



VERNON PRESS

www.vernonpress.com

FLYPR12

12% DISCOUNT ONLINE
USE CODE AT CHECKOUT

\$ 105

€ 96

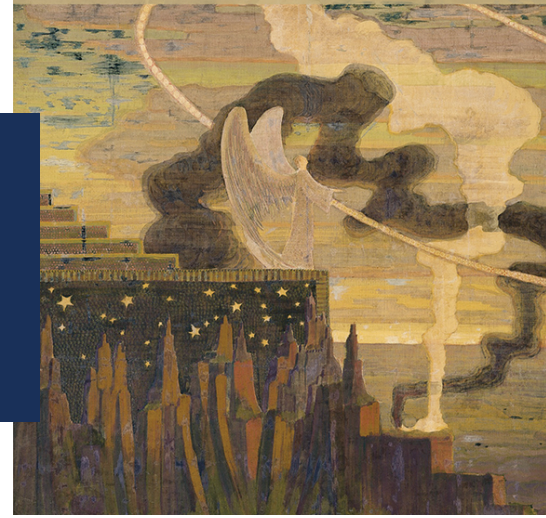
£ 81

VERNON PRESS
SERIES IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

THE OLD AND THE NEW

Churching a Secular Age from Solovyov to Bulgakov

Michael Lee Miller



Michael Lee Miller

The Old and the New

Churching a Secular Age from Solovyov to Bulgakov

SERIES IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Summary

In the midst of exile from his native Russia in the mid-1930s, Fr Sergii Bulgakov identified his basic aspiration as an Orthodox theologian to be a 'positive overcoming of Modernity' - in fact, a continuation of the efforts of his great 19th-century inspiration, Vladimir Solovyov, to reconstruct Christian thought and culture in the face of the unprecedented challenges posed by the Enlightenment and the era of revolutionary upheaval. But Bulgakov's theological vision also involves a distinctive revision of Solovyov's programme, whose 'residual Hegelianism' continually threatens to level out speculative reason and mystagogical faith, progress in history and 'the Kingdom not of this World'. Bulgakov refuses any such levelling: instead, he consummates the 'apocalyptic turn' Solovyov had already commenced in the years immediately preceding his premature death in 1900. The resulting preference for the paradox of 'antinomy' over the closure of 'dialectic' comes to light in relation to four themes running through Bulgakov's thinking in the decades falling between his rejection of Marxism and the commencement of his mature systematic-theological work in the 1930s: history, work, knowledge, and power.

Michael Lee Miller has written an exceptionally learned study of the pre-1924 thought of S. N. Bulgakov that makes an essential contribution to our understanding of Silver Age Russian cultural and intellectual ferment. Using the notion of 'the social imaginary' developed by Charles Taylor in his "A Secular Age" as a point of entry, Miller shows how Bulgakov appropriated and transformed the earlier response to the problem of secularisation by Vladimir Solovyov in order to fashion his own vision for Russia as it moved away, at times violently, from the tsarist past to an equally troubled new, ostensibly atheistic society. Miller focuses on what Bulgakov himself identified as crucial for Russian religious philosophy, namely, 'theocracy', and charts its evolution from Solovyov, through Vyacheslav Ivanov, Semyon Frank, and Pavel Florensky down to Bulgakov himself. All the great themes that occupy Bulgakov - history, tragedy, religion, Marxism, work, economy, matter, beauty - receive their due in this truly magisterial discussion of Bulgakov's thought.

Prof. T. Allan Smith

Fellow, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies
Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Theology, USMC
Emeritus - Full Member, Graduate Centre for Theological Studies at the Toronto School of Theology
Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Toronto

With awesome learning and effortless command of the original Russian sources, Miller traces the intricate lines of thought that lead from Solovyov to Bulgakov, focusing on the period from "The Philosophy of Economy" to "The Unfading Light," shedding light on the tangled and often obscure texts of the Russian Silver age. He closes with a conclusion and 'appendix'—really the high point of the book—which reach beyond his self-imposed time scale, with profound meditations on how Bulgakov conceived the future of the Church after Christendom, a kind of theocracy democratized, and how his later thoughts on gender shake off the thrall of lingering notions of patriarchy. An astonishing tour de force!

Archpriest Andrew Louth

Professor Emeritus, Durham University
Author of "Modern Orthodox Thinkers" (2015)

About the author

Michael Lee Miller completed his doctoral thesis at Jesus College, Cambridge, under the supervision of Dr Rowan Williams. He is currently training to practice law at the Family Bar of England and Wales.

January 2025 | Hardback 236x160mm | 440 Pages | ISBN: 978-1-62273-855-7

SUBJECTS Language and Linguistics, Theology, Philosophy

VIEW/ORDER ONLINE AT vernonpress.com/book/917