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ORTHODOX PRIESTS AS THE RESEARCHERS OF RELIGION IN RUSSIA IN THE 19th AND 20th CENTURIES*

This article is devoted to the academic work of clergymen in the Russian empire in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. The author proves that until the middle of the 19th century it should be spoken with a great caution that there was a Russian theology, as well as of individual clergymen's scientific studies, despite the fact, there were certain talented researchers. Nevertheless, it is in the first half of the 19th century when there were changes both in secular science and theology that made real a scientific resurgence that had started in the Age of Great Reforms.

These innovations wouldn't have been possible without changes in Higher and Secondary education of clergymen. A very important step in integration of education was permission for students of Russian spiritual academies to continue their education abroad. The author considers that this provided for the development of national Biblical studies. Another important factor, that made clergy's academic studies more intensive was an increase in the number of scientific periodicals.

The third factor that enabled the academic work of clergymen in the Russian empire in the second half of the 19th to the beginning of the 20th centuries, was an increase in the number of scientific societies in which scholars could take part. The greater part of clerics' writings were published as the labours of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society which had many regional departments. The intensification of missionary work demanded from clergymen a knowledge of traditional religious beliefs and syncretistic religious views of the peoples of Siberia, Povolzhye and the Caucasus. The ethnographical materials, brought by them, are relevant even up to the present time. Refs 19.

Keywords: intellectual history, the history of the study of religion in Russia.

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ПРАВОСЛАВНЫЕ СВЯЩЕННОСЛУЖИТЕЛИ — ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛИ РЕЛИГИИ В РОССИИ XIX — НАЧАЛА XX ВЕКА

Статья посвящена научной работе священнослужителей в Российской империи второй половины XIX — начала XX в. Автор доказывает, что до середины XIX в. о российской богословской науке, как и о ученых занятиях священнослужителей, несмотря на наличие отдельных талантливых исследователей, можно было говорить с большой осторожностью. Однако именно в первой половине столетия как в светской науке, так и в богословии происходили изменения, сделавшие возможным научный подъем, начавшийся в эпоху Великих реформ. Эти инновации в науке были бы невозможны без изменения системы среднего и высшего образования священнослужителей. Важным шагом в интеграции образования стало разрешение учащимся российских духовных академий продолжать образование за рубежом. Автор считает, что это способствовало развитию отечественной библеистики. Другим важным фактором, повлиявшим на интенсификацию научных занятий клириков, было увеличение числа периодических научных журналов. Третьим фактором, который активизировал научную работу священнослужителей в Российской империи, стало увеличение числа научных обществ, в деятельности которых они принимали участие. Больше всего работ клириков публиковалось в трудах Императорского Русского географического общества, которое имело множество

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региональных отделений. Интенсификация миссионерской работы потребовала от клириков знания традиционных религиозных верований и синкретических религиозных представлений народов Сибири, Поволжья и Кавказа. Этнографические материалы, которые были ими собраны, были обширны и не утратили своей научной значимости и сейчас. Библиогр. 19 назв.

Ключевые слова: интеллектуальная история, история изучения религии в России.

Until the middle of the XIXth century it should be spoken with a great caution of a Russian theology, as well as of clergy's scientific studies, despite the fact, there were single talented researchers. Nevertheless, it is in the first half of the XIXth century, when there were changes both in secular science and theology, that made real a scientific uprise, started in the Age of Great Reforms. These innovations wouldn't have been possible without changes in Higher and Secondary education. If in many European countries independent scientific creativity in a field of secular studies and spiritual sphere developed apart from a state, in Russia the science and theology development was in many ways connected with state decisions, and this aspect influenced much on a specific development of the national culture.

V.I. Vernandsky wrote about state and science relations in the second half of the XIXth century: "Russian scientists made their scientific work in contrary to the state organization" [1, c. 8]. At the same time there was a high hope for science. In its development the followers of reforms set a condition of successful reforming the country and a way of "moral and economical rapprochement of all the society classes for the shared benefit" [2]. Science cultivation became appreciated as an estimable occupation for people of all the social classes. It is no wonder, that many clergymen were among the researchers, who contributed much not only in studying the Church history, different church disciplines, but also in such secular studies as ethnography, anthropology of religion, folklore studies, area studies. V.K. Kantor admits: "The clerical order gradually became a second echelon of Russian enlightenment" [3].

Due to the reform of religious education an educational background level of graduates from higher spiritual institutions changed cardinally [4], and this reform also provided including clergymen to a scientific process. It provided uprising of the theology level in whole. Owing to the fact, that since 1869 students of spiritual institutions had had an ability to continue their education abroad, the level of the Biblical, Byzantine, etc. studies was up. Students and professors from spiritual schools could take part in work of Russian academic organizations abroad, particularly, in the Russian Archeological museum in Constantinople [5], which due to the efforts of the academician F.I. Uspensky became one of the biggest centers of Byzantine studies in the world [6, c. 246]. Not only dissertations' level was higher, but also their problematic was wider. In the beginning of the XXth century dissertations, defended at the spiritual academies, were devoted to national religiosity, knowledge of which was very important for priests' work.

A base of these works was Old Russian booklore (here we may mention A. N. Sobolev's work "Afterword of Old Russian Beliefs. Literary-Historic Experience of Old Russian National World View Study") [7] actual until now), as well as folklore and ethnographical origins, grounded in Ph.D. theses of the Moscow Spiritual Academy's students M. Kurgansky "Nature in religious view of the Russian people" (1912) and V. Ilyinsky "Human nature in a Russian folk view" (1911), which were reviewed by the Moscow Spiritual Academy's professor Pavel Florensky [8], who admitted in his comment on the work of V. Ilyinsky,

that “Both for a clergyman and for a thoughts historian equally it should be found out and understood the world outlook in its whole. If the first one can’t but take-up, to whom go those, who he teaches, then the second one must be reasonably interested in that, from whom descend those, who taught him. The folklore world view, as a clay, for a clergy’s influence, and the folklore world view, as a womb, giving birth to thinkers, for a historian, — that is a common subject of a world view of both a life-doer and a life-contemplator. Without knowing this background a folklore clergyman would have thrown the seeds of teaching onto the stony soil, and a scientist would have pulled out the thought springs from his native ground” [8, c. 128]. Florensky was also gathering the folklore. Previously published archive documents show us another side of Florensky’s talent as of a folklorist [9].

From the second half of the XIXth century there was a raise of publications, devoted to different aspects of religious studies. Their authors were orthodox priests. There are many explanations of this fact, and one of the most important is a raising amount of periodicals, in which they could be published. An official central synodical edition “Tserkovniy Vestnik” was added by many regional ones. They were not only scientific and theological editions of spiritual academies and seminaries, opened after the Synod’s letter of 1884, in which poorness of theological periodicals was admitted, but also numerous eparchial editions, having been published since 1860 in 63 dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church. Since 1860 a journal “Instruction for Country Priests” had been published. Until present time it is an important source for the researchers of anthropology of religion.

There were also clergymen’s notes and articles in secular editions: in provincial Vedomosti (since 1838), but more often in editions of the Russian Geographical Society both in regional and in a journal “Live Olden Time”, published by the Ethnographical department of the RGS, also in editions of regional societies, like “News of Arkhangelsk’s Society of the Russian North Studying”. On their pages one can find materials on the Church history, many notes and articles, which are an invaluable source of folk religiosity studies, religious freethinking, also for studying of religious views of native people of the Russian North, Siberia and the Far East.

Probably, a participation of clergymen, especially parish clerks, was not always free-will. From the Rozanov’s book “Notes of a Country Clergyman. Daily Life and Needs of Orthodox Priesthood” we may find out, how collecting different information was organized through the parish priests. «All possible departments for all possible information address to the priests. Thus, the regional statistics department annually demand for information of newborns in general, of newborns seasonally, amount of illegitimate children, twins, trines, freaks... Other departments demand for information on ethnography, topography and meteorology...<...> It is not seldom when someone is delegated to gather information on special field, science. He can’t be bothered and do much, not knowing the region, where he had been sent; thus, he will prudently decide, that it is much easier for him to gather this information through the local popes... And to have matter with the popes for him, a great nobleman, is dishonorable. Then he, without any ceremonies, sends his program to the consistory and asks the priesthood to send him the necessary information” [10, c. 19–22].

Through the eparchial archiereuses information of gathering materials was given to parish priests. It was a way of spreading ethnographical programs of the Russian Geographical Society, most part of which was clergymen. The first ethnographical program of the RGS was composed by N. I. Nadezhdin and sent through the provinces in amount

of 7000 copies. The correspondents sent a huge amount of materials. In the RGS's report of 1849 it was admitted, that due to answers to this program from all corners of Russia, including Siberia, from all society classes, there were about 500 monographs, edition of which was for the most part possible owing to local orthodox priests, who were endorsed by the enlightened archpastors [11].

Due to these ethnographical programs, sent by the RGS, a tremendous data base was formed. It has not fully worked out even until now. Partly a classification of the data base was produced by D.K. Zelenin, who published three volumes of the annotated catalog "Description of Manuscripts from Scholar Archive of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society" (1914–16), the fourth volume was not published.

It was missionaries who studied culture and religious beliefs of peoples in the Russian empire of the XIXth century. The political exiled men also contributed much in studying of traditional beliefs of the Siberian and the Far Eastern peoples. Until the beginning of the XIXth century these labours were occasional, but in the Alexander's I epoch they become regular, because the state began to appeal for Christian enlightenment of the "aliens". In 1805 the Holy Synod prescribed to clergymen to preach in native languages of recent converts: "In schools and churches one should catechize in their native languages" [12, с. 355]. But the real changes were only possible after appearance of a "Statute of Aliens Management" [13, с. 85–110].

In this period the government was again interested in a missionary work in Siberia in order to Russify small peoples by Christianization. By the order of the Holy Synod an archbishop of Tobolsk Eugene (Kazantsev) in late twenties of the XIXth century composed a project for education of missionaries for a more solid achievement in spreading Christianity in Siberia [14, с. 124]. Missionaries, intending to Christianize their flock, had to make many efforts, because their recent converts forgot their Christian names, knew no prayers and had no idea of Christian dogmatics.

Even in those cases, when the baptized people considered themselves as orthodox Christians, their religious views remained "dual beliefs" and could be characterized as a combination of different religious practices and ideas [15]. The church and public government set not only catechetical tasks before missionaries, but also evangelical tasks, as well. Therefore missionaries had to know everyday life and religious views of aboriginals and, of course, languages.

A situation with learning languages in the first quarter of the XIXth century became better not only due to governmental measures, but also due to the fact there appeared representatives of the indigenous peoples and children of mixed marriages among priests. Thus, one of the first translators of liturgical texts to the languages of the Siberia's peoples became a priest Lucka Petrovich Vologodskiy (near 1809 — after 1843). He was half Ostyak (modern Hunt) and, besides his native language, he also knew Russian, Ancient Greek, Ancient Hebrew and French languages. Lucka compiled a first Hanty alphabet, Russian-Hanty dictionary, translated the Symbol of Faith to Hanty language. He was in correspondence with many scientists, particularly with an academician A.M. Shegren. The activity of Lucka Vologodskiy contributed much in Ugric studies.

The Altai Spiritual Mission brought a great contribute into the studying of the Siberian people's culture [16]. The mission was founded in 1830. Its first head was archimandrite Macarius (Mikhail Yakovlevich Glukharev, 1792–1847). After the departure of Macarius (Glukharev) in 1844 the mission was headed by an archpriest Stephen (Stepan)

Vasilyevich Landyshev (died in 1883). He continued the Macarius's work on translation of sacred texts and learning languages, also studying of Altaian beliefs, which resulted in his work "Cosmology and theogony of the Altain pagans" (Kazan, 1886). In the Altaian mission there also worked such famous turgologists as a priest Vladimir Verbitskiy and a metropolitan Macarius (Mikhail Andreevich Nevsky, 1835–1926), a Bible translator to the Altaian language, who had worked in the mission since 1855. Verbitskiy (1827–1890), a missionary of the Altai Spiritual mission, ethnographer and turcologist, arrived to the mission in 1853.

During his work for the Mission he became a first researcher of the Gorny Altai's ethnography and religion, wrote many works on mythology, folk religiosity and everyday life of the Altaians, which are actual until present time [17]. Before the Revolution of 1917 there were published 104 works of V.I. Verbitskiy on history, language, culture, mythology, religious beliefs, household chores of the Altaians. We know much about religious beliefs of the aboriginal peoples of the Gorny Altai only owing to the works of V.I. Verbitskiy. He also studied academic learning of the Altaian local languages. As a result there was an edition of a "Brief Gramma of the Altaian Language" (ed. by N. I. Ilminsky, 1869); and then of a "Dictionary of the Altaian and Aladagian Dialects of the Turcik Language" (Kazan, 1884).

In the beginning of Nicolas' I reign the Synod took some measures for strengthening missionary work in Eastern Siberia. It was only possible owing to the efforts of the archbishop Nil (Nikolai Fyodorovich Isakovich, 1799–1874), who had headed the Irkutsk eparchy in 1833. During his episcopacy in Irkutsk Nil was studying religion and culture of the Buryats and other numerous peoples, inhabiting vast territories of his eparchy. His labour "Biddhism, considered in its relation to its followers, living in Siberia" (SPb, 1858) allowed Nil to be regarded as one of the forebears of Russian Buddhist studies. Not less interesting and containing much information on shamanism and ethnography of Siberian peoples is his other composition "Notes of a Journey through Siberia" (Yaroslavl, 1874), and also many other works, printed in different periodicals.

One of the first researchers of Yakut culture was a priest and missionary Drimtry Vasilyevich Khitrov (1818–1896)¹. During his long journeys through Siberia he attentively observed habits, learned languages, analyzed religious practices, beliefs and rituals. His works resulted in numerous notes in periodicals, diaries, and also the "Brief Gramma of the Yakut Language" (Moscow, 1858), "Yakut-Russian Dictionary" (Moscow, 1858). It's worth mentioning, that due to the missionary work of the Irkutsk eparchy there was gained a great experience of studying language, ethnography, religious beliefs of Siberian aboriginals.

Therefore, it should be admitted, that the missionary experience had an applied essence and had to serve for a successful spreading of Christianity among the mongolo-buryats. Nevertheless, among priests' researches there are those, who played an important role in development of academic Mongolian studies. Besides abovementioned ones, it is a grammar of the Mongolian language of a father and a son Bobrovnikovs and A. M. Orlov [18]. Speaking of studying eastern territories of the Russian Empire by missionaries, it's impossible not to say about an academic work of a man, contributed much in a labour

¹ In 1868 D. V. Khitrov after his wife's death became a monk with a name Dionisiy with the status of bishop of Yakutsk, and then the bishop of Ufa and Menzelinsk.

mode of an orthodox missionary, — Innokenty of Irkutsk (Veniaminov)², whose great part of life passed not in Siberia, but in Alaska. No doubt, Innokenty (Veniaminov) was perfectly studied by researchers, and his canonization in a rank of Equal-to-the-Apostles supported this process in last ten years.

Orthodox clergymen contributed not less in studying religious beliefs and syncretistic religious views of peoples of the Caucasus. In this short list it should be mentioned of a protopope Ioann the Bulgarian, Vladimir, the bishop of Stavropol [19] and an archpriest Alexey Gatuev, a co-author of many articles about special features of religious practices and beliefs of the Ossetians, whose the most famous work is “Christianity in Ossetia”, recently republished.

Unfortunately, in this short article it is impossible to list out all the clergymen, who had contributed into the studying of the Church history, local Church history, syncretistic religious beliefs and anthropology of religion. This article claims for complex research of contribute of the Russian clergymen into the religious studies researches.

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² Veniaminov-Popov-Anginskiy Ivan Evseevich (monak — Innokenty) (1797–1879), the Moscow Metropolitan, a missionary, a translator of the Holy Scripture to the languages of the Northern aboriginals. 1823–1834 — a priest on the Aleutians, 1834–1840 — In Alaska, 1840 — the bishop of Kamchatka, the Kuriles and Aleutians, 1868 — the Moscow Metropolitan.

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