



**THE LIFE AND DEATH OF RASPUTIN**

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Written by Vladimir Moss

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As the revolutionary threat receded (temporarily) in Russia after 1905, new, more subtle and sinister threats appeared: theosophy, occultism, spiritism and pornography flooded into Russia.<sup>[1]</sup> The most famous occult figure of the time, whose sexual excesses, both real and imagined, were the talk of Russia, was Gregory Rasputin, a married peasant from Siberia.<sup>[2]</sup> His association with the Royal Family was a devil-sent weapon in the hands of the enemies of the Tsar.

The fateful introduction of Rasputin to the Royal Family has been laid at the door of Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, at one time rector of the Petersburg Theological Academy and tutor of the Tsar's children. However, this charge was rejected by Theophan when he witnessed before the Extraordinary Commission into Rasputin's doings in 1917: "How Rasputin came to know the family of the former emperor, I have absolutely no idea.<sup>[3]</sup> And I definitely state that I took no part in that. My guess is that Rasputin penetrated the royal family by indirect means... Rasputin himself never talked about it, despite the fact that he was a rather garrulous person... I noticed that Rasputin had a strong desire to get into the house of the former emperor, and that he did so against the will of Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolayevna. Rasputin himself acknowledged to me that he was hiding his acquaintance with the royal family from Militsa Nikolayevna."

The first meeting between the Royal Family and Rasputin, as recorded in the Tsar's diary, took place on November 1, 1905. Archbishop Theophan testified: "I personally heard from Rasputin that he produced an impression on the former empress at their first meeting. The sovereign, however, fell under his influence only after Rasputin had given him something to ponder."



According to the Monk Iliodor, Rasputin told him: "I talked to them for a long time, persuading them to spit on all their fears, and rule."

On hearing that Rasputin had impressed the empress, Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolaevna said to him, as Archbishop Theophan testified: "'You, Gregory, are an underhand person.' Militsa Nikolayevna told me personally of her dissatisfaction with Rasputin's having penetrated the royal family on his own, and mentioned her warning that if he did, it would be the end of him. My explanation of her warning... was that there were many temptations at court and much envy and intrigue, and that Rasputin, as a simple, undemanding wandering pilgrim, would perish spiritually under such circumstances."

It was at about this time that Rasputin left Fr. Theophan's lodgings and moved in with the woman who was to become one of his most fanatical admirers, Olga Lokhtina. Archbishop Theophan writes: "He only stayed with me a little while, since I would be off at the Academy for days on end. And it got boring for him... He moved somewhere else, and then took up residence in Petrograd at the home of the government official Vladimir Lokhtin," who was in charge of the paved roads in Tsarskoe Selo, and so close to the royal family...

Rasputin returned to his wife and children in Siberia, in the autumn, 1907, only to find that Bishop Anthony of Tobolsk and the Tobolsk Consistory had opened an investigation to see whether he was spreading the doctrines of the khlysty – perhaps, as was suspected, at the instigation of Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolayevna. Olga Lokhtina hurried back to St. Petersburg and managed to get the investigation suspended. Soon afterwards, testifies Fr. Theophan, "the good relations between the royal family and Militsa, Anastasia Nikolayevna [the sister of Militsa], and Peter and Nikolai

Nikolayevich [the husbands of the sisters] became strained. Rasputin himself mentioned it in passing. From a few sentences of his I concluded that he had very likely instilled in the former emperor the idea that they had too much influence on state affairs and were encroaching on the emperor's independence."

The place that the Montenegrin Grand Duchesses had played in the royal family was now taken by the young Anya Vyubova, who was a fanatical admirer of Rasputin. Another of Rasputin's admirers was the royal children's nurse, Maria Vishnyakova. And so Rasputin came closer and closer to the centre of power...

Contrary to the propaganda of the Masons, Rasputin never had sexual relations with any member of the Royal Family. Moreover, his influence on the political decisions of the Tsar was much exaggerated. But he undoubtedly had a great influence on the Tsarina through his ability, probably through some kind of hypnosis, to relieve the Tsarevich's haemophilia, a tragedy that caused much suffering to the Tsar and Tsarina, and which they carefully hid from the general public. It is this partial success in curing the Tsarevich that wholly explains Rasputin's influence over the Royal Family...

Bishop Theophan began to have doubts about Rasputin. These doubts related to rumours that Rasputin was not the pure man of God he seemed to be. "Rumours began reaching us," testified Vladyka, "that Rasputin was unrestrained in his treatment of the female sex, that he stroked them with his hand during conversation. All this gave rise to a certain temptation to sin, the more so since in conversation Rasputin would allude to his acquaintance with me and, as it were, hide behind my name."

At first Vladyka and his monastic confidants sought excuses for him in the fact that "we were monks, whereas he was a married man, and that was the reason why his behaviour has been distinguished by a great lack of restraint and seemed peculiar to us... However, the rumours about Rasputin started to increase, and it was beginning to be said that he went to the bathhouses with women... It is very distressing... to suspect [a man] of a bad thing..."

Rasputin now came to meet Vladyka and "himself mentioned that he had gone to bathhouses with women. We immediately declared to him that, from the point of view of the holy fathers, that was unacceptable, and he promised us to avoid doing it. We decided not to condemn him for debauchery, for we knew that he was a simple peasant, and we had read that in the Olonets and Novgorod provinces men bathed in the bathhouses together with women, which testified not to immorality but to their patriarchal way of life... and to its particular purity, for... nothing [improper] was allowed. Moreover, it was clear from the *Lives* of the ancient Byzantine holy fools Saints Simeon and John [of Edessa] that they both had gone to bathhouses with women on purpose, and had been abused and reviled for it, although they were nonetheless great saints." The example of Saints Simeon and John was to prove very useful for Rasputin, who now, "as his own justification, announced that he too wanted to test himself – to see if he had extinguished passion in himself." But Theophan warned him against this, "for it is only the great saints who are able to do it, and he, by acting in this way, was engaging in self-deception and was on a dangerous path."

To the rumours about bathhouses were now added rumours that Rasputin had been a khlyst sectarian in Siberia, and had taken his co-religionists to bathhouses there. Apparently the Tsar heard these rumours, for he told the Tsarina not to receive Rasputin for a time. For the khlysts, a sect that indulged in orgies in order to stimulate repentance thereafter, were very influential among the intelligentsia, especially the literary intelligentsia, of the time.

It was at that point that the former spiritual father of Rasputin in Siberia, Fr. Makary, was summoned to Tsarskoe Selo, perhaps on the initiative of the Tsarina. On June 23, 1909 the Tsar recorded that Fr. Makary, Rasputin and Bishop Theophan came to tea. There it was decided that Bishop Theophan, who had doubts about Rasputin, and Fr. Makary, who believed in him, should go to Rasputin's house in Pokrovskoye and investigate.

Bishop Theophan was unwell and did not want to go. But “I took myself in hand and in the second half of June 1909 set off with Rasputin and the monk of the Verkhoturysk Monastery Makary, whom Rasputin called and acknowledged to be his ‘elder’”. The trip, far from placating Vladyka’s suspicions, only confirmed them, so that he concluded that Rasputin did not “occupy the highest level of spiritual life”. On the way back from Siberia, as he himself testified, he “stopped at the Sarov monastery and asked God’s help in correctly answering the question of who and what Rasputin was. I returned to Petersburg convinced that Rasputin... was on a false path.”

While in Sarov, Vladyka had asked to stay alone in the cell in which St. Seraphim had reposed. He was there for a long time praying, and when he did not come out, the brothers finally decided to enter. They found Vladyka in a deep swoon.

He did not explain what had happened to him there...

But he did relate his meeting with Blessed Pasha of Sarov the next year, in 1911. The eldress and fool-for-Christ jumped onto a bench and snatched the portraits of the Tsar and Tsarina that were hanging on the wall, cast them to the ground and trampled on them. Then she ordered her cell-attendant to put them into the attic.

This was clearly a prophecy of the revolution of 1917. And when Vladyka told it to the Tsar, he stood with head bowed and without saying a word. Evidently he had heard similar prophecies...

On returning from Siberia and Sarov, Vladyka conferred with Archimandrite Benjamin and together with him summoned Rasputin. “When after that Rasputin came to see us, we, to his surprise, denounced him for his arrogant pride, for holding himself in higher regard than was seemly, and for being in a state of spiritual deception. He was completely taken aback and started crying, and instead of trying to justify himself admitted that he had made mistakes. And he agreed to our demand that he withdraw from the world and place himself under my guidance.”

Rasputin then promised “to tell no one about our meeting with him.” “Rejoicing in our success, we conducted a prayer service... But, as it turned out, he then went to Tsarkoye Selo and recounted everything there in a light that was favourable to him but not to us.”

In 1910, for the sake of his health, Vladyka was transferred to the see of Tauris and Simferopol in the Crimea. Far from separating him from the royal family, this enabled him to see more of them during their summer vacation in Livadia. He was able to use the tsar’s automobile, so as to go on drives into the mountains, enjoy the wonderful scenery and breathe in the pure air.

He often recalled how he celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the palace, and how the Tsarina and her daughters chanted on the kliros. This chanting was always prayerful and concentrated. “During this service they chanted and read with such exalted, holy veneration! In all this there was a genuine, lofty, purely monastic spirit. And with what trembling, with what radiant tears they approached the Holy Chalice!”

“The sovereign would always begin every day with prayer in church. Exactly at eight o’clock he would enter the palace church. By that time the serving priest had already finished the proskomedia and read the hours. With the entry of the Tsar the priest intoned: ‘Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.’ And exactly at nine o’clock the Liturgy ended. Nor were there any abbreviations or omissions. And the priest did not give the impression of being in a hurry. The secret lay in the fact that there were no pauses at all. This enabled the Liturgy to be completed within one hour. For the priest this was an obligatory condition. The sovereign always prayed very ardently. Each petition in the litany, each prayer found a lively response in his soul.

“After the Divine service the working day of the sovereign began.”

However, the issue of Rasputin was destined to bring an end to this idyllic phase in the relations between Vladyka Theophan and the Royal Family.

“After a while,” testifies Vladyka, “rumours reached me that Rasputin had resumed his former way of life and was undertaking something against us... I decided to resort to a final measure – to denounce him openly and to communicate everything to the former emperor. It was not, however, the emperor who received me but his wife in the presence of the maid of honour Vyubova.

“I spoke for about an hour and demonstrated that Rasputin was in a state of spiritual deception... The former empress grew agitated and objected, citing theological works... I destroyed all her arguments, but she... reiterated them: ‘It is all falsehood and slander’... I concluded the conversation by saying that I could no longer have anything to do with Rasputin... I think Rasputin, as a cunning person, explained to the royal family that my speaking against him was because I envied his closeness to the Family... that I wanted to push him out of the way.

“After my conversation with the empress, Rasputin came to see me as if nothing had happened, having apparently decided that the empress’s displeasure had intimidated me... However, I told him in no uncertain terms, ‘Go away, you are a fraud.’ Rasputin fell on his knees before me and asked my forgiveness... But again I told him, ‘Go away, you have violated a promise given before God.’ Rasputin left, and I did not see him again.”

At this point Vladyka received a “Confession” from a former devotee of Rasputin’s. On reading this, he understood that Rasputin was “a wolf in sheep’s clothing” and “a sectarian of the Khlyst type” who “taught his followers not to reveal his secrets even to their confessors. For if there is allegedly no sin in what these sectarians do, then their confessors need not be made aware of it.”

“Availing myself of that written confession, I wrote the former emperor a second letter... in which I declared that Rasputin not only was in a state of spiritual deception but was also a criminal in the religious and moral sense... In the moral sense because, as it followed from the ‘confession’, Father Gregory had seduced his victims.”

There was no reply to this letter. “I sensed that they did not want to hear me out and understand... It all depressed me so much that I became quite ill – it turned out I had a palsy of the facial nerve.”

In fact, Vladyka’s letter had reached the Tsar, and the scandal surrounding the rape of the children’s nurse, Vishnyakova, whose confessor was Vladyka, could no longer be concealed. Vishnyakova herself testified to the Extraordinary Commission that she had been raped by Rasputin during a visit to Verkhoturye Monastery in Tobolsk province, a journey undertaken at the empress’s suggestion. “Upon our return to Petrograd, I reported everything to the empress, and I also told Bishop Theophan in a private meeting with him. The empress did not give any heed to my words and said that everything Rasputin does is holy. From that time forth I did not see Rasputin, and in 1913 I was dismissed from my duties as nurse. I was also reprimanded for frequenting the Right Reverend Theophan.”

Another person in on the secret was the maid of honour Sophia Tyutcheva. As she witnessed to the Commission, she was summoned to the Tsar.

“You have guessed why I summoned you. What is going on in the nursery?”

She told him.

“So you too do not believe in Rasputin’s holiness?”

She replied that she did not.

“But what will you say if I tell you that I have lived all these years only thanks to his prayers?”

Then he “began saying that he did not believe any of the stories, that the impure always sticks to the pure, and that he did not understand what had suddenly happened to Theophan, who had always been so fond of Rasputin. During this time he pointed to a letter from Theophan on his desk.”

“‘You, your majesty, are too pure of heart and do not see what filth surrounds you.’ I said that it

filled me with fear that such a person could be near the grand duchesses.

“Am I then the enemy of my own children?’ the sovereign objected.

“He asked me never to mention Rasputin’s name in conversation. In order for that to take place, I asked the sovereign to arrange things so that Rasputin would never appear in the children’s wing.”

But her wish was not granted, and both Vishnyakova and Tyutcheva would not long remain in the tsar’s service...

It was at about this time that the newspapers began to write against Rasputin. And a member of the circle of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov, the future bishop-martyr of the Catacomb Church, published a series of articles condemning Rasputin. "Why do the bishops," he wrote, "who are well acquainted with the activities of this blatant deceiver and corrupter, keep silent?... Where is their grace, if through laziness or lack of courage they do not keep watch over the purity of the faith of the Church of God and allow the lascivious khlyst to do the works of darkness under the mask of light?"

The brochure was forbidden and confiscated while it was still at the printer's, and the newspaper *The Voice of Moscow* was heavily fined for publishing excerpts from it.

Also disturbed by the rumours about Rasputin was the Prime Minister Peter Arkadievich Stolypin. But he had to confess, as his daughter Maria relates: “Nothing can be done. Every time the opportunity presents itself I warn his Majesty. But this is what he replied to me recently: ‘I agree with you, Peter Arkadievich, but better ten Rasputins than one hysterical empress.’ Of course, the whole matter is in that. The empress is ill, seriously ill; she believes that Rasputin is the only person in the whole world who can help the heir, and it is beyond human strength to persuade her otherwise. You know how difficult in general it is to talk to her. If she is taken with some idea, then she no longer takes account of whether it is realisable or not... Her intentions are the very best, but she is really ill...”

In November, 1910, Bishop Theophan went to the Crimea to recover from this illness. But he did not give up, and inundated his friend Bishop Hermogen with letters. It was his aim to enlist this courageous fighter against freethinking in his fight against Rasputin. But this was difficult because it had been none other than Vladyka Theophan who had at some time introduced Rasputin to Bishop Hermogen, speaking of him, as Bishop Hermogen himself said, “in the most laudatory terms.” Indeed, for a time Bishop Hermogen and Rasputin had become allies in the struggle against freethinking and modernism.

Unfortunately, a far less reliable person then joined himself to Rasputin’s circle – Sergius Trophanov, in monasticism Iliodor, one of Bishop Theophan’s students at the academy, who later became a co-worker of the head of the Cheka, Felix Dzerzhinsky. Then he became a Baptist, married and had seven children. In an interview with the newspaper *Rech*’ (January 9, 1913)

Fr. Iliodor said: “I used to be a magician and fooled the people. I was a Deist.” He built a large church in Tsaritsyn on the Volga, and began to draw thousands to it with his fiery sermons against the Jews and the intellectuals and the capitalists. He invited Rasputin to join him in Tsaritsyn and become the elder of a convent there. Rasputin agreed.

However, Iliodor’s inflammatory sermons were not pleasing to the authorities, and in January, 1911 he was transferred to a monastery in Tula diocese. But he refused to go, locked himself in his church in Tsaritsyn and declared a hunger-strike. Bishop Hermogen supported him, but the tsar did not, and ordered him to be removed from Tsaritsyn.

But at this point Rasputin, who had taken a great liking to Iliodor, intervened, and as Anya Vyubova testified, “Iliodor remained in Tsaritsyn thanks to Rasputin’s personal entreaties”. From now on, Olga Lokhtina would bow down to Rasputin as “Lord of hosts” and to Iliodor as “Christ”...

When Rasputin’s bad actions began to come to light, Hermogen vacillated for a long time.

However, having made up his mind that Vladyka Theophan was right, and having Iliodor on his side now too, he decided to bring the matter up before the Holy Synod, of which he was a member, at its next session. Before that, however, he determined to denounce Rasputin to his face.

This took place on December 16, 1911. According to Iliodor's account, Hermogen, clothed in hierarchical vestments and holding a cross in his hand, "took hold of the head of the 'elder' with his left hand, and with his right started beating him on the head with the cross and shouting in a terrifying voice, 'Devil! I forbid you in God's name to touch the female sex. Brigand! I forbid you to enter the royal household and to have anything to do with the tsarina! As a mother brings forth the child in the cradle, so the holy Church through its prayers, blessings, and heroic feats has nursed that great and sacred thing of the people, the autocratic rule of the tsars. And now you, scum, are destroying it, you are smashing our holy vessels, the bearers of autocratic power... Fear God, fear His life-giving cross!'"

Then they forced Rasputin to swear that he would leave the palace. According to one version of events, Rasputin swore, but immediately told the empress what had happened. According to another, he refused, after which Vladyka Hermogen cursed him. In any case, on the same day, December 16, five years later, he was killed...

Then Bishop Hermogen went to the Holy Synod. First he gave a speech against the khlysty. Then he charged Rasputin with khlyst tendencies. Unfortunately, only a minority of the bishops supported the courageous bishop. The majority followed the over-procurator in expressing dissatisfaction with his interference "in things that were not of his concern".

Vladyka Hermogen was then ordered to return to his diocese. As the director of the chancery of the over-procurator witnessed, "he did not obey the order and, as I heard, asked by telegram for an audience with the tsar, indicating that he had an important matter to discuss, but was turned down."

The telegram read as follows: "Tsar Father! I have devoted my whole life to the service of the Church and the Throne. I have served zealously, sparing no effort. The sun of my life has long passed midday and my hair has turned white. And now in my declining years, like a criminal, I am being driven out of the capital in disgrace by you, the Sovereign. I am ready to go wherever it may please you, but before I do, grant me an audience, and I will reveal a secret to you."

But the Tsar rejected his plea. On receiving this rejection, Bishop Hermogen began to weep. And then he suddenly said: "They will kill the tsar, they will kill the tsar, they will surely kill him."

The opponents of Rasputin now felt the fury of the Tsar. Bishop Hermogen and Iliodor were exiled to remote monasteries (Iliodor took his revenge by leaking forged letters of the Empress to Rasputin). And Vladyka Theophan was transferred to the see of Astrakhan. The Tsar ordered the secular press to stop printing stories about Rasputin. Before leaving the Crimea, Vladyka called on Rasputin's friend, the deputy over-procurator Damansky. He told him: "Rasputin is a vessel of the devil, and the time will come when the Lord will chastise him and those who protect him."

Later, in October, 1913, Rasputin tried to take his revenge on Vladyka by bribing the widow of a Yalta priest who knew Vladyka, Olga Apollonovna Popova, to say that Vladyka had said that he had had relations with the empress. The righteous widow rejected his money and even spat in his face...

In December, 1916 the Empress visited the prophetess Maria Mikhailovna at the Desyatina convent in Novgorod. She was 107 years old and a severe ascetic. "You, beautiful lady, shall know suffering," she told the empress. "Don't fear the heavy cross"...

A few days later Rasputin was killed, bringing great suffering to the Empress. Logically, this should have removed one of the main reasons for the people's anger against the Royal Family. But the Russian revolution had little to do with logic...

Rasputin was killed on December 29 by Prince Felix Yusupov and two other conspirators. Yusupov lured him to his flat on the pretext of introducing him to his wife, the beautiful Irina Yusupova, the Tsar's niece. He was given madeira mixed with poison, but this did not kill him. He was shot twice,

but this did not kill him. Finally he was drowned under the ice of the River Neva.

However, recent forensic research by Russian and British police has revealed that Rasputin was killed by a third bullet of a type that could only have come from the gun of a British secret service agent...

The Tsar refused to condone the killing, which he called murder. But Yusupov was justified by his close friend, Great Princess Elizabeth Fyodorovna, who said that he only done his patriotic duty – “you killed a demon,” she said. Then, as Yusopov himself writes in his *Memoirs*, “she informed me that several days after the death of Rasputin the abbesses of monasteries came to her to tell her about what had happened with them on the night of the 30<sup>th</sup>. During the all-night vigil priests had been seized by an attack of madness, had blasphemed and shouted out in a voice that was not their own. Nuns had run down the corridors crying like hysterics and tearing their dresses with indecent movements of the body...”

Pierre Gilliard, the Tsarevich’s tutor, said: “The illness of the Tsarevich cast a shadow over the whole of the concluding period of Tsar Nicholas II’s reign, and... was one of the main causes of his fall, for it made possible the phenomenon of Rasputin and resulted in the fatal seduction of the sovereigns who lived in a world apart, wholly absorbed in a tragic anxiety which to be concealed from the eyes of all.”

Following this line of argument, Kerensky said: “Without Rasputin, there could have been no Lenin”... But no, Rasputin was not the cause of the Russian revolution. God would not have allowed the greatest Christian empire in history to fall because of the sinfulness of one man!

Nevertheless, Rasputin’s influence on the Empress because of his seeming ability to stem the haemophiliac blood-flows of the Tsarevich did undermine the popularity of the Monarchy at a critical time. Moreover, Rasputin was a symbol of the situation of Russia in her last days. The Tsarevich represented the dynasty, and therefore Russia herself, losing blood, that is, spiritual strength, as a result of her sins. Rasputin represented the enemies of Russia, who offered their own pseudo-spiritual remedies. But Russia was not cured, but died. “And the child, “who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron... was caught up to God and His throne” (Revelation 12.5)...

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[1] Maria Carlson, “*No Religion Higher than Truth*”: A History of the Theosophical Movement in Russia, 1875-1922, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

[2] See Archpriest Michael Polsky, *The New Martyrs of Russia*, Wildwood, Alberta: Monastery Press, 2000, pp. 121-122; Monk Anthony (Chernov), *Vie de Monseigneur Théophane, Archevêque de Poltava et de Pereiaslavl* (The Life of his Eminence Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereyaslavl), Lavardac: Monastère Orthodoxe St. Michel, 1988; Monk Anthony (Chernov), private communication; Richard Bettes, Vyacheslav Marchenko, *Dukhovnik Tsarskoj Sem’i* (Spiritual Father of the Royal Family), Moscow: Valaam Society of America, 1994, pp. 60-61 ; Archbishop Averky (Taushev), *Vysokopreosviaschennij Feofan, Arkhiepiskop Poltavskij i Pereiaslavskij* (His Eminence Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereyaslavl), Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1974 ; Edvard Radzinsky, *Rasputin*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000; Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 453-455; F. Vinberg, *Krestnij Put’* (The Way of the Cross), Munich, 1920, St. Petersburg, 1997, chapter 6; K.V. Krenov (ed.), *Petr Stolypin*, Moscow: Novator, 1998, p. 176 ; Lubov Millar, *Grand Duchess Elizabeth of Russia*, Redding, Ca., 1993, pp. 183-186; Prince Felix Yusupov, *Memuary* (Memoirs), Moscow, 1993; Robert Massie, *Nicholas and Alexandra*, London: Indigo, 2000.

[3] In fact, “Rasputin first appeared in St. Petersburg most probably in 1902, having by that time ‘won the heart’ of the Kazan bishop Chrisanthus, who recommended him to the rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Bishop Sergius [Stragorodsky, the future patriarch]. The latter, in



his turn, presented Rasputin to the professor, celibate priest Veniamin, and to the inspector of the Academy, Archimandrite Theophan” (Alexander Bokhanov, Manfred Knodt, Vladimir Oustimenko, Zinaida Peregudova, Lyubov Tyutyunnik, *The Romanovs*, London: Leppi, 1993, p. 233).