

Metropolitan Anastassy (Gribanovsky) and his legacy. On the Occasion of the 150th Anniversary of His Birth

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"The Wisest"

This was the name given to this archpastor, the First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, Metropolitan Anastassy (Gribanovsky), sometimes a little ironically, but usually quite sincerely. The nickname was not accidental. It is enough to look at the ecclesiastical activities of the hierarch, to find time to read his diaries, letters, and articles, to understand how right his contemporaries were. For just one example, Metropolitan Anastassy twice, in the mid-1940s and mid-1960s, saved the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia from seemingly inevitable troubles. And how many times has Vladyka's wisdom restrained the Church Abroad from ill-considered actions and radical steps?

It is necessary to speak briefly about the life of this hierarch.

Metropolitan Anastassy, whose secular name was Alexander Alekseevich Gribanovsky, was born on August 6, 1873, on the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, in the village of Bratki, Borisoglebsk District, Tambov Province. His maternal grandfather served in the local church, followed by his father. Alexander received his education at the Tambov Theological School, and then at the local seminary. Since the young man's performance was brilliant, he was sent to study at the Moscow Theological Academy at the expense of the state. At that time, it was headed by one of the most prominent clergymen of the time, Archimandrite Antony (Khrapovitsky), later Metropolitan and one of the contenders for the Patriarchate. At that time, no one could have imagined that just two decades later, historical Russia would cease to exist, that the Russian Church would enter a period of terrible persecution, and that today's teacher and pupil would one after another lead its free part, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR).

Fr Antony, who was distinguished by his brilliant ability to kindle hearts, attracted many students of the academy to the path of monasticism. Alexander Gribanovsky was one of them. A year after graduating from the Academy in 1898, he was tonsured a monk, receiving the name in honor of St Anastasius of Sinai, and ordained a hierodeacon and then hieromonk. Fr Anastassy's further path was typical of a learned monk typical of that time. At first he was an assistant inspector at his native academy, then an inspector at Bethany Theological Seminary, and finally as rector of the Moscow Theological Seminary.

Bishop Anastasy of Serpukhov

In 1906, Fr Anastassy was ordained Bishop of Serpukhov, Vicar of the Moscow Diocese, the seat of the hierarch being St Daniil Monastery. Bishop Anastassy headed the commissions for the church part of the celebrations in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Borodino and the 300th anniversary of the House of Romanov. In 1915, Bishop Anastasius was appointed to the Kishinev cathedra. The Orthodox Christians of Bessarabia - Moldavians, Ukrainians and

Russians - were the subjects of the hierarch. It was here that the archbishop was caught by the revolutionary upheavals.

The changes in the country allowed the Russian Church to organize an All-Russian Church Council to solve the accumulated problems. One of his main contributions was towards the restoration of the Patriarchate. In August 1917, Archbishop Anastassy went to Moscow to participate in the Council, and a few months later he headed the commission for the preparation of the enthronement of Patriarch Tikhon.

In the meantime, the diocese of Kishinev was on the verge of great tribulations – in 1918 Bessarabia was annexed to Romania, and the local parishes were included in the Romanian Church. Archbishop Anastassy tried to put the process on a canonical path, he insisted that the transfer of the diocese to another jurisdiction was impossible without the consent of the Russian Church. However, the efforts of the archpastor were in vain - the Romanian church authorities demanded that he submit. He was offered a comfortable existence in his cathedra as a Romanian bishop and a member of the Romanian Synod. The archpastor did not agree to the violation of the canons. Due to the fact that contact with Patriarch Tikhon was lost, Archbishop Anastassy became subordinate to the Supreme Ecclesiastical Authority of the South of Russia, which since 1920 had been located in the Crimea and headed by St Dimitry (Abashidze) [1]. All the decisions of this SEA were subsequently recognized by Patriarch Tikhon as legitimate. In October 1920, the SEA appointed Archbishop Anastassy as its representative to the Ecumenical Throne.

The archpastor's later life was connected with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, the main structure of the “Russian Church Abroad.” Of course, there was a need for a temporarily independent Church, autonomous of the Moscow hierarchy. In the name of Russian Orthodoxy, it was necessary to tell the truth about the atrocities and class genocide taking place in the homeland, about the destroyed churches, the desecrated monasteries, about the new martyrs and confessors. The Church in the Fatherland could not take upon itself this mission.

While in Istanbul, Archbishop Anastassy defended the rights of the Russian Church, which was the reason for his expulsion from Turkey. In 1924, Patriarch Gregory VII of Constantinople, who actually recognized the Soviet schismatics-renovationists, demanded that the Russian bishops in Turkey refrain from denouncing communist crimes and stop commemorating Patriarch Tikhon. Archbishop Anastasios, unwilling to compromise his conscience, was forced to move to Jerusalem.

The work of the archpastor in the Holy Land deserves special mention. Archbishop Anastassy succeeded in obtaining recognition of the rights of the Russian mission by the British government of Palestine, regulated monastic life in the monasteries of the Holy Land, and acquired a plot of land near the Jordan River. With the blessing of the archpastor, the Bethany monastery and monastery in the Garden of Gethsemane [2] were founded.

In many respects, it was thanks to Archbishop Anastassy that it was possible to overcome the turmoil in the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem. In order to prevent a revolt, Patriarch Damian (Kasatos) of Jerusalem decided to perform episcopal consecrations over his supporters. Archbishop Anastassy, meeting the canonical Primate of the Church, agreed to take part in their

ordination. Among the hierarchs appointed with the participation of Archbishop Anastassy was Bishop Timothy (Themelis), who later became Patriarch Jerusalem [3].

In May 1925, Patriarch Damian and Archbishop Anastassy performed the solemn consecration of the Russian church at the Oak of Mamre in Hebron [4]. To this day, the Hebron monastery is the only Christian monastery in this city.

"On the first day of Holy Easter at the health resort in Topcider, April 11/24, 1927." In the first row sit (from left to right): SN Palaiologos, General PN Wrangel, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), Archbishop Anastassy (Gribanovsky), Olga Mikhailovna Wrangel, Archpriest Pyotr Belovidov, Dr Nikolai Alexandrovich Tereshchenko (head of the "Health Resort").

As the health of the head of ROCOR, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), declined, the question arose more and more often as to who would succeed him. The overwhelming majority of the flock abroad understood that there was simply no better candidate than the "wisest." In fact, the issue was resolved in 1935, when a conference of Russian bishops abroad was held under the chairmanship of Patriarch Varnava of Serbia. At the same time, Archbishop Anastassy was elevated to the rank of metropolitan by His Holiness Patriarch Varnava. The archpastor remained in Yugoslavia as an assistant to Metropolitan Anthony.

Russian Bishops Abroad in Serbia. In the first row, from left to right: Archbishop Anastassy, Patriarch Irinej of Serbia, Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky, Bishop Seraphim Lukianov

After his death in 1936, Metropolitan Anastassy was unanimously elected President of the Synod of Bishops of ROCOR. A new period of his service began, which coincided with the most severe world cataclysms. Stalin's terror and the actual destruction of the Church in the Soviet Union, then the Second World War, which found the Metropolitan in Belgrade, enduring unsuccessful attempts to force Vladyka to cooperate with the Hitlerite regime.

Metropolitan Anastassy's visit to St Job of Pochaev, Ladomirova. In the first row, on the far right, is 12-year-old Vasily Shkurla, the future Metropolitan Laurus. Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, 1940.

In 1944, Metropolitan Anastassy, fleeing from the Soviet troops that had entered Yugoslavia, moved to Munich. By that time, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia itself was under threat. Many bishops and priests did not know whether its structures had been preserved, whether the Metropolitan himself was alive. It seemed that the Russian Church Abroad no longer existed. Some émigré clergy, who were at a loss, gradually began to come under the subordination of the Moscow Patriarchate.

However, Metropolitan Anastassy managed to leave for neutral Switzerland, contact the bishops and halt the evaporation of the Church Abroad. There was still a need for it: together with the retreating German troops, many Orthodox Christians - Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians - left for the west. In addition, there were already many representatives of other nations in the world who had become Orthodox Christians and associated themselves with the Russian tradition. As a rule, they did not want to enter other jurisdictions. The mission once undertaken by the founders of the Church Abroad had to be continued. In 1946, Metropolitan Anastassy convened a Council of Bishops in Munich, after which the life of the Russian Orthodox Church

Outside of Russia was once again restored. In 1950, Metropolitan Anastassy moved to New York, where the administrative center of the Church Abroad had moved.

But the problems were not over. It was necessary to respond to the post-war Soviet terror, to the excesses of the ecumenical movement in world Orthodoxy. And there were also internal upheavals in ROCOR, including the notorious "revolt of the laity" in San Francisco and a number of similar "riots" throughout the Russian diaspora. The bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia were also divided into "parties." Its split in the early 1960s seemed inevitable to some [5]. In the early 1960's, the archpastors were indeed divided over the question of Metropolitan Anastassy's successor as head of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. Some stood for St John (Maximovich), some for Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky) and did not want to yield to one another. But Metropolitan Anastassy, already descending into the grave, was able to supervise the election of his successor, Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky), the youngest bishop by consecration. The candidacy of this hierarch reconciled the opponents. After that, it was possible to retire, which the 90-year-old Metropolitan Anastassy did in 1964.

Metropolitan Anastassy in his old age. Source: <http://pokrov-fond.info/print/46298>

An important event of that year was the canonization of the venerable ascetic in Russia and abroad, the Righteous John of Kronstadt. The glorification of this saint had been prepared in the early 1950's, but Metropolitan Anastassy preferred to wait then, counting on changes in his homeland after Stalin's death. The archpastor hoped that the Church would now be freed and that it would be possible to carry out canonization together with it and other Local Churches. However, the events at home still did not provide a pretext for optimism [6]. In the early 1960's, against the backdrop of the unfolding ecumenical processes in the Moscow Patriarchate and the growing hostility towards the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, the latter no longer postponed the glorification of Father John.

"There exists the conviction," wrote Archimandrite Constantine (Zaitsev), "which is said to be widespread in Soviet Russia as well, that the glorification of Fr John of Kronstadt will determine the end of the Soviet period, with the return of Russia to its historical path of God's salvation." [7]

Indeed, less than six months after the glorification of Father John by the Church Abroad, Khrushchev was deposed, and his brutal anti-church policy was largely collapsed. A year after the canonization of Father John by the Moscow Patriarchate (1990), the Soviet Union also disappeared.

The canonization of Righteous John paved the way for the further glorification of the saints in the Russian emigration – St Herman of Alaska, Blessed Xenia of St Petersburg and the New Martyrs of Russia, etc. True, all this would take place after the blessed repose of Metropolitan Anastassy, but these glorifications can be considered the fruits of his activity. A striking example of such a bridge thrown into the future, or in other words, the fruit of his spiritual creativity, is the canon of the divine services of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia (1981), which from the very first words contains direct quotations from Vladyka Anastassy's "Homily in Praise to the New Hieromartyrs of the Russian Church," [8] just as the divine services of the Nativity of Christ and Pentecost are drawn from the sermons of St Gregory the Theologian.

The Metropolitan's heart stopped beating on May 22, 1965, the feast day of St Nicholas. The hierarch was buried in a crypt at Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, NY.

A dignified life of a remarkable bishop, ascetic, true Russian patriot, talented administrator... But, as has already been pointed out, there is also a rich spiritual heritage of this archpastor.

The legacy of Metropolitan Anastassy is a topic for many future articles and studies. The most famous is Metropolitan Anastassy's spiritual diary, *Conversations with His Own Heart*. The title of this book, marked with the imprint of profound wisdom, refers us to the thought of St Isaac the Syrian that the path within oneself and the path to God are one and the same path. Inner concentration, prayerfulness, humility of mind – these are the traits of the hierarch who left us this remarkable work. But it is not only deep spirituality that marks this diary – the notes show the archpastor as a man of the deepest erudition, familiar with the works of a variety of writers, philosophers, and politicians.

Contemporaries remember Metropolitan Anastassy not only as a wise archpastor, but also as a reserved and unsociable man. It wasn't an affectation or a mask. The hierarch was indeed a man of few words, believing that the most sincere, the most capacious word can be born only when it has been experienced. And a preacher is truly believed when his word comes from the heart.

"Those who do not know how to put protection on their lips," wrote Metropolitan Anastassy, "along with the word, imperceptibly squander the reserve of inner spiritual energy. It is not in vain that one ascetic likens the man of many words to a bathhouse with open doors, through which all the steam comes out. Restraint in words helps us to conserve the inner heat, which, if necessary, rushes outwards with force, turning our speech into a fiery stream."

Here are other words of the archpastor: "Verbosity is almost always a sign of hasty exposition or an unconsidered subject. Sometimes it is necessary to exert a great deal of effort in order to condense one's thought, so that, like a nourishing extract, it gives much in a little." [10]

It is not surprising, therefore, that Metropolitan Anastassy's carefully-calibrated sermons made an impression on his listeners, were original and inimitable. The very appearance of the archpastor also inspired respect and reverence. Archimandrite Cyprian (Kern) recalled: "It is difficult to imagine a more stylish and photogenic person than Archbishop Anastassy. His appearance, his voice with the fading ends of phrases, his intonations in service cannot be forgotten by anyone who has seen and heard him." [11]

In addition to spiritual experience, there was also an ideological legacy. The hierarch was one of only two pre-revolutionary bishops (together with Patriarch Alexy I) who survived not only Stalin's terror, but also Khrushchev's persecution of the Church. As an exile, Bishop Anastassy lived in Turkey, the Holy Land, Yugoslavia, Germany, and the United States, where his earthly journey ended. The archpastor was able to compare, contrast, and analyze the accumulated experience, which was expressed in his sermons, epistles, and diary entries.

The archpastor lived in the hope of the restoration of historical Russia, with the thought of the repentance of the Russian people of the sin of apostasy. The spiritual potential of Metropolitan Anastassy himself was revealed throughout his life and could not but be reflected in the ideology of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, which he headed. The moment has come when this experience has become in demand on a pan-Orthodox scale. At a certain point, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia became the spiritual flagship of anti-communism.

It is no coincidence that the Second All-Diaspora Council (1938) turned to Metropolitan Anastassy with a request for his attention in the matter of national unity. It was at this Council that the Russian diaspora tried to give an answer as to why God had allowed Russia to undergo such terrible trials. "Because," said the conciliar epistle, "we have 'fallen deeply and have become corrupt' (Hos. 9:10), forgetting the high calling which God has shown us, and failing to stand firm in the truth and righteousness of life, which has been revealed to us more clearly than to any other people on earth." The sin of the Russian people was that they were seduced by the Communist promises of an earthly paradise. At the same time, the Council was confident that liberation would come sooner or later, for it was not in vain that "the blood of our martyrs, headed by the Tsar-Passion-Bearer." True, there was one condition – the Russian people must continue their feat and come to Orthodox-national self-determination.

The task of the emigration, according to the Council, was to preserve Orthodoxy, so that later it would be possible to transmit the faith to the revived Russia.

While in exile, Metropolitan Anastassy constantly pondered why the revolution and the terrible bloody dictatorship took place in Russia. Vladyka considered this phenomenon to be one of the most difficult in history. The archpastor insisted that the Revolution had become, first of all, a spiritual temptation for the Russian people, in which all the temptations that Christ endured in the wilderness could be traced. First, there is the temptation of bread, "the kingdom of general satiety" which replaces spiritual ideals. Secondly, it is the temptation to jump into the abyss of the "kingdom of freedom" with which Russia wanted to surprise the whole world. Thirdly, it is a rejection of God (the same as the worship of Satan) and an attempt to subordinate the whole world to a godless ideology.

The archpastor was convinced that the revolution in Russia was rooted in the deepest evil, that it had been maturing in people's minds for a long time and was realized at a time when the state organism was weakening. And many people had a hand in its preparation – Westernizers, who mercilessly criticized the Russian political system, Slavophiles, who spoke of Russia as a light for the whole world, ordinary people, thirsting for a riotous holiday, and the intelligentsia with anarchy of minds, decadence and nihilism. "All this confusion," the Metropolitan reasoned, "turned out to be leavened by materialist Marxism, which is alien to us, and that is why it gave rise to such an unexpected and violent ferment, which turned the sun into darkness and the moon into blood, created confusion and horror everywhere, and made Russia a terrible disgrace to the whole world." Loving the Russian people and considering them enslaved by Bolshevism, Metropolitan Anastassy did not absolve them of the guilt for the upheavals. Vladyka pointed out that God admonishes nations in different ways, through natural disasters and invasions of foreign tribes. However, these troubles arise suddenly and not by our will. But the revolution cannot

come without the will of the people themselves. Not being an optimist with regard to Europe either, considering it to be perishing after Russia, the archpastor asserted that "only Christianity, which saved the world from destruction in the epoch of the fall of ancient culture, can once again infuse new life into spiritually decrepit humanity." [14]

Metropolitan Anastassy considered the power of the Bolsheviks to be absolutely illegal. The words of the Apostle "There is no authority except from God" (Rom. 13:1) were not attributed by Metropolitan Anastassy to the communist regime. Referring to St Gregory the Theologian and St John Chrysostom, the archpastor pointed out that the Epistle to the Romans refers to the principle of authority itself, and not to each specific bearer of it. It is no coincidence that the Lord Himself spoke to His people through a prophet: "Israel has rejected what is good: the enemy will persecute her. They have appointed kings themselves, they have appointed princes, but without My knowledge" (Hos. 8:3-4). "To assert that the Bolshevik power is 'power from God,'" said Metropolitan Anastassy in his Nativity Epistle in 1949, "means to blaspheme the Almighty, because He Himself would then be responsible for all the crimes committed by the Soviets not only in Russia, but throughout the world, for the very godlessness that they are trying to implant wherever they reach their hands."

Metropolitan Anastassy never departed from his position of fierce opposition to the political system established in his homeland. Against the backdrop of constant Soviet propaganda directed against old Russia and the last emperor, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia in general, and Metropolitan Anastassy in particular, tirelessly reminded us that what was happening in the homeland after 1917 was a chain of atrocities. The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia publishes a book by Archpriest Michael Polsky, *The New Martyrs of Russia* [16], which caused a huge resonance in the world and reminded us of the unprecedented persecution of the Church. A special place in the ideology of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia was occupied by the Royal Family. While the Communists called the Tsar "Nicholas the Bloody" and slandered him in all sorts of ways, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia prescribed solemn Liturgies and pannikhidas on his birthday, namesday, and villainous murder.

Metropolitan Anastassy openly said that the murder of the royal martyrs is a crime that cannot go unpunished. "The murder of the defenseless Russian monarch, abandoned by all," said Metropolitan Anastassy, "together with his wife and young children, will always be a grave reproach to the conscience of the whole world." [18]

Under Metropolitan Anastassy, the day of regicide on July 17 became known as the "Day of Russian Sorrow" [19]. In 1956, the Council of Bishops of ROCOR decided to declare July 17 a day of universal fasting and repentance. After the panihida, a special prayer of repentance was to be read, based on the biblical "Prayer of the Three Youths of Babylon" [20].

At the same time, Metropolitan Anastassy and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia testified to the falsehood of the ideology established in their homeland.

The temporary suspension of persecution in 1943-1947 did not mislead Metropolitan Anastassy. In the opinion of the hierarchy, relative freedom for the Church was only a political trick of the Stalinist state, which at the first opportunity would return to its former atheism. The archpastor turned out to be right: in 1948 the persecution of the Church resumed. Between 1948 and 1953 more than a thousand churches were closed, some of them were destroyed. Arrests of priests and laity resumed; as a rule, they received long prison sentences. In Metropolitan Anastassy's opinion, it was unacceptable to conceal any of the ongoing lawlessness, to hush them up, to put up with them, just as it was inadmissible to take half-measures in relation to totalitarian ideology. "It is impossible to reconcile oneself with communism," the metropolitan wrote, "even if only partially, except by taking a part of its poison into one's heart. At a time when there is a struggle against this evil everywhere, everyone who does not live against it is already for it." [21] In 1953, the Council of Bishops of ROCOR declared Stalin "the greatest persecutor of the Church and the planter of godless communism."

The denunciation of the inhuman system was continued by the Council of Bishops of ROCOR in 1959: "In seeking to destroy in man the image and likeness of God," said the Council's message, "communism cannot give anything positive in return. Communism opposes the Gospel preaching of love and peace to the fierce class struggle inspired by base passions. The teachings of communism lead its followers to boundless hatred, expressed in the physical destruction of people who not only do not accept their teachings and are called 'class enemies' by them, but also the communists themselves in the so-called purges which they have been carrying out in their ranks from time to time... Their very kingdom on earth is a kind of threshold of hell, in which everyone is tormented and suffers, both the oppressed and the oppressors, for the service of evil brings no one true joy." [23]

It is clear that the uncompromising position of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia could not contribute to unity with the Church in the Fatherland. Compelled to survive in the most difficult conditions of militant atheism, the Moscow Patriarchate could not bear witness to the New Martyrs, could not denounce atheism. Moreover, from the lips of its official representatives one could hear both the denial of persecution and direct support for the atheistic state [24], and statements that Soviet atheism does not contradict Christian teaching. [25] Sometimes it is impossible to say whether such speeches were sincere or insincere. But the fact of such statements did not contribute to unity. And although the best representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, such as St John (Maximovich), did not conceal their conviction that the unity commanded by Christ would sooner or later be restored, nevertheless under Metropolitan Anastassy it remained a dream. At the time, it was a pipe dream.

It would be surprising if Metropolitan Anastassy's anti-communist stance went unnoticed by his ideological opponents – none of the First Hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia has received such torrents of slander as Metropolitan Anastassy.

At the forefront of this stream was the accusation of supporting Hitler and praying for his victory. Here, Soviet ideologues competed with each other in backbiting, although all of them,

for lack of evidence, were forced to create slander on the basis of two or three circumstantial facts.

In fact, only the ROCOR Diocese of Berlin prayed for the German regime. However, other Orthodox jurisdictions in Germany, including the parish of the Moscow Patriarchate, also prayed for the authorities.

Another reason for slander was Metropolitan Anastassy's speech of gratitude at the consecration of the Cathedral of the Resurrection in Berlin [27]. But it must not be forgotten that it was uttered on June 12, 1938, that is, more than a year before the outbreak of World War II and four years before Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union.

Gratitude at that time did not cause serious complaints, on the contrary, with very few exceptions, it was received calmly. Patriarch Alexander III of Antioch and the head of the Church of Greece, Archbishop Chrysostomos, in their letters to Metropolitan Anastasius, expressed their joy at the help of the "great German government" [28]. The consecration of the Berlin church was attended by representatives of the Serbian and Bulgarian Churches, representatives of the governments of Germany, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Romania, as well as representatives of the Evangelical Church of Germany. The words of the head of ROCOR were perceived as a normal phenomenon, because gratitude for help is not a sin. In addition, although the more far-sighted already understood where Hitler's regime was leading Germany, for the majority it did not yet seem criminal, on the contrary, the euphoria about Hitler, who "raised Germany from its knees," was massive. The horror into which National Socialism was plunging the world came only after Kristallnacht, the pogrom against Jews on November 9-10, 1938.

But even after Kristallnacht, both the Western powers and Stalin were friends with Hitler and concluded treaties, and none of the confessions, not the Protestants, nor the Roman Catholics, nor the Moscow Patriarchate, uttered a single word against their governments against their good relations with the Führer. It is no coincidence that Archbishop Anthony (Sinkevich) of Los Angeles later wrote: If the Moscow church authorities considered the German authorities to be so criminal, why didn't she condemn the Soviet government for its alliance with Hitler in 1939? [29]

And yet, neither Metropolitan Anastassy nor the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia was deceived about Hitlerism and other totalitarian systems. "Fascism," the archpastor said at the St Vladimir's celebration in Belgrade (1936), "is a type of state structure that can in no way be our ideal. It is based on the principles of coercion that extend to the very ideology of man. But without freedom, there is no moral achievement and no moral responsibility. Without the latter, we cannot conceive of a Russian Orthodox state." [30]

In the reports of the Second All-Diaspora Council (1938) one can clearly trace the rejection of National Socialism.

Hitler's Germany was alien to the ideas of the Russian Church Abroad. Throughout the Second World War, she was harassed by the government. After the occupation of Yugoslavia, the Gestapo searched Metropolitan Anastassy's Belgrade apartment, and confiscated the records of

the Synod of Bishops. At one time, the churches of the Church Abroad in Leipzig and Dresden were under threat of closure. These churches weren't closed solely because it might serve to spark fear that such actions would worsen relations with the German allies, Romania and Bulgaria, as well as with other peoples of southeastern Europe. The educational activities of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia were also hindered, and until mid-1942 there was a ban on the import of literature published by ROCOR into the territory of the Reich, Bohemia and Moravia, Belgium, Holland and Serbia. In the years that followed, it was allowed to distribute in these areas literature only in temples or by subscription [33].

On the part of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, attempts were made to help prisoners of war, as well as workers who had been deported for forced labor (Ostarbeiters). However, the Nazi leadership interfered with such activities in every possible way. Although Metropolitan Seraphim (Lyade) of Berlin was able to appoint 15 traveling priests to take care of the camps, in practice their activities depended on the local authorities, who often interfered with pastoral work.

The Serbian Church, which drank a great cup of suffering during World War II, did not even hint at Metropolitan Anastassy's unanimity with the occupiers. Patriarch Gabriel of Serbia directly defended the head of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia: "Metropolitan Anastassy with great wisdom and tact behaved with the Germans, was always loyal to the Serbs, was subjected to searches several times and did not enjoy the confidence of the Germans." [36]

In different countries that lost contact with Metropolitan Anastassy during the war, bishops and pastors had different attitudes toward the war. It is naïve to believe that clerics in the United States or Great Britain would have supported Hitler. As for the official position of the ROCOR during World War II, there was no support for the Nazi regime in its documents and orders. The Nazis demanded that Metropolitan Anastassy himself address the Russian people with a message which would call for action on the side of Germany. However, the archpastor refused to do so [37]. There were no instructions to pray for Hitler's victory, on the contrary, such prayers were forbidden. In the churches of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, it was prescribed to pray only for the salvation of Russia. [38]

In the archpastor's opinion, the cause of the Nazis, as irreligious and immoral, was doomed to destruction. "This terrible lesson," said the archpastor, predicting the fate of the Soviet Union, "was necessary for all modern humanity, so that everyone could see that whoever wants to build a life without God builds his edifice on the sand and dooms it to complete collapse in advance." [39]

Another accusation leveled by Soviet propaganda against Metropolitan Anastassy was calls for atomic bombings of Russia.

The basis for the slander was his Easter Epistle of 1948, which spoke of a man-made and destructive hellfire that burns up human vices. The archpastor said, quite in the spirit of the Holy Fathers, that even these explosions were not as dangerous for the Russian people as their moral decline. It was possible to see in these words calls for nuclear war only if there was a political order. [41]

The epistles and writings of Metropolitan Anastassy help us to understand what he meant. The idea that God punishes mankind with cataclysms for the sins of mankind can be traced in many of the hierarch's writings, and this opinion is fully consistent with the biblical and patristic teaching. The idea that catastrophes and calamities can be man-made, and that the righteous perish among sinners, is also not a new idea. However, the prophets who spoke about bloody wars as ways to bring mankind to their senses were not accused of fomenting wars.

In some of his epistles, Metropolitan Anastassy called for begging the Lord that the disasters of the coming nuclear war (which seemed inevitable until the 1960s) would bypass the Russian people, who had already endured severe suffering during the decades of the totalitarian regime. The hierarch suffered greatly from the fact that the world considers Russia to be the support and source of communism, which, in fact, is a victim of this ideology that is destructive to the world.

Throughout the years of his exile, Metropolitan Anastassy dreamed of liberating his homeland and returning to Russia. During his earthly life, these aspirations were never realized, and he did not live to see the end of the "Babylonian captivity." But the legacy of the hierarch has remained – his messages, writings, research. And the good news is that they are becoming more and more in demand.

Afterword. From the Editors: On War and Atomic Fire

As early as 1945, Vladyka Anastassy wrote: "The war has revealed the terrible ulcers of modern society, which at first lurked within its organism and are now exposed outside, in all their hideous ugliness. Under the cover of the outward decorum of life, everything that distinguishes man from beast has been perverted and corrupted in it—imagination and thought and heart, and even what we are accustomed to call the moral sense or the voice of conscience. A word full of malice has become blood."

What terrific words. They are also directly related to our modernity. The Metropolitan went on to write:

"Science has turned into a tree of knowledge of good and evil, poisoning the soul of mankind with its poisonous fruits. Thought, like word, moves along deceitful or deceitful paths. A twisted conscience does not reconcile itself to the truth that has flown to heaven. Beauty has distorted its true face, breaking away from its eternal Prototype. Love, which, according to Christ's commandment, must extend to the whole world, to one's own and to others, to those near and far, to friends and enemies, to rise above all the barriers that separate people from one another, has closed itself in narrow self-love.

[1] St Demetrius (in schema named Anthony) (Abashidze) was canonized by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in 2011.

[2] *The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad: 1918 – 1968*. T. 1-2 / Ed. by A. Sollogub. – New York. 1968. T. 1. Art. 419, 452.

[3] See: N. Talberg, "Holy Russia on the Holy Land." 1958. № 14. p. 6; St John (Maximovich) and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. Jordanville. 1996. p. 30.

[4] Consecration of the Russian Church in Hebron // Tserkovnye vedomosti. 1926. № 3 - 4. P. 11.

[5] For example, in 1954, Archimandrite (later Archbishop of the Moscow Patriarchate) Mstislav (Volonsevich) wrote in his memorandum that after the deaths of Metropolitan Anastassy and Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko), the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia "will undoubtedly disintegrate" (For more details, see: A. Kostryukov. *The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia in 1939 – 1964 Administrative Structure and Relations with the Church in the Fatherland*. Moscow, 2015. p. 457).

[6] For more details, see: Euthymius (Logvinov), hierom. "On the Attitude of Metropolitan Anastassy (Gribanovsky) to the Glorification of St John of Kronstadt as a Saint by the Russian Church Abroad // XV Annual Theological Conference of St. Tikhon's Orthodox University for the Humanities." T. 1. Moscow, 2005. P. 305 - 311. - Prot. Nikolaj Artemoff (Munich, Germany), "On the Veneration and Glorification of Holy Rights. St John of Kronstadt abroad." XX Annual Theological Conference of St Tikhon's Orthodox University for the Humanities. Vol. 1 – Moscow: PSTGU Publ., 2010. S. 92-104.

[7] Constantine, Archim. "Father John of Kronstadt as God's 'Sign'" // *Pravoslavnaya Rus'*. 1958. № 24. P. 3.

[8] *Collection of Selected Works of His Eminence Metropolitan Anastassy, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad*, Jubilee Edition for the Day of the 50th Anniversary of the Priesthood, Jordanville, 1948, "Praise Word to the New Priests of the Russian Church," pp. 55-62.

[9] Otechnik, compiled by St Ignatius Brianchaninov. Moscow, 1996. P. 226.

[10] Anastasius (Gribanovsky), Metropolitan. *Conversations With Your Own Heart*. St. Petersburg. 2002. pp. 46, 54.

[11] Cyprian (Kern), Archim. "Reminiscences of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) and Bishop Gabriel (Chepur)." Moscow, 2002. P. 178.

[12] Acts of the Second All-Diaspora Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia with the Participation of Representatives of the Clergy and Laity, held on August 1 / 14 – 11 / 24, 1938 in Sremski Karlovci in Yugoslavia. Belgrade. 1939, pp. 169, 682 – 683, 693.

[13] Anastasius (Gribanovsky), Metropolitan. *Conversations With One's Own Heart*. pp. 188, 191.

[14] Anastasius (Gribanovsky), Metropolitan. *Conversations With One's Own Heart*. pp. 187, 189, 221 – 237.

[15] Anastasius, Metropolitan. Nativity Epistle // *Church Life*. 1949. № 10 – 12. Pp. 6–7.

[16] Protopresbyter M. Polsky (Comp.), *The New Martyrs of Russia*, Jordanville, vol. 1: 1949, 287 p.; vol. 2: 1957, 333 p.

[17] Decisions of the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia // Church Life. 1939. № 1 – 2. P. 8.

[18] “Sermon Delivered by Metropolitan Anastasiy” // Church Life. 1949. № 5 – 6. P. 10.

[19] Decisions of the Bishops' Council of the ROCOR // Church Life. 1951. № 2. P. 2.

[20] Decisions of the Synod of Bishops of the ROCOR // Church Life. 1958. № 1 – 6. P. 25 – 26.

[21] Anastassy, Metropolitan. Nativity Epistle // Church Life. 1949. № 10 – 12. P. 7.

[22] Decisions of the Bishops' Council of the ROCOR // Church Life. 1953. № 9 – 12. P. 56 – 57.

[23] Epistle of the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to the Suffering Russian People // Church Life. 1959. № 11 – 12. P. 173 – 174.

[24] As is known, the leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate referred to the words of the Apostle Paul about obedience to the authorities (Rom. 13. 1 - 5). In response to this argument, the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia in its 1933 Encyclical noted that the authoritative interpreters of the Apostolic Epistles, St. John Chrysostom (8th century) and Blessed Theodoret of Cyrus (4th century), referred the words of the Apostle to the very principle of state power, which is necessary for order in society, and not to specific rulers, among whom there were many tyrants. those who have seized power by force, and not a few enemies of God, like the biblical King Saul. The Council of Bishops also referred to the words of God in the book of the prophet Hosea: "You have appointed kings, but without Me, you have appointed princes, but without My knowledge" (Hos. 13:32). "If all authority," said the Encyclical Epistle, "had been recognized as sacred by the very fact of its existence, Christ the Saviour would not have called Herod a 'fox' (cf. Lk. 6:1960), the Church would not denounce the impious sovereigns who defended heresies and persecuted Orthodoxy" (For the text of the epistle see: Nikon (Rklitsky), Archbishop Biography of His Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galicia, tome 6, New York. pp. 269-299).

[25] See, e.g., Nicodemus, Archbishop. "Peace and Freedom" (Report at the Regional Conference in Holland) // Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate. 1963. № 1. P. 42.

[26] Decisions of the Synod of Bishops of the ROCOR // Church Life. 1936. № 7. P. 99.

[27] Consecration of the Berlin Cathedral // Church Life. 1938. № 5 – 6. pp. 93 – 96; “Malevolence or thoughtlessness? Morning Light.” 1938. № 10 – 11. pp. 84-85; The German Press on the Consecration of the Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Berlin // Church Life. 1938. № 7. P. 110.

[28] Gramota of the Patriarch of Antioch to the Chairman of the Synod of Bishops // Church Life. 1939. № 7. p. 101; Gramota of the Archbishop of All Greece to the Chairman of the Synod of Bishops // Church Life. 1939. № 7. P. 102.

[29] Anthony (Sinkevich), Archim. Letter to Hegumen Nikon 28.09.1945 // Archive of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem (MP). D. 225-n "Archimandrite Nikon".

[30] Jubilee Collection in Memory of the 150th Anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church in North America. Part 2, New York. 1945. p. 34.

[31] See: Acts of the Second All-Diaspora Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. pp. 460, 520.

[32] "On the Centenary of His Birth. His Beatitude Metropolitan Anastassy" // Church Life. 1973. № 5–7. P. 45. s

[33] Shkarovsky M. Nazistkaya Germaniya i Pravoslavnaya Tserkov [Nazi Germany and the Orthodox Church]. Moscow, 2002. Pp. 249–252. Michail Shkarovskij, Die Kirchenpolitik des Dritten Reiches gegenüber den orthodoxen Kirchen in Osteuropa (1939-1945), Forum Orthodoxe Theologie, Bd. 4, Münster 2004, S. 117-118.

[34] Nikitin A. Nazistkiy régime i russkaya pravoslavnaya obshchestva v Germanii [Nazi Regime and the Russian Orthodox Community in Germany]. Moscow, 1998. P. 338.

[35] Kornilov A. Preobrazhenie Rossii [Transfiguration of Russia]. Nizhny Novgorod. 2000. p. 87.

[36] Seide G. Bishops' Council of 1946 and its significance for the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. 1986. № 9 – 10. P. 162.

[37] "On the Centenary of His Birth. His Beatitude Metropolitan Anastasiy" // Church Life. 1973. № 5 – 7. P. 46.

[38] Michail Shkarovskij, Die Kirchenpolitik des Dritten Reiches gegenüber den orthodoxen Kirchen in Osteuropa (1939-1945), Forum Orthodoxe Theologie, Bd. 4, Münster 2004, S. 81-82.

[39] Kostryukov A. The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia in 1939 – 1964 Administrative Structure and Relations with the Church in the Fatherland. Moscow, 2015. P. 393.

[40] Troitskiy S. O nepravde Karlovatskogo raskola [On the Untruth of the Karlovtsy Split]. Editions de L'Exarchat Russe en Europe Occidentale. Paris. 1960. Repr. Moscow Patriarchate, 1992. pp. 94, 114. Beglov A., Shilkin A. The Karlovci schism – past and present. Moscow, 1975. P. 18.

[41] Paschal Epistle of the Chairman of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia // Church Life. 1948. № 4 - 5. S. 1-11.

[42] From the editors of the Herald: The fact that there was an "order" and what it was is evident in the fate of St. Luke of Simferopol and Crimea (Voino-Yasenetsky). At the request of G. Karpov, the head of Stalin's organ for the political leadership of the Church, he had to write an article about atomic weapons, which Stalin did not yet have at that time, about the "enemies of peace" who "the wheel of history <... > hope to stop it at the terrible cost of a third world war, at the cost of exterminating millions of civilians with atomic bombs." Speaking of "their determination to resort to atomic bombs," the author emphasizes: "Even more important is their fear of the inevitable approach of socialism." St. Luke later wrote to his son: "In October (1947) I received an urgent telegram from the editors of the JMP with a request to write two articles about

warmongers for No. 12 and No. 1 of the journal. It was clear that the order came from Karpov, and I was in a quandary: I didn't want to write at all, but it was hard to refuse. Obviously, they were based on the fact that I was heavily propagandized abroad and my name was needed. Reluctantly, I sent two articles, of which the second, much better, was not allowed to pass by the censors. On receiving the news of this, I refused to print it first." The editors of the JMP compelled the saint to agree. (Mark Popovsky, *The Life and Life of the Voyno-Yasenetsky Archbishop and Surgeon*, Paris 1979, p. 405 and n. 103, p. 506). This episode vividly illustrates why it was necessary to use Metropolitan Anastassy's Paschal Epistle of 1948, grossly distorting its meaning (see below Afterword from the Editors, p. ...).

[43] Anastasius, Met. Rozhdestvenskoe epistle // *Tserkovnaya zhizn'*. 1951 No 5 – 6. P. 7.