Introduction to Orthodox Christian Social Thought

Outline

Dylan Pahman

Acton University 2025

1. Introduction: What is Christian social thought?
	1. The problem of modern abundance
	2. Does modern Orthodox social thought exist?
2. How to think socially
	1. Basic principles all Christians should agree on
		1. Natural law
		2. Rule of law
		3. Image of God and Human Dignity
		4. Jesus Christ
		5. Wealth not evil, but brings temptations
		6. Property rights
		7. Care for the poor
		8. Inequalities create responsibilities
		9. Stewardship
		10. Religious liberty
	2. The Old Christian Map
	3. Adam Smith (and Kenneth Boulding)
		1. Christian versions
	4. A New Social Map
		1. What about the Church?
3. Modern Orthodox social thought
	1. Sophia
		1. Problematic
		2. But not necessarily irredeemable
		3. Grounded in Scripture and Tradition
		4. Creativity as a revelation of Paradise
			1. Economic production
			2. Friendship
	2. *Sobornost’*
		1. Catholicity or holism
		2. The spiritual unity of society
			1. Personal, not impersonal
			2. Internal, not external
			3. Grace, not law
			4. “Church,” not world
		3. Imitation of the Mother of God
	3. Liturgical Theology
		1. A eucharistic worldview
		2. Sacramental *and* ascetic
		3. Interior monasticism
		4. Asceticism and subsidiarity
4. Conclusion