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ANCIENT AND (POST)MODERN ESCHATOLOGICAL
NOTIONS

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Abstract. Before discussing different eschatological notions, the author indicates that it is possible to argue both cyclical and linear conception of time. Cyclical conception of time is typical of mythic understanding of the world, Far Eastern religions and ancient polytheism. Unlike monistic and pantheistic understanding of the world, monotheistic religions, as well as the modern science, support linear understanding of time. Within scientific linear conception of time, it is possible to represent an optimistic idea of infinite progress, but also a pessimistic idea, based on the second law of thermodynamics, that the universe is facing death caused by cooling. Having presented different versions of messianic ideas in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, the author reflects on eschatological notions of the Esoterics, present in the basis of the syncretistic New Age movement. In the final section of his work the author confronts Christian eschatology with the optimistic notion of the New Age supporters about the forthcoming age of Aquarius, in which the humanity will allegedly experience great spiritual progress and consequently peace and harmony. The author indicates the danger that postmodern man faces when, being misguided by pseudo-spiritual experiences, he confuses the expected Messiah with Antichrist.

Keywords: eschatology; messiah; time; progress; Antichrist.

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ДРЕВНИЕ И (ПОСТ)СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ
ЭСХАТОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ ПОНЯТИЯ

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Аннотация. Прежде чем перейти к обсуждению различных эсхатологических понятий, автор указывает, что можно аргументировать как циклическую, так и линейную концепцию времени. Циклическая концепция времени типична для мифического понимания мира, дальневосточных религий и древнего политеизма. В отличие от монистического и пантеистического понимания мира, монотеистические

религии, как и современная наука, поддерживают линейное понимание времени. В рамках научной линейной концепции времени можно представить оптимистическую идею бесконечного прогресса, но также и пессимистическую идею, основанную на втором законе термодинамики, что Вселенная сталкивается со смертью, вызванной охлаждением. Представляя различные варианты мессианских идей в иудаизме, христианстве, исламе, индуизме и буддизме, автор размышляет об эсхатологических представлениях эзотерики, присутствующих в основе синкретического движения нового века. В заключительном разделе своей работы автор противопоставляет христианскую эсхатологию оптимистическому представлению сторонников нового века о грядущем веке Водолея, в котором человечество якобы будет испытывать большой духовный прогресс и, следовательно, мир и согласие. Автор указывает на опасность, с которой сталкивается постмодернистский человек, когда, будучи введенным в заблуждение псевдодуховными переживаниями, он путает ожидаемого Мессию с Антихристом.

Ключевые слова: эсхатология; Мессия; время; прогресс; Антихрист.

Confronting the uncertain future, contemporary man relies more on eschatological notions of different religions than on scientific theories. Unlike people in the ancient times, he has access to different religious and esoteric teachings and he lives in a secularized age. Hence, he has an opportunity to choose an eschatological notion in which he wants to believe. Indeed, he is being “helped” by the mass media that, occasionally and in sensational way, launches different prophecies about the end of the world. Whether it is the famous Mayan calendar, which allegedly ends in 2012, or unexplained the third prophecy of Fatima, or forbidding collision of our planet with a celestial object, it is important to cause an excitement in a potential consumer of such contents.

In order to distinguish typical eschatological notions from considerable diversity of prophecies of future events, it would be worthwhile to pay attention to different conceptions of time. Namely, time can be conceived as cyclical and as linear. Within cyclical conception of time,

one may represent a viewpoint of perpetual recurrence of the same thing, like Stoics and Nietzsche did, or consider that there is an infinite number of different cycles. Regarding the cycle itself, one may believe that the motion is made from the highest towards the lowest point and perpetually back towards the highest point, or as discontinued leap from the lowest towards the highest point. Regarding the linear conception of time, it is possible to believe in infinite progress or in apocalyptic end of the physical world.

Keeping in mind the wide range of possibilities in understanding the time, one should not be surprised by the fact that different spiritual traditions gave different eschatological notions. As syncretistic mixing of fragments of different teachings is typical of postmodern man and performed at his own discretion, it is worthwhile to shed light on those ancient eschatologies that, more or less, fit nicely in different postmodern collages. All the more so because, thanks to the religious revival in the Eastern European countries and Islamic world, there are parallel

traditional eschatological notions, independent of postmodern tendency of syncretism.

Cyclic conception of time is characteristic of mythical understanding of the world, Far Eastern religion and ancient polytheism. Their understanding of historical events is based on the model of organism which is brought into life, develops, becomes old and dies, so that a new organism could take its place. Cosmos is established by victory of gods over forces of chaos, but it is still getting old, despite the occasional regenerations. Its degradation is accelerated by the sins of humanity. Although the world is gradually getting farther from the perfection of its beginning, i.e. from the golden age, it is not the reason for pessimism. Namely, after cataclysm of the old, foul and timeworn world, after decomposition of the cosmos into chaos, thanks to creativity of divine forces, a new golden age will begin.

As is well known, a dominant teaching in Hindu tradition is the teaching about cosmic cycles, i.e. kalpas. Each kalpa lasts thousand great cosmic ages, each being divided into four yugas. While the Golden Age corresponds to Krita Yuga, which lasts for 1.440.000 human years, Treta Yuga corresponds to the Silver Age, Dwapara Yuga to the Bronze Age, and Kali Yuga to the Iron Age. According to this teaching, in each subsequent cycle the good is decreasing and the evil increasing. While in Krita Yuga the good dominated, and the evil was almost absent, in Treta Yuga there were $\frac{3}{4}$ of the good and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the evil, in

Dwapara Yuga there was an equal amount of the good and the evil, while in Kali Yuga there is $\frac{1}{4}$ of the good and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the evil. Just as in ancient Greece it was believed that they lived in the Iron Age, so in India there is a predominant concept that we live in Kali Yuga, in the age in which the evil is prevailing.¹ Since man is not capable to essentially change anything with his own deeds, it remains for us to hope for divine intervention, i.e. the arrival of avatars who will overpower forces of the evil and bring us into the new cosmic cycle.

Unlike monistic and pantheistic understanding of the world, which are characterized by cyclical concept of time, monotheistic religions have linear notion of time. According to monotheistic religions, eternal, unworldly God is not just a demiurge who builds the universe out of set chaotic material, but rather He is the creator of the world from nothing. Due to the very fact that monotheistic religions advocate the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*, time and cosmos have their beginning. History of mankind begins by expulsion of the forefather Adam from paradise and it will last until restoration of the heavenly state after doomsday. Hence, the history of mankind is progressing in linear course, because it has the beginning and the end.

Augustine's theology of history in *De civitate Dei* may serve as an example of such understanding of history. In accordance with biblical teaching about the creation of the world in six days, Augustine divided world history in six periods. The first period lasts from Adam until the flood, the

¹Indeed, one of Hindu teachers did not share this widely accepted opinion. Sri Yukteswar considered that not only do we live in Kali Yuga, but that after Kali Yuga there will not be Krita Yuga, but Dwapara Yuga. Sri Yukteswar divided equinoctial cycle of 24.000 years into ascending and descending arches, each one lasting for 12.000 years. According to his calculations, the Iron Age was at its peak up to 499 AD. Then, human intellectual abilities declined to the degree ruled by harsh materialism. Only after 1100 years of ascending Kali Yuga, during transition period towards Dwapara Yuga, man becomes capable of discovering more subtle laws of universe, and establishing political peace. After 200 years of transition period in Dwapara Yuga, around 1899, actual Dwapara Yuga will begin. It will be in the sign of discovery of electricity and atomic energy (Jnanavatar Swami Sri Yukteswar Giri, 1977).

second from Noah until Abraham, the third from Abraham until David, the fourth from David until the Babylonian captivity, the fifth from the Babylonian captivity until the birth of Jesus Christ. We find ourselves in the sixth, the final period of the history of mankind, which will end with the Second Coming of Christ. After that, according to biblical story of God`s repose on the seventh day, earthly history will cease because, after doomsday, people will find themselves either in heaven or in hell.

While ancient Greeks primarily asked themselves about the logos of the cosmos, considering that the history was “moving in circular flow of political changes,” and, hence, that “the future cannot bring anything completely new” (Löwith, 1961), Judeo-Christian viewpoint is characterized by the attempt to understand God`s plan for history, i.e. to understand God`s providence and anticipate the future. Unlike Far Eastern teaching about reincarnation, which quite corresponds to cyclical conception of time, monotheistic religions consider that each human being is given just one life. For that reason, both individual human life and history of mankind are viewed from the perspective of attaining salvation. In principle, they find strange the understanding of impersonal destiny, typical of cyclical conception of time¹. There is more room for freedom within monotheistic religions because they understand God as a person. Although God traced the plan of historical

occurrence, the man can influence God`s will with his actions. Thanks to redemption, moral and spiritual rebirth of a certain human community, punishment for sins can be avoided or postponed².

Linear conception of time is standard in scientific understanding of the world. According to the Enlightenment and positivistic understanding, history moves from the primitive state towards man`s infinite development, which will be made possible by unrelenting development of science and engineering. Yet, as Löwith notices, there is no doubt that the modern concept of progress is actually a secularized Judeo-Christian understanding of historical occurrence. Godless (post)modern man, who no longer takes care of the salvation of his soul, but who is focused on satisfying hedonistic needs, “believes neither in destiny, nor in providence. He imagines that he can create his own future” (Löwith, 1961). He takes initiative in constructing the future in accordance with his own will by assigning himself the role of the subject of history.

Contrary to this optimistic understanding of history as infinite progress, it is also possible to take a pessimistic viewpoint on history from the scientific view of the world. Different futuristic theories indicate not only the increasing ecological problems in the world, but also the danger of nuclear disasters, volcanic eruptions, collisions with celestial objects, human

¹According to Hindu religion, the law of karma works automatically and impersonally. Each breach of moral cosmic order demands making sacrifice, whose energy would restore the order. It is interesting that in Greek mythology, not only humans are subordinate to fate, but god as well. Moreover, even supreme god Zeus is also powerless in relation to it. Yet, thanks to interpretations of omens, dreams and constellations of celestial bodies, a man can alleviate, sometimes even partially escape from the blow of fate.

²Taking seriously the threatening message that God sent them through the prophet Jonah, the Ninevites repented for their sins and abstained from evil. Consequently, they avoided God`s punishment. Although God is perceived as a person, in Islam and Protestantism predestination has very high importance. Calvinistic understanding of the world is based on belief that God predetermined who will be punished and who will be saved. Belief in *kismet* is typical of both layman and dominant theological understanding of Islam. Nevertheless, some Islamic theologians indicate the importance of free will in historical occurrences.

overpopulation, as well as the abuse of science (genetic engineering). Keeping in mind a disproportion between the undoubted scientific and technical progress, and absence of progress in the realm of morale, one should not be surprised that many people anxiously observe current activities in the areas of technology. Moreover, there is an opinion, based on the second law of thermodynamics, that cosmos is facing death caused by cooling¹.

The messianic idea is possible both in linear and cyclic conception of time. Messiah is a person whose task is to defeat the forces of evil at the end of time and establish the perfect era of overall peace, love and justice. Idea of the Messiah originates from Judaism. The word itself denotes God`s anointed one, the person who plays the key role in establishing the Kingdom of God. Although they had been anxiously waiting for the Messiah, when he appeared in the likeness of Jesus of Nazareth, most of the Jews did not recognize him, because they had narrow, nationalistic-political understanding of the Messiah. Moreover, not only did they reject him, but they handed him over to the Romans to be crucified as blasphemer and rebel. Because their religious identity is based on rejection of Jesus as Christ, the Jews still wait for the coming of the Messiah who will establish their rule on earth.

The Christians are people who acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, i.e. as Christ. They believe that the Second Coming of Christ will be preceded by the

rule of Antichrist on earth. Since the early age of Christianity, the faithful have been warned to remain awake and not to succumb to deception of those who falsely portray themselves as the Messiah. It is strongly stressed that in the end times people will be forced to receive mark of the beast on their forehead or the right arm. Acceptance of that mark, without which they will not be able to buy or sell, will be equal to the betrayal of Christ. However, those who endure in deserted places three and a half years of scarcity will be saved and worthy of dwelling in heaven.

Islam took over the Judeo-Christian idea of the Messiah. In Islam his name is Mahdi. Different Shiitic communities ascribe the status of the Messiah to the Hidden Imam, whose identity is established in different ways, depending on whether it is being done by Ishmaelites or duodecimal Shiites. It is interesting that in different versions of Islamic tradition Jesus Christ, too, has the messianic role. While some identify him with Mahdi himself, who is usually understood as Muhammad`s descendant, others treat him as Mahdi`s assistant. There is a belief that in the end of times Jesus will unclose himself as the true Muslim. Not only will he crash the cross, slaughter the pig, go to pilgrimage to Mecca, but he will become related to Muhammad. Namely, after he questions his righteous faith, Muhammad will let him marry his own sister. After he defeats the Dajjal (Antichrist), Jesus will place before non-Muslims choice to accept the Islam, as the only true religion, or to be destroyed. According to the Islamic belief, it is Jesus

¹ See: (Rifkin, 1986). "His theory of 'heat death' stated that the universe is gradually running down and eventually will reach the point of maximum entropy or heat death where all available energy will have been expended and no more activity will occur." (Rifkin, Howard, 1981: 45) "The Entropy Law destroys the notion of history as progress" (Rifkin, Howard, 1981: 6). In order to slow down an inevitable process of entropy, according to Rifkin, the mankind should choose an ecological behavior model. Although it seems that the Entropy Law inevitably leads to a pessimistic view of the world, Rifkin reminds that "it is a law governing the horizontal world of time and space," but luckily "it is mute, however, when it comes to the vertical world of spiritual transcendence" (Rifkin, Howard, 1981: 8).

who will contribute to overall victory of Islam¹.

According to Hindu teaching, whenever *dharma* is endangered, when people cannot resist cosmic evil with their own strength, Vishnu, god who keeps balance between the good and the evil in the universe, becomes incarnated in avatar on earth and defeats unleashed forces of evil². Allegedly, until now there have been nine avatars. Since many Indian people are prone to pantheistic view of the world, one should not be surprised at their belief that Vishnu incarnated in animals, too. He preformed his mission as fish, turtle, boar, half-man, half-lion, dwarf, in order to later be incarnated in a human, too. After incarnation in Rama with an ax, the most famous two of his incarnations followed: Rama and Krishna, depicted in Ramayana and Mahabharata. Hinduism propensity to absorb even opposed teachings is shown by the example of the ninth avatar – despite the fact that Buddhism was once treated as heretical teaching, Buddha was ascribed status of the ninth avatar³. At the end of this cycle, when Kali Yuga reaches its culmination, Vishnu will incarnate in Kalki avatar and destroy the evil. Its triumphant establishment of justice on earth will mark the beginning of Kali Yuga, the new Golden Age⁴.

Buddhism also includes the belief that long time ago the Golden Age existed.

People were ruled by emperors-saints. Life was carefree and blissful. But, during the reign of the seventh emperor the good slowly began to decline and the evil emerged. The consequence was that the people lived shorter. While, during the peak of the Golden Age, people lived up to 80.000 years, during the life of Siddharta Gautama on earth, the life span of man shortened to hundred years. Buddhist believe that either at the end of this kalpa, or five thousand years after Gautama`s life on earth, new Buddha will incarnate in human form. Currently he is in Tushita heaven as Bodhisattva, and he will appear as Maitreya Buddha to establish peace and love on earth. His coming will take place at the age of absolute degradation of morality and spirituality. People will then live only for ten years. Not only will they be selfish and self-centred, but also prone to do any evil to one another. Realizing that they are constantly exposed to violence, that they live in fear of another, they will repent for their evil nature. Then Maitreya Buddha will appear and offer them his teaching about salvation. Thanks to the spiritual revolution which will then take place, an era of peace, harmony and love will begin.

Let us reflect on eschatological notions of the Esoterics, since they are the source of inspiration for the *New Age* movement that considers that the only response to global and ecological problems

¹ See: (Busse, 1993: 282-283). Certainly, Christians do not believe in Islamic teaching. Not only do they treat Islam as a religion that is spiritually inferior to Christianity, but they also consider the emergence of Islam a God`s whip, a certain punishment for Christians because of their non-christian life.

² Krishna, incarnation of god Vishnu, tells the following to Arjuna about his role: “Whenever, O descendant of Bharata, there is decline of Dharma, and rise of Adharma, then I body Myself forth, For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of Dharma, I come into being in every age.”(Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita, 1909).

³ There were spiritual teachers, like Ramakrishna, who placed Jesus Christ amongst avatars.

⁴ Hindu view of the world is cyclical, so the evil can never be completely destroyed. Avatar actually defeats only one manifestation of the evil, not the evil as such, because it has its role in evolution of the world. Despite the defeats, the evil will always emerge again, grow and hence call for the arrival of the avatar. Physical world is the world of dualities, so the good and the evil cannot exist without each other. Only the enlightened one will jump out of this cosmic play, which, from the point of absolute monism is yet an illusion.

of our age is a creation of a new, unique world religion. At the end of XIX and beginning of XX century, theosophists developed a teaching about evolution of human kind, relying on occult practice and relating in a syncretistic way elements of religions of East and West. Amongst other things, they restored a renaissance idea about the coming of a new era, new golden age of mankind. While Helena Blavatsky considered that the new era, when the sixth race will emerge, is very far away, her followers significantly decreased the time of the beginning of golden age. Annie Besant tried to quicken its beginning, considering that the time for new era is ripe. In order for that to happen, according to her opinion, it was necessary that Christ incarnates on earth. As immaculate and holy womb of Virgin Mary was needed for Christ to descend from heavenly heights to the earth, so it was necessary to find a person who will renounce one`s own ego and let divine mind move in in her. Annie Bessant believed that the person who was prepared to renounce himself, who had a great spiritual potential, was an Indian boy Krishnamurti. In order to fulfill their plan, theosophists kidnapped the boy and took him to England. Despite the fact that he was submitted to attentive theosophical training and occult influence, the boy ultimately refused to renounce his ego and denied that he was the awaited the world saviour. So, the expected arrival of the theosophical Saviour to earth was temporarily delayed.

The New Age movement that encompasses different religious teachings, already with its name refers to the fact that the center of its interest is the coming of new age. That new age, which we already stepped in according to some, and which we are stepping in according to the others, is called the age of Aquarius. Unlike the era

of Pisces, which is characterized by dogmatic exclusivity, aggression and confrontation, the age of Aquarius will be the age of blossoming freedom, creativity, peace, concord, cooperation and spirituality. In this era of unsuspected spiritual enthusiasm, everyone will have be entitled to search for one`s own way of self-realization. Because they nurture the notion of a nonpersonal divinity, instead of personal God, because they oppose church, priesthood, dogmas and hierarchy, the New Age movement supporters consider that there are many different ways leading to God, none of which should claim exclusivity.

The beginning and full development of the age of Aquarius requires the saviour to appear on earth. Followers of the movement are required to focus in their meditation on his arrival. Conditions for the appearance of the Saviour will be established when the New Age teaching becomes accepted by a sufficient number of people and when the sufficient number of meditators of high level of consciousness take part in meditation. Crossing narrow borders of individual religions, he will be the creator of the new world religion, which will encompass the best of each. For Hindus, the Saviour will be Kalki, for Buddhist Maitreya, for Muslims Mahdi, for Jews Messiah, for Christians Christ.

Having outlined traditional and postmodern eschatological notions, it would be useful to make a comparison between them. We will focus on a different view of the future in Christianity and in the New Age movement. Undoubtedly, vision of the future from the viewpoint of the New Age movement is very optimistic. Advocates of this movement consider that all problems of our time, primarily ecological, will be solved relatively easily,

thanks to entering the age of Aquarius. When people adopt holistic view of the world, when they focus on what brings them together, instead on their differences, when they become primarily interested in their own spiritual development, there will not be any reasons for conflicts. They will feel belonging to mother Earth and deep connection not only with all the people, but with all the creatures as well. The spiritual evolution will bring the time of concord, peace and harmony on earth.

This optimism seems very naive to Christians. Although they, too, believe that after the Second Coming of Christ the world will transform, that new heaven and new earth will be created, they are aware that it will be preceded by a period of great suffering and temptations. The Bible announces that we are to face wars, illnesses and natural disasters, before the evil culminates in the appearance of Antichrist. His appearance will be enabled by the people becoming more selfish and sinful, by faith in Christ becoming cold to a great extent, despite the external pledges and rituals. Christians see one of the signs of the approaching evil in the New Age movement, whose advocates mostly display negative attitude towards church. In the New Age veneration of nature, their pseudo-spiritual practice, denial of traditional values, conception of a unique syncretic religion, Christians not only anticipate restoration of paganism, but also preparation for the coming of Antichrist. Christians do not see Saviour in the person of Maitreya, i.e. Jewish Messiah, but the Antichrist.

Christians do not display their distrust in the New Age ideology so much because of its theoretical closeness to Far Eastern religions, but because of the pseudo-

spiritual practice which does not contain any traces of asceticism. This ideology is close to educated people of the Western world who are interested in instant spirituality, in which tangible results are achieved without much effort. They expect that practicing certain techniques will bring relaxation, better health, longer life, more successful carrier. Unlike Far Eastern religions, that understand this earthly life as arena of suffering, that wish to break the chain of incarnations on earth, followers of this movement are focused on attaining pleasure. Partially familiar with teachings of Far Eastern religions, without prior ascetic efforts to burn their ego, by having comfortable lives they strive to experience mystical union with the universe¹.

Wishing to expand their own consciousness, they treat their own pseudo-spiritual experiences in a very non-critical manner. As they are theoretically familiar with monistic and pantheistic positions, they do not devote much attention to the problem of the evil and do not think about the danger of falling into spiritual deception. Yearning to get in contact with the higher sphere, they recklessly surrender themselves to the guidance of spirits-leaders and, because of that, end up deceived. Unlike ascetics who are highly distrustful towards their visions, who, despite the long lasting ascetic endeavour do not consider themselves worthy of contact with the divine sphere, they neither see their sinfulness, nor try to overcome their pride. Relying on the teaching that spirituality is above the morale, they want to skip their moral development and long term practice of burning their ego, and take the esoteric shortcut to the position which is beyond the good and the evil. Those who believe that occult practice will help them

¹It is easy to talk at length in theory about the unity of *Atman* and *Brahman*, but burning one's ego and truly experience the unity of internal and external divinity is remarkably difficult, even for great spiritual seekers.

on such way often end up in Satanism. Hence, one should not be surprised that some of the supporters of the New Age, prone to accusing Christianity of intolerance, support the reaffirmation of Lucifer¹.

Relaying on the Bible and patristic teachings, according to which Antichrist, by acting as a great humanist and performing miracles, will become emperor on earth during the great apostasy², Christians are very distrustful towards globalistic tendencies of the modern world. They see ideological preparation for the rule of Antichrist in the efforts of the New Age movement advocates to abolish states, nations, religions, and create a unique world religion and world government. Biblical words that “man of sinne bee reuealed, the sonne of perdition” will not come to rule until “onely he who now letteth, will let, vntill he be taken out of the way” (2 Thessalonians 2:7) can be interpreted in many ways. Most frequent interpretation claims that they refer to removal of the Church, although there are some who think that they refer to removal of the Russian Tsar.

In light of these interpretations, attacks on orthodox Christianity that remained as the only faithful one to the original Christianity, as well as on Russia and its potential orthodox allies, can be understood as part of the process of removing the spiritual strength that prevents the coming of Antichrist. Namely, as long as liturgies are being served in

orthodox Christian temples and prayers of saints are offered up, as long as orthodox Christianity does not dilute and collapses, the coming of Antichrist is postponed³.

Therefore, the task of not only the orthodox Christian believer, but of any man who does not want the evil to overcome in the world, is to engage oneself in struggle against the evil in one`s own heart. Fate of the world partially depends on everyone`s personal internal struggle. Instead of superficial optimism which lulls us in expectation of rosy future, it is better to be aware of the great danger which approaches. That awareness of the danger should not cause an internal panic reaction. Although the forces of evil will be of great magnitude and the temptations will be remarkably strong, God will eventually conquer the evil and the entire world will be transformed. During the times of tribulations he will give to the faithful ones the strength to endure it all and to come out from the troubles transformed, as through the purging fire.

Each one of us is to choose the eschatological teaching to which our trust will be given. Although it seems irrelevant to many, because near future is highly uncertain and unpredictable, it is yet no so. Namely, our view of the future is to the great extent affected by our behaviour in the present. If we take seriously the danger that lies ahead of us, if we observe an immense power of global system that potentially lies at disposal to the forces of evil, we will take more responsible attitude in the present. Especially in times that are

¹Some of them consider that Lucifer is an angel of internal evolution of man. See: (Spangler: 183).

²Biblical words that in that time “man of sinne bee reuealed, the sonne of perdition, Who opposeth and exalteth himselfe aboue all that is called God, or that is worshipped so that he as God, sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himselfe that he is God.” (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4) are most frequently interpreted as Antichrist`s installation in a restored Temple of Solomon.

³Many orthodox Christian believers look in distrust to ecumenistic tendencies within local orthodox churches. Having experienced over the centuries different attempts to weaken Orthodox Church from within, they consider that advocacy of ecumenism is a step towards relativisation of orthodox teaching, i.e. abandonment of the truth for compromised unity.

coming, we must be awake and try to attain Christ`s likeness, to resist the seduction of demonic forces.

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