

“UNDERGROUNDED CHRISTIANITY...”

The main topic of Prof. IIEvlampiev's monograph "UNDERTAKING CHRISTIANITY" AND ITS ORIGINAL SOURCES" hypothesis is as follows: Gnosticism of the 1st–4th centuries is a legitimate version of Christianity. This fundamental (over 800 pages, published in 2024) monograph substantiates the hypothesis that Gnosticism of the 1st–4th centuries, which the church fought as a heresy, is a legitimate version of Christianity, more in line with **the original Teaching of Jesus Christ**, rather than the orthodox version of His Teaching proclaimed by the Christian church.

Prof. IIEvlampiev's monograph analyzes the oldest early Christian texts sources: the Gospel of John, the Gospel of Thomas, the Apocrypha of John, the Gospel of Philip and the Gospel of Truth, the late origin of the Synoptic Gospels (mid-2nd century) is proven, which were compiled specifically to support a distorted version of Christian teaching. The second part of the monograph shows how the most prominent thinkers of the first millennium of Christian history – from Valentinus and Origen to John Scotus Eriugena – developed the most detailed possible in their teachings the philosophical justification of the worldview of true (gnostic) Christianity.

The examination of the original philosophical systems of later centuries reveals **the concern to restore true Christianity and establish it in life** for the sake of European society. salvation from the spiritual and social catastrophe that threatens it. The monograph is intended for specialists in the history of biblical studies and philosophy and for all those interested in the history of Christianity. history, its various trends, its current state, as well as those who want to understand the logic of the development of European philosophy. The book's **FOREWORD** and **CONCLUSIONS** are **published here**, which will help you get acquainted with the topic and stimulate interest in the work of this author.

IIEvlampiev "UNDIFFERENT CHRISTIANITY AND ITS ORIGINAL SOURCES"

FOREWORD

For many centuries, European philosophy was greatly influenced by Christian teachings and the Christian church. It was only in the 18th century that a tendency emerged not only to separate philosophy from Christianity and from religion as such, but even to include religious ideas. The denial of the significance of religion for philosophy. The strengthening of this trend over two centuries has led to a natural result: most modern philosophers do not consider themselves connected with religious ideas, and this process is also portrayed as "progress" because it is interpreted as the liberation of philosophy from the "dictatorship" of religion and the achievement of a final and "free" form that corresponds to its essence.

It cannot be denied that the emergence of this trend in the 19th century had valid reasons. For centuries, church teaching limited the freedom of philosophical thought with its unyielding demands for dogmatic correctness. The great European thinkers never reconciled themselves to these artificial restrictions and protested against the very desire to subordinate philosophical thought to external goals. But does this mean that philosophy should completely break ties with religion and consider it only as an obstacle to the full development of human freedom? Turning once again to the great

authority of past thinkers, we will find an unambiguous answer to this question: a philosophy that is completely separated from religion and does not carry religious ideas in itself is generally unworthy of its name and does not correspond to its essence. The main task of philosophy is to help a person realize his *absoluteness and infinity*, to reveal *the infinite dimension of his being*. However, infinite

The perception of human essence, leading to the practical perception of this essence in the world, *is religiosity, understood by philosophy in the most general and natural sense*.

By rejecting any connection with religion, philosophy denies the existence of the aforementioned infinite dimension in man, but this means that it understands man as a finite being, to whom the same laws apply as to all of nature. This leads to the fact that man ceases to understand himself, loses his sense *of the supernatural*, and begins to see himself as a natural being.

"mechanism" (or as a "supercomputer", in modern terminology). Thus he loses the idea about the higher goals of one's existence and the meaning of life. This is exactly what is happening in the modern world. The crisis of a civilization that has lost its understanding of the true goals of its existence is at the same time a crisis of man himself, who does not recognize himself as an absolute, infinite being. And this is mainly related to the crisis of philosophy, which has ceased to be the highest and most important knowledge about man and has become an optional addition to science.

Thus, the denial of philosophy's essence is most clearly manifested in the denial of its connection with religion. But let us consider again why many serious European thinkers fought against the attempts of religion to influence philosophical thought. The answer lies in the nature of religion itself and in the nature of

The ambiguity of Christianity. For centuries, the Christian church imposed the view that it alone was the heir of Jesus Christ and the "owner" of his teachings, that its infinite

The fight against various deviations from dogmatic teaching has only one goal - to preserve the teachings of Jesus.

The purity of the Revelation brought by Christ. In this belief lies that *radical distortion of the European worldview*, which, having persisted for many centuries, has led to the fact that the foundations of our entire civilization have become deeply flawed. It was not until the 20th century, when numerous ancient texts were discovered, showing how complex and diverse the early

Christian ideas, we have been able to properly understand what is true in the Christian tradition and what is false and false. But even without the evidence of the past that we have,

Many thinkers of past centuries recognized the ambiguity of the Christian movement,

the presence in it of fundamentally very different tendencies, opposite in meaning; the truth about the real

The content of Christian Revelation survived, despite all persecution and harassment.

For the first time in the history of philosophy, Johann Gottlieb Fichte decided to express directly an idea that many people had guessed. "In our opinion," Fichte declared, "there are two very different forms of Christianity:

the Christianity of *the Gospel of John* and the Christianity of *the Apostle Paul*, among

whose like-minded people are also other evangelists, especially

Luke". Fichte considered only the Gospel according to John to be an expression of *true Christianity*, the true teaching of Jesus Christ, and the remaining monuments to be the result of a distortion of this teaching.

The essence of this distortion is the introduction of elements of Judaism into the teaching of Jesus, primarily the idea of the radical sinfulness of man, due to which man turns into an imperfect being, distant from God.

It is this false, distorted Christianity that, unfortunately, triumphed over the Christian churches throughout history.

In the name of. Nevertheless, true Christianity did not disappear; it lived and developed, despite all persecutions, only occasionally bursting to the surface of public life in the form of mass heresies

However, these episodic manifestations were not at all the main thing in its existence; the main form of the existence of true Christianity was *European philosophy*, or rather, not all philosophy, but only one, but very influential, tradition of it - ***the tradition of mystical pantheism***,

based on the idea that the world and man constantly reside in God and can in no way "escape" from his identity with God. The fatal difference between the two versions of the Christian movement The split occurred in the 2nd century, when the leaders of the newly formed church realized that the great teachings of Jesus Christ were too complex and difficult for ordinary people to implement. in earthly life and completely unfit to rule millions of masses. After all, Christ taught how a person can become a perfect, divine being, and not somewhere "in heaven", but directly in earthly life, and this is most clearly reflected in the main of *the authentic* ancient Christianity monuments – in the Gospel of John. For its own purposes, the church decided to combine the new teaching with the old, with Judaism, borrowing from it such "useful" religious concepts for earthly rulers as the idea of original sin, the idea of the church as a salvific authority, the idea of the Last Judgment as a constant threat to sinners, as well as the very concept of a "religion of law" that divides people into rulers and ruled.

The Orthodox Christianity that emerged in this way, with a much stronger organization and a much greater "will to power" than all other Christian groups, very quickly enslaved the entire Christian movement and eventually began to persecute those who continued to profess Jesus The teaching of Christ in its original purity. These Christians, who remained faithful to their Master, were called "*Gnostics*" and declared the main enemies of the "*triumphant*" church.

Since the teachings of Jesus Christ had already taken on a developed philosophical form by the 3rd-4th centuries, The struggle with the "Gnostics" also passed into the sphere of ideas, and here, unlike in the sphere of public life, the church could not achieve a final victory over its opponents. As a result, the entire history of medieval philosophy looks like **a struggle between two ideological trends - one that developed the orthodox teaching of the church, and one that relied on the authentic teaching of Christ** and gave this teaching an original philosophical development. Christian ideas, with all their ambiguity, became the foundation of philosophy for centuries, therefore, **in general, the entire history of European philosophy (from the 2nd century to the present day) is essentially a struggle between the tradition of mystical pantheism, based on the undistorted teaching of Jesus Christ,** and various currents that deny

the significance of this Christian tradition as a universal philosophy: the anti-religious tendencies that emerged in the Age of Enlightenment, which became the very foundations of orthodox Christianity a by-product of existence. After all, the figures of the Enlightenment era supported the ideas characteristic of orthodox Christianity - the existence of an unbridgeable distance between God and the created world to which man belongs. A natural consequence of such a concept is the idea that man can completely ignore God (the "clock" of the world) in his earthly existence, because neither the presence nor his absence of God is in any way significantly reflected in our being. From such an understanding of the history of philosophy, two main turning points can be found. The first is the Renaissance, when the crisis of the Christian church, which had betrayed the precepts of its founder, became so obvious that an influential movement was born that returned civilization to true Christianity, and man to his true goals on this earth. The Renaissance became the greatest era in European history precisely because for a certain time true Christianity became the basis of cultural development, and the abundance of cultural achievements achieved during the century and a half of the Renaissance era is clear evidence of the fruitfulness and long-term significance of the teachings of Christ for European civilization. However The Renaissance suffered a historical failure, the church once again won, and European culture was again drawn into the strict framework of dogmatic Christianity. A corresponding "counter-revolution" also took place in philosophy. Philosophy returned to the fold of orthodox Christianity, although the church could no longer to destroy their own creations – atheistic teaching; materialistic and positivist ideas The destructive work continued and eventually led to a natural result: in our day, European philosophy has practically lost its meaningful existence.

The rationalist model of man, developed by the philosophy of the 17th and 18th centuries, was surprisingly similar to the medieval idea of man: in both cases, man appeared to be an insignificant part of existence, without any significant purpose in the universe. This "medieval" belittling of man caused a reaction among the most insightful German thinkers of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, which gave rise to a philosophical movement that repeated in a much more mature form the action of the Renaissance - restoring the basic uncorrupted principles of Jesus Christ

rights and on that basis created a new philosophical picture of man. A special role here played by the pioneer of this movement, I. Kant. It is hardly possible to

cannot be called a *Christian* thinker to the same extent as other great European thinkers, but it was he who took the most important step towards a new form of true Christianity.

renaissance in philosophy. It was much easier for his direct successor Fichte to take the last step step along this path and clearly formulate the very idea of the need to choose between true and distorted Christianity. The great Russian thinkers of that era – F. Dostoevsky, L.

Tolstoy, V. Solovyov – also wrote about the same need to overcome the historical layers of lies and return Christianity to its lost purity. Solovyov's statement about the "medieval

The crisis of the "worldview" is particularly indicative: he, like no other, understood that even at the end of the 19th century, official Christianity remained "medieval", that is, it catastrophically failed to meet the requirements of history and culture, and did not correspond to the worldview of man of the new era.

Based on the ideas of his great predecessors (Ficht, Herzen and Dostoevsky), **Solovyov**

defined with astonishing severity, but extremely correctly, the radical distortion of the great teaching of Jesus Christ that occurred in European history: "Under Constantine the Great and under Constantine, the

pagan masses flocked to Christianity

not out of conviction, but out of slavish appeasement or selfish intentions. A previously unknown type of Christian hypocrite emerged <...> The once truly Christian society decayed and dissolved into

Christian in name, but essentially a pagan community. Most of the new converts wanted everything to remain as it was before. They recognized the

truth as an external fact and established certain external formal relations with it, but only so that their life would remain pagan, as before, so that the secular kingdom would remain

worldly, and the kingdom of God, not being of this world, would remain outside the world, having no no vital influence on him.

This situation remained unchanged throughout the subsequent centuries of "Christian" Europe, due to whom, as Solovyov bitterly notes, in recent centuries the Spirit of Christ has acted not so much through the church as through people who "do not believe in Him." Drawing on Dostoevsky's legacy, Solovyov speaks of the need to move from historical "temple" Christianity, which has almost no influence on the personal and social life of people, to universal

Christianity, which "must embrace all of humanity and all human affairs."

A century and a half of European history – from the beginning of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century – ideologically repeated the period of the 15th and first half of the 16th centuries, a new and final period of philosophical and cultural flourishing of European civilization, which brought back the spirit of the Renaissance. However, the historical content of the new era was completely different; the Renaissance figures in The future could be viewed optimistically, because the global crisis of civilization had just begun and it was still possible to hope to overcome it.

Thinking people of the 19th century could no longer be overly optimistic: centuries of

The reign of false Christianity brought civilization to a state that was fraught with final catastrophe.

Therefore, the greatest thinkers of the non-classical tradition, such as

Solovyov, Dostoevsky and Nietzsche acted more as critics of the contemporary situation than as prophets of a new flourishing of civilization. But it is still important to see behind their criticisms a positive vision of the future, their faith in this future. And if we correctly understand their historical insights, we can understand the unity of their aspirations; and then the "atheist" Nietzsche will appear as devoted a follower of Jesus Christ as his Russian "opponents" F. Dostoevsky, L. Tolstoy and V. Solovyov.

It is especially necessary to mention the role of Henri Bergson in the "restoration" of true Christianity, which took place in the philosophy of the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Formally, Bergson never directly speaks of his commitment to the Christian worldview; in his works we find only criticism of traditional, orthodox Christianity and its unchanging philosophical basis - Christian Platonism.

However, in relation to Bergson, the above-mentioned

Solovyov's decision is correct (Leo Tolstoy wrote about this in his book "What is my faith?"): in the new era that began in the middle of the 19th century, the most faithful successors of Christ were usually those who were cold towards traditional Christianity or even denied it.

In his last book, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, Bergson is not afraid to directly call his philosophy religious and even mystical; his main goal is to express philosophically rigorously (as far as possible) that universal religious worldview without which neither the individual nor humanity can live. And, of course, in this universal religious worldview we recognize

the true teaching of Jesus Christ, alive and fruitful in the 20th century as in the 1st. Unfortunately, Bergson turned out to be one of the last great thinkers to directly recognize the dependence of his philosophy on the universal religious worldview, which was most fully revealed in early Christianity. A very similar system of ideas was created after Bergson by M.

Heidegger, but it is already quite difficult to discern in his philosophy the features of a true Christian teaching; he rather plays with Christian principles than truly believes in them, and therefore his role in history is twofold: being the legitimate representative of the last great epoch of European philosophy, he simultaneously acts as one of those who are moving towards a nihilistic criticism of the past, which, having developed into a form of "postmodernism", in just half a century will lead European thought to complete collapse. They really took over deeply the religious traditions of 19th century philosophy. /.../

The final catastrophe of European civilization associated with World War II interrupted the processes in culture and philosophy that had been underway since the beginning of the 19th century. The second half of the 20th century opened a completely new era in European history; after a few decades it becomes clear that this leads not to a revival, but to the final extinction of Western civilization. And this fading is most clearly manifested in the disappearance of the great European philosophical tradition. Only in Russia does philosophy retain its commitment to the traditions of the past, which is determined by the revival of pre-revolutionary religious philosophy, which remains the only force capable of resisting the destructive tendencies generated by postmodernism.

If in the West the great cultural past of Europe is increasingly forgotten – it no longer means anything to a modern European – then in Russia our great cultural history, in unity with the great European culture, remains an effective factor in modern life; the more closely we look at the past, the more optimistically we plan for the future. It is the past, cleansed of lies and understood in all its grandeur, that is the foundation on which we can boldly build the future. And the keystone in the foundation on which it will be possible to build a future meaningful philosophy and a future creative culture, is true Christianity, finally emerging after many centuries of silence and distortion*.

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CONCLUSIONS

The teachings of Jesus Christ in their original form were so innovative, they put forward such grandiose ideas about man and human relations that it was difficult to believe in the real embodiment of his goals in the imperfect society of antiquity. And yet Christianity quickly became an influential movement that attracted many people who abandoned their previous imperfect lives and tried to get closer to the ideal outlined by Christ. Their new way of life went beyond the ordinary way of life and meant something truly mystical to those who remained immersed in ordinary life. The pragmatic attitude of some Christian churches

(primarily the Roman Church) leaders quickly realized that on such foundations it is impossible to create an organization similar to the Jewish church, providing churches hierarchs unlimited power over the flock. People who have achieved at least relative perfection Under the influence of Christ's teaching, they gained such inner, spiritual freedom that it was no longer possible for them to return to a state of complete obedience to neither secular nor religious authority. In order to strengthen their power, the church hierarchs turned to the path of consistent distortion of the Gospel of Christ; they did everything to return the new religion to the framework of the old, Jewish model of relations between the flock and the shepherds. The aggressive struggle that lasted two centuries ended with the complete victory of the supporters of Orthodox Christianity over the faithful successors of Christ. The union of the Church with the pagan empire completed the process of "reworking" of the doctrine and forever ensured the stability of the Orthodox tradition.

However, eradicated from the practice of human life, true Christianity was able to create a completely new philosophical model of describing the world and man, significantly different in its basic principles from the concepts of ancient philosophy. And it was in this form that it continued to live and develop, indirectly influencing human life and the entire cultural system.

Let us once again formulate the main conclusion of our work: *the concepts of European philosophy*
The richness and originality of the Christian faith over the centuries ensured that true Christianity, the true teaching of Jesus Christ, which had been forgotten in the church and in "official" Christianity, would continue to exist in it.

Despite all their desires, orthodox ideologists were unable to subordinate philosophical thought to their understanding of Christianity; free thinkers, consistently developing their ideas, they inevitably went beyond the narrow framework of dogmatics and came into sharp conflict with orthodox teaching. In this sense, the history of European philosophy can be called the history of the struggle of true Christianity against distorted Christianity. This fact was realized by many representatives of European philosophy, as discussed in the introduction. However, the incompatibility of philosophy and orthodox Christianity was also recognized by the insightful supporters of the latter. In the Russian philosophical tradition, we can cite S. Bulgakov's book as a striking example "The Tragedy of Philosophy (Philosophy and Dogma)", written in 1920–1922, but first published only in 1993. Analyzing the main line of development of European philosophy, Bulgakov comes to the conclusion that philosophical reasoning inevitably leads to "heresy", therefore, in the name of faith "purity" is worth giving up altogether.

Thus, in order to provide definitive proof of the correctness of the reconstruction of the history of early Christianity, it is necessary to trace the fate of the teaching of Jesus Christ in the history of European philosophy, to trace what forms it took in the greatest European systems of thought. The implementation of this task will require extensive research, but the time has come for it, such research is urgently needed.

In conclusion, we will limit ourselves to just one characteristic example of the philosophical expression of unadulterated Christianity.

Perhaps the first consistent attempt to restore the authentic teaching of Christ, despite the dogmatic teaching of the church, is the philosophical system of Meister (Johann) Eckhart. Here First of all, we find the pantheistic thesis about the essential identity of God and man and the understanding of God as the inner essence of the whole world: *"Whoever accepts God...from the essence, perceives God Divinely and for him He shines in everything, because all things speak to him about God, and from all "God appears to him in things."*

Eckhart takes this thesis to the extreme, recognizing the indivisible identity of the individual man and God: "You must know Him without the help of an image, without mediation, without comparison." "And if I know Him without a mediator, I become completely Him, and He becomes me! This is exactly what I meant, that God must become "I," and "I" must become God, so perfectly one, as if this He and this "I" were to become one and thus remain—as pure essence—so that we could create one creation in eternity! /.../

In full compliance with the logic of Gnostic Christianity, Eckhart, based on his initial position about the possibility of man's union and fusion with God, concludes about the fundamental postulate of ecclesiastical Christianity, concerning the fall and insurmountable human sin.

sinfulness, insignificance. Of course, Eckhart does not deny the presence of sin in man, but he recognizes sin as easily overcome and essentially not requiring such a radical "redemption" procedure as Christ's sacrifice on Golgotha. He claims that for a person who wants to ascend to God, "the highest level to which one can ascend is this: to be sinless through God's repentance." /.../

The incompatibility of this position with dogmatic teaching was not in doubt. It is no coincidence that the relevant theses attracted the attention of the inquisitors who investigated the heresy of the German philosopher's views, attention and were included among the 28 positions incriminating Eckhart in the bull of accusation of Pope John XXII (number 15).

Based on the denial of the essentiality of sin, the attitude towards the divine nature of man changes. perfection, the idea of his entry into the Kingdom of Heaven: if in dogmatic Christianity this is possible only after death, the will of God radically changes the earthly existence of man, while in Eckhart's Gnostic Christianity this possibility is real at every moment of earthly life and can be realized through the efforts of the person himself, who discovers God within himself: "That person who could renounce everything for the sake of God, regardless of whether God gives it or not, will reach the true Kingdom of Heaven." /.../

The confrontation between those frozen in ignorance and between people ready to be content with the usual dogmatic formulas without reflection, and free-thinking people striving for The search for a "seeing" faith based on clear knowledge and understanding runs through the entire history of European culture. Unfortunately, the former prevailed at all turning points in history and suppressed all attempts to radically change the situation and restore unadulterated Christianity as the true religion of mankind. the basis of personal and social life. **As a result, we see the complete transformation of Christianity degradation in the modern era. /.../**

The Church, the "fiefdom" of the Grand Inquisitor, remains an instrument of politics, a form of social control, a means of calming "weak souls" (a kind of psychotherapeutic practice), but there is almost nothing truly religious or mystical left in it.

The only form in which true Christianity still lives on in the modern world is a serious philosophy that develops centuries-old traditions of European Christian thought.

Philosophy, being the center of European culture, could not avoid the deep crisis that European culture has experienced over the past fifty years, and therefore in Western countries it acquired the same "phantom"

