

Methexiology

Philosophical Theology and Theological
Philosophy for the Deification of Humanity

NICOLAS LAOS

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METHEXIOLOGY

Philosophical Theology and Theological Philosophy for the Deification
of Humanity

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Contents

Foreword by Arthur Versluis vii

Introduction 1

Chapter 1: Being and Its Presence 75

Chapter 2: Access to Being 97

Chapter 3: The Modes of Being 124

Chapter 4: Epistemology and the Noetic Faculty of the Soul 153

Chapter 5: Mystery, Grace, and Philosophical Theology:
Through Unselfishness to Deification 173

Chapter 6: Psychotherapy: The Secret Potential of the Mind 209

Chapter 7: Axiology, Ethics, and Justice 229

Bibliography 251

Glossary 261

About the Author 267



Foreword

IT IS A PLEASURE to provide some prefatory remarks and context for this book by Dr. Nicolas Laos, which represents Dr. Laos's remarkable synthesis of a wide range of sources and intellectual currents. In it, and in a previous work, *The Metaphysics of World Order*, which more or less leaves off where this book begins, he develops an unusually broad and deep analysis based in the Hellenic tradition. Here, Hellenic tradition includes the Platonic inheritance from antiquity as well as Orthodoxy and in particular Hesychastic tradition, all of which have been given not enough attention by international scholars. What distinguishes Dr. Laos's work above all, beyond its unusual scope, is his emphasis on the assertion of metaphysical truth as the touchstone for understanding political, philosophical, religious, social, cultural, and economic dimensions of modern life in a theologically informed context.

Dr. Laos's book is also unusual because it incorporates elements of what has become known as "Western esotericism," but which might better be described as those traditions in Western European tradition (including alchemy) that point us toward deeper dimensions and understanding of inner or spiritual life. After all, the word "esoteric" (bearing the meaning of "inner" as opposed to "exo-," or "outer") ultimately refers to different processes of inner transmutation and illumination, and as such has analogues in Eastern or Asian religious traditions that also reject simplistic rationalism and subject-object dualism. By emphasizing the Platonic and Orthodox traditions, Dr. Laos presents us with a philosophical and theological synthesis that in turn looks at aspects of modern political and cultural life in what for many readers will be new and surprising ways.

For the modern secular reader, some aspects of Dr. Laos's book may be daunting. He offers detailed historical accounts in order to substantiate his larger case, and the last part of the book seeks to synthesize

philosophical and theological traditions in ways that unabashedly challenge rationalist and secular perspectives. But the theological dimensions of his work are integral to his argument, and must be seen in the context of the whole, not in isolation. What Dr. Laos is presenting in this book is nothing less than a challenge to most established ways of thinking about modernity and the modern world. Regardless of whether you find yourself agreeing or disagreeing with the whole or some of its parts, you will without doubt find that it presents new ways of thinking not only about the world in which we find ourselves, but also about the world as he envisions it could be. His work is original, stimulating, and provocative—without doubt, it will reward the attentive reader.

Arthur Versluis, author of *The Mystical State* and many other books
Chair of the Department of Religious Studies and Professor in the
College of Arts & Letters at Michigan State University

Introduction

METHEXIOLOGY OR THE PHILOSOPHY of methexis is a system of philosophical theology and theological philosophy that is focused and founded on the concept of *mēthexis*. The Greek word *mēthexis* literally means participation and sharing. It is important to understand that *mēthexis* is something much deeper and more specific than the term “relation,” because *mēthexis* emphasizes the event of an ontologically grounded union. Therefore, eros (love passion) is at the center of the methexiologists’ theological method, in accordance with the New Law of Christ, namely, love,¹ and in accordance with the following biblical passages: “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king, who prepared a marriage feast for his son,”² and: “I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband.”³

Intimately related to methexiology is a peculiar Christocentric type of mysticism. In general, by the term “mysticism,” I mean a personal experience of communion with the real truth in a way that transcends propositional language, and, instead, it involves a peculiar type of enlightened intuition. The East has been the cradle of mysticism, whose hierophants, guided by ideational and contemplative imagination, were the prophets among the Egyptians, the Chaldeans among the Assyrians, the philosophers among the Greeks, the Sramanas of the Bactrians, the Magi among the Persians—who announced beforehand the birth of the Savior, being led by a star until they arrived in the land of Judaea, and among the Indians the Gymnosophists, and other philosophers of ancient Eastern nations.

1. John 13:34–35.
2. Matthew 22:2.
3. Revelation 21:2.

2 Methexiology

The mystical teaching of the ancient Brahmans, who are the only interpreters of the Vedas or Holy Writings, is symbolized by an equilateral triangle circumscribed about a circle: the circle symbolizes infinity and eternity, while the equilateral triangle symbolizes Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, the three creative principles in the Hindu pantheon. Brahma means, when literally translated, "that which grows," and he is a symbol of evolution; Vishnu is a symbol of form, the producer of forms; Shiva is a symbol of chaos, out of which order emerges. The mystical tradition of the peoples irrigated by the Ganges and the Indus rivers was brought to the banks of the Nile by the Gymnosophists.

The mystical schools of ancient times attained their greatest prosperity in the valley of the Nile through the mysteries of Isis, Serapis, and Osiris. The Osiris mystery represents the human soul's drama. Osiris symbolizes the soul proper, namely, what in ancient Greek is called nous, the repository of the uncreated Spirit, or what the Kabbalists call neshamah. Osiris is also a Son of the Sun. However, within the profane men, Osiris is dead through the lower nature, symbolized by Set-Typhon, which means through the animal soul, particularly, through selfish thoughts and through selfish sentiments and passions. Thus, Osiris is buried in the shrine of the mummy of the material world and thrown into the Nile, which symbolizes material life. But Isis, who symbolizes the love for the divine, that is, for the real Truth, seeks, with the help of Anubis (who symbolizes divine wisdom), the parts of Osiris's fragmented corpse, to collect them and to take care of them, thus giving rise to an integrated, harmonious, and divinely illuminated higher soul, symbolized by Horus, the new divine Osiris, which subdues the demon, namely, Set.

Initiation into the Egyptian mysteries was most highly valued and was embellished with all the splendor of Eastern culture and lore. In 525 BC, the Persian King Cambyses beat the great Egyptian nation into submission, but, a thousand years before this, the Greeks had already formed their mystical schools under the influence of Egypt, and they had already instituted their famous mysteries of Samothrace and Eleusis. According to the mysteries of Eleusis, the grieving Demeter, for nine days and nights, wandered about with a torch, searching for her lost daughter, Persephone, as Isis once searched for the missing Osiris. Furthermore, gradually, the Greeks' spirit of religion assumes a philosophical color with the molding of the Orphic tradition. Rhythm and music give rise to an ecstatic existential state that takes on the meaning of a surrogate for death, and that does away with the straitjacket of the senses, so that

it brings about a peculiar experience of spiritual liberation and offers entry to a world where life beyond the grave is the ultimate reality. Both Orphism and Pythagoreanism, each in its own way, made use of certain elements of this psychosocial and religious disposition and, thus, set the stage for the development of classical Greek philosophy.

Let us look at the first true history of philosophical thought, namely, the opening book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Here, Aristotle sets out his two most basic results: The first result mentioned by Aristotle has to do with making the most of awareness and of its ability, firstly, to detach itself from the world of necessity, and, secondly, to relate, thereafter, to other objects independent of all endurance, objects that awake its wonder and puzzlement, and are also independent of any kind of exigency. The second result mentioned by Aristotle consists in developing the power of awareness in order to detach itself from the immediate and specific environment of the existence that it is the awareness of, and giving itself over to abstract elucidation of the problems arising from the fact of its detachment.

Ancient Greeks used the term *logos* (plural: *logoi*) in order to refer to the event of "disclosure," or truth. Disclosure proclaims and speaks about the existence of an entity in the world; additionally, it refers to a conscious being that is aware of the event of disclosure. Hence, as Martin Heidegger has pointed out, from the perspective of the Greeks' notion of truth (in Greek, *alētheia*), truth emerges from the relationship between a disclosed entity and the viewer of this disclosure. According to classical Greek philosophy, true being consists in a harmonious, meaningful, and decent order, specifically in the common *logos*, which is manifest in the *cosmos*.

The Greek word *alētheia* is a combination of the prefix "a-," signifying lack, and the Greek word *lēthe*, meaning forgetfulness. In other words, as Heidegger has pointed out, for the ancient Greeks, truth means *un-forgetfulness*, un-concealment, and disclosure.⁴ Ancient Greeks managed to endow their life with a transcendent scope, namely, the scope of harmonizing the self with the cosmic *logos*. In this way, they managed to bridge the gap between history and eternity. According to Plato's *Timaeus* and Plotinus's *On Time and Eternity*, time is an image of eternity. This does not mean that, for Plato and Plotinus, time consists in a deterministic cycle of the world of becoming, but it means that the image—precisely,

4. Heidegger, *Basic Writings*.

4 Methexiology

time—points to and leads to the creative archetypal Good, the Sun mentioned by Plato in his *Republic* (514a ff.).

Plotinus argues that we must release time from the shackles of the physical world and seek the origin of time in the nature of the soul. In his book *On Time and Eternity*, Plotinus argues that “eternity” is the radiance of the substratum of the mental principle, and it is continually in a state of changeless timelessness. Moreover, in the same book, following Plato, Plotinus argues that time consists of the activity of the soul in the world, and it is an image of eternity. According to Plotinus, the term “being” refers to eternity, and “real being” in its absolute ideal state is unmanifested, whereas the term “existence” means the manifestation of being in the world of becoming. Hence, time, being guided by eternity, manifests a tendency toward perfection, and eternity manifests the participation of beings in the state of the intelligible world, precisely in a state of ontological completeness. Similarly, in the Holy Scripture, we read that, in God, the past and the future are united in eternal presence: with Whom there is no variableness, nor change of light, or darkness (Jas 1:17).

All these men formed schools, their doctrines spread throughout the world, and, thus, in Judea, schools of thought were established well before the coming of Christ, such as the Pharisees, religious conservatives, the Sadducees, political conservatives, and the Essenes, a mystical religious society influenced by Pythagoreanism and austere Stoic practices. Moreover, the Jews of the Hellenistic Egypt developed a highly Hellenized literature, on which I will say more later.

At this point, it is useful to mention that monotheism was not originally developed by the Hebrews/Israelites, and that the Hebrews were not the only monotheistic nation in the ancient world. At the zenith of ancient Egyptian civilization, Pharaoh Amenhotep IV (who reigned for approximately sixteen years; from 1352 until 1336/1334 BC), known also as Akhenaten (meaning Effective Spirit of Aten), attempted to change the polytheistic religion of Egypt into a monotheistic one by promulgating the monotheistic worship of Aten, the Sun God. Aten means bright disk, and, thus, the falcon-headed picture of Ra-Harakhti (the previous Egyptian solar deity) was replaced by the symbol of a solar disk whose rays ended in human hands some of which were holding the holy ankh, the symbol of life. In contrast to the old Egyptian solar deity, which represented the physical Sun, Aten was a symbol of the Transcosmic One, the One life-giving source, which creates and preserves the cosmos through its light. Moses, the most important prophet in Judaism, was arguably initiated

into the mysteries of the Egyptian monotheism, and, when the Egyptians decided to abandon Akhenaten's monotheistic religion and return to polytheism, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Moses preserved and expanded the monotheistic tradition among the Hebrews. Thus, Judaism became the strictest and most effective custodian of monotheism in the ancient world. Moreover, in the Hebrew Bible, the manifestations of God's glory are often described as light or fire, and one of the Hebrew names for God is Adonai, which comes from the root *ada*, which means radiant.

In ancient Greece, in the context of the Orphic Mysteries, there was a monotheistic religious dogma, and, in contrast to Homer's popular polytheistic beliefs, the Orphic hymns celebrated the One and Universal God. According to Iamblichus and Porphyry, even though Pythagoras made references to several gods, he taught that there is only one God and that the various different gods mentioned in the Greeks' Homeric popular polytheistic religion are powers or energies of the One God. In the same spirit, Plutarch, one of the most influential Platonist philosophers, believed in one, unitary, trans-temporal God, with different names for the Divinity's different aspects and energies.

Why is monotheism so important for the spiritual development of humanity? Monotheism leads to the ontological liberation of God from the cosmos, and, therefore, in the context of monotheism, the divine Logos is free from cosmic laws, that is, from cosmic necessity. In the context of pure monotheism, God's mode of existence is freedom. The essential autonomy of God from the natural cosmos implies that God relates to the natural cosmos only under terms dictated by God's own free will (in Greek, the divine *thēlema*), and, therefore, the laws that govern the natural cosmos (that is, the creation) do not govern the divine Mind (that is, the ultimate cause of creation) itself. Therefore, since God is the existential mirror in which humans see themselves, and since the qualities and the nature of the God with whom one empathizes determine one's way of thinking about oneself and about one's existential integration, the God of monotheism is the perfect archetype of humanity's historical emancipation and spiritual perfection.

However, over time, the Pharisees and the Sadducees failed to keep the fire of spiritual initiation burning. The Pharisees, in particular, became so obsessed with obeying their legal interpretations in every detail that they ignored God's mystical message of grace and mercy, and their piety was often hypocritical. The Sadducees lapsed into a formalist

6 Methexiology

religious system, devoid of the inner meaning of the Bible, and they were often willing to compromise their values with the Romans and others in order to maintain their social status and extract social privileges. Jesus Christ calls the Pharisees an evil “brood of vipers” (Matt 12:34), “hypocrites” (Matt 23:23), and “blind guides” (Matt 23:16, 24), not because their ideas were evil, but because they politicized them in order to promote their own selfish purposes. Jesus charges the Pharisees with having committed blasphemy against the Spirit (Matt 12:31), because they took the law that applies to the heart (i.e., the law of the Spirit, according to Rom 8:2–11) out of its proper context and forced it upon others through political lawmaking.

Of the mystical schools of Judea, that of the Essenes was the most important. The Essenes were feeling contempt for riches, they had a communal way of life, they were praying together turning eastward, and they were meditating on divine law in a language rich in symbolism and allegory. The Essenes were submitting their candidates to three years of trials. Then, in the ceremonies of initiation, they were handing them a pick or axe and a white garment. Their fundamental maxim was: “You will love God and your neighbor, you will be virtuous.”

The divine flame of spiritual initiation continued to burn and the great work was brought to completion by Jesus Christ. He appeared in an age when corruption was universal; in the midst of a people who, from time immemorial, had been subject to slavery and who eagerly expected their deliverer announced by the prophets. Jesus appeared and taught the doctrine of the potential divinity of man. Jesus Christ set a clear and eternal example of how the deified man, that is, the man who is united with the deity, approaches law, possession, and religion.

Jesus Christ’s teaching about law is the following: “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27). Additionally, he said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another” (John 13:34). “One of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together. Knowing that he had answered them well, asked him, ‘Which commandment is the greatest of all?’ Jesus answered: ‘The greatest is, “Hear, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one: you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.” This is the first commandment. The second is like this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:28–31).

Jesus Christ's teaching about possession of material wealth is the following: "Most certainly I say to you, a rich man will enter into the kingdom of heaven with difficulty. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into God's kingdom" (Matt 19:23–24). The apostle Paul observes that "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil" (1 Tim 6:10). It is the love of money that is the obstacle to faith, not the money itself. Although Jesus never condemns material wealth as evil *per se*, he consistently addresses the danger of material possessions as a hindrance to full and sincere compliance with the New Law of Christ, which is love.

Jesus Christ's teaching about religion is the following: first of all, Jesus said to humans: "Ye are gods" (John 10:34), thus revealing that the true Christianity is a mystical path toward man's deification, and that Christ is the manifestation of every worthy religion's purpose, namely, the deified human. Whereas Jesus Christ taught the deification of the human being, the Pharisees and the Sadducees insisted on a phyletic perception of salvation, centered on the messianic destiny of the Jewish nation and founded on historical means. Jesus taught the true worship of God as follows:

The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour comes, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, will you worship the Father. You worship that which you don't know. We worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such to be his worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:19–24)

Thus, as we read in Revelation 21:22, there is no temple in the New Holy City: "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof."

From the perspective of methexiology, philosophical theology is possible and meaningful only under the conditions that by the term "philosophy" we mean *a way of life whose fundamental attribute is the erotic pursuit of and union with the Absolute Lover*, and that by the term "theology" we mean *the experiential knowledge of the Absolute Lover*, that

8 Methexiology

is, the participation in the Absolute Lover's way of life and the experience of an ontological union with the Absolute Lover.

Symeon the New Theologian, a renowned theologian, poet, and saint of the Eastern Orthodox church, in his fifteenth Hymn, writes that Christ makes his true servants-saints his spouses, in the sense that those souls which are united with God are God's spouses. Therefore, according to methexiology, the main purpose and *finis ultimus* of philosophical theology is the study of God's beautiful mode of being and humanity's participation in God's uncreated energies, that is, in the uncreated life-force of God's uncreated essence.

Moreover, in the context of methexiology, theology—defined in the aforementioned “methexiological” way—brings philosophy to completion and conclusion. In other words, in the context of methexiology, philosophical theology and theological philosophy are inextricably related to each other, and, indeed, they constitute the two sides of the same coin.

Given the definitions of the terms “methexiology,” “philosophy,” and “theology” that I have just proposed, the philosophical constituent component of methexiology consists of the philosophical works of Plato and Aristotle, and the theological constituent component of methexiology consists of the theological works of the Hesychasts (known also as the Neptic fathers), since both these philosophical and theological traditions are centered on eros.

The Stakes Are High

Before delineating the ontological, epistemological, and ethical dimensions and the substantial arguments of the philosophical orientation that I call methexiology, I would like, in this introductory section, to briefly inform and alert my readers about the manipulation of spirituality by various power oligopolies that tend to subordinate values and principles to historical expediencies in the context of a selfish conception of “pragmatism,” and they use philosophical and theological notions merely or primarily as “mental munitions” for the promotion of their selfish interests and agendas. The previous attitude, which is particularly characteristic of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes as well as of the advocates of the underlying mentality of *Realpolitik*, causes serious erosions in the moral status of humans and, implicitly but clearly, cultivates an attitude of complacent nihilism.

Given that methexiology highlights and underpins the spirit's freedom from and supremacy over history and the natural world, thus, giving primacy to spiritual goals over pragmatic ones and refusing to subdue the human mind to any necessity, I wish to compare and contrast methexiology with characteristic examples of policy-makers, organizations, scholars, and even religious leaders who adhere to the opposite view. I think that it is significant to do so, not only in order to draw a clear distinction between methexiology and politicized or, generally, manipulated spirituality, but also for three more reasons: (i) first, in order to show that, when philosophy, instead of guiding politics, becomes a servant or instrument of politics, then political power takes precedence over truth, and the human being becomes a means to the achievement of political goals; (ii) secondly, in order to show that, when political power and, in general, the achievement of historical goals are elevated to absolute principles, then the different opposing historical "camps" ultimately become spiritually similar to one another, and the creation of a world society is impossible due to a lack of transcendent, universal values sufficiently capable of cultivating and underpinning the sociality of the historical actors' souls; (iii) thirdly, in order to help my readers understand why I maintain that methexiology is an alternative existential strategy and leads to a different perception of civilization from the one that prevailed in the era of modernity, without being oblivious of the defects of other pre-modern and anti-modern social models.

Methexiology is a new philosophical orientation, and, therefore, a new existential strategy, that is, ultimately, a vision for a new civilization. In general, "civilization" means an anthropological type, and, therefore, at the most fundamental level, large-scale historical change refers to great anthropological changes: for instance, the emergence of capitalism is a historical consequence of the values of an anthropological type that gives primacy to the *exchange* value of money (that is, money trade or financial speculation) over the *use* value of money, thus transforming "money" into "capital." In particular, capitalism emerged in the fifteenth century AD, when the Papacy decided to morally legitimize and honor usury, whereas, until then, other traditional anthropological types, that is, civilizations, had never honored usury, thus precluding the development of capitalism. (Capitalism appeared on the historical scene as a peculiar form of trade organized by the Fugger family in Germany; when the Fuggers made their first loan to the Archduke Sigismund, in 1487, they took as security an interest in silver and copper mines in the Tirol.)

Furthermore, “advanced modernity” is marked by a deep crisis, which became tragically manifest in the 2000s, and which consists in a deep crisis of the nation-state, of the world-conception of *Realpolitik*, of financial capitalism, of the major Euroatlantic institutions (such as NATO and the EU),⁵ of Russian nationalism, of the modern Islamic world, of Maoist China’s peculiar capitalist model, and even of the model of globalization that was formed and implemented in the 1990s on the basis of the principles of advanced modernity. Therefore, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, humanity is faced with the need to extricate itself from the intellectual shackles of the previous principles and ways of life, which are in deep crisis, in order to consciously and responsibly give rise to a new major historical change.

Reflecting on my studies in the history of art and aesthetics, I realize the following: ancient agricultural civilizations worshiped nature, and, thus, their gods usually had animal characteristics; ancient nomadic civilizations worshiped the natural bond of blood, the power of the race; but, on the other hand, ancient Greek gods had human form. The human form of the ancient Greek gods was characterized by exceptional beauty, because it was expressing the ancient Greek person’s quest for existential integration and perfection. According to ancient Greek mythology, the end of the human being’s existence is human participation in the deity. Thus, through their mythology, Greeks gave priority to a personal approach to reality over the impersonal commands of nature and race, and, in this way, they created an anthropocentric civilization. The humanism of the classical Greek aesthetics was transformed into a theological system by Christianity, since Christians identified the Greek value of beauty with Jesus Christ, and, through Jesus Christ, Christianity stressed the personhood of God and the incarnation of the divine Logos,

5. During the Cold War, NATO was defending one ideology against another one, and it had important ideational attributes, but, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the West’s military-industrial-security complex was alarmed by the end of the “communist threat” as the ready-made justifier of continued escalation of the Western nations’ defense/security budgets and by the demands for “peace dividends,” and, therefore, NATO, gradually, degraded into an institution that blatantly serves the interests of the West’s military-industrial-security complex through military interventions for regime change and counter-terrorism operations. On November 7, 2014, RT published an interview with the prominent U.S. scholar Noam Chomsky, in which Chomsky pointedly characterized post-Cold War NATO as a “US-run intervention force.” See: <https://www.rt.com/shows/sophieco/202967-cold-nuclear-war-nato/>

that is, the personal and, hence, free and perfect presence and disclosure of God within the sensuous world.

Spirituality, Faith, and Power Politics: A Theme in Need of a Focus

In 1887, the influential British Freemason and scholarly mystic Arthur Edward Waite pointedly wrote that “beneath the broad tide of human history there flow the stealthy undercurrents of the secret societies, which frequently determine in the depths the changes that take place upon the surface.”⁶ In the garb of “faith” and “spirituality,” there are many hidden and secretive military Orders that manipulate targeted populations with precision around the entire world. It goes without saying that, in general, many “mystical” networks have flourished in diplomacy, defense, espionage, and business. The “Skull and Bones” fraternity at Yale University is a characteristic case in point.

Formed in 1832 by General William Russell, whose shipping firm later dominated the U.S. side of the China opium trade, this secret society became the recruiting grounds and preserve of the most important New-England-centered families, such as the Coffins, the Sloanes, the Tafts, the Bundys, the Paynes, the Whitneys, etc. In 1903, Yale Divinity School established several schools and hospitals in China that were collectively known as “Yale in China.” The program “Yale in China” was an intelligence network undermining Sun Yat-sen’s republican movement and supporting Mao Zedong on behalf of the Anglo-American establishment. During World War II, “Yale in China” was used by the U.S. establishment and its Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in order to install the Maoists into power.⁷ “Yale in China” was run by OSS operative Reuben Holden, a member of Skull and Bones. Furthermore, “Yale in China” was closely associated with the New York-based Union Theological Seminary, which was dominated for twenty years by Henry Sloane Coffin, a U.S.

6. Waite, *The Real History of the Rosicrucians*, 1.

7. In other words, the “pragmatist,” or rather cynical and materialist mentality, of the United States’ liberal oligarchy and OSS/CIA operatives played a substantial role in China’s conversion to communism. In particular, the United States Army Observation Group, commonly known as the Dixie Mission, was the first U.S. effort to establish official relations with the Communist Party of China and the People’s Liberation Army, then headquartered in the mountainous city of Yan’an. This mission was launched in July 1944, during World War II, and it lasted until March 1947.

intelligence executive from the Sloane and Coffin families and a Skull and Bones member. The New-York-based Union Theological Seminary has been a major center for U.S. subversion of Asia. From the outset, the Skull and Bones fraternity has been playing a “two ends against the middle” game, whereby it aims at controlling and manipulating both the “thesis” (e.g., the USA/Euroatlantic Bloc, Liberalism, etc.) and the “antithesis” (e.g., the USSR/Russia, China, Communism, Fascism, etc.), thus keeping the peoples of the world in a state of confusion and despair, in the hope that, ultimately, people will resign themselves into accepting the “synthesis” (specifically, a particular world order model fabricated and promoted by the Skull and Bones fraternity) as the only alternative to solve the problems that the “synthesis” brokers created in the first place.⁸

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, in the context of Eurasian mysticism and geostrategic competitions, Shamzaran (Pyotr) Badmaev (a Buryat Mongol who had grown up in Siberia and converted to Russian Orthodoxy, with Tsar Alexander III acting as his godfather) articulated an occult geopolitical vision of a unified Eurasia that emphasized the unification of Russia with Mongolia and Tibet. Badmaev, known also as “the Tibetan,” served for many years in the Asia department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was familiar with the legend—popular in Mongolia, China, and Tibet—about the “White Tsar” who would come from the North (from “Northern Shambhala”) and restore the original traditions of Buddhism. Moreover, Badmaev had a close association with a prominent Tibetan master, the lama Agvan Dordzhiyev, the tutor and confidant of the thirteenth Dalai Lama. According to Dordzhiyev, Russia represented the coming Kingdom of Shambhala anticipated in the *Kalachakra* texts of Tibetan Buddhism.⁹ In a letter of December 19, 1896, Badmaev wrote to Tsar Nicolas II that his activities aimed at helping Russia to achieve “greater influence than other powers upon the Mongolian-Tibetan-Chinese East.” In addition, intimately related to Russia’s occult Orientalism is a neo-pagan belief in “sacred geography,” which perceives the human being as a being of the earth, and not as a being of the sky, that is, as a free spirit.

In the same spirit of occult Orientalism, the Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev (1874–1948) called for a “new knighthood” against

8. Sutton, *America’s Secret Establishment*.

9. According to Tibetan Buddhism, Shambhala is a mystical kingdom of adepts in which the teachings of the *Kalachakra* (Wheel of Time) Tantric school are maintained in their purest form.

the West, and the Russian artist and archaeologist Nikolai Konstantinovich Rerikh (1874–1947), a student of Madame Blavatsky's works,¹⁰ promoted a Eurasian vision founded on his belief in the transcendent unity of Eurasian religions and on the argument that the doctrines of Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity are husks concealing the truth within. Thus, in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, Eurasian mysticism was inextricably linked to a cultural shift of many members of the modern Russian elite away from Orthodox Christianity and Byzantium/"Romanity," mostly to Asian cultures and "New Age" spiritualist movements. Whereas modern tsarist imperial Russia could reclaim Romanity as a descendant of the Eastern Roman Empire and thus act as a neo-Byzantine super-power in European and Eastern-Mediterranean affairs, in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, Eurasian mysticism tended to intellectually confine Russia to Orientalism and German romanticism. In fact, the late-nineteenth-century and the early-twentieth-century Russian Eurasianist scholars were not only alienated from Orthodox Christianity, but also they were alienated from and often inimically disposed toward the Greco-Roman culture.

In 1886, Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, who had named himself "Philosopher of the East," visited Russia invited by the order of the Russian government, and he joined up with Blavatsky's publisher, Mikhail Katkoff, who wanted to implement an imperialist Russian-Orientalist ideological and geostrategic policy in Central Asia and India. Al-Afghani was descended from a Shiite Azerbaijani family from the Asadabad village of Iran, but he used the name al-Afghani to hide his Iranian and Shiite origin, because he was generally active within predominantly Sunni areas. Al-Afghani established his own Masonic organization under the auspices of the Grand Orient of France. Al-Afghani's ideology was a peculiar combination of radical, anti-Western Pan-Islamism and an attempt of utilizing Western rationality and technology in order to invigorate Islam. The nineteenth-century Russian establishment cooperated with Blavatsky, Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, and several spiritualists in order to conduct

10. Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, the founder of a mystical "school" called Theosophy, articulated a Eurasian theory of mystical imperialism. Blavatsky was a friend of Russian Tsar Nicolas II and the Oriental enthusiast Prince Esper Ukhtomsky, a close confidant of Tsar Nicolas II. In fact, Blavatsky fascinated Tsar Nicolas II and his wife, the notoriously superstitious Tsarina Alexandra Feodorovna, with her book *The Secret Doctrine*. Blavatsky's book *The Secret Doctrine* is a synthesis of several mystical traditions, but it is primarily focused on Indo/Tibetan spirituality.

its own “occult war,” thus betraying its Byzantine Christian roots and departing from the spiritual legacy of the Eastern Roman Empire.

Furthermore, if we investigate the history and the identity of Sheikh Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, the relationship between the Muslim terrorist network ISIS/Daesh and the Baathist regime that was dictatorially established in Iraq in 1968, the hidden connections and operations of Hezbollah’s Secretary-General, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, as well as the relationship between the Norwegian terrorist, Freemason, and neo-Templar Anders Behring Breivik and the ethos of several neo-Templar Orders, we can easily realize that there is a deep, substantial, and clandestine relationship among spiritual masters, terrorism, and imperialism.

In the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was in a period of decay, and the Western Great Powers decided to integrate the Islamic world into the global capitalist system. Great Britain was right to pursue the dissolution of the corrupt and obscurantist Ottoman Empire,¹¹ but the British foreign policy was guided by *Realpolitik* and not by any noble ideas. Thus, following the traditional divide-and-conquer strategy, Great Britain concentrated its diplomacy in World War I on wresting the *Hejaz* (i.e., the Islamic holy cities of Mecca and Medina) from the control of the Ottoman Empire and on spreading the ideology of nationalism throughout the Arabo-Islamic world. This goal of the British diplomacy was achieved when “Sharif” Husain, the Ottoman-appointed “Sharif” (ruler) of Mecca, was induced by the British Empire to rebel against the Ottoman caliph and to establish an autonomous authority over the *Hejaz* under British protection. By 1916, the Ottoman caliph had lost control over Mecca and Jeddah, and, in 1919, he lost control over Medina, too, since Ottoman troops within the city of Medina were induced to rebel against Fakhri Pasha.

Finally, on March 3, 1924, the Ottoman Caliphate was abolished, and, on March 7, 1924, Sharif Husain, who had been exercising *de facto* local control over the *Hejaz* since 1916, claimed the Caliphate for himself. But the British Empire’s policy was different from Sharif Husain’s plans. Thus, Great Britain assisted Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud to move against Sharif Husain and to wrest control of the *Hejaz* from him. Ibn Saud was a “puppet” of the British diplomacy. In particular, during Sharif Husain’s rebellion against the Ottoman caliph and during the imposition of Sharif

11. Byron, *The Byzantine Achievement*; Portal, *The Slavs*.

Husain's rule over the *Hejaz*, Ibn Saud was receiving a monthly sum of 5,000 pounds sterling from the British Treasury in return for his policy of neutrality, which was then serving the interests of the British Empire. But when Sharif Husain claimed the Caliphate for himself, Great Britain urged Ibn Saud to move his forces against Sharif Husain.

In 1902, the Saudis captured Riyadh as a result of an alliance between a tribal chief and the religious leader of the Wahhabi religious sect. The alliance ensured that the *Najdi* Saudis would be under the control of the Wahhabis and would seek to enforce Wahhabism in the "heartland" of Islam, that is, in the *Hejaz*. Wahhabism is founded on a modern Sunni reformer called Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1792); it is a puritanical, formalist, and fanatical perception of the *Sharia*, and its mentality resembles that of Oliver Cromwell's English Puritanism.

According to the researcher Dr. John Coleman, the Muslim Brotherhood was created by the great names of the British Intelligence.¹² In its dealings with Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egyptian Prime Minister, 1952–70), the British government used espionage, diplomacy, bribery, and even direct military might to retain control over Egypt and the Suez Canal. The newly founded CIA was also concerned about Nasser's policy, because Nasser showed signs of tilting to the Soviet Union. The Muslim Brotherhood was an obvious ally against Nasser, because he had banned it in Egypt after it was involved in a failed assassination attempt on his life in 1954. In general, the Muslim Brotherhood rejected Nasser's policy. In June 1955, the British intelligence agency MI6 was already cooperating with the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria to undermine and destabilize the new government that showed strong left-wing tendencies and a desire to forge an alliance with Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood became an even more important Anglo-American intelligence asset after Nasser announced the Egyptian takeover of the Suez Canal. According to the researcher Stephen Dorril and the investigative journalist Mark Curtis, the Muslim Brotherhood was linked to British intelligence through the British explorer and travel writer Dame Freya Stark prior to World War II, and the Shah's regime in Iran considered it to be closely associated with British Freemasonry;¹³ "the CIA also approved Saudi Arabia's funding of

12. Coleman, "What Really Happened in Iran."

13. Curtis, *Secret Affairs*, 62.

the Muslim Brotherhood to act against Nasser, according to former CIA officer, Robert Baer.”¹⁴

During the 1950s and the 1960s, Nasser persistently implemented a strict policy against the Muslim Brotherhood, and, during the same period, Saudi Arabia hosted Arab Muslim Brotherhood exiles. The strong presence of Muslim Brotherhood exiles in Saudi Arabia spawned a new Salafist movement, which is a hybrid of Wahhabism and other post-1960s Islamic movements, and it has been associated with literalist and puritanical approaches to Islam. When the then Syrian President Hafez al-Assad launched his own harsh crackdown against the Syrian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in the early 1980s, a new wave of Muslim Brotherhood exiles moved to Saudi Arabia. In the 1980s, the Muslim Brotherhood evolved, spread, and spawned a virulent network of radical jihadists, including Al-Qaeda.

With regard to the Assad regime in Syria, it is worth pointing out that the Assad family, which started ruling Syria in 1970, has deep connections with the French establishment and the French Freemasonry, particularly, the Grand Orient of France. The Assads are Alawites, who are a Shiite sect, which the French entrusted with the ruling of Syria in the 1970s. In 1936, Ali Sulayman al-Assad, the father of Hafez al-Assad, was one of eighty Alawite notables who signed a letter addressed to the French Prime Minister saying that “[the] Alawi people rejected attachment to Syria and wished to stay under French protection.” However, in 1946, Hafez al-Assad joined the Arab Baath Party, which espoused a pan-Arabist socialist ideology, and, in 1970, after dictatorially displacing the corrupt and unpopular Jadid’s government, he established his own autocratic Baathist regime in Syria. Like many other members of the Syrian establishment, Hafez al-Assad was a Freemason.¹⁵ Even though the Assad regime is secular and has traditional ties with the West, particularly, with France, the U.S. and its allies, including Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, in 2011, initiated a series of subversive operations against the government of Bashar al-Assad, who was elected President of Syria on July 10, 2000, succeeding Hafez al-Assad, his father, who had led Syria for thirty years and died in office a month prior. The reasons for the United States’ and its allies’ decision to overthrow the Assad regime in Syria include their decision to stop cooperating with Baathist governments and substi-

14. Ibid, 63.

15. Sfeir, “Les francs-maçons en terres d’Islam.”

tute them with weaker and, thus, more easily manipulated ones as well. Thus, in 2011, the U.S. and its allies started using jihadists, including the Al-Nusra Front (i.e., Al-Qaeda in Syria), in order to fight against Bashar al-Assad's government.

In order to understand the history of jihadism, it is also important to bear in mind that, in 1978, U.S. President Jimmy Carter's National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski (a Polish-born nobleman whose family hailed from the most anti-Russian part of Poland, and who acquired significant political power through the Trilateral Commission), advised Carter to transfer pro-Saudi fighters, called "mujahedeen" (later called "Taliban"), into the then-Soviet-allied Afghanistan, in order to create there a wave of terrorism that would render the Soviets unable to preserve their Afghan ally, and, thus, help to bring down the Soviet Union.¹⁶ Moreover, when, in February 1979, after Mohammad Reza Shah's overthrow, Ayatollah Khomeini, a radical Iranian Shiite religious leader, took over the leadership of Iran, Brzezinski argued that, because Khomeini's Shiite fundamentalism was coupled with an anti-Soviet policy, Khomeini's government could become part of a U.S.-controlled anti-Soviet alliance.¹⁷

As regards the relationship between the Muslim terrorist network ISIS/Daesh and the Baathist regime that was dictatorially established in Iraq in 1968, Kyle W. Orton wrote in *The New York Times*, on December 23, 2015, that in the 1980s the then U.S.-backed Baathist Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein "allied with Islamists, notably the Muslim Brotherhood, to destabilize his regional rival in Syria," and, in 1986, "the Pan-Arab Command, the Baath Party's top ideological institution, formally reoriented Iraq's foreign policy toward an alliance with Islamists";¹⁸ "the campaign of Islamization intensified further after Iraq's devastating defeat in Kuwait in 1991 and the subsequent Shiite revolt, culminating in 1993."¹⁹ Thus, during the 1990s, Salafist and other radical Sunni elements were integrated into Iraq's Baathist regime, giving rise to the capture of great parts of Northern Iraq by ISIS/Daesh militants in the post-Saddam Hussein era.

In the case of Hezbollah's Secretary-General, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, too, it is difficult to distinguish between the identity of a religious

16. Brzezinski, "Interview."

17. Engdahl, *A Century of War*, 171.

18. Orton, "How Saddam Hussein Gave Us ISIS."

19. *Ibid.*

leader and that of a military Order's leader. Through Hezbollah's international network, the Beirut-based Shiite cleric Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah promotes a radical Shia ideology. During NATO's wars against the former Yugoslavia (1991–2001), the Euroatlantic alliance backed Hezbollah to fight in Kosovo against the Serbs and to assist in the creation of the Sunni nation of Bosnia.²⁰ In 2002, "Geostrategy-Direct," an online newsletter edited by veteran journalist Robert Morton, wrote that the Dutch government released a report that detailed the alliance between the United States and militant Islamic organizations to help Bosnian Muslims; in particular, according to that report, the United States provided a green light to groups on the State Department list of terrorist organizations, such as Hezbollah, to operate in Bosnia.²¹ This explains why Nasrallah often gets a good image and a good press in the West, compared to other terrorist outfit leaders and is not demonized like them.

However, Nasrallah controls a big international network of diamond mining and diamond cutting experts as well as diamond mining equipment suppliers.²² This network, whose members compete ambitiously in the international gemstone market, has given rise to a challenging Shiite actor in the diamond industry, since, in the 2000s, Hezbollah teamed up with Iran and formed a nexus with Venezuela and Cuba against the U.S. and the State of Israel. During the 1990s, the 2000s, and the 2010s, the diamond dispute led to several attacks on Lebanon by the Israeli Armed Forces. Hezbollah has transferred diamond-mining technology to South East Asian nations, particularly, to Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, and Indonesia, thus making it imperative for the U.S. to set up a naval base in Bangladesh. Additionally, Hezbollah is believed to have raised significant funds by dealing in so-called "conflict diamonds" in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Congo, a practice that has reportedly been copied by al-Qaeda.²³ In the 2010s, the United States and the State of Israel teamed up with Saudi Arabia to counter their Shiite competitors in the diamond market, and they have bargained with Saudi Arabia's regime for the creation of a Salafist/Wahhabi satellite state in the diamond-rich Pattani area (one of Thailand's Southern provinces) and in the Philippines on the lines of Kosovo in Bosnia.

20. Geostrategy-Direct Intelligence Brief, "U.S. Gave Green Light to Terrorists in Bosnia."

21. Ibid.

22. Levitt, "Hezbollah Finances."

23. Ibid.

It is worth pointing out that Shia Islam has a deep mystical tradition, and, according to Angel Millar, it “has developed a complex theory of transmission of initiatory knowledge (*ilm*, i.e., the esoteric interpretation of the Qur’an) to the elite believers (*khasa*).”²⁴ Shia Islam emphasizes more the mystical, prophetic, and messianic aspects of the Islamic religion, whereas Sunni Islam focuses more on the legalist, moral, and political aspects of the Islamic religion. Furthermore, several Sunni teachers have articulated a stunningly brutal Islamic hedonistic calculus. For instance, Al-Suyuti (known also as Jalaluddin), a fifteenth-century AD Egyptian religious scholar, juristic expert, and teacher, and one of the most prolific Sunni Arab writers of the Middle Ages, has described the Muslims’ conception of Paradise as a state in which, each time a Muslim sleeps with a Hourī (erotic companion), he finds her a virgin, and, additionally, as a state in which “the penis of the Elected never softens,” and “the erection is eternal,” each “chosen one” being married to seventy Hourīs.²⁵ Thus, at first hearing, the mystical teachings of Shia Islam create the impression that they cultivate a spiritually deeper, more mature, and freer consciousness than Sunni Islam. However, this is not the case, because Shia Islam’s relationship with history is as problematic as Sunni Islam’s. In particular, Sunni Islam seeks to totally formalize historical becoming through a suffocating, religious legal system (occasionally coupled with an Islamic hedonistic calculus), while Shia Islam seeks to give an end to historical becoming.

Whereas Christian mysticism, especially Hesychasm (which I shall elucidate and defend in the present book), understands mysticism as a way of spiritualizing history, and, therefore, as a way of endowing history with a transcendent meaning, which underpins the spiritual freedom and creativity of the historical actor, the Shiites’ perception of mysticism gives rise to a negation of history altogether and, thus, to a peculiar type of nihilism (since it refuses to accept the real value of history). Any belief system that denies the real value of history for the sake of an eschatological vision renders its adherents unable to undertake their historical responsibilities in a creative and efficient way. Moreover, when a person who negates the value of history forms the impression that his eschatological vision clashes with his actual historical conditions, he is prone to violent sentimental explosions, since not only is he unable to reconcile

24. Millar, *The Crescent and the Compass*, 19.

25. Quoted in Papanicolaou, *Islam vs. the United States*; see also: <http://www.moveguide.org/news-articles/bookguide-islam-vs-the-united-states.html>

his eschatological expectations with history, but he also persistently experiences a psychologically traumatic contradiction between eschatology and history, and, thus, he tries to annihilate historical reality (including human beings) as a source of discontent.

However, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the U.S. launched a “Global War on Terrorism” (GWOT), which has the essential ingredients of the twelfth-century AD French and Spanish inquisitions, and it underpins several U.S. imperialist military interventions in geoeconomically crucial areas of the Middle East.

On July 26, 2011, the Reuters journalist Michael Holden wrote that, “at a secret location in London in April 2002, nine far-right extremists gathered together to form ‘The Knights Templar Europe,’ a small pan-European group,” and, nine years later, on July 22, 2011, one of those at this meeting, Anders Behring Breivik, “caused the sort of carnage the group had discussed as being an essential part of their campaign, the bombing and shooting rampage that killed at least 76 people in Norway.”²⁶ The Breivik manifesto and video enhance the suspicion that Breivik was associated with a larger movement of neo-Templar Crusaders in defense of “Judeo-Christian” Europe.

A video attributed to Breivik shows some remarkable similarities to a video that has been released by the leader of a self-professed Knights Templar group called Order 777. The leader of the Order 777 is a former anti-Muslim terrorist and bomber from East Germany, by the name of Nick Greger (“Commander Mad Nick” or “madnick77”).²⁷ The videos that have been released by the Order 777 and Breivik use a Zionist-Christian and neo-fascist rhetoric in order to urge “Judeo-Christian” Europe to unite against Islam and globalist multi-culturalism as enforced by the UN and the United States. A fact not highlighted in these videos is that, of the nine men celebrated at its outset, all but two (Eugene Terreblanche of South Africa and Laurent Nkunda of the Democratic Republic of the Congo) were notorious criminals (mainly, drug traffickers), namely: Charles Taylor, self-installed president of Liberia, Samir Geagea, militia leader in Lebanon, Milorad Ulemek, a Serbian gangster and Breivik’s mentor, Johnny Adair, former Protestant militia leader in Northern Ireland, and Irish militia hitmen Gary Smith and (allegedly) Billy Wright.²⁸

26. Holden, “The Knights Templar Europe.”

27. Gardham, “Violent Videos of Oslo Killer’s ‘Mentor.’”

28. Scott, “Norway’s Terror as Systemic Destabilization.”

The profiles of the Order 777 and of Breivik match with the structure of the “deep events” that have been studied by Peter Dale Scott, a former Canadian diplomat and English Professor at the University of California, Berkeley.²⁹ By the term “deep event,” one should understand an event that is obscured and/or misrepresented in mainstream media, and whose origins are mysterious and often attributed to marginal outsiders, but, in reality, they intersect with powerful and covert forces intending to influence history. Russian sources have linked Ulemek, Breivik’s mentor, with Vladimir Filin, the Russian leader of Far West LLC, a group of former Soviet military intelligence officers that has developed into a multinational linchpin between organized crime and the global intelligence and corporate establishment, and it enjoys connections to the intelligence networks of Israel, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Great Britain, and the United States.³⁰ Moreover, Far West LLC “is said to have CIA-approved contractual dealings with Halliburton for geopolitical purposes in the Caucasus, as well as dealings in Iraq with Diligence LLC.”³¹

It goes without saying that militant Islam *predates* the Western Crusades, and, therefore, it is a lie that the Crusaders were the first aggressors. For instance, Egypt was conquered by the forces of Islam in 647 AD, Cyprus and Armenia were conquered by Muslims in 653 AD (Cyprus was liberated in 965 AD by the Byzantine Army), Constantinople was first attacked by the armies of Islam in 678 AD, Andalusia and Granada, in Spain, were conquered by the forces of Islam in 711 AD (liberated in 1492 by Ferdinand and Isabella), Avignon, in France, was conquered by the forces of Islam in 719 AD, Paris was attacked by Muslims in 732 AD, Sicily was conquered by Islamic forces in 828 AD, Malta was conquered by the armies of Islam in 870 AD (liberated in 1090 by the Normans), etc. However, the First Crusade started in 1095 AD. Arguing that the militant Islam predates the Western Crusades is one thing, but trying to justify the Crusaders’ ethos is another. In the Middle Ages, not only did the Crusaders fail to contain the Islamic world, which by the eleventh century AD had almost transformed the Mediterranean Sea into a Muslim lake, but they also undermined and looted the Eastern Roman Empire. Moreover, since the Crusaders were very poorly educated, several of them, during their stay in the Middle East, were influenced by

29. Scott, “Korea (1950), the Tonkin Gulf Incident, and 9/11.”

30. Scott, *American War Machine*, 188.

31. Scott, “The Global Drug Meta-Group.”

Islamic and other Oriental schools of mystical belief, and, therefore, far from defending Christian theology, they became agents of non-Christian belief systems in the West.

It is also important to mention that, after the East-West Schism (1053) and the Fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans (1453), several Western Sovereigns, following policies dictated by narrow-minded selfish calculations, and underestimating the significance of great cultural and identity issues, allied with the Ottoman Empire. In 1536, the Franco-Ottoman alliance was established between King Francis I of France and the Turkish sultan of the Ottoman Empire Suleiman the Magnificent. Even though the Franco-Ottoman alliance was designated as “the impious alliance,” or “the sacrilegious union of the Lily and the Crescent,” it endured because it served economic interests of both parties.³² King Charles IX of France (1560–74) was another significant Western ally of the Ottomans; he even gave free use of France’s main naval base at Toulon to the Ottomans and converted the Cathedral of Toulon into a mosque to accommodate the Muslim fleets.

The policy of Queen Elizabeth I of England (1533–1603) was beneficial to the Ottomans, too, and her pirate flotillas, captained by Sir Francis Drake, plundered the Spanish galleys that were coming back to Spain from America loaded with gold. By stealing a large portion of Spain’s gold, Queen Elizabeth I of England rendered Spain unable to build a navy powerful enough to fight Islam.

Judaizing Christians, the Qur’an, and neo-Templarism

In the context of church history, one of the earliest Christian heresies was that of the Judaizing Christians. In the fourth century AD, in the city of Antioch (which was founded in 300 BC by Seleucus I Nicator, one of Alexander the Great’s generals), there were two big Jewish synagogues that exerted significant spiritual influence on the local Christian community. In particular, in the fourth century AD, the Judaizers, or Judaizing Christians, were promoting a syncretistic attitude toward Christianity and Judaism, they were getting blessings and amulets from Jewish rabbis, and many of them were even celebrating Easter together with Jews on the fourteenth of Nisan, in violation of the relevant canons of the First Ecumenical Council. On the other hand, from the perspective of Orthodox

32. Merriman, *Suleiman the Magnificent*, 133.

Christianity, Jesus Christ's gospel is the disclosure of the *telos* (i.e., the ultimate, transcend purpose) and the perfect fulfillment of biblical Judaism (i.e., of the Old Testament). Hence, in the Christian era, the true Israel³³ is the New Israel of Jesus Christ's church.

Between 386–87 AD, John Chrysostom, who was then a Presbyter, and later he became Archbishop of Constantinople, wrote of the Jews and of Judaizers in eight homilies *Adversus Judaeos*. Chrysostom argues that the heresy of the Judaizing Christians is a “very serious illness,” and he describes it as follows: “there are many in our ranks who say they think as we do,” but “some of these are going to watch the festivals and others will join the Jews in keeping their feasts and observing their fasts,” adding that he intends to “drive this perverse custom from the church right now.”³⁴ John Chrysostom emphasizes that, because of the Jews' decision to deny Jesus Christ, the Jewish synagogues lack communion with the Incarnate Logos of God, who is the ultimate source of the significance and the end of the Old Testament. Thus, according to Chrysostom, even though the holy books of the Old Testament are kept in every Jewish synagogue, Christians should not worship God in Jewish synagogues; in John Chrysostom's own words, “let no man venerate the synagogue because of the holy books.”³⁵

One of the most influential movements of the Judaizing Christians was that of the Ebionites. The Ebionites taught that Jesus of Nazareth was God's Messiah (messenger), but they rejected his ontological divinity, and they insisted on the necessity of following Jewish law and rites (for which reason they strongly opposed the apostle Paul, who taught that, through Jesus Christ, the law of the life-giving Spirit has liberated humanity from “the law of sin and death”³⁶). Hippolytus of Rome, the most important third-century theologian in the Christian church in Rome, wrote in his *Refutation of All Heresies*, 7.22: the Ebionites “live conformably to the customs of the Jews, alleging that they are justified according to the law, and saying that Jesus was justified by fulfilling the law.” Moreover, Epiphanius of Salamis (who was Bishop of Salamis, Cyprus, at the end of the fourth century), in his *Panarion* 30, argues that “Ebionites

33. In Hebrew, “Israel” literally means “triumphant with God,” and “who prevails with God” (Genesis 32:28, 35:10), that is, it means the people of God.

34. *Adversus Judaeos* (Patrologia Graeca, Vol. 48), 844.

35. *Ibid.*, 851.

36. Romans 8:2.

are very like the Cerinthians and Nazoraeans; the sect of the Sampsaeans and Elkasaites was associated with them to a degree.”

Judaizing Christians also had an influence on early Islam. In 595 AD, Mohammed married Khadijah, who is commonly regarded by Muslims as “the Mother of the Believers.” Khadijah had a cousin who was called Waraqah ibn Nawfal. Waraqah ibn Nawfal was an Ebionite priest, and he exerted significant influence on Mohammed’s religious thought. In 1978, a Lebanese Maronite priest using the pen name Abu Musa al-Hariri authored a book in Arabic entitled *Qiss wa Nabi* (Nabi means Prophet, and Qiss means Priest), which was the culmination of his long research in ancient Islamic and Christian texts.³⁷ In this book, Abu Musa al-Hariri, whose real name is Father Joseph al-Qazi, elucidates Waraqah ibn Nawfal’s spiritual influence on Mohammed: Waraqah ibn Nawfal recognized Mohammed’s religious tendencies and leadership capabilities, and he hoped that Mohammed would succeed him as the Ebionite leader of Mecca. Thus, Mohammed’s perception of the Bible (Old and New Testaments) and the biblical stories that are included in the Qur’an are molded by the teachings of the Ebionites. In fact, the Qur’an itself mentions that, when Mohammed first began to preach among the poor of Mecca, he called them not to any particular religion called “Islam,” but to the monotheism of Abraham. Mohammed’s perception of Abraham’s faith reflects the heresy of the Ebionites. Thus, in the Qur’an, specifically in Sura 5:73, Mohammed writes that those who equate Jesus, “the Messiah, son of Mary,” with God, and, in general, those who believe in the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity are “disbelievers.” After Waraqah ibn Nawfal and Khadijah died, Mohammed decided to follow some of his converts to the city of Medina, where his message and lifestyle became more radical: his message became one of conquest and imperialism, and his lifestyle became peculiarly hedonistic. Thus, in the Qur’an, specifically, in Sura 9:5 (Medina, 113th), Mohammed writes that, “when the sacred months are over slay the idolaters wherever you find them.”

In the Middle Ages, especially after the East-West Schism, Western Christianity rejected the Eastern Orthodox Church’s teachings about the deification of humanity through Jesus Christ, and it endorsed a moralistic and largely legalistic theology. Thus, ignoring the mystical theology of

37. See: http://www.muhammadanism.org/Arabic/book/hariri/priest_prophet_book.pdf. In 2010, Abu Musa al-Hariri was interviewed on the Arabic TV show “Daring Question,” and during that interview, he identified himself as Father Joseph al-Qazi; see: <http://islamexplained.com/>.

the Eastern Orthodox Church, several medieval Western mystics started looking for consciousness-expanding experiences in Oriental schools of mystical belief, primarily in Arabo-Islamic and Jewish mystical texts. Moreover, nineteenth-century romanticism signaled a revival of occultism and chivalry. In the context of nineteenth-century romanticism, several Western mystics developed and propagated neo-Templar legends according to which the medieval Knights Templar acquired secret knowledge by interacting with Muslim and Jewish mystics during their stay in the Middle East. In particular, the nineteenth-century neo-Templar legends cultivated a syncretistic theology that reflected the teachings of the Ebionites, Gnosticism, and non-canonical gospels.³⁸ Thus, in the nineteenth century, several Freemasonic organizations were significantly influenced by various types of Judaizing Christianity, and they compromised or even abandoned the original Christian and European identity of the first Masonic Lodges.³⁹

38. In classical Antiquity, the term “canon” acquired the meaning of a rod or measuring stick, and it was metaphorically used to describe the essential teachings of a school of philosophy. The early church used the term “canon” to denote which texts were to be included in the Holy Bible, as opposed to those that were to be excluded. There were two basic criteria for determining the canonicity of Gospels. The first criterion was apostolic authorship; for instance, the Gospels of Mark and Luke bore the stamp of Peter and Paul’s authority, respectively. The second criterion was more complex: the Gospel’s content had to deal with salvation, and, of course, the Gospels that would ultimately be included in the Holy Bible should be theologically consistent with one another. For instance, the “infancy gospels” of Thomas and James, though of great antiquity, were discarded, because they were found to be misleading in teaching the salvation of humanity, and they were filled with extravagant accounts of Jesus Christ’s childhood and adolescence. The church began to separate the canonical Scriptural texts from the non-canonical ones in the early centuries; specifically, one can refer to the following ecclesiastical texts: Apostolic Canon 85; Council of Laodicea (364 AD), canon 60; Council of Carthage (418 AD), canon 32; Athanasius of Alexandria, 39 Festal Epistle (367 AD). All these attempts were finally assessed, combined, and confirmed by the Sixth Ecumenical Council (691 AD), canon 2, and further ratified by the Seventh Ecumenical Council (783 AD).

39. In 1846, the English cleric, schoolmaster, topographer, and writer Reverend Dr George Oliver—who was elected Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Masons for Lincolnshire in 1832, and who was appointed an honorary member of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, with the rank of Deputy Grand Master, in 1840—published his *Apolo-gy for the Freemasons*, in which he emphasized that the traditional medieval Masonic organizations were explicitly serving both the church and the state, and many Masonic degrees are Christian, and only Christian Masons espousing the Christian Trinitarian doctrine can be admitted to them. Moreover, according to Reverend Dr George Oliver (*ibid*), on several occasions, in England, the Grand Masters of Masonry were selected from the highest dignitaries of the church, such as the following: Austin the Monk

Spiritualism, Ideological Wars, and World Order

When we study the history of spirituality, in general, it is useful to bear in mind that spiritualism has been used by various elites in order to promote religious syncretism, and, through religious syncretism, to establish an empire. For instance, Arthur Balfour, 1st Earl of Balfour—who was the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from July 1902 to December 1905, and later Foreign Secretary—was a member of a mystical society called Hort’s Apostles and President of the Society for Psychic Research (S.P.R.). Moreover, Balfour not only headed the S.P.R., holding séances at his home, but also he initiated a group called the “Synthetic Society,” whose goal was to create a one-world religion, which, in turn, would spiritually underpin a new world order that was being promoted by the League of Nations, in which Balfour was instrumental. Balfour invited a certain Frederic Myers of the S.P.R. to join the Synthetic Society, and together they created the “preamble of all religions,” according to which “our . . . material world is interpenetrated and to an extent acted upon, by another order of things, an unseen spiritual world,” and “the metetherial realm (is) a World Soul,” and “linked to all . . . is a Universal Spirit.”⁴⁰

The Charter of the United Nations—whose name was coined by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt and was first used in the Declaration by United Nations of January 1, 1942, when representatives of twenty-six nations pledged their governments to continue fighting together against the Axis Powers—was signed on June 26, 1945. The United Nations (UN) officially came into existence on October 24, 1945, when the Charter had been ratified by China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, and by a majority of other signatories. After the establishment of the UN, Alger Hiss became its acting Secretary-General. Alger Hiss was a U.S. State Department official, and he was accused of being a Soviet spy in 1948 and convicted of perjury in connection with this charge in 1950. However, before he was tried and convicted, Hiss cooperated with Joseph E. Johnson (who later became Secretary of the Bilderberg Group) in writing much of the UN Charter

(597 AD), Bennet, Abbot of Wirral (680 AD), St. Swithin (856 AD), St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury (957 AD), Gondulph, Bishop of Rochester (1066), Peter de Rupibus, Bishop of Winchester (1216), Walter Giffard, Archbishop of York (1272), William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester (1357 AD), Henry Chichely, Archbishop of Canterbury (1413), William Waynfleet, Bishop of Winchester (1443), John Poynt, Bishop of Winchester (1552), etc.

40. Gauld, *The Founders of Psychological Research*, 305–10.

in a way that, to a significant extent, reflected principles of the Soviet Union's constitution and of Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*.

The first official UN Secretary-General was Trygve Lie, who was a high-ranking member of Norway's Social Democratic Labor Party, which was an offshoot of the Third Communist International. The second UN Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld, was a Swedish socialist, who openly supported communist policies, and the third UN Secretary-General, U Thant, was an acknowledged Marxist and an advocate of world federalism. The study of the early history of the UN and of the mentality of the first UN Secretary-Generals helps one to understand the philosophy on which this international institution has been founded.

It goes without saying that, throughout the twentieth century, the UN was never a communist, anti-capitalist institution. However, the UN has used the secular, materialist cosmopolitanism that characterizes Marxism in order to promote and implement its own globalist agenda by deconstructing traditional metaphysics and identities and by manipulating international ideological, geopolitical, and economic conflicts. Moreover, in 1982, Norman Dodd was interviewed by the U.S. film-maker and journalist G. Edward Griffin regarding the time that he spent as the head researcher for the Reece Committee, and, in that interview, Dodd stated that, in 1954—when he was the newly appointed chief investigator of what was called the Congressional Committee to Investigate Tax-Exempt Foundations—he realized that major tax-exempt foundations of the USA, including the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, immediately after the end of World War II, became involved in a clandestine operation whose objective was the creation of a world-wide collectivist state, including the Soviet Union, which would be ruled from behind the scenes by those same interests which then controlled those U.S. tax-exempt foundations.⁴¹

In fact, communism/socialism (i.e., the ideology underpinning “left-wing” political parties) and fascism/Nazism (i.e., the ideology underpinning extreme “right-wing” political parties) are merely variants of a common underlying collectivist ideology that justifies the sacrifice of the individual human being for the sake of a historical objective that a collectivist elite propagandizes as something historically necessary, noble, or even sacred, yet, in reality, it is determined and dictated by the

41. The transcript of the ground-breaking 1982 interview of Norman Dodd by G. Edward Griffin can be found in the following link: <http://realityzone.stores.yahoo.net/hiddenagenda2.html>.

selfish interests of the corresponding collectivist elite. In general, the mainstream left-versus-right political paradigm is mainly a propaganda ploy by which the propagandist can promote a liberal, a fascist, a communist, or a socialist variant of collectivism, depending on one's mission.

The liberal variant of collectivism consists in the liberal collectivists' thesis that the individual has to conform to impersonal, objective, necessary economic laws, which supposedly are similar to the natural laws, yet, in reality, they are ideological underpinnings of a system of liberal oligarchy and technocratic capitalism, in the context of which individualism becomes a shadow of itself. For instance, the liberal variant of collectivism is the founding ideology of the European Union (EU), the European Central Bank (ECB), the Federal Reserve System (Fed), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The EU, the ECB, the Fed, and the IMF traditionally support financial oligopolies, economic regimes of imperfect competition, and state-sponsored austerity programs, which contradict the theory of free market system, according to which no firm or consumer should be able to significantly affect the market price, and all (or almost all) currently available information should be already incorporated into the market price. For instance, in the 1990s, in the 2000s, and in the 2010s, it became clear that, through currency swaps and other economic agreements, a banking cartel composed of the Federal Reserve System, the European Central Bank, the Bank of England, the Bank of Switzerland, the Bank of Japan, and the Bank of Canada aims at establishing a global oligarchical financial/monetary regime, whose foundations were laid by the 1985 Plaza Agreement, and which was significantly invigorated by the establishment of a USD/Euro swap line between the Federal Reserve System and the European Central Bank in December 2007, as well as by the fact that, in 2011, the Federal Reserve System, the European Central Bank, the Bank of England, the Bank of Switzerland, the Bank of Japan, and the Bank of Canada agreed to coordinate their actions concerning the management of global liquidity. This financial oligarchy, which creates money out of thin air and operates as an overlord of the real economy, can only corrupt and destroy a free and fair market.⁴²

42. For more details, see Rickards, *The Death of Money*. From 2008 until 2014, the Fed was printing more and more money, but the velocity of money was plunging, that is, people were neither borrowing nor spending extra money. In fact, in 2014, in the U.S., the velocity of money was worse than in 1929 (the first year of the Great Depression). Moreover, in 2014, in the U.S., the Misery Index (which is defined as the sum of the real unemployment rate and the inflation rate) increased to 32.89, that is, it was worse than in the Great Depression (the Misery Index in the Great Depression

Moreover, in the same spirit of liberal collectivism, in 1997, George Soros, a notorious financial speculator, wrote an essay entitled “The Capitalist Threat,” in which he argued that the main contemporary threat to what he calls an “open society” is a fully free economic market.⁴³ Inherent in Soros’s concept of “the open society” is his ideology of liberal collectivism, because he maintains that “people must be free to think and act, *subject only to limits imposed by the common interests*”;⁴⁴ it is exactly this perception of “the common interests” that, in the context of liberal collectivism, underpins and justifies the expansion of state authority, which, in turn, is ultimately manipulated by the most powerful members of the social establishment, namely, by the liberal oligarchs, such as George Soros himself. In fact, the super-rich are aware that the only economic institution that is more powerful than themselves and can really eliminate their oligarchical privileges is the free economic market itself, and that the state is the most effective instrument by which they can manipulate the market, since the state has tremendous power to mobilize and control the masses and acquire popular legitimacy. Thus, many members of the super-rich class are advocates of the liberal variant of collectivism, which they usually call a “mixed economy.”

The fascist variant of collectivism consists in the fascist collectivists’ thesis that the individual is real only to the degree that one conforms to particular conceptions of national interest and national destiny that are always defined by a ruling “national” elite whose rule stems exactly from its exclusive privilege and absolute power to define the corresponding nation’s interest and destiny. Thus, for instance, within the context of the Bilderberg Group—which is NATO’s elitist private exclusive membership club—the elite of the liberal variant of collectivism cooperates with the elite of the fascist variant of collectivism in an effective way in order to establish a shared vision of world order. In fact, the Bilderberg Group has had Nazi connections from the very beginning. The first conference of the Bilderberg Group was held at the Hotel de Bilderberg in Oosterbeek,

was 27). During the “economic boom” years of the 1950s and the 1960s, in the U.S., every dollar of debt that was created corresponded to \$2.41 worth of economic growth (Gross Domestic Product growth); during the stagflation years of the late 1970s and the early 1980s, in the U.S., every dollar of debt that was created corresponded to only \$0.41 worth of economic growth; in 2014, in the U.S., every dollar of debt that was created corresponded to only \$0.03 worth of economic growth.

43. Soros, “The Capitalist Threat.”

44. Ibid.

Netherlands, from 29 to 31 May 1954. From 1954 until 1975, the chairman of the Bilderberg Group's steering committee was Prince Bernhard of Lippe-Biesterfeld, later Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands (after he married Princess Juliana, the future Queen of the Netherlands), who was a member of the "Reiter-SS" of the Nazi party, and of the National Socialist Motor Corps. Moreover, John Foster Dulles—who served as U.S. Secretary of State under Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower from 1953 to 1959—was instrumental in setting up the Bilderberg Group. In 1954, John Foster Dulles testified in favor of a bill designed to return vested German enemy assets, such as those of the General Aniline and Film Company (GAF), to their previous owners, and his brother, Allen Welsh Dulles, the first civilian Director of the CIA, was responsible for Operation Paperclip, which enabled many Nazi scientists (among others) to settle in the United States and start working for the U.S. government in various capacities.

It is also worth pointing out that, in the context of the Cold War, CIA chief Allen Dulles created a series of secret armies of fascist terrorists, including former Nazis, across Western Europe and Turkey with the coordination of NATO, known as stay-behind organizations. The most infamous stay-behind organizations were the Italian "Operation Gladio," and the Turkish "Counter-Guerrillas."⁴⁵ The chief ideological inspiration of the fascist stay-behind networks was Julius Evola (1898–1974), who articulated a radical anti-egalitarian, anti-liberal, authoritarian political theory founded on Saint-Yves's and Papus's occult authoritarianism, known as "synarchism,"⁴⁶ on René Guénon's traditionalism, and on occult Nazism.

45. Ganser, *NATO's Secret Armies*.

46. In 1888, Papus (whose real name was Gérard Anaclet Vincent Encausse) and Joseph Alexandre Saint-Yves d'Alveydre founded the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Cross (OKR+C), which came to be regarded as the "inner circle" of the Martinist Order. Through the OKR+C, they were promulgating "synarchism." Synarchism is an occult system of religious syncretism and authoritarian rule by secret societies, which the advocates of synarchism perceive as a "trans-religious" priestly class in direct communication with the "Ascended Masters" of Agartha, a legendary city that is said to reside in the hollow earth. Agartha is intimately related to the myth of Shambhala, popularized by Madame Blavatsky as the legendary home of the Aryan race. Like Shambhala, Agartha was situated in Central Asia, and, thus, it is also related to Eurasian occultism and the Turkish Counter-Guerrillas, who developed the "Ergenekon," a clandestine, Kemalist, ultra-nationalist organization. The name "Ergenekon" is derived from a Turkish legend according to which Ergenekon is a mythical place located in the valleys of the Altai Mountains, in Eurasia, serving as a model for the synarchist

The fascist variant of collectivism is used by the ruling oligarchy in order to manipulate the radicalization of the petty bourgeoisie (the lower middle social class), since, historically, fascism is the main political expression of the radicalization of the petty bourgeoisie. Additionally, during the twentieth century, as I already pointed out, the Western ruling oligarchy used fascists on several occasions as the established system's "mastiffs." On the other hand, historically, the main political expression of the radicalization of the proletariat is communism, and, therefore, the ruling oligarchy plays fascism and communism against each other in order to keep people intellectually imprisoned in collectivist ideologies. Thus, for instance, Jacob Schiff, head of the New York investment firm Kuhn, Loeb and Co., was one of the principal financial supporters of the Bolshevik revolution, and he personally financed Leo Trotsky's trip from New York to Russia. In the February 3, 1949 issue of the *New York Journal-American*, Jacob Schiff's grandson, John Schiff, was quoted by columnist Cholly Knickerbocker as saying that his grandfather had given about \$20 million for the triumph of Communism in Russia. Because Jacob Schiff was a key member of New York's financial cartel, an advocate for passage of the Federal Reserve Act, and a Zionist activist, he used Marxism in order to bring about regime change in Russia, where Tsar Nicolas II was following a policy that was opposite to the interests that Jacob Schiff represented.

The communist and the socialist variants of collectivism consist in the communists' and, generally, the socialists' thesis that the individual is real only to the degree that he or she conforms to particular conceptions of class interest and class struggle that are always defined by a ruling communist/socialist party elite whose rule stems exactly from its exclusive privilege and absolute power to define the working class's interest and destiny.

The possibility of a dialectical synthesis between the liberal variant of collectivism and the communist one became strikingly manifest in the 1971 meetings between the then U.S. National Security Advisor Henry A. Kissinger and the then Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai, which paved the way to the following groundbreaking events: the 1972 summit between the U.S. President Richard Nixon and the Communist Party of China Chairman Mao Zedong, the formalization of relations between the two

idea of the mythical realm of Agartha. These mythical motifs, combining occultism, authoritarianism, and geopolitical determinism, are the main spiritual underpinnings and garbs of several fascist movements.

countries, irrespectively of their declared ideological opposition to each other, and the development of a peculiar type of Chinese capitalism, in the context of which capitalist economic relations are coupled with an absolutist government exclusively controlled by China's Communist Party. Moreover, prominent Western socialists, such as António Guterres, former President of the Socialist International and former Prime Minister of Portugal (1995–2002), Lionel Jospin, former leader of the French Socialist Party and former Prime Minister of France (1997–2002), as well as John Smith (1938–94), former leader of the UK's Labor Party, have been actively involved in the Bilderberg Group. In fact, John Smith had also been a member of the Steering Committee of the Bilderberg Group.

Whenever ideological “warlords” of the aforementioned collectivist “camps” go to war with one another, as it happened in World War II, for instance, they do not fight over ideology, since, in essence, they are all collectivists, but they fight over dominance, that is, over who is going to rule. However, Jesus Christ has explicitly warned Christians against these events, saying: “You know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you.”⁴⁷

As Tatiana Goricheva, a prominent dissident scholar in Russia, pointedly argued, “talking about God is dangerous.”⁴⁸ The creation of a world-wide collectivist state presupposes a corresponding convenient mythology and necessitates subversion of genuine Christianity, because genuine Christianity teaches the deification of the human being through the incarnation of the divine Logos, thus, endowing the individual human being with infinite, ontologically grounded (precisely, God-given) value. Jesus Christ's ministry in the world is clear: “having stripped the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly,”⁴⁹ and he taught that each individual human being is a potential god,⁵⁰ through and due to one's personal relationship with God, who, for this reason (that is, for the deification of humanity), was self-disclosed within history.

On the other hand, Robert Muller, a Belgian-French civil servant who served as Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations for four decades, has argued as follows: “We must move as quickly as possible

47. Matthew 20:25–26.

48. Goricheva, *Talking About God Is Dangerous*.

49. Colossians 2:15.

50. John 10:34.

to a one-world government; a one-world religion; under a one-world leader.”⁵¹ Muller’s arguments about world government and spirituality underpin the increased representation of religions in the UN, especially of so-called New Age organizations. It is worth pointing out that one of Muller’s major philosophical mentors was the Jesuit priest and philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who has argued that, “although the form is not yet discernible, mankind tomorrow will awaken to a ‘pan-organized’ world.”⁵² According to Robert Muller, “Teilhard [de Chardin] had always viewed the United Nations as the progressive institutional embodiment of his philosophy.”⁵³

Robert Muller, who won the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education in 1989 for his World Core Curriculum, is associated with two different branches of the Theosophical movement: one is the Share International, a group that believes that “Maitreya,” the “World Teacher,” is about to return soon,⁵⁴ and the other is Alice A. Bailey’s Arcane School and Lucis Trust. In fact, Muller has openly admitted that The Robert Muller School is philosophically founded on the occult teachings set forth in the books of Alice A. Bailey, the founder of the Arcane School and the Lucis Trust, according to Bailey’s Tibetan teacher, Djwhal Khul.⁵⁵ Between 1979 and 1984, Robert Muller published seven articles in *The Beacon*, which Alice A. Bailey’s Lucis Trust describes as “a magazine of esoteric philosophy presenting the principles of Ageless Wisdom as a contemporary way of

51. Kinman, *The World’s Last Dictator*, 81.

52. Chardin, *The Future of Man*, 170

53. Muller, and Zonneveld, eds, *The Desire to Be a Human*, 304.

54. In March 1982, the Share International printed an article written by Robert Muller under the title “The Future of the United Nations.”

55. Robert Muller’s manual for the World Core Curriculum says: “the underlying philosophy upon which The Robert Muller School is based will be found in the Teachings set forth in the books of Alice A. Bailey by the Tibetan Teacher, Djwhal Khul . . . and the Teachings of Morya as given in the Agni Yoga series books”; see: Robert Muller School, *World Core Curriculum: Foundation*, 1. Alice A. Bailey (1880–1949)—born Alice LaTrobe Bateman—was a writer of more than twenty-four books on theosophical subjects, and she was one of the first writers to use the term “New Age.” Her writings are based on the teachings of Madame Blavatsky (the founder of the Theosophical Society), Singh gurus, and Muslim mystics (“Sufis”). In the 1910s, Alice Bailey became a member of the Theosophical Society, and, in 1921, she married Foster Bailey, who was a senior official of the Theosophical Society. In 1922, Alice and Foster Bailey founded the Lucis Trust, whose activities include the Arcane School, World Goodwill, Triangles, a quarterly magazine called *The Beacon*, and a publishing company primarily intended to publish Bailey’s books.

life.”⁵⁶ In 1995, the UN asked the Temple of Understanding, founded by Bailey’s Lucis Trust, to host the fiftieth anniversary of its founding and to organize two inter-faith services.

Promoting religious freedom is one thing, but promoting religious syncretism—that is, fusing different religions into one globalist religion, whose purpose is to be a mythological underpinning of globalization—is a totally different thing. Globalist decision-makers, such as Robert Muller, and New Age “schools,” such as the Theosophical Society and the Arcane School/Lucis Trust, argue that one of the major factors provoking international turmoil and even conflicts is the sheer fact that there are different religions, and they assume that any expression of a genuine theological faith, that is, any statement of the belief that a religious person is speaking the real truth, is politically threatening and unacceptable. The aforementioned globalist decision-makers and New Age “schools” believe that, if people stop speaking about the real truth and state that their religious convictions are merely subjective cultural paths and conditional loyalties, humanity would be spared the risk of cultural or, more specifically, faith-based conflicts and, generally, violence. Thus, the aforementioned globalist decision-makers and New Age “schools” promote a romantic approach to religion, they attempt to build alliances among different romanticized religious communities, and they detest classical ontology, since the latter is focused on the issue of truth.

The aforementioned globalist and New Age fantasy is founded on an implicit assumption that talking about truth is necessarily less important than talking about political order and harmony. Moreover, given that, in the context of secular modern political thought, “political order” has no ontologically grounded and universal definition, and, thus, it is bound to be defined by the most powerful historical actors in any particular segment of space-time, it logically follows that, in the context of the aforementioned globalist and New Age perceptions, political *power* is more important than *truth*. Being concerned about truth implies that one recognizes that there are things about humanity and the world that transcend historical necessity and are absolute values. On the other hand, ceasing to be concerned about truth means that one admits that political power has the last word. As the British Christian anarchist scholar Gilbert K. Chesterton has wisely argued, the individual’s relationship with the deity endows one with intrinsic, absolute value and with the

56. See: https://www.lucistrust.org/el/books/the_beacon_magazine

authority to criticize the government, whereas, by abolishing the relationship between the individual human being and the deity, the government becomes the God.⁵⁷

Thus, neither the fact that there are different religions nor doctrinal theology itself is necessarily a cause of global turmoil, but, on the contrary, the communities that are primarily and sincerely concerned about truth are crucially important for the spiritual health of humanity. Since doctrinal theologians, philosophers focused on ontology, and, generally, religious persons will not readily give up their claims to truth in response to the appeal from ephemeral political authorities to be at one for the sake of a political order, they give witness to the spiritual freedom of humanity. However, the following question emerges: what is the cost of religious diversity to social cohesion? My answer is that *religious diversity and even religion itself undermine social cohesion only if and to the extent that a religion is politicized, that is, it compromises with the logic of historical necessity.*

From the perspective of my theory of methexiology, the ultimate purpose of any worthy religion is to expand humanity's soul in order to make the human being capable of receiving the Absolute into one's soul. Thus, a truly religious person is in communion with God and in a eucharistic, that is, metaphysically fraternal, relationship with his or her fellow humans. The belief in an absolute religious truth is the ultimate underpinning of the sociality of the human soul, and it implies that one is spiritually independent from history. Religion becomes a cause of antisocial behavior and even of violence *only* if and to the extent that it has betrayed its metaphysical essence and has submitted to the spirit of history. For instance, jihadist terrorists are not violent because they are very religious, but, on the contrary, they are violent because their metaphysical thought is so poor and disordered, and their relationship with the deity is so agitated that they believe that their historical failures are failures or defeats for God, and, therefore, they resort to crime to save their god's (in reality, their idol's) face in front of other historical actors. In other words, religious violence suggests a deep crisis in one's relationship with the deity and an essentially antireligious shift from a life founded on metaphysical principles to a life founded on the logic of historical necessity.

The more sincerely one is concerned about truth, and the more solid one's belief in the truth of his convictions is, the more noble one's attitude

57. Chesterton, *The Man Who Was Thursday*.

toward history will be. The less developed one's metaphysical thought is, and the more insecure one feels about one's relationship with God, the more plebeian one's attitude toward history will be. Thus, Jesus Christ said to Pilate that his kingdom "is not of this world,"⁵⁸ and he taught his disciples that it is the knowledge of truth that will make them free.⁵⁹ Moreover, Jesus Christ told his disciples to globalize Christianity, making disciples of all nations,⁶⁰ and he disclosed to them that he is "the way and the truth and the life,"⁶¹ and that the perfect communion between humanity and God the Father is possible only through Jesus Christ,⁶² but he stressed that his disciples should never use coercion, violence, or deceit in order to expand the Christian faith: "Whoever wants to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."⁶³ However, in John the Evangelist's Revelation 1:5, we read that no authority of this world is really sovereign, and that God has the last word in history, since the Incarnate Logos of God, namely, Jesus Christ, is "the ruler of the kings of the earth."

Noopolitics and Mental Wars: Secret Aspects of Spirituality

Intimately related to philosophy and mysticism is noopolitics (derived from the Greek compound *nous* + politics = mind-centered politics). Whereas "geopolitics" is the conduct of politics in the geographical space, "noopolitics" is the conduct of politics in the network (or system of networks) that is created by the communication among conscious entities. Thus, noopolitics is concerned with people's fundamental significations (or values), culture, institutions, and technologies. At the center of noopolitics is the concept of "myth," that is, the spiritual core, or ultimate meaning, of beings and things. By the term "myth," one should

58. John 18:36. Moreover, with regard to the ethos of the historical Jesus Christ and the early Christians, one may refer to the following ancient non-Christian sources: Tacitus, *Annals*, 15:44; Pliny, *Epistles*, 10:96; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18:63–64.

59. John 8:32.

60. Matthew 28:19.

61. John 14:6.

62. John 14:6.

63. Mark 8:34.

understand the capacity of an idea to inspire, to direct, and to motivate people according to the myth's central idea.

The term "noopolitics" (*Noöpolitik*) was coined by the defense experts John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt in a seminal RAND Corporation study of 1999.⁶⁴ Arquilla and Ronfeldt defined noopolitics as the network-based geopolitics of knowledge. Thus, in the context of noopolitics, the members of the international system are studied as conscious organisms and as phenomena molded by conscious communication. The key conclusion of noopolitics can be summarized as follows: by ruling a population's fundamental significations (or values) and myth, one commands that population's system of institutions and technologies; by ruling a population's system of institutions and technologies, one commands that population geopolitically, too.

In the context of noopolitics, power and technology are primarily directed toward man's psychic life, particularly, his memories, attention, and fundamental values. Thus, by being directly and inextricably concerned with mythology and symbology, Freemasonry has tremendous noopolitical significance. In particular, by "chiseling" the consciousness of its members and by organizing its members into a particular spiritual "edifice," each Freemasonic Order is essentially and *de facto* a great noopolitical operation.

Consciousness is that state of being which enables us to develop the functions that are necessary in order to know our environment as well as the events that happen around us and within ourselves. The significance of the riddle of consciousness and of techniques of consciousness change can be fully understood if we bear in mind that consciousness cannot make meaningful statements about one reality, but it can refer to, describe, and evaluate comparative realities as perceived by different instruments, including the central nervous system, which is the instrument that "reads" all the instruments of the human organism. The central nervous system interlocks with the immunological system, the endocrine system, the neuro-muscular system, etc., and, hence, every judgment that a human being makes is a synergetic process of the human system as a whole. Moreover, biochemical events can even cause religious and mystical experiences.⁶⁵

64. Arquilla, and Ronfeldt, "The Promise of Noöpolitik"

65. See, for instance, Ropp, *Drugs and the Mind*.

In the context of the study of the interplay between mysticism and consciousness research, several researchers analyze findings from brain imaging and electroencephalographic (EEG) research. On November 6, 2014, Sage Lazzaro wrote in the *Observer* that “researchers achieved brain-to-brain communication where one person was able to control the movements of another person’s hand by simply thinking about it”;⁶⁶ the study was published on November 5, 2014 by The University of Washington, and “it involved three pairs of participants working together to play a computer game” that “involved firing a cannon and intercepting rockets to protect a city.”⁶⁷ Each pair was comprised of a “sender” and a corresponding “receiver”: each of the senders who were placed in front of the computer game could not physically interact with it, but he could only think about moving one’s hands to fire the cannons and intercept the rockets; each of the corresponding recipients sat in a distant, dark room without being able to see the game, and their right hands were positioned over touchpads that controlled the game. The senders were connected to EEG machines, and their partners wore caps equipped with technology that stimulates the part of the brain that controls hand movements. Thus, when a sender thought about moving his hands to shoot the cannon, his partner’s brain received the message to do so via signals sent from his partner’s brain to his over the Internet.

The aforementioned psychological, biological, and technological discoveries, which lead to the conclusion that the American psychologist Timothy Leary was right when he argued that the term “reality” should be replaced by the term “reality tunnel,”⁶⁸ stem from the more fundamental argument that “reality” is a system of abstractions.

As I shall explain in this book, in the context of Western philosophy, the origins of the argument that “reality” is a system of abstractions can be traced back to Augustine of Hippo’s theology and the medieval scholastics. Moreover, in chapters 2, 3, and 4, I maintain that reality can be perceived as a system of abstractions only if and to the extent that one identifies the terms “consciousness” and “mind” with each other, and I defend arguments that have been put forward by Plato, Aristotle, and the Orthodox Christian mystics known as the Hesychasts according to which the term “mind” (in Greek, *nous*) should *not* be identified with the

66. Lazzaro, “It’s Now Possible for One Person’s Brain to Control Another Person’s Movements.”

67. *Ibid.*

68. Leary, et al, *Neuropolitique*.

term “consciousness,” thus restoring traditional ontology without negating the significance of abstraction.

Each person’s “reality tunnel”—being a consequence of one’s genetic program, one’s early imprints, one’s subsequent conditioning, one’s learning experiences, and of whatever experiments one has done in reprogramming one’s nervous system—can be altered through psychotherapy, yoga, general semantics, neurolinguistic programming (NLP), psychedelic drugs, and brain tuning machines. In fact, the most extreme and most effective ways in which the world super-structure and secret services control members of the elites are the manipulation of the instinct of reproduction (especially through paraphilias) and the manipulation of the central nervous system (especially through psychedelic drugs, which are particularly useful in order to suspend the targeted persons’ inhibitions); several mystical fraternities and private exclusive membership clubs are used for such purposes. Inasmuch as one exists in one’s own “reality tunnel”—which is a state similar to the one that Plato describes in his myth of the cave⁶⁹—one’s existence and identity can be manipulated by the forces that handle one’s reality tunnel through psychotherapy, yoga, general semantics, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), psychedelic drugs, and brain tuning machines, and, thus, one finds oneself in a hypergame situation in which different reality tunnels compete with one another. The previous situation changes dramatically when one exits one’s reality tunnel in order to seek the *real truth*; this radical spiritual quest, namely, the pursuit of the real truth, is the essence of traditional metaphysics and, more specifically, the object of my theory of methexiology, which I elucidate in the present book.

In 1980, two Psychological Operations (PSYOP) officers of the United States Army, namely, Colonel Paul E. Valley and Major Michael A. Aquino, authored a treatise entitled *From PSYOP to MindWar: The Psychology of Victory*, which was published by the 7th Psychological Operations Group of the United States Army (Presidio of San Francisco, California, 1980). In that treatise, they discussed the use of psychotronic and electromagnetic weapons for brain manipulation. In particular, the biggest part of humanity’s thinking process consists in “pattern thinking,” that is, it is subconscious, and many of the ways in which these patterns come into existence are mechanical, in the sense that they are consequences of senses and sensory perceptions that people are not aware of.

69. Plato, *Republic*, Book 7, section 7.

The various brain frequencies are a characteristic case in point: Alpha waves (i.e., neural oscillations in the frequency range of 8–12 Hz) put one in a pleasant mood; Beta waves (i.e., neural oscillations in the frequency range of 12–27 Hz) put one in a somewhat nervous and confrontational mood; Theta waves (i.e., neural oscillations in the frequency range of 3–8 Hz) put one in a creative mood (Theta is also a very receptive mental state, and, thus, it is useful for hypnotherapy and self-hypnosis using recorded affirmations and suggestions); Delta waves (i.e., neural oscillations in the frequency range of 0.2–3 Hz) are the slowest brainwaves, and Delta is the mental state when one is in deep sleep (according to a Hindu mystical tradition that is known as “Advaita Vedanta,” if one can stay aware or conscious while in deepest dreamless sleep, a deep meditative state that is called “jagrat sushupti” is said to be achievable; this paradoxical type of consciousness is linked to high cortical activity, which happens during the delta-sleep); Gamma waves (i.e., neural oscillations whose frequencies are 27 Hz and above) are associated with the formation of concepts, high levels of concentration, language and memory processing, as well as various types of learning.

It is important to mention that Michael A. Aquino is not only a prominent Psychological Operations officer of the United States Army, but he is also a highly influential black magician. During the summer solstice of 1975, Michael A. Aquino consecrated the “Temple of Set,” a left-hand path initiatory order, in Santa Barbara, California, by practicing a “greater black magic” ritual that resulted in what Aquino regards as a supernaturally revealed text entitled *The Book of Coming Forth by Night*. In 1969, Michael A. Aquino joined Anton Szandor LaVey’s “Church of Satan,” but, in 1975, he left the church of Satan, and, followed by other former members of the church of Satan, he founded the Temple of Set, arguing that LaVey had lost the mandate, which, according to Aquino and his advocates, the “Prince of Darkness” then transferred to Aquino and his Temple of Set. During 1969–70, Aquino was assigned to the 6th PSYOP Battalion, 4th Group, Vietnam. As an HA Command & Control Team Leader, he was responsible for both tactical (HB) teams in combat operations and audio-visual (HE) teams in the Civil Operations & Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program, and he flew numerous PSYOP air support missions throughout III Corps Tactical Zone with both the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Army aviation. In 1990, as one of the U.S. Army’s first officers to be certified in Joint Space Intelligence by the U.S. Air Force, Aquino was assigned to J2 HQ U.S. Space Command,

where in Section X, out of the Cheyenne Mountain NORAD complex, he was involved with those files until he retired from the Active USAR in 1994.

Furthermore, especially from the 1940s onward, several mystical groups have been investigating the issue of UFOs from the perspective of the concept of “extra-dimensional beings” and in the context of studies and experiments in the field of “altered state of consciousness”⁷⁰ (ASC). Such studies have been methodically developed and promoted by the Borderland Sciences Research Foundation (formerly Associates), which is a non-profit organization based in California, informally organized in 1946 and legally incorporated in 1951 as the “Borderland Sciences Research Associates Foundation” by founder Meade Layne,⁷¹ later renamed “Borderland Sciences Research Foundation” in 1968 under Riley Crabb.⁷² Relevant information is contained in the so-called *The Vault*, which is the new Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) library set up by the FBI.⁷³ Lynn E. Catoe, who was the senior bibliographer of a government publication researched by the Library of Congress for the United States Air Force Office of Scientific Research entitled *UFOs and Related Subjects*, argues that “a large part of the available UFO literature is closely linked with mysticism and the metaphysical,” and that “many of the UFO reports now being published in the popular press recount alleged incidents that are strikingly similar to demonic possession and psychic phenomena.”⁷⁴

The twentieth-century neo-mythology about humanity’s contacts with physical aliens and physical UFOs gives one a cosmic theory that, supposedly, explains everything and, also, gives one a place in the universe. In fact, back in the 1950s, the psychoanalyst Carl G. Jung studied the issue of “flying saucers,” and he authored a relevant book in which

70. The expression “altered state of consciousness” was brought into common usage from 1969 by the prominent psychologist and parapsychologist Charles T. Tart, who received his doctoral degree in psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1963, and then he received postdoctoral training in hypnosis research with Professor Ernest R. Hilgard at Stanford University.

71. Meade Layne was an early researcher of ufology and parapsychology, and, prior to his public work studying UFOs, he was professor at the University of Southern California and English department head at Illinois Wesleyan University and Florida Southern College. He coined the term “interdimensional hypostasis” in order explain flying saucer sightings.

72. Greenfield, *Secret Cipher of the UFOonauts*.

73. <http://vault.fbi.gov/>

74. Catoe, *UFOs and Related Subjects*.

he argued that UFOlogy is a new, emerging mythology and even a new religious phenomenon in the context of which extraterrestrials tend to replace traditional angels and demons.⁷⁵ Thus, UFOlogy is a powerful neopolitical instrument, and several secret intelligence organizations are involved in research projects and experiments related to UFOlogy and altered state of consciousness.

For instance, the U.S. branch of the fringe-Masonic Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.) that was founded in 1969 by a U.S. military officer named Grady Louis McMurty (whose “retired” rank was Lieutenant Colonel) is tied to the U.S. military intelligence and the CIA. In 1943, McMurty was stationed in England, where he became a student of the occultist and British spy Aleister Crowley,⁷⁶ who was the leader of the British branch of the O.T.O. Crowley elevated McMurty to the eleventh degree of the O.T.O., giving him the name “Hymenaeus Beta” in November 1943. The German occultist Karl Johannes Germer,⁷⁷ also known as “Frater Saturnus,” was the successor of Aleister Crowley as the Outer Head of the Order (O.H.O.) of the O.T.O. from 1947 until his death in 1962. In October 1962, Germer died from complications following a prostate operation at the age of seventy-seven, without naming a successor as head of the O.T.O. Thus, Kenneth Grant of Britain, Hermann Metzger of Switzerland, and Marcelo Ramos Motta of Brazil claimed succession to Germer. But, in 1969, in California, McMurty decided to restore the O.T.O. by invoking his emergency orders from Crowley that gave him authority (subject to Karl Germer’s approval) to “take charge of the whole work of the Order in California to reform the Organization,” and he assumed the title “Caliph of O.T.O.,” as specified in Crowley’s letters to McMurty

75. Jung, *Flying Saucers*.

76. Churton, *Aleister Crowley*.

77. Germer worked as a military intelligence officer in World War I and received first-class and second-class Iron Crosses for his services to Germany. In 1923, he sold his Vienna property and founded the publishing house and magazine “Pansophia Verlag” in Munich. During January and February 1926, Germer and his wife, Marie, stayed at the “Abbey of Thelema,” which was Aleister Crowley’s occult center in Cefalù, Sicily, in Italy. In 1926, Germer moved to the USA with his wife, and, in 1927, he founded the publishing house “Thelema-Verlags-Gesellschaft,” which published German versions of Crowley’s works. In 1941, Crowley appointed Germer as X° for the free German-speaking peoples and legate in the USA. Germer’s ideology was a peculiar version of occult Nazism, and, thus, since 1942, Germer and his wife, Sascha, believed that they were being monitored by the FBI. After Crowley’s death, Germer, as the new O.H.O. of the O.T.O., transferred the headquarters of the O.T.O. to California, since he was living in Barstow, California.

from the 1940s. His witnesses were the prominent occultists Israel Regardie and Gerald Yorke (“a veteran British intelligence agent”⁷⁸), who both supported him, even though other O.T.O. Obediences refused to accept McMurty’s leadership.

The O.T.O. Lodges that were placed under McMurty’s control and administration became experimental laboratories for the CIA’s psychological programs. In particular, Alex Constantine argues that “Germer died during the period the CIA had chosen to move mind control experimentation from academic and military labs into the community,” and “a number of intelligence agents with occult interests already had their hooks into the O.T.O.”⁷⁹

In 1919, Aleister Crowley, in his “Dead Souls exhibition” held in Greenwich Village, New York, included what he called the portrait of Lam; “Lam” is the Tibetan word for way or path, and “Lama” is he who goes. According to Crowley, the portrait of Lam was a drawing he made of an entity he had invoked repeatedly in 1918. Crowley’s Lam is the original motif of what Americans call the “grey aliens.” In 1987, Kenneth Grant, one of Crowley’s successors in the O.T.O., formalized the “Lam Workings” into what came to be known as the cult of Lam. Since Crowley’s time, several occultists, such as Michael Bertiaux in the 1960s and a group of O.T.O. initiates in the 1970s, following Crowley’s path, have claimed to have intentionally and successfully contacted Lam through magical evocations, and they consider Lam to be a trans-mundane, extraterrestrial entity. The cult of Lam is a characteristic case of UFOlogy. Moreover, Monsignor Corrado Balducci (1923–2008), who was a Roman Catholic theologian of the Vatican Curia and the Vatican’s chief demonologist and UFOlogist, has cultivated and exploited UFOlogy, specifically, people’s belief in extraterrestrials, in order to adjust UFOlogy to the Vatican’s noopolitical strategy.

Apart from using UFOlogy for the conduct of psychological operations, several governments use the neo-mythology of UFOs as a means of disinformation in order to conceal particular technological achievements for reasons of national security. For instance, from 1891 to 1893, Nikola Tesla, the famous Serbian American physicist, inventor, electrical engineer, mechanical engineer, and futurist, gave a series of lectures in which he presented his invention of flying “saucers,” and, around 1937, Werner

78. Constantine, *Virtual Government*, 103.

79. *Ibid.*, 103.

von Braun was in Los Alamos, New Mexico, testing Tesla's "saucer" technology which then developed into a high-technology weapon program of Nazi Germany.⁸⁰ Amidst the first wave of so-called UFO sightings in 1950, Professor Giuseppe Belluzzo, a prominent engineer and former Italian cabinet minister, who personally worked in a German-Italian "flying saucer" project in the 1940s, was quoted in the Italian daily newspaper *Il Giornale d'Italia*, on March 24–25, 1950, saying that, at least as regards the cases of UFO sightings of which he was aware, flying saucers are not alien space ships, but they are man-made, rational constructions, and that Great Powers launch such "discs" to study them; the day after, several newspapers published Belluzzo's claims, such as *Il Corriere della Sera*, *Il Messaggero*, *La Nazione*, *La Stampa*, *La Gazzetta del Popolo*, etc.⁸¹

The Creation of the Ecumene

The Greek civilizations of the Aegean Sea constitute the cradle of Europe's prehistoric architecture and technology as well as the cradle of Europe's philosophy.⁸² By the fourteenth century BC, trade relations between Mycenae and the Celts were already flourishing, and, in the sixth century BC, Greeks from Phocaea founded Marseille, which soon became a major cultural center for the dissemination of the Greek civilization among the Celts. In his *Geographica*, IV, 181, Strabo writes that Marseille was schooling the Celts to be fond enough of the Greeks to write even their contracts in Greek, and that was one of the most important educational centers in the Roman Empire. In his *De bello gallico*, I, 29:1, Gaius Julius Caesar writes that, "in the camp of the Helvetii, lists were found, drawn up in Greek characters." Moreover, in *De bello gallico*, VI, 14:4, Gaius Julius Caesar writes about the Druids (namely, the priests of the Celts): "in their public and private transactions, they use Greek characters."

Furthermore, the civilization of ancient Rome was a Greek creation. First of all, according to Roman mythology, the city of Rome was founded by Romulus, son of the Greek god Ares. The first ruler of Rome was Janus, grandson of Erechtheus, an archaic king of Athens. The Roman (Latin) alphabet was derived from the Greek one, and the first known Roman author is the Greek dramatist and epic poet Livius Andronicus

80. Lyne, *Pentagon Aliens*.

81. For more details, see also Lafayette, *The German UFOs*.

82. Hawkes, *The Prehistoric Foundations of Europe to the Mycenaean Age*.

(third century BC). The ancient Greek religion was adopted by the Romans during the classical era, that is, long before the Hellenistic era. For instance, the Temple of Demeter in Rome was built by Greek artificers in 493 BC. Ancient Roman art was derived from Greek art, and many Roman artists came from Greek colonies and provinces. For instance, some of the Greek antecedents of Roman art were the following: Polygnotos (noted for his wall murals), Apollodoros (the originator of chiaroscuro), Zeuxius, Parrhasius, Phidias, Lysippos, Praxiteles, Agasias, Cleomenes, Aristeas, Demophilos, Gorgasos, etc. Many of the art forms and methods used by the Romans (such as high and low relief, free-standing sculpture, bronze casting, vase art, mosaic, cameo, coin art, fine jewelry and metalwork, funerary sculpture, perspective drawing, caricature, genre and portrait painting, landscape painting, architectural sculpture, and trompe l'oeil painting) were developed or refined by ancient Greek artists.⁸³ Moreover, the intellectual roots of Roman law can be traced back to the book *Dodecadeltos* (in Latin, *Duodecim tabularum*), which was written by the Greek philosopher and jurist Hermodorus, who was born in Ephesus, in the fifth century BC, and he was a student of the famous Greek philosopher Heraclitus.

In 334 BC, Alexander the Great had already liberated the Greek inhabitants of Ionia from the Persian yoke, and he went to Gordium, the Phrygian capital, to spend the winter. By that time, he had already conceived the “ecumene,” that is, the creation of a spiritually grounded world order and, indeed, a world *society*. In the last year of his life, he had a deep understanding of the notion of ecumene, and, in fact, he had created the ecumene. According to Arrian’s *Anabasis* (Book VII, 11), Alexander the Great “prayed for other blessings, and especially that harmony and community of rule might exist between the Macedonians and Persians.” Alexander the Great did not simply found an empire; he founded the “ecumene,” that is, the first type of globalization in the history of mankind. Thus, Hermann Bengtson argues that neither the Roman Empire, nor the triumph of Christianity’s march, nor the Byzantine Empire, nor the Arab civilization could have been achieved without Alexander the Great’s work.⁸⁴

In his book *On the Fortune or the Virtue of Alexander*, I, 329a–d, Plutarch points out that Alexander the Great gave effect to Zeno’s

83. Piper, *The Illustrated Library of Art*.

84. Bengtson, *History of Greece*.

cosmopolitan political ideal. Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, wrote in his *Republic* that we should consider all men to be of one community and one polity and that we should all have a common life and common order. Furthermore, Plutarch points out that Alexander the Great did not follow Aristotle's advice to treat the Greeks as if he were their leader, and other peoples as if he were their master. Instead, according to Plutarch, Alexander the Great believed that he came as a heaven-sent ruler to all and as a mediator for the whole world, and, therefore, those whom he could not persuade to unite with him, he conquered by force of arms, but he bade all his subjects consider as their fatherland the whole inhabited earth, as their polity his camp, as akin to them all virtuous men, and as foreigners only the wicked. Thus, Alexander the Great created a multicultural polity. With respect to his attitude toward Asia, Plutarch (*Ibid.*, I, 330c–e) emphasizes that Alexander did not overrun Asia like a robber, but Alexander's goal was to render all upon earth subject to one law of reason and one form of government.

Instead of building up an empire merely by establishing regimes based on physical-spatial unity, Alexander the Great was founding new cities that were centers of the Greek *paideia*,⁸⁵ and, at the apex of his imperial career, he declared the brotherhood of all men, thus uniting the existential dimensions of space and time. If one conquers space, but he fails to conquer the human factor, that is, if the superiority of his cultural proposal is not acknowledged by others, then his spatial conquests will be lost within a relatively short time interval. Geopolitical calculations can yield power, indeed; but, if they are not combined with a sufficiently attractive cultural proposal, even the most ingenious geopolitical calculations will end in failure, because they will be defeated by time. Culture leads to a dynamic understanding of space and unites it with time, like an artifact, whose truth is being continually formed and reformed over time. Alexander the Great was the first world leader who transcended national differences, and he anticipated the apostle Paul's universalism by forging a spiritual unity between the Greeks and the barbarians.⁸⁶

85. In his book entitled *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, W. W. Jaeger explains that *paideia* is a word that we translate as education, but, according to ancient Greeks, *paideia* means not only the rearing and education of children (*pais* is the simple Greek for child), but also culture and civilization, and, generally, the spiritual accomplishments of an age or people; it was rendered in Latin as *humanitas*.

86. Tarn, "Alexander: The Conquest of the Far East."

The Punic Wars played a decisive role in the fate of the ecumene. They were a series of three wars fought between Rome and Carthage from 264 BC to 146 BC. They started in 264 BC, when the Roman Republic decided to ally itself with the Mamertines (which means “sons of Mars”), a group of thugs and pirates, who were living in Messina, which was besieged by King Hieron II of Syracuse and the Carthaginians. In his *Histories*, I, 12:5, Polybius explains the historical significance of the First Punic War: it was “the first warlike expedition of the Romans beyond the shores of Italy.”

When, after their victory in the Second Punic War against Carthage, the Romans decided to march out toward Pherae, an ancient Greek town in southeastern Thessaly, against the Greek kingdom of Macedonia, many Greek city-states allied with the Romans, and, for this reason, at the Battle of Cynoscephalae (in Thessaly), in 197 BC, the Roman army, led by Titus Quinctius Flamininus, managed to defeat King Philip V of Macedon. Philip V of Macedon was an ally of Antiochus III the Great, a Seleucid Greek king and the sixth ruler of the Seleucid Empire (ruling over the region of Syria and large parts of the rest of the Middle East). When Antiochus III the Great learned that his ally, Philip V of Macedon, had been defeated by the Romans, he decided to attack the Romans and drive them out of Greece. But, by the time Antiochus III the Great and his huge army arrived in Thessaly, Philip V of Macedon had become the leader of the Roman army, and, therefore, he turned against Antiochus III the Great. At the Battle of Thermopylae, in 191 BC, the allied forces of the Romans, Philip V of Macedon, and several Greek city-states defeated Antiochus III the Great.

After, Philip V's death, Perseus, son of Philip V, became the new king of Macedon. Perseus decided to attack the Romans, since the Roman army was small, and the primary cause of the Romans' power was their alliance with Greek city-states. However, at the Battle of Pydna, in 168 BC, Perseus was defeated by the Romans, because the Roman general Lucius Aemilius Paullus had bribed several officers of Perseus's army.⁸⁷ It is worth pointing out that Perseus refused to employ Gallic mercenaries, because he wanted to liberate and unite the Greeks without any foreign assistance. Finally, in 146 BC, the Roman statesman and general Lucius Mummius, exploiting the Greek civil wars, and primarily a conflict between Corinth and Sparta, conquered the Achaean League and brought

87. Polybius, *Histories*, 29.

all of Greece under Roman control. However, because the Romans were unable to maintain direct political authority over Greece, they offered autonomy to all Greek city-states, and, during the so-called Roman occupation period (i.e., from the first century BC until the third century AD), most of the Roman emperors, who admired Greek culture, acted as benefactors to the Greek cities, and especially Athens. Thus, Jacques Pirenne argues that the Roman Empire was a “Hellenistic state,”⁸⁸ and Francis E. Peters uses the terms “Latin Hellenism” and “Greek Hellenism” in order to describe the extent of Greece’s cultural influence on Rome.⁸⁹

The Christianization of the Ecumene

Given that the dominant civilization of the ancient ecumene was the Greek one, the study of the issue of the Christianization of the ecumene is reduced to the study of the issue of the Christianization of the Greeks.

From the perspective of classical Greek philosophy, the human soul is relatively capable of introducing harmony into its movements and of acting in such a way that human life has some order, because and to the extent that it has achieved to gaze at that which is timeless, that is, the deity, the absolute good.⁹⁰ The absolute good is the ultimate purpose, the end (*telos*), of being, because it is simultaneously the order of the constitution of each work and of reality as well as their completion. This is the kind of goodness that each positive work tries to actualize, whether it is the work of the divine constructor mentioned in Plato’s *Timaeus* 29a–d, or the work of the painters, the builders, the shipwrights, the trainers, and the physicians mentioned in Plato’s *Gorgias* 503–4, or the work of those who practice the art of weaving, which can be used as a model for the study of statesmanship, as mentioned in Plato’s *Statesman* 279a–b. Hence, everything that takes place in the world exists due to its end (ultimate purpose). The deity is the end that gives meaning to the whole cosmic becoming, because of the erotic attraction that the deity exerts: seeking the order that they have to actualize and the perfection that they have to achieve, all beings respond positively to the universal eros, whose ultimate object is the perfection of the deity.

88. Pirenne, *The Tides of History*.

89. Peters, *The Harvest of Hellenism*.

90. Plato, *Phaedrus* 247c–d.

According to Plato and Aristotle, *theoria* (spiritual gaze) brings the philosopher's life to completion and conclusion, and *theoria* should not be identified with scientific theorizing. From the perspective of the classical Greek philosophers, *theoria* means direct knowledge of the eternal being and identification with it. For this reason, "the life of *theoria*" is the philosopher's mode of life, that is, it consists in love of wisdom. Wisdom is the beginning and the result of philosophy, which gazes at and accesses the totality of the being of the cosmos and, together with the gods, it enjoys the pleasures of the mind. Thus, *theoria* consists in the event of man's participation in the deity and echoes religious experiences. According to Plato, man's access to the deity is a transcendental experience, and, apart from the development of human reason, it necessarily presupposes psychic cleansing or cure,⁹¹ and, similarly, according to Aristotle, humanity's access to the deity presupposes the perfection of the human mind.⁹² In particular, according to Aristotle, *theoria* is an energy of the mind, which comes from the outside; the mind, Aristotle maintains, is "the divinest part of us,"⁹³ and it is "the true self of each, inasmuch as it is the dominant and better part."⁹⁴

Furthermore, in order to understand the history of the Greek metaphysical thought, in general, and the underpinnings of Hesychasm, in particular, one should bear in mind the interaction and synthesis of the Greek philosophical tradition with the Jewish scriptural tradition in the context of the Ptolemies' Greek kingdom of Egypt. First of all, in the context of the Ptolemies' Greek kingdom of Egypt, a significant part of the Jewish community of Egypt was Hellenized. In particular, many Jews of Egypt used to take Greek names (such as: Apollonius, Artemidoros, Diodotus, Demetrius, Dionysus, Diophantus, Heracleia, Heracleides, Hermeias, Theodotus, Theodorus, Dositheus, Jason, etc.), and they were proud of their Greek culture and manners. The Jews of the Hellenistic Egypt developed a highly Hellenized literature: the historiographer Demetrius, a Jewish courtier of Ptolemy IV, wrote an exposition of the Jewish religion following a philosophical style, which indicates the Greek spiritual influence on the Jews of the Hellenistic Egypt; Artapanus of Alexandria, another famous Hellenized Jew, wrote an allegorical novel in which

91. Plato, *Symposium* 212a; *Republic* 443d–e, 509b6–10

92. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1072b18–24; *Nicomachean Ethics* 1177a20–21.

93. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1177a16.

94. *Ibid.*, 1178a2–3.

Moses is presented as the founder of the Orphic Mysteries (i.e., of the pagan Greeks' monotheistic mysteries); a Jew named Ezekiel composed a Greek tragedy on the theme of the book of Exodus; Philo the Elder wrote an epic poem *On Jerusalem* in Homeric hexameters; Theodotus wrote an epic poem *On Shechem* (an Israelite city of the tribe of Manasseh), in which he connects the name of Shechem with Sikimios, son of the Greek god Hermes; and the Jewish philosopher Aristobulus of Paneas put forward the theory that Pythagoras and Plato had knowledge of the Bible. Under Greek philosophical influences, the Jewish worship practices were enriched with teachings about the interpretation of the Jewish religious texts, that is, with a philosophical activity, and the expressions "God the Most High" and "I am that I am" are indications of Platonic influences on the interpretation of the Bible. In the context of their cultural interaction with the Jewish scriptural tradition, many Greeks, on their side, turned their mind toward the Jewish monotheistic and prophetic theology, since it is focused on direct and personal communion with God. Titus Flavius Josephus (37–ca. 100 AD), also called Joseph ben Matityahu, an ethnic Jew and priest of Jerusalem, studied the relations between the Greeks and the Hebrews in his historical book *Antiquities of the Jews*, in his polemical work *Against Apion* (I, 12:60–68), and in his book *Jewish War*, in which he introduces himself with the Hellenized version of his name: Iosepos.

The Orientalization of the Greek philosophical tradition, that is, the synthesis of Greek philosophy with Oriental mystical religious traditions, was further enhanced and enriched by the Hermetic cult, which prevailed in Hellenistic Alexandria, in Egypt. Tobias Churton writes about the history of the Hermetic cult that, a century after Alexander the Great conquered Egypt and founded his city, Alexandria, in 331 BC, Greek settlers in Alexandria had begun to apply the epithet *megistos kai megistos theos megas* (greatest and greatest the great god) to the god Hermes, and that this dignity derives from the epithet "two times great," which Egyptians had applied to Hermes's Egyptian equivalent, the god Thoth. In Hermopolis, Thoth was believed to have hatched the World Egg. The Graeco-Egyptian Thoth-Hermes was the spirit of inventiveness. Sometime between the first century BC and the end of the first century AD, a new figure appeared: "Hermes Trismegistus" (Thrice Greatest Hermes), a name with which Greek settlers in Egypt unified the Greek god Hermes and the Egyptian god Thoth, since both were associated with magical knowledge, the dead, and healing. According to the Hermeticists' legends, the *Hermetica* was a collection of forty-two books of

Hellenistic Egyptian magical wisdom that were written by Hermes Trismegistus, who was believed to be an ancient patriarch of civilization and the founder of a philosophical religion focused on man's purification and union with the deity.

At this point, it is important to mention that the aforementioned process of the Orientalization of Greece, far from contradicting the humanist core of the Greek philosophy, was a process through which the spiritual core of the Greek aesthetics was perfected. If we study history of art, we see that ancient agricultural civilizations worshiped nature, and, thus, their gods usually had animal characteristics, and ancient nomadic civilizations worshiped the natural bond of blood, the power of the race. On the other hand, ancient Greek gods had human form. The human form of the ancient Greek gods was characterized by exceptional beauty, because it was expressing the human quest for perfection, and, according to ancient Greek mythology, the end of the human being's existence is man's participation in the deity. Thus, through their mythology, ancient Greeks gave priority to a personal approach to reality over the impersonal commands of nature and race, and, in this way, they created an anthropocentric civilization.

The humanism of the classical Greek aesthetics was transformed into a theological system by Christianity, since Christians identified the Greek value of beauty with Jesus Christ, and, through Jesus Christ, Christianity stressed the personhood of God. According to Irenaeus of Lyons' book *Against Heresies*, 3, 19:1, the central dogma of Christianity is that "the Logos became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Logos and thus receiving divine 'sonship,' might become a son of God."⁹⁵ Furthermore, Gregory of Nazianzus (known also as Gregory the Theologian) has stressed that the Christ Mystery signifies not only the Incarnation of the divine Logos but also the deification of the human flesh.⁹⁶ Thus, ultimately, the Greeks adopted the Orthodox Christian doctrine of the Incarnation of the divine Logos, because they understood it as a metaphysical thesis that completed and perfected the classical Greek humanist philosophy.

Greek philosophy needs mystical religious experiences in order to arrive at its completion and perfection. Hesychasm is the Christocentric perfection of the Greek concept of *theoria*. What defines a Hesychast is

95. *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. 7:1, 939.

96. *Ibid.*, Vol. 36, 353B.

that he or she poses and answers the “how” question in a very specific way: “how can a human attain *theoria*?” Or, in other words, “how can a human attain direct communion with the absolute good, or the deity, just as Moses and Hermes Trismegistus did?” Or, more specifically, “how can a human experience the uncreated light of God’s glory, which was manifested during Christ’s Transfiguration?”

Aristotle argues as follows: “We ought not to obey those who enjoin that a man should have man’s thoughts and a mortal the thoughts of mortality, but we ought, so far as possible, to achieve immortality.”⁹⁷ In particular, according to Aristotle, God’s activity is the activity of *theoria*, and “the whole of the life of the gods is blessed,” whereas human life is blessed “only in so far as it contains some likeness to the divine activity.”⁹⁸ But the classical Greek conception of *theoria* was imperfect because of the following reason: the Greek mind discovered *theoria*, that is, the perfect mode of life, but, as Aristotle has pointed out, man, faced with physical reality, realizes that his own will and powers cannot overcome natural necessity.⁹⁹ In particular, as Aristotle has pointed out, man, being composed of mind and body, cannot unceasingly be in the state of pure *theoria*, but only during rare, pleasant moments of his life.¹⁰⁰ From the previous perspective, therefore, the life of the Greek philosopher is tragic.

The awareness of the tragedy of human life by the Greek philosophers, that is, the Greek philosophers’ awareness of the contradiction between the spiritual freedom that characterizes the life of *theoria*, on the one hand, and human subservience to natural necessity, on the other, is the ultimate source of inspiration for the classical Greek tragic poets. Thus, for instance, Sophocles, in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, a tragedy devoted to the issue of punishment, writes: “Alas, generations of mortals! How mere non-being I count your life!”¹⁰¹ Similarly, Euripides, in *Hippolytus*, describes the tragedy of the human being as follows: “the life of mortals is wholly trouble. . . . Anything we might love more than life is hid in a surrounding cloud of darkness. Thus, everything that shines on earth

97. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177b31–33.

98. *Ibid.*, 1178b26–27.

99. *Ibid.*, 1112a21–26.

100. *Ibid.*, 1177b11.

101. Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 1186.

disappoints us, because we have neither knowledge of another life nor proof of an afterlife. We are governed by mere tales.”¹⁰²

Hesychasm addresses exactly the aforementioned Greek philosophical problem, precisely, the relationship between the created and the uncreated, and the possibility of the created human being participating in the uncreated God. According to Hesychasm, the only uncreated essence is God’s essence, and, therefore, God’s essence is *totally inaccessible* and *totally unknowable*. However, the Hesychasts emphasize that God exists hypostatically, precisely, as a communion of three hypostases (i.e., the divine Nous [Mind], called the “Father;” the divine Logos/Word, called the “Son,” and the Holy Spirit), and, therefore, God is not constrained by His essence, and His mode of being is totally free. Thus, the divine Logos can be incarnated without diminishing his divinity. In addition to His uncreated essence and His uncreated hypostases, God has uncreated *energies*, too. God’s uncreated energies, known as His omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, providence, etc., are the life-force of His essence, that is, His capacity to perform work. *With regard to His uncreated essence, God is totally alien to creation, but, with regard to His uncreated energies, God is present in creation, in accordance with His hypostatic mode of being, precisely, in accordance with His personal will.*

Since the essence of the human being is created, a human cannot be united with God at the level of God’s essence. The union between humanity and God at the level of God’s hypostases (i.e., the “hypostatic union” between the divine and the human natures) took place only once, that is, in the case of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Logos of God. Therefore, apart from Jesus Christ, human beings cannot be united with God at the level of God’s hypostases, either. *However, each human being can participate in God’s uncreated energies*, since, according to Hesychasm, the human mind is the repository or closet of God’s uncreated energies, and the Incarnation of the divine Logos restored the human nature’s ability to bear the uncreated grace of the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father in the name of the Son (John 14:26). In fact, for the Hesychasts, human participation in God’s uncreated energies, that is, the union between humanity and God at the level of God’s energies, is the essence of pure theology and the kind of *theoria* that the Greek philosophers had been seeking before Christ. Without the Incarnation of the Logos of God, pure theology and the kind of *theoria* that the Greek philosophers had been seeking before

102. Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 189–97.

Christ would have remained “hid in a surrounding cloud of darkness,” and humanity would have continued to be “governed by mere tales,” as Euripides writes in *Hippolytus*. Thus, from the perspective of Hesychasm, love is a disposition of the soul by which one prefers no being to the participation in God’s uncreated energies.

In addition to the essence/energies distinction, the Hesychasts emphasize the distinction of the human mind, being construed as the repository or closet of God’s uncreated energies, and, therefore, as a source of uncreated, divine knowledge, from the human intellect, being construed as the seat of human reason, and, therefore, as a source of created knowledge. Jesus Christ himself referred to the mind as a spiritual closet; in particular, in Matthew 6:5–6, we read that Jesus Christ taught the following about praying: “When you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. . . . But you, when you pray, enter into your closet, and having shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

Moreover, there are significant similarities between the Hesychast notion of the mind as the repository or closet of God’s uncreated energies and the Kabbalistic doctrine of the “neshamah,” as it is presented in the *Sefer Ha-Zohar* (Book of Splendor), an important text of Jewish mysticism filled with arcane symbolism and erotic language. The *Zohar* first appeared in Spain in the thirteenth century AD and was published by a Jewish writer and rabbi named Moses de León. According to the *Zohar*, the neshamah stands above all the parts of the soul, it is the supernal power by which a human knows the Holy One, it obeys His precepts, and it can be conceived as our spiritual umbilical cord that connects us to God and to each other. The biblical term *neshamah* literally means breath, and it can be broadly understood as the “soul proper” and the ability to become partakers of God. In the Old Testament, there are several references to the *neshamah*, such as the following: Isaiah 30:33: breath of God as hot wind kindling a flame; 2 Samuel 22:16 and Job 4:9: as destroying wind; Job 32:8 and 33:4: as cold wind producing ice; 1 Kings 17:17, Isaiah 42:5, Job 27:3, and Daniel 10:7: breath of man; Genesis 2:7 and Job 34:14 and 36:4: breath of life and God’s breath in man; Isaiah 2:22: man in whose nostrils is but a breath.

The Division of the Ecumene

In 330 AD, the first Christian ruler of the Roman Empire, Constantine the Great, transferred the imperial capital from Rome to Byzantium. In the seventh century BC, Byzas, son of the king of Megara (a city-state near Athens), created a Megarian colony in a location where the Golden Horn, an important natural harbor, meets the Bosphorus and flows into the Sea of Marmara; Byzas named that city Byzantium after himself. The location of Byzantium attracted Roman Emperor Constantine the Great, who, in 330 AD, refounded it as an imperial residence and the capital of the Roman Empire; after his death, the city was called Constantinople (literally, the “city of Constantine”). Between 330 AD and 1453 AD, Constantinople (known also as the “New Rome”) was the capital of the Roman Empire. However, when Emperor Theodosius the Great (fourth century AD) divided the Roman Empire between his two sons, Arcadius in the East and Honorius in the West, the Adriatic Sea became the new border between East and West.

In the first centuries of the Christian era, many Christians felt uncomfortable with Greek philosophy, because many gnostic “schools” challenged Christianity by putting forward philosophical arguments, and because philosophy, in general, poses questions that the early Christian church was not ready to tackle in a systematic way. Thus, an early Latin church father, Tertullian (active in the second and the third centuries AD), in his *De Praescriptione Haereticorum* 7, posed the question: “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” Tertullian answered the previous question in the negative, thus fomenting a cultural clash between philosophy and Christianity, whereas, as I have already argued, early Greek church fathers, such as Justin Philosopher and Martyr and Clement of Alexandria, were pursuing a synthesis between philosophy and Christian theology.

Justin Philosopher and Martyr, one of the early Greek church fathers, argues, in his *Dialogue with Trypho* II, 1, that “philosophy is, in fact, the greatest possession, and most honorable before God, to whom it leads us and alone commends us; and these are truly holy men who have bestowed attention on philosophy.” In the same spirit, another prominent early Greek church father, Clement of Alexandria, argues, in his *Stromata* VI, 7:55, that “philosophy yearns for the wisdom which consists in rightness of soul and speech and in purity of life.” In addition, in his *Stromata* I, 20:100, Clement of Alexandria argues that the primary task of Greek

philosophy is the defense of the Christian faith: “in rendering the attack of sophistry impotent and in disarming those who betray truth and wage war upon it, Greek philosophy is rightly called the hedge and the protective wall around the vineyard.”

On the other hand, Tertullian was the first Christian apologist who wrote in Latin, not because he didn't know Greek, but because he wanted to deter Christendom from the use of the Greek philosophical language. In his theological essays, Tertullian uses legal terms, instead of philosophical ones, and he articulates a legalist exposition of the Christian faith. Moreover, the first Latin translation of the Bible, known as the *Vulgata*, accomplished by the Dalmatian scholar Jerome, who was commissioned by Pope Damasus I (d. 384 AD), is replete with Latin legal terms and concepts, thus underpinning and promoting a legalist approach to Christ's gospel.

The transfer of the Roman Empire's capital from Rome to Constantinople by Constantine the Great had important spiritual consequences, because it was favorable to the Greek culture. In particular, as a result of the transfer of the imperial capital from Rome to Constantinople, the Greek church could develop under the direct protection of the Roman emperor and control the education of the imperial capital, whereas Rome had to develop without having any powerful imperial institution by its side and to deal with several barbarian invasions. Thus, the See of Rome decided to fill the power vacuum and to give primacy to secular goals, precisely, to inducing barbarian hordes to adhere to the Christian church and to the Roman Empire's institutional system. In other words, for both cultural and geopolitical reasons, the See of Rome arguably succumbed to the lure of historical power at the expense of the metaphysical essence of Christianity.

As a consequence of the aforementioned cultural and geopolitical reasons, the See of Rome and the See of Constantinople (the “New Rome”) have followed different paths. The central and guiding vision of the Greek East is the deification of humanity, whereas the central and guiding vision of the Latin West is the historical fulfillment and self-affirmation of humanity. The spiritual divergence between East and West increased when the Western Roman Empire and the See of Rome were conquered by German tribes in the ninth century AD.

In 476 AD, Odoaker, a German soldier, deposed Romulus Augustulus and proclaimed himself King of Italy, signaling the end of the Western Roman Empire. In 751 AD, Childeric III, the last Merovingian King of

Frankia, was deposed by Pope Zachary at the instigation of Pepin the Short, a son of the German Frank Charles Martel, mayor of the palace of Austrasia (the eastern part of the Frankish Kingdom). In 754 AD, in Paris, at the Basilica of St. Denis, Pope Stephen II—who had left Rome to beg the Frankish King for assistance against the Lombards—anointed Pepin the Short King of the Franks a second time, and he bestowed upon him the additional title of “Patricius Romanorum” (Patrician of the Romans); this is the first recorded crowning of a civil ruler by a Pope. In 768 AD, Carloman I and Charlemagne, the two sons of Pepin the Short, each inherited a half of the Kingdom of the Franks upon their father’s death. Carloman I, who had the personality of a bureaucrat, as opposed to Charlemagne, who was an ambitious warlord, died in 771 AD. Thus, Charlemagne annexed Carloman’s territory, and, in 774 AD, he became King of Italy, too. While still consolidating their grip on Gaul, the Franks had already conquered northern and central Italy by the middle of the eighth century, pretending that they were liberators of the See of Rome from Lombard oppression. At this time, the Papacy was preoccupied with the iconoclastic controversy, opposing both the Roman emperors and the patriarchs of Constantinople, who supported the iconoclastic movement. The Franks applied the policy of “divide and rule,” playing one Roman party against the other, and, finally, they condemned both the iconoclasts and the Seventh Ecumenical Council (786–87 AD) at their own Council of Frankfurt in 794 AD, even though Pope Hadrian I was a staunch supporter of the Orthodox practice, which was also supported by the Seventh Ecumenical Council.

In the early Middle Ages, the German tribes adopted Christianity, mainly as a means to better social status in the Roman Empire, and they used Christianity in order to conquer the Western part of the Roman Empire and the See of Rome from the inside. Boniface, the first Archbishop of Mainz, described the situation of the Frankish church in the eighth century as follows: “The Episcopal Sees . . . have been given, for the most part, into the possession of avaricious laymen or exploited by adulterous and unworthy clerics for worldly uses. . . . Among them are bishops who . . . are shiftless drunkards, . . . who march armed into battle and shed with their own hands the blood of Christians and heathens alike.”¹⁰³

In 800 AD, Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation by Pope Leo III on Christmas day at Old

103. “Boniface to Pope Zachary on His Accession to the Papacy” (742 AD); *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. 89, 744.

Saint Peter's Basilica. In 799 AD, Charlemagne and his army protected Pope Leo III from his enemies, who had accused Pope Leo III of adultery and perjury, and they had attempted to kill him, and, on December 1, 800 AD, Charlemagne held a council in Rome, thus solidifying the pontificate of Pope Leo III, who, in return, strengthened Charlemagne's position by crowning him "Augustus of the Romans." The coronation of Charlemagne—an illiterate, megalomaniac German warlord—in 800 AD, as emperor of the "Holy Roman Empire" (which was essentially a German empire) signals an important spiritual change in the West: a significant part of the West was essentially cut off from its Greco-Roman cultural heritage, and it was subjugated to the crude power of the German tribes, which, gradually, together with the subjugated See of Rome, formed a new historical entity, precisely, a Western European geopolitical and geocultural entity that was politically dominated by the Carolingian Europe and spiritually founded on scholasticism and legalism. By the term "Carolingian Europe," I refer to a geographical area that includes the Western part of Germany, a great part of France, the Benelux countries, and the Alpine region. Historically, the Carolingian Europe corresponds to the medieval Frankish Kingdom that was founded by Charlemagne in 800 AD.

On the other hand, the mystical spirituality, precisely, Hesychasm, of the Greek East expanded throughout the Slavic world in the fourteenth century AD; thus, as the distinguished scholar Dimitri Obolensky has pointed out, "Byzantium, Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, and Russia were all affected by this new cosmopolitan movement [Hesychasm]," and, "through this "Hesychast International," whose influence extended far beyond the ecclesiastical sphere, the different parts of the Byzantine Commonwealth were, during the last hundred years of its existence, linked to each other and to its center and perhaps more closely than ever before."¹⁰⁴ By the ninth century AD, in the region that, in the modern era, corresponds to the states of Bulgaria, Serbia, and Romania, the foundation of the culture of the Slavs who lived there was Byzantine. In the region that, in the modern era, corresponds to the states of Russia and Ukraine, the dominant culture had three components: an inherited pre-Christian pagan component and two acquired components derived from Christianity and Byzantium.

104. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth*, 390.

After the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans, in 1453, Russia became, geopolitically, the most important representative of and heir to the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine civilization) and, geopolitically, the most important Christian Orthodox nation. In the fifteenth century AD, Ivan III Vasilyevich, known also as Ivan the Great, who was a Grand Prince of Moscow and Grand Prince of all Rus, tripled the territory of his state, ended the dominance of the Golden Horde¹⁰⁵ over the Rus, renovated the Moscow Kremlin, and laid the foundations of the Russian state. Ivan III married Zoë Sophia Paleologina, a Byzantine princess and niece of the last Byzantine Emperor, Constantine XI Palaiologos.

It should be mentioned that, from its dawn, the Russian civilization has been a multicultural one, and Russia had significant political and commercial ties with Central Asian and Middle Eastern states as early as the ninth century AD. Thus, the Christocentric ecumenism and the multicultural character of the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium) were particularly appealing to the Russians. In the late ninth century AD, Scandinavian warrior-traders, the Varangians, gradually took control of the major waterways from the Baltic to the Black Sea. This process began in about 860 AD, when the people of Novgorod invited the Varangian Prince Rurik to become their ruler. In 882, Rurik's successor, Oleg, captured Kiev, where he was succeeded in about 912 by Rurik's son, Prince Igor. The Rurik dynasty survived as rulers of Russia until 1598.

By the tenth century AD, the Russian city-states of Novgorod, Pskov, Smolensk, Suzdal, Kiev, and Vladimir had been established on the basis of an elaborate pagan culture and a prosperous trading system. The main trading partners of the Rus, as these people came to be known, were Byzantium and the Greeks who had lived for several centuries on the northern shores of the Black Sea. Moreover, during this period, the Rus were frequently attacked by nomadic Asian tribes, such as the Khazars, the Pechenegs, and the Polovtsians.

From the beginning of the ninth century, the Russian world was increasingly exposed to Christianity. Patriarch Photius of Constantinople, in his "Encyclical to the Eastern Patriarchs" (866 AD), writes that Greek Orthodox missionaries were active in Russian society in the middle of the ninth century. Additionally, as early as 846 AD, the Persian geographer Ibn Khordadbeh wrote in his *Book of Roads and Countries*

105. The Golden Horde was a Mongol and later Turkicized khanate established in the thirteenth century AD and originating as the northwestern sector of the Mongol Empire.

about Rus-Christians who traded with Byzantium and the Middle East. It should be mentioned that Novgorod and other Russian merchant cities prospered without joining the initial capitalist movement, which was primarily a Western phenomenon, and this is another element that indicates the cultural and political affinity between Russia and Byzantium.

In the second half of the tenth century AD, a large part of southern and central Rus was united under Prince Vladimir of Kiev's rule. He then adopted Orthodox Christianity as the official religion of the Rus. The Russian Orthodox Church adhered to the Byzantine Orthodox pattern completely, and it creatively assimilated pre-Christian Russian folk traditions. The adoption of Byzantine Christianity by the Rus played a key role in the development of Russian literature and marked the beginning of literacy after the adoption of the new alphabet. Two brothers from Thessaloniki, Cyril (826–69 AD) and Methodius (815–85 AD), created the alphabet for the Russian liturgical language, which was influenced by Greek linguistic models and was the common literary language of all the Christian Orthodox Slavs. Moreover, Byzantine art was another important cultural bridge between Byzantium and Russia throughout the Middle Ages.

In the thirteenth century AD, Alexander Nevsky (1219–63), Prince of Novgorod, Grand Prince of Kiev and Grand Prince of Vladimir, played a key role in preventing the submission of Russia to the Roman Catholic Pope and the Germans. In 1193, Pope Celestine III declared the Northern Crusades, encouraging the Holy Roman Empire (i.e., the Germans) and the Kingdom of Sweden to advance eastward, into Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. Within a decade, much of the region was under Teutonic control. Alexander Nevsky stood on the shores of Lake Peipus determined to halt the German knights' encroachment on April 5, 1242. Marching his army out onto the frozen water, Alexander Nevsky scored a major victory at the Battle of the Ice. Thus, he prevented the Teutonic Knights from entering Russia, and he hardened the dividing line between the Papacy and the Orthodox Church. He was canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1547, and his principal feast day is 23 November.

With regard to religion, the Slavic world and, generally, the Russians are spiritual descendants of the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium), since they have adopted Byzantine Orthodoxy. However, the genuine Byzantine Orthodoxy, especially its mystical tradition, namely, Hesychasm, is founded on a Christocentric synthesis of classical Greek philosophy (i.e., Plato's, Aristotle's, and Plotinus's ontological theories), Jewish scriptural

tradition, and Christ's gospel, whereas, in the Middle Ages, the Slavs and the Russians adopted Byzantine Orthodoxy without having previously assimilated the Greek philosophical tradition, which is embedded in and underpins Byzantine Orthodox theology. Thus, Russia and the Slavs are characterized by a spiritual dichotomy between their "myth," which is inextricably linked to Byzantine Orthodoxy, and their "logos," which has been strongly influenced by Western modern philosophy and political thought. In other words, the Slavs' and the Russians' myth and religion have been molded by Byzantine Orthodoxy, whereas their mainstream philosophical thought has been molded by Western modernity.

For instance, Tsar Peter the Great (1672–1725) was a sympathizer of German Protestantism, and Empress Catherine the Great (1729–96) was an adherent of the Enlightenment. In the same spirit of apostasy from their Byzantine Orthodox roots, often masked behind a pietist and moralist rhetoric, Tsar Alexander I was one of the founders and masterminds of the "Holy Alliance," an authoritarian system of international governance which was formed in Paris in 1815 by the Sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, who thus attempted to "export" and universalize their authoritarian, absolutist, and essentially inhuman political regimes. Moreover, Georges Florovsky has written that, in the seventeenth century, Metropolitan Peter of Kiev (Petro Mohyla) founded a Roman Catholic school within the Russian Orthodox Church, and, thus, "for generations the Orthodox clergy was raised in a Roman Catholic spirit and taught theology in Latin."¹⁰⁶ As a result of the predominance of Western intellectual "schools" in the modern Russian elites, a desk reference book for Russian Orthodox clergy, authored by Sergei Vasilevich Bulgakov and "officially sanctioned" and published by the Russian Orthodox church in 1913 addresses the teachings of Hesychasm under a section devoted to "Schisms, Heresies, Sects, etc.," and its treatment of Hesychasm echoes the accusations of Gregory Palamas's scholastic critics and chief antagonist, the Calabrian Uniate monk Barlaam.¹⁰⁷ Additionally, for several centuries, while many Russian tsars were nominally Orthodox Christians, in reality they maintained a brutal, essentially anti-Christian, regime, and they treated most of their own people as slaves.

During the Soviet regime, the Russian Orthodox church was unable to give witness to Hesychasm, and, due to the KGB's suffocating

106. Florovsky, *Collected Works, Volume 5: Ways of Russian Theology: Part One*, 72.

107. Nedelsky, *Palamas in Exile*, 18.

control over the Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow, the Russian Orthodox church was compelled to adjust ecclesiology to the state policy. Given that Marxism-Leninism is a purely modern Western and materialist ideology, the Soviet regime rendered the Patriarchate of Moscow incapable of giving witness to Hesychasm. In particular, the intrinsic anti-Christian ethos and legacy of Marxism has been thoroughly analyzed by Richard Wurmbrand in his book *Marx and Satan*.¹⁰⁸

The aforementioned cultural adventures and contradictions of the Slavic world and, especially, of Russia have been aptly addressed by the Russian novelist Fyodor M. Dostoyevsky and by the Russian theologian Georges Florovsky. In the modern era, Russian philosophical thought has been dominated by Enlightenment scholars, existentialists, Marxists, New Age mystics, and a few sympathizers of Fascism, who are all representatives of modern Western intellectual currents. For this reason, in the modern world, Russia has great geopolitical power, but it has little “soft power,”¹⁰⁹ since it cannot articulate a coherent alternative existential proposal of potentially global relevance.

The Political Significance of Methexiology

Those who have a plebeian ethos, such as the bourgeois plutocracy and the Marxist leaders, are hungry for power due to their spiritual poverty and psychological perversion, and, therefore, they are unable and too poor to give. On the other hand, methexiology underpins and gives rise to an aristocratic ethos, and a true aristocrat is one who manifests his aristocracy by *giving*. Therefore, methexiology underpins and gives rise to an ethical transition from a plebeian, that is, brutal quest for selfish power to a noble ideal of giving and even of giving one’s own self for the sake of the idea of the Good.

108. We might also note that Vladimir I. Lenin had been trained on the Isle of Capri in the cult beliefs of the Emperor Tiberius, who murdered Christ.

109. In his book *The Future of Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), Joseph Nye, Jr. has discerned “hard power,” which is the ability to get what you want through coercion and/or payment (i.e., through “sticks and carrots”), and “soft power,” which is the ability to get what you want through attraction, which arises from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, institutions, and political behavior. In other words, according to Nye’s typology of power, hard power consists in commanding others to “change their behavior against their initial preferences” and/or in the ability to control agendas, whereas soft power consists in “the ability to affect others’ preferences so that they want what you want”; see Nye, Jr., *The Future of Power*, 11.

The necessary underpinning of the survival of a superior humanity is neither the state nor the race, but humanity's transparency to the transcendent, namely, the ultimate source of the meaning of existence. Everything that takes place in the world exists due to its end, or purpose, or logos. Thus, the pursuit of the source of the significance of beings and things gives rise to a specific epistemology: by the term "knowledge," one should not merely refer to one's intellectual penetration into the essence of a being. By the term "knowledge," one should primarily refer to the knowledge of a being's end, or logos. In other words, my theory of methexiology implies a teleological epistemology, in the context of which beings are not merely substances, but every being's substance is continuously united with its meaning. Therefore, when one refers to a union or a society of beings, he should not necessarily mean a natural, or substantial, type of unity, that is, he should not necessarily mean the absorption and elimination of the particular into the general, nor should he mean that a being is constrained by the coercive logic of its nature. By contrast, from the perspective of my teleological theory of knowledge, unity or society means the participation of a set of beings in the same meaning, that is, in the same ultimate existential purpose, or in the same ultimate will.

As a conclusion, human society should not be regarded as a consequence of the common nature of human beings. Human society does not stem from the general conception of "humanity." If human society is regarded as a consequence of the common nature of human beings, then its unity is founded on the logic of nature, which seeks the affirmation of instincts, and, thus, the society of human beings does not differ from that of bees or ants, and it necessarily counters freedom of consciousness. On the other hand, from the perspective of methexiology, which I propose in this book, the foundation of human society is not nature, but a transcendent logos, namely, the source of the significance of beings and things, which transcends individual consciousness and yet can be participated by the human being. Therefore, from the perspective of my theory of methexiology, the society of human beings is founded on humanity's spiritual freedom, since it is a consequence of a decision of human beings to agree on the meaning of certain things that characterize their lives.

My theory of methexiology gives rise to a theocentric political system that endows human freedom and value with ontological underpinnings in complete agreement with the Bible. First of all, in the Old Testament, in 1 Samuel 8:1–21, we read that Samuel was displeased when Israelis said to him, "Give us a king to judge us," and, after he prayed to

God, Samuel passed on God's warning to the people who asked him for a king: sovereignty belongs only to God, and, if people choose a man to be their sovereign king, then, someday, their human king will exploit and oppress them. However, since "the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel," the latter, after praying to God, decided to listen to people's voice and make them a king. Thus, according to this passage, not only does sovereignty belong only to God, but also a temporal king's authority stems from people's approval and God's concession. In the same spirit, in the New Testament, we read that the ultimate authority is not any historical institution or ruler, but God himself (Acts 4:19 and 1 Cor 6:1–6). Additionally, in Colossians 2:15, the apostle Paul writes about the impact of Jesus Christ's ministry on worldly rulers and principalities: "Having stripped the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it [i.e., the cross]."

Far from negating the quest for freedom that underpins the theory of human rights, methexiology leads to a theocentric type of philosophical conservatism in order to assert a vision of human freedom that, by being metaphysically founded, is essentially more radical than the most radical requests and visions of modern liberals, since methexiology is aimed at the *deification* of humanity.

What do I mean by the term "philosophical conservatism," as opposed to other tenets of conservatism? I mean an attitude according to which one should examine every aspect of a being or thing and preserve every element of that being or thing that has a value. In other words, my conception of philosophical conservatism consists in respecting, protecting, and retaining everything that has a value. In fact, my conception of philosophical conservatism is, to a large extent, inherent in the etymology of the English word "conservatism," which is derived from the Latin prefix *con-* (meaning "together," "with," and "from every aspect") and the Latin verb *servare* (meaning "to watch over" and "to guard"). Similarly, the Greek term *syntereticōs* (meaning conservative) is derived from the Greek prefix *syn-* (which is equivalent to the Latin prefix *con-*) and the Greek verb *terō* (meaning "to retain," "to keep," and "to examine"). On the other hand, the dominant tenet of modern Anglo-American conservatism stems from its advocates' limited imagination and from their attempt to control and restrain people's imagination. Moreover, in contrast to my conception of philosophical conservatism, revolutionary conservatism, which was a German national conservative movement prominent in the years following the First World War, is a reaction against the

principles of the French Revolution and the Jacobins, it is a politicized expression of old German nobility's aesthetics, and it aims at preserving the political privileges of the elites *vis-à-vis* the "mob"; as Armin Mohler has pointedly observed, the advocates of the Conservative Revolutionary movement can be regarded as the "Trotskyists" of National Socialism.¹¹⁰

Both the dominant tenet of modern Anglo-American conservatism (which is intimately related to the intellectual passivity of British empiricism) and the Conservative Revolutionary movement (which is intimately related to the German national character's propensity for extreme voluntarism) tend to use humanity as a means to historical ends; the first uses people as a means to the preservation of the established regime, while the latter uses people as a means to the historical manifestation of the national spirit's power. In contrast to both modern Anglo-American conservatism and the Conservative Revolutionary movement, my conception of philosophical conservatism gives primacy to metaphysics over history, it endows humanity with a metaphysical, that is, *a priori*, value, and, therefore, it precludes the use of humanity merely as a means to any historical end.

Without metaphysics, human beings are determined by the powers of nesting, digesting, and congesting, like monkeys for instance. Additionally, without metaphysics, the political system reduces to a tragic and funny process according to which monkeys rule other monkeys.¹¹¹ If politics does not have any metaphysical underpinnings, then the question of whether a monkey A or a monkey B is the ruler is funny and, ultimately, insignificant. Methexiology teaches self-mastery through personal communion between oneself and the Good-in-itself, also called the deity. Furthermore, methexiology is "pro-life," not only in quantitative terms, but also in qualitative terms, precisely, methexiology is "pro" the best of what humans can make of themselves.

The theocratic element that is inherent into methexiology aims at limiting and guiding government "from above," that is, metaphysically, and not merely through secular libertarian arguments or through social contract theory. Only an ontologically solid truth with which humans can establish a personal relationship can *really*, that is, ontologically, endow the human individual with an *a priori* value and with sacredness and, thus, *really* limit government's powers. Within the context of

110. Mohler, *Die Konservative Revolution*.

111. See also Deloire and Dubois, *Circus Politicus*.

methexiology, “freedom from” is inextricably linked to “freedom to,” in the sense that human freedom from arbitrary and oppressive authorities is inextricably linked to and dependent upon humanity’s existential potential and *telos*, specifically, the deification of humanity. Thus, at the political level, my theory of methexiology underpins a system of theocratic anarchy.

A theocratic anarchist is a person who contests that the human individual has an ontologically grounded, intrinsic nobility stemming from the essential ability of the human being to participate in God’s uncreated energy and, thus, to be deified. Furthermore, from the perspective of theocratic anarchy, “anarchy” does not signify democracy carried to its logical conclusion, but it signifies the universalization of nobility through metaphysics. The “anarch” is not an ideologically driven “anarchist,” but a spiritually free person. Thus, whereas liberals silence the difference between “civil rights” and “civil liberties,” emphasizing the first while ignoring or even suppressing the latter, theocratic anarchy safeguards civil liberties by endowing them with metaphysical authority. Civil rights refer to government policies that protect individuals from discrimination by the government or other individuals, whereas civil liberties refer to the constitutional protections of citizen’s freedoms from government abuse. By emphasizing civil rights, while simultaneously silencing and suppressing civil liberties, liberal regimes degrade into liberal oligarchies, since they justify the expansion of government power and manipulate people’s consciousness by claiming that, in these ways, they act as protectors of people’s civil rights, which, thus, become a synonym for a government-controlled conception of “political correctness.”

Judges 9:8–15 is one of the most eloquent libertarian pieces of the Bible:

The trees set out to anoint a king over themselves. They said to the olive tree, “Reign over us.” But the olive tree said to them, “Should I stop producing my oil, with which they honor God and man by me, and go to wave back and forth over the trees?” The trees said to the fig tree, “Come and reign over us.” But the fig tree said to them, “Should I leave my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to wave back and forth over the trees?” The trees said to the vine, “Come and reign over us.” The vine said to them, “Should I leave my new wine, which cheers God and man, and go to wave back and forth over the trees?” Then all the trees said to the bramble, “Come and reign over us.” The bramble said to the trees, “If in truth you anoint me king over you, then come

and take refuge in my shade; and if not, let fire come out of the
bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.”

In the aforementioned symbolical biblical passage, authoritarian power attracts a tyrannical, corrupt, and culturally poor personage, symbolized by the bramble, whereas it is passed over by the virtuous personages, symbolized by the olive tree, the fig tree, and the vine, all of whom chose a life of service to humanity and of devotion to God over the might of the shrub state. Thus, as we read in Acts 5:29, “Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men.’”

Intimately related to my conception of Christian libertarianism, or theocratic anarchy, is a system of political economy that is founded on the following three libertarian principles:

1. The foundation and the core of the economic system must consist in a system of personal property rights and voluntary exchanges of goods and services, and taxation should be minimal.
2. The economic system must preclude any symbiotic relationship between business and government; in other words, every type of state capitalism should be eliminated. In this sense, the U.S. military-industrial complex, the Western financial oligopolies, the International Monetary Fund, the Eurozone, and the big welfare state institutions (which are extremely socially expensive in terms of taxation) are characteristic examples of capitalist institutions that contradict and actively impede the operation of the free market. International trade should be as free as possible, “corporate welfare” (that is, government handouts to business) should be minimized, and the distribution of economic information should be as efficient as possible.
3. Economic decision-making, even with regard to issues that are assumed to belong to the sphere of the so-called “welfare state” (e.g., social security, education, administration of justice, etc.), should be as much decentralized, free, and privatized as possible, thus leading to the substitution of the welfare state by a society founded on mutualism and voluntarism. In this context, government welfare should be replaced with private charity and with a negative income tax system,¹¹² and the social security system should be privatized.

¹¹². Assume that X is a family of n members, and that a minimum income of $\$k$ is desirable for this type of families. If X 's earned income is less than $\$k$, then X can be

Additionally, custodial sentence (serving a prison term) and capital punishment (death) should be abolished and replaced with alternative sentences, such as psychotherapy programs, community service, fines, probation, and restitution.

There is an absolute antinomy between Marxism and Christianity, and, therefore, there is an absolute antinomy between Marxism and methexiology, too, because, in 1859, in his Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Karl Marx argued that “it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.”¹¹³ Marxism is a populist and eschatological (hence, quasi-religious) imaginary creation and social movement that excites desperate people by proposing a vision of earthly justice.

As it has been pointed out by the prominent British philosopher Bertrand Russell, the secular eschatology and the quasi-religious nature of Marxism are modeled on a materialist interpretation (precisely, distortion) of the Bible in accordance with the following correspondences:

Bible	Marxism
Yahweh	Dialectical Materialism
Messiah	Marx
The Chosen People	The Proletariat
The Church	The Communist Party
The Second Coming of Christ	The Proletariat Revolution
Hell	Punishment of the bourgeoisie/ capitalists
The thousand year reign of peace	Communism

Whereas Marx’s secular utopia is founded on a vision of earthly justice, in the name of which any crime can be justified (as it happened in the Soviet coalition and in Maoist China in the twentieth century), genuine Christianity believes in the justice of the heavens. The Christians’ belief

assisted by applying a negative income tax. That is, the national income tax might be structured so that, while X pays taxes to the government for income earned in excess of \$k, the government will make negative tax (subsidy) payments to X on the amount by which X’s earned income falls short of \$k.

113. Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx*.

in the justice of the heavens does not mean that Christians seek to find justice only in the afterlife, but it means that a genuine Christian's perception of justice never submits to any historical necessity, or to any coercive legal order. A genuine Christian would never redistribute wealth, unless he had previously changed people's conscience in such a way that people's own perception of justice would motivate them to voluntarily redistribute their wealth. In particular, a genuine Christian's perception of justice does not dictate that one who has no shirt should take another person's shirt, but it dictates that one who has two shirts should voluntarily share with the one who has none.¹¹⁴

Methexiology and World Order

Any international order is caused radically (in the ontological sense) by something else, namely, by the intentionality of the consciousness of the international actors. Any international order is not a "given" to be reckoned with by the particular members of the world system, but it is a creation of consciousness. Therefore, a humane and viable world order is a world order of particularity, that is, a "multipolar system," a term that has been highlighted by the Russian geopolitician Alexander Dugin of the State University of Moscow. However, even though multipolarity gives rise to the ontology of freedom in the field of international relations, it entails important risks, too, and, therefore, multipolarity must be interpreted in a way that combines existential otherness (individuality) and sociality.

The first risk that is inherent in the theory of multipolarity is that, by over-emphasizing the actors' existential otherness and by isolating the actors' existential otherness from their socialization in the world system, multipolarity can cultivate aggressive individualism (in this case, by the term "individual," I mean an international-political actor, e.g., a state, a civilization zone, etc.), instead of promoting the idea of personhood. A "person," or hypostasis, is a socialized individual, or an-individual-in-a-relationship. Therefore, international-political actors (e.g., states and civilization zones) can become "persons" only if they are partakers of a truth that transcends them. As a result of its participation in the transcendent, an international-political actor acquires an individual value (exactly due to its relationship with the transcendent), and the different

¹¹⁴. Luke 3:11.

international-political actors that are aware of their participation in the transcendent constitute an international-political society, that is, they recognize each other as members of a truth that can be participated by each one of them but transcends every one of them. In other words, international-political actors can become persons only if they have a common, universal, existential mirror in which they can look at themselves and evaluate themselves.

The second risk that is inherent in the theory of multipolarity is that it may cultivate the mentality that people are necessarily—that is, ontologically—constrained by geopolitical categories or that people are necessarily prisoners of geopolitical divisions. On the contrary, due to the freedom of spirit, humanity is not a being of the earth (in Greek, *gaia*), but is a being of a “place beyond heaven,” according to the terminology that is used by Plato in *Phaedrus*. Humanity is determined by geopolitical necessities only if and to the extent that it compromises its spiritual freedom, and, therefore, it decides to be ontologically self-degraded. Thus, according to John 4:24, Jesus Christ said to a Samaritan woman that there would no longer be limitations of geography in worshiping God, for “God is spirit.” In other words, humanity’s relationship with its existential purpose transcends geopolitics and “sacred geography.” Furthermore, science and technology, which are creations of the human mind, in the image of God’s creative activity, enable humanity to overcome geographical necessities by providing humans with potentially unlimited economic resources.

The ontology of particularity is a condition *sine qua non* for the creation of a world order worthy of human beings. However, we must answer the following question: how can one socialize the actors of the international system, and, furthermore, how can one prevent particularity from degenerating into aggressive and destructive individuality (e.g., aggressive nationalism/communitarianism)?

The relations among international-political actors are unthinkable without the event of communication. Hence, the event of communication in the international sphere manifests each world order not simply as something instituted, that is, historically given, but as something constituted, that is, constantly realized (structured and restructured) as an event of intentional communication. Each actor of the world system (nations, transnational organizations, civilization zones, etc.) is ontologically founded on communication, which means that there is no such thing as a pure international-political subject, conceivable in itself,

and simultaneously communication is founded on a concrete and free international-political hypostasis.

In world politics, as in the context of societal relations, in general, a person cannot exist without communication, and, therefore, the globalists are right to the extent that they recognize and declare the ontological significance of communication. Simultaneously, communication should never deny or suppress the person, and, therefore, the anti-globalists are right when they recognize and declare the ontological significance of otherness. The previous arguments lead us to what the Greek church fathers, in general, and the Hesychasts, in particular, mean by the term “hypostatic mode of being,” or personhood. Thus, methexiology, being founded on Hesychasm, urges us to think about international relations in terms of communion.

Methexiology can operate as a very important spiritual underpinning of the United Nations by promoting the idea of an “international-political hypostasis,” or “great political hypostasis.” In principle, the United Nations belongs to no particular international-political actor, since it is intrinsically international, and, therefore, in principle, it can serve every international-political actor. From this perspective, the United Nations has an unrivalled moral status in the international-political system.

Methexiology can further empower the United Nations by highlighting the United Nations as a global society of international-political hypostases. In the context of such a model of global society, each and every international-political actor could freely experience its existential otherness, but, simultaneously, it would be socialized through its participation in a universal truth, that is, in a truth that transcends history and individual interests. In particular, the universal truth that can transform the United Nations into a global society of international-political hypostases is the freedom of the human being from historical necessity and the acknowledgement of the human being as the universal mediator who unifies the world with its existential purpose. This image of a universe that reveals its vocation through humanity has been stressed by Maximus the Confessor and is particularly significant for an ontologically grounded humanism, which should be the spiritual foundation of every institution of global governance.

The aforementioned approach to international relations, which emphasizes the transformation of the international-political actors into international-political hypostases (“individuals-in-relationships”) and the transformation of the United Nations into a global society of

international-political hypostases, posits that the deeply Christian values of conciliarity and discretion should be the norm in a prescriptive way, thus constraining the use of coercive power and threats. Without the concept of “international-political hypostasis,” society reduces to a fragile association of individual interests or to a coercive rationalist order, in which individuals are aggregated like objects. In other words, without the concept of “international-political hypostasis,” the attempt to create a viable world society is chimerical.

As a conclusion, in the sphere of international politics, methexiology can be understood as a meta-political “custodian” of humanity’s sociality and as the most solid metaphysical foundation of humanism. By looking at politics from a meta-political standpoint, that is, from outside the political sphere itself, methexiology can grasp the reason and the purpose of the entire political stage, since a methexiologist transcends mere individuality and is aware that his identity is located in his communion with the universal Logos and with his fellow humans, who are also partakers of the universal Logos. The kind of humanism that stems from methexiology is based neither on the Cartesian “cogito” (I know) principle nor on the Heideggerian “sum” (am) principle, but it is based on the awareness that our humanity is grounded on and stems from our divinity, in accordance with Jesus Christ’s proclamation “You are gods” (John 10:34).

According to methexiology, the human being is ontologically and morally prior and hence superior to any historical entity (state, nation, economic system, etc.), since “God created humankind in his image” (Gen 1:27). Even though human beings are shaped by the historical communities to which they belong, their value and their existential purpose transcend every historical community. This is the essence of methexiology’s cosmopolitanism. Thus, even though each community may have its own ethics (that is, its own concrete morality stemming from a rational social order where rational institutions and laws provide the content of conscientious conviction), the value of the human being as a potential god overrides every system of social ethics. From the previous perspective, methexiology provides a metaphysical underpinning for human rights and for a world order centered on the divinity of man, and it urges us to evaluate civilizations according to the degree to which they recognize the divinity of man and help man to become aware of and actualize his potential divinity.

The Structure of this Book

I have organized the present book along seven chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: Being and Its Presence: In this chapter, I study the concept of being and the different aspects of being throughout the history of philosophy, and I expound methexiology as an ontological orientation.

Chapter 2: Access to Being: Seeking the being, the philosophizing mind can choose among several paths to the conception of being. These “paths” are the methods according to which the philosophical activity may take place. In this chapter, I study and evaluate the different philosophical methods, and I expound the methexiological method.

Chapter 3: The Modes of Being: Being is not a simple reality, but it is receptive of attributes that correspond to its constitutive elements and powers. Each of these elements and powers is a parameter of the ontic function. This chapter is concerned with the different ways in which the modes of being have been studied throughout the history of philosophy and with the Hesychasts’ theory of God’s essence and energies. I elucidate the importance of methexiology for the study of the modes of being.

Chapter 4: Epistemology and the Noetic Faculty of the Soul: From the perspective of my theory of methexiology, “soul” is the totality of the faculties and the attributes of the human being that transcend pure biology. Moreover, the term “soul” refers to the personal manner in which each human being manifests life. The purpose of this chapter is to study the problems of knowledge and truth and the Hesychasts’ theory of the mind and to elucidate methexiology’s contribution to epistemology.

Chapter 5: Mystery, Grace, and Philosophical Theology: Through Unselfishness to Deification: In this chapter, I elucidate the nature of methexiology as a philosophical theology and as a theological philosophy, and I compare and contrast it with other attempts that have been made in the field of philosophical theology, such as John Milbank’s “Radical Orthodoxy” and Oliver Davies’s “Transformation Theology.”

Chapter 6: Psychotherapy: The Secret Potential of the Mind: This chapter is given over to an examination of different theories of psychotherapy (paying particular attention to Freud’s and Jung’s thoughts) and to the study of the nature, the structure, the powers, and the problems of the human soul from the standpoint of methexiology.

Chapter 7: Axiology, Ethics, and Justice: In Plato’s *Apology* 38a, Socrates argues that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” This chapter is devoted to the study of the nature of moral consciousness

74 Methexiology

(conscience), to the examination of different theories of the moral criterion (e.g., Bentham and Mill's utilitarianism, Adam Smith's principle of sympathy, Kant's moral rationalism, etc.) and to methexiology's contribution to axiology, ethics, and the theory of justice.