

The man with the mark of the beast

by Rachel Douglas and Susan Welsh

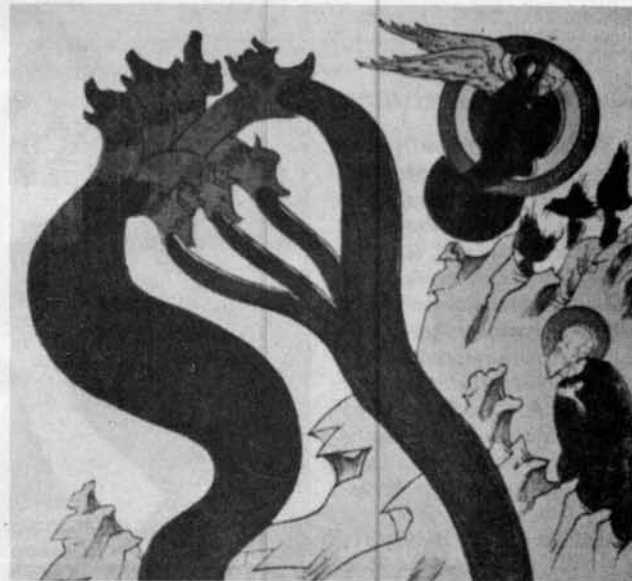
A high-level official of the Roman Catholic Church in Europe, when briefed on the Leesburg raid against Lyndon LaRouche, pointed immediately to the 12th and 13th chapters of the Book of Revelation, where St. John the Divine describes “a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns,” and foretells that “as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed,” and that “no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Mikhail Gorbachov is branded with the mark, the official said; LaRouche is not.

It is a remarkable fact that in the Soviet Union, no photograph of the General Secretary is permitted to appear, which does not have the prominent mark on Gorbachov’s forehead carefully airbrushed out (compare our cover photo). The Kremlin leadership fears the explosive reaction of the Soviet population to the idea that Mother Russia is ruled by Satan.

One West Germany-based expert on Russian history, when reached for comment Oct. 8, stressed that the Soviets are enormously sensitive to questions like the mark on Gorbachov’s brow, because of the strong and unpredictable “apocalyptic Old Believer tradition” in the population. “Russia has a history of apocalyptic-messianic views like no other country in the entire Christian world. From 1666 to 1931, for 275 years, this was at a high point. At the time of the Bolshevik Revolution, one-third of Christians were estimated to be apocalyptic Old Believers. No one can tell, today, how strong this belief is. It is very unpredictable, and the Soviet authorities, and the Church itself, couldn’t tell what would happen in the backwoods, if it were generally known that Gorbachov had this mark on his forehead.” The expert added that “the Russian Orthodox Church has certainly tried to play down the Book of Revelation of St. John the Divine.”

An official representative of the Russian Orthodox Church in Geneva responded to a query on Gorbachov’s mark with evident distress: “This cannot be so, whatever some people may think. This is not a good thing to say. The Russian people are still very superstitious, you know. . . . This is not a good thing to say. The Church has good relations with the State.”

To understand the explosion which “the mark of the beast” could unleash in the Soviet Union—which one expert de-



The Soviet press is replete with terms taken from the Old Believers’ texts. A common example is the phrase “dark forces,” which originates in Revelation 16:13: “And I saw three dark forces like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.” The woodcut shown here is from the Old Believers’ Apocalypse.

scribed as “psychological fission”—consider the uproar caused among both peasant and intellectual circles in the country in the aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. The word passed swiftly from one *babushka* to the next: According to Revelations 8:10-11, “And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.” And the Ukrainian word for wormwood, as the *babushki* knew, is *chernobil*—or in Russian translation, *chernobyl*.

The Apocalypse and the Russian Revolution

Indeed, the apocalyptic side of Russian culture is pervasive. Ongoing *EIR* investigations into “the Trust,” the Western-Russian condominium which launched the Russian Revolution, reveal just how deep this “Old Believer” (*Raskolnik*) current runs. Sir Samuel Hoare, the chief of the British Military Intelligence mission in Russia in 1917, shows in his memoir, *The Fourth Seal* (1930), how the Western oligarchical forces involved in creating the Bolshevik Revolution, identified it with the Apocalypse. His book is illustrated with woodcuts from Revelation, taken from the *Old Believers’ Apocalypse*. Hoare was himself a leading figure of the Trust, and was close to A. I. Guchkov, the head of the Moscow Old Believer circles that heavily financed the Bolsheviks. Guchkov later surfaced abroad as an émigré Russian on the payroll of the OGPU, the Bolshevik intelligence service.