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Research, Results, and Reading

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Anders Jarlert

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*Fig. 1. Patriarch Tikhon. Picture taken after the enthronement in 1917.
Mikhail Vostryšev, Žizn' zamečatel'nykh ljudej: 2005.*

From Biography to Hymnography

On the Canonization of Patriarch Tikhon

Per-Arne Bodin

Canonizations have never been a more important issue in the Russian Orthodox Church than in the last decades. A substantial share of the post-Soviet Orthodox discourse concerns the new martyrs; that is, an extremely large group of saints who have been canonized for their suffering and death for their faith during the Soviet era.¹

Although he himself is not labelled a martyr, perhaps the most important character included in this mass canonization is Patriarch Tikhon. He is one of the most conspicuous figures in Russian 20th-century ecclesiastical life. Born in 1865, after finishing school he studied at the Theological Seminary in Pskov and then at the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy, where he graduated in 1888. In 1897 he was consecrated Bishop of Lublin, and was sent as a bishop the following year to America. For that reason, he is sometimes called the Enlightener of North America. In 1907 he returned to Russia, first to the diocese of Yaroslavl and then to Vilnius, and in 1917 he became Metropolitan of Moscow. After the February Revolution in 1917 a church council convened for the first time since the 17th century elected him Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia. The council members chose three candidates and then an old monk drew lots among them. The lot fell on Tikhon, a fact that is viewed in the hagiographic rendering of his life as a token of God's will.

The Bolsheviks began harassing the church immediately after the October takeover, and Tikhon was arrested in 1922 and held in custody for more than a year. After submitting a much-disputed loyalty declaration to the Soviet government he was released. He died in 1925 and was canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1989.

A few months after the Bolshevik takeover in October 1917 a decree was issued

1 I have devoted a chapter in my book *Eternity and time* to this topic; Per-Arne Bodin, *Eternity and time: Studies in Russian literature and the Orthodox tradition*, Stockholm: Stockholm University 2007, pp. 231–250.

separating church and state, and at the same time the church was stripped of its responsibility for the school system. Its properties were confiscated, although it was temporarily allowed to use churches and monasteries. Priests, bishops, monks and nuns were deprived of their civic rights. For example, they were not allowed to vote in general elections until 1936. On its part, the church excommunicated the new rulers.

During the 1921 famine, the state demanded that the church hand over its objects of value for the purchase of food for the starving. The church promised to help in any way it could, but maintained that it could not relinquish things that were needed in the divine service. Documentation that became available during glasnost reveals that the state deliberately made the demand in order to create conflict with the church. Riots broke out when believers attempted to defend church property from confiscation. In a secret letter to his colleague Molotov Lenin wrote:

The more representatives of the reactionary priesthood and bourgeoisie we manage to shoot on these grounds the better. We must teach these individuals such a lesson that they won't dare to think of any sort of resistance for several decades.²

The Party and the state apparatus initiated a wave of arrests, and thousands of priests and bishops were executed as counterrevolutionaries.

Yet another threat to the patriarch came from among a group that had been dissatisfied with the decisions of the 1917–1918 council. Dating from the discussions around 1905 on the future of the Russian church, these reformers, *obnovlency*, renovationists, demanded that it cast off its medieval cloak. They called for a much more democratic administration and wanted to modernize the church far beyond what the majority had been willing to accept. The group developed a new theology that declared capitalism to be a demonic ideology and viewed the Soviet regime as the kingdom of God on earth. Unlike the rest of the Orthodox Church, they maintained that not only priests but also bishops should be allowed to marry, and they began using Russian rather than Church Slavic as the liturgical language. For a time in the 1920s the renovationists were a very influential group with as many followers as the patriarch, and they were recognized as the true representatives of Russian Orthodoxy by the other Orthodox churches in the world. Even Metropolitan Sergej, who would succeed Tikhon, briefly supported the group, although he later apologized to the patriarch.

Led by Aleksandr Vvedenskij, the renovationists broke with Tikhon in connection with the famine of 1921 and promised the state more support than the official church leadership had been willing to offer. The movement had been founded in close cooperation with state agencies and the security services. In the trial of Patriarch Tikhon and his bishops, they participated as prosecution witnesses, which made them suspi-

2 Antologija samizdata, <http://antology.igrunov.ru/authors/Lenin/1084383832.html>, accessed 28 August 2015.

cious in the eyes of groups that had initially supported them. Later, when it became apparent that they were losing their support among believers, they were deprived of their state backing.

The reformers were genuinely and sincerely interested in ridding the church of its reactionary past in order to modernize it and adapt it to the demands of the 20th century, but they failed to realize that continuity and responsibility for tradition were two of the church's most essential features. What brought them to complete disaster and doomed their movement was their inability to preserve their independence vis-à-vis the secular power. Unlike the patriarch's church, which was forced to depend on the state, the renovationists sought out this contact themselves, and they were demoralized and corrupted by their proximity to power. For Russian Orthodoxy, the encounter between the totalitarian state and the church was both a trauma and a great temptation. The dilemma and tragedy of the renovationists strongly resembles that of the Russian modernists, who wanted to radically reform art and at first viewed the Party and state apparatus as their allies.

Tikhon: biography, literature, and art

The situation in 1917 was precarious and ambiguous. The old Russia had fallen. The fact that the council could be summoned, however, was to a great extent due to the abdication of the tsar. The new Bolshevik rulers who seized power late in the year were openly hostile to the church and wanted to annihilate it. Street battles were going on in Moscow during both the council and Tikhon's enthronement.

The situation can be illustrated through three quotations from Tikhon himself that are repeated in almost all his biographies. When he learned that he had been appointed, the newly elected patriarch made a short speech which not only contained the usual formulas of humility but also expressed serious concern for the Church of Russia and his own destiny:

Ваша весть об избрании меня в Патриархи является для меня тем свитком, на котором было написано: Плач, и стон, и горе, и каковой свиток должен был съесть пророк Иезекииль.

Your news of my election as patriarch is to me the scroll on which it was written: 'Weeping and gnashing of teeth and grief'³ which the prophet Ezekiel was forced to swallow / ... /³

The second quotation is the anathema spoken by Tikhon on the new rulers, accusing them of committing satanic deeds:

3 Lev Regelson, *Tragedija ruskoj cerkvi 1917–1945*, Paris 1977, p. 33.

Опомнитесь, безумцы, прекратите ваши кровавые расправы. Ведь то, что творите вы, не только жестокое дело, это поистине дело сатанинское, за которое подлежите вы огню геенскому в жизни будущей — загробной и страшному проклятию потомства в жизни настоящей земной.⁴

Come to your sense, madmen. Cease your bloody violence, for what you are doing is not only cruel, it is indeed satanic, and for it you will be subject to the fires of hell in the life to come beyond the grave, and to a terrible curse from posterity in this earthly life.

The third quotation is allegedly some of his last words:

А теперь я усну... крепко и надолго... Ночь будет длинная ...⁵

Now I will fall fast asleep and for long – the night will be long ...

These words can pertain both to the feeling of his own approaching death and the situation of the church and Russia.

This sense of the end of the church is also expressed very clearly by his secular contemporaries. Referring to Tikhon and his difficult situation in a 1918 poem, Osip Mandel'stam, one of the best-known poets of the time, compares his own precarious position as a poet with that of the patriarch:

Кто знает? Может быть, не хватит мне свечи —
И среди бела дня останусь я в ночи;
И, зернами дыша рассыпанного мака,
На голову мою надену митру мрака;

Как поздний патриарх в разрушенной Москве,
Неосвященный мир неся на голове —
Чреватый слепотой и муками раздора;
Как Тихон, ставленник последнего собора ...⁶

Who knows, maybe my candle won't last,
and right in broad daylight I'll drop into night,
and breathe scattered poppy seeds
and wear a black mitre on my head:

Like the dilatory patriarch, in ruined Moscow,
unconsecrated world on my head,

⁴ *Akty*, p. 83.

⁵ *Akty*, p. 369.

⁶ Osip Mandel'stam, *Sobranie sočinenij v trech tomach*, tom 1, Inter-language Literary Associates, Washington 1967, p. 143.

racked with argument, blind, blind
like Tikhon—the elected of the last church-council.⁷

The connection in the poem between Tikhon's enthronement and an awareness of the crushing burden of the task ahead has a direct counterpart in the speech that the patriarch held when he was informed he had been elected.

For his part, in words reminiscent of Pussy Riot's critique of Patriarch Kirill some years ago, the futurist Vladimir Majakovskij wrote a propagandistic poem directed against the patriarch for allegedly refusing to donate money to the victims of the famine:

Тихон патриарх,
прикрывши пузо рясой,
звонил в колокола по сытым городам,
ростовщиком над золотыми тряся:
«Пускай, мол, мрут,
а злата —
не отдам!»⁸

Patriarch Tikhon
covering his paunch with his robe,
trembling like a moneylender over his riches,
let all the well-fed cities know:
“So what if they die”, he said,
“I won't give up my gold!”

The poem ends with a wish that the patriarch will be convicted by the Soviets.

In a way, after having been elected by the council, Tikhon was the only remaining legitimate ruler in the country, which gave him a certain political importance. Thus, the hostility towards him was not only rooted in the Bolsheviks' antipathy toward religion in general and the Orthodox Church in particular, but also reflects the fact that the patriarch was regarded as a political force.

Besides the patriarch's speech and Mandelstam's poem, the sense of an ending can also be noticed in another case: two of the best-known artists of the time, Michail Nesterov and Pavel Korin, attended the burial of the patriarch in the Donskoj Cathedral. In a remark on the event he made to Nesterov, Korin also stressed this feeling that something was coming to an end:

7 *Complete poetry of Osip Emilevich Mandelstam*, translated by Burton Raffel & Alla Burago, Albany, N.Y. 1973, p. 172.

8 V.V. Majakovskij, ‘Kogda my pobeždali golodnoe licho, čto delal patriarch Tikhon?’ (‘Tikhon patriarch, prikrývši puзо rjasoj ...’), *Polnoe sobranie sočinenij: V 13 t.*, Moskva: Gos. izd-v chudož. lit., 1955–1961, T. 5. *Stichotvorenija 1923 goda*, podgot. teksta i primeč P.I. Ageeva & F.N. Pickel', 1957, p. 13.

Это же картина из Данте! Это «Страшный суд» Микеланджело! Написать все это, не дать уйти. Это реквием!⁹

This is a picture out of Dante! This is Michaelangelo's *Last Judgment*. I must paint all this, not let it get away. It is a requiem!

Korin began to paint a canvas that he later called *Requiem* to express this feeling of finality. In a letter he explains that the theme of his picture was connected to the Trisagion Hymns sung at the burial ceremony: “My painting is on the burial motif ‘Holy God’” (“Картина моя на похоронный мотив ‘Святой Боже’”) and in another context associates it with the “Dies irae” of the Catholic Requiem.¹⁰ This unfinished enormous canvas shows many of the church leaders of the time (including Patriarch Tikhon himself) in the Uspenskij Cathedral (which at the time of the patriarch’s death was closed, and no divine services could be held there). All of them are standing gazing at the western wall, where the Last Judgement is traditionally depicted in Orthodox churches.

In the Soviet Union, the name of the patriarch was then silenced. The official church mentioned him, but had very little possibility to act or publish anything. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union 25 years ago a few biographies of the patriarch have appeared. One deserving special mention is Michail Vostryšev’s in the series *Lives of outstanding persons*. In addition to biographical facts about the patriarch, it also contains the minutes from the interrogations of Tikhon in the Soviet court.

As is usual for saints, the vita of St Tikhon have been published in two versions: a short one and a one that is more elaborate. They focus on the patriarch’s ability to develop the dioceses under his responsibility, which is a traditional way of writing about a saint as a church leader – *svjatitel’* or “sanctifier”, as the title is sometimes translated. There are almost no miracles recorded, which in other cases are a prerequisite for canonization. Nor is he mentioned as a martyr, although the tribulations he suffered at the hands of the Bolsheviks are described. His ecumenical interests and his good relations to representatives of other faiths are stressed. This is unique among Russian vitae.

After Tikhon’s canonization in 1989 liturgical texts and a few Akathist hymns have been written to celebrate him. These hymns are a very popular poetical-liturgical genre in the Russian Orthodox Church and use the same poetical pattern as the well-known early Byzantine Akathist Hymn venerating the Theotokos. Noticeable here is the fact that the texts of these hymns are almost totally free of any sense of an end. On the contrary, as can be seen in the refrains of the Akathistos devoted to Tikhon, they express confidence in the victory of the church.

9 P.D. Korin, *Pis'ma iz Italii*, Moskva: Izobrazitel'noe Iskusstvo, 1981, p. 42.

10 Varvara Švalikova, ‘Otpevanie epochi’, trok-ua.ru/ru/sections/art/show/otpevanie_ehpokhi.html?type=98&cHash=f43d9d6dec, accessed 29 August 2015.

Радуйся, святителю Тихоне, Церкви Православныя похвало и утверждение.¹¹

Rejoice, O sanctifier Tikhon, glory and affirmation of the Orthodox Church.

Радуйся, святителю Тихоне, всяя Российския земли добрый пастырю и дивный предстоятелю.

Rejoice O sanctifier Tikhon, good shepherd of all the Russian Land and wondrous Primate.

Much can be inferred from the hymn about the political situation of the time: the church council, the election of the patriarch by lot, the battle against the renovationists and his firm protest against the Bolsheviks. For example:

Радуйся, яко обретатели злочестивых ересей посрамлены показал еси; радуйся, яко нрав дерзкого безбожия всенародно обличал еси.¹²

Rejoice, for you have shown the shame of the inventors of wicked heresies and for you have unmasked to all the people the impudent nature of godlessness.

He is often depicted in this context as a victor, as in these lines from the Akathistos:

Радуйся, страданием исповедание совершивый; радуйся, на Бога Промыслителя все упование возложивый. Радуйся, яко обличаеши прелести сокровения; радуйся, яко ужасаеши нечестивых помышления. Радуйся, правую веру чрез многи подвиги непреложно утвердивый; радуйся, благочестивую отрасль туды твоими возрастивый. Радуйся, святителю Тихоне, Церкви Православныя похвало и утверждение.¹³

Rejoice, thou who hast shown thy faith through suffering; rejoice, having all thy trust invested in Divine Providence, rejoice, thou who has exposed the temptation of conspiracy; rejoice, thou who hast shunned godless thought; rejoice, thou who has confirmed thy inviolable faith through many great deeds; rejoice, thou who through thy labours hast increased shoots of piety; rejoice, O sanctifier Tikhon, glory and affirmation of the Orthodox Church.

The spreading of Tikhon's influence from his different episcopal seats up to his appointment as patriarch is depicted in the service texts. He had a formidable resume that spanned not only America, but also some Russian sees, as well as two dioceses – Lublin and Vilnius – with a mainly Catholic population. In other words, he was often bishop in a diocese where the majority were not Orthodox Christians.

There are, however, some hymns which strike a more solemn note; for example, this lamentation for the Russian land:

¹¹ *Služba iže vo svjatyh otcu našemu svjatatelju Tichonu, Patriarchu Vserossijskomu*, Izdanie Don-skogo monastyrja, p. 18.

¹² *Služba* supra n. 11, Akafist, ikos 10, p. 33.

¹³ *Služba* supra n. 11, ikos 10, pp. 33–34.

Плачем и рыданием земля Российская огласися, кровь святых мученик и исповедник Христовых потоки по ней излиясяи, храмы Божии осквернишася и попранию предашася. Увы мне, земле моя! взывал еси, святителю. Кое врачевание прилежит ти, да всех сих избавишися?¹⁴

The Russian land cries and weeps for the rivers of blood of holy martyrs and confessors of Christ, for the temples of God desecrated and trampled. Alas for me, my land! hast thou called, o sanctifier. What a healing task you must take upon yourself to save them all?

There is a feeling of common guilt for the sins committed in and after the revolution:

Ты же, святителю, людей враждующих к покаянию и примирению призывал еси, научая превозносити Христа во веки.¹⁵

Thou, sanctifier, called the enemies to repentance and atonement, learning them to praise Christ in eternity.

In rare cases the imitation Christi motif is used:

Радуйся, яко и сам принимал еси за Христа заточение. Радуйся, вольным Христовым страданием подражавый; радуйся, страдания за Христа и Церковь Его радостию почитавый.¹⁶

Rejoice, for you took upon yourself confinement for Christ, rejoice, for you imitated Christ's voluntary suffering; rejoice, for you reckoned suffering for Christ as a joy.

Many depictions of Patriarch Tikhon are like the icons of every hierarch: his birth, different consecrations, and his presence at the church council, and a meeting with the earthly ruler, in this case the tsar's family. His mission in America is depicted in one hymn:

Радуйтесь и веселитесь верныя чада Церкви Российския, иже в Пенсильвании, Калифорнии, Флориде и иных землях Американских суции, / святитель бо Тихон ныне престолу Божию предстоит и молится о спасении душ наших.¹⁷

Rejoice and be of good cheer, true son of the Russian Church who has been in Pennsylvania, California, Florida, and other American lands, sanctifier Tikhon will today before the throne of God pray for the salvation of our souls.

14 *Služba* supra n. 11, kanon, pesn' 9, p. 42.

15 *Služba* supra n. 11, kanon, pesn' 8, p. 42.

16 *Služba* supra n. 11, Akafist, ikos 10, p. 33.

17 *Služba* supra n. 11, kanon, pesn' 4, p. 14.



Fig. 2. *Saint Tikhon Contemporary Russian icon*, http://www.k-istine.ru/images/ikons/tihon_moskovskiy-03.jpg, accessed 9 April 2017.

The same triumphant note can be noticed in his biographical icon, with miniatures from different events in his life. I will in this paper especially mention two examples: his travel to United States and his chairing of the church council in 1917.

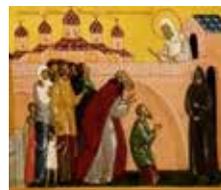
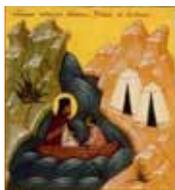


Fig. 3a. *Tikhon on his way to Aleutians*; 3b. *Patriarch Tikhon at the council 1917*; 3c. *Patriarch Tikhon in confinement, Miniatures from the icon.*

Thus, in the United States he was the pastor of the Aleuts, and the miniature shows him approaching an Aleutian settlement over a river or perhaps to an inlet. The scene may also recall his journey across the Atlantic. The village he is going to is represented by two Aleutian tents. In the icon dedicated to the life of the patriarch, his precarious situation during the Soviet period is shown in only two *klejma*, or miniature marginal scenes depicting his confinement.

The miniature on the right is also included in the large icon *Gathering of new martyrs* painted in 2000, which attempts to assemble various events in the lives of the Soviet martyrs into a whole. The explanation of the miniature provided by the church mentions the victory of the church:

Преобладающий розовый цвет напоминает о реальном цвете стен Донского монастыря. Но в системе больших обобщений иконописного искусства он становится символом. В античности и затем в искусстве Византии розовый цвет ассоциировался с цветом зари. Здесь он может рассматриваться как обозначение духовной зари, никогда не гаснущей, невзирая на мрак гонений.¹⁸

The pink color is reminiscent of the real color of the walls in the Donskoj Monastery. But in the broad generalization typical of iconography it becomes a symbol. During classical antiquity and later in Byzantine art pink was associated with the dawn. Here it can be seen as a symbol of spiritual dawn that never fades despite the darkness of persecution.

The details of Patriarch Tikhon's life blur as his biography becomes hagiography. The miracles that are traditionally a constituent part of *vitae* are almost entirely absent from these texts about him.

¹⁸ Klejmo 7 – Svjatejšij Patriarch Tichon v zatočenii v Donskom monastyre, <http://www.svelizaveta.ru/ikona/ikona-08.htm>, accessed 29 August 2015.



Fig. 4. The reliquary of patriarch Tikhon. From Donskoj stavropigial'nyj monastyr', Moskva 2014.

Something approaching the hagiographic tradition of miracles, however, can be seen in the narrative about the discovery of Tikhon's relics in 1992. These remains were said to have disappeared, removed either by the Bolsheviks in order to prevent them from becoming a shrine or by the church to prevent the Bolsheviks from destroying them. The body was found almost intact in the coffin in connection with a fire in the church where he was buried. The incorruptibility of the dead body is one of the most important signs of sanctity in the Russian Orthodox tradition. The finding of Tikhon's relics also has a political background. Because one of the first things the Bolsheviks did after the revolution was to confiscate and destroy relics as tokens of superstition, veneration of them is especially stressed in the church of today. February 22, the day the body was found, is celebrated as a feast day.

The cloak (*mantija*) in which he was buried was said to have been stolen by the renovationist, but this story also proved to be untrue. Today Tikhon's relics are in a gold coffin with a glass lid in the main cathedral of the Donskoj Monastery (previous page). The original coffin is in an otherwise empty glass display case covered with the patriarch's green cloak. Both objects are intended to show that the church has vanquished the godless Soviet regime.

There are some "difficult questions" in the biography of the patriarch. One of them is his support for continuing the unpopular war after the February Revolution. This is documented, for example, in a photo from the summer of 1917 showing him blessing a women's battalion standing on guard on Red Square. Furthermore, he protested against the separate peace treaty with Germany concluded by the Bolsheviks in 1918 in Brest-Litovsk. In an open letter to his flock he proposed a revision of the treaty, calling it "a shameful peace." He also protested against the independent status given to Ukraine, praying for brave men to return "what has been torn away and collect that which has been scattered."¹⁹ Many of his sermons concern the need for the Russian people and the political leaders to repent, but nothing is said of the responsibility of the church for failing to protest against the atrocities committed by the tsar and his government before 1917.

Another such issue has to do with the authenticity of his will, which called for loyalty to the regime, and then there is the question of his death. Was it from natural causes, or was he poisoned? These questions are avoided in the vitae and are understandably absent from the hymns as well.

19 M.E. Gubonin, *Akty Svjatejšego Tichona, Patriarcha Moskovskogo i Vseja Rossii*, Moskva: Bratstvo Vo Imia Vsemilostivogo Spasa, 1994, p. 108.



Fig. 5. The metropolitan Tikhon blessing a women batallion at the Red square 1917. From the journal Iskry 1917, Internet: http://cyrillitsa.ru/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Tikhon_mitropolit_and_russian_soldiers_1917_in_Moskow_Krasnaja_square1.jpg, April 21 2016.



Fig. 6. Patriarch Tikhon welcomed in the Don monastery. Fresco in the monastery painted by Natal'ja Ermakova. With the permission of the photograph Aleksandr Chebotar'. From the site Chramy Rossii, <http://www.temple.ru/tree>.

The life of the patriarch is depicted not only in icons but also in frescos. A unique, newly made wall-painting by Natal'ja Ermakova showing parts of his life can be seen in one of the churches in the Donskoj Monastery. One example will be discussed here. In this fresco the patriarch is depicted as he arrives at the Monastery soon after his enthronement and is greeted with great veneration by the brothers and laymen. Even the horse pulling his coach turns its head towards him in a reverent gesture. He was confined by the Bolsheviks in that monastery, and after his release from prison he lived there the last years of his life. Revolution, the precarious situation in Moscow and street fighting are also included in the painting, but in the background and only implied, as in the image of the marchers up to the left holding a red banner in the style of Socialist Realism. They look quite insignificant in comparison with the patriarch, as do the two fires that are implied by the image of flames. Semantic proportions are important in icon painting, and they are here as well. He looks enormous if we compare him with the church he enters seen in the background.

There is thus an ambiguity between the role of Tikhon as a *sviatitel'*, or sanctifier, and as a *mučenik*, or martyr. In the vita as well as in the icons and the hymn the focus is more on his role as a church leader, then on his suffering and tribulations. In some cases, however, he is called a sanctifier-martyr (святитель-мученик Тихон).²⁰ The history of the Russian Church is full of conflicts, and it is rare to find anyone who is venerated by almost all parties and groups, but that seems to be the case with Patriarch Tikhon. At the same time, it must be said that Tikhon does not enjoy any great popularity among Russian believers in his capacity of a saint: he is too modern, and the same can be said about the new martyrs. The Russians continue to pray to traditional saints such as Nicholas or Sergij of Radonež.²¹

In his seminal work on Russian hagiography *Visions of glory*, the Norwegian scholar Jostein Børtnes differentiates between two kinds of vitae: a metaphoric one focused on the *imago Christi*-theme and a metonymical one that focuses on contiguity and the gradual rise in the saint's status in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.²² The texts and the images depicting Patriarch Tikhon pertain to the second group. He is called a shepherd, but comparisons with Christ and Christ's suffering are rare. What we encounter is a church hierarch, and he is depicted as such; his suffering and trials are secondary. In the eyes of contemporary Russia, a very dark part of its religious history is perceived to be a new beginning for the triumphant Orthodox Church. The sense of an end in Tikhon's

20 Slovo v den' pamjati Ioanna Bogoslova i svjatelja Tikhona, <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/put/48978.htm>, accessed 10 January 2016.

21 For a discussion of the popularity of different Russian saints, see Karin Hyldal Christensen, *The making of the new martyrs of Russia Soviet repression in Orthodox memory*, Copenhagen: Copenhagen University, 2015.

22 Jostein Børtnes, *Visions of glory: Studies in Early Russian hagiography*, Oslo: Solum, 1988, p. 158.

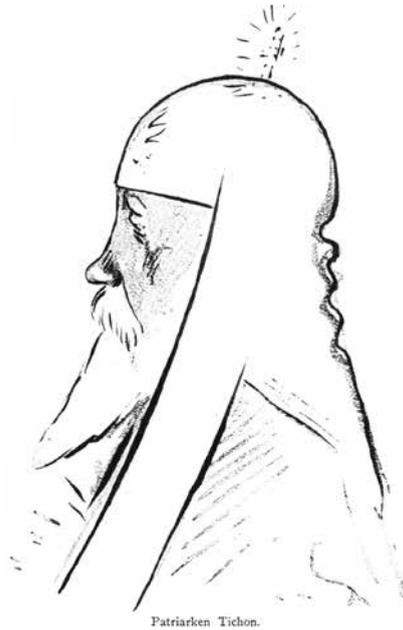


Fig. 7. *Albert Engström, Moskoviter, Skrifter av Albert Engström, Stockholm: Bonniers, 1946, p. 155. Projekt Runeberg, fil <http://runeberg.org/moskovit/0155.html>, accessed 21 April, 2016.*

own utterances and the understanding of his contemporaries has become a much more optimistic note in the texts and paintings connected with his recent canonization.

The Swedish author and artist Albert Engström, who visited Moscow in 1923 and attended a service celebrated by the patriarch in the Donskoj Monastery cathedral, had an opportunity to experience Tikhon first hand.²³ He was even allowed to enter the altar room. Engström understood little of the liturgical celebration but he reports that Tikhon seemed weary after his imprisonment and that it was terribly cold in the cathedral. He lamented his ignorance of foreign languages, which prevented any sort of personal contact. Actually, Tikhon spoke fluent English after a decade in the United States, and in his youth he had taught French. Engström, however, had the impression that the patriarch did not dare to speak with any foreign writers. His visit resulted in a sketch of the preparations for the Mass in the altar room:

²³ Albert Engström, *Samlade berättelser*, 18: *Moskoviter*, Stockholm: Albert Bonniers förlag, 1929, pp. 150–155.

The patriarch was dressed in a simple skirt-like white garment and was bareheaded. He reached out his hand to the bishop, who bowed deeply, kissed his superior on the cheeks, mouth and hand, bowed and curtsied and whispered something in the old man's ear between kisses. Then the bishop waved, and several other equally splendid priests came and began dressing the patriarch for the holy ceremony, all of which took place with many signs and wonders.

And then I recalled that my knowledgeable companion had told me a few days previously that today the patriarch would wear the white tiara with a cross of diamonds on the crown that was worth so and so many millions!

And then the great moment arrived. Several priests – more of them now opened a cabinet and took out a lot of pear-shaped, bejeweled mitres and tried them on themselves and on each other. They crowded around me, and I felt like a poor lost little boy from Småland straight out of the forest. I felt superfluous, in the way, at the wrong place.²⁴

Engström is a sympathetic observer with considerable but benevolent humor who does not understand or is really even interested in what is going on around him. He knows nothing about the Orthodox Church and seems completely secularized, and wants to remind his readers of the fact. He also includes a detail on the supposed enormous wealth of the church that was the background to the arrest of the patriarch.

On August 23 1925 at the World Conference of Life and Work in Stockholm, a requiem or *panikhida* in Church Slavonic was held to commemorate Tikhon in the Gustav Vasa Church in central Stockholm. Swedish Church Archbishop Nathan Söderblom commented that the event was a testimony to spiritual fellowship with Russian Christians. As seems evident from the archbishop's account in his book on the conference, this requiem was perhaps the strongest manifestation of Christian unity during the gathering. As the Swedish archbishop noted, the memorial service became a real handshake between East and West.²⁵

²⁴ Engström 1929, p. 157.

²⁵ Nathan Söderblom, *Kristenhetens möte i Stockholm. Augusti nittonhundratjugufem: historik, aktstycken, grundtankar, personligheter, eftermäle*, Stockholm: SKD, 1926, p. 202.

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