

## **A Marriage of Convenience? Domestic and Foreign Policy Reasons for the 1943 Soviet Church–State ‘Concordat’**

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Determined and vicious antireligious persecution in the Soviet Union came to an informal halt after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. The Russian Orthodox Church played an important propaganda role and earned recognition as a legal person and permission to have a bank account, and bishops were once more appointed to dioceses in Russia and the rest of the Soviet Union. The most important turning-point in church-state relations was, however, a meeting on 4–5 September 1943 where Stalin, Molotov and Metropolitans Sergi, Nikolai and Aleksii met and discussed the concessions that the church needed from the state in order to become a substantial force once more in the ecclesiastical world.

The fact that the state waited until the autumn of 1943 to formalise its apparently more permissive relationship with the church has puzzled historians, and has led to some confusion over the role which the church played from 1941 to 1945.<sup>1</sup> In fact, there were two distinct periods, 1941–43 and 1943–45, or arguably 1943–48. The role that Stalin envisaged for the church changed in 1943 when the need to plan for the postwar settlement became apparent and the state began to reimpose official cultural values. Between 1941 and 1943 the role of the Russian Orthodox Church had involved appeals to fellow-Christians and fellow-Slavs; after 1943 the church found itself expected to play a more tightly controlled role as one aspect of the face which Soviet Russia presented to its people and the world. There were two central reasons why the state timed the meeting as it did: first, a recognition of the foreign policy potential of the Russian Orthodox Church; second, domestic control as part of a wider reassertion of party control.

### **Foreign Policy**

The fate of religion in the Soviet Union had considerable propaganda significance for relationships with other countries. Although the freedoms which the church enjoyed after 1941 made it possible for allied propaganda to evade the issue of religious persecution in the Soviet Union, archival evidence shows that the relevant British authorities were sceptical about the permanence of the relaxation. Soviet representatives tried to persuade foreign powers that religion in the Soviet Union had not been persecuted; Popovsky claims that the Soviet ambassador lied to the British, saying that there were 58,442 priests in the USSR and in this way ‘trying to get the British

ally on his side'.<sup>2</sup> There were thus powerful foreign policy reasons for codifying the freedoms of the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>3</sup> Another foreign policy motive was the formalisation of the relationship with the church in order to provide an instrument that would influence other Orthodox and Slavic peoples in Eastern Europe. After 1943, as the Soviet Union tried to persuade the allies to open a second front in Europe and to attract aid, the government sought to use all the means it could to present a positive face. The use of the Russian Orthodox Church for foreign policy purposes led to its official status being defined in September 1943 and an official state body being set up to ensure that it performed the tasks it was set with the minimum of interference from old-fashioned atheists within the Soviet Union.<sup>4</sup> However, foreign policy concerns were not the most important reasons for the occurrence or the timing of the 1943 meeting.

### **Domestic Reasons**

Although the first part of the war saw a considerable loosening of cultural controls, historians of Soviet culture identify the turning-point in cultural freedom as 1943:

After Stalingrad bombastic motifs of victory and military suffused the media; and after the even greater battle of Kursk, resolementization ensued on a vast scale. On the great day of victory over the Germans the surgeons of official culture began to excise the great heart that had beat so spontaneously in the cauldron of battle.<sup>5</sup>

Schapiro notes the change in Stalin's speeches during the war, from the shaky 'Brothers and sisters ...' 1941 speech to his November 1943 speech when all emphasis had returned to the power of the Party. Schapiro adds that around 1943 '... party and socialist themes began to reappear in propaganda, and party organisations were rated for having neglected such subjects hitherto'.<sup>6</sup>

Stalin's meeting with the metropolitans in September 1943 was part of the general return to official culture as eventual victory began to seem certain. It combined a return to official 'top-down' cultural policy with a recognition of the power and potential usefulness of the Russian Orthodox Church. The meeting was not an act of goodwill on Stalin's part, nor was it indicative of his essential religiosity as folklore has suggested;<sup>7</sup> it was the calculated elimination of a potential enemy – or, at best, a source of uncontrolled and independent values – by the cooptation of apparently trustworthy elements of the church in order to control believers and eliminate counterrevolutionary threats from religious communities.

### **Hypothesised Motives**

Before the archival report became available historians suggested various motives for the state's making of concessions to the church in 1943. Some authorities suggest that the sheer strength of the religious revival in unoccupied and occupied areas of the Soviet Union was Stalin's essential motive for the concessions granted to the Russian Orthodox Church. Yakunin, for example, claims that 'Not to be outdone by Hitler's "piety" he [Stalin] commanded the obedient Metropolitan Sergei to open the cathedrals'.<sup>8</sup> Curtiss, Fireside, Pospelovsky and House suggest that popular belief was an important factor in persuading the state to permit the revival of the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile other authorities have suggested that the 1943 concessions were a reward for the loyalty of the church between 1941 and 1943.<sup>10</sup>

## The Meeting

On 4–5 September 1943 Stalin invited the patriarchal *locum tenens* Metropolitan Sergi (Stragorodsky) and the Metropolitans Aleksii (Simansky) and Nikolai (Yarushevich) to the Kremlin and the concordat with the church was agreed. The meeting is usually described as the most significant turning-point in Soviet church-state relations.<sup>11</sup> At this meeting the leaders of the church requested concessions that were to form part of the limited revival that would be permitted to the Russian Orthodox Church in its new role as junior partner of the Soviet regime. The meeting laid the foundations for the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in official Soviet policy. Different accounts of it have been the central source for understandings of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet state in wartime.<sup>12</sup> Until the archives began to be opened there were two main sources of information about the meeting itself, both of these being memoir sources from religious émigrés.<sup>13</sup>

## Three Texts<sup>14</sup>

The first text on the meeting is from the autobiography of the religious dissident Anatoli Levitin-Krasnov.<sup>15</sup> His report of the meeting originates from a conversation he had with Metropolitan Nikolai. Levitin-Krasnov was clearly writing his history for a religious, antisoviet intelligentsia: he concentrates on the personalities of Sergi and Stalin and presents a fictionalised report of what the metropolitans were thinking during the meeting. Stalin is a demonic figure completely in control of the state; his behaviour is threatening and his pronouncements are unquestioned.<sup>16</sup> Levitin seems to assume that at this time the church needed to achieve some sort of recognition from the atheistic state – an assumption that would come naturally to a Renovatianist. It is possible that Nikolai, or Levitin, wanted to encourage readers to compare Stalin's interest in the church with Khrushchev's militant opposition after 1959. Although Levitin's description of the meeting is dramatised, almost fictionalised, and only two pages long, it became the standard account for most writers in the West after the eminent historian of the Russian Orthodox Church Dimitry Pospelovsky selected it as the 'most authoritative' of the émigré accounts.<sup>17</sup> The Levitin account, therefore, has until very recently shaped our understanding of the events at the meeting.

The second émigré account of the meeting is by the historian Mark Popovsky<sup>18</sup> and appears in his book about Archbishop Luka of Krasnoyarsk. Popovsky's informant was A. V. Verdernikov, whose informant had been Metropolitan Aleksii (d. 1970). Popovsky's account is four pages long and more detailed than Levitin's, but it is third-hand. Popovsky writes within the same frame of reference as Levitin,<sup>19</sup> appealing to the same antisoviet sentiments and presuppositions, but the essential difference is that Popovsky opposes the choices made by Sergi. Thus his account of the meeting is an attempt to show how Sergi squandered an opportunity for far greater religious freedoms than were actually achieved.

The archival text is a first-hand report written by Georgi Karpov.<sup>20</sup> As the NKVD's expert on religious affairs and the future chairman of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (CAROC), Karpov attended the meeting although neither of the other two texts lists him as present.<sup>21</sup> Karpov's report comes from the CAROC archives and was published in 1994 in *Moskovsky tserkovny vestnik*.<sup>22</sup> Karpov's account is ten pages long, detailed, first-person and apparently factual. The language and the detail both suggest that Karpov was taking notes at the meeting. His

report was written for the state bureaucracy and was not intended for publication. It reflects accepted notions of state bureaucrats; it is not contentious, but confirms accepted ideas about Stalin's power over the church. Karpov makes no explicit attempt to analyse or excuse the sudden change in direction of policy, but we can assume that his selection of information reflects his own beliefs as to why Stalin chose to call a meeting with the metropolitans and offer them concessions.

There are a number of factors that should lead us to approach the two memoir texts with caution. The authors wrote these accounts years after the event and years after their informants had died. Clear discrepancies exist between the texts; for example, as to the timing of the meeting. According to Levitin the metropolitans were collected at 9 p.m. and arrived at the Kremlin ten minutes later; the conversation with Stalin and Molotov seems to have started immediately. Later tea was served and the meeting lasted until 3 a.m. Popovsky writes that the metropolitans arrived at the Kremlin 'towards midnight' and were received by Molotov because Stalin was occupied; at 2 a.m. Stalin, Molotov and the metropolitans 'took their places round a richly decked table'. The metropolitans went home as 'day was breaking over Moscow'. Karpov agrees that the metropolitans arrived around midnight but indicates that they were taken directly to Stalin. He writes that the meeting lasted only an hour and fifty-five minutes. Stalin's appointment diary records an even shorter meeting. The diary states that the meeting began at forty minutes past midnight and finished at 2 a.m.<sup>23</sup>

### **Preparations for the Meeting**

The meeting was arranged at very short notice. Fletcher and Fireside both argue that no real negotiations took place at the meeting as all the details had been sorted out previously by aides of the two organisations;<sup>24</sup> however, archival evidence indicates that the agreement reached at the meeting in Stalin's office had not been prearranged: given his subsequent importance in the practical execution of policy Karpov would doubtless have been present at any previous meeting with representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church, and he does not mention one in his report. Neither émigré account mentions a prior meeting. However, even Karpov was not present at the initial decision to hold the meeting with the metropolitans: Odintsov notes that the initial decision to create a body under Sovnarkom that would act as a link between the church and the state was taken by Stalin, Molotov, G. M. Malenkov, Beria and V. N. Merkulov and that the decision was taken then to ask Karpov to collect information on the Russian Orthodox Church and its patriotic activities and to recall Sergi from Ul'yanovsk.<sup>25</sup>

The only previous meeting attended by Karpov was with Stalin, Malenkov and Beria a few hours before the meeting with the hierarchs where Karpov briefed Stalin on the state of the Russian Orthodox Church. From the questions that Stalin asked it is possible to suggest a set of motives for the meeting. First, Stalin asked about Sergi's position and authority within the church and his attitude to the Soviet state, which indicates that he was considering Sergi's potential efficacy as an instrument of state control. Second, he asked a number of questions about links with the church abroad and the other Orthodox churches which suggests that he was aware of the potential propaganda benefits of utilising the Russian Orthodox Church for the benefit of foreign policy. Third, he asked about the number of churches and bishops in the USSR, assessing the size of the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>26</sup> Stalin also asked if Karpov was Russian, presumably anxious to ensure that the chairman of the

Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church be an ethnic Russian himself. The fact that the meeting with the metropolitans took place with no delay after Stalin's briefing by Karpov and the fact that Stalin offered the concessions personally to the Russian Orthodox Church underline the centrality of Stalin in wartime religious policy.

### **Subjects Discussed at the Meeting**

The government made a number of concessions at the meeting. There has been considerable doubt as to what was arranged at the meeting since the report was not available until the opening of the archives and the two memoir reports, published only in 1979, disagree on the events at the meeting. Popovsky's account claims that the government was prepared to offer far more than the metropolitans had the courage to ask for. 'The leader even reproached the metropolitans for the narrowness of their plans, for the absence of real scope.'<sup>27</sup> If this statement is true the behaviour of the metropolitans indicates an understandable caution.

Karpov's report of the meeting indicates what the metropolitans and Stalin discussed, what the priorities of the hierarchs were and how far the state was prepared to permit or encourage the revival to take place. Most of the discussion focused on the central church structures and rebuilding the Patriarchate, and the first request made by Sergi quite clearly indicates this priority: he called the election of a patriarch 'the most important and most pressing question'.<sup>28</sup> Sergi's lack of canonical authority enabled rebel churchmen to call him an imposter and weakened his position *vis-à-vis* the underground churches in Russia which also accused him of leading the church without appropriate authority. Stalin made no objections to the convocation of a Council (*Sobor*) and the election of a patriarch; in Popovsky's words, 'This is an internal church matter, the leader reassured them.'<sup>29</sup> When the hierarchs asked for a month to arrange a Council, Stalin asked Karpov, 'Isn't it possible to show Bolshevik speed?', with the result that the Council was held on 8 September rather than in October. The early date no doubt ensured that no hierarch the state had not approved would be able to attend the Council; but Sergi was elected by the nineteen bishops who attended and was thus able henceforth to act as the legal head of the church.

Continuing with requests that would lead to the rebuilding of the institution of the church Sergi asked for permission to renew publication of *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* and Stalin agreed. The revived journal provided a tool for the central church organisation to renew regular contact with the *oblasti* in a formal and sanctioned manner, and signalled the fact that the Soviet state now permitted, even supported, the existence of the church. Ten thousand copies of the first issue of the journal were authorised.<sup>30</sup>

The next request came from Aleksii and was again concerned with strengthening the central church; he addressed the church's lack of regular income by requesting that the dioceses be permitted to send money for the maintenance of the central church and that the statute on church administration might be altered to permit priests to become members of the executive organs of local churches. Once more Stalin had no objection. Stalin's enthusiasm for rebuilding the central church structures was clear from his response to Nikolai's request for permission to establish candle factories: 'The church can rely on the comprehensive support of the government in all questions connected with strengthening and developing its organisation within the USSR.'<sup>31</sup> Popovsky writes that Stalin told the hierarchs: 'You must create your own Vatican where there will be academies, libraries, publishing houses and all other

establishments necessary to a large and significant Patriarchate like the Moscow Patriarchate'.<sup>32</sup> There is a difference in emphasis between these two sentiments: in Karpov's report Stalin is discussing the church's domestic growth, while Popovsky, with the benefit of hindsight, seems to be rewriting the discussion to emphasise the propaganda foreign policy role that the church was to play.

The metropolitans' next request was made, according to Karpov, jointly by Sergi and Aleksii; they asked for permission to organise theological courses in a few dioceses, in order to address the crucial problem of the lack of priests. Stalin acceded to this but made it clear that the government was happy to permit far more, asking: 'Why do they ask for theological courses when the government will allow the organisation of religious academies and the opening of religious seminaries in all the dioceses where they are needed?' Popovsky records that Stalin responded: 'Courses? Hah! You need ecclesiastical academies and seminaries', and adds the unlikely remark: 'For this business it is necessary to train people from childhood.'<sup>33</sup> The hierarchs reacted very reluctantly to Stalin's offer, saying that they did not have the resources for academies and explaining that men under 18 were too impressionable to be trained as priests: 'They considered [men under the age of 18 to be] unsuitable in terms of the time and of past experience: they knew that while people had not yet formed a definite outlook on the world, to train them as priests was very dangerous.'<sup>34</sup> Whatever their motives, the hierarchs thus avoided a potential future clash with the state on the awkward subject of the education of children and the involvement of young people in religion: this in fact was to remain an area in which the Soviet government would make no concessions even at the height of the religious revival.

Addressing the problem of the lack of churches, Sergi asked for churches to be opened in some dioceses. Karpov reports him as saying that 'almost all the diocesan hierarchs were telling them that there were few churches and that no churches had been opened for many years', and that he believed that diocesan hierarchs should be allowed to negotiate with local authorities on the question of opening churches. Aleksii and Nikolai agreed, noting the uneven distribution of operating churches and requesting the opening of churches in areas where there were few.<sup>35</sup> Stalin did not object. We may thus hypothesise that in line with the priorities of the church, after 1943 the majority of reopened churches were in areas where there were none, or only a few.

The next few questions, which Odintsov calls the 'awkward' (*neudobny*) questions, were received with less enthusiasm.<sup>36</sup> Aleksii asked if the hierarchs in camps and prisons could be freed. The metropolitans were told to submit a list. The list was sent to the government on 27 October 1943 and listed 25 clergymen, mainly bishops and archbishops, who were in prison; Karpov forwarded the list to the NKVD but most of those on it were already dead.<sup>37</sup> According to Levitin the exchange was very different, and Stalin menaced the metropolitans in an exchange concerning the 'missing' clergy:

'And why do you lack clergy? What has happened to them?', he asked, removing his pipe from his mouth and staring at his audience. Aleksii and Nikolai were shaken by the fixed gaze of the green eyes: everyone knew that the clergy had been slaughtered in the camps.<sup>38</sup>

Almost certainly Levitin or his source is here rewriting the discussion to make explicit what he imagined to be the underlying thoughts of Stalin and the metropolitans.

In an associated request, returning to the problem of the church's lack of priests, Sergi asked for freedom of residence and mobility in the USSR and permission for former priests who had served their sentences to conduct services. Karpov was told to examine these questions.

The metropolitans had no more requests for Stalin and simply mentioned the occasionally unfair taxation of priests in the localities. Stalin then turned his attention to the metropolitans' living conditions, offering them food at state prices, access to cars, and the former German ambassador's house at 5 Chisty Pereulok. The hierarchs insisted that they could buy food at the market and Stalin told them: 'It is inconvenient and expensive for you to buy your food at the market. For this reason the state can provide you with food at state prices.' The implication once again was that the metropolitans and the church they led were to be servants of the state.

In his report of the meeting Karpov states that 'All three [metropolitans] declared that they regarded comrade Karpov's appointment to this post [chairman of CAROC] highly favourably.' Although Popovsky records that the metropolitans protested at the appointment of Karpov,<sup>39</sup> judging from later communications between Karpov and the leaders of the church<sup>40</sup> it is extremely unlikely that the hierarchs would have risked vitiating the concessions that Stalin was prepared to make to the extent that they would have questioned his choice of chairman for a state organisation.<sup>41</sup>

Indicating the desired propaganda impact of the meeting Stalin said to Molotov: 'We must bring this to the attention of the population just as, later, we will also need to report the election of a patriarch to the population.'<sup>42</sup> Molotov started to draw up a communiqué which appeared in *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* on 5 September and in *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian* the next day.<sup>43</sup> The report was very brief and the newspapers did not venture any independent analysis of the significance of the meeting. However, on 7 September *The Times* published a short piece analysing the importance of the meeting and the reasons for the state's concessions.<sup>44</sup> The writer used the concessions to the church to laud Stalin's enviable ability to respond positively to popular demand, a questionable conclusion that may have had more to do with the Second World War alliances than realities in Soviet Russia. However, he ended by hoping that the compromise indicated a new, democratic era for the Soviet Union, which suggests that the meeting had successfully persuaded the British press that Soviet religious policy had really changed.

## **Conclusion**

Commentators have suggested a number of motives for the meeting and for the concessions that were made. This conclusion examines the hypothesised motives in light of the meeting. The first thing to emphasise is that the archival document does not answer all the questions that have been asked of it. At no stage is an explanation given for the meeting and although the archival document supports some hypotheses, others, by virtue of their nature (for example, the Nazi policy of church openings), would not have been recorded in such a document.

The suggestion that Stalin was motivated to formalise the relationship because of popular support for the church is not negated by an examination of the archival report. The report says that Stalin told the metropolitans that the government had received many comments expressing a positive view of the recently enhanced role of the church. Of course the early years of the war, when the survival of the regime itself was in doubt, had provided a context for this temporary reversal of government policy on the church in order to appeal to popular support. However, the formalisa-

tion of this reversal in 1943 cannot be explained by the simple fact that the church had popular support, particularly in light of the savage persecution of the church up to 1941 when the degree of popular support was completely disregarded. In my estimation government anxiety, which had been growing for a number of years, about apparently widespread support for the underground churches which opposed the regime led to the fostering of the loyal patriarchal church.

Various commentators have suggested that the government made the concessions because it appreciated the loyalty that the church had shown after the invasion of 1941. This is unlikely since the central church organisation had been expressing its loyalty since 1927. It is more likely that Stalin's appreciation of the loyalty that the official church offered was contrasted to the perceived disloyalty of the underground churches and those churches in Ukraine and Belorussia that had sided with the Nazis since 1941. It is likely that what Stalin appreciated was the potential of the church as an instrument of policy rather than its loyalty; but clearly the church's loyalty made it easier to use it as a tool.

Fireside writes that 'since no details have ever been released regarding this historic meeting analysts must surmise the nature of the bargain the hierarchs were able to drive from the progress the church made in the next few months'.<sup>45</sup> However, the post-meeting developments reflected the spirit of the meeting rather than the actual concessions granted. As we have seen the hierarchs were reluctant at the meeting to accept all the concessions the state was prepared to offer. The concessions that they did not dare to accept, theological academies and seminaries, were nevertheless to be made in the next few years; a fact that indicates how powerless the hierarchs were. Additionally, the meeting concentrated mainly on central church organisations, and the concession which affected most people, the opening of churches in the localities, was passed over briefly. The discussion here focused on the opening of churches in areas with no churches; this aspiration did not correspond with the ambitions of the state and was not in fact reflected in subsequent developments. Finally, the foreign policy role of the church was not mentioned at all at the meeting, but only at the briefing beforehand.

None of the accounts suggests that the hierarchs demanded anything, or 'drove a bargain' with Stalin; in fact both Karpov and Popovsky indicate that the metropolitans were reluctant to accept some of the concessions that Stalin offered, presumably anxious not to give the state too much scope for renewed persecution on the basis of excessive influence. The anxieties of the hierarchs appear to have been largely that the central institution of the church should be rebuilt, especially that the election of a patriarch should occur, and that a journal should be allowed so that the church leadership could keep in contact with the dioceses. The requests which the metropolitans made were all fairly modest, including permission to run theological courses for a few people and that a few churches be reopened in the localities. Even their anxiety that clergy be released from the camps focused almost entirely on senior clergymen, their contemporaries. Priests had been imprisoned in their thousands, but none of their names were on the list which the metropolitans submitted to Stalin.

The church, then, remained firmly under state control. I have argued that at the 1943 meeting, summoned at his initiative, Stalin's aim was to coopt the church in two areas. Odintsov is surely right when he observes that the situation the church found itself in after 1943 'arose from Stalin's intention of using the institution of the church in order neatly to solve pragmatic political and ideological tasks within the country and in the foreign policy area.'<sup>46</sup>



## Notes and References

- <sup>1</sup> William C. Fletcher, *A Study in Survival: The Church in Russia 1927–1943* (SPCK, London, 1965), p. 112; and Richard S. Curtiss, *The Russian Church and the Soviet State 1917–1950* (Little Brown & Co., Boston, 1953).
- <sup>2</sup> Mark Popovsky, *Zhizn' i zhitiye Voino-Yasenetskogo arkhiepiskopa i khirurga* (YMCA Press, 1979), p. 373.
- <sup>3</sup> Odintsov also makes the point that leaving the NKVD in charge of religious policy was damaging to foreign relations. M. I. Odintsov, 'Gosudarstvenno-tserkovnyye otnosheniya nakanune i v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voyny', in *id.* (ed.), *Religioznyye organizatsii Sovetskogo Soyuza v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voyny, 1941–1945gg* (Moscow, 1995), p. 24.
- <sup>4</sup> *loc. cit.*
- <sup>5</sup> 'Introduction', in Richard Stites (ed.), *Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1995), p. 6. For similar findings see Jeffrey Brooks, 'Pravda goes to war', in Stites (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- <sup>6</sup> Leonard Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Methuen, Cambridge, 1985), p. 499.
- <sup>7</sup> See Mikhail Agursky, 'Stalin's ecclesiastical background', *Survey*, vol. 28, no. 4, Winter 1984, p. 13, for a legend that Stalin permitted the revival of the Russian Orthodox Church after three Russian saints appeared to him in a vision in the summer of 1941; Alexander Werth, *Russia at War* (Barrie and Rockliff, London, 1964), p. 437, for there being 'a lot of talk' about Stalin as an ex-seminarian having a 'soft spot' for religion.
- <sup>8</sup> Sergei Pushkarev, Vladimir Rusak and Gleb Yakunin, *Christianity and Government in Russia and the Soviet Union: Reflections on the Millennium* (Westview Press, London, 1989), p. 68.
- <sup>9</sup> Curtiss, *op. cit.*, p. 300; Harvey Fireside, *Icon and Swastika: The Russian Orthodox Church under Nazi and Soviet Control* (Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 172; Dimitry Pospelovsky, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime, 1917–1982* (St Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 1984), p. 196; Francis House, *The Russian Phoenix: The Story of Russian Christians AD 988–1988* (SPCK, London, 1988), p. 75; *The Times*, 7 September 1943, p. 3; Dimitri Pospelovsky, *Pravoslavnaya tserkov' v istorii Rusi, Rossii i SSSR* (Bibleisko-bogoslovsky institut sv. Apostola Andrey, Moscow, 1996), p. 298.
- <sup>10</sup> Andrew Sorokowski, 'Church and state 1917–64', in Eugene B. Shirley and Michael Rowe (eds), *Candle in the Wind: Religion in the Soviet Union* (Ethics and Public Policy Centre, Washington DC, 1989), p. 49; House, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
- <sup>11</sup> For the importance of the 1943 meeting see, for example, Walter Kolarz, *Religion in the Soviet Union* (Macmillan, London, 1962), p. 51; Fireside, *op. cit.*, p. 166; Pospelovsky, *Pravoslavnaya tserkov' ...*, p. 298.
- <sup>12</sup> Pospelovsky, *The Russian Church ...*; Kolarz, *op. cit.*
- <sup>13</sup> Anatoli Levitin Krasnov, *Ruk tvoikh zhar 1941–56* (Krug, 1979); Popovsky, *op. cit.*
- <sup>14</sup> The analysis in this section can be found in more detail in Anna Dickinson, *Stalin's Holy War: Representations of Church–State Negotiations in 1943* (MSocSc Dissertation, CREES, University of Birmingham, 1995).
- <sup>15</sup> Levitin was a member of the Renovatianist Church, rejoining the Patriarchal Church only in 1944; he was imprisoned under Stalin and Brezhnev. Using the name A. Krasnov he was a pioneer of *samizdat*, defending human and religious rights. He emigrated to Switzerland in 1974. Philip Walters, 'Obituary: Anatoli Levitin-Krasnov, 1915–91', *Religion in Communist Lands*, vol. 19, nos. 3–4, Winter 1991, pp. 264–70.
- <sup>16</sup> See the *Russian Review* debate, especially the articles by Peter Kenez and Arch J. Getty, for a discussion of the 'demonising' of Stalin in histories of the USSR.
- <sup>17</sup> Pospelovsky, *The Russian Church ...*, p. 201.
- <sup>18</sup> Popovsky, born in 1922, was a writer and a dissident. Victimised for his work, he left the Soviet Union in 1977. M. Popovsky, *Science in Chains: The Crisis of Science and Scientists in the Soviet Union Today* (Collins & Harvill Press, London, 1980), pp. 243–44.

- <sup>19</sup> Both émigré sources emphasise the reversed importance of Stalin and Metropolitan Sergi, making the reader aware that Stalin had begun as a very junior seminarian when Sergi was already a bishop in the church ('When Stalin was a seminarian, Metropolitan Sergi was already a bishop and held the post of rector of the St Petersburg Theological Academy' (Levitin, pp. 106–7); 'the former seminarian had ... taken on the role of the Emperor Constantine' (Popovsky, p. 374).) Popovsky also underlines the past persecution of the church. Stalin is 'head of a party which orders its members 'to wage a decisive struggle ... against religious prejudices'.'
- <sup>20</sup> Georgi Karpov joined the Party in 1920 and entered the OGPU, moving steadily up the ranks of the NKVD until he became a general and the head of the Fourth Department, responsible for the struggle against 'church–sectarian counterrevolution'. In 1943, therefore, he was the state's specialist on the Russian Orthodox Church.
- <sup>21</sup> Pospelovsky suggests that Nikolai could have forgotten to mention that Karpov was at the meeting. He also notes that Popovsky's account claims that Karpov came in halfway through the meeting: 'According to it [Popovsky's account], in the middle of the conversation Georgy Karpov ... appeared', ... Pospelovsky, *The Russian Church ...*, pp. 202–3, footnote 18.
- <sup>22</sup> Gosudarstvenny Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF), f.6991 op.1 d.1 11.1–10; *Moskovsky tserkovny vestnik*, no. 6, 1994.
- <sup>23</sup> *Istorichesky arkhiv*, no. 3, 1996, p. 78.
- <sup>24</sup> Fireside, *op. cit.*, p. 178. Dimitry Pospelovsky records that the historian Ye. I. Lisavtsev claimed at a 1993 conference that Stalin and Sergi had met before the 4 September meeting in order to prepare the ground for the official meeting. Pospelovsky, *Pravoslavnaya tserkov' ...*, p. 298. One must agree with Pospelovsky's conclusion that this is unlikely in light of the evidence provided by Alekseyev (which is essentially Karpov's report). See Alekseyev, *Illyuzii i dogmy* (Moscow, 1991).
- <sup>25</sup> Odintsov, *op. cit.*, pp. 24–25.
- <sup>26</sup> Georgi Karpov, *Moskovsky tserkovny vestnik* (archival reference: GARF f.6991s op.1 d.1 11.1–10, in Felix Corley (ed.), *Religion in the Soviet Union: An Archival Reader* (Macmillan, 1996), pp. 139–47.
- <sup>27</sup> Popovsky, *Zhizn' i zhitiye ...*, p. 374.
- <sup>28</sup> Karpov, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
- <sup>29</sup> Popovsky, *Zhizn' i zhitiye ...*, p. 374.
- <sup>30</sup> House, Public Records Office FO 371 36963, p. 190.
- <sup>31</sup> Karpov, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- <sup>32</sup> Popovsky, *Zhizn' i zhitiye ...*, p. 374.
- <sup>33</sup> *loc. cit.*
- <sup>34</sup> Karpov, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
- <sup>35</sup> *ibid.*, p. 6.
- <sup>36</sup> Odintsov, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
- <sup>37</sup> GARF f.6991 op.1 d.5 11.1–2 (obverse).
- <sup>38</sup> Levitin-Krasnov, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
- <sup>39</sup> Popovsky records that Sergi objected 'but he is our persecutor ...' (Popovsky, *Zhizn' i zhitiye ...*, pp. 373–74).
- <sup>40</sup> See for example correspondence relating to arrangements for the visits of foreign dignitaries (GARF f.6991 op.1 d.31) and material on a meeting between Karpov and the hierarchs in October 1943 (GARF f.6991 op.1 d.4 11.1–3).
- <sup>41</sup> As Odintsov notes, Karpov's relationship with Aleksii was 'equable, even friendly': Odintsov, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- <sup>42</sup> Karpov, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- <sup>43</sup> *The Manchester Guardian*, 6 September 1943, p. 5; *The Times*, 6 September 1943, p. 4.
- <sup>44</sup> *The Times*, 7 September 1943, p. 3.
- <sup>45</sup> Fireside, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
- <sup>46</sup> Odintsov, *op. cit.*, p. 27.