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RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE USSR AND IN MODERN RUSSIA

Referring to the role of the Russian Orthodox Church under the Communist rule one would be close to the truth by stating that it was basically non-existent. The Soviets were forced to feel that to be Communist in present and future held no place for any religion. A perfect example seems to be here, in St.-Petersburg where the Kazan Cathedral was transformed to the museum of Atheism. The Soviet times were very secular times.

With the downfall of the Soviet Union religion and activities associated with it have taken a dramatic turn in Russia. Russia's long history of being an Orthodox society experiences a definite revival. Turning back to the example of the Kazan Cathedral it is known that it will be returned to the fold of the Orthodox Church when authorities are able to roof for the accommodation of the Atheism museum. Other religions in Russia such as Muslim, Buddhist and Judaism are also experiencing sharp growth in popularity. Nonetheless, Orthodoxy still retains its place of the most popular religion in the country being the first by the number of its followers and the magnitude of its traditions.

The two different ruling elites – those of the Soviet power and those of today's Russia – are completely opposite in their respective views on religion. The former were steadfast atheist while the latter obviously lean to traditional Orthodoxy.