Barbara Hallensleben, Regula M. Zwahlen, Aristotle Papanikolaou, Pantelis Kalaitzidis (eds.)

BUILDING THE HOUSE OF WISDOM

Sergii Bulgakov and Contemporary Theology: New Approaches and Interpretations



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Abstract

Sergii Bulgakov (1871–1944) is one of the preeminent theologians of the 20th century whose work is still being discovered and explored in and for the 21st century. The famous rival of Lenin in the field of economics, was, according to Wassily Kandinsky, "one of the deepest experts on religious life" in early twentieth-century Russian art and culture. As economist, publicist, politician, and later Orthodox theologian and priest, he became a significant "global player" in both the Orthodox diaspora and the Ecumenical movement in the interwar period.

This anthology gathers the papers delivered at the international conference on the occasion of Bulgakov's 150th birthday at the University of Fribourg in September 2021. The chapters, written by established Bulgakov specialists, including Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury (2002–2012), as well as young researchers from different theological disciplines and ecclesial traditions, explore Bulgakov's way of meeting the challenges in the modern world and of building bridges between East and West. The authors bring forth a wide range of new creative ways to constructively engage with Bulgakov's theological worldview and cover topics such as personhood, ecology, political theology and Trinitarian ontology.



Herausgegeben von Barbara Hallensleben, Guido Vergauwen, Nikolaus Wyrwoll in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Zentrum für das Studium der Ostkirchen der Universität Freiburg Schweiz

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Sophiology and Personalism, Foundations of the New Political Science in the Twenty-First Century

Antoine Arjakovsky

We observe today, in an increasingly dramatic way, an acute crisis of modern consciousness and of its heir, more worried, post-modern consciousness. The problems of fundamentalism in Afghanistan and elsewhere, the rise to power of China and Russia, or even extremely violent wars in Ukraine or Syria, the dramatic consequences of global warming and the loss of biodiversity, based on a totally non-spiritual vision of the economy, testify to the fact that contemporary political science is absolutely incapable of helping to solve these crises that come at an increasing cost and loss of life: Each year the planet's major powers spend more than 1.7 trillion dollars on armaments but find only 140 billion for development aid. In fact, everything is happening as if the world has entirely lost its moral compass.

There is no need to be surprised by this development, since contemporary political science refuses any association with morality, as John Milbank and Adrian Pabst regret in their 2018 book *The Politics of Virtue*.¹ This situation was already denounced in September 1941 by Jacques Maritain in a lecture given at the University of Chicago on Machiavelli. In his text "The End of Machiavellianism," the French thinker explained how, under the influence of the Florentine thinker, the goal of politics was no longer the implementation of the common good but the sole acquisition of power and the struggle to keep it.² For Maritain, the tragedy of Machiavelli was to stop believing that man had an eternal destiny. The drama of modern political philosophy, under the influence of Hegel, has been to transform Machiavellianism into atheistic metaphysics. This is why, for Maritain and his Russian friends Sergii Bulgakov

¹ John Milbank, Adrian Pabst, *The Politics of Virtue* (London, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016).

² Jacques Maritain, "The End of Machiavellism," The Review of Politics 4, 1 (1942), 1–33.

and Nikolai Berdiaev, only a renewal of eschatological metaphysics, the real source of justice and moral virtue, was able to refocus politics on justice and on the construction of peace.³

But their position was not heard after the war. In France, Raymond Aron rehabilitated Machiavellianism: For him, democracies could not do without using effective means specific to politics, especially when they are threatened by regimes ready to use all means to achieve their ends. This appeared to be common sense after WWII. But the eschatological basis of Maritain's thought was lost and the criticism of Hegelian thought by Russian religious thought was ignored.

1. The Eschatological Metaphysics of Fr. Sergius Bulgakov, the Foundation of a New Political Science

Even before the Russian Revolution, Sergei Bulgakov, in his courses in political and economic science at the Moscow Commercial Institute, had shown the limits of the modern conception of politics. For Bulgakov, it was appropriate to recognize the partial truth of Machiavelli's treatise in the face of the political theology of the papacy in the Middle Ages:

In contrast to the medieval view, according to which the supreme power belongs to the pope and is only delegated by him to the emperor, a number of writers, beginning with Dante, sought to defend the independence of the state and its interests, the secular nature of the state, and the need for its secularization. Of particular importance here is the literary work of Machiavelli (The Prince), Hobbes, Hugo Grotius, et al.⁴

Bulgakov considered that Machiavelli had been right to criticize, in the continuity of Dante, the theory of the two swords of the papacy. He was bold in breaking away from the Augustinian view of history understood as a long empty corridor where men can only suffer while awaiting their salvation at the

³ On Maritain and his Russian friends, see Antoine Arjakovsky, *The Way. Religious Thinkers of the Russian Emigration in Paris and their journal*, 1925–1940 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013); Bernard Hubert, ed., *Un dialogue d'exception (1925–1948). Jacques Maritain et Nicolas Berdiaev* (Paris: YMCA Press, 2022).

⁴ S. N. Bulgakov, "Ocherki po istorii ekonomicheskikch uchenii" [1913] in *Istoriia ekonomicheskikh i sotsial'nykh uchenii*, ed. V. V. Sapov (Moscow: Astrel', 2007), 187 (trans. the editors).

end of time. There was nothing Christian about this vision. But nor was there anything evangelical in Machiavelli's rehabilitation of the Roman conception of the state:

After Dante came a political thinker, less religious but more courageous, Machiavelli, who in his essay *The Prince* consistently developed his theory of the state, where he considered all means convenient for the service of the state, without being concerned with either ethical or religious requirements. He resurrected the Greek and Roman idea of the state as a self-sufficient principle of life.⁵

The mobilization of *virtu*, comprising skill but also devious blows and manipulations in the name of the prince's interests, had nothing to do with Christian *virtue*. It drew on a pagan Greek background according to which the world was ruled by fortune, that is to say by all that we do not owe to the merit of our own actions.

After the Russian Revolution, the émigré Russian theologian gave a seminar at the Saint Serge Institute in Paris on the notion of the Kingdom of God. He offered an authentic alternative to modern political science, an ecumenical and eschatological metaphysics.⁶ His last book, *The Apocalypse of John*, completes all his political thinking by taking the perspective of the Kingdom of God on earth seriously. The last book of the Bible was indeed for him a "book of revelation firstly about the earthly, temporary thousand-year kingdom, and then of the universal and ultimate reign of the saints unto the ages of ages."⁷ According to his exegesis, there is a Christian form of interpreting the coming of the reign of Christ and his saints for a thousand years, announced in the Revelation of John in chapter 20 as well as in the description of the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem to the earth described in chapters 21 and 22. The second description

⁵ Bulgakov, "Ocherki," 220.

⁶ See Sergii Bulgakov, "Khristianskaia sotsiologiia," in *Istoriia ekonomicheskikh i sotsi-al'nykh uchenii*, ed. V. V. Sapov (Moscow: Astrel', 2007), 814–16. See also his lectures in Prague: Sergii Bulgakov, "Novozavetnoe uchenie o Tsarstvii Bozhiem. Protokoly seminariia professora protoiereia S. N. Bulgakova (po zapisi L. A. Zandera)", ed. and introduced by Anna I. Reznichenko in *S. N. Bulgakov, Religiozno-filosofskii put*', ed. Alexei P. Kozyrev (Moscow: Russkii Put' 2003), 427–520.

⁷ Sergii Bulgakov, *The Apocalypse of John. An Essay in Dogmatic Interpretation* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2019), 239–40, trans. Mike Whitton [Serge Boulgakov, *L'Apocalypse de Jean*; traduction française par Anne Kichilov, préface d'Antoine Arjakovsky (Paris: Parole et Silence, 2014), 282].

of the descent from heaven of the Jerusalem, described in 21,10, belongs truly, according to Bulgakov, to the history of this world, unlike that revealed in 21,2:

It is therefore a divine-human work that crowns the human history—and that is why it is necessary to fully understand this humanity which is his. But in it is also revealed the action of grace, the power of God, manifested in the transfiguration. This is the manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth, even though still within the confines of earthly possibilities, God's revelation, God's closeness to creation.⁸

This revelation allows us to understand why Christ taught his disciples to pray to the Father that his kingdom come and that his will be done "on earth as it is in heaven." Bulgakov's, but also Berdiaev's, awareness of the historical and political implications of this prayer, beyond the heretical millenarian temptations, brought about a reconciliation between sapiential theology and personalist metaphysics. Neither of them, for example, believed in the coming of a time of the Spirit as a *deus ex machina*. On the other hand, both thought in an eschatological, personalist and sophiological way the relation of the personhood of God to its trinitarian consciousness. The philosopher Nicolas Berdiaev, in his commentary on the *Mysterium magnum* by Jakob Boehme, identified Sophia with the deepest freedom of God and of man. Whereas Bulgakov understood Wisdom not as a new divinity but as the trinitarian self-consciousness of the divine personhood.

Their stroke of genius, to put it in a nutshell, was to think of an intermediate eschatology, between the temporality of participation in ecclesial grace—which recognizes that the Kingdom of God can manifest itself in a community way in this world—and the temporality of the gift of glory, when God will be all in all. Berdiaev, in his *Essay on Eschatological Metaphysics (1947)*,⁹ insisted on the fact that every creative and ethical gesture makes it possible to complete fallen history and to manifest in this world the Kingdom of the saints. Bulgakov also theorized his eschatology, which combined the time of grace with that of glory:

None of these aspects of the Kingdom of God—communion with God and eschatology—exhaust the whole meaning of the Kingdom of God. For the Kingdom of God, which is in us, although it inaugurates eternal life, does not exclude life in time. On the contrary, it affirms the meaning of what is happening in time. In

⁸ Boulgakov, L'Apocalypse de Jean, 269 (own translation) [Bulgakov, Apocalypse, 228].

⁹ See Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Beginning and the End* (Semantron Press, 2009), trans. Boris Jakim.

time we understand the meaning of the Last Judgment, because in time, in a way, eternity is considered. The aspiration for the second coming does not destroy the feeling that the history exists, even if the time between the first and second coming is longer than originally thought. And this time is not for us an indifferent course of events, but the history of the Church, the authenticity and the content of what is happening in the Church. History finds its justification.¹⁰

While the modern conception of sovereignty, inspired by Machiavelli and by Jean Bodin, proved incapable in the 1930s of stemming the rise of conspiracy theories, populism and finally totalitarian regimes, Father Sergius Bulgakov proposed a conception of politics connected with a new metaphysics. For him God has not withdrawn from the history of men. God reveals himself to mankind when it is ready to turn to His divine Wisdom, through the reign of the Father, the power of the Son and the glory of the Holy Spirit. Genuine *Dasein* consisted of being aware of both, being thrown into the world and already being able to participate now in the Kingdom of God on earth.

The whole history of humanity is therefore that of the encounter between divine and eternal Wisdom and created and temporal Wisdom. This means, in particular, that the Church, which is both the Body of Christ and the Bride of the Lamb, is called to go through the same stages of divinization as Christ, the passage from a prophetic conscience to a sacramental conscience and *finally to a royal conscience during the millennium announced by Revelation in chapter 20.* If Augustinian a-millenarian political theology is to be condemned, it is because it excludes any participation by humanity in the advent of the Kingdom of God. This is a form of ecclesiological docetism.¹¹ However, according to Christian revelation, history does have a meaning which *will be* manifested by a period of peace on earth thanks to the action of the Virgin Mary, the saints, and the just, starting *already now*.

This intermediate eschatology is found today in the Catholic Church as it emerges from the work of the catholic theologian Cyrille Pasquier, in the thesis he recently defended at the University of Fribourg. This refers more to the sapiential thought of Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort than to that of Father Sergius Boulgakov. But his mariology brings him closer to Bulgakov's eschatological, personalist and sapiential metaphysics.

¹⁰ Bulgakov, "Khristianskaia sotsiologiia," 815.

¹¹ Docetism (from the Greek *dokein*, to appear) is a set of Christological tendencies from the beginning of Christianity for which Christ becoming "flesh" does not mean that he becomes "man."

The parousia will be triggered both by a transcendent principle—the Father who sends his Son, Christ the Head with all the saints, for resurrection, judgment and entry into eternity—and by an immanent principle: The mystical birth of Mary, the new virgin who prepares the Body of Christ for its eternity, through the spiritual resurrection of its elect. (A. A.: my translation.)¹²

2. The Consequences of Eschatological Metaphysics for Political and Moral Science

The new eschatological metaphysics elaborated by Bulgakov, both personalist and sophiological, is neither a return to the theory of two swords nor a new sacralization of public power. For this vision the world is indeed constituted by power relations. But authentic power is not found in the claim to be able to destroy one's adversary, for the soul is an indestructible reality. Genuine sovereignty consists in manifesting over time the just, the true, the good and the beautiful. Some states may spend their fortunes on propaganda, but the recent history of totalitarianism shows that truth always triumphs over lies.

This spiritual metaphysics induces a certain number of developments in political and moral science, which can be briefly sketched out, starting with a new theory of sovereignty and law, an ecumenical conception of political action, and finally a rediscovery by Christians of the sense of their involvement in politics.¹³

Let's start with sovereignty and law. The state is not, as Bodin thought, the secular power capable of imposing, outside any participation in divine life, an absolute power at once unique, indivisible and untransferable. Contemporary authors like Pascal Lamy, the former director of the WTO, have shown the ridiculousness of such a claim in the age of globalization and the advent of multinational powers, especially financial ones. Nor is the state, as Hegel's modern epistemology imagined, the fulfilling People's Spirit that puts law at its service. This vision, which refuses to link any conception of justice to public power, as Ernst Cassirer has shown, was also shattered in the twentieth century.¹⁴

¹² Fr. Cyril Pasquier, "Approches du Millénium. Une christologie de l'histoire" (Université de Fribourg, Thèse de doctorat 2018), 545.

¹³ We can add a sense of renewed ecclesiality within the various Christian denominations: Antoine Arjakovsky, "Les voies possibles de réforme de l'Eglise Orthodoxe à la lumière du livre de la Révélation" ("The possible ways of reforming the Orthodox Church in the light of the book of Revelation"), *Le Messager orthodoxe* 166–67 (2021), 21–34.

¹⁴ Ernst Cassirer, The Myth of the State (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946).

Rather, for Bulgakov the state should be understood as a spiritual power, itself subject to divine justice, capable of subjecting society to legal relations. The latter must itself be at the service of the highest conception of justice, both distributive and appreciative, according to the theory today of Michael Sandel, if it wants to prevent the state from dissolving into corruption or anarchy.¹⁵ This is why law itself must be placed at the service of that which transcends it, namely Wisdom, as King Solomon knew.¹⁶

It is through the Wisdom that God gives that man can recognize divine justice. God answers Solomon's prayer in this way (1K, 3,11): "Since you ask for wisdom to exercise righteousness, behold, I will do according to your word." It is therefore on God that the gift of wisdom depends and it is by this wisdom alone that man can recognize justice. In the Book of Proverbs 2, 6–22, Wisdom makes Justice depend on itself: 'For the Lord gives Wisdom [...] then you will understand justice (*zedek*), equity (*mischpath*), righteousness [...] And thus you will walk in the way of the good people, you will keep the path of the righteous." Human justice can therefore only be understood and followed through the wisdom of God!

The New Testament conception of law is clearly eschatological. The glory of the nations and therefore human rights is preserved in the heavenly Jerusalem, as evidenced by chapter XXI of Revelation (Revelation 21, 24–26). Likewise, Matthew insists on this word of Christ: 'You will be judged as you have judged" (Math 7,2). This means that God chooses to judge a man not the absolute of righteousness, but the righteousness of that man. He judges him according to his own criteria, according to his words, according to his rules of life or law, according to his judgments. And man finds himself condemned not first of all by the absolute holiness of God before whom he is annihilated, and who appears only when God forgives, but above all by his own justice. This eschatological conception of law is hostile as much to positive law as it is to natural law because of their rejection of any transcendent vision of justice.

The French thinker Jacques Ellul, a personalist thinker marked by W. Visser't Hooft and Nikolai Berdiaev, published an important book on this subject in 1946.¹⁷ For Ellul, as for Bulgakov, that which is *just* is that which is in accor-

¹⁵ Michael J. Sandel, Justice (Paris: Albin Michel, 2016).

¹⁶ See Sergei N. Bulgakov, "Tserkovnoe pravo i krizis pravosoznaniia," in Russkaia nauka tserkovnogo prava v pervoi polovine XX veka: Poisk metodologii, ed. Irina Borshch (Moscow: URSS, 2008), 201–22.

¹⁷ Jacques Ellul, *Le fondement théologique du droit* (Paris: Dalloz 2008; Delachaux et Niestlé, 1946).

dance with the will of God. What is ordered in relation to that justice is right. The act of God that establishes law is the covenant, that is, the righteousness of God in motion. Consequently, in this eschatological conception of justice, the legal construction must derive mainly from discernments in concrete situations, from a judgment based on historical facts (more or less *just* according to the justice of God), and from human relations with bringing into play human rights and God-given institutions.

Second, eschatological metaphysics is fully ecumenical and must be investigated in all forms of inter-confessional, inter-religious and inter-convictional dialogues and joint actions. For Bulgakov the advent of the kingdom of God on earth, marked by the advent of the City with 12 gates in the names of the 12 tribes of the sons of Israel, described in Rev XXI, will be the triumph of Judeo-Christianity in the whole world.¹⁸ This ecumenical character (in the trans-religious sense of the term, therefore, both personal and universal) can be actualized today by political science.¹⁹ The state, for sapiential, personalist and ecumenical metaphysics, is the power capable of embodying divine-human Wisdom through its executive, legislative and judicial expressions. According to the Judeo-Christian tradition of wisdom, the state should be able to embody virtues such as wisdom and discernment, counsel and valor, knowledge and fear. Now Wisdom is a gift of the Spirit which belongs to the different spiritual traditions of East and West, as David Bentley Hart has shown very well in his superb book The Experience of God. For the sapiential tradition of Asian religions, rediscovered today by the jurist Mireille Delmas Marty, harmony is found in the balance between freedom and security, competition and cooperation, exclusion and integration, innovation and conservation.²⁰

The four pillars of religious faith (just glorification and faithful memory, moral uprightness and knowledge of justice) and the four ways of acquiring the truth (as correspondence and as stability, as coherence and as consensus) are found in varying degrees of consciousness within the main religious and convictional traditions.²¹ Also, to deprive oneself of the spiritual dimension of faith, as Western democracies do, is as absurd as to deprive oneself of its

¹⁸ Bulgakov, Apocalypse, 230 [Boulgakov, L'Apocalypse, 272].

¹⁹ Antoine Arjakovsky, Qu'est-ce que l'æcuménisme? (Paris: Cerf, 2022).

²⁰ Mireille Delmas Marty, Sortir du pot au noir. L'humanisme juridique comme boussole (Paris: Buchet Chastel, 2019).

²¹ Antoine Arjakovsky, *Essai de métaphysique œcuménique*, Paris, Cerf, 2021. English translation: *Towards an Ecumenical Metaphysics. The Principles and Methods of Ecumenical Science* (Brooklyn, NY: Angelico Press, 2022) (3 volumes).

rational depth, as fundamentalist and dictatorial regimes do. This is why the political and moral science of the twenty-first century will necessarily be based on an ecumenical theology and on an ecumenical metaphysics of politics.

Finally, the new political and moral science also offers a response to the contemporary craze for transhumanism through its eschatological and ecumenical anthropology. There is a vision in transhumanism that we will qualify as Manichean or neo-Cathar. The soul is captured there as a disembodied mind to the point that artificial intelligence researchers and video game designers already imagine that they can download the human mind (*mind uploading*) and transfer it from one computer to the other. Bulgakov, like Berdiaev had the merit not only of criticizing the dualistic or even monistic vision of the human spirit but also of proposing an alternative by re-establishing ternary anthropology. They particularly appreciated the thought of Fedorov, in particular his great project of raising the dead, which was to become the common work of humanity liturgically united to Christ.²² Both, admittedly, criticized Fedorov for failing to see that there were two possible conceptions of the resurrection, a resuscitation in the material body and a resurrection in the spiritual body.²³ But what was important to them was Fedorov's proposed update of the ternary anthropology of the Church of the first millennium. We know in fact that the apostle Paul addressed the Thessalonians in this way (1 Thes. 5, 23): "May your whole being, spirit, soul and body, be kept without reproach".

Following Bulgakov we can suggest that political science should be associated with a fully eschatological and ecumenical vision of the vocation of man in order to overcome the transhumanist gnosis. Future political and moral science must not be afraid to confront the question of the victory, at least partial, of life (*zoi*) over death. It must question the mystical experiences describing the existing relationships between the Spirit, eternal by definition, the created body and the soul that unites them. According to the gospel faith, Christ brought resurrection power into the world. Indeed, as the evangelist Matthew reports in chapter 10, Christ made it clear to his apostles that they would be concerned

^{22 &}quot;For Fedorov, according to Berdyaev: "Liturgy ought to embrace the whole of life, not the spiritual only and inward, but also the external, the worldly, the mundane, transforming it into a deed of resuscitation." Nikolai A. Berdiaev, "Filosofiia obshchego dela N. F. Fedorova," *Russkaia Mysl*' July 1915, 76–120.].

²³ Ibid.: "His truth is in this, that he emphasised the activity of man and the immanent character of resuscitation, but this truth cannot be torn asunder from its other side, from the power of the grace of Christ, in which and through which only there is also possible for man both resurrection and resuscitation. Resurrection can only be mystical, in a mystical flesh."

with his disciples as they carried out their mission of resurrection. But this was based above all on an active faith in the proximity of the kingdom of heaven. Christ's words to his disciples are:

Go, preach, and say: The kingdom of heaven is at hand. *Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, expel demons.* (Mat, 10, 7–8)

When we study the text closely, we see that the orthodoxy of the apostolic faith in the proximity of the Kingdom consists in holding together the two visions of the descent from heavenly Jerusalem, which are intertwined in the perspective of divine humanity. A vertical axis is discerned in the first vision of heavenly Jerusalem. In fact, we find here, on one side, the celebration of the glory of God (namely *the gift of resuscitating* since, as the Apocalypse attests, "of death there will be no more"; Rev. 21, 4). This gift is intertwined on the other side with the work of authentic memory, that is, of the coming Kingdom. This is why it is advisable to accomplish a *work of purification* with regard to the fallen memory. In the gospel of Luke, the leper who is justified is the one who *remembers* that he has been healed by God. This is why it is necessary to accomplish a work of purification of the forgetful memory by the glorification of the divine action. The angel therefore asks John to write because "these words are certain and true" (Rev. 21.5).

But we can also discern a horizontal axis in the second vision of messianic Jerusalem, namely the incarnation in moral law of divine justice (and therefore the *expulsion of demons* from the divine-human City, Rev 21:27). We observe also in the Book of the Revelation the fulfillment of God's righteousness in the political life of the nations that will walk in the light of the Lamb. This allows the ability *to heal the sick* as in the vision of St. John with the trees of life whose leaves can heal the pagans (Ap, 22, 2).

Conclusion

Of course, the rediscovery by Christians of their authentic political vocation requires prior spiritual work.²⁴ Likewise, the virtuous and harmonious state which could succeed the various figures of the state in the post-modern era,

²⁴ Antoine Arjakovsky and Jean-Baptiste Arnaud, "Our global crisis has brought one conception of life to an end — what comes next?" *ABC Religion & Ethics (https://www.abc. net.au)*, July 17, 2020; id., "What comes "after"? Our crisis demands an epistemological revolution", *ABC Religion & Ethics*, August 3, 2020.

from the ultra-liberal state to the mafia state, has no chance of seeing the light of day unless contemporary consciousness manages to free itself from the quite primitive modern doctrine according to which the finality of politics is the conquest and the conservation of power.

The new political science must be able to call on the resources of different religious traditions. Kate Raworth's new economics, respectful of social life as much as of creation, draws on the resources of Buddhism as much as on the Christian vision of the tree of life and its healing leaves.²⁵ Sophiological thought agrees with personalist thought in recalling that the end of politics is the common good of a people united within just institutions. Only such a metaphysics allows man to be in the world in the mode of being both embodied in this world and participating in a realm which transcends the limits of this world.

Like Berdiaev, Bulgakov refused to sanctify the state and distanced himself from the monarchist circles of the Russian emigration. In the 1920s and 1940s he defended a democratic state on the American model, institutionally separated from religious institutions while cooperating with them and based on the principles of human rights of the human beings understood as divine creatures:

the insurmountable opposition between the two ideologies of power—"by the grace of God" and "by the will of the people." Christian history knows a power that recognizes itself as approved by the grace of God and is exercised by the people, not by the king: this is the system in America based on the right of man and citizen as the son of God.²⁶

But for him, only an in-depth rediscovery of Wisdom, in God and in creation, was able to transform the Modern conception of the solitary state into a new form of personalist sovereignty, virtuous, inclusive and respectful of creation.

²⁵ Kate Raworth, Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist (Vermont, White River Junction, 2017).

²⁶ Bulgakov, "Khristianskaia sotsiologiia," 832.