My responses to the detailed comments of Reviewer #1

I will be following the page numbers in the reviewed manuscript. Some of those will change drastically. One criticism of this reviewer is that my critique of Pilch seems "scattered," so I have gather together my critique into a summary section, so those page numbers will now be very different from where the reviewer's comments appear.

SOLOVIEV SECTION

Page 1: Reviewer:
Introduction needs to be rewritten by exposing the main goal of the article and the central theme of each separate section (1, 2, etc.)

I respond: Yes, I have rewritten it and stated the central theme of each section.

Reviewer:
Abstract needs to be rewritten from syntactic as well as cohesive point of view.

Yes, I have rewritten the abstract.

Pages 1-2: Reviewer (regarding a sentence that begins on 1 and finishes on page 2, in which I say that Soloviev had a big impact on subsequent Russian theology, and cite a Berdyaev article in the footnote):
This reference to Soloviev should be from a book about his life or a secondary source about his work. It does not match here to use a reference from Berdyaev to Soloviev.

I respond: The Berdyaev book *is* speaking about Soloviev's work and influence. It is "a secondary source about his work." I think I have to leave this as-is.

Page 2: Reviewer (regarding my organizing of Soloviev's career into three periods):
Which categorization of his work does the author follow? Author needs to specify this because there are some authors who added another (fourth) period, the apocalyptic one, in Soloviev's thought.
I respond: I think the threefold division works fine.

Page 3: Reviewer (regarding a sentence where I quote Berdyaev and his description of Soloviev: "His understanding of evil was not mystical but overly rationalistic; interpreting it gnostically."):
This is the interpratation of Gnostic according to Berdyaev. However, the early period of Soloviev's works is deeply Gnostical (the concept of Sophia, the cosmological model he presents in his work La Sophia, etc.)

I respond: I do acknowledge, one sentence later, "However, some of Soloviev's writings *do* show some ideas that are Gnostic-looking (in the second-century sense."). Therefore, I think I can leave this unchanged.

Reviewer (regarding my sentence "Middle and late Soloviev are much more orthodox, but also more ecumenical."):
Better to say here that "His vision was ecumenical during the second and the third period of his thought"

I respond: That leaves out my point about the orthodoxy of those two periods, and does not improve my comment about his ecumenicism, so I am leaving it as-is.

Reviewer (regarding a sentence where I start to analyze Soloviev's Sophiology):
Soloviev refers to Sophia in several works, such as La Sophia, La Russie et l'eglise universelle, Lectures on Godmanhood, etc. The author needs to find all these references in order to show how Sophia is linked (if linked) with the notion of deification in different contexts.

I respond: I will be doing that in the course of the next two pages. I think it is alright in this first sentence, not notice what he says about Sophia. His point about noticing whether or not Sophia is linked with deification is a valid point.

Page 4: Reviewer (responding to my comment that Lectures 11-12 in *Lectures on Divine Humanity* marks the beginning of his middle period):
This work is a transitional work between the first and the second period of Soloviev's work. Author needs to highlight this in order to show the more 'theocratic' vision of Soloviev's thought during his second philosophical period.

I respond: Whether it is "transitional" or whether it truly begins the second Solovievian period is a matter of opinion. I find it to be truly part of the second period since it is strongly influenced by patristic thought, which characterizes the second period.

Reviewer (responding to my "In an encyclopedia article, Soloviev says that Maximus is 'celebrated [for his] struggle against the Monothelite heresy,'[1] a heresy that 'more or less eliminated the *human* principle from Christ,' thereby undermining the possibility for divine-human cooperation."):
This is an estimation by Soloviev in a small article about Maximus. It does not mean anything whether Soloviev was influenced or not.

I respond: I see no need to change this, since the passage definitely shows that Soloviev sees Maximus as preserving the human principle in Christ, and shows Soloviev's admiration for Maximus's theology.

[1] Vladimir Soloviev, *SS* Vol. XII, 598; quoted in Pilch, *"Breathing the Spirit with Both Lungs,"* 86.

Reviewer (on a sentence which I start "It may be," and I am citing Pilch):
These were claimed by Pilch, not by the author. This needs to be specified.

I respond: I change my sentence-beginning to say "According to Pilch."

Page 5: Reviewer (responding to my remark "but Origen's restoration and recapitulation concept is definitely part of his understanding of deification"):
How can you justify this?

I respond: I spend the next two paragraphs (beginning "For Origen") justifying this. I have decided to change the sentence preceding "but Origen's restoration" and remove the next Pilch quotation, since I partially misunderstood that sentence of Pilch's. I have rewritten the paragraph, adding a sentence about Origen ("Pilch has the ultimately insupportable idea that the patristic concept of *apokatastasis* 'was rarely linked to deification,'[2] but Origen's restoration and recapitulation concept is definitely part of his understanding of deification. Origen sees it as a time when every rational mind 'will be wholly God . . . it will no longer behold or retain anything else than God . . . God becomes to him 'all.'"[3]).

Reviewer (to my sentence "Pilch wants to protect Soloviev from any association with Origen."):
Why do you think that he wants to do that?

I respond: I am pulling back from saying what Pilch "wants," as part of my attempt to comply with the reviewer's request that my critique of Pilch be less "personal." So here I say "Pilch denies that Soloviev makes any use of Origen's concept of deification."

Page 6: Reviewer (responding to my "It is not clear to me whether or not Soloviev was a universalist, believing that all souls would ultimately be saved."): One of the core ideas in Soloviev's philosophy is the idea of All-Unity. The fact that all souls would be saved does not include the only and one part of Soloviev's universalism.

I respond: I cannot understand your comment, whether or not you are saying Soloviev is a universalist in the sense I express. So I am leaving it unchanged.

Reviewer (responding to my "The goal for Soloviev is the deification of humanity"):
The deification of humanity is not a goal, it is a process.

I respond: Either word would be appropriate. It is a goal, as regards Soloviev's advocacy. It is a process, as regards how it is accomplished. I left this unchanged.

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[2] Pilch, *"Breathing the Spirit with Both Lungs,"* 229.
[3] Origen, *On First Principles* 3.6.3; quoted in Michael Roden, *Being Gods: Christian Deification as Restoration of the Divine Nature* (Columbus, OH: Omnia Gratia, 2024), 291.

Reviewer (responding to my "*Theosis* involves universal repair"):
Does Soloviev use the term 'theosis' in The Spiritual Foundations of Life"? Or does he use the word "bogochelovechestvo"?

I respond: Of course he uses the Russian word, but my article is intended mainly for English readers and will not be citing the Russian word in every instance. I did change "*theosis*" to "deification" in this sentence.

Page 7: Reviewer (responding to my statement that a passage shows "a certain Slavophile angle."):
What was Soloviev's relationship to Slavophilism?

I respond: I answer this with several of the remarks I make here and in what follows. In this remark I show that he echoes Slavophilism in some passages, but in the rest of the paragraph I say that he does not follow the anti-Western bent that Slavophilism took.

Page 8: Reviewer (responding to my statement that "In *God, Man and the Church* Soloviev spells out three categories of human cooperation with God that are necessary for the deification process: prayer, alms-giving, and fasting,"):
Doesn't this reflect to Maximus' ascetic values?

I respond: It might, but that is not my point here. My point is to explore what Soloviev says in that book.

Reviewer (responding to my "Sophia is completely left out of *God, Man and the Church*"):
Yes, because Soloviev has left behind the Gnosticism, Kabbalah, etc.

I respond: You may be right, but my comment says enough.

Page 10: Reviewer (responding to my "*Theosis*, then, means universal *theosis*; it is not for individuals alone."):
This is not correct. His work "The Meaning of Love'' is based on individual's perfection as a presupposition of theosis.

I respond: That may be, but I am looking at *God, Man and the Church*. However, I have rewritten my sentence thus: "The full meaning of deification, then, has to include universal deification." And this is true about the *full* meaning of deification, even in "The Meaning of Love."

Reviewer (responding to my referring to the title *Russia and the Universal Church*):
This is the English translation.

I respond: Of course. I am using English titles throughout. I explain this in my first footnote.

Page 11: Reviewer wants my short paragraph on Berdyaev's remarks to be placed in a footnote.

I respond. I have placed it in a footnote.

Reviewer (to my remark "Besides his continued use of Maximus the Confessor"):
Which parts of Justification of the Good show a direct link with Maximus? Is only deification?

I respond: I have added "regarding deification" at the end of my clause.

Page 12: Reviewer (regarding my "This humanist Antichrist may be based in part on Soloviev's picture of himself at an earlier period, a 'self-parody,' but not a 'self-negation.'"):
The author needs to distinguish where he expresses his own views and where he transfers others' point of view.

I respond: I have rewritten it to read "This Antichrist who poses as a humanist may be based in part on Soloviev's picture of himself at an earlier period, a 'self-parody,' but not a 'self-negation.'"[4] Obviously, I am here sharing Kornblatt's interpretation.

Reviewer (regarding my sentence beginning "But Berdyaev says"):
The author puts with a scatter way Berdyaev's criticism about Soloviev. I would suggest to collect all the criticism by Berdyaev and put it in a separate section in the article.

I respond: I have moved that paragraph to the summary section.

Page 13: Reviewer (to my sentence "For Soloviev and other Christians, *theosis* was never meant to be a way to diminish or undermine Christology."):
Christology in Soloviev's writings is obvious mainly in two works: The Lectures on Godmanhood & The Justification of the Good. In all the other writings there isn't any explicit reference to Christ. Unless, the author implies that Soloviev's work (in total) is deeply Christological. Then, the author needs to justify this.
Other Christian thinkers, theologians, philosophers? Kindly specify.

I respond: I have dropped the phrase "and other Christians." I disagree with the assertion that only two writings contain Christology. The sentence after the next quotes *God, Man* in speaking about "the God-man Jesus Christ" and how he brings the renewal of humanity. That counts as Christology.

[4] Judith Deutsch Kornblatt, "Soloviev on Salvation: The Story of the 'Short Story of the Antichrist,'" in *Russian Religious Thought*, ed. Judith Deutsch Kornblatt and Richard F. Gustafson (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 70.

Reviewer (responding to my assertion "he never loses sight of the Christological basis of *theosis*."):
Kindly justify this.

I respond: My quotations from three of Soloviev's works in the paragraphs preceding and following this passage show the strong Christology in Soloviev's thinking. Our deification grows out of the God-man. It is human cooperation, not initiative, that allows deification. It is done by the power of the existing Divinity.

BERDYAEV SECTION

Page 14: Reviewer wants me to rewrite the paragraph that speaks of leading philosophers in Berdyaev's youth.

I respond: I have rewritten it thus: "During Berdyaev's young manhood the main influences in philosophical circles were Kant and Nietzsche, and he frequently responded to their work. Kant was particularly influential at the Moscow Spiritual Academy, with an emphasis on rationality and moral perfection.[5]" The sentences are a bit more straightforward.

Reviewer examines my quotation from Berdyaev saying what Catholics need to understand about Orthodoxy, asking: And what about the Orthodoxy? What Orthodoxy needs to understand?

I respond: The second and the third sentences in the next paragraph criticize the tyranny of official Orthodoxy.

Reviewer (regarding my mention of "Alexei Khomyakov and Ivan Kireyevsky, who emphasized both freedom and community"):
What is your own position about this?

I respond: If I gave my own opinion here on these writers I would probably be criticized as making "scattered" comments. I see no need to express an opinion at this point. I do note that Berdyaev did not follow the anti-Western opinions that eventually emerged among Slavophiles.

Reviewer wants me to replace "Recovery" with another word.

I respond: I rewrote the whole sentence without that word. ("He criticized institutional Orthodoxy for its neglect of the idea of divine-human cooperation.").

Page 15:

Reviewer asks "What about Nietzsche's superman and Soloviev's God-man?"

[5] Coates, *Deification in Russian Religious Thought*, 63.

I respond: This is the Berdyaev section, not the Soloviev section. The following paragraphs spell out the contrast between Nietzsche's atheism and Berdyaev's theism.

Page 16:

Reviewer asks why I don't use the Russian word instead of the English word "Godmanhood," similar to his comment on page 6.

I respond: As I said regarding page six, this is an English language article, and I don't feel the need to always insert the Russian for every term Berdyaev uses.

Reviewer objects to my "abrupt" transition to Boehme.

I respond: The transition is necessary, since Berdyaev does use the language of "abyss," and it is necessary to show where it comes from. The new section on Boehme helps with continuity.

Reviewer asks "do you claim here that Berdyaev revises Nietzsche through Boehme's Ungrund?"

I respond: No, I claim he is utilizing Boehme and *not* Nietzsche.

Page 17:

Reviewer asks why I have the short paragraph on Berdyaev not being a Gnostic.

I respond: The paragraph is not really necessary, but just a response to some common criticism of Berdyaev (including from Coates, which I don't quote here). I have simply deleted this paragraph.

Reviewer objects that section "2c. Divine Human Collaboration" is all just quotes without any reflection from me.

I respond: I have added to my reflection that was already present. I have dropped two quotes. I have added my response to material at two places on page 18.

Reviewer asks me to quote Origen, when I say Berdyaev's quote has an Origenist ring to it.

I respond: I have dropped the mention of "Origenist." Turns out Origen does not speak of Adam's original image so much as *God's* image being restored within man.

Page 18:

Reviewer wants my reflection upon Berdyaev's comments on ethics and deification.

I respond: I have added new reflection at the end of this and the following paragraphs.

Page 19:

Reviewer wants expansion upon my remark about affirmation of eternity.

I respond: I expand my sentence, adding two more clauses.

Reviewer objects to my "quite personal way" of speaking about universalism here.

I respond: I have rewritten my paragraph to put the emphasis on Berdyaev's view, not mine, although a little bit of mine leaks through.

Page 21:

Reviewer asks if I am expressing Berdyaev's view or my own.

I respond: I clarify that this is Berdyaev's view.

Reviewer asks if Berdyaev is using "sexual love" in the same way Soloviev does in "The Meaning of Love."

I respond: I don't see a need to link it with that work of Soloviev's. I am simply asking what transformations does Berdyaev imagine. Lower on the page he has a similar .

Reviewer asks a similar question regarding the spiritual Adam in Soloviev.

I respond: Again, I don't see a need to link it with that work of Soloviev's. I am looking at Berdyaev's theology of the spiritual Adam (Christ).

Page 22:

Reviewer requests "Please elaborate more on common points between Sol. and Berdyaev about deification. What was the role of Christology on this? Berdyaev's Christology is more evident than Soloviev's? Why this happen and what does this mean?"

I respond: I understand the request, and I have expanded this paragraph with more analysis.