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## EDITORIAL NOTE

# THE LIFE-GIVING POWER OF THE WORD



Photo: Pierre Bamin

March is amazingly rich for literary holidays: in the first month of spring, the World Poetry Day, the World Writer's Day, and the Day of Orthodox book are all celebrated.

"Poetry is a fire that kindles in the human soul. This fire burns, warms and illuminates... A real poet burns involuntarily and with suffering, and burns others," Leo Tolstoy said.

At all times, poets and writers sought to find the answers to eternal questions about human existence. Patriotic poetry called for changes in the social system, dreaming of a just and perfect world order. The poets of the "art for art's sake" kept aloof from social themes, considering artistic creativity as having intrinsic value; improving poetic technique, expanding the possibilities of the word, they called for admiration of the world reflected in poetry.

The great Russian novelists of the 19th century, who created the works of enormous artistic power, revealed the dialectics of the human soul, developed Russian literature into a truly unique phenomenon that the world never ceases to admire and that continues to inspire writers of our day.

It would be appropriate here to cite the statement of the remarkable Soviet poet and translator Samuil Marshak: "Literature needs talented readers, just as much as talented writers. It is on them, on these talented, sensitive, imaginative readers, that the author counts when they extend all their mental strength in search of the right image, the right change of events, the right word. The artistic author takes on only part of the work. The rest must be supplemented by the imagination of the artistic reader."

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MEMORY

# IN MEMORY OF VICTOR LOUPAN

*Pages of life journey of an outstanding journalist*

MIKHAIL LEPEKHIN,  
*literary historian*

I met Victor Nikolaevich Loupan in the summer of 1995 at his old friend (connected since their adolescence), the chairman of the Russian Bibliographical Society, Anatoly Pavlovich Petrik.

The beginning of friendship between Loupan and Petrik should be attributed to the 1960s, when both studied at the School No. 1 in Chisinau. The acquaintance was both at school and home: their fathers belonged to the highest stratum of the republican nomenklatura. In those years Pavel Petrovich Petrik (1925–2014) headed the trade unions of the Moldavian SSR, Nikolai Ivanovich Loupan (1921–2017) was the editor-in-chief of the Moldavian television, which largely owed to him, if not for the fact of establishing, then for its successful work over the first fifteen years.

The long life of Nikolai Ivanovich was quite difficult. Several generations of ancestors were peasants of the village of Chepeleutsi, Khotinsky district, Bessarabian province (now the Edinet region of Moldova). In the year of Nikolai Ivanovich's birth, the village belonged to Romania. Born as the 10th child, since his early childhood he had been striving to achieve something more than the monotonous rural life, and through tireless work, he slowly achieved each of his goals. Having received a primary education, for which he had to go daily to a neighboring village, he graduated from a school for junior officers. A career as a military profes-

sional was not his goal, but he could not have achieved more in 1940. In the rank of senior sergeant of the Romanian army, he fought first against the USSR, but since 1944 against the Third Reich. After demobilisation, Nikolai Ivanovich returned to Chepeleutsy, where in 1945–1952 he taught mathematics at a local school. (In 1940, Bessarabia became part of the USSR, which did not have the best effect on the relatives of Nikolai Ivanovich: in the spring of 1941 they were dispossessed and deported to Siberia as special settlers). In 1952, he was invited to Chernivtsi, the capital of Bukovina (since the end of the 19th century, the city has enjoyed the fame of "little Vienna"). It was there that on April 3, 1954, the baby Victor was born. In 1958, the family moved to Chisinau, where Nikolai Ivanovich took a leading position at the State Radio and Television of the MSSR.

Well-known Moldovan film directors, journalists, actors, writers, artists were frequent visitors to the hospitable house of N.I. Loupan, and Victor grew up in a creative environment. The best school in Moldova, where he studied, granted him an in-depth knowledge of the French language, which early became his third native language (along with Moldovan and Russian).

Thanks to the high administrative status of Nikolai Ivanovich in the 1960s, about ten of his relatives deported to Siberia were given the opportunity to return to their native Chepeleutsy.

In the 1970s, the paths of Anatoly and Victor diverged for almost a decade and a half. Both entered the faculties of philology: Anatoly – to the Swahili Division of the Department of African studies of the Institute of Asian and African countries at Moscow State University, Victor chose the French Division of the University of Chisinau.

For Victor, a quiet life ended, when in 1970 his father was removed from his post for "a gross political mistake – promoting Romanian bourgeois nationalism" (relations between the USSR and Romania were damaged in 1968, when Romania condemned the entry of the Warsaw Pact armies into Czechoslovakia). In Moldavia, the suspicion of Romanianism began to be regarded as one of the most serious ideological sins.

Was there such a thing? Hardly: N.I. Loupan was not a political self-murderer, however his position was the object of desire of his colleagues. The former subject of the Romanian Kingdom with a difficult fate, already due to his background, was very vulnerable to cultivation in the course of the career manipulation of the central and regional administrations. (NB! Provocations of the 1970s carried out among the Moldavian intelligentsia were demonstrated in "Aquarium" by V. Suvorov). The intrigue succeeded with the desired result: Nikolai Ivanovich was left without work with a strict party reprimand. For an ideological worker, the wording of dismissal and

reprimand were equated with a ban on the profession. According to the unwritten rules of the nomenklatura, *the failed one* had to be offered a position of equal value or with a slight decrease – but there was no such position in the Moldavian SSR... After spending more than two years unemployed, the father of three decided on an extraordinary act for persons of his status: he applied to emigrate from the USSR together with the whole family. After the signing of the Final Act of the so-called "Helsinki Accords" by the "freest country in the world" in 1973 – the agreements which granted citizens the right to freely choose their country of residence, Nikolai Ivanovich theoretically acquired such a right, but it was hardly exercisable.

Acquaintance with P.P. Petrik helped. Since the late 1940s, Petrik enjoyed the patronage of the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Moldavian SSR Leonid Brezhnev. Being familiar with Nikolai Ivanovich for quite a long time and knowing full well that he could not survive with the label of a "dissident" in Moldova, Petrik vouched for him before Brezhnev, and in 1974 Nikolai Ivanovich left for Paris for permanent residence with his wife and three children (permission to do so belonged to the competence of the head of the Department of Administrative Bodies of the Central Committee of the CPSU N.I. Savinkin, who could not issue it without the knowledge of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU). During Soviet times, the departure of a nomenklatura official of such a high rank was an exceptional case, which is why later the personality of Nikolai Ivanovich was overgrown with many conspiracy speculations – given the position that he took in the Bessarabia and Bukovina fellowcountrymen's association headed by him and in the world Romanian Diaspora from the beginning of the 1980s.

In the meantime, a father and a son had to re-learn. Having moved

from Paris to Brussels, they entered local universities. At the age of 57, Nikolai Ivanovich graduated from the Free University of Brussels, after which he obtained the right to engage in journalism professionally. And Victor, having entered the Brussels Institute for Theater, Cinema and Sound, specialised in directing. With a scholarship from the Belgian Ministry of Culture, he created a theatrical enterprise, staging three performances based on his own plays in two years; the success was noted by the Belgian mass media.

Victor completed his education in Los Angeles at the American Film Institute's Film Directing School, but he decided leave Hollywood, as he accepted an offer from the University of Louisiana to teach directing. In Baton Rouge, Victor taught from 1982 to 1984, but then did not renew the contract, because he felt a vocation for creativity, and not for professorship.

In 1985, Victor returned from the banks of the Mississippi to the banks of the Seine, where his relatives settled. By that time, his father had already become a full-time employee of Radio Free Europe, and also headed the Bessarabia and Bukovina fellowcountrymen's association, which existed in 24 countries and numbered over a hundred thousand participants. Nikolai Ivanovich had a reputation as one of the world's greatest experts on the real history of Romania in the 20th century, was the author of a number of books and articles, and the organiser of many scientific conferences and seminars. As for Victor, he returned to teaching in 2014, teaching courses in film anal-

ysis and film language at the Institut Georges Méliès in Paris.

The so-called "Romanian issue" was alien to Victor himself – to the same extent as the Soviet problems were far away from him. He refrained from contacts with emigre circles, perfectly understanding the dead-end nature of the subsequent development of events. Almost immediately, a well-trained young documentary filmmaker attracted the attention of the intellectual world of France. In the second half of the 1980s, Loupan made four full-length documentaries. The most famous of them in 1987 was a film dedicated to the fate of Soviet prisoners of war in Afghanistan, it received a prize as the best humanitarian film of the year. Victor helped M.M. Shemyakin in their rescue from the captivity, whom he met in the United States and with whom he was connected through a long-lasting friendship. The film became a world-class event: after it, the USSR began to show interest in the fate of the prisoners of





war, who were routinely written off as irretrievable losses. Of course, the film was not shown in the USSR: the topic of death in the Afghan war was tabooed until the early 1990s.

In 1986, Victor met Louis Povel (1920–1997): the legend of French journalism was interested in Loupan, and after a detailed conversation with him, Povel blessed the 32-year-old filmmaker on the thorny path of documentary reporting in the press.

In 1987, Victor was invited to the weekly *Le Figaro Magazine*: the author specialised in interviews (over 200 of them were prepared) and military reports. Chief editor Henri-Christian Giraud gave Loupan complete freedom in choosing topics. Among the interviewees were A. Tarkovsky, I. Brodsky, S. Hussein, A. Pinochet, J. Arafat, E. Honecker, G. Aliyev, E. Shevardnadze, M. Gorbachev, S. Niyazov, D. Dudayev, A. Lebed, as well as persons whose fame was created by Victor himself. He repeatedly appeared on French television; they began to recognise him in the streets and start a conversation with him (he gained fame and acquaintances instantly).

As a result of a long trip to Romania after the “velvet revolution” that followed the execution of the Ceausescu spouses, Loupan’s first book, *La Révolution n’a pas eu lieu: Roumanie, l’histoire d’un coup d’État* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1990) was published. In it, he convincingly proved that there was no revolution, but there was a coup d’état planned with sufficient care. The future of Romania, headed by I. Iliescu, seemed extremely unenviable to Loupan – even in comparison with the dictatorship of the overthrown “genius of the Carpathians” cursed at that time by everyone. The further development of events in Romania and the comprehension of what had happened showed the complete correctness of Loupan’s conclusions about the recent past and his forecasts for the near future.

In July 1989, after 15 years of separation, a meeting of old friends took

place: A. P. Petrik arrived in Paris for a session of IFLA (The International Federation of Library Associations). In the autumn, Victor visited Moscow, and later trips became quite frequent. Since 1992, Loupan began to work on a book about the Comintern. By that time, the archive preserved in the former Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Central Committee of the CPSU (now the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History), became available to researchers. The subject of Loupan’s main investiga-



tions was not the subversive activity of the revolutionary octopus, which entangled the whole world with tentacles, but the well-established mechanism for financing the so-called “national liberation movements” by the Comintern using the example of the French Communist Party. The result was the book *L’Argent de Moscou: L’histoire la plus secrète du PCF* (Paris: Plon, 1994), which, unfortunately, has not yet been translated into Russian. At that time, one of the first studies on the Comintern based on primary sources could not fail to attract the attention of historians and Sovietol-

ogists. The book has not lost its significance even today due to the abundance of documents cited in it.

Loupan’s authority as a serious researcher and his moral qualities in 1994 became the reason for his inclusion in the press pool, which accompanied A. I. Solzhenitsyn for two months on his triumphant return to Russia after two decades of exile. The status of Loupan is evidenced by the fact that he was traveling in the same carriage with the writer – from the journalists there was only a BBC production team led by Archie Baron, who was granted the exclusive right to televise the trip of the Great Writer of the Russian Land in Russia – the rest could only photograph and make records.

Solzhenitsyn was greatly revered by Loupan as a man who, by his own strength, had risen to an unattainable height. To no lesser extent, he revered N. D. Solzhenitsyn as an ideal wife, especially emphasising her organisational talents. According to Loupan, the recognition of family values as dominant brought them closer: both had three children.

As I have already indicated, in July 1995 I met Victor. We quickly warmed to each other. Loupan behaved easily, without the slightest snobbery, and talked a lot and fascinatingly about his trips around the globe. I was pleasantly surprised by the objectivity of assessments, the complete absence of any negative opinions about certain persons, healthy optimism in the forecast for the near future. He told a lot, and exactly what was not included in the records (I regret that I did not write down the story about the pursuit of Brodsky in the USA and Europe from memory, but with the help of Veronika Shilts, a many-hour interview was finally received). We exchanged phone numbers, and as soon as I traveled to Paris, I paid a short visit to Victor (to the editorial office). He happily met me and after dinner drove me to my temporary residence on a motorcycle.

He chose a motorcycle taking into account his own large complexion – it seemed to me that I was riding a Percheron. High-speed raid through Paris among trucks and buses is still memorable.

In the autumn of 1997 Victor paid me a return visit. He was led to Saint Petersburg by Giraud’s interest in the problem of “royal remnants”. The secret burial of the executed royal family found in 1979 by the Ural geologist A. N. Avdonin, in the 1990s became a stumbling block in the relationship between monarchists, the Russian Orthodox Church, secular authorities at different levels, historians, and publicists. On the eve of the 80th anniversary of the death of the Royal Family, the dispute about the authenticity of the remnants renewed. Loupan, who stayed with Avdonin for a week in Yekaterinburg, initially agreed with his conclusions after reading all the documentation provided to him. On the trip, Victor was accompanied by his namesake, the outstanding photo artist Victor Petrovich Gritsyuk (1949–2009), who was in charge of the photo department of the magazine “Rodina” and a person of remarkable spiritual qualities.

I met two Victors at the airport – and we went from Pulkovo straight to my place. Having laid down the equipment, Gritsyuk expressed a desire to visit the Smolensk cemetery and bow to St. Xenia. We set off, arrived in the middle of the service. After approaching the cross, Archpriest Fr. Igor Esipov turned to me with a question about the guests – two men of heroic stature. I introduced them to each other, a conversation ensued... Loupan asked a question about the royal remnants – in response, Fr. Igor brought out the issue of The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchy with the appropriate explanations, ordering it to be returned after reading. They went to me. “I have already read it. Can another authoritative priest or maybe even a bishop answer all my questions?”, he asked me.

I immediately forwarded Victor’s question to the spiritual writer A. N. Strizhev, calling Moscow and recommending Loupan in the most flattering way. Alexander Nikolaevich immediately called the famous archaeologist L. A. Belyaev, who called Alexy II; and so, consent for the interview was obtained. Half an hour later I answered Victor’s question: “Will the patriarch suit you?”

The next morning, Loupan visited a well-known building in Chisty Pereulok, where he was provided with the same article from the JMP and offered to formulate questions for a written interview based on it. The text of the interview was agreed upon within three days. Published in *Le Figaro Magazine*, it immediately became a world-class sensation: before that, the patriarch had not given interviews to foreign journalists, especially on such a sensitive topic. As you know, the ROC (MP) at that time categorically rejected the authenticity of the “Yekaterinburg remnants”, making it impossible to venerate them as holy relics. At present, their authenticity is not in doubt; in May 2022, they are supposed to be recognised as such at the Bishops’ Council.

An interview with Patriarch Alexy II contributed to Loupan’s career in both secular and spiritual manifestations. Probably, then he met the chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, Metropolitan Kirill (Gundyaev), now the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. Since the early 2000s, their meetings in Moscow and Paris have become systematic. Knowing everyone and everything in Paris, Victor was helpful to Bishop Kirill both with his connections and a balanced assessment of the mood in the church environment. It is natural that, with the blessing of Bishop, Loupan became one of the leaders of the Movement for a local orthodoxy of Russian Tradition in Western Europe created in 2004, which he left in 2006 indicating the following reason: “due to disagree-

ments with the board members”. Such a delicate wording reflected Loupan’s sharp confrontation with his fellow members. The latter could not determine the canonical status of “a local orthodoxy of Russian Tradition in Western Europe”, as well as indicate the sources of its financing – in projecting they represented it as something like a local Church, but as such, of course, it could not count on the recognition of other Churches.

Loupan, who took a realistic view of things, persuaded the fellow members in favour of “returning to fold of the Mother Church,” but the fellow members did not perceive the Moscow Patriarchate as such. 13 years later, the idea, which seemed stillborn, was crowned with success in 2019: the Archdiocese of Russian Orthodox churches in Western Europe was created by voting and accepted into the Moscow Patriarchate. An important role in this event is associated with the name of Loupan, who tirelessly crushed the enemies of the Moscow Patriarchate with the power of his journalistic gift.

For services to the Moscow Patriarchate, Loupan was introduced to the Patriarchal Council for Culture (2010). Victor considered as a matter of special importance and honor to take part in the annual meetings of the Council headed by Metropolitan Tikhon (Shevkunov), and invariably visited Moscow.

In the autumn of 2019, Loupan was invited by Patriarch Kirill to Moscow for the celebration of the entry of the entirety of the Archdiocese of Russian Orthodox churches in Western Europe into the Moscow Patriarchate. In summing up the results of the vote, his merit was great as an assistant to the church warden of the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral.

Loupan played a significant role in the creation of the Archdiocese – conceived back in 2003 by Patriarch Alexy II as the metropolitan district holding a special status as a part of the Moscow Patriarchate, consisting of parishes under the jurisdiction



of the Constantinople and Moscow Patriarchates, as well as the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR), now, in 2022, the Archdiocese fully corresponds to the original plan of His Holiness.

Loupan saw no less service to the Church in his participation in the fate of the reader of the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral Seryozha Tutunov (born 1978), the nephew of the artist S. A. Tutunov, his old Parisian friend. A deeply religious young man, a talented mathematician graduated with honors from the Moscow Theological Academy and Seminary, transferred to the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, and in 2006 was admitted by Metropolitan Kirill to the staff of the Department for External Church Relations. Now Bishop Savva (Tutunov) of Zelenograd, vicar of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, is the deputy director for temporal affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate, the head of the audit and analysis service of the Administrative Department, and also a permanent member of the Inter-Council Presence, *de facto* being one of the five most influential persons of the Moscow Patriarchate.

How religious was Victor? It is my understanding that he developed an in-depth interest in the Church after the interview with the Patriarch, and the abbot of the Sretensky Monastery, Archimandrite Tikhon (Shevkunov) (Metropolitan of Pskov and Porkhov since 2018), played a decisive role in his development as a deeply religious person. The personality of Bishop Tikhon is well known, there is no need to tell even more. Two graduates of the stage management faculties – one of the Moscow State Institute of Culture and another of the American Film Institute – found each other. Both are distinguished by a total lack of exaltation and attraction to mysticism, as well as a combination of piety and sanity. Speaking of Bishop Tikhon, Victor invariably added: “The future belongs to him”.

But let’s go back to the last millennium.

In September 1999, I worked in the Moscow archives. At that time, residential buildings were blown up in Moscow, Buynaksk and Volgograd, and FSB officers were detained in Ryazan while planting explosives in the basement of a high-rise building. (I will not comment on this story: just type in the search engine: “Conspiracy theories about explosions of residential buildings (1999)” and “Ryazan sugar”).

On September 20, Petrik told me that Loupan had arrived and really wanted to meet me. I immediately called, and Victor offered to dine tomorrow at the Marco Polo Hotel (which is on Spiridonovka), where he was staying. On Tuesday, September 21, a conversation took place at the meal, the course of which I remembered almost verbatim. Loupan said that he would stay for a week to write an article about the explosions of residential buildings and would very much like to know my opinion on this (probably he had the opinion that I was competent enough in all the innermost secrets of Russian history). I had to disappoint Loupan, because I could not add anything new on this story, since I learned about what had happened from the media, and even then I paid not much attention to the topic. On the proposal to prepare the text of the article on this topic in a short time, I immediately refused, because it seems to me unnatural to express someone’s opinions and retell other people’s texts. I was pleasantly flattered by my importance, but I did not want to plunge into the dull Russian conspiracy theories. I tried to explain that I consider the external world mainly from the bibliographic point of view, and the present in general interests me very little. Moreover, who exactly blew up the houses, the Russian secret services or the Caucasian terrorists, is simply not interesting to me, since this is not part of my research interests.

Victor did not expect such a sharp refusal and after a pause he asked me: is there a decent and competent per-

son among my acquaintances, who, for a decent fee, could prepare such an article on condition of anonymity or (if the name of the author is sufficiently known) *while not hiding*? To that I replied that the former secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation *with special powers*, the governor of the Krasnoyarsk Krai, Lieutenant General A. I. Lebed, an old friend of Loupan, fully corresponds to the criterion of *decency and competence*. After that Victor looked at me for a long time and did not say anything – and so, we parted and did not see each other again during that visit. I know about everything that followed the conversation only from the words of A. P. Petrik, who always had a special interest in Moldovan events (his father headed Tiraspol for many years, and as secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the MSSR supervised Transnistria) and was personally acquainted with Lebed (NB! His *special powers* resulted in signing of the Khasavyurt agreements on August 31, 1996, for which Lebed is still cursed by Russia!).

As Petrik told me a month later, after arranging a meeting with Lebed, Loupan flew to Krasnoyarsk on Thursday. The governor dedicated the entire Friday to his old friend: they traveled around the neighborhood, took a steam bath, had a hearty dinner – and all this time they talked, since they had not seen each other for several years... In the evening, the conversation turned into a recorded interview: with the consent of the interlocutor, Loupan turned on the recorder. Lebed answered all his questions with the utmost frankness, with his characteristic clarity of wording and without mincing words; there could be no ambiguous interpretation of what he said. On Saturday, Victor flew to Moscow, on Sunday – to Paris. From all that Lebed said, a coherent text was compiled in the form of an interview; all words that were inconvenient in print were also removed.

And then there was a crack of thunder!

It happened on the morning of Wednesday, September 29, 1999, when the latest issue of *Le Figaro* was published and Lebed said: “I am almost convinced that the explosions in Moscow were organised in the Kremlin. The goal is to disrupt the upcoming elections in any way in order to keep the exhausted and discredited Yeltsin clan in power”. According to Lebed, “houses were blown up not by Chechens, but by bandits and mercenaries who have no nationality – and they did it based on the orders of power structures in Moscow”.

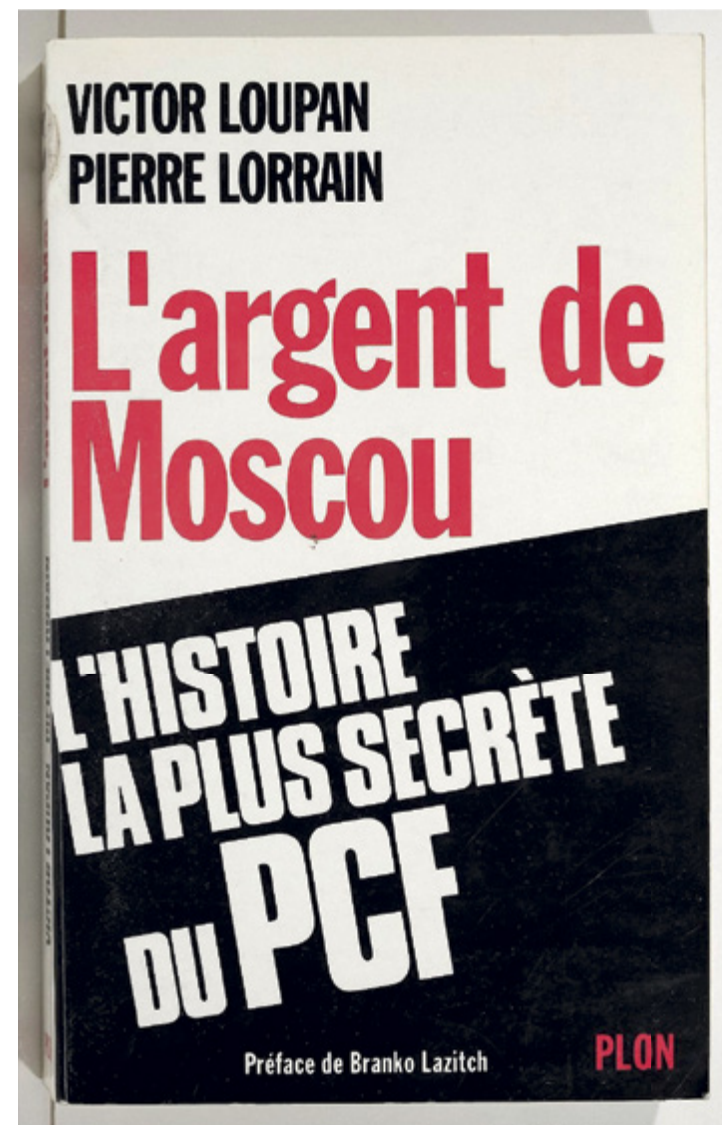
Even despite the fact that most of the interview was devoted personally to General Lebed and his vision of what was happening in Russia, and that he did not seek to convince everyone of the correctness of his version, but only told about what was obvious to him, all attention was focused precisely on a fragment about explosions. Immediately the press secretary of the President of the Russian Federation D. E. Yakushkin called the interview “a malicious provocation on the part of the general” and a “delusional version”. Then Prime Minister V. V. Putin reacted just as instantly, declaring at a press conference in Cheboksary that he “treated the general very well” and called the ill-fated interview “complete nonsense”: “I do not believe he said that”. Putin also rejected the version itself: “It is absolutely impossible. Making a political career on blood is unacceptable”.

On Thursday, September 30, 1999, a photo of a frowning Lebed appeared on the front page of *Izvestia*, A. Maskhadov stood as an ominous shadow behind him. The (anonymous) editorial was headlined: “COUP / Alexander Lebed accuses the authorities of organising terrorist attacks. The general is preparing to

governor in an interview with *Le Figaro* newspaper, Lebed announced that he was ready to immediately head the new Russian government on one condition: Yeltsin must immediately leave the Kremlin”. According to the *Izvestia*’s anonymous source, “only two options for the development of his relationship with

B. A. Berezovsky could have prompted Lebed to make such a harsh statement”. The first option: “The impudence of Lebed’s actions in relation to the existing government and his declaration of war against the Kremlin are explained by the fact that Lebed quarreled with Berezovsky”. Option two: “Berezovsky has completely quarreled with the Kremlin and is using Lebed as a battering ram”. The final conclusion of *Izvestia* was made in the best traditions of Soviet agitprop: “The general, who gave an interview to foreign “voices”, choking in his own ambitions, showed disrespect for his country, his people and he beats in the very heart of Russia”.

On the same day, that is, the day after the publication of the interview, the press service of the governor of the Krasnoyarsk Krai issued a statement



Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

enter the Kremlin on a white horse / Honor for export”. The article in *Le Figaro* (its text, of course, was not cited) was reported in the retelling of the Paris staff correspondent of *Izvestia* E. Guseynov. According to the anonymous source, among the “most sensational of the many shocking statements made by the Krasnoyarsk

“about Alexander Lebed’s interview to *Le Figaro* newspaper, which caused some noise”. The statement said: “Alexander Lebed, having read the comments on his interview to *Le Figaro* newspaper, ordered to provide him with a full translation of the text published in *Le Figaro*”. “After reading it, Lebed said that he fully re-





During a meeting with Joseph Brodsky

alised again that quotes leave much more room for fantasy than the text from which they are taken". In addition, "Lebed complained that he had forgotten how to explain simple things to foreign journalists". Almost on the same day, Berezovsky flew to Lebed, after which the Governor-General no longer talked about explosions or gave interviews, and the interview itself suddenly ceased to be mentioned in mass media, as if it did not exist at all. (Especially since D.S. Likhachev died on September 30 and mass media got other breaking news).

In the future, I never spoke about it during conversations with Loupan. As Petrik told me, the consequences of the interview (or rather, the collapse of Lebed's political career) were painful for Victor (he considered the general to be his personal friend), but he could not overcome the temptation of a journalistic sensation. I regret that I did not see the original text in *Le Figaro*, I did not show timely interest in this story. Nevertheless, almost immediately a rumor spread that Yeltsin, who had previously invariably favoured Lebed and saw him among possible successors, was so furious that he vented his anger at his

subordinates, who admitted the very possibility of such an interview.

As for Lebed, after Yeltsin's anger, he should have forgotten about presidential ambitions. Due to the unpredictability of his behavior (he betrayed everyone who had the stupidity to deal with him) and his complete inability to manage the region (that he proved in the Krasnoyarsk Krai), Berezovsky, who led him *de facto*, backed down. When Putin ascended to the presidency of the Russian Federation, the Krasnoyarsk governor finally turned into a political marginal. His death in a helicopter crash could not surprise those who knew him. So, according to A.P. Petrik, Loupan categorically rejected the version of the premeditated murder, who repeatedly flew with Lebed in a helicopter. According to Victor, the general liked to personally stand behind the pilot and direct the flight. The fact that a helicopter without a map got caught on a power line wire should be considered a tragic coincidence: sabotage is not done that way.

Loupan experienced hard the death of the general, whom he knew well from Transnistria, – I know about this again from the words of

Petrik, because I never spoke with Victor about Lebed again.

It is worth noting that our conversations were more devoted to the past than to the present.

Loupan was interested in one of the topics of my research – the biography of the author of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" M. V. Golovinsky (1865–1920). When Victor told Giraud about this, he offered to write an article on this subject in the form of an interview with me. Having discussed the conditions, I agreed, and Loupan, together with Gritsyuk, flew to Saint Petersburg.

Previously, the text of the article was already prepared by me and the interview was carried out for four hours. Victor asked the questions about what, in his opinion, needed to be specifically explained to French readers. In August 1999, the article was published. That same morning, Loupan received a phone call from J.– F. Revel, thanking him for the pleasure to read the text written in a highly professional manner. Then, in the course of the conversation, it became clear that the ruler of the minds of the French intellectuals tried not to miss a single piece created by Victor – such recognition later became a source of special pride for Loupan.

This story had a sequel. The article attracted the attention of another ruler of the minds of European intellectuals – P.A. Tagiyev, who still has a global reputation as the largest specialist in the "Protocols". He was carried away by the article, where, among others, I disavowed a number of traditional liberal myths, suggesting that my friend, publicist E. Conan, prepare a paired interview (mine and his). Eric was received by me in Saint Petersburg; during a nine-hour (with a lunch break) detailed interview, a number of puzzling circumstances were clarified – and his article appeared in *L'Express* at the end of November 1999 – just in time for the 100th anniversary of the "Protocols".

When I arrived in Paris in March 2000, Victor informed me that Gi-

raud wanted to meet me and that it was only a quarter-hour courtesy visit. At 6 PM I went up to the office of the editor-in-chief of *Le Figaro Magazine* and introduced myself. Thanking for the cooperation with the magazine, Henri-Christian mentioned his grandfather, General of the Army Giraud. It just clicked in my mind, and I automatically asked: "So you are a baby in a pushchair?" The interlocutor with amazement confirmed my assumption, after which the conversation took on a relaxed character.

To comprehend the dialogue, a small comment should be made. The celebrated hero of the First and Second World Wars Henri Honoré Giraud (1879–1949) is still one of the most significant figures for the French traditionalists. The only one of all the French military leaders, he resisted to the last the superior troops of the Third Reich. After being captured, he was imprisoned in the Königstein Fortress (near Dresden), from where he escaped, at the age of 63 descending a rope from a castle window into a gorge, and then walked about 800 km on foot to the Swiss border. Almost immediately, General Giraud turned into a national hero – a symbol of unconquered

France; the popularity of Charles de Gaulle was very insignificant in comparison with him. Giraud's extreme anti-communism and his skillful political maneuvering between traditional values and democracy made him suspicious in the eyes of Stalin, who opted for de Gaulle because of his demonstrative anti-Americanism and pro-Soviet orientation. Both leaders became co-chairmen of the French Committee of National Liberation on June 3, 1943, and only on the fifth attempt was it possible to photograph them shaking hands in the presence of Roosevelt and Churchill – they both pulled them back so quickly with disgust. On August 4, 1943, Giraud became the commander-in-chief of the CFLN troops, but left both posts through de Gaulle's intrigues.

Despite the formal loss of his posts, the moral authority of the elderly Giraud was unusually high, and he posed a real threat to de Gaulle's autocracy, remaining vice-chairman of the Supreme Military Council.

Living at the Villa Mazagran (Oran), Giraud used to take a walk with his wife at the same hour – his grandson was in a pushchair at that time. On August 23, 1944, an assassi-

nation attempt was made on General Giraud – a Moroccan shooter rushed at him with a knife. The grandmother covered her grandson with her body, and Giraud, with the help of a guard, neutralised the attacker. He was almost immediately sentenced to death by a tribunal subordinate to De Gaullists and executed. Despite the obvious involvement of de Gaulle's secret service in the assassination attempt, this has not been proven.

The baby grew up and eventually became the editor-in-chief of *Le Figaro Magazine*.

After clarifying all the circumstances, a quarter-hour visit turned into a three-hour conversation. Henri-Christian Giraud has accumulated several questions relating to the history of Russia, to which I have tried to answer conscientiously. I was very sorry that Loupan did not take part in the conversation: far from always my French was sufficient for a detailed answer. All this time Victor was waiting for me in his office and after the conversation ended, he took me to the nearest Berber Cafe for dinner (it was the headquarters of *Le Figaro Magazine*, where its employees spent most of their office time). At the end of the meal, Victor took me on a motorcycle to my temporary residence in Auteuil. Such a strange way of driving around Paris no longer surprised me, but Loupan was impressed by a story about the apartment where I rented a room. This apartment (33, rue Erlanger) at the end of 1944 was received as a trophy by one of the most seasoned French communists (she was still alive at the end of the 20th century) – as "the escheated property of a German collaborator". That turned out to be... P.B. Struve, who died in my room on February 26, 1944 (as N.A. Struve clarified this to me, who visited his grandfather several times upon his return from Belgrade). Another ending to the story...

*To be continued...*





# PAGES OF LENT

*Few people know that in the original Greek Creed the word "Creator" literally means "Poet"*

AUGUSTIN SOKOLOVSKI,  
*Doctor of Theology, Priest*

At the Liturgy of the second preparatory Sunday before Lent, following the ancient Church rule regarding the order of Gospel readings, the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11–32) is read.

This parable of the Lord Jesus is found in the Gospel of Luke and is not found in the other Gospels. It reveals the essence of gospel forgiveness. In pondering the mystery of forgiveness, the Church as a community of the faithful prepares itself in this way for the Lenten season. In the language that we use for spiritual things, words creep in that become meaning-neutralizing. They are so familiar that they can block understanding.

When we speak of "chief priests", for example, in reference to those who held supreme sacred authority in the time of Christ, we are often unaware of the greatness and authority that these men were called to possess, who in the end betrayed their Biblical calling and condemned the Lord. At the words "tax collectors", "harlots", and "sinners" we may fail to feel all the censure and condemnation that fell upon Christ for their fellowship with them. Finally, when we call a lost, lost, perished, torn, lonely, doomed son simply a "prodigal son", we cease to understand God.

For centuries, and now for millennia, interpreters, preachers, counselors, moralists have offered their own, so many, but incredibly similar explanations for the parable of the prodigal son. And we just haven't noticed that theology has long since moved on. Ran away. Gone. From countless books and speeches "about God" it has, in Eucharistic terms,

"transmuted" into Art, Thought, Literature. After all, the greatest theologian of the twentieth century was ... no, not a teacher or a hierarchy, but ... the writer Franz Kafka; the greatest Russian theologian was Dostoevsky.

Everyone remembers the magnificent realistic paintings of Flemish masters on biblical themes. And no one will ever forget Rembrandt's The Prodigal Son. And the stunning, incomparable moral pathos of Russian literature, in its essence, and by virtue of its incredible hidden theological tectonics, is nothing other than an appeal, a plea to believe that what Jesus said in the Parable of the Prodigal Son is true.

The Parable of the Lord shows us the face of God. His kind, wonderful, harmless, native and familiar, blindfolded face. Only He can forgive without knowing. He has biblical power, right and authority to do so. The Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory. The Parable of the Prodigal Son by the mouth of the Lord Jesus speaks of forgiveness. It speaks about how God cannot fail to forgive. But the same Gospel also tells us that there is a sin that is not forgiven: blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The truth is that no one has ever been able to answer the question of what such blasphemy is. God remained elusive in His word. "But the older son became angry and would not come in. And he answered his father, 'When this son of yours, who wasted his possessions, came in, you made a feast for him'" (cf. Luke 15:28–30). The end of the Lord's parable – the sinful appearance of the righteous, blameless, judgmental son – has re-

vealed to us the Face of the Antichrist and it's the key to understanding that 'blaspheming the Spirit' is Unforgiveness. The sin of the one who does not allow forgiveness. Judgment on him who is forgiven. Judgment on him who forgives.

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During the first days of Great Lent, the great penitential canon of St Andrew of Crete (660–740) is read at the Vespers service. This four-day reading introduces the Church to a time of repentance. In reading the great canon, the Church also honors the memory of its venerable author. Saint Andrew was born at Damascus during the reign of the fourth righteous caliph of Islam, Ali (656–661), whose succession is referred to in the Islamic Shi'a tradition, and died on the island of Lesbos during the reign of the Iconoclast emperor Leo Isaurus (+741), who ushered in a new Constantinopolitan dynasty. The birth of Andrew was a year before the tragic death of Imam Ali, and his departure to the Lord also was a year before the death of Leo.

The era of the Righteous Khalifs (630–661) came to an end with the death of Abu Talib. It was Leo who succeeded in stopping the Arabs' advance at the walls of Constantinople (718). And in gratitude to God for this victory, Leo has begun ... Iconoclasm (730–842). Unlike the hagiographies of many famous saints, there is little legendary in the extant biography of Andrew. His biography is interesting and logical. Though it is deprived of the legendary, it is his-

torical and therefore precious and instructive.

Early enough, at the age of 15 Andrew settled in the monastery of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. According to the canons of the Church, the age of majority sets at 14 years. And in general, people's life expectancy was low at that time. In 680 the III Council of Constantinople was held in Constantinople, which later went down in history as the VI Ecumenical Council. At this Council the Church condemned the heresy of Monothelitism. Monothelitism held that there was no natural human will in the God-man Christ. According to the logic of the Council Fathers, this meant that the human will was not perceived by Christ and therefore not healed. The theme of sickness and healing of the human will is one of the components of ... the Great Canon. Since Jerusalem was on Caliphate territory, the Patriarch Theodore I (668–692) didn't take part in the Council of 680. In 685 he sent Andrew, who had by that time become his secretary, as a member of a delegation to Constantinople to confirm the consent of Jerusalem with the decisions of the Council of Constantinople. Andrew remained in the Capital, where he was made a deacon in the Hagia Sophia.

Like our own, Andrew's time was an apocalyptic time. In the aftermath of the Christological disputes of the V–VI centuries, following the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon (451), the bigotry of the opponents of the Council and the repressive policy of Constantinople against the dissenters, Eastern Orthodoxy was split into two parts from 537. The centres of these parts were Alexandria and Constantinople respectively. They were two equal churches, with parallel hierarchies, which did not mind ... rebaptizing each other. At the beginning of the VIII century the Arab armies were already conquering the Pyrenees, by 674–678 they were already at the walls of Constantinople. In his canon, St Andrew asks the

Virgin to preserve the 'Great City'. New Emperor Leo III Isaurus (717–741) was very religious. In religion he looked for the reason of constant defeats of Byzantines. In 717–718 the second siege of Constantinople by Arabs continued. Leo allied himself with the Bulgarians and he was a great commander. At the cost of unbelievable effort, the city was defended. The victory of the founder of the Isaurian dynasty stopped the Arab expansion in Asia Minor and Eastern Europe. Then in 726 Leo embarked on the path of iconoclasm. After all, the Muslims, who were constantly winning mil-

itary victories at that time, were also "iconoclasts", i.e. those who did not accept human religious images. Soon afterwards, Leo began to win. Such a coincidence was a great temptation for the Church at that time.

Andrew was a deacon until his consecration in 692 as bishop of the Cretan city of Gortyna, not far from Heraklion, in the year 692. In 712 he took part in another Council convened by the emperor Philippikos Bardanes (711–713), which reversed the decisions of the Sixth Ecumenical Council and again upheld Monothelitism. For Fathers like Maximus (580–662) or Martin the Confessor (598–655), signing the Council's decisions in this way meant renouncing Christ. After the deposition of Philippikos, Andrew repented of his earlier decision, it is documented in a corresponding poem. The mourning of the denial of God runs invisibly through the lines of the Great Canon. Shortly before his death, St Andrew of Crete went to Constantinople. As if to atone for his Monothelite renunciation, St Andrew preached against iconoclasm.



Rembrandt. *The Return of the Prodigal Son*. About 1668

In 730, together with Patriarch Germanos (+730), St Andrew refused to sign the Iconoclastic Edict. For this he spoke out against the policy of the Emperor. The creator of the Canons was deposed, exiled and died in exile. Andrew had a great poetic gift. Liturgical scholarship believes that Andrew of Crete should be considered the progenitor of the liturgical genre of canons. Historically, the canon superseded the preceding genre of the kondak: an extended, technically and philologically much more complex type of liturgical text of praise in honor of the feast. The pinnacle of the kondak genre is considered to be the work of the native of Homs, Syria, Romanos the Melodist (485–556). In remembering St Andrew of Crete, the congregation is also called to remember his unwitting rival Romanos, of whose great, stunning poetic legacy almost nothing is used in contemporary Orthodox worship...

"I believe in one God the Father, the Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth." Few people know that in the original Greek Creed the



word “Creator” literally means “Poet”.

Reading the Great Canon, the Church cries out: “Reverend Father Andrew, pray to God for us”. St Andrew was a bishop, a preacher and a poet. The hagiography of St Andrew of Crete tells us that he was not able to speak until he was seven years old. The gift of speech came to him through Communion. It turns out that, in Andrew’s creations, Communion was the birth of poetry – poetry to the glory of the Poet of Heaven and Earth.

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The third Sunday in Lent is dedicated to the remembrance of the Holy Cross. The approaching of the Sunday of the Cross marks exactly half of the forty-day period, which, according to the ancient Christian tradition, is dedicated to penitence. By analogy with the forty days of repentance, this period is a time of biblical lamentation of man over the imperfections of his soul. The coming of the Sunday of the Cross means that exactly half of those sacred forty days have already passed. There is a belief that, unlike Western Christianity which concentrates on the Cross, the suffering and death of Christ, Eastern Christianity has always been a religion of joy, celebration and resurrection. However, this is not entirely true. For the Cross undoubtedly resides also in the holy of holies of Eastern Orthodoxy.

If we try to formulate what is specific about the Cross that distinguish-



*St Andrew of Crete*

es Eastern Christianity from Western Christianity, perhaps it would be more correct to say that Orthodoxy perceives the Cross as a sign of victory. The triumph of the Risen One over the devil, hell and death, accomplished on the Cross. The Cross of Christ is mentioned in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, which Tradition identifies with the Second Ecumenical Council of 381. The Cross is mentioned. In doing so, it does not “appear” alone, but accompanied by a historical character – one of the few people in History who saw the Cross of the Lord Jesus with

their own eyes. Apart from Jesus and the Virgin Mary, the Gentile Pilate is the only named person mentioned in the Creed. For reasons unknown, he was, as it were, the focus of the drafters of the text. “Crucified for us under Pontius Pilate”. Many commentators thought that Pilate was mentioned only to mark the chronology of the Event of the Cross. Had this been the case, the makers of the Symbol would have had to have included Tiberius (+37), the emperor under whom Jesus was crucified. But, unlike Pilate, Tiberius Augustus did not speak to Jesus, and the extant legends about his involvement in the Lord’s biography apparently already seemed too implausible to the Church at that time. Pilate is not mentioned in the Symbol for chronological reasons. His name is a political decision of the Church to witness to its parity, equality, opposition, interaction,

dialogue with the Empire. In the language of theology, it means to express “universality”. With the words of the Crucifixion under Pilate, the Church consciously opposed herself to the political and state world represented in the person of whoever then specifically represented the Empire before the Lord Jesus.

The Church perceived itself as a concrete vis-a-vis the Empire. As something or someone who, until the end of the age, would have a dialogue with it, preaching to its peoples. If we follow this logic, the Church was to live with the Empire forever. “Cae-

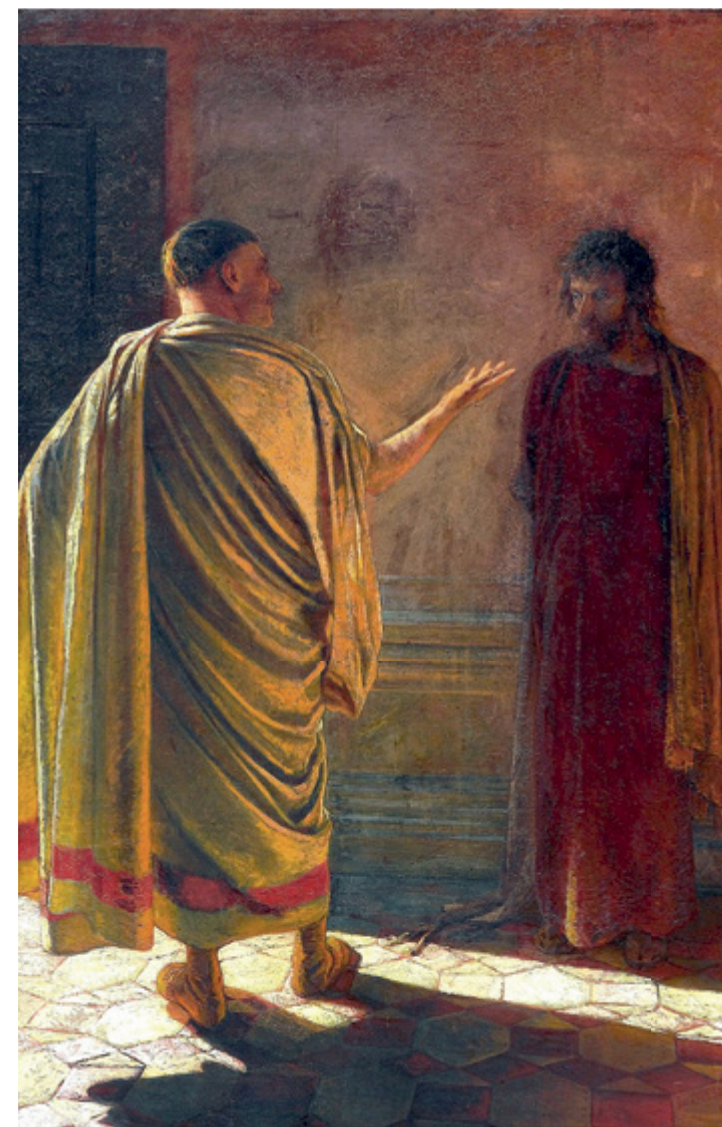
sar proclaimed to all men the banner of salvation <...>, in the midst of the royal city he raised up a sacred symbol (of the Cross) against the enemies and inscribed firmly and indelibly that this salvific sign is the guardian of the Roman land and the whole empire” (Praise of Constantine 1:40).

It is interesting that Pilate, who crucified Jesus, immediately, and as it was thought at the time, forever, succeeded in getting away from the responsibility for his crime against the truth. Thus, already in the last chapters of John’s Gospel, there is an obvious attempt to rehabilitate him. “Pilate said to them, ‘I find no fault in him’” (John 18:38). “Pilate, hearing this word, was more afraid” (John 19:8). “From that time Pilate sought to let Him go” (Jn.19:12).

The first centuries of Christianity continued Pilate’s Apologetics. In Tertullian (+220) we find evidence that the washing of hands by Pilate symbolizes baptism. Also, and in one of the synaxaries of the Ethiopian Church, he is mentioned among the saints, with a Memorial Day of 19 June. Among the monuments of this ancient Eastern Church, we find the “Martyrdom of Pilate,” and even the “Anaphora,” which the Eucharistic Prayer apparently attributed to his name ...Under the name of Claudia Procula, a martyr venerated in our liturgical calendar, many see the “last dreamer” of the New Testament (Mt.29:17) – the wife of the Roman Procurator of Judea. Pilate

managed to keep his hands washed until the turn of the First and Second Millennium. Then, as a result of the Roman bishops’ struggle for emancipation from secular rulers as well as the dispute over investiture, Pilate, in the perception of the Church, became what he was: a cynic who had lost his taste for truth.

In the XXI century the gospel image of Pontius Pilate has proved remarkably enduring. Today, in Pilate and his gesture of the Washing of hands – the harbinger of the changes now being introduced everywhere in the West – we see the image of the modern democratic ruler. He deliberately retreats into the shadows, “handing over” de-



*Nikolai Ge. What is truth? Christ and Pilate. 1890*

cision-making power to the people. In this way, but only temporarily, the eternal Pilate once again manages to absolve himself of his responsibility before the History.

The rejection of the conviction that Christianity was not meant to Christianise, but to overcome the Empire (something of which the pagan Roman authorities quite rightly and shrewdly accused the first Christians!) over the centuries has led to the quasi-dogmatic conviction that there can be only one Empire. Just as there is one God, one Redeemer, one Church and one Scripture. In this sense the “official creed of the Empire” was then becoming one of the key definitions of Orthodoxy.

“Wherever the power of thought may wander, whether to the East, or to the West, on earth, or to Heaven itself, everywhere it sees the Blessed Caesar, inseparable from his kingdom. His children reign over the earth. Like new luminaries, they illuminate the earth with the light of their father. He lives in them by his own power, increasing it in their succession, and governing all the universe even more perfectly than before”, – we read in Eusebius of Caesarea (263–339) in his Praise of Constantine.

Faith in One Empire necessarily led to the denial of the authenticity and orthodoxy of the states and churches which were outside of it. It turns out that, with the division of the Empire, the Separation of the Churches into Orthodox and Catholic Churches was bound to happen inevitably.



LITERATURE

# SYMBOLISM IN LITERATURE

By ALEXANDER SHUM

Symbolism was a movement in mainly Russian, French and Belgian poetry, as well as other arts – contrary to naturalism and realism, symbolist was seeking to represent absolute truths symbolically, and do so through language and metaphorical images.

In literature, the style originates with the 1857 publication of Charles Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*. The works of Edgar Allan Poe, which Baudelaire admired greatly and translated into French, were a significant influence and the source of many stock tropes and images. The aesthetic was developed by Stéphane Mallarmé and Paul Verlaine during the 1860s and 1870s. In the 1880s, the aesthetic was articulated by a series of manifestos and attracted a generation of writers. The term “symbolist” was first applied by the critic Jean Moréas, who invented the term to distinguish the Symbolists from the related Decadents of literature and of art.

Symbolism was largely a reaction against naturalism and realism, anti-idealistic styles which were attempts to represent reality in its gritty particularity, and to elevate the humble and the ordinary over the ideal. Symbolism was a reaction in favour of spirituality, the imagination, and dreams.

Some writers, such as Joris-Karl Huysmans, began as naturalists before becoming symbolists; for Huysmans, this change represented his increasing interest in religion and spirituality. Certain of the characteristic subjects of the Decadents represent naturalist in-

terest in sexuality and taboo topics, but in their case this was mixed with Byronic romanticism and the world-weariness characteristic of the fin de siècle period.

The Symbolist poets have a more complex relationship with Parnassianism, a French literary style that immediately preceded it. While being influenced by hermeticism, allowing freer versification, and rejecting Parnassian clarity and objectivity, it retained Parnassianism's love of word play and concern for the musical qualities of verse.

The Symbolists continued to admire Théophile Gautier's motto of “art for art's sake”, and retained – and modified – Parnassianism's mood of ironic detachment. Many Symbolist poets, including Stéphane Mallarmé and Paul Verlaine, published early works in *Le Parnasse contemporain*, the poetry anthologies that gave Parnassianism its name. But Arthur Rimbaud publicly mocked prominent Parnassians and published scatological parodies of some of their main authors, including François Coppée – misattributed to Coppée himself – in *L'Album zutique*.

One of Symbolism's most colourful promoters in Paris was art and literary critic (and occultist) Joséphin Péladan, who established the *Salon de la Rose + Croix*. The Salon hosted a series of six presentations of avant-garde art, writing and music during the 1890s, to give a presentation space for artists embracing spiritualism, mysticism, and idealism in their work. A number of Symbolists were associated with the Salon.

## Symbolist Manifesto

Jean Moréas published the Symbolist Manifesto (“Le Symbolisme”) in *Le Figaro* on 18 September 1886. The Symbolist Manifesto names Charles Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Paul Verlaine as the three leading poets of the movement.

Moréas announced that symbolism was hostile to “plain meanings, declamations, false sentimentality and matter-of-fact description”, and that its goal instead was to “clothe the Ideal in a perceptible form” whose “goal was not in itself, but whose sole purpose was to express the Ideal.”

In a nutshell, as Mallarmé writes in a letter to his friend Henri Cazalis, ‘to

depict not the thing but the effect it produces.’

## Symbolist techniques

The symbolist poets wished to liberate techniques of versification in order to allow greater room for “fluidity”, and as such were sympathet-



Henri Fantin-Latour, *By the Table*, 1872, depicting: Paul Verlaine, Arthur Rimbaud, Léon Valade, Ernest d'Hervilly and Camille Pelletan (seated); Pierre Elzéar, Emile Blémont, and Jean Aicard (standing)





Marceline Desbordes-Valmore, a French poet and novelist



Charles Baudelaire (c. 1862), whose writing was a precursor of the symbolist style

ic with the trend toward free verse, as evident in the poems of Gustave Kahn and Ezra Pound.

Symbolist poems were attempts to evoke, rather than primarily to describe; symbolic imagery was used to signify the state of the poet's soul. T.S. Eliot was influenced by the poets Jules Laforgue, Paul Valéry and Arthur Rimbaud who used the techniques of the Symbolist school,



Stéphane Mallarmé was a major French symbolist poet, and his work anticipated and inspired several revolutionary artistic schools of the early 20th century, such as Cubism, Futurism, Dadaism, and Surrealism.

though it has also been said that 'Imagism' was the style to which both Pound and Eliot subscribed. Synesthesia was a prized experience; poets sought to identify and confound the separate senses of scent, sound, and colour. In Baudelaire's poem *Correspondences* (which mentions *forêts de symboles* ("forests of symbols") and is considered the touchstone of French Symbolism).

### Paul Verlaine and the poètes maudits

Of the several attempts at defining the essence of symbolism, perhaps none was more influential than Paul Verlaine's 1884 publication of a series of essays on Tristan Corbière, Arthur Rimbaud, Stéphane Mallarmé, Marceline Desbordes-Valmore, Gérard de Nerval, and "Pauvre Lelian" ("Poor Lelian", an anagram of Paul Verlaine's own name), each of whom Verlaine numbered among the poètes maudits, "accursed poets."

Verlaine argued that in their individual and very different ways, each of these hitherto neglected poets found genius a curse; it isolated them from their contemporaries, and as a result these poets were not at all concerned to avoid hermeticism and idiosyncratic writing styles.

They were also portrayed as at odds with society, having tragic lives, and often given to self-destructive tendencies. These traits were not hindrances but consequences of their literary gifts. Verlaine's concept of the poète maudit in turn borrows from Baudelaire, who opened his collection *Les fleurs du mal* with the poem *Bénédiction*, which describes a poet whose internal serenity remains undisturbed by the contempt of the people surrounding him.

In this conception of genius and the role of the poet, Verlaine referred indirectly to the aesthetics of Arthur Schopenhauer, the philosopher of pessimism, who maintained that the purpose of art was to pro-

vide a temporary refuge from the world of strife of the will.

### Symbolists and decadents

The symbolist style has frequently been confused with the Decadent movement, the name derived from French literary critics in the 1880s, suggesting the writers were self-indulgent and obsessed with taboo subjects. While a few writers embraced the term, most avoided it. Jean Moréas' manifesto was largely a response to this polemic. By the late 1880s, the terms "symbolism" and



Gérard de Nerval French writer, poet, and translator

"decadence" were understood to be almost synonymous.

Though the aesthetics of the styles can be considered similar in some ways, the two remain distinct. The symbolists were those artists who emphasized dreams and ideals; the Decadents cultivated précieux, ornamented, or hermetic styles, and morbid subject matters. The subject of the decadence of the Roman Empire was a frequent source of literary images and appears in the works of many poets of the period, regardless of which name they chose for their style, as in Verlaine's "Langueur".



# FINNISH CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE: A WEALTH OF VOICES

By NINA PAAVOLAINEN

Finnish literature is going further than ever.

Bertolt Brecht once noted that Finns are silent in two languages. Maybe so, but they write in three – Finnish, Swedish and Sámi – and the total number of titles published annually in Finland is tremendous. The country sees the publication of 13,000–14,000 books a year, over 4,500 of them new works. Only in Iceland are more books published per capita.

Finns are also diligent readers, and the country's extensive network of free libraries is largely to be thanked for this. Free admission to the world of knowledge is the key equalizing principle in cultural policy, and the figures are convincing: an average of over 19 library loans per resident per year. The library institution is vital for authors as well, as the compensation they receive from loans is an essential source of income for many.

In Finland, reading is a hobby that begins in the home at a young age: according to a study by Statistics Finland, about 70% of parents read out loud to their children. The latest PISA studies award Finnish pupils good results in reading skills, and in addition to the Disney characters known worldwide, favourite literary figures for Finnish children include Tove Jansson's Moomintroll, who has appeared in just about every corner of the globe, and Ricky Rapper, whose adventures have been made into incredibly popular family films. One more revealing statistic: every

third Finn reads literature every month, and this figure has remained stable since 2000.

Although the battle for readers' free time has escalated – reading, after all,

is a time-intensive activity – sales of literature have not notably declined since the turn of the millennium, and according to a 2008 'Finland Reads' study, 16% of Finns buy over ten



*Elias Lönnrot*



*Sofi Oskanen*

books a year. The 2010 statistics reveal a distinct, over 10% drop in total sales of literature – the first ever. Nevertheless, the book has maintained its position as a prestigious gift, despite the fact that, as elsewhere, paperback markets have expanded and new works are sometimes available in paperback during their year of release.

On the other hand, reading groups, social media, and popular blogs on literature have extended the group that critically assesses and recommends books. Although reading is a private experience, there is a desire to share it. In this sense, literature is a broad adhesive surface that binds people together.

With its e-books and print-on-demand, the current publishing environment has transformed the traditional role of the general-interest publisher. In recent years, Finland

has seen the establishment of professionally run small presses that focus primarily on Finnish literature and nonfiction, with some degree of translations. Along with this development and in accordance with international trends, Finland has also seen the founding of its first literary agencies, which sell Finnish authors' translation rights abroad, an activity that has traditionally been the sphere of publishing houses.

Furthermore, there has been growth in the sale of these translation rights: currently, approximately 200 Finnish titles appear in translation each year in almost 40 languages. The greatest number of these titles are published in Germany, with Sweden and Estonia following, but there are also, for instance, significant numbers of translations into Japanese. Finland has a broader tip of good lit-

erature these days, translator training has been bolstered, and sales efforts have been intensified.

The new generation of writers, born in the 1970s and '80s and raised in an international environment, is gradually solidifying its position. Many of them write flexibly across genre boundaries: poems and prose, for children and adults. Literature by immigrant writers has also started to appear. The polyphonic voice of contemporary Finnish literature is carrying further than ever.

## On Finnish prose

At the end of the first decade of the 21st century, Finnish literature bears international comparison well in terms of multidimensionality, despite the fact that Finland does not





Finnish literature society

boast a particularly long literary history. National author Aleksis Kivi was the first master of Finnish-language prose, and his output coincided with the postromantic decades following the 1850s, while the Finnish national epic *The Kalevala*, compiled by Elias Lönnrot, appeared in 1835.

It should be noted that *The Kalevala* still holds influence today: even if you've never read it, its body of stories and imagery continue to have a powerful effect on the collective Finnish imagination. Comic book

artist Mauri Kunnas' *The Canine Kalevala* (new edition 2006) and a simplified version of *The Kalevala* intended for children (2002, English version 2009) remain incredibly popular. *The Kalevala* has been translated into over 60 languages, and Aleksis Kivi's best-known work, *Seven Brothers*, which crystallises the tension between rural and urban, primitiveness and civilisation that has long shaped the core of Finnish identity, continues to be a favourite and benchmark for authors.

In Finland as elsewhere, the biggest sales figures are achieved by detective novels (Matti Yrjänä Joensuu, Leena Lehtolainen), thrillers (Ilkka Remes), family sagas (Laila Hietamies) and why not chick-lit-influenced portrayals of urban women (Katja Kallio). Also enjoying newfound status as a top-selling genre is the domestic comic book (embodied in such characters as Viivi and Wagner).

In addition, other quality prose is written in Finland, which in terms of

style and subject more and more frequently finds its way across the nation's borders.

### The historical novel

Finnish literature has always included a powerful historical awareness. In the years of post-war growth and creation of national unity, literature had ideological tasks to fulfil, and up until the 1970s, it contributed to discussions surrounding the construction of the welfare state. Prior to this, Mika Waltari – in whose production novels situated in the past are read as depictions of the societal climate at the time of publication – created the 1945 work *The Egyptian*, which was translated into dozens of languages. Its status as a classic is by and large founded on its fundamental humanism, and Waltari remains among Finland's best-known authors abroad.

Sofi Oksanen's *Purge* (2008), one of Finland's biggest interna-

tional breakthroughs in recent years, revitalises the historical novel. Its Estonian-Finnish framework, fixed against a backdrop of recent European history, has spoken to readers as far away as the US, and in Finland alone the book has sold over 160,000 copies.

The popularity of *Purge* can be explained through a variety of factors. It takes a bold approach to the recent history of Finland's sister nation, and its interpretations of the events of the Second World War, the relationship

between the conqueror and the conquered, have generated much debate. The heroes end up turning into the losers, and during wartime everyone loses something, not least of all themselves.

Oksanen's narration is not anchored in the tradition of realism; it is carried along by a profuse flow of lush and lingering verbs. The strong female perspective opens up a view to a mental landscape whose experiences have not received equal exposure. It gives a voice to a muzzled distress that no one has wanted to hear, and this is likely one reason why the work has tapped into such a broad base of identification. The story of three generations of women fleshes out the themes of nationalism and femaleness: women's bodies and women's work are both concretely and metaphorically instruments of warfare in which subjugation, humiliation, and shame are ever-present.

Furthermore, Sofi Oksanen represents the younger generation of writers in that she is happy to meet her readers, travels abroad continuously to speak about her work and raises topics of current interest when she makes an appearance. The media continues to write more about

writers as phenomena rather than literature itself, but shifts in the publishing field and seemingly dramatic changes of publisher feed this orientation as well.

Examples also exist from recent years of the historical novel's fragmentation to deal more problematically with the construction of Finnish identity over the last century. A fine illustration of its expansion into the mental-historical arena is Jari Järvelä's trilogy, whose final segment has been appropriately named *Kansallismaisema* ('The National Landscape,' 2006). As old as his century, in other words 38 years old in 1938, the protagonist takes centre stage as the author carefully describes the painful birth of a common culture.

Jari Tervo, who has long belonged to the first tier of Finnish authors, frequently and very amusingly portrays 'the common folk,' particularly the people of northern Finland. His works that appeared in the years leading up to the 2010s, a trilogy that deals with Finnish history, do not form a chronologically linear whole: we begin from the Cold War era and end in 1920, in the period following the Finnish Civil War. Instead, it redraws key turning points from the nation's recent past, which

in Tervo's interpretation are linked by the fight against communism.

Leena Parkkinen's strong debut *Sinun jälkeesi*, Max ('After You, Max,' 2009) resurrects the past milieu of 1920s Helsinki, but its broader framework is the European worldview and its questions universal. Siamese twins and circus performers Max and Isaac tour Europe, embodying the thematics of difference and otherness: How is it possible to live separately and yet forever side by side?



Aleksis Kivi



# TATE BRITAIN – NEW SEASON OF SPOTLIGHTS

By ELLA LARINA

Tate Britain has opened its latest series of new free displays, each focusing on specific artists and subjects, including works from across the centuries by William Blake, John Singer Sargent, Marie Yates and John Akomfrah. Located throughout the chronological Walk Through British Art and in the Clore Gallery, these Spotlight displays offer an in-depth look at particular artists, themes and moments in history. They can all be visited for free, either by picking up a collection ticket on arrival at Tate Britain or by booking in advance at [tate.org.uk/britain](http://tate.org.uk/britain).

## **Poetical Bodies: Works on Paper by Blake and His Contemporaries (open until 10 April 2022)**

This display focuses on William Blake and several of his contemporaries. These artists studied human form, movement, character and expression but applied this knowledge to unconventional, visionary scenes. Gods, heroes, demons and monsters populate their drawings and prints, arising from their imaginations as well as myth, literature and history. They looked to the art of the past, but also used topical incidents as inspiration, caricaturing and transforming contemporary public figures.

## **John Singer Sargent: Wertheimer Portraits (open until 24 July 2022)**

This display brings together portraits from the Wertheimer bequest by John



John Singer. *Sargent Ena and Betty, Daughters of Asher and Mrs Wertheimer 1901*. Tate

Singer Sargent and is the first time these portraits are being shown as a standalone group at Tate. Asher Wertheimer (1843–1918), a highly successful London art dealer, commissioned Sargent to paint the series, which forms the artist's largest commission. Nine of them were donated to the national art collection, a gift which sparked controversy at a time when only aristocratic families traditionally commissioned portraits of this scale.

## **Isabel Rawsthorne and Alberto Giacometti: a con- versation: (open until 25 Septem- ber 2022)**

This display reveals an artistic and romantic conversation between the sculptor Alberto Giacometti and the painter Isabel Rawsthorne through Paris in the 1930s to London in the 1960s. Giacometti's portraits are well known, especially his mysterious interpretations of 'Isabel', becoming thinner and more elusive as they were separated by the dangers of the Second World War. But this is the first time that Rawsthorne's portraits of humans and animals have been put on display at Tate, revealing a passionate conversation between the two artists

about the elusiveness of living presence, in art, life and death.

## **After Industry: Communities in Northern England 1960s-80s (open until 30 October 2022)**

After Industry presents a range of photographers from the Tate collection, including Shirley Baker, Sirkka-Liisa



Marie Yates. *Only Woman*. 1984, partially reprinted 2019. Tate © Marie Yates

Konttinen, Peter Mitchell, Tish Murtha and Chris Killip. Also included is a film by Sirkka Liisa-Konttinen and Amber



Sirkka-Liisa Konttinen. *Girl on a Spacehopper (Byker)*. 1971. printed 2012. Tate © Sirkka-Liisa Konttinen

Film & Photography collective of life in Newcastle in early 1980s as well as photo-books from Tate's library and archive. The photographers and filmmakers included used social documentary practices to record the lives of communities in northern England during a period of socio-economic upheaval and deindustrialisation.

## **Marie Yates: The Only Woman (open until 30 October 2022)**

Using photomontage, artist Marie Yates reflects on her mourning process over the death of her mother. Described as a feminist art project, her four-part photographic installation references Sigmund Freud's tracings of the mourning process: Pain, Rage, and Gaze, and a further one – Continuum. The sections reflect Yates's own stages of grief through her use of photomontage, with short texts taken from her

journal entries of the time, resembling news headlines.

## **Sixty Years: The Unfinished Conversation (open until 2 April 2023)**

This is the latest iteration of Tate Britain's large-scale contemporary collection displays. It explores the evolving nature of diasporic identity through art from Tate's collection, seeking to present a sense of pluralism – that all identities, beliefs and differences are accepted, respected and ongoing. Based around John Akomfrah's film work *The Unfinished Conversation* 2012, the display features works which defy predetermined or fixed notions of identity. Collective memory and networks forged within and across groups connect the artists featured here, exploring themes such as migration, marginalisation, kinship, celebration, healing and resilience.



# CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION IN FRANCE IN 2022 AND BEYOND

By MARIANNE ROSENDALE

France has played a key role in helping international efforts to tackle climate change, but it needs to accelerate key parts of its energy transformation to meet its targets. The government is facing crucial decisions about its future energy mix, according a new policy review by the International Energy Agency.

The current rate of deployment of low-carbon energy technologies and energy efficiency solutions in France is not fast enough for the government to meet its energy and climate targets, calling for stronger policy efforts and increased investments, according to the IEA's 2021 Energy Policy Review of France. In particular, the future development of the country's electricity supply requires a clear policy strategy to be put in place.

France has demonstrated important leadership in raising global climate ambitions. It has done so within the framework of the European Union and, most notably, in its leading role in the negotiations that resulted in the landmark Paris Agreement in 2015.

At home, France was one of the first countries to enact a climate law, and in 2019, the government put into legislation the goal of reaching net zero emissions by 2050. France has promoted green finance and a green budgeting approach across government, aligning national expenditure and revenue processes with climate and other environmental goals. The government's 2030 Investment Programme and its economic recovery

plan are among the most ambitious globally in terms of clean energy transitions, with innovative funding schemes to encourage building retrofits and low-carbon transport.

In 2022, the government of France will need to take important decisions to ensure the country gets on track to

meet its 2050 net zero emissions goal, notably in terms of plans to modernise its nuclear power fleet. The government will also have to step up its clean energy ambitions and measures for the coming years across the entire economy to align with the EU-wide goal of reducing emissions by 55% by 2030.



Photo: Karyatid

“France is approaching a crossroads, as key decisions on its future energy system need to be taken soon to ensure it can reach net zero emissions by 2050. By investing much more in energy efficiency, renewable energy and nuclear power, France can accelerate progress on its key energy and climate goals,” said Fatih Birol, the IEA Executive Director, who is launching the report in Paris today with Barbara Pompili, France's Minister for the Ecological Transition.

successful adoption of more stringent building codes and product regulations. However, renovation rates remains slow and only minor savings were gained in the transport sector.

Half of France's renewables output still comes from hydropower plants that were built decades ago. The government is seeking to accelerate progress in solar and wind power

by streamlining permits, promoting flagship initiatives, and better aligning regional and national ambitions. But these promising efforts risk being undermined without more sustained and consistent policies.

“The IEA peer review is very precious as it consists of an independent analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of our energy policy, especially in the context of the carbon neutrality by 2050 commitment,” said Minister Pompili. “This review comes in a crucial time frame, in particular to anticipate the French multi-annual Plan review preparation and the energy and climate programming act discussion in 2023. The IEA review confirms the orientations France has adopted, based on three pillars: strengthening energy efficiency, developing renewable energies and maintaining a nuclear electricity base.”

To maintain its low-carbon power sector, France needs to expand renewable energy and decide on the future of its ageing nuclear fleet, which in 2019 accounted for 71% of electricity production. Important work is underway. Power system operator RTE has tested several decarbonisation scenarios, supported by a dedicated study from the IEA on the technical challenges of integrating high shares of renewables, which can help inform the critical decisions on France electricity and energy future.

The IEA report calls on the government to take a timely decision on

a vision for France's post-2030 electricity mix and on the related financing mechanisms in order to send clear signals to investors, especially on nuclear energy. The government should also upgrade its capacity market to ensure sufficient electricity supply during the clean energy transition.

Energy security will be fundamentally important during the clean energy transition. France still relies on oil and gas for two-thirds of its energy consumption. The government should foster the shift to low-carbon fuels and support the adaptation of France's oil and gas infrastructure, including by engaging in international and European cooperation on fuels such as hydrogen.

“In addition to a continued strong focus on policies that support a climate- and people-centred energy transition, the government also needs ongoing action to safeguard energy security as the nature of the risks evolve,” Dr Birol said. “This involves stepping up support for research and development to drive innovation in emerging clean energy technologies so they're ready for market in time. It also means developing measures to ensure the availability of critical minerals that are needed for key technologies like EV batteries and wind turbines. And it includes investing in energy infrastructure to make it resilient to more extreme weather and cyber threats – and compatible with new low-carbon energy sources.”



Photo: Red Zeppelin



# BALLET ICONS GALA 2022

By RUSSIAN ART & CULTURE

The annual BALLET ICONS GALA, presented by Ensemble Productions, celebrates the 150th anniversary of Sergei Diaghilev, the legendary creator of the Ballets Russes, at the Coliseum on 13 March 2022 with most memorable moments from the Ballets Russes' repertoire as well as contemporary masterpieces inspired by the Ballets Russes.

The programme, which celebrates the unique style, quality and sheer calibre of the Russian school of ballet training, will bring together world ballet stars including Maria Alexandrova (the Bolshoi Ballet), Daniil Simkin (Staatsballett Berlin/ABT), Natalia Osipova (The Royal Ballet), Artem Ovcharenko (the Bolshoi Ballet), Iana Salenko (Berlin State Ballet), Paul Marque (Paris Opera Ballet), Kimin Kim (Mariinsky Ballet) and many more.

The Gala's programme will bring to life masterpieces from the Ballets Russes' repertoire, such as *Petrushka*, *Scheherazade*, *L'Après-midi d'un Faune*, *Le Spectre de la rose* and others, as well as contemporary works which have been influenced by the Ballets Russes.

The Gala continues to be one of the world's most important events in the world's ballet calendar. For one night only – 13 March 2022 – the Gala will bring together the world's greatest ballet stars in a splendid performance – a night to remember! The annual Ballet Icons Gala in London has been organised by Ensemble Productions since 2006.

*"We will celebrate the life of one of the most significant figures in the history of ballet, Sergei Diaghilev, an inspiration for all connected to the world of dance. We will admire again his creations and contemporary works which would not come alive without his influence. All*



*these to be performed by world's biggest ballet stars sharing the stage in Diaghilev's memory,"* says Olga Balakleets, CEO of Ensemble Productions.

The Ballet Icons Gala 2022 will be accompanied by the English National Ballet Philharmonic orchestra



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