Toward the end of World War II, a nunnery from Moldova was occupied by the conquering Soviet troops. The nuns left and looked for refuge in other places. When they returned, they found a note on the altar: “The commander of the troops that occupied the monastery declares that he left it untouched and asks you to pray for his soul.” Beginning with that moment, the name of Alexander is mentioned at every religious service.

Pray for brother Alexander! You too, reader, pray, because this name does not concern only the commander of the victorious troops (But what have you done, brother Alexander, in the meantime? Have you spent your days in prison or have you become a conformist? Have you slaved on the fields like the others, or have you written books and sent them abroad†), but it also concerns all the other brothers Alexander, the insecure victors. Pray for brother Alexander from China, but do not forget brother Alexander in the United States; pray for the strong everywhere, for those who know, physicists, mathematicians, and super-technicians, but who no longer know well what they know and what they do, for all those who possess and give orders, together with their economists; pray for the triumphant wanderers through life without culture, but also for the wander-

* Moldova was a province of Romania. Since the monastery was occupied by the Soviet troops, Noica probably refers to the part of Moldova which was annexed by the Soviet Union first in 1940 and then also of the end of WWII: Bessarabia, the current Republic of Moldova.
† Due to censorship during Communism, writers from the Eastern bloc sent their manuscripts to the West with the help of acquaintances. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s The Gulag Archipelago, for example, was first published in the West.
ers within culture; for the European man who triumphed over material needs, for the modern man who triumphed over nature and over the good God. Pray for brother Alexander!