Saving the Third Rome. “Fall of the Empire”, Byzantium and Putin’s Russia

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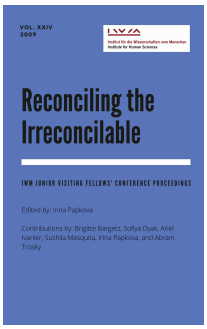

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This article examines some of the symbolic political and cultural implications of “Fall of the Empire: Byzantium’s Lesson” (Gibel’ Imperii, Vi z antiiskii Urok), a film that aired on the Russian Federation government-controlled television station Rossiia (RTR) on January 31, 2008. The film was produced and directed for RTR by Father Tikhon Shevkunov, head of the Sretenskii monastery in Moscow, one of the wealthiest and most influential religious communities in present day Russia. Father Tikhon is also the spiritual advisor (dukhovnik) of the wife of Vladimir Putin, Liudmilla. (Persistent rumors have also given him the reputation of being Vladimir Putin’s dukhovnik as well). A year and a half in the making, “Fall of the Empire” is ostensibly a film about the collapse of Byzantium. However, it is clearly meant to be a parable in which the audience is treated to Shevkunov’s (and, by implication, Putin’s) vision of Russia’s contemporary geopolitical position. In the film, the collapse of the Eastern Roman Empire is attributed to corrupt domestic oligarchs and the pernicious actions of the Medieval and Renaissance West; the narrator, Father Tikhon, proposes that the tragedy could have been avoided had Byzantium pursued autarchic, nationalist development. The story of Byzantium is explicitly presented as a warning for Russia’s contemporary rulers: they are exhorted to rein in the oligarchs, fortify the ramparts against the West, or face destruction.

While it is obvious that the appearance of the film at a critical juncture in Russian politics – just two months before the transition from Putin’s regime to that of his chosen successor – is by no means accidental, the precise meaning of the timing and content of the film remain the subjects of contentious debate. For one thing, it is not clear whether or not the film was meant as a public statement of Putin’s political credo, or if it reflects other powerful interests, either in the state (specifically the security services) or in the Russian Orthodox Church. This article explores “Fall of the Empire’s” symbolism within the contemporary Russian context from two viewpoints. First, it places the film in the continuum of projects perpetuating the myth of Russia as the Third Rome, a theme that continues to resist all attempts to debunk it. Second, the paper asks questions about the film’s reception in Russian society. A warm reception would indicate a propensity by

Russia's public to endorse the program of action offered by the film; however, by all accounts the film sparked intense controversy in the Russian media , suggesting that the current political system contains more room for pluralism than is generally perceived. Finally, the paper briefly considers some broader implications of Gibel Imperii for our understanding (admittedly still from a historically limited vantage point) of the Putin era Russian state.

I. Gibel' Imperii and the "Third Rome" Myth

The "Third Rome" myth is simply stated: After the collapse of the Orthodox Byzantine Empire, the Russian Muscovite tsardom supposedly took over the mantle of the spiritual and political center of Orthodox Christianity, a burden which was seamlessly passed on to the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union and subsequently to the Russian Federation. References to the "Third Rome" myth invariably hearken back to a letter ostensibly written by the Monk Filofei in 1510 to the Muscovite Great Prince Vassily III, in which Filofei appears to claim that, since Byzantium has fallen, Muscovy is now the inheritor of its role as Orthodox empire: "Two Romes have fallen. The third stands. And there will be no fourth. No one shall replace your Christian Tsardom." The last phrase in particular has been understood traditionally to imply that the messianic destiny of Russia is eternal, in other words, that the country must remain "the Third Rome" throughout its history, no matter what the internal political circumstances are, thus allowing for a linkage all the way from Orthodox Muscovy through the atheistic Soviet Union to the generally secular Russian Federation. The "Third Rome" myth has cropped up frequently in the post-Soviet context; however, Gibel' Imperii stands to date as the clearest and most culturally important articulation of the purported spiritual and historical identification between the contemporary Russian Federation and Byzantium. The extent to which the meaning of Filofey's letter has been misinterpreted is a separate issue (According to Harvard Professor Edward Keenan, for example, Filofei directed his text as an exhortation to Vasiliy III to scuttle his plans for confiscating the ecclesiastical properties in Pskov; were Vassily to seize the church's lands, he would inevitably be responsible for the collapse of the Muscovite princedom; in Keenan's view, at least, the letter had nothing to do with any notion of *translatio imperii*).[1]

For the purpose of this article, it is essential to demonstrate the ways in which Gibel' Imperii adds its voice to the perpetuation of the "Third Rome" paradigm. True, Father Tikhon never explicitly refers to the myth and the words "Third Rome" do not appear anywhere in the film. Nevertheless, a close analysis of the narrative and cinematography shows beyond doubt that the "Third Rome" idea is central to the film's message. Tellingly, the title provides the first indication of its author's allegorical intentions. The first clause, Gibel' Imperii, would, for the Russian audience, immediately resonate with the title of a highly popular mini-series of the same name that had appeared on Russian prime-time television in 2005. The mini-series was set in the circumstances of the Russian Revolution; accordingly, the audience of the 2008 film was likely to make the direct connection between the two imperial disasters. The effect is reinforced by the second clause, "Lesson from Byzantium," which has an unspoken object: the lesson must be for

someone; in the Russian context, this object can only be Russia itself. Thus the film's title implicitly ties together the Russian Federation and Byzantium from the very start of the production.

The first scene confirms this initial impression. The film opens in the snowy courtyard of Moscow's fourteenth-century Sretenskii monastery, a recognizable symbol of Russian statehood and Orthodox culture (the monastery was founded to commemorate the inexplicable decision of the Tatar conqueror Tamerlane to turn back just as he was about to sack Moscow, an event that was attributed to the intercession of the Virgin Mary).[2] The narrator, father Tikhon, introduces the subject matter of the film in two short phrases ("In 1443, the Byzantine empire collapsed; we will see now how this happened"); as he walks towards the camera the scene shifts to contemporary Istanbul. The link between the two scenes is seamlessly underscored by a bird whose flight begins in the snowy courtyard and ends under the sun of contemporary Istanbul. (If this transition clearly links the 'Third Rome' to the 'Second,' the following brief scene hearkens back to the original itself, as an ancient Roman charioteer races across the screen).

In the narrator's description of the glories of Byzantium, the connection between ancient Constantinople and the Russian Federation moves closer to the explicit level: "Byzantium encompassed around 1000 cities, almost as many as contemporary Russia." By the tenth minute of the film, the association reaches its fullest expression. According to Father Tikhon, in contrast to the West, which became civilized only after having "captured, plundered, destroyed and absorbed" Byzantium's material riches, the ancestors of present day Russians (nashi predki) understood that the empire's greatest wealth lay in its spiritual tradition. As the camera pans the frescoes of Hagia Sophia (today a mosque but formerly the largest Orthodox cathedral in the world) Father Tikhon explains to the audience that "our ancestors saw what kind of spiritual treasure they could obtain in Byzantium, and on this treasure they built not museums, not banks, not capital; instead, they built Rus', Russia, the spiritual heiress to Byzantium."

Gibel' Imperii, however, is not fundamentally a film about Byzantine accomplishments; it purports to be the story of imperial collapse. If "our ancestors" understood the secret to Byzantine greatness, then Father Tikhon intends to make sure that contemporary Russians perceive the reasons for its destruction and avoid a similar fate themselves. And he finds the roots of the fall of Constantinople in 1443 to the Turks in phenomena uncannily familiar to anyone who has lived through or observed the Russian experience of the last two decades. The first mention of the Turks appears twenty minutes into the story; their role in Byzantium's destruction is described as minor. Instead, the viewer is presented with a cocktail of contributing causes that include the following: the state let go of control over the financial system, ceding it to international (explicitly Western) merchants and domestic oligarchs; the regional governors became too powerful, weakening the centralized state; the Byzantines betrayed their Orthodox faith and entered into ecclesiastical union with Catholic Rome. In all of this, the West emerges as the central villain, with domestic traitors (pursuing their own financial interests) and spiritual degradation playing complementary roles. Indeed, Gibel' Imperii is so laden with contemporary connotations that it would require many pages to do justice to them all. In

the event, all of these themes make sense to a Russian audience in the 21 st century, as viewers would remember the disintegration of the planned Soviet economy, the domination of Russian capitalism by oligarch robber-barons and the rapid devolution of power from Moscow to the regions in the 1990s.

For the purpose of this current article, it is sufficient to underline only the most striking instances that in themselves already leave no doubt that the "Lessons from Byzantium" are meant to resonate with contemporary Russian themes. First, in discussing the supposed abnegation by the Byzantine state of its control over national resources, Father Tikhon comments that, "Unlike today, the major sources of national income were not oil and gas, but rather customs duties gained from international trade." In the contemporary context it is clear that the phrase "Unlike today" contains the unspoken subtext "in Russia." A subsequent scene that describes the sack of Constantinople by crusaders (in the film: "the Western allies") in 1204 does so in the following language: "In doing so, the Venetians…declared to the entire Western world that they were restoring…the rights of the free international market and – most importantly – were fighting against a regime that did not recognize European values (obshcheevropeiskie tsennosti)." To recall, "not recognizing European values" is a charge often leveled by the European Union members against Russia of the Putin era, particularly when it comes to the questions of human rights abuses in Chechnya and the cutting off of gas supplies to Russia's immediate neighbors whenever those countries appeared to be moving away from the Russian orbit. What is more, according to the scenario of Gibel Imperii , it is from the moment of the Venetian sack of Byzantium that "in the West, the image of Byzantium as a heretical evil empire began to be created;" the reference to the Reaganesque portrayal of the USSR is obvious. It may be countered, of course, that the USSR is long gone and that the reference is not relevant to today's Russia; however, Father Tikhon continues on immediately to say that "in the future this image could be pulled out of the ideological arsenals whenever necessary." In the circumstances of a rapidly degrading relationship between post-Yeltsin Russia and the most powerful representative of the collective West – the United States – the film's viewers would be likely to recognize the reference as pertaining to the West's attitude toward their own country.

Throughout Gibel' Imperii , corrupt oligarchs are presented as key to the Empire's demise; they are contrasted to a strong, bureaucratized state that, for centuries, managed to withstand their assault. In particular, emperor Basil II is credited with having built a "vertical of power," curtailing the powers of the regional governors-cum-oligarchs who threatened to "pull apart the country." The fate of one regional magnate is described in detail: a certain obscenely rich Eustatius, who dared to influence political appointments ("put forward his own candidate"), was punished for his audacity by being stripped of his wealth and being "imprisoned in a remote corner of the empire." Mikhail Khodorkovsky's lot, it appears, is not historically unique. Lest the viewer doubt that in Basil II one is supposed to see a direct analogue to Vladimir Putin, there is a plethora of other clues. According to Father Tikhon, Basil began his reign after a period of "severe crisis; the country was basically privatized by the oligarchs." The emperor's very first action was to "build a strict vertical of power" (zhestkii vertical' vlasti); he then "defeated separatist movements in the borderlands," "crushed mutinous governors and oligarchs, who were

about to divide up the Empire," "purged the government (of corrupt officials)," and "confiscated for the national treasury huge sums of ill-gotten revenues." After he "restored the vertical of power" in Byzantium, Basil left his successor (priemnik) an immense "stabilization fund." One need only substitute "Vladimir" for "Basil" to perceive that this entire list of accomplishments reads like the official Russian narrative about Vladimir Putin's eight years in office: recentralized state power, crushed Chechen rebels, appointed governors, dismissed ministerial cabinets, and nationalized oil and gas industry.

In general, for Father Tikhon, the Byzantines were the "world's best 'successor specialists'" (spetsialisty po priemnikam). The inclusion of this phrase in the film's narration , perhaps more than any other, has provoked speculation that Gibel' Imperii should be understood primarily (or even exclusively) as part of the Kremlin's propaganda on the eve of the transfer of the presidential mantle from Vladmir Putin to his chosen successor, Dmitrii Medvedev. (The term " priemnik " was popularly employed in Russia to describe the process whereby Putin would ensure that the presidency would go to someone of his choice). Yet, based on the discussion above, it becomes clear that the film is only partially – one is even tempted to say, only incidentally – about the exact political moment in Russia at which it was aired. The idea of Russia – or more specifically, of the Russian Federation – as the Third Rome runs like a red thread throughout Gibel Imperii , providing the fundamental framework for a specific reading of Russia's recent history. The last scenes of the film make this point abundantly clear. After describing the final death agony of Byzantium, the narrator concludes that "The vengeful hatred of the West towards Byzantium and its heirs…continues to this day…Without understanding this shocking, but undoubted, fact, we risk not understanding not only the history of long gone days but also the history of the twentieth and even the twenty first century." The subtext here, of course, is the Cold War, the (supposedly Western-inspired) collapse of the USSR and the continuing tensions between the West and the Russian Federation through the Putin era. The final sequence shifts the viewer from today's Istanbul back to the snow covered territory of the Sretenskii Monastery of the film's opening scene; with no further comment from Father Tikhon, the last minute of Gibel' Imperii shows obviously Russian believers venerating icons to the accompaniment of distinctively Orthodox chant, in its Russian, not Byzantine version. The message is clear: Like tsarist Russia and the USSR, the Russian Federation is the heiress to Constantinople's spiritual riches; today's Russia is equally and eternally the Third Rome, subject to the same Western hatred as its chronological territorial predecessors and original Byzantine source.

II. Gibel' Imperii and Contemporary Russian Pluralism

Both the timing of Gibel Imperii's appearance and the identity of the film's narrator-director, Father Tikhon, seem to suggest that the project was inspired from within the presidential administration of Vladimir Putin, as an attempt to legitimize both Putin's policies of the preceding eight years and his method of ensuring the succession of power. In turn this interpretation of the film dovetails with a general image in the West of the Russian Federation under Putin as increasingly authoritarian, with a severely circumscribed space for public debate of political issues. In particular, the lack of media freedom has become a standard assumption in the analysis of Russian politics, often

appearing as Exhibit A in the case “Putin versus Democracy.” Indeed, the track record seems to speak for itself, as the Russian state has systematically encroached on the previously commercially independent media, beginning with the memorable take-over of NTV in 2000, leading in the end to total state control over television. There remain a few independent radio stations and newspapers, as well as the Internet; even these, however, have tended in the last few years to systematically follow the Kremlin line on political questions; the latest example here being the presidential electoral campaign in 2008, in which none of the Russian mass media provided adequate coverage for the opponents of Putin’s chosen priemnik , Dmitrii Medvedev.

Given all of this, one would expect that Russian media coverage of Gibel’ Imperii (previews, reviews, etc.) would be overwhelmingly positive. To be sure, a detailed examination of TV, radio, and press articles in the weeks immediately following the film’s release does show some positive reactions. Citing audience demand, RTR aired the film three times. Izvestia ran a positive review several days before the film aired.[3] Gazeta also followed with a good review two days before the airing.[4] Mikhail Leontiev, a leading personality from Russian television’s Channel One, strongly endorsed Gibel’ Imperii, calling critics of the film a “satanic rabble” (sataninskaia svora).[5] In the right-wing newspaper Zavtra , Denis Tukmakov called the film “the most important ideological event in Russia [in a long time]…[Father Tikhon definitely shows] where our people are, and where – the enemies of the Fatherland” (von tam – svoi. A tam vot – vragi Otechestva. ”[6] Even the relatively liberal Moskovskii Komsomolets – whose editorial board has traditionally had a very testy relationship with the Russian Orthodox Church and should have been unlikely to endorse a film produced by a prominent clergyman – ran a positive review.[7]

Surprisingly, however, following the film’s release, Russia’s press was flooded with critical reactions to Gibel Imperii. For example, writing for Kommersant , Grigorii Revsin accuses Father Tikhon of “outright lies” (otkrovennoe vranie).[8] In Russkii Zhurnal, Vladimir Mozhegov calls the film “a thirty minute hate session for the people” (tridsatiminutka nenvisti dlia naroda).[9] Dozens of examples can be found of similar reactions; it is enough for the present purposes to cite a fragment from a critical article by Sergei Stroev: “Only someone who has no conscience – or alternatively, has an excessive sense of humor – can call this frontal, brutal, totally bearish […] propaganda […] ‘historical parallels.’” Later on in the same article, Stroev accuses the film’s producers of presenting “Byzantium in the crooked mirror of faked propaganda.” [10] The negative reaction in the press was to some degree spearheaded by members of the (eternally shrinking but still not quite extinct) Russian liberal opposition, perhaps most notably by Valeria Novodvorskaia and Iurii Afanasiev, head of the Russian State Humanitarian University. Novodvorskaia, with typical polemic élan, declared that that because of the film, “the liberals, thank God and St. Sophia, have awaken from their lethargy and have used history to beat up the illiterate fantasy of the new Savanarola” (udarili istoriei po nevezhestvennoi fentazy novogo Savanaroly).[11] Afanasiev’s reaction was more visceral: in an interview to the New Times, he called Gibel’ Imperrii a “very, very slimy film.” (ochen’, ochen’ gadkii film’).

Significantly, Gibel Imperii elicited a wave of negative reactions from the historical community, which did not hesitate to express its views in the Russian press. In doing so, the historians brought forth arguments from the arsenal of their profession, tearing apart Father Tikhon's propositions by pointing out to the many errors in fact and historical sequence that pepper the film. At the same time, the critical historians themselves strayed into polemical hyperbole. For example, the historian Aleksandr Musin exclaimed that Father Tikhon had clearly not learned the negative lesson from Byzantium regarding the destructive consequences of a too-close relationship between church and state.[12] Another historian, Ilia Peresedov, calls the film an unfortunate fantasy.[13] A typical example of the reaction among historians came from Alexander Yanov, who wrote, for Novaia Gazeta: "Anyone who knows history even on the level of middle school should be offended [by Gibel' Imperii']. Not only because the definite feeling that the film's protagonist, Father Tikhon, is openly trying to brainwash the viewer. It is even more offensive that the brainwashing is occurring through the unscrupulous distortion of history…"[14]

To be fair, the reaction among historians was not all negative. For example, Nezavisimaia Gazeta published a letter by five scholars in support of Gibel' Imperii, praising Father Tikhon for "reminding professional historians of the real role of historical science," that is, of using its lessons to draw lessons for the present.[15] Yet, the point is not so much that Gibel' Imperii elicited more negative than positive reactions (though I would venture that a statistical counting of the articles that appeared after the film's release would most likely confirm this point) but that Father Tikhon's production provoked a lively, genuine discussion that took place on the pages of Russia's less-than independent press and in the air waves of its government dominated television. The breadth of the debate is in itself surprising: It involved not only the community of historians and Russian Federation's liberal and nationalist political partisans, but also engaged the community of Orthodox clergy and active laity. For instance, Novodvorskaia and Afanasiev, as mentioned, can be clearly placed on the liberal side of the Russian political scene; on the nationalist, Novodvorskaia's bitter polemics were matched in tone by those of Natalia Narochnitskaia, former Duma member and leading nationalist ideologue: "Liberals, who have raised the hysterics (vizg) around this film, cannot stand the very conception that the goal and center of human history related to faith, harmony between the individual and general philosophical teleology of human life…[in contrast to liberal individualism]."[16]

Still, most surprisingly of all, Gibel' Imperii provoked public disagreements from within the Russian Orthodox Church itself. Far from being a symbol of Orthodoxy's growing status as the post-Soviet neo-totalitarian ideology, Father Tikhon's film served to usefully underline political cleavages within the Church. Several scholars have begun writing about the pitfalls of treating the Russian Orthodox Church as an ideological monolith, a tendency that has characterized most analysis of Orthodoxy until recently.[17] The various reactions within the Church towards Gibel' Imperii lend credence to this new scholarship. Most strikingly, the ecclesiastical administration did not issue any comment on the film. Patriarch Alexii II, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, has been silent on the matter; this, in the Byzantine configuration of Russian church life can be reasonably read as distancing from the film and its contents. In the meantime, the head of the

Church's Department of External Relations, the controversial Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk, publicly stated that Father Tikhon's apocalyptic vision is "his personal opinion, and does not reflect the official position of the Church."[18] Moreover, the metropolitan made clear that Russian Orthodoxy has traditionally sought to avoid giving official commentary to history. The ordinary clergy has also demonstrated division surrounding the film: here one can contrast briefly a highly critical article published by Father Georgii Mitrofanov, a prominent St. Petersburg priest, and on the other hand statements in support of Gibel' Imperii by a number of well-known Moscow clergy. Finally, the extent of the disagreements surrounding the film can be seen in public polemics between lay professors at the Moscow Spiritual Academy (the leading Orthodox educational establishment in Russia), themselves responsible for forming future generations of Russian clergy: their public disagreement suggests that it is difficult to assume ideologically uniform graduates filling the ranks of future Russian Orthodox clergy.

All of this begs the question: how is it possible that, in an atmosphere of (at a minimum) self-censorship and increasing state pressure on Russian media, a film that looks tailor-made by the Putin regime generated so much public debate in the printed press and airwaves? There are three possible ways of understanding this paradox. The first is simply that, all coincidences aside, Gibel' Imperii was not produced at the behest of the Kremlin and was in fact the product of Father Tikhon Shevkunov's personal artistic vision (this is in fact the version defended by Father Tikhon himself). If one accepts this version, then the next question arises, namely, whether the intended audience was the Russian public or the Russian ruling elite, as it stood ready to shift from the Putin regime to another, as yet unknown (at the time the film was produced the outcome of the priemnik game was unclear). In any case, if the film was entirely Father Tikhon's own initiative, there was little incentive for the Kremlin to stage-manage public reaction. The second explanation may be that on certain issues the Kremlin finds it useful to maintain the façade of pluralism, allowing a certain degree of public argument as long as the existing political system itself is not threatened; it is possible that the polemics around Gibel' Imperii fall into this "safe" category.

The third possible answer is, admittedly, entirely in the realm of speculation. Even if Gibel' Imperii was in fact a piece of Kremlin-directed propaganda, the extent of public debate speaks to a surprising weakness in the Putin-era state. Indeed, one might recall the ease with which political opposition to United Russia and Medvedev was denied access to the media and thus to the full public sphere and ask why in the case of Gibel' Imperii the state did not bring down the weight of its power and quash criticism of the film before it even appeared on the printed page. A possible explanation may lie in the Russian state's general inability to deal coherently with issues that have a religious coloration: significantly in this respect, prior (and parallel) to Gibel' Imperii one finds another public debate that has continued unabated in the Russian media for the last ten years, namely, the discussion regarding whether or not Orthodoxy should be taught in public schools and if so, in what form. In this case the public debate has been continuous, acrimonious, and entirely devoid of state interference, even in the most obviously state-controlled media outlets; in the process, the debate has revealed deep fissures within the political elite about which policies to follow towards Orthodox education. Thus Gibel' Imperii may be

indicative of a general pattern in which the Russian state has simply been unwilling – or unable – to formulate a coherent position on an issue that brings together religion and politics, and has, as a result, refrained interfering in the relevant segment of the public sphere.

III. Some Concluding Thoughts

Discussions around Gibel' Imperii lasted several months after its initial appearance on Russian television, and are to some degree still continuing. The political and cultural implications of the film in the Russian Federation are numerous indeed; this article has merely highlight two areas in which Father Tikhon Shevkunov's production speaks to broader issues within Russian life. First, the film clearly stands as the most creative articulation of the Russian Federation's place in the "Third Rome" myth. Second, while the degree to which this resonates with contemporary Russian reality remains the subject of future inquiry, one can already demonstrate that the Gibel' Imperii elicited contradictory reactions from Russian society. In turn, the fact that societal reaction to the film occurred not in the form of clandestine kitchen-table discussions but rather manifested itself on the pages and airwaves of Russia's largely state-controlled media raises questions about the real strength of the Russian state and about its perceived quest for a new, totalizing ideology. Given the recent character of the Gibel' Imperii phenomenon, it is difficult certainly to draw any concrete conclusions at this stage. However, it is hoped that the article at least arouses interest in the questions raised, leading to future productive research and analysis into the nature of the post-Yeltsin state and the place of Russian Orthodoxy within the consolidating regime.

Notes:

[1] See Edward Keenan, "On Certain Mythical Beliefs and Russian Behaviors," in S. Frederick Starr, ed. *The Legacy of History in Russia and the New States of Eurasia* (Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe, 1994): 26-27.

[2] Ironically, though the viewers would not know this (and the film's producers most likely did not think of this link), Sretenskii monastery was founded under Great Prince Vasili I, who married his daughter Anna to the Byzantine emperor John VIII Paleologus.

[3] Sergei Leskov "Gibel'nyi Urok" *Izvestiia* 28. 01.08 http://www.pravoslavie.ru/smi/32.htm

[4] "Vizantiiskii Revansh" *Gazeta.ru* 29.01.08 http://www.pravoslavie.ru/smi/34.htm

[5] Mikhail Leontiev "Izbavi Nas ot Lukavogo" http://www.pravoslavie.ru/smi/130.htm

[6] Denis Tukmakov "Spasti Imperiu" *Zavtra* 7, 743 (13.02.08) http://zavtra.ru/cgi//veil//data/zavtra/08/743/41.html

[7] Valeria Gorelova "Gibel' Imperii. Kanal Rossiia Prepodast 'Vizantiiskii Urok" *Moskovskii Komsomolets* 30. 01.08 http://www.pravoslavie.ru/smi/35.htm

[18 Grigorii Revsin. “Gibel’ Istorii. Uroki Otsa Tikhona” *Kommersant* 31.01.08

[9] Vladimir Mozhegov “Gibel’ Imperii” *Russkii Zhurnal* 05.02.08 http://portal-credo.ru/site/?act=news&id=60282&type=view

[10] Sergei Stroev “Medvezhyi Agitprop v Vizantiiskom Anturazhe” 26.02.08 *contrtv.ru* http://portal-credo.ru/site/?act=news&id=60721&type=view

[11] Valeria Novodvorskaia. “Chtoby Zemliu v Stambule Chekistam Otdat.” *Grani.ru*. 12.02.08.

[12] Aleksandr Musin, “Esli Dovelos’ v Imperii Roditsa, Nado Znat’ Uroki Vi zantii” *Gorod,* No. 5 (18.02.08) http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=fresh&id=723

[13] Ilia Peresedov “V Nuzhnom Meste Postavili Krestik” *Novaia Gazeta* 04.02.2008

[14] Aleksandr Yanov “Osleplennye Priemnikom” *Novaia Gazeta* 11.02.08 http://portal-credo.ru/site/?act=news&id=60350&type=view

[15] “Vizantiiskii Nabat. K Diskussii o Fil’me Arkimandrita Tikhona (Shevkunova)” *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* 04. 02.08 http://religion.ng.ru/printed/208785

[16] Natalia Narochnitskaia “Vizantia Byla Namerenno Iziata iz Evropeiskogo Istoricheskogo Soznania” 06.02.08 www.pravoslavie.ru

[17] For example, Zoe Knox, Russian Society and the Orthodox Church: Religion in Russia After Communism (New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005); Wallace L. Daniel, The Orthodox Church and Civil Society in Russia (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006); Nikolai Mitrokhin, Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’: Sovremennoe Sostoianie i Aktual’nye Problemy (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2004); Aleksandr Verkhovskii, Politicheskoe Pravoslavie: Russkie Pravoslavnye Natsionalisty i Fundamentalisty 1995-2001 (Moscow: Center Sova, 2003); Irina Papkova, Orthodoxy and Democracy in Russia: New Interpretations (PhD diss., Georgetown University, 2006).”

[18] “Bitva Kremlevskikh Pastyrei” from www.portal-credo.ru

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