Factories of Worship:  
Forging a New Faith after Bloody Sunday

*“The criticism of religion is the premise of all criticism.”*  
Karl Marx, “A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right” (1843)[[1]](#footnote-2)

*“You are about to read astonishing things, but believe them, these are the facts.”*   
Gor’kii’s opening words in a letter to his wife, Ekaterina, 9 January 1905[[2]](#footnote-3)

For a book so important to atheist Soviet propaganda, Gor’kii’s *Mother* (1907) asks a striking number of theological questions. On the novel’s surface, spirituality looks like organized religion. The novel’s overt religious symbology and messianic central character both criticize Russian Orthodoxy Christianity in a variety of manners, so much so that publication led the Orthodox Church to make formal charges of heresy against its author.[[3]](#footnote-4) At the same time, some noticed its religious undertones swinging in the opposite direction: Lenin spoke highly of *Mother* in public but in private expressed consternation for elevating spiritual over material concerns.[[4]](#footnote-5) The story’s mixed messages have left Gor’kii’s attempt at his own gospel muddled and his questions without answers. Thus, Soviet ministers of culture and schoolteachers could confidently use *Mother* to edify the class consciousness of the reading public—a portion that expanded with “illiteracy liquidation” programs early in the Soviet era—because it unambiguously denigrated Russia’s imperial and Orthodox institutions. On the other hand, we can be sure that this book has spread the message and spirit of revolution unlike any other, though it is difficult to say exactly what made it such an effective medium.[[5]](#footnote-6) Perhaps its weakness, an uncanny resemblance to the most important Christian narratives, was also its strength.

This chapter argues that *Mother* is Gor’kii’s attempt to sketch a new anthropocentric credo, a post-Christian model of the Holy Trinity. The novel transposes Biblical accounts of Christ’s resurrection and the Holy Spirit’s gifts to form a new absolute truth, notably and curiously excluding the Father. The lack of a God-the-Father in Gor’kii’s model represents the absence of a foundational narrative that moors a population in place. Filling that gap is the purpose of the novel *Confession*, which I analyze in the next chapter. *Mother*’s experimental spirituality reflects Gor’kii’s own internal debates in the aftermath of the 1905 Bloody Sunday events. He and a hundred thousand others witnessed tsarist forces violently suppress a labor march outside the Winter Palace in Saint Petersburg. To understand this new model of faith, we first read Gor’kii’s sketch “9 January” (1906), where he depicts the destruction of the image of the Tsar-God, the result of two centuries of tsarist administration of the Church, as I argued in the first chapter. Losing faith in the tsar meant for Russian Orthodox believers losing faith in God’s presence on Earth. In the novel *Mother*, Gor'kii reimagines a world reborn with a post-Christian body and spirit: collective labor, collective love, and collective minds. Using the Bible as one would use a cast for metalworking, *Mother* offers secular replacements for a savior figure and unifying spirit that will be at the center of socialist spirituality. Through transposed text, ritual, and ideology what was once old is renewed, and a revolutionary gospel is again brought to the masses.

*Introduction*

Both "9 January” and *Mother* were written in response to historical events that shook Russia and the labor movement of the nascent twentieth century. Gor’kii had become increasingly involved in workers’ organizations in and around Nizhnii Novgorod during the 1890s, which is reflected by growing preoccupations about economic disparities in his writings from the period.[[6]](#footnote-7) On January 9 [23], 1905 the tsar’s guards around the Winter Palace of St. Petersburg violently suppressed a procession of workers and supporters, which left hundreds of injured, dead, and arrested. Gor’kii witnessed firsthand the day’s events, commonly referred to as Russia's "Bloody Sunday," which elicited multiple recorded reactions, including the letter to his wife (quoted in the second epigraph above) and the sketch bearing the date as its title published the following year. The novel was also first printed in 1906, though its historical roots go back to 1902: one of the first large-scale political demonstrations in the Russian labor movement took place on May 1 of that year in the Nizhnii Novgorod suburb of Sormovo. As I will argue, however, Bloody Sunday greatly influenced *Mother*'s content and message. This connection to January 1905 positions the novel as a vision set in the world that Gor’kii sketches first in his sketch.

The Sormovo May Day demonstration of 1902 would have been no more than an early but unremarkable event in the timeline leading to 1917 had it been led by someone other than Peter Zalomov. His fiery character and behavior became the basis for Pavel Vlasov in *Mother*.[[7]](#footnote-8) Zalomov’s own mother also served as an inspiration for the novel’s Pelageia Nilovna, though she was just one among many real-life examples for Pavel’s mother.[[8]](#footnote-9) The Social Democrats organized a demonstration with Zalomov and other laborers at Sormovo’s largest factory. The year before, Gor’kii had been arrested for spreading anti-government propaganda in preparation for the 1901 May Day rally, but his role in the much larger 1902 demonstration is unknown.[[9]](#footnote-10) On that day, Zalomov appeared at the front of the crowd with a red banner to lead the procession of workers, much like Pavel in the novel.[[10]](#footnote-11) Zalomov and several others were arrested for their role in 1902, which Gor’kii took upon himself to solve. The author first financed the strikers’ legal defense.[[11]](#footnote-12) From this experience he also likely got the inspiration for Pavel’s ardent speech in court from Zalomov’s own in real life. Gor’kii himself had a hand in writing the original version, which would explain the similarities found in the fictitious exculpation.[[12]](#footnote-13) His novel *Mother* recorded the Sormovo demonstration and Zalomov in stone with the stylized portrayal of Pavel Vlasov, Pelageia Nilovna, and their comrades. However, Zalomov was not his only inspiration.

The sketch “9 January” was published over a year after the tragedy itself, but there was no doubt as to which year was referenced. On that day in 1905, Father Georgii Gapon led a procession of approximately 100,000 workers to present Tsar Nicholas II with a petition for improved labor conditions, greater compensation, regulated hours, and elected representation in the government.[[13]](#footnote-14) The bureaucratic apparatus that administered Russian day-to-day life, outside of the cities especially, had become by this time apathetically inefficient on its best days and maliciously obstructive and punitive on its worst.[[14]](#footnote-15) Moreover, urban centers old and new answered the tsarist government's demands for military production to equip the navy embroiled in the Russo-Japanese War, and as a result Russia’s growing urban populations were asking for improved material conditions in return after the prolonged economic struggles of the 1890s and early 1900s.[[15]](#footnote-16) The march on the Winter Palace was organized as a broad show of support for a local strike, which had nevertheless drawn tens of thousands, at the Putilov Works (now Kirov) plant after four workers were fired for reasons deemed unjust by the other laborers.[[16]](#footnote-17) Gapon and other participants later called this march a “holy procession” [*krestnyi khod*] in defense of workers’ rights.[[17]](#footnote-18) Their ritualistic act transformed a localized issue into a city and eventually nation-wide movement on the momentum of labor organizing efforts already underway in the Russian Empire’s major cities. This event and Gapon in particular, I will argue, became the second inspiration for *Mother*’s procession to the factory alongside the Sormovo demonstration. Neither the workers nor the government knew the deadly ramifications that would come from their meeting on Palace Square on that Sunday.

While the immediate fallout of the day was calamitous, the level of death and destruction was limited compared to the events in the year following. On January 9 itself, crowds of people were injured and killed by a Cossack regiment of palace guards as the workers led by Father Gapon approached the tsar’s residential complex. Nicholas II was not at the Winter Palace, but had fled to Tsarskoe Selo south of St. Petersburg, away from his disgruntled but peaceful subjects. Despite forewarning and good intentions, the tsar ordered his guards to resist any advance by the crowd toward the palace and dispersed additional officers to suppress political activity around the city. When the throng approached the square in front of the Winter Palace, the guards “met them with nine shots” that injured several hundred, at least dozens fatally, according to Gor’kii himself, who sheltered a wounded Gapon later that evening.[[18]](#footnote-19) The priest had spread the people’s petition to domestic and western media in the lead-up to the day. Subsequent news of the tsar's violent methods spurred strikes throughout the Russian Empire in solidarity with the St. Petersburg workers. Major cities and middling provinces alike awoke to protests in the following days, and in the subsequent weeks, strikes took over industrial centers like Warsaw and Riga at the territorial edges of the empire.[[19]](#footnote-20) Meanwhile, revolutionary organizations, such as the Social-Democrats and Socialist-Revolutionaries, seized the opportunity by stoking additional strikes and protests among the worker and peasant populations.[[20]](#footnote-21) This internal unrest, especially in the Russian Empire’s acquired territories, even required the tsar to recall a significant contingent troops from his war with Japan in order to maintain sovereignty at home.[[21]](#footnote-22) The eventual result was the first Russian revolution that gave subjects minor concessions at the cost of the many thousands more dead and injured. On that fateful Sunday afternoon of January 9, 1905, Russia became a nation on the brink of collapse as a state and identity. Father Gapon himself said in summary of the day: “There is no tsar! There is no God!”[[22]](#footnote-23) Gor’kii’s sets this tone in his sketch and novel, disappointedly and defiantly asking, “What do we believe in now?”

At the center of my analysis of both “9 January” and *Mother* is the concept of the Christian Trinity as a symbol and instrument of ontological grounding for ideological communities. In post-Christian thought, such concepts will be transposed into secular forms with similar functions so that meaning and reasoning can remain largely interrupted. A triune deity lies at the center of Christian dogma and worldbuilding, and its influence and function are multifaceted. In Orthodox belief, the deity referred to as “God” has three distinct persons or hypostases: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Collectively they share the divine *ousia* or essence of the Trinity. The Father exists outside of the bounds of space and time, and from the Father originates everything, including the other two hypostases of God. Thus, the Father is associated with the absolute authority of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience. The Son, on the other hand, proceeds from the Father, is both divine and mortal, and speaks and acts as the “Word” of the Father. Of a dual nature and existence, the Son is associated with praxis, the embodiment and implementation of doctrine in the physical world. The Holy Spirit also proceeds from the Father and enlivens the vessel it fills by bestowing creative power. As a result, the Holy Spirit is commonly associated with its gifts to believers at baptism, revelation, and other significant spiritual moments: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing powers, miracle working, prophecy, differentiating spirits, distinguishing tongues, and interpretation of tongues.[[23]](#footnote-24) With a beginning, end, and vehicle of causation, Christian dogma explained how our universe came into existence and whence it is inevitably going.

There are a few reasons to take this analytical approach. First, Gor’kii’s intimate knowledge of Christian teachings, both his instrument and object of recreation, suggests that he would have understood how and why the Trinity deserved its own detailed substitute in the post-Christian era. As recounted in previous chapters, young Aleksei Peshkov was raised fully immersed in Church teachings and scripture, largely due to his grandparents’ influence during childhood. He had a deep knowledge base of not only the literary features but also the sociocultural significance contained within the stories of the Bible and other religious narratives. Readers, at least those looking, see evidence of this in early transpositions, the instance in his short story “Cain and Artem” being perhaps the most cogent example. Having observed the great meaning of Christian literature in others, Gor’kii knew how to craft his secular world; to truly replace God in the eyes of Christians required a believer’s perspective, which meant accounting for all major components. In the Christian creed, there is no more pervasive, important doctrine than the Trinity. Second, there are hints to this disambiguating treatment of God in both texts. As I will show, exclamations of God’s absence in both “9 January” and *Mother* refer not to the entire Triune deity called “God” but specifically to the ideological fundament that is the Father. At the same time in the novel, Gor’kii presents a new Son and Holy Spirit in the forms of Pavel and the revolutionary cause (as seen in Pelageia Nilovna), respectively. God-the-Father, on the contrary, is indeed excluded from Gor’kii’s post-Christian gospel, at least while he tests concepts such as “logic” [*razum*] and “the people” [*narod*] as new foundations for post-Christian society, which will be explored in greater detail in the following chapter. Gor’kii’s earnest attempt to find a spiritual substitute for Russian Orthodoxy must first of all consider its most central tenet, the Trinitarian God.

*Literature Review*

I offer this more nuanced approach to reconcile the tension in the commentary about the novel’s uncanny religiosity. Its incomplete transposition offers a viable replacement, yet something is still to be desired, which conversations involving religion, Gor’kii, and *Mother* often reflect. Literary critics and intellectual historians have long recognized biblical quotations and didactic modeling in Gor’kii’s writing, even going so far as to talk about *Mother* in particular as his “Gospel” bearing a new socialist religion.[[24]](#footnote-25) There is general consensus that Pavel is a Christ-like figure, although making sense of this new faith beyond that interpretation has created more confusion than conclusions. Using source texts like the Orthodox Bible, I aim to provide a more complete model for analyzing the novel’s many mythopoetic devices with religious origins. Moreover, transpositions open another dimension that has been largely absent from discussion so far: the setting that Gor’kii crafted for his “Gospel.” More than just the text, transposed places demonstrate that Gor’kii considered the real-world application of his new faith and values system. Finally, working with the new theological models found in these texts, I speak to the small number of scholars having begun only recently to consider Gor’kii a serious and influential Russian religious-metaphysical thinker. Beginning with *Mother*, he offers complex arguments on the current status and future potential of Russians’ deep-rooted spirituality, which places him among the likes of Nikolai Rozanov, Valerii Briusov, Lev Tolstoi, and Konstantin Tsiolkovskii.[[25]](#footnote-26) Believing is not a requirement for understanding, and Gor’kii’s position in between spirituality and secularism offers a unique perspective worth considering.

Maksim Gor’kii and his novel *Mother* are peerless in twentieth-century Soviet culture on account of their innovativeness and productivity in the Russian literary sphere. This liminality between past and future creates a variety of impressions about where our subjects lie in history. Katerina Clark’s study *The Soviet Novel* (1981) endures as an authoritative voice on categorizing *Mother*, which she calls the “prototypical beginning” of the Socialist Realist genre that characterizes a great deal of later Soviet literature.[[26]](#footnote-27) At the same time, Clark’s description is less definitive than meets the eye. She labels *Mother* as a parabolic and hagiographic work, genres that resist comparison with any sort of Realism, Socialist or otherwise. More recent conversations have reopened the topic of the novel’s form, such as G. Mitin’s evaluation that *Mother* perhaps represents its own genre or a unique subgenre under Realism.[[27]](#footnote-28) Still others have remarked on the gospel nature of the novel in reference to Pavel’s story, though this focus on the first part overlooks the larger second part primarily featuring the mother, Pelageia Nilovna.[[28]](#footnote-29) In response, I argue that transpositions of both content and authorial voice found in *Mother* make the case to consider the novel as both a Gospel of salvation (the good news of the socialist cause) in Part I and the apostolic acts of Pelageia Nilovna in Part II. My analysis leaves little room to consider the novel hagiographic for its lack of an origin or biographical story, a panegyric tone, miracles of any kind, and other elements of saints’ lives in the Orthodox tradition, which do appear in other works by Gor’kii. Framing the novel’s parts as gospel and apostolic acts brings into focus Gor’kii’s primary message while he employs the new fatherless duality of Pavel as savior and Pelageia Nilovna as an everyday—though still laudable and imitable—martyr for the revolutionary cause.

*Mother* represents Gor’kii’s most involved usage of Orthodoxy for its number of transpositions both with and without modification to the original. Nearly every discussion of *Mother* in the past few decades has commented on the role and contributions of Orthodox Christianity as a source for Gor’kii’s creativity, but many connections and their meanings remain to be uncovered. Religion’s presence is obvious, which was subject to quick interpretation by literary scholars, though its wholesale application has exposed numerous holes in past juxtapositions. As mentioned, Western scholars like Clark and Raimund Sesterhenn have noted broad correlations in *Mother* with the Biblical account of Jesus Christ made with the aim of advancing the socialist message in Russia. Sesterhenn even goes so far as to say that *Mother* interprets revolutionary phenomena through the Christian lens before moving onto a more general concept, which is another way to describe the post-Christian paradigm shift Gor’kii is seeking to accomplish.[[29]](#footnote-30) This portrait of the novel’s relationship with Orthodoxy, one which sees them as inhabiting different niches, needs further refinement. Before diving into the particulars, however, it is important to note that Gor’kii did not subvert spirituality in favor of socialism, as Clark claimed, nor did he forsake his Christian worldview, at least in the span of the novel, as Sesterhenn asserted.[[30]](#footnote-31) On the contrary, as I will show, *Mother* is a spiritual text that heavily relies on Christian narratives, rituals, and symbols to develop a syncretic system of values and artifacts that is no less religious than the Bible and the system it espouses. New Testament components that Gor’kii borrowed for his novel are much like the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in the original Gospels: historic and integral for understanding its successor.

Much of the focus in scholarly discussions about *Mother* revolves around the character of the son, Pavel, and the obvious references that connect him and Christ. As G. Mitin stated, it is as if Gor’kii went back and forth between Marxist sources and the story of Christ when writing the novel.[[31]](#footnote-32) Readers seeing Pavel’s placement of the icon depicting the story on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:13-35) in his home will begin to understand the parallels Gor’kii is trying to make, as many have done before.[[32]](#footnote-33) Following the appearance of the icon, His outspoken leadership on behalf of the downtrodden laborers and his sacrifices for the greater good often come after the icon to bring Pavel and Christ’s narratives closer. However, there still remains much to extrapolate from Gor’kii’s choice of the Emmaus appearance, which I will undertake below. Some, such as Eric Lippman, also draw attention to their contrasts, which are by and large a result of Pavel’s entirely mortal nature or hyperrationality.[[33]](#footnote-34) When seen as a transposed post-Christian savior, Pavel’s shortcomings are not deviations from the Christ narrative, as Lippman argues, but a manifestation of the dual nature of the Son, which is paradoxically also present in Lippman’s analysis. One can surely note differences, but ultimately the shortcomings lie with society, Gor’kii’s primary object of scrutiny. Their numerous similarities notwithstanding, Pavel and Christ diverge at important moments to be explicated below, but these differences are in ideology rather than implementation.

To complement Pavel, many critics have likened Pelageia to Mary, the mother of Jesus, but that conclusion, though valid at times, passes over the integral role she plays in the novel. Naturally, Christ’s own mother is the quickest and most common comparison made to explain Pelageia Nilovna’s function in the novel. She is not just Pavel’s mother, but she also considers herself a maternal figure to all the young revolutionaries working alongside her son.[[34]](#footnote-35) Their relationship, as expressed boldly in the novel’s title, is undoubtedly important. However, this analysis reduces the central character to a single facet. My reading, on the contrary, pushes back on that broad equivalence for its lack of continuity throughout Pelageia Nilovna’s arc and, in doing so, investigates the full significance of the mother in Gor’kii’s post-Christian theology. Beyond comparisons to Mary—who has strong connections with all of the Trinity’s personas—I put forth the idea that Pelageia Nilovna’s development, the true (and arguably only) axis around which the whole novel spins, is Gor'kii’s post-Christian Holy Spirit in action. In *Mother*, the revolutionary spirit drives important character (personal) and plot (social) development while it retains the forms and functions of the Christian Holy Spirit. This transformation through transcendence is the “religious element” Sesterhenn refers to when discussing the mother as the “synthesis” of faith and reason.[[35]](#footnote-36) In addition, I argue that this new Holy Spirit anticipates the spontaneity-consciousness dialectic that underlies Gor’kii’s influential novel and those that came in its wake, according to Clark. The spirit’s presence confers a “state of grace (albeit revolutionary rather than religious)” that will define a new era, which is to follow the novel’s climactic conclusion.[[36]](#footnote-37) Though the Trinity is traditionally seen as masculine—and perhaps that is reason enough to assume Gor’kii would make at least part of it feminine—it stands to say there is precedent for manifesting a Holy Spirit-esque character as a woman.

At the time of the novel’s composition, Russian religious thinking appeared in diverse artistic portrayals, including those which depicted the supernatural wisdom of the Holy Spirit as a feminine figure, the Divine Sophia. The concept itself, which extends back to pre-Christian Judaism or earlier, is hardly exclusive to Russia, but Sophia’s return to relevance in modern studies comes from a distinctly Russian mind. Philosopher and poet Vladimir Sergeevich Solov’ev (1853–1900) with his “Lectures on Divine Humanity” [*Chteniia o bogochelovestve*] (1878–1900) and later poetry, especially *Three Encounters* [*Tri svidaniia*] (1898) put Sophia back into circulation among intellectuals and artists. The concept comes from the Greek *Σοφία*, “wisdom,” such as *Σοφία Σολομώντος* [*Sofia Solomuntos*], the book of the Wisdom of Soloman in the Old Testament, and is seen elsewhere, such as a root of the word “philosophy.” We may assume that because both the original Greek and the modern Russian [*premudrost’*] words are of feminine grammatical gender, this divine wisdom appeared to Solov’ev as a woman. Among his audience at the lectures sat many figures influential in their own right, including Konstantin Pobedonostsev, the overseer of the Russian Empire’s Holy Synod on Bloody Sunday, and great authors such as Fedor Dostoevskii and Lev Tolstoi.[[37]](#footnote-38) Before Sergii Bulgakov and other theologians developed Sophia further as a religious concept, Russia’s poets quickly adopted Solov’ev’s feminine figure of Sophia for their own works. The most famous examples of Sophia in secular art likely belong to Alexander Blok, for his works *Verses on a Beautiful Lady* [*Stikhi o prekrasnoi dame*] (1904) and “The Stranger” [*Neznakomka*] (1906). Gor’kii later in life published a fake recollection in which he meets Anna Schmidt, whom he calls “Nizhnii Novgorod’s incarnation of Sophia” [*Nizhegorodckoe voploshchenie Sofii Premudrosti*] in “A. N. Schmidt” [*A. N. Shmit*] (1924).[[38]](#footnote-39) Then and now, the feminine Divine Sophia represents a strong Russian contribution to theology and religious influences in secular art. For the present purposes, we will see how Pelageia Nilovna represents the Sophia of the old world and acts as the transitional figure between Christian and post-Christian worldviews in Gor’kii’s attempt to create a Russian spiritual socialist ethic.

In addition to the narratives and characters transposed from Orthodoxy with significant changes, there are religious elements that are replicated without much modification. For example, Sesterhenn and Alyssa Dinega have remarked on the workers’ holy procession and its likeness to Christ’s procession into Jerusalem celebrated on Palm Sunday.[[39]](#footnote-40) In my analysis, I show in detail the similarities between the religious ritual and Gor’kii’s version, though I assert it is much easier to draw comparison with contemporary processions during Easter celebrations. Likewise, religious icons play a role in the story.[[40]](#footnote-41) Such aesthetic transpositions contribute to the mapping of old characters onto their replacements. While scholars of the past have noted these rituals and symbols as secularized direct imports, they are nonetheless still transpositions because they draw on other differences. Contrary to the meticulously modified contents of the post-Christian Trinity, I argue the transposed Orthodox rituals and symbols speak to broader issues by drawing on contrasts in setting. As I will show, these are religious elements stripped of their supernatural context and placed in the workers’ world. The edifice of the church is replaced with the factory, Gor'kii's post-Christian cultural, economic, and spiritual center. As B. Kaigorodova notes, this and other uses of Christian symbols serve to highlight and comment on the differences between the ideal and the real.[[41]](#footnote-42) Elucidating this religious commentary is a primary goal of this chapter. At the same time, this secular recontextualization of religious images and behavior raises multiple questions about the relationship between religion, especially Christianity, and socialism in general. *Mother* is only one in a long list of fictional works that attempts to bridge Christian ideals with Marxist and similar socioeconomic ideological frameworks.

As time moves us away from Soviet censorship, scholars have increasingly considered Gor’kii and, at times, his fellow godbuilders as religious thinkers. Their acceptance reflects critics’ growing eagerness to highlight the positive statements Gor’kii made both explicitly and implicitly about Christian values and ontology. Still, scholars of the past and present have been plenty justified in choosing subjects antagonistic to religion: the plot is blatantly written to supplant the hegemonic Orthodox system in name and image. Agurskii provides what may be the most accurate summary of Gor'kii’s religious thinking in saying that they can only be understood in the world of Christian hereticism.[[42]](#footnote-43) Gor’kii’s criticism of the Church should not be confused or conflated with criticism of religious feeling, however. *Mother* both rebukes and celebrates the Russian orthodox religious tradition by adapting and adopting Christian cultural elements for its imagined secular world. Said somewhat differently, the many religious artifacts that retain their place in Gor’kii’s post-Christian era represent what he believes traditional Orthodoxy does best. The novel’s more nuanced commentary, I argue, constitutes Gor’kii’s early contributions to theological discussions about Christianity and faith in general. A small number of scholars only since the 2010s have begun to frame the discussion about *Mother* and Gor’kii around religion, and much remains to be discovered.[[43]](#footnote-44) By the end, this chapter aims to shine light on the value of considering Gor’kii as a religious thinker—in exile, like the others—and moreover as one of Russia’s greatest for his time.

The present argument asserts that, contrary to popular belief, Christianity and radical left thinking agree to a much greater extent than they disagree with each other. Moreover, for many Russian revolutionary thinkers, Gor’kii in particular, Christianity was the foundation of revolutionary thought. The basis for socialists’ adoption of a worldview derived from Christianity is not well established. However, we know that Gor’kii, the godbuilders, and others saw socialism as the final religion.[[44]](#footnote-45) I have suggested previously that for reasons of convenience, such that Gor’kii grew up in the Christian sphere of influence and knowing others came of age in similar circumstances, he used religious imagery as a common Aesopian language to champion anti-governmental sentiment. Here I argue that Gor’kii through *Mother* provides a comprehensive theological sketch of commonalities shared by Christianity and Russian radical politics. In other words, *Mother* is written as the marriage of the Orthodox faith and revolutionary thought in Russia at the time.There have been many studies done on how and where the two spheres of thought coincide and cooperate in general. Andrew Collier’s *Christianity and Marxism*, for example, juxtaposes the two beliefs and examines numerous general shared interests: collective survival and success, critical look at human behavior, assigning moral acceptability and fate, and a dialectical model of reason, among others.[[45]](#footnote-46) In addition, in his study of applications of Christian socialist thought, *Red Theology*, Roland Boer offers a rich collection of how the two systems have appeared in societies across the world.[[46]](#footnote-47) Though Boer offers a glimpse of Gor’kii’s contributions, the historian like others before him approaches *Mother* from the perspective of Lenin.[[47]](#footnote-48) In the history of Russian religious thought and philosophy, scholars have published volumes on Rozanov, Tolstoi, Bulgakov, Berdiaev, and other Russians who have conceived of their own blend of Christianity and socialism.[[48]](#footnote-49) It is my hope that the conversation on Gor’kii’s contributions to this lineage takes its first major step here.

*“9 January”*

The major turns of history and their consequences are often only clear in hindsight, but there are perhaps a handful of days in a person’s life that are obvious turning points. January 9, 1905 was a day like that for Gor’kii, and that night he began recording what he witnessed and felt as Tsar Nicholas II’s guards killed hundreds and injured thousands on Saint Petersburg’s streets. His letter on that day (quoted in an epigraph above) reads like a documentary account of the events of Bloody Sunday, and it served as the basis first for revolutionary agitation literature and, due to its strong rhetoric, later the sketch “9 January”, which was to serve that same higher purpose.[[49]](#footnote-50) Zinovii Grzhebin wrote to Gor’kii on Capri to request the longer work for his new publishing house *Shipovnik* with the goal of creating a “historical-revolutionary calendar to fix all of the more or less important moments of the liberation movement” for posterity—a socialist liturgical calendar, so to speak.[[50]](#footnote-51) The sketch “9 January” was never published in *Shipovnik*, but it did eventually come to light in *Avanti!*, the daily newspaper of the Italian Socialist Party, in 1907.[[51]](#footnote-52) While it is called a “sketch” [*ocherk*], the contents of “9 January” are highly stylized. Literary devices and an artistic license toward history allow Gor’kii to dramatize an invisible sea change for the Russian psyche. With hyperbolic imagery Gor’kii pieces together one of the few eyewitness accounts remaining of that first day of the first Russian revolution.

In this section, I offer a reading of “9 January” that demonstrates Gor’kii’s embrace of a post-Christian mindset as he and many in the Russian Empire came to understand the events of Bloody Sunday. Though it was written after *Mother*, “9 January” acts as a prequel to the revolutionary novel, I argue, by laying the ideological groundwork for Pavel and eventually Pelageia Nilovna’s stories. The sketch takes a few major steps to that end. First, it establishes the figure of the “tsar-god,” as I have called it in Chapter 1: the image of the tsar as the benevolent, almighty father of the Russian people. Other scholars, such as Nina Tumarkin, have called this the “naive monarchy” of the Romanov period, under which subjects assumed their good will toward the tsar was reciprocated.[[52]](#footnote-53) Second, we see the dissolution of this idea as a result of Bloody Sunday, which causes a crisis of faith in God, in nation, and in identity. January 9, 1905 marked the end of the era of Russian subjects' naivete and propelled a critical mass into an antagonistic relationship with their monarch. Finally, a call to revolution follows and seeks to replace at once both tsar and the God he represented with a person or an ideal chosen by the people. In this way, *Mother* grapples with the revolutionary procedure set out in the sketch, whereas *Confession* (1908), the subject of the following chapter, seeks to identify that figure or concept to replace the Christian establishment. Before then, “9 January” set the stage for secular spiritual change to occur.

For hundreds of years, the monarch was a benevolent symbol of divine authority for the ordinary Russian, and then one January day that assumption died forever. Tsars and tsarinas ruled the empire as an agent of God-the-Father, which the government instituted in the Official Nationality formula, “Orthodoxy. Autocracy. Narod.” and other cultural political artifacts. At the same time, the long prevailing image of the tsar as *batiushka* (which, like the Anglophone title of “father,” connotes both a paternal parent and Christian cleric) gave the tsar’s image a gentle, loving hue. As “9 January” commences, we immediately see that the tone is no longer warm. A crowd resembling a “dark wave” rising from the sea whispers among itself “about «him» more than anything.”[[53]](#footnote-54) Gor’kii refrains from mentioning the tsar by name or title, instead only referring to him by the emphatic pronoun “«he»,” for the first couple pages, as though *he* is the default. The crowd discusses the tsar:

They talked about «him» more than anything, assuring each other that «he» is kind, warmhearted and will understand everything. But there were no colors in the words that painted his image. It felt as though for a long time—and maybe never―they have not thought about him seriously, have not considered him a living, real person, did not know what this is, and even poorly understood why «he» exists and what [«he»] can do.[[54]](#footnote-55)

Gor’kii brings readers’ attention to the tsar-god figure that loomed large over the morning of Bloody Sunday, but not without reminding us that, especially in hindsight, there was in fact nothing but belief supporting the facade. The issue of faith arises early and naturally in the sketch as Gor’kii strives to highlight the cracks in the tsar-god concept held so long and tightly by the Russian people.

As the crowd struggles with what and whom to believe, some godbuilding makes its earliest appearances in “9 January” of all Gor’kii’s works. The throng, representing the common Russian people, splits into two factions that seek to dominate the narrative about the tsar. The doubtful, led by an unnamed young man with a familiar red flag, square off against the believers following Gapon to the tsar’s palace. In a war of words for the hearts of the audience, the radicals win the first battle, but a defender of the tsar quickly parries. “And they gradually revived the corpse” of the tsar-god, as Gor’kii describes it, and “faith arrived, embraced people, and roused them, silencing the quiet whisper of their doubts...”[[55]](#footnote-56) So goes the group of people to petition the tsar with the last thread of trust keeping their mood aloft. Gor’kii here shows how, despite the disappointing lived experiences of Russians, well-spun words can miraculously keep hope alive for now. They proceed with one mind to their “father,” reminding each other “«he» loves us,” while Gor’kii lays bare the people’s “self-deception:” “And there is no doubt that the mass of people genuinely believed in the love of this being they just created.”[[56]](#footnote-57) While the tone is critical, there is admiration in the description of Russians’ faithfulness, both in general and in particular toward their tsar. Belief, especially when shared among the masses, creates a force [*sila*] that overpowers even those behind the revolutionary flag. In this exposition of “9 January,” we witness how, regardless of what people know, a common belief can even raise the dead, and that capacity is in even the most cynical of us.

What happens next tells us that there is a limit to the faith that can be placed in one entity but not to our need to believe in something. The guards’ reaction to the “holy procession” of workers was the death knell of Russians’ naïveté toward its monarchy because it broke the tsar-god's narrative of mutual goodwill. As Gor’kii puts it, the bloodshed “violated the integrity of the created image” of the Russian tsar in the eyes of the public, for “«he» is the power above all power and he has no reason to push away his people with bayonets and bullets.”[[57]](#footnote-58) Conflicted sentiments emerge clearly as Gor’kii juxtaposes two voices in the crowd, ironically also juxtaposing two related parts of official nationality. One person exclaims, “A murder is happening, Orthodox faithful!” Another asks, “Why?” And the first voice answers, “Such is the government!” [—*Ubiistvo idet, pravoslavnye! —Za chto? —Vot tak pravitel’stvo!*].[[58]](#footnote-59) The Russian root *prav*—“right,” “rule,” “correct” in their various meanings—repeated here draws attention to the contrast between the people’s sense of propriety and their government’s sense of authority. The issue of “Why?” that physically divides the Orthodox faithful and the tsar in that exchange is the “terrible question” that “eliminated the image of the recently conjured hero, the tsar, the source of kindness and good” which originally had propelled the mass of people toward their monarch.[[59]](#footnote-60) Gor’kii laments the crestfallen nature of the crowd, noting that, “admitting this [destroyed image] was difficult, as it meant depriving yourself of your only hope...”[[60]](#footnote-61) Breaking free from this thinking, however, would mean liberation. Surveying the makeshift battlefield in front of the tsar’s palace, Gor’kii summarily observes that those with him mourned his murdered compatriots alongside the slain “slavish preconception” of the tsar as a source and vessel of hope. He concludes finally that the survivors’ silence was perhaps out of “fear of creating another [image] in the place of the dead one.”[[61]](#footnote-62) As we know, a sacred space is never empty. Gor’kii recognizes the human ability and desire to worship someone or something, even while the sting of their loss is still fresh.

As a result of the violence on Bloody Sunday, the people’s faith once placed in the tsar is ripe for revolutionary change. The explanation for their lack of trust is reminiscent of the arguments against theodicy found in earlier works by Gor’kii pulling from the Book of Job. The tsar “was all-powerful and calmly showed the immensity of [his] authority, thoughtlessly scattering the city’s streets with dead bodies, covering them with blood.”[[62]](#footnote-63) The senseless violence against his subjects “inspired a unanimous fear, a caustic fear that emptied out the soul.”[[63]](#footnote-64) Gor’kii immediately announces with what he is seeking to fill the soul: “And it firmly roused the mind, making it create plans for a new defense of personhood and new structures for the protection of life.”[[64]](#footnote-65) In this statement we see the rudimentary outlines of a post-Christian worldview drawn in terms of its fundamental building blocks. The anthropocentric value system Gor’kii will espouse centers on the dignity of an individual. The violence of Bloody Sunday shaped this worldview by demonstrating the consequences of devaluing human life. Sadly, Gor’kii financed a great deal of the Bolsheviks’ projects that did exactly that later on. Returning to the story, we soon see the connection to revolutionary activity: “Above the crowd rose a person’s figure, and in the gloom a call loudly roared, ‛Who wants to fight for freedom? For the *narod*, for a person’s right to live, to work? Who wants to die in the battle for the future, come and help!’”[[65]](#footnote-66) The martyrdom heard in the call for revolution serves the new values that will underlie a secular Russian society to come. Finally, as night descends on the bloodied Saint Petersburg streets, we learn who will lay down their life for others when Gor’kii draws a distinction in the day’s witnesses: “Those who did not have fire in their chest hurried quickly to their usual corners.”[[66]](#footnote-67) While the tone is hopeless concerning the majority who will not answer the call, he highlights amidst the darkness those who will. The martyrs who will go on the counterattack in the first Russian revolution carry the revolutionary spirit, much like the fires we see burn inside Pavel and the other radical youth of *Mother,* from January 9 forward.

When reflecting and recalling the events of Bloody Sunday, a day that changed the course of history for the country and his own life, Gor’kii wrote about the question of faith and doubt more than anything. The author casually mentions that “when people need faith, it comes” [*kogda liudiam neobkhodima vera — ona prikhodit*]—as though it is an obvious law of nature—right before the man reassures the crowd of the tsar’s goodwill.[[67]](#footnote-68) At first, though, the statement sounds condescending toward the tsar’s supporters naively walking into harm. However, the notion takes on a different dimension as we learn that the optimistic believers become the only beacons of hope on days like Bloody Sunday, such as those leading the vanguard in *Mother*. Tsar Nicholas II’s violence against the Russian people caused a crisis of faith for witnesses. For that reason, we see belief play such a significant role in both “9 January” and *Mother*. Suddenly, characters are not sure whom to believe, what to believe, and how to believe. In the sketch, Gor’kii affirms that faith persisted among a few, albeit crudely formed. Desperation or even need for change is not enough to inspire action, as we see in the defeated resignation of many of the witnesses in the story. The flame of belief in an actionable cause, in human agency to effect transformation in the world is what separates the wheat from the chaff in Gor’kii’s worldview. In the novel, he attempts to understand mechanisms for forming one’s faith and spreading it to others. If the people need something to believe in, Gor’kii will bring it to them.

*Mother*

The novel *Mother* follows from the premise it is human nature to believe and its corollary, “If not with Christianity as our tradition, then how do we move forward?” Gor’kii assumes his readers know the reasons for discarding Orthodoxy, and thus he spends little time explaining them further. Moreover, precisely what beliefs compose this futuristic faith are also mentioned only sparingly, as well. Rather, the novel’s purpose is to demonstrate how followers will come to a new and improved faith that fulfills the material and spiritual needs of the Russian commoner. In the journey back to belief, Gor’kii takes stock of his past. He uses the epistemological tools his Christian upbringing gave him, particularly Biblical stories and liturgical rituals, to answer the novel’s nagging question of how and what to believe again after Bloody Sunday. All this to note that, in a way, Gor’kii’s revolutionary solution looks much like the problem he is trying to solve. Specifically, I look at how Gor’kii transposed two of the three persons of the Trinity and the early history of the Christian Church’s founding onto contemporary Russian life and its problems. In this search for an answer, Gor’kii draws the road map toward a post-Christian Russian faith, even though he does not yet know the destination.

On a broad level, the novel has an antagonistic, competitive relationship with the Christian tradition and the authority of its surviving institutions. Early in the novel, the young socialists are depicted as proponents of an alternative system that will fill a spiritual niche mutually exclusive with mainline Christianity. One of Pavel’s comrades declares that their mission is to “build a bridge through the swamp of this festering life to the future kingdom of the kindness of the heart,” suggesting a kingdom that is not God’s but that of humanity.[[68]](#footnote-69) Shortly after, when word of her son’s activities reaches Pelageia Nilovna, we hear the young socialists compared to the Khlysty, religious sectarians that undermined centralized Russian Orthodox authority from the seventeenth to the twentieth century.[[69]](#footnote-70) Pavel’s growing revolutionary movement challenges not only the political establishment but the sociocultural status quo, as well. For their disagreement, the socialists and their literature are called heretical multiple times over.[[70]](#footnote-71) The young socialists’ role as a competing religious movement rivals the breadth and depth of their political activity. Pelageia Nilovna, moreover, representing the crude masses across the Russian Empire, responds positively to the proposed transformations of political power before any changes in religious authority. Gor’kii knew that Russians would likely sooner give up their allegiance to the state than to God. From what we know now, we can also say that he knew a revolution would require substitutes for the kingdom on Earth as well as in heaven.

The Trinity is the organizing principle from which the rest of religious doctrine emerges to form the Christian faith system. Though the three persons (hypostases) are otherwise co-equal, God-the-Father is traditionally understood to be the head of the Trinity due to a fundamental role in Christian worldbuilding. The Nicene Creed, the formula of faith Orthodoxy has confessed to believe since its adoption in 325 CE, begins, “We believe in a Single God-the-Father, the Almighty, Creator of everything visible and invisible” [*Veruem v Edinogo Boga Ottsa, Vsederzhatelia, Tvortsa vsego vidimogo i nevidimogo*]. These first words and dual procession of Christ and the Holy Spirit are the only qualities of God the-Father mentioned in the Nicene Creed, but they speak loudly. In particular, these attributes underline the Father’s principality and describe his role as author of existence itself. When everything visible and invisible can be traced back to a single origin, that creative source becomes the backdrop for living and understanding, much in the way that history becomes the causal background for the present. This temporal metaphor also expresses the multidimensionality of the Trinity’s personae. According to the teachings of St. Gregory of Nazianius [*Grigorii Bogoslov*, also known as *Grigorii Nazianin*], a prominent Orthodox Church Father, God-the-Father's timelessness is a component in the Trinity’s Absolute nature in Christian dogma.[[71]](#footnote-72) Gor’kii tests this notion of God-the-Father’s radical position in the Trinity by removing him from the spiritual equation.

*God-the-Fatherless*

Reading *Mother*, one may be forgiven for not realizing that there is, in fact, a *father*. To wit, Mikhail, Pelageia’s husband and Pavel’s father, is the first character readers meet. The introduction is brief and unpleasant, however. If Mikhail Vlasov has a redeeming characteristic, it is his labor as the best metal worker in the factory. The rest of his time is spent as the town’s bully [*silach*]—much like Artem in the earlier story “Cain and Artem”—and the Vlasov family’s drunken tyrant. Mikhail beats his wife and neglects his son, curses everyone, and generally leaves destruction in his wake. Only his dog is immune from violence, aggression, and being called a “bastard, which was his favorite word,” though he shows the loyal hound no warmth either.[[72]](#footnote-73) Mikhail dies from an untreated hernia, a common injury resulting from strenuous physical labor, at the exact time of the factory whistle blowing for the morning shift. Here Gor’kii contrasts the wasted remains of a father’s body and the crowds of other men that walk to their own deaths. The observation that Mikhail “did not die [like a person] but croaked [like an animal]” [*ne pomer, a izdokh*] further emphasizes the inhumanity of the working conditions.[[73]](#footnote-74) The chapter's final scene emphasizes the point even further. Mikhail’s loyal dog, who stayed by his side even after he was in his grave, is summarily killed while lying by his grave. The old world of the father, including everything he valued, is buried in the past; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust.

As the only father figure in the story, Mikhail becomes a stand-in for all paternal figures. Discussions of Gor’kii’s own personal issues with his father aside, nearly all the young revolutionaries lack a dad for one reason or another: dead, drunk, or just a deadbeat. Their fatherlessness arises in conversation several times throughout the novel, but a silence lingers instead.[[74]](#footnote-75) Natasha, a young socialist, introduces herself with her first name only after using a patronymic when referring to the mother: “Are you the mother of Pavel Mikhailovich? Hello, my name is Natasha...” to which Pelageia asks, “And your patronymic?” [*A po batiushke?*].[[75]](#footnote-76) This generational divide is shown in starker contrast again at the end of the novel. When another of Pavel’s peers, Aleksandra, introduces herself to Sizov, an older factory worker sympathetic to the cause, with just her first name, Sizov asks for her patronymic just as Pelageia does (“*A po batiushke?*”). Aleksandra responds, “I have no father,” to which Sizov says, “So, he died...” The young socialist, with “something stubborn, insistent resounding in her voice,” quips, “No, he’s alive!” implying that her dad is nevertheless dead to her.[[76]](#footnote-77) Andrei has a living father from whom he is estranged, as well. The older generation, even those who support the revolution, live according to an inextricable paternal authority. Pavel’s generation of post-Christian world builders are “spiritual orphans,” as Ivan Esaulov calls them, without fathers of any kind.[[77]](#footnote-78) Mikhail’s death signals the end of an era inside and outside of the novel.

The father’s brutal demise concludes a brutish past dictated by the hegemons of tradition. What appears to be an ostensibly minor loss of a vaguely known character marks a fundamental redirection in Gor’kii’s worldbuilding and, from a broader point of view, twentieth-century Russian (world?) literature and art. Mikhail is a lightning rod for Gor’kii’s patricidal anger against the Russian people’s collective patriarchs: the tsar, the Russian Empire’s “Little Father” [*batiushka*], and God-the-Father, Christianity’s “Our Father.” They share in being the traditional pillars of authority and responsible for a long history of suffering, and they are dead to Gor’kii, much like Aleksandra. For that reason, they do not appear except to find their demise in *Mother*. Mikhail’s story in this way summarizes Gor’kii’s impression of Bloody Sunday and put Gapon’s words (“There is no tsar! There is no God!”) into literary form. Of course, in reality, when the Russian Revolution of 1917 comes, God and Tsar Nicholas II will perish in a manner much more violent than Mikhail. Patriarchal reign—earthly, heavenly, and everything in between—died with the peaceful Bloody Sunday procession participants, and *Mother* starts with a *tabula rasa* that reflects and preaches that conviction. Gor’kii’s is a fatherless world; free from the chains of tradition, a new, brighter future is on the horizon.

*The New Son*

While the factory’s whistle at daybreak focuses our attention on the exploitation of laboring bodies, Gor’kii hints that a new day has come. Following the father’s funeral, Pavel and Pelageia, free of the yoke of the past for the first time, make a fresh start. The mother steps into the parent role and steers her son away from the alcohol that plagued his father. An internal transformation accompanies a physical transfiguration in Pavel: “... he noticeably began to take the road less traveled: he more seldom went to parties and, although he went somewhere on holidays, he returned home sober. The mother, vigilantly watching after him, saw that the swarthy face of her son was becoming sharper, his eyes looked ever more serious, and his lips were pursed strangely austerely.”[[78]](#footnote-79) For the first time, Pavel recognizes his mother's dignity as a human, emphasizing Pelageia’s unique personhood as his father never did: “... and in general he tried to ease her labor. Nobody in the town ever did that.”[[79]](#footnote-80) The teenager gets a job and soon takes up reading "forbidden” [*zapreshchennaia*] literature—the “new Word”—though we do not yet definitively know the texts are of a revolutionary nature. Gor’kii leaves it up to the reader to connect Pavel’s changes in behavior and appearance, time-consuming trips away from home, and mysterious influx of illicit ideas as signs that these changes, confounding though positive, are in preparation for something bigger.

The Gospel of Luke stands out as a powerful inspiration for *Mother*. Gor’kii adopts multiple themes and motifs from Luke, the most prominent of which is the Emmaus story, to rebuild the post-Christian messiah. The Book of Luke addresses a particular audience, a feature unique among the Gospels, which is integral to its tone and content. Specifically, as Luke explains in his preface, he writes to those who received instruction in their faith, the Christian converts or pagans.[[80]](#footnote-81) For that reason, the Luke’s Gospel emphasizes spreading Christ’s message and the challenges and rewards therein. If one replaces the good news of the resurrection with the good news of socialism, the revolutionaries’ “holy deed” as Pelageia later calls it, we see how Part I of *Mother* uses Luke’s themes in furtherance of a post-Christian faith. Pavel and his comrades clandestinely distribute political pamphlets to proselytize residents, especially workers, for the revolutionary cause, much like the faithful in the Book of Luke spread the message of Christ. Similar to the Gospel’s author, Gor’kii writes to an audience born in one faith in order to convert them to another, a new worldview sure to evoke backlash from above while trying to turn the world upside-down and inside-out.

References to the Christian Gospels bring their revolutionary nature and revelatory tone to the forefront while blatantly claiming the right to succession. As Pavel begins bringing books home—his revelation and baptism in the new faith—the Biblical allusions begin with the parable of Christ’s appearance on the road to Emmaus. Gor’kii explains that, “One day Pavel brought and hung a picture on the wall [with] three people, talking and walking somewhere lightly and boldly.” This image, Pavel declares, “is the risen Christ walking to Emmaus!”[[81]](#footnote-82) The painting, likely an icon, depicts Gospel of Luke 24:13-31. The verses describe Jesus crossing paths with apostles Luke and Cleopas immediately after the resurrection on a road to Emmaus, a settlement, also known as Nikopolis, approximately thirty kilometers west of Jerusalem. As the story goes, upon meeting Jesus, neither follower recognizes God before them, but they invite the stranger to continue with them to Emmaus and dine together. While on the road, Luke and Cleopas resume their conversation, exchanging doubts about the resurrection. Only upon breaking bread at dinner does Jesus reveal to the apostles his identity. Gor’kii chose this story for more than just to transpose the resurrection; the story of the road to Emmaus introduces a question and theme that will dominate the rest of this novel and others.

When examining the events of the Emmaus story and Part I of *Mother*, we can make several comparisons between the Biblical text and Pavel’s spiritual, political rebirth marked by the appearance of the icon. The story of Emmaus has long been and continues to be the centerpiece of writings and speeches across Christian denominations about discernment in one's beliefs. Luke and Cleopas’s original inability to see Jesus demonstrates the difficulty of fostering faith in unprecedented circumstances, such as those many faced after Bloody Sunday. The apostles first hear of Jesus’s empty tomb, but Christ’s resurrection continued to cause them doubt and bewilderment.[[82]](#footnote-83) Moreover, during their conversation with Jesus, both Luke and Cleopas feel the divine presence in them, described as “hearts burning inside us,” though they still did not believe.[[83]](#footnote-84) During Pavel’s arrival as the post-Christian messiah, he too faces doubt and bewilderment from the nonbeliever in his world. In fact, *Mother*'s Part I is speaking directly and precisely to the disbelief of Pelageia Nilovna and others like her. Her doubt and bewilderment at the beginning of the novel is the inspiration and motivator to the novel’s plot development. Upon seeing the icon, Pelageia exclaims to Pavel, “You honor Christ, but you don’t go to church!”[[84]](#footnote-85) That "but” introduces the mother’s disbelief in her son, but it also puts the initial crack in her defense of tradition. In her mind, Pavel’s reuse of the Emmaus icon divorces Christ and church, representing the Church, for the first time. Gor’kii leans on the Russian spiritual impulse to drive a wedge between active faith and static fidelity.

The third piece of the Emmaus transposition follows the customary inversion pattern Gor’kii employed in earlier works. While Luke and Cleopas doubt and wonder at the idea of Christ’s resurrection, the ultimate reason for their disbelief is their hope to preserve the power structures of the old world. The apostles say amidst recounting evidence to the contrary that they “were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel” and thus restore the political power of the Jewish state.[[85]](#footnote-86) When revealing his true self to Luke and Cleopas, Jesus calls this expectation a “foolish misunderstanding” for its rigid attachment to earthly authority of the past rather than the spiritual kingdom to come.[[86]](#footnote-87) Pelageia Nilovna, who occupies a disciple role in the first half of the novel, similarly refuses to see Pavel’s messianic nature. Her attachment to the earthly authority of the old world embodied in the Church holds her back from seeing the “Truth” Pavel is purveying. In the beginning, this attachment manifests itself in the fear and pity she feels for Pavel. As the chapter progresses, when she finally begins to see a future through faith in the movement, she is unshackled from what once was her life: “She understood that she could love this life, despite its danger, and, sighing, she looked back, where her past stretched back like a dark thin line.”[[87]](#footnote-88) The apostles and Pelageia Nilovna must leave their past conceptions of life behind them in order to have faith in the possibilities of the future, but only the son can see with new eyes.

The qualities and capabilities unique to Pavel distinguish him from the rest of the population and point to his capacity to effect revolutionary change. The first indication of Pavel’s special nature comes after his father’s funeral and immediately before he delivers the Emmaus icon. Pelageia Nilovna remarks about his transformation following Mikhail’s death that “in general he tried to lighten her workload. Nobody in the village did that.”[[88]](#footnote-89) In addition to radical internal change, Pavel is already at work to help the laboring masses starting with his own home—those who live in exploitative domestic circumstances should not cast the first stone. Another comment testifying to Pavel’s uniqueness is heard shortly after Pavel’s arrest, this time from his disciple Andrei. In order to reassure Pelageia while Pavel sits in prison, he calls Pavel a “rare” [*redkii chelovek*] and “iron” [*zheleznyi chelovek*] person. Andrei’s message seeks to dispel doubt by emphasizing Pavel’s spiritual strength and commitment—the metaphorical use of “iron” to describe a person’s faith in an intangible ideal is not lacking in irony. There is no rational argument proven by these unique features, as Sesterhenn inexplicably argues.[[89]](#footnote-90) It is personal redefinition for the good of others—socialism, in theory. Pavel’s monastic lifestyle, which made him “beyond his years” as well, prepared him to endure deprivation in prison. Demonstrations of steadfastness and refusal of material pleasures are scattered throughout the Bible.[[90]](#footnote-91) Christ and Pavel are the literary embodiment of their respective dogmas.

More than anything, Gor’kii is interested in defining and expanding an ideological community, one that is bound by shared ideals, which he spends Part I of *Mother* explicating. In the first pages of the novel Gor’kii lays the cornerstone for a socialist post-Christian religion: a problem to be rectified by the savior. Describing the decrepit spiritual and material state of Russia, the narrator outlines a new original sin that has separated people from goodness and each other—exploitation of labor. Labor exploitation has debased Russian workers, as the father exemplifies. These inhuman conditions dispel the inherent dignity that Christianity preaches:

Meeting with each other, they spoke about the factory and machines, they cursed at their masters—they spoke and thought only what is connected to work. … And, tightly hanging onto each opportunity to defuse this disturbing feeling, people, for the smallest of reasons, threw themselves at each other with the animosity of beasts. There were bloody fights. At times they finished with serious injuries and at times murder.  
In people’s relationships there was a feeling of lurking anger most of all. It was as old as the incurable fatigue of their muscles. People were born with this disease of the soul, inheriting it from their fathers, and it accompanied them to their grave like a black shadow, leading them throughout life to an array of actions revolting for their aimless cruelty.[[91]](#footnote-92)

Gor’kii here transposes original sin, the presence of which separates humanity from God according to Christian doctrine. The "disease of the soul,” which began alongside their “incurable fatigue of their muscles” from work, has separated the individuals from the community—a post-Christian god. The focus on animalistic violence reminds readers of the story of Cain and Abel. By the time of *Mother*, Gor’kii seems to say, there were only Cains left. This social malady becomes a problem for revolutionary ideas to solve, much like original sin is a disorder for the savior to rectify in the Christian tradition. Without this fundamental disorder, there is nothing from which a savior will liberate humanity. Socialism in *Mother* is the remedy for the dehumanizing socioeconomic inequalities that Orthodoxy can no longer provide.

Pavel completes his transfiguration into a Christ-like savior by fulfilling the prophecies that result in his detainment and death at the hands of the state. Here Gor’kii takes from the prophetic tradition of the Bible, on which the entire New Testament relies for its legitimacy as holy scripture. Jesus’s fulfillment of the Old Testament requirements became the spiritual authority for creating the Christian Church in his name. These prophetic signs include a virgin birth, performing healing miracles, and betrayal by a loved one, for example. The Gospels and Acts are therefore dedicated to recounting Jesus’s deeds in order to prove, insofar as they can, that Jesus of Nazareth earned the title of “the Christ”—from the Greek Χριστός [*Khristos*], “the anointed one” or “the chosen one” of divine provenance.[[92]](#footnote-93) In other words, early Christians could discern the identity of the true messiah through understanding and verifying that the prophecies, defined first by Jewish tradition (Old Testament), were in fact realized. To this day, believers rely on this method of establishing authority to assert Jesus’s divinity, which Gor’kii undoubtedly understood about his audience. Pavel, the transposed Christ figure, therefore, completes his own test to demonstrate that he is the true post-Christian savior of Russia (and workers around the world).

Though Pavel is only a recent convert to the cause, he immediately becomes a leader amongst peers in their revolutionary cadre. His position as first among equals affords Pavel the influence to preach to those around him, thus forming a group of revolutionary disciples, much like Jesus’s followers in the Bible. The Christian tradition presupposes the messiah to command a community of believers by setting an example of thought and behavior.[[93]](#footnote-94) Jesus’s proclamation of a new law and world order slowly builds a contingent that will form the body of the Christian Church in his absence. Similarly, Pavel’s travels and speeches gradually bring into the fold workers and allies who will stand up against unjust capitalist exploitation. During the impromptu protest at the factory, a group begins to form around Pavel as he speaks. “We are always everywhere, the first ones at work and in the last place in life,” he screams to the crowd.[[94]](#footnote-95) The diametrical contrast between extremes, one of great toil and minimal reward and vice-versa, particularly in the context of justice, recalls Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes, as written in Mt. 5:1-16 and Lk. 6:20-26. There Jesus exalts the poor (Lk. 6:20: “Blessed are the poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God”) and rebukes the wealthy (Lk. 6:24: “But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation”), much as Pavel does. Immediately after his own Beatitudes, Pavel appears different to Pelageia Nilovna. “[T]he crowd slowly approached him, coalescing into a dark, thousand-headed body,” which, as it did in the original Gospels, marks the beginning of a new kind of church.[[95]](#footnote-96) As the Christian prophecy demands, speaking truth to power becomes the reason for imprisonment. Pavel and Jesus knew to expect a prison sentence or even worse for challenging the dominant power of the time.

One of the strongest unifying qualities of early Christianity and Russian communism is their repression by the state in response to proposals for radically reforming secular and religious power structures. The illicit nature of Jesus and Pavel’s missions connects them and undergirds a common disestablishmentarian theme throughout both texts. *Mother*’s savior figure, Pavel, predicts and peacefully accepts his arrest for subversive behavior, as Christ does when fulfilling another prophecy in the Gospels. Pavel sprints from the Emmaus icon to announcing his coming arrest for revolutionary activity. Of the pamphlets he spreads, Pavel remarks that “they are printed quietly, secretly, and if they find them on me, I will be put in prison.”[[96]](#footnote-97) When Pelageia expresses concern for his safety, Pavel replies, “I cannot lie to you. It cannot be avoided!”[[97]](#footnote-98) When the time comes for the protest that will lead to Pavel’s arrest—featuring the Beatitudes references—his attempt to organize ends in failure and betrayal. Calls for a strike are met with anger and, perhaps above all, doubt. When someone asks, “But who will work?” the name, used as an epithet, “Judases!” is returned. From this sequence of events, we can understand that the worker who reported Pavel was from this group. Pavel was arrested immediately after, which he was prepared for. He whispers to Pelageia Nilovna, “They are taking me away...” and the prophecy is once again complete.[[98]](#footnote-99) Gor’kii takes the one sure principle of his post-Christian ideal, self-renunciation, from these significant moments Jesus’s narrative.[[99]](#footnote-100) Pavel will spend seven weeks in prison before his May Day celebration, the number of weeks between Clean Monday [*Chistyi ponedel’nik*], the start of Orthodoxy’s Great Lent, and Easter Sunday.[[100]](#footnote-101) Personal sacrifice for others' benefit as a common value brings socialist and Christian values into conversation, and Gor’kii is seeking to borrow the religious ideal for his brave, new post-Christian world.

Persecution by authorities is a major Biblical prophecy that echoes in *Mother* and other literature and movements around the world. *Mother*’s prophet attracts attention by exposing a new “truth” [*pravda*] to the public that contradicts the government’s established narrative and exposes injustices perpetrated by the state. Disruption of the status quo is found in religious and pseudo-religious traditions throughout world history that have sought the end of perceived discriminations. Liberation theology, an innately Christian approach to understanding religion’s role in society begun in the 1960s and 1970s, has at its center the anti-oppression message of Jesus’s teachings. Theologians, often coming from Black and Latin American backgrounds, such as James Hal Cone and Gustavo Gutiérrez, foreground the message of justice and freedom in Christ’s preaching.[[101]](#footnote-102) Advocates of liberation theology have often been criticized as disruptive Marxists for their antagonism against wealthy elite classes, particularly in Central and South America.[[102]](#footnote-103) The Bible tells of Jesus’s preaching for equality of everyone before the “truth” of God-the-Father, which ran counter to Roman rule over the Province of Judaea, the Gospels’ setting. In his own gospel, Gor’kii preaches through Pavel about equality of everyone before the “truth” of humane socialism, the details of which take form only in *Confession*. For now, Gor’kii is adamant that the fatherless take control.

*Factories of Worship*

Ideas need a place to live if they are going to persist in our physical world. The novel’s first part primarily functions as a Gospel text about the new socialist faith and its messianic harbinger, Pavel Vlasov. The most important prophecy of the Gospels is the resurrection and redemption of the executed Christ, which marks the beginning of the Christian liturgical calendar—Easter. This most sacred springtime celebration reminds believers to have faith in the truthfulness of Jesus’s prophetic claims. Triumphant songs and cheers fill the smallest chapels and the biggest cathedrals with the same confidence in the Christian message. Therefore, as Gor’kii builds his own religious tradition, he would want to capture the powerful physicality that a church lends to the survival of Christian traditions, particularly for the occasion of Easter. Before examining Pavel’s own resurrection prophecy transposition, the following chapter takes a step back to examine how Gor’kii first transposes the social and cultural functions of a church onto the local factory. As the revolutionary youth disavow the town’s churches, Gor’kii transforms the factory into a house of worship for his post-Christian, labor-centered religion. At the end of Part I, Pavel’s factory becomes a sacred space when it hosts the socialist Easter-like celebration on May 1, also known as May Day or Labor Day, not Palm Sunday as others have said.[[103]](#footnote-104) Like the Christian Gospels, the novel’s first part ends with the creation of an ideological community and its physical home, from which it can spread the good news of its founder.

The church buildings, representative of the old-world Church as a whole, are first divorced from the idea of God and any spirituality of the group of young revolutionaries, who will constitute the post-Christian congregation. Gor’kii hastens to note that youth’s lack of church attendance does not indicate a lack of religious feeling. Pelageia’s comment to her son that, “You revere Christ, but you don’t go to church...” recognizes Christian elements in Pavel despite separation from the church. Pavel wishes to show his mother that he can continue Russia’s “sacred deed,” as she comes to call it while preparing for the May Day festivities, without inviting the Orthodox Church. In fact, Gor’kii says, church is precisely where anyone seeking God should avoid. Rybin, an elder community member who is sympathetic to but uninvolved in any revolutionary activity, says in a conversation with Pavel that “God is in the heart and mind but not the church. Church is God’s grave.”[[104]](#footnote-105) Of all of *Mother*’s anticlerical discourse, this comment is mostly like to have earned Gor’kii his formal charge of heresy following the novel’s publication. Pavel clarifies for Pelageia Nilovna that they are not talking “about the good and kind God, in which [she believes], but about the one that the priests threaten us with like a stick.”[[105]](#footnote-106) These sentiments and images are scattered throughout Gor’kii's writings prior to *Mother* as he struggled with questions of theodicy. For the young revolutionaries, God is still good, but hell is God’s people.

As May Day dawns, the world takes a different hue while the revolutionaries prepare to inaugurate their house of worship, the factory, and celebrate a spiritual rebirth. Pelageia is particularly attuned to the “wonderful, bright celebration of the triumph of freedom and logic” that Pavel promised everyone the night before, using language traditionally associated with Easter.[[106]](#footnote-107) Having not slept at all, she hears the morning factory whistle echo throughout the town, noting that it “seemed like today it is ringing longer than it ever has.”[[107]](#footnote-108) Instead of the celebratory church bell calling the faithful to prayer and worship, the factory beckons workers to labor and create. Pavel underscores this vital capacity, saying of himself and others, “We are the people who build churches and factories, forge chains and money, we are the living power than feeds and entertains everyone from cradle to grave.”[[108]](#footnote-109) The factory like the church is a celebration of human innovation and hard work, but only factories can make that which moves society forward. If readers need another sign to leave the church behind in the old world, the workers pass by one on their way to the factory. As opposed to the organic, joyful group of revolutionaries, they witness churchgoers performing Easter rituals with an obvious disaffection, a lack of communion, shown in their actions and words. Arranged around the church building, the “motley crowd” consisted of people, some sitting while others standing, many “raising their heads up and looking afar, impatiently waiting” with confused looks on their faces. Wives shy away from husbands, who curse at them, and neither wanted to be there.[[109]](#footnote-110) With the past finally behind them, Pavel and his comrades advance to a brighter future.

Gor’kii integrates several religious rituals into the workers’ travel to the factory square, much as marchers led by Father Gapon did on Bloody Sunday. The holy procession is a tradition at least as old as Christianity itself, during which the congregation moves as one giant body, often circumambulating around a church, performing burial rites at a graveyard, or visiting holy sites. Participants carry items of religious significance and sing hymns as they travel. Gor’kii’s transposition spins off from there, setting up further contrast between the post-Christian and Christian practictioners. The traditional procession around the church went in circles—that is, nowhere—whereas Pavel’s group is progressing with a direction—to the factory. Their banner, “flying above people’s heads like a red bird,” is reminiscent of the Orthodox *khorugv*, prominent symbols of Easter processions.[[110]](#footnote-111) Instead of gospel songs, the revolutionaries sing lines from the ‬“Worker’s Marseillaise‭” [*Rabochaia Marsel’eza*]: “We’ll renounce the old world... / We’ll shake its ashes from our feet...”[[111]](#footnote-112) Its lyrics, set to the tune of the French revolutionary anthem “La Marseillaise,” are sung from the perspective of a “we” that saves the working masses from the rich and “Vampire Tsar” to live in a kingdom of “the sacred word.”[[112]](#footnote-113) It was originally known as “The New Song” [*Novaia pesnia*] and informally by its first line, “We Renounce the Old World” [*Otrechemsia ot starogo mira*]. The song’s popularity during the events of 1905 undoubtedly compelled Gor’kii to include it in his socialist holy procession.[[113]](#footnote-114) Personal experience at Bloody Sunday provided realistic detail and poignant imagery for the imagined revolutionary vanguard.

Gor’kii turns Pavel into an icon by composing common icon motifs, leaving behind a new ideological community in his image. Finally, we see the post-Christian savior, Pavel, at the head of the group, where an icon of Christ usually leads Orthodox processions. On January 9, 1905, Gapon led the procession.[[114]](#footnote-115) In the span of a moment, Pelageia recognizes her son as the socialist messiah and begins her own mission to carry on his message: “Looking at the red banner in the distance, she—without looking—saw the face of her son, his bronze forehead and eyes aflame with the bright fire of faith.”[[115]](#footnote-116) This flash of transcendence over the mother, I argue, is the crux of the novel’s development. It is a catalytic *kairos*, the moment when the divine and mortal meet, in Gor’kii’s post-Christian paradigm. It is undoubtedly an anthropocentric message, but it is one of faith, not skepticism. Other scholars consider Pavel to be the rational Christ-like figure, likely because Pavel himself talks about the “bright festival of freedom and logic’s triumph.”[[116]](#footnote-117) Pavel’s actions for the cause directly contradict that thinking, however. His preaching of and sacrifice for a higher purpose were not rational; instead, they were to cultivate others’ belief in the same ideal. “There wouldn’t have been a Christ, had people not died for his glory,” the mother says as Pavel is taken away for the final time before judgment.[[117]](#footnote-118) Her belief cost his life because he believed it would matter, not because it was logical. In turn, Pelageia’s coming to faith, which propels Part II of *Mother*, hastens the end of a man and the beginning of a myth.

*The Revolutionary Spirit and the Acts of the Mother*

Pavel is absent from the vanguard following his arrest at the May Day celebration, but his spirit is still very much present among his comrades. The novel’s second half shows the remaining revolutionaries, especially Pelageia Nilovna, use Pavel’s personal sacrifice as inspiration for tireless dedication to spreading his story. This plot, I argue, as the backbone of Part II, dictates that the latter portion of the novel be read as a transposed Acts of the Apostles. Immediately following the Gospels, Acts is a continuation of Luke and maps out the earliest days of the Christian community as “the Church” in the hostile Roman Empire. Christ's apostles disseminate the news of the resurrection—the Christian religion—with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the third persona of the Holy Trinity. Correspondingly, the revolutionaries of *Mother* take up Pavel’s mission to convert additional workers to their radical cause, which is particularly true for the proselyte mother. Therein lies the new believer Pelageia Nilovna’s purpose for the remainder of the story. Borrowing the Bible’s pneumatological symbolism and function, *Mother*’s latter half traces how Pelageia Nilovna, a convert to the cause, carries the fire of the Revolutionary Spirit to others in order to build a community of believers—the “capital-C Church” of socialism. Much like the Acts of the Apostles, other localities establish their factories—“lowercase-C churches”—as a refuge for the fold. The final section of this chapter presents the Revolutionary Spirit, Gor’kii’s post-Christian transposition and replacement of the Holy Spirit. More than a biological mother or ideological follower, Pelageia Nilovna becomes the bearer of the Revolutionary Spirit in her pilgrimages, and with Pavel she lives out the story of Saint Paul—the Russian Orthodox holy martyr *Pavel*—as told in Acts. At the novel’s end, in *Mother*’s mother, Gor’kii finds his rock on which he will create a Church and spread his revolutionary gospel to the world.

Critics have often seen Pelageia Nilovna as the maternal figure Mary, mother of Jesus, and for good reason, though these comparisons fail to capture the character’s entire trajectory. In addition to Pavel, the post-Christian Christ, Pelageia is motherly to all the young revolutionaries.[[118]](#footnote-119) In fact, she develops “a mother’s compassionate love for them.”[[119]](#footnote-120) Orthodoxy reveres Mary but lacks a concept of universal motherhood in relation to her. Viewing Pelageia as a disciple more fully describes the mother’s role, as she does follow in the footsteps of Pavel. However, her special stature in the cadre pushes back against such a description. Pelageia not only continues Pavel’s work spreading socialism, but she also comes to embody her son’s mission, sacrificing her life for the cause. She becomes more than just another member, much like her son was before his arrest. In fact, as Rybin says, Pelageia takes the place of Pavel in his absence, which is key to understanding her role.[[120]](#footnote-121) Without the messiah, the Church must have a way to continue the “sacred deed” and cultivate its presence on Earth: the new “Way,” so to speak, is Pelageia and the Revolutionary Spirit.

Acts of the Apostles [*Deianiia sviatykh apostolov*], or just Acts [*Deianiia*], is the first book after the Gospels and fifth of the New Testament. Its stories describe the founding and growth of the early Christian Church immediately following the resurrection. Specifically, Apostle Luke, its author, writes again to Theophilus about disciples’ missions to several settlements throughout the modern-day Middle East spreading the news of Christ. On the fortieth day after the resurrection, Jesus ascends to Heaven in preparation for the next stage of the Church’s development.[[121]](#footnote-122) The Holy Spirit succeeds Jesus on Earth, as he promises to the apostles, and leads building the Church—much in the same way Pelageia succeeds Pavel.[[122]](#footnote-123) The day marking the Holy Spirit’s appearance to Christ’s earliest followers is celebrated as Pentecost [*Piatidesiatnitsa*], the most important holiday second only to Easter in Eastern Orthodoxy, where it is also known as the Day of the Holy Trinity [*Den’ Sviatoi Troitsy*]. On that day, as described in Acts 2:1-4, the Holy Spirit descends from heaven as wind and flames that fills the disciples and reveals to them the truth of Jesus’s preaching: baptism by fire. From a theological perspective, the book’s opening chapters reconfigures the relationship between Christ and humanity. God-the-Son remains present in the Church by the power (proxy) of the Holy Spirit, who carries out Christ’s will on Earth. Anyone who has received the sacrament of chrismation (from the Greek χρῖσμα for “anointing” or “myrrh,” usually applied immediately after baptism), thus can receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit [*dary Sviatogo Dukha*], which may include wisdom, faith, prophecy, and speaking and understanding tongues.[[123]](#footnote-124) The Book of Acts, emphasizing faithfulness and selflessness for the collective, shares many qualities with the second part of Gor’kii’s *Mother*.

In addition to the overarching thematic commonalities shared by Part II of *Mother* and the Biblical book, the novel offers specific allusions that indicate Gor’kii’s intention to transpose Acts. That shared theme is the global spread of a story of salvation to transform individuals into a community of interconnected the both the early Christian Church and the new revolutionary Church. In a conversation with Sofia, for example, Pelageia compares a political organizing meeting with morning service, daily orthros, in a church. Sofia responds affirmatively and adds that “only here God’s house is the whole world!” [*Tol’ko zdes’ bozhii dom – vsia zemlia.*][[124]](#footnote-125) In the first chapter of Acts, Jesus’s commandment to spread the story of his resurrection “even to the ends of the Earth” [*dazhe do kraia zemli*] (1:8) outlines this same crusade-like mission. Gor’kii further anchors Pelageia Nilovna’s story in the Bible with prominent moments in Acts appearing at the start of Part II. Pelageia and Mar’ia return to the Vlasov house from a clash with authorities on May Day, and Pelageia, whom Mar'ia lovingly calls “my unfortunate martyr” [s*tradalitsa moia neschastnaia*], instantly falls asleep at home.[[125]](#footnote-126) In a dream, the mother sees Pavel standing above a burial mound [*kurgan*], as though floating. Here Gor’kii takes from Christ’s ascension in Acts 1:9-11, when the apostles and converts watch Jesus taken from Earth into heaven, an affirmation of overcoming death. The inclusion of a burial mound below Pavel’s suspended figure seems to say that the new savior has overcome his arrest in a similar way. When police in the dream suddenly begin running toward her and the baby now in her arms, Pelageia runs to a church, only to find the same persecution from the priest. She screams “Don’t throw away the child!” [*Ne brosaite ditia!*] in response.[[126]](#footnote-127) Recalling the persecution of Christ, an apostle in Acts 7:19 retells the story of Herod attempting to kill Jesus by “forcing [our people] to throw away the babies” [*prenuzhdaia ikh brosat’ detei*] of Jerusalem. Such connects are less transposition than simple echo, though they nevertheless clarify Gor’kii’s intent. The dream sequence that begins Part II further connects both Pavel with Christ and the novel’s latter half with Acts.

The vision, a baptism-like experience for Pelageia, shortly comes to an end and prepares her to accept the socialist cause as her new ultimate principle. In order to find Pavel and Andrei in the dream, Pelageia follows them down a dark chasm, which wakes her in a fright. Gor’kii notes that “she arose and, not washing herself or praying to God, started putting the room back together.”[[127]](#footnote-128) The mother makes a miniature red banner from items found around the house, which she hides in her pocket. The factory whistle blows once more, and she sits down to ask herself “What is now to be done?” [*chto zhe teper’ delat’*]. While this phrase has precedent in revolutionary literature like Chernyshevskii‘s *What is to be Done?*, it also finds resonance in the Bible. Acts 2 describes Pentecost, which celebrates the arrival of the Holy Spirit seven weeks and one day after Christ’s death, roughly matching Pavel’s time in prison. After the Holy Spirit descends to baptize the three thousand Israelites at Pentecost with fire, the crowd turns to Peter and Jesus’s other apostles to ask the same question: “What are we to do” [*chto nam delat’*] with this revelation?[[128]](#footnote-129) Peter’s answer is leave one’s past behind and spread the news with others. Though she is not praying, Pelageia has a hesychastic revelation that inspires her to commit to a new worldview. Her post-Christian transition, as reflected in her actions: “Remembering that she still had not prayed, she stood before the icons and, having stood a few seconds, again sat—in her heart there was nothing.”[[129]](#footnote-130) Where the Holy Spirit once was, the Revolutionary Spirit will soon be.

Gor’kii transposes the Christian symbol of the flame of faith among other gifts associated with the Trinity’s third persona so that he may engineer a secular pathos for the masses. Naturally, something so fundamental as fire has more than just Christian connotations. Human fascination with combustion, especially with its byproducts light and warmth, is recorded throughout human culture. In particular, the Greek religious figure Prometheus, who famously stole fire from the gods to give to humanity, has been lauded by revolutionary thinkers—in the broader sense of the word—for millennia. Nietzsche, whose influence on Gor’kii is well-documented, often used the story of Prometheus as an example of a civilization’s progress.[[130]](#footnote-131) While one cannot deny the possibility of non-Christian inspiration Gor’kii may have had in his writing *Mother*, Gor’kii starts and ends the novel with the topic of faith, especially that of Pelageia Nilovna, punctuated by the image of fire. The Revolutionary Spirit’s first appearance in the novel comes at a time of difference in belief in Part I. Shortly before May Day, when fellow revolutionary’s death sends Pavel into a furor about the government’s “most heinous murder of millions of people, the murder of souls,” he challenges his mother’s fidelity to the tsar, much like Bloody Sunday did to Gor’kii: “If you felt this whole abomination and shameful rot, then you would understand our truth, [you] would see how great and bright it is!” In response, Pelageia rises “flustered and full of the desire to merge her heart with her son’s heart into one fire.” At the time, that flame was of the Christian Holy Spirit, but she nevertheless agrees: “Wait, Pasha, wait! … I feel it, wait!”[[131]](#footnote-132) Her desire to believe in something is the spark waiting to be lit.

By the time the workers’ procession is over, the mother has finally merged hearts into a single fire, but this time it is the Revolutionary Spirit. Seeing Pavel’s “eyes, burning with the bright flame of faith” before his arrest brings her into communion with not only her son but the entire revolutionary movement. Pelageia at last truly feels the presence of the spirit that resides in Pavel’s soul, creating a moment of real transcendence. This shared flame inspires her to preach the socialist faith. Reassuring the workers after Pavel is taken away, she beseeches everyone to “Believe them!”—much like Gor’kii in his letter to his wife following Bloody Sunday (“You are about to read astonishing things, but believe them, these are the facts.”). Amongst the crowd, someone yells at the group to listen to their new idol saying, “The Holy One speaks! … The Holy One, good people! Listen!”[[132]](#footnote-133) This moment can signify the inclusion of other gifts of the Christian Holy Spirit in addition to faith, such as wisdom or prophecy. It also opens the novel to Gor’kii’s most spiritual side, the power of the word. Texts like the Christian Bible or *Mother* have an immortal, intangible presence in our mental faculties, and Gor’kii wishes to occupy the place held by Orthodoxy in Russian minds. Guided by the spirit of works like these, people build and destroy cultures and nations, moved by faith in their message. Pelageia Nilovna expresses these sentiments throughout the novel. As she comes to accept Pavel’s imprisonment, she repeats several times, “Our Lord Jesus Christ would not have been, had people not died for his glory.”[[133]](#footnote-134) Later, plagued by doubt, Pelageia tells Tat’iana, “Regarding God, I don’t know, but I believe in Christ... I believe his words, love thy neighbor as oneself, I believe in this!”[[134]](#footnote-135) Gor’kii will show in the mother’s development exactly how far faith in words—in an idea—can take an individual and, more importantly, a community.

In the second part of *Mother*, we see the factory operating as the cultural and social center of the town, as churches once did. To reflect this, Gor’kii immediately establishes the place as the community’s revolutionary hub. In the part’s first chapter, Pelageia Nilovna commits to continue Pavel’s work spreading literature from the factory throughout the city. This is possible because Pavel succeeded in convincing everyone working to join the strike, thereby capturing the factory as a home base. The manual laborers, who had supported Pavel’s campaign, assist and encourage her to disseminate disruptive information. Throughout the novel’s second half, the factory is used as a location for revolutionary organizing as well as a refuge during times of fear of prosecution, a source of motivation about stories of a dark past, and other social good traditionally provided by the Church. In addition to the factory’s diffused central role in the latter half of the plot, Gor’kii offers readers a concrete, striking image to underline the importance and influence of the factory church of this imagined socialist future. The second chapter of Part II begins thus:

On the ground, blackened by soot, the factory sprawled like a large dark red spider, having raised its smokestacks high into the sky. Workers’ single-story houses pressed against it. Gray and flattened, they crowded in a tight group on the edge of the swamp and looked pitifully at each other with their small, dim windows. Above them rose a church, also dark red to match the factory, its bell tower shorter than the factory chimneys.[[135]](#footnote-136)

As the tallest building in the city, the factory casts a literal shadow over every other edifice, including the church. With growing connections thanks to the mother’s pamphlet proselytizing, the red spider imagery connotes the long shadow of revolutionary thought over the city. The old Church and its churches now heed the socialist cause, represented by the looming factory. From this citadel, Pelageia Nilovna and the rest of the revolutionary cadre can carry out their mission of ushering Russia into a brave new world—and maybe one day the globe, as well.

*Mother*’s Part II can be divided into two consecutive apostolic narratives: Pelageia as missionary and Pelageia as martyr for the revolutionary cause. This division correlates with the Book of Acts, which can be seen as having two halves as well, the first of which is the development of the Christian Church (ch. 1-8). In the novel, however, Gor’kii meditates on the power of doubt against faith. The mother’s maternal feelings deter her from committing to Pavel’s message, a strong argument against viewing her as a transposed Mary in this part. On the other hand, Pelageia’s belief in the cause regularly takes two steps forward and one step back while these conflicting allegiances battle for her heart, as reflected in the flames of the Revolutionary Spirit in and around her. Gor’kii uses the Holy Spirit leitmotif to depict the mother’s struggle with doubt, which may be comparable to what he and others experienced as the idea of revolution, both political and cultural, started to become a possibility. This first narrative of Part II, I argue, is Gor’kii’s contribution to the persistent conversation about faith and doubt in Russian literary history. After feeling the Revolutionary Spirit for the first time at the May Day procession, she wakes up the next day eager to start her mission, though not without reservations. When asked to do a minor favor, Pelageia begs the revolutionaries to equip her with the necessary provisions for a whole mission, traveling “winter and summer, right up until the grave, like a wanderer,” adding, “Is this really a bad fate for me?” Despite this, “she becomes sad” as she imagines herself dependent upon alms. Self-doubt notwithstanding, she nevertheless decides to dedicate the rest of her life to cultivating the revolutionary Church by preaching Pavel’s message.

Pelageia’s mission continues until Pavel’s trial and first addresses her conflicting feelings for her son and her son’s greater purpose. She “dresses as a nun, a lace and linen saleswoman, a well-to-do philistine, or [one of Repin’s] pilgrims” while disseminating revolutionary literature.[[136]](#footnote-137) Her choice of disguise suggests that faith is a business, one that she does well. After some success, Pelageia is confronted by her maternal instinct to protect Pavel, a spirit competing with her revolutionary side. Thinking of her son’s heroism, she says to herself, “Everything will be okay, everything!” but faced with the reality of Pavel’s rebelliousness, her “maternal [heart] impeded the growth of her human [heart], burned it down, and in place of a great feeling, in the gray ash of distress, a melancholic thought sheepishly beat: ‘[He] will die... [He] will be gone!..’”[[137]](#footnote-138) Gor’kii undoubtedly saw the internal conflict with the mothers of Peter Zalomov and other revolutionaries. The author asks if revolutionary change is worth such a great sacrifice by placing Pelageia’s maternal interests in opposition to her growing revolutionary identity. The cause demands it, therefore she must yield. The collective, which will fill the God-the-Father role in Gor’kii’s next book, *Confession*, begins to take form here. Though she does not say it outright, Pelageia readies herself to accept the consequences if revolution requires her son’s life for the betterment of society. Her immanent transcendence, feeling both personal and collective allegiances, through the heart of humanity helps her push forward through the worst of times. Pelageia’s loss is given meaning by the faith in a brighter future to come.

Now with an ideal and a keeper, Gor’kii is ready to spread his gospel. After seeing her son one last time before his trial, Pelageia commits to the cause and spreads her passion to those around her. Rybin announces that she has joined the party, which he calls “miraculous.”[[138]](#footnote-139) For the following gathering behind her, she becomes a font of confidence in the cause. She “collects everything bright and pure she has seen into a single flame” that whips her into a frenzy during her speeches, causing the public to hang onto her words attentively.[[139]](#footnote-140) In an evening after a particularly forceful speech, Tat’iana confides in Pelageia Nilovna about her own doubts, knowing past adversity likely caused both to doubt the meaning of their lives: “You speak well, and your speech tugs at my You think, God, at least look at these people and life through this crack. What are you living for? Sheep! Here I am literate, I read books, I think a lot, but you can’t sleep at night because of your thoughts. What’s the use? [If] I don’t think, it will be in vain, and [if] I do, it’s also in vain.”[[140]](#footnote-141) While she was speaking, “the flame in the lamp flickered, dimmed, but after a second flared up anew evenly and brightly.” Tat’iana has already found a solution for her crisis in Pelageia, for she immediately adds, “they heard your speeches, and that is why people live! And how miraculous is it that I hear and see you, and I know this! Before you, I never had heard of or thought such things...”[[141]](#footnote-142) Pelageia Nilovna’s oratory—the Word propelled by the Revolutionary Spirit—has re-lit the fire in Tat’iana’s heart and renewed the young socialist’s passion for the cause. Once preoccupied with her personal cares, Gor'kii elevates the mother’s role to become a beacon for those whose light flickers as hers once did.

As the mother comes to embody socialist spirituality, she becomes Gor’kii’s emblem of a cleansed soul who In a later scene, Pelageia meets with Chumakov, another revolutionary who was present at the May Day procession and “who had a flame burning for a long time.”[[142]](#footnote-143) Like Tat’iana, he exclaims to Pelageia, “You really touch [others] with your faith in people... I, in fact, love you like my own mother!..” Observing her and spending time with the cadre has effected spiritual change: “such a surprisingly healthy and clean feeling” to gather in his soul.[[143]](#footnote-144) The cause has inspired faith that the country will survive its current troubles. He exclaims, “Russia will be the brightest democracy in the world!”[[144]](#footnote-145) The Revolutionary Spirit has cured his spiritual ailment, another motif seen in the Book of Acts. For example, Acts 3:1-10 tells of Saints Peter and John healing a disabled beggar. Chumakov explains he had his year spent bent over “books and numbers” turned him sour and resulted in a “deformity.”[[145]](#footnote-146) From his description, we may assume this man was afflicted by Gor’kii’s transposed original sin, valuing money more than humanity, which had left him spiritually lame. In Acts, Peter responds to the crippled man’s requests for money: “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I will give you,” before invoking Jesus to heal the beggar, who quickly and joyously skips away.[[146]](#footnote-147) In the novel, Pelageia’s demonstration of faith sends Chumakov to Pavel and the other young workers, who in turn cure his doubts. They remake him into someone “bright and alive” with the Revolutionary Spirit, and Gor’kii‘s Church takes another into its fold.[[147]](#footnote-148) Beaming with the Spirit herself, Pelageia remains hopeful as Pavel’s judgment approaches.

The conclusion of *Mother* pivots to the final narrative, the transposed martyrdom of Paul, at the revolutionaries’ trial. Pavel—the Russian equivalent of “Paul”—and Pelageia share in this denouement, as though they were of one essence. Their collective experience maps onto the story of Saint Paul, which constitutes the remainder of the Book of Acts after Pentecost and the growth of the early Church. Like Paul, Pavel and Pelageia, having gathered a rebellious following, face imprisonment and then trial for spreading their “Truth,” appeal to the judge with a fiery defense of their confessed beliefs, receive exile, and ultimately die for those very beliefs. For his part, Pavel—the revolutionary Word—does the speaking, while Pelageia Nilovna—beacon of the Revolutionary Spirit—does the praxis for hers. When the trial starts, Pavel leads twelve other co-defendants into the courtroom and speaks on their behalf. The dozen following Pavel naturally conjures Christ’s apostles. The mother’s exclusion from this list suggests that she is more than an apostle, as well. Pavel charges the judges with being “spiritually barren” [*dukhovno besplodnye*] and declares that they have brought the solution, socialism, which “joins the broken world in a single, great whole,” the Revolutionary Church.[[148]](#footnote-149) The defense speech, though more forceful than Paul’s in Acts, earns Pavel and his conspirators the same consequence, exile, to their delight. After the announcement, the revolutionaries leave the scene, and Pelageia is left alone to finish Paul’s story.

The last chapter of *Mother* provides a coda to Pavel, Pelageia, and Paul’s intertwined stories that draws on a source outside of Acts. Paul is exiled to Rome, and the Book of Acts ends shortly after his arrival. His fate is only recorded in histories of the Christian Church. Scholars estimate that Luke finished Acts of the Apostles shortly after the Gospels in the early 60s CE based on historical events that are present and absent in the narrative. Acts recounts Paul’s life up to his first trial and arrival in Rome around 60 CE, but it fails to mention any subsequent arrest and execution ordered by Emperor Nero. Historians of the Church and Rome later recorded Paul’s death, which occurred no later than 64 CE, after Luke finished writing his historical account.[[149]](#footnote-150) The canonical version of Acts contains twenty-eight (28) chapters, and perhaps for that reason *Mother*'s twenty-ninth (29) and final chapter shows readers Pelageia’s fate, which mirrors Paul’s own death. With her son entirely out of the picture, Pelageia dedicates herself more ardently than ever before. At the same time, she feels a confident calmness that “always came to her after great stress and once upon a time slightly alarmed her, but now only opened her soul.”[[150]](#footnote-151) Pelageia, no longer needing to worry about her maternal instinct, is free to direct her passion toward the cause. To mark this moment, she undergoes a rebirth of spirit and identity:

Standing in the middle of the room half-clothed, she got lost in thought for a minute. It seemed that the person she was, who lived with the anxieties and fears about her son and with thoughts about protecting his body, was no longer there; she left, went far away somewhere, and maybe, she was burned entirely by her worry, and this eased and cleaned the soul and renewed the heart with a new power.[[151]](#footnote-152)

Pelageia’s transformation is accompanied by a peace and insight that rivals Pavel’s prophetic demeanor. Born anew, her final mission is to give everything for her new faith.

Pelageia’s personal sacrifice for the revolution dovetails with Apostle Paul’s death, establishing her as the prototypical saint of Gor’kii’s socialist spiritual tradition and example for the audience. She begins organizing the printing and dissemination of Pavel’s defense speech, which makes her passion burn ever brighter. On a cold day, “in her chest it was also bright, but warm.”[[152]](#footnote-153) When talking to others, “she remembered words of a forgotten prayer, lit with a new faith, [and] she tossed them from her heart like sparks.”[[153]](#footnote-154) She tells the revolutionaries to go forth and spread the word like children, “clothe everything with new heavens and illuminate everything with an imperishable fire that comes from the soul.”[[154]](#footnote-155) Her own promise to deliver Pavel’s words, running through her veins, brings her to an apogee. Like her son before her, Pelageia transforms into an icon, brilliant and transcendent:

Her gentle, large face trembled, her eyes smiled radiantly, and her eyebrows fluttered above them, as though giving wings to their brilliance. She was intoxicated by grand thoughts, and she soaked in them everything that warmed her heart, everything that she managed to survive, and compressed her thoughts into solid, expansive crystals of bright words. They were born ever stronger in her autumnal heart, illuminated by the creative power of the spring sun, blooming and blushing ever brighter in it.[[155]](#footnote-156)

Pelageia has now had her own *kairos*, her moment in a divine radiance, that has turned her into an iconic saint, as well. In a moment of religious ecstasy, she erupts with a declaration: “This is how a new God is born to the people!” The mother is ready to be with her son, this new God, once again.

When Pelageia goes for her next pamphlet delivery, the state forces her to make the ultimate decision: her faith or her freedom. This test of fidelity is a common signal of a saint’s blessedness and eligibility for sainthood found across Christian literature, including the Book of Acts. It will be Gor’kii’s final piece for his own post-Christian ideal, as well. The government, now suspicious of Pelageia, has sent spies to surveil her. On a delivery run, as one pursues her with pamphlets in hand, she knows she must get rid of the copies of Pavel’s speech if she is to have any chance of evading the fate that befell her son—or worse. When caught, “one thought after another flashed like sparks.” The brightest one of all, “Do I throw away my son’s word? To these people? … Or make away with them?... Run...” becomes her final, defining moment. Gor’kii adds that “these thoughts seemed foreign to her, like someone from beyond forcibly planted them in her”, so to say that the Revolutionary Spirit is at work.[[156]](#footnote-157) Pelageia’s decision to resist the gendarme leads to a struggle, during which she yells to the crowd socialist-coded spiritual maxims, ending with “A resurrected soul will not be killed!”[[157]](#footnote-158) The crowd rushes to try to prevent the guards from “spilling the blood of reason,” as one audience member screams, but they slowly close their hands around her neck. Despite her lifeless body in under the weight of the guards, “her eyes never extinguished and saw the eyes of many others; they burned with a familiar bold, keen fire, a fire that made a home in her heart.”[[158]](#footnote-159) Putting word to action and sacrificing her life for the cause has lit the flame of the Revolutionary Spirit within every witness. She is a martyr, and her story will live on for generations to come.

Pelageia’s final words contain Gor’kii’s most urgent message to readers, but they may get lost in the tale of her heroic deeds. Like the end of earlier stories such as “On the Raft” and *The Lower Depths*, Gor’kii reaches back into the Book of Revelation [*Otkrovenie*; also known as *Apokalipsis*] convey Pelageia’s parting wisdom. As she’s struggling to get air, Pelageia manages to break free temporarily and say that even “seas of blood cannot extinguish the truth...”[[159]](#footnote-160) “Oceans of blood" is a well-known Biblical image unique to Revelation. Implying that seas of blood are symbolic of the Christian Trinity’s judgment of humanity, Gor’kii emphatically resists via Pelageia Nilovna the assertion that the final word belongs to the Russian state. Faith in truth, Gor’kii’s God, albeit ill-defined, will prevail. For now, however, he must use the Bible against the Orthodox powers that be. Pelageia’s final word and dying breath, “wretched,” directed at her oppressors, also plays a prominent role in Revelation. In the final book of the Bible, Saint John includes seven letters to seven new churches to convey their judgment on behalf of Christ. Not despite but because of their lukewarm attitudes toward justice, the Laodicean church received the most scathing rebuke. John writes about them, “So then because you are lukewarm and not hot or cold, I vomit you out of my mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’; but you do not know that you are *wretched*” [*a ne znaesh’, chto ty* neschasten].[[160]](#footnote-161) Christ’s harshest judgment is against the new church who believes in nothing but itself, for at least the vilest of us have convictions worth fighting for. Those who only serve themselves by remaining inactive are worth no more than water spat onto the ground. Gor’kii warns his readers in the Russian Empire to pick a side and prepare for judgment day on the horizon.

The tsar’s guards took the lives of hundreds on Bloody Sunday, but their actions had wider consequences. Gor’kii’s sketch “9 January” (1906) and his novel *Mother* (1907) demonstrate how Bloody Sunday likewise killed the Russian conception of a loving, gentle “Little Father Tsar” forever. The sketch depicts the catastrophic conclusion of Russians’ political naivete and the realization of a new fatherless era with no God and no tsar. The novel then re-imagines Russia following Bloody Sunday with a populace in need of a spiritual home more than ever before. Gor’kii’s answer is in *Mother*, which transposes an array of scriptural narratives from the Christian tradition to renew the Trinity in the fatherless, messianic New Son and the Revolutionary Spirit. The novel’s first half, based on the Gospel of Luke, projects Christ’s prophetic deeds, first and foremost the resurrection, onto Pavel’s revolutionary activity. Integral to the transposed Easter celebration is the factory, which becomes the local hub of radical community of believers in the cause. However, Gor’kii’s primary focus is on Pelageia Nilovna, who reorients her religiosity toward the new “holy deed” of the revolution. Pelageia transforms from a skeptical onlooker to a martyr for the cause. Though not a part of the Trinity herself, she comes to embody its message and values while sharing them with others. Her own work unfolds over the second half of the novel, as she spreads the news of the coming revolution to workers in the surrounding areas, a theme that Gor’kii took from the Book of Acts. *Mother*, therefore, begins Gor’kii’s revolutionary scriptures and establishes his Revolutionary Church for a new epoch.

Time and time again faith emerges as the bulwark to the torrent of doubts in the novel’s background. Bloody Sunday and the bloody history that preceded it slowly eroded the Russian people’s belief in the ruling institutions and figures, but the flame of the *narod*’s faith reignited elsewhere. The post-Christian world of “9 January” and *Mother* attests that even if we no longer believe in God-the-Father, we must have an idea or person in which we believe that answers the question “What is to be done?” Irrespective of religion, faith is what moves us from the answer of that question to action, as Rybin says. Gor’kii’s message is to have faith; it is the assurance that *good*—whatever that may mean to you—will prevail in the end. *Mother* declares that tradition, particularly the tsar-god and his supporting apparatus, can no longer be the *good* in which we place our faith, but stops short of naming a successor. As a result, *Mother*’s ending, a mournful wail from an anonymous follower of Pelageia, sounds more like Gor’kii’s own “What is to be done?” than an answer to said question. The novel, like all works that ask great questions, was censored by the authorities of tradition for the potency of its inquiry. Nietzsche’s remark, as quoted in the epigraph, that “The criticism of religion is the premise of all criticism,” explains: to have one’s own faith is to have one’s own ideas and actions, and to control the faith of others is to control their ideas and actions. Is your faith, your “Truth” your own? If not, what are you going to do about it?

1. “Marx, Karl, Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung,” accessed December 15, 2024, <http://www.zeno.org/Philosophie/M/Marx,+Karl/Zur+Kritik+der+Hegelschen+Rechtsphilosophie.+Einleitung>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Gor’kii, PSP, vol. 5, 8. “Ты прочитаешь удивительные вещи, но верь им, это факты.” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Gor’kii, PSP, vol. 2, 351. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 479. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. T. A. Nikonova, “Roman «Mat’» kak katekhizis revoliutsionera: Formirovanie revoliustionnoi etiki,” *Acta Eruditorum* 31 (August 19, 2019) provides a succinct overview of the novel’s immediate reception by Lenin, Lunacharskii, and other influential people in what would become Soviet cultural politics. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Histories of MG’s political activity up through 1905: [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. This has no direct confirmation from MG himself, but it is commonly accepted among scholars, such as (everyone). Also in Lenin’s PSS, vol. 7, 556. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Gor’kii, PSP vol. 8, 234. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Gor’kii, PSP, vol. 2, p. 351. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Lenin, PSS, vol. 7, 556. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Gor’kii, PSP, vol. 3, l. 68 (9 maia 1902, 54-55); l. 179 (31 oktiabria 1902, 115); PSP vol. 4, l. 87 (2 marta 1904, 55-56) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Text of speech: <http://saint-juste.narod.ru/Zalomov.html>; fact about MG’s role in Zalomov’s speech from n. 8 for l. 127 to Piatnitskii (vol. 3, 337) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Soblinsky 187-188 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Soblinsky 187-188 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Catherine Evtukov, *A History of Russia: Peoples, Legends, Events, Forces* (Houghton Mifflin, 2004), 532-533. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Soblinsky, 164-165. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Soblinsky, 238. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Gor’kii, PSP, vol. 5, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Evtukhov, *A History of Russia*, 523-533. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Robert Service, *A History of Twentieth-century Russia* (Harvard University Press, 1998), 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Soblinsky, p. 240 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Soblinsky, p. 243 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. 1 Cor. 12:7-11 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Lippman, “Co-Opting Orthodoxy,” 183. G. A. Mitin, “Evangelie ot Maksima,” in *Maksim Gor’kii: Pro et contra*, ed. D. K. Bogatyrёv (Izdatel’stvo Russkoi khristianskoi gumanitarnoi akademii, 2018), 637–57. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. M. S. Agurskii, “Velikii eretik (Gor’kii kak religioznyi myslitel’),” in *Maksim Gor’kii: Pro et contra*, ed. D. K. Bogatyrёv (Saint Petersburg: Izdatel’stvo Russkoi khristianskoi gumanitarnoi akademii, 2018), 89. Alyssa W. Dinega, “Bearing the Standard: Transformative Ritual in Gorky’s Mother and the Legacy of Tolstoy,” *The Slavic and East European Journal* 42, no. 1 (1998): 76, <https://doi.org/10.2307/310053>, 653. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Indiana University Press, 1981), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. Mitin, “Evangelie ot Maksima,” 637. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. Lippman, “Co-Opting Orthodoxy,” 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. Raimund Sesterhenn, *Das Bogostroitelʹstvo bei Gorʹkij und Lunac̆arskij bis 1909: Zur ideologischen und literarischen Vorgeschichte der Parteischule von Capri* (Verlag Otto Sagner, 1982), <http://www.oapen.org/download/?type=document&docid=1003574>, p. 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, p. 50. Sesterhenn, *Das Bogostroitelʹstvo*, 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. Mitin, “Evangelie ot Maksima,” 652. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. Mitin, “Evangelie ot Maksima,” 640. Sesterhenn, *Das Bogostroitelʹstvo*, 240. Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. Lippman, “Co-Opting Orthodoxy,” 184. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. Sesterhenn, *Das Bogostroitelʹstvo*, 263. Rossen Djagalov, “The Red Apostles: Imagining Revolutions in the Global Proletarian Novel,” *Slavic and East European Journal* 61, no. 3 (2017), 407. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. Sesterhenn, *Das Bogostroitelʹstvo*, 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. Judith Kornblatt, “Visions and Re-Visions of Sophia,” in *Divine Sophia: The Wisdom Writings of Vladimir Solovyov* (Cornell University Press, 2009), 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. Part of collection “Между прочим” (1924) [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. Sesterhenn, Das Bogostroitel’stvo, 255. Alyssa W. Dinega, “Bearing the Standard: Transformative Ritual in Gorky’s Mother and the Legacy of Tolstoy,” *The Slavic and East European Journal* 42, no. 1 (1998): 91, <https://doi.org/10.2307/310053>, [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. Lippman, “Co-opting Orthodoxy,” 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. B. E. Kaigorodova, “Novyi chelovek i vechnye tsennosti v povestiakh M. Gor’kogo 1900-x godov,” in *Maksim Gor’kii: Pro et contra*, ed. D. K. Bogatyrёv (Saint Petersburg: Izdatel’stvo Russkoi khristianskoi gumanitarnoi akademii, 2018), 661. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. Agurskii, “Velikii eretik,” 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
43. G. M. Hamburg and Randall Allen Poole, “The Humanist Tradition in Russian Philosophy,” in *A History of Russian Philosophy 1830-1930: Faith, Reason, and the Defense of Human Dignity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
44. Ruth Coates, *Deification in Russian Religious Thought: Between the Revolutions, 1905-1917* (Oxford University Press, 2019), 8-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
45. Andrew Collier, *Christianity and Marxism: A Philosophical Contribution to Their Reconciliation* (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
46. Roland Boer, *Red Theology: On the Christian Communist Tradition*, *Red Theology: On the Christian Communist Tradition*, Studies in Critical Research on Religion (Brill, 2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
47. Robert Chadwell Williams, *The Other Bolsheviks: Lenin and His Critics, 1904-1914* (Indiana University Press, 1986), <http://archive.org/details/otherbolsheviksl00will>. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
48. Of note, by author: Rozanov, Tolstoi: Pavel Basinskii, *Lev Tolstoi — Svobodnyi chelovek* (Molodaia gvardiia, 2016); Richard F. Gustafson, *Leo Tolstoi: Resident and Stranger: A Study in Fiction and Theology, Sources and Translations* (Princeton University Press, 1986). Bulgakov, Berdiaev: Ruth Coates, *Deification in Russian Religious Thought: Between the Revolutions, 1905-1917* (Oxford University Press, 2019). and other [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
49. PSP [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
50. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 502. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
51. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 502. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
52. Nina Tumarkin, *Lenin Lives!: The Lenin Cult in Soviet Russia* (Harvard University Press, 1983), 11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
53. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 349. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
54. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, p. 349: “Больше всего говорили о «нем», убеждали друг друга, что «он» — добрый, сердечный и — всё поймет... Но в словах, которыми рисовали его образ, не было красок. Чувствовалось, что о «нем» давно — а может быть, и никогда — не думали серьезно, не представляли его себе живым, реальным лицом, не знали, что это такое, и даже плохо понимали — зачем «он» и что может сделать.” [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
55. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, p. 351. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
56. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 352. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
57. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 356. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
58. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 356. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
59. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 356-7. “Рассматривали раненых взвеши вающими глазами, что-то молча измеряли, сравнивали, углубленно искали ответов на страшный вопрос, вста вавший перед ними неясной, бесформенной, черной тенью. Он уничтожал образ недавно выдуманного героя, царя, источника милости и блага.” [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
60. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 357. “Но лишь немногие решались вслух сознаться, что этот образ уже разру шен. Сознаться в этом было трудно,— ведь это значило лишить себя единственной надежды...” [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
61. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 359. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
62. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 368. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
63. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 369. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
64. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 369. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
65. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 371. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
66. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 371-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
67. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 350. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
68. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 30. “Мы должны построить мостик через болото этой гниючей жизни к будущему царству доброты сер дечной, вот наше дело, товарищи!” [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
69. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
70. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 57, 74, 82, 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
71. Nikolai Vinogradov, “Dogmaticheskoe uchenie Sviatogo Grigoriia Bogoslova, A) Uchenie o Boge Ottse - sviashchennik Nikolai Vinogradov,” Azbyka.ru, accessed January 4, 2025, https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Nikolaj\_Petrovich\_Vinogradov/dogmaticheskoe-uchenie-svjatogo-grigorija-bogoslova/1.  [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
72. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
73. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
74. Patronymics, from Latin *pater* "father" and *onyma* "name", play an important role in Russian pragmatics. Formed from one’s father's name with a binary gender-based suffix, these function as a middle name between given and family. Pavel's patrynomic is Mikhailovich because his father’s name is Mikhail. If he had a sister, her patronymic would be Mikhailovna. In everyday speech, they are used when referring to or addressing a person with authority or someone unfamiliar to the speaker. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
75. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
76. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 326. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
77. Ivan Andreevich Esaulov, *Paskhal’nost’ russkoi slovesnosti* (Krug", 2004), 690. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
78. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
79. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
80. Luke 1:1-4 [… чтобы ты узнал твердое основание того учения, в котором был наставлен.] [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
81. Gor'kii, *PSS*, vol. 8, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
82. Lk. 24:21-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
83. Lk. 24:32. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
84. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
85. Lk. 24:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
86. Lk. 24:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
87. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 109-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
88. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
89. Sesterhenn, *Das Bogostroitel’stvo*, 242. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
90. Cf., e.g., 1 Tim 4:7-8: “Reject profane wives’ tales, and exercise yourself toward godliness, for bodily exercise is little useful, but godliness is useful for all things, having promise of this life and the next.” [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
91. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 8: “Встречаясь друг с другом, говорили о фабрике, о машинах, ругали мастеров,— говорили и думали только о том, что связано с работой. ... И, цепко хватаясь за каждую возможность разрядить это тревожное чувство, люди, из-за пустяков, бросались друг на друга с озлоблением зверей. Возникали кровавые драки. Порою они кон­ чались тяжкими увечьями, изредка — убийством. В отношениях людей всего больше было чувства подстерегающей злобы, оно было такое же застарелое, как и неизлечимая усталость мускулов. Люди рожда­ лись с этою болезнью души, наследуя ее от отцов, и она черною тенью сопровождала их до могилы, побуждая в течение жизни к ряду поступков, отвратительных своей бесцельной жестокостью.” [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
92. We may take Matthew 5:17 (Не думайте, что Я пришел нарушить закон или пророков: не нарушить пришел Я, но исполнить. / Do not think that I came to defy the law or prophets; I came not to defy but to fulfill.) as our first argument. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
93. Cf., e.g., Isaiah 9:6: “For unto us a Child has been born, unto us a Son has been given; power shall be on His shoulders, and they will name Him: Miraculous, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
94. Gor'kii, *PSS*, vol. 8, 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
95. Gor'kii, *PSS*, vol. 8, 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
96. Gor'kii, *PSS*, vol. 8, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
97. Gor'kii, *PSS*, vol. 8, 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
98. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 65-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
99. Jesus predicts arrest and praises sacrifice in Jn. 6:64, 70-71; prophetic element from Psalm 41:9, Zech. 11:12-13; accepts arrest in   [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
100. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, p. 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
101. Gutiérrez: *A Theology of Liberation*, orig. *Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas* (CEP, 1971). Cone’s *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Orbis, 1970) was seminal in the black liberation theology movement. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
102. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Liberation Theology,” Encyclopaedia Britannica, December 17, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/liberation-theology. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
103. Sesterhenn, *Das Bogostroitel’stvo*, 255. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
104. Gor'kii, *PSS*, vol. 8, 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
105. Gor'kii, *PSS*, vol. 8, 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
106. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 143-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
107. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 144. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
108. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, p. 62. “Мы — те люди, которые строят церкви и фабрики, куют цеди и деньги, мы — та живая сила, которая кормит и забавляет всех от пеленок до гроба...” [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
109. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 152. “Вокруг нее, в ограде густо стоял и сидел народ, здесь было сотен пять весе­лой молодежи и ребятишек. Толпа колыхалась, люди беспокойно поднимали головы кверху и заглядывали вдаль, во все стороны, нетерпеливо ожидая. Чувствовалось что-то повышенное, некоторые смотрели расте­рянно, другие вели себя с показным удальством. Тихо звучали подавленные голоса женщин, мужчины с до­ садой отвертывались от них, порою раздавалось не­ громкое ругательство. Глухой шум враждебного трения обнимал пеструю толпу.” [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
110. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 152-153. “Древко, белое и длинное, мелькнуло в воздухе, наклонилось, разрезало толпу, скрылось в ней, и через минуту над поднятыми кверху лицами людей взметнулось красной птицей широкое полотно знамени рабочего народа. Павел поднял руку кверху -- древко покачнулось, тогда десяток рук схватили белое гладкое дерево, и среди них была рука его матери.” [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
111. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 154. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
112. One can easily find lyrics and recordings online, such as “Rabochaia Marsel’ieza,” in Wikipedia, December 18, 2024, https://ru.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=%D0%A0%D0%B0%D0%B1%D0%BE%D1%87%D0%B0%D1%8F\_%D0%9C%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%B5%D0%B7%D0%B0&oldid=142143797. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
113. The song was popular before 1905 and continued to be a favorite among revolutionaries even after the Bolshevik coup. It was temporary elevated to the status of national anthem after the February Revolution. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
114. Gor’kii, PSP, vol. 5, 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
115. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 156-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
116. Lippman, “Co-opting Orthodoxy,” 184. Sesterhenn, Das Bogostroitel’stvo, 242. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
117. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
118. Cf., e.g., Sesterhenn, Das Bogostroitel’stvo, 263. Lippman, “Co-opting Orthodoxy,” 183. Djagalov, The Red Apostles, 407. Mitin, “Evangelie ot Maksima,” 640. Kaigorodova, “Novyi chelovek,” 660. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
119. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 76. “Она молча, низко поклонилась ему, ее трогали эти молодые, честные, трезвые, уходившие в тюрьму с улыбками на лицах; у нее возникала жалостливая любовь матери к ним.” [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
120. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 191. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
121. Acts 1:9-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
122. Acts 1:1-8, esp. 1:5. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
123. These are outlined differently in a few verses; 1 Cor. 12:8-11 is the most inclusive list. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
124. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 206. “— Верно! — весело ответила Софья. — Только здесь божий дом — вся земля.” [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
125. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, p. 168. “— Пелагея! Спишь? Страдалица моя несчастная, спи!” [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
126. Ibid., 169. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
127. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
128. Acts 2:37. “Услышав это, они умилились сердцем и сказали Петру и прочим апостолам: что нам делать, мужи братия?” [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
129. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 170. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
130. About FN & MG: Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal, *New Myth, New World*, From Nietzsche to Stalinism (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002); Nel Grillaert, *What the God-Seekers Found in Nietzsche: The Reception of Neitzche’s Übermensch by the Philosophers of the Russian Religious Renaissance* (Rodopi, 2008); Edith W. Clowes, *The Revolution of Moral Consciousness: Nietzsche in Russian Literature, 1890-1914* (Northern Illinois University Press, 1988); Mikhail Viacheslavovich Ivanov, “Sotsial’nyi mif v kontseptskii bogostroitel’stva,” *Nauchno-tekhnicheskie vedomosti SPbGPU* 1 (2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
131. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
132. Ibid., 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
133. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 165. “Господа нашего Иисуса Христа не было бы, если бы люди не погибли во славу его...” [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
134. Ibid., 273. Насчет бога — не знаю я, а во Христа верю... И словам его верю — возлюби ближнего, яко себя,в это верю!..” [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
135. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 173. “На земле, черной от копоти, огромным темно-красным пауком раскинулась фабрика, подняв высоко в небо свои трубы. К ней прижимались одноэтажные домики рабочих. Серые, приплюснутые, они толпились тесной кучкой на краю болота и жалобно смотрели друг на друга маленькими тусклыми окнами. Над ними подни­малась церковь, тоже темно-красная под цвет фабрики, колокольня ее была ниже фабричных труб.” [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
136. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 212. “По нескольку раз в месяц пере­одетая монахиней, торговкой кружевами и ручным по­лотном, зажиточной мещанкой или богомолкой-странницей, она разъезжала и расхаживала по губернии с мешком за спиной или чемоданом в руках.” Here Gor’kii refers to Il’ia Repin’s 1878 painting *The Pilgrims* [*Bogomolki-strannitsy*]. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
137. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
138. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 246. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
139. Ibid., 268. “Бессознательно подчи­ няясь этому требованию здоровой души, она собирала всё, что видела светлого и чистого, в один огонь, ослеп­ лявший ее своим чистым горением...” [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
140. Ibid., 269-70. “Хорошо говорите,— тянет сердце за вашей ре­ чью. Думаешь — господи! хоть бы в щелку посмотреть на таких людей и на жизнь. Что живешь? Овца! Я вот грамотная, читаю книжки, думаю много, иной раз ночь не спишь, от мыслей. А что толку? Не буду ду­мать — зря исхизну, и буду — тоже зря.” [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
141. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 270. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
142. Ibid., 254, 270. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
143. Ibid., 279. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
144. Ibid., 279. “И в душе накопилось такое — удивительно здоровое, чистое. Какие хорошие люди, Ниловна! Я говорю о молодых рабочих — крепкие, чуткие, полные жажды всё понять. Смотришь на них и видишь — Россия будет самой яркой демократией земли!” [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
145. Ibid., 279. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
146. Acts 3:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
147. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 279. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
148. Ibid., p. 316. “Вы оторвали че­ ловека от жизни и разрушили его; социализм соединяет разрушенный вами мир во единое великое целое, и это будет!” [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
149. http://aliom.orthodoxy.ru/arch/050/st-pavel.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
150. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 332. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
151. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 333-4. “Стоя среди комнаты полуодетая, она на минуту задумалась. Ей показалось, что нет ее, той, которая жила тревогами и страхом за сына, мыслями об охране его тела, нет ее теперь — такой, она отделилась, ото­ шла далеко куда-то, а может быть, совсем сгорела на огне волнения, и это облегчило, очистило душу, обновило сердце новой силой.” [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
152. Ibid., 334. “Мать посмотрела в окно, на улице сиял холодный крепкий день, в груди ее тоже было светло, но жарко.” [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
153. Ibid., 338. “Ей вспоминались слова забытых молитв, зажигая новой верой, она бросала их из своего сердца, точно пскры.” [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
154. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
155. Ibid., 339. “Ее доброе большое лицо вздрагивало, глаза лучисто улыбались и брови трепетали над ними, как бы окрыляя нх блеск. Ее охмеляли большие мысли, она влагала в них всё, чем горело ее сердце, всё, что успела пережить, и сжимала мысли в твердые, емкие кристаллы светлых слов. Они всё сильнее рождались в осеннем сердце, освещенном творческой силой солнца весны, всё ярче цвели и рдели в нем.” [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
156. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, 344. “Но более ярко мелькнула другая искра: «Сыновнее слово бросить? В такие руки...» Она прижала к себе чемодан. «А — с ним уйти?.. Бежать...» Эти мысли казались ей чужими, точно их кто-то извне насильно втыкал в нее.” [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
157. Ibid., 345-6. “— Собирай, народ, силы свои во единую силу! — Душу воскресшую — не убыот!” [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
158. Gor'kii, PSS, vol. 8, p. 346. “— Душу воскресшую — не убыот! Но глаза ее не угасали и видели много других глаз они горели знакомым ей смелым, острым огнем — родным ее сердцу огнем.” [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
159. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
160. Revelation 3:16-17. “Но, как ты тепл, а не горяч и не холоден, то извергну тебя из уст Моих. Ибо ты говоришь: «я богат, разбогател и ни в чем не имею нужды»; а не знаешь, что ты несчастен, и жалок, и нищ, и слеп, и наг.” [↑](#footnote-ref-161)