

Russian Monasticism

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Abstract

"Russian Monasticism" is a unique, comprehensive work on the history of Russian monasticism from its origins through the 19th century, written by the distinguished church historian I. K. Smolich. Smolich spent 15 years working with materials on Russian church history. In the course of his work, he realized that the subject of the history of Russian monasticism had been virtually neglected. This led to the publication of his book **Russian Monasticism**. Smolich presents the history of Russian monasticism as closely intertwined with the history of Russian statehood and the general history of the Russian Church. Smolich considers the victory of the Josephites over the Non-Possessors to be a pivotal moment in the history of Russian monasticism; in his view, this led to secularization and, subsequently, to the complete degradation of Russian monasticism. It began to revive only in the 19th century. In other words, Smolich views the history of the Russian Church in a highly non-stereotypical way: the late centuries of Ancient Rus' were a time of decline for Orthodoxy, while the Synodal period was a time of revival and flourishing.

From the Editor

This book is a supplement to the multi-volume **History of the Russian Church**, published in 1994–1997. Published by the Spaso-Preobrazhensky Valaam Stavropegial Monastery (since November 1996—the Ecclesiastical-Scientific Center of the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), "Orthodox Encyclopedia"). It includes two works by the outstanding Russian church historian Igor Kornilievich Smolich: "Russian Monasticism: 988–1917" and "The Life and Teachings of the Elders," dedicated to different aspects of a single ecclesiastical-historical phenomenon—Russian monastic life. Having studied Russian church history for several decades, I. K. Smolich sought to create a monumental compendium devoted to the history of the Russian Orthodox Church from its founding until the end of the Synodal period. However, in the absence of any serious works on the history of the Church in the 18th–19th centuries, I. K. Smolich decided to "preface the history of earlier times" with a history of the Church during the Synodal period¹, hoping eventually to turn to the era of the establishment of Christianity in Rus' and to the era of the Moscow metropolitans and patriarchs. A special study on the history of Russian monasticism was also intended to serve this same goal—the preparation of a comprehensive work on the thousand-year history of Orthodoxy in Russia. However, these plans were never realized due to the researcher's death².

When he undertook the publication of his work on the history of monasticism in 1952, I. K. Smolich emphasized its "preliminary nature," a certain incompleteness in the details (which an attentive reader will also notice, especially as the study nears the end of the period under consideration), and its focus on "the main features of Russian monasticism that emerged during its formation." Fifteen years of work on a vast but entirely unsystematized body of historical materials³ led the author to the conclusion that, in treating the history of monastic life in Russia as a separate subject of study, he must trace its development in close connection with the general history of Russia and with the history of the Russian Church as a whole. "Members

¹ See: History of the Russian Church. Moscow, 1997. Vol. 8. Parts 1–2.

² For a brief biography of I. K. Smolich, see: History of the Russian Church. Moscow, 1997. Vol. 8. Part 1. pp. 5–16.

³ For a brief overview of the state and nature of sources on the history of Russian monasticism, see pp. 15–18 of this edition.

of the monastic community were in lively and almost uninterrupted communication with the secular world. Although the secular world's influence on monasticism manifested itself with varying intensity across different eras, certain negative phenomena in monastic life were always linked to political events in Russian history. The relationship between the state and the Church in Rus' has always been of exceptional importance, and this relationship has constantly, in one way or another, affected the life of monasticism and its views." Nevertheless, in his division of the history of Russian monasticism into periods, the author does not rely on the traditional division into eras—common to both secular and ecclesiastical history—namely, Kievan Rus', Muscovite Rus', and the St. Petersburg period, but rather identifies turning points in the internal development of monasticism. And so, in Smolich's work, the architect of monasticism in Muscovite Rus', the "Abbot of the Russian Land," the Venerable Sergius of Radonezh, is presented as the direct spiritual successor to the founders of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, the Venerables Anthony and Theodosius, who established monasticism in Rus': "This is a cohesive era in both the internal and external history of monasticism, one that cannot be divided into distinct periods; the beginning and the heyday of this era merge into a single whole, which we have designated as the first period in the history of Russian monasticism."

The author considers the turning point in the history of monasticism in Russia to be the dispute between the Venerable Joseph of Volotsk and the "Josephites," on the one hand, and the Venerable Nil of Sora and his followers, the "Elders of the Volga Region," on the other. The victory at the Council of 1503 of the Josephite concept of monastic organization—which implied that monasteries should possess extensive estates, engage in active economic activity, and maintain an inseparable connection with the secular world—according to the author, determined the "strong secularization" of monasticism for three centuries, which had "a particularly negative impact on monastic life." However, it should be noted here that such a harsh assessment of the influence of the Venerable Joseph of Volotsk on monastic organization is largely determined by the author's own views on the goals and tasks of monastic life: his focus exclusively on ascetic ideals leads to a deliberate downplaying of the social and educational activities of monasteries. Here, too, the author often contradicts himself, for, as an honest historian, he devotes many pages of his study to the colonization of pagan territories, during which monasteries bore the brunt of missionary activity. It is clear that without extensive landholdings, the monasteries would have been unable to fulfill their mission of enlightening pagan peoples, preserving the Orthodox culture of Rus', and so on.

The historian's view of the "striving to revitalize monastic life" during the Synodal period of Russian church history—a period usually portrayed as little short of a historical "interregnum"—sounds quite unconventional. I. K. Smolich links this revitalization to the movement of the elders, the origins of which the author traces back to the Old Russian monastic system.

A separate work by the same author—*The Life and Teachings of the Elders*, written in the form of a historical essay—is devoted to the topic of Russian elderhood. The author conducts a detailed analysis of the inner essence of elderhood, its origins, and its historical fate through characterizations of the most significant figures of this movement, including not only such well-known elders as the Venerable Paisius Velichkovsky, Seraphim of Sarov, or Ambrose of Optina, but also the founders and patrons of the elder tradition in Russia: Metropolitans Gabriel (Petrov) and Filaret (Amfiteatrov). The book *The Life and Teachings of the Elders*, written in 1936, perfectly complements the author's later work on the history of monasticism.

Unfortunately, both of these studies have come down to us only in German translation; therefore, the editors are compelled to offer the reader a back-translation, which, of course, cannot help but affect the stylistic features of the text. It should also be borne in mind that the book was written during and immediately after World War II, when, as the author himself admitted, he had lost many of his preliminary notes and bibliographic excerpts and often had to reconstruct facts from memory—a memory whose phenomenal nature is still the stuff of legend. The work *Russian Monasticism* was translated by Prot. Vladislav Tsypin based on the edition: *Russisches Mönchtum: Entstehung, Entwicklung und Wesen. 988–1917*. Würzburg, 1953. Quotations from Russian sources were verified by the translator and, in part, by the editorial staff.

The work *The Life and Teachings of the Elders* is published in a translation by His Eminence John (Wendland), Metropolitan of Yaroslavl and Rostov († March 25, 1989), who was friends with I. K. Smolich during his years of episcopal ministry in Berlin⁴. The editors have only made stylistic corrections to the text

⁴ The translation text was kindly provided by the Moscow Patriarchate Publishing House.

and, where possible, verified the quotations. However, responsibility for the accuracy of the information provided rests entirely with the author.

Published works by I. K. Smolich⁵ :

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- The Russian Emperor's Position on the Orthodox Church in Russia from the 18th to the 20th Century // Studies in Eastern European History. 1955. 2. pp. 139–164.
- Feofan Prokopov's Prayers of Thanksgiving for Empress Anna Ioannovna's Autocracy // ZSP. 1956. 25. pp. 212–224.
- The Significance of the Philokalia for Russian Religious Life. Introduction to: (Nikodemus [Hagiorita]) The Little Philokalia: Teachings of the Monastic Fathers of the Eastern Church on Prayer, *selected and translated by Matthias Dietz*. Einsiedeln; Zurich; Cologne, 1956.

⁵ In compiling this list, materials published in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 1971, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 629–630, were used.

- Bibliography of Soviet-Russian Literature, 1939–1952, on the History of Eastern and Southeastern Europe // *Studies in Eastern European History*. 1956. Vol. 3. pp. 99–281 (with M. Bernath).
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- I. S. Aksakov and the Question of Freedom of Expression and Conscience // *Festschrift for Margarete Woltner on Her 70th Birthday*. Heidelberg, 1967. pp. 262–269.
- I. K. Smolich is also the author of individual articles in: **Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart**. 3rd ed. Tübingen, 1957–1965 (articles: Kiev, Laura, Solovki Monastery, Stauropegion, Trinity-Sergius Monastery, Valaam Monastery, Blessing of the Waters); *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*. 2nd ed. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1957–1965 (articles: Alexander Nevsky, Alexander I of Russia, Starez).
- I. K. Smolich also published reviews in: *Kyrios*, *ZSP*.

Preface

This work, the result of 15 years of research on the history of the Russian Church in general and the history of Russian monasteries in particular, is intended as preparatory material for writing a history of Russian monasticism, from its origins to 1917. We view it merely as an attempt to present the most significant moments of this history and to characterize the main features of Russian monasticism that emerged during its formation. Since our study relies almost exclusively on previously published sources, we did not dare to call it “A History of Russian Monasticism,” although some chapters—particularly those covering the period prior to the 18th century—draw on a very extensive body of historical material. Sources on the most recent period in the history of monasticism—the 18th and 19th centuries—particularly those concerning the history of individual monasteries, have for the most part not yet been published, and many have likely already been lost. Therefore, not all aspects are covered here with equal detail; the thoroughness of our characterization of the various stages in the development of monasticism was determined by the volume of material available to us. Nevertheless, we hope that we have succeeded in identifying the most important and typical aspects of this history and in highlighting the most characteristic historical figures.

The first four chapters are a reprint of my book **Old Russian Monasticism**, with minor abridgments. In Chapters VI, VII, VIII, and XIII, we reproduce, with some abridgments and alterations, a manuscript written for a planned book on monastic estates as far back as 1941, at a time when we had more sources and literature at our disposal. The remaining chapters were written in 1947–1948 based on material previously collected and now at our disposal. Unfortunately, not all sources were available to us, and we were often forced to rely solely on historical literature for certain issues, which is noted in the relevant footnotes each time.

I am grateful to the administration of the Slavic Institute and the former Seminar on the History and Regional Studies of Eastern Europe (both in Berlin) for kindly granting me access to their extensive collections. I would also like to express my gratitude to acquaintances who made books from their personal libraries available to me.

Introduction

1. General Remarks

Monasticism became widespread in the Russian Church because, from the very beginning, the ascetic teachings of Christianity found a lively response in the souls of the newly converted Russian people. Monasticism very quickly acquired special significance in Russia also because it brought education and culture to the people, with monasteries serving as centers of these activities. In addition to fulfilling their purely ecclesiastical mission, monasteries found themselves involved in the nation's political and cultural life. Members of the monastic community maintained a lively and almost continuous interaction with the secular world. This did not leave the internal development of monastic life unaffected. Although the world's influence on monasticism manifested itself with varying intensity across different eras, certain negative phenomena in monastic life were always linked to political events in Russian history. The relationship between the state and the Church in Russia has always been of exceptional importance, and this relationship has constantly, in one way or another, affected the life of monasticism and its views, often drawing the spiritual forces of monasticism into movements that did not correspond to the monastic ideal.

All of this must be taken into account if we wish to provide an overview of the history of Russian monasticism, characterizing its internal features and its external development, or to divide this history into distinct periods.

A turning point in the history of monasticism occurred at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, when a pressing need arose within monastic circles to answer questions about the meaning, purpose, and future development of monasticism as a church and Christian-ascetic institution, and to lay the foundations for its further development. The existence of two different points of view on this issue gave rise to a sharp controversy and struggle that lasted for decades, leading to the victory of the "Josephites"—named after their leader, St. Joseph of Volotsk—which had a decisive impact on the further development of monastic life and the monastic way of life in Rus'. One can even pinpoint the exact date of this shift—the Council of 1503—although the controversy and struggle did not truly unfold until after that Council.

The period before 1503 constitutes a single, cohesive era in both the internal and external history of monasticism, one that cannot be divided into distinct phases; the beginning and the heyday of this era merge into a single whole, which we have designated as the first period in the history of Russian monasticism.

After 1503, monasticism entered its second period, during which it underwent a profound process of secularization. This occurred, on the one hand, due to the victory of the Josephites, which drew the monasteries into a more intensive participation in the political life of Russia than before; on the other hand—as a result of the accumulation of monastic wealth, which led to the monasteries being integrated into the state's economic system. Since the authorities did not take a clear stance regarding monastic estates, their growth had a particularly negative impact on monastic life.

The third and final period began in the early 18th century, the era of Peter the Great's reforms; these reforms were not aimed at changing or correcting monastic life, but during the Synodal era, monasticism was assigned a completely different role in the life of the Church than before, and it definitively lost its once highly prominent position. Ecclesiastical authority, embodied in the Holy Synod, lost the close connection with monasticism that had existed prior to the 18th century. Moreover, the Synod did not seriously address issues of monastic life at all. If there were any efforts during this period to revitalize monastic life, they stemmed from healthy forces within monasticism itself, primarily from the Russian elders of the 18th and 19th centuries. The influence of the elders appears to be the most important factor in the development of monasticism over the last two centuries, playing a decisive role in the revival of true monasticism.

In this essay, we have deliberately omitted the history of Southern Russian monasticism—that is, the history of the monasteries of the Kiev Metropolis and those western regions that became part of the Russian state later, in the 17th and 18th centuries. These monasteries and their inhabitants had their own distinct history, which requires a separate study. It was only from the end of the 18th century—or, more precisely, from the beginning of the 19th century—that monastic life became uniform across all regions of Russia.

The history of Russian monasticism on Mount Athos also constitutes a distinct chapter in the general history of Russian monasticism, for its internal and external development took place under conditions different

from those in Rus'. Sources on this topic proved so difficult to access that we were forced to abandon even the most general overview of Athos.

Here, relying constantly on sources, we have attempted to present and characterize the most important events in the history of monasticism, bearing in mind that "the first law of history is to admit no falsehood under any pretext; next—never to fear the truth; and to admit neither a shadow of partiality nor a shadow of malice" (Cicero, **On the Orator**, 2, p. 15).

2. Bibliographic Survey

When studying the history of Russian monasticism, two circumstances become apparent from the very beginning: first, the scarcity of sources, with the material distributed quite unevenly across different periods; and second, the dispersion of documents across various collections and individual publications. Anyone undertaking a study of the history of Russian monasticism must take both of these circumstances into account. We have almost no collections of materials specifically compiled on a particular topic. In ecclesiastical-historical literature, despite its relatively extensive volume, different eras and processes are covered unevenly. For the period up to the early 18th century, we had to rely mainly not on specialized ecclesiastical-historical literature, but rather, for example, on works dealing with state, political, and economic history or the history of Old Russian literature.

Let us list the most important sources we have used. First among them is the **Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles** (PSRL), the compilation of which was primarily the work of monks. The most important state acts and official documents concerning the highest ecclesiastical administration, diocesan administration, and monastic life are contained almost exclusively in collections of documents on the political history of Russia (AAE, AI, DAI, AMG, SGGD, SGKE, etc.). **These chronicles and acts provide material only up to the end of the 17th century; the chronicles date back to the mid-16th century, while the acts and documents begin in the 14th century. For the Moscow period, various materials are found in the "Russian Historical Library" (RIB), where separate volumes contain documents and other historical material specifically on Russian church history; less reliable is the collection known as "Ancient Russian Bibliography" (DRV) (1773–1775, 2nd expanded ed., 1788–1791): not all of the documents and writings included here have been verified and cross-referenced, as is customary in scholarly editions of documents; nevertheless, this collection is of great value, for it contains documents whose original manuscripts were subsequently lost . Many important documents and studies on the history of monasticism have been published in the journal **Readings of the Society for Russian History and Antiquities** (**Readings**), including in the "Miscellany" section. K. Bestuzhev-Ryumin's earlier work, **Sources and Literature on Russian History from Antiquity to 1825**, published as an introduction to his **History of Russia** (Mitava, 1877), can serve as a reference guide. As supplementary material, we recommend the "Introduction" to S. F. Platonov's **Lectures on Russian History**. In the field of church history, N. N. Glubokovsky's work **Russian Historical Science in Its Historical Development and Current State** (1928) is of great value. Also highly recommended is the book by Emilius Hermann, **De fontibus juris ecclesiastici Russorum. Commentarius historico-canonicus** (1936) [**On the Sources of Russian Ecclesiastical Law. A Historical-Canonical Commentary**], which serves as an indispensable resource on both Russian ecclesiastical law and the general history of the Russian Church. The author provides a list of the most important collections of sources and documents, as well as relevant scholarly literature; furthermore, he offers detailed explanations regarding the history of the origin of various documents, codes, and other canonical materials, and provides an assessment of them. Hermann's study serves both as an invaluable reference work and as a concise course on the history of the canonical law of the Russian Church.**

Among the sources for the 18th century, the "Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire" (PSZ, 2nd PSZ, and 3rd PSZ) ranks first; it contains nearly all the decrees of the Russian emperors concerning the Russian Church. The first three volumes contain material on the 17th century; for example, Volume 1 reproduces the "Code of 1649." Peter the Great's "Spiritual Regulations" are found in Volume 6, No. 3718. The PSZ covers the period from 1649 to 1825 (45 vols.), the Second Series of the PSZ covers the period from 1825 to 1881 (55 vols.), and the Third Series of the PSZ covers the period from March 1881 to 1913 (33 vols.). Even after the codification of Russian law in the form of the "Code of Laws of the Russian Empire" (15 vols., published in 1832, 1842, and 1857; of particular importance for the history of the Church are vol. 1, part 1, §§

40–43, as well as vols. 11, 13, and 14) and the 1906 “Code,” imperial decrees retained their legislative force. Also worth mentioning are the “Complete Collection of Decrees and Orders of the Department of the Orthodox Faith” (PSPiR) and the “Description of Documents and Cases of the Most Holy Governing Synod” (ODDS) (cf.: Herman, p. 87). Both of these collections contain extensive material on the history of monasticism and monasteries. The ODDs frequently includes detailed excerpts from the decrees and orders of the Most Holy Synod.

From the 19th century, one can mention another large collection that primarily contains material on the external history of monasticism (statistical data, dates of the founding of certain monasteries, orders of the Holy Synod, etc.)—“The Most Humble Reports of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod” (Reports) for 1836–1914.

Much information can be gleaned from the *History of the Russian Hierarchy* (IRI) (6 vols. in 7 books, Moscow, 1807–1815), compiled primarily by Metropolitan Eugene (Bolkhovitinov, † 1837), although it is often attributed to Bishop Ambrose (Ornatsky, † 1827), who wrote only part of the text. Volumes 2, 3–6 are particularly important for the history of monasticism. This work, however, is not free from errors, which must be taken into account when using its materials.

These are the most important collections of sources on both the general history of the Russian Church and the history of monasticism. References to other sources and relevant literature are provided in the notes. Unfortunately, there is still no detailed overview of the sources; we hope to compile such an overview in the future, as it will be of great use to researchers and students.

And a few more remarks on the literature concerning the history of Russian monasticism. Although its volume is relatively large, on the whole it still fails to satisfy the specialist. It is distributed quite unevenly across historical periods and varies in scholarly merit. This applies in particular to the so-called “histories” and “descriptions” of monasteries—we are aware of about a hundred works in this genre. For the most part, these descriptions were written as devotional reading for the people; the dates and other information they contain must always be double-checked; this applies, for example, to the descriptions of the Vologda monasteries (see: IRI. 3). We list the most serious of these in our bibliography. The works of N. Nikolsky, A. Dobroklonsky, Archimandrite Dositheus (in part), A. V. Gorsky, and Serebryansky are of purely scholarly value. Zverinsky’s three-volume work deserves special mention, as it is absolutely indispensable for historians of monastic colonization.

Regarding the history of monastic estates, one can consult works devoted to the social and economic history of Russia, such as those by Rozhkov, Gautier, Dyakonov, and others, as well as the work by V. Milyutin, published in 1859 and 1861, which remains relevant to this day. “Pisets” and “pereschnaya” books provide a wealth of material on the history of monastic estates.

As for the history of monastic life and the views characteristic of monks of a particular era, most of what has been written on this subject comes not from church historians but from literary historians—we are referring to the works of Porfiryev (on the Kyiv period), Petukhov, and Speransky, which are devoted to the general history of Old Russian literature. Specialized monographs are cited in the relevant sections of the bibliography and notes. The works of Metropolitan Evgeny (Bolkhovitinov) and Archbishop Filaret (Gumilevsky), as well as the previously mentioned book by N. Glubokovsky—though used more as a scholarly study than as a work of source criticism—are still used as reference works. In the field of cartography concerning monastic colonization and diocesan boundaries, practically nothing has been done to date, although these issues are highly important; however, some information can be found in Pokrovsky’s work.

Historiography on the 19th century, especially its second half, is very fragmentary.

The unfinished edition of the *Orthodox Encyclopedia* (PBE) serves as a useful reference work (containing biographical entries and thematic articles), although the articles vary in scholarly quality. It is also worth mentioning the *Russian Biographical Dictionary* (RBS), which, for example, when studying the 18th and 19th centuries, is highly valuable both for its extensive bibliography and its content; it was not published in alphabetical order, and some letters are missing either entirely (“M” and others) or partially. When citing this publication, one must indicate the first and last names included in the volume and the corresponding page number.

Everything stated here is merely a brief historical-source and bibliographic overview; it is provided, on the one hand, to assist the reader, and on the other, to illustrate how difficult it is to gather material on

certain topics. The list of sources and scholarly literature naturally includes only the most important publications; additional information with references to specialized literature is provided in the notes.

Chapter I. Origins

1. A Brief Overview of the History of Orthodox Monasticism in the East

Old Russian Christianity was Greek Orthodox Christianity. It came to Rus' from Byzantium; by adopting it, Rus' became part of the religious and cultural world of the Eastern Church. Church life in Rus' developed in close connection with the spiritual culture of the Eastern Church, particularly in its Byzantine form.

The formation of statehood among the Eastern Slavs took place in the 6th–9th centuries and culminated in the establishment of the Kievan Rus'. During this era, the Slavs maintained economic ties with the Northern Black Sea region, the Crimea, and Constantinople. The entire Black Sea region had been a center of Christian evangelization since the 1st century. The first historical records of Greek bishops in Crimea date to the 4th century. Christian missionary work spread there quite successfully; over time, the number of bishoprics grew to five. The bishops of Crimea ministered not only to the Greek-Christian population of Crimea, northern Taurida, and the northern and southeastern coasts of the Sea of Azov, but also to the nomadic tribes of the vast steppe regions⁶.

The Christian mission of the Byzantine Church also reached the Eastern Slavs. It has now been proven beyond any doubt that Christianity had penetrated the Kievan Rus' long before Prince Vladimir's conversion (988/89)⁷.

The Local Russian Church, as a newly formed diocese, received its doctrine, canons, and statutes from the Patriarchate of Constantinople—its Mother Church. Church Slavonic became its liturgical language—the fruit of the great labors of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the Apostles to the Slavs—a language that the Byzantine Church had already been using for a century to preach among the Slavs.

Monasticism occupied a special place in the life of the Eastern Church at that time. Upon its arrival in Rus', it was met with a very favorable reception by the people, spread rapidly throughout the country, and exerted a significant influence on church affairs, as well as on many other spheres of Old Russian life, including statehood and culture. The reasons for this are rooted in the history of Eastern monasticism, and in particular in the fact that, as we now know, monasticism had penetrated Rus' even before its official adoption of Christianity and long served as an example of true Christian piety.

By the time of the Christianization of Rus', on the eve of the 10th century, monasticism in the Eastern Church had already taken on its definitive form. It will suffice here to provide only the briefest and most schematic overview of its development:⁸.

In its early days, monasticism was characterized by a particular asceticism. The great host of ancient Egyptian anchorites—among whom St. Anthony (d. 356), St. Macarius (d. 390), and St. Pachomius (d. 348) shine as the brightest stars—found in the latter the “head of the Egyptian monastic order.” The community that gathered around Pachomius formed the first Christian monastery; it was founded in Tavenna, near Thebes,

⁶ For general reference: Stählin, K., **Geschichte Russlands**. Vol. 1 (1923); Kljutschewskij, V., **Geschichte Russlands**. Vol. 1 (1925); Laehr, G., **Die Anfänge des russischen Reiches** (1930); Djakonov, M. **Sketches on the Social and Political Order of Ancient Russia** (1928); Philaret, Archbishop. **History of the Church of Russia**. 2 vols. (1872); Bonwetsch, N. **Church History of Russia** (1923); Harnack. *The Mission and Spread of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*. Vol. 2 (1924). p. 797; Kulakovskij, Yu. *The Past of Taurida*. Kyiv, 1914; Stratonov, I. “The Crimea and Its Significance for the Christianization of the Eastern Slavs,” in: *Kyrios*. Vol. 1. pp. 381–395.

⁷ Laehr. *Op. cit.*; Heyduk, J. *The Beginnings of the Christianization of the Rus' Tribe*. Vienna, 1888; Leib, Rome. Kyiv and Byzantium at the End of the 11th Century. Paris, 1924 (not entirely objective); Parkhomenko. *The Beginnings of Christianity in Rus'*. Poltava, 1911; Tomashevsky, St. *Introduction to the History of the Church in Ukraine*, in: *Analecta Ordinis S. Basilii Magni*. 4 (Lviv, 1932).

⁸ From the most recent literature on ancient monasticism, I will mention only the most important works: Koch, Hugo. **Sources on the History of Asceticism and Monasticism in the Early Church** (1933); Lot-Borodine, M. “The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Church up to the 11th Century,” in: **Revue de l'histoire des religions**. 55–56 (1932), 57–58 (1933); Heussi, K., **Der Ursprung des Mönchtums** (1936); cf. the bibliography cited in Heiler, Fr., **Urkirche und Ostkirche** (1937), pp. 365 ff. See also: **Enchiridion Asceticum**. Ed. M. Roué de Journal. Freiburg, 1936. pp. 144–147, 360–367, 410–416, 635–637 (Pachomius), 645 ff. (Sava).

in 318 or 320. Its rule became the foundation of communal asceticism. St. Basil the Great († 379) deserves special credit for the establishment and development of monastic communal life, as well as for the precise definition of its essence and fundamental characteristics. His ascetic writings, composed for the monastic communities of Cappadocia, contain a theological and pastoral justification of cenobitism⁹.

The Palestinian monasteries, where Hilarion of Gaza († 371) and Chariton the Great († 350) were the pioneers of cenobitism, evolved into a kind of communal monastery known as a “laura.” Euthymius the Great († 473), Theodosius the Kinoviarch († 529), and especially St. Savvas the Abbot († 532), the compiler of the monastic rule—the “Typikon of St. Savvas,” which subsequently played an extremely important role in the liturgical life of the Eastern Church—were the founders of the monastic community, which in Palestine had its own distinctive local characteristics. Cyril of Scythopolis’ hagiographic account of these ascetics—a gem of early Christian literature—introduces us to the daily life of the earliest monasteries. By the 5th century, monasticism was already flourishing in Syria and on the Sinai Peninsula. The examples of the great Syrians Ephrem and Isaac, John Climacus, and Simeon the Stylite attest to the extraordinary heights to which monastic renunciation of the world had risen there¹⁰.

During the 4th–6th centuries, Eastern monasticism began to play an extremely important role in the life of the Church; its ecclesiastical, social, and political significance becomes clearer to us when we turn to Emperor Justinian’s († 565) *Codex*, in which the novelles concerning monasteries occupy a very important place¹¹. In the 8th and 9th centuries, the significance of monasticism grew even further. It found the strength to take up the struggle against the hierarchy and imperial authority—or at least to oppose them—in order to defend the Church’s teachings on the most crucial issues of Orthodox life. It is well known that in the struggle for the veneration of holy icons—a struggle that was fateful for the Church—it was monasticism, filled with unshakable faith and steadfastness, that held high the banner of Orthodoxy and ensured the triumph of icon veneration. This victory further elevated and strengthened the position of monasteries within the Church. In this glorious struggle, the monastic community found its great leader, who has remained at the very center of the history of Eastern monasticism for all time. This was Theodore the Studite (d. 826). The significance of the great Studite is not limited to his role in the struggle for icon veneration: he was one of the principal architects of the monastic organization itself. He was the author of the monastic rule known as the “Studite Rule,” the original of which, unfortunately, has been lost to ecclesiastical history. Like St. Basil, the abbot of the famous Studite Monastery was a zealous adherent of the cenobitic way of life. His rule reflected centuries of monastic experience¹².

After the defeat of iconoclasm (the first phase of which lasted from 726 to 780, and the second from 802 to 842), monasticism entered the most glorious period of its history. The number of monasteries grew; the influence of the monks became so strong that contemporaries called Byzantium “the kingdom of monks” and that era “the age of monastic glory”¹³.

For Russian monasticism and for its attainment of a special place in the life of the Church, the flourishing of Byzantine monasticism had extremely important consequences. The echoes of iconoclasm and the role that monks played in overcoming it were still a vivid memory at the time of the Baptism of Rus’. And as we survey the history of Russian piety, we should not be surprised by the great veneration with which holy icons and the “angelic rank” of monks were held in the religious consciousness of the ancient Russians. In the history of the formation of Old Russian monasticism, one can see a connection with the events of the iconoclastic era—a connection that is not external, but internal and spiritual.

⁹ Holl, K. *Enthusiasmus und Bußgewalt*. pp. 156 ff.; cf.: Kranich. *Die Asketik in ihrer dogmatischen Grundlage bei Basilus d. Gr.* (1896).

¹⁰ On Palestine: Oltarzhevsky, F. “Palestinian Monasticism from the 4th to the 6th Centuries,” in: PPS. 15, Part 2 (1896), p. 51. On the Rule of St. Savva, see: Kurtz, E., in: BZ. 2 (1894); Welzer, *Kirchenlexikon*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 434–37. On Syria: Hugo Ball, *Byzantine Christianity: Three Lives of Saints*, Munich, 1932; Anatolius, Hieromonk, “A Historical Sketch of Syrian Monasticism until the Mid-6th Century,” in: *TKDA* (1911); Smirnov, I. The Sinai Paterikon. Sergiev Posad, 1917.

¹¹ See, for example: Grani B., “The Legal Status and Organization of Greek Monasteries under Justinian Law,” in: BZ 29 (1929–30); Nießen W., “The Regulation of Monasticism in the Roman Empire until the End of the 9th Century” (1897); cf.: Voigt, K. *State and Church from Constantine the Great to the End of the Carolingian Period* (1936). pp. 103 ff.; Marin, E. *The Monks of Constantinople from the Founding of the City to the Death of Photius* (1897).

¹² Ostrogorskij, G. Studies on the History of the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy (1929); Max, Duke of Saxony. St. Theodore, Archimandrite of Studion (1929); Vasilev, A. History of the Byzantine Empire. Vol. 1 (1932). pp. 333 ff., 373 ff.

¹³ Marin. Op. cit.; Sokolov, I. The State of Monasticism in the Byzantine Church from the Mid-9th to the Early 13th Century (1894).

Already during the first outbreak of iconoclasm, many defenders of Orthodoxy fled to Tauria and Crimea. St. Stephen the New († 767), a zealous champion of icon veneration, referred to the northern shores of the Black Sea, in the direction of the Diocese of Zichia, as a safe haven for refugee monks. In his hagiography, we read: “Byzantium was left desolate, as if the entire monastic community had been taken captive. Some sailed across the Euxine Sea, others to the island of Cyprus, and still others to ancient Rome”¹⁴. The caves, which are so numerous in the Crimean mountains, may have served as the first cells for these refugees. In the life of St. Stephen, Archbishop of Sugdeya (Surozh, † c. 750), who labored greatly to enlighten the pagans in Crimea, we find new evidence that there were many advocates of icon veneration here at that time; it is quite possible that it was precisely the monks who fled from Byzantium who brought with them to Southern Rus’ a fervent veneration of icons¹⁵. After arriving on the peninsula, the monastic community very quickly settled in and grew in number. Proof of this is a letter from St. Theodore the Studite to Bishop Filaret in Crimea, which praises the preaching efforts of the monks who had arrived on the peninsula¹⁶.

It is also significant to us that caves inhabited by people and resembling monasteries have been discovered not only in Crimea. Archaeological finds from the 8th and 9th centuries in the upper reaches of the Don River (near the Tikhaya Sosna River, a tributary of the Don, close to the towns of Korotoyak and Ostrogzhsk) point to Christian catacombs—caves which, according to scholars, are nothing other than the ruins of monasteries¹⁷. If the monks managed to expand their settlements to the northeast, it is natural to assume that a similar expansion took place in the northwest as well, especially since the monks who came from Byzantium were proponents of an active, militant form of Christianity, and in these regions the conditions for preaching the Gospel were particularly favorable, for it encountered no obstacles from the East Slavic population. Spreading to the northwest, Christian preaching reached Kyiv. As early as the second half of the 10th century, during the reign of Prince Svyatoslav († 972), when the country and its people had acquired the characteristics of a state and political organization, Christianity had penetrated the princely court: Princess Olga, the mother of the Prince of Kyiv, was baptized in Constantinople (around 957)¹⁸.

Unfortunately, we lack material to characterize the activities of monastic emigration in the Kyiv State. Our knowledge of the very beginnings of Christianity in this land has significant gaps. It is known only that Christians lived in Kyiv even before the Baptism of Rus’ and that they had their own church—the Church of St. Elijah; this is evident from the treaty between Kyiv and Byzantium dated 944–945. *Among these Christians, there were undoubtedly ascetics who led a pious, strictly ascetic life. The first Kyiv martyrs—the Varangians, people of non-Slavic origin—who were killed in 983 come to mind. However, no external traces indicating monastic buildings or anything similar have yet been discovered*¹⁹.

Everything said so far pertains to the prehistory of Russian monasticism, which is difficult to connect through clear, defining lines to history in the strict sense.

2. The Emergence of the First Monasteries in Kievan Rus’

In the earliest Russian sources, the first mentions of monks and monasteries in Rus’ date only to the period following Prince Vladimir’s baptism; their emergence is dated to the reign of Prince Yaroslav (1019–1054). His contemporary, Hilarion—who became Metropolitan of Kyiv in 1051—in his famous eulogy dedicated to the memory of Prince Vladimir, “The Word on Law and Grace,” which he delivered between 1037 and 1043 while serving as a priest at the court²⁰—stated that already during Vladimir’s time in Kyiv, “monasteries stood on the mountains, and monks appeared”²¹. This contradiction can be explained in two ways: it is quite likely that the monasteries mentioned by Hilarion were not monasteries in the strict sense, but rather that Christians lived in separate huts near the church in strict asceticism, gathered together for worship,

¹⁴ Vasilyevsky. Russian-Byzantine Excerpts. 6: The Life of Stephen the New, in: ZhMNP. 1877. June. pp. 299, 307, 308; The Life of St. Stephen the New, in: Migne. PG. 100. p. 1117.

¹⁵ The Life of Stephen of Surozh, in: Vasilievsky. Works. 3 (1915). p. 238, Introduction; cf.: Stratonov. Op. cit. pp. 387, 389.

¹⁶ The Life of St. Theodore, in: Migne, PG, 99, pp. 253, 1344, 1350; Kulakovsky, Op. cit., p. 74; Vasilyevsky, Works, vol. 3, p. 159.

¹⁷ Stratonov. Op. cit., p. 392. It is interesting to note that the monasteries that later arose here (Svyatogorsk and Divnogorsk) used the caves as cells and as churches. Cf.: Zverinsky. Material for the History of Orthodox Monasteries, vol. 1, pp. 169, 421.

¹⁸ Laehr. Op. cit.; Parkhomenko. Op. cit.

¹⁹ Golubinsky. History of the Russian Church. Vol. 1, Part 1 (2nd ed.). pp. 63–104.

²⁰ Priselkov. Essays. p. 98.

²¹ Hilarion. “A Discourse on Law and Grace,” in: Ponomarev. Vol. 1. pp. 71 ff.

but did not yet have a monastic rule, did not take monastic vows, and did not receive proper tonsure²² ; or, another possibility—the compilers of the chronicle, which includes the “Compilation of 1039”—a text with a very strong pro-Greek bias—tended to underestimate the successes in the spread of Christianity in Kievan Rus’ prior to the arrival there of Metropolitan Theopemptus (1037), who was likely the first hierarch in Kyiv of Greek ordination and Greek origin²³ .

Under the same year, 1037, the Old Russian chronicler recounts in solemn language: “And with this, the Christian faith began to flourish and spread, and the monks began to multiply, and monasteries began to be established. And Yaroslav, loving the church canons, held the priests in high esteem, and the monks were in abundance”²⁴ . The chronicler goes on to report that Yaroslav founded two monasteries: St. George’s (Georgievsky) and St. Irene’s (Irininsky Convent)—the first proper monasteries in Kyiv. But these were so-called “ktitor’s” monasteries, or, more accurately, princely monasteries, for the prince was their ktitor. For Byzantium, such monasteries were a common phenomenon, though not the predominant one²⁵ . The later history of these monasteries shows that the Old Russian princes exercised their rights as founders over the monasteries; this was particularly evident in the appointment of new abbots, meaning that we can speak of an exact repetition of the relationships characteristic of Byzantium between the founder and the monastery he established. Such monasteries were usually named after the patron saint of the founder (Yaroslav’s Christian name was George, and Irina was the name of his wife’s patron saint); these monasteries later became family monasteries; they received money and other gifts from the founders and served as family burial places. Almost all monasteries founded in the pre-Mongol era—that is, before the mid-13th century—were precisely princely, or founder-sponsored, monasteries.

The famous Kiev cave monastery—the Pechersk Lavra—had a completely different origin. It arose from the purely ascetic aspirations of individuals from the common people and became famous not for the nobility of its benefactors or its wealth, but for the love it earned from its contemporaries thanks to the ascetic feats of its inhabitants, whose entire lives, as the chronicler writes, were spent “in abstinence, in great penance, and in tearful prayers.”

Although the Pechersk Monastery very quickly acquired nationwide significance and retained this significance and its influence on the spiritual and religious life of the people even in later times, much remains unclear regarding the history of its founding. Based on various scholarly studies, this history can be presented as follows:²⁶ .

The chronicler recounts the founding of the cave monastery under the year 1051, in connection with the account of the elevation of a priest from the church in Berestovo (a village southwest of Kyiv, which was under Yaroslav’s control) to the metropolitan see. His name was Hilarion, and, as the chronicle attests, he was “a good man, learned, and a fasting ascetic.” Life in Berestovo, where the prince usually spent most of his time, was restless and noisy, for the prince’s retinue was also stationed there; therefore, the priest, striving for spiritual feats, was forced to seek a secluded place where he could pray away from the hustle and bustle. On a wooded hill on the right bank of the Dnieper, south of Kyiv, he dug himself a small cave, which became the site of his ascetic vigils. Yaroslav chose this pious presbyter for the then-vacant metropolitan see and ordered the bishops to consecrate him. He was the first metropolitan of Russian origin²⁷ . Hilarion’s new duties consumed all his time, and now he could only occasionally visit his cave. But very soon, Hilarion gained a follower.

He was a hermit who, under the name of Anthony, is known as the founder of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra. Much about his life remains unclear to us; information about him is fragmentary. His hagiography, written in the 70s or 80s of the 11th century (but before 1088), which, as A. A. Shakhmatov established, was widely known as early as the 13th century, was lost three centuries later²⁸ . This Anthony, a native of the town of

²² Golubinsky. 1. 1. pp. 553–557; cf. the work by Jacob the Monk, “Memory and Praise of Vladimir,” in: Golubinsky. 1. 1 (2nd ed.). pp. 238 ff.

²³ Priselkov. Essays. pp. 84–87; cf. also: Shakhmatoff. Studies.

²⁴ The Lavrentian Chronicle for the year 1037 (3rd ed.). p. 148.

²⁵ Golubinsky. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). p. 698; Troitsky, S. “The Right of Endowment in Byzantium and in Neman Serbia,” in: Glas Srbske Kral. Akademije. No. 84 (168) (1935); Zhischman, J. v., *Das Stiftrecht in der Morgenländischen Kirche* (1888).

²⁶ See the works of D. Abramovich, L. K. Getz, M. Priselkov, and A. Shakhmatov.

²⁷ Lavr. Annals for the year 1051; Priselkov. Essays. pp. 88 ff.; Goetz. Staat und Kirche in AltruЯland (1908). p. 82; Golubinsky. Vol. 1, No. 1 (2nd ed.). pp. 297, 300; Makariy. Vol. 2 (2nd ed.). pp. 5–13.

²⁸ Shakhmatoff. Studies. pp. 434, 271, 257; cf.: Priselkov. Essays. p. 166.

Lyubech near Chernihiv, had a strong inclination toward asceticism; he came to Kyiv, lived there for a short time in Hilarion's cave, and then set off southward. Whether he was on Mount Athos, as stated in his hagiography, or in Bulgaria, as M. Priselkov asserts (the latter seems more likely to us), is not entirely clear. But this question is of only secondary importance for the history of the Kiev Caves Monastery, for it is not Anthony but the abbot of the monastery, St. Theodosius, who stands in the foreground as the spiritual and religious founder of the monastery and the ascetic mentor of the brotherhood. Anthony belongs to that category of ascetics who set a shining example through their own lives but do not have a calling to serve as mentors or teachers. It is evident from the Life of St. Theodosius and from the Caves of Kiev Paterikon that Anthony preferred to remain in the background and entrusted the administration of the new monastery to other brothers. Only the life of Anthony—which was compiled in connection with the highly convoluted ecclesiastical and political events in Kyiv—tells us of the Holy Mountain's blessing for the founding of the monastery—perhaps with the intention of imbuing the Kyiv Caves Monastery, which had grown out of the ascetic aspirations of the Rus' community, the stamp of "Byzantine" Christianity by linking it to Mount Athos and presenting its founding as a Byzantine initiative. Upon his return, Anthony—as his hagiography recounts—dissatisfied with the way of life at the Kiev monastery (which could only have been the Monastery of St. George), once again withdrew into solitude—to the cave of Hilarion²⁹. Anthony's piety earned him such great reverence among the faithful that Prince Izyaslav himself, the son and successor of Yaroslav, came to him for a blessing.

Anthony did not remain alone for long. Already between 1054 and 1058, a priest came to him who is known in the Caves of Kiev Paterikon as the Great Nikon (or Nikon the Great). The question of who this Nikon was is both interesting and important. Personally, I agree with M. Priselkov's view that the Great Nikon was none other than Metropolitan Hilarion, who in 1054 or 1055, at the behest of Constantinople, was removed from his see and replaced by the Greek Ephrem. At the same time, Hilarion, of course, retained his priestly ordination; he reappears as a priest who had taken the great schema; upon taking the schema, he, as is customary, changed his name from Hilarion to Nikon. Now, in the growing monastery, his activities took on a special scope. As a priest, he tonsured novices at Anthony's request; as we shall see later, he embodied the idea of his monastery's service to the entire nation; he then left the Pechersk Monastery and, after a brief absence, returned, became abbot, and died after living a long, eventful life. Nikon stands at the very center of the national and cultural events of the 11th century, since all of them were connected in one way or another with the Kiev Caves Monastery. He represented that Old Russian, nationally minded monastic community that opposed both the Greek hierarchy and the interference of the Kiev princes in the life of the Church³⁰.

While the name of Nikon the Great is associated with the national and cultural flourishing of the Kiev Caves Monastery, in the person of St. Theodosius we see a true spiritual mentor and the forefather of Russian monasticism. Theodosius's role is incomparable to the historical role of Anthony. His hagiography, written by Nestor, a monk of the Kiev Caves Monastery, in the 80s of the 11th century—at a time when Nikon the Great was active there—depicts Theodosius as an ascetic who embodied the ideal of Christian piety. Nestor was familiar with many hagiographic works of the Eastern Church, and this may have exerted a certain influence on his account of Theodosius; yet the figure of Theodosius emerges from the pages of the hagiography as so whole and vivid, so simple and natural, that Nestor's narrative can no longer be viewed merely as an imitation of hagiographic models. Theodosius came to Anthony in 1058 or slightly earlier. Thanks to the rigor of his spiritual struggles, Theodosius took a prominent place among the monastic community. It is not surprising that just four years later he was elected abbot (1062). During this time, the number of monks had grown so much that Anthony and Barlaam (the monastery's first abbot) decided to expand the caves. As the number of monks continued to grow, Anthony appealed to Prince Izyaslav of Kyiv, asking him to grant the monastery a plot of land above the caves for the construction of a church. The monks received what they had asked for, built a wooden church and cells, and surrounded the structures with a wooden fence. In the hagiography of Theodosius, these events are dated to 1062, and Nestor, the author of the hagiography, links the construction of the monastery's above-ground buildings to the beginning of Theodosius's abbacy. It would be more accurate to consider that only the completion of this construction dates

²⁹ Cf.: Shakhmatoff. *Op. cit.* Ch. 12; Priselkov. *Essays*. pp. 253, 264–274; Goetz. *Das Kiever Höhlenkloster*. 17; Golubinsky. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). p. 647.

³⁰ Golubinsky. Vol. 1, No. 1 (2nd ed.). p. 286; on Hilarion-Nikon, see: Priselkov. *Essays*. pp. 172–189; idem. Nestor the Chronicler (1924); idem. Metropolitan Hilarion, known as Nikon in the schema, as a Champion of the Independent Russian Church, in: *Collection in Honor of S. F. Platonov* (1911). pp. 188–201.

to the time of Theodosius's abbotship³¹. The most significant act of Theodosius during the first period of his abbotship was the introduction of the communal rule of the Studion Monastery. From Theodosius's hagiography, we learn that he strove for the strictest observance of monastic vows by the brotherhood. Theodosius's works laid the spiritual foundation of the Kiev-Pechersk Monastery and made it an exemplary Old Russian monastery for two centuries³².

Along with the flourishing of the Pechersk Monastery, new monasteries began to appear in Kyiv and other cities. From a story in the Paterikon about a dispute between the spiritual mentors of the Pechersk monastic community, Anthony and Nikon, and Prince Izyaslav (over the tonsure of Varlaam and Ephrem, members of the prince's retinue), we learn that the Monastery of St. Mina already existed in Kyiv at that time. There is no precise information about how or when this monastery was founded. It is possible that no such monastery existed in Kyiv at all, but that a Bulgarian monk from the Byzantine or Bulgarian Monastery of St. Mina—who had left Kyiv together with Nikon—simply lived there³³. Nikon left the city to avoid the prince's wrath and headed southeast. He reached the shores of the Sea of Azov and settled in the city of Tmutarakan, where Prince Gleb Rostislavich, the grandson of Prince Yaroslav, ruled (until 1064). In Tmutarakan, which was known to the Byzantines as Tamatarha, between 1061 and 1067, Nikon founded a monastery in honor of the Mother of God and remained there until 1068, when he returned to Kyiv, to the Pechersk Monastery, where from 1077/78 to 1088 he served as abbot³⁴.

The Dimitrievsky Monastery was founded in Kyiv in 1061/62 by Prince Izyaslav. To administer it, Izyaslav invited the abbot of the Pechersky Monastery. Izyaslav's rival in the struggle for Kyiv, Prince Vsevolod, in turn also founded a monastery—the St. Michael's Monastery in Vydubychi—and in 1070 ordered a stone church to be built there. Two years later, two more monasteries were established in Kyiv. The Spassky-Berestovsky Monastery was likely founded by German, who later became the Bishop of Novgorod (1078–1096)—in historical sources, this monastery is often referred to as “Germanich.” The other, the Klovsk-Vlacherna Monastery, also known as “Stefanich,” was founded by Stefan, abbot of the Pechersk Monastery (1074–1077/78) and Bishop of Vladimir-Volynsky (1090–1094); it survived until the destruction of Kyiv by the Tatars³⁵.

Thus, these decades were a period of intense monastic construction. From the 11th to the mid-13th century, many other monasteries were established. Golubinsky counts up to 17 monasteries in Kyiv alone³⁶.

In the 11th century, monasteries were built outside of Kyiv as well. We have already mentioned the monastery in Tmutarakan. Monasteries also appeared in Pereyaslavl (1072–1074), Chernihiv (1074), Suzdal (1096), and³⁷. A particularly large number of monasteries were built in Novgorod, where there were as many as 17 monasteries in the 12th and 13th centuries. The most significant among them were the Antoniev Monastery (1117) and the Khutyn Monastery (1192), founded by St. Barlaam of Khutyn. As a rule, these were princely or patron-funded monasteries. Every prince sought to have a monastery in his capital city, which is why monasteries—both for men and women—were built in the capitals of all the principalities. Bishops served as patrons of some of them. In total, by the mid-13th century, there were up to 70 monasteries in Rus', located in cities or their environs³⁸.

Geographically, the monasteries were situated along the most important trade and water routes of Ancient Rus', in cities along the Dnieper, in and around Kyiv, and in Novgorod and Smolensk. From the mid-12th century, monasteries began to appear in the Rostov-Suzdal region—in Vladimir-on-Klyazma and Suzdal.

³¹ The Life of St. Theodosius was published six times: 1. By Bodiansky, in: Readings. 1858. 3; 2. By Yakovlev, in: Monuments of Russian Literature of the 12th and 13th Centuries (1873); 3. By A. Popov, in: Readings. 1889. 1; 4. by Shakhmatov, in: *Readings*, 1899, no. 2; 5. by Abramovich, in: *Monuments of Slavic-Russian Literature*, vol. 2: *The Kiev-Pechersk Paterikon* (1911); 6. by Abramovich, in: *The Kiev-Pechersk Paterikon* (1930). For further reading, see: Goetz. *Das Kiever Höhlenkloster*. p. 15, note. Cf.: Lavra Chronicle, year 155; *Paterikon*, ch. 1.

³² Golubinsky. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). pp. 607–627, 494–507, 776–790; Migne. PG. 99. p. 1704; Lavra Chronicle, entry for 1051; Priselkov. Essays. p. 202; Paterikon. Chapter “On the Founding of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra.”

³³ Paterikon. Chapter on the passing of the Great Nikon; Golubinsky. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). pp. 588, 746.

³⁴ Lavra Chronicle, year 1064; Priselkov. Essays. pp. 206, 235; Golubinsky. 1. 1 (2nd ed.). p. 682; 1. 2. p. 776; Shakhmatoff. Research. p. 435.

³⁵ Golubinsky. Vol. 1, No. 2 (2nd ed.). pp. 585–587, 746; Goetz. *Das Kiever Höhlenkloster*. p. 57; Lavr. Annals, under the years 1091 and 1094; Zverinsky. No. 1580.

³⁶ Golubinsky. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). p. 746; Makarii (1. p. 200; 2. p. 95) lists 18 monasteries.

³⁷ Golubinsky. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). pp. 748, 760.

³⁸ Golubinsky. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). pp. 746–776; PSRL. 2. pp. 78, 111, 114, 192.

The first steps in the monastic colonization of the Trans-Volga region can be traced to the second half of that century, where mainly small sketes and hermitages were built. This colonization was carried out by settlers from the Rostov-Suzdal region, who gradually advanced toward Vologda. The city of Vologda itself arose as a settlement near the monastery founded by St. Gerasim († 1178) in honor of the Holy Trinity. Subsequently, monastic colonization extended northeastward, toward the confluence of the Yug River and the Sukhona River³⁹.

The first steps of monastic colonization north of the Volga, in the so-called Trans-Volga region, subsequently, in the second half of the 13th and throughout the 14th centuries, grew into a great movement that dotted a vast region from the Volga to the White Sea (Pomor'ye) and to the Ural Mountains with sketes and hermitages.

Chapter II. The First Golden Age of Monasticism in Kievan Rus'

1. The Pechersk Monastery and St. Theodosius

St. Theodosius earned the reverence and love of his contemporaries, for he was truly “the founder of monastic life in Rus’.” His hagiography and the Paterikon of the Kiev Caves Monastery are the primary sources that acquaint us with the activities of this outstanding figure and his influence on his disciples. The Paterikon is valuable in that it helps form a comprehensive picture of Old Russian monasticism in the 11th–12th centuries, and in particular of the inner life of monasteries at that time.

In terms of content, the Caves of Kiev Paterikon is a hagiographic account of the Caves of Kiev monastery and the exploits of its inhabitants from the monastery’s founding until the end of the 12th or the beginning of the 13th century. Even more important is the Life of St. Theodosius. It was compiled by a lay brother of the Caves of Kiev Monastery named Nestor; he wrote the hagiography in the late 80s of the 11th century, when the abbot of the monastery was the Great Nikon—that is, approximately 15 years after the death of the holy abbot, so that many of the brethren who had known him during his lifetime were still alive. This is precisely why there is nothing legendary about the hagiography. Although Nestor’s work reveals the influence of certain examples of Byzantine hagiography, it is nonetheless written in a very realistic style and bears the imprint of the author’s personality. The image of Theodosius was still so vivid at that time—almost contemporary for the writer—that, despite Nestor’s use of Byzantine hagiographies, most likely primarily the hagiography of St. Savva the Hegumen, this image lacks the stereotypical hagiographic traits of Byzantine saints; rather, it is endowed with the specific characteristics of a Russian ascetic, which do not fully correspond to the early Christian ideal of a monk. What strikes us about Theodosius is not only his zealous desire to perfect his soul and, having renounced all external things, to transform earthly life into a heavenly abode, but also his desire to influence the world. This distinctly national trait is also evident in the hagiographies of St. Barlaam of Khutyn († 1192) and St. Abraham of Smolensk († 1220).

The religious, social, and cultural ties between the monasteries and the outside world allowed L. K. Götz to call the Pechersk Monastery “the cultural center of pre-Mongol Rus’” and gave him reason to speak of the monastery’s deviation from “the original ideal of monasticism, which knows only a religious life apart from the world, only asceticism, and whose primary concern was the salvation of the monk’s own soul”⁴⁰. This assertion cannot, however, be extended to all monasticism of that time. The Pechersk Paterikon combines two different ascetic ideals: alongside St. Theodosius or St. Nicholas the Holy, we find figures of ascetics who devoted themselves to the most refined asceticism and complete renunciation of worldly concerns; they bring to mind figures from the “Sayings” and the “Limonar” by John Moschus († 620).

The existence of these two types of asceticism suggests that monasticism was then in its formative stage. But the ascetics who did not engage in sophisticated ascetic practices—who, judging by the accounts in the Paterikon, often stumbled on the path of piety and fell into delusion—namely St. Theodosius, became the leader and mentor of the Russian ascetic tradition, and in later times, the traits of his piety can be seen in the figure of the Old Russian monk.

³⁹ Konoplev. *Saints of the Vologda Region* (1894). p. 14; Zverinsky. 2. p. 623; Golubinsky. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). p. 775; Makariy. 3. p. 78.

⁴⁰ Goetz. *The Kiev Cave Monastery*. Vol. 3; cf.: Nikolsky, N. “On Old Russian Christianity,” in: *Russkiy Mir*, 1913, No. 6; Fedotov. p. 248.

Theodosius was still a young man when he came to Anthony's cave, but he had already had to endure a long struggle to obtain his mother's blessing to take monastic vows, as she did not approve of his inclination toward monastic life. Anthony accepted the fugitive from the world (around 1058), and the young novice, through his humility and patience, as well as his spiritual disposition, soon won the affection of this elderly hermit, who instructed the Great Nikon to tonsure him. The young monk soon won the affection of the monastic community as well; after Abbot Varlaam was transferred, by the will of the Grand Prince, to serve as abbot of the newly founded Monastery of St. Demetrius, Theodosius was elected abbot in his fifth year at the monastery and, with Anthony's blessing, assumed this arduous office.

It is unclear which charter governed the Pechersk Monastery prior to Theodosius's abbotship. There is much to suggest that the Pechersk Monastery, like other Kiev monasteries that preceded it, based its way of life in its early years on the "Statute of the Great Church"—that is, on the liturgical regulations of the Church of Saint Sophia and other churches in Constantinople⁴¹. However, this Typikon was of little use for organizing monastic life, as it contained only liturgical rules. It is possible that the new abbot was aware of the existence of the monastic rule of St. Theodore the Studite. Theodosius received his first—probably incomplete and not entirely satisfactory—information about this rule from a Greek monk named Michael, who was part of the entourage of Metropolitan George of Kyiv. From him, Theodosius may have learned that a complete copy of the rule was kept in one of the monasteries in Constantinople. According to his hagiography, St. Theodosius sent a monk to Constantinople to see the monk Ephrem (who had once been tonsured at the Pechersk Monastery but was now taking refuge in one of the Greek monasteries) in order to obtain from him a copy of the Studite Rule. However, Theodosius received not the version of the Rule written in the hand of St. Theodore himself—the one by which his monastery had been governed—but a later revision prepared by Alexius, Patriarch of Constantinople (1025–1043). It is known that no accurate and complete copy of the Studite Rule has survived. We have only a brief summary of it, compiled at the Studite monastery shortly after the death of the great Studite. This rule forms the basis of Patriarch Alexius's edition, but his edition is not a detailed monastic rule that would cover all aspects of monastic life; it contains only certain liturgical instructions from Alexius himself and the most general rules regarding fasting and monastic life in general⁴².

But what mattered most to Theodosius was to uphold the foundation of the rule—the principle of strict communal living—which he put into practice throughout his entire tenure as abbot. He himself labored ceaselessly—"in manibus opus, in ore psalmus" (work in his hands, prayer on his lips)—and demanded the same of the brethren entrusted to his care. Nestor's simple yet, in its simplicity, so impressive and vivid account reveals to us both Theodosius's multifaceted pastoral gift and his zealous commitment to the strict observance of the principle of communal life. He did not encourage the sophisticated or excessively austere asceticism characteristic of the Syrian Fathers, for he understood that such asceticism could not serve as the common foundation of monastic community life; this was especially impossible at a time when monasticism was taking its first steps in Russia and still had a long and difficult path to travel before it could eventually become a true example of Christian piety, an ideal for the world. This does not mean, of course, that St. Theodosius rejected the highest degrees of asceticism. He knew full well that only these steps provide spiritual experience and the capacity for spiritual guidance, and that for an abbot they are the sole source of the strength necessary to influence the brotherhood. He himself practiced asceticism diligently, but in his humility he did not wish for the brotherhood—or his contemporaries in general—to know of his ascetic feats. Only in his youth did he wear chains. Prayer, humility, and fasting filled his life; he bore his office as abbot with the utmost humility; his simple attire showed both the brotherhood and the great ones of this world that poverty adorns a Christian; he was always fasting: dry bread, rarely vegetables without oil—that was his entire sustenance, yet his face was always joyful; he performs his ascetic practices at night; he devotes the entire day to work; he cares for the brethren but guides them without excessive severity; he educates them more by his example than by words, and instructs them with parables; he admonishes those who have erred with love and gentle strictness. The miracles of St. Theodosius—his gift of prophecy—are presented in his hagiography as a consequence of his ascetic virtues. These miracles mostly concerned the monks' interactions with the world

⁴¹ Dmitrievsky. *Description of Liturgical Manuscripts*. 1. Kyiv, 1895. Introduction. pp. XCV–XCVI, 1–152; Lisitsyn. pp. 13–160; cf.: Diehl, in: BZ. 1. p. 521; Krasnoseltsev. *The Typikon of the Church of Saint Sophia in Constantinople*. Odessa, 1892.

⁴² The Statute of St. Theodore, in: Migne. 99. P. 1704 ff., 1813 ff.; and also in: Dmitrievsky. 1. pp. 224–238. Introduction. pp. CVII ff.; cf.: Lisitsyn. pp. 161 ff. The Statute of Alexius in: Golubinsky. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). pp. 494–507. *The Kiev-Pechersk Paterikon* (1911). pp. 24–26, 28, 14.

beyond the monastery walls, for they, on the one hand, emphasized the importance of alms from the laity for monastic life, and on the other, strengthened the laity's respect for the Christian virtues of monasticism.

The hagiography provides us with a number of examples of St. Theodosius's service to his neighbors, so that he may be considered the forerunner of socially oriented Christian service to the world. The monk Nestor calls him the protector of widows, orphans, and the poor. His deeds remind us of Palestinian monasticism. Soon, Theodosius's influence reached the princely court of Kyiv, where he was held in high esteem thanks to his insightful counsel; this was clearly evident in his dispute with Prince Svyatoslav, in which he prevailed: the headstrong prince was forced to bow to the spiritual authority of the future saint.

Theodosius also preached among the monastic community; his teachings addressed the fundamental principles of the monastic life, but he did not provide instructions on how to perform specific ascetic practices⁴³.

Theodosius's views on various aspects of everyday monastic life are expressed in the five sermons for monks that he left behind, the authorship of which is unquestionably attributed to the saint⁴⁴. Theodosius bases his system of pastoral education on a zealous striving for perfection. He saw the main goal of monastic life in his time as humility and patience, prayer, and love for one's brothers. However, he did not demand excessively difficult external ascetic feats from the monks. It was clear to the holy abbot that one could not immediately demand too much from the first generation of monks. These teachings attest to how slowly and gradually the Christian-ascetic worldview took root, and to the fact that any tightening of requirements could only harm monastic life. It was of utmost importance for the development of Old Russian monasticism that, under Theodosius, ascetic demands went hand in hand with practical pastoral duties, for only in this way could the monastic community maintain a certain standard.

During Theodosius's time, a monk at the Kiev Caves Monastery spent his day in prayer and handicrafts. From Theodosius's hagiography, we learn that Matins, the Hours, and the Divine Liturgy were celebrated daily at the monastery. The monks devoted the intervals between services to manual labor; they wove bast shoes and hats, which they then sold in town so that they could use the proceeds to purchase grain for the monastery. The monks ground this grain themselves and baked bread from it. In the spring and summer, the brethren worked in the monastery garden. The food was simple and meager: on weekdays, the diet consisted mainly of bread and water; only on Saturdays and Sundays, when the rule permitted a break from fasting, was porridge or oatmeal soup prepared for the brethren. But often the brethren had neither porridge nor even bread. They ate together in the refectory, and Theodosius strictly forbade taking any food back to their cells except dry bread. They fasted particularly rigorously during Lent and Holy Week⁴⁵.

The spirit of Theodosius's monastic community was best expressed in the story of Nikola Svyatosha, which was included in the Caves of Kiev Paterikon. Nikola Svyatosha was Prince Svyatoslav Davydovich of Chernigov, the great-grandson of Grand Prince Yaroslav. In 1106, he joined the brotherhood of the Caves of Kiev Monastery. The Paterikon recounts his ascetic life in particularly solemn language. Filled with humility, Nikola Svyatosha did not shy away from the monastic tasks performed by a simple novice: at first, he worked in the kitchen for three years, leaving only to attend services in the church; then he served as the monastery gatekeeper for another three years; and later, he served the other monks in the refectory. Only after many years of diligent service did he, with the abbot's blessing, build himself a small cell. Contemporaries recounted that Svyatosha never idled away his time there: he always had some task at hand; he even wove his own monastic robe from particularly coarse yarn. The Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner") never left his lips—in Russian hagiography, Nikola Svyatosha is remembered as the first practitioner of the unceasing Jesus Prayer. He lived a life of asceticism in the monastery for 36 years and passed away in 1142/43. *His brother, Prince Izyaslav Davydovich, was healed of a serious illness by putting on Nikola Svyatosha's shirt. Upon entering the Pechersk Monastery, Nikola distributed all his princely wealth to the poor*⁴⁶.

⁴³ Paterikon (1911). pp. 14–56; cf. the works of Chagovets and Fedotov.

⁴⁴ The Teachings of Theodosius in: Ponomarev. 1; on the identity of the teachings, cf.: Shakhmatoff, in: IORAS, 1893. pp. 827–33; Nikolsky. Materials for a Chronological List of Russian Writers and Their Works of the 10th and 11th Centuries. St. Petersburg, 1906. pp. 157–166.

⁴⁵ Paterik (1911). pp. 26, 27, 29, 39, 41, 43. Lavr. letters dated 6559, 6582, 6583, 6599, 6604; Goetz. Das Kiever Höhlenkloster.

⁴⁶ Paterik (1911). pp. 83–86; Priselkov. Essays. pp. 246, 367; Goetz. p. 207.

The Life of St. Theodosius provides us with numerous examples of how great the respect for him was, both in the monastery and in Kyiv. In his struggle to bring the Christian ideal to life, he made no distinction between the great and the small, between the rich and the poor. The spirit of social justice and inner unity among people under those circumstances contributed to the Christianization of society. The abbot's Christian steadfastness, evident during a severe and protracted dispute with Svyatoslav—who, trampling on justice, had banished his elder brother, Grand Prince Izyaslav, from Kyiv—must have had a particularly compelling effect on society. The Pechersk Monastery and its brethren fell out of favor with the wayward prince; the Great Nikon left the monastery for the second time and went to Tmutarakan for several years, to the monastery he had founded earlier. Only Theodosius showed no fear and convinced the prince that he was in the wrong.

2. Monastic Life in the 12th and 13th Centuries

In 1058 or slightly earlier, Theodosius arrived at the Pechersk Monastery; in 1062, he was elected abbot, and he died 12 years later—on May 3, 1074. During this time, the small group of ascetics who had taken refuge in Anthony's cave grew into a numerous monastic community; cells and the Great Church were built at the monastery. The monastery owed its material and religious-spiritual growth above all to the efforts of the holy abbot. The great spiritual significance of the Pechersk Monastery at that time can best be judged by a letter written at the end of the 12th century by Bishop Simon (a former monk of the monastery and co-author of the Pechersk Paterikon) to the monk Polycarp: "Who does not know me, the sinful Bishop Simon, and this cathedral church, the beauties of Vladimir, and the other churches of Sudal, which I myself built? How many cities and villages do I possess! And tithes are collected throughout that land. And all of this is ruled by our weakness. I would have abandoned all of this, but consider what a great spiritual matter it is to sustain me now, and I pray to the Lord that He may grant me a favorable time to govern. And the Lord knows this secret; truly I tell you, I would soon regard all this glory and honor as dung if I were to stand like a stick behind the gates or be trampled like rubbish at the Pechersk Monastery and be trodden upon by people, or to be just one of the poor at the honorable gates of that Lavra and become a supplicant—that would be a better honor for me than these temporal honors. A single day in the house of the Mother of God is worth more than 1,000 years, and I would rather dwell there than live in sinful villages." The holy abbot of the Kiev Caves Monastery became a model of faith not only for his brothers and contemporaries, but also for the entire Old Russian monastic community. In his example, Old Russian ascetic piety found its national expression and the ideal measure of asceticism. When, after a certain hiatus, Old Russian monasticism experienced its greatest flourishing, it maintained an inner connection with St. Theodosius in its understanding of the meaning of asceticism. The spirit of the first decades of the Kiev Caves Monastery lived on in many ascetics of Northern Rus'.

After the death of Theodosius, who had sought to keep the brotherhood at the level of strict cenobitic discipline they had attained, his system of monastic guidance began to undergo changes. The Kiev Caves Monastery, like other urban monasteries, was too closely entangled with the secular world. On the one hand, these ties led to a gradual secularization of monastic life; on the other hand, the monastic community, in opposition to this secularization, set a number of examples of increasingly rigorous asceticism; in some cases, this intensification of ascetic practices led to falling into delusion. Relations with the ruling Prince of Kyiv were of immense importance to the Pechersk Monastery; the monastery, like other monastic communities, had to reckon with the prince's favor and disfavor. Theodosius himself, with his great authority, was able to resist the prince's arbitrariness, but after him, not all abbots managed to maintain such a high standard. All these circumstances influenced monastic life, and in later times the brethren of the Pechersk Monastery appear in a different light than they did under Theodosius. A series of figures passes before our mind's eye: recluses and strict ascetics, martyrs and preachers, visionaries and miracle-workers. At the same time, the Paterikon shows us examples of ascetic excesses, examples of behavior that does not meet the basic requirements of Christian life. The former unity, which had been the cornerstone of Theodosius's monastic community, is now crumbling.

And the historian's eye notes one more important circumstance: as soon as the internal structure of monastic life changes, it immediately begins to draw from a different spiritual source than before. The spirit of the Theodosius Kinovia can be compared to Palestinian asceticism. It is no coincidence that Theodosius, in his teachings to the brethren, mentioned the names of Euthymius and Savvas; the way of life of these fathers and their circle from the Lavra of St. Savvas or the kinonia of Theodosius the Great contributed to the

introduction of communal life, particularly communal meals and prayer. For Theodosius, this monastic ideal was also linked to the Studite Rule, which likewise required strict observance of the rules of communal life; both rules—the Studite and that of St. Savvas—were rooted in the teachings of the great Cappadocian⁴⁷. However, the excesses in ascetic practices characteristic of the monastery’s monks in the 11th and 12th centuries and described in the Paterikon, is reminiscent of the Syrian ascetics or certain Egyptian monks, as well as of the 11th-century monks of Mount Athos, who resisted the cenobitic rule introduced by St. Athanasius of Athos and, in their desire to save themselves according to their own understanding, sometimes fell into delusion. Those ascetics mentioned in the Paterikon who indulged in excessively severe ascetic practices were also guided by their own understanding. Only for the elect did this path become the narrow way to salvation; for the inexperienced, especially for those who had not undergone the training of communal life, it was a path of despair, wavering, and temptation⁴⁸.

The life of Abraham of Smolensk, who was one of the most distinctive figures of pre-Mongol Rus’, speaks to the internal crisis of monasticism during that era. In the 12th century, Smolensk experienced a brief cultural revival and rivaled Kyiv. Abraham, born in Smolensk shortly after 1146 into a wealthy family, received a very good education for that time; it is possible that he also knew Greek. He was tonsured at a monastery near Smolensk, where his ascetic inclinations could only have been strengthened by his study of the works of John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Ephrem the Syrian, and the life of St. Theodosius of the Caves, all of which were preserved there. Abraham spent 20 or 30 years there, living in strict abstinence and devoting his time to prayer and, perhaps, mystical contemplation. The monk Ephrem, a disciple of Abraham and the author of his hagiography, reports that the great Palestinian ascetics, such as Hilarion, Abbot Savva, and Euthymius, served as his role models. This account, as well as other details of Abraham’s life, suggest that he was a follower of the Palestinian tradition, in which regard he can be compared to St. Theodosius. Ignatius, then Bishop of Smolensk, could not help but notice the ascetic—and ordained him as a hieromonk. This took place after 1197. Ephrem goes on to write that Abraham celebrated the Divine Liturgy every day, always delivering a sermon afterward. The power and eloquence of his words drew crowds of people to him. Avraamy’s popularity aroused envy and ill will on the part of the monastery’s abbot and the monks, so Avraamy was subjected to persecution. He then moved to the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Smolensk and continued his preaching and pastoral ministry there. In his sermons, Abraham spoke mainly about the Last Judgment, to which two icons he painted are also dedicated. Perhaps his “Sermon on the Heavenly Powers”—an interesting example of Old Russian scholarly writing—dates from this period. With great persuasiveness and considerable eloquence, he discusses here the salvation of believers, repentance, and the approaching end of the world. In doing so, Avraamy reveals himself to be a zealous advocate of Old Russian eschatological teachings. Soon, however, even in his new post, Avraamy gained envious rivals and detractors who accused him before the bishop of heresy and of reading heretical books (the “Dove’s Book” or “Deep Book”). The trial, in which a representative of the Prince of Smolensk also participated, found that the accusation was slander; however, to quell the turmoil caused by the slanderers, the bishop sent Avraamy to the monastery where he had once begun his monastic life, forbidding him from celebrating the Divine Liturgy, as well as from receiving and instructing visitors. The hagiography states that, as a result of this injustice, God’s punishment befell Smolensk—intense heat and drought. After the bishop lifted the ban—imposed on the innocent man, rain fell in response to Abraham’s prayers, and the land of Smolensk was saved from disaster. Then the bishop, who had founded a monastery there in honor of the Mother of God, appointed Avraamy as its abbot. This monastery, too, soon became a place of pilgrimage for the faithful—people flocked there in droves. Avraamy led his monastery, where he spent only seventeen months, along the path of strict asceticism. As the monk Ephrem recounts, he devoted himself entirely to the gathering of the soul and the contemplation of the Last Judgment. Immersed in ascetic and mystical practices, Abraham passed away in 1219 or 1220.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Cf.: note 4; Abramovich. pp. 133 ff.; Schneider. Theodor v. Studion und sein Zeitalter (1892). p. 40.

⁴⁸ The ascetic tradition of St. Theodosius is represented by the ascetics: Nikola Svyatosha, Prokhor, Gregory, Spyridon, and Alipius; cf.: Paterikon. Chapters 20, 27, 28, 31.

⁴⁹ On the cultural flourishing of Smolensk, see Nikolsky. On the Literary Works of Metropolitan Clement Smolyatich (1892). p. 138; Lavrovsky. On Old Russian Schools (1854). p. 49; Klyuchevsky. Old Russian Hagiographies (1871). p. 54. On Avraamy: Redkov. Op. cit.; Fedotov. Op. cit., in: Prav. m. 2 (1930); Makary. 3. pp. 64–67, 205–210. “A Word on the Heavenly Powers” in: Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences. 9 (1860–61). P. 188 ff.; see also: Vilinsky. The Life of St. Basil the New. 1 (1913). P. 311; Veselovsky, A. N. Studies in the Field of Russian Spiritual Poetry (1889). p. 121; see also: Shevyrev. History of Russian Literature. 3 (1858). p. 15; Buslaev. Historical Essays on Russian Folk Literature and Art. 2. p. 119.

The Life of Abraham, compiled shortly after his death (around 1237) by his disciple, the monk Ephrem, constitutes a valuable source for the 12th century, much as the Life of Saint Theodosius is for the 11th century. The spiritual environment surrounding Abraham echoes certain features familiar to us from the Caves of Kiev Paterikon. One might, of course, argue that Old Russian monasticism, prior to the Mongol invasions, had already entered a period of decline by that time. But we must not forget that the cause of this lay not in monasticism itself—which was still a novelty in Rus’ at the time—but in the conditions of state, political, and ecclesiastical life at that time. The inner maturity and strength of monasticism rest on many years of unceasing spiritual labor, and the Old Russian monk had not yet had time to undergo such training. Theodosius’s lifetime was too brief, and his influence endured for only one or two generations of the monastic brotherhood; Russian monasticism had not yet absorbed the full ascetic experience of monastic life, nor had it mastered the fundamentals of communal living. The ascetic writings of the Holy Fathers speak to how slowly this process takes place, what harm an interruption in spiritual practice can cause, and how easily monasteries can fall prey to secularization. In order to maintain the heights it has reached, monasticism needs not only a well-established ascetic tradition but also living bearers of that tradition who would educate new generations of monks in the spirit of that tradition—as do the Orthodox elders, so little known in the West—and who would train new spiritual mentors to succeed them. But this was sorely lacking, for despite all his personal spirituality and piety, St. Theodosius did not establish a “school” of ascetic worldview—neither for the entire pre-Mongol monastic community in general, nor for the Kiev Caves Monastery in particular. Therefore, in the monastic life of that era, we do not see a “golden mean”—strict communal living, cenobitic life, the first and most important school of the monk: instead, there were either excessive ascetic feats or the secularization of monastic life.

St. Theodosius, through his life, demonstrated the nobility of the monastic order and its necessity for Christian society, and he himself served as an example of ascetic virtue for the newly converted people; at the same time, he was more the embodiment of the new Russian Christianity in general than of Russian monasticism.

The internal division within monasticism in the 12th century is also attested to by the works of a bishop who was, perhaps, one of the finest exponents—but, unfortunately, not the founder—of Old Russian asceticism. I am referring to Cyril, Bishop of Turov, the “Russian Chrysostom,” so named for his sermons, which were imbued with a lofty poetic inspiration. He was born in 1130 and died shortly after 1182. Early in his monastic career, as a monk at the Boris and Gleb Monastery in Turov, he distinguished himself by the austerity of his life and his ascetic practices, which even included living on a pillar; for his time, he was a well-educated monk. Later (1162), Cyril was elected Bishop of Turov. Among his other works, three letters have survived in which he discusses the monastic life. Although these letters, addressed to specific individuals, are characterized by different features than the previously mentioned teachings of Theodosius (theologically, they are of a higher caliber and constitute a principled discussion of the topic), they nonetheless provide insight into the state of monasticism at that time. The letter to Basil, the abbot of the Kiev Caves Monastery (1182), sheds particular light on certain aspects of monastic life. For example, we learn from it that ideas about the significance of the great schema were not entirely clear at that time.

Already in the hagiography of Abraham, we find traces of the office of spiritual father, which are evident in all the saint’s deeds—first and foremost in his relationship with the black-robed monk Ephrem, but also with other believers who sought his spiritual guidance. This was an example of the office of spiritual father outside the monastery walls, reminiscent of the spiritual fathers of the 18th century. Cyril’s work, “The Tale of the Black-Robed Order,” clearly shows that he, too, understood the role of the spiritual father as an ascetic and monastic institution⁵⁰.

Unfortunately, we have little material describing daily life in a monastery of the 11th–12th centuries. The Life of Theodosius provides some basis for imagining monastic life of his time, but mainly, if not exclusively, at the Pechersk Monastery itself. Our information regarding later periods and other monasteries is quite fragmentary. The Life of Abraham is also not very informative in this regard, since its author limits himself to recounting events in Abraham’s own life.

⁵⁰ Kalaydovich. Monuments of Russian Literature of the 12th Century (1821). pp. 102–131 (two epistles); all three epistles in: The Works of Our Holy Father Cyril, Bishop of Turov (1880). pp. 90–127; on Cyril himself, see: Introduction, in: Works; Golubinsky. 1. 1 (2nd ed.). p. 797; Ponomarev. 1. p. 98 ff.; Paterik (1911). p. 28.

As for monastic administration, we have fairly reliable information here. As a rule, the abbot was elected by the monastic community itself. Later, the newly elected abbot was confirmed in his position by a bishop or metropolitan. The situation was different in monasteries founded by princes—the so-called “ktitor” monasteries, which were largely dependent on the prince. In these monasteries, the selection and removal of the abbot were entirely in the hands of the ktitor—the prince. The same was true of monasteries founded by bishops. In practice, the prince would propose his candidate to the bishop for appointment. It was extremely rare for the bishop to refuse. Although at the Pechersk Monastery the election of the abbot remained, in principle, the privilege of the monastic community itself, the *Paterikon* contains evidence that these elections often took place not without outside influence. Furthermore, the *Paterikon* attests that the monks were not always satisfied with the abbot and often sought his removal. When Theodosius, on his deathbed, suggested that the monastic community elect the monk Jacob as the new abbot, the monks refused to heed his advice because Jacob had come to the Pechersk Monastery from another monastery. Theodosius then named another candidate to succeed him—Stephen. The brotherhood agreed to elect him abbot. But soon Stephen (who served as abbot from 1074 to 1078) was removed due to the brotherhood’s dissatisfaction and was forced to leave the monastery. His successor was Nikon the Great (1078–1088), who was elected by the monastic community. The fact that the elections themselves were sometimes not without friction is evidenced by the story of the election of the priest Basil as abbot in 1182. Another example of how parish priests could be appointed as monastery abbots was the election of Prokhor in 1112. Of course, in both cases, the parish priests took monastic vows before being appointed abbots⁵¹.

Management of the monastery was concentrated in the hands of the abbot; however, if the monastery was founded by a patron, the abbot had to take the patron’s wishes into account in his decisions. If the abbot was a strict ascetic and a zealous upholder of a well-established monastic order, his task was particularly difficult, for he had to strike a balance between strict adherence to the monastic charter and the prince’s will. The prince’s authority over the monastery contributed to its secularization, which was also evident in the monastery’s material dependence on that authority. The prince’s endowments were the main source of the monasteries’ livelihood. Added to this were offerings from private individuals, bishops, wealthy merchants, and other donors...⁵²

However, the monasteries’ material wealth helped them fulfill their social mission. In the *Life of St. Theodosius and the Caves of Kiev Paterikon*, we find many examples of charity, which flourished at the Caves of Kiev Monastery. As the wealthiest monastery, the Kiev Caves Monastery was able to engage in charitable work on a much larger scale than other monasteries of the 11th–12th centuries. The monastery also played a significant role in the internal mission. It may seem counterintuitive, but a monk’s work outside the monastery walls inevitably took a toll on monastic life. In Ancient Rus’, only monks were permitted to hear the confessions of the faithful. The spiritual father served not only as a guide in spiritual life but also as an advisor in everyday matters. This gave the monastic community considerable influence over social relations, but at the same time drew monasticism into these relations and sometimes had undesirable consequences. In Ancient Rus’, a will was usually drawn up after consultation with the spiritual father and in his presence; at times, a literate confessor would personally record the last will of his spiritual child and could thus influence the testator’s wishes. It is clear how important it was for a monastery if its abbot or some other influential monk served as spiritual father to princes or wealthy individuals and could use his position for the monastery’s benefit. Yet this “dark side” was also linked to the clergy’s profound and beneficial influence on the society of that time. The example of the aforementioned Abraham of Smolensk shows just how great the influence of a spiritually gifted confessor could be on the faithful; many other sources also attest to this⁵³.

⁵¹ Golubinsky. 1. 1 (2nd ed.). p. 743; Shakhmatoff. *Studies*. pp. 437–438; Priselkov. *Essays*. p. 215 ff.; *Paterik* (1911). pp. 27, 53, 57; Makariy. 3. p. 101. On the right of ktitor: see Troitsky, I. “The Right of Ktitor in Byzantium and in Serbia under Nemanja,” in: *Glas Srpske Akademije Nauk* (1935). 168 (in Serbo-Croatian).

⁵² *Paterikon* (1911). pp. 24–26; Goetz. pp. 128–134; *Lavr. Chronicle*, under the years 1051, 1074, 1086, 1096, 1108, and others; *Paterikon* (1911). pp. 39, 41, etc.; *Ipatiev Chronicle*, entries for 1154, 1158, 1187, 1113, and other years; Goetz, p. 165. See also excerpts from the spiritual testament of St. Barlaam of Khutyn (1112), which are included in S. Herberstein’s well-known work **Rerum Moscoviticarum Commentarii**. Antwerp, 1557. pp. 29–30.

⁵³ Smirnov. *The Old Russian Testament* (1914). Ch. 1.

3. Religious and Cultural Activities of the Monastic Community

Another factor leading to internal division within monasticism was the fact that it bore the great responsibility of national and cultural enlightenment.

Old Russian literature, which is, to one degree or another, religiously and morally oriented, emerged from the monastic milieu. Not all works were entirely original, but Old Russian monk-writers generally had little desire to create something new at all costs. The reason for this was partly the lack of education among ecclesiastical circles, and partly the great reverence for books in general and religious works in particular, for they contain divine truth, and no human hand dares to add anything of its own to them. And yet, Old Russian monks produced quite a few works that bear the mark of creativity.

We cannot survey the entirety of Old Russian literature here. It will suffice merely to emphasize the special role of the Old Russian monk in the creation of this literature and to dwell in more detail on two of its genres: the Old Russian sermon and the chronicle.

The former attests to the religious and moral service of the monastic order, while the latter attests to its national and cultural service.

Perhaps the sermons of the 11th–13th centuries, when viewed from a historical and literary perspective, were not entirely original. What was more important for that time was their content and the impact on people exerted by the Christian worldview expressed in them. From a Christian perspective, sermons speak of the weakness of human nature, condemn superstitions and sins, and point the way to salvation. Eschatology has been a central theme in the religious worldview of the Russian people since the earliest days of Christianity in Rus'. Theodosius of the Caves and Abraham of Smolensk have already been mentioned as preachers. St. Abraham's "Treatise on the Heavenly Powers" has a distinct eschatological tone. Like Theodosius, who preached to the monastic community about the fundamental principles of monasticism, Luke Zhidyata, Bishop of Novgorod (d. 1059), demanded that his flock remain faithful to the Christian foundations of life. Cyril, Bishop of Turov, whose nine sermons have survived, preached in a different manner. He stood on a higher level of culture and education than his contemporaries. The sermons he delivered on the feasts of the liturgical year—the best of which was delivered on the Ascension of Christ—were theologically profound and, perhaps, not entirely comprehensible to his flock, but they attest to his thorough knowledge of Sacred Scripture and the Holy Fathers, and, more generally, to his erudition, which was extraordinary for that time. They are of high literary quality, contain allegories and parables, and characterize Cyril as a man of Byzantine ecclesiastical culture⁵⁴.

Another representative of this culture was Clement, Metropolitan of Kyiv (1147–1154, † 1164). He was born in Smolensk at a time when the city was experiencing a cultural renaissance. He was Russian, and the Grand Prince had chosen him as Metropolitan of Kyiv, but he did not remain in that office for long, as the Patriarchate of Constantinople always sought to have a Greek occupy the metropolitan see. Clement was a well-educated man, possessing not only theological knowledge but also a grasp of classical philosophy—he is the only Old Russian bishop to have been given the epithet "the Philosopher" by a chronicler⁵⁵. He is known primarily as the author of the Epistle to the Presbyter Thomas.

Kirill of Turov and Clement both belonged to the monastic community of the 12th century, an era when Byzantine scholarship had already been influencing Russian ecclesiastical circles for two centuries, and this influence could not fail to bear fruit. But they had another predecessor, a brilliant preacher among the newly converted people, who combined deep faith, a gift for oratory, and a strongly expressed national consciousness. This was Metropolitan Hilarion of Kiev.

An ancient chronicler, who tells us that Hilarion was initially a priest at the palace church in Berestovo (likely as a hieromonk), describes him, as already mentioned, as "a good man, a scholar, and a fasting ascetic," but says nothing about his origins. Most likely, thanks to his constant interaction with non-Russian circles—the Bulgarians and Greeks—Hilarion was able to receive a Christian theological education. But in our mind's eye, Hilarion appears not only as a learned Christian. He was a Christian with a strong inclination toward asceticism; he may have been the first Russian monk. The scarcity of information about Hilarion's life is linked to gaps in the historical record regarding the origins of Russian monasticism in general. We do not

⁵⁴ See note 50.

⁵⁵ Nikolsky, N. *On the Literary Works of Metropolitan Clement Smolyatich, a 12th-Century Writer* (1892). We may also mention another Russian preacher—Serapion, Bishop of Vladimir (d. 1275), who served for some time as abbot of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra; his sermons (five in total) are profound and of high literary quality.

know where he embarked on the path of asceticism. He dug a small cave for himself on the banks of the Dnieper to have a quiet place for prayer and spiritual reflection; he may have been ordained between 1037 and 1039, and later, in 1051, by the will of Grand Prince Yaroslav and with the consent of the people, he was named Metropolitan of Kyiv. While still serving as a presbyter, around 1039, he delivered a sermon for reasons that are not entirely clear. This sermon, known as the “Sermon on Law and Grace,” is a true masterpiece of oratory, a fact acknowledged even by E. E. Golubinsky, who was cautious in his assessments and a great skeptic regarding Russian church history.

This “Sermon” was likely not a church sermon, because its content was too advanced for the broad masses of believers of that time to understand. It is possible that Hilarion delivered it before Grand Prince Yaroslav, the metropolitan, and the court on the occasion of the church feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord⁽⁵⁶⁾.

At the beginning of the “Sermon,” Hilarion compares the Old Testament (“the Law”) with the New Testament (“grace”); The Old Testament is merely a preparation for the New Testament; in the second part of the “Sermon,” he speaks of Prince Vladimir, praising him for enlightening his people with the light of the Christian faith; the third part of the “Sermon” is a prayer to God, offered on behalf of the entire newly converted Russian land. In his work, Hilarion asserts the historical-philosophical idea that in world history, guided by Divine Providence, there is a succession of peoples who stand at the center of the historical process. Israel, chosen by God, and its history represent a period of preparation—the era of the Law—which is succeeded by the era of grace, the era of Christianity, the era of truth and the salvation of the human race. Prince Vladimir therefore deserves praise for having, through his feat, led the Russian people into the “Kingdom of Grace.” Hilarion particularly emphasizes the significance of Vladimir’s spiritual disposition, which led him to conversion.

⁵⁷The second part of the “Sermon” is important to us because it expresses Hilarion’s national and patriotic consciousness. Vladimir came to believe in Christ not as a result of the preaching of Greek missionaries, as the pro-Greek Korsun Legend claims, but out of an inner need of the soul and a conviction in the truth of the new faith.

Hilarion’s national-patriotic views and his national-ecclesiastical opposition to the pro-Greek legend of Vladimir’s conversion were the very idea that expressed the national-cultural views of the entire Old Russian monastic community, especially the Pechersk brethren, and were zealously professed by Russian monasticism. Such views contributed to the entrenchment of the idea of the Russification of the Russian Church, which led to a series of historical events indicating the existence within the Russian Church of opposition to the policies of the Patriarch of Constantinople. Hilarion’s nationalist sentiments were, perhaps, not the least of the reasons why, in 1051—when his relations with Byzantium had become particularly strained—Yaroslav ordered the Council of Russian bishops to consecrate Hilarion and elevated him to the see of the Metropolitans of Kyiv, which had been vacant since the death of Theopemptus. From this time on, there are no records of Metropolitan Hilarion; he did not remain in office for long: when Yaroslav once again sought reconciliation with Constantinople, Hilarion was forced to leave the see (1054–55).

Hilarion’s subsequent life is linked to the history of the Kiev Caves Monastery and the monastic community of that time, particularly to the national and cultural activities of this monastery, which had become the spiritual center of Ancient Rus’. We associate Hilarion’s subsequent fate with the Kiev Caves Monastery because we share Priselkov’s hypothesis that the Great Nikon (or Nikon the Great) from the hagiography of Theodosius and Metropolitan Hilarion are one and the same person⁵⁸.

Such a remarkable figure as Hilarion-Nikon cannot be excluded from the history of Old Russian monasticism; he must be the focus of attention when examining the question of Old Rus’ national identity. National and cultural creativity absorbed a significant portion of the monastic community’s spiritual energy, and in a certain sense, this had negative consequences for purely ascetic practice, primarily for the brethren of

⁵⁶ Nikolsky. *Materials* (1906). pp. 75–76; Priselkov. *Essays*; Ponomarev. 1. pp. 48–58; Golubinsky. 1. 1 (2nd ed.). p. 844; “A Sermon on the Law and Grace” in: Ponomarev. 1. pp. 59–79.

⁵⁷ Shakhmatoff. *The Korsun Legend of Vladimir’s Baptism* (1906); idem. *Research*; Parkhomenko. *The Beginnings of Christianity in Rus’* (1911); Priselkov. *Nestor the Chronicler* (1924). pp. 52, 74–77; cf.: Baumgarten, N. de. *Saint Vladimir and the Conversion of Russia* (1932), in: **Orientalia Christiana**. 79.

⁵⁸ Priselkov. “Metropolitan Hilarion, in monasticism Nikon, as a Fighter for an Independent Russian Church,” in: *Collection in Honor of S. F. Platonov* (1911). pp. 188–201; *ibid.* *Essays*; *ibid.* *Nestor the Chronicler* (1924); cf.: Shakhmatov. *Studies*.

the Kiev Caves Monastery. But it is not known which was more important for Kievan Rus' at that time: the formation of a national Russian identity or the education of two or three generations of monks, whose development suffered due to the secularizing influence of state and social conditions. Later history tends to support the former.

After being deposed from the metropolitan see—this occurred after 1051 and shortly before 1055, when the chronicler already refers to the Greek Ephrem as metropolitan—Hilarion went to Anthony, who was living in the old Hilarion Cave; and from that time on, Hilarion is known as Nikon the Great in the Life of St. Theodosius and the Caves of Kiev Paterikon⁵⁹. The change of name is connected with his tonsure into the great schema. Nikon immediately began to play a special role in the life of the Caves of Kiev Monastery. Since Anthony did not hold the priestly order, Nikon received and tonsured novices. Because he had tonsured two of the Grand Prince's retainers, Nikon incurred the prince's wrath and was forced to leave the monastery for a time. He went to the city of Tmutarakan (Greek: Tamartarcha), on the shore of the Sea of Azov, where he founded a monastery in honor of the Mother of God (between 1061 and 1067); he himself did not stay there long, and by 1068 he was able to return to the Kiev Caves Monastery. From 1068 to 1074, Nikon served as Theodosius's chief assistant in providing spiritual guidance to the monastic community. After a brief abbotship under Stephen—who succeeded Theodosius but was forced to leave the monastery due to discontent among the monastic community—Nikon *was elected abbot in 1077–78 and led the monastery until his death in 1088. His ten-year tenure as abbot constituted one of the most significant periods in the history of the monastery's development. Under his leadership, construction of the stone church continued, and invited Greek artists adorned it with paintings, carvings, and mosaics*⁶⁰.

But the most important achievement was the creation of the Old Russian chronicle—a work imbued with a genuinely Christian and nationally Russian spirit. From that time on, the Old Russian monastery became a center of chronicle-writing, and the image of the Russian chronicler became inseparable from that of the monk. Consequently, the worldview embodied in the chronicles is Christian and ascetic in nature⁶¹. In his tragedy **Boris Godunov**, A. Pushkin portrayed the Old Russian chronicler—in the character of the monk Pimen—in a beautiful artistic and historically accurate manner: Pimen (writing by lamplight):

One more, the final tale—
And my chronicle is finished,
The duty entrusted to me by God
to me, a sinner. It is no wonder that for many years
Has the Lord made me a witness
And taught me the art of writing;
Someday a diligent monk
Will find my diligent, nameless work,
And he, like me, will light his lamp—
And, brushing the dust of centuries from the parchments,
He will transcribe the true tales,
So that the descendants of the Orthodox
The past fate of their native land,
And may they honor their great kings
For their labors, for their glory, for their goodness—
And for their sins and dark deeds,
They humbly implore the Savior⁶².

⁵⁹ See note 25.

⁶⁰ Paterikon (1911). pp. 21, 24, 33; Priselkov. Essays. pp. 206, 235; Golubinsky. Vol. 1, No. 1. p. 687; Vol. 1, No. 2. p. 776 (2nd ed.); Shakhmatoff. Studies. p. 435.

⁶¹ Georgievsky. Christianity as Understood by the Russian People in the Pre-Mongol Period (1893); Sumtsov. On National Self-Consciousness in Pre-Mongol Rus' (1905); Shakhmatoff, A. Studies (1908); Shakhmatoff, M. Essays on the History of Old Russian Political Ideas. Vol. 1. Prague, 1927. A general overview of Old Russian chronicles is provided in: Speransky. History of Ancient Russian Literature. Vol. 1 (1914). pp. 301–318; Vol. 1 (1920). pp. 325 ff.

⁶² Pushkin, A. S. Boris Godunov.

During Nikon's time, work began on compiling a chronicle. The so-called "Chronicle of 1039," compiled by the Greek community at the Metropolitan See of Kyiv, was revised and expanded⁶³. This gave rise to the "Chronicle of 1073," written primarily by Nikon. A continuation of this Chronicle was the "Chronicle of 1095," in the creation of which the monk Nestor, known as the Chronicler, played the leading role; this "Chronicle of 1095" is the "Original Russian Chronicle," or "Original Kyiv Chronicle," which forms the basis of the Old Russian chronicle of 1116. And the chronicle of 1116 ("The Tale of Bygone Years." — Translator's note) forms the basis of the well-known Laurentian (1377) and Ipatiev (15th century) chronicles, as well as all other Russian chronicles.

The example of Nestor particularly clearly illustrates the result of Nikon's efforts to shape a Russian national worldview. Ideologically, Nestor was a faithful disciple of Nikon. He arrived at the Kiev Caves Monastery while Abbot Stephen was still in office—that is, between 1074 and 1077—but his literary activity took place mainly in the 80s and 90s of the 11th century. Nestor also wrote two hagiographic works: the Life of St. Theodosius—part of the Pechersk Paterikon—and the Life of the Holy Princes Boris and Gleb. The Life of Boris and Gleb was Nestor's first hagiographic work; it appeared in the early 80s of the 11th century, that is, already during Nikon's time. The writer's religious and political worldview has distinctly national characteristics, so Nikon's influence here is indisputable. The hagiography recounts the murder of two brothers, Princes Boris and Gleb, the younger sons of Prince Vladimir, which was carried out on the orders of their older brother, Svyatopolk. This atrocity committed by Svyatopolk made a profound impression on his contemporaries, and the fledgling Russian Church began to venerate the slain as martyrs. The Life of Boris and Gleb was a particularly beloved reading among the people. Nestor wrote it to praise the Christian virtues of the slain princes, as well as to set forth his national-Russian doctrine. At its core lies the idea of the unity of Rus' and the right of primogeniture within the princely line. This idea is clearly expressed by Nestor in the Life of Theodosius (in the account of the saint's dispute with Prince Svyatopolk). Nestor was a zealous adherent of this idea, which later took on such distinctive features in the activities of the Metropolitans of Moscow⁶⁴.

The fact that this idea found support not only among the brethren of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra but also had strong backing in monastic circles in general is attested to by the hagiographic work known as "Memory and Praise of the Russian Prince Volodymyr." The author of "Memory and Praise" is disputed; one can only determine with certainty the time of its composition, which dates to the first half of the 12th century. The anonymous writer rejects the pro-Greek concept of the "Korsun Legend," and his ecclesiastical-political worldview is distinctly national-Russian in character⁶⁵.

The literary-historical and hagiographic works of the monastic scholars of the Kiev Caves Monastery greatly contributed to the formation of the national identity of Ancient Rus'. Other literary monuments of the 12th century, such as "The Pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Hegumen Daniel" and "The Tale of Igor's Campaign," indicate that national identity was deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the task of shaping the national identity of the emerging Russian state was accomplished primarily and first and foremost by the Old Russian monastic community. From the standpoint of state and national politics, this was, of course, a great achievement of monasticism; but from a purely ecclesiastical and Christian-ascetic perspective, it was detrimental to the spiritual growth of the first generations of monks, who should have devoted themselves solely to spiritual endeavors within the framework of strictly observed monastic communal life.

The Church and monasticism sought to avoid the danger of secularization arising from the diversity of their activities. And as we shall see later, they succeeded in this, not as a result of measures taken by

⁶³ On the history of the emergence of Old Russian chronicles, see: Shakhmatoff, A. *Research* (1908). pp. 420–460; idem. *The Tale of Bygone Years* (1916); Speransky. Op. cit.; Boguslavsky. On the Nature and Scope of Nestor's Literary Activity, in: IORAS (1914). Vol. 1, p. 131; Vol. 3, pp. 153–191; Istrin. Remarks on the Beginnings of Russian Chronicling, in: IORAS (1921). pp. 45–102; (1922). pp. 207–251; Nikolsky, N. The Tale of Bygone Years. 1 (1930). For literature on the chronicle, see: Nikolsky. Materials (1906). German translation: *Die Nestor-Chronik*. Ed. K. Trautmann. Leipzig, 1931, in: *Slav. – Baltische Quellen und Forschungen*. 6.

⁶⁴ Priselkov. Nestor the Chronicler (1924); Petukhov. Russian Literature. The Ancient Period (1916). pp. 16–18; cf. the literature cited in note 56.

⁶⁵ Golubinsky. 1. 1 (2nd ed.). p. 743; "Memory." Ibid. pp. 238–247. Shakhmatoff. Studies. pp. 34–40, 437 ff.; Nikolsky. Materials (1906). pp. 225, 228, 230–233; Serebryansky. Lives of Old Russian Princes (1915). pp. 48–51.

ecclesiastical authorities, but because monasticism itself, drawing on the ascetic spirit of the Russian people, brought forth new ascetics to address this challenge and found new strength within itself.

Chapter III. Saint Sergius of Radonezh and His School

1. Historical Preconditions for the Flourishing of Christian Asceticism in Northeastern Rus'

The significance of monasticism for Old Russian life was already recognized by contemporaries. In the worldview of the Russian people of that era, the monastic ideal occupied one of the foremost places. While this assertion may not be entirely unqualified for the 11th and 12th centuries, there can be no doubt as to its validity regarding the 14th or 15th centuries. This ideal influenced the worldview of the Russian people, imbuing it with an ascetic character, and shaped their attitude toward the monastery. A monastery is a “holy place,” a “home of angels”; monks connect the earthly world with the angelic world, and just as angels shine before the monks, so do the monks shine before the laity. The monastery and the “monastic order equal to the angels” are intermediate steps on the ladder leading from the sinful, sensual earth to Heaven. The idea of the salvation of the soul—which must begin right here, in the feat of overcoming one’s mortal flesh—stood at the center of the religiosity of that era. Believers viewed human life as a battleground for demonic temptations and firmly believed that a victorious struggle against them could be waged only within the monastery walls.

During the first two centuries of Christianity in Rus', these views and sentiments took root in the popular consciousness slowly and gradually, but by the 14th century they had fully taken hold; therefore, this era can be called the age of asceticism in Ancient Rus'. For the history of monasticism, the 13th century was a time of transition. The forms of monastic life had not yet taken on a definite character suited to Russian conditions. Monasticism had not yet made a choice between cenobitism (communal living) and idiorhythm (solitary living); the “desert,” life in a skete, and hermitage—this constellation had not yet risen in the northern sky of the Russian Thebaid. Monasteries in cities or their environs continued to serve as a refuge for those seeking salvation; only occasionally did ascetics venture into the dark, dense forests. It was an era of ascetic reflection and, perhaps, spiritual doubt, but by no means a rejection of the ascetic ideal.

At this time, two events occurred in the political life of Rus' that, in a certain sense, had a significant impact on the history of monasticism and brought it out of a state of uncertainty.

The first was of a domestic political nature. Yaroslav's great and unified Kyiv state underwent political disintegration in the 12th century due to strife among the descendants of his sons⁶⁶. It broke up into appanage principalities, which no longer pursued pan-Russian interests but were concerned only with their own local, narrow interests. Kyiv's political prestige fell particularly low after the brave and energetic Prince Andrei Bogolyubsky († 1174), a grandson of Yaroslav[], laid the foundation for a new political entity in the impenetrable northern forests of the Suzdal region. This region became a gathering place for new state and social forces, which ultimately led to the formation of the Moscow Tsardom. The disintegration of Kievan Rus' into appanage principalities contributed to an increase in the number of princely capitals, resulting in the creation of new dioceses and the founding of new urban monasteries, for every prince and every bishop sought to adorn his or her residence. Geographically, this process mainly unfolded in a northeasterly direction, in the region of the Oka and Upper Volga; at the same time, there was an intensive migration of the Russian population from the south and southeast (from the Ryazan region) to the northeast (especially in the 14th century)⁶⁷.

This process was partly driven by foreign policy events, which constitute the second most important factor in the history of Russian missionary activity. The political collapse of the Kievan Rus' was also a consequence of the increasing incursions by nomadic tribes from the southeast into the southern Russian steppes. In the 10th and 11th centuries, these were the Pechenegs, whose defeat cost the Kyiv princes and the country much strength and blood. In the mid-11th century, the Turkic nomads known as the Cumans—whom the Russians called the Polovtsians—appeared on the northern shore of the Black Sea. The “Tale of Igor's

⁶⁶ For further reading, we recommend: Stöhl, Karl. *History of Russia*. Vol. 1 (1923). pp. 66–134; Goetz, L. *State and Church in Old Russia, 988–1240* (1908); additionally: Klyuchevsky. *History of Russia* (1925). 2. Chapter 14.

⁶⁷ Lyubavsky, M. The Formation of the Main State Territory of the Great Russian Nation. Settlement and Unification of the Center (1929); Presnyakov, A. The Formation of the Great Russian State (1918); Lyubavsky, M. The Rise of Moscow, in: Moscow in the Past and Present. 1 (1912).

Campaign” poetically reflects the centuries-long struggle against this ferocious and barbaric people, who burned and ravaged towns and villages. Incidentally, this struggle, which lasted for decades, influenced the formation of the Old Russian worldview, for contemporaries, in accordance with Christian belief, saw in this political and economic calamity God’s punishment “for our sins”⁶⁸.

The terror instilled by these steppe peoples, however, was merely a harbinger of the impending invasion by the Mongols—or, as they were called at the time, the Tatars. They came to the Russian lands as “God’s scourge”—so judged the people of that time. “That same summer,” writes the chronicler under the year 1224, “because of our sins, pagans appeared, of whom no one knows for certain who they are, where they came from, what language they speak, to which tribe they belong, or what their faith is”⁶⁹. Ancient Rus’ was destined to become—and did become—a shield protecting Europe, but for this it paid the price of Tatar yoke, which lasted more than 200 years. Through resistance to the enemy and martyrdom, all of Rus’, from the humble peasant to the prince, bore witness to its aspiration for political freedom.

Batu’s conquest of Rus’ began in 1237. Within two or three years, calamity and terror engulfed the entire land of Rus’. On December 6, 1240, Kyiv fell under the onslaught of Batu’s hordes; the wealthy city, whose beauty and size had already inspired admiration in Titmar of Merseburg, lay in ruins and ashes. And many other cities faced the same fate.

For contemporaries, this event signified more than just a political and economic catastrophe. It was a terrible blow to people’s emotional equilibrium and their worldview. Life on earth had lost its certainty and stability; social conditions had become harsh and oppressive. The first settlers in the Suzdal region and Northern Rus’ had to wage a relentless struggle against nature to reclaim a patch of land from the forest for their fields, and now the livelihoods they had established with great difficulty were crumbling under new blows.

But once the calamities of the first terrible decades of the Tatar yoke were behind them, and once Northeastern Rus’ and its princes managed to establish a certain degree of stability in their relations with the Golden Horde, the process of political and economic consolidation began anew in the country.

This was an era of renewed population resettlement, as people sought a secure place to settle down; it was an era of political unification for the Russian nation, which chose the upper reaches of the Volga and Oka rivers as the new center of its statehood and began to develop active economic activity there⁷⁰.

To overcome political and economic difficulties, the state had to mobilize all the people’s resources.

At the beginning of the 14th century, Russian life was dominated by concerns for daily sustenance; people lived in constant fear of attacks by Tatar hordes, both large and small. They had to find safe havens for their property; peasants, seeking protection, moved from place to place. The cities had become too turbulent, and the urban monasteries—many of which had been destroyed by the Tatars—were no longer reliable refuges, for they, too, were often, if not always, entangled in the cares and hardships of daily life. A person with ascetic aspirations could not find peace of mind there. Monks sought new, tranquil places for their ascetic practices, and thus began the process known as “monastic colonization”; this process led to the founding of numerous “deserts”⁷¹.

2. The Nature of Asceticism in the 14th and 15th Centuries

The 14th and 15th centuries represent a period in the history of Russian asceticism when monasticism acquired certain distinctive, nationally Russian characteristics. Numerous hagiographies of ascetics from this period show that people from very different backgrounds shared the same consistent common traits, on the basis of which one can sketch a typical portrait of the founder of an Old Russian monastery of that era.

⁶⁸ See the new works by D. Razovsky: 1. The Pechenegs, Turks, and Berendei in Rus’ and Hungary, in: *Seminarium Kondakovianum*. 7 (1935); 2. The Polovtsians. Ibid. 7–10 (1935–1938).

⁶⁹ 1st Novgorod Chronicle, entry for the year 6732 (1224).

⁷⁰ See the works by Lyubavsky and Presnyakov mentioned above.

⁷¹ “Of the more than 100 monasteries documented by the end of the 13th century,” writes V. Klyuchevsky, “we cannot count even a dozen such hermitages, and of those, the majority date precisely to the 13th century. However, beginning in the 14th century, the movement toward forest hermitages developed rapidly and strongly among the monastic community of northern Russia: the number of hermitage monasteries founded in that century was comparable to that of new urban monasteries (42 and 42); in the 15th century, they outnumbered them by more than double (57 to 27), and in the 16th century, by 1.5 times (51 to 35). Thus, over the course of these three centuries, as far as is known, 150 hermitage monasteries and 104 urban and suburban monasteries were built within the borders of Muscovy” (Kljutschewskij. Geschichte Rußlands. Vol. 2, p. 259).

He usually came from a well-to-do family, most often from the service class (boyars) or merchants, and less often from peasants⁷². This gave the future ascetic the opportunity to learn to read and write as early as childhood. In his youth, he avoided children's games, as recounted in nearly every hagiography, and it is precisely from this that the well-known tradition of Orthodox hagiographic literature stems. Reading theological books and the lives of the saints, attending church—this is where his spiritual education began, awakening in him an irresistible longing for solitude and the monastic life. Parents do not always approve of their son's monastic inclinations, especially if he is their only child, since, as the future owner of the estate, he must enter public service to preserve the estate for the family, or, if he comes from a merchant family, continue his father's business. After a brief or prolonged internal and external struggle, he nevertheless leaves his parents' home and secretly goes to some monastery not too far away, which he knows from stories depicting the harsh life there. At the monastery, his life of asceticism begins; with patience and humility, he performs the hardest and dirtiest work, which, however, does not prevent him from arriving at church before the other brothers and remaining until the very end of the evening and night services. His novitiate lasted several years. Then, having received the abbot's blessing, he left the monastery to find a new secluded place where he could continue his ascetic practice. At that time, northeastern Rus' was covered with dense, impenetrable wilds—a "forest wilderness"—that sheltered the hermit from the vain and noisy world and helped him in the best possible way to remain in solitude and spiritual composure.

Many of the ancient Russian ascetics began their arduous life of solitude without first serving as novices in a monastery (for example, Sergius of Radonezh and his brother Stephen, and possibly also Savva of Vishersky). The ascetic lived in a hut (for example, Sergius and Stephen, Gerasim of Boldino, Cyril of Novoezero, and others) or in a tree hollow (for example, Paul of Obnorsk), slept on dry leaves or moss; Forest berries and roots that he gathers, or dry bread that rare passersby place in a basket he has woven himself and hung from a branch (as was the case, for example, with Gerasim of Boldino, Theodore of Rostov, and Sergius of Radonezh), constitute his entire sustenance. Day and night, he devotes much of his time to prayer and the singing of psalms. His tattered clothes offer no protection from the cold of the long northern Russian winter, and as he stands for long periods in prayer, he shivers from the frost; in summer, he is tormented by heat and stifling humidity, while myriads of insects pester the hands and face of the man at prayer. A life of fasting and prayer, of enduring cold and heat, exhausts him, withering his body and face. That is why the icon of an Old Russian saint—such as Cyril of Belozero or Alexander of Svir—is not a stylization but a faithful depiction of the ascetic's actual appearance.

But the hermit does not remain in his solitude for long—a city set on a hill cannot be hidden (Matt. 5:14). Sometimes two hermits, for example, Paul of Obnorsk and Sergius of Nurom, come together and decide to remain as a pair to support one another in the difficult life of a hermit; or news of a stern hermit reaches nearby towns and villages, and one day a new lover of God comes to him, also seeking solitude and salvation from worldly temptations. The new monk builds himself a wooden hut, and now the two of them devote themselves to fasting and prayer. Over time, the hermitage grows and becomes a monastery. The brethren build a wooden church, and the founder of the monastic community—whom everyone considers the abbot of the new brotherhood—goes to the local bishop, and sometimes directly to Moscow to the metropolitan, to ask for a blessing for the newly founded monastery and for the consecration of the church. If the founder of the monastery is sufficiently literate, the bishop ordains him as a presbyter and tonsures him (if he has not yet been tonsured); now he himself celebrates the Divine Liturgy and administers the sacraments; but often, out of humility, the ascetic declines ordination and remains merely the abbot of his monastery, without a clerical rank; in which case the bishop sends a hieromonk of his own choosing to the new monastery, provides him with the necessary liturgical books and an antimension, and presents him with icons of the Savior and the Mother of God as his blessing to the monastic community.

⁷² Those of boyar or servile origin included Sergius of Radonezh († 1392); Cyril of Belozero († 1427); Ferapont of Belozero († 1426); Paul of Obnorsk († 1429); Gregory of Pelshe († 1441); Iakov of Zheleznoborsk (d. 1442); Euphrosynus of Pskov (d. 1481); Pafnutius of Borovsk (d. 1478)—from a converted Tatar family; Macarius of Kalyazin (d. 1483); Nil of Sora (d. 1508); Joseph of Volotsk or Volokolamsk (d. 1515); Innocent of Okhlebin (c. 1481), also known as Komelsky; Cyril of Novoezersk (d. 1532); Cornelius of Komel (d. 1537); Arsenius of Komel (d. 1550); Daniel of Pereyaslav (d. 1540); Stephen of Komel (d. 1542); Savva of Vishersk (d. 1460); Ferapont of Mozhaik (d. 1426); from a princely family: Ignatius of Vologda (d. 1523). From merchant or town-dwelling families: Dimitri Prilutsky (d. 1392); Dionysius Glushitsky (d. 1437); Alexander Svirsky (d. 1533); Arseny Konevsky (d. 1447); Gerasim Boldinsky (d. 1551); Eleazar Anzersky (d. 1656). From wealthy peasant families: Alexander Oshevsky (d. 1479); Anthony Siysky (d. 1556). From a priest's family: Euthymius of Novgorod (d. 1458).

This is how these new monasteries come into being, often on the steep banks of countless rivers and lakes, from where the enchanting and gentle beauty of Northern Rus' unfolds before the eye... The silvery expanse of water alternates with dense fir and pine forests, whose austerity is softened by the whiteness of birch trunks. One could stand here for hours, gazing at these wondrous scenes, when in early autumn, bathed in the rays of the setting sun, the white trunks and golden leaves of the birches glow against the reddish backdrop of coniferous trees standing quietly and motionless in their dark-green robes, as if lost in thought... The colors grow darker, but the air remains clear and crisp. The ringing of the bells does not come all at once, but gradually drifts in from afar and then fades back into the distance. The monastic community gathers for vespers...

Such a monastery consists of several wooden cells arranged around a wooden church; next to the church stands a larger building: this is the monastery refectory. Everything is surrounded by a wooden fence. Between the cells are vegetable gardens that provide the brotherhood with the most essential food. As a rule, the site where the monastery is built is cleared of impenetrable forest by the hands of the brotherhood themselves.

At first, new monasteries operate according to a rule of individual living; each monk builds his own cell, tends his own vegetable garden, provides for his own clothing and food, weaves baskets or engages in other handicrafts, and then exchanges his wares for bread from the peasants. He remains alone in his cell, praying and singing psalms there as he sees fit. The brethren gather together only for divine services. Their leader is usually the founder of the monastery. In a certain sense, the Northern Russian monastic system of individual living resembles the way of life at the Palestinian Lavra of St. Savva.

But gradually, many monasteries are transitioning to the cenobitic way of life. Under the communal rule, none of the brothers possess personal property⁷³; they work for the monastery, and the monastery provides them with food and clothing. Everything harvested from the vegetable garden or a small field goes into the monastery cellar. Monks are forbidden to eat in their cells or store food supplies there. The brethren gather in the refectory, where, after communal prayer and the abbot's blessing, all monks receive the same meal. Monastic duties are assigned by the abbot; without his permission or blessing, no monk undertakes or begins anything. Novice monks are placed under the guidance of senior monks and carry out their will in all things. Often, the relationship between senior and novice monks takes the form of a mentor-disciple relationship. The senior monks, who sometimes hold specific positions within the monastery, form the monastic council, or council of elders, which governs the monastery together with the abbot.

The abbot's personal spiritual gifts played a major role in Old Russian monastic life. This was precisely the fundamental difference between Old Russian monasticism and medieval monasticism in the West. There, the flourishing of monasticism depended on the strength of the organization, which from the very beginning defined in detail the ascetic life of the order's brotherhood, guiding it along a specific path. In Ancient Rus', by contrast, the structure of monastic life was determined by the personality of the monastery's founder and abbot. Those monasteries whose founders were the finest representatives of Old Russian asceticism—and whose precepts were observed long after the founders' deaths—took on particular significance. Disciples always sought to preserve the spiritual ethos of their mentors, and if they later became founders of new monasteries themselves, they organized them in the spirit of the ascetic tradition of their religious alma mater. It should be particularly emphasized here that for the Old Russian monk, what mattered most was not the spiritual content of this tradition, nor its advantages or its ecclesiastical recognition, but rather the personality and spiritual character of the monastery's founder. Often, the objective content of asceticism took a back seat to the personality of the ascetic himself and his feats. The most characteristic feature of Old Russian religiosity is that it is not the system itself, but the spiritual example set by the bearers of that system that plays the leading role; the Old Russian person, in his Christian world, always lives surrounded by these examples and images—icons and saints—which breathe life into the religious system (dogmas and faith) and lead him to a truly religious life; these images tell him that the path to such a life is open to every person, following the example of the glorified holy ascetics.

All of this must be taken into account when we turn to Old Russian monasticism, for its history has shown that the image of the ascetic was far more significant than asceticism itself. This was particularly evident in the history of Old Russian monastic communities. Already during the Kyiv era, as mentioned, the

⁷³ See my article on this topic: Smolitsch. Studien zum Klosterwesen Rußlands. 2, in: Kyrios. 3 (1938). Issue 4.

existence of monastic communities depended more on the influence of St. Theodosius than on the official recognition of the cenobitic system as the most perfect ascetic system of monastic life. As the image of the monastery's founder faded from the memory of successive generations over time, the system of monastic life he had established suffered as a result and underwent distortions. In turn, the revival of communal life was not linked to any decrees or reforms by church authorities in the 14th century, but rather to the influence of individual outstanding ascetics who were the architects of this revival. The transition took place slowly and was not uniform everywhere. Nor was it a reform from below that, having grown out of the monastic community itself, would then have spread universally and, by contributing to the strengthening of ascetic sentiments among the people, would have left its mark on them. Nor did the revival of cenobitism occur as a result of a fundamental recognition of its reviver's initiative; it was simply a stage in his own spiritual growth. It is not entirely clear whether the reviver of communal life realized that the introduction of cenobitism was necessary only for his own monastery or for all monastic communities. The role of a reformer—one who sets a great goal for himself and zealously strives to achieve it—was ill-suited to the humble Old Russian ascetic. Yet his humility was not at odds with the hope that his brothers and disciples would preserve his attitude toward monastic life.

Therefore, it would not be an exaggeration to assert that the ascetic and monastic revival was the result of the deeds of a simple Old Russian monk. We are referring to the founder of the famous Russian monastery, the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, St. Sergius of Radonezh.

3. St. Sergius of Radonezh and His Monastery

When St. Sergius revived communal living, he did roughly the same thing as St. Theodosius. The only difference is that the latter came to a monastery that had already been established by another, St. Anthony, and left his own spiritual mark there. St. Sergius, on the other hand, was himself the founder of the monastery, which was initially a community of individual cells. The transition to communal living took place gradually: the small hermitage grew into a large monastery, and at the same time, the founder's spiritual influence on the brotherhood grew stronger. The Life of St. Sergius of Radonezh was written by his contemporary Epiphanius, who, as a monk of his monastery, remained in spiritual communion with the saint for about 15 years⁷⁴. This life is of immense value, especially in its abridged version, which is included in the Old Russian chronicle under the year 1392, for it is distinguished by an objective and sober account of events—despite the author's somewhat florid style—and is not overburdened with the moralizing rhetoric characteristic of the later adaptation of the hagiography by the hagiographer Pachomius. For Epiphanius, the purely ascetic traits of St. Sergius's personality were paramount; Sergius's activities related to the political events of the era recede into the background in his account, whereas Pachomius emphasizes precisely those activities above all else. Epiphanius tells us about the life of a man who, through his Christian piety, rose to sainthood, whereas Pachomius creates a canonical image of a saint who is meant to serve as an example of holiness in general; which is why he supplements the hagiography with descriptions of posthumous miracles and strives throughout to present the life of Sergius of Radonezh as a model of Christian asceticism.

The saint came from a wealthy family among the service nobility of the Principality of Rostov; he was born on May 3, 1314, on his father's estate near Rostov, and was given the name Bartholomew at his baptism. The hagiography recounts how his mother, who was expecting a child, went to church on Sunday for the Divine Liturgy. Before the reading of the Gospel, the infant suddenly cried out in his mother's womb; the cry was repeated during the singing of the Cherubic Hymn and before the priest's exclamation, "Holy to the Holy." The alarmed mother decided that when the child was born, she would dedicate him to God. And after his birth, the infant behaved unusually: on fast days, as well as whenever his mother ate meat, he refused his mother's milk. Bartholomew was seven years old when his parents sent him to the church school. His older brother

⁷⁴ The Life of Saint Sergius, written by his disciple Epiphanius the Wise (d. 1420), has come down to us in a version edited by the hagiographer Pachomius (d. after 1484). The original, though abridged, version of the life has survived only in the Nikon Chronicle (PSRL. 11. pp. 127–147). Pachomius's adaptation appears in: 1. OLDP. 58. Moscow, 1885; 2. VMCh. September. Part 3 (September 25). St. Petersburg, 1883; 3. Edited by Simon Azaryin. Moscow, 1646; 4. Edited by the Trinity-Sergius Lavra. 1853. Bibliography: Klyuchevsky, V. Old Russian Hagiographies as a Historical Source. Moscow, 1872; Golubinsky, E. The Venerable Sergius of Radonezh and the Trinity Lavra He Founded. Moscow, 1892; 2nd ed., 1909. On Epiphanius, see: Kadlubovsky, A. Essays on the History of Old Russian Hagiographic Literature. Warsaw, 1902. pp. 171–178. On the style of Pachomius's hagiographic works, see: Nekrasov, N. Pachomius the Serb, a 15th-Century Writer. Odessa, 1871; Yablonsky, V. Pachomius the Serb and His Hagiographic Writings. St. Petersburg, 1908; and also: Kadlubovsky, pp. 179–188.

Stephen quickly learned to read and write, but young Bartholomew struggled with these skills, so his teachers punished him, and the other students laughed at him. One day, Bartholomew was sent to the meadow to fetch a horse. There he met an elderly monk who, noticing the boy's sad expression, asked him why he was sad. Weeping, the boy told him of his inability to read and asked the elder to help him. The elder went with Bartholomew to his parents' home and instructed the boy to read the Psalms in their presence. To everyone's surprise, Bartholomew read fluently and well. From that day on, Bartholomew became very capable in his school studies. This miraculous story from the boyhood of the future beacon of piety gives the hagiographer the opportunity to highlight the main traits in Sergius's character: humanity, patience, and humility—traits that would continue to be central to the saint's life. His childhood was similar to that of many others, with its childish worries, sufferings, and joys. But the seeds of his ascetic path were already sown in these childhood concerns.

A simple, ordinary Christian life—not exaggerated religiosity—is the soil in which Russian national piety is cultivated and flourishes. Let us recall the ascetics of our own day—St. Seraphim of Sarov († 1833) or the Elder Leonid of Optina († 1841)—and we will immediately see this foundation, which is always true—provided, of course, that we strip the images of Russian ascetics of their moralistic and rhetorical legendary embellishments, even though the latter often contain much Christian truth. For in the life of a Christian ascetic, the main thing is that it is a genuinely human life; it is not great sins that destroy the soul, but daily temptations, which imperceptibly, yet at every turn, endanger the soul of the ascetic, just as they do that of every Christian. We notice this feature of Old Russian asceticism immediately; we find it already in the life of St. Theodosius of the Caves, although every ascetic possesses a quite distinct individuality.

When the small Principality of Rostov reunited with the growing Grand Duchy of Moscow shortly after 1328, Bartholomew's father moved to Radonezh—a village in the Moscow region—where he received an estate. It was here that Bartholomew spent his youth. He divided his time between working on the estate and reflecting on and worrying about the future. Both of his brothers—the elder, Stephen, and the younger, Peter—were already married, and the time had come for all three to enter the sovereign's service, for in those days the estate was granted by the Grand Prince of Moscow in exchange for service; that is, its owner was obligated to serve. But Bartholomew had long been preoccupied with another thought: he had asked his father many times to let him enter a monastery. His parents did not object; they only wanted their unmarried son to remain with them until their deaths. But after some time, the family's circumstances changed. His older brother's wife passed away, and Stephen went to a nearby monastery. His parents were already in their twilight years, and in keeping with the religious views of Ancient Rus', they decided to spend the rest of their lives in monastic seclusion. Now Bartholomew was free to embark on his desired path in life. He transferred his estate to his younger brother (in a later version of the hagiography, edited by Pachomius for moral instruction, it is stated that the estate was distributed among the poor) and went to his older brother's monastery; soon after, he persuaded him to leave the monastery and begin the arduous life of a hermit in the dense forest.

Immediately beyond the monastery wall stood a dense pine forest like a dark wall, and the brothers did not have to go very far. After walking a little more than 10 kilometers deep into the forest, on a small hill on the bank of a stream, they found a beautiful clearing. At first they lived in a hut; later they built themselves a wooden cell and a small church dedicated to the Holy Trinity. To seek a blessing and permission to consecrate the church, they traveled to Moscow to see the metropolitan; after receiving everything they needed for worship there, they returned. After the consecration of the church, the priest left the brothers; yet now they could pray in their new church, which smelled of resin, but since they did not hold the priestly office, they could not celebrate the Liturgy. Their ascetic life was not an easy one, spent in fasting and prayer, far from the world, in the forest, where twilight began soon after noon and winter seemed endless. The eldest brother, Stephen, could not endure such a harsh ascetic life for long and transferred to one of the monasteries in Moscow.

Bartholomew remained alone, in complete solitude; this was the most difficult period of his ascetic journey.

Some distance away lived an elderly hieromonk named Mitrofan, who often came at the hermit's invitation to celebrate the Liturgy and administer Holy Communion to him. One day, Bartholomew asked the hieromonk to tonsure him as a monk. At his tonsure, he received the name Sergius. With Mitrofan's blessing, the newly tonsured monk remained in complete solitude so that, in the seclusion of the dense forest, he might lead a life following the example of the ancient ascetics—struggling against temptations and overcoming

them. These first decisive years of desert life, when the ascetic either overcame temptations or fell, defeated by them, were the most difficult and, at the same time, the most spiritually enriching period for the future luminary of Russian monasticism. It was not only the ascetic practice itself that was difficult—doubts about the chosen path, about one's own strength, the temptations of Satan and one's own human nature, thirst and hunger, and inexperience in the practice of gathering the soul and sustained prayer. The solitude in the forest was also difficult. In the summer, living conditions were, of course, easier, but in the winter—a solid wall of pine forest and a monotonous blanket of snow on the ground, dead silence by day and the howling of blizzards during the long nights— all of this interfered with the reading of the Psalter, prevented him from gathering himself in prayer, and evoked fear, a sense of abandonment and isolation, a feeling of his own weakness, and confusion. “After some time,” writes the monk Epiphanius, the author of Sergius's hagiography, “that is, after he had spent one, two, or more or fewer summers alone in the desert—God alone knows.” And God alone knows how great the hermit's labors truly are; He alone assists the inexperienced and makes him experienced...

But the impenetrability of the dense forests cannot hide a true warrior of God from people. His fame spreads throughout the world, and his example attracts and calls to people who have lost hope in worldly life. Seekers came one day to Sergius and begged him to allow them to labor alongside him for the Lord's sake and for their own salvation. At first with great reluctance, but then submitting to God's will, Sergius accepted novices who wished to become his disciples in the spiritual life. Thus, little by little, a community gathered around him, which became the guardian of his monastic ideals and carried the fame of his deeds to the remotest corners of Rus'. For Sergius himself, the arrival of the community marked the beginning of a new spiritual endeavor, and for his secluded little hermitage, the renewal of communion with the world was of historic significance, for it marked the beginning of an intense influence on the religious life of the Russian people—an influence that transformed his wooden hut and his tiny church into the greatest monastery in Russia—the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, whose golden domes, rising above the forest, beckon people here, to the Lavra, which has become a holy site.

If we try to describe the original appearance of the new monastery, we will also gain an understanding of how monasteries generally began. Sergius's small wooden church stood in a forest clearing, which had been expanded by the newly arrived monks. Surrounding it were their cells—tiny wooden huts. And all of this was enclosed by a fence—not only to protect them from wild animals, but also to remind the brethren that the dark forest thicket was now a world they must leave behind. The plot of land between the huts, painstakingly reclaimed from the forest, served as a vegetable garden to feed the brotherhood. The early years of the monastery's establishment were difficult and full of hardships. Sergius, who was then still a simple monk, led this small community of no more than 12 ascetics. In performing monastic duties and in prayer, he was a role model; in his dealings with the brethren, he was always humble, loving, and gentle. Years passed, and Sergius realized that, for the common good, the monastery needed a properly ordained abbot. But out of humility, he himself did not wish to accept this office. Only after the persistent entreaties of the brethren did Sergius finally resolve to fulfill their wish. After his ordination as a hieromonk and his appointment as abbot—which took place around 1344—Sergius gained not only moral authority in the eyes of his brothers but also canonical authority.

A great and important goal lay before the young abbot (Sergius was 30 years old at the time)—the introduction of strict communal life—but he approached the realization of this goal gradually. In his new, elevated rank, he remained unchanged in his attitude toward the brethren; he was always and in every way the embodiment of monastic virtue for them. Meanwhile, the monastery's reputation grew. An archimandrite from Smolensk named Simon, having heard of the young abbot's exploits, left his own monastery and came to Sergius to seek refuge in his monastery. The money he brought with him made it possible to begin construction of a large church in honor of the Holy Trinity. The number of monks grew, but novices had to undergo a relatively long period of probation before they were deemed worthy by the strict abbot to be tonsured as monks.

The monastery still followed a rule of separate living: the brethren did not share meals, and the principle of communal life was expressed only liturgically—that is, through communal prayer. In addition, Sergius served as spiritual father to the monks of the monastery, which, of course, played a major role in the spiritual growth of the brotherhood. In this regard, Sergius's ministry resembled that of St. Theodosius of the Caves. From Sergius's hagiography, we learn that the monastic community was under the abbot's constant

care, day and night. But enforcing his ascetic requirements proved an extremely difficult task for Sergius due to the monastery's poverty and hardship, for the abbot had once and for all forbidden the monks from accepting alms outside the monastery walls. The Life attributes the first miracle in the history of the Sergiev Monastery to a time of extreme need: a cart carrying freshly baked bread and fish suddenly stopped in front of the monastery gates; according to the coachman, this had been done at the behest of an unknown benefactor. St. Joseph of Volokolamsk († 1515) wrote that during times of poverty at the Sergiev Monastery, liturgical books were written on birch bark—some of which have survived to this day. Only after 10 or 11 years as abbot—that is, around 1354—did Sergius introduce a communal rule, which, however, met with resistance from some monks, who soon left the monastery. This circumstance best illustrates how foreign the concept of cenobitism—the very foundation of monastic life—was to the monastic community of that time. But the most difficult years of hardship were now behind them, and Sergius was finally able to erect the buildings necessary for communal life. The refectory, the monastery kitchen, and other service buildings were constructed. Monks were selected from among the brotherhood to perform permanent duties. The number of monks grew, and offerings from devout people—including princes and grand princes—flowed into St. Sergius's Monastery, which, year after year, occupied an increasingly prominent place in the religious life of the Russian people.

This wealth, however, posed a threat to the spiritual life of the monastic community. Sergius's activities took on ever greater scope, and his hagiography provides us with a number of examples of the pastoral gift and, at the same time, the ascetic rigor with which he administered his monastery. The monastery was no longer surrounded by dense forest; peasant settlements had sprung up near the monastery walls, and the monastery found itself drawn into worldly affairs: it acquired movable and immovable property, which compelled many monks to perform various kinds of duties outside the monastery walls; it had now become not only a place of spiritual asceticism but also an economic institution of great importance to the surrounding lands.

The history of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery is a striking example of Old Russian monastic colonization. Within two or three decades, a built-up and populated area took shape on the site of a small forest hermitage. The same process occurred with other monasteries of the 14th and 15th centuries: the monastery's founder or a monk seeking solitude would retreat into the dense forest, thereby paving the way for subsequent colonization. The newly founded hermitages in the Vologda and Belozersk regions and further on toward the White Sea served as milestones along the path of Old Russian colonization.

"This movement," says V. Klyuchevsky, "was of great significance in Old Russian colonization. First, a forest hermitage, in and of itself, within its tight wooden or stone enclosure, constituted an agricultural settlement, albeit one unlike secular peasant villages; the monks cleared the forest, cultivated vegetable gardens, plowed, and mowed, just as the peasants did. But the monastery's influence also extended to the population living beyond its walls. We will soon see how secular peasant villages formed around the hermitage, which, together with the monastic community, constituted a single parish drawn to the monastery church... Later, the monastery disappeared, but the peasant parish with its monastery church remained... Thus, the rise of hermitages was the rise of future rural parishes, most of which were the first in their respective regions. Second, wherever the monks went, the peasant population followed; before both lay the same path—to the free deserts of the north and northeast, where the peasant could freely cultivate his land, clear the wild forest for arable fields, and the monk could observe his silence"⁷⁵.

The transformation of a small, primitive hermitage into a large monastery that once again came into contact with the world—this was the fate of many Russian monastic communities. Clearly, such a change had not only positive consequences (the opportunity for broader social and Christian service) but also negative ones (the secularization of monastic life). After Sergius's passing, these consequences also became apparent in his monastery, but during his tenure as abbot, he strictly safeguarded the monastic community as the foundation of monastic life. He succeeded in this thanks to the monks' recognition of his extraordinary spiritual gifts, the strength of his faith, and the power of his personality. To those around him, he was not so much an abbot elected by the monastic community as a man standing on the threshold of holiness. The monk Epiphanius, the author of his hagiography, tells us—and his account inspires trust through its sobriety and unadorned simplicity—that Sergius, despite the multitude of tasks he performed in managing the monastery, was constantly perfecting his spiritual life; that in his inner journey he had risen from the stage of

⁷⁵ Kljutschewskij. *Geschichte Rußlands*. 2 (1925). p. 263.

purification of the soul to the stage of spiritual enlightenment; that even then he was a mystic and had attained the highest stages of spirituality—the contemplation of God and union with Him. Thus, in Epiphanius's simple, at times almost childlike narrative, Sergius appears before us as the first Russian mystic—a figure we will find nowhere else in the Old Russian hagiographies.

Once, two brothers, Isaac and Macarius, saw bright angels standing beside the saint and celebrating the Divine Liturgy with him. When asked about the vision by his horrified brothers, Sergius, after some hesitation, said that this was not the first time he had been granted such unearthly grace, but forbade them from speaking of it until after his death. On another occasion, his cell attendant, the monk Michael, beheld a miraculous apparition of the Mother of God accompanied by the Holy Apostles Peter and John. Sergius himself recounted this vision to his brothers Macarius and Isaac. A third miracle was witnessed by the monk Simon. Before receiving the Holy Gifts during the Liturgy, the entire altar was filled with light, and a fiery ray fell from above into the chalice containing the Body and Blood of Christ; after this, St. Sergius received the Holy Gifts. When asked by the astonished Simon, the abbot replied that it was the grace of the Holy Spirit...

An ascetic who had attained such spiritual heights could not help but influence those around him. His hagiography tells us of miracles, prophecies, the healing of the sick, and the saint's clairvoyance. The holy abbot gave Grand Prince Dimitry his blessing for the battle against the Tatars (1380) and predicted his victory at the Battle of Kulikovo (in the upper reaches of the Don River). There is a beautiful account of how Sergius and Stephen, Bishop of Perm—the greatest missionary of Ancient Rus'—greeted one another with bows from a distance of many kilometers apart. Most of these incidents occurred during the final years of the saint's earthly life.

He passed away on September 25, 1392, at the age of 78, after 58 years of ascetic life in the monastery. His life was filled with humility and simplicity, labor, and love. Metropolitan Alexius of Moscow († 1378), a great friend and admirer of the Venerable Sergius, asked the holy abbot to become his successor on the see, but Sergius did not wish to exchange the hermit's rags for the luxurious vestments of a bishop. The Venerable Sergius of Radonezh is held in special veneration and love among Russian ascetics and saints for his humility and simplicity. But history has also recognized him as the chief architect of the Old Russian monastic way of life and as the founder of an ascetic school that contributed to the flourishing of Russian asceticism, for within this school—or under its influence—a whole host of Christian ascetics came of age.

4. Sergius's Ascetic "School" and Other Ascetics of the 14th and 15th Centuries

St. Sergius of Radonezh is the true founder of Russian monasticism. His influence not only sparked a revival of cenobitic life in Russian monasteries; it also became the foundation and root of the great tree of monasticism in the 14th and 15th centuries: nearly all the branches of this tree draw their nourishment from the spirit of Sergius's monastery.

Eight more monasteries with a communal rule owe their founding to him⁷⁶. The eight founders of these monasteries, who themselves were great builders of monasticism in the 14th and 15th centuries, were disciples of St. Sergius.

Three of them—St. Paul († 1429), Sergius († 1412), and Sylvester († 1379)—labored in the Trans-Volga region, in the Obnorsk volost of the Vologda region; they founded three monasteries there. St. Paul of Obnora is known for his particularly austere way of life; even before founding the monastery, he lived in a tree hollow for three years. He died at the age of 112. There is evidence that the tradition of spiritual guidance flourished in his monastery⁷⁷. The fourth disciple, St. Abraham of Galich († after 1375), founded four monasteries in the vicinity of Galich (Kostroma Governorate)⁷⁸. Another monastery⁷⁹ in the Kostroma region was founded by Nikita, also a disciple of Sergius. Jacob (Zheleznoborsky, † 1442), also a disciple of Sergius,

⁷⁶ These are: 1. The monastery in Kirzhach; 2. The Andronikov Monastery in Moscow (1360); 3. The Boris and Gleb Monastery near Rostov (1363); 4. The Simonov Monastery in Moscow (1370); 5. The Golutvinsky Monastery near Kolomna (1381); 6. The Dubensky Monastery near Bogorodsk (1381); 7. The Dubensky-Ostrovsky Monastery (1380); 8. The Vysotsky Monastery in Serpukhov, which was founded with the blessing of Sergius by his disciple Athanasius (1374). Zverinsky. Op. cit. 2. Nos. 864, 675, 1990, 1212, 1313, 753; 1. No. 72. Golubinsky. Op. cit. pp. 75–79.

⁷⁷ See my book: Smolitsch. *Leben und Lehre der Starzen*, pp. 65–70.

⁷⁸ Zverinsky. Op. cit. Vol. 2, Nos. 598, 597; Vol. 3, Nos. 1915, 2031. Klyuchevsky. Lives of the Old Russian Saints. pp. 196, 276. Makarii. Vol. 4. pp. 196, 195. Golubinsky. The Venerable Sergius. p. 81.

⁷⁹ Zverinsky. 2. No. 754.

was the founder of a monastery⁸⁰. In the Moscow region, two monasteries were founded by disciples of Sergius: one by Methodius († 1392) and the other by Savva of Storozhevo⁸¹.

Another group consists of ascetics who did not belong to the brotherhood of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery but were in close spiritual communion with the Venerable Sergius—his “conversation partners,” that is, those who frequently visited him and followed his advice.

Among them, it is worth mentioning Stephen of Makhrishch († 1406), a monk of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, who came to Sergius around 1355. He founded two monasteries. St. Dimitri of Pereyasavl († 1392), known as Prilutsky, founded two communal monasteries north of the Volga. Dionysius, Archbishop of Suzdal (d. 1385), founded a monastery in Nizhny Novgorod and established a connection between that city and Sergius’s school. St. Stephen, Bishop of Perm (d. 1396), the most famous Russian missionary, who undertook the great Christian task of evangelizing the pagan Finnish tribes, established four monasteries in the newly converted lands⁸².

But the brightest star in this constellation of monastery founders is St. Cyril of Belozero († 1427), the founder of the renowned Kirillov Monastery on the shores of Lake Beloye. St. Cyril became the spiritual father of a group of particularly strict ascetics, from whom—later, at the end of the 15th century and in the first half of the 16th century—a distinct movement within the monasticism of that era emerged: the Trans-Volga Elders, which, through St. Nilus of Sora, is linked to the mysticism of Mount Athos and Hesychasm.

In the history of monasticism in Russia, St. Cyril occupies—perhaps after St. Sergius of Radonezh—the most important place, for his zealous defense of communal living was widely known, and the rule of his monastery in the 15th century was considered by his contemporaries to be the most austere. He came from a boyar family (born in 1337) and lost his parents at a very young age. For a long time, he served Boyar Velyaminov, who belonged to the Grand Prince’s inner circle. Very late in life, at about 43 years of age, Cyril, under the influence of Stephen of Makhrishch, decided to take monastic vows and settled at the Simonov Monastery. He became known for his severe asceticism and tireless labor. Whenever St. Sergius visited the Simonov Monastery, he would first stop by to see Cyril. But his austere lifestyle and love of solitude were not well suited to a wealthy metropolitan monastery; therefore, after becoming archimandrite and abbot of the monastery, Cyril was unable to hold this position for long. He left the monastery and initially lived in his cell in strict seclusion; later, he left the monastery altogether and went to the “northern wilderness,” the impassable and marshy forests of Belozero. There, in 1393, the Venerable Cyril founded his own monastery, where he instituted a particularly strict communal way of life. He spent 30 years at this monastery, and many monks were trained under his guidance. He passed away on June 9, 1427.⁸³ Even during Cyril’s lifetime, many small hermitages sprang up around his monastery, for which this monastery served as a spiritual center. These monasteries formed the famous monastic region of the Volga Region, the spiritual homeland and stronghold of a particularly strict ascetic movement that took up the struggle against monastic landholdings. St. Nil of Sora, an outstanding figure in the history of the Russian Church, also labored in the Volga Region; he exerted a strong influence not only on his contemporaries but also on the monastic community of the 18th and 19th centuries.⁸⁴

As already mentioned, a number of founders of new monasteries received their spiritual formation at the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery.

First and foremost, we should mention the monk Savvatiy († 1435), who founded the Solovetsky Monastery on an island in the White Sea⁸⁵. In addition to him, we should mention Alexander of Oshev (†

⁸⁰ Zverinsky. 2. No. 796. Golubinsky. Op. cit. p. 82.

⁸¹ Zverinsky. 1. No. 404; Golubinsky. p. 79; Zverinsky. 2. No. 1140; Golubinsky. p. 80.

⁸² Golubinsky. pp. 82–84, 86. Zverinsky. Vol. 2, No. 1959; Vol. 1, No. 524; Vol. 2, No. 1330. Makariy. Vol. 4. pp. 142, 147, 211. Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. p. 96. Readings. 1878. Vol. 3. p. 43.

⁸³ Golubinsky. Op. cit. p. 84; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. p. 159; Kadlubovsky. Op. cit. pp. 182–187; Muravyov. Russian Thebaid. p. 147 ff.; AI. 1. Nos. 21, 22, 25, 26, 55, 56, 32; the life of St. Cyril was published by Kadlubovsky (1912) in: Yablonsky. Pakhomius the Logothete (1908); excerpts in: Makarii. 4. Appendix. pp. 356–360; a retelling of the hagiography in: Filaret. Russian Saints. June. pp. 206–222. See also: Barsukov. Sources. pp. 297–306 and the above-mentioned work by Yablonsky. For St. Joseph of Volotsk’s views on Cyril, see his “Tale of the Holy Fathers” in: LZAK. 2. p. 82. Zverinsky. 2. No. 867. On the charter of St. Cyril, see: Nikolsky. “Communal and Cell Life at the Cyril-Belozersk Monastery,” in: Christian Readings 1907. 224. p. 163.

⁸⁴ On St. Nilus, see Chapter IV.

⁸⁵ Zverinsky. 2. No. 1151; Savich. The Solovetsky Estate in the 15th–17th Centuries (1927); this work offers a new and important assessment of the material.

1479) and Martinian of Belozero († 1483), a disciple of St. Cyril and abbot of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery from 1447 to 1454.⁸⁶

Finally, Cornelius of Komel († 1537) also came from the Kirillov Monastery; his disciples, in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, founded many monasteries in northern Rus'—mostly sketes located close to one another, which contemporaries called “the Lavra of St. Cornelius.” St. Cornelius, like St. Cyril, came from a boyar family of service; at the age of 20, around the middle of the 15th century, he entered the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery and performed the hardest labor there, serving under an elder named Gennady. This way of life continued for 10–15 years. Cornelius then spent several years wandering, moving from monastery to monastery. Dissatisfied with life in urban monasteries and in search of complete solitude, Cornelius came to the Vologda region, to the so-called Komel forests—dense, impassable, and swampy—where no settler’s foot had yet trodden. Here, in the silence of the forests, he spent several years. But his life, as his hagiography recounts, was full of hardships and temptations—the sort that befall every soldier of God and bring earthly glory to the austere hermit. This was also the case with the Venerable Cornelius, for, though he devoted himself to strict asceticism in the depths of the fir forest, he did not remain hidden from the world, and gradually new ascetics seeking salvation gathered around him. After 20 years of living in the forest, Cornelius, who was already over 50, decided to organize the monastic community into a proper monastery. But due to the severity of his demands, certain difficulties arose, so that for a short time he was even forced to leave his monastery. St. Cornelius is particularly known for having personally written a rule for the brotherhood. Cornelius’s Rule is not an original work. It shows the influence, on the one hand, of St. Nilus of Sora’s **Instruction on the Skete Life** and, on the other, of St. Joseph of Volotsk’s **Spiritual Guide**, which describe two different systems of monastic education. This seemingly strange combination can be explained by the fact that Cornelius had to administer a communal monastery, while not wishing to forget the spiritual experience he had gained from his life as a hermit. Furthermore, it is possible that Cornelius personally knew the elder Nilus, who may have lived with him at the Kirillov Monastery. From Nilus’s **Instruction**, Cornelius borrowed what was essential for the spiritual care of the individual monk (“intelligent prayer”). He used Joseph’s **Spiritual** to establish the foundations of communal life and as a guide for divine services. Cornelius’s Rule is directed against monastic landholdings, which again points to the influence of Nilus. Cornelius of Komel died on May 19, 1537. His hagiography—a gem of Old Russian hagiography—was written by the monk Nathanael; in 1600, Cornelius, after his posthumous miracles were attested, was canonized⁸⁷. A number of founders of new monasteries emerged from the monastery of Cornelius of Komel, scattered across a vast territory from Vologda to the White Sea. The most famous among them were Cyril of Novoezersky (or Bely, † 1532), founder of the monastery on Krasny Island on Lake Novoozero; Gennady of Kostroma († 1565); and Philip of Irap († 1527)⁸⁸.

So far, we have spoken of those ascetics who were in one way or another connected to the spiritual influence of St. Sergius. But in addition to them, we can single out another group of ascetics who also labored with diligence and occupied a prominent place in the history of Russian monasticism.

This is a group of monks from the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery, located on a rocky island in Lake Kubenskoye. The monastery was founded in the mid-13th century, but it only gained particular significance under Abbot Dionysius. He was of Greek or South Slavic origin, had visited Mount Athos, and then came to Moscow. At the end of the 14th century (but before 1389), Dionysius was appointed abbot of the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery, where he introduced the strict Athonite rule. Dionysius remained at the monastery until 1418, when he was appointed archbishop of the ancient city of Rostov, where he died in 1425. The Spaso-

⁸⁶ Zverinsky. 2. No. 606. On St. Martinian, see: Brilliantov. The Ferapontov Monastery of Belozero. p. 17. Gorsky. Historical Description of the Holy Trinity St. Sergius Lavra (1890). p. 69. Martinian founded a monastery on the shore of Lake Vozhskoye and is often referred to as the Vozhezersky Monastery; cf.: Zverinsky. 2. No. 1188.

⁸⁷ On St. Cornelius, see: Konoplev. Saints of the Vologda Region, in: Readings. 1895. 4. pp. 86–101. Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. pp. 303, 308, 389, 393, 401. Muravyov. Op. cit., p. 64; for its charter, see: IRI. 4. pp. 673–704; excerpts in: Konoplev, pp. 94–100, retold by Muravyov. Makarii. 7. pp. 49, 69; AAE. 1. Nos. 222, 380–397. On the question of the estates owned by his monastery, cf.: AYU. 1. No. 76. Zverinsky. 2. No. 884.

⁸⁸ Zverinsky. 2. No. 868, 1157, 557. Cf. Tables I and II.

Kamenny Monastery nurtured many renowned ascetics who, in turn, founded new monasteries around Lake Kubenskoye and accomplished a great missionary feat by bringing the light of Christianity there⁸⁹.

First and foremost among them is St. Dionysius of Glushitsa († 1437). His life story paints the image of an ascetic filled with meekness and mercy, warmth, and humility—virtues in which he rivals St. Sergius. He adorned the church of his monastery, built on the banks of the Glushitsa River (in the Vologda region), with icons of his own painting, for he possessed the gift of iconography—a talent relatively rare among Old Russian saints; his hagiography also recounts that he was highly skilled at crafting sacred vessels and utensils for the Divine Liturgy—discos, chalices, and star-shaped vessels. Dionysius introduced the Kinovian rule to his monastery; in total, he founded three monasteries located close to one another, including a women's monastery. A distinctive feature of his missionary work was the construction of parish churches in peasant settlements⁹⁰.

He had a disciple named Gregory, known as Peleshsky († 1442)⁹¹. In his hagiography, written in the late 15th or early 16th century, we find an interesting account of a conversation between Dionysius of Glushitsa and Gregory—one might say, between the elder and his disciple; even if this account does not reproduce an actual conversation, it is nonetheless important evidence of the penetration of Hesychast views into the monastic community of the Vologda forests. St. Dionysius speaks of the cultivation of the heart and spirit, which, through the purification of the soul from evil and sinful thoughts, leads to union with God. It is possible that this conversation reflected the training Dionysius himself received at the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery under the guidance of an abbot from Mount Athos.

Philip of Rabanka was also a disciple of St. Dionysius; he founded a hermitage on the banks of the Rabanka River in 1446–47. *Somewhat later, a monk named Stephen († 1542), a stern hermit, also lived there and founded the hermitage of*⁹².

A contemporary of St. Dionysius, the monk Alexander of Kushch († 1439), built a hermitage at the confluence of the Kushch River and Lake Kubenskoye, not far from the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery⁹³.

These are the four most important groups of ascetics, whose activities are linked to the monastic colonization of the 14th and 15th centuries. Three of these groups, through St. Cyril of Belozersk and St. Cornelius of Komel, trace their lineage back to St. Sergius of Radonezh. Of course, they do not exhaust the entire scope of monastic colonization during that era. There were also small groups of ascetics and individual monks who participated in it.

Among them, it is worth mentioning a small group of ascetics from Nizhny Novgorod associated with Dionysius, Archbishop of Suzdal (d. 1385), who founded the Pechersky Monastery in Nizhny Novgorod; a monk from this monastery named Euthymius († 1404) founded the Spassky Monastery in Suzdal, which subsequently played a rather important role in the ecclesiastical life of⁹⁴. Archbishop Dionysius, as already mentioned, was one of St. Sergius's close associates.

It is also worth mentioning a small group of ascetics who were influenced by St. Alexander of Svir († 1533), who was greatly revered in Muscovite Rus'. The founding of two monasteries is associated with his name. His disciples founded three more hermitages, all located near one another, to the northeast of Lake Ladoga. This group dates back to the 16th century.⁹⁵

The Pskov ascetics, led by St. Euphrosynus of Pskov († c. 1481)⁹⁶, stand apart, as do the Novgorod monks, who founded a number of small hermitages around Novgorod that maintained administrative and economic ties with the local urban monasteries⁹⁷.

⁸⁹ We have an account of the history of the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery—the “Tale of the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery” by Elder Paisius Yaroslavov, a prominent figure of the 15th–16th centuries; he died after 1503. See the “Tale” in: Prav. sob. 1861. pp. 197–214. Zverinsky. 1. No. 446. See Table III.

⁹⁰ Konoplev. Op. cit. pp. 43–53; here is a good retelling of the life of St. Dionysius; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. pp. 493, 415, 462; Zverinsky. 2. No. 766, 767; 3. No. 1150; Savich. “Key Aspects of Monastic Colonization of the Russian North in the 14th and 15th Centuries,” in: Perm University Collection. 3 (1929). p. 25.

⁹¹ The Life of St. Gregory of Pelshem, in: VMCh. September. Part 3 (September 30); also: Konoplev. Op. cit. pp. 60 ff.; Zverinsky. 2. No. 909; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. p. 196.

⁹² Zverinsky. 2. Nos. 1173, 1208; the Semigorodsky Monastery was also founded by Dionysius's disciples. Ibid. 2. No. 1144.

⁹³ Zverinsky. Vol. 2, Nos. 605, 1189; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit., pp. 300, 372.

⁹⁴ Zverinsky. Vol. 2, Nos. 1055, 1158.

⁹⁵ Zverinsky. Vol. 2, Nos. 607, 1215; Vol. 1, Nos. 344, 193.

⁹⁶ Serebryansky. Essays on Monastic Life in the Pskov Region (1908).

⁹⁷ Grekov. The House of St. Sophia (1914).

The Valaam Monastery, which became widely known in later times, also participated in the monastic colonization of the 14th–15th centuries. Monks from this monastery ventured far to the northeast, as far as Lake Onega and even beyond⁹⁸.

We have identified the most important groups of ascetics and the main trends in monastic colonization in Rus'. Historical facts indicate that the monastic community, by participating in the colonization process, not only accomplished a great feat of Christian evangelization but also carried out significant state, political, and economic work, resulting in the incorporation of a vast Christianized territory—stretching from Vologda to the White Sea—into the Muscovite state. Therefore, purely monastic movements and trends played such an important role in the political life of Ancient Rus'; monasticism acquired not only religious but also significant political influence within the state, a fact that became particularly evident in the mid-16th century. The struggle between the monastic factions—the Non-Possessors and the Josephites (which will be discussed in the next chapter)—clearly demonstrates this assertion.

The names of its founders and teachers—St. Sergius and Cyril, St. Paul and St. Cornelius—for these men, on the one hand, laid the foundation of monastic life through their spiritual authority, and on the other, became examples for ascetics themselves, embodying the finest traits of Russian asceticism. As long as the spirit of their founders lived on in the monasteries, monastic asceticism continued to flourish, its form and substance passed down from one generation of monks to the next. But as soon as the internal unity of monastic life was shattered, the monasteries entered a period of crisis. Some monks sensed the approaching danger as early as the end of the 15th century. They saw that the very foundations of strict cenobitic monasticism were under threat, and if things continued in this vein, those foundations would be completely destroyed. The danger stemmed from the growth of monastic landholdings, the causes of which were rooted in both the religious and economic life of the country. Monastic life needed reform—a new revival of asceticism. But this time, the proposed remedy was not the restoration of strict communal living, but rather a form of solitary living based on strict observance of the vow of poverty and on the role of the elder as a school for the ascetic and mystical education of the monks.

Chapter IV. Joseph of Volotsk and Nil of Sora. The Dispute Between Two Ascetic Schools

1. St. Joseph of Volotsk and His Ecclesiastical and Political Views

The 15th century marked the zenith of Russian asceticism. This flourishing, which elevated the spiritual authority of monasticism in public life, was the result of the fruitful spiritual work of a whole host of ascetics who were, in one way or another, connected to the school of St. Sergius of Radonezh. Sergius's ascetic views, which emphasized the decisive importance of strict communal living, became the foundation of monastic life. However, the Venerable Sergius did not propose a comprehensive system of ascetic education; rather, he relied on the spiritual gifts of his successors. And already among some of his disciples—such as St. Paul of Obnora and St. Cyril of Belozero—distinctive traits of their spiritual individuality began to emerge. The consequences of this personal, individual approach to asceticism were not long in appearing: among new generations of ascetics, we discover new traits. These became quite noticeable as early as the last quarter of the 15th century; two movements emerged within monasticism, each interpreting the essence of Christian asceticism differently; as a result, Russian monasticism split into two rival factions: one known as the “Josephites” (named after its leading representative, Joseph of Volotsk), and the other as the “Non-Acquirers” or “Trans-Volga Elders.”

Joseph, the abbot of the Volokolamsk Monastery in the vicinity of Volok Lamsky, not far from Moscow, was also genealogically linked to the school of Sergius of Radonezh. St. Sergius's disciple Nikita, who founded a monastery in Serpukhov, spent his final years at the Vysotsky Monastery in Borovsk (Kaluga Governorate), where he had a disciple under his spiritual guidance. This disciple, named Pafnutius, who came from a baptized Tatar family, founded a monastery in a dense forest near Borovsk around 1445. Pafnutius's spiritual connection to St. Sergius (through Nikita) gave him special authority in the eyes of his contemporaries

⁹⁸ The Valaam Monastery and Its Ascetics (1889).

and of Moscow society in later times⁹⁹. Pafnutius led the Borovsk monastery for nearly 30 years. He proved to be a very capable administrator and a strict abbot who attached great importance to the outward appearance of monastic life. Pafnutius maintained good and close relations with the grand ducal family, and long after his death (he died in 1477), the royal family cherished his memory; two of his disciples, St. Daniel of Pereyaslav and the monk Cassian the Barefoot, having already become elderly elders, became godparents to the newborn Ivan, who later became Tsar Ivan IV the Terrible (1533–1584)¹⁰⁰.

In the atmosphere of this monastery, with its well-managed estate—Pafnutius had received a large gift of money and land from the Grand Prince—where asceticism was understood, in a certain sense, as an outward display, the young Joseph received his initial monastic education¹⁰¹. He was born in 1439/40 into a boyar family. At the age of 20, he entered the Borovsk Monastery (around 1460) after a brief stay at another monastery, whose monastic life had failed to satisfy him. In his ascetic life, Joseph followed the teachings of Pafnutius: hard labor in various monastic work areas and long divine services, which were conducted by the Pafnutius-following monks with extremely strict, “literal” observance of the monastic rule. It was this very training that instilled in Joseph a particularly zealous attitude toward a monk’s outward conduct during divine services—a principle that takes first place in the monastic rule he compiled (“The Spiritual Charter”).

The aging Pafnutius saw that Joseph, by his very nature, was better suited than others to be his successor, and began to involve him in the affairs of monastic administration in the hope that Joseph, if the brotherhood elected him abbot, would be able to preserve the spirit of the monastery’s founder. Joseph often accompanied the abbot on his trips to Moscow, where he was warmly received at the Grand Duke’s court. Joseph did, in fact, become Pafnutius’s successor. It is unclear, however, how he came to hold the office of abbot—whether by the choice of the monastic community or by order of the Grand Prince: two hagiographies, composed shortly after Joseph’s death, contradict one another in their accounts of this event. In any case, Joseph’s good relations with the Grand Duke could not have gone unnoticed by the monastic community. Already at the beginning of his abbacy, Joseph faced concerns and difficulties that are characteristic of the Pafnutius Monastery. The monastery operated largely in a spirit of formal austerity, with a great deal of attention devoted to administrative matters; when Joseph attempted to raise the standard of communal life in the monastery—which (likely due to the extensive scope of administrative work) was becoming increasingly secularized—dissatisfaction and grumbling arose among the monastic community. The older monks, who had already grown accustomed to the established way of life, put up stubborn resistance to the innovations, even though in principle they, too, recognized the need to improve conditions. The opposition from the Pafnutian monastic community was so strong that Joseph was forced to leave the monastery. Accompanied by a single monk, he wandered from monastery to monastery for some time—about a year; during these travels, he also visited the Kirillov Monastery on White Lake¹⁰².

A year later, Joseph returned to the Borovsk Monastery, but he did not stay there long, for he had already decided to found his own new monastery. He left the Borovsk Monastery along with several monks, heading toward Volok Lamsky (Volokolamsk), and founded a monastery (1479), which quickly grew and played such an important role in church affairs during the following century. The generous endowments (villages and money) that Joseph’s monastery received from the Prince of Volokolamsk only prove that Joseph had quickly managed to establish good relations with him. The monastery’s financial prosperity made it possible as early as 1486 to build a large stone church and decorate it with frescoes by the renowned 15th–16th-century iconographer Dionysius¹⁰³; later, a tall bell tower and several other monastic buildings were

⁹⁹ Joseph Volotsky. The Legend of the Holy Fathers, in: Readings. 1847. 7; cf.: Letter from Leonid, Bishop of Ryazan, to Tsar Theodore Ioannovich (1584–1598), in: Tikhonravov. Chronicle of Russian Literature and Antiquity. 5. Part 3, p. 142; AI, vol. 1, no. 410. According to chronicle records (PSRL, vol. 8, p. 183), Pafnutius founded the monastery in 1443.

¹⁰⁰ Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. pp. 294, 439–453; Kadlubovsky. Op. cit. pp. 209 ff.

¹⁰¹ The Life of Joseph in: Great Martyrs. September 9. pp. 455–498; his monastic charter (“Spiritual Charter”): Ibid. pp. 499–615. On Joseph, see: Khrushchev. A Study of the Writings of Joseph Sanin, the Venerable Hegumen of Volotsk (1868); in addition, works by Bulgakov, Zhmakin, Kadlubovsky, and Fedotov.

¹⁰² A description of Joseph’s pilgrimage is contained in Part 2 of Chapter 10 of his charter; it was also published separately in: LZAK. 2 (1862/63), and in abridged form in: Chteniya. 1847. 7.

¹⁰³ On Dionysius, see: Georgievsky, V. Frescoes of the Ferapontov Monastery (1911); this volume also contains a detailed inventory of the Josephov Monastery for the year 1545. On the history of the monastery’s enrichment, see Joseph’s letters to B. V. Kutuzov (in: DRV. 14. p. 177) and to Princess Maria Golenina (in: Khrushchev, pp. 255–260); see also: Khrushchev, pp. 39 ff.; Zverinsky. 2. No. 845; Gerontius (Kureanovsky), Archimandrite. The Second-Class Monastery of St. Joseph of Volokolamsk (1903).

erected, all of stone—a feat that, at that time in the forested regions of Northern Rus', was possible only with generous financial support¹⁰⁴. Generous gifts poured in from all directions, especially from people who took monastic vows at the monastery and bequeathed all their property to it. Joseph willingly accepted these offerings, and soon his monastery, in terms of the scale of its estate, came to resemble that of Pafnutius: fields stretched all around, peasants from the monastery's villages worked in the fields, and granaries, barns, and sheds stood everywhere; to a novice monk, the monastery seemed like a large estate, and many monks assigned to agricultural duties had to devote all their free time—when not engaged in divine services—to managing the monastery's affairs. This allowed the abbot to engage in charitable work and, in years of poor harvests, to help the people of the surrounding villages¹⁰⁵.

During his travels through the monasteries of Northern Russia, Joseph found that communal living was not strictly observed everywhere. Therefore, he decided from the very beginning to introduce the *kinoviya* in his monastery and to observe it in the most rigorous manner. Later, he wrote a monastic charter known as the "Spiritual Letter"¹⁰⁶. This charter is particularly important to us, for it provides a good opportunity to take a close look at Joseph's religious, moral, and ascetic views¹⁰⁷. Joseph appears before us as an exponent of external, formally understood Christian asceticism. Joseph bases the spiritual guidance of monks not on the perfection of the soul and will, but on the outwardly impeccable behavior of the monk. The outward aspect of behavior—"physical decorum," as Joseph puts it—must be the primary concern of anyone who wishes to become a good monk. In this regard, Joseph is a typical exponent of that Old Russian view according to which strict instruction and the literal observance of rituals were paramount. Joseph's ascetic rigor is aimed at regulating and prescribing every aspect of monastic life—down to the smallest detail—in its outward manifestation. He proceeds from the idea that, of the three monastic vows, the vow of obedience takes first place, and that precise regulation is the surest means of achieving obedience.

It should be noted here that Joseph's view of the spiritual guidance of monks differs fundamentally from that of the elders. The elders also see obedience as a good means of educating a novice monk, but they use it precisely as a means and always strive to take into account the uniqueness of the disciple's personality in their spiritual guidance, avoiding a cookie-cutter approach to the spiritual perfection of the monks.

Joseph disregarded both the spiritual foundations of Christian asceticism in general and the foundations of monastic mentoring in particular. This was particularly evident in his views on the relationship between the abbot and the brotherhood. The requirements that Joseph imposes on the abbot are merely superficial. When discussing this in his rule, he supports his arguments with numerous examples from the history of Eastern monasticism and demands that the abbot treat the brotherhood with extreme severity. He educates the monk not by appealing to his conscience or by demonstrating the spiritual value of asceticism, but by intimidating the disobedient. In this context, the monk does not see the abbot as a spiritual mentor to whom he could confide his inner anxieties and receive counsel and assistance, but rather as a monastic authority who not only can but is also obligated to punish him for any offense, no matter how minor.

The Rule prescribes certain behaviors for monks in their cells, in the refectory, while working, and during worship in the church. In the church, for example, each monk must have a specific place and use the same door through which he is to enter and exit. Joseph even writes about how a monk should stand and how to hold his head and hands when making the sign of the cross. The Rule primarily concerns communal prayer; it requires that during the service, everything be read and sung in full, without omissions. Because of this, the service dragged on, and the monk had no time left for private prayer; one must not forget that the monks in his monastery devoted a great deal of time to domestic work—less to handicrafts and more to managing the monastery's enterprises (mills, field work, etc.)¹⁰⁸.

In organizing this monastic way of life, Joseph pursued very specific goals. In his view, the monastery, as a church institution, has its own special tasks. But these tasks are not purely ascetic in nature. The monastery

¹⁰⁴ At the Monastery of St. Sergius, the first stone church was built 30 years after his death. Gorsky, A. *Historical Description of the Holy Trinity-Sergius Lavra*. Vol. 1 (1890). p. 6.

¹⁰⁵ However, I must note that G. Florovsky's conclusions (*The Paths of Russian Theology*. 1937. p. 18) regarding Joseph's social activities are not entirely correct; cf. my review in: *Jahrbuch für neuere Geschichte Osteuropas*. 3 (1938). p. 262.

¹⁰⁶ See: VMCh. September. pp. 499–615; cf.: Khrushchev. pp. 59–63, 75–80.

¹⁰⁷ In this regard, the 7th word in Joseph's principal work—*"The Enlightener"*—is particularly important, as is his admonition regarding observance of the monastic rule ("St. Joseph of Volotsk's Admonition to One of the Brothers Regarding Failure to Observe the Monastic Rule") in: DAI. 1. No. 211.

¹⁰⁸ See Chapter IX. It contains a detailed account of Joseph's monastic rule.

should become a kind of ecclesiastical-pastoral school, designed to prepare future hierarchs. Uniformity in the methods of the monks' spiritual formation, as well as consistent behavior on the part of the monks during divine services and in all other circumstances of life visible to the faithful, were intended, in Joseph's view, to confer special authority upon future hierarchs in the eyes of the flock. Joseph generally paid little attention to the moral and educational activities of bishops. The church hierarchy, he believed, should not educate, but rather rule and govern.

Both in the charter and in his other writings, Joseph develops the idea of a close interconnection between ecclesiastical and state tasks. For Joseph, a bishop is simultaneously a servant of both the Church and the state, and a monastery itself represents a kind of ecclesiastical-state institution. From this central idea naturally follows the justification for monasteries' claims to land holdings populated by peasants. In order to be able to prepare the future church hierarchy, a monastery must be economically and financially secure. "If monasteries do not have villages," Joseph remarks in one passage, "how can an honorable and noble man (that is, a future bishop) take the monastic vows?" This succinctly formulated idea about the monastery's tasks was received particularly favorably by broad circles of the monastic community and the episcopate of that time. It formed the basis of the worldview shared by many members of the Russian church hierarchy in the 16th century. These bishops constituted an extremely influential group known as the "Josephites," which began to exert a profound influence on the life of the Russian Church and soon took the reins of church governance into their own hands for a long time.

The influence of the Josephites is eloquently demonstrated by the fact that in the 16th century, the episcopate not only shared Joseph's ideas but also consisted, for the most part, of monks from the Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery. A leading role in this was played by Metropolitan Daniel of Moscow (1522–1539), a faithful disciple of Joseph and his successor in the administration of the Volokolamsk Monastery (1515–1522), a typical prince of the Church with a Josephite worldview, who promoted monks from his own monastery to bishoprics¹⁰⁹. Another outstanding metropolitan of the 16th century was Makarii (1542–1563), who, following the brief tenure of Metropolitan Ioasaf (1539–1542), continued Daniel's ecclesiastical policy—specifically, the close integration of the tasks of the Church and the state—and was also among the champions of the Josephite movement¹¹⁰. The decrees of the Stoglav Council, or Stoglav, convened in Moscow in 1551, bear a distinctly Josephite character; of the nine bishops who participated in the Council's proceedings, five had previously been monks at the St. Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery¹¹¹. Supported by Metropolitans Daniel and Macarius, the Josephites always advocated for monarchical absolutism in Muscovy. This movement converged with a body of ideas known as the doctrine of "Moscow—the Third Rome," which, however, drew from sources other than Joseph's views¹¹².

The excessive focus on the monastic order's state and ecclesiastical-political tasks was, of course, detrimental to its internal development. Joseph's ascetic and ecclesiastical-political views found not only adherents and followers but also numerous opponents who sought to protect mid-15th-century Russian monasticism from the danger of secularization and from serving purely state objectives, and who sought to return monastic life to the path of exclusively spiritual asceticism. Opponents of Josephanism emerged from the ranks of monasticism itself, putting forward a remarkable ascetic whose public stance marked the beginning of a sharp polemic with Joseph of Volotsk and Josephanism. This was the elder Nil of Sora, who found himself at the center of the anti-Josephanist faction.

The dispute flared up even during Joseph's lifetime—he died in 1515—and continued for more than 50 years; this dispute touched upon many important issues of asceticism and problems of church life in Russia, and it gave voice to the core ideas of both factions.

¹⁰⁹ VMCh. September. p. 491; Zhmakin. Metropolitan Daniel. pp. 110 ff., 129, 138, 452–456; Pavlov. A Historical Essay on Secularization. p. 86; Kurbsky. The Legend (2nd ed.). p. 42. Daniel was elected Metropolitan of Moscow by decree of Grand Prince Vasily III; PSRL. 6. p. 254; 8. p. 269.

¹¹⁰ Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 734; Dyakonov. The Power of the Moscow Sovereigns (1880). p. 108; Zhmakin. The Struggle of Ideas in Russia in the First Half of the 16th Century, in: ZhMNP. 1882. April. p. 160; Pavlov. Op. cit. p. 109; Makarii may have been a novice at the Pafnutiev Borovsk Monastery. Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 747; Zaustinsky. Makarii, Metropolitan of All Russia, in: ZhMNP. 1881. October.

¹¹¹ Stoglav. Ed. Kozhanchikov (1863). pp. 19–20; cf.: AI. 1. No. 216.

¹¹² On the idea of "Moscow—the Third Rome," see Chapter V.

2. Elder Nil of Sora and His Ascetic Views

Elder Nil of Sora, born in 1433, came from the Moscow boyar family of the Maikovs¹¹³. Nil began his monastic life at the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery. Dissatisfied with the monastic life there, Nil decided to travel to the Holy Mountain of Athos and familiarize himself with the way of life of the Athonite monks, hoping to find answers there to the various questions that tormented him. The young Neil's deeply religious soul, his mystical inclinations, and his theological quests found no full satisfaction in the somewhat dry spiritual atmosphere of the Kirillov Monastery¹¹⁴.

Nilus, like other Russian monks, had heard much about the Holy Mountain and the lives of its inhabitants. Ancient Rus' first ties with Mount Athos date back to the 11th century. By the 12th century, there was already a Russian monastery there called Xylourgou; in 1169, Russian monks received another monastery on Mount Athos—St. Panteleimon, which came to be known as the Russian Monastery¹¹⁵. In the 13th century, relations with these monasteries were severed for a long time due to the Tatar invasion and the devastation of Southern Rus'. Intensive ties were restored only at the end of the 14th and during the 15th centuries, when many Russian monks visited Mount Athos. At the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery, as already mentioned, a Greek named Dionysius served as abbot for a time and introduced the Athonite Rule to the monastery. Many books were translated on the Holy Mountain (primarily by South Slavs), and these translations made their way to Rus'; among them were books containing general information about Hesychasm¹¹⁶.

Nilus, along with his friend Innokenty Okhlebinin († 1521), visited Mount Athos after the victory of the Hesychasts¹¹⁷. His close acquaintance with the life of the Mount Athos monks, his encounters with elders and ascetics, and his reading of ascetic and mystical works—which Neil had already begun to study at the Kirillov Monastery—all shaped the direction of his spiritual quest. His pilgrimage to Mount Athos turned Neil into a devotee of Hesychasm¹¹⁸.

On Mount Athos, as he later wrote, Nil lived “like a bee, flitting from one good flower to a better one,” in order to study “the vineyard of Christian truth” and the lives of the saints, “to revive his hardened soul and prepare it for salvation.” Having been spiritually nourished and having found inner peace, Neil returned to his homeland. Back home, at the Kirillov Monastery, he now viewed everything through different eyes. It is

¹¹³ On St. Nilus of Sora, see my book: **Leben und Lehre der Starzen** (1936). pp. 71–76; it contains (pp. 77–89) the most important excerpts from his principal work, **Tradition to His Disciples**; Arkhangel'sky. **Nilus of Sora and Vassian Patrikeev** (1881); Zhmakin, op. cit.; Pravdin, “The Venerable Nil of Sor and His Rule on the Hermit Life,” in: *Christian Readings* 1877, vol. 1, pp. 114–157; Grechev, “Nil of Sor and the Elders of the Volga Region,” in: *BV.* 1907, nos. 7–8; 1908, nos. 5, 9, 11; Smolich, I. “The Great Elder Nil of Sora,” in: *Put'*. 19 (1929); Fedotov. *Saints of Ancient Rus'* (1931), pp. 166–175.

¹¹⁴ On the state of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery in the third quarter of the 15th century, see Chapter 10 of Joseph's **Spiritual Letter**, as well as: Nikolsky. *Communal and Cell Life at the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery in the 15th, 16th, and Early 17th Centuries*, in: *Christian Readings* 1908, pp. 225 and 227; idem, *The Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery* (1897), vol. 1.

¹¹⁵ Gorsky, A. “On the Relations of the Russian Church with the Holy Mountain Monasteries” (1848); Solovyov, A. “History of Russian Monasticism on Mount Athos,” in: *Notes of the Russian National Institute in Belgrade.* 7 (1932). pp. 137–156.

¹¹⁶ Sobolevsky. *Translated Literature of Muscovy* (1903). pp. 5–6; Ilyinsky. “The Significance of Mount Athos in the History of Slavic Literature,” in: *ZhMNP.* 1908. 11; Orlov, A. “The Jesus Prayer in Rus' in the 16th Century,” in: *PDP.* 185 (1914).

¹¹⁷ On the Hesychast controversy and the life of the Athonites, see: Engelhardt, G., “Die Arsenianer und Hesychasten,” in **Z. f. hist. Theologie** (1838); Stein, F., **Studien über die Hesychasten** (1879); Porphyry (Uspensky), Bishop, **The Christian East: Athos**, vol. 3, Part 2 (1892); Uspensky, F., *Essays on the History of Byzantine Education* (1891); Meyer, Ph., **Die Hauptkunden für die Geschichte der Athos-Klöster** (1894) and his articles on the recent history and current state of the Athos monasteries, in: **Z. f. Kirchengeschichte**. 2 (1907); Sokolov, I. “Barlaam and the Barlaamites,” in: *PBE.* 3; Radchenko, K. “The Religious and Literary Movement in Bulgaria in the Era Before the Turkish Conquest” (1898); Hausherr, I. “La méthode de l'oraison hésychaste,” in: *OCA.* 9. 2 (1927); Alexius, Bishop. *Byzantine Ecclesiastical Mystics of the 14th Century* (1906); Ostrogorsky, G. *The Athonite Hesychasts and Their Opponents*, in: *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Sciences in Belgrade.* 5 (1931); my book. *Op. cit.*, pp. 45–58; Wunderle, G., “From the Holy World of Athos” (1937), in: **Eastern Christianity**, 2; idem, “On the Psychology of Hesychastic Prayer” (*ibid.*, New Series 2). 2nd ed. (1947). An important Hesychast work is the “Centurie” (“The Hundred”) by Callistus Xanthopoulos, recently published in German by A. M. Ammann: Ammann, A. M., **Die Gottesschau im palamitischen Hesychasmus** (1939), in: **Das Östliche Christentum**, 6/7. Wassilij, Mönch. **Die asketische und theologische Lehre des hl. Gregorius Palamas. 1296–1351** (1939) (*ibid.*, 8).

¹¹⁸ For an understanding of Hesychasm as an ascetic-mystical and theological-mystical movement, see: Syrku. *The Life and Times of Euthymius, Patriarch of Tarnovo* (1898); Schmidt, B. **Das Geistige Gebet** (Halle, Theol. Diss. 1916); Baur, I., “Investigations into the Doctrine of Deification in the Theology of the Greek Fathers,” in: *Theol. Quartalschrift*, 98–100 (1917/18); Jugie, M., **Theologia dogmatica christianorum orientalium**, 2 (1933). pp. 47 ff.; Lot-Borodine, M., “La doctrine de la déification dans l'Église grecque jusqu'au XIe siècle,” in *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 55 (1932), pp. 1–35; 56 (1933), pp. 325–374; 57 (1933). pp. 8–55; see also the bibliography in the book by Monk Basil. *Op. cit.* p. 9.

therefore not surprising that he left the large monastery in search of solitude and silence, so that he might experience firsthand what he had learned on Mount Athos—the beauty of mystical immersion in mental prayer, “guardianship of the heart” and “sobriety of the soul,” so that, by climbing this “ladder to paradise,” he might attain the goal of the Christian life and hesychasm—to be made “like God.”

Together with his friend and disciple Innocent, Nilus went into a dense, marshy forest on the banks of the little Sora River, some distance from the Kirillov Monastery, and settled there, devoting his life to ascetic practice and mystical contemplation. Gradually, a small flock of ascetics gathered around Nilus; finding refuge in his skete and under his spiritual guidance, they sought to establish a new form of asceticism and a new way of monastic life in Russia. Unfortunately, the Life of Nilus of Sorsk has been lost, but from other writings by his contemporaries we know that they considered the elder Nilus the “pioneer of skete life” in Russia; this underscored the fact that he introduced something new and, at that time, as yet unknown into Old Russian monasticism. Based on his writings and the records of his disciples and contemporaries, we can attempt to imagine this unique figure, whose influence left an indelible mark on centuries of Russia’s spiritual history. His purely Christian, truly ascetic views provoked strong opposition from the Josephites. Their hostility may have been the reason for the loss of the hagiography of Nil of Sorsk—his opponents sought to erase the image of the humble elder from the memory of the faithful, and above all from that of the monks, for his hagiography could have served as a living indictment of Josephianism and of monastic life in the second half of the 16th and 17th centuries. However, Nil’s work, **The Tradition of the Skete Life**, was zealously copied by those who shared the great elder’s views, though this was done primarily in the small monasteries and hermitages of the Trans-Volga region.

Elder Nilus passed away on May 7, 1508. Desiring neither earthly honor nor glory, he ordered his disciples to carry his sinful remains into the forest and leave them to be devoured by wild beasts, for he had sinned greatly before God and was unworthy of burial.

Church records contain no information about when Elder Nil was canonized. It can be assumed that his canonization took place only in the late 18th or early 19th century, although the devout Russian people and pious pilgrims had always known the narrow path through the marshy forest to the Nil-Sorsky Skete and had long venerated the elder as a saint¹¹⁹.

His pilgrimage to Mount Athos had a profound influence on Nil’s religious views—it was there that his perspectives on the inner and outer aspects of the life of a Christian ascetic were finally formed. Nil’s literary legacy is modest (it is possible that some of his writings were destroyed by ideological opponents and the passage of time), but it gained recognition and immense authority among his contemporaries and disciples. His charisma and moral stature, which were highly valued by those around him, played no small part in this. Nil Sorsky’s ascetic-mystical tradition could serve as the foundation for a revival of the ideals of ancient Eastern asceticism within Old Russian monasticism.

The character of Neil, a man of ascetic disposition, differs quite significantly from that of Joseph. Nilus contrasts the religious formalism and outward rigor of the leader of the Josephite faction with a psychologically nuanced approach to the religious life of the soul. He exudes a spirit of inner freedom attained through the process of moral perfection; he was a religious thinker who provided a mystical foundation for Christian piety. The tasks he sets for the monk are more difficult and profound than Joseph’s requirements. The activities of a monk and of any Christian ascetic in the world—to which Joseph attached such great importance—are far from being the primary task for a person who has renounced the world, in Nilus’s view. The primary focus of his own spiritual life—and the main task he sets for Christians in his writings—was the perfection of the soul, through which a person’s spiritual growth takes place and he attains salvation. Nilus closely followed the tradition of the ancient ascetics of the Eastern Church and the ascetic-mystical views of Hesychasm.

The works of Nil of Sora allow us to provide a concise overview of his views.

The entire life of a Christian striving to follow the spirit of the Gospel must be a path of continuous perfection. A person, personally endowed with a free and conscious will, walks this path—the path of spiritual struggle—for the sake of the salvation of his soul. The inner, moral, and spiritual growth of the one seeking salvation is attainable only through “mental prayer” and “sobriety of the heart”; only these means of ascetic-mystical practice form the foundation of a fruitful and active Christian life. “Physical practice,” writes Nilus,

¹¹⁹ Cf.: Rostislavov, A. “The Skete of the Nilo Desert,” in: Starye Goda (1913), April.

“external prayer, is nothing more than a leaf; the internal, that is, intelligent prayer, is the fruit”¹²⁰. Everyone must practice it: not only monks, but also those who remain in the world. Nilus paid special attention to the state of the soul of a Christian striving for perfection, to the temptations that lie in wait for him, and to his passions and delusions. He paints a picture of the “conflict of thoughts,” a picture of the struggle against temptations—a “mental battle.” As he endures this battle, the ascetic overcomes “temptations,” “associations,” “combinations,” “captivities,” and “passions.” These are the stages of human sinfulness. “A temptation is simply a thought, or the imagination of some object, suddenly introduced into the heart and presented to the mind... A ‘combination’... is defined as a dialogue with the thought that has arisen—that is, a kind of secret conversation, hidden from us, with the thought that has appeared, whether driven by passion or dispassionately; in other words: the acceptance of a thought brought by the enemy, holding onto it, agreeing with it, and willingly allowing it to remain within us. The Holy Fathers do not always consider this to be sinless... By “composition,” the Holy Fathers mean the heartfelt, favorable acceptance of a thought that has entered the mind, or of an object that has presented itself to it. This happens, for example, when someone accepts a thought generated by the enemy or an object presented by him, enters into communion with it—through mental rambling—and then inclines or disposes his mind to act as the enemy’s thought suggests... Captivity is the involuntary attraction of our heart to a thought that has taken hold, or the constant dwelling of that thought within us... This usually stems from distraction and from excessive, unproductive conversations... A passion is defined as such a inclination and such an action which, having lodged in the soul for a long time, through habit become, as it were, part of its very nature... The cause of this is... negligence and self-indulgence, a prolonged preoccupation with the object. Passion, in all its forms, is inevitably subject either to repentance commensurate with the guilt, or to future torment. Therefore, one ought to repent and pray for deliverance from every passion, for every passion is subject to torment not because one has suffered from it, but because of a lack of repentance”¹²¹.

In waging spiritual warfare, the ascetic deals with eight fundamental passions, which he must overcome within himself so that, by successfully progressing along the path of experience and external deeds, he may finally attain the state of mystical contemplation; the crown of it all is deification. Here are the eight passions that block the ascetic’s path of ascetic ascent: gluttony, fornication, love of money, anger, sorrow, despondency, vanity, and pride¹²².

According to Nilus, a wise and virtuous struggle against temptations consists in “guarding the heart,” in “silence,” and in “mindful prayer.” A monk must devote much time to mystical contemplation, and the words of the Jesus Prayer—“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner”—must be constantly on his lips. Nilus also explains exactly how the Jesus Prayer should be recited¹²³.

Thus, we see that Nilus’s ascetic views differ greatly from those of Joseph of Volotsk. The difference in Nilus’s and Joseph’s understanding of asceticism is also reflected in their views on fasting. While Joseph, in his rule, prescribes in great detail the times for meals and the amount of food, without taking into account the individual characteristics of the monks, we find a completely different approach to fasting in Nil. Nilus bases external asceticism on the individual spiritual qualities of the ascetic, while also taking into account the difference in climate between Northern Rus’ and Palestine. It is impossible to establish a single rule for eating that applies to all people, for, as Nilus says, “bodies vary in strength and vigor, just as copper, iron, and wax do”¹²⁴.

Nilus of Sora also addresses the issue of monastic estates. He categorically rejects the view of Joseph of Volotsk, who believed that monasteries could or even should own villages, land, and other property. According to Nil, monks should live by the labor of their own hands, selling or, better yet, bartering the goods they produce for the necessities of life. It is not fitting for monasteries and monks to accept alms from

¹²⁰ I draw upon Nilus’s principal work: “The Tradition of Our Venerable Father Nilus of Sora, as Transmitted to His Disciples Concerning the Skete Life” (1849). p. 22.

¹²¹ The Tradition. pp. 27, 28, 29, 31, 32. Nilus presents the image of a person committing sin based on ancient ascetic tradition. Cf. my book. Op. cit., pp. 24–59, 81–89; Ammann, A. M., Op. cit., “Centurie” by the monks Callistus and Ignatius (p. 43 ff.).

¹²² Tradition. pp. 67–68; 69–103. This schema of the passions is already found in the book **Antirrytikon** by Evagrius of Pontus († 402) (Migne, PG 40. P. 1272A–1276A). It was adopted by ascetic writers of a later era, such as Nilus of Sinai, John Climacus, John Cassian, and others. See, for example: Nilus of Sinai. **Tractatus de octo spiritibus malitiae** (On the Eight Deadly Sins), in: PG 79, pp. 1145, 1164.

¹²³ Tradition. pp. 36–40; see my book, op. cit., pp. 82, 48; also: Schmidt, E., **Das Geistige Gebet** (1916).

¹²⁴ Tradition. p. 70; on fasting, see Nilus. Ibid. pp. 69–80.

laypeople; on the contrary, they themselves must share with the poor what they have earned with their own hands. Nilus also expresses a very interesting—and, for Ancient Rus', extremely unusual—view that excessive luxury in the decoration of churches, expensive gold vestments, and the like are completely unnecessary for divine worship. First, this luxury often becomes an end in itself—that is, it turns into a passion; second, what matters most is the inner disposition of those praying, not the richness of vestments and liturgical vessels. In this view, Neil reveals an affinity with St. Sergius of Radonezh, who for many years celebrated the Liturgy using simple wooden vessels and always wore humble linen robes during services¹²⁵.

Of the three forms of monastic life, Nilus preferred the “middle way”—the “golden mean”—which he called skete life: the life of monks living in pairs or trios. He did not consider either strict hermitage or cenobitic life to be the best form of monastic life.

By “skete life,” Nilus did not mean anchoritism at all. A skete consisted of several cells, or huts, in which the cell-dwelling monks (kellioties) lived (). These cells were the property of the monastery. The kellioties (skete dwellers) lived in pairs or, less commonly, in groups of three. Often, this pairing consisted of an elderly monk and a novice—an elder and his novice, or an elder with two novice disciples. This way of life was the most sensible when spiritual guidance was available. The skete dwellers remained under the general authority of the monastery's abbot. They received food supplies from the monastery, usually enough to last the entire week. On Saturday or on the eve of a feast day, all the skete dwellers would gather together in the monastery church to participate in the communal divine service; this was the practice, for example, at the Lavra of St. Savva, which was nothing other than a large cell-based monastery. The daily prayer schedule of the skete dwellers often differed from the general monastic one. The instruction of novices also took a different form. Several cells, if they were located close to one another, were grouped into a skete; in this case, the monks often followed a common prayer schedule and elected a skete abbot. Ascetic training in a skete was stricter than in a kinovia. A kinovia (communal living) is a monastic arrangement where common requirements applied to everyone: a common rule, communal meals, and identical monastic vestments. Kinovia monasteries were governed by an abbot based on a specific monastic charter. Idiorrhythm (separate living) is the opposite of kinovia. Each monk sought salvation according to his own understanding, living either in a detached cell or in a cell located within the main monastery building; he provided for his own meals and clothing, and he also performed his prayer rule at his own discretion. Monasteries with a rule of separate dwelling were governed by an abbot, who was elected for one year and was accountable to the council of monastic elders¹²⁶.

According to Nilus, a skete offers the ascetic the best opportunities to lead a life of spiritual sobriety and abstinence, in prayer and silence. He should begin the day with prayer and spend all his time in works pleasing to God: in prayer, singing psalms and other church hymns, and reading the Holy Scriptures. Among the books of the Bible, Nilus preferred the New Testament, especially the Epistles of the Apostles. It is also necessary for the ascetic to be engaged in manual labor: first, to maintain constant vigilance, and second, to earn a meager livelihood through the labor of his hands and to struggle against the passions. A monk's food should be commensurate with his strength: no more than is necessary, for intemperance in eating inclines one toward the passions. Sleep, too, must be brief, and in it one must see a foreshadowing of death. The thought of death must always accompany the monk, and he should structure his spiritual life so that at any moment he is ready to stand before the Face of God.

Only by following this path of struggle against the passions, having tested himself through experience, can a monk ascend to the highest rungs of the spiritual ladder. His spiritual practice must now consist of contemplation; as he mortifies all that is earthly and carnal, his spirit rises to the mystical beholding of God. Through the Jesus Prayer, the guarding of the heart, complete stillness, and perfect detachment from the

¹²⁵ Tradition. pp. 18–20.

¹²⁶ Meyer, Ph. *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athos-Klöster* (1894) and his articles on the recent history and current state of the Athos monasteries, in: *Z. f. Kirchengeschichte*, 11 (1890); Sokolov, I. The Internal State of Monasticism in the Byzantine Church from the Mid-9th to the Early 13th Century, 842–1204 (1894), in: Prav. Sob. 1893. 3. Nil of Sora always understood the term “hermitage” to mean a skete. In Ancient Rus', a skete often possessed certain characteristics of a solitary life. To understand this form of monastic life in Ancient Rus', see: AI. 1. Nos. 26 and 181; PSRL. 6. p. 284. Some Russian historians mistakenly refer to Nil as an anchorite (hermit); for example: Nikitsky, *An Essay on the Internal History of Novgorod*, p. 86. In the Trans-Volga region (near Vologda), there were no cenobitic monasteries until 1371 (Makarii, 4. p. 214), but further north, near the White Sea, communal monasteries already existed by the mid-15th century (Ayu. No. 110. 6. p. 145). In Novgorod and its environs, there were generally only hermitages. PSRL. 6. p. 284.

world—in silence and sobriety of the soul—the ascetic grows spiritually and draws near to the ultimate goal of his endeavor (experience † contemplation): deification. And in this grace-filled mystical immersion, in union with God, he attains a state of bliss¹²⁷.

Nilus's views are rooted in the ascetic and mystical tradition of the Eastern Church. Many of the works of the Holy Fathers were known in Rus' long before Nilus. But Nilus used them somewhat differently than his predecessors and contemporaries. An Old Russian scholar—for example, Joseph of Volotsk—uses the writings of the Holy Fathers solely to prove his own point and to refute the views of his opponents. Nilus, on the other hand, uses Sacred Scripture or the writings of the Holy Fathers to make his arguments clearer and more convincing¹²⁸. His reasoning is free from any trace of formalism; he encourages the reader to reflect and appeals to their conscience; he does not merely argue but analyzes. In this, Nilus reveals himself to be a thinker and a psychologist. He quotes the Holy Fathers and ascetic-mystical works extensively, but no more than is necessary to clarify his own thoughts. He does not pile up quotations as Joseph of Volotsk does, who, in his major work, **The Enlightener**, wearies the reader with their abundance. For Joseph, asceticism was always an end in itself, whereas for Nilus it is merely a means, merely a tool. What matters most to him is the spiritual meaning of asceticism, for in and of itself it is merely an outward manifestation of the Christian's inner life. Therefore, he never loses sight of the individual traits of the ascetic's personality.

In Nilus's principal work, **The Tradition**, speaks of the spiritual struggle waged to achieve the ascetic ideal, but not of the ideal itself—which may be explained by the fact that Nilus, as a skilled psychologist, understood how, given the state of monasticism at the time, a practical guide to asceticism was more useful than a depiction of an ideal whose path to attainment was not clearly outlined.

3. The Dispute Between the “Josephites” and the “Non-Acquirers”

The differences in Joseph's and Nilus's views on the meaning of monasticism and the nature of monastic life, as well as their differing ascetic perspectives, were most clearly expressed during discussions of two worldview issues that particularly stirred Moscow society in the early 16th century.

The first issue touched upon the foundations of Christian doctrine; the second was more of a practical matter and concerned the relationship between the Church and the state in Muscovite Rus'.

Heresies and heretics who attempted to distort the teachings of the Orthodox Church were a very rare phenomenon in Ancient Rus'. In its internal mission, the Church struggled only with superstitions, remnants of paganism, and grotesque forms of outward piety. Heretical movements did not shake the foundations of Old Russian Christianity¹²⁹.

The Strigolnik heresy, which arose in Novgorod in the 14th century, did, however, play a certain role in history. Only through the polemical writings directed against this heresy can one form a general idea of this religious movement. At the end of the 15th century, again in Novgorod, a new heretical movement emerged known as the “heresy of the Judaizers,” since several Jews were involved in it¹³⁰.

This movement gained relatively widespread popularity in Novgorod and Moscow. We will not go into detail about it—what is more important to us is the difference in Joseph and Nil's attitudes toward heresy. In his major work, **The Enlightener**, Joseph speaks out very sharply against the Judaizers, arguing against them and their religious views; therefore, **The Enlightener** is a very important source on this issue. In other writings, including some epistles, Joseph proposes practical measures against heretics¹³¹. As an advocate of harsh measures, Joseph even allows for the death penalty. Joseph's views met with very strong opposition from the non-possessors in the circle of Nil Sorsky. In his polemic against the Judaizers, while defending the

¹²⁷ Tradition. pp. 6–65, 69 ff., 107 ff.

¹²⁸ Nilus quotes the following Church Fathers and ascetic writers: Macarius, Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, Nilus of Sinai, Isaac the Syrian, Ephrem the Syrian, Abba Dorotheus, Hesychius of Jerusalem, Cassian, John Climacus, Maximus the Confessor, Peter of Damascus, Pope Gregory the Dialogist, Theodore the Studite, Philotheus, Simeon the New Theologian, with a special preference for Gregory of Sinai, and others.

¹²⁹ One can only note the relatively vague references in the Old Russian chronicles to the “heresy” of the monk Adrian (the Nikon Chronicle, under the year 1004) and a certain Dmitry (twenty years later), which may have been connected with Bulgarian Paulicianism. One can also mention a presbyter named Martin, an Armenian, about whose life and teachings only extremely vague information has survived; cf.: Golubinsky. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). p. 795. Controversies regarding fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays (12th century) and the use of “Alleluia” (14th century) did not have a heretical character.

¹³⁰ For more on this movement, see Chapter X.

¹³¹ Letters to Mitrofan and Grand Prince Vasily Ivanovich, in: Chteniya. 1847. 1; to Bishop Nifont, in: RIB. 6. p. 825 ff.

necessity of harsh measures, Joseph relied primarily on the Old Testament, whereas the non-possessors, in objecting to him, drew upon the spirit of the New Testament. They resolutely opposed the use of the death penalty by Christians; heretics are sinners who, if they do not renounce their errors, should be excommunicated from fellowship with other Christians and confined to monasteries, so that there, through instruction, they might come to the knowledge of the truth¹³². Although Joseph's viewpoint prevailed at the Council of 1504 and the Church condemned some heretics to death¹³³, this difference in views nevertheless remains very characteristic of the two monastic movements we are examining.

Another issue on which differences in the religious views of these two movements became apparent was the question of monastic estates¹³⁴.

The growth of monastic wealth in Muscovite Rus' was gaining ever greater momentum. Monasteries founded in the 13th–14th centuries gradually grew into economic colonies of central and northern Russia. They engaged in agriculture and crafts; peasants lived on monastic lands, either working for the monastery or paying rent. Various privileges regarding land holdings, granted to the monasteries by princes and grand princes, increased their prosperity. The monasteries themselves purchased land that had already been cultivated and received estates as gifts or through bequests from princes, boyars, merchants, and others; furthermore, monastic holdings grew through contributions made by wealthy individuals who entered the monastery. The concentration of a significant portion of arable land in the hands of the Church prompted the government to consider reclaiming the land lost for state purposes¹³⁵.

Within the church hierarchy and the monastic community, two views emerged regarding monastic estates: one was the Josephite view, and the other was the Non-Acquirers' view¹³⁶. The Non-Acquirers, or the "Elders of the Volga" (), who denied the rights of the Church and monasteries to landholdings, had some predecessors among the Russian episcopate and monastic community¹³⁷.

At the Council of 1503, the Moscow government attempted to rely on the party of the Non-Acquirers to peacefully resolve the issue of monastic lands. The viewpoint of the opponents of monastic lands was represented at the Council by Nil of Sora and Paisius of Yaroslavl. Nil of Sora had already spoken out decisively against monastic estates and the personal property of monks on more than one occasion in his writings. But when the bishops and other clergy at the Council were to make a decision on this matter and

¹³² The response of the Non-Acquirers—"Epistle of the Elders of Vologda," in: DRV. 14 (1792). pp. 424–428.

¹³³ PSRL. 6. p. 49; 8. p. 244.

¹³⁴ The literature on this subject is quite extensive; I will mention only the most important works: Milyutin. "On the Real Estate of the Clergy," in: Readings. 1859. 4; 1860. 3; 1861. 1, 2; Gorchakov. On the Landholdings of Russian Metropolitans, Patriarchs, and the Holy Synod (1871); *ibid.* The Monastic Office (1868); Pavlov. *Op. cit.*; Zhmakin. *Op. cit.* A brief overview is provided by the book: Gautier. An Essay on the History of Landownership in Russia (1915). An attempt at a comprehensive study of monastic economic management in northern Rus' is found in the work: Savich, A. The Solovetsky Estate in the 15th–17th Centuries: A Study of the Economy and Social Relations in the Russian Far North. Perm, 1927. See Chapters VI and VIII.

¹³⁵ Adam Clement, who visited Moscow in 1553, wrote about the monasteries: "Plurima ibi exstruuntur Basilianorum coenopia (coenobia); their agricultural income is vast, for the monks hold one-third of all the land in the entire realm," in: *Rerum Moscoviticarum scriptores varii*. Frankfurt, 1600. p. 152.

¹³⁶ The Church based its rights on the canons and rules of the Ecumenical and Local Councils, which, however, speak against land ownership: Apostolic Rule 38, Rule 12 of the Seventh Ecumenical Council (Rules of the Holy Apostles, Holy Councils, and Holy Fathers with Commentaries. Moscow, 1876. pp. 87, 668) and, in particular, Rule 6 of the Second Council of Constantinople of 861 (Acts of the Nine Local Councils. Kazan, 1877. p. 238). St. Theodore the Studite demanded the strictest poverty from his brethren and rejected the monks' right to personal property. Dobroklonsky, A. The Venerable Theodore, Confessor and Abbot of Studion. Odessa, 1915. p. 498.

¹³⁷ A letter (1395/1405) from Cyprian, Metropolitan of Moscow (1381–1382, 1390–1406), to Abbot Athanasius (AI. 1, No. 253), in which he addresses the issue of monks' right to private property and rejects this right as contrary to the views of the Holy Fathers. He acknowledges, however, the legitimacy of land holdings for communal monasteries, provided that these holdings are managed by a layperson who supplies the monastery with all necessities. This same viewpoint was shared by St. Sergius of Radonezh and St. Cyril of Belozersk, who in principle recognized the right of communal monasteries to own land but denied the right of individual monks to personal property. Although both saints sought to introduce and maintain the strictest form of cenobitic life in their monasteries, they could not refuse the land grants that were bestowed upon the monasteries as gifts, especially if these gifts came from princes. Pavlov. *Op. cit.* pp. 11, 66; Makarii. 8 (1874). p. 154; Nikolsky. The Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery. 1. 2 (1910). p. 11. At the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, the monastic community split into two factions; the dispute between them continued throughout the second half of the 15th century and led to the formation of a group of non-possessor monks who resolutely opposed the monastery's estates. Nikolsky. Communal and Cell Life at the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, in: *Christian Readings* 1907. August. Pp. 155–173. Cf.: VMCh. September. P. 550. It is possible that these very disputes prompted Nil of Sora to found his own skete.

Neil of Sora expressed his wish “that monasteries should have no villages, but that the monks should live in the wilderness and support themselves through manual labor,” although Nil was supported by the elder Paisius Yaroslavov, this proposal did not find favor with the majority of those present at the Council, and least of all with the abbot of the Volokolamsk Monastery, Joseph Volotsky¹³⁸.

While Nil proceeded from purely ascetic views, which were moreover based on the canonical rules of the Eastern Church, Joseph was guided more by practical ecclesiastical considerations. The monastery’s primary task is to prepare the church hierarchy. The monastery can fulfill this task only if it provides the monastic community (Joseph refers to a communal monastery) such living conditions that the monks are freed from concerns about their daily bread, allowing them to devote themselves entirely to preparing for future service within the ranks of the church hierarchy—as bishops, abbots, and so on. “If monasteries do not own land,” Joseph articulated his position at the Council of 1503, “why would any honorable and noble man take the monastic vows?”¹³⁹ Joseph’s views found support among the bishops at the Council and prevailed: the lands remained in the possession of the monasteries.

The differences in opinion on this matter between the leading representatives of both parties demonstrate just how diametrically opposed their ascetic views were overall. For Nil of Sora, the most important thing was the inner perfection of the monk in an atmosphere of genuine asceticism; generations of monks raised in this spirit, should they have to carry out their ministry in the secular world, would strive toward purely Christian goals. Joseph of Volotsk saw monastic asceticism first and foremost as a means of preparing monks to carry out ecclesiastical and administrative tasks. He spoke of the need for a close connection between church and state affairs; Neil, on the contrary, demanded their separation and complete independence from one another. Monasteries, in Joseph’s view, should suppress the monk’s individuality; therefore, he once said that personal opinion is the mother of all passions, and that opinion is the second fall. Nil, on the other hand, defended human individuality and upheld the ascetic’s inner freedom in his spiritual practice.

Joseph’s victory was of epochal significance. His followers gained strength, especially from the second quarter of the 16th century onward, —a brief interlude associated with Metropolitan Joasaph (1539–1541), who sympathized with the non-possessors but had little significance for the fate of the Church—and soon the Josephites became the most influential, ruling group in the Russian Church.

Chapter V. The World of Ecclesiastical and Political Ideas in Moscow in the 16th Century

1. The Consolidation of the Russian Lands Under the Political Authority of the Moscow Sovereigns and the Russian Church

The dispute between the two ascetic movements could have benefited monasticism if both sides had drawn the correct conclusions from it and recognized that matters concerning the spiritual guidance of monks and the organization of monastic life in general are purely ecclesiastical affairs. Although this dispute revealed that ascetic views were closely linked to the country’s political and state life—we are referring to the issue of monastic estates— —both the Josephites and the Non-Acquirers could have found a middle ground and thereby eliminated the negative consequences of the dispute from monastic life, had they shown moderation, which is precisely what monastic humility required of them. However, this did not happen—not because of the excessive zeal of the Josephites or the stubbornness of the Non-Acquirers, but because both of these movements found themselves caught up in a powerful torrent of political opinions, ideologies, and ideas that literally engulfed the Muscovite state in the 16th century. It is likely no coincidence that the dispute over the foundations of monasticism flared up at a time when the Muscovite Tsardom entered a decisive period in its history.

The entire history of monasticism, both in the East and in the West, shows how difficult it is to separate the monastery from the outside world and, if monks are required to fulfill their duties in the secular world, how difficult it is to shield monasticism from secularization. Major ecclesiastical and political events break

¹³⁸ Tradition. pp. 81, 14, 18; Additions. 10. p. 505.

¹³⁹ Additions. Vol. 10. p. 508.

down the monastic walls and draw monasticism into the flow of secular life. Iconoclasm in Byzantium, the Cluniac movement in the West, and the Crusades serve as clear confirmation of this pattern.

The events that unfolded in the Muscovite state were momentous and profound, both for contemporaries—the Josephites and the Non-Acquirers—and for the next generation. The religious and political views of people of that era—especially among the educated class, which drew its spiritual strength exclusively from monasticism—were literally shaken by these events. Historians, and especially church historians, often oversimplify the thought processes and actions of people from the past; later generations sometimes simply fail to understand the ideas that guided people back then unless they manage to mentally transport themselves to the circumstances of that era and make sense of the religious views of the past. The worldview of the Russian people at that time was thoroughly religious; all events in ecclesiastical and state-political life were viewed, weighed, and evaluated from a religious perspective. Their way of thinking and the nature of their reasoning differed markedly from those of today. People at that time were, for the most part, like devout children, but with the passions of adults; they were Christians who could see examples of true Christian perfection but were unable to find the path to it themselves. To understand the psychological underpinnings of the era, we must once again recall the characteristic traits of the Russian people in the early 16th century: “At that time, people thought not in terms of ideas, but in terms of images, symbols, rituals, and legends; that is, ideas did not develop into logical combinations, but into symbolic actions or presumed facts, for which they sought justification in history. They turned to the past not to explain present phenomena, but to justify current interests, seeking examples to support their own claims”¹⁴⁰.

Great events in Russian national history and world politics were unfolding before the eyes of the Russian people. Until recently, the Principality of Moscow had been nothing more than a small patch of land amid the boundless forests of the Russian Plain. But this patch of land was constantly expanding at the expense of other appanage principalities; the Principality of Moscow grew territorially, politically, and economically¹⁴¹. The consolidation of the Russian principalities under the rule of the Prince of Moscow, the “unifier of the Russian lands,” was the result of skillful politics, on the one hand, and the growth of national self-awareness, on the other¹⁴². “The completion of the territorial unification of Northeastern Rus’ by Moscow transformed the Principality of Moscow into a Great Russian national state”¹⁴³, says Klyuchevsky.

The annexation of the appanage principalities allowed the Grand Prince of Moscow to concentrate the combined power of these regions in his own hands¹⁴⁴. The Moscow Prince Ivan III (1462–1505) became “sovereign and autocrat”¹⁴⁵, “Grand Prince of All Rus’.” Previously, this title had been merely a formality; now it acquired real state and political significance: Ivan III ruled *de facto* and *de jure*¹⁴⁶. The territorial unification of Rus’ under the authority of the Grand Prince of Moscow was significant not only for the Russian lands: the consequences of this unification were international in nature. The Grand Duchy of Moscow now shared common borders with other states. Once a small principality, hidden in the forests between the Oka

¹⁴⁰ Kljutscheskij. *Geschichte Rußlands*, Vol. 2, p. 127.

¹⁴¹ The following works serve as an introduction to the complex of issues concerning the growth of the Muscovite state in the 15th–16th centuries: Kljutscheskij. *Op. cit.*, Vol. 2, Chapters 1, 2, and 5; Stdhlin, Karl. *Geschichte Russlands*, Vol. 1 (1923), p. 197 ff.; Presnyakov, E. *The Formation of the Great Russian State* (1918); Lyubavsky. *The Formation of the Main State Territory of the Great Russian Nation* (1929); Platonov, S. *History of Russia* (1927).

¹⁴² The Grand Prince of Moscow brought the following under his control: in 1463—the appanage principality of Yaroslavl (under a peace treaty); in 1472—the appanage of Prince Yuri (brother of Ivan III): Dmitrov, Mozhaïsk, and Serpukhov; in 1472—he conquered Perm; part of this territory had already been annexed under Ivan I Kalita; in 1478—he conquered Veliky Novgorod; in 1481, the appanage of Andrei, Ivan’s brother, was annexed: Vologda and Tarusa; in 1482–1493—the small principalities of the Chernigov and Novgorod-Seversky lands: Vyazma, Chernigov, Starodub, and Novgorod-Seversky; in 1485, the Tver Principality was conquered; in 1485, the principality of Vereya was annexed pursuant to a will that had been coerced; in 1489, Vyatka was conquered; in 1492, the principality of Uglich, belonging to his brother Andrei the Great, was annexed; in 1503, part of the Ryazan Principality was annexed pursuant to the will of Prince Fyodor of Ryazan. All of this was the result of Ivan’s (1462–1505) skillful politics. Under his son, Grand Prince Vasily III (1505–1533), Moscow’s rise continued: in 1510, Pskov was subjugated; in 1513, the small Principality of Volokolamsk; in 1514, the Principality of Smolensk was recaptured from Lithuania; in 1517, the Grand Principality of Ryazan was annexed; and in 1523, the Principality of Seversk. For further reading, see the previous note.

¹⁴³ Kljutscheskij. 2. p. 116.

¹⁴⁴ Rozhkov. *Russian History*. Vol. 3, p. 25; Presnyakov. *Op. cit.*, pp. 458, 429.

¹⁴⁵ Platonov. *Lectures on Russian History*. 9th ed. (1915). p. 156. Cf.: the views of Ključevskij (2, p. 126) and Dyakonov (*The Power of the Moscow Sovereigns* (1889), p. 54 ff.) on the meaning of this term.

¹⁴⁶ See: Dyakonov. *Op. cit.*; Rozhkov. *The Origin of Autocracy in Russia* (1906); Philipp W. Ivan Peresvetov (1935). Ch. 4; Vladimirsky-Budanov. *Review; Sergeevich. Russian Legal Antiquities*.

and Volga rivers, it found itself, over the course of several decades, drawn into the complex web of world politics¹⁴⁷. This was an entirely new phenomenon not only for the Moscow government but also for thinking Muscovites. Only one circumstance cast a shadow over the political splendor of the now-mighty state—the Tatar yoke, which, de facto, was of course not very noticeable in Moscow, but de jure still persisted. However, in 1480, even this shadow was erased: Rus' shook off the yoke that had weighed upon it for two and a half centuries (1238–1480)¹⁴⁸.

2. Ecclesiastical and Political Ideas in Moscow in the Second Half of the 15th and Early 16th Centuries

These events, naturally, left their mark on the lives of the people of that era. It must not be forgotten that the ecclesiastical hierarchy played a very important role in the unification of the Russian lands. The Russian metropolitans¹⁴⁹—primarily Theognostus (1328–1353), Peter (1308–1325), Alexius (1354–1378), and Gerontius (1473–1489)—always zealously supported the policies of the “unifiers of the Russian lands”¹⁵⁰. This policy of the church hierarchy already contained the preconditions for the formation of such relations between the state and the Church that corresponded to the views of Joseph of Volotsk and his supporters. Monks had participated in the implementation of such a policy even earlier, before Joseph of Volotsk. A strict ascetic, St. Sergius of Radonezh acted in the same spirit outside the monastery walls. He did not participate in the Battle of Kulikovo (1380), which ended in victory over the Tatars, but he blessed the Grand Prince for this battle.

The Church, however, not only supported and blessed the Grand Prince; it was often forced to seek assistance from the state authorities itself. This was particularly evident in 1439, when the Russian Church and Russian religious consciousness had to determine their stance toward the Council of Florence. The actions of Russian Metropolitan Isidore (1437–1441), who participated in the Council and recognized the union, met with resolute opposition in Moscow from Grand Prince Vasily (1425–1462) and the Russian clergy¹⁵¹. The distrust of the Greeks that already existed in Moscow intensified after the Union of Florence, and the firmness displayed by the Grand Prince in defending Orthodox doctrine was not only recognized and approved by church circles but also demonstrated to them that state authority was willing and able to serve Christian goals. This event was an extremely important manifestation of Russian religious consciousness, which subsequent generations were able to appreciate. “The significance of the Union of Florence for Russian history cannot be overstated. It heralded the integration of Rus' into pan-European politics in the second half of the 15th century. At the same time, the union and the assessment of its significance became the basis for religious journalism's discussions of Moscow's growing power”¹⁵². The Union of Florence was of great importance for the development of Russian religious journalism in the 15th–16th centuries, as well as for defining Moscow's relationship with Byzantium and the Greek Church. When, two decades after the union, Constantinople—the Second Rome—fell under the onslaught of the “godless” Turks (1453), Christians in Moscow saw this event

¹⁴⁷ See: Stdhlin, vol. 1; Kljutschevskij, vol. 2 (1925); Platonov, **History of Russia** (1927); Presnyakov, **Education** (1918); Ubersberger, H., **Austria and Russia since the End of the 15th Century** (1906); Forstreuter, K. *Prussia and Russia in the Middle Ages. The Development of Their Relations from the 13th to the 17th Century* (1938); Barbashov, A. *Vytautas. The Last Twenty Years of His Reign* (1891).

¹⁴⁸ Stählin, vol. 1, pp. 216 ff. See also: Grekov, B., and Yakubovsky, A., *The Golden Horde: An Essay on the History of the Jochi Ulus during Its Formation and Heyday in the 13th and 14th Centuries* (1937); Spuler, B. “The Foreign Policy of the Golden Horde,” in: *Jahrbuch für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 5 (1940); idem. *The Golden Horde* (1941) (with an extensive bibliography); my article “On the History of Russian Eastern Policy in the 15th and 16th Centuries,” in: *Jahrbuch für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 6 (1941), pp. 55–84. On the attitude of the Tatar khans toward the Russian Church: Priselkov, M., **The Khan's Charters of Russian Metropolitans** (1916).

¹⁴⁹ See: Priselkov, M., *Essays on the Ecclesiastical and Political History of Kievan Rus' in the 10th–12th Centuries* (1913); Presnyakov, *Education*; Sokolov, D. *The History of the Division of the Russian Metropolis* (1900); Sokolov, P. *The Russian Bishop from Byzantium and the Right to His Appointment until the Early 15th Century* (1913); Makariy. 5–6 (relevant chapters).

¹⁵⁰ Sokolovsky. *Participation* (1902); Presnyakov. *Education*; Makarii. 6; Dyakonov. *The Power of the Moscow Sovereigns* (1889). The policy of the metropolitans, aimed at supporting state authority, is also reflected in the chronicle compilations that were compiled under the metropolitan see; see: Priselkov, M., **History of Russian Chronicling in the 11th–15th Centuries** (1940), especially pp. 149–155, 162; Shakhmatoff, A., “All-Russian Chronological Compilations of the 14th and 15th Centuries,” in *ZhMNP*, 1900, nos. 9–10, 11; Presnyakov, A., “Chronicle Compilation in the 14th–16th Centuries,” in *History of Russian Literature until the 19th Century*, ed. A. Gruzinsky, vol. 1 (1916).

¹⁵¹ Ziegler, A., **Die Union** (1938), which provides a bibliography on the subject; cf. the review by Philipp, W., in: **Jahrbuch für Geschichte Osteuropas**, vol. 5 (1940), p. 213 ff.; see also: Shpakov, A., **State and Church** (1904), a work not cited by Ziegler.

¹⁵² Philipp. *Op. cit.*, p. 213.

as punishment for the alliance with the “heretical Latins.” In the eyes of the Russians, the religious authority of Greek Orthodoxy had fallen irrevocably¹⁵³.

To understand how profoundly political upheavals influenced the religious consciousness of the Russian people, one must mentally transport oneself to the spiritual atmosphere of that era. The Christian worldview of the Russian people sought a way to regain its balance. The stronghold of Orthodoxy, sanctified over the centuries, had been destroyed, and without the image of this stronghold, they could neither believe nor live. For them, this was a reminder of the approaching end of the world. The year 1492 marked the end of the seventh millennium since the creation of the world (according to the calendar of that time), while the Russian consciousness had long since absorbed Christian eschatology. The events of the previous decades—the “heretical union” and the fall of “apostate Byzantium”—had cast an even darker shadow over this expectation. But on the night of March 24–25, 1492, the end of the world did not come: the Moscow Tsardom continued to exist and, by the standards of the time, was flourishing politically. For the ancient Russian, this became a subject of new reflection, forcing him to reexamine his eschatology and prompting him to investigate the causes of ecclesiastical and state-political events¹⁵⁴.

Meanwhile, events took place in Moscow that fit well into this atmosphere of intellectual ferment and the intensification of religious sentiments, passions, and opinions. Moscow’s state-political development—the transformation of small principalities into a single kingdom with a vast territory—as already noted, made a strong impression on contemporaries. But “what mattered was not the quantity of new territories,” Klyuchevsky observes. “In Moscow, people sensed that a great, long-standing undertaking was coming to a close, one that deeply affected the internal structure of communal life... Finding itself in a new position, but not yet fully realizing its new significance, the Moscow state authority groped, both at home and abroad, for forms that would correspond to this position; and, having already adopted these forms, it sought to clarify its new significance for itself through them. From this perspective, certain diplomatic formalities and new court ceremonies that emerged during the reign of Ivan III take on considerable historical interest”¹⁵⁵.

In this situation, Ivan’s second marriage steered the reflections of his contemporaries in a certain direction. In 1472, Ivan III married Sophia, the orphaned niece of Constantine Palaiologos, the last Byzantine emperor (1448–1453). She arrived in Moscow from Italy, where she had been living until then; her arrival not only brought about changes in court ceremonial, which was restructured according to the lavish Byzantine model, but also served as a catalyst for the formation of a specific religious-philosophical concept aimed at strengthening, justifying, and even perpetuating the state and ecclesiastical-political role of the Moscow autocrat.

This gave rise to the political-philosophical notion that the Grand Prince of Moscow, through his marriage to a princess from the Byzantine imperial house, had become the heir to the Byzantine emperors. Yes, the great Christian Orthodox kingdom on the Bosphorus was destroyed by godless Muslims, but this conquest will not last long, much less be eternal. “But know this, wretch,” the author of **The Tale of the Capture of Tsargrad** exclaims passionately, “...the Rus’ people will defeat even Ishmael, the creator of all things, and will take the Seven-Hilled City (i.e., Constantinople. – I. S.) will be restored to its rightful rulers, and they will reign there”¹⁵⁶. This belief that the Moscow sovereign had become the heir to the Byzantine emperors was reflected both in the new court ceremonial at Ivan III’s palace in the Moscow Kremlin—which henceforth mirrored Byzantine ritual—and in the new state coat of arms featuring the Byzantine double-

¹⁵³ It is precisely for this reason that it is not surprising that the chronicle contains such a detailed description of the capture of Constantinople (Tsargrad): “The Tale of the Capture of Tsargrad” in: PSRL. 12. pp. 83–97; German edition: “Bericht über die Eroberung Konstantinopels.” Translated (based on the Nikon Chronicle) and annotated by M. Braun and A. M. Schneider. Göttingen, 1940. This “Tale,” or “Legend of Tsargrad,” being an important source of Old Russian journalism, has generated a wealth of critical literature: V. Yakovlev, “The Legend of Tsargrad” (1868); I. Sreznevsky, in: Academic Proceedings of the Second Department of the Academy of Sciences (1854); Orlov, A., in: IORAS 12 (1908); Archimandrite Leonid, “The Tale of Tsargrad by Nestor-Iskander of the 15th Century,” in: PDP 62 (1886). See also: Petukhov, p. 101.

¹⁵⁴ Zhmakin. Metropolitan Daniel. pp. 364, 362–367; cf.: AI. 1. No. 282. p. 513; Prav. Sob. 1860. 2. p. 337; Maximus the Greek. Works. 1. p. 132; Zinoviy of Otnsk. Testimony of Truth. pp. 48–49; Elder Artemy. Epistles. RIB. 4. 1221. On eschatological sentiments in general, see: Bonwetsch, N. Methodius of Olympus. 1 (1891); Sakharov, I. Eschatological Writings and Legends in Old Russian Literature (1879); Malinin. Elder Philotheos. pp. 426, 429, 430; RIB. 6. pp. 800, 806, 810.

¹⁵⁵ Klyuchevsky. 2. pp. 115, 123. “When Ivan III ascended to the grand ducal throne,” says Klyuchevsky (ibid., p. 115), “the territory of Moscow barely covered more than 15,000 square miles. The acquisitions of Ivan III and his son increased this territory by at least 40,000 square miles.”

¹⁵⁶ PSRL, vol. 12, p. 97; “The Tale,” p. 33.

headed eagle¹⁵⁷. After the Tatar yoke was cast off (1480), the Grand Prince of Moscow came to regard himself—and styled himself—not only as an autocrat, but also as the “sovereign of all Rus” and even as “tsar by the grace of God”¹⁵⁸. Grand princes had occasionally been called “tsars” before, but this was merely a rhetorical flourish; now, however, this title, in the view of the Russian people, came to reflect the actual state of affairs¹⁵⁹. For decades, Russian political and ecclesiastical journalism would explore this theme, ultimately creating a grand worldview¹⁶⁰. These ideas did not arise from political ambitions, but primarily from religious quests and the Christian faith; they emerged as a response to the spiritual upheaval caused by the aforementioned historical events. For Russian society at that time, these were not merely historical facts but religious-historical events; therefore, they were received with such emotion and were the subject of such intense discussion from a religious perspective.

Particular attention should be paid to the fact that religiously tinged journalism speaks of both the rights and the duties of the Orthodox tsar. This distinctive feature of tsarist authority was emphasized by representatives of the church hierarchy and the monastic order at a time when they appealed to the Grand Prince for help in the struggle against the Novgorod heretics—those who practiced Judaism¹⁶¹. For the Josephites, the religious rights and duties of the Orthodox tsar stem from his godlike nature. “By nature, the tsar is like any other human being,” says Joseph of Volotsk, “but in authority, he is like God Almighty”¹⁶².

The idea of the tsar’s religious duties, which became deeply and enduringly rooted in the views of the Josephites, was also expressed by Archbishop Theodosius of Novgorod¹⁶³. He was the author of three epistles to Ivan IV (1545–1547)¹⁶⁴. These same views were, of course, shared by Macarius, Metropolitan of Moscow

¹⁵⁷ On the complex of ideas and doctrines associated with the sacred nature of Byzantine court ceremony, see: Treitinger, O., **Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee** (1938); a work rich in material: Dölger, F., **Rom in der Gedankenwelt**; additionally: Savva, V., **Moscow Tsars and Byzantine Basileus** (1902). On the fact that the sacred elements in the Byzantine imperial ideal have a very long tradition in the Byzantine consciousness, see: Baynes, N. H., “Eusebius and the Christian Empire,” in **Annuaire de l’Inst. de Philos. et Hist. d’Orient**, 2 (1934), p. 13 ff.

¹⁵⁸ Kljutschevskij, 2. p. 126.

¹⁵⁹ Dyakonov. The Power of the Moscow Sovereigns; Waldenberg. Old Russian Doctrines (1916). On the history of the title “autocrat,” see: Ostrogorsky, G. Autocrat and Autocrat. On the History of the Title of Autocrat in Byzantium and Among the South Slavs. Appendix: The Title of “Autocrat” in Russia, in: Glas Srpske K. Akademije. 2. No. 84 (1935). pp. 95–181 (in Serbian); cf. my review in: Kyrios. 2 (1937). pp. 79–80. See also: Vernadsky, in: Byz. – Neugriech. Jb. 7; Russian version in: Collection in Honor of N. V. Kondakov (1926).

¹⁶⁰ An interesting perspective on the significance and meaning of the royal title can be found in the writings of the 16th-century Russian publicist Ivan Peresvetov; cf.: Philipp. Op. cit.

¹⁶¹ For a characterization of the Josephite views on the duties of a Christian tsar toward the Church regarding the struggle against heresies with the assistance of state authority, see the following letters: Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod to Bishop Niphon of Suzdal, in: Khrushchev. Op. cit., App. XXIII; idem, To Archbishop Joasaph of Rostov, in: Readings. 1847. 8; idem, To Metropolitan Zosima, in: RIB. 6. p. 775 (also in: AAE. 1. No. 380); idem, “On the Council of 1490,” in: RIB. 6. pp. 779, 764; a detailed discussion of this topic can be found in Joseph of Volotsk’s 13th chapter of **The Enlightener**; *ibid.* “Epistle to the Grand Prince,” in: DRV. 16. p. 424. Of particular interest is the opinion of Presbyter George Skripitsa regarding the tsar’s duty to resolve disputes among bishops; he had already expressed this view as early as 1503 (Readings, 1848, 6, Part 4). The Josephites were, of course, not the first to speak of such rights of secular authority. As early as the 13th century, this idea was expressed in the work “A Word on How Christians Should Live,” in: Collection of Laws, 1859. p. 128 ff.; the work “Akinidin’s Letter, a Monk of the Lavra of the Holy Mother of God, to the Grand Prince,” in: RIB. 6. p. 155 ff., dates to the 14th century; it refers only to the Grand Prince’s oversight of the church hierarchy’s struggle against heresies. Cf.: Waldenberg, op. cit., p. 137, and Golubinsky, 2. 1, p. 106. Beneshevich (Old Slavonic Kormchaya, p. 739) compares Akinidin’s views with Justinian’s 6th Novella. A. Pavlov’s older work, “Two Epistles to Grand Prince Michael Yaroslavich of Tver,” in: Prav. Sob. 1867, vol. 2, pp. 236–253, remains of interest even today.

¹⁶² Joseph the Enlightener (1896). Ch. 16. p. 547. A comprehensive picture of Joseph’s worldview is provided by a new work: Holzwarth, Irene. **Der Prosvetitel des Josif von Volokolamsk** (Berlin: Phil. Diss., 1944; typescript); on Joseph’s use of various titles when referring to the Grand Prince of Moscow, see: *ibid.*, pp. 250 ff.

¹⁶³ Theodosius was a monk at the Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery; in 1531, he was the abbot of the Khutyn Monastery in Novgorod and maintained close ties with Archbishop Macarius, later Metropolitan of Moscow, who was himself a zealous follower of Joseph; when Makarii became Metropolitan of Moscow, Theodosius, upon Makarii’s recommendation, was appointed to the Diocese of Novgorod (1542).

¹⁶⁴ A letter from 1545–46 was written in connection with the Grand Prince’s campaign against the Kazan Tatars; Theodosius compares the Grand Prince to Emperor Constantine and emphasizes the religious significance of this campaign against “the enemies of Christ” and “the godless Tatars,” in: DAI. 1. No. 37; a year later (1547), Theodosius wrote again to the young tsar, this time regarding various crimes being committed in Novgorod: “I write to you about these matters, O God-confirmed sovereign, not to instruct or rebuke your sharp wit and noble wisdom—for it is not fitting for us to forget our place and presume upon such matters—but as a student to a teacher, as a servant to a sovereign, I remind you and now beseech you ceaselessly: for the Heavenly King has granted you, O sovereign, in the likeness of heavenly authority, the scepter of the earthly kingdom of power, so that you

(1542–1563), “one of the greatest figures in the history of the Russian Church”¹⁶⁵, “the most distinguished of all our 16th-century metropolitans”¹⁶⁶. His views were shaped not only by the events of the era but also—and primarily—in harmony with his own life experience and with the ideas of Joseph and the Josephites¹⁶⁷. Macarius’s Josephite views were also reflected in his archpastoral ministry. In connection with measures to reform monastic life in the Novgorod Diocese, in 1526 he appealed not to the church authorities—the Metropolitan of Moscow—but directly to the Grand Prince, from whom he sought permission to amend the monastic charter and introduce communal living. His letter to Grand Prince Vasiliy III is entirely in the spirit of the Josephites and reflects the idea of an Orthodox tsar: “For the sake of God, Your Majesty, and for the sake of the Most Pure Mother of God and the great miracle-workers, take care and provide for the divine churches and honorable monasteries; for, Your Majesty, you have been appointed by God’s right hand as the autocrat and sovereign of all Russia; God has chosen a place for Himself on earth and seated you on His throne, entrusting to you the mercy and life of all the great Orthodox faith”¹⁶⁸. This was an expression of the views held by representatives of the church hierarchy regarding the tsar’s religious duties, his relationship to the Church, and even his place within the Church.

The political events mentioned above contributed to the development and written articulation of these views. For that era, this was not a fabricated ideology, but a logical conclusion drawn from the ecclesiastical and political situation that had developed in the Muscovite state. The long-standing ecclesiastical ties with Byzantium could and should have borne fruit, and when a terrible catastrophe befell Byzantium, a new power was to take its place at the center of the Orthodox world¹⁶⁹. But for the Moscow autocrats, a purely ecclesiastical and religious justification was not enough; they also sought to justify their power through political and legal discourse, rooting it in tradition, in “the old ways”¹⁷⁰.

These state-political views took shape in parallel with the activities of the “Moscow unifiers” and the political flourishing of Moscow. Klyuchevsky¹⁷¹ provided a brief description of this ideological construct and its content: “For Moscow politicians of the early 16th century, a marriage alliance with Byzantium (i.e., with Princess Sophia Palaiologina—I. S.) was not enough; they wished to be related by blood as well, and moreover to the very root or universal model of supreme power—Rome itself. In the Moscow chronicles of that century,

may teach people to uphold the truth... it is fitting, therefore, for you, pious tsar, to take every care to promote piety and to save those under your rule from spiritual and physical distress,” in: DAI. 1. No. 41. p. 55. Earlier, while serving as abbot of the Khutyn Monastery, Theodosius wrote to boyar Ivan Shigona (1534) immediately after the death of Grand Prince Vasiliy III: “...A deep and dark night has overtaken us; we have been deprived of a firm and steadfast pillar, a shepherd and teacher, a righteous tsar... who guided and nourished his entire flock toward spiritual salvation” (AI. 1. No. 294. p. 537).

¹⁶⁵ Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 744.

¹⁶⁶ Makarii. 2nd ed. 6. p. 211. On Metropolitan Makarii, see: Lebedev, N. Makarii, Metropolitan of Moscow (1880); Zaustinsky, K. Makarii, Metropolitan of All Russia, in: ZhMNP. 1881. No. 10–11; Andreev, N. “Metropolitan Makarii as a Figure in Religious Art,” in *Seminarium Kondakovianum*. 7 (1935); Makarii. 6–7; Golubinsky. 2. 1. pp. 744–875; additionally: Klyuchevsky. *Old Russian Lives of the Saints* (1871). pp. 221–297; Kadlubovsky, A. Op. cit., pp. 219–284; Golubinsky. History of Canonization (1903); Vasilyev. History of Canonization (1893).

¹⁶⁷ Zhmakin. “The Struggle of Ideas in Russia in the First Half of the 16th Century,” in: ZhMNP. 1882. 4. p. 160; Dyakonov. Op. cit. p. 108; Pavlov. A Historical Essay on the Secularization of Church Lands in Russia (1871). p. 109. Makarii began his ascetic training at the Pafnutiev Monastery, which was closely associated with the Josephov Monastery; he later served as abbot of the Luzhetsky Monastery (near Mozhaishk) and, from 1526 to 1542, as Archbishop of Novgorod. Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 745; Makarii. 6. p. 210; Zauskinsky. p. 213.

¹⁶⁸ DAI. 1. No. 25. Makarii’s letters to Tsar Ivan IV: the first—regarding his marriage in 1547 (AI. 1. No. 40) and the second—regarding the war with the Kazan Tatars (1552) (AI. 1. No. 160). The religious duties of an Orthodox tsar are also set forth in the “Rite of Coronation” (DAI. 1. No. 39; PSRL. 13. 1. p. 151), which was composed by Makarii himself for Ivan’s coronation on January 16, 1547. Cf.: Waldenberg. Op. cit., p. 277. On the sacred aspects of this rite, see: Barsov, E. Old Russian Monuments of the Sacred Coronation (1883); Loparev. On the Coronation Rite (1887); Popov, *The Rite of Sacred Coronation* (1896); Prozorovsky, *On the Significance of the Tsar’s Title* (1875); Savva, op. cit.; Maltzew, *Die heilige Krönung* (1896); Kattenbusch, vol. 1, pp. 374–393. See also the interesting work: Enßlin W., *Gottkaiser und Kaiser von Gottes Gnaden*, in: *Sitzber. Bayer Ak. d. Wiss., Phil. – hist. Abt.* (1943), as well as: Treitingner, op. cit.

¹⁶⁹ On the ecclesiastical significance of Byzantium, see: Karl Holl, “Die Kirchliche Bedeutung Konstantinopels im Mittelalter,” in: Collected Works, Vol. 2 (1928), p. 416 (previously published in: *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, Vol. 11 (1901), pp. 83–96).

¹⁷⁰ Cf.: Kljutschewskij. 2. p. 129. On the significance of tradition (antiquity) for Moscow’s state-legal views, see the work: Philipp W. Ivan Peresvetov (1935). pp. 42–60; this study, which provides a comprehensive characterization of Peresvetov’s distinctive personality, is also important for understanding the views of 16th-century Moscow society and the logic of the ecclesiastical and political thought of the era.

¹⁷¹ Kljutschewskij. 2. p. 127.

a new genealogy of the Russian princes appears, tracing their lineage directly back to the Roman emperor. Apparently, a legend emerged in the early 16th century claiming that Augustus, Caesar of Rome, ruler of the entire universe, when he began to grow weak, divided the universe among his brothers and kinsmen and placed his brother Prus on the banks of the Vistula River, along the river called the Neman, which to this day is called the Land of Prussia after his name, “and from Prus descended the fourteenth generation—the great sovereign Rurik.” Moscow’s diplomats put this legend to practical use: in 1563, Tsar Ivan’s boyars, justifying his royal title in negotiations with Polish envoys, cited this very genealogy of the Moscow Rurikids in the words of the chronicle... They also sought to lend historical weight to the idea of a Byzantine heritage. Vladimir Monomakh was the son of the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine Monomakh, who died more than 50 years before his grandson ascended the throne in Kyiv¹⁷². The Moscow chronicle, compiled during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, recounts that Vladimir Monomakh, having become prince in Kyiv, sent his commanders to Constantinople to wage war against this very Greek emperor, Constantine Monomakh, who, in order to end the war, sent to Kyiv—accompanied by the Greek metropolitan—the Cross from the Life-Giving Tree and the royal crown from his own head, that is, Monomakh’s cap, along with a carnelian cup from which Augustus, the Roman emperor, had drunk, and a golden chain... Vladimir was crowned with this crown and came to be called Monomakh, the God-crowned Tsar of all Rus’. “From then on,” the tale concludes, “all the Grand Princes of Vladimir are crowned with that royal crown...”¹⁷³ ...The main idea of the legend: the significance of the Moscow rulers as ecclesiastical and political successors to the Byzantine emperors is based on the joint rule of Greek and Russian autocratic rulers over the entire Orthodox world, established under Vladimir Monomakh.”¹⁷⁴.

3. Monk Philotheus and His Messianic Ideas

This state-political legend (which, of course, also had religious overtones) and the views of Moscow society at that time, as described above¹⁷⁵, found their ultimate expression in the Byzantine-Russian idea of the Moscow Tsardom as the Third Rome¹⁷⁶. The creator of this messianic idea was the monk Philotheus of the Eleazarov Monastery near Pskov. It is noteworthy that writings on this subject appeared not in Moscow, nor in the ecclesiastical and cultural center of Ancient Rus’, but in the provinces, which, of course, attests to the Pskov monastic community’s keen interest not only in liturgical matters but also in worldview issues¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷² Grand Prince Vladimir (II) Vsevolodovich, known as Monomakh, reigned from 1113 to 1125. Emperor Constantine IX Monomakh reigned from 1042 to 1054.

¹⁷³ This refers to Vladimir on the Klyazma, which served as the capital of the Russian grand princes from 1157 to 1328, with several interruptions; for this reason, the legendary chronicle narrative is titled “The Tale of the Princes of Vladimir.” In the first half of the 16th century (before 1533), this tale was reworked and became known also as “The Tale of Monomakh’s Crown.” Cf.: Petukhov, pp. 103, 101 ff.

¹⁷⁴ For the entire body of literature on this topic, see: Waldenberg. Op. cit.; Dyakonov. Op. cit.; Sokolsky. Op. cit.; Zhdanov, I. “The Tale of Babylon” and “The Legend of the Princes of Vladimir,” in: ZhMNP. 1891. 9. Schaefer, H. Moskau, das Dritte Rom (1929).

¹⁷⁵ The ecclesiastical and political atmosphere of the late 15th century was marked by the solemn coronation (1498) of Prince Dimitry—the grandson of Ivan III and the son of his son Ivan, who died young († 1490); Dimitry was crowned tsar—not grand prince (!)—while Ivan III († 1505) was still alive (SGGD. 2. No. 25); see also Ivan III’s speech during this ceremony (Kljutschewskij. 2. p. 133). Herberstein, who visited Moscow twice (in 1517 and 1526), provides a detailed description of this solemn ceremony in a special chapter titled “How the Grand Princes Ascend the Throne” in his famous work **Rerum Moscoviticarum Commentarii**. I have at my disposal only the new German edition: “Moskovia by Herr Sigmund, Baron of Herberstein, Neyperg, and Guettenhag.” Translated into German by V. F. Steinen. Edited by H. Kanders. Erlangen, 1926. pp. 59–64. The first edition was published in Vienna in 1549; the second, revised edition, in Basel in 1556; the first German translation, done by Herberstein himself, appeared in Vienna in 1557. Herberstein’s work is a very valuable and reliable source, as established in E. Zamyatinsky’s “Herberstein and His Historical and Geographical Accounts of Russia.” St. Petersburg, 1884.

¹⁷⁶ I cite the most important works devoted to this messianic doctrine: Malinin, “The Elder Philotheus of the Eleazarov Monastery” (1901); Dyakonov, op. cit. (1889); Waldenberg. Op. cit. (1916); Kirillov (1914); Lukyanov (1913); Pavlov. Course in Canon Law (1892; 2nd ed., 1905); Sokolsky. Op. cit. (1902); Pavlov. “Letters of Elder Eleazar the Monk to Grand Duke Vasily Ivanovich,” in: Prav. Sob. 1863, vol. 1, pp. 337–348; Shpakov. Op. cit., vol. 1 (1904); Zernov. Moscow—The Third Rome (1936). Works in German devoted to this topic include: Schaefer, H., **Moskau, das Dritte Rom** (1929); cf. reviews by Woltner, M., in: **Z. f. Sl. Philologie** (1931) and Ostrogorskij, G., in: **Hist. Z.** 146 (1932), pp. 368–371.

¹⁷⁷ It should be noted here that Pskov was located on the border between the “Orthodox” Moscow Tsardom and the “heretical” West, which aroused religious distrust or even revulsion among Russians. Various religious movements had long been emerging in Pskov: disputes over the timing of fasting, over “Alleluia,” and later, in the 1770s, the “Strigolniki” movement arose. See: Serebryansky, N. “Essays on the History of Monastic Life in the Pskov Region,” in: Readings. 1908; as well as the relevant volumes by Makarii and Golubinsky; Klyuchevsky. “The Pskov Disputes,” in: Collected Works. 1872. 12; idem. Geschichte Russlands. 2; Gehring, Joh.

Thanks to his epistles, the monk Philotheus became one of the most prominent figures in Russian history. And yet we know very little about his life. He was born in the second half of the 15th century somewhere in the Pskov region, and later became a monk at the Eleazarov Monastery, founded around 1450 by St. Euphrosynus of Pskov on the outskirts of Pskov. He likely later became the abbot of the Eleazarov Monastery. His literary activity spanned the reigns of Grand Prince Vasily III (1505–1533) and Tsar Ivan IV (1547–1584). Before composing his famous epistles, Philotheus was engaged in compiling chronicles and participated in the creation of the Chronograph of 1512, which certainly attests to his education and literary talent¹⁷⁸.

Already in this Chronograph, Philotheus wrote these remarkable lines: “Our Russian land, by God’s grace and through the prayers of the Most Pure Mother of God and all the miracle-working saints, is growing, and becoming younger, and rising (and expanding)”¹⁷⁹. These words encapsulate the core of his ecclesiastical-political ideology, his belief in the messianic destiny of the Muscovite Russian “orthodox and Orthodox kingdom.” Philotheus’s ecclesiastical-political concept is closely aligned with the views and opinions we have already described; it fits organically into the spiritual atmosphere of anxiety about the future of Orthodoxy as the sole and eternal religious community, as the City of God (*Civitas Dei*), which was founded by Christ and subsequently embodied in the Byzantine Empire, but in recent times, due to the religious betrayal and godless deeds of the Byzantines—the “deceitful Greeks”—has found itself on the brink of destruction.

The Orthodoxy of the Russians and the Orthodoxy of the Moscow Tsardom were never called into question by any of the spiritual writers of that realm—neither by Gennadius, Archbishop of Novgorod, nor by Joseph of Volotsk, nor by Macarius, Metropolitan of Moscow, nor by their contemporaries; but when the discussion turned to Moscow’s religious responsibility and its religious-political tasks, and to the need for this politically powerful kingdom to also possess religious authority and religious primacy in the Orthodox world—all of this had to be substantiated by a whole series of historical facts. Through the Union of Florence, the Greeks not only committed treason against Christ but also cast a shadow over their own Orthodoxy, discrediting it¹⁸⁰. This sin could also have had disastrous consequences for the Russians—as an Orthodox people. These were critical times for the Christian world, for two decades later came the year 1492, which, according to the reckoning of years since the creation of the world, was the 7,000th year; and, according to the Byzantine calendar, the end of the world was to come on the night of March 24–25. Were not the long-standing Tatar yoke, the Union, the political collapse of the Byzantine Empire, and the heresies in Novgorod all ominous signs from God? These were the questions people of that era asked themselves. Chiliastic ideas found fertile ground in Ancient Rus’, whose spiritual life had always been strongly colored by eschatological themes¹⁸¹. What had previously been merely imagined could now become reality, a *fait accompli*.

The Sects of the Russian Church (1898); Arkhangel’sky. *Nil of Sora* (1882). Pp. 256 ff. Serebryansky’s thorough study demonstrates that monasticism in the Pskov region was characterized by an intense religious life.

¹⁷⁸ Shakhmatoff, A. A. “The Journey of M. G. Misyur Munehin to the East and the Chronograph of the 1512 Edition,” in: IORAS. 1899. 1. p. 215.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 214.

¹⁸⁰ This view is expressed in all works related to the Union of Florence. Cf.: Ziegler, op. cit., and Shpakov, op. cit. Sharp criticism of the “Greeks” is also found in Ivan III’s letter to Iona, Archbishop of Novgorod (between 1465–1470), RIB 6, p. 710.

¹⁸¹ Cf.: note 149. Chiliasm—the expectation of the “Millennial Kingdom” and the “Last Judgment”—resonated with the religious consciousness of the Russians and became widespread. It came to Rus’ from Byzantium along with Christianity; a major role in this was played by the work of Methodius of Olympus († c. 311), who in Ancient Rus’ was usually referred to as Methodius of Patara, which appeared in a Slavic translation under the title “Revelation” as early as the 11th century (Chronicle, entry for 1096). This translation of the work “By Methodius, our holy father, Archbishop of Patara, on the Last Things” was published by N. S. Tikhonravov in: *Monuments of Renounced Russian Literature*. Vol. 2. pp. 268–281. Cf. the serious study by V. Istrin, “The Revelation of Methodius of Patara and the Apocryphal Vision of Daniel in Byzantine and Old Russian Literature” (1897); cf. also: Bonwetsch (Note 149). I refer here only to the ninth speech of his “Symposium” in: BdKV. 40. 2nd ed. p. 370: “...When this world is destroyed in the seventh millennium, when, after the end of the universe, God will live with us in joy.” Cf. also: Alzberger. *History of Christian Eschatology within the Pre-Christian Era* (1896), p. 497, and Kirsch, Joh. P., *The Church in the Ancient Greco-Roman Cultural World* (1930), pp. 234, 319. See also: *The Didache* (“The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles”). Chapter 16: “...For in the last days false prophets and destroyers will multiply, and sheep will turn into wolves, and love will turn into hatred” (BdKV 35, 2nd ed., p. 16); the “Revelation” of John (chap. 20); The Epistle of Barnabas (ch. 15): “Therefore, my children, in six days—that is, in six millennia—all will come to an end. And on the seventh day, He (God) will rest” (BdKV 24, 2nd ed., p. 129). Many apocryphal writings, most of which are imbued with eschatological and chiliastic themes, provided believers with rich food for thought. As early as the 12th century in Rus’, a monk named Abraham in Smolensk wrote a treatise that was eschatological in content (cf. Chapter II, 2 above); this was likely the first Russian work in which the end of the world was linked to the year 7,000 (cf.: Philipp

But the dreaded year of 1492 passed, and the Christian world did not collapse. This became a subject for reflection and contemplation. When Russians pondered what was happening in their homeland, they discovered that here, in the Moscow Tsardom, development was proceeding under the banner of the state's flourishing.

It is possible that the "Tale of the Princes of Vladimir" was composed at the very same time that Philotheus was writing his Chronograph. Philotheus was undoubtedly familiar with all the views and ideas of his time, for he belonged, so to speak, to the intellectual and cultural elite of the first quarter of the 16th century. All of this gave him grounds to include the aforementioned characterization of Rus' in his **Chronograph**. Another decade passed before his thoughts and convictions finally matured. As early as the 1520s, he wrote his epistles, in which he put forward the famous idea of Moscow as the Third Rome¹⁸².

Two ideas form the basis of Philotheus's religious-philosophical and messianic concept: the universal-historical significance of the Moscow kingdom as the City of God (*Civitas Dei*) chosen by God, and the theocratic-monarchical assessment of this kingdom.

World-historical development takes place within the framework of Divine Providence. God guides both humanity as a whole and the individual; God's gracious will reigns throughout the world; God exalts kingdoms and overthrows them when they fall into corruption; The Lord elevates rulers to their thrones and punishes them if they fall into sin; He guides rulers and all people toward truth and righteousness. The First Rome fell away due to the Apollinarian heresy and, by God's will, lost its place in the Christian Orthodox world. In its place, by God's grace, the Second Rome—Constantinople, Tsargrad—took its place. But through its union with apostate Rome, it betrayed Orthodoxy—and perished. Its holy shrine, Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, was desecrated and destroyed by godless conquerors as punishment for this. But hope remained for the Orthodox: Moscow shines with its piety and fear of God; Moscow sealed its Orthodoxy by rejecting the union and thus became the third and last Rome in world history, and there will be no fourth Rome. The Russian tsar is the only Orthodox sovereign in the world, and the Russian kingdom is the last kingdom, after which there will be only the Kingdom of Heaven.

Philotheus succinctly outlined his entire philosophy in his "Epistle Against the Astrologers and the Latins": "For all Christian kingdoms have come to an end and have been united into the single kingdom of our sovereign, according to the prophetic books—that is, the Russian kingdom. For two Romes have fallen, and the third stands, and the fourth shall not be... namely, the sole Christian king and ruler under heaven, the holy throne of God of the Holy Ecumenical Apostolic Church, which has taken the place of Rome and Constantinople, and which is in the God-saved city of Moscow"¹⁸³.

And to Grand Prince Vasily III, Philotheus writes about his vision of a Russian Orthodox kingdom: "For the Church of Old Rome fell from the heresy of Apollinaris, and the Church of the Second Rome, Constantinople, had its doors hacked open with axes and hammers by the descendants of the Agarians; but this, the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of the Third Rome, your sovereign kingdom, which shines brighter than the sun throughout the entire world in the Orthodox Christian faith... Therefore I say to you,

W. Ansdze. 1940, p. 46). The Old Russian Paschalion, which was compiled only up to the year 1492, concluded with the prophetic words: "Here is fear, here is sorrow, as in the crucifixion of Christ; this cycle has come to pass, this year has arrived, and finally it has appeared, in which we await Your universal coming" (Zhmakin. Metropolitan Daniel. pp. 364, 362–367). The continuation of the Paschalion for the period after 1492 was compiled by Gennadius, Archbishop of Novgorod, who in 1489 wrote a letter to Joasaph, Archbishop of Rostov, asking him to consult the elders Paisius Yaroslavov and Nil Sorsky—who at that time likely enjoyed great theological authority in church circles (both lived in Joasaph's diocese)—to ascertain their views on the end of the world and to report these views to him, Gennadius (*Arkhangelskiy. Op. cit.*, pp. 16, 30; Malinin. *Op. cit.*, p. 429). In 1492, the Metropolitan of Moscow commissioned Gennady to compile a paschal table for the coming millennium (Makariy. 2nd ed., vol. 6, p. 103); in this work (*ibid.*, Appendix III, pp. 376–383), Gennadius, citing the Old and New Testaments, refutes the notion that the end of the world was approaching and engages in polemics with the Judaizers of Novgorod, who mocked the Orthodox because the expected end of the world had not occurred. Joseph of Volotsk discusses the same topic—primarily to refute the heretical views of the Judaizers—in chapters 8 and 9 of his **Prosvitel** (cf. Holzward, p. 119 ff.).

¹⁸² Among his works, the following are particularly important to us: 1. "A Treatise on Astrologers and Latins," addressed to M. G. Misyur Munehin, a deacon from Pskov, written between 1510 and 1520 (Malinin, *Collected Works*, p. 159; *ibid.*, Appendix, p. 45, and in: *Prav. Sob.* 1861, vol. 2, p. 95); 2. "Epistle to Grand Prince Vasily Ivanovich" (before 1533), (Malinin, *op. cit.*, Appendix, pp. 49–55; *Prav. Sob.* 1863, vol. 1, pp. 337–348); 3. "Letter to Tsar Ivan (IV) Vasilievich" (Malinin. *Op. cit.* Appendix. p. 62 ff. and *DAI.* 1. No. 23). Cf. the literature cited in note 171 and Schaeder. *Op. cit.*, pp. 55 ff. The doctrine of "Roma mobilis" (the wandering Rome) also found its interpreters in the West; cf.: Limnacus, Johannes. **Juris publici Imperii Romano-Germanici**. Argentorati, 1629. Vol. 1, Part 1, Ch. 4, No. 16.

¹⁸³ Malinin. *Op. cit.* Appendix. p. 45.

take heed, O Tsar, and once again pay close and firm attention to this: all Christian kingdoms have come to rest within your kingdom, for the two Romes have fallen, the third stands, and there shall be no fourth”¹⁸⁴.

Thus, we see that Philotheus’s messianic vision was the final link in a chain of views that had arisen in the Muscovite realm earlier and continued to emerge during his era. At the same time, Philotheus’s teaching represents a logical synthesis of all these views and ideas. More distinctly and clearly than others, the Pskov monk speaks to all his contemporaries about the great Christian mission of his country and its sovereign, the Orthodox tsar: about the divine origin of the royal office, its holiness, and the duties and rights of the tsar, who, in both secular and ecclesiastical matters, is accountable only to God¹⁸⁵.

Philotheus’s religious philosophy of history and the views of the Josephites merged into a unified ecclesiastical-political worldview, which became the foundation for the further development of relations between the state and the Church in Russia, both in the Muscovite Tsardom¹⁸⁶ and in Peter’s empire of the 18th–19th centuries.¹⁸⁷ The ideological elevation of Moscow to the status of the Third Rome had a very strong ecclesiastical-national character. It corresponded to the long-standing Russian conviction that Russian Christianity was in no way inferior to Greek Christianity—a conviction that had been expressed by Metropolitan Hilarion of Kiev as early as the 11th century.¹⁸⁸ Now, however, the time had come for representatives of the Russian ecclesiastical hierarchy and the Russian monastic community to substantiate this claim with concrete facts, examples, and models. Ideology and rhetoric, however beautiful and logical they might be, were not yet proof for the Russian people. The Russian soul came to believe in the truth of Christianity and the truth of Orthodox teaching not because of dogmatic constructs or the impressive persuasiveness of Old Russian writings, but rather because of the liturgical richness and beauty of this teaching. For it was precisely the liturgical life of the Church that gave him the opportunity to feel himself a humble member of the glorious host of martyrs and saints, miracle-workers and confessors, and even angels. During worship, the Church did not merely speak of the future blessed and eternal life of the righteous; the church hymns and readings affirmed that every person would be able to partake in this blessed life of the righteous if they imitated the examples of Christian piety and built their lives upon these examples¹⁸⁹. It may seem paradoxical, but in Russian religiosity, the liturgy pushed dogmas into the background; in this religiosity, the main focus was not on the content of faith but on the experience of faith. This is the most characteristic and important feature of the Russian religious soul.

The Ancient Church and the Byzantine Church bore witness to the truth of their teachings and their orthodoxy through numerous examples of holiness. Could not the Russian Church—the Church of the Third Rome—have borne witness to its orthodoxy through such examples as well? Could it not also have revealed the Kingdom of Christ to its righteous ones, as participants in this glory, and proclaimed—not only to the Russian people but to the entire Orthodox world, in which the Russian Church has now become the center of

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. pp. 49, 55.

¹⁸⁵ Philotheus once again set forth the entire complex of these ideas in his letter to the young Tsar Ivan IV, which was more extensive and not as concise and substantive as his two other letters (Malinin. Op. cit. Appendix. p. 62). Compare the echoes of Philotheus’s views in Ivan’s first letter to Prince A. M. Kurbsky: “Since the providence of God’s Word is fulfilled everywhere, and God’s servants have, like eagles in flight, circled the entire universe with God’s Word, even the spark of piety has reached the Russian kingdom. Thus, the autocracy of the Russian kingdom, which is truly Orthodox, by God’s will, began with Grand Prince Vladimir, who enlightened the Russian land through holy baptism, and Grand Prince Vladimir Monomakh, who received the highest honor from the Greeks, and the brave Grand Prince Alexander Nevsky, who won a great victory over the godless Germans, and the praiseworthy Grand Prince Dimitri, who, beyond the Don, triumphed over the godless Agarians (i.e., Tatars. – I. S.), and even to the avenger of injustices, our grandfather, the great sovereign John, and the liberator of the lands long lost to our forefathers, our father of blessed memory, the great sovereign Vasily, and even down to us, the humble holders of the scepter of the Russian realm” (Correspondence, p. 26). The “Tale of the Princes of Vladimir” mentioned above was, of course, also known to the young tsar. See also Ivan’s views on the duties of an autocrat (ibid., p. 40).

¹⁸⁶ Philotheus’s doctrine of “Moscow—the Third Rome” was not officially proclaimed ex cathedra by either the Church or the state, but we find its reflection in an official document, namely in the explanation of the reasons for the establishment of the patriarchate (the “Ulozhennaya Gramota”) in 1589, in: SGGD, vol. 2, p. 97. Shortly after the establishment of the Patriarchate, in the early 17th century, a hagiographic work titled “The Book of the Russian Saints” was compiled in Moscow. In the afterword, the author states that the true faith had fallen into decline in Byzantium, while the Moscow Tsardom and the Russian Church, thanks to their orthodoxy and great multitude of saints, had taken first place in the Orthodox world. This afterword was first published by I. Mansvetov in “Report on the 21st Awarding of the Count Uvarov Prize”; in full in: *Readings*. 1887. 4.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. my work: “On the Question of Periodization in the History of the Russian Church,” in: *Kyrios*. 5 (1940–1941). pp. 66–81.

¹⁸⁸ See Chapter II above.

¹⁸⁹ See individual examples in my book *Leben und Lehre der Starzen* (1936).

orthodoxy—their faithfulness, holiness, and miracles? The Russian hierarchy and Russian monasticism provided many examples of Christian asceticism, religious zeal, and miracles. The Third Rome had its own Russian Thebaid and its own ascetics, and it was no easier to practice asceticism here than anywhere in Egypt or Syria. The Russian Church already had several saints who had performed great Christian feats. The calendar of saints of the Russian Church already included its own national saints, who occupied a prominent place among the host of universal Orthodox righteous ones. But many of the ascetics were still unknown to the people or were known only in the region where they had lived and labored. Therefore, for the builders of the Third Rome, it was an important and solemn task—their Christian duty—to resolve the question of recording the deeds of the saints in writing and of their glorification, for this contributed to the exaltation of the Russian Church.

4. Metropolitan Macarius and 16th-Century Russian Hagiography

The primary task was to compile the lives of Russian ascetics. The monastic community took on the bulk of this work. By the beginning of the 16th century, several lives of Russian ascetics and saints already existed, but their number was still small¹⁹⁰. In the first half of that century, Russian hagiography expanded significantly, mainly thanks to the personal initiative and leadership of Metropolitan Makarii (1542–1563)¹⁹¹.

Already during his tenure as head of the Novgorod Diocese (1526–1542), Archbishop Makarii undertook the immense task of compiling the **Great Menaion** in 12 volumes, one for each month; Work began in 1529–1530, and in 1541 Makarii donated the Menologion to the Cathedral of Saint Sophia in Novgorod as a contribution for the repose of his parents' souls. When he became Metropolitan of Moscow in 1542, this work was completed, and in 1552 the new manuscript was presented to the Moscow Cathedral of the Dormition (¹⁹²). “Given the task,” writes Klyuchevsky, “that lay at the foundation of this collection—to gather and transcribe ‘all the holy books found in the Russian land’—Macarius’s Miney is the most daring undertaking in Old Russian literature”¹⁹³. These Menaia contained the lives of all the saints of the Orthodox Church known in Rus’ at that time, as well as various ascetic, catechetical, homiletic, and some canonical works¹⁹⁴.

Macarius deemed it necessary to give the lives of Russian saints a prominent place in the Menaion. He gathered assistants around him, and they compiled these lives at his behest. It is clear that Makarii sought out assistants from among the monastic community aligned with the Josephite movement, with which he had long been associated, dating back to his time as a novice at the Pafnutiev Borovsk Monastery. Therefore, it can be asserted that during these years the “Josephite school” of Russian hagiography took shape, seeking to present

¹⁹⁰ On Russian hagiography, see: Klyuchevsky. *Old Russian Lives of the Saints* (1871); Sergius, Archimandrite. *Complete Monthly Calendar of the East*. 2 vols. (1875); Kadlubovsky. *Essays* (1902); Yakhonov. *The Lives of the Saints of the Pomeranian Region as a Historical Source* (1881); Konoplev. *The Saints of the Vologda Region* (1895), also in: *Readings*. 1895. 4; Serebryansky. *Ancient Princely Lives*, in: *Readings*. 1915. 3; see also the very useful work: Boguslavsky, S. “The Literary Tradition in Northern Russian Hagiography,” in: *IORAS*. 101 (1928). Literature on canonization in the Russian Church: Vasilyev. “The Canonization of Russian Saints” (1893), also in: *Readings*. 1893; Golubinsky. **The History of the Canonization of Saints in the Russian Church** (1903), also in: **Readings**. 1903; Peeters, P. “La canonisation dans l’Église russe,” in: **Analecta Bollandiana**, 33 (1914). Nekrasov. *The Emergence of National Literature in the Great Russian North* (1870) (outdated); Veruzhsky. *Historical Tales of the Lives of the Saints of the Vologda Region* (1880); Fedotov, G. *Saints of Ancient Rus’*. Paris, 1929.

¹⁹¹ We have already written about the saints of the 11th–15th centuries (Chapters II and III). Prior to the 16th century, the following Russian saints were venerated locally or throughout Russia: 1. Sts. Boris and Gleb, Martyr Princes († 1015); 2. St. Prince Vladimir († 1015); 3. St. Princess Olga († 969); 4. St. Leontius, Bishop of Rostov († 1072); 5. St. Prince Michael of Chernigov and his boyar Theodore († 1245); 6. St. Ignatius, Bishop of Rostov (d. 1288); 7. St. Peter, Metropolitan of Moscow (d. 1325); 8. St. Alexius, Metropolitan of Moscow (d. 1378); 9. St. Sergius of Radonezh (d. 1392); 10. St. Isaiah, Bishop of Rostov (d. 1190); 11. St. Barlaam of Khutyn (d. 1192); 12. St. Prince Theodore of Smolensk and Yaroslavl (d. 1299) and his sons David and Constantine; 13. St. Anthony of the Caves († 1073); 14. St. Theodosius of the Caves († 1074); 15. St. Cyril of Belozero († 1427); 16. St. Dimitri of Prilutsk (d. 1391); 17. St. Abraham of Rostov (d. 11th century); 18. St. Nikita of Pereyaslav (d. 1186). Cf.: Sergius. *Op. cit.*, vol. 1, Appendix 15.

¹⁹² Zauskinsky. *Op. cit.*, p. 229; Makarii (Bulgakov). *Notes on the Novgorod Makarii Chetii Minei*, in: Tikhonravov. *Chronicle of Russian Literature and Antiquities*. 1 (1959). Section 5, pp. 68 ff.; Klyuchevsky. *Lives*. pp. 228–231; Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 7. pp. 407 ff.

¹⁹³ Klyuchevsky. *Op. cit.* p. 228.

¹⁹⁴ For the contents of the entire collection, see Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 7. p. 409 ff. A complete table of contents for the Great Menologion is found in: *Readings*. 1877. Vol. 4. Part 4.

the lives of the saints in the spirit of Josephite views and to describe an ascetic life whose content corresponded to these views or was colored in “Josephite” tones. This Josephite hagiographic school, whose works are usually referred to in literary history as the “lives of the Makaryev edition”¹⁹⁵, produced a whole series of lives that are of varying quality both in literary and ecclesiastical-historical terms¹⁹⁶; first, because the authors of the hagiographies possessed varying literary talents, and second, because they processed the material based on a specific ecclesiastical-political concept.

As early as 1537 in Novgorod, Makarii, then still an archbishop, commissioned Vasilii Tuchkov, the son of a boyar, to write the hagiography of Mikhail Klopsky († 1456), a holy fool for Christ’s sake and an ascetic who was highly revered by the people of Novgorod¹⁹⁷.

Around 1545, the hagiography of St. Alexander of Svir († 1533) was compiled; it is considered one of the gems of Old Russian hagiography. The author, named Hilarion, abbot of the Alexander-Svirsky Monastery, was a contemporary and disciple of the saint; he wrote a narrative that is historically very accurate, expressed in simple and expressive language. The hagiography devotes special attention to the miracles of St. Alexander, describing them in simple, colloquial language, without rhetoric or fantasy, which made a particularly deep impression on readers and listeners¹⁹⁸. This hagiography was composed even before Alexander’s glorification and served as the basis for his canonization.

At the same time, around 1545–46, by personal order of Metropolitan Makarii Savva, the Bishop of Krutitsy—a disciple of Joseph of Volokolamsk—wrote the hagiography of Joseph. This hagiography was also included in the Menaia, and from a literary standpoint, it too ranks among the finest examples of Old Russian hagiography. It is rich in historical facts and distinguished by its fine style. The portrayal of Joseph is very vivid and leaves a lasting impression. At the same time, however, the hagiography has a distinctly Josephite ecclesiastical and political slant. The author, Bishop Savva, who himself belonged to this movement, pays particular attention to Joseph’s struggle against heresy, emphasizing the necessity of severe measures against heretics—including the death penalty—and recounting with great satisfaction the executions that had already taken place. The compiler of the hagiography also speaks of the close relationship between Joseph and the grand princes, and of how the abbot himself and the brethren of his monastery revered the Moscow autocrat, whom Savva—even before 1547, before the introduction of the title of “tsar”—referred to as “God’s anointed one,” “tsar,” and “Orthodox tsar,” placing these expressions into Joseph’s own words¹⁹⁹.

Almost simultaneously, or a few years earlier, between 1540 and 1546, the hagiography of Joseph was written; it came to be known as the “Hagiography of an Unknown Author,” since the name of its author has not yet been established. Many scholars are inclined to identify the author of the hagiography as the monk Zinovy of the Otensky Monastery. This assumption is based on certain circumstances of Zinovy’s life and on the content of the hagiography. Although Zinovy shares the ideology of the Josephites, he displays a certain moderation in his condemnation of the Novgorod heresy, praising Joseph for his struggle against it but speaking very cautiously about punishments against heretics. On the issue of monastic estates, the author adheres to views that are entirely in line with those of the Josephites, but he is restrained in his criticism of the Non-Acquirers’ views on monastic villages. The hagiography emphasizes the importance of external asceticism and highlights this aspect in the ascetic practices of Joseph and Cassian the Barefoot, a monk of the Joseph Monastery²⁰⁰.

The third hagiography of Joseph was written in 1547. Its author was Joseph’s nephew, the monk Dosipheus Toporkov, and this hagiography is a eulogy to the saint. In terms of its content and overall spirit, it is a purely Josephite work²⁰¹.

The abundance of hagiographic works about Joseph leads us to believe that Metropolitan Macarius intended to canonize Joseph of Volotsk at the Council of 1547. This is also evident from the fact that the

¹⁹⁵ Speransky. History of Old Russian Literature (1911). p. 161; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. p. 222.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. pp. 222–296.

¹⁹⁷ By 1537, two versions of the Life of Michael Klopsky already existed (ibid., p. 209); they are printed in: Monuments of Ancient Russian Literature, vol. 1; Tuchkov’s version—ibid., vol. 4.

¹⁹⁸ The hagiography, commissioned by Archbishop Theodosius for the Menaion, is included in the Menaion under August 30. Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 418.

¹⁹⁹ VChM. September 9. pp. 455–498; Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. pp. 418–419; Klyuchevsky. Ibid. pp. 292, 293.

²⁰⁰ Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. p. 293; Rzhiga. Essays on the History of 16th-Century Russian Journalism. Maximus the Greek as a Publicist, in: TODRL. 1 (1934). p. 8. This hagiography was previously published by Nevostruev: CHOLDP. 1865.

²⁰¹ Nevostruev. Op. cit.

metropolitan commissioned the monk Photios of the Josephov Monastery to compose a canon to Joseph and blessed its singing in private “until the celebration of the cathedral liturgy”²⁰².

Joseph of Volotsk passed away on September 15, 1515, but at the Councils of 1547 and 1549 he was not glorified; it was not until December 20, 1578, that a local glorification took place—that is, memorial services were no longer held for him at his monastery, and during divine services, prayers were offered to him as a saint. Joseph’s official canonization was performed by Patriarch Job in 1591; he gave his blessing for a canon to be composed in Joseph’s honor and added his name to the Menaion²⁰³.

Praise for the asceticism of the Josephites is also found in the hagiography of the aforementioned monk Cassian the Barefoot († 1542), a rigorous ascetic who endured severe cold. His hagiography was written shortly after Cassian’s death by Archimandrite Vassian²⁰⁴.

The Josephite hagiography is concluded by the Volokolamsk Paterikon, written in 1547–48 by *the monk Dosiphei Toporkov, possibly also under the metropolitan’s guidance. The Paterikon contains 29 stories and an introduction that briefly outlines the history of the founding of the Volokolamsk Monastery. Five stories are devoted to Joseph and contain his remarks on monasticism, monastic life, and the foundations of Christian asceticism, while emphasizing the advantages of the cenobitic life over other forms of monastic living; these remarks are included in the Paterikon as the abbot Joseph’s own sayings. Other stories are written from the perspective of Hegumen Pafnutius of Borovsk or Joseph himself. Although all these stories are intended to describe monastic life at the Volokolamsk Monastery, they are not actually original in content; they show a noticeable influence from early Christian patristic works, which were widely circulated and very popular in Ancient Rus’. The Josephite worldview runs like a common thread throughout the entire collection*²⁰⁵.

The Josephites’ intensive hagiographic activity, as well as, possibly, rumors of preparations for the Council—which was to decide on the canonization of many Russian ascetics—and the entire atmosphere of that era—the unabated ideological struggle between two movements in Old Russian monasticism (the Josephites and the Non-Acquirers)—prompted the Non-Acquirers to engage in hagiographic literary works as well. On the one hand, they wanted to show that there were many worthy and glorious ascetics among them; on the other hand, they may have sought to counter the spread of Josephite views.

A monk named Matthew from the Ferapontov Monastery in Belozersk—who was closely associated with the Non-Acquirers and distinguished by the austerity of his ascetic life—wrote the hagiography of Hegumen Ferapont (d. 1426), the monastery’s founder. The hagiography is particularly interesting in that its author supports the idea of communal living, emphasizes the necessity of the monks’ personal physical labor, and advocates non-possessiveness. Monk Matthew also wrote the hagiography of Hegumen Martinian of Belozersk (d. 1483). The hagiography, portraying the abbot as a follower of the ascetic views of St. Cyril of Belozersk, notes his independence in his dealings with the grand princes, especially during the period when he temporarily served as abbot of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery (1447–1455), emphasizes his inclination toward non-acquisitiveness, spiritual composure, and abstinence, and indicates that Martinian attached primary importance to inner asceticism—that is, traits linking him to the views of Nilus of Sora are evident throughout. Both hagiographies were written between 1547 and 1549.²⁰⁶

Around 1547, a hagiography of the monk Joasaph († 1483) of the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery appeared in the circles of the Trans-Volga monastic community. According to this hagiography, Joasaph, who came from a princely family, embodied the archetype of a strict ascetic who devoted his entire life to the struggle against temptations and inner spiritual work; he considered love to be the highest Christian virtue, while rejecting outward asceticism and monastic possessions. The hagiography contains a very interesting account

²⁰² Zauscinski. Op. cit., in: ZhMNP. 118 (1881). p. 30.

²⁰³ Gerontius. Description of the St. Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery (1894). p. 47; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. pp. 296, 312; Makarii. 2nd ed. 8. pp. 47, 61.

²⁰⁴ Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. p. 295. This monk, Cassian, was the godson of Tsar Ivan IV, which also attests to the close relationship between the St. Joseph Monastery and the grand ducal family. Kadlubovsky. Op. cit., in: Russkaya Filologiya, vol. 45 (1901). pp. 35 ff.; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. pp. 289, 294–295. The Life of Cassian the Barefoot is also included in this “Tale.” On the influence of early Christian ascetic collections known as the Paterika (PaterikJ) (cf.: Krumbacher, 1897, p. 188), see: Kadlubovsky. Op. cit., pp. 51–70.

²⁰⁵ Kadlubovsky. Op. cit., in: Russkaya Filologiya, vol. 45 (1901). pp. 35 ff.; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. pp. 289, 294–295. The Life of Cassian the Barefoot is also included in this “Tale.” On the influence of early Christian ascetic collections known as the Paterika (PaterikJ) (cf.: Krumbacher, 1897, p. 188), see: Kadlubovsky. Op. cit. pp. 51–70.

²⁰⁶ Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. pp. 272–273; IRI. 6. pp. 849–853, 853–855.

of a mystical vision experienced by Joasaph: the Savior, appearing to him in a revelation, said that humility and meekness are the best means of combating temptations²⁰⁷.

Hagiographic works written by representatives of both factions depicted the exploits of Old Russian saints, and this was significant for the early 16th century. It is clear that it was important for Metropolitan Makarii to compile material that could glorify the Russian Church—the Church of the Third Rome—from its very inception. It was precisely during this time, in the late 1440s and early 1450s, that the extensive hagiographies of St. Prince Vladimir, under whom Rus' was baptized, and St. Princess Olga were compiled²⁰⁸. The hagiography of Vladimir, which contains a very detailed description of the entire era of his reign (it consists of 72 chapters), reflects the ecclesiastical and political views characteristic of the time when it was written. It also addresses the question of the genealogy of the Moscow rulers and emphasizes Prince Vladimir's kinship with the Roman Emperor Augustus. The hagiography was included in the **Stepennaya Kniga**—a vast collection that emerged during this period, as will be discussed below.

At the metropolitan's behest, the monk Michael of the Nativity Monastery in Vladimir supplemented and revised the existing hagiography of Prince Alexander Nevsky, transforming it into a kind of eulogy to the saint²⁰⁹. Composing a hagiography in the form of a eulogy likely corresponded well with the views of the people of that time, for around 1547, by order of Makarii, the hagiographies of Metropolitan Jonah of Moscow († 1461)²¹⁰ and of Nikon († 1426), the abbot of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery²¹¹; both hagiographies were written by unknown authors.

Two hagiographies of renowned ascetics of the 15th century were compiled for the **Minei**. One of them is the hagiography of the austere ascetic Pavel Obnorsky († 1429), whom we already know, written as early as 1536–1538 by an unknown monk and now, in 1547, supplemented with an account of his miracles²¹². The second was the hagiography of Macarius († 1483), abbot of the Trinity Monastery in Kalyazin, near the town of Kashin in the Tver Governorate. Born into a wealthy boyar family, Macarius was distinguished by his austere ascetic life—marked by complete renunciation of the world, fasting, and humility. Even during his lifetime, he was honored by his contemporaries, and subsequent generations also revered him²¹³. His relics were discovered in 1521. At the behest of the metropolitan, an unknown monk from the Kalyazin Monastery composed a very fine, substantive hagiography of Macarius. This same monk was likely the author of the account of the discovery of his relics, for Macarius had long been venerated locally as a saint, thanks to numerous posthumous miracles²¹⁴.

5. The Glorification of Russian Holy Ascetics

All these hagiographic works appeared at the initiative of Metropolitan Macarius, not only to supplement his *Menaion*, but primarily to support his intention to convene a Council in Moscow and, at that Council, to solemnly glorify many locally venerated Russian ascetics of piety by numbering them among the saints. The glorification of numerous Russian ascetics, holy hierarchs, and righteous princes was intended to elevate the Church and the state and to consolidate Moscow's reputation as the Third Rome²¹⁵.

²⁰⁷ The Legend of the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery, in: Prav. Sob. 1861. Vol. 1, pp. 197–214; Klyuchevsky, op. cit., p. 275. On the local veneration of Joseph, see: Golubinsky, History of Canonization, p. 149. The views of the non-possessors are also reflected in the life of St. Daniel of Pereyaslav († 1540); at the tsar's request, it was composed after the Councils of 1547 and 1549, around 1553, by an unknown author. This life is considered one of the gems of Old Russian hagiography. See Klyuchevsky. Op. cit., p. 282; Makarii. 2nd ed., vol. 7, p. 433.

²⁰⁸ Serebryansky. Old Russian Princely Lives. p. 43; the oldest, abridged version of Vladimir's life was composed in the late 12th or early 13th century (ibid., p. 44); "Memorial and Praise to Prince Vladimir," written by the monk Jacob, appeared no earlier than the mid-11th century; it represents the first example of a church composition about St. Vladimir (ibid., p. 50). Cf.: Makarii. 2nd ed., vol. 7, p. 436.

²⁰⁹ Makarii. 2nd ed., vol. 7, p. 421; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit., p. 238; see: Boguslavsky. "On the Question of the Original Text of the Life of Grand Prince Alexander Nevsky," in: IORAS. 1914. Vol. 1, p. 261. The life was published by Mansikka in: PDP. 180 (1913).

²¹⁰ Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 7, p. 422; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit., pp. 238, 240; Kadlubovsky. Op. cit., p. 64.

²¹¹ Macarius. 2nd ed. Vol. 7. p. 421; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. p. 247; the first, ancient version of Nikon's hagiography was compiled even earlier by the well-known 15th-century hagiographer Pachomius Logofet. Ibid. pp. 248, 152, 119.

²¹² Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 421; Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. p. 272; Konoplev. Op. cit. p. 68; Kadlubovsky. Op. cit. p. 47.

²¹³ Joseph of Volotsk knew Makarii of Kalyazin personally and writes about his ascetic life with great respect; see Joseph's "Spiritual Letter" in: VMCH. September. Part 1. p. 558.

²¹⁴ Klyuchevsky. Op. cit., p. 289; Makarii. 2nd ed., vol. 7, pp. 21–22, 423–424.

²¹⁵ Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. pp. 222–225, 228; Sergius. Op. cit. Vol. 1, pp. 194–196

In 1547, this Council took place in Moscow—“by order” of Grand Prince Ivan IV, as stated in documents of the era²¹⁶. After reading the hagiographies²¹⁷ and verifying their authenticity, the Council decided to glorify 21 ascetics. Twelve of them received pan-Russian glorification, while nine were canonized as locally venerated saints²¹⁸. The justifications for the canonization of the new saints have not survived to the present day. “In all likelihood, the Council established feast days for these particular saints not because it recognized them alone as worthy of veneration and glorification, but because it had at its disposal the necessary information regarding them, on the basis of which it could confirm its decision”²¹⁹.

The fact that neither Metropolitan Makarii, nor the young Tsar Ivan, nor the bishops were entirely satisfied with what had been accomplished and sought to further increase the number of Russian saints—whose veneration was intended to strengthen the authority of the Russian Church—is evidenced by the fact that two years later, in 1549, a new Council convened in Moscow, again devoted exclusively to matters of canonization²²⁰. Strangely enough, no reliable documents regarding the proceedings of this second Council have survived to the present day. Only on the basis of an interpolation in the hagiography of Metropolitan Jonah can we learn the names of the glorified saints, but it should be noted that this interpolation is not an entirely reliable source. It can be assumed that at the Council of 1549, seven hierarchs of the Church, six venerable fathers, abbots and founders of new monasteries, three martyrs, and one prince were glorified—a total of 17 saints²²¹. Thus, it appears that 38 ascetics were canonized at these two Councils²²².

The goal of both Councils was to elevate the Russian Church and the Moscow Tsardom as the Third Rome; however, Metropolitan Makarii undertook another important endeavor to establish, in the eyes not only of his contemporaries but also of future generations, the internal ecclesiastical and political harmony of the Third Rome. Under his leadership, a vast collection of ecclesiastical and state history—the **Stepennaia Kniga**—was compiled, containing a well-thought-out, ecclesiastically oriented history of the Muscovite state, “Holy Rus’.” This hagiographic and biographical compilation included accounts of the deeds of the rulers of the Moscow dynasty, from its inception to the end of Grand Prince Ivan III’s reign, and offered an assessment of them from a Christian-ecclesiastical perspective. “This work was a profound reworking of old Russian chronicles, chronographs, and other historical sources based on new principles—grounded in the genealogy of the ruling dynasty rather than a simple chronological account organized by year”²²³. The “Book

²¹⁶ AAE. Vol. 1, No. 213; Golubinsky. *History of Canonization*. p. 94; Herman. *De fontibus*. p. 50.

²¹⁷ Among the most ancient hagiographies read were those of Archbishop John of Novgorod (d. 1186) and the two founders of the Solovetsky Monastery, Savvatiy (d. 1435) and Zosima (d. 1478). Makariy. 2nd ed. Vol. 7. p. 420; Klyuchevsky. *Op. cit.* pp. 198, 269.

²¹⁸ Two holy hierarchs, nine venerable fathers, and one grand prince received pan-Russian glorification: 1. John, Archbishop of Novgorod (d. 1186); 2. Jonah, Metropolitan of Moscow (d. 1461); 3. Nikon, abbot of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra († 1426); 4. Paul of Obnorsk († 1429); 5. Savvatiy of Solovki († 1435); 6. Dionysius of Glushitsy († 1437); 7. Michael Klopsky (d. 1452); 8. Paphnutius of Borovsk (d. 1478); 9. Zosima of Solovki (d. 1478); 10. Macarius of Kalyazin (d. 1483); 11. Grand Prince Alexander Yaroslavich (d. 1263), known as Nevsky, and 12. Alexander of Svir (d. 1533). Golubinsky. *History of Canonization*. p. 100; Macarius. 2nd ed. 7. p. 219. Among the locally venerated saints, one bishop, five princes, and three holy fools for Christ’s sake (saló...) were canonized (they did not take monastic vows): 1. Arsenius, Bishop of Tver († 1409); 2, 3, and 4. Constantine, Prince of Murom († 1129), and his sons Michael and Theodore; 5 and 6. Peter, Prince of Murom, and his wife Fevronia; 7. Procopius of Ustyug († 1285), likely of German origin; 8. John of Ustyug (d. 1494); 9. Maximus of Moscow (d. 1433)—the last three were holy fools for Christ’s sake. Golubinsky. *Ibid.* p. 100; Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 219. The lives of the holy fools for Christ’s sake likely appeared only after their canonization. Klyuchevsky. *Ibid.* pp. 277, 278, 246. On Russian holy fools, see: Fedotov. *Saints of Ancient Rus’* (1931). pp. 205–219.

²¹⁹ Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 219.

²²⁰ This is evidenced by an interpolation in the hagiography of St. Alexander Nevsky, compiled after the Council of 1547. Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 227, note, as well as the extensive preface to the life of Metropolitan Jonah (the so-called “third edition,” according to Klyuchevsky. *Op. cit.*, p. 241); this interpolation is included in Klyuchevsky (*Op. cit.*, pp. 460–463).

²²¹ Based on this interpolation, the following list can be compiled: saints: 1. Stephen of Perm († 1396); 2. Euthymius, Archbishop of Suzdal († 1405); 3. Euthymius, Archbishop of Novgorod († 1458); 4. Jonah, Archbishop of Novgorod (d. 1470); 5. James of Rostov (d. 1391); and, probably, 6. Nikita of Novgorod (d. 1107) (Klyuchevsky, *op. cit.*, p. 460, note); 7. Niphon of Novgorod (d. 1156); three martyrs killed by pagan Lithuanians: Anthony, John, and Eustathius (d. 1347); six monks: 1. Abraham of Smolensk (d. 1219–20); 2. Savva of Storozhev († 1407); 3. Gregory of Pelshem († 1441); 4. Euphrosyne of Pskov († 1481); 5. Ephrem of Perekom (d. 1492) and 6. Savva of Vishersk (d. 1460); one prince: Vsevolod-Gabriel of Pskov (d. 1138). *Ibid.* pp. 462–463; Sergius. *Op. cit.* 1. pp. 194–196; Golubinsky. *History of Canonization*. pp. 103–105. On the Council of 1549, see: Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 772; Vasilyev. *Op. cit.* pp. 183–203.

²²² See also the names of the saints mentioned in Tsar Ivan IV’s letter. AI. 1. No. 213.

²²³ Speransky. *Op. cit.* (1921). p. 172.

of Degrees” is a collection of hagiographies of the “Christian autocrats” of the Moscow dynasty—a hagiographic account of the political history of Rus’ that its compilers considered entirely truthful and accurate, even though it also contained accounts of fictional events. “The idea of the state embodied in the sovereign merged with the idea of the greatness of the Russian Church, as well as that of the Russian state; this is why, alongside the biographies of tsars and princes, the book also included the biographies of metropolitans, bishops, and the lives of saints”²²⁴.

The compilation of this monumental work required the participation of many authors, among whom the Moscow priest Andrei—the tsar’s confessor and later Metropolitan of Moscow—likely played the most important role, that of editor. Among the compilers of this collection were many members of the Moscow monastic community unknown to us, for it was only within this milieu that people capable of literary creativity could be found. But the initiator and leader of this entire undertaking was Metropolitan Makarii. The final editing of the **Stepennaia Kniga** took place during the last years of Makarii’s life († 1563). The “Book of Degrees,” better than any other historical document, illustrates how deeply rooted the idea of “Moscow—the Third Rome” was in the views of Metropolitan²²⁵.

Thus, this work brings to a close a nearly century-long period of ideological creativity by the architects and proponents of the “Moscow—the Third Rome” idea—an epoch-making spiritual endeavor spanning two or three generations of the church hierarchy and monastic community. To a greater or lesser extent, this worldview influenced the tsars and church hierarchs of later generations, the clergy and monastic community, poets and writers, statesmen and society, as well as Russian travelers and peasants. Whether the monk Philotheus and his contemporaries were right or wrong is a question we will not discuss here; to answer it, one would have to trace the entire subsequent history of the Russian Church and the Russian state. Our sole aim was to show how much effort Russian monasticism expended in creating this ecclesiastical-political concept.

Chapter VI. The Question of Monastic Landholdings in Polemical Writings and in the Legislation of the 16th–17th Centuries

1. “Prince-Monk” Vassian and His Polemical Writings

The decrees of the Council of 1503—which we discussed in Chapter IV—marked the triumph of the Josephite views. From that point on, the Josephites began to play a leading role in the ecclesiastical life of Moscow, but their opponents, the non-acquisitive monks, did not lose their fighting spirit. They soon noticed that the triumph of Joseph and his supporters did not particularly please the government. Several decades later, the Moscow government, guided by state-political and economic interests, was compelled to revisit the issue of monastic land holdings and, if not to repeal the decrees of the 1503 Council, then at least to revise them in the interests of the state. The merit of Nil and Paissius lay in the fact that, through their speeches at the Council of 1503, they drew the government’s attention to monastic estates and shifted this issue from the realm of purely ecclesiastical life to that of state and economic interests.

This issue was now being addressed by the Non-Acquirers, the Josephites, and the government alike. The former took an offensive stance, while the government attempted to resolve the issue by adopting certain measures. The Josephites, however, adopted a defensive stance and succeeded, on the one hand, in overcoming the Non-Acquirers, and on the other, in ensuring that the government’s measures against the expansion of monastic estates remained half-hearted.

The Council of 1503 marked the beginning of the Non-Acquirers’ struggle to spread the view that monastic estates were harmful to the normal life of monasteries. Neither of the two elders, Nil of Sorsk nor Paisius of Yaroslavl, participated in this struggle or the resulting controversy. They passed away shortly after

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 173. The Book of Royal Genealogy was published in: PSRL 21 (1908). Vasenko, P., “The Book of Royal Genealogy and Its Significance in Old Russian Historical Writing,” 1 (1904); vol. 2 was never published.

²²⁵ Cf.: Dyakonov. Op. cit. p. 108; Zauskinsky. Op. cit., in: ZhMNP. 1881. 218. p. 32; Speransky. Op. cit. pp. 172–173; Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 434. In fact, the first preparatory work, the so-called “ancient edition,” which was, of course, known to Metropolitan Makarii, was carried out by Pachomius Logothetes. Cf.: Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. p. 242; on the hagiographer Pachomius, who was of Serbian origin or was born in Serbia, see: Yablonsky, V. Pachomius the Serb and His Hagiographic Writings (1908); Klyuchevsky. Op. cit., p. 119, as well as an earlier work: Nekrasov, I. “Pachomius the Serb, a Writer of the 15th Century” (1871).

the Council—the first in 1508, and the second sometime after 1503. For both elders, the issue of monastic estates held a matter of principle and was of purely ascetic significance, a fact acknowledged even by Joseph of Volotsk himself²²⁶. However, those representatives of the Non-Acquirers' faction who opposed monastic estates after Nil's death also had other considerations in mind.

If we consider the social background of the non-possessors, it becomes clear that this group of monastics was closely connected with the boyars and the service nobility of the Muscovite state. Many Russian ascetics of the 15th–16th centuries came from boyar and service nobility families, as we have already noted in Chapter III; it was precisely in the last quarter of the 15th century that quite a few members of this class exchanged their boyar robes for monastic habits and went to monasteries beyond the Volga, primarily to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery²²⁷. It must not be forgotten that the economic aspect of the Josephites' ideology conflicted with the interests of the boyars and the military nobility. The growth of monastic wealth at the expense of boyar and noble estates was highly undesirable for this group of people, for it diminished the political and economic significance of their class. It is therefore not surprising that there were so many monks among the non-acquisitive who had come from this social class.

But it was not merely economic considerations that led this group of monks to side with the non-possessors; there was also a political reason for their hostility toward the Josephites, for the latter zealously promoted the growth of the Moscow rulers' power and the strengthening of their autocratic authority. For the Old Russian boyars, who played an important role in the governance of the state during the last quarter of the 15th century, these new views were alien and unacceptable, since they diminished the significance of the boyars and deeply offended their class pride²²⁸. The idea of "Moscow—the Third Rome," which received such ardent support from the Josephites, found no resonance among the boyars, who could not sympathize with the growing influence of the church hierarchy.

Clearly, the opponents of the Josephites—the non-possessors—showed little willingness to accept Philotheus's ecclesiastical-political ideology; for the sake of the prophecy about the "Moscow Orthodox Kingdom," they were unwilling to sacrifice their ascetic ideals and their beliefs regarding the necessity of separating the heavenly from the earthly. This group of Russian monastics found supporters and followers among the boyars. The elders Paisius Yaroslavov, Nil Sorsky, Innokenty Okhlebinin—the founders and leaders of the ascetic-mystical movement in the forested Trans-Volga region, whom we already know—were strict ascetics and Christian idealists; their views were independent of their contemporaries' perspectives on earthly affairs, and they were not influenced in any way by economic considerations. The situation was different for their followers, the ascetics of the first half of the 16th century, when many members of the boyar class—which was losing its political influence—took monastic vows in their few hermitages. The coarse monastic habit could not subdue their class pride, their arrogance, or the passions of their noble blood. They fought alongside the Josephites for certain ideas of the non-possessors, but it must be remembered that the reasons for their participation in the controversy over monastic estates cannot be assessed unequivocally²²⁹.

The main participant in this controversy—though not the only opponent of the enrichment of monasteries—was the "prince-monk" Vassian, known in secular life as Prince Vasily Ivanovich Patrikeev Kosoy. By birth and rank, he belonged to one of the most distinguished boyar families at the court of the Grand Prince of Moscow. The founder of the Patrikeev princely family, a grandson of the Grand Duke of Lithuania Gediminas (1315–1341), traveled to Moscow in 1408 and entered the service of Grand Duke Vasily I. His children and grandchildren were already known as the Patrikeev princes and not only held prominent

²²⁶ See his treatise "On the Unloved," in: Supplements. 10. pp. 505, 509–510. Cf.: Pavlov. Historical Essay. p. 46.

²²⁷ Nikolsky. Op. cit., in: Christian Readings 1908, no. 8, pp. 178–188.

²²⁸ Klyuchevsky. The Boyar Duma (1880); idem. Course, vol. 2, chs. 27–28; Dyakonov. Op. cit. (1889); Stdhlin. 1. p. 244 ff. The famous "Conversations" (1525) between Boyar I. N. Berseny-Beklemishev and the monk Maxim the Greek (AAE. 1. No. 172) are very characteristic of the boyars' views. For nearly a century, the Moscow boyars fought for their state-political ideology and to preserve their role in state affairs, suffering a final defeat during the era of the "Oprichnina" (the 1560s and 1570s). On the Oprichnina, see Platonov. Essays on the History of the Time of Troubles in the Muscovite State (1899, 2nd ed. 1912); ibid. Ivan the Terrible (1924); Stdhlin, p. 269 ff.; Heinrich von Staden, *Aufzeichnungen über den Moskauer Staat*, ed. F. Epstein, in: Hamb. Univ.—Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiet der Auslandskunde. Vol. 34, Series 1, No. 5; Budovnik, I. "Ivan the Terrible in Russian Historical Literature," in: Ist. Zap. 21 (1947). pp. 271–330 (with an extensive bibliography).

²²⁹ The work that best introduces us to the inner atmosphere of the non-possessors' views is: Nikolsky, N., "Communal and Cell Life at the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery in the 15th–16th Centuries and at the Beginning of the 17th Century," in: Christian Readings 1907–1908; as well as: Grechev. The Elders of the Volga Region, in: BV (1907). 7–8.

positions at the Grand Prince's court but were also related to him by blood. Prince Yuri Patrikeev married the daughter of Grand Prince Vasily I; his son Ivan, the father of Vassian, was the chief boyar at the court of Grand Princes Vasily II and Ivan III²³⁰. Ivan III repeatedly entrusted the young Prince Vasily Ivanovich with various diplomatic missions²³¹. But in early 1499, the Patrikeev princes lost their influential position at court. In the dispute over the succession within the grand ducal family, they—true to the traditions of the Moscow boyars—harbored animosity toward the “Greek woman,” Grand Duchess Sophia, and supported the grand duke's grandson, Dimitri, as heir to the throne rather than his son, Vasily, and they participated in both intrigues and open dynastic strife²³². Some of Dimitri's supporters were executed. The Patrikeevs—father and son—escaped the death penalty thanks to the intercession of the metropolitan, but the Grand Duke ordered that both be tonsured as monks. The son, now bearing the monastic name Vassian, was sent into exile at the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery²³³.

There, behind the monastery walls, his new life began. However, Vassian did not remain at the monastery for long: likely because the monastic rule did not suit his character very well, he built his own hermitage²³⁴ and met the elder Nil of Sorsk, who had taken refuge in a hermitage in the same area. After this encounter—though it is possible he had heard of the wise elder before—, Vassian became a zealous supporter of the Non-Possessors and their ascetic views, which he did not, however, fully share, especially as they pertained to his own way of life. Nilus and Vassian were completely different people, and their lives unfolded in different ways as well. Vassian counted himself among Nilus's disciples²³⁵, but apparently not in the sense of ascetic training, for Nilus—gentle in spirit and inclined toward spiritual practice and contemplation—could not transform the proud, energetic, and passionate character of the Moscow boyar, nor could he instill in him monastic humility. Judging by his writings, Vassian learned a great deal, but he adopted from Nil—and from the ascetic elders in general—only their fundamental views and principles—more to defend them as the true ideal for monastic life than to be guided by them in his own life²³⁶. The character of this headstrong, energetic scion of a boyar family could not endure the seclusion of a monastic cell; he needed a stage for action where he could put Nil's views into practice.

Looking back at the life and work of Prince-Monk Vassian, we see that he was one of the most interesting figures in 16th-century Russian history. He was a unique individual who combined the most disparate traits in his character and actions: arrogance and passion; devotion to his cause and hostility toward Joseph of Volotsk and the Josephites; erudition limited by his era and a critical, polemical spirit; acceptance of the principles of Christian asceticism and a non-ascetic lifestyle of his own; finally, adherence to the views of the Trans-Volga monks on monastic estates and on state and political affairs—a man who fought steadfastly and fiercely for his convictions and his faction, even though he understood that his opponents were stronger and that he had almost no chance of victory. Moreover, when his fate had already been sealed, true to his boyar character, he met his sentence with irony and sarcasm.

The decrees of the Council of 1503, which—contrary to Nil's proposal—affirmed the monasteries' rights to land ownership, provided Vassian with a good pretext to advocate for monastic non-possessiveness and to use the weapon of journalism to defend Nil's ascetic views²³⁷. Vassian understood the situation at the

²³⁰ On the Origin of the Patrikeev Family, in: PSRL. 7. p. 254.

²³¹ PSRL. 8. pp. 227–228, 256; 4. p. 164.

²³² Ivan III had already appointed his son from his first marriage, Ivan, as his co-ruler and heir, but the latter died suddenly in 1490, leaving behind a seven-year-old son, Dimitri. In his second marriage to the Greek woman Sophia, Ivan III had a son, Vasily; on suspicion that she wanted to make her own son the heir, Sophia fell out of favor, Vasily was imprisoned, and Dimitri was crowned tsar (!) in 1498 (see note 170). But later, as a result of boyar intrigues, Ivan III once again—and this time definitively—revised the question of the heir in favor of Vasily, while Dimitri, along with his mother Elena, was sent into exile; during Vasily's reign (1505–1533), he died (1509), likely from carbon monoxide poisoning. Both Patrikeevs, father and son, belonged to Dimitri's faction.

²³³ PSRL. 12. p. 248; Readings. 1847. 9. Section 4. p. 9.

²³⁴ PSRL. 7. p. 236; Readings. 1847. 9. Section 4. p. 9.

²³⁵ Additions. 10. p. 505. The fact that Vassian was a zealous follower of Nil is best illustrated by his work “The Hermit Monk Vassian's Collection from the Holy Fathers on Joseph, Abbot of Volotsk,” in: Prav. Sob. 1863. 3. pp. 204–210. Vassian refers to Nilus as his spiritual father and to himself as his disciple. Ibid. p. 208.

²³⁶ Zhmakin. Metropolitan Daniel. p. 65. In our opinion, the highly negative characterization of Vassian provided by Zinovy Otensky (The Testimony of Truth, p. 900) cannot be considered entirely objective, for Zinovy sympathized, after all, with the Josephites, and wrote his account after Vassian's exile in 1531.

²³⁷ Zhmakin. Op. cit., p. 65; in Zhmakin's work we find a correct assessment of the views and activities of Vassian and, more generally, of the Non-Possessors and Josephites; the opinion of Metropolitan Makarii Bulgakov in his *History of the Russian

time well enough to realize the futility of fighting the Josephites if he conducted the struggle from a desert remote from the world. Only Moscow could be a suitable place for a polemic against the triumphant Josephites. It is unclear whether Vassian attended the sessions of the Council of 1503, as some believe²³⁸; Vassian himself did not speak explicitly about his participation in the Council's proceedings. He likely arrived in Moscow after the death of Grand Prince Ivan (October 1505)²³⁹. Very soon, Vassian established good relations with the grand ducal court: he not only managed to win the favor of the new Grand Duke, Vasily, but also exerted influence over him in matters of governance²⁴⁰. In this regard, it is legitimate to ask whether Vassian played a certain role in the appointment of the new Metropolitan Varlaam (1511–1521). This appointment was made without a council of bishops, by order of the Grand Duke, who nominated Varlaam for the metropolitan see. Not only is this circumstance interesting, but so is the fact that Varlaam sympathized with the non-possessors and was the abbot of the Simonov Monastery, where Vassian was living at the time and knew the honest abbot well. It is possible that Vassian suggested to Grand Prince Vasily that Varlaam be nominated for the metropolitan see. If this was indeed the case, then it is a great credit to Vassian, for Varlaam ranks among the finest representatives of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Muscovy²⁴¹.

Vassian's literary and polemical activity took place mainly between 1508–09 and 1515–17.²⁴² The following works by Vassian have survived: 1) "Preface by Nil and Vassian, his disciple, addressed to Joseph, the abbot of Volotsk, on how to understand and pay attention to God and prayer"; 2) "A Response to Those Who Slander the Gospel Truth and on the Monastic Life and Church Order"; 3) "A Compilation by Vassian, a Disciple of Nilus of Sora, on Joseph of Volotsk, drawn from the Holy Rules of Nikon²⁴³ and from many writings"; 4) "By the same monk and hermit Vassian, on Joseph, the abbot of Volotsk, a compilation drawn from the holy rules and from many books, and concerning his disciples, and various responses exchanged among themselves from the books" (this work consists of a dialogue between Vassian and Joseph and serves as a kind of afterword to works 2 and 3)²⁴⁴. A special "treatise" that Vassian composed as an afterword to his **Kormchaya**—a very brief work 5)—"A Collection by a Certain Elder in Remembrance of His Vow from

Church* (2nd ed., vol. 6, pp. 195–204) is not very objective, for he, like other representatives of the Russian church hierarchy (even in the 19th century), sympathized with the views of Joseph of Volotsk.

²³⁸ Makarii. 2nd ed. 6. p. 127; Khrushchev. Op. cit., in: *Ancient and Modern Russia*. 1875. 3. p. 270.

²³⁹ *Collected Works*. 1863. Vol. 3. p. 207. According to Golubinsky, Vassian arrived in Moscow only after the death of the ill-fated Prince Dimitry, who died on February 14, 1509. Golubinsky. Vol. 2, No. 1. p. 654.

²⁴⁰ The monk Paisiy of the Ferapontov Monastery speaks of Vassian's frequent visits to the court and his long "heart-to-heart conversations" with the Grand Prince; see his treatise on Vasily's second marriage (1525), in: *Readings*. 1847. 8; cf. Makarii's opinion on this work (2nd ed., 6. 175); and also: Pavlov. *Historical Essay*. p. 87; Golubinsky. 2. 1. pp. 732, 892. Another contemporary, Mikhail Medovartsev, who also knew Vassian well personally, calls him a favorite, "a great man of his time" under Vasily, in: *Readings*. 1847. 7. Section 2. p. 11. Evidence of Vasily's trust in Vassian can also be found in official documents: in 1523, as he set out on a campaign against the Kazan Tatars, Vasily entrusted his will to Metropolitan Daniel in Vassian's presence. SGGD. 1. No. 150. p. 416. Golubinsky (2. 1. p. 654) believes that Vasily favored Vassian for specific ecclesiastical and political reasons, intending to use him against the church hierarchy in the contentious issue of monastic estates.

²⁴¹ On the appointment of Barlaam: PSRL. 6. p. 252; Herberstein. Op. cit. (1926). p. 66. Regarding Barlaam's moral character, he says: "When I was sent there (referring to his first trip to Moscow in 1517—I. S.) by Emperor Maximilian, Bartholomew (i.e., Varlaam—I. S.) was the metropolitan, and he was considered a holy man" (ibid., p. 66). The following paragraph in this work, devoted to Varlaam's subsequent fate, does not entirely correspond to reality. Cf.: Golubinsky. 2. 1. pp. 637–645; on Varlaam's affinity for the views of the Non-Possessors: PSRL. 6. p. 252; 8. p. 252. Unfortunately, information about Metropolitan Varlaam is very scarce.

²⁴² In one of his works, Vassian mentions a reply from Joseph, who died on September 9, 1515. This reply from Joseph is unknown; it may be assumed that Joseph's polemical activities were hindered by the influence Vassian enjoyed at court. However, a letter from Joseph to Boyar V. A. Chelyadnin has survived, in which he asks the boyar to intercede with the Grand Duke for permission regarding his "writings," or, as we believe, permission to circulate a response to Vassian's attacks. Cf.: Khrushchev. Op. cit., p. 260. By 1517, Vassian had already completed his **Kormchaya**; this was a difficult and very voluminous work that took 2–3 years; therefore, it can be assumed that he wrote his polemical works before 1515. The composition of these polemical works compelled Vassian to turn to a collection of canonical rules, which was intended to lend particular weight to his polemical arguments.

²⁴³ Vassian is referring to Nikon of Montenegro (d. ca. 1092), a monk from the Raif Monastery in Antioch. Nikon's works, **Pandjktj** and **TaktikTn**, were widely circulated and highly valued in Ancient Rus'. Golubinsky. 1. 1. pp. 910–912; Sreznevsky, I. "The Pandects of Nikon of Montenegro," in: **Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences**. 21. p. 194; Sokolov, I. "The Moral and Intellectual State of Byzantine Monasticism from the Mid-9th to the Early 12th Century (842–1204)," in: *Legal Collection* 1893, vols. 2, 3, pp. 608–610.

²⁴⁴ See: *Polemical Writings of the Monk-Prince Vassian Patrikeev*, in: *Legal Collection* 1863. 3. 1st—pp. 102–104; 2nd—pp. 104–112; 3rd—pp. 180–206; 4th—pp. 206–210. The first treatise serves as an introduction to the second and third.

Holy Scripture to Renounce the World”²⁴⁵. And finally, 6) his “Kormchaya,” a critical edition of the most important ecclesiastical-legal text used by the Church of Ancient Rus’²⁴⁶; Vassian believed that it would definitively confirm the views he had set forth in his other works and prove the indisputable righteousness of the non-possessors.

The works by Vassian listed above differ from one another in content. “Preface” (1) addresses general issues. Here, among other things, the author expresses his view on prayer, which is entirely consistent with the ascetic-mystical views of Nilus of Sora, namely: for the one who prays, prayer is a weapon in spiritual warfare and a means of entering one’s “inner cell”; its depth and power do not lie in the beauty of liturgical chant. For Vassian, this statement is not only an expression of his ascetic views but also a critique of the formalism of the Josephite external piety. “The Word in Response” (2) particularly well reflects the principles and character of Vassian’s polemics. Here he criticizes the formal interpretation of monastic vows and demands that a monk observe Christ’s commandments not only outwardly but also inwardly in his ascetic (monastic) life. These commandments require self-denial and self-sacrifice, a renunciation of earthly goods and values. In reality, however, because monasteries own land inhabited by peasants and are burdened with the associated economic responsibilities, monasticism, in Vassian’s view, lives in complete disregard of Christ’s commandments²⁴⁷. In speaking of the need to organize monastic life according to the Gospel, Vassian has a specific goal—to return monasticism to its Christian ascetic roots: “We desire to return to the original spiritual beauty and nourishment”²⁴⁸. In this work, Vassian appears before us as a representative of a specific ascetic movement, as an exponent of his personal spiritual experience; his other work—*A Collection of the Rules of the Saints* (3)—is a typical critical and polemical treatise, an attempt to refute the claims of the “acquisitive ones,” and primarily those of Joseph. Joseph justified his claims regarding the necessity and permissibility of monastic estates with examples from the lives of ancient Russian monastery founders and ascetics. Vassian challenges these arguments by referring to the lives of early Christian ascetics—Pachomius of Egypt, Euthymius, Savvas, and Theodosius of Palestine²⁴⁹—and writes that these early Christian ascetics were non-possessive and lived lives of great hardship and renunciation of worldly goods. Vassian does not claim that these and other ascetics, as abbots of monasteries, had no monastic estates at their disposal at all; he merely states that “they held villages but had no attachment to them.” Vassian does not dispute the rights of ecclesiastical institutions to land holdings; he acknowledges such rights for diocesan bishops and parish churches and requires only that these holdings and their use not contradict the canons²⁵⁰. But monastic life, in his view, must be free from any property claims; in this he is a faithful follower of Nilus²⁵¹. For monastic estates, in Vassian’s opinion, even if they are very meager, awaken in the monks a passion for new acquisitions: they begin to extort gifts for the monastery from wealthy people through pleas or deception, engage in legal disputes with neighbors over insignificant plots of land, and do not even hesitate to resort to forging documents and deceiving the authorities²⁵².

For Vassian, who came from the ranks of the wealthy and power-hungry boyars, it was quite unusual that in his polemics he also raised purely social issues, namely the question of the plight of the monastery peasants. Thus, on the peasant question, the prince-monk Vassian Patrikeev emerges as the first Russian liberal. He reproaches the monastic order—first and foremost the abbots and those monks who managed the monastery estates—for exploiting the labor of the monastery peasants; he compares the monks’ wealthy and easy life with the peasants’ arduous existence, speaking of the peasants’ exhausting daily labor, their simple

²⁴⁵ See: Tikhonravov. *Chronicle of Russian Literature and Antiquity*. 5 (1863). Section 3. pp. 139–141.

²⁴⁶ On the *Kormchaya Kniga* (or *Kormchaya*)—a collection of rules from the Holy Apostles, the Ecumenical and Local Councils, and the Holy Fathers—see: Herman. *De Fontibus juris ecclesiastici Rurorum*. p. 23 ff. (with an extensive bibliography); on Russian editions, see: Makarii. 8. pp. 143 ff.; Golubinskii. 1. 1. p. 659.

²⁴⁷ *Collection of Canons*, 1863, vol. 3, pp. 104–112.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

²⁴⁹ Pavlov demonstrated the sound historical basis of Vassian’s assertions. *Op. cit.*, p. 69, note. It should be noted that monastic estates in the 11th–13th centuries—Joseph also mentioned St. Theodosius of the Caves—were of a completely different nature than those at the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries. Cf.: Golubinsky. Vol. 1, No. 1 (1880). p. 435.

²⁵⁰ “Debate... with the Elder Vasyan,” in: *Readings*. 1847. 9, 6; *Collected Works*. 1863. 3. pp. 200–210, 192; *Additions*. 10. p. 505.

²⁵¹ St. Nil of Sora and His Rule on the Hermit Life (1864). pp. 7–9, 175.

²⁵² *Collected Works* 1863. 3. pp. 109, 110; cf. Nil’s point of view in: Arkhangelsky. Nil of Sora and Vassian Patrikeev. p. 72; Maximus the Greek. *Works* 2. pp. 37, 89, 41, 95, 110. The fact that Vassian made his assertions not out of polemical zeal is confirmed by the official resolution of the Stoglav Council, in: *AAE*. 1. No. 227. p. 218.

and meager food, their poor housing, and their poverty and indebtedness to the monastery, which leads to the peasants' enslavement²⁵³.

Reading Vassian's polemical writings, we see the energy and passion with which he devoted himself to discussing these issues. A purely principled discussion of the topic and the dispassion of ascetically experienced monks, such as Nil of Sorsk, could not satisfy Vassian. In Vassian's writings, we sense the boiling of his hot boyar blood, his passion, his intransigence, and his anger toward his opponents—the Iosiflians; his language is sharp, his judgments incisive; he does not back down even when left alone, when he sees that his situation (as will be discussed below) is almost hopeless. Because of this, he made many enemies in Moscow who passed a harsh judgment on him; moreover, he faced sharp and, in part, unjust criticism from church historians²⁵⁴.

2. Other Writings Directed Against Monastic Landownership

At the time he wrote his works, between 1503 and 1517, Vassian would have remained almost a lone fighter for his cause had his views not elicited a certain sympathy from Metropolitan Barlaam and tacit support from the Grand Prince. After 1517, Vassian gained new support—he found an ally in the monk from Mount Athos, the famous Maximus the Greek. This foreigner, a monk from the Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos who had arrived in Moscow quite by chance, was a remarkable individual and a major figure in the history of the Russian Church. “The Venerable Maximus,” writes Golubinsky, “is a figure in our church history who, on the one hand, appeared entirely by chance, and on the other hand, is as famous within that history as he is important to its scholarship”²⁵⁵.

Information about Maxim's life prior to his arrival in Moscow is fragmentary and unreliable²⁵⁶. He was born between 1470 and 1475 in the city of Arta in Albania to a Greek family that was likely well-to-do, as his parents were able to support their son during his lengthy studies in Italy. Maximus visited Venice, Ferrara, Padua, Florence, and other cities, where he was able to study under the finest scholars of Italian learning; he studied not only Christian writings but also classical literature (Hesiod, Homer, Thucydides, Plutarch) and the works of the Greek “external philosophers” (“compiled by external sages”), as evidenced by his writings and his letter to Grand Prince Basil²⁵⁷. The greatest event in Maxim's life at that time was his acquaintance with Savonarola²⁵⁸. The young Greek could not have imagined that he himself would repeat the tragic fate of the Florentine preacher, equaling him in steadfastness and moral greatness. Perhaps, in the final years of his life, Maxim mentally envisioned the example of Savonarola's fate and found solace in his memories of this “ascetic, adorned with divine zeal”²⁵⁹. “Secular philosophers” could not fully satisfy Maxim; rooted in Christianity and in the teachings of the Eastern Church, he sought a thorough study of ecclesiastical theology and Orthodox doctrine, and he also sought inner Christian perfection. And so, around 1507, he set out for Mount Athos, for at that time the monks of Mount Athos constituted a stronghold of Orthodoxy.

It was a world entirely different from the humanistic atmosphere of the Italian Renaissance—a world of silence and the unique way of life found in the Athonite monasteries, sketes, and cells, where the monks lived almost identically in the 11th, 16th, and 19th centuries, —and their life was completely unlike the colorful bustle of Italian cities. At the Vatopedi Monastery, Maxim found a refuge for his theological studies; it was there that he took his monastic vows and was tonsured. On Mount Athos, Maxim developed as a person, as a scholar, and as a theologian; he acquired knowledge in the field of Orthodox theology—knowledge that was both extensive and thorough, as can be gleaned from his works. Yet the atmosphere of the Holy Mountain

²⁵³ Collected Works 1863, Vol. 3, pp. 112, 187, 105, 184, 109, 190, 184. We believe that the presence of numerous remarks on the condition of peasants in Muscovy in the writings of Maxim the Greek is linked to Vassian's influence; cf.: Maximus the Greek. Works, Vol. 2. “The Tale”—pp. 94, 98–100; “A Sermon on Repentance”—pp. 130, 131, 132; “A Sermon Beneficial to the Soul”—pp. 34, 38.

²⁵⁴ Makarii. 2nd ed. 6. pp. 141, 205. Cf.: Zhmakin. Op. cit. p. 65.

²⁵⁵ Golubinsky. Vol. 2, No. 1. p. 665. The literature on Maximus the Greek is relatively extensive; major works include: Ikonnikov (1915); as well as: Klosterman, R. A., “Maksim Grek in der Legende,” in: ZfKG. 53 (1943). pp. 177–228; Denissoff, E., *Maxime le Grec et l'Occident*. Paris-Bouven, 1943, pp. XIX–XXXIV.

²⁵⁶ See the work by E. Denissov mentioned above, in which he attempts, based on various Italian and Greek sources and literature, to trace Maxim's life from childhood to his arrival in Moscow. Cf. also: Golubinsky, vol. 2, part 1, pp. 667 ff.

²⁵⁷ See Maxim's letter to the Grand Duke regarding the translation of the Psalter, in: Addenda. 18. p. 184.

²⁵⁸ Maximus the Greek. Works, vol. 3, pp. 158, 194.

²⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 158.

by no means nullified the fruits of his studies in Italy. In his scholarship, we find a splendid combination of knowledge of classical philosophy and Christian theology; however, for Maxim, the teaching of the Church and the Holy Fathers holds the primary and indisputable authority²⁶⁰. Maximus's scholarly pursuits at the Vatopedi Monastery²⁶¹ lasted ten years; in the eyes of the Mount Athos community, he gained great theological authority, for it was not without reason that this responsible task was entrusted specifically to him.

In 1515, the Grand Prince sent two envoys to Mount Athos with gifts for all the monasteries of the Holy Mountain and a letter addressed to the Archimandrite of the Holy Mountain. The Grand Duke asked him to allow a certain monk named Savva, who knew the Slavic language, to travel to Moscow for a time: a Greek Psalter with commentaries had been discovered in the Grand Duke's library, and the Grand Duke wanted it to be translated. Due to illness and old age, the monk Savva was unable to undertake such a long and arduous journey. The Archimandrite then chose the monk Maxim for this task, even though he spoke neither Slavic nor Russian. But the Archimandrite, who was aware of Maxim's abilities and philological education, hoped (and wrote of this in his reply to the Grand Duke) that Monk Maxim would very quickly learn the Slavonic language and be able to fulfill the Grand Duke's wish. Thus, quite unexpectedly, Monk Maxim had to—as he thought, only for a short time—leave the Vatopedi Monastery and set off for Moscow. But he could not have imagined that he was leaving the holy Mount Athos forever and that an extraordinary fate awaited him in Moscow—one that would make him a major figure in the spiritual history of Rus' and, at the same time, take unexpected turns and end tragically²⁶².

On March 4, 1518, after a relatively long journey, Maxim arrived in Moscow. A completely new era began in his life, one that, on the one hand, brought him widespread respect and unofficial acclaim, and on the other, many hardships and undeserved persecution from the Josephite-leaning hierarchy. His own life's journey turned out to be closely intertwined with the events of 16th-century Russian church history, and he provided a remarkable account of this history in his writings, particularly in his critique of the state of the Church in Moscow—the “Third Rome.” Many of his writings constitute a very important and reliable source for the history of Russian monasticism of that era: they were written by an Orthodox monk who possessed extensive theological knowledge, observed life in the Holy Mountain monasteries, and lived that life himself—and was therefore able to offer an accurate assessment. His conflict with the Moscow hierarchy characterizes not only that hierarchy but also the entire Russian monastic community. We must not forget that at that time, the Russian church hierarchy was—unlike in later periods—flesh of the flesh and blood of the blood of the monastic community; it emerged from the monasteries, shared the monks' views, for the most part possessed the same theological knowledge, and, in general, had all the virtues and shortcomings of monasticism. And if a member of the episcopate shared the views of the Non-Acquirers or the Josephites—for there were almost no neutral bishops in the 16th century, especially in its first half—this was always connected with the spiritual atmosphere of the monastery in which a particular bishop had spent his monastic life.

It is clear that as soon as the Holy Mountain monk Maxim became acquainted with the ecclesiastical and political situation that had developed in Moscow, he—thanks to his knowledge of Sacred Scripture and the writings of the Holy Fathers, which could be useful to both parties—was, willy-nilly, compelled to take part in this epoch-making dispute. It was no coincidence that his knowledge, his own ascetic experience, and his personal convictions led him to side with the non-possessors; his acquaintance and frequent conversations with Prince-Monk Vassian—as will be discussed below—were not the primary reason for this choice, although we believe that it was from Vassian that Maximus received information about specific details and the general state of monastic life; the reason for his choice, however, was that the views of the Non-Possessors were indeed rooted in the true ascetic tradition of the Church.

Upon his arrival in Moscow, Maxim, as the chronicle reports, was received with “great honor” and settled first at the Chudov Monastery and then at the Simonov Monastery. Since he knew none of the Slavic languages, two Russian translators who were fluent in Latin were assigned to assist him with the translation work. A letter from the translator Dimitry Gerasimov to the deacon Misyur Munehin gives an idea of the difficulties they faced in their translation work: Maxim translated the Greek text into Latin, and Gerasimov

²⁶⁰ Gudziy, N. “Maximus the Greek and His Attitude Toward the Renaissance,” in: Univ. Kyiv. 1911. 7.

²⁶¹ Maximus the Greek. Works, vol. 2, p. 377.

²⁶² Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 6. pp. 159–160; PSRL. Vol. 6. p. 257; Vol. 8. p. 259; Denissoff. Op. cit., pp. 329–333. Epistle (letter) from the Grand Prince and reply from the archimandrite of the Vatopedi Monastery (incomplete) in: Vremennik, vol. 5, part 3, p. 30; Epistle to Metropolitan Barlaam in: AI, vol. 1, no. 122.

then translated it from Latin into Church Slavonic²⁶³. Nevertheless, the translation of the thick folio was completed in 16 months. Along with the new Church Slavonic Psalter, Maxim presented the Grand Duke with a lengthy preface in which he recounted the story of his arrival in Moscow and, at the same time, requested permission to return to the Vatopedi Monastery²⁶⁴. The Church Slavonic translation was reviewed by Metropolitan Varlaam and several bishops—of course, only the Slavonic text, since none of them knew Greek—and was approved and praised. But Maxim was not allowed to return to Mount Athos, although his companions—several monks from Vatopedi who had arrived in Moscow with him—were granted permission to return home.

Both the Grand Duke and Metropolitan Varlaam understood that, given the severe shortage of educated people in Moscow, Maxim could be of great service²⁶⁵. Maxim was entrusted with another important and difficult task—to correct the liturgical books, into which many errors had crept, by comparing them with the original Greek text. Although we do not know who initiated this, we can assume that the metropolitan entrusted this work to Maxim. It is possible that this idea was suggested to the metropolitan by Prince-Monk Vassian, whom we already know, for he believed that all Slavic translations of liturgical books contained errors, inaccuracies, and obscure passages. Nor should we forget that Vassian had personal reasons for keeping Maxim in Moscow as long as possible: he needed an experienced advisor for his work on the *Kormchaya*, and Maxim could be of great use to him. Thus, Maxim had to remain in Moscow for an indefinite period and carry out a new assignment²⁶⁶.

While in Moscow, having gradually learned the Russian language, Maxim was able, through his own observations and interactions with various individuals—most notably the monk-prince Vassian—to gain a thorough understanding of church life in Russia, monastic life, the views of bishops and monks, government policy, the Grand Duke's autocracy, and his interference in church affairs. Maxim witnessed the unlawful deposition of Metropolitan Barlaam from his see, which constituted a gross example of the Church's dependence on the Grand Prince's autocracy. He subjected all these aspects of church life to indignant and sharp criticism; they prompted him to write a series of polemical and critical works. These works are very important documents for us, providing a thorough insight into Russian religiosity in the 16th century.²⁶⁷ When a Russian, such as Joseph or Vassian, criticizes various aspects of Russian life, we must always bear in mind that they may not be entirely objective, that they are influenced by their partisan biases—for example, on the issue of monastic estates. Maxim could not have harbored such bias; moreover, his critical writings were composed in a strictly ecclesiastical spirit, for he was well versed in canon law and ecclesiastical life on Mount Athos and in the Eastern Church in general.

Among Maxim's works²⁶⁸, four treatises are specifically devoted to the issue of monastic estates and monastic life, and this gives us reason to draw upon material from these treatises in our essay on the dispute between the two factions, even though Maxim was not Russian and did not belong to either the Josephites or the Non-Acquirers. It should be noted, however, that his other works, when they discuss Russian religiosity, also address the way of life of Russian monasticism²⁶⁹.

His principal work directed against monastic estates was "The Tale of a Well-Known Monastic Life"²⁷⁰, written in the form of a dialogue. Philoctymon (the covetous one) and Actymon (the non-covetous one)

²⁶³ Letter from Gerasimov in: Addenda. 18. p. 190.

²⁶⁴ Maximus the Greek. Works 2. p. 299 ff. This work supplements the two letters mentioned above; it shows that Maximus was sent to carry out only one specific translation.

²⁶⁵ Maximus earned the metropolitan's favor and gratitude by personally translating, for him, an anonymous commentary on the Acts of the Holy Apostles. Macarius. 2nd ed. 6. p. 166.

²⁶⁶ Unfortunately, there is no information about this work by Maximus other than a few remarks by Maximus himself. Works 1, pp. 33, 37. Cf.: Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 683. Herberstein's account of Maximus (Op. cit., p. 91) does not correspond to reality. It is possible that Herberstein, who visited Moscow in 1526, relied on various rumors circulating in Moscow.

²⁶⁷ Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 665.

²⁶⁸ Maximus the Greek. Works. Published by the Kazan Theological Academy. 3 vols.: 1 (1859, 2nd ed. 1894), 2 (1860), 3 (1862, 2nd ed. 1897). 2nd ed.: Sergiev Posad, 1910–1911. 3 vols. (Russian translation from the Church Slavonic original). On Maxim's works, see: Golubinsky. 2. 2. pp. 232–263. Denisoff. Op. cit. pp. 35–40. On Maxim's journalistic writings: Rzhiga. Essays on the History of 16th-Century Russian Journalism. Maxim the Greek as a Journalist, in: TODRL. 1 (1934).

²⁶⁹ See: Preobrazhensky (1881); Ikonnikov (1915).

²⁷⁰ Maximus the Greek. Works, Vol. 2, pp. 89–119. The exact title is "The Tale of a Famous Monastic Life. The Contenders Philoctymon and Actymon, That Is, the Greedy One and the Non-Greedy One." According to Rzhiga, the Tale was written between 1531 and 1537. Rzhiga. Op. cit. p. 105.

discuss the foundations of the monastic life. The former, representing Joseph's views, seeks to prove that the introduction of strict coenobial life (communal living) eliminates the negative aspects of using monastic estates, since none of the brethren derives personal benefit from it; he thus attempts to justify the communal use of the estates. To this, Aktimon replies: "It is laughable to imagine that this is any different from the situation where many men unlawfully consort with a single harlot and are reviled for it, yet each defends himself, saying: 'Not a single sin comes from this, for this common acquisition is the same for all'; or if someone went out with many robbers to commit robbery and gathered much plunder, and then, due to certain circumstances, was caught by those seeking the robbers, who tormented and tortured him severely, he would reply, saying: 'I am not guilty of anything; I left everything with them and took nothing from there'"²⁷¹.

In another work ("A Word Beneficial to the Soul"), Reason converses with his soul about Christian virtues and asks her: "How, then, can you acquire meekness, humble wisdom, and sacred silence of heart, when you are so often and unrestrainedly carried away by anger and quarrels—whether over lands, the peasants themselves, or your neighbors—whenever they seem to have wronged you in any way, striving to insult them as if they were enemies?"²⁷². In another work, Maximus expresses his fundamental view on the treatment of monastic peasants, reminding the owners of monastic estates: "The Divine Paradise does not accept into itself those who, with all manner of greed and inhumanity, hoard treasures of gold and silver for themselves on earth, but casts them out"²⁷³ — yet it was precisely the monasteries that lent money to their peasants at high interest rates. In Maximus's view, only non-acquisitiveness provides the true Christian ascetic foundation for monastic life: "Such people, constantly giving of themselves to others and, like loving fathers, constantly caring for the salvation of many, are honored and beloved by all"²⁷⁴. His other writings concerning monastic estates—and directed against them—are written in the same spirit; these include: a) "A Discourse on Repentance," b) "A Discourse on the Reform of the Monastic Life," and c) "A Discourse on Repentance and the Insatiable Stomach"²⁷⁵.

But Maximus is not content with merely rhetorical criticism of the vices of monastic life: he provides an example of the proper organization of monastic life. He does this in the work "A Terrible and Memorable Tale of the Perfect Monastic Life," in which Maximus, recalling what he witnessed in Italy, describes the virtuous life of the Carthusian monks, the monastic rule of that order, and their perfect non-possessiveness, which is expressed in the fact that the monks live on alms from the faithful and, in return, provide their lay Christian brothers with spiritual care and, more broadly, an inner mission. Maxim's conclusion is as follows: alms from the laity, for which the monks repay with Christian instruction and enlightenment, constitute the foundation of monastic life²⁷⁶.

In all these writings, when discussing the organization of monastic life, Maxim adopts a purely ascetic perspective. Maxim himself had no partisan bias, something one might suspect of the Josephites or Vassian. He served only a "pure idea"²⁷⁷, writing out of pure idealism and a firm conviction in the righteousness of his beliefs. Nor should we forget that his polemical activities were dangerous for him, for the new Metropolitan Daniel (1522–1539) was a staunch Josephite; he could have punished Maxim for his sympathy toward the non-possessors and did indeed take revenge on him.

In criticizing Russian monasticism, Maxim did not call for the forcible and universal secularization of monastic estates. For him, the main goal was not the reorganization of monastic life through any external reforms; rather, internal improvement and the revitalization of the monastic way of life took precedence. State

²⁷¹ Maximus the Greek. Works, vol. 2, p. 114.

²⁷² Ibid. Vol. 2, pp. 5–52. "This discourse is very beneficial to the soul for those who heed it. The mind converses with its own soul; it also addresses the topic of greed." p. 42; also written between 1531 and 1537. Rzhiga, op. cit., p. 105.

²⁷³ Maximus the Greek. Works, Vol. 3, pp. 178–205 (2nd ed., pp. 145–167): "A Terrible and Memorable Tale Concerning the Perfect Monastic Life." p. 205 (2nd ed., p. 167).

²⁷⁴ Maximus the Greek. Works, Vol. 2, p. 147.

²⁷⁵ Ibid. 2: a) "A Sermon on Sincere Repentance and on the True Monastic Life." pp. 119–144; b) "A Sermon in Remembrance of the Correction of the Monastic Life, Addressed to Certain Virtuous Nuns." pp. 394–415; c) "A Sermon on Repentance and on the Insatiable Stomach and the Countless Evils of Sinful Monks." p. 148. Maxim also addresses the issue of monastic estates in his work "Instructive Chapters." Ibid. pp. 157–184.

²⁷⁶ Ibid. Vol. 3, pp. 178–205.

²⁷⁷ Pavlov. Op. cit. p. 79.

intervention could be justified only if it directed the income from monastic, parish, and diocesan estates toward charitable causes, such as charity²⁷⁸.

Prince-monk Vassian and the Mount Athos monk Maxim, two men so different from one another—both in terms of their past life circumstances and their inner spiritual dispositions—became, thanks to their unusual fate, kindred spirits and champions of the same cause, even though, as we have already seen, their reasons for opposing monastic land ownership were different. This demonstrates just how important the question of the proper organization of monastic life in Russia was. And yet these two polemicists were the only representatives of the monastic community in the first half of the 16th century who openly called for a reorganization of monastic life in their writings. Regrettably, it must be acknowledged that their literary work found no resonance in church circles, which stubbornly clung to the views of the Josephites; it may have only indirectly influenced certain half-hearted measures taken by the secular authorities.

In this regard, attention should be drawn to one of the most interesting figures of the 16th century—Elder Artemy, who, not through his writings but through his personal actions, helped ensure that the issue of monastic estates was raised at the Stoglav Council. The life and spiritual development of Elder Artemy²⁷⁹ once again take us to the Trans-Volga region, to that haven of the non-acquisitive, where the spirit of Nil Sorsky still lived, and where he continued to attract new followers and successors. Nil and Artemy, the leading representatives of this movement in the history of Russian monasticism, set forth their views in writing, and through their writings we can gain insight into this ascetic-mystical movement. We will discuss Artemy's writings—which represent both a further development and a certain modification of Nil's views—later; for now, we wish only to say a few words about his life and highlight his role in resolving the issue of monastic estates.

There is no information about his origins or his place of birth. He began his monastic life under St. Cornelius of Komel († 1537). In 1536, Artemy left that monastery and settled not far from the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, in a hermitage that was likely founded by the elder Porphyry, the former abbot of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery (1521–1524). Elder Porphyry himself, a monk of strict ascetic life and, in his views, a non-possessor, was forced to resign as abbot because he had incurred the wrath of the Grand Prince with a few words of admonition filled with reproach: “²⁸⁰ .” His association with Porphyry and other non-possessors—the elders Tikhon, Dorotheus, and Ioasaf Belobayev—drew Artemy into the world of non-possessor ideas and made him a devotee of these ideas²⁸¹. Artemy remained in the desert until 1550–51. *Around the same time, or perhaps even before 1536—it is difficult to determine exactly when—he made a journey to Pskov. From Pskov, Artemy set off abroad—“to the German lands” (that is, to Estonia)—to familiarize himself firsthand with Western Christianity and to discuss and debate matters of faith with the local Lutherans (“to discuss through books”)*²⁸². *His time in Porphyry's desert was a decisive period in Artemy's life: it was there that his spiritual formation took place, and it was there that he earned the respect of his fellow monks through the austerity of his life and his theological education, so that word of him eventually reached Moscow.*

In late 1550 or early 1551, Artemy was invited to Moscow; we do not know who recommended him. All that is known is that the young Tsar Ivan ordered him to be placed in the Chudov Monastery and instructed his spiritual father, the priest Sylvester, to thoroughly examine Artemy's knowledge and assess his personal qualities (“to discern in him every virtue and spiritual benefit”). After speaking with Artemy, Silvestr reported to the tsar that both Artemy's personal qualities and his theological education—which were well known to many people—were indeed worthy of praise²⁸³. At that very time, the Trinity-Sergius Monastery was without an abbot, and the tsar, at the request of Sylvester and the monastic community, ordered on May 17, 1551, that Artemy be appointed abbot of this monastery. But it was not Sylvester's recommendation alone that prompted the tsar to make this choice. From Artemy's writings, we know that at that time he himself was in contact with the young tsar, who asked him to instruct him in the Holy Scriptures and in the affairs of daily life. A contemporary, Prince Andrei Kurbsky, wrote of Artemy that “the tsar had previously loved him dearly and

²⁷⁸ Maximus the Greek. Works, vol. 2, p. 172.

²⁷⁹ For information on Elder Artemios, see the bibliography for Chapter X.

²⁸⁰ Gorsky, A. Historical Description of the Holy Trinity St. Sergius Lavra. 1 (1890). p. 78.

²⁸¹ AAE. 1. No. 238.

²⁸² AAE. 1. No. 238. p. 251.

²⁸³ Ibid. p. 246.

conversed with him many times”²⁸⁴. But Artemy did not remain abbot for long; after six months, he left the monastery and returned to the hermitage. It appears that Prince Kurbsky’s assertion is true—that Artemy left his office due to disputes with the Josephite-leaning brethren—for Artemy, with his ascetic views, found the atmosphere in the monastery not merely unpleasant but utterly unbearable, and, as is evident from later accounts by the priests Silvestr and Simeon, he decided to prefer the “honest” silence of the desert to the disorderly life of a large, wealthy monastery²⁸⁵.

What is important for us is that, in his conversations with the young tsar, Artemy also raised the issue of monastic estates, and he spoke out on this pressing issue (namely, at the very time the Stoglav Council was in session) in the spirit of the non-possessors, believing that monks should live not off their estates but by the labor of their own hands²⁸⁶. These conversations did not go unnoticed, for Artemy’s views found sympathy with the tsar, and perhaps the well-known decree of May 11, 1551, concerning monastic estates—which we will discuss in detail later—is closely connected with these conversations²⁸⁷. Thus, Elder Artemy’s personal involvement yielded more practical results than the polemical writings of Vassian or Maximus.

Another work is devoted to the problem of the corrupting influence of monastic estates on monastic life: the so-called “Conversation of the Venerable Sergius and Herman, the Wonderworkers of Valaam,” an anonymous work from the mid-16th century. Literary historians offer varying answers regarding when it was written and who its author or authors were²⁸⁸. In our opinion, this work originated in monastic circles that did not fully belong to the Non-Acquirers’ faction but felt a clear aversion to the ecclesiastical-political activities and views of the Josephites. We also believe that the authors of the “Conversation” were well acquainted with the works of Vassian and Maximus and that these works served as a source for them, as well as, of course, their personal experience and a good knowledge of the everyday ecclesiastical life of their time. The authors were not as well-educated as Vassian or Maximus, which is immediately apparent from the style of the work: it is written in poor language, the ideas are expressed haphazardly, and there are many repetitions.

Four main ideas characterize the authors’ ecclesiastical and political viewpoint: (1) the denial of monasteries’ right to landholdings, (2) criticism of the close ties between the tsar’s governance and the church hierarchy, (3) sympathy for the plight of monastic peasants, and (4) a certain conservatism in their assessment of life in Moscow at that time. The first two ideas are closely intertwined: *The Conversation* reproaches the tsar for the expansion of monastic estates, the enrichment of the monastic order, and its secularization, since the tsar allows land holdings to accumulate in the hands of monks and often personally grants land inhabited by peasants to monasteries: “It is not fitting for a tsar to bestow villages and districts inhabited by Christians upon monks, and such an act on the part of a tsar is not praiseworthy.” The tsar may assist monasteries, but only with money, which can be regarded as alms. This view is expressed several times in *The Discourse*, likely not merely for the sake of repetition, but to emphasize this point. Elsewhere in the “Discourse,” the statement is even more pointed: “Foolish kings, enemies of Christ, bestow favors upon monks and give them their royal estates, towns, villages, and districts along with their Christian inhabitants, and exempt them from the tax obligations of their own Christians, as if they were pagans,” and the peasants are thus left without land.

²⁸⁴ AAE. 1. No. 72. No. 238; AI. 1. No. 132. Kurbsky. Legend (1842). p. 136. Artemy. Epistles, in: RIB. 4. pp. 1388, 1383, 1386, 1390, 1440.

²⁸⁵ Kurbsky. Op. cit. p. 134; Gorsky. Op. cit. p. 84; AAE. 1. No. 238.

²⁸⁶ Letter to Tsar Ivan, in: RIB. 4. pp. 1440, 1432–1441. This work was likely written in 1553; in it, Artemy reminds the tsar of their previous conversations and reiterates his views on monastic life. Cf.: Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 836.

²⁸⁷ Cf.: Zhdanov, in: ZhMNP. 1876. 7. p. 67; Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 836.

²⁸⁸ The first publisher of *The Conversation*, O. Bodiansky (in: *Readings*. 1859. 3), expressed the opinion that the author of *The Conversation* was Prince-Monk Vassian. This assertion has been disputed by many. A. S. Pavlov (Historical Essay, p. 136, note) believed that *The Conversation* did not originate in monastic circles. E. E. Golubinsky (2. 1, p. 655) also disputed Bodiansky’s view. Bodiansky’s edition was very flawed, and V. Druzhinin and M. Dyakonov prepared a new edition (in: LZAK, vol. 9); based on a thorough study of the language and style, they too concluded that the *Conversation* did not originate in monastic circles; a similar point of view was expressed by I. A. Stratonov (Notes on the History of the Zemsky Sobors, in: Scientific Notes of Kazan University 1906, 3). Bodiansky’s opinion was supported by S. L. Avaliani (in: BV. 1909, no. 1), who also identifies Prince-Monk Vassian as the author of *The Conversation* and dates its composition to 1531–1537 (ibid., p. 380). Other literary historians objected to his view: N. Gudzi (in: *Russian Philology*, vol. 1, 1913, 3) and G. Belchenko (1914). Recently, the view has been expressed that the *Conversation* originated among the peasantry of the Trans-Volga region, since the rapid growth of monastic estates in that region caused strong discontent among the peasants. The frequent reminder that the tsar, in carrying out his policies, must consult with representatives of the peasantry (the village community) allowed I. Smirnov (in: Ist. Zap. 15, 1946. p. 257) to argue that *The Conversation* is a journalistic work that emerged from peasant circles.

Monks must not accept such gifts from kings—“that is, beloved brethren, from the devil; it is a new heresy contrary to the new grace, that monks should possess districts inhabited by Christians.”

Following Vassian and Maximus, the authors of the “Discourse” speak of the mistreatment of peasants by monastic authorities and their stewards. Thus, the “Discourse” contains a social protest against the oppression of peasants. At the same time, the “Conversation” emphasizes that monastic life is falling into decline due to the enrichment of monasteries, since the fundamental principles of asceticism are either pushed into the background or completely destroyed as a result of the monasteries’ involvement in worldly affairs.

The political views of the compilers of *The Discourse* are also characterized by their reasoning on how kings should rule. *The Discourse* categorically rejects the right of church hierarchs to participate in governance or to serve as advisors to the king: “It was not from the monks that the Lord commanded the tsar to rule the kingdom, the cities, and the districts, and to hold power—but from the princes, the boyars, and other laypeople, not from the monks... It is fitting for the tsar himself, with his own powers, to govern the realm in all matters, and not with the monks”²⁸⁹. This idea of the necessity for the boyars and other segments of the population to participate in the governance of the country, on the one hand, echoes the views of Vassian and other representatives of conservative circles among the boyars; on the other hand, it brings to mind the social relations in the republican city of Veliky Novgorod²⁹⁰.

The conservatism of *The Discourse* is expressed not only in the discussion of the issues already mentioned, but also in its attitude toward foreign influences, which, according to the authors of *The Discourse*, constitute “misfortune, sorrow, and ruin” for Christians—that is, for Russians—and call into question the purity of the faith. The work criticizes the “unfaithful” West and foreigners who care only about this earthly, “worldly” life, “while we strive for the life to come”²⁹¹.

3. Writings Defending the Right of Monasteries to Own Estates

“Conversation” concludes the literary polemic against monastic estates; its aim was, if not to completely halt, then at least to slow the growth of landholdings and the enrichment of monasteries. But for actual history, the activities of the defenders of monastic estates and the government’s position were of greater significance.

The views of Joseph of Volokolamsk, which we have already discussed in connection with the Council of 1503, always remained something of a dogma for the Josephites and for the church hierarchy. Shortly after that Council (around 1504–05), *at the behest of Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod, a treatise was composed in which the question of monasteries’ right to land holdings was again discussed, and an attempt was made to justify this right canonically. It is a rather lengthy work which, despite its length, is titled “A Brief Word”* (²⁹²). *Its author was not a Russian, but a Dominican monk named Benjamin, likely of Slavic origin, who, by an irony of fate, found himself in Novgorod at the end of the 15th century, where, at the archbishop’s request, he translated several books of the Bible from the Latin Vulgate into the Slavic language; It is unknown to us whether the Dominican remained a Roman Catholic or converted to the Greek Orthodox Church*²⁹³. *The main ideas of “The Word” are as follows: secularization and even a tendency toward it are nothing other than a manifestation of hostility toward God’s will. The episcopate and monasteries must constantly bear this in mind. They must not allow interference in matters concerning monastic estates and are obliged to combat such attempts or actions. Kings and secular authorities, in general, must not in any way confiscate, restrict, or take away the property and estates of the Church and its institutions. The basis for the Church’s right to own movable and immovable property is found in the words of Christ Himself; the holy apostles confirm this right; and pious Christian emperors, beginning with Constantine (with reference to the “Constantine Grant”), “Louis I, King of the Romans, and Charles the Great,” as well as Emperors Otto I and Henry I, Caesars of*

²⁸⁹ “The Conversation” (1890). pp. 4, 5, 3, 10, 7, 8, 21, 17, 24, 13.

²⁹⁰ Unfortunately, Smirnov’s view cannot be substantiated by the full context of *Beseda*. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it was precisely the free peasantry of the North (“black-soil peasantry”) that fought very fiercely and quite frequently against the founders of monasteries (cf. Chapter VII below). On the peasantry of the North in general, see: Bogoslovsky, M. “Zemstvo Self-Government in the Russian North in the 17th Century,” Vol. 1 (1909).

²⁹¹ “Beseda” (1890). pp. 14, 22, 24. It should be noted that some of the views expressed by the authors of “Beseda” are similar to those expressed in Metropolitan Daniel’s “Epistles.” These “Epistles” will be discussed below.

²⁹² “A Brief Word in Defense of Monastic Property.” Ed. A. D. Grigoriev, in: *Readings*. 1902. 2; cf.: Avaliani, in: *BV*. 1908. 3. p. 374.

²⁹³ Ibid. Preface. pp. XXV–XXVII.

*Rome, treated the Church's rights to own movable and immovable property with the utmost respect. At the end of "The Word," the author further emphasizes that spiritual authority is superior to secular authority; although both authorities come from God, secular authority must submit to spiritual authority*²⁹⁴.

The "Word" was the only work written in the first half of the 16th century, following the Council of 1503, in defense of Joseph's views: his faction felt strong enough and had no need for polemical journalism. Such was the fate of the non-acquisitive: to fight for their cause and attack the Josephites.

Another interesting fragment dates to the first half of the 16th century, in which secular authorities are warned against interfering in matters related to church property. In the mid-16th century, the Office of the Metropolitan of Moscow undertook the task of compiling ancient decrees of the Tatar khans, which affirmed the rights of churches, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and all clergy. It is possible that the purpose of this endeavor was to obtain new evidence confirming the monasteries' rights to land holdings. The collection of charters was accompanied by an afterword written by an unknown scribe from the metropolitan's inner circle. In it, the author emphasizes the benevolent attitude of the "pagan khans" toward the Russian Church, whose privileges they had preserved in their entirety, including exemption from taxes. He holds up the khans as an example to the "Orthodox princes" and admonishes them: "You, Orthodox princes and boyars, strive to show charity toward the holy churches, lest you be put to shame by those barbarians on the Day of Judgment"²⁹⁵.

The compilation of this collection of *yarlyks* followed an attempt in 1550 by the young Tsar Ivan IV to transfer part of the Moscow Metropolitan's estates to the state treasury so that these lands could be granted as estates to the service class. The tsar's plans, as well as negotiations with the metropolitan regarding the acquisition of lands through purchase or exchange, met with sharp objections from the Moscow hierarchy. Metropolitan Makarii composed a special treatise entitled "On Immovable Property Entrusted to God as an Inheritance of Earthly Blessings." In it, he vehemently protests the tsar's plans and justifies the Church's rights to land holdings with various quotations from Holy Scripture and conciliar decrees; as in the "Brief Word," Makarii also mentions "Constantine's dowry"²⁹⁶.

This dispute between secular and ecclesiastical authorities, which ended peacefully, best illustrates that the state was not entirely in favor of the expansion of church lands, for it needed to redistribute land to achieve its own goals.

4. Sixteenth-Century Government Measures Aimed at Limiting Monastic Land Ownership

Meanwhile, church holdings in the Muscovite Tsardom continued to grow. Monasteries, founded as hermitages for ascetic practices, eventually—through the acquisition of land by purchase, donation, and other means—transformed into veritable economic colonies. The monasteries had their own peasants, who either worked at the monastery, paid rent, or performed *corvée* labor on monastic land. Numerous privileges granted by the state contributed to the economic prosperity and enrichment of the monasteries. Adam Clement, who visited Moscow in 1553, wrote that in the Moscow Tsardom "*plurima ibi exstruuntur Basilianorum coenopia; their agricultural revenues are substantial, for the monks hold one-third of the land of the entire realm*" [there are many Basilian monasteries there, and they possess a great deal of land; one-third of the land of the entire realm belongs to the monks]²⁹⁷.

But the transformation of the Principality of Moscow into the great Moscow Tsardom forced the government to provide armed defense of its borders. The task of maintaining the army—which consisted mainly of servicemen who received estates as payment for their military service—was one that the government never managed to resolve entirely satisfactorily. As established by historical scholarship, land was the state's sole capital. There was a shortage of arable land at the government's disposal that could be granted as estates; this is explained, as already noted, by the fact that a significant portion of the land was owned by the Church and monasteries, and all new land grants continued to slip from the government's grasp²⁹⁸.

²⁹⁴ Ibid. pp. 12, 16, 24, 29–31, 48. Cf.: Golubinsky. 2. 2. p. 635, and Maikov. IORAS. 1900. 2. p. 377.

²⁹⁵ Priselkov. Khan's Charters (1916). p. 61. The charters issued by the khans of the Golden Horde were documents confirming the rights of the Russian Church and exempting it from tribute to the khans.

²⁹⁶ Makarii's treatise in: Tikhonravov. Chronicle. Vol. 5, Part 3, p. 129; Golubinsky. Vol. 2, Part 1, p. 800. The tsar's decree in: Vremennik. Vol. 20, Part 3, p. 41.

²⁹⁷ Clement Adam, in: *Rerum Moscoviticarum scriptores varii* (Frankfurt, 1600). p. 152.

²⁹⁸ See the bibliography for Chapters VII and VIII—studies by S. Rozhdestvensky (1897), N. Rozhkov (1899), Y. Gautier (1915), V. Milyutin (1859–1861), and Gorchakov (1868); as well as: Kljutschewskij. Geschichte Russlands. 2; Stählin. 1. pp. 296 ff.; Pavlov-Silvansky, N. The Tsar's Servants (1909).

Even before the Council of 1503, the Grand Prince of Moscow had taken the first steps against monastic and church estates. After the conquest of Novgorod (1478), he distributed vast tracts of land in the Novgorod region—which had previously belonged to the metropolitan and the wealthiest monasteries—as estates to his Moscow-based officials; this was a characteristic feature of Moscow’s colonization policy²⁹⁹. The Archbishop of Novgorod, Theophilus—the last bishop elected by the people of Novgorod themselves—vehemently protested these measures by the Moscow government, but in 1480 he was removed from his see and replaced by Archbishop Sergius (1483–1484), who had been appointed by Moscow. In 1490–1491, all church and monastic estates were thoroughly inventoried by clerks specially sent from Moscow³⁰⁰. As a result of this inventory, a new confiscation of church and monastic lands in favor of the state took place in 1499–1500, and this measure also affected poor monasteries³⁰¹.

It is clear that the initiative of the elders from beyond the Volga, put forward at the Council of 1503, was very convenient for the government; although, after this initiative failed as a result of Joseph of Volokolamsk’s resolute objections, the Grand Prince—who privately sympathized with it—took no steps to secure a change in the Council’s decrees or even to repeat the Novgorod confiscation on a larger scale.

The successors of Ivan III, despite the very vigorous literary activity of Prince-Monk Vassian directed against monastic estates, also took no concrete measures to limit the Church’s landholdings. A significant factor in this was the fact that Metropolitan Daniel (1522–1539), who wholeheartedly shared the views of the Josephites, was on good terms with the Grand Prince, especially after 1525, when he blessed Vasily III’s second marriage. However, the decrees of the Stoglav Council reveal that during Vasily’s reign, the government issued a decree prohibiting service men in the Tver, Mikulin, Torzhok, and Belozero districts from transferring their estates to monasteries as a contribution for the repose of their souls; later, this prohibition was extended to the Yaroslavl, Suzdal, and Starodub districts³⁰². After Vasily’s death (1533), during the minority of Ivan IV and the regency of Grand Duchess Elena—when state power was effectively in the hands of her favorite boyars—the government managed to partially limit the expansion of monastic holdings. A charter from 1535 has survived, in which the Glushitsky Monastery is prohibited from purchasing or exchanging estates, as well as accepting them for the repose of souls, without the Grand Prince’s permission³⁰³. A year later, the government seized fallow lands—that is, uncultivated lands—from various churches and monasteries in Novgorod. These measures were fully in line with the views of the boyars, who viewed the transfer of boyar estates to the Church with displeasure³⁰⁴.

The beginning of Ivan IV’s reign (1533–1584; in reality, 1546–1584) marked the start of a new era in addressing the issue of monastic lands. The young tsar’s first attempt to curb their expansion, undertaken in 1550, was unsuccessful due to strong objections from Metropolitan Makarii³⁰⁵. The need to acquire land to distribute as estates to his servants, and perhaps conversations with the elder Artemy, compelled the tsar to raise the issue of monastic estates several times in his addresses (“tsar’s questions”) at the Stoglav Council in connection with criticism of monastic life. The Stoglav Council, which in principle confirmed the inviolability of monastic and church property, issued, however, a “decree” dated May 11, 1551, under which bishops who had received land from the children of boyars, servicemen, or peasants in payment for debts were obligated to return these plots to their former owners. In addition, properties transferred to bishops or monasteries without the tsar’s permission were subject to return. “And whoever, without the sovereign’s knowledge,” the decree states, “gives their estate to a monastery of their own free will, and that estate is held by the monasteries without payment to the sovereign.” From then on, monasteries could also purchase land only with the tsar’s

²⁹⁹ PSRL. 4. pp. 216–217. Nikitsky. An Essay on the Internal History of the Church in Veliky Novgorod (1879). p. 126.

³⁰⁰ Pavlov. Historical Essay. p. 32; Grekov. The Novgorod House of St. Sophia (1914). pp. 246–247.

³⁰¹ PSRL. 4. p. 271; and in the Belozersk region, which belonged to the Novgorod Republic, many peasant households were transferred to state control. S. A. Yu. No. 5. For details, see: Gnevushev, A. Essays on the Economic and Social Life of the Rural Population of the Novgorod Region after Its Annexation by Moscow. 1 (1915). pp. 3–8, 276–307, 347 ff., 355 ff. (abridged in: BV. 1911. 2); Yanitsky, N. “The Economic Crisis in the Novgorod Region in the 16th Century,” in: Univ. Kiev. 1914. 7. pp. 12–14.

³⁰² AAE. 1. No. 227. p. 219; Pavlov. Historical Essay. p. 37.

³⁰³ IRI. 3. p. 714. From the first paragraph of the charter, one can conclude that this procedure existed not only for the Glushitsky Monastery; unfortunately, no documents have survived to prove that this procedure was universal.

³⁰⁴ PSRL. 4. p. 299. Description of Documents and Cases Held in the Moscow Archive of the Ministry of Justice. 1 (1869). p. 169 (No. 1736); Alexander Nevsky Chronicle, in: RIB. 3. p. 248.

³⁰⁵ Cf.: Stoglav. Ch. 98 (Kazan ed., p. 412).

consent³⁰⁶. Despite its formal strictness, this decree, as we shall see later, was hardly ever enforced in practice. It should not be forgotten that at the same time, the Council recognized the Church's right—represented by the metropolitan, the bishops, and the monasteries—to retain ownership of land already acquired. Therefore, the ruling of the Stoglav Council was merely a stopgap measure. We will see later that legislation regarding monastic estates would formally become increasingly strict; however, the effects of this tightening would be nullified by new royal charters issued by the tsar.

A tsarist decree of 1557 granted the relatives of testators the right to redeem from monasteries the hereditary estates bequeathed to them, at fixed prices³⁰⁷. However, a few years later, this decree was repealed by a resolution of the Council in 1572. At the same time, the Council ruled that only poor, land-poor monasteries could accept land holdings as gifts. Theoretically, this ruling of October 9, 1572, was very important, for it limited the further growth of the wealth of large monasteries: “No further estates shall be granted to large monasteries that already possess many estates”. The estates were to be returned to the service men, “so that there would be no loss in service and the land would not be withdrawn from service”³⁰⁸.

The next Council (1580) resolved the issue largely in favor of the state: a general rule was adopted whereby neither the metropolitan, nor the bishops, nor the monasteries could acquire land from landowners through purchase or as collateral³⁰⁹. The Council justified this ruling by noting that the Moscow Tsardom was surrounded by enemies (the Council likely referred to the war in the west, in Livonia, and the raids by the Crimean Tatars), and that well-armed and well-equipped military men were needed to repel them. But the servicemen had been reduced to extreme poverty and possessed neither land nor money to equip themselves. Furthermore, the Council noted that the enrichment of monasteries led to the corruption of monastic life, fostering among the monks a habit of excessive eating and drinking; this may have reflected the views of the Council participants.

The decree of the 1580 Council—primarily its first part—could have become a new program of government measures to resolve the issue of church estates, had it been put into practice. Two years later, on July 20, 1584, already under Tsar Fyodor (1584–1598), a new Council was convened. This Council reaffirmed the 1580 decree and supplemented it with very important measures, namely: if not permanently, then for an indefinite period, the tarhans were abolished—“until the sovereign's... decree... to set aside the tarhans, until such time as the land is put in order... and to pay all tsarist taxes and local levies through the tarhan, by any tarhan... with all the people”³¹⁰.

This new government measure, prompted primarily by the state's extremely difficult financial situation, was in fact directed against church and monastic estates, for almost all of them had been exempted from taxes and levies owed to the state by special letters of grant and tarhans. Had the government implemented this program, on the one hand, one could have spoken of a sharp change in government policy regarding church and monastic estates, and on the other, one could have expected a significant increase in revenue for the state treasury. But this decree of the Council was very soon—as was often the case in the administrative practice of the Muscovite state—violated by the government itself³¹¹. It is both interesting and significant that the authorities viewed the Council's decree of July 20 as an actual abolition of the tarhans and sought to implement it as quickly as possible. As early as the beginning of fall of that same year, petitions were received from the monasteries, indicating that local authorities were demanding taxes from them³¹².

Various documents show that, immediately after the issuance of the decree of July 20, 1584, the monastic authorities took steps to circumvent it. As early as August 11—that is, three weeks later—the

³⁰⁶ AAE. 1. No. 227. p. 219.

³⁰⁷ AI. 1. No. 154. IV.

³⁰⁸ AI. 1. No. 154. XIX. Pavlov (Historical Essay, p. 142) and Gorchakov (On Land Holdings, p. 62) erroneously date this decree to 1573.

³⁰⁹ SGGD. 1. No. 200 (the version in: AAE. 1. No. 308, p. 372, is incorrect).

³¹⁰ SGGD. 1. No. 202. pp. 594, 595.

³¹¹ This fact was already established by S. F. Platonov (Essays on the History of the Time of Troubles (1899). p. 593); cf. also his brilliant work “Boris Godunov” (1924). p. 82. A. Shpakov (The State and the Church in Their Relations in the Muscovite State. The Establishment of the Patriarchate in Russia (1912). pp. 85, 39) believed that the restoration of the tarhans was carried out at the behest of the pious Tsar Fyodor, who could not refuse the petitions of the monasteries.

³¹² See, for example: Historical Acts of the Spassky Monastery in Yaroslavl. 1 (1896). Nos. 58, 59, 60; Shumakov, S. *Catalog of the Letters of the Board of Finance*. 4 (1917). No. 1798; Kataev, I., and Kabanov, A. *Catalog of the Acts of Count Uvarov's Collection*. Historical Acts (1905). No. 58—dating as early as October 11, 1584; Petrov, V. “The 1584 Conciliar Code on the Abolition of Tarkhans,” in: Collection in Honor of S. F. Platonov (1922). pp. 191–201.

Solovetsky Monastery succeeded in retaining its old tarhans, though in exchange for a commitment to pay an annual rent³¹³. Other examples of the half-hearted nature of government policy can be cited, so this new legislation did not bring any particular practical benefits to the state.

The economic activities of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery are particularly telling; during the 16th century, it amassed extensive landholdings. Documents from this monastery show that, following the ruling of the Stoglav Council, the monastery authorities had no intention whatsoever of reducing their land acquisitions in accordance with that ruling. On the contrary, it was precisely in the first years following the Council—between 1551 and 1572—that the monastery authorities were engaged in purchasing new lands, mainly in the north, and most importantly, the monastery did not even attempt to seek the tsar's permission for this. After the 1572 decree, which prohibited accepting land endowments from military servants for the repose of their souls, the monastery sought to enrich itself through salt pits and saltworks transferred to it as endowments. And following the decree of 1580, the monastery authorities succeeded in persuading the tsar to retain the tarhans previously granted to them³¹⁴. Similar examples from the late 16th and early 17th centuries can be found in the economic activities of other monasteries as well, for instance in the Tver and Uglich districts³¹⁵. These examples further demonstrate the extent to which formal legislation and its practical application diverged in the Muscovite state; throughout the 16th century, the issue of church and monastic estates was never definitively resolved³¹⁶.

5. Measures Taken in the 17th Century Before 1648

The political, social, and economic upheavals of the Time of Troubles (1598–1613)³¹⁷ could have brought about certain changes in government policy regarding monastic estates. However, upon analyzing this policy, we find no significant changes in the first half of the 17th century, prior to 1649 and before Tsar Alexei's Code (1645–1676).

Although the financial and economic situation of the Muscovite Tsardom after the Time of Troubles was very difficult, the government could not bring itself to implement any serious measures to confiscate monastic land holdings³¹⁸. It can be argued that the very idea of secularizing church holdings was alien to the ecclesiastical-political views of the secular authorities; furthermore, one must not forget that during the reign of Tsar Mikhail (1613–1645), the influence of Patriarch Filaret (1619–1633), the tsar's father, was immense, and the patriarch would, of course, have resolutely opposed any restriction on the Church's rights to land holdings³¹⁹. Therefore, the government continued to act half-heartedly and addressed the issue of church estates only indirectly in its decrees³²⁰.

³¹³ AAE. 1. No. 323.

³¹⁴ Nikolsky. Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery. 1. 2. Appendices: XLII, LVI, LXXV, LXXVIII. The tsar himself violated the decrees of the Councils; for example, in 1575 he granted lands to the Kirillov Monastery, which was already one of the wealthiest (Ayu. No. 126); in 1583 he again granted three villages to this monastery (Makarii. 8. pp. 255).

³¹⁵ Acts of Tver. Ed. S. Shumakov. 1 (1896). Nos. 19, 20, 75; Acts of Uglich. 1 (1898). Nos. 46, 48, 70–73, etc.

³¹⁶ The fact that the church hierarchy continued to insist on the inviolability of church estates is also evidenced by a letter from the newly appointed Patriarch Job to the Metropolitan of Georgia dated 1589. Makarii. 10. p. 68; the letter is found in: Christian Readings. 1869. 2. pp. 867–893. In the early years of Tsar Boris's reign (1598–1605), according to S. Platonov, the 1584 decree abolishing the tarhans regained force; but already under Fyodor, in 1593–1594, the government—which was in fact controlled by Boris Godunov—was forced to conduct a review of monastic deeds, and properties for which the monasteries had no documentation were confiscated and transferred to the state treasury. Platonov. Boris Godunov (1924). pp. 149–150. Unfortunately, there are neither official records nor any other historical material regarding this “audit.”

³¹⁷ To this day, S. F. Platonov's work **Essays on the History of the Time of Troubles in the Muscovite State** (1899; 2nd ed. 1912) remains the best study of the causes and events of the Time of Troubles.

³¹⁸ The financial assistance provided by the Church and monasteries during the Time of Troubles will be discussed below.

³¹⁹ Patriarch Filaret received new, extensive land grants from the tsar; in addition, many estates were acquired through purchases and received as gifts—while 16th-century legal rulings were generally disregarded. Gorchakov. On Land Holdings (1871). pp. 329–336. On Filaret's great influence in matters of governance, see: Stasevsky. Essays on the History of the Reign of Tsar Mikhail Feodorovich (1913) and Makarii. 11. pp. 1–75. It is also worth mentioning here the well-known decree of 1625, which significantly expanded the patriarch's judicial powers (Gorchakov. The Monastic Office. p. 53) and was of great importance for the monasteries of the “patriarchal domain.”

³²⁰ For example, the ruling of the Zemsky Sobor of 1619 stipulated that townspeople and county residents who had settled on church and monastic lands during or after the Time of Troubles were not exempt from taxes and other obligations, as had been customary under letters of grant and tarhans. AAE. 3. No. 105.

In this regard, it is necessary to recall two decrees. The first, dated November 28, 1620, that is, issued at a time when Patriarch Filaret, due to Tsar Mikhail's youth, played a huge role in governing the state³²¹, allowed military officials to freely dispose of the estates they had received for their service during the reign of Tsar Vasily Shuisky, including donating them to monasteries for the repose of souls or selling them³²². Two years later, on August 27, 1622, another decree was issued, according to which estates received by monasteries as endowments for the repose of the soul, as gifts, or acquired through purchase after 1613 could be redeemed from the monasteries by relatives of the testators, donors, or those who had transferred them; However, estates that had become the property of monasteries before 1613 could be redeemed only if petitions to that effect had been submitted before 1613 and if the matter had been reported to the tsar; those estates for which no petitions had been filed remained the property of the monasteries³²³.

In administrative practice, it was customary to issue certain decrees not for the entire state, but only for specific regions; such decrees often concerned monastic estates as well. For example, in 1624, a special decree was issued for the Ustyug District in the north, prohibiting the sale and dedication "for the repose of the soul" of "black lands" and villages—that is, villages inhabited by free peasants who paid taxes and fulfilled other obligations to the state. The monastic authorities, however, just as in the 16th century, found ways to circumvent this 1624 decree as well. Consequently, in 1651, the government ordered that "black lands" acquired after the 1624 decree be returned to the state and that the peasants living on these lands be transferred to the state treasury³²⁴.

The decree of 1641 had practical significance; while it did not actually concern monastic estates, it primarily addressed monastic peasants. It proved effective because its implementation depended not on the government but on private initiative. The well-known "petitions of 1641" served as the impetus for this decree. Servants from various cities and counties complained to the tsar about the privileges enjoyed by monasteries, which allowed them to secure a better economic position for themselves and to lure peasants away from the hereditary estates and lands of the servants to their own lands, as well as to settle runaway peasants on their estates. The service men also complained that privileges concerning "fixed-term" or "reserved" years caused much confusion regarding jurisdiction, since the judicial rights of different monasteries varied. All of this had a favorable effect on the monasteries' economy but caused significant losses to the service men. The petitioners requested that a decree be issued allowing landowners to indefinitely seek the return of runaway peasants and those who had moved to church lands, who were obligated to pay rent. (The peasants themselves were free, but bound to the land.) Tsar Mikhail granted the petitioners' requests by issuing a corresponding decree, and now many serfs could bring lawsuits against monasteries in court on their own initiative³²⁵.

This decree of 1641 only indirectly addressed the fundamental issue of monastic estates, but it once again drew the government's attention to it. Indeed, a few years later, with the Code of 1649, the secular authorities began to encroach upon the privileges of ecclesiastical institutions, though not yet in the most decisive manner; another half-century of half-measures passed before the issue of monastic estates began to be resolved differently.

6. The Code of 1648

Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich's 1649 Conciliar Code—the result of the 1648–49 Zemsky Sobor (³²⁶)—*could not ignore the issue of church and monastic estates, which was so important to the economy of Muscovy.*

³²¹ PSRL. 5. p. 64; cf.: SGGD. 3. No. 4 and Smirnov. Patriarch Filaret, in: CHOLDP. 1873. June. p. 829.

³²² Decree Book of the Local Office. Ed. N. Storozhev. No. 6, in: Description of Documents and Files of the Archives of the Ministry of Justice. 6 (1896).

³²³ Ibid. No. 96.

³²⁴ Dyakonov. Essays on the History of the Rural Population of the Muscovite State in the 16th–17th Centuries (1898). p. 180. Bogoslovsky. Op. cit., in: Readings. 1909. Vol. 1. p. 59. It is characteristic that the monastic authorities managed to circumvent this decree with ease. For example, the Archangel Monastery, located in the city of Ustyug, concluded no fewer than 50 transactions involving the purchase and mortgaging of land between 1624 and 1648; other northern monasteries accounted for another 42 such transactions during this period. Ibid. p. 86 ff.

³²⁵ AI. 3. No. 92. p. 33. We will return to the issue of fixed-term leases in the chapter on monastic economy.

³²⁶ The Zemsky Sobor of 1648–49 should not be confused with the Sobor of 1649, which was devoted to certain issues of worship. Belokurov. Proceedings of the Moscow Ecclesiastical Sobor of 1649, in: Readings. 1894. 4. On the Zemsky Sobor of 1648–49 and the Code of 1649, see: Latkin, V., Zemsky Sobors of Ancient Rus' (1885); Platonov, S., "Sources of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich's Code," in: Yuridicheskii Vestnik, 1889, 11 (a very valuable study); Arkhangelsky. "On Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich's Conciliar Code of 1649 in Relation to the Russian Orthodox Church," in: Christian Readings. 1881. 2. pp. 42–134, 300–365; Stdhlin. 1. pp. 379 ff.

Nor should we forget that many of the resolutions of this renowned Zemsky Sobor were adopted in response to numerous petitions from people of various social classes—those classes that disapproved of the legal and financial privileges enjoyed by church institutions. This explains why the Code, which addressed the demands of these social classes, reaffirmed the earlier decree of 1580 and definitively prohibited the patriarch, bishops, and monasteries from acquiring new lands by any means whatsoever (Code, Chapter 17, §§ 30 and 42). Furthermore, all settlements and free towns located on church and monastic lands and exempted from *corvée* labor by various privileges were transferred to the jurisdiction of the state treasury, and church institutions were prohibited from acquiring or establishing such settlements (Code, Chapter 19, §§ 1, 5, 7–9, 13, 15, 16). The estates represented at the Zemsky Sobor demanded more, namely the sequestration of all lands that had passed into the hands of the clergy after 1580, so that they could be distributed as estates to landless service men. However, these demands by the estates met with vigorous resistance from the clergy and were not granted—they are not reflected in the Code. The tsar merely promised to order an inventory of all lands acquired after the 1580 decree.³²⁷

The demand for partial secularization was unsuccessful. The government could only agree to limit the further expansion of church holdings. The Church retained its old holdings—those it had acquired both before and after the 1580 decree. Since the Zemsky Sobor of 1649 issued no decree regarding holdings acquired before 1580, and the estates' demand to seize lands acquired after the 1580 decree was rejected by the tsar, the Church considered—as was repeatedly stated later—that the Code contained a recognition of the Church's right to the land holdings at its disposal.

The Code of 1649 attempted *de jure* (Chapter 17, § 42) to reaffirm the 1580 ruling and an earlier ruling of the Stoglav Council in order to restrict the purchase of land by monasteries. In 1651, the government even ordered that villages purchased or received as pledges by monasteries, parishes, and merchants be “transferred to the sovereign” if these villages were located in the “black tax-paying volosts” (³²⁸). Unfortunately, there is no evidence that this order was ever implemented. On the contrary, it is known that the government—contrary to the Code of 1649 and the decree of 1651—allowed certain monasteries, in response to their petitions, to acquire lands inhabited by peasants in the “black tax-paying” volosts³²⁹. The tsars themselves violated the 1649 Code: documents from the second half of the 17th century provide numerous examples of monasteries receiving as gifts from the tsars both uncultivated lands and lands inhabited by peasants from the sovereign's estates³³⁰. Thus, in the 17th century, the government followed the same course as in the 16th century, and the strict wording of the 1649 Code actually placed very few restrictions on the monasteries' rights to land holdings.

Regarding the background and history of the Code's drafting, the works of P. Smirnov, devoted to the views and wishes of the estates represented at the Council, are of great value: 1. On the Origins of the Code and the Zemsky Sobor of 1648–49, in: *ZhMNP*. 1913. 9; 2. *Several Documents on the History of the Council Code and the Zemsky Sobor of 1648–49*, in: *Readings*. 1913. 4 (Miscellany section); 3. Petitions from the Nobility and Boyar Children of All Cities in the First Half of the 17th Century, in: *Readings*. 1915. 3; 4. A New Petition by Moscow Merchants Regarding the Expulsion of Foreigners, in: *Readings of the Nestor the Chronicler Society*. 22 (1912). No. 4. Smirnov's works once again demonstrate the extent of the estates' dissatisfaction with the growth of church and monastic estates.

³²⁷ AAE. 4. No. 33. Regarding the fact that the Code of 1649 was indeed enforced (this applies in particular to the transfer of settlements to the state treasury), see AAE. 4. Nos. 35, 36, 39; AI. 4. No. 32; PSZ. 1. No. 35; 2. No. 731.

³²⁸ RIB. 12. pp. 261, 910, 932.

³²⁹ In 1652, this right was granted to the Ivanovsky and Gledensky monasteries in the north (RIB. 12. p. 261); in 1663, both monasteries received a charter of grant, according to which their lands were not subject to return to their former owners or their heirs (*ibid.*, p. 372), which contradicted the decree of August 27, 1622. This privilege was likely widely applied in practice, since other monasteries also received special rights on the basis of petitions, so that in the 17th century a significant portion of the land in various regions of the state passed into the possession of monasteries due to the debts burdening the military nobility. Cf.: Gautier. *The Moscow Region* (1937). pp. 232–233; Shumakov. *The Bezhetsk Acts*, in: *Readings*. 1899. 1; A.Yu. No. 119. 3; *idem*. *The Uglich Acts*. *Ibid.*

³³⁰ The following received gifts: in 1682, the Savvo-Storozhevsky Monastery; in 1682–83, *Patriarch Joakim*; in 1683, *Metropolitan Jonah of Rostov*; in 1685–86, the New Jerusalem Monastery; in 1692–93—the *Goritsky Monastery*; in 1689—the *Rozhdestvensky Monastery in Rostov*. Gautier. *Op. cit.*, pp. 224, 222. In 1672, a decree authorized the transfer of wastelands and uncultivated lands in various counties to the patriarch, episcopal sees, and monasteries; a year later, a new decree was issued that expanded the possibilities for new acquisitions. PSZ. 1. Nos. 521, 549, 552, 554.

7. The Grand Palace Office and the Monastic Office

Based on the 1649 Code, a new institution was established, the so-called Monastic Office, which in reality did not play a particularly significant role in resolving the issue of monastic estates and, in essence, was not truly new; however, the establishment of the Monastic Office led to changes in the jurisdiction of the clergy, as well as certain shifts in the Moscow government's policy toward the Church³³¹. Therefore, the creation of the Monastic Office provoked very strong discontent and criticism—both open and covert—on the part of the clergy, which was due to changes in this particular area rather than to the issue of church and monastic estates³³².

Although the secular authorities of Muscovy between 1503 and 1649 could not bring themselves to carry out fundamental reforms regarding church—and, above all, monastic—estates, partly due to the bishops' influence on the government and partly due to the religious views of the people of that era, the government nevertheless deemed it necessary to at least gain an understanding of the state of church and monastic estates, establish some control over them, and secure certain benefits from monastic economic activities. The establishment of the Monastic Office, however, was only a minor innovation in government policy, for long before the Monastic Office and the Synod of the Petrine era, the secular authorities in Moscow had already instituted permanent oversight of church institutions, including matters pertaining to monastic estates. This oversight was exercised by the Grand Palace Office. It was one of those institutions of Muscovite Rus whose activities cannot be ignored when discussing the relationship between the Church and the state.

The Grand Palace Office is first mentioned in 1547³³³, although it can be assumed that it existed earlier, as far back as the time of Grand Prince Ivan III (1462–1505), though its activities were less extensive at that time³³⁴. “All matters pertaining to ecclesiastical institutions and their estates and subject directly to the sovereign's decrees were reported to the sovereign from the mid-16th to the mid-17th century (prior to the Sobornoye Ulozheniye of 1649) through the Grand Palace Office. It was there that these matters were administered; and through it, the tsar's decrees were issued to ecclesiastical authorities, institutions, and the relevant individuals”³³⁵. The records mention on more than one occasion instances when monastic affairs were resolved precisely here³³⁶. This institution, which oversaw a wide variety of matters—as was customary for governance in Ancient Rus—exercised, among other things, control over monastic estates; Documents from the era of Tsar Mikhail (1613–1645) frequently mention a branch of this office, which was already referred to as the “Monastic Office and the Office of Monastic and Relocation Affairs”³³⁷. The office was administered by a boyar, who was called a steward, and clerks. It handled all financial matters related to monastic estates: general taxes on arable land, taxes on fishing rights—which the state leased to monasteries for a fixed fee—and taxes on saltworks and other economic enterprises³³⁸; later, in the 17th century, this office also oversaw the harvest and the conscription of recruits for military service³³⁹. However, all of this applied only to those monasteries that held royal charters of grant; monasteries that did not possess such charters—and such monasteries also existed—were accountable to local authorities for the payment of taxes, levies, and dues³⁴⁰.

³³¹ On the jurisdiction of the monastic order, see Chapter IX. On the Monastic Office: Gorchakov, M., **The Monastic Office** (1868)—a study that has retained its scholarly significance to this day; it is also important to note another work: Shimko, I., **The Patriarchal State Office** (1894), and yet another work: Gorchakov, **On the Landholdings of the All-Russian Metropolitans, Patriarchs, and the Holy Synod** (1871).

³³² Patriarch Nikon protested particularly vehemently against the establishment of the Monastic Office: “Patriarch Nikon's Opinion on the Code,” in: Notes of the ORSA. 2 (1861). pp. 456–497, especially p. 451; on the Church's rights to ecclesiastical property: pp. 453, 449. Cf.: Gorchakov. The Monastic Office. p. 19 and Zhukov, A. Patriarch Nikon's Views Nikon on Relations Between Secular and Ecclesiastical Authority, in: Legal Collection 1916. 3–4. However, Nikon protested only against changes in the jurisdiction of the clergy. Disapproval of the Monastic Office can also be found in the opinions expressed at the Council of 1667, in: PSZ. 1, No. 412; AAE, 4, No. 167. The Council sought to abolish the Monastic Order's jurisdiction over the clergy. Cf.: Gorchakov, op. cit., pp. 95–97.

³³³ AI. 1. No. 149.

³³⁴ Nevolin, K. A. “The Formation of the Administration from John III to Peter I,” in: Collected Works, vol. 6.

³³⁵ Gorchakov. The Monastery Office. p. 40; see *ibid.* for a brief history of the Grand Palace Office.

³³⁶ For example: AI. 1. No. 155; 2. No. 353; AAE. 1. No. 299.

³³⁷ I. 3. No. 65; AAE. 2. No. 277; AI. 2. No. 355; SGGD. 2. No. 219.

³³⁸ AI. 1. No. 192, et al.

³³⁹ AAE. 4. No. 16, 82; DAI. 2. No. 37; cf.: Gorchakov. Op. cit. p. 42.

³⁴⁰ AI. 1. Nos. 155, 158; 2. No. 249; 3. No. 162; AAE. 4. Nos. 56, 315.

The Grand Palace Office took into account all decrees and letters patent concerning various monasteries; it centralized control over the inventory and taxation of land holdings and other property belonging to ecclesiastical institutions, and received reports on the purchases and expenditures of these institutions. However, this was not done on the basis of uniform, universally binding legislation, but rather on the basis of individual orders and decrees issued by the tsar, which were not uniform across different monasteries and depended on the tsar's personal preferences, the circumstances of the time, and the resourcefulness of the monastic authorities. It was also here that new letters of grant and *tarhans* were issued, old letters were ratified, disputed issues were resolved, petitions and complaints were reviewed, and donations to monasteries—in the form of land holdings as well as annual or one-time monetary assistance (*rugi*)—were registered³⁴¹. In short, this was the hub of all relations between government agencies and the monasteries and their estates. Monasteries, both large and small, sought to come under the jurisdiction of the Grand Palace Office more for practical than legal reasons, for this relationship spared them from many and frequent conflicts with local authorities, who were quite adept at such matters in Muscovite Rus'. A monastery's possession of a charter of privilege was important not only from a legal and economic standpoint, but also because it exempted the monastery from supervision by local authorities. Hence the curious circumstance that a certain degree of dependence on the Grand Palace Office was desirable for monasteries and valued by them. This may seem paradoxical, but according to the clergy's views of that time on the relationship between the state and the Church, this dependence did not constitute any violation of the rights of the Church and its institutions—unlike the issue of the clergy's jurisdiction, which was of fundamental importance to them. The Grand Palace Office could not, on its own, revoke the Church's rights to land holdings; therefore, it was in the Church's interest to maintain close relations with the Office, emphasizing the financial and economic benefits to the government that arose from the existing state of affairs. From time to time, as the state's financial and economic situation deteriorated, the government attempted to bring the issue of monastic estates up for discussion; however, as noted above, the government failed to make any significant progress toward resolving the issue at any of the councils that addressed it; the rulings were often quite severe in form, but in practice, the result was always a vicious circle.

The establishment of the Monastic Office also failed to bring about any significant changes. The most characteristic feature of the legislation of Muscovite Rus' is its chronic incompleteness and confusion; might this be linked to the historical circumstance that Ancient Rus', unlike Western Europe, was unfamiliar with Roman law, which is so adept at clearly defining all legal issues? "Hence, in the provisions of the Code, there are omissions, ambiguities, and contradictions, as well as a certain duality in the principles"³⁴², especially regarding the jurisdiction of the clergy; thus, there was no clear legal basis in the Code for the new institution. The Monastic Office took over from the Grand Palace Office all cases related to monastic estates and handled them in exactly the same way as its predecessor. When the Council of 1667 abolished the Monastic Department's jurisdiction over the clergy³⁴³, the department still retained jurisdiction over matters related to *corvée* labor and taxes levied on church and monastic lands—matters previously handled by the Grand Palace Department; the changes were insignificant and of a practical rather than a fundamental nature. The activities of the Monastery Office, as Gorchakov writes, "were quite limited even within the scope assigned to it"³⁴⁴. On December 17, 1677, a tsar's decree was issued that put an end to the Monastic Office: it was ordered to transfer all matters to the Grand Palace Office³⁴⁵, so that monastic estates once again came under the jurisdiction of the latter in all the matters already mentioned.

The Council of 1667, however, took a step forward. The members of this Council—the hierarchs and the clergy—recognized the corrupting influence of wealth on monastic life and prohibited monks from owning

³⁴¹ Gorchakov. *Op. cit.*, p. 42; AI. 3. No. 162; AAE. 1. No. 227; 2. No. 56.

³⁴² Gorchakov. *Op. cit.* p. 68. Cf. a different opinion: Vladimirsky-Budanov, M. *Review* (1888). p. 210.

³⁴³ Gorchakov. *Op. cit.* p. 95. PSZ. 1. No. 412.

³⁴⁴ Gorchakov. *Op. cit.* p. 101. Some monasteries sought to appeal to the Grand Palace Office regarding matters related to land holdings (e.g., AI. 4. No. 166).

³⁴⁵ PSZ. 2. No. 699. Gorchakov. *Op. cit.*, p. 101. The issuance of this decree was prompted in no small part by the decrees of the Council of 1675: these decrees sought to shield the clergy from secular interference in matters of jurisdiction. AAE. 4. No. 204 and 205.

personal real estate, since this contradicted their monastic vows³⁴⁶, thereby accomplishing only half the task. The issue of monastic estates was not even raised at the Council of 1667, and it can be safely asserted that the Council, which had achieved such great success in the matter of the jurisdiction of the clergy, firmly held the view that ecclesiastical institutions had every right to landholdings³⁴⁷.

Thus, in resolving the issue of monastic estates at the end of the 17th century, nothing fundamentally new was done: the estates remained in the hands of the monasteries, and this could not help but influence monastic life. The fears and predictions of the anti-accumulators of the first half of the 16th century were fully vindicated by historical developments. Over the course of two centuries, the secularization of monastic life steadily intensified and penetrated ever more deeply into the fabric of monastic life. The monastery, with its own economy and constant material concerns, transformed from a place of renunciation of the world into a kind of economic enterprise. The economic situation of the monasteries became the foundation of their internal life in the 16th and 17th centuries. Many negative aspects of monastic life, which led monasticism toward secularization and crisis, can be explained by the fact that the views of the Non-Acquirers were not put into practice. The blame for this lies to a considerable extent with their opponents—the Josephites. The reforms of Tsar Peter the Great, which swept through Muscovy like a hurricane, also shook the foundations of Old Russian monastic life. Had they been implemented in a timely manner, they might at least have slowed the process of secularization of monastic life. But Peter's church reform and his views on Christian monasticism were built on a flawed foundation and did not stem from the views of the Non-Possessors. Therefore, the process of secularization did not cease; it continued, albeit in slightly different forms.

Chapter VII. Main Trends in Monastic Colonization in the 16th–17th Centuries

1. State and Political Conditions of Colonization

The issue of monastic land holdings—which was never definitively resolved, despite numerous polemical writings and certain measures taken by the Moscow government—was of particular significance for the organization of monastic life during this period. The enrichment of the monasteries drew the best elements of the Russian monastic community, with rare exceptions, into a movement directed in a direction opposite to the monastic ideal. But it was not only the economic growth of existing monasteries that created this situation. In the 16th–17th centuries, many new monasteries were founded, which either received as gifts or acquired on their own extensive landholdings, so that the growth of monastic estates was linked not only to the enrichment of the older ones but also to the emergence, in various parts of the geographically expanded Muscovite Tsardom, of new monasteries that very quickly turned into large economic colonies.

Monastic colonization during this period—from the first quarter of the 16th century to the end of the 17th century—was of a different nature than the monastic colonization of the 14th–15th centuries that we have already described, when the main areas of colonization were the center of the Grand Duchy of Moscow and the northern Trans-Volga region. In the Trans-Volga region in the 15th century, the Old Russian monk, driven by purely ascetic motives, was the main driving force behind the economic revival of this vast forested region—the Russian “Phivaida”—where there were at that time only tiny “settlements” of peasant colonization. The Muscovite state effortlessly appropriated the fruits of many years of monastic colonization in the Trans-Volga region. The territorial expansion of the Grand Duchy of Moscow and its transformation into the Muscovite Tsardom, the unification of the appanage principalities, and the successful campaign in the east, which led in 1552 to the conquest of the Kazan Khanate in 1552, and the slow but steady colonization toward the south and southeast, in the steppe region between the Dnieper and the Volga—all of this led to the founding of numerous fortified towns and, later, to the creation of a fortified line—the “defensive line”—which protected the new settlements. In the east and south, the state itself was the main driving force and regulator of colonization, although free colonists often outpaced it in the development of new lands.

The history of monastic colonization after the first quarter of the 16th century is shaped by this circumstance. Monasteries were now generally built either in cities or near them; that is, they were urban

³⁴⁶ Gorchakov. Op. cit. p. 112; PSZ. 1. No. 412. The Council of 1669 ratified this decree and ordered that shops and other commercial establishments belonging to the clergy or monasteries and managed by their stewards be transferred to the tsar, that is, handed over to the state. PSZ. 1. No. 442, § 12; AAE. 4. p. 161.

³⁴⁷ Gorchakov. Op. cit. pp. 114–115.

monasteries, vastly different from the forest hermitages of the Russian North. Most of them were founded not on the free initiative of individual ascetics, but by order of state and church authorities. Almost all monasteries were built immediately after a city was founded, and their existence, as well as the structure of monastic life within them, were closely linked to the political significance of the cities in which they appeared. Many monasteries were established by order of secular and ecclesiastical authorities—this important fact deserves special attention. For the tsar or the metropolitan, the founding of monasteries was both a matter of state and a missionary endeavor; they were built primarily in the ethnographically diverse East, with a relatively large pagan population, and a Russian city without churches and monasteries was simply unthinkable for the people of that time. The Christianization of newly acquired territories was a pious duty for the Moscow government³⁴⁸, and the monastic communities of the newly founded Eastern monasteries were entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out a broad Christian mission—in the 14th and 15th centuries, activities of this kind were quite modest. This endeavor, which partly hindered the process of secularization of monastic life, was also one of the defining features of the era. In studying the history of colonization, we conclude that in various regions of the country, local circumstances played a significant role in shaping monastic life at a given monastery.

2. Six Main Areas of Monastic Colonization

The 16th and 17th centuries were a period of rapid monastery construction. Based on approximate calculations by V. O. Klyuchevsky³⁴⁹, we can compile a table showing the ratio of hermitages to urban monasteries:

Centuries XIV XV XVI XIV–XVI
Desert Monasteries 42 57 51 150
Urban monasteries 42 27 35 104
Total 84 84 86 254

In the 17th century, approximately 220 monasteries were founded³⁵⁰.

Thus, over the course of two centuries, more than 300 new monasteries were established; however, this does not indicate a strengthening of ascetic tendencies among the Russian people at that time, for private initiative played only a minor role in this matter. The founding of new monasteries during this period was dictated by state and church-political considerations and was linked to needs that arose in a particular place at a specific time. This becomes particularly evident when one examines the geographical distribution of the newly founded monasteries. In this regard, the territory of the Muscovite state can be divided into six regions, the boundaries of which are linked not to the characteristics of the state's organic territorial growth, but to the colonization efforts of the Muscovite government, which varied in scope and significance across the regions

³⁴⁸ Tsar Ivan IV referred to the Church's missionary tasks in his letter to Gury, the first Archbishop of Kazan (1555–1563). AAE. 1. No. 241. It is interesting to note that this idea is clearly expressed in the frescoes of the Sviyazhsk Theological Monastery: Aynalov, D. "Fresco Painting in the Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God at the Sviyazhsk Monastery of the Mother of God," in: *Antiquities. Proceedings of the Russian Archaeological Society* 21. 1 (1906); Nekrasov, A. N. *Old Russian Visual Art* (1937). p. 292.

³⁴⁹ Klyuchevsky. *Course*. 2 (1907). p. 263. In studying the question of the founding of monasteries in the Ponizovye region in the 16th century, we have concluded that Klyuchevsky's data requires clarification: in fact, the number of monasteries founded in the 16th century was higher.

³⁵⁰ Znamensky. *A Guide to the History of the Russian Church* (1896). p. 279. At the beginning of the 18th century, there were 1,201 monasteries in Russia. Verkhovsky. *Inhabited Real Estate Holdings of the Holy Synod...* (1909); Appendix 8 lists more than 500 monasteries that owned inhabited estates. However, the 1762 Table compiled by the Holy Synod lists 954 monasteries; from this number, one must subtract about 70 monasteries in Southern Russia. Zavyalov. *The Question of Church Estates under Empress Catherine II* (1900). pp. 346–348. Some of the monasteries in the Chernigov Diocese in the 17th century were under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. Unfortunately, we were unable to verify this information, since V. Zverinsky's work was not available to us during the final preparation of this book, and our initial excerpts from it had been lost. For this reason, when describing monastic colonization, we are also unable to provide precise data on the number of newly founded monasteries in each region (with the exception of the Ponizovye region—I have retained the data for that region). However, we hope that the most significant of the newly founded monasteries have been included here—that is, those that later played a certain role in the history of Russian monasticism. In conclusion, I would note that the Holy Synod itself provided highly contradictory information regarding the number of monasteries in the 18th century, and this may serve, in part, as an excuse for historians.

we have identified; in two regions they were carried out almost not at all, and it was precisely in these regions that very few new monasteries were founded³⁵¹.

The first region encompasses the central areas of the Muscovite State. Its northern border runs along the Volga from the confluence of the Mologa to the mouth of the Sura; its eastern border follows the Oka and Sura rivers; to the west, the Muscovite center is bordered by the Tver Region; and to the south, by the Oka River and its tributary, the Moksh.

The second region comprises the Russian North—the Trans-Volga region and the Pomor region, the land stretching from the Volga to the White Sea, the Russian “Phivaida” already familiar to us, a arena for the ascetic feats of monks in the 14th–15th centuries.

The regions south of Tula and around Kaluga form the northern border of the boundless steppes between the upper reaches of the Don and the Oka; their southern border cannot be defined, for year after year the territory of the Muscovite state expanded southward as a result of state-sponsored and voluntary colonization; new cities were built, and uncultivated steppe lands were granted as estates to the service class. Here, day and night, a fierce struggle was waged against the nomads of the southeast and the Crimean Tatars, who attacked the new cities, villages, and estates of the service class, plundering and burning them; as a result, peasant settlements would spring up only to disappear again. These regions constitute the third area of colonization.

The western regions, stretching from Novgorod and Pskov to Smolensk, constitute the fourth region.

To the east of the Sura River and to the southeast of the Moksh River lies the Middle Volga region—formerly the Tatar Khanate of Kazan—where vigorous colonization began in the mid-16th century; Here, the Russian Church came into contact with a diverse non-Christian population, and it was precisely here that there were ample opportunities for Christian missionary work. This is the fifth region—the Lower Volga region.

Finally, the sixth region consists of the Urals and Siberia, where Russian colonization proceeded slowly but steadily, with Russification and Christianization merging into a single state, ecclesiastical, and political objective.

3. Monastic Colonization in the Moscow Region

As for the Moscow region, 54 new monasteries were founded here in the 16th and 17th centuries, 32 of them in cities and 22 in rural areas but near cities. Sixteen urban monasteries were founded in the 16th century and the same number in the 17th century, while of the rural monasteries, only 9 were founded in the 16th century and 13 in the 17th century.

The capital, Moscow, naturally ranks first. Among the new monasteries founded there, the following deserve mention: the Donskoy Monastery (1592), which became so famous in later times and has survived to this day; the Znamensky Monastery (1613), the Passion Convent (1614), the Zaikonospassky Monastery (1660), as well as the Resurrection New Jerusalem Monastery—Patriarch Nikon’s favorite project³⁵².

Among the monasteries that emerged in the Vladimir region, it is worth mentioning the Dormition Hermitage, located 35 km from the city of Suzdal, founded on the monk Iona’s own initiative (1624), the Dormition Florishchev Hermitage (1654), and the Presentation Ostrovsky Hermitage (around 1695); the latter two later, at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries, became centers of Russian monasticism. In 1594, a monk named Lukian founded the Bogoroditskaya Hermitage, approximately 25 km from the city of Pereslavl-Zalessky.

In the Kostroma region, six monasteries were founded, none of which are particularly notable³⁵³. In the Yaroslavl region, the Spassky Monastery was founded in 1529 by the austere ascetic St. Gennady († 1565), and in 1543, St. Adrian († 1550) founded the Uspensky Monastery, 6 km from the town of Poshekhony.

Eleven new monasteries were founded in the Tver region. Among them were: the Nilo-Stolobenskaya Hermitage on an island in Lake Seliger, where the ascetic and hermit Nil († 1554) lived as a pillar-ascetic for 27 years; he was deeply revered by the local population and, later, by all of Rus’; Forty years after Nil’s repose,

³⁵¹ On the various regions of the Muscovite State and their political and economic significance in the early 17th century, see Platonov. *Essays on the History of the Time of Troubles* (1899); Chechulin. *Cities of the Muscovite State* (1889); Yakovlev, A. *The Frontier of the Muscovite State* (1916); Smirnov, P. *Cities of the Muscovite State in the 17th Century* (1918).

³⁵² Makariy. 2nd ed. 7. pp. 2, 14; Bulgakov. *Handbook*. pp. 76–82.

³⁵³ Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 7. pp. 20, 23, 15. Bulgakov. pp. 60, 73–74.

the monk German founded a hermitage at the site of his ascetic labors. Numerous miracles were performed through Nil's relics, and in 1667 the Russian Church canonized him³⁵⁴.

Among the monasteries of the Kaluga region, we will mention the Vvedenskaya Optina Hermitage—strictly speaking, an old monastery that first appeared as early as the mid-15th century, but which fell into disuse and was revived in 1625. In the 19th century, this hermitage became famous for its elders³⁵⁵.

4. Monastic Colonization in the North

In the North, in the Trans-Volga region and Pomorye, where Russian asceticism flourished in the 14th–15th centuries, the silence and desolation of the forests and swamps continued to attract the founders of new monasteries, and over the next two centuries, 30 monasteries and hermitages appeared here, including only 7 urban monasteries. But the hermitages founded during this period were different in character from their predecessors: immediately after their founding, they received land holdings—mainly through petitions from their founders—as well as various privileges; they engaged in vigorous economic activity, waged legal battles with neighboring peasants over land, and their inhabitants bore no resemblance to the austere ascetics of the 14th–15th centuries. One example is the St. Anthony of Siy Monastery, founded in 1520 by St. Anthony of Siy († 1557), 100 km from the town of Kholmogory. By the time the law on secularization was enacted (1764), the Siy Monastery was already among the wealthiest in Russia³⁵⁶. Here is another example: in 1604, the widowed priest Miron founded the Krasnogorsk Monastery of the Mother of God, approximately 200 km from Arkhangelsk, which later became a vast and prosperous economic enterprise³⁵⁷.

In total, 19 monasteries were founded in Pomorye during this period: 11 in the 16th century—all outside cities—and 8 in the 17th century (2 urban monasteries and 6 hermitages).

Of the monasteries founded in the Olonets region, two are particularly noteworthy: The Nikolaevskaya Ondrusovskaya Hermitage (1520), located 30 km from the city of Olonets, founded by the Venerable Adrian († 1549), a disciple of St. Alexander of Svir, and the Trinity Monastery on Klimetsky Island in Lake Onega, founded by the Venerable Jonah³⁵⁸.

The personal initiative of the monastery founders was particularly evident in the Vologda region, where 15 monasteries were founded during this period³⁵⁹. Venerable Arsenius († 1550), a member of Boyar Sukhorusov's family and a monk of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, served as abbot there from 1521 to 1529 but preferred solitude; after resigning his abbotship, he withdrew to the Vologda forests, where he founded a hermitage in 1530³⁶⁰.

Another austere ascetic, St. Theodosius of Totma († 1568), founded the Spaso-Sumorin Monastery in 1554 at the request of the local population; subsequently, this monastery also became a major landowner³⁶¹.

The Vladimir Hermitage also owes its existence to the personal initiative of its founder. According to pious tradition, a resident of Vologda was granted a vision of the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God in a dense forest on the outskirts of the city. Stunned by this miraculous apparition, he took monastic vows under the name Joseph († 1612) and, in 1588, founded a small hermitage at the site of the vision. The forests surrounding the hermitage were a veritable scourge for the residents of the nearby villages, for a band of robbers led by their chief, Anika, operated there. Joseph, the first abbot of the new hermitage, according to tradition, persuaded Anika to renounce his bloody trade, turning Saul into Paul. For this reason, the hermitage came to be known among the people as the Za-Anikeevsky Hermitage, since it is located beyond the forests

³⁵⁴ Bulgakov. p. 103; Historical Dictionary of Saints (1862). p. 187; Uspensky, V. Description of the Nilo Desert (1886).

³⁵⁵ Muravyov, A. The Holy Mountain and the Optina Hermitage (1852); Chetverikov, S. The Optina Hermitage (1926).

³⁵⁶ During his lifetime, St. Anthony received a gift from the tsar (1544) of more than 12 square kilometers of land (SGKE. 1. 1. No. 97). In 1764, the monastery owned 3,333 peasant households. IRI. 3. pp. 103–104. Makarii, Bishop. "Historical Description of the Anthony of Siy Monastery," in: Readings. 1878. 3; cf.: Runkevich. "Description of the Arkhangelsk Diocese," in: PBE. 1. pp. 1113–1117. On the monastery's finances: Ledgers of the St. Anthony of Siy Monastery. Ed. by A. F. Izyumov, in: Readings. 1917. 2. Cf.: Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 42.

³⁵⁷ Makarii, Bishop. A Historical Description of the Krasnogorsk Monastery, in: Readings. 1880. 3. Cf.: Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. 41. In 1763, this monastery was very poor and received an annual subsidy (ruga) of 25 rubles from the Holy Synod. Zavyalov. p. 385.

³⁵⁸ IRI. 4. 530. Barsov. The Klimenty Monastery in Olonets, in: Readings. 1870. 4.

³⁵⁹ Bulgakov. pp. 61–62.

³⁶⁰ IRI. 2. p. 279.

³⁶¹ Ibid. 6. pp. 412–413.

where Anika used to plunder. Later, the ascetic Joseph of Vologda was glorified as a locally venerated saint³⁶².

In the 17th century, several more monasteries were founded in the Vologda region. One of them, also established on the personal initiative of its founder, deserves mention. In 1654, a monk named Philip founded the Znamensk Hermitage (approximately 35 km from the city of Ustyug), which later enjoyed great veneration among the local population. Unfortunately, there is no information about the life of the ascetic who founded it³⁶³.

In 1460, the Semigorodsky Monastery was founded by disciples of St. Dionysius of Glushitsa (see Chapter III). Later, the monks left it, and the monastery fell into disuse. In the early 17th century, it was revived (this time by monks from the Pokrovsky Glushitsky Monastery, founded by St. Dionysius in the 15th century)³⁶⁴.

5. Monastic Colonization in the West

In the region west of Moscow, 23 new monasteries appeared in the 16th and 17th centuries: 15 urban and 8 rural.

First among them is the Novgorod region, where nine monasteries were founded. Two of them were founded by great ascetics: the Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery by St. Cyril of Novoezersky († 1532), and the Troitsky-Irapsky Monastery by St. Philip († 1527); both monasteries were established around 1517.³⁶⁵ Among other monasteries, the Monastery of the Mother of God in the city of Tikhvin deserves mention. It was founded by order of the tsar in 1560 in commemoration of the 1383 apparition in Tikhvin of the miraculous icon of the Mother of God, which is greatly venerated by the Russian people³⁶⁶.

In the Pskov region, urban monasteries predominated; for example, in Pskov itself during the 16th century, four women's monasteries were founded in addition to the men's monasteries³⁶⁷. Among the monasteries located outside Pskov, the Pskov-Pechersk Monastery deserves special mention; it was founded in the 15th century, destroyed by the Livonian Germans at the end of that same century, and reestablished around 1520.³⁶⁸

A relatively large number of monasteries were built in the Smolensk region. St. Gerasim of Boldino († 1554) founded four monasteries. The most famous of these is the Holy Trinity Monastery of Boldino (1528), located about 18 km from the town of Dorogobuzh; a few years later, St. Gerasim founded the Monastery of St. John the Baptist (around 1535) in the forests near Vyazma; he then traveled south to the impenetrable Bryn forests and there, on the Zhizdra River, founded the Monastery of the Presentation (between 1535 and 1545); the last of the monasteries he founded was the Nativity Monastery, near the town of Dorogobuzh. The monasteries founded by St. Gerasim were characterized by a large number of monastic brothers. For example, as early as the mid-16th century, more than 100 monks lived at the Boldino Monastery, while the hermitages in the Bryn forests numbered up to 40 monks. St. Gerasim introduced a strict communal rule³⁶⁹ in all the monasteries he founded. The Boldino Monastery gradually acquired extensive land holdings and, in the 17th century, launched vigorous economic activities³⁷⁰.

Among the monasteries founded in the 17th century, one worth mentioning is the Transfiguration Monastery in the city of Bryansk, which existed for only 68 years. It was founded by Prince D. A. Baryatinsky in 1694 and closed immediately after the enactment of the law on secularization (1764). This monastery is known primarily because a stern ascetic named Polycarp († 1624) took refuge there, leading a life of strict ascetic self-denial³⁷¹.

³⁶² Ibid. 5. p. 134; Bulgakov. p. 184; Golubinsky. History of Canonization. p. 136; Klyuchevsky. Lives. p. 324.

³⁶³ IRI. 6. p. 593.

³⁶⁴ Zverinsky. 2. No. 1144.

³⁶⁵ Zverinsky. 2. Nos. 868 and 557.

³⁶⁶ Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 34. Cf. my article: "Die Verehrung der Gottesmutter in der russischen Frömmigkeit und Volksreligiosität," in: Kyrios. 5 (1940–41). p. 208.

³⁶⁷ Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 38.

³⁶⁸ The First-Class Pskov-Pechersk Monastery (1893); Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 39.

³⁶⁹ IRI. 3. p. 413; Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. pp. 18–19.

³⁷⁰ Cf.: Income and Expenditure Ledgers of the Boldino-Dorogobuzh Monastery, in: RIB. 37 (1923).

³⁷¹ IRI. 5. p. 588.

6. Monastic Colonization in the Lower Volga Region

A great many monasteries were founded in the vast region along both banks of the Middle Volga, extending west to the Sura River and east to the Ural Mountains—a region which, in the official language of Moscow, was called Ponizovye and constituted a separate administrative unit³⁷². As already mentioned, Ponizovye offered monasteries and monastic communities great opportunities for Christian missionary work. Even if not through their activities, their very presence in a region with a highly diverse non-Christian population could serve the cause of Christianization. As for the 16th and 17th centuries, unfortunately, the monastic community did not engage in any particularly active missionary work during this time; it was not until the 18th century that Christian missionaries achieved some success in Ponizovye.

Unlike other regions of the Muscovite State, we have a wealth of material on the Ponizovye that sheds light not only on the history of monastic colonization but also on the steady growth of monastic landholdings³⁷³. During the 100-year struggle against the Tatar Khanate of Kazan, which ended with the conquest of Kazan on October 2, 1552³⁷⁴, Moscow's colonization of the Middle Volga region was taking its first steps: in 1523, the town of Vasil-Sursk was founded at the confluence of the Sura and Volga rivers, and in 1551, Sviyazhsk was founded at the confluence of the Sviyaga and Volga rivers. In Sviyazhsk, by order of Tsar Ivan, not only churches but also a monastery were built. This Trinity Monastery of Sviyazhsk, founded by decree of the state authorities, marks the beginning of a rich history of monastic colonization in the Lower Volga region³⁷⁵. After the conquest of Kazan in 1552, monastic colonization advanced further; it went hand in hand with the founding of new towns, which arose systematically at the behest of the Moscow government, which sought to maintain control over the Ponizovye region and the entire Volga River as far as Astrakhan—which Moscow finally conquered in 1557.³⁷⁶ Only during the Time of Troubles did Moscow's colonization efforts come to a halt for several years. Thus, the history of the founding of new cities can be divided into two periods: 1) before the end of the 16th century and 2) the 17th century. The history of the founding of new monasteries—which for the most part appeared simultaneously with the cities or shortly after their founding—can also be divided into these two periods³⁷⁷.

We have identified 21 towns and 31 monasteries founded in the Ponizovye region during this era; to this number we must add another 3 monasteries that appeared before 1551 (see Table 6A). Thus, over the course of 50 years, 30 monasteries were established, and as can be seen from Table 6A, these monasteries are characterized by the following features: 1) all the monasteries were built in or near towns—that is, they were urban monasteries, markedly different from the hermitages of the Russian North; only the monastery around which the town of Krasnoslobodsk later grew, and the monastery in the Nizhnelomovsky District, were built relatively far from towns; 2) almost all monasteries were established shortly after the cities were founded, with the sole exceptions of Astrakhan—where the first monastery appeared 11 years after its conquest—and Kurmysh, where the first monastery was built 110 years after the city's founding; 3) All these monasteries were built not on the initiative of their founders, but by order of state or church authorities³⁷⁸.

³⁷² The lack of clear boundaries between administrative regions, characteristic of the Muscovite state, was linked to the lack of clarity in the delineation of the functions of individual Prikazs. For the most part, the Lower Volga region was administered by the "Kazan Palace"—a special Prikaz with very vague jurisdiction, which in the 17th century, due to the emergence of new territorial administrative institutions (Prikazs and especially "cheti"), was constantly changing; this circumstance also affected the jurisdiction over monastic estates by one Prikaz or another, especially at a time when the Monastic Prikaz (1649–1677) was vested with a wide variety of rights in this matter. Established shortly before 1574, the Kazan Palace existed until Peter the Great's administrative reform (1708). See: Peretyatkovich, G. *The Volga Region in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (1877); Platonov. *Essays on the History of the Time of Troubles*. Ch. 1, § 6 (1937 ed., pp. 78–86); Milyukov, P., *The State Economy of the First Quarter of the 18th Century and the Reforms of Peter the Great* (1890), pp. 366–373; Nevolin, V., *Works*, Vol. 6, p. 179.

³⁷³ We explored this issue in an article intended for the journal **Kyrios**, but the war prevented its publication. Materials from that study are used here.

³⁷⁴ Cf.: my work: "On the History of Russian Ostpolitik in the 15th and 16th Centuries. 1. The Conquest of the Kazan Khanate," in: JGO (1941).

³⁷⁵ Zverinsky. 3. No. 1248; DRV. 17. p. 146.

³⁷⁶ On Turkey's attempts in 1569 to wrest Astrakhan from Moscow's control, see: Sadikov, P., "The Campaign of the Tatars and Turks against Astrakhan in 1569," in: *Ist. zap.* 22 (1947), pp. 132–165.

³⁷⁷ On the founding of cities, see: Nevolin. *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

³⁷⁸ This last point deserves special attention. For the tsar and the metropolitan, the founding of monasteries was both a state and a missionary undertaking. The Kazan Diocese was established in 1555; its first archbishop, Gury (1555–1563), had previously been the abbot of the Trinity Selizharovsky Monastery and a novice at the Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery. Immediately after the conquest of Kazan, Ivan IV founded the Dormition Monastery, later known as the Zilantov Monastery, since Archbishop Gury

In the 17th century, the picture regarding the founding of new towns and monasteries looks somewhat different. This is clearly evident from Table 6B. We see that 44 new monasteries were founded in towns that emerged in the 16th century, while 26 were founded in towns that emerged in the 17th century. In total, there were 70 new monasteries, which, together with the monasteries founded in the 16th century, amounts to 101 monasteries in the Ponizovye region alone. Topographically, the area of monastic colonization lies mainly north of the Samara–Penza line. Only 10 monasteries were founded south of this line³⁷⁹.

The monasteries that appeared in the 17th century can be divided into three groups. The first group consists of monasteries that arose in old cities; the second group consists of monasteries in newly founded towns located in areas where agricultural colonization was taking place; and the third group consists of monasteries in fortified towns on the Lower Volga, where agricultural colonization had not yet begun at that time. This results in the following table:

Years of Monastery Founding	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Total
1600–1613	3	–	1	4
1614–1650	18	7	1	26
1651–1700	17	17	6	40
Total	38	24	8	70

Thus, in the second half of the 17th century, significantly more monasteries were founded than in the first half of the century. This was due to the Moscow government's intensive efforts to colonize the lands located southwest of the Volga, in the Simbirsk and Penza regions.

The colonization of the Ponizovye region unfolded systematically, driven by political and economic objectives. The distribution of land to ecclesiastical institutions—the archbishopric in Kazan and the monasteries—played a very important role in the Ponizovye region, since the land was intended not only to support these institutions but also to assist the Moscow government in achieving its political goals. The estates of the service class³⁸⁰ and the wealth of the monasteries at that time were the most visible evidence of Moscow's political power and the strength of its authority in the newly settled region, while the construction of Russian towns and the emergence of new estates and settlements were the best means of consolidating that authority. The number and size of land holdings gifted and transferred to monasteries by the government were, in fact, constantly increasing, despite the fact that the measures taken by the authorities to limit this growth—which we have already mentioned—were becoming increasingly stringent. The situation of the peasants on monastic estates was better than on the estates of the nobility, and the monastic authorities constantly sought

relocated this monastery to Zilantov Hill in 1560. Zverinsky. Nos. 1286 and 196. In 1556, Guriy gave his blessing to Archimandrite Varsonofy to build a second monastery—the Transfiguration Monastery (Karinsky. *Essays on Ancient Kazan* (1879). p. 96). Guriy's successor, Archbishop German (1564–1568), built the St. John the Baptist Monastery outside the city (Zverinsky, No. 843). In 1579, the first women's monastery—the Monastery of the Mother of God—was founded with funds from the tsar (*ibid.*, No. 55). Under Archbishop Vassian (1575), the Feodorovsky Trinity Monastery was built (*ibid.*, No. 555). Thus, over the course of 25 years, five monasteries appeared in Kazan. In Sviyazhsk, which was the administrative center of the pagan Cheremis region, three monasteries were founded (Zverinsky, nos. 657, 874, 2148). Looking at a map, we can see that the monasteries were established primarily in towns between the Volga and Sura rivers; the southern border of this region is formed by the Alatyr River up to the town of Tetyushi. Only two monasteries were founded south of this line: one in Astrakhan, on the Caspian Sea itself, and the other in the vicinity of Nizhny Lomov, on the southeastern border of the former Ryazan Principality. The region lying between the Volga and Sura rivers was being intensively developed by the Moscow government at that time. See: Arzamas Local Records. Ed. by S. Veselovsky (1916), No. 390; A. Emausky, "From the History of the Struggle for Land and Peasants in the Arzamas Uyezd in the 16th–17th Centuries," in: *Proceedings of the Kirov Scientific Research Institute of Regional Studies*. 7. 3 (1934). pp. 7, 9; Heraklitov, A. "The Arzamas Mordvins According to Tax and Census Records of the 17th and 18th Centuries," in: *Scientific Notes of Saratov University*, vol. 8, p. 2. In 1568, Ivan IV ordered Abbot Kirill to build the Trinity-St. Nicholas Monastery in Astrakhan and provided financial support to this monastery; Russia. 6. p. 544; several years later (1573, 1575, and 1588), this monastery received charters granting it the right to fish and produce salt. AI. 1. Nos. 184, 193, 223.

³⁷⁹ These were monasteries in three fortified cities: five in Astrakhan, two in Tsaritsyn, and three in Saratov. These monasteries served little purpose in terms of missionary work; we believe they were built to adorn the border towns and to enhance the prestige of the Muscovite Tsardom among the nomadic peoples of the Volga steppes.

³⁸⁰ The founding of these cities and the distribution of land to military officials contributed to the political strengthening of the Muscovite state. Cf.: Peretyatkovich, *op. cit.*, p. 107; Chechulin, *op. cit.*, pp. 202–206; Cadastral Records of Kazan from 1565–1568 and 1646, in: *Materials on the History of the Peoples of the USSR*, vol. 2 (1933). Tables 1–3, 9–11; Korsakov, D. "In Which Cities Were Servicemen Landowners and Estate Holders in the Kazan Region in the 16th and 17th Centuries," in: *Proceedings of the Archaeological Congress*. 1 (1884). p. 173. Many artisans were also sent to the Ponizovye region; Romanov, K. "Pskov, Novgorod, and Moscow in Their Cultural and Artistic Interrelations," in: *Proceedings of the Academy of Material Culture*. 4 (1925). p. 239.

to attract more and more peasants to their lands; consequently, monastic estates played a significant role in the settlement of new regions along the Volga³⁸¹.

Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, only six monasteries were established in the Ponizovye region on the initiative of their founders—a very small number, of course, considering that a total of 101 monasteries were founded there during that period.

Among these six monasteries are two hermitages: the Sedmiezerskaya Hermitage of the Mother of God and the Raifskaya Hermitage of the Mother of God. They were founded by humble monks, and these hermitages are located outside the city walls. The founder of the first hermitage was the monk Euthymius, a native of the Trans-Volga region, from the city of Ustyug. Twenty kilometers from Kazan, amid seven lakes, in a secluded spot that reminded him of the Trans-Volga region, he founded his hermitage (1613–15). *It was not until 1628 that Euthymius's small skete became a monastery. But even in 1645–46, when 29 monks were already living at the monastery, it was still very poor, and the monks supported themselves through handicrafts and produce from their vegetable gardens—a scene typical of 15th-century monasteries in the Trans-Volga region, but almost unique among the monasteries of the Ponizovye region. It was not until the second half of the 17th century that the Euthymius Monastery acquired land and peasants*³⁸². The history of the Raifskaya Hermitage followed a similar pattern. Its founder was a monk named Filaret from the Chudov Monastery in Moscow. Around 1613, he arrived in Kazan, where he first lived at the Transfiguration Monastery; he later left it for the dense forests northwest of Kazan and founded a hermitage there on the shore of Lake Raifskoye³⁸³.

Shortly before 1614, an unknown monk founded the Trinity Monastery on the banks of the Kama River, 47 versts northeast of the town of Laishev. Later, this monastery was placed under the jurisdiction of the Novospassky Monastery in Moscow, and by the early 18th century, it had disappeared³⁸⁴. The fourth of the monasteries established on the founders' own initiative was the Trinity Monastery in the city of Alaty (between 1600 and 1614). It had no land holdings and was very poor; in 1614–15, *the monastic community appealed to the Trinity-Sergius Monastery with a request to be affiliated with this renowned monastery, which was granted at that time*³⁸⁵. *Shortly after the Time of Troubles, around 1616, under Abbot Ion, the Trinity Monastery in Elabuga gained prominence*³⁸⁶. *A letter from Kazan Metropolitan Tikhon, dated 1702, addressed to the archimandrite of the Maloyunginsky Monastery near the town of Kozmodemyansk, indicates that this monastery had already existed before 1627 and was founded by an unknown monk*³⁸⁷. *In the second half of the 17th century, the monks founded two more monasteries: the Transfiguration Monastery near the town of Krasnoslobodsk—by the monk Dionysius (before 1655)*³⁸⁸—*and the Dormition Convent in the town of Verkhniy Lomov—by the nun Iraida in 1688.*³⁸⁹

Unfortunately, we have little information about the life of these monasteries and their founders. Were they strict ascetics dissatisfied with the monastic way of life in urban monasteries? Was Monk Filaret of Moscow's Chudov Monastery, for example, such an ascetic? Or did some other reasons compel him to found his own hermitage in the woods? Perhaps the harsh years of the Time of Troubles—and the first three monasteries were founded shortly after the Time of Troubles—made a strong impression on the monastic community and reawakened ascetic sentiments at a time when monastic life in Moscow's monasteries was in decline. Answering these questions would be both interesting and necessary for a historian of Russian monasticism.

³⁸¹ Pokrovsky, I. From the History of Kazan Monasteries until 1764 (1902). p. 6.

³⁸² Zverinsky, No. 1143; Pokrovsky, op. cit., pp. 7, 21; according to Znamensky (Description of the Sedmiezerskaya Mother-of-God Hermitage, in: Prav. Sob. 1869, Vol. 2, pp. 214, 231, 232), the hermitage received its first endowment shortly after 1645, with a second following in 1686; according to the 1744 audit, it had 513 peasants. Milyutin. "On Real Estate," in: Readings. 1860. Vol. 3. p. 145.

³⁸³ Zverinsky. 2. No. 1110; Pokrovsky. Op. cit. p. 9. By 1744, this hermitage already owned 506 peasants. Milyutin. Op. cit. p. 145.

³⁸⁴ Zverinsky. 3. No. 2154.

³⁸⁵ Ibid. No. 1249. Gorsky. Description. p. 204.

³⁸⁶ Zverinsky. 3. No. 1267.

³⁸⁷ Ryabinsky, K. "The Maloyunginsky Monastery," in: Izvestiya Kazan, vol. 13, p. 3.

³⁸⁸ Zverinsky. 3. No. 1169.

³⁸⁹ Ibid. No. 1324. In the Nizhny Novgorod District, which was administratively part of Ponizovye only until the early 17th century, two monasteries were founded in the 17th century on the initiative of their founders: the monk Ion founded the Spassky Monastery (1658), approximately 85 versts south of the city (Zverinsky. 3. No. 1192), and Monk Pafnutius founded the Pokrovsky Monastery in the village of Balakhna (Zverinsky. 2. No. 1061).

The numerous monasteries founded in Ponizovye contributed greatly to the colonization of this region. The next chapter will describe in more detail how they launched extensive economic activities on the lands granted to them and gradually transformed the previously uninhabited forests and steppes along both banks of the Volga into an agricultural region. The monasteries of Ponizovye, perhaps more so than those in other regions of the Muscovite state, served the government's political and economic plans. Concerns for the prosperity of the monastic economy here almost completely supplanted the ascetic goals of monasticism. If we consider the ascetics known to us from the second half of the 16th and the 17th centuries, we see that in the monasteries of Ponizovye the ascetic precepts of the ancient fathers had been almost entirely forgotten, for not a single outstanding ascetic emerged from these monasteries.

To the northeast of Ponizovye lie the Vyatka and Perm regions, a land of mighty rivers and impenetrable forest wildernesses. As early as the 14th century, thanks to the missionary efforts of St. Stephen of Perm († 1396), the light of Christianity had penetrated this region, but the conversion of the local Finno-Ugric tribes proceeded slowly³⁹⁰. In the early 16th century, St. Trifon of Vyatka († 1612) carried out missionary work here among the pagan Ostiak villages; he had founded the Assumption of the Virgin Trifon Monastery (1580). His missionary endeavors were not easy; the pagan Ostiaks attempted to kill this stern ascetic on more than one occasion. The names of Saints Stephen and Trifon have remained forever linked not only to the history of this region but also to the history of the Christian mission in Russia as a whole³⁹¹.

7. Monastic Colonization of Siberia

The Ural Mountains could not halt the expansion of the Muscovite state to the east. Brave individuals and enterprising merchants ventured farther and farther across the mountain passes and reached the new, boundless steppes and forests between the Urals and the Tobol and Irtysh rivers. Yermak Timofeyev (d. 1584), the ataman of a detachment of Cossacks thirsting for dangerous adventures—a “land conquistador,” as K. Stelin aptly called him—took the first step in Moscow's state-led colonization of Siberia. In 1587, the city of Tobolsk was founded, and throughout the 17th century, the colonization and conquest of Siberian lands steadily advanced eastward, all the way to the shores of the Pacific Ocean³⁹². The Russians established cities as strongholds to defend against the local population; settlements soon sprang up, populated by colonists who, for various reasons, had left the Muscovite state of their own accord or had been forced to do so. As in the Ponizovye region, many monasteries were built here, and their nature was the same—they were primarily urban monasteries. Of the 20 monasteries founded in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, 12 were urban. The Siberian monasteries were intended to serve the same purposes as the monasteries in Ponizovye: the Russification and Christianization of the country. The history of the Russian Christian mission in the 18th and 19th centuries attests that, in this regard, the monastic community in Siberia accomplished a great deal. The monks labored in the mission field, primarily at the behest of church authorities; at the same time, however, this missionary work reveals many examples of genuine Christian asceticism unrelated to state or church-political objectives; among the missionaries were figures of the highest Christian virtue³⁹³.

8. Monastic Colonization in the South

From the end of the 16th century, Moscow began colonizing the lands south of the Oka, the steppes between the upper reaches of the Don and the Oka, and further beyond the Seim, along both banks of the Upper Donets. Throughout the 17th century, this movement continued uninterrupted; fortified lines were built

³⁹⁰ On the early stages of Russian colonization in Vyatka, see Platonov, *Essays* (1899), p. 171 ff. St. Stephen founded four monasteries here. Zverinsky, 2, No. 1959; 1, No. 524; 3, No. 1330. Cf.: Makarii. 4. pp. 142, 211. In the 15th century, only one monastery was founded here—the Trinity-Pechersk Monastery—and its founder was the Bishop of Perm. Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 46.

³⁹¹ IRI. 6. p. 437.

³⁹² Stählin. 1. pp. 287, 285–287. On the colonization of Siberia, see: Ogorodnikov, V. 2 vols. (1920–1924); Bakhrushin, S. (1927) and the new work: Sunkov, V. (1946), which is not available to me. See also: Wirth, A. **Geschichte Sibiriens und der Mandschurei** (1899). pp. 101–105, 112 ff.

³⁹³ My notes on the newly founded monasteries have been lost. The material is collected in: Zverinsky, vols. 2–3. The data cited by Bulgakov (op. cit.) are, in my opinion, incomplete; the descriptions of the dioceses in the PBE are also incomplete. Therefore, the information I provide may need to be double-checked.

here and new towns were founded³⁹⁴. As in the Ponizovye region, state colonization was accompanied by the founding of new monasteries. But here, in the south, monasteries very rarely developed into large-scale economic enterprises. Alongside the construction of towns and fortified lines, the government sought to populate the new lands with military servicemen, granting them estates in recognition of their military service in guarding the border. Although monasteries also received land holdings and other gifts from the state, these were not as extensive as those in the Ponizovye region. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that particularly rapid colonization in this region took place in the second half of the 17th century, when, under the Code of 1649, the government was restricted in its ability to grant land holdings to monasteries and was generally required to exercise frugality in the distribution of land³⁹⁵.

Based on information about newly founded monasteries, the following diagram can be drawn up³⁹⁶:

Century Urban monasteries Rural monasteries

16th 2 8

XVII 13 21

Total 15 29

At first glance, it seems that the large number of monasteries founded outside city walls (29 compared to 15 urban monasteries) contradicts our previous assertions. However, it should be noted that almost all of these monasteries were located near cities (three to five kilometers away) and bore little resemblance to the true hermitages of the North. Thanks to the intensive colonization of the lands south of the Oka River—accompanied by the founding of numerous new towns and settlements of military personnel (so-called “slobods”), which was driven by the need for military service to protect the southern borders—this region was rapidly settled; the process of its settlement mainly took place in the second half of the 17th century, when a particularly large number of new monasteries appeared³⁹⁷.

In terms of the number of monasteries, the Oryol-Kursk region ranks first; it is situated on both banks of the Oka River, extending westward to the Desna River and, in the southwest, in the Chernihiv area, bordering Ukraine, which was then under Polish rule³⁹⁸. Nine new monasteries were founded here (two in the 16th century and seven in the 17th). In the Kursk region alone, seven monasteries were built (four in the 16th century and three in the 17th). To the east, the Oryol-Kursk region borders the Voronezh region. As early as the 1620s, a border line was established here, extending westward to the city of Belgorod and, in a northeasterly direction, crossing the Don River to the upper reaches of the Khopra River in the Tambov region³⁹⁹. In the 17th century, seven monasteries were founded here, including three in the city of Voronezh⁴⁰⁰.

³⁹⁴ I will mention only the most important works: Platonov, *Essays* (1899); Bagaley, D., in: *Readings*, 1886–1887; Dobroklonsky, A., in: *Readings*, 1888; Yasinsky, A. (1900); A. Yakovlev (1916); as well as: I. Miklashevsky, *On the History of Economic Life in the Muscovite State*. Vol. 1: *Settlement and Agriculture in Southern Ukraine in the 17th Century* (1894).

³⁹⁵ Rozhkov, N. (1898); Lappo-Danilevsky. *The Organization of Direct Taxation in the Muscovite State* (1890); a brief but good overview in: Gnevushev, A. *Land Ownership and Agriculture in the Muscovite State in the 16th–17th Centuries*, in: *Russian History in Essays and Articles*. Ed. M. Dovnar-Zapolsky. 3 (1912). pp. 267–311.

³⁹⁶ This table is compiled from various sources; we consider it incomplete, as Zverinsky’s work was unavailable to us during the final editing of the book; it is possible that the total number of monasteries was higher—primarily, we believe, due to non-urban monasteries that disappeared during the 17th century, shortly after their founding.

³⁹⁷ During the construction of fortified lines, the government required monasteries to send their peasants to work on the construction projects. See, for example: RIB. 10. pp. 268–269; cf. also: Yakovlev. *Op. cit.*, which contains a great deal of information on this subject. For similar government measures in the Ponizovye region, see: *Historical and Legal Acts*. Compiled by S. Melnikov. 1 (1859). pp. 22, 23, 24.

³⁹⁸ In administrative terminology, Ukraine in the 17th century was called Little Russia. The name “Polish Ukraine” referred mainly to the Belgorod and Kharkiv regions. The word “Ukraine” means “lying at the edge” of the “field,” that is, the steppe.

³⁹⁹ DAI. 9. pp. 270–288. Cf. also: Bagaley. *Op. cit.* p. 197; Yakovlev. *Op. cit.* p. 284.

⁴⁰⁰ In Voronezh (founded in 1586): 1620—the Akatovsky Monastery, founded by Abbot Kirill (Zverinsky, 2, No. 609); 1623—the Pokrovsky Convent (*ibid.*, No. 1060). Before 1620, the Bogoroditsky Monastery was founded in the town of Zadonsk (*ibid.*, vol. 1, no. 59). Around 1640, the Uspensky Divnogorsky Monastery was built 20 km from the city of Ostrogozhsk (*ibid.*, vol. 1, no. 169). Shortly before 1646, an austere ascetic named Konstantin founded the Transfiguration Convent (commonly known as the Tolshen Convent) on the banks of the Usmani River, 40 km from Voronezh (*ibid.*, Vol. 2, No. 1222). By order of Tsar Mikhail, the Dormition Monastery was built in 1613, 3 km from the town of Valuiki (*ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 1329). The seventh monastery, the Monastery of St. John the Baptist, was founded by order of Peter the Great in 1697 in the conquered fortress of Azov; in 1711, after Russia lost Azov as a result of Peter’s unsuccessful Prut Campaign, this monastery was relocated to Voronezh. Cf.: Bulgakov. *Op. cit.*, p. 63.

In the southeastern region—the northeastern part of which administratively belonged to the Ponizovye—the first monastery was founded as early as 1573⁴⁰¹, and by the 17th century, there were a total of eight monasteries in the area. Two hermitages deserve special mention, as they later, in the 18th and 19th centuries, played a major role in the history of Russian monasticism: The Bogoroditskaya Sanaksarskaya Hermitage (1659), not far from the town of Temnikov, and the Uspenskaya Sarovskaya Hermitage (1679, reestablished in 1692), approximately 40 km from the same town, which became known to all the Russian people thanks to the life and deeds of St. Seraphim of Sarov⁴⁰².

Returning to the Oryol region, we will mention some monasteries that subsequently played a significant role in the history of Russian monasticism. At the end of the 16th century, the Ploshchanskaya Hermitage of the Mother of God was founded approximately 60 km from the town of Sevsk, but it was destroyed by Polish troops during the Time of Troubles. In 1620, Prokopius, a monk from the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, with the blessing of Patriarch Filaret, restored the ruined hermitage. In the 18th and 19th centuries, this hermitage was one of the centers of the elder tradition⁴⁰³. Around 1661, Hieromonk Serapion founded the Beloberezhsky Hermitage of St. John the Forerunner, approximately 17 km from the city of Bryansk, on the banks of the Snezhnet River, and Russian elders lived and labored here in the 19th century⁴⁰⁴. Among the hermitages of the Kursk region, we should mention the Hermitage of the Nativity of the Mother of God, known in Russia as the “Korennia” Hermitage, named after the miraculous “Korennia” Icon of the Mother of God that was (formerly) housed there. This hermitage, located 30 km from Kursk, was founded in 1597.⁴⁰⁵

In the second half of the 17th century, monastic colonization advanced further south, into the steppe region between the Dnieper and Donets rivers, where several monasteries were built⁴⁰⁶.

9. General Characteristics of Colonization

This is the general picture of the construction of new monasteries in the 16th and 17th centuries. But let us reiterate: the data we present requires verification and refinement; once the necessary historical material and sources on all the monasteries have been gathered, the statistics will look somewhat different. Research on this topic is complicated by the fact that many monasteries, built by order of ecclesiastical or state authorities or on the initiative of the founders themselves, fell into disuse after several decades for various reasons; the monks left them, and the monasteries, as historical documents put it, stood “without singing.” Only some of the abandoned monasteries were subsequently revived—most often at the monks’ own initiative. There were many monasteries whose existence is not mentioned at all in official documents and which, so to speak, remained hidden from the world. The church authorities made no effort to revive the monasteries that had fallen into disuse. They usually focused on founding new monasteries, which was in their interest, as these efforts were generally closely linked to the state’s colonization initiatives. At the beginning of the 18th century, the founding of new monasteries also ceased, a development attributable to the attitude toward monasticism and monasteries held by Peter the Great and influential members of the church hierarchy. In the first half of the 18th century, very few new monasteries were founded. It was not until the 19th century that a new wave of monastery foundations began, but this was now driven by entirely different reasons and considerations than

⁴⁰¹ The Nikolaevsky Chervnitsky Monastery, 20 km from the town of Shatsk (Zverinsky, Vol. 2, No. 569); the Trinity Monastery on the banks of the Don River near the town of Lebedyan was likely founded in the 16th century; the first reliable records of it date to 1620–21 (*ibid.*, Vol. 1, No. 529).

⁴⁰² Zverinsky. 2. Nos. 644 and 1141.

⁴⁰³ Zverinsky, vol. 2, no. 1057; Denisov, op. cit., no. 630.

⁴⁰⁴ Zverinsky. 1, No. 92; Denisov. Op. cit., No. 626. The monks had already abandoned this hermitage by the end of the 17th century, and it lay in ruins; in 1721 it was revived by Archimandrite Pitirim (from the Peter and Paul Monastery in Bryansk), abolished in 1764, but the monks continued to live there, and later, in 1817, it was “officially” revived again. The hermitage was very well known in the late 18th century thanks to the elders who lived there. See Chapter XV.

⁴⁰⁵ Bulgakov. Collected Works. p. 74. I will mention two more newly founded monasteries: 1) the Glinsk Hermitage of the Mother of God near the town of Putivl (1557) and 2) the Monastery of the Mother of God in Molchansk (commonly called Sofroniev’s Monastery), 25 km from Putivl, founded in the 15th century and reestablished in 1593. Zverinsky, Vol. 2, No. 933. Both monasteries became famous for their elders. See Chapter XV.

⁴⁰⁶ In 1654, the Holy Trinity Monastery was founded near the settlement of Akhtyrka, known for its miraculous icon of the Mother of God of Akhtyrka; in 1663, the Transfiguration Monastery was founded, approximately 10 km from Kharkiv, which became famous for its icon of the Mother of God of Ozeryanka. Bulgakov. Op. cit. p. 100. The southernmost monastery was the St. Nicholas Monastery (1680) near the village of Novomoskovsk on the banks of the Samara River (north of the city of Yekaterinoslav, now Dnipropetrovsk). Bulgakov. Op. cit. p. 65.

during the Moscow period. This new wave of monastery foundations deserves special attention, for the history of their establishment is of a completely different nature than before.

In providing an overview of monastic colonization, we must address one more question: How did the local population react to the founding of so many monasteries? Here, an interesting fact comes to light. Not every founding of a new monastery met with the full approval of the local population; at times, they even attempted in one way or another to prevent the construction of the monastery, and often the matter escalated to the point of the monastery's founder being beaten. In those regions where monastic colonization was closely linked to state colonization—that is, in the Ponizovye region and in the south—such incidents were rare. But in the north and, to some extent, in the central regions—where Russians had lived for a long time and where the issue of free, arable land was acute—such incidents were not uncommon. Even the lives of some saints and ascetics, who were held in high esteem, mention that the founding of new monasteries did not always please the residents of neighboring villages and settlements. In such cases, economic and social circumstances prevailed over the people's religious views and piety⁴⁰⁷. Land and the right to use it were sometimes the subject of years-long disputes, lawsuits, and even a cause for violence when local residents were unable to prevent the establishment of a new monastery. Historical documents indicate that the blame for this lies not only with the local peasants but also with the monasteries themselves and their desire to expand their landholdings, as they attempted to do so at the expense of neighboring peasants. Thanks to cunning, gold, and connections with the authorities, the monasteries managed to drag out legal disputes for years—a process the peasant communities could not afford.

It can be argued that the peasants' fears were not unfounded: despite government measures to limit the growth of monastic holdings, new monasteries managed to establish themselves very quickly and grow economically. The founding of monasteries—whether they received small or large land grants—led to an overall increase in monastic landholdings. Thus, the rise in the number of monasteries did not lead to a revival of the ascetic spirit of monasticism, but rather to the enrichment of the monasteries themselves, and therefore had more negative than positive consequences. A look at the history of monastic estates in the 16th–17th centuries provides ample evidence of this, and we now wish to examine this unfortunate historical circumstance in detail.

Chapter VIII. Monastic Estates and Monastic Economy in the 16th–17th Centuries

1. Legal Documents Serving as Sources on the History of Monastic Estates

The historical reason for the emergence and growth of monastic landholdings lay not in their necessity—as, for example, St. Joseph of Volotsk, for the flourishing of monastic life, but primarily in the monks' own deep conviction that monastic estates did not contradict the foundations of monastic asceticism. It was on this false premise that the Josephites built their views, and under this pretext did they engage in polemics and struggle against the non-acquirers⁴⁰⁸. Despite their firm conviction that they were in the right

⁴⁰⁷ We will mention only the most interesting cases. From the life of St. Adrian of Poshekhonsk (late 16th century), it is evident that in 1543 he founded a hermitage near the town of Poshekhonye; it was destroyed by peasants (IRI, vol. 3, p. 70). St. Alexander of Svir (1533), who was already venerated as a saint during his lifetime, was forced to abandon one of the hermitages he had founded (ibid., 6, p. 115). See also his hagiography in: VChM, December 7. St. Leonid of Luzhsk, or Ust-Nedum († 1654), having resolved to build a church (1603), also encountered resistance from the local population (IRI, 1, p. 114). St. Simon of Volom († 1644) built a church, but the local residents, fearing that he would later build a monastery there, burned it down (ibid., vol. 3, p. 608). And the pagan population viewed the missionary efforts of the ascetics with great distrust, as is evident from the lives of St. Trifon of Pechenga († 1583) and St. Trifon of Vyatka (IRI. 4, p. 582; 6, p. 437). The hostile attitude toward the founders of monasteries is also described in the lives of the Venerable Dmitry of Prilutsk, Stephen of Makhreshch, Macarius of Zheltovodsk, and Macarius of Kalyazin (all 14th century). Pavlov, Essay, p. 20. St. Agapitus of Markushevsk († 1584) was actually killed by neighboring peasants after he received a charter from Moscow granting his hermitage ownership of the land (IRI. 5, p. 51). The monasteries themselves were often to blame in these disputes, because they had unlawfully occupied the peasants' land. See similar examples in the history of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery. Nikolsky. Op. cit. 1. pp. 2, 8–10.

⁴⁰⁸ In examining the issue of monastic landholdings, V. O. Klyuchevsky observes: "Monastic land ownership was a doubly ill-advised sacrifice made by a devout society to an insufficiently understood concept of monasticism; it hindered the moral betterment of the monasteries themselves and, at the same time, disrupted the balance of the state's economic forces" (Geschichte Russlands. Vol. 2, p. 294). Russian monasteries already owned land during the time of St. Theodosius of the Caves. Cf. the Life of Theodosius: 1. in: Yakovlev, Op. cit. (1873, XII); 2. in: Readings (1889), 1. p. 25. The monastic community held the view that such ownership

and that their claims to these holdings were religiously justified, the monasteries nevertheless sought to confirm these rights through state decrees as well. Since the state, for its part, was interested in legally establishing the monasteries' right to own land, but at the same time in limiting that right as much as possible for its own benefit, the state and the Church found themselves alternately as allies and as adversaries. It can be argued that neither side managed to achieve a decisive victory nor suffered a true defeat. The uncertainty and unresolved nature of the issue regarding the monasteries' land rights fostered the growth and even the flourishing of monastic economy.

Various privileges (immunities) granted to monasteries by princes and grand princes contributed to the expansion of monastic landholdings⁴⁰⁹. Of immense importance for the proliferation of privileges regarding church estates were the decrees of the Tatar khans, which, as already mentioned, were regarded by the church hierarchy as the basis for the Church's special rights⁴¹⁰. It is clear that the hierarchy and individual monasteries sought to obtain from their local (appanage) princes, and later from the grand princes, letters of grant confirming these rights—not only to protect their estates from the claims of secular (princely) institutions, but, above all, to legally secure these estates for the future⁴¹¹. The rights and privileges of monasteries were established and protected by a number of different documents⁴¹².

The most important document was the charter of grant. When a new monastery was established, its founder sought to obtain a charter of grant from the Grand Duke or the Tsar, which would precisely define the boundaries of the land holdings; at the same time—and this was especially true in the 16th century—the monastery received from the Grand Duke or the Tsar the right to accept settlers from other places⁴¹³. These letters of grant were often letters of exemption, by which monasteries, their inhabitants, and all those living on monastic lands were exempted from paying taxes to the state; such exemptions were usually granted for a fixed term—10 or 15 years. Very often, if not always, these privileges also applied to hereditary boyar estates donated to the monastery (often at the time of its founding), as well as to long-settled peasants who had lived on these estates even before the monastery received its charter. Very rarely were letters of privilege issued for

did not contradict the spirit of monastic vows, and based its views on this matter on the existence of monastic landholdings in Byzantium, where they were administered in accordance with the "Church Statute of Patriarch Alexius." See: Description. 3. No. 330 (statute). p. 231. Cf.: Golubinsky. 1. 2. p. 597. Old Russian chroniclers referred to princely grants of land to monasteries as "acts of piety" (e.g., PSRL. 1. pp. 65, 85, 92, 129, 187; 2. pp. 11–113, 154, etc.). But we must not forget that these chroniclers were exclusively monks. As early as the 12th century, it was common for monasteries to own the land from which they derived their sustenance. Gorbunov. "Privileges Granted to Monasteries and Churches," in: Archive. Ed. by N. Kalachov. 5 (1860–61). pp. 4–5. However, it should be noted right away that some members of the episcopate, such as Metropolitan Clement Smolyatich (1147–1154), opposed monastic landholdings and pointed to the corruption of monastic life resulting from them. Nikolsky, N. *On the Literary Works of Metropolitan Clement Smolyatich* (1892). pp. 104, 220. Golubovsky. *History of the Smolensk Region until the Beginning of the 15th Century* (1895). p. 238. On methods of acquisition in the 12th–15th centuries, see: Gorbunov. *Op. cit.*, pp. 11–19; Milyutin. *Op. cit.*, p. 42; Gorchakov. *On Land Holdings* (1871). pp. 83–109; Meychik. *Charters of the 14th–15th Centuries* (1883). p. 3.

⁴⁰⁹ For a general discussion of the emergence of immunity in Ancient Rus', see: Pavlov-Silvansky. Works, 3 vols.; Vladimirsky-Budanov. Review (1888). pp. 153, 195 ff., as well as: Sergeevich, Zagoskin, Pavlov. Course in Canon Law. p. 158; Suvorov, N. Course in Canon Law; Makarii. 8. pp. 191, 267, 285.

⁴¹⁰ The khan's decrees very precisely define the rights and privileges of the clergy regarding land holdings; cf., for example, the decree of Mengu-Temir (c. 1267–1279), in: SGGD. Vol. 2, No. 2. On the decrees, see: Priselkov, M., *The Khan's Decrees of the Russian Metropolitans* (1916); as well as the earlier study: Grigoriev, *On the Authenticity of the Khan's Decrees* (1842) and Hermann, *Op. cit.*., pp. 69–71.

⁴¹¹ On the earliest letters of grant (13th–15th centuries), see: Gorbunov, *op. cit.*, and Milyutin, *op. cit.*

⁴¹² On various types of documents: Gorbunov, *op. cit.*, and Shumakov, S., "A Survey of the Documents of the Board of Finance," Part 4, in: Readings, 1917, No. 2, pp. 17 ff.; Vladimirsky-Budanov. Review (1888). pp. 195 ff.; Hermann. *Op. cit.* pp. 69–71; also important is the work by Veselovsky, S. "On the Origin of the Patrimonial System" (1926). pp. 26 ff., 84–89, 90.

⁴¹³ Cf.: Gorchakov. *On Land Holdings*. p. 105. Of the oldest and most notable letters of grant, we will mention only a few; for example, the letter of grant from Prince Ivan Kalita (14th century) to the Yuryev Monastery: AAE. 1. Nos. 4 and 5; and those from the Belozersky princes to the Ferapontov Monastery (1450): AAE. 1, No. 47; cf. also: Nos. 20, 21, 51, 53; all these charters support the monasteries' colonization efforts—the cultivation of unplowed land, the recruitment of new settlers, and the construction of new villages. On the rights of long-time residents, see: AAE. 1. Nos. 34 and 35. Particularly detailed is the charter granted by Prince Vasily of Yaroslavl (1321–1345) to the Spassky Monastery (c. 1325) in: Historical Acts of the Spassky Monastery in Yaroslavl. Ed. by Vakhrameev. 1, No. 1; it was later supplemented and confirmed by Grand Prince Ivan (c. 1464–1466): OAMYU. 4, No. 147. The following letters of grant are typical of the 16th century: 1551—to the Yuryev Monastery (DAI. 1, No. 46); 1560—to the Mikhailovsky Convent (DAI. 1, No. 113); 1556—to the Troitsky Pechenga Monastery (SGKE. 2. No. 136); 1554—to the Konevsky Monastery (DAI. 1. No. 48); 1560—to the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery (*ibid.* 1. No. 115).

an indefinite term⁴¹⁴. Along with the charter of privilege, a letter of immunity was usually issued, which exempted the monastery, its peasants, and workers from the jurisdiction of state authorities and granted judicial powers to the abbot, with the exception of criminal cases—thrift, robbery, and murder⁴¹⁵. If all these rights and privileges were listed in a single charter and the monastery received complete exemption from taxes (even if only for a limited period) and from the jurisdiction of state authorities, then such a charter was called a “tarkhan” charter, or simply a “tarkhan.” These tarkhans were issued rarely, and in 1584, by decree of the Council, their issuance was completely discontinued⁴¹⁶.

The documents mentioned above serve as sources on the public law of that era concerning church and monastic estates. They may be supplemented by various documents of a private law nature.

First and foremost are the so-called statutory charters of the grand dukes and metropolitans, which govern the legal relationship between the metropolitan and the monasteries within his diocese (unless they are exempt from the metropolitan’s jurisdiction by special letters patent)⁴¹⁷. When, as a result of disputes over property boundaries, certain documents were drawn up by imperial decree or court ruling, these documents were called legal charters⁴¹⁸. When estates (primarily hereditary estates) were donated, the former owner of the estate issued such a charter⁴¹⁹ to the monastery, transferring all rights and privileges associated with the donated estate; the monasteries, in turn, sought to confirm the terms of these charters with letters patent. Monasteries often exchanged portions of their estates with one another or with private landowners. These exchanges were certified by exchange charters⁴²⁰. Such exchanges were particularly common in the late 16th and first half of the 17th centuries, when church council decrees restricted or entirely prohibited the purchase of land. When establishing disputed boundaries between neighboring estates, local authorities issued “visiting charters.” These charters were of particular importance to monasteries, as many monasteries were involved in protracted legal disputes with their neighbors over the boundaries of their estates (especially in the north—with peasants)⁴²¹. Finally, it is worth mentioning documents known as “mortgage deeds” or “kabala,” which recorded rights to money or property given as collateral⁴²².

These were the state and private-law documents that confirmed the monasteries’ rights to land holdings.

New properties were acquired in various ways. The primary method was a grant from the Grand Prince or Tsar, which in practice was issued in response to a petition from the monastery’s founder at the same time the monastery was established and was confirmed by a charter of grant. Upon the accession of a new tsar, the

⁴¹⁴ See: Milyutin, op. cit.; Dyakonov, Essays (1898); Grekov, V., “Yuri’s Day and the Sacred Years,” in: Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (1926), Nos. 1–2; *ibid.* Peasants in Russia from the Earliest Times to the 17th Century (1946). Privileged charters, written in official and colloquial language, were also called “obelny” charters; “obel’at” means to exempt from taxes that peasants living on “black” land—that is, land subject to taxation—were required to pay.

⁴¹⁵ See “charter of exemption from prosecution”: to the Vazhsky Monastery (1548). DAI. 1. No. 44; to the Nikolaevsky Korelsky Monastery (1542). AI. 1. No. 141; to the Strokina Hermitage (1547). *Ibid.* No. 147; To the Trinity Monastery in Astrakhan (1573). *Ibid.* No. 184; To the Konevsky Monastery (1578). DAI. 1. No. 122; To the Trinity-Sergius Monastery (1535 and 1551), in: Acts. Edited by Fedotov-Chekhosky. 1. Nos. 57 and 75; to the Ferapontov Monastery (1534). *Ibid.* No. 42; to the Pokrov Monastery in Suzdal (1528). AI. 1. No. 131; to the Chukhlom Monastery (1518). AI. 1. No. 125; to the Antoniev-Siy Monastery (1545). SGKE. 1. No. 109; to the Volokolamsk Monastery during the lifetime of St. Joseph (1500). AAE. 1. No. 136. From the 15th century, we will mention the following letters of immunity: to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery. AAE. 1. No. 95; To the Trinity-Sergius Monastery (1494). *Ibid.* 1. No. 131. According to researchers, monastic estates, as well as the hereditary fiefs of the boyars, already enjoyed immunity rights in the 14th and 15th centuries: Presnyakov. Knyazhye Pravo (1909). p. 296; Sergeevich. Op. cit. 1. p. 328 and, especially: Pavlov-Silvansky. Works 3. pp. 281, 295; Pavlov. Course on Canon Law (1902). pp. 158–160.

⁴¹⁶ Petrov, V. “The Conciliar Code of 1584 on the Abolition of Tarkhans,” in: Collection in Honor of S. F. Platonov (1922).

⁴¹⁷ For example, the charter documents in: AAE. 1. No. 9—granted by the Grand Prince to Metropolitan Cyprian (1392), and No. 11.

⁴¹⁸ For example, in: AJU. 1. Nos. 8, 12, 16, 17, and others.

⁴¹⁹ For example, in: AJU. 1. No. 32, 63; a will often served as such a charter; the earliest example is the bequest of an estate to the Vasilevsky Monastery in Suzdal (1253), in: AJU. 1, No. 439; or to the Chukhchenemsky Monastery (15th century), in: SGKE. 1, Nos. 24, 19, 26, 11, 27, etc. Cf. my work: Studien zum Klosterwesen Rußlands. 2. “On the Problem of Monastic Property in the 15th and 16th Centuries,” in: *Kyrios*. 4 (1939). A *votchina* is a hereditary estate, as opposed to a *pomestye*, which was granted as conditional property in return for service; Western European equivalents are *allod* and *benefice*.

⁴²⁰ For example, in: AYU. 2, No. 156; SGKE. 1, Nos. 45, 49, 156.

⁴²¹ For example, in: AJU. 2. No. 178, 179, 180, etc. These “visiting charters” served as sources for letters of grant and were often incorporated into them.

⁴²² For example, in: AJU. 2. No. 126; SGKE. 1. Nos. 3, 6, 10 (15th century). They are particularly characteristic of the second half of the 16th century and the first half of the 17th century.

abbots of the monasteries hastened to secure from him confirmation of the letters of grant that had already been issued; this was also done in cases where, as a result of a fire or the destruction of the monastery, the letter of grant had been lost—which happened to many monasteries, for example, during the Time of Troubles. The second type of acquisition consisted of land or monetary gifts from private individuals; these gifts were confirmed by such charters or by a will—a testamentary will, when the donor wished for his estate to pass to the monastery after his death. Large monasteries mainly increased their wealth through numerous purchases of arable land, forests, fishing grounds, and saltworks, which were recorded in deeds of sale. From 1551 onward, every land purchase had to be registered with the Grand Palace Office, “with a report to the tsar,” and after 1580, as already mentioned, a deed of sale became legally valid only on the basis of a special charter granted by the tsar. When the acquisition of land by purchase was officially prohibited by synodal decrees, monasteries found ways to circumvent these prohibitions through various types of land exchanges. Another method of acquisition was receiving estates as collateral, which monasteries did quite often, in violation of the sacred canons prohibiting usury by the clergy and monastics. As already mentioned, these transactions were regulated by mortgage records.

The land registers of the 16th–17th centuries and the census records of the 17th century are also of particular importance for the history of monastic estates and monastic economy. These are very important sources that allow us to assess the colonization activities of the monasteries, the steady growth of their estates, and the development of the monastic economy⁴²³.

2. *The Oprichnina and the Agricultural Crisis of the 16th Century*

Before moving on to a description of monastic agriculture, let us mention two additional circumstances that are of great importance to the issue under discussion. The first is Tsar Ivan IV’s so-called Oprichnina, which led to the transfer of many boyar estates into the hands of monasteries; the second is the agricultural crisis in the Moscow region during the second half of the 16th century.

The Oprichnina, Tsar Ivan’s terrible and bloody reform, was properly examined only at the beginning of the 20th century, primarily in the works of historian S. F. Platonov and his students⁴²⁴. On the one hand,

⁴²³ Land registers are a kind of cadastral survey of land holdings, including a census of the population (household owners) and a description of their properties. The emergence and nature of land registers are linked to taxation. The first general census of the population (specifically, households) in Ancient Rus’ was conducted by the Tatars in 1257 and 1275. PSRL. 1. 2 (2nd ed.). p. 474; 10. p. 152. The first census of households in the Muscovite state was conducted in 1538–1547 and was called the “Great Census.” This census was deemed unsuitable, and in 1551–1580 a new census took place—the “new census”—which included a cadastral description of land holdings; at that time, the clerks compiled land registers. Some of these have survived to this day and constitute a valuable source on the history of land relations in the Muscovite State, particularly regarding the history of monastic and church landholdings. In the 17th century, two censuses were conducted: one in the 1620s and the other from 1646 to 1678. (AAE. 4. No. 14). The first census was conducted according to the old system: the primary unit of description was the territorial unit—the “soha”—with a description of the land and its qualities. In 1646–1678, census registers of tax-paying households were compiled, without a description of the land. A “soha” on the estates of court officials comprised 800 “chettyrti,” while on church and monastic estates it comprised 600 “chettyrti,” meaning it was subject to a higher tax. A “chettyrt” or “chet” was the term used at the time for the area sown with one “chettyrt” (150 liters) of rye; one “chetvert” corresponded to half a “desatina” (1 desatina = 1.9 hectares); 400–1,000 “chetverts,” depending on soil quality, constituted one “soha”; there were three types of soil: “good,” “average,” and “poor.” The “soha” was the basic unit of taxation—the “pososhnaia podati”—in the Muscovite state until the late 1620s. This system emerged in the mid-16th century, when the procedure for distributing estates to service men was changed (the Code of 1556). Sources are found in the Chronicle: PSRL. 13. pp. 268–269. Cf.: Borodin, A. “The 1556 Code on Military Service,” in: Collection in Honor of S. F. Platonov (1922). pp. 143–153. A comprehensive study of the cadastral inventory (“soshnoe pis’mo”) is contained in the work: Veselovsky, S. Soshnoe pis’mo. 2 vols. (1915–1916), see here: 1. p. 97; 2. pp. 348, 363 ff. And also: Nikitsky, A. “On the Question of Measures in Ancient Rus’,” in: ZhMNP. 1894. 4. pp. 414–415; Rozhkov, “Plow,” in: Granat’s Encyclopedic Dictionary, vol. 40, no. 3 (1925), p. 275; Lappo-Danilevsky, A., “The Organization of Direct Taxation in the Muscovite State” (1890). pp. 220, 229–233; Milyukov, P. Controversial Issues in the Financial History of the Muscovite State (1892). pp. 35–76 (in this work, Lappo-Danilevsky’s assertions are criticized). On tax registers as a historical source, see Rozhkov. Agriculture in Muscovite Russia (1899). pp. 221–231; Kaufman, A. “On the Question of the Statistical Method in Historical-Economic Research. On the Use of Tax Registers as Historical Material.” Vol. 1, No. 1 (1913). pp. 10–39; Gnevushev, A. “The Statistical Method in the Analysis of the Tax Registers of the Muscovite State,” in: New Historical Journal. 2 (1914). No. 3. pp. 16 ff. A good brief overview of the research findings is provided in the book: Yakovlev, A. The Order for the Recruitment of Soldiers (1917). Ch. 1.

⁴²⁴ See the monograph: Platonov, S. F., Ivan the Terrible (1923; Berlin ed., 1924), in which Platonov provides, in the introduction, a critical overview of the historiography on Ivan IV and offers his own characterization—based on extensive research—of Ivan’s personality, which has been the subject of so much debate among historians. Chapter 4 provides a multifaceted examination of the origins of the Oprichnina. Cf. also: Platonov, Essays (1899) and the same author, History of Russia (1927), p. 157; as well as Stöhl, K., vol. 1, pp. 270–278, which relies primarily on Platonov. It should be noted that Klyuchevsky’s portrayal and characterization of

this reform was political in nature and was merely a continuation of the long-standing policy of the Grand Princes of Moscow, directed against the appanage princes and their descendants (the “knyazhat”) and designed to strengthen the tsar’s autocracy; on the other hand, it was an agrarian reform. Many estates seized from the princes and boyars were divided into small plots and transferred to the estates of the service class. The Oprichnina stripped the boyars of their social and political significance and led to their ruin. The new rules of military service (1570) were difficult and nearly impossible for the boyars and many members of the service class to fulfill. All of this forced boyar families to sell or mortgage their hereditary estates. The only potential buyers were monasteries: they alone possessed monetary capital in the mid-16th century; only the monasteries were completely unaffected by the Oprichnina⁴²⁵.

The agricultural crisis of the 16th century, which drew the attention of the authorities and, as S. F. Platonov established⁴²⁶, compelled them to take certain measures (around 1570), was, in essence, the logical result of the vigorous political and economic efforts of the Muscovite state during the first half of Tsar Ivan IV’s reign. The struggle against the Kazan Tatars, the Livonian War—initially successful but later unsuccessful—and the defense of the southern borders against raids by the Crimean Tatars and Nogais—all of this constituted the political aspect of the crisis; the Oprichnina, the new system of military service and the associated changes in the distribution of estates—the government’s main source of capital—and the extensive colonization of conquered lands constituted the economic aspect of the crisis and deepened it. The situation of the inhabitants of the central regions—primarily the area between the Oka and Volga rivers—became increasingly difficult with each passing year. For lower-ranking military officers, whose estates yielded little income (partly due to primitive farming methods), as well as for the peasants who lived on this land and suffered greatly from economic hardships, the search for better living conditions became a matter of urgent necessity. Things were no better in the hereditary estates or among the peasants living there. At the same time, the lands on both sides of the Middle Volga, the Lower Volga region, and the southern steppes offered unlimited opportunities for settlers. Moreover, the government needed thousands of people for the armed defense and agricultural development of these regions. New colonists were granted large tracts of land, and new monasteries invited peasants to their estates, offering them better living conditions than those in the Moscow center. A massive exodus of people from the center to the new regions began—a veritable resettlement, or “dispersion,” as sources from that era put it—which resulted in an economic crisis and left the central regions in a state of desolation. Many of the monasteries in the center of the country also suffered greatly from this crisis, while the crisis had a favorable effect on the economic development of the monasteries in the Ponizovye region.

A general assessment of these two circumstances (which, unfortunately, we) was necessary to show that the issue of monastic estates and monastic economy sheds light on various aspects of the political and economic life of the Muscovite state, and that the monasteries and their inhabitants, having fled the world and worldly concerns, were once again drawn into the cares of this world.

3. Specific Examples of Monastic Farming

Many factors influenced the development of monastic economy: the religious and historical significance of the monastery—with the name of the founder, whether canonized by the Church or highly revered by the people, playing a major role—local conditions, and relations with the royal family; no less important were the economic skills and enterprising spirit of the abbots and other individuals vested with authority in the monastery, who tirelessly cared for the monastery’s economic well-being and often, with a persistence and tenacity incomprehensible to us, strove for the ever-greater enrichment of their monastery. It would be wrong to view this solely as a negative trait of certain abbots or monks. Here we discover something

the Oprichnina in his **History of Russia** (**Geschichte Russlands**, Vol. 2), as Platonov and his students have demonstrated, cannot be considered satisfactory. See also the book by Vipper, V., **Ivan the Terrible** (1922), recently published in English. One might also mention the work by I. Budovnik, which takes into account nearly all the literature on Ivan IV and the Oprichnina.

⁴²⁵ On this, see: Lyubavsky, M., **Lectures on Ancient Russian History up to the End of the 16th Century**, 3rd ed. (1918), pp. 255–270; Rozhdestvensky, S., **Servant Landownership in the Muscovite State** (1897).

⁴²⁶ Platonov, Ivan the Terrible (1924). p. 116. On the general causes and course of the crisis, see: *ibid.* pp. 117–127; Grekov, Yuryev Day. p. 75, where the author emphasizes the significance of the Livonian War; Klyuchevsky, *The Boyar Duma* (5th ed.). p. 305 ff.; for a proper understanding of social and economic relations in the Muscovite state in the second half of the 16th century, we recommend consulting Platonov’s **Essays**; additionally: Rozhkov, **Agriculture** (1899), which examines nearly all aspects of the agricultural structure and the causes of the crisis.

characteristic of the religiosity of that era: the conviction that luxury in the decoration of monasteries and churches was pleasing to God (this, incidentally, was sharply criticized by the non-acquisitive); this opulence was seen as a service to the glory of the monastery's founder and the entire Russian Church. Furthermore, we must not forget that many monasteries engaged in charitable work and, in difficult times, provided assistance to the state and the people.

The main features of the development of monastic economy in the 16th–17th centuries can be illustrated by the example of individual monasteries. These features, with minor variations, were evident in monasteries located in various regions of the country.

We are already familiar with the history of the founding of the famous Trinity-Sergius Lavra. Its founder, St. Sergius (d. 1392), was not concerned with the worldly prosperity of his monastery; according to his ascetic views, monks should live in abstinence and poverty and support themselves through the labor of their own hands. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that as early as the last years of his life, the monastery received its first land holdings as a gift⁴²⁷. From the era of the second abbot, the Venerable Nikon (1392–1428), we have records of the monastery's extensive acquisitions, some of which were received as gifts and others purchased. By the end of the 15th century, the monastery owned land with villages inhabited by peasants who leased this land⁴²⁸. Throughout the 16th century, the monastery's holdings continued to grow. By the end of the century, according to the inventory of 1593–94, *the monastery owned more than 2,500 villages and hamlets, most of which (about 34) had been received as gifts, while only 14 had been purchased*⁴²⁹. *A very characteristic feature of the monastery's economy was that in the first half of the 16th century, the monastery authorities mainly leased land to peasants, while in the last quarter of that century they sought to expand the size of the land holdings on which the monastery itself conducted its farming operations; these lands were cultivated by numerous monastic servants and monastic novices, as well as by peasants who performed corvée labor there*⁴³⁰. *During the crisis years of the 16th century and the Time of Troubles in the 17th century, the monastery, despite some losses due to runaway peasants and the resulting reduction in cultivated land, remained economically stable. In 1620, the monastery's lands were cultivated on the same scale as in 1593–94*⁴³¹. According to the tax registers of 1646, there were 16,838 households across all the monastery's estates, inhabited by peasants, monastery novices, serfs⁴³², and monastery artisans⁴³³. Thus, over the course of three centuries, the small monastery of St. Sergius had transformed into a vast economic institution of Ancient Rus'. Foreigners, who visited Moscow, wrote that the monastery's acquisitions in the late 16th century—as D. Fletcher estimated—amounted to more than 100,000 rubles of the time (about 5 million gold

⁴²⁷ In 1391, on the eve of the death of St. Sergius, the monastery received a gift of salt mines in the Soligalich District. AJU 1, No. 63. By the mid-15th century, the monastery already had three salt works there. AAE 1, No. 52. In addition, there is an uncontested charter granted to the monastery by Grand Prince Dimitry (1363–1389), which proves that the monastery already possessed land holdings. Gorsky. Description. 1 (1890). p. 210.

⁴²⁸ During Nikon's relatively long tenure as abbot, the monastery acquired 24 estates through grants and purchases. Ibid. pp. 211–212. Rozhkov. Op. cit. p. 405. The earliest charter regarding land holdings dates to 1414–1415. AAE. 1. No. 19.

⁴²⁹ Rozhkov. Op. cit. pp. 377, 402, 405, 410–415. According to the inventory of 1592–1594, the monastery possessed 142,999 chetverti of cultivated land: Gauthier. The Region Beyond Moscow (1937). p. 116; as well as fallow lands, forests, fishing grounds, and saltworks. In addition, one must also take into account lands in five uyezds, the inventories of which have been lost. There were 3,988 peasant households and 502 landless households on the monastery's land. Ibid. Of these holdings, 17.3% were acquired in the 15th century, 66.8% in the 16th century, and 15.9% at an unknown date. Rozhkov. Op. cit., pp. 406, 410–413. From 1432 to 1633, the monastery paid 16,934 rubles to acquire new land holdings. Gorsky. Op. cit., p. 217.

⁴³⁰ Rozhkov. Op. cit. p. 132. Dyakonov. Essays (1898). p. 296; Gautier. Op. cit. p. 332.

⁴³¹ Ibid., p. 329. According to the inventory of 1614–1616, fallow lands totaled 54,604 chetverti, while in 1624–1640 they amounted to only 34,980 chetverti—that is, less than in 1592–1594 (when they totaled 40,062; *ibid.*, p. 116). The number of peasant households also increased: in 1614–1616 (that is, shortly after the Time of Troubles), there were only 623 peasant households and 426 bobyi households, while in 1624–1640 these numbers rose to 1,536 and 1,199, respectively. Ibid.

⁴³² Originally, the term “bobyi” referred to a peasant who did not own land—a landless peasant; but in the 17th century, the term was very often applied to peasants who did own land as well. Dyakonov. Essays (1889). Pp. 218 ff. The question of the “bobyi” as a distinct category of the peasant population is one of the controversial issues in the history of the Russian peasantry. Cf.: Shumakov, S. “Unclear Points in the History of Russian Law,” in: ZhMNP. 1904. 4. Especially p. 206; Veselovsky, S., *Soshnoye Pismo*, vol. 2, p. 517; Sergeevich, *Antiquities*, vol. 3 (1903), pp. 135–136, 467. Stashevsky, E., *Essays on the History of the Reign of Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich*, vol. 1 (1913), pp. 47–49; Grekov, B. Peasants in Russia (1946). p. 734. Cf. also: Klyuchevsky. The Origin of Serfdom in Russia, in: Essays. 1. p. 252.

⁴³³ Nikolsky. The Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery. Vol. 1, No. 1 (1897). Appendices VIII–XXV.

rubles in 1914)⁴³⁴. The profound veneration of the monastery's holy founder was the reason for numerous gifts and grants, as well as letters of privilege and immunity from the Grand Prince and Tsar—all these favors formed the basis of the monastery's enrichment and were the reason why life in the monastery in the 14th century was so different from life there in the 17th century.⁴³⁵

The economy of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, which was also among the most renowned monasteries of Muscovy, developed on a different basis. During the time of its founder, St. Cyril of Belozero († 1427), the monastery was known for the strictness of its communal life, for which it was highly valued; indeed, it earned the recognition and praise of St. Joseph of Volotsk⁴³⁶. After Cyril's death and until the 1480s, his monastery set an example of a truly ascetic monastic life and was closely associated with the ideal of non-possessiveness. But in the 16th century, the monastery's former high standard of living began to decline, and the era of the monastery's great founder came to seem like a historical legend⁴³⁷. As early as the 15th century, before 1521, the monastery had grown wealthy through numerous grants from the Grand Prince and donations from boyar families; moreover, it purchased—using funds derived from monetary gifts—large tracts of land, primarily from small landowners and even from peasants⁴³⁸. This drive to acquire land did not diminish even after the resolutions of the Stoglav of 1551. It was precisely after this council that the monastery concluded numerous land acquisition deals that contradicted the council's resolutions. Between 1551 and 1555 alone, the monastery acquired 19 new landholdings; from 1564 to 1572, the monastery authorities continued to acquire more and more land. The monastery bought the hereditary estates of boyars, the manors of service men, and small peasant plots. When a decree of 1572 prohibited the donation of land holdings to monasteries, the monastery began acquiring saltworks and plots in cities. Even after the Council of 1580, which generally prohibited monasteries from acquiring land, the abbot, demonstrating great resourcefulness, managed to secure from the tsar a charter of grant and immunity, under which the monastery was permitted to acquire new holdings⁴³⁹. As early as 1473, the monastery compiled a detailed inventory of its holdings⁴⁴⁰. The oldest surviving monastery land registers (from 1543–1544) mention 399 villages and hamlets in the Belozersk region alone that were owned by the monastery⁴⁴¹. The land acquired between 1543 and 1595 included at least 284 villages and hamlets. By the 1580s, the monastery's lands were located in 13 uyezds of the Muscovite state; in 8 of these alone, there were more than 5,000 desyatinas of cultivated land⁴⁴². Immediately after the Time of Troubles, the monastery continued its acquisitions. As early as 1615, the monastery received a charter from the young Tsar Mikhail granting it saltworks near the town of Nenoksa, along with land parcels in the town itself, including forests, hayfields, fishing grounds, and other assets⁴⁴³. According to the census records of 1646, there were 3,854 peasant households on the monastery's estates⁴⁴⁴.

⁴³⁴ Rushchinsky. Op. cit. p. 139. On the value of the ruble at that time, see: Klyuchevsky. "The Russian Ruble of the 16th–18th Centuries in Relation to the Present," in: Readings. 1884. Cf.: idem. Geschichte Rußlands. Vol. 2, p. 337.

⁴³⁵ The most important material on the economic history of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery is contained in its own economic records ("supervisory," "summary," and others), in: Monuments of the Socio-Economic History of the Muscovite State in the 16th–17th Centuries. Edited by S. Veselovsky and A. Yakovlev. 1 (1929).

⁴³⁶ Iosifovo's "Tale of the Holy Fathers," in: LZAK. 2. p. 82.

⁴³⁷ Details about this era of the decline of monasticism are contained in the work by N. Nikolsky (see the bibliography for Chapters III and IV).

⁴³⁸ For the period 1397–1521, N. Nikolsky identified 60 grants and 41 purchases of land holdings. Nikolsky. 1. 2 (1910). pp. 6, 11. Deed of St. Cyril (1427). A.Yu. 1. No. 72; 1430. Ibid. No. 6; Abbot Cassian (1448–1468) acquired a fishing ground. Ibid. No. 73; Abbot Philotheus (1469) acquired another one. Ibid. No. 74. 1519—acquisition of several villages and hamlets with land. Ibid. No. 77. 1539—sale of several villages to the Savvo-Storozhevsky Monastery. Ibid. No. 80. The monastery's expenditure ledgers show that "donations per soul" were very substantial. During the reign of Vasily III (1505–1533), 1,000 rubles were granted; under Ivan IV (1547–1584), 28,201 rubles; and in the first quarter of the 17th century, 5,444 rubles. Nikolsky. Ibid. 1. 2. p. 170; in addition, numerous gold, silver, and other valuable items were donated. The Expense Ledger, in: Notes of the ORSA. 1 (1851). pp. 46–139.

⁴³⁹ Nikolsky. Ibid. 1. 1. Appendices XLII, LVI, LXXV, LXVII; 1. 2. XI–XIII. Grekov. Peasants in Russia (1946). p. 605; in 1568, the monastery purchased a saltworks and fishing rights in the Dvina District. AYU. 1. No. 85; in 1577, two more saltworks were purchased. Ibid. Nos. 88 and 98; in 1598, land was purchased in the town of Kargopol. Ibid. No. 96.

⁴⁴⁰ AAE. 1. No. 377.

⁴⁴¹ AI. 1. No. 163.

⁴⁴² Rozhkov. Op. cit. pp. 394, 391; AAE. 1. No. 285.

⁴⁴³ Smirnov. Op. cit. 1 (1917). p. 111; AI. 3. No. 61.

⁴⁴⁴ Nikolsky. Ibid. Vol. 1, No. 1. Appendices VIII–XXV; for the year 1637, cf.: AAE. 3. No. 274 and AI. 3. No. 198, where, likely erroneously, only 2,101 peasant households are counted; the cultivated land is estimated at 25,490 chetverti.

Our third example is an urban monastery—the Spassky Monastery in Yaroslavl⁴⁴⁵, one of the oldest in Rus'. It is first mentioned in the chronicles in 1216; it was founded by Prince Konstantin of Yaroslavl, and at that time the stone monastery church was laid, with construction completed eight years later⁴⁴⁶. By the end of the 15th century (1463), after the discovery of the relics of the miracle-working princes Theodore († 1299), David, and Constantine, which were interred there, the monastery occupied a prominent place among the shrines revered by the people⁴⁴⁷. The monastery's special significance was emphasized by the church hierarchy through the elevation of its abbot to the rank of archimandrite⁴⁴⁸.

The monastery's estates consisted mainly of cultivated land, very extensive hayfields flooded during the spring high waters, and young forest. As early as 1321–1345, the monastery received a charter of immunity from Prince Vasily of Yaroslavl. During the tenure of Archimandrite Christopher—that is, between 1464 and 1466—Grand Prince Ivan III granted the monastery a charter of immunity, which indicates that the Spassky Monastery had its own saltworks; in 1478, it acquired another saltworks; In 1490, 1508, and 1516, the monastery made further purchases of cultivated land, including villages and estates⁴⁴⁹. In 1538, 1545, 1547, and 1550, the monastery received very generous donations for the repose of the soul from Prince S. F. Kurbsky and grants from the tsar⁴⁵⁰. After the Stoglav, in 1555 and 1556, the monastery carried out exchanges “with the tsar”; interestingly, the monastery offered the government estates with villages, while requesting uninhabited land for itself⁴⁵¹. In 1564, Tsar Ivan granted the monastery land with villages; in 1562, the monastery received a donation for the repose of the soul from Boyar Prince I. V. Penkov; and in 1564, it received a gift from Prince D. Zaseikin⁴⁵². Thus, during the 1550s and 1560s, the monastery's holdings grew significantly; this shows just how insignificant the decree of May 11, 1551, actually was. It was no coincidence that the Josephite majority in the Stoglav introduced a proviso into this decree stating that monasteries could continue to receive estates as endowments for the repose of the soul. The exchange of estates was not yet prohibited, and the Spassky Monastery took advantage of this opportunity: it carried out exchanges with the state itself—a good example of how easily the decree of May 11, 1551, could be circumvented.⁴⁵³

From the Spassky Monastery's land registry books for 1628–1631⁴⁵⁴, the following description of the size of the monastery's estates can be compiled:

arable land: 15,993.58 *chveteri* (7,997 *desyatinas*)

hayfields: 18,745 *kopens* (937.14 *desyatinas*)

forest: 994 34 *desyatinas*

peasant households: 1,947

households of the poor: 1,374

households of monastery servants: 163

Total: 3,484 households in 554 villages

The land registry records from 1646 show that at that time there were 3,183 peasant and tenant households on the monastery's lands, while the records from 1678 list 3,915 households⁴⁵⁵. In other words, from 1646 to 1678, the monastery's estates gained at least 732 peasant households, and this occurred after the

⁴⁴⁵ Main source: Historical Acts of the Spassky Monastery in Yaroslavl. Edited by Vakhrameev. 3 vols. (1896). We have studied the economy of this monastery in: Zur Geschichte der Wirtschaft des Spassky-Klosters in der Stadt Yaroslavl' im 16. – 17. Jahrhundert (manuscript).

⁴⁴⁶ PSRL. Vol. 1, pp. 186, 190; Vol. 10, p. 69.

⁴⁴⁷ Preobrazhensky, G. Monasteries and Churches of the City of Yaroslavl (1901). pp. 3, 7; Makarii. 7. p. 171; Klyuchevsky. Lives. p. 74.

⁴⁴⁸ Stroev. Lists of Hierarchs and Abbots of Monasteries of the Russian Church (1877). p. 377.

⁴⁴⁹ AI. 1. No. 3, 4. OAMYU. 4. No. 147, 149, 253; AYU. 2. No. 481.

⁴⁵⁰ AI. 1. No. 10; 2. Nos. 13–15.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid. 2. Nos. 19–21.

⁴⁵² Ibid. 2. Nos. 32, 33, 30, 31, 35, 26, 27, 28.

⁴⁵³ Decrees dated October 9, 1573, and October 1, 1584 (AAE. 1, No. 308; SGGD. 1, No. 208) prohibited the donation of estates to monasteries for the repose of the soul, while encouraging exchanges of this kind. Even in 1674, the monastery carried out an exchange with Prince I. P. Pronsky that was highly advantageous for itself. Kholmogorov. The Russian Tithe (1891). p. 64.

⁴⁵⁴ Records from 1627–1629 and 1629–1631. AI. 3. The calculation was made by us. If each *desyatina* amounts to about 20 *kopens* (Klyuchevsky. Course. 2 (1908). p. 366), then the monastery had no fewer than 937.14 *desyatinas* (!) of hayfields.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid. 3. pp. 130–252, 253–255. The calculation was performed by us.

Code of 1649, when the acquisition of new households was formally prohibited⁴⁵⁶. After the 1678 census, the increase in the number of households was insignificant, as in 1696 the Spassky Monastery had only 4,049 of them⁴⁵⁷.

The nature of the monastery's economic development in the 16th century can also be traced through the history of the St. Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery. This monastery, which had acquired a very special ecclesiastical and political significance thanks to its founder, St. Joseph, possessed a prosperous economy in the 16th century. In the 17th century, the monastery's economy saw almost no growth; this may have been due to the fact that the monastery's significance was no longer comparable to what it had been in the previous century. Although the Joseph Monastery wielded enormous political influence in the 16th century, this did not make it as spiritually blessed a place as, for example, the Trinity-Sergius or St. Cyril Monasteries. Popular piety judges religious shrines differently than the church hierarchy does; this fact is quite often striking to historians of the Russian Church.

Founded in 1479 near the town of Voloka-Lamska, which in the 15th–16th centuries was one of the busiest trading centers of Muscovy, the Josephov Monastery managed, already in the first century of its existence, to become a major economic institution⁴⁵⁸. The monastery received its first land holdings as a gift from Prince Boris of Volotsk in 1488–1495; in just 100 years, by 1591–1592, the monastery had acquired no fewer than 153 new estates as gifts and in exchange for prayers for the repose of the soul; The donations made for the repose of the soul were very substantial for that time and totaled 30,861 rubles (more than 1.5 million gold rubles at the 1914 exchange rate)⁴⁵⁹. Records of these contributions were entered into the monastery's synodicon. In one of the monastery's earliest synodicons, the following entry was made in the hand of St. Joseph himself: "Through these salvific and soul-saving books, we acquire every blessing in this life and in the life to come... As for food, sustenance, clothing, and footwear, as well as the arrangement of the cells—and if the cells are sufficiently supplied with all necessary items—and furthermore, villages, orchards, rivers, lakes, pastures, and every kind of animal and four-legged creature"⁴⁶⁰.

All of this enabled the monastery authorities as early as 1543–1566 to surround the monastery with a stone wall—a very costly undertaking at that time; other monastery buildings were also erected⁴⁶¹. The monastery's estates, located mainly in the central counties, comprised 26,170 desyatinas of arable land, forests, and hayfields, including 40 villages and hamlets; they were divided into five sections and managed by administrative and business-minded monks⁴⁶². The decrees of the Stoglav had very little impact on the monastery's economic prosperity. After 1550, it received more than 60 villages with land as gifts and through bequests. The monastery's economic and financial position was so secure that, unlike other monasteries, it did not engage in the sale or mortgaging of its land holdings⁴⁶³. The monastery's excellent financial condition can be explained by the fact that its letters of grant and letters of exemption exempted it from all taxes and

⁴⁵⁶ Since the division of estates among sons was rare at that time due to taxes, such divisions can account for at most a 10–15% increase in the number of estates; this means that more than 600 estates were newly acquired.

⁴⁵⁷ Sivkov. *On the History of Land Ownership*. p. 222.

⁴⁵⁸ Our account is based on K. Shchepetov's work, which draws on extensive archival material from the Iosifov Monastery—"Agriculture in the Estates of the Iosif-Volokolamsk Monastery at the End of the 16th Century," in: *Ist. zap.* 18 (1946). The monastery possessed a full charter of immunity—a *tarhan*—which contributed to its enrichment, as it exempted it from all taxes. *Ibid.* p. 96.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.* p. 95. Including 10,031 rubles from grand princes and tsars; 4,389 rubles from princes; 7,195 rubles from the clergy (metropolitans and bishops); and 9,345 rubles from boyars and service men. Tsar Ivan IV alone granted 7,000 rubles; 4,300 rubles of this amount consisted of donations for the repose of the souls of the voivodes, boyars, princes, nobles, boyars' children, and all those who died in captivity who were killed during the Oprichnina. Tsar Ivan's son, Tsar Theodore, granted the monastery 1,035 rubles; Tsar Boris—800 rubles; and Tsarina Irina—500 rubles, all for the repose of souls. It is interesting to note that in the 17th century, the monastery did not receive as many donations as it had in the past; in our opinion, this can be explained by the fact that it no longer played such a significant "national-ecclesiastical" role as it had in the preceding century.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.* p. 94. The monastery authorities spent money sparingly: of 153 new acquisitions, only 23 properties were purchased; 12 were exchanged, and 118 were received as donations for the repose of the soul.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.* p. 96. Gerontius. *The Volokolamsk Joseph Monastery*. p. 46. The Trinity-Sergius Monastery was not able to begin construction of a stone wall until 1510—that is, nearly 200 years after its founding. Gorsky. *Description*. p. 7. In 1592, the Josephov Monastery had a very large livestock herd: 292 cows, 62 calves, 117 bulls, and 153 sheep; there were 385 horses in the stables. Shchepetov. *Op. cit.* pp. 134, 137.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.* pp. 94, 115.

⁴⁶³ Rozhkov. *Op. cit.* p. 418; for the most part, the estates were acquired from service men, either as contributions or through purchase. The tsar granted the monastery 19 villages, and private individuals granted 53 villages. *Ibid.* p. 421.

payments, except for “post-station fees” and “streltsy grain levies”⁴⁶⁴. The agricultural crisis of the 1560s and 1570s of the 16th century, despite complaints from the monastery authorities that half the land was left uncultivated because the peasants had fled, had little actual impact on the monastery’s economy⁴⁶⁵, because here, sooner than in other monasteries, they realized that it was advantageous to change the system of land management. Until then, the monastery had either cultivated its own land or, after dividing it into small plots, leased it to poor peasants who lacked their own farms, or settled so-called “monastery children” on these plots. The monastery received an annual payment from these tenants—a land *tax* (obrok)⁴⁶⁶. After the crisis, beginning around 1591–92, *the monastery authorities sought to increase their own cultivated land and to switch the peasants from paying land tax to performing corvée labor—it was more profitable for the monastery to have its own grain reserves and sell them*⁴⁶⁷. *During the Time of Troubles, the Iosifov Monastery faced economic difficulties, and many peasants fled its estates; in 1619, the monastery received permission from the young Tsar Mikhail to bring the fugitive peasants back*⁴⁶⁸. *The 16th century was a period of prosperity for the monastery; later, after the Time of Troubles, its holdings declined. According to the 1646 census, it owned only 1,104 peasant households and ranked 19th among 439 monasteries in this regard; in 1661, its estates comprised a total of 991 peasant households*⁴⁶⁹.

4. The Growth of Monastic Landholdings in the Ponizovye Region in the 16th and 17th Centuries as an Example of Monastic Colonization

To make the overall picture of monastic economy clearer, let us turn to one region of the country, namely Ponizovye, for by drawing on the abundant source material available on this region, we can thoroughly illuminate our topic⁴⁷⁰. Let us recall that, on the one hand, there was ample scope for monastic colonization here, and on the other hand, colonization in this region was not linked to the initiative of individual ascetics, as in the north, but was initiated by the state and the church hierarchy. In the previous chapter, we already discussed the extensive scale that monastic colonization reached in the Ponizovye region during the 16th and 17th centuries; we also identified the main directions of this colonization and outlined the number of newly founded monasteries, as well as the timing and nature of their establishment. According to the land survey records from 1565–1568—that is, those compiled 13–15 years after the Moscow government began colonizing the Ponizovye region—church and monastic estates there were still relatively small. The table shows the sizes of various estates in the Ponizovye region⁴⁷¹:

Arable land in quarters (1 quarter = 12 <i>desyatinas</i>)	
Owners Kazan District Sviyazhsk District	
Estates of military officers	18,243 20,644
State-owned land	6,225 42,191.6
Archbishop of Kazan	2,087.5
Monasteries	493 2,086.4
Parishes	15 174
Chuvash and Tatars	? 51,944
Residents of market towns	700 ?

⁴⁶⁴ Shchepetov. Op. cit. p. 96. The carriage tax and the streltsy grain levies were mandatory for all monasteries. Tarkhan permitted the Iosifov Monastery to purchase and import various foodstuffs and other goods into the monastery duty-free: bread, salt (!), fish, butter, vegetable oil, honey, linen, furs, and so on. Ibid. p. 97.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid. p. 99; Rozhkov. Op. cit. p. 146.

⁴⁶⁷ Shchepetov. Op. cit. pp. 100–102. This change in the system of economic management can also be observed in other monasteries. Rozhkov. Op. cit. p. 132; for the 17th century, cf.: Gautier. Op. cit. (1937). pp. 329, 251. Various economic ledgers (“sowing,” “threshing,” etc.), which were required to be kept by monk administrators (village elders) or lay stewards, are characterized by great precision; every measure of grain and every sheaf of hay was recorded in them; peasant taxes were recorded in exactly the same way; a peasant was reminded of every kopeck he owed during the harvest or when taking out another loan. The economic ledgers of other monasteries, such as Koryazhensky, Boldinsky, and Antoniev-Siy, are of the same nature.

⁴⁶⁸ Cf.: RIB. 35 (1917). No. 263; Dyakonov. Essays (1898). pp. 49, 52, 54, 59; Klyuchevsky. Course. 2. pp. 342 ff., 326.

⁴⁶⁹ Nikolsky. Op. cit. 1. 1. Appendix VIII.

⁴⁷⁰ In Peretyatkovich’s earlier works (1877 and 1882), the topic of monastic estates is not covered in great detail. Sources published later provide a more complete picture of monastic economy.

⁴⁷¹ Rozhkov. Op. cit., p. 374.

Monastic land ownership was just beginning here, but the holdings of individual monasteries were growing very rapidly. This applies, for example, to the Trinity Monastery (founded in 1551)⁴⁷², which multiplied its holdings many times over in a short period:

Year Arable Land Fallow Land Forest Villages

1575 562.4 190 6.52 ?

1593 1,005 456 9.26 14

The available data show that the founding of new monasteries in the 16th century played a significant role in the colonization of the Lower Volga region, as the monasteries contributed greatly to the economic revitalization of the area. They owed their economic growth primarily to the fact that the fertile lands of this region attracted peasants from other parts of the state. This migration eastward was also linked to the agricultural crisis in the central regions during the 1570s and 1580s. For the new settlers, who needed funds to establish their farms, the monasteries were their greatest allies. New peasant settlements sprang up on or near monastic lands. When a peasant's efforts to establish a farmstead were going poorly—due to a lack of money or food—he was forced to ask the monastery for help. As a result, agreements—guarantee contracts with one monastery or another—were soon drawn up⁴⁷³.

Until the end of the 16th century, peasants who settled on a landowner's estate or on monastic land were free tenants; that is, under an agreement with the landowner, they gave him a portion of their harvest (ranging from *one-fifth to one-half*); *they were usually called "polovniki."* In addition, they paid the owner a rent (in cash or in kind) and performed various kinds of work for him—in monasteries, this was called "monastic labor." Lease agreements—especially informal ones—were not usually put in writing; in various documents, we find such statements as: "And there was no written agreement between us; we trusted him by God's truth"⁴⁷⁴. In the 16th century, the amounts of rent and the scope of *corvée* labor were not always precisely defined; 17th-century lease agreements, which were now usually drawn up in writing, also did not always strictly define the tenants' obligations⁴⁷⁵. Since the situation of peasants in different regions and on different monastic lands was far from uniform, Old Russian peasants, with their innate passion for migration⁴⁷⁶, often set out in search of better land and wealthier monasteries. The lands of the Ponizovye region offered them opportunities for successful farming in this regard, which increased the influx of peasants to the lands of the local monasteries.

A key factor in the economic development of the Ponizovye monasteries was the fact that the turmoil of the Time of Troubles affected the Ponizovye region less severely than the western and central regions of the country⁴⁷⁷. Some monastic estates suffered greatly from the Time of Troubles, but this damage cannot be compared to that sustained by monasteries in the central regions of the state, where many monasteries were completely deserted⁴⁷⁸. As for the size of the land holdings of the monasteries in the Ponizovye region, we

⁴⁷² Ibid. p. 25; Vasilyev, A. "On the History of Land Ownership in the Sviyazhsk District," in: *Izvestiya Kazan*, 12 (1894). pp. 605, 608. Cf.: Peretyatkovich. Op. cit. (1877). p. 21. Another monastery in Sviyazhsk, the Assumption Monastery, derived substantial income from duty-free trade in salt. AAE. 1. p. 382. The Trinity-Sergius Monastery also owned estates in Ponizovye; in 1593–94, it possessed 1,275 *desyatinas* of arable land alone, 3,125 *desyatinas* of forest, and 41 *desyatinas* of pastureland in the Kazan District. Rozhkov. Ibid. The Kazan Zilantov Monastery significantly expanded its holdings from 1552 to 1598. It is interesting to note that the monastery's holdings grew thanks to skillful management of abandoned land, which had previously been divided into estates for Kazan service men. *Charter Documents of the Zilantov Monastery*. pp. 270, 278, 281–285; AI. 1. No. 191; Rybinsky. *A Brief History of the City of Kazan*. 1 (1898). p. 48.

⁴⁷³ Cf. examples of such contracts between the Pokrovsky Monastery in Tetyushi and peasants, in: Acts. Ed. S. Melnikov. 1 (1859). Nos. 27, 31–37.

⁴⁷⁴ For example: RIB. 14. No. 275 or 302; cf.: Dyakonov. *Essays on the Social and Political Structure of Ancient Rus'* (1912, 4th ed.). p. 105.

⁴⁷⁵ On various types of records, for example in the North, see: Bogoslovsky. *Zemstvo Self-Government*. 1; Dyakonov. *Essays* (1898). pp. 163–165. See also: Grekov. *Peasants in Rus'*. p. 725. And also: Acts Relating to the History of the Tax-Paying Population. Ed. by M. Dyakonov (1897). Vol. 1.

⁴⁷⁶ As stated by Klyuchevsky. *Course*. 1 (1906). p. 24.

⁴⁷⁷ The consequences of the Time of Troubles were felt most acutely in the western counties of the Ponizovye region—in Arzamas, Alatur, and Sviyazhsk. Platonov. *Essays*. pp. 329, 513; cf. also the letter from Metropolitan Hermogenes (dated December 24, 1606) in: AAE. 2, No. 61, and from Voivode G. G. Pushkin. Ibid., No. 160; see also: AAE. 2, Nos. 104, 144, 149, 156; AI. 2, Nos. 112, 113, 141, 145.

⁴⁷⁸ For details, see: Veselovsky, S. "Seven Collections of Request and Pyatina Taxes in the Early Years of Mikhail Feodorovich's Reign," in: *Readings* (1909). Vol. 1, p. 150; Gautier. *The Region Beyond Moscow* (1906). pp. 213, 230; Nikolsky. Op. cit. 1. 2 (1910). pp. 261, 266. During the Time of Troubles, as many as five new monasteries were founded: Zverinsky. 3. Nos. 1449, 2154,

unfortunately have no precise information on this subject. We have no data whatsoever on the holdings of some monasteries; for others, our sources are incomplete. The land registers of the 1620s and the census records from 1646–1678 have either not survived in their entirety or have been lost altogether.

From the census records of 1646, we can glean information only about 13 monasteries in the Kazan District, which collectively owned land comprising 2,573 peasant households⁴⁷⁹. According to P. Smirnov, based on the 1646 census records, it can be assumed that all the monasteries in the district owned land comprising 2,706 households⁴⁸⁰; the difference of 133 households is attributed to other monasteries. Unfortunately, nothing can be said about the growth of monastic land ownership. Based on the 1646 census records, it can be concluded that in the districts of Ponizovye, monasteries owned land comprising 4,567 peasant households⁴⁸¹. The census records of 1678 contain more detailed information on the land holdings and number of peasants for 36 monasteries⁴⁸² and on the number of peasant households on the lands of 21 monasteries⁴⁸³. While these 21 monasteries owned land with 3,057 peasant households in 1646, according to the 1678 inventory, there were only 2,425 households on the lands of these same monasteries. And after 1678, some monasteries continued to lose peasant households⁴⁸⁴. During the first half of the 18th century, a series of measures were implemented aimed at bringing monastic estates under state control (we will discuss this below), using the income from these estates for state purposes, and confiscating part of the estates. According to data from 1744, 14 monasteries in the Kazan Diocese owned land with a peasant population of 15,131 souls⁴⁸⁵. When, in 1762—that is, 18 years later—a new inventory of church and monastic estates was compiled for Peter III, the 38 monasteries of the Kazan Diocese were recorded as having 14,517 peasant souls⁴⁸⁶.

This is the general picture of the development of monastic economy in one of the regions of the Muscovite state in the 16th–17th centuries. This process did not unfold in the same way in all regions of the country; we could make several more digressions to characterize local conditions, but we consider it appropriate at this point to turn to monastic estates in the Muscovite State as a whole, so that we may then move on to a description of internal relations within these estates and the role of the monastic community in monastic agriculture.

5. An Overview of Monastic Economy

It is impossible to determine with precision the total amount of land owned by monasteries in the 16th–17th centuries. The land registers—the most important source on this issue—have been lost entirely for many localities, while for others, only fragments have survived. Inventories of many monasteries often provide inaccurate information about monastic land holdings; moreover, although monastic authorities took care to preserve lists derived from the land registers, these were nevertheless lost in many monasteries. Only by synthesizing information from various sources—as, for example, Rozhkov, Y. Gautier, and others, is it possible to construct a comprehensive picture for certain regions of the country. Foreigners who visited Moscow in the 16th or 17th centuries based their assessments more on the statements of various individuals

1249; 2. No. 1110; Pokrovsky. *On the History of Monasteries*. p. 7. It is noteworthy that the land holdings of the Kazan See grew steadily. The 1623 inventory provides an indication of how much these holdings had increased between 1603 and 1623. In 1612, for example, Metropolitan Ephrem of Kazan (1606–1613) succeeded in obtaining new estates “by decree of the entire land of the Kazan State (!)”; see this remarkable document in: *Readings*. 1896. Vol. 3, Part 5, p. 9.

⁴⁷⁹ We have extracted this information; see “Materials” in: Pokrovsky. *On the History of Kazan Monasteries until 1764*, in: *Izv. Kaz.* 18 (1902). Appendices I–XXV.

⁴⁸⁰ Smirnov. *Cities of the Muscovite State*. Vol. 1, No. 2 (1919). pp. 298, 290.

⁴⁸¹ The 1646 census book (with omissions) in: Nikolsky. *Op. cit.* 1. 1 (1897). Appendices IV–XXV. For the Kazan District, data are available for only 5 monasteries.

⁴⁸² We extracted this information; cf. “Materials” in: Pokrovsky. *Op. cit.* Appendices X–XXV.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.* Appendices I–XXV.

⁴⁸⁴ In 1696, during the reign of Tsar Peter the Great, diocesan sees and monasteries were required to build ships at their own expense for the campaign against Azov. Elagin, S. *History of the Russian Fleet: The Azov Period* (1864). p. 51. The clergy’s lands were divided into 17 “kompanstva,” each comprising 8,000 peasant households; the Metropolitan of Kazan constituted an entire separate kompanstvo with 1,126 peasant households and paid 9,800 rubles. *Ibid.* pp. 54, 61. For this purpose, a census of peasant households was conducted. During this census in the Ponizovye region, four monasteries were included. Let us compare the number of households in 1696 with the data from 1646 and 1678.

⁴⁸⁵ Milyutin. *Op. cit.*, in: *Readings*. 1860. Vol. 3. pp. 132, 142–143, 151.

⁴⁸⁶ Zavyalov. *The Question of Church Estates under Empress Catherine II* (1900). pp. 246–347. The Synod’s Chancellery used data from 1744, as can be seen by comparing the two censuses.

than on knowledge of official documents. And yet these assessments can be accepted without much criticism, for they more or less corresponded to reality. The words of a certain Clement Adams, who visited Moscow in 1553, stating that “tertiam fundorum partem totius imperii tenent monachi” [one-third of the land of the entire kingdom belongs to the monks], are corroborated by the observations of other foreigners. The Englishman Jerome Gorse, who lived in Moscow continuously from 1572 to 1590, refers to the words of Tsar Ivan IV, spoken at the Council of 1580, that the Russian clergy “owns one-third of the entire kingdom.” The same was stated by the Swede Peter Petrei, who visited Moscow in the late 16th and early 17th centuries and published his travel notes on the Muscovite state in 1615⁴⁸⁷. S. F. Platonov, in his excellent *Lectures on Russian History*, considers it entirely credible that by the end of the 16th century, up to 37% of all arable land⁴⁸⁸ — as well as forests and hayfields—was in the hands of the clergy, the metropolitan, the bishoprics, and the monasteries.

In the five counties of the Moscow region alone, monasteries owned 230,721.8 chvartis (115,360.9 desyatinas) of land⁴⁸⁹. And in the Novgorod region, monastic holdings in the 16th century were very extensive⁴⁹⁰. Monastic estates in Pomorye (the Ustyuzhsky, Solvychevodsky, Dvinsky, Totemsky, and Arkhangelsky districts) and in the Vyatka region in the 17th century were enormous⁴⁹¹. We have already discussed the Ponizovye region. Monastic estates were small only in the west (with the exception of the Novgorod monasteries) and in the south, on the border with the steppe, where the government was very frugal with the land, which it allocated to service men as estates⁴⁹².

Towns and settlements located on monastic land and paying large monetary rents to the monasteries were of great importance to the economy of many monasteries. The town of Ostashkov belonged half to the Patriarchal See and half to the St. Joseph of Volokolamsk Monastery; the town of Tikhvin was situated on the lands of the Tikhvin Monastery; the settlement of Nepokok belonged to the Kirillov Monastery; and the settlement of Borovsk belonged to the Pafnutiev Monastery. And these are just a few examples⁴⁹³. Almost all large monasteries had so-called “monastic settlements,” located on monastic land and inhabited by artisans who worked for the monastery. All these towns, settlements, and villages were exempted from taxes owed to the state by special charters granting privileges and immunity from prosecution, and they paid the monasteries very substantial rents in cash and in kind⁴⁹⁴.

The scale of monastic economic activity in the 17th century is evidenced by the number of peasant households located on monastic lands—this information is derived from census records. According to the census records of 1646, there were at least 109,267 peasant households on lands belonging to ecclesiastical institutions⁴⁹⁵:

on lands belonging to the Patriarchate: 6,481 households
in the estates of the bishoprics: 10,857 households
on the lands of 439 monasteries: 91,829 households

In 1661–1662, another census was conducted of peasant households located on monastic lands; however, it should be noted that the Monastic Office conducted the census based on information provided by the monastic authorities themselves; it is possible that the actual number of peasant households was somewhat higher, but the monasteries concealed some of them. According to this census, 476 monasteries owned land

⁴⁸⁷ Clemens Adam, in: Op. cit. p. 152; Horsey, in: *Russia at the Close of the 16th Century*. London (Published by the Harklit Society). Cited in: Makarii. 8. pp. 229; Petrejus. *Regni Muschkowitici Sciographia*. Stockholm, 1615 (German edition: **Historien und Bericht von dem Großfürstentum Muschkow durch Petrum Petrejum de Erlesunda**. Leipzig, 1620; in Russian: **History of the Grand Duchy of Moscow**, in: **Readings**. 1867. Vol. 2. p. 418).

⁴⁸⁸ Platonov. *Lectures* (1915, 9th ed.). p. 165. Small landholdings, mainly small estates, were sold or pledged to monasteries. Veselovsky. *The Village and Hamlet in Northeastern Rus' in the 14th–16th Centuries* (1936). p. 56. Cf. numerous documents: *Tver Acts*. Ed. S. Shumakov. Vol. 1 (1896) and *Uglich Acts* (1899); this process continued into the 17th century.

⁴⁸⁹ Rozhkov. Op. cit. pp. 399, 400. For the 17th century, see: Gautier. Op. cit. (1937). pp. 251–255, 329, 351.

⁴⁹⁰ Rozhkov. Op. cit. p. 385.

⁴⁹¹ Bogoslovsky. Op. cit. pp. 65–77.

⁴⁹² Gnevushev. Op. cit.; Bagaley. Op. cit.

⁴⁹³ For more on this, see: Smirnov. Op. cit. 1 (1917). pp. 108–134.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid. pp. 170–231.

⁴⁹⁵ See this inventory in: Nikolsky. Op. cit. 1. 1 (1897). Appendices VII–XXV.

with 87,907 peasant households⁴⁹⁶, and in 1696, there were 102,476 households on monastic land⁴⁹⁷. If we assume that each household consisted of four adult men of working age—peasants always avoided dividing their households due to taxes—it turns out that more than half a million men alone were employed on monastic lands, and together with women and children, at least another half a million people⁴⁹⁸. These figures alone reveal the scale of monastic economic activity and its significance for the economy of the Muscovite state as a whole. This explains why Peter the Great, when carrying out his reforms—which were primarily intended to alleviate the financial difficulties associated with the Great Northern War—paid particular attention to monastic assets. The monasteries' wealthy estates proved to be excellent sources from which he could draw the necessary funds.

6. The State and Legal Framework of Monastic Land Ownership

We have attempted to provide a general overview of monastic economy and its development. To make this picture clearer, we need to describe the internal economic relations within monastic estates and the monks' participation in managing them. From this description, we will see how many monastic residents were engaged in secular affairs and were thereby distracted from true monastic practice and spiritual asceticism.

When discussing monasticism in the 14th–15th centuries, we cited characteristic examples of how new monasteries emerged at that time: almost every monastery founder sought to secure, through legal documents, the land on which the monastery stood—at first, it consisted only of a wooden church and a few wooden cells. Perhaps the founder did not always envision a thriving estate growing up on the site of his small hermitage; at that time, he was primarily concerned with protecting the monastery from its neighbors (let us recall once again the sometimes hostile attitude of the local population toward new monasteries) and with giving the monastic community the opportunity to cultivate a vegetable garden or sow grain. This is how the first charters granting land on which the monasteries stood came into being. Then came the successors: new abbots, new monastic communities; they were no longer as inspired by ascetic ideals as the monastery's founder had been. The lives of certain strict ascetics and the histories of the monasteries they founded reveal a pattern—perhaps the most characteristic of Old Russian monasticism—in which the earthly fame of the ascetic, who was often venerated as a locally revered saint shortly after his death, led to the enrichment of the monastery he had founded and the worldliness of the monks. Offerings—goods, money, and land—flowed into the monastery in a steady stream from the saint's devout admirers. The monastery's territory grew year by year; it owned not only the land adjacent to it but often also land holdings located quite far from the monastery, sometimes even in a different region⁴⁹⁹. This created a need to manage the new estates and maintain constant oversight over them. Peasants lived on the donated lands, and it was necessary to regulate their relations with the monastery and with the state.

One feature of monastic land ownership warrants explanation. As landowners, monasteries held full ownership rights to the land granted to them, which in the legal terminology of the Muscovite state was usually referred to as “patronage rights”⁵⁰⁰. As landowners, monasteries were obligated to pay the state all taxes levied on the land they owned; at the same time, all the rent paid by the peasants living on monastic land went to the monastery. The amount of taxes that monasteries paid to the treasury for the land, as well as the relationship

⁴⁹⁶ The 1661 inventory (170th inventory) in: Notes of the ORSA. 2 (1861). pp. 401–422; 348 monasteries had fewer than 100 households each.

⁴⁹⁷ Sivkov. Op. cit. pp. 221–225.

⁴⁹⁸ The population of the Muscovite State in 1480 was approximately 2.1 million souls; a century later, at the end of the 16th century, it was 4.3 million, and at the end of the 17th century—approximately 12.6 million. Pokrovsky. Population, in: ES. 40. Milyukov estimates the population at 10–11.5 million in the mid-16th century and at 17–18 million at the end of the 17th century. Milyukov. Essays on the History of Russian Culture. 1 (6th ed.). p. 26.

⁴⁹⁹ The lives of certain saints recount how economic concerns influenced the entire structure of monastic life; for example, the account by the monk Innokenty of the final days of Pafnuty of Borovsk's earthly life: Innokenty writes that even on his deathbed, Pafnuty was preoccupied with everyday concerns. Klyuchevsky. Lives. p. 437.

⁵⁰⁰ In addition to the works already mentioned by Sergeevich (3), Vladimirsky-Budanov, and Pavlov-Silvansky, see also: Zagoskin, N. History of Law in the Muscovite State (1877). Dyakonov, M. Essays on the Social and Political Structure of Ancient Rus' (1908; 2nd ed., 1912); Belyaev, I. “Forms of Land Ownership in the Muscovite State,” in: Vremennik, vol. 11 (an old but valuable work); Blumenfeld. “Forms of Land Ownership in Ancient Rus” (1884); Rozhdestvensky. “Servant Land Ownership in the Muscovite State in the 16th Century” (1897); Veselovsky, S. “On the Origin of the Patrimonial System” (1926); ibid. “Monastic Landownership in Muscovite Rus' in the Second Half of the 16th Century,” in: Ist. zap. 10 (1941) (unfortunately, this work is not available to me).

between the monastery and the peasants, were regulated by charters of grant and immunity, which gave these relationships legal force⁵⁰¹.

Depending on its owner, land—whether cultivated or uncultivated—was referred to as sovereign's land, or palace land, if it belonged to the state; patrimonial land, if it belonged to the descendants of appanage princes or boyars as their inheritance, that is, a patrimony; "estate land"—if it was granted to service men as payment for their service to the state. Land belonging to metropolitans, bishoprics, monasteries, and parishes was referred to as "church land," and, depending on the owner, as "metropolitan," "episcopal," or "monastic" land.

The population of the Muscovite state was divided into groups according to their obligations to the state and the rights associated with those obligations. As landowners, members of these groups determined the legal status of the land they owned; later, beginning in the second half of the 16th century, legal practice defined this relationship in reverse—that is, the use of a particular type of land determined the owner's classification within a specific category of the population in relation to the state treasury.

The population was generally divided into two groups: 1) "white-land" owners and 2) "tax-paying" people. The first group included the clergy and those in service (boyars and landowners), who performed religious or state service in exchange for their land; the second group consisted of people obligated to pay taxes—in cash or in kind. Consequently, land in the Muscovite state was divided into two categories: "white" and "black" land. "White" land was that belonging to persons exempt from taxes, while "black" land was that belonging to tax-paying peasants⁵⁰².

Land belonging to a monastery could be either white or black. It was almost a universal rule that the land on which the monastery itself was located—including the church or churches, the abbot's and monks' cells, the refectory, and the service areas—was considered white land and was exempt from *corvée* labor by special royal charters. This land was usually enclosed by a stone wall or a wooden fence. The monastery's vegetable garden and arable land—which were cultivated by the monastic community itself or by monastery servants and peasants obligated by contract with the monastery to perform various kinds of work for it—were also considered "white land." Usually, though not always, special royal charters also designated as "white land" a portion of the monastery's estates located near the monastery or in other places. Monasteries held full ownership rights over white land.

However, monasteries could also own "black land," which, although referred to as monastic land, was subject to different legal and fiscal relations with the state—the same as any other "black land." Often, monasteries acquired landholdings—including villages and settlements—that were classified as "tyagla" or "black land" through purchase, exchange, or donations made in memory of the deceased. Upon becoming monastery property, this land remained "black," and the monasteries undertook the obligation to pay the state, in cash and in kind, all the taxes that had previously been levied on it. In the 17th century, mainly in the north, so-called "black monasteries" emerged; these were built from the outset on "black" land, and all their holdings

⁵⁰¹ See, in particular: Veselovsky, "On the Question" (1926).

⁵⁰² In official language, the term "bely" referred to a person exempt from taxes; "to make bely" meant to exempt from taxes; a "belopomestets" was the owner of "bely" land, for which he paid no taxes to the state. The right to own such land was tied to the obligation to serve the state. Tax-paying peasants lived either on "white" land or on the sovereign's land, and they paid taxes for the right to use both types of land. Thus, the right of tax-paying peasants with regard to the land was merely the right to use land belonging to others. Tax-paying peasants who lived on the sovereign's land and formed urban societies and rural communities were called "black people." These were mainly state peasants and townspeople. It is also important to note the following: peasants who lived on the land of military officials or on church land and bore certain obligations to the state were not referred to in official documents as "black people," but rather, depending on the nature of the land on which they lived and worked, as "landowner's people" or "monastic people." For this category of peasants, the landowner served as an intermediary between them and the state regarding their obligations and, on the basis of letters of immunity, also held judicial rights. "Black people," on the other hand, fulfilled their obligations to the state through the communities to which they belonged. For more on this, see: Dyakonov, M., *Essays* (1908). In the language of the *Prikazy*, "the sovereign's black land" referred to the land used by tax-paying black peasants, while the expression "the sovereign's land" referred to the land that the state granted to service men as estates for the duration of their service and depending on the nature of their service. Cf.: Rozhdestvensky, *op. cit.* However, all land always remained the sovereign's land—the land of the tsar and the grand prince; cf., for example, § 84 of the Code of 1550, AI 1, No. 155. In the legal consciousness of the subjects of the Moscow sovereign and in the language of legal documents, the state or the tsar was the ultimate owner of all land: hence the Old Russian expressions: "The land belongs to the tsar, but I am its master," "The land belongs to God, the tsar, and the Grand Prince, but the fields and the harvest are ours."

were “tyagly”⁵⁰³. The history of individual monasteries shows that monastic authorities always sought to expand their “white” estates, to “whiten” their “black” lands through letters of grant, and thereby reduce their financial obligations to the state. In the 16th century, petitions of this kind were almost always successful, but in the 17th century, due to financial difficulties associated with the Time of Troubles, the government pursued a completely different policy on this matter and almost always rejected the monasteries’ petitions to reclassify their black land holdings as white⁵⁰⁴.

Some monasteries were exempted from certain obligations by special letters of privilege, but complete exemption was rare. The famous Trinity-Sergius Monastery enjoyed complete exemption from all obligations—a charter confirmed in 1551; even the peasants living on the monastery’s lands were exempt from all obligations to the state. Furthermore, pursuant to a charter of immunity from prosecution dated 1541, the peasants were subject only to the monastery’s abbot. And the clergy serving on the monastery’s estates, located in various counties of the Muscovite state, were exempt from paying tribute to the metropolitan (and later the patriarch) and to the diocesan bishops. It was not until 1625, under Tsar Mikhail, that a new *tarhan* introduced certain changes: from then on, this monastery, like other monasteries, was required to pay post-station fees to the Palace Office, deliver grain for the maintenance of the *streltsy*, and contribute funds for the construction of fortresses—“fortification projects”⁵⁰⁵. The St. Joseph of Volokolamsk Monastery was also exempted from all obligations in the 16th century, with the exception of the *yamskaya* tax and the delivery of grain for the maintenance of the *streltsy*⁵⁰⁶.

All monasteries fulfilled the obligations mentioned here, and we know of no petitions seeking their abolition.

7. Monastic Peasants

The situation of monastic peasants could be the subject of a separate study—we will only outline it in general terms, as a detailed examination of this issue would significantly expand the scope of our work. The presence of peasants on monastic lands drew the monasteries ever deeper into the intricacies of state policy. In their polemics, the non-possessors protested not only against the nature of the relationship between the monasteries and their peasants⁵⁰⁷, but first and foremost against the inhabited estates themselves, for because of them the monasteries became irrevocably entangled in all the vicissitudes of the country’s political and economic life.

The presence of peasants as a labor force on monastic lands was an important contributing factor to the successful development of monastic agriculture and the enrichment of the monasteries. We should pay attention both to the relationship between the monastery and its peasants and to the peasants’ situation, for this will help us uncover new aspects of monastic life during that era.

Until the 16th century, peasants lived on the landowner’s property as free tenants who, under a contract—known as a “*poradnaya*”—which was usually oral in the 16th century and written in the 17th, gave a portion of their harvest to the landowner. In addition to this rent—ranging from a quarter to half of the

⁵⁰³ See on this: Bogoslovsky. *Op. cit.* 1, p. 91 ff. One such “black monastery” was, for example, the Chelmogorsk Hermitage. As can be seen from the abbot’s report of 1676, the hermitage had no peasants; the monastery’s land was partly leased out and partly cultivated by the monastic community itself and by workers hired for the harvest season; all of the monastery’s modestly sized holdings were “black land.” RIB. 14. p. 442.

⁵⁰⁴ Bogoslovsky. *Op. cit.* pp. 93, 96. In the south, known as the “wild field,” every plot of land was formally the property of the tsar (sovereign land); in reality, however, all the land there was distributed among the service class; newly founded monasteries received very little land there. Cf.: Nekrasov, N. “Essays on the History of the Ryazan Region in the 16th Century,” in: *ZhMNP*. 1914. 4; Belotserkovsky, G. “Tula and the Tula District in the 16th and 17th Centuries,” in: *Univ. Kiev*. 1914–1915. Although there was no black earth there, taxes were paid to the state by peasants, monasteries, and, to some extent, even military servants. Dobroklonsky, A. “The Solotchinsky Monastery,” in: *Readings*. 1888. 1. pp. 48, 61, 62–68.

⁵⁰⁵ Gorsky. *Description*. Vol. 1. p. 324. An important change was made in the charter of immunity: the abbot of the monastery, who had previously been subject to the tsar’s jurisdiction (in non-ecclesiastical matters), was now subject to the patriarch’s jurisdiction. During the reign of Tsar Boris, the peasants living on the monastery’s estates received certain new privileges. *Ibid.* p. 225.

⁵⁰⁶ Smirnov. *Op. cit.* p. 96.

⁵⁰⁷ It should be noted that the peasants’ economic situation was often so good that they owed the monastery nothing. Such was the situation of the peasants of the St. Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery, especially in 1573–1581, when an agricultural crisis that had shaken the Moscow center was raging in the surrounding area; it is noteworthy that the monastery authorities provided severance pay to peasants who left the monastery’s lands at the end of their fixed terms without any debts. *Income and Expenditure Ledgers of the Volokolamsk Monastery from the Late 16th Century*, in: *Ist. arkh.* 2. pp. 72, 76, 83, et al.

harvest—peasants were required to perform certain labor as directed by the landowner; often, in the terms of these agreements, we find provisions for paying rent in cash or in kind and for performing *corvée* labor without having to surrender a portion of the harvest. Furthermore, peasants were required to pay the state tax levied on the land. For tenants, jubilee years were established during which they were exempt from rent and *corvée* labor, and the landowner assumed responsibility for paying the state tax during those years. The lease term was not always specified in the lease agreements; in some cases, it was set at 10 years, after which the tenant, provided he had fully settled his accounts with the landowner, could leave the estate. In the 17th century, a change unfavorable to the tenant was introduced in the lease agreements: the tenant now lost the right to leave the land, and if he did leave, the landowner gained the right to bring him back. This is how the binding of peasants to the land they cultivated arose, which later evolved into their binding to the landowner and became the basis of serfdom⁵⁰⁸.

All of this applies in general terms to peasants living on monastic lands as well, but here one can identify certain distinctive features related to different categories of peasants. These categories emerged in the course of the development of monastic land ownership.

Upon its establishment, a monastery received land by virtue of a charter on which peasants were already living, so that they now became monastery peasants or “monastery people.” They entered lease agreements with the monastery and paid rent. In the 16th century, these peasants were recorded in the tax registers under the designation “long-time residents”; subsequently, they were listed under this name in all monastic documents. Gradually, according to M. Dyakonov, a rule developed whereby peasants in this category, once entered into the tax registers, lost the right to leave the plots they leased. The monastery authorities gained the right to search for and return runaway “old settlers”⁵⁰⁹. Through gifts or purchases, monasteries acquired new land holdings, also inhabited by peasants. Monastery records also classify these peasants as “old settlers.” For the most part, the lease agreements they had concluded with the previous landowners remained in effect; the monastic authorities merely reconfirmed these agreements, making some changes—most often to ease the peasants’ obligations. This relief primarily concerned payments in kind and *corvée* labor for the monastery⁵¹⁰.

The second category of monastic peasants consisted of the so-called “newcomers” or “new settlers.” First, these were peasants who appealed to the monastic authorities for permission to settle on monastic land; second, they were peasants invited by the monasteries themselves to their lands or resettled by them from one estate to another. The tax burden imposed on “black land” often forced peasants to leave their villages and resettle on the monasteries’ “white lands,” where they could receive financial assistance to set up their farms and be exempted from taxes⁵¹¹. Newcomers were almost always exempt from the land rent for a certain period—ranging from 3 to 5 years, or, less commonly, up to 10 years—or this rent was significantly reduced; in addition, they received monetary “assistance” from the monastery to help them get established. In the contract they entered into with the monastery, the lease term and conditions were specified in great detail, including those related to the financial assistance, labor obligations to the monastery, taxes owed to the state, and the rent owed to the monastery—both in cash and in kind—as well as the right of the monastery authorities to demand the fulfillment of all obligations and to prosecute, through legal channels, peasants who failed to fulfill these obligations. Monasteries typically kept special ledgers in which all peasant obligations were recorded with great precision; these ledgers constitute a very important source for the history of individual

⁵⁰⁸ See: Belyaev, I. *Peasants in Russia* (1860); Dyakonov, M. *Essays* (1898); Grekov, B. *Peasants in Russia* (1946). On the Origins of Serfdom: Grekov, op. cit.; Engelmann, I., **Die Leibeigenschaft in Russland** (1884); Klyuchevsky, V., “The Origin of Serfdom in Russia,” in: **Russkiy Mir**, 1885, no. 10, and also in: **Experiments and Studies** (1918); idem, **Geschichte Russlands**, vol. 2, Chapter 17; Debolsky, N. “On the Question of the Enslavement of Landowner Peasants,” in: *ZhMNP*. 1895. 11; Belyaev, P. “Old Russian Lordship and Peasant Enslavement,” in: *ZhMNP*. 1916. 8–9.

⁵⁰⁹ Dyakonov. *Essays* (1898). pp. 16–39. Grekov. Op. cit. pp. 630, 641, where he supplements some of Dyakonov’s assertions; and also: Smirnov, I. “On the Question of Long-Time Residents,” in: *Questions of History*. 1946. 8–9 (this work is not available to me).

⁵¹⁰ Dyakonov. *Ibid.*; Nikolsky. Op. cit. 1, 2. pp. 37 ff.; Shchepetov. Op. cit. p. 97. As early as the 15th century, letters of grant mention the “old settlers” in contrast to the peasants who later settled on monastic lands. Cf., e.g.: AAE. 1. Nos. 20, 21, 51, 53; as well as Nos. 5, 34, 35. Metropolitan Cyprian’s letter (1391) provides a clear picture of the labor that peasants were required to perform for the monastery. AAE. 1. No. 11.

⁵¹¹ We have a number of documents from the 16th and 17th centuries that mention the flight of peasants from “black villages” and from the estates of service men. AAE. 1. Nos. 234 (1552), 258 (1561); AYU. No. 177, 178, 183 (16th century); 189, 194, 196 (17th century). On the Trinity-Sergius Monastery: *Collection Books* (1614), in: *Monuments of Social and Economic History*. 1 (1929); on the Iosifov Monastery: *Income and Expenditure Ledgers*, in: *Historical Archives* 2. pp. 70, 74, 83, 84.

monastic estates and for characterizing the situation of monastic peasants; They also contained detailed records of all the peasants' corvée labor; in the 17th century, these records included the monetary value of such labor, since at that time, in connection with the development of monetary relations in the Muscovite state, the monastic authorities sought to replace the payment in kind with monetary payments. Only wealthy monasteries, which had capital consisting of monetary rent, proceeds from the sale of salt, and trade, were able to fully transition to a cash-based system of management; smaller monasteries, which required various agricultural products—such as beans, vegetable and butter oil, cheese, honey, eggs, mushrooms, berries, etc.—usually required their peasants to pay a portion of their tribute to the monastery in kind⁵¹². In the north, in Pomorye, new settlers usually settled on monastic land as “polovniki,” paying half of their harvest as rent for the cultivated land; various documents show that this category of tenants was already widespread in the 15th century, for example, on the lands of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery. The obligation to the monastery for the polovniki was usually limited to handing over half of the harvest, and if they also had to pay a rent, it was insignificant⁵¹³.

A third category of monastic peasants, the so-called “bobylys,” also played a certain role in monastic landholding⁵¹⁴. Bobylys rarely leased a plot of monastic land; they received land only for their own homestead—often the homestead of a departed or runaway peasant; they did not enter into any contractual agreements with the monastery and did not pay taxes; at most, they paid a small rent if they had their own vegetable garden or a tiny field. They supported themselves through work performed for the monastery: they were fishermen, artisans, tailors, beekeepers, and so on. The number of bobyli households varied across different monastic estates, but such households existed on all monastic estates; their number increased significantly after the Time of Troubles, when many peasant households were completely ruined; only in the second half of the 17th century did the number of bobyli households begin to decline. For the monasteries, the bobyli served as a cheap labor force suitable for a wide variety of tasks, as various account books eloquently attest⁵¹⁵.

The proliferation of estates and the growth of monastic economies demanded an ever-increasing labor force; the three categories of peasants mentioned above were insufficient. This forced the monasteries to take two types of measures: first, to increase the number of peasants, and second, to create two new categories of peasants dependent on the monasteries—monastic servants, or “sluzhki,” and monastic “offspring.”

8. Monastic Estates and the Emergence of Serfdom

The monasteries' efforts to attract new peasants to their lands continued throughout the second half of the 16th century and the first half of the 17th century. Since this did not go unnoticed—whether regarding the estates and manors of the nobility or state-owned lands—the government was forced from time to time to prohibit or restrict the monasteries' poaching of peasants. But even on this issue, state policy was inconsistent, for a steady stream of new letters of grant made exceptions for certain monasteries or opened loopholes for them in previously issued decrees—which, of course, played into the monasteries' hands.

Since the transfer of peasants to monastic lands was linked to their departure from private or state estates, the government measures implemented in the 16th and 17th centuries were aimed at generally restricting peasant migration—in other words, at a slow, gradual restriction of peasant freedom, which ultimately led to the emergence of serfdom. Extensive historical research has shown that the enslavement of peasants was the result of a complex interplay of various circumstances related to the state of agriculture in Muscovite Russia; in essence, it was the result of economic necessity rather than the product of feudal power-

⁵¹² Examples of promissory notes: AYU. Nos. 177, 178 (16th century, from the Vyazhitsky Monastery); RIB. 12. pp. 458, 1366, 1468 (from the Prilutsky Monastery); Acts. Ed. by Melnikov. 1. Nos. 21, 23, 26, 27, etc. (from the Pokrovsky Monastery in Ponizovye). On the estates of individual monasteries in various regions, peasants performed different duties, depending on local conditions; see, e.g.: AAE. 1. No. 348 (Trinity-Sergius Monastery). Dobroklonsky. Op. cit., pp. 61, 69–85; Dyakonov. Essays (1898), pp. 131, 163. Account books: of the Joseph Monastery, in: Ist. arkh. 2; of the Boldin Monastery, in: RIB. 37; of the Korniliev-Komelsky Monastery, in: LZAK. 5 (1871); Acts of the Koryazhensky Monastery, in: LZAK. 23 (1910).

⁵¹³ RIB 12, pp. 198 (1634), 201 (1637); AI 3, No. 240 (1627). Dyakonov, Essays (1898), pp. 147 ff.; Grekov, Peasants in Russia, p. 694.

⁵¹⁴ We translate the Old Russian word “bobyli” into German as “Unglückliche” (“unfortunate”); in documents, these peasants are often referred to as “nevzgodniki.” Cf.: Dyakonov. Essays (1898). pp. 206–240; Bogoslovsky. Op. cit., vol. 1. p. 136.

⁵¹⁵ See also: Rozhdestvensky, S. “The Rural Population of the Muscovite State in the 16th–17th Centuries,” in: Russian History in Essays, ed. M. Dovnar-Zapolsky, vol. 3 (1912), pp. 41–44.

seeking, and the first stage of serfdom was the binding of the peasant to the land he cultivated and on which he lived, rather than to the owner of that land. The vast scale of monastic farming attests to the important role that monastic landownership played in this process during the 16th and 17th centuries; this role is acknowledged in historical research, but not to the full extent. In the mid-16th century, all landowners sought to retain the peasants who worked their land on their estates, and the vigorous economic activity of wealthy monasteries was, at that time, the main factor driving peasants to leave their former homes and flock to monastic lands⁵¹⁶.

As early as the 15th century—as will be shown below—monasteries sought to bind the agricultural labor force to themselves, to make it difficult for them to leave, and to secure the legal attachment of peasants to their land; in doing so, they laid the groundwork for future legislation that would enslave the peasants.

It is not our task to provide a detailed examination of the entire range of issues—we will focus only on certain phenomena directly related to the history of monastic land ownership.

It was important for landowners in general—and for monastic estates in particular—to limit the peasants' time spent working outside the estate and to set a specific time limit for it. And so, in monastic documents, we find evidence of such a deadline being set: in Prince Mikhail of Belozersk's charter granted to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery in 1450, November 26 (according to the Old Style)—the feast day of St. George, "Yuryev Day"—was designated as the date for the peasants' departure⁵¹⁷. One of the letters of grant to the Trinity-Sergius Monastery (1455–1462) permitted the monastery not to release peasants from certain estates at all⁵¹⁸. The Code of 1497 designated November 26 as the nationwide deadline for peasants to leave, though peasants were permitted to move to new lands during the 8 days preceding this deadline and the 8 days following it. The Code of 1550 (Article 88) reaffirmed this provision⁵¹⁹. These regulations gave monasteries a legal means to entice peasants to their lands, and this right was exercised very extensively. The Stoglav (1551) also allowed peasants to leave freely on St. George's Day, while simultaneously introducing a provision whereby landowners and monasteries were granted the right, by that date, to resettle their peasants—whether engaged in agriculture or not—to vacant homesteads in the settlements⁵²⁰. Although the Stoglav quite unequivocally permitted the acceptance onto their lands only of those peasants who had no tax arrears, monasteries circumvented this provision, and the government was often forced, in response to numerous petitions, to take measures against such abuses⁵²¹. The economic crisis of the 1570s and 1580s triggered a massive resettlement of peasants from one area to another; this increased the opportunity to lure peasants onto monastic lands. The government also very often allowed peasants to leave the land of one owner and move to another, which created a large group of peasants dissatisfied with their living conditions, as well as new migrants wandering from place to place. Furthermore, in the early 1580s, due to a general economic decline, the 1550 decree—which had restricted peasants' departure to St. George's Day—was repealed; henceforth, peasants were permitted to leave their land on other days as well, while the so-called "tsar's reserved years" (⁵²²) were introduced.

The incessant flight of peasants led to a flood of petitions addressed to the government and legal disputes between secular landowners and monasteries, as well as between monasteries themselves⁵²³. By a

⁵¹⁶ See note 503, as well as the following works: Odinet, D. "The Loss of the Right of Transit by Landed Peasants of the Muscovite State," in: Collection in Honor of P. N. Milyukov. Paris, 1929; Mikhailov, P. "The Institution of Long-Time Tenancy and Serfdom," in: ZhMNP. 1912. 1; idem. "On the Question of the Origin of Land Tenure by Long-Time Residents." Ibid. 1910. 6.

⁵¹⁷ AAE. 1. No. 48; DAI. 1. No. 198. On the role of St. George's Day in the Russian peasant calendar, see: Kalinsky, I. The Church-Folk Calendar in Russia, in: Notes of the Geographical Society, Ethnography Section. 1 (1877). p. 325.

⁵¹⁸ AI. 1. No. 59; AAE. 1. Nos. 64, 83.

⁵¹⁹ For deviations from it in practice, see, for example: AYu. Nos. 186 and 290.

⁵²⁰ Stoglav (Kazan ed., 1862). pp. 412–414; AI. 1. 165; AAE. 1. No. 257.

⁵²¹ AAE. Vol. 1, No. 234 (regarding the Vazhsky and Shenskursky districts, 1552); AI. Vol. 1, No. 193 (regarding the Trinity Monastery in Astrakhan, 1575); Dyakonov. Essays (1898). 6 (on the Bogoroditsky Monastery in Sviyazhsk, 1576). Material on this subject is also found in 16th-century tax registers. Cf.: Nevolin. On Pyatinas and Pogosts. p. 167.

⁵²² Debolsky. Op. cit., in: ZhMNP. 1895. 1. p. 99; Grekov. Yuryev Day. p. 78; idem. Essays on the Economy of the Novgorod St. Sophia House, in: LZAK. 34 (1927). p. 113; Odinet, Op. cit. p. 205.

⁵²³ RIB. 14. p. 135. For the 17th century, we have a wealth of documents on such disputes: AI. 3. No. 286 (1621). 160 (1629); AAE. 3. No. 141 (1623); RIB. 35. No. 263 (1616). See also: Dyakonov. Essays (1898). pp. 52–59.

decree of 1597⁵²⁴, all landowners—both secular and ecclesiastical—were granted the right to demand through the courts the return of peasants who had fled no more than five years earlier and had settled on other estates; those peasants who had fled more than five years earlier were no longer subject to return to their former place and could remain with their new landowners. This gave rise to the so-called “probationary periods,” which played an important role in the history of the peasantry of the Muscovite State until the Code of 1649 and exerted a certain influence on the development of monastic landownership. By a decree dated March 9, 1607, the “fixed terms” were extended to a 15-year period⁵²⁵. Immediately after the Time of Troubles, monasteries began submitting petitions to the government requesting an extension of their “fixed terms”[. For example, in 1614, the Trinity-Sergius Monastery was granted the right to bring back peasants who had fled its estates over the previous nine years, and in 1615, its lease terms were extended to a 10-year period. The St. Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery received the same privilege in 1619⁵²⁶. These privileges caused discontent among the service class—especially because, for example, the Trinity-Sergius Monastery was returning its runaway peasants even after the 10-year grace period had expired—and they petitioned the government to revoke this privilege. However, decrees of 1637 and 1642 reaffirmed the 10-year servitude period for the Trinity-Sergius Monastery⁵²⁷. It is possible that the petitions of the service class influenced later legislation. In 1646, in connection with the introduction of census registers, the instructions for census takers stated that peasants and their children listed in these registers “shall be permanently bound” to the land without any fixed terms. Two years later, the fixed terms of service were officially abolished, and the Code of 1649 (Ch. 9, § 3; 15, § 3) definitively established the binding of peasants to the land and the landowner, and of the landowner to the peasants. It was entirely in the economic interests of the monasteries that the 1646 census registers became the basis for binding peasants to the land; thus, peasant homesteads located on monastic land remained in the possession of the monasteries, a fact that was officially confirmed by the Code of 1649.

9. “Monastic Servants” and “Monastic Children”

Various government decrees—both specific and general in nature—and the rulings of the Councils could not, and, as we believe, did not even aim to limit the growth of monastic estates; thus, the tsar’s decrees and the Code of Laws of 1497 and 1550 did not pose a real obstacle to the constant influx of peasants onto monastic lands. The clearest evidence of this is the data we cited above regarding the number of peasant households on these lands in the last quarter of the 17th century. The monastic authorities realized that these regulations could always be circumvented by obtaining special letters patent, and in some cases, thanks to the skillful diplomacy of monastic representatives in Moscow, they managed to turn these regulations to the monasteries’ advantage; they also observed how the government itself constantly violated its own legal provisions and continued to distribute land. Although the monasteries did not fear a decline in the influx of peasants to their lands, they nevertheless sought out ever-new sources of labor. This was partly due to the circumstance already mentioned—the monasteries’ gradual transition to a new system of agriculture and the expansion of their own cultivated lands. Furthermore, as monastic estates grew, new branches of agriculture emerged or existing ones expanded in individual monasteries, and it was more convenient for the monasteries to employ a labor force in these activities that was more closely tied to the monastery than the monastic peasants. This explains the relatively widespread presence of three groups of monastic people in the narrow sense of the term: 1) monastic servants, or attendants, 2) monastic apprentices, and 3) artisans⁵²⁸.

⁵²⁴ This decree was previously mistakenly regarded as marking the beginning of the permanent binding of peasants to the land and the institution of serfdom. The decree has not survived and has been reconstructed on the basis of later documents. Cf.: Vladimirsky-Budanov. Op. cit. p. 139.

⁵²⁵ Ibid., p. 139; Rozhdestvensky, op. cit., in: Russian History in Essays, vol. 3, p. 63. The provisions of 1597 were confirmed and supplemented in subsequent years by new decrees: dated November 28, 1601, February 1, 1606, and March 9, 1607. Vladimirsky-Budanov. Ibid. p. 139 ff.; Kljutschewskij. Geschichte Rußlands. Vol. 2. pp. 342–344; Dyakonov. Essays (1898). p. 49.

⁵²⁶ See the monastery records on fugitive peasants: Summary Records of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, in: Monuments of the Socio-Economic History of the Moscow State in the 16th–17th Centuries, Vol. 1 (1929); AAE, Vol. 3, No. 66 (1615); AMG. 2. No. 143. Cf.: Rozhdestvensky. “On the History of ‘Fixed Years’ for the Search for Runaway Peasants in the Muscovite State in the 17th Century,” in: Collection in Honor of V. O. Klyuchevsky (1909). pp. 152–154.

⁵²⁷ AMG. 2. No. 143.

⁵²⁸ Monastery servants should be distinguished from a group of people who were not servants at all, although in documents they are also referred to as “monastery people”—they were engaged in the management of the monastery’s estates and came mainly from the children of boyars and the nobility. They will be discussed below, in the section describing the system of estate management.

Monastic servants had long been employed in monasteries and on monastic estates⁵²⁹. They performed various kinds of work in the monastery, serving as stablehands, shepherds, watchmen, fishermen, beekeepers, artisans, and so on. As the monastery's territory expanded—due to the construction of new wings, buildings, stables, barns, and so on—the number of monastic servants also grew. They received housing, clothing, and food from the monastery, as well as some monetary compensation, usually in the form of gifts at Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, or on the feast day of Saints Peter and Paul. This group consisted of impoverished peasants who could no longer—or no longer wished to—cultivate their land, as well as settlers, war invalids, and others. In the 17th century, monastic servants typically entered into a verbal agreement or a written contract with the monastery⁵³⁰.

“Detenyši” constitute one of the most intriguing categories of people living on monastic lands; although this category is frequently mentioned in monastic documents, it lacked clearly defined boundaries. Historical literature offers no clear characterization of this group; neither its origins nor the history of its development have been traced⁵³¹. This ambiguity stems from the fact that documents refer to the “detnyashi” in various ways: at times they are listed alongside monastic servants, implying they performed the same tasks for the monastery as the servants; at other times, the “detnyashi” are described as peasants working the land; they lived both within the monastery walls and in the monastery settlements, and sometimes even had their own courtyards in the monastery villages; they also worked as artisans—in fact, in the second half of the 17th century, they were engaged in nearly all branches of the monastery's economy⁵³². Sources mention “monastic children” from the mid-16th century onward⁵³³; their emergence and the growth in their numbers can be linked to the expansion of the monasteries' own land holdings⁵³⁴. On the one hand, these were adults—impoverished peasants and smallholders—who cultivated the monastery fields, mowed hay, and fished. Thanks to financial assistance from the monasteries, they acquired their own homesteads or received abandoned homesteads belonging to peasants who had fled or fallen into debt. Like the monks, the “detenyši” were exempt from taxes and levies⁵³⁵; they fulfilled their obligations to the monastery through labor. On the other hand, most of the children (especially in the 17th century) were orphans or the children of monastic peasants and serfs. For example, in 1636, the Solovetsky Monastery had a veritable orphanage housing about 300 children who performed light monastic tasks: in the vegetable garden, in the monastery kitchen, and so on.—which prompted a special message from the tsar to the monastery's abbot, in which he demanded strict supervision of the orphans to prevent misconduct, as well as the construction of a separate house for these children outside the monastery walls⁵³⁶. Peasants, and especially the poor peasants, gladly sent their sons to the monastery. At first, they performed light work, as at the Solovetsky Monastery; later, they married peasant girls, established their own households, and worked the monastery's fields, but in the monastery's records they continued to be listed as monastery wards—both out of tradition and for fiscal reasons. In the 17th century, we find contracts (in this case, they were usually referred to not as “poradnye” but as “zhiletskiye” records) between the monastery and its adult “detnyats,” which listed the mutual obligations of the parties⁵³⁷. The 17th-century tax registers contain a wealth of information about this group of individuals dependent on monasteries and about the estates of the “detenyashi”⁵³⁸.

Monasteries were constantly in need of various kinds of handicrafts, which, given the subsistence economy of the time, they had to produce themselves. This explains why so many artisans lived and worked

⁵²⁹ Metropolitan Gerontius's letter contains particularly extensive references to monastic servants. AAE. 1. No. 113 (1478).

⁵³⁰ Arseny, Archimandrite. Reports, in: Readings. 1867. 3; Dobroklonsky. Op. cit. pp. 11–12; Historical Acts of the Spassky Monastery in Yaroslavl. 3. p. 77. Tikhomirov, M. “The Monastery as a Landowner in the 16th Century,” in: Historical Notes. 3. pp. 149–152 (on the Josephov Monastery).

⁵³¹ See primarily: Dyakonov. Essays (1898). pp. 295–321 (with bibliography). Grekov. Peasants in Russia. p. 695 ff.

⁵³² Compare the extensive list of sources on children in Dyakonov's work. Op. cit., pp. 295, 298; Dobroklonsky. Op. cit., p. 33; Peretyatkovich. The Volga Region in the 17th and 18th Centuries (1882), pp. 93, 117.

⁵³³ In 1547, according to the Josephov Monastery: Grekov. Op. cit., p. 695; in 1576, according to the Trinity-Sergius Monastery: Tax Registers of the Muscovite State, Vol. 1. Section 1. pp. 68, 73, 82, 76, 611, 642, etc.

⁵³⁴ Grekov. Op. cit. pp. 695, 710; Dyakonov. Essays (1898). p. 303—almost identical.

⁵³⁵ Grekov. Op. cit. p. 711.

⁵³⁶ AAE. 3. No. 262. The tsar's reprimands were justified: according to the monastic charter, male children were not permitted to live in or remain at monasteries. The Stoglav strictly prohibited this practice: Stoglav. Kazan ed. pp. 229, 233, 236. On the orphans at the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, whose number reached 600, see: Arseny. Op. cit. pp. 8, 56.

⁵³⁷ Dyakonov. Essays (1898). p. 333.

⁵³⁸ Ibid. pp. 298, 303, 306; Dobroklonsky. Op. cit. p. 33.

for the monastery, either within the monasteries themselves or in the nearby monastic settlements. These included carpenters, masons, joiners, coopers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, tailors, saddlers, and other artisans who made tools, plows, harrows, and shovels for the monastery—and often for the monastery’s peasants as well; tailors and shoemakers sewed clothing and shoes for the monks, monastery servants, and children.

The Joseph Monastery had more than 100 such artisans, 37 of whom were apprentices⁵³⁹. In 1628–1629, the Spassky Monastery in Yaroslavl owned 27 households, in which 27 artisans lived and worked for the monastery. In the settlement, there were 194 households, in which, once again, the monastery’s artisans lived; 25 of them were apprentices, and they produced nearly everything needed by the monastery and its estates⁵⁴⁰. The Solotchinsky Monastery in the Ryazan District produced almost everything it needed through the labor of its own artisans, and some of the goods were even sold⁵⁴¹. The account books of the Boldino Monastery in Dorogobuzh, in the Smolensk region, provide a wealth of material that allows us to assess the significance of the work performed by the monastery’s artisans, the monastery’s financial management, and the payment of the artisans’ wages. They received not only monetary wages for their work but also, as an incentive, gifts—usually in the form of money—at Christmas and Easter⁵⁴².

Specialized tailors made priestly vestments, while goldsmiths and silversmiths crafted liturgical vessels; in large monasteries, which always had their own apiaries, candles were made.

Hired labor played a very important role, for example, in the extensive estate of the Solovetsky Monastery, where, according to monastic documents, 700 hired workers were employed in 1621 and received housing, clothing, and money from the monastery. They were employed in various economic activities: fishing, salt production, and salt transportation⁵⁴³.

10. Monastic Trade

Due to the constant growth of monastic estates and the development of monastic agriculture, monasteries often had a surplus of various goods, the quantity of which exceeded their own needs, forcing them to engage in trade. On the other hand, monasteries needed various products and goods for their monks. The first and most important commodity was bread. Some monasteries had an abundance of it, while others, on the contrary, were forced to buy it for their community. Since monasteries often possessed considerable capital—accumulated from monetary donations, primarily for the repose of souls—they were able to use this capital for commercial purposes.

Small, poor monasteries had to sell part of the produce from their farms in order to purchase the necessary food supplies. The monks of the Pechenga Trinity Monastery in the Far North wrote in a petition to Tsar Ivan IV that, due to the harsh climate and the barrenness of the land, they were unable to engage in agriculture, but “make their living in that monastery... when they catch fish at sea and boil them down into salt, and they transport that salt to sell... And once they have sold that salt in Vologda and the Vologda District, they use the money they receive from the salt to purchase... all manner of supplies for the monastery’s needs: rye, flour, barley, oats, buckwheat groats, grains, butter, cloth, shoes, and all manner of monastic supplies”⁵⁴⁴. Monasteries in the fertile southern districts also resorted to purchasing goods if their own farms were unable to fully meet their needs⁵⁴⁵. To conduct trade, many monasteries built their own shops and trading posts in Vologda—which became a major commercial center in the 17th century—where specially appointed monks or trusted agents handled buying and selling. Thus, in 1626, there were at least 36 monastic shops and warehouses in Vologda⁵⁴⁶.

⁵³⁹ Tikhomirov. Op. cit. p. 151.

⁵⁴⁰ Historical Acts of the Spassky Monastery, vol. 3, pp. 77–85; Nikolsky, op. cit., vol. 1, vol. 2, Appendix “D.”

⁵⁴¹ Dobroklonsky. Op. cit. p. 74.

⁵⁴² Income and Expenditure Ledgers of the Boldino Monastery, in: RIB. 37. pp. 20–22, 36–38, 43–46, 64–69, etc.

⁵⁴³ Klyuchevsky. “Economic Activities of the Solovetsky Monastery in the White Sea Region,” in: Moscow University Bulletin. 1866–67. No. 7. p. 574; and also in: *Research Studies* (1913).

⁵⁴⁴ Savich. Key Points. p. 55.

⁵⁴⁵ For example, the Solotchinsky Monastery in the Ryazan District: Dobroklonsky, op. cit., pp. 89–93; or the Boldinsky Monastery in the Smolensk Region: RIB, vol. 37. pp. 188, 192, 219, 240, etc., as well as the Blagoveshchensky Monastery in Nizhny Novgorod: RIB. 2. No. 51; cf.: Acts of the Koryazhensky Monastery, in: LZAK. 23 (description of the acts only).

⁵⁴⁶ Storozhev. “Monastic Landownership in Vologda,” in: Collection in Honor of V. O. Klyuchevsky (1909). pp. 362, 366. Distant monasteries also maintained their shops there.

Salt was the most important commodity for both the monasteries and the entire economy of Muscovy; it was used primarily for salting fish, which was the main food during fasting days—strictly observed at that time not only in monasteries but by all Russian people. Next on the list of items traded by the monasteries were fish, honey, and wax. The wealthy Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, which could not grow enough grain on its own fields, purchased it while simultaneously selling salt from its saltworks, which brought it substantial income; it also purchased other foodstuffs, handicrafts, agricultural goods, clothing, and footwear for the monks and monastery servants⁵⁴⁷.

In the Trans-Volga and Pomor regions, monasteries were particularly active in trade. They owned numerous salt mines and saltworks, fishing grounds, and apiaries, the produce of which sold quickly in Moscow's markets; in turn, they themselves needed food supplies and handicrafts. Monasteries in the Ponizovye region, which owned fishing grounds on the Volga and Kama Rivers, traded in caviar and whitefish—such as sterlet, beluga, and sturgeon—which were in high demand⁵⁴⁸.

We have already described the economic activities of some wealthy monasteries; now let us turn our attention to the economy of the famous Solovetsky Monastery on the White Sea, which quickly became the largest trading post in the Far North and, thanks to trade, became one of the wealthiest monasteries in the Muscovite state.

The Solovetsky Monastery was founded in 1429–1436 by two ascetics, the Venerable German and Savvatiy, who sought seclusion from the world on the desolate northern islands; during the abbacy of St. Zosima (1452–1478), the monastery grew significantly, and its economic activities flourished under Abbot Philip (1548–1566), the future Metropolitan of Moscow, who was a man of extraordinary talents and, as evidenced by his dispute with Tsar Ivan IV⁵⁴⁹, a remarkable representative of the hierarchy who was steadfast in defending the Church's interests. As early as the second half of the 15th century, based on charters of grant and immunity issued by Veliky Novgorod, the monastery owned large tracts of land and fishing grounds on the White Sea; these holdings were subsequently confirmed and expanded by charters issued by the grand princes. In 1555, in the Sumy District alone, the monastery owned 33 salt pits; later, new ones were purchased⁵⁵⁰. This enabled the monastery to trade salt throughout the entire Moscow State. In the mid-16th century, the Solovetsky Monastery sold 6,000 poods of salt; a century later, the monastery's saltworks were already producing 130,000 puds of salt, which was transported on the monastery's own ships down the Dvina and Sukhona Rivers to Vologda and sold there. For this trade, the monastery paid 658 rubles in duties to the state annually. The total amount of all taxes paid by the monastery in the mid-17th century was 4,000 rubles. The monastery's saltworks, fishing operations, and shipping industry employed 700 workers, who received wages, clothing, and food from the monastery; this figure attests to the scale of the monastery's economic activities⁵⁵¹. Enterprising abbots in the second half of the 17th century even built a rope factory for their merchant fleet in the White Sea and on the northern rivers⁵⁵².

Monasteries also established industrial enterprises; one example is the Svensky Monastery near Bryansk, which had its own iron smelting furnace⁵⁵³.

⁵⁴⁷ As early as the end of the 15th century, the Kirillov Monastery purchased at least 2,400 poods of grain annually in Vologda. AAE. 1. No. 126, cf. No. 283; Nikolsky. Op. cit. 1. 1. Section "D." p. 248. The monastery operated salt shops in various cities. AAE. 1. No. 378; in 1566, the monastery sold up to 10,000 puds of salt at a single shop in the city of Dmitrov alone. Ibid. No. 271; cf.: Makarii. 8. 2nd ed. 8. p. 267.

⁵⁴⁸ The document collections (AI, AAE, SGGD) contain extensive material on this subject; cf.: Hensler's remarks on the commercial activities of monasteries, in: Readings. 1874. 4. p. 24. On monastic trade in Astrakhan: AI. 1. No. 193; and also: Kulisher. History of the Russian Economy. 2 (1925). p. 324. The Trinity-Sergius Monastery, for example, exported flour to Astrakhan that had been ground at its mills from its own grain. Gautier. Op. cit. p. 537.

⁵⁴⁹ Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 41.

⁵⁵⁰ Klyuchevsky. "Economic Activities of the Solovetsky Monastery," in: Experiments and Studies. p. 11; Savich. The Solovetsky Estate (1927). p. 148. On the monastery's land holdings, see: Bogoslovsky. Op. cit. 1. pp. 73–75.

⁵⁵¹ Klyuchevsky. Op. cit. in: Experiments. p. 36 (in: Moscow University Bulletin, vol. 7, p. 574). The following data indicate the volume of the monastery's salt trade: in 1588, 81,201 puds were shipped to Vologda; in 1598, — 92,990 puds, and in 1608—123,137 puds. Savich. Op. cit., p. 148. In Vologda, the monastery purchased a wide variety of grains, which were then transported back to the monastery on the same ships. For example, in 1608, the monastery purchased 15,000 chetverti of rye for its own consumption; at that time, it had 827 permanent and 286 seasonal workers. Ibid. pp. 110, 142, 154, 213, 221.

⁵⁵² Ibid. p. 167.

⁵⁵³ Hierotheos, Archimandrite. The Bryansk Svensky Dormition Monastery in the Oryol Governorate (1866). p. 47.

As already mentioned, capital consisting of gifts and donations for the repose of the soul was of great importance for the monasteries' commercial activities⁵⁵⁴. Furthermore, in the mid-16th century, during the Oprichnina under Tsar Ivan IV, many boyars and service men, fearing robbery or confiscation, entrusted their money, gold, and jewels to the monastery for safekeeping⁵⁵⁵. The deposit records mention both movable property—money, gold, jewelry, food, livestock, horses, as well as icons, liturgical books, clothing, etc.⁵⁵⁶—and real estate—land and villages. Typically, the deed of endowment included a provision allowing the donor to continue using their property—land or estates—for the rest of their life, which, according to Pavlov-Silvansky, resembles the Western European medieval *praecaria oblata*⁵⁵⁷. The donor transferred full ownership of his estate to the monastery and received it back from the monastery for use—no longer as property, but as a grant from the monastery. The following wording is often found in endowment records: “And as long as God grants me life, may the archimandrite be gracious enough not to send me away.” In the 1590s, the government recognized the legality of lifetime use of estates donated to the monastery. Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine from the donation records and wills exactly how the monastery utilized the donated property while the donor or testator was still alive—a period that could last several decades⁵⁵⁸. Since bequeathed real estate was not always located in a convenient place for the monastery or might have been unprofitable for its operations, monasteries often sold or exchanged such endowments for more suitable estates, always to their own advantage⁵⁵⁹.

Closely linked to these transactions was the practice of monasteries accepting land holdings as collateral, since monasteries always had large sums of money at their disposal. Nor should we forget that, unlike other landowners—whose estates suffered greatly as a result of service to the sovereign (they spent large sums on military equipment, and their fiefs and estates suffered due to the absence of the landowner, who was away on military campaigns, and were therefore usually in a state of neglect)—monastic estates were always under careful supervision. Necessity forced military servicemen to borrow money—for military equipment or to restore their estates. Hence the numerous cases of estates being pledged to monasteries or money being borrowed from monasteries at interest. Such misconduct, contrary to the canons of the Ecumenical Councils, became deeply ingrained in the daily life of the Russian clergy; it persisted throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, despite the fact that the Stoglav Council and Tsar Alexei's Code strictly forbade the clergy from charging interest⁵⁶⁰. When lending money, a monastery would take land or houses as collateral; a mortgage deed was drawn up, which, upon the expiration of the loan term, was replaced by a deed of sale. Under this arrangement, instead of interest, certain property—whether movable or immovable—passed into the monastery's possession⁵⁶¹. Estates acquired through wills, deeds, and mortgage deeds were often sold or exchanged by the monastery authorities, always to the monastery's advantage; it was not uncommon for a monastery to exchange estates with the state treasury—either at the sovereign's behest or upon a petition from the monastery⁵⁶².

⁵⁵⁴ A great deal of material on this subject is contained in the monastery's ledgers; see, for example: *The Ledgers of the Antoniev Siy Monastery*. Edited by A. Izyumov, in: *Readings*. 1917. Vol. 1. Monastery household records also provide material on this subject.

⁵⁵⁵ Rozhdestvensky. *Clerical Landownership*. p. 87; Pavlov. *An Essay on Secularization*. p. 150.

⁵⁵⁶ Avraamy Palitsyn, who later became the famous cellarer of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, upon entering the monastery, contributed his village, liturgical books, and gold. Shumakov. *Sotnitsy*, in: *Readings*. 1902. 2. p. 226.

⁵⁵⁷ Pavlov-Silvansky. *Feudalism in Appanage Rus'*, in: *Works*, Vol. 3, p. 338. The following phrase is frequently found in deed records: “and to live in that estate until the end of my days.” Cf.: Rozhdestvensky. *Servile Landownership*, pp. 104–107.

⁵⁵⁸ Pavlov-Silvansky. *Op. cit.*, p. 389; Rozhdestvensky. *Op. cit.*, pp. 107, 105.

⁵⁵⁹ See Klyuchevsky's opinion on monastic trade in: *The Boyar Duma* (1884). p. 288.

⁵⁶⁰ The First Ecumenical Council, 17th canon; the Sixth Ecumenical Council, 10th canon; and the Council of Laodicea, 4th canon. These canons are also contained in the *Nomocanon of John Scholasticus*, which was known in Muscovite Rus'. In 1416, Metropolitan Photius sent a letter to the clergy of Pskov in which he severely condemned this abuse. AI. 1. No. 22, as well as: *Stoglav*. Kazan ed. p. 345; *Code of 1649*, Ch. 10. In 1727, the clergy were permitted to charge 6% per annum upon the expiration of a loan term. Milyutin. *Op. cit.*, in: *Readings*. 1859. 4. p. 101. This permission was confirmed by a decree dated May 13, 1754. PSZ. No. 10235. Numerous documents from the 15th–16th centuries show that monasteries and monks personally collected interest. Cf.: AYU. Nos. 15, 71, 232, 238, 241, 243, 245, 248, 255, 267, etc.; DAI. 1, Nos. 51, 55. For more details on this, see my article in: *Kyrios*. 4 (1939). pp. 29–38.

⁵⁶¹ Selected examples: AYU. Nos. 234, 236, 237, 241 (all three concerning the Kirillov Monastery), 254; AI. 1. Nos. 104, 106, 163; DAI. 1. No. 157; AI. 3. No. 138; 5. No. 32, etc.

⁵⁶² AAE. 2. No. 42 (1646); 4. No. 26 (1648); DAI. 1. Nos. 21, 113, etc. AYU. No. 108. The *Code of 1649* (chap. 16, §§ 4–5) attempted to prohibit such exchanges, but this effort was unsuccessful.

All transactions of this kind led to the enrichment of the monasteries, forced the monks to engage in various activities outside the monastery walls, and ultimately had a detrimental effect on monastic discipline.

11. Management of Monastic Estates and the Monasteries' Obligations to the State

In order to increase revenue from the numerous and extensive monastic estates—a matter of concern to nearly all abbots—a large administrative staff was required. This staff had two tasks: to carefully ensure that the monastery suffered no financial losses, and—even more carefully—to ensure that the monastery did not pay the state more than necessary, so as not to inadvertently give the state authorities a pretext to demand more from the monastery than was stipulated in the charter of privilege.

The abbot headed both the spiritual and administrative management of the monastery. Upon taking office, the abbot took possession of the monastery's property based on a very detailed inventory, or "list of the great treasury." This inventory included the monastery's funds, church furnishings with a detailed list of liturgical vessels, icons, all kinds of movable property, and documents—among them a list of all the monastery's contracts with peasants, deeds of sale, and mortgage records, etc.⁵⁶³ In all matters concerning the management of the monastery, the abbot was assisted by the treasurer, whose direct responsibility was to oversee the monastery's finances.

The monastery's estates were managed either by elderly monks or by trusted lay associates of the monastery. These monks, who were usually elected by the monastic community and sometimes appointed by the abbot, are referred to in monastery documents as "council elders"⁵⁶⁴. They were sent to the monastery's estates or villages as "village elders," where they represented the monastery's authority. Within the monastery itself, they performed a wide variety of duties: the stable elder supervised the stables and the grooms, while the refectory elder oversaw the refectory.

Gradually, especially in the 17th century, they were increasingly replaced by lay servants—the beltsy. These were monastic people. These monastic people—or even monastic servants—should not be confused with the monastic servants mentioned above. These servants, who were primarily engaged in administrative duties, mostly came from impoverished boyar and noble families; in documents, they are often referred to as "monastic boyar children." It was not uncommon for such a boyar's son to transfer his debt-ridden estate to the monastery as a gift or for the repose of his soul, settle in the monastery settlement himself, and support himself by serving the monastery as a village administrator or steward on the monastery's estates and in its villages. The number of such "monastic people," or monastic servants, in large monasteries was very significant. In the monastic settlements, they had their own permanent courtyards; in addition, they were sometimes sent for an entire year to distant villages and estates to perform various administrative duties. As early as the 1420s, the Trinity-Sergius Monastery had a "service settlement," which gradually grew into Sergiev Posad. In 1594, the monastery had 159 such monastic servants, 43 of whom were engaged in administrative affairs, while 116 made up the monastery's mounted regiment. During the Time of Troubles, when the monastery was besieged by the Poles, they fought successfully on the monastery walls; by 1692, there were already 160 households in the settlement, and in 1651, the monastery had 371 mounted warriors; the tax registers of 1646 list 217 mounted warriors, 60 of whom were of boyar or noble descent; The tax registers of 1677 mention 242 households of monastery servants. In 1651, Tsar Alexei took 230 mounted warriors from this monastery on a military campaign. Among the monastery servants were also priests' sons and merchants; the only ones absent were peasants, who were classified as a separate group of monastery servants or as "detnyashi" (⁵⁶⁵). The priests' sons served in the monastery offices as scribes—deacons or

⁵⁶³ RIB. 32. No. 229 (1567, regarding the Koryazhensky Monastery) or RIB. 35. No. 470 (1638, regarding the Prilutsky Monastery).

⁵⁶⁴ It is necessary to clarify the various meanings of the word "starets" in Old Russian ecclesiastical literature. First, the term "starets" was often used simply to refer to an elderly monk without holy orders—not a hieromonk; in this sense, it is used to refer to Starets Philotheus, the author of works on Moscow—the "Third Rome"; second, the term "elder" was applied to the so-called "cathedral elders"—those monks who, together with the abbot, administered the monastery and performed specific duties; and finally, the term "elder" was also used to refer to those elderly and experienced monks who provided spiritual guidance to novices and other monks—these are elders in the true sense of the word. An example of the word "elder" being used in different senses can be found in a letter from Archbishop Simeon of Novgorod to the Snetogorsk Monastery, where in two instances the word "elder" refers to a spiritual mentor, and in two others—to a council elder. RIB. 6. No. 45; cf. also: Smirnov. "The Old Russian Spiritual Father," in: Readings. 1914. 2. p. 26.

⁵⁶⁵ I. A. The Church of the Nativity of Christ in Sergiev Posad, in: Readings. 1891. 3. pp. 4–8, 17, 28, 33. For a list of such monastic figures, see: Arseny. Op. cit., in: Readings. 1867. 3.

clerks—as well as monastery cooks. The latter played an important role in all large monasteries. They were authorized representatives of the monasteries in Moscow, where they lived in monastic estates and, on behalf of the monasteries, corresponded with the Palace Office—and later the Monastic Office—on a wide variety of matters. These were highly active and capable individuals who, thanks to their knowledge of local conditions and their familiarity with the intricate workings of bureaucratic affairs in Moscow, were virtually indispensable to the monasteries. Their influence was immense, and the abbots always accommodated their wishes and demands⁵⁶⁶.

The complexity of managing the estates of large monasteries is illustrated, for example, by the fact that the Trinity-Sergius Monastery had 60 administrative offices at the beginning of the 18th century; the St. Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery divided its land holdings among five administrative offices, each headed by a village elder⁵⁶⁷. Monastic estates were located on the monastery's lands and in the villages, where the village elders lived; these served as administrative centers where peasant representatives settled matters with the monastic authorities, where monetary and in-kind taxes were paid, and where the village elders, on the basis of letters of immunity, administered justice over the peasants⁵⁶⁸.

Chartered and, primarily, “immunity” charters constituted the legal basis for the authority of the monastery and its abbot over the peasants living on monastic lands. The Grand Palace Office—and from 1649 to 1677, the Monastery Office—was the government agency responsible for fiscal and judicial matters related to monastic estates⁵⁶⁹. As discussed earlier in Chapter VI, the Grand Palace Office has already been described; here we will address it only in connection with the internal administration of monastic estates.

Charter grants conferred fiscal rights upon the monasteries, but they did not specify the scope or extent of the obligations of those living on monastic lands; this was a matter for the monastic authorities themselves to determine. Numerous agreements between monasteries and the inhabitants of their lands show that the extent of these obligations varied from monastery to monastery and even among different estates belonging to the same monastery. Through its representatives—village elders or stewards—the monastery monitored the performance of corvée labor and the timely payment of taxes in cash and in kind; local conditions or natural disasters—frost, drought, or flooding—could serve as grounds for reducing the amount of taxes, a decision that lay within the monastery's authority. The government and the monastery pursued the same goal—to prevent peasants from evading tax payments, “so that those liable for taxes would not evade them.” The Grand Palace Office maintained tax registers; later, during the era of the Monastery Office, census registers served the same purpose; for the government, they constituted the legal basis for the distribution of tax burdens.

The taxes that the monastery paid to the state were determined based on the number of sohas (a soha is a measure of cultivated land) specified in the tax registers; on monastery lands, with rare exceptions, one soha equaled 600 chveteri. The amount of taxes levied on different monasteries varied. A charter granted to the Pesnoshsky Monastery (near Moscow) in 1557–58 *set the tax at 1 ruble per soha. By contrast, the Solotchinsky Monastery, for example, paid 3.27 rubles per soha in the last quarter of the 17th century.*⁵⁷⁰ *As already mentioned, in 1679, based on the new census records from 1676–1678, the tax per plow was replaced by a per-estate tax. Meanwhile, for monastic estates, the per-estate tax had already been introduced in 1623–1630. It was finally codified by a decree dated May 19, 1630. It is interesting to note that this measure, which was beneficial to the state but burdensome for monastic estates, had already been implemented during the patriarchate of Filaret. Under the decree of May 19, 1630, regarding the so-called “living quarter,” taxes were assessed not based on land area but on the number of households located on monastic estates; that is, the households of people not engaged in agriculture—such as day laborers or artisans—were also taken into account. Clearly, this new practice was highly disadvantageous for the monasteries*⁵⁷¹. However, in the 17th

⁵⁶⁶ This is evident, for example, from the documents of the Solotchinsky Monastery. Dobroklonsky. Op. cit. pp. 28–29. On monastic stewards, see: Vvedensky, A. “The Labor Activities of Stewards in Northern Russian Monasteries of the 16th–17th Centuries,” in: Sever (1923). pp. 36–64 (unfortunately, I do not have access to this).

⁵⁶⁷ I. A. The Church of the Nativity of Christ. p. 8; Shchepetov. Op. cit. p. 115.

⁵⁶⁸ Dobroklonsky. Op. cit. pp. 24 ff.; cf.: Makariy. 2nd ed. Vol. 8. pp. 260–262.

⁵⁶⁹ Gorchakov. The Monastic Office. pp. 40 ff.

⁵⁷⁰ On the collection of taxes from monastic estates, see: Rozhkov. Agriculture. pp. 221–231; Veselovsky. Soshnoe Pismo. Vol. 1, No. 1. p. 300; Vladimirsky-Budanov. Op. cit. p. 189; Dobroklonsky. Op. cit. p. 61.

⁵⁷¹ Dyakonov. Essays (1898). pp. 312–316. Ibid. “The Living Quarter in Historical Literature,” in: Russian Historical Journal. 5 (1918). pp. 154–176; Veselovsky. Op. cit. Vol. 1, Ch. 1; Vol. 2, p. 660. Lappo-Danilevsky. The Organization of Direct Taxation. p.

century, the government took a more decisive approach to financial matters than it had in the 16th century, when special charters exempted certain monasteries—such as the Trinity-Sergius and St. Joseph of Volokolamsk monasteries—from all taxation, while others were exempted from certain types of taxes for a specified period. The Code of 1649 completely abolished these privileges.

In addition to the land tax, monasteries bore other obligations to the state. With regard to these obligations, it had long been evident that the state, which issued charters of privilege to monasteries, sought to impose certain duties upon them—primarily related to military service and prison administration. As early as the 15th-century charters, conditions were stipulated under which monasteries, while exempt from taxes, were required to provide financial and material assistance in the construction of fortresses⁵⁷². As S. Rozhdestvensky established, 16th-century charters always provided for the participation of monasteries in activities of a national and military nature. When old letters of privilege were ratified, some of the previous privileges were often revoked⁵⁷³. The abolition of the tarhans by decree in 1584 was justified by defense needs. The government required wealthy monasteries to maintain small military units or participate in the construction of fortresses. For example, the Solovetsky Monastery was required to maintain 100 archers; in addition, it built fortified outposts on the shores of the White Sea, for which it was exempted from the pososhny tax after the war with Sweden. The Trinity-Sergius Monastery, as already mentioned, was required to provide a detachment of mounted warriors for military service. The Belopesotsky Monastery in the south, near the town of Kashira, built massive stone walls on which cannons were mounted, manned by the monastery's novices. The Trinity Monastery in the town of Tetyushi in Ponizovye provided sentry duty along a fortified line—the defensive line. The Ipatiev Monastery in Kostroma also had massive stone walls and a military detachment composed of monastic men⁵⁷⁴. “Monastic lands,” writes S. Rozhdestvensky, “were taxed more heavily in the second half of the 16th century than patrimonial and manorial lands,” although they were granted various privileges by royal charters⁵⁷⁵. During the Time of Troubles (1605–1613), many monasteries, thanks to their powerful fortress walls, took on defensive significance and were used by the troops of the Muscovite state to fight Polish detachments⁵⁷⁶; thus, the measures taken in the 16th century fully justified themselves. The siege of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery is particularly famous; the Polish troops besieging the monastery suffered heavy losses and were repelled by the monastery's defenders—monastic servants, monks, and residents of nearby villages⁵⁷⁷. During the Time of Troubles, the state also used monastic funds and grain reserves to support its troops⁵⁷⁸. And in the 17th century, the government frequently used the monasteries' money and grain reserves for military purposes; monasteries were not exempt from one-time levies for the maintenance of the troops⁵⁷⁹. Therefore, the critical remarks of historians or the complaints of contemporaries regarding the actions of Peter the Great, who used monastic funds for military purposes, are unfounded. Peter merely continued the previous policy of the Moscow government, and when in 1696 he ordered that the monasteries' account books be submitted to the Grand Palace Office, prohibiting the monasteries from incurring any expenses whatsoever without his permission, there was nothing new in this measure for the

530 (incidentally, this work is also of great value to church historians). The decree of 1630 is printed in: Storozhev. Decree Book of the Local Office. pp. 101–103.

⁵⁷² AAE. 1. No. 28, 131; AYU. 1. No. 31. 4; AI. 1. No. 71, 74; cf.: Rozhdestvensky. Servile Landownership. p. 138.

⁵⁷³ Ibid. p. 138; AAE. 1. No. 200; AI. 1. No. 143; Milyukov. Controversial Issues. p. 17.

⁵⁷⁴ Rozhdestvensky. Op. cit. pp. 140–143; Smirnov. Cities of the Muscovite State. 1 (1917). p. 108; Storozhev. On the History of Agricultural Life at the Kostroma Ipatiev and Epiphany Monasteries, in: Readings. 1894. p. 137.

⁵⁷⁵ Rozhdestvensky. Op. cit. p. 144; Milyukov also expressed this same point of view (Controversial Issues. pp. 48, 79).

⁵⁷⁶ AAE. 3. No. 34, 97–99; DAI. 2. No. 26, 33 (Kirillov Monastery); AAE. 3. No. 97 (Pskov-Pechersk Monastery); AAE. 2. No. 160 (Prilutsky Monastery).

⁵⁷⁷ Avraamy Palitsyn. Legend, in: RIB. 13.

⁵⁷⁸ AAE. 2. No. 135. Particularly large sums were taken from the sacristy of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery; Tsar Boris took 15,400 rubles, False Dmitry—30,000 rubles, and Tsar Vasily Shuisky—20,000 rubles, which constituted an enormous fortune by the standards of the time. Makarii. 10. p. 223. Foreigners who visited Moscow after the Time of Troubles wrote about the collection of money from monasteries. Rushchinsky. Op. cit., in: Readings. 1871. 3. p. 144.

⁵⁷⁹ AI. 4. No. 3; Makarii. 11. p. 204; DAI. 10. No. 34; RIB. 12. pp. 1046–1065, 1188–1215; Milyutin. Op. cit., in: Readings. 1861. 2. pp. 465, 471–477. Thus, during the Polish War, Tsar Alexei took 100,000 rubles from the Trinity-Sergius Monastery and 10,000 rubles from the Kirillov Monastery; the Patriarchal District (including the monasteries) provided 10,000 soldiers.

monasteries, for the Monastery Office had previously scrutinized monastic accounts as well; however, the tone adopted by the state at this time became harsher⁵⁸⁰.

The so-called “yamskaya” taxes were also among the state-wide obligations; their payment was imposed on all monasteries by letters patent of the 15th–17th centuries⁵⁸¹. The same was true of collections to ransom captives: both monasteries and all ecclesiastical institutions in general were required to pay “captive ransoms,” and the Stoglav confirmed this obligation as well⁵⁸².

12. Jurisdiction over Monastic Estates

We now turn to the question of the jurisdiction over persons living on monastic lands. Legally, the relationship between monasteries and monks on the one hand and the Church and the state on the other was as follows: monks, as clergy, were subject to the jurisdiction of the metropolitan and diocesan bishops in ecclesiastical matters, while monasteries, as landowners, were subject to the state—that is, to the grand princes and, later, to the tsars. This latter circumstance did not provoke any objections from the church hierarchy; neither Joseph of Volotsk nor the bishops at the Stoglav⁵⁸³ contested this jurisdiction. In fact, however, the legal relationships between monasteries and diocesan bishops, on the one hand, and between monasteries and the state, on the other, were determined by letters of immunity issued by the grand dukes or tsars. The content of these letters varied: some completely exempted monasteries from the jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop, while others exempted them from jurisdiction in all matters except purely ecclesiastical ones. The church hierarchy was, of course, opposed to the first type of letters of immunity, for they contradicted church canons and signified state interference in ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The Stoglav decreed that such letters of immunity should no longer be issued. However, this decree was soon forgotten, and Tsar Ivan IV continued to issue such letters⁵⁸⁴.

In the letters of immunity, which transferred judicial authority over the inhabitants of the monastery and the monastery’s lands to the abbot, three types of cases are distinguished: 1) criminal cases—murder, robbery, and theft caught in the act—were subject to the jurisdiction of state authorities based on the general state code; 2) other criminal cases and disputes among the monastery’s peasants were heard by the abbot or his representative; 3) if the parties to a dispute fell under the jurisdiction of different authorities, a “mixed court” was established, consisting of a representative of the abbot or the abbot himself and a state official. Usually, the abbot himself did not handle judicial matters, which would have been impossible for him given the vast extent of the monastery’s estates. He delegated his authority to the village elders, who presided over the trials and handed down verdicts in the presence of several (three to five) representatives of the peasantry. Peasants had the right to appeal an unjust verdict directly to the abbot himself⁵⁸⁵.

Disputes between monasteries or between monasteries and secular landowners—concerning various contentious issues, such as property boundaries, runaway peasants, and so on—were subject to the jurisdiction of the Grand Palace Office, and after 1646, to that of the Monastery Office⁵⁸⁶. The judicial dependence of monastic estates on these secular institutions could not have pleased the clergy, since the secular authorities frequently interfered in matters which, in the conviction of the church hierarchy, were beyond their jurisdiction; at the same time, many monasteries (primarily the aforementioned “black monasteries”) sought precisely this kind of dependence on secular offices. Patriarch Nikon protested particularly vehemently against

⁵⁸⁰ AAE. 1. No. 298; Stoglav. Kazan ed. pp. 235, 297; AI. 1. No. 154. 2; AAE. 4. No. 315. PSZ. 3. No. 1664; Gorchakov. Monastery Order. pp. 41–55.

⁵⁸¹ AI. 1. No. 115 (1505), 147 (1547); AAE. 1. No. 164 (1517), 179 (1534); AYU. 1. No. 30. 4 (1554), etc.

⁵⁸² AYU. 1. No. 30. 4; 209. 5; 211; Stoglav. Kazan ed. Chapters 5 and 72.

⁵⁸³ DRV. 14. p. 196; Stoglav. Kazan edition. pp. 235, 297.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid. Chapters 5 and 67; DAI. 1. Nos. 46, 48, 114, 130. Examples of non-judicial charters: 1471—to the Kirillov Monastery. AAE. 1. No. 95; 1494—to the Trinity-Sergius Monastery. Ibid. No. 131; 1500—to the Josephov Monastery. Ibid. No. 136; 1535 and 1551—to the Trinity-Sergius Monastery. AJU. 1. Nos. 97 and 75; 1542—to the St. Nicholas Monastery in Korel. AI. 1. No. 141; 1547—to the Strokinskaya Hermitage. Ibid. No. 147; 1573 – to the Trinity Monastery in Astrakhan. Ibid. No. 184, et al. Examples of the transfer of judicial authority in ecclesiastical matters to bishops: AAE. 1. No. 386; 2. No. 16, 62; 3. No. 67; AI. 2. Nos. 58, 69, 77, 86; AI. 2. No. 65; DAI. 2. No. 37, etc. However, very often, by a charter of judicial authority, judicial power over ecclesiastical matters was conferred personally upon the diocesan bishop, rather than upon his judicial officials (deceni), for example: DAI. 1. No. 44 (1548); cf.: Makarii. 2nd ed. 8. p. 223.

⁵⁸⁵ Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 8. pp. 263–265.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid. p. 265; Gorchakov. The Monastic Office. pp. 43, 48, 54–57, 66 ff.

the existence of the Monastic Office and its activities⁵⁸⁷. The rulings of the Councils of 1667 and 1675 marked a temporary victory for the church hierarchy over the state, for these rulings, ratified by Tsar Alexei, put an end to the Monastic Office's judicial authority over the clergy, and monasteries came under the judicial authority of the diocesan bishops in all matters related to monastic estates⁵⁸⁸. From then on, the Monastery Office was concerned solely with collecting taxes from monastic lands; it continued, as before, to review the monasteries' accounting books and monitor the fulfillment of state-wide obligations, kept an inventory of monastic estates for tax assessment, and so on. In 1677, the Monastic Office was abolished, and all these matters were once again transferred to the Grand Palace Office. This situation persisted until the end of the 17th century, when, in connection with Peter the Great's reforms regarding the jurisdiction of the clergy—as well as the issue of monastic estates in general—certain changes took place⁵⁸⁹.

Chapter IX. The Structure of Monastic Life in the 16th–17th Centuries

1. *From the History of Monastic Rules in Ancient Rus' from the Beginnings to the 16th Century*

While the corrupting influence of the world encroached upon monastic life from the outside, within the monastery walls the foundations of asceticism were at times understood not in the spirit of ecclesiastical tradition, but according to one's own understanding. This danger was already known in the very earliest days of Christian asceticism, as evidenced by both the most ancient ascetic writings and the activities of the founders of monasticism. In their writings and in practice, the Holy Fathers paid special attention to the danger of self-will in ascetic practice, since the desire to attain salvation according to one's own understanding usually preceded the secularization of monastic life. To counteract this, various rules for monastic life were compiled, which are collected in monastic statutes. These statutes gradually evolved, influenced by temporal and local conditions and reflecting the individual characteristics of their authors' ascetic views. But at their core, they are all rooted in the early Christian tradition in the spirit of St. Pachomius the Great, the founder of monasteries and the author of the first rule. Later generations of ascetics continued the work of St. Pachomius and guided Eastern Christian monasticism along the true path of authentic Christian asceticism⁵⁹⁰.

Earlier (see Chapter II), in describing the early stages of Old Russian monasticism, we have already discussed the rules of the first monasteries of Kievan Rus'. Now let us turn to the question of monastic statutes of the 16th–17th centuries. At the outset, we must note that the history of the Russian Church's monastic statutes for the period from the 14th to the 17th century is very fragmentary and rather obscure.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid. p. 91.

⁵⁸⁸ AAE. 1. No. 155 (1667), 204 (1675); PSZ. 1. No. 412; Gorchakov. Ibid. pp. 96 ff.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid. pp. 99–102; PSZ. 2. No. 699 (1677). It is interesting to note that even after the decrees of 1667 and 1675, some monasteries continued to appeal to the Grand Palace Office on various matters; e.g., AI. 4. No. 166.

⁵⁹⁰ Cf. Chapter I, 1. The rules of St. Pachomius and St. Basil the Great formed the basis of monastic life in the Church. A new period begins with the rule of St. Savvas, composed by St. Savvas the Sanctified († 532) for his monastery in Palestine. It is printed in *Monumenta Ecclesiae Graecae* by Cotelieri, vol. 3, p. 222 ff.; cf. also: Bardenhewer, vol. 5, p. 127; Welzer, *Kirchenlexikon*, 2nd ed., vol. 10, p. 1434; Fischer, W. "On the Typikon of St. Sabbas," in: BZ 8 (1890), p. 306 ff.; Kurz, E. Op. cit. 3 (1894), pp. 167–170; and also: Oltarzhevsky. Palestinian Monasticism from the 4th to the 6th Centuries (1896) and Theodosius, Hieromonk. Palestinian Monasticism in the 4th Century, in: TKDA (1899). The Rule of Sabbas contains certain liturgical instructions, as it was intended for monks living in individual cells. The liturgical rule of St. Savva became the cornerstone of the Orthodox All-Night Vigil. Mansvetov, I. The Church Rule (Typikon): Its Formation and Fate in the Greek and Russian Churches (1885). pp. 168 ff. St. Theodore the Studite († 826) compiled a special rule for his monastery, known as the Studite Rule. In contrast to Savva's rule, which was intended for cell-dwelling monks, Theodore's rule is characterized as a communal rule (PG 99. P. 1704 ff.). In the last quarter of the 10th century, the so-called "Statute of the Holy Mountain" appeared, compiled by St. Athanasius, the founder of the Lavra on Mount Athos (cf.: Meyer, Ph. *Die Haupturkunde für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* (1894). P. 101 ff.). The Athos Rule is an adaptation of the Studite Rule: it also emphasizes the necessity of communal living, but, in addition, provides particularly strict regulations regarding fasting and monastic discipline (Mansvetov, op. cit., p. 222). In the centuries that followed, Byzantine communal monasteries generally lived according to the Studite Rule, although their liturgical practices were largely determined by the Jerusalem Rule, as the Rule of Savvas was commonly called. Sokolov. The Internal State of Monasticism in the Byzantine Church from the Mid-9th to the Early 13th Century, 842–1204, in: Prav. sob. 1893. 3. p. 122; Leclercq, H. "Cénobitisme," in: Dictionnaire d'Archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie. 2. pp. 3049–3248 and Monachisme. Ibid. 11. 2. pp. 1774–1974. Sergius. Op. cit. 1. pp. 33–46, 113 ff.; Golubinsky. 2. 2. p. 429.

The rule introduced by St. Theodosius at the Kiev Caves Monastery was the rule of St. Theodore the Studite, as revised by Patriarch Alexius; it provided for a communal (kinovian) structure of monastic life⁵⁹¹. However, the fate of the Studite Rule, particularly its disciplinary section requiring strict cenobitic observance, turned out to be quite unfortunate: the foundations of monastic communal life were very quickly forgotten, and monasticism almost everywhere adopted a monastic lifestyle. However, even the idiorhythm did not always serve as the basis of monastic life; the 12th–15th centuries can even be called an era without a monastic rule, as is well illustrated in Serebryansky's remarkable work on monasticism in the Pskov region during the 13th–15th centuries⁵⁹². There is, however, a treatise titled "The Rules of Saint Cyril, Metropolitan of Rus', on Monastic Discipline and All Matters of Conduct," which was likely indeed composed by Metropolitan Cyril, a Greek by birth (13th century); it appears in manuscripts from the 16th and even the 17th centuries and contains a relatively detailed monastic charter. It is likely that this charter was unknown in the 14th–15th centuries; it is even doubtful whether it was ever implemented in any monastery⁵⁹³. In all likelihood, St. Sergius of Radonezh knew nothing about it when he was organizing monastic life in Muscovy. At first, as mentioned, he introduced a rule of separate living in his monastery and only later, not without resistance from the brethren, reorganized monastic life on the basis of the communal rule. His disciples followed the venerable one's example and, when founding new monasteries, introduced strict cenobitic rules into them, which, however, did not take root everywhere⁵⁹⁴. The question of the foundations of monastic life was not entirely clear to Russian monastics of the 14th–15th centuries, as evidenced, for example, by the history of the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery, where Abbot Dionysius (shortly before 1389 and until 1418) initially introduced the strict communal Athonite rule, but subsequently both he himself and some of the monks adhered to the idiorhythmic practice⁵⁹⁵. At the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, the communal rule did not last long. When St. Joseph of Volotsk stayed there for some time in 1478, the monastery followed the idiorhythmic rule, as confirmed by certain documents⁵⁹⁶. Although we know that in the 14th–15th centuries, the idiorhythmic way of life was gradually supplanted by the cenobitic, we have almost no material that would help answer the question of what this individual living arrangement actually entailed in an Old Russian monastery. However, we have ample evidence that communal living did not take root in many monasteries; the system of monastic life that had developed at that time was subject to very sharp criticism, which means that, in reality, monastic life did not conform to either the norms of authentic idiorhythm or the requirements of the cenobitic rule⁵⁹⁷.

At the same time, in the literature of that era, we find not only criticism of monastic life but also insistent demands for strict observance of the communal rule. Many representatives of the church hierarchy in the 14th–15th centuries emphasized the need to introduce the Kinovian Rule: Archbishop Dionysius of Suzdal (1382), Archbishop Simeon of Novgorod (1417–1421), Metropolitans Photius (1418), Iona (1455), and Theodosius (1461–1464)⁵⁹⁸. Although their letters to individual monasteries and the metropolitan charter (circa 1500)⁵⁹⁹ indicate that the Kinovian Rule was recognized as the foundation of monastic life, nevertheless, in the 15th century, no measures were taken to ensure its widespread implementation.

The reason for this lay partly in the fact that it was practically impossible to keep track of the lives of the multitude of monasteries scattered across the remote regions of the center and the north, and partly in the fact that Old Russian monasticism during this era offered many examples of austere asceticism precisely along the path of hermitage and solitary living, bringing this form of monastic life to the forefront. The strong aversion to written monastic rules, characteristic of the monastic community of that time, also played a role.

⁵⁹¹ Golubinsky. Vol. 1, Part 2. pp. 320–371, 502–608; Vol. 2, Part 2. p. 428; Mansvetov. Ibid. pp. 113 ff., 121 ff.

⁵⁹² Serebryansky. Op. cit. p. 261.

⁵⁹³ Gorchakov, M. "On the History of the Penitential Nomocanons of the Orthodox Church" (1874). pp. 104–110.

⁵⁹⁴ Golubinsky. "The Venerable Sergius of Radonezh and the Trinity-Sergius Lavra He Founded," in: Readings. 1909. Vol. 2. pp. 47, 75–86; Vol. 3. p. 103; RIB. Vol. 6. No. 21.

⁵⁹⁵ The Legend of the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery, in: Prav. Sob. 1861. 1. pp. 203, 206.

⁵⁹⁶ Joseph's "Spiritual Letter," in: VChM. September. Part 1. p. 551; AI. 1. No. 274; AYu. 2. No. 126.

⁵⁹⁷ Epistle (1382) from Dionysius, Archbishop of Suzdal, to the brethren of the Snetogorsk Monastery, in: RIB. 6. No. 24 (and also in: AI. 1. No. 5); epistle from Simeon, Archbishop of Novgorod, to the same monastery. Ibid. No. 45; a letter from Metropolitan Photius dated 1488. Ibid. No. 46; a letter from Metropolitan Jonah to the Bogolyubsky Monastery in Vladimir (c. 1455). Ibid. No. 75 (also in: AI. 1. No. 265); a letter from Metropolitan Theodosius to the Pesnoshsky Monastery (1461–64). Ibid. No. 96 (also in: AI. 1. No. 276).

⁵⁹⁸ Cf. the previous note. It is quite telling, however, that, for example, Metropolitan Philip does not dispute the monks' right to own property even after taking monastic vows. RIB. 6. No. 104 (1472), the case involving Monk Pamva's horse.

⁵⁹⁹ Metropolitan Charter, in: RIB. 6. No. 128 (and also in: AAE. 1. No. 381).

St. Joseph of Volokolamsk noted that his contemporaries, the monks of the northern monasteries, insisted with great determination: the holy fathers, who had labored in the Russian land since ancient times, did not draw up written rules or statutes, but instructed the monks through the living word, and therefore, they argued, monastic statutes should not be written even now, but the brethren should be instructed orally⁶⁰⁰. It would not be an exaggeration to say that such views were typical not only of Joseph's contemporaries but of the entire fifteenth century. They corresponded to the piety of the Old Russian ascetics, who valued above all the personal example of the abbot or founder of the monastery, his deeds, his teachings, and his attitude toward the brotherhood.

However, some ascetics—including the founders and abbots of monasteries—recognized the need to establish a monastic rule. First and foremost, we should mention St. Euphrosyne of Pskov († 1481). His hagiography is not merely a biography of a strict ascetic and monastery founder, but a rather important chapter in Russian church history, although the scope of our work does not allow us to dwell on this hagiography in detail⁶⁰¹. St. Euphrosynus was the author of the oldest communal rule, which he introduced at the monastery he founded in the Pskov region⁶⁰². It is difficult to determine which sources he used to compose his rule; in addition to quotations from the Old and New Testaments, Euphrosynus refers to the works of St. Basil the Great, St. John Climacus, and St. Isaac the Syrian. The uniqueness of his charter lies in the fact that it contains only disciplinary requirements and does not address liturgical practice at all⁶⁰³. The charter is divided into 28 sections, or paragraphs (specifically, an introduction and 27 rules). The author's ascetic views regarding the structure of monastic life can be characterized as follows: 1) the fundamental requirement of strict observance of the cenobitic rule (§§ 1–4, 8); 2) complete obedience to the will and orders of the abbot (§§ 5, 7, 18); 3) constant manual labor, performed by the brethren with love and mutual respect (§ 8, 9, 27); 4) ascetic rules common to all monks concerning prayer, fasting, chastity, and non-possessiveness (§ 10–15, 4, 17, 26, 27); and 5) aid to the poor and needy (§ 24 and 25). The rule also addresses the abbot of the monastery and his duties (§§ 5, 21, 23, 20). Although St. Euphrosynus composed this rule for his own monastery, other monasteries could have used it as well, since it was of a fairly general nature and emphasized the necessity of strict observance of communal life. However, we do not know whether it was applied in other monasteries, nor is it known how long Euphrosynus's strict communal rule lasted in his own monastery. The monk Philotheus, known to us through his writings, was a monk—and perhaps even the abbot—of the Eleazar Monastery in the early 16th century, that is, two or three decades after Euphrosynus's death. His writings, devoted exclusively to ecclesiastical and political issues, do not allow us to clarify the question that interests us. We do not know whether the organization of his monastery was so flawless that it gave no cause for criticism, or whether he was so absorbed in ecclesiastical and political issues that the “trifles” of everyday monastic life no longer concerned him. It is a pity that Philotheos, one of the most interesting and talented writers of that era, overlooked this issue.

In discussing the question of the monastic rule, we must also say a few words about the Elder Nile of Sor, whose ascetic views are set forth in detail in Chapter IV, 2. This zealous defender and champion of the true monastic life, a contemporary of St. Euphrosyne, preferred the skete rule to the cenobitic one, but his views on the daily life of a monk—on manual labor, prayer, and non-possessiveness—were almost identical to those of Euphrosyne. Both ascetics essentially sought the same goal: to organize monastic life in such a way as to protect it from worldliness, but they charted different paths toward this goal. The language of Euphrosynus's rule is businesslike and somewhat dry, whereas in Elder Nilus's work we find a detailed depiction of the spiritual struggle against the temptations that a monk encounters on his path to Christian perfection, along with instructions on how to wage this struggle.

Elder Nilus was not the only one to emphasize the special value of the skete life. There is a Skete Rule, compiled by an unknown author, likely shortly before Elder Nilus's death, in the second half of the 15th century.⁶⁰⁴ It is possible that this rule was written precisely at a time when communal monastic life had fallen

⁶⁰⁰ VChM. September. Part 1. pp. 548, 547.

⁶⁰¹ The Life of Euphrosyne, in: Monuments of Ancient Russian Literature. 4 (1862). pp. 67–119, 172–179. On Euphrosyne, see: Serebryansky. Op. cit. Cf.: Makarii. 2nd ed. 8. pp. 129 ff.

⁶⁰² Serebryansky. Op. cit. p. 508.

⁶⁰³ Ibid. pp. 275–278, 271.

⁶⁰⁴ Mansvetov. Op. cit. pp. 298–300. This charter is known only through its detailed description. Description. 2. 3. pp. 730–732; Makarii's assumption (2nd ed., vol. 6, pp. 77–78) that this rule might have been composed by a disciple of Nilus of Sora is erroneous, since the earliest copies of it date back to the mid-15th century.

into disuse in Russia, and the anonymous author sought, through his rule, to combat the distortions of idiorhythm. The Skete Rule found practical application in the small hermitages of the Russian North, where solitary living was widespread and sometimes took on the character of the skete life, especially in the 15th century and the first quarter of the 16th century, when austere asceticism flourished there; the existence of many copies of the Skete Rule indicates that it was widely used⁶⁰⁵.

In contrast, St. Joseph of Volokolamsk († 1515) demanded strict adherence to communal living. The monastic rule he composed, known as the “Spiritual Letter”⁶⁰⁶, has already been described by us in general terms (Chapter IV, 1). Joseph’s rule—like Euphrosyne’s—is a communal rule; but Euphrosyne’s rule is too brief, whereas Joseph’s rule constitutes a sort of collection of teachings on the fundamental rules of monastic life. This distinctive feature of the rule—its resemblance to a collection of teachings or sermons that can serve more than one generation of monastic brothers—is likely explained by the fact that, as Joseph himself noted, the monks of his time heeded only the abbot’s personal instructions; perhaps this is precisely why Joseph called his work a “spiritual testament”—that is, a legacy—rather than a “monastic rule.”

The first nine chapters of his rule take the form of teachings, supported by passages from Holy Scripture and the ascetic writings of the Holy Fathers. Chapter 11 contains a special instruction for the abbot, outlining his duties toward the monastery, and a teaching for the brethren. The common sense and religious formalism of the founder of the Josephite Order led him to repeat the first nine teachings in the form of brief rules intended to govern the entire life of the monastery from early morning until night.

This is followed by two more chapters⁶⁰⁷; the first contains nine “traditions”—instructions on how the council of elders should observe the rule, and the second contains nine “prohibitions” that the abbot and the council of elders may apply to members of the brotherhood who have violated the rule. In the title of this chapter, Joseph emphasizes that he composed the rules of monastic communal life based on the model of the rules and ascetic instructions of St. Basil the Great and the monastic rule of St. Theodore the Studite.

In the concluding chapter, seeking to emphasize the necessity of strict asceticism, Joseph cites examples of monastic feats performed by saints who shone throughout the Russian land, whose lives should serve as a “rule” and “model” for Russian monasticism. According to Joseph, he learned about these ascetics during his pilgrimage to the monasteries. In the introduction, he writes that the holy fathers instructed the monks living in the community not only orally but also in writing. Since, he goes on to say, the lives of monks are not worthy of emulation in all monasteries, today’s abbots must do the same—provide both oral and written instructions to the brotherhood, which are just as binding for them as the teachings of the holy fathers⁶⁰⁸.

Joseph’s “Spiritual Letter” is a detailed monastic rule that regulates the daily life of monasteries down to the smallest detail, while paying special attention to the monk’s outward conduct.

A different spirit pervades “The Instruction to His Disciples on the Skete Life” by St. Nilus of Sora († 1508), which, in terms of its content, is not a monastic rule, because it deals only with the fundamentals of the monastic life, primarily the monk’s struggle against temptations and sins. We have discussed the content of the “Tradition” at length above (Chapter IV, 2). Here we will merely recall that Nilus’s views on monastic life differ greatly from those of Joseph, for he prefers the skete life rather than the cenobitic life, as Joseph did.

We find an attempt to combine both forms of monastic life and to draw what is useful for the brotherhood from both in the monastic rule of St. Cornelius of Komel († 1538). His “Constitution, or Rules of Living” (for monks)⁶⁰⁹, which we used when describing the life of this renowned ascetic of Ancient Rus’ (Chapter III, 4), takes Joseph’s strict communal life and Nilus’s perfect non-possessiveness as the foundation of monastic asceticism. Cornelius put both of these principles into practice in his monastery.

Another communal rule dates to the mid-16th century. The story of its origin is as follows: St. Gerasimus of Boldino († 1554), who founded four monasteries in the Smolensk region, once gathered the

⁶⁰⁵ Mansvetov. Op. cit. pp. 301–303, 299.

⁶⁰⁶ VChM. September. Part 1. pp. 499–615. Summary in: Khrushchev, Iosif Volotsky. pp. 59–63, 75–80. Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. pp. 61–66.

⁶⁰⁷ In some catalogs of the *Spiritual Letter*, only the lengthy titles of both of these chapters are included, without the text itself. Description. Vol. 2, No. 2. p. 520.

⁶⁰⁸ These chapters (VChM, pp. 546–563), known as “A Reply to the Curious,” are often published separately, for example, in: LZAK, 2 (1862) or in: Readings, 1847, No. 7 (in abridged form). Joseph’s views on monastic life are also expressed in the 7th homily of his major work—*The Enlightener*—and in a letter to an unknown monk (DAI. 1. No. 211).

⁶⁰⁹ The Rule, in: IRI. 4. pp. 673–704; a detailed retelling in: Konoplev. Op. cit. 96–100 and Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 67; as well as Muravyov. Russian Thebaid. p. 20.

monks of his Trinity Monastery in Boldino and the abbots of the three other monasteries and instructed one of the monks to transcribe, as he dictated, his recollections of his own monastic life. He added to this a “Testament,” which speaks of the necessity of preserving communal life in the monasteries he founded⁶¹⁰. This charter does not reflect the individual characteristics of Gerasim’s ascetic views; it contains only the general principles of communal life. The section concerning the abbot of the monastery is of particular interest. Gerasim emphasizes that the brotherhood must follow the abbot’s will in all things, but if the abbot himself violates the rule, the monastery’s brotherhood may send a delegation to him consisting of the most venerable monks, distinguished by the strictness of their lives, to point out to him, in a spirit of love and humility, his errors or abuses. Furthermore, Gerasim requires that monks always remain in the same monastery and not move from one monastery to another.

All these monastic rules owe their origin to the personal initiative of individual ascetics. In essence, they all came into being because the ascetics sought to use them to organize the internal monastic life in the monasteries they founded so that it would best correspond to their ascetic ideals; these rules were also intended to ensure that the established order would be preserved for as long as possible even after the death of the monastery’s founder. We have already discussed above how important the personal authority of a monastery’s founder was and how he was revered after his death. Although all these statutes—written as testaments for the compiler’s contemporaries and for future generations of monks—have clear hagiographic features, they are nevertheless strongly imbued with local color. Therefore, the possibility of imitating them or applying the rule of one monastery to another was ruled out, especially given the Old Russian monks’ aversion to written rules that regulated everything in detail. This explains the remarkable diversity in the organization of monastic life across different monasteries, even though all these monasteries might have lived according to a communal rule, as well as the differences observed in the structure of monastic life within the same monastery across different eras, depending on how much time had passed since the death of the monastery’s founder or a particular abbot who possessed a strong will and a great gift for spiritual guidance. All these statutes are more closely tied to the history of individual monasteries and to the moral theology of Ancient Rus’ than to the general history of Old Russian monasticism. Although they all emerged within a single half-century—Nilus’s “Tradition” at the end of the 15th century and Gerasim’s “Testament” shortly before 1554—their influence was not particularly great, and they did not bring about any reform of monastic life. Such a rule made the spiritual image of its author more appealing, but it remained effective and fruitful for only a short time. The only feature common to all these rules, with the exception of Nil of Sorsk’s rule, is a preference for cenobitic monasticism.

2. Monastic Rules of the 16th and 17th Centuries

The first attempt by the church hierarchy to reform monastic life and raise its spiritual level did not occur until the end of the first quarter of the 16th century. The initiative came from Archbishop Makarii of Novgorod, the future Metropolitan of Moscow. In 1526–27, he sent a letter to Grand Prince Vasily III, in which he asked for permission to make certain changes and improvements to the organization of the monasteries in his diocese⁶¹¹. In his letter, Makarii wrote that only four monasteries in the Novgorod diocese followed the Kinovian rule, while all the others followed the Idiorhythmic rule, and that, in general, there was much disorder in monastic life. From the chronicle⁶¹², we know that in 1528, Macarius summoned all the abbots of the diocese to Novgorod and, in his archpastoral address, recommended that they take measures to reform monastic life and introduce a strict communal rule in the monasteries under their jurisdiction. Sixteen abbots promised to do so, while two opposed the bishop’s advice and insisted on preserving the idiorhythm in their monasteries. According to the chronicle, the archbishop did not coerce the stubborn abbots; he merely stated that they would be accountable to God for their actions. In connection with this reform, Archbishop Makarii sent out to the monasteries the so-called “Statutory Charter,” in which he reiterated his instructions regarding the observance of communal life. One of these statutory letters, sent to the Holy Spirit Monastery,

⁶¹⁰ Gerasim’s “Will” in: Description of the Smolensk Diocese (1864). pp. 291–295; IRI. 3. p. 413; Klyuchevsky. Lives. p. 305; Kadlubovsky. Op. cit., pp. 290 ff. It is evident from the Life of Anthony of Siy that a communal rule was also introduced in his monastery. Kadlubovsky. Op. cit., p. 311.

⁶¹¹ DAI. 1. No. 22.

⁶¹² PSRL. 6. p. 284.

*has survived to this day*⁶¹³. These instructions by Macarius do not differ from other Kinovian statutes—such as the statute of St. Joseph—and are set forth in a very clear manner. It is interesting to note that in Macarius's charter we find a feature that would later reappear in the charter of St. Gerasimus of Boldino, namely, the mention of the brethren's right to point out to the abbot any violations of the monastic charter on his part.

Along with measures aimed at combating separate living, Archbishop Makarii abolished the so-called “double monasteries.” Eight women's monasteries remained in his diocese, but they were now governed by abbesses rather than abbots, as had been the case previously; from then on, only parish priests were permitted to conduct divine services in women's monasteries⁶¹⁴. Dual monasteries () already existed in Byzantium, and in the Middle Ages they were also known in the West⁶¹⁵. Mixed monasteries in Muscovy, as in Byzantium, were organized according to a rule of separate living: monks and nuns lived in separate cells arranged around the church, which together formed the monastery—often surrounded by a wall—and were under the authority of a single abbot. St. Nil of Sora condemns this abuse⁶¹⁶. Such monasteries existed, for example, in Pskov in the late 15th and early 16th centuries⁶¹⁷. The Council of 1503 abolished mixed monasteries; furthermore, it prohibited women's monasteries from having abbots or spiritual fathers who were monks—the spiritual father was to be the parish priest⁶¹⁸. However, this prohibition likely had no practical effect, since in 1528 Archbishop Makarii had to issue the same prohibition once again. The Stoglav also denounced dual monasteries as an abuse and reaffirmed the 1503 decree.⁶¹⁹

Macarius's measures against the idiorhythm were local in nature, as they concerned only his diocese. The decrees of the Stoglav show that both communal and separate-living monasteries continued to exist. The proceedings of the Stoglav (Chapter 52) show that both types of monasteries were recognized; furthermore, the Stoglav (Chapter 85) states that monks often left cenobitic monasteries because they were unable or unwilling to observe the rules of the communal charter. The Stoglav prohibited the establishment of new small hermitages, in which monks usually lived according to a monastic rule of individual living; it ordered that small hermitages located near one another be merged into a single monastery, but the decrees say nothing about which rule should be adopted in such merged monasteries. Chapter 49, specifically devoted to “honorable monasteries,” contains general provisions regarding the internal life of monasteries; cinovial monasteries are subject to the requirement of communal meals and the prohibition against bringing food supplies into cells and storing them there.

Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, monasteries continued to be divided into those with separate living quarters and those with communal living quarters. Several new monastic statutes appeared, drafted at the initiative of individual ascetics. A renowned ascetic named Eleazar (d. 1656) wrote a statute in the first quarter of the 17th century for his hermitage on Anzer Island in the White Sea, where the monks lived in separate cells. The rule contains strict requirements regarding monastic life⁶²⁰. The abbot of the Simonov Monastery in Moscow, Archimandrite Gabriel (Dometsky), compiled two rules: one for individual living (1683) and one for communal living (1690); this may indicate that the monastery transitioned from idiorhythm to cenobitism during those years, or that both statutes were applied simultaneously within the monastery. It is important to note that this monastery was among the largest in Moscow and was close to the royal family, especially during the reign of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich († 1676). The abbot of another Moscow monastery—the Resurrection Monastery—named Nikanor (1688–1698), compiled a kinovian rule for his brethren⁶²¹. It can be assumed that the true motivation for compiling these rules was the decline of monastic life in these large and wealthy monasteries of the capital (the Simonov Monastery possessed extensive land holdings). Already at the time of the founding of this monastery (1370), St. Theodore of Rostov introduced a strict communal rule there, which, according to St. Joseph, was still observed in the second half of the 15th century;

⁶¹³ AI. 1. No. 292.

⁶¹⁴ PSRL. 6. p. 285.

⁶¹⁵ Sokolov. The Internal State. p. 325.

⁶¹⁶ “The Legend” of Nilo (1849). pp. XXI–XXII.

⁶¹⁷ PSRL. 4. p. 278.

⁶¹⁸ Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 6. pp. 123–124.

⁶¹⁹ Stoglav. Ch. 82. Ed. Kozhanchikov. p. 244.

⁶²⁰ Filaret. Russian Saints (1861). January. p. 77. The Book of the Saints, in: Readings. 1887. 4. No. 324; Yakontov. Lives of Northern Russian Ascetics (1882). pp. 197–198.

⁶²¹ Filaret. Review. Vol. 1. pp. 377, 363, 266; Popov, N. “Description of the Manuscripts of the Simonov Monastery in Moscow,” in: Readings. 1910. Vol. 3. p. 233.

the monk Zinovy of Otensk, in his writings, mentions the particularly austere and unpretentious life of the monks at the Simonov Monastery in the 1520s, when Prince-Monk Vassian Patrikeev resided there⁶²².

The church hierarchy repeatedly issued general directives instructing monastery abbots to ensure compliance with the monastic statutes of both types. This was discussed at the Councils of 1667, 1675, and 1681, which decreed that diocesan bishops should oversee the implementation of the statutes⁶²³. From the 1680s and 1690s, numerous archpastoral reminders to various monasteries have come down to us, urging that the monastic statutes not be violated⁶²⁴. All documents that have survived to this day and that directly or indirectly address the issue of monastic statutes indicate that in the 16th and 17th centuries, both communal and individual living arrangements persisted in Russian monasteries; unfortunately, it is not possible to determine the numerical ratio between monasteries of the two types. One can only surmise that, since the sources more frequently mention the communal rule, this rule was either more widespread or more often violated, while the rule of individual living, which was applied primarily in the northern deserts, was observed more strictly.

3. The Internal Structure of Monastic Life

The monastic rule is obviously supposed to be the cornerstone of a monastery's internal organization, but the question arises as to whether this was actually the case. A distinction must be made between two aspects of monastic life: administrative organization and adherence to the requirements of the rule. Regarding the former, it can be stated that, as far as the material available to us allows us to judge, the administrative organization of monasteries of both types differed little from one another in practice; of great importance was the fact that almost all monasteries of both types owned land, the cultivation of which entailed certain consequences. Monastic discipline was influenced by three factors: first, the views of that era on monastic asceticism, its meaning, and its purpose; second, the general attitude toward the cenobitic and idiorrhythmic ways of life; and third, the far-reaching secularization of internal monastic life and the decline in discipline resulting from land ownership. The relentless secularization of monasticism had a detrimental effect on the organization of governance, the activities of the monastic authorities, and monastic discipline. Furthermore, the nature of monastic administration was influenced by secular authorities, who very often interfered in church affairs, as is clearly evident from our essay on church-state relations, monastic colonization, and monastic economic management.

According to the charter, in the 16th and 17th centuries, as in the 14th and 15th centuries, the abbot of a monastery was elected by the monastic community and confirmed by the diocesan bishop; in the so-called stauropegial monasteries, which fell under the jurisdiction of the patriarch, the election of the abbot was subject to patriarchal confirmation⁶²⁵. The selection process took into account not only the candidate's personal merits, the austerity of his life, and his education, but also other factors: boyar lineage and the ability to manage estates⁶²⁶. Several interesting documents have survived, showing that when selecting a new abbot, the monastic community entered into a sort of contract with him—or, more accurately, presented him with their “decree,” which he was required to sign and subsequently abide by⁶²⁷. Often, the abbot came from another monastery. In the second half of the 16th century and throughout the 17th century, the election of an abbot by the monastic community became rare; this custom persisted only in remote or small monasteries. In large and wealthy monasteries, as well as in all Moscow monasteries, abbots were appointed by decree and at the behest of the tsar or the patriarch. This kind of interference by secular authorities in the internal affairs of monasteries had occurred before, during the reign of Grand Prince Vasily III (1505–1533), but the practice became particularly entrenched under Tsars Ivan IV (1547–1584) and Alexei (1645–1676)⁶²⁸. The Stoglav

⁶²² Joseph's “Spiritual Letter” in: VChM. p. 552; Zinovy of Otensk. Testimony of Truth (1863). p. 901.

⁶²³ AAE. 4. No. 204; AI. 4. No. 253; 5. No. 75. PSZ. 1. No. 412.

⁶²⁴ AAE. 4. Nos. 311, 312; Adrian's charter, in: Vremennik. 11. pp. 30–46.

⁶²⁵ For example: RIB. 6. Nos. 54, 61, 63, 129, 113; AI. 1. No. 37; AAE. 1. Nos. 40, 108. The statutes of Joseph and Gerasim also mention the election of the abbot by the monastic community; see also: Stoglav. Ch. 86. Ed. Kozhanchikov. p. 250; AYU. 2. No. 274; Zhmakin. Metropolitan Daniel. p. 110. On stauropegial monasteries: Мiлaљ. Op. cit. pp. 672, 675.

⁶²⁶ RIB. 6. p. 54. OLDP (1881). p. 89.

⁶²⁷ Dosifei. Description of the Solovetsky Monastery (1836). p. 67.

⁶²⁸ Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 700. Joseph of Volotsk asked Basil III to appoint an abbot and sent him a list of 10 candidates. Basil, however, ordered that the monk Daniel (from the same monastery), who was not on the list, be appointed abbot. Zhmakin. Op. cit. p. 110; PSRL. 6. pp. 288, 289; AAE. 1. No. 238; AYU. 1. No. 381; RIB. 6. p. 61. Gorsky. Description of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra.

(Chapter 86) states the following: the abbot is appointed by the metropolitan or diocesan bishop at the request of the monastic community, with the tsar's consent. Numerous hagiographies show how often the founders of monasteries were appointed by the metropolitan and, later, by the patriarch⁶²⁹.

Although the statutes mentioned above instruct the monastic community on the necessity of obeying the abbot's will, at the same time they limit the abbot's authority and initiative in a certain way; this authority is limited by the council of monastic elders—a council of the most experienced older monks, usually consisting of 12 members⁶³⁰. Euphrosyne's charter makes no mention of this council whatsoever; by contrast, in St. Joseph's charter, the council of monastic elders is assigned an important role in the management of the monastery (chapters 13 and 14). These chapters show that the institution of the council of elders operated in parallel with the abbot's will and authority. Strictly speaking, the council did not yet limit the abbot's authority, but in matters of monastic discipline it had almost the same rights as the abbot, for St. Joseph grants the council the right to punish the brethren for violations of the charter and, in general, to oversee its observance. This "constitutional" feature was even more clearly expressed in the charter of St. Gerasimus of Boldino; as already mentioned, according to this charter, the council of elders could make remarks and issue reprimands to the abbot. The right of the council of elders to point out the abbot's mistakes is also mentioned in the charter of Archbishop Macarius, drawn up for the Holy Spirit Monastery. A monk's obedience to the abbot is something entirely different from a monk's unconditional obedience to his spiritual father. Perhaps this was the reason why, in the 16th and 17th centuries, the practice of spiritual guidance did not become widespread (especially in cenobitic monasteries)⁶³¹.

The equation of the abbot's rights with those of the council of elders carried within it the seeds of discord. We know of many examples where an abbot, attempting to combat violations of the ascetic requirements of the monastic charter, suffered defeat upon encountering resistance from the monastic community, which was unwilling to follow the abbot's instructions and give up their habits that contradicted the charter. Elder Paisius Yaroslavov, who led the Trinity-Sergius Monastery for several years (1479–1482), was forced to resign as abbot and return to the forests of Belozero. Elder Artemy was able to lead this monastery for only half a year (1551), and then, due to the monks' disobedience, he resigned from the office of abbot⁶³². St. Joseph was also forced to clash with the monastic community. Metropolitan Daniel (1522–1539), during his tenure as abbot of the Joseph Monastery—several years after Joseph's death—also experienced difficulties in his relations with the monastic community and even composed a special treatise in which he explained the fundamentals of communal life to the brothers and justified his directives⁶³³. Almost all writings that address negative phenomena in 17th-century monastic life mention the disobedience of the monastic community⁶³⁴. The replacement of the election of the abbot with his appointment—which became common practice in the 17th century—naturally strengthened his position within the monastery, partly at the expense of the council of elders.

The council of monastic elders⁶³⁵, which usually consisted of 12 members, included not only the monastery's most senior monks but also those monks who held specific offices related to the management of the monastery. First and foremost among them was the cellarer (). His position in the monastery was particularly responsible and prestigious; he was in charge of all matters related to the monastery's internal administration, and if the monastery owned land, he also exercised general oversight over it. In connection with this oversight, the cellarer (as early as the late 15th century) held judicial authority over the monastic

1 (1890). pp. 77, 80, 84, 85, 88, 97, 130, 156. On the era of Tsar Alexei: AAE. 3. Nos. 262, 307, 331; 4. Nos. 37, 225, 253, 275, 322.

⁶²⁹ The Venerable Sergius of Radonezh, Cyril of Belozero, Paphnutius of Borovsk, Joseph of Volotsk, Gerasimus of Boldino, Eleazar of Anzer, Macarius of Kalyazin, Anthony of Siy, Euphrosynus of Pskov, and others.

⁶³⁰ In the 17th century, when the abbot began to be appointed by the tsar, the cathedral elders gradually lost their former role in the management of the monastery. At the Savvo-Storozhevsky Monastery, which enjoyed the special favor of Tsar Alexei, there were, for example, only three council elders in 1688, while the number of monks exceeded 150. Belokurov. Materials for Russian History (1888). p. 161.

⁶³¹ See Chapter XV.

⁶³² Gorsky. Op. cit. 1. p. 73; AAE. 1. No. 237. p. 247. Kurbsky. The Legend (1842). pp. 134, 132. On disobedience to the abbot, see: AI. 1. Nos. 265 and 276 (both concerning the 15th century).

⁶³³ The Life of Joseph, by an unknown author, in: Readings. 1903. 3. p. 18; Zhmakin. Op. cit. p. 664. Daniel's work: *ibid.* Appendix. pp. 55–57. Other works by Daniel also emphasize the necessity of obedience.

⁶³⁴ AI. 5. No. 75; AAE. 4. Nos. 311, 312; PSZ. 1. No. 412.

⁶³⁵ Uspensky, N. "On the Great Builders of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery," in: Readings. 1897. Vol. 1. pp. 3, 4, 11–12, 17.

community and the monastery's peasants, which he exercised either personally or through his representatives. In the metropolitan's charter (circa 1500), the cellarer is mentioned immediately after the abbot. Documents from the Trinity-Sergius Monastery dating from 1495–1505 indicate that the cellarer was entrusted with the management of the monastery's estates; he was also responsible for acquiring new estates and for exchanging or selling old ones. In the 16th century, documents from the Trinity-Sergius Monastery concerning administration or financial matters even bore a special treasurer's seal. In the second half of the 17th century, the cellarer of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery also served as the clerk of the Monastic Office⁶³⁶. Large monasteries always had the position of cellarer⁶³⁷. In the charter of St. Joseph, the cellarer's cell is designated as the place for holding meetings on the most important matters⁶³⁸. A tsarist decree addressed to the Spaso-Evfimiev Monastery in Suzdal (1640) lists in great detail all the duties of the cellarer: managing the monastery's internal affairs and estates, safeguarding the monastery treasury, disbursing and receiving money, overseeing the timely collection of taxes and the fulfillment of all obligations by the monastery's peasants, supervising the maintenance of the monastery's accounting records, exercising judicial authority over the monastery's servants and peasants, representing the monastery in the tsar's offices and administrative bodies, etc.⁶³⁹

In the second half of the 16th century and especially in the 17th century, it was common for small and poor monasteries to be affiliated with large and wealthy ones—the so-called “affiliated monasteries”; The small monasteries did this to improve their financial situation and to come under the patronage of an influential monastery, which sought to extend its privileges to the monasteries affiliated with it. The cellarer of the main monastery was the official who held administrative and judicial authority over the affiliated monasteries; moreover, the abbots of the affiliated monasteries also transferred to him the right to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction⁶⁴⁰.

The actual management of the monastery's estate—the cellar, granaries, kitchen, stables, and livestock yard—was entrusted to the steward, or treasurer; he was the cellarer's closest assistant and reported directly to him. He was an elderly, venerable monk who was elected by the brotherhood for this office for a fixed term; and he was likely also among the council of elders. Reporting to him, in turn, were the monks responsible for various aspects of the monastery's operations: the assistant steward, who oversaw the cellars and storerooms; the baker; the refectory manager; the stablemaster; the sacristan; and often the assistant sacristan, and so on. To manage the monastery's estates, the treasurer also had a whole staff of assistants: the assistant treasurer, the village elders, or stewards. In large monasteries, the number of monks assigned to specific duties was quite large. For example, in the 17th century, there were at least 46 such monks at the Solotchinsky Monastery (Ryazan District) and 51 at the Savvo-Storozhevsky Monastery; some of them performed various duties, including those related to divine services⁶⁴¹.

In providing spiritual guidance to the monastic community, the abbot's closest assistant was the monastery's confessor, and in some monasteries, spiritual elders also played a role; these spiritual elders served as mentors and spiritual fathers to novices and newly ordained monks. Divine services in monasteries were celebrated only by hieromonks and hierodeacons; parish priests (white priests, or beltsy) served only in women's monasteries, as established by the Councils of 1503 and 1551. The ecclesiarch (ustavshchik) was responsible for ensuring that services were conducted according to the rules; he was an elderly monk well-versed in the Typikon (monastic rule). He was assisted by the canonarch (golovshchik)—in large monasteries there were two or three canonarchs at a time—as well as the psalm reader and the paramonar (ponomar); there was also a wake-up monk—a monk who woke the brethren for night services—a candle-bearer, or candle elder—a monk who distributed candles for services (for example, during Holy Week), a church overseer, or

⁶³⁶ Golubinsky. 1. 2. p. 692; AI. 1. No. 100, 192, 292; 3. No. 69; DAI. 3. No. 87; AAE. 1. No. 381; 3. Nos. 47, 104, 294, et al.; Kedrov. Avraamy Palitsyn, in: Readings. 1880. 6. p. 18. Gorchakov. The Monastic Office. p. 78.

⁶³⁷ VChM. September. p. 607; AAE. 1. No. 221; 3. No. 298; AI. 1. No. 212; Makarii, Bishop. Historical Description of the Krasnogorsk Monastery, in: Readings. 1880. 3. p. 81; Bogoslovsky. Op. cit. 1. p. 72; Belokurov. Materials (1888). p. 164; Dobroklonsky. Op. cit. p. 11.

⁶³⁸ VChM. September. p. 607.

⁶³⁹ AAE. 3. No. 298.

⁶⁴⁰ AI. 1. No. 25, 178; 5. No. 65, 195; AAE. 4. No. 144.

⁶⁴¹ Serebryansky. Op. cit. p. 472; VChM. September. pp. 600, 605, 588–590; The Life of Varlaam of Khutyn, in: OLDP (1881). pp. 72, 78, 80, 93; AAE. 2. No. 298; IRI. 7. pp. 193, 194; Dobroklonsky. Op. cit. pp. 11, 14; Makarii, Bishop. Op. cit. p. 81; Bogoslovsky. Op. cit., p. 72; Belokurov. Materials, p. 164; AI, vol. 1, no. 212; AAE, vol. 1, nos. 56, 75.

church elder, who ensured the brotherhood's proper conduct during services and maintained cleanliness in the church, a prosphora baker, and a bell ringer⁶⁴².

Clearly, the number of monks engaged in specific duties varied between large and small monasteries; in communal monasteries, especially those that owned extensive estates, quite a few monks were employed in various branches of the economy. If, in addition, they were sent as managers or overseers to distant villages or to enterprises (such as mills, saltworks, fishing grounds, or logging sites), they became completely detached from the internal life of the monastery; although they remained firmly attached to the monastery, this bond was no longer of a spiritual or religious nature but purely worldly—concerned with the management of the monastery's estates. In small monasteries and hermitages, the spiritual level was generally higher and the monastic rules were violated less frequently, although this statement cannot be generalized. The very structure of monastic life carried within it the seeds of secularization, and only a few ascetics were able to rise above the general spiritual level.

4. The Rite of Tonsure and Spiritual Guidance for Novice Monks

Entering a monastery and the subsequent tonsure into monastic life was always an extremely important step for a person seeking to fill his life with a special Christian-ascetic meaning and substance. The importance of this step was linked to the religious responsibility inherent in monastic life. The inner spiritual responsibility for the future monk was further heightened because, in the Eastern Church and among Orthodox monastics, monastic tonsure has long been regarded as a sacrament. Dionysius the Areopagite (late 5th or early 6th century), whose writings are highly valued by Orthodox monasticism, considers tonsure to be the fifth of the six sacraments; St. Theodore the Studite (d. 826) also attributed sacramental significance to tonsure: for the newly tonsured monk, it is something like a second baptism. These views are reflected in the Eastern Church's rite of tonsure: when explaining the religious and sacramental significance of tonsure to a future monk, the abbot refers to this rite as a "second baptism." Doctrinally, however, the Eastern Church attributes to tonsure only the significance of a liturgical rite⁶⁴³.

In Ancient Rus', all classes of society were drawn to Christian asceticism and monastic life. There is ample evidence of this in the lives of the ancient Russian ascetics; among the monks, both in ancient and later times, there were both educated and uneducated individuals; monasteries made no distinction between social classes⁶⁴⁴.

These hagiographies also indicate that there could be no question of specific age restrictions upon admission to a monastery; it is only evident that a monk entered the monastery either in his youth or in his old age⁶⁴⁵. In Muscovite Rus', it was customary to spend the final years of one's life in a monastery; a contribution was made to the monastery treasury, as already mentioned, and an agreement was concluded with the abbot, under which the contributor received the right, in exchange for this contribution, to spend the remainder of his life, "as long as God grants life," as a monk in the monastery. These were the so-called "contributions for tonsure"⁶⁴⁶. In the 16th and 17th centuries, there was also a widespread custom whereby a community of townspeople or peasants ("mir") would send a petition to the tsar asking for permission to found a monastery, which the members of this community intended "for themselves, their children, and their grandchildren for tonsure and for their funeral services"⁶⁴⁷. In such monasteries, tonsure was performed only in old age; furthermore, war invalids and other disabled persons were tonsured there. It was customary to make a certain contribution, either in cash or in kind, upon entering a monastery. Some monasteries, most often communal

⁶⁴² Golubinsky. 1. 2. p. 689. The number of hieromonks and hierodeacons varied: for example, in 1582–83, the Kirillov Monastery had 7 hieromonks and 3 hierodeacons; at the Savvo-Storozhevsky Monastery in 1688, there were 20 hieromonks and 15 hierodeacons. *AI*. 1. No. 212; *Belokurov. Materials*. p. 164.

⁶⁴³ See: Stiglmayr, J., "Die Lehre von den Sakramenten und der Kirche nach Pseudo-Dionysios," in *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*, 22 (1898), p. 246 ff.; Holl, K., *Enthusiasmus und Bußgewalt* (1898). p. 205 ff.; Heiler, *Urkirche und Ostkirche*. 1 (1937). p. 375; Lebedev, P., *The Science of Divine Worship in the Orthodox Church*. 2 (1881). p. 169; Anthony (Khrapovitsky), Metropolitan. *An Attempt at a Christian Orthodox Catechism* (1924). p. 65.

⁶⁴⁴ See note 67.

⁶⁴⁵ Golubinsky. 1. 2. p. 668.

⁶⁴⁶ Rozhdestvensky. *Op. cit.* pp. 105–107; Bogoslovsky. *Op. cit.* pp. 82, 77.

⁶⁴⁷ *AI*. 1. No. 211; *AAE*. 2. No. 11; *RIB*. 12. p. 1218, etc.; Zverinsky. 2. Nos. 1247, 122, 924.

ones, demanded quite large sums; there are known cases when complaints about this were made to the tsar⁶⁴⁸

Tonsure was not always performed at the will of the person being tonsured; at times, the government exiled individuals it deemed politically undesirable to monasteries and insisted on their tonsure in order to remove them from any participation in secular and state-political life. Prince-monk Vassian Patrikeev, whom we have already mentioned, was among such disgraced exiles. In the northern monasteries, and especially at the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, many monks came from boyar families. Such tonsures took place both during the reign of Grand Prince Ivan III (1462–1505) and under Tsar Ivan IV (1533–1584)⁶⁴⁹.

After entering the monastery, a probationary period began—the novitiate. From the specific facts already mentioned here, it is evident that abbots were often forced to perform the rite of tonsure on individuals who had not completed the novitiate period in the monastery; thus, in reality, only those who entered the monastery of their own free will and at a young age were tonsured in full compliance with all the requirements of the monastery's charter.

According to the ascetic tradition, all monks in the Russian Church are divided into three degrees: 1) rasophores, 2) monks of the lesser schema, and 3) monks of the greater schema; these degrees can be attained only sequentially. Corresponding to these three degrees, there are three rites of tonsure.

Those who enter the monastery are called novices. Upon completion of the canonical period of novitiate, they are tonsured as rasophore monks (), and this tonsure is performed without monastic vows. They are, however, obligated to observe the monastic rule with the same strictness as monks of higher degrees; and although they do not take monastic vows, they are morally bound by them. After performing a specific rite, rasophore monks are granted the right to wear a rasia () and a kamelaukion (). Newly tonsured monks receive a rosary ()—called “lestovki” in Russian monasteries—with 103 knots. During the tonsure ceremony, the abbot shaves the monk's head in a cross-shaped pattern and then clothes him in monastic vestments. Novices who have been tonsured as rasophores are forbidden to leave the monastic life of their own accord⁶⁵⁰.

The second degree consists of monks of the lesser schema (*parvi habitus*,); this designation arose to distinguish them from monks of the greater schema. The schema () signifies outward humility, symbolizing inner spiritual repentance. Depending on the degree of this repentance, a distinction is made between the lesser schema () and the greater schema (). During the rite of tonsure into the lesser schema, the monk takes monastic vows. He must: a) renounce everything that gratifies carnal desires; b) be obedient to everyone until death; c) never seek to acquire property⁶⁵¹. During the rite of tonsure into the lesser schema, a is placed on the monk—in Old Russian monasteries it was called a “svitok,” and later a “vlasytsa”—which symbolizes voluntary poverty; over the vlasyitsa is placed the paraman (), a four-cornered cloth with four cords at the corners, which is worn across the chest and shoulders; the paraman is meant to remind the monk of the voluntary taking upon himself the blessed yoke of Christ and that this burden is light; the paraman is tied tightly, symbolizing the binding of all earthly passions; Over this is worn a mantle () and, finally, a special headdress with a train attached to the kamelauka—(or, in Russian, a klobuk). Monks of the lesser schema cannot renounce their monastic vows, which is still possible for monks in the ryas with special permission and for extremely compelling reasons; canonically and morally, they are obligated to observe the vows they have taken until death.

During the tonsure into the Great Schema, a cloth similar to a paraman but larger in size—called an analav ()—is placed on the candidate, and instead of a cowl, a kukul () is worn—a sort of hood covering the head and shoulders; There are five crosses on the kukul: on the forehead, chest, shoulders, and back; for the first seven days after the tonsure, the monk must not remove it. A monk who has taken the Great Schema (in Russian, a “skhimnik”) vows to spend his life in particularly strict fasting and unceasing prayer; he no longer performs any duties outside his cell. A prerequisite for taking the Great Schema for every monk is an impeccable ascetic life; after 30 years of such a life in the monastery, provided he demonstrates high monastic

⁶⁴⁸ For example, the abbot of the Khlynovskoye Dormition Monastery—which was, moreover, a “secular” monastery—demanded a contribution of 10 rubles, which was a large sum at that time (1559). AAE. 2. No. 11.

⁶⁴⁹ Nikolsky. Communal and Cell Life, in: Christian Readings 1907. 8. pp. 181, 184; AI. 1. No. 214.

⁶⁵⁰ Golubinsky. 1. 2. pp. 668–670; Milaľ. Op. cit. p. 657. On the rite of tonsure, in: Maltzew. Begrõnis-Ritus (1898). pp. 202–203; The 17th-century tonsure rite, in: OLDP. 24 and 63; Innokenty, Archimandrite. Tonsure into Monastic Life (1899); Palmov, I. Rites of Tonsure in the Eastern Orthodox Church (1914). On the religious symbolism of individual parts of monastic vestments: Oppenheimer, Ph. Symbolik und religiõse Wertung des Mõnchskleides im christlichen Altertum (1932). Cf. also: Golubinsky, Vol. 1, Vol. 2, pp. 675–686.

⁶⁵¹ Milaľ. Op. cit., p. 658.

virtue, he receives permission and a blessing from the abbot to be tonsured into the Great Schema; the tonsure is performed at the monk's own free will. Monks wearing the ryasofor may receive the Great Schema immediately after 30 years of impeccable asceticism. If a monk has already been ordained as a hieromonk prior to taking the Great Schema, he retains the right to celebrate the Liturgy; however, according to the Nomokanon, a bishop, after taking the Great Schema, may no longer perform his episcopal ministry⁶⁵².

Prior to monastic tonsure, a novice must remain under the spiritual guidance of a worthy and experienced elder monk. In other words, it is required that the future monk, at least until his tonsure, undergo spiritual training under the guidance of an elder. It is difficult to determine to what extent this requirement was fulfilled in the 16th and 17th centuries. The nature and prevalence of the elder's guidance during this era will be discussed in more detail in Chapter XV; here, we will merely note that two works devoted to the spiritual formation of novices date from this period.

The first work is titled "The Elder's Instruction to Novice Monks: How One Should Live in Obedience to the Elder" (⁶⁵³). The life of a future monk should consist of prayer, reading the Holy Scriptures (if he is literate; if illiterate, then only prayer), and manual labor; and all this must be done as the elder commands. According to the "Tradition," a novice must "not take a single step toward any task without the blessing" of the elder; a monk cannot have free time; his life must always be filled with works pleasing to God, for "a true monk has no feast day on earth, nor Easter; Easter for him is when he passes from (earthly) vanity into eternal rest."

Another work is titled "The Teaching of a Certain Elder to His Disciple on Monastic Life and the Rule of the Cell Based on the Divine Scriptures"; it was composed in the 15th century at the Monastery of St. Paul of Obnorsk, where the tradition of spiritual guidance was flourishing at the time. The existence of manuscripts dating to the 17th century indicates that this work was put into practical use at that time⁶⁵⁴. It is already clear from the introduction that the text deals with the spiritual guidance of a newly tonsured brother—that is, a monk wearing the rasophora—in contrast to the first work, which was likely intended for novices. The difference lies in the fact that the first work addresses more general issues of asceticism, focusing primarily on the outward aspects of a novice's behavior, while the second offers advice to a monk who has already gained some spiritual experience, emphasizes the special importance of the Jesus Prayer, and sets forth the basic rules for ongoing communication between the monk and his spiritual father.

5. The Liturgical Monastic Rule and the Daily Life of Monks

From a practical and ascetic standpoint, for a novice or a newly initiated monk, great importance was attached not only to the monastic rule established in the monastery or the guidance provided by the abbot, but also to the entire spiritual atmosphere of the monastery, as well as the structure of daily monastic life. In this regard, the basis for dividing the day among various duties was the order of divine services, which determined the times for prayer, manual labor, and rest.

The liturgical content of the annual cycle of divine services determines the liturgical order of the entire Eastern Church, including the Russian Church. "While the actual content of the Divine Liturgy itself, unlike the liturgy of our Church, is almost unchanged, —writes P. Kilian Kirchhoff in his brief but substantive essay on the annual cycle of worship in the Eastern Church—the full richness of Eastern spirituality, which permeates the rhythms of worship, is expressed almost exclusively in the services adjacent to the Divine Liturgy. "The full scope of the Church's liturgical services is contained within four mutually complementary and interpenetrating liturgical cycles: two annual, one weekly, and one daily"⁶⁵⁵. The rich and diverse nature of the Orthodox Church's liturgical services left a distinctive mark on monastic life, where all the prescribed liturgical services were required to be—and in fact could be—performed. Thanks to this, there was no monotony—which can be particularly oppressive for a novice or an inexperienced monk—and at the same time, the abundance of divine hymns, imbued with the Church's dogmatic teachings and constituting the

⁶⁵² Ibid.; Maltzew. Op. cit., pp. 203–204, 280; Heiler. Op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 382–384. On the rite of tonsure in the modern Greek Church, see Spunda, F., *Griechische Mönche* (1928), pp. 27–44 (with excerpts from the liturgical sequence). Raevsky, *Euchologion*, vol. 3, pp. 199–217; Kattenbusch, vol. 1, pp. 529–536.

⁶⁵³ In: Serebryansky. Op. cit. pp. 265–267 (excerpts).

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid. pp. 571 ff. (in German: my book *Leben und Lehre der Starzen*, pp. 65–70).

⁶⁵⁵ Kirchhoff, P. Kilian, O. F. M., "The Holy Year—The Holy Ministry," in *Der christliche Osten*, ed. G. Wunderle (1939), p. 75. Further on the content and development of divine services: Heiler, vol. 1, pp. 335–364; Kattenbusch, vol. 1, pp. 447–456; Lebedev, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 44–82.

content of Orthodox worship⁶⁵⁶, opened up an opportunity for spiritual enlightenment⁶⁵⁷. Two annual cycles—the cycle of movable feasts associated with Pascha and the cycle of fixed feasts dedicated to the Savior, the Mother of God, and the commemoration of the saints—form the foundation; these are supplemented by the weekly and daily cycles, which are imbued with the liturgical content of the annual cycles, for each day of the week is dedicated to a specific event from Sacred History or the commemoration of the saints, and strictly defined hours of prayer are recited throughout the day⁶⁵⁸. The feasts of the annual cycle are days that occur only once a year, while the services of the daily and weekly cycles consist of constantly recurring hymns that are of immense importance for monastic practice⁶⁵⁹ and for the entire structure of monastic life throughout the day, which, beginning at 6:00 p.m., is divided into seven parts⁶⁶⁰. The monastic rule defines the disciplinary aspect of monastic life, while the daily schedule in the monastery depends on the liturgical rule. Its foundation is the Typikon (in Russian, “rule”) of the Orthodox Church, which has evolved over several centuries⁶⁶¹.

The aforementioned statutes of St. Savva and St. Theodore the Studite covered both of these aspects—disciplinary and liturgical—and, upon reaching Rus’, they became the foundation of the liturgical statute of the Russian Church⁶⁶². The liturgical section of the rule developed somewhat differently in communal and solitary monasteries. It is likely that in the 14th century, the liturgical section of the Studite Rule was gradually supplanted by the so-called Jerusalem Rule. This was the Rule of St. Savvas (in its liturgical section) with certain changes and additions made primarily by Patriarchs Alexius (1025–1043) and Philotheos (1354–1355, 1362–1376). In Ancient Rus’ during the 14th–15th centuries, three versions of this statute were known, differing only in details⁶⁶³. According to this statute, the Liturgy, Vespers, Matins, and All-Night Vigil were

⁶⁵⁶ See the excellent translations of Orthodox hymns by P. K. Kirchhoff: 1. **Die Ostkirche betet**. 4 vols. (1934–1937); 2. **In paradisum**. Funeral hymns (1939); 3. **Ehre sei Gott**. Hymns to the Trinity (1940). 4. **Über Dich freut sich der Erdbreis**. Hymns to Mary (1940); this volume contains a substantive preface. See also: Zankow. Op. cit., pp. 93–99. “For nothing,” says St. John Chrysostom, “so elevates and inspires the soul, detaches it from the earth, frees it from the bonds of the body, and disposes it to contemplate and despise all worldly things as much as harmonious singing and a well-composed divine hymn. Our nature takes such delight in melodies and is so inclined toward them that even infants, when they cry and are restless, are lulled to sleep by them.” Homily on Psalm 41; cited in: Kayser, Joh. **Beiträge zur Geschichte und Erklärung der älteren Kirchenhymnen**. 2nd ed. 1881. p. 47. On Greek (Orthodox) hymnology, see also: Christ, W. “On the Significance of Hirmoi, Troparia, and Kanon in Medieval Greek Poetry,” in: *Proceedings of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences* 1870. 2; Jacobi, L. “On the History of Greek Church Hymns,” in: *Z. f. KG* (1882); Meyer, W. “The Beginnings and Origins of Latin and Greek Rhythmic Poetry,” in: *Abh. der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 17. 2 (1885). Krumbacher (1897). p. 655 ff.

⁶⁵⁷ See Wunderle, G., **From the Sacred World of Athos: Studies and Memoirs** (1937. **Eastern Christianity**, 2).

⁶⁵⁸ Cf. note 651; and also: Būdumer, S., **History of the Breviary** (1895); Leclercq, H., “Breviary,” in: **Dictionnaire d’Archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie**, vol. 2, no. 1 (1925), pp. 1262–1316.

⁶⁵⁹ Each day of the week is dedicated to a particular event in the history of our salvation or to the saints: Monday—to the holy angels; Tuesday—to John the Forerunner and Baptist; Wednesday—to the betrayal of Judas; Thursday—to the holy apostles, miracle-workers, and holy hierarchs; Friday—to the Passion of Christ and the Holy Cross; Saturday—to the holy confessors, martyrs, and all the saints; Sunday—to the Resurrection of Christ and the Holy Trinity. All days of the week are dedicated to the Most Blessed Mother of God, Mary, but especially Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday. See the beautiful reflections on this topic: Cyprian, Hieromonk, **Prayerful Lilies**. Belgrade, 1928. pp. 57–208.

⁶⁶⁰ In the Orthodox Church, the days of the week are counted not starting with Sunday, but with Monday; the beginning of the day is considered not midnight, but 6:00 p.m.; the hours are counted starting at 6:00 a.m. Throughout the day, monks are required to celebrate the following services: in the evening (at 6:00 p.m.) Vespers, followed by Compline; at midnight (at 12:00 a.m.) Midnight Office; early in the morning (at 3:00 a.m.) Matins; in the morning (at 6:00 a.m.) the First Hour; at 9:00 a.m. the Third Hour; at noon—the sixth hour; and at 3:00 p.m.—the ninth hour. The Liturgy is celebrated between the third and sixth hours. The order of these daily services differs in certain respects from that of Roman Catholic daily services. Cf.: Būdumer. Op. cit. pp. 31–130.

⁶⁶¹ The sequence of the daily cycle of services is determined by the Typikon. On the development and composition of the Typikon, see: Mansvetov. Op. cit., pp. 269 ff. On the numerous copies of ancient Typikons, see the seminal work: Dmitrievsky, A. *Description of Liturgical Manuscripts Preserved in Eastern Libraries*. 2 vols. (1894, 1916). See also: Kattenbusch, vol. 1, pp. 479 ff.; Sergius, Archimandrite. Op. cit., 2 vols. (1875–76); Nikolsky, K. *A Guide to the Study of the Typikon* (1884, 1908); Skaballanovich, M. *An Explanatory Typikon*. 2 vols. (1911–13); Būdumer, p. 31 ff.; Heiler, vol. 1, pp. 297, 299 ff.

⁶⁶² Mansvetov. Op. cit., pp. 78, 127, 294–296, 298 ff.; Odintsov, N. *The Order of Public and Private Worship in Ancient Russia until the 16th Century* (1881); Dmitrievsky, A. “Divine Worship in the Russian Church in the First Five Centuries,” in: *Prav. Sob.* 1882–1883; idem. “Divine Worship in the Russian Church in the 16th Century” (1884). Leonid, Archimandrite. “On Slavic Translations of the Church Liturgical Order,” in: *Chteniya*. 1867. 2; Mansvetov, I. “Metropolitan Cyprian in His Liturgical Activity” (1882); Lisitsyn, M. “The Original Slavonic-Russian Typikon” (1911). The first printed Typikon of the Russian Church was published in Moscow in 1610.

⁶⁶³ Mansvetov. Ibid. pp. 269, 275, 284, 304; Golubinsky. Vol. 1, No. 1. pp. 320–329, 330–377, 507; Vol. 2, No. 2. p. 406; Makarii. 2nd ed. 8. p. 77.

celebrated in parish churches on the eves of Sundays and major feasts. In monasteries, the Hours—the 1st and 9th Hours, Vespers, and Midnight Office—were also celebrated; typically, the latter two services were combined into one, while the 3rd and 6th Hours were combined with the Liturgy: the 3rd Hour was read before the Liturgy, and the 6th Hour after it. This order of divine services existed primarily in communal monasteries⁶⁶⁴. Some monasteries had their own liturgical statutes, for example, the Trinity-Sergius Lavra or the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery⁶⁶⁵. Various documents from the 15th–16th centuries indicate that the provisions of the statute (typikon) were not always observed in monasteries⁶⁶⁶. The Stoglav established that in parish and monastic churches, divine services were not conducted according to the typikon (chapters 6, 8, 41, 5, 7, 16). In the small hermitages of the North, where the Skete Typikon was primarily followed, there were certain distinctive features in the celebration of divine services. It was precisely this rule that placed great emphasis on the liturgical aspect as opposed to the disciplinary one; this was especially true of the Hours and the All-Night Vigil on the eves of Sundays and major feasts, whereas in communal monasteries, on Sundays and major feasts, only Vespers was often celebrated; in this respect, the Skete Rule was closer to the original rule of St. Savva⁶⁶⁷.

The so-called “monastic manuals” provide a wealth of interesting material on the order of divine services in monasteries, revealing to us a picture of everyday monastic life. These books emerged in connection with monastic diptychs, which covered the entire liturgical year and served as a kind of monastic calendar. They were based on the annual cycles of movable and fixed feasts, with additions from the monthly calendar. In connection with the feasts of the Lord, the Mother of God, and the saints, the monastic manuals included notes specifying which services were to be celebrated in the monastery on the eve of the feast. Also included were the names of deceased and living grand princes and tsars—especially if they had made charitable contributions to the monastery—as well as the names of other benefactors from all walks of life; these names were commemorated during divine services in the church. The daily schedules provide an excellent insight into everyday life in a given monastery. They demonstrate that in communal monasteries—such as the Monastery of St. Joseph, the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, or the Novospassky Monastery—the All-Night Vigil was celebrated only on the eve of Sundays or major feasts; whereas in small hermitages with a rule of solitary living, it was also celebrated on Wednesdays, provided that no major feast fell on that day during the week⁶⁶⁸.

These daily schedules also provide a wealth of valuable material on the history of monastic asceticism, for they contain daily instructions regarding meals, strictly adhering to the charter’s requirements for observing the fasts mandatory in the Eastern Church. Already in the Byzantine Church, the issue of fasts and their observance played an important role⁶⁶⁹. Monastic disciplinary statutes paid particular attention to their observance as one of a monk’s most important duties. People in Old Rus’, and especially monks, attached perhaps exaggerated importance to fasting compared to other forms of ascetic practice.

The Russian Church observes four extended fasts: Great Lent before Easter (the Forty Days), which begins on the Monday following Cheese Week; the Nativity Fast (before Christmas), which begins on the day following the commemoration of the Apostle Philip (November 14), which is why it is popularly known as Philip’s Fast; the Peter’s Fast, from the Monday of the second week after Pentecost until the feast of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29); finally, the Dormition Fast—for two weeks before the Dormition of the Mother of God (August 15). Fast is also observed every Wednesday (in remembrance of Judas’ betrayal) and every Friday (in remembrance of Christ’s Crucifixion); fasts on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

⁶⁶⁴ Golubinsky. Vol. 2, Part 2. pp. 428–433; Odintsov. Op. cit. p. 40. Mansvetov. Op. cit. p. 271.

⁶⁶⁵ Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 8. p. 78.

⁶⁶⁶ Serebryansky. Op. cit. pp. 368–371; AI. 1. No. 478.

⁶⁶⁷ Mansvetov. Op. cit. p. 301; Makarii. 2nd ed., vol. 8, p. 77.

⁶⁶⁸ For diptychs, see Leclercq, H., *Manuel d’archéologie chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu’au VIIIe siècle*, vol. 2 (1917), p. 333 ff. Menus: 1. The Joseph Monastery (1589–90), in: Leonid, Archimandrite. *Monastic Dining Hall Menus*, in: *Readings*. 1880. 3. pp. 5–22; 2. The Novospassky Monastery in Moscow (second half of the 17th century). *Ibid.* p. 24; 3. Trinity-Sergius Monastery (1—for the years 1445–1533, 2—for the years 1533–1547), in: Gorsky. *Historical Description*. 2 (1900). pp. 16–44. Mansvetov. Op. cit. p. 301.

⁶⁶⁹ On fasting in the Eastern Church: Mansvetov. “On Fasting in the Orthodox Eastern Church,” in: Pribavleniya. 1885. 36. pp. 355–399; 37. pp. 630–698; Holl, K. “The Origin of the Four Great Lenten Seasons in the Greek Church,” in: *Collected Essays*. 2 (1928) (also in: *Proceedings of the Berlin Academy* 1923; Phil-hist. Kl. No. 5); Büdumer. Op. cit. pp. 63–67; Golubinsky. Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 399–462; Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 607.

(September 14), in memory of the Beheading of John the Baptist (August 29), on the eve of the Nativity of Christ, and on the eve of the Epiphany (January 5). In accordance with the Typikon's rules on fasting, monastic liturgical calendars contain precise instructions regarding the monks' meals throughout the year.

The Typikon distinguishes four types (or degrees) of fasting, which must be strictly observed by the monks, and requires them to completely abstain from eating meat (⁶⁷⁰). The highest degree of fasting is complete abstinence from food, prescribed on Monday and Tuesday of the first week of Great Lent and on Good Friday. On other fasting days, the Typikon permits eating only once a day, in the evening after sunset. The second degree of fasting consists of dry fasting, which is observed during Great Lent. The only exceptions are Saturdays and Sundays, when one may eat boiled vegetables without oil. Eating boiled vegetables with (vegetable) oil constitutes the third degree of fasting, while eating fish constitutes the fourth and final degree; fish may be eaten on the Feast of the Annunciation (if it does not fall during Holy Week) and on the Feast of the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem.

The Typikon precisely lists the days when wine and oil are permitted; on these days, one may drink wine diluted with water and eat food with vegetable oil. In the Eastern Church, monks are strictly forbidden to eat meat; during fasts and on all weekdays, abstinence from dairy products and eggs is also required. Dairy dishes or vegetables with butter, porridge with milk or butter, white bread, or pies filled with cabbage or fish appear on the monastic table only on Sundays and feast days. On feasts of the Lord and the Mother of God, the monks' meals are both better and more abundant (three to four courses) than on feasts dedicated to the memory of saints or on the tsar's name day. Monastic rulebooks contain another characteristic feature of the piety of that time: a particularly "good and light" meal is prescribed for feasts of the Mother of God; a more abundant meal was also prescribed on feasts dedicated to particularly venerated icons of the Mother of God—for example, the Vladimir and Kazan ". " The day of the founder's repose was solemnly observed, becoming a church feast after his canonization, as was his name day.

For example, the St. Joseph Monastery celebrated the commemoration of the repose of St. Joseph on September 9. On this day, the monks of the monastery received a better meal than on the previous day, September 8, the Nativity of the Mother of God; on the day of St. Joseph's commemoration, the tables were covered with the most expensive tablecloths. On both September 8 and 9, the monks ate white bread, but on September 9 they were served three fried fish dishes, whereas on September 8 they were served only two boiled fish dishes, with two side dishes, horseradish, and mustard; On September 9, they also ate a stuffed pie and pastries with eggs and honey—in honor of the monastery's founder—while on September 8, they had only cabbage soup and porridge with milk; in memory of St. Joseph, the monks drank better honey kvass than on the Nativity of the Mother of God. If September 9 fell on a Wednesday or Friday—that is, a fast day—the brethren received for lunch only pea soup with pepper⁶⁷¹, a quarter loaf of bread, and a mug of kvass, while the festive meal was held the following day, September 10. On September 9, all beggars, the poor, and pilgrims received a hearty meal at the monastery, and after the Liturgy, the senior monks would give the beggars small coins from the monastery treasury. Interestingly, the monks themselves also received monetary gifts from the monastery on this day (one kopeck each).

On the first day of Easter, the table was especially bountiful and "light": Easter cakes, white bread—which the monks could eat without restriction, "to their heart's content"—boiled and dyed eggs, fresh fish (two varieties, prepared two ways—fried and boiled), milk porridge, honey kvass for lunch, and white-bread kvass for dinner; fish was served again for dinner. On August 15, the Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God, the patronal feast of the monastery church, all the food was provided at the tsar's expense (as was the case in the 16th century); this was his special gift to the monastery. As for Monday and Tuesday of the first week of Great Lent and Holy Week, the monastic rule states: no food, no bread, no water⁶⁷².

⁶⁷⁰ Lebedev. *Op. cit.*, pp. 84–91.

⁶⁷¹ Pepper was considered a delicacy in the 16th century. Metropolitan Philip, in his letter to the Solovetsky Monastery, specifically mentions the gift of 1 pound of pepper to the monastery's brethren; see this letter in: Fedotov, G. Saint Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow (1928). p. 222.

⁶⁷² Household Regulations of the Josephov Monastery. pp. 7, 8, 17, 22, 13, 16. If we compare these household regulations with those of the Novospassky Monastery, we can see just how far the secularization of monastic life had progressed there. There, the monks were served the finest varieties of Volga fish, the best pickled mushrooms, cheese pies, caviar, honey spread, and more. While at the St. Joseph Monastery in the 16th century the monastic community and the monastery servants ate the same meals (p. 9), at the Novospassky Monastery the monastery servants were served a different, simpler meal (p. 24).

We have taken the liberty of quoting such extensive excerpts from the monastic rulebooks to show how superficially the meaning of monastic asceticism was understood and how distorted that understanding was. Yes, the Typikon's rules regarding fasting were observed strictly and punctually, but on other days the monastic table did not correspond to the meaning and requirements of monastic asceticism. We have already cited Elder Nilus's view on the meaning and form of fasting (Chapter IV, 2). It is also evident from the writings of Elder Artemius that even in the mid-16th century, the non-possessors had not lost their correct understanding of the religious and ascetic significance of fasting⁶⁷³.

But first and foremost, the memory of the monastery's founder was celebrated liturgically. On the eve of the feast, the All-Night Vigil was celebrated, lasting nearly the entire night. The readings prescribed by the Typikon for Matins were divided into three or four parts, and the final reading, following the sixth ode of the canon, contained the life of the saint—the glorified founder of the monastery—which was intended once again to serve as a reminder and instruction to the brotherhood. The All-Night Vigil often continued until morning; then, after a short break during which the brethren remained in the church, the festive Liturgy began. It was celebrated by the abbot of the monastery together with one hieromonk. The Liturgy continued until noon and concluded with a special prayer service in honor of the saint, with a prayer for the monastery's protection. After the service, the brotherhood, led by the abbot, proceeded to the refectory—slowly and solemnly, singing the psalm “Praise the Lord, O my soul” (Ps. 145). In the refectory, before the ark of the covenant or before the iconostasis (the refectory was often constructed as a church with an altar and iconostasis), the troparion of the day was sung. The abbot blessed the meal, which was already set on the tables, and distributed to the monks the prosphora brought from the church—this was their first taste of food after many hours of fasting: the last time the monastic community had eaten was the evening before the All-Night Vigil. Following the abbot, the monks, making the sign of the cross, sat down at the tables and silently began to eat. The silence was broken only by the footsteps of the serving brothers and the reading of the saint's life or some other text designated by the abbot. Lunch consisted of dishes prescribed by the monastery's rule of life; it concluded with a prayer of thanksgiving and the repeated singing of the troparion. In the same order, the brethren left the refectory for the church, singing the psalm “How lovely are Your dwellings, O Lord of hosts!” (Ps. 83) or “I rejoiced when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord’” (Ps. 121). In the church, one of the hieromonks or the abbot himself would pronounce the dismissal, and the brethren could then retire to their cells to rest until the next divine service⁶⁷⁴.

6. *The State of Monastic Life*

The main obstacle to a truly ascetic organization of monastic life was not the absence of a common rule for coenobitic or cenobitic monasteries, nor the fact that such a rule had not been introduced by the archpastors of the Church, nor the fact that the rules applied in individual monasteries differed from one another, but rather that a correct understanding of the inner meaning of Christian asceticism in general, and monastic asceticism in particular, had been preserved only among individual monks or small groups of monks. The controversy between the Josephites and the Non-Acquirers, reflected in the writings of Joseph and Nilus, influenced the organization of monastic life in later times. St. Joseph, who was himself a strict ascetic and who, in his rule, imposed severe requirements on the organization of monastic life, understood asceticism in an external and formal sense⁶⁷⁵. His disregard for the inner foundation of the spiritual life or the liturgical life of the monastery is simply striking. He provides precise instructions on how a monk should conduct himself during divine services or in private prayer, yet at the same time overlooks the necessity of the monk's spiritual composure. The extent to which religious formalism was widespread is also evidenced by the critical remarks on monastic life made half a century later by Maxim the Greek and Elder Artemy⁶⁷⁶.

This religious formalism casts a shadow not only on the piety of the spiritual fathers of the Josephites; it also left its mark on the character of the pious Tsar Fyodor Ivanovich (1584–1598)⁶⁷⁷ or Tsar Alexei

⁶⁷³ RIB. 4. pp. 1210, 1419. The significance of fasting as an ascetic practice is particularly emphasized in “The Sermon on Philip's Fast,” written in the late 15th or early 16th century; Arkhangelsky, Nil Sorsky. pp. 215, 217.

⁶⁷⁴ Description. 2. 1. p. 239; Vinogradov. Statutory Readings, in: BV. 1912. 4. p. 785.

⁶⁷⁵ VChM. September. pp. 505–513; cf. also his treatise “On Penances” in: Smirnov. The Old Russian Spiritual Father (1899). Appendix VI. Especially pp. 109, 110, 111. The same is found in the rule of St. Cornelius of Komel, in: IRI. 4. p. 669.

⁶⁷⁶ Maximus the Greek. Works 2. pp. 241, 243; Artemius's Epistle “To the Unknown,” in: RIB. 4. p. 1399.

⁶⁷⁷ Cf. his biography in RBS.

Mikhailovich (1645–1678), who attached such great importance to rituals; and it found its ultimate expression in the schism of the 17th century, when more than one generation of people bore witness to their commitment to religious formalism through bloodshed and self-immolation.

The decline of monastic life is evident not only to us, from a historical perspective, but was also recognized by contemporaries. Not only the Non-Possessors, such as Prince-Monk Vassian or Elder Artemy, but also Metropolitan Daniel, one of the most faithful disciples of St. Joseph, and Tsar Ivan IV spoke openly about this decline. The decrees of the Stoglav and certain other sources from the era complete the overall picture of monastic life in the 16th century; as a result, the sharp criticism leveled by the Non-Possessors or by Maximus the Greek, who sympathized with them, loses its tinge of partisan bias.

In the aforementioned writings of the prince-monk (though we have no doubt that some of his remarks were made out of frustration with his own fate and stem from the writer's character), the secularization of monasticism is attributed to the material enrichment of the monasteries. Remaining faithful to the views of the Elder Nilus, he attaches no value whatsoever to the earthly riches of the monks or of the Church in general: "The Church's adornments are consumed by fire, by barbarians, and by thieves who steal them. But if given to the poor, not even the devil can steal it," he says⁶⁷⁸. The sin of worldly enrichment is characteristic not only of monasteries but also of individual monks, Vassian believes, and thereby the vow of poverty—which should be the foundation of the monastic life—is violated. This violation of the communal rule was the most widespread evil. It is mentioned by Vassian and Maximus the Greek, as well as by Metropolitan Daniel and the Stoglav⁶⁷⁹. Even in monasteries with individual cells, monks kept too many possessions and too much money after entering the monastery⁶⁸⁰. A number of 16th-century documents describe how grossly the rules of the communal charter and the vow of poverty were violated⁶⁸¹. These vices persisted in communal monasteries into the 17th century, so the Council of 1667 was compelled to demand their elimination in the strictest terms, and the Council of 1681 once again emphasized the obligation to strictly observe the communal charter⁶⁸². Excessive eating was noted, as was the absence of communal meals for the monastic community in many monasteries. Abbots often ordered special dishes to be prepared and arranged separate meals for themselves, their guests, relatives, and wealthy pilgrims. The prevalence of this misconduct prompted the young Tsar Ivan, in one of his inquiries addressed to the Stoglav Council, to draw the Council's attention to this scandal⁶⁸³. At the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, formerly known for the strict asceticism of its monks, a decline was also observed in the 16th century, which was reflected in the rebukes expressed by the tsar in his famous letter of 1573; similar phenomena took place at the Trinity-Sergius Monastery⁶⁸⁴. In 1547–1551, that is, shortly before the Stoglav, an intriguing work appeared, titled "Petition of the Monks to Tsar Ivan Vasilyevich," in which the author or authors wrote about violations of the monastic charter in monasteries near Moscow and requested that measures be taken to ensure that life in the monasteries conformed to the charter⁶⁸⁵. Perhaps it was precisely this "Petition" that made such a strong impression on the young tsar that, at the Council, he raised so many questions concerning the constant violations of the fundamentals of monastic life.

One of the common vices was drunkenness. The monastic statutes already mentioned severely condemn this vice and forbid monks from storing or drinking wine in their cells⁶⁸⁶. The Stoglav (Chapter 49) attests that wine drinking was quite widespread in monasteries. It is likely that the prohibitions contained in

⁶⁷⁸ Collected Works, 1863, vol. 3, p. 209.

⁶⁷⁹ Vassian, in: Collection of Canons, 1863. Vol. 3. p. 109; Maximus the Greek. Works, Vol. 2. pp. 37, 89, 41, 110, 131, 104, 262; Daniel, Metropolitan. On the Monastic Law and the Rule of Common Life, in: Zhmakin. Collected Works. Appendix. p. 644, 666 ff.; Stoglav. Ch. 5.

⁶⁸⁰ Zinovy Otensky. The Testimony of Truth (1863). p. 899.

⁶⁸¹ See my article in: *Kyrios*. 4 (1939). pp. 29–38; Zhmakin. Op. cit. Appendix. pp. 39–44.

⁶⁸² PSZ. 1. No. 412. AAE. 4. No. 161; AI. 5. No. 112; as well as AAE. 4. Nos. 311, 312.

⁶⁸³ Stoglav. Ch. 5. pp. 49, 52; Zinovy Otensky. Op. cit. p. 899; a description of monks in monastic communities living in separate dwellings by Metropolitan Daniel in his work "On the Differences in Monastic Life," in: Zhmakin. Op. cit. Appendix. p. 660. On the Kirillov and Trinity-Sergius Monasteries (1590), in: DAI. 1. No. 135.

⁶⁸⁴ Nikolsky. Communal and Cell Life, in: Christian Readings 1907. 224. pp. 157, 173 ff.; AI. 1. No. 204. On the date of this letter: Nikolsky. "When Was Tsar Ivan Vasilyevich IV's Reproachful Letter to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery Written?", in: Christian Readings 1907. 223. p. 852.

⁶⁸⁵ See "Petition." Ed. G. Kuntsevich (1912).

⁶⁸⁶ The Rule of Euphrosyne, ch. 11; of Joseph, ch. 2; of Cornelius, ch. 13; cf.: RIB. 6. pp. 209, 602; and also: "Conversation." Ed. Druzhinin. pp. 13, 21.

the Stoglav's decrees were not effectively enforced, for two decades later, in his 1573 letter to the Kirillov Monastery, the tsar again wrote about the monks' drunkenness⁶⁸⁷. The decrees of the Councils of 1667 and 1682 indicate that this vice was still widespread in the 17th century.⁶⁸⁸

Metropolitan Daniel (1522–1539) devoted six letters to the negative aspects of monastic life in the first half of the 16th century, in which he discusses violations of the communal charter. These letters were addressed to specific individuals or monasteries. The author does not merely point out this or that vice, but attempts to explain to his addressees the foundations of asceticism, to show the difference between cenobitic and idiorhythmic life, and to emphasize the superiority of communal living. He supports his arguments with quotations from Sacred Scripture and ascetic writings. These works by Daniel provide rich material not only for assessing monastic life but also for characterizing the author's own ascetic views. Daniel remains here captive to the views of his teacher, St. Joseph; there is nothing original in his writings, nor are there any individual traits that could transform this power-hungry church dignitary—skilled in dealing with state authorities—into an independent thinker⁶⁸⁹.

The formalistic approach to understanding the ascetic foundations of monastic life—characteristic of both Metropolitan Daniel and the bishops of the Stoglav—did not contribute to overcoming the vices and abuses observed in monastic life. Nor were effective measures taken in the following century to halt the process of the secularization of monasticism; nor are we aware of any writings from that era that attempted to elucidate the inner meaning of asceticism. The noble examples of genuine ascetic devotion from the 14th and 15th centuries had faded from the consciousness of the broader monastic community. Only a few individuals still clung to the ancient ascetic tradition, but among them were no leaders with organizational talent or a desire for reform. The church hierarchy, too, took no measures to purify monastic life. This era—from the Time of Troubles to Peter the Great's reforms of all aspects of Russian life—directed its attention, energy, and passions elsewhere.

In characterizing monastic life in the 16th and 17th centuries, it would be helpful to determine the number of monks in Muscovy. By the end of the 17th century, there were over 1,200 monasteries⁶⁹⁰, but there are no official figures on the total number of monks. Only scattered documents and sources make it possible to estimate the number of monks in certain monasteries.

As a rule, the monastic community was small. Many monasteries had between 3 and 10 monks. Makarii, in his **History of the Russian Church**, writes that in the 16th century, only 10 monasteries had between 20 and 50 monks, while 8 or 10 monasteries had more than 50 monks each⁶⁹¹. In 1582–83, the Kirillov Monastery *was home to 52 monks: among them were the abbot, the cellarer, the church elder, two sacristans, seven hieromonks, three hierodeacons, and 36 ordinary monks*⁶⁹². *At that time, only two monasteries had a large monastic community: the Solovetsky Monastery and the Trinity-Sergius Monastery. The Solovetsky Monastery had about 270 monks in 1584–1594 and about 350 in 1649*⁶⁹³. *Foreigners visiting Moscow wrote that in the first quarter of the 16th century, about 300 monks lived at the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, and by the end of the century, up to 700*⁶⁹⁴. *In the 17th century, despite the growth in the number of monasteries, the number of monks in them remained small everywhere. Monasteries in the north typically had few residents*⁶⁹⁵. *The monastic communities of Moscow's urban monasteries were relatively large. At the Savvo-Storozhevsky Monastery near Moscow, which enjoyed the special favor of Tsar Alexei (1645–1676), there were 165 monks in 1688, including 20 hieromonks and 15 hierodeacons, and 54 monks were employed in various administrative roles*⁶⁹⁶. *The Stoglav Council decreed that small monasteries located in close*

⁶⁸⁷ AI. 1. No. 204; Stoglav. Ch. 52.

⁶⁸⁸ AAE. 4. No. 161. Cf.: Ibid. Nos. 311, 312; AI. 5. Nos. 7, 75.

⁶⁸⁹ Zhmakin. Op. cit. pp. 650–690. Daniel's letters are included here.

⁶⁹⁰ Chudetsky, in: TKDA. 1877. Vol. 4. p. 73.

⁶⁹¹ Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 7. p. 54.

⁶⁹² AI. 1. No. 212. In 1508, there were only 12 monks in the Nilo-Sorsk Hermitage. Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 44.

⁶⁹³ Klyuchevsky. Essays (1913). p. 36; in 1568, 200 monks took refuge in the Solovetsky Monastery. Fedotov. Op. cit. p. 224.

⁶⁹⁴ Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 7. p. 55; Readings. 1884. Vol. 4. p. 23.

⁶⁹⁵ Bogoslovsky. Op. cit. Vol. 1. p. 72; at the Krasnogorsk Monastery (Kholmogory District), founded in 1606, there were 9 monks in 1624 and 12 in 1677, although as early as 1661, 17 monks from the Kiev Metropolis had moved there. Makarii, Bishop. "Historical Description of the Krasnogorsk Monastery," in: Readings. 1880. Vol. 3. pp. 62, 81. On the migration of monks from Southern Rus' to Northern Rus' monasteries, see also: Kharlamovich, K. "The Rtishchev School," in: BV. 1913. Vol. 5. p. 8.

⁶⁹⁶ Belokurov. Materials. p. 164.

proximity should be merged into a single monastery (Chapter 5); nevertheless, in the 17th century, monasteries with a brotherhood of 3 to 10 monks remained a common occurrence⁶⁹⁷. Based on all this data, it can be estimated that the total number of monastic inhabitants—monks and nuns—was approximately 25,000⁶⁹⁸.

7. Jurisdiction over Monasteries in Spiritual Matters

The decline of monastic life and monastic discipline can be partly explained by uncertainty regarding the jurisdiction over the monastic community.

Violations of monastic discipline by monks were subject to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of diocesan bishops. However, there was considerable variation in the relationship between monasteries and bishops, particularly regarding the issues of subordination and jurisdiction.

The so-called stauropegial monasteries⁶⁹⁹ were completely removed from the bishop's jurisdiction, falling under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan and, after 1589, the Patriarch of Moscow. The remaining monasteries were subject to the jurisdiction of the respective diocesan bishops in all ecclesiastical matters and were required to pay fines imposed by the court. Such ecclesiastical-legal relations were established by the canons of the Eastern Church; they were recognized and confirmed by the statutes and letters patent of the Russian sovereigns⁷⁰⁰. Yet these same sovereigns, by granting letters patent and letters of immunity to monasteries, violated their own other statutes and letters patent issued to the metropolitan.

The significance of letters of privilege and letters of immunity for the legal status of monastic estates has already been discussed. However, some letters of immunity were issued that entailed changes even in the realm of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In terms of their content, these letters of immunity varied: some completely exempted monasteries from the jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop; others left monasteries subject to the bishop's jurisdiction in ecclesiastical matters; and still others exempted monasteries from the jurisdiction of the bishop's officials, but not from that of the bishop himself⁷⁰¹.

Tsar Ivan's question at the Stoglav Council (Chapter 5, Question 14) regarding the legitimacy of such unjudged decrees was raised in part due to the influence of Metropolitan Makarii, for these unjudged decrees were undesirable to the episcopate from a practical rather than a canonical standpoint. It is therefore clear that the bishops of the Stoglav Council spoke out resolutely against them, and the Council decreed that "henceforth such charters shall not exist" (Chapter 67). In reality, this resolution remained merely on paper, for Tsar Ivan continued to issue letters of immunity even after the Council⁷⁰². Disregard for this resolution persisted into the 17th century⁷⁰³. This government policy stemmed from the fact that, in the event of a dispute with a diocesan bishop, the abbots of monasteries would submit a petition not to the metropolitan but to the tsar. This uncertainty and inconsistency in relations—which ran counter to the canonical order of the Church and diminished the spiritual authority of the bishops in the eyes of the monastic community—could not fail to have consequences; it did not facilitate the bishops' ability to exercise constant and strict oversight over the observance of monastic discipline⁷⁰⁴. While the well-known charter of 1625, issued by the young Tsar Mikhail to Patriarch Filaret, in a sense restored the judicial rights of the church hierarchy⁷⁰⁵, the Code of 1649 and the establishment of the Monastic Office introduced new confusion into the normal relations between diocesan bishops and monasteries. Patriarch Nikon's protests and his attempts to fully restore the canonical rights of

⁶⁹⁷ The Voznesensky Monastery was founded on the Svir River; in 1684, it had 5 monks, and 3–4 km away stood another monastery, the Nikolsky, which was home to only 3 monks. Belokurov. Ibid. p. 445.

⁶⁹⁸ In 1724, the Synod counted 14,534 monks in men's monasteries and 10,673 nuns in women's monasteries. Chudetsky, in: TKDA. 1877. 10. p. 46.

⁶⁹⁹ Мiлaлb. Op. cit. pp. 672, 675.

⁷⁰⁰ Cf.: Goetz, L. K., *State and Church in Altrualland: The Kievan Period, 988–1240* (1908). pp. 151–154; (the Statute of St. Prince Vladimir), as well as: Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 8. pp. 143–168, 176, 202; Hermann. Op. cit. pp. 23 ff.

⁷⁰¹ Makarii. Vol. 8, p. 220; Vol. 10, pp. 207, 209; AI. Vol. 1, Nos. 224, 232, 234, 235, 240; Vol. 2, pp. 58, 86, 77; AAE. 1. No. 386; 2. No. 14, 62; 3. No. 67; RIB. 2. No. 190.

⁷⁰² AI. 1. Nos. 46, 114, 130, etc.

⁷⁰³ AI. 1. No. 46, 114; AAE. 2. No. 62. At the same time, letters of appointment were issued to the new patriarch and certain bishops: SGGD. 2. No. 73; AAE. 3. No. 109; AI. 1. No. 148.

⁷⁰⁴ AAE. 2. No. 17; Dosiphei. Description of the Solovetsky Monastery. 3. p. 205. DAI. 1. No. 148; AAE. 2. No. 14; 3. No. 285.

⁷⁰⁵ AAE. 2. No. 164 (also SGGD. 3. No. 7). The charter contained a specific provision regarding criminal cases, which continued to be subject to secular courts.

the hierarchy were unsuccessful⁷⁰⁶. The Council of 1667, whose members had also attended the Council of 1666 and had sided with the tsar in the dispute between the tsar and Patriarch Nikon at that time, this time—on the issue of ecclesiastical jurisdiction—agreed with the views of the deposed patriarch and issued a ruling whereby the ecclesiastical hierarchy retained all its judicial rights. It is known that Tsar Alexei ratified this verdict⁷⁰⁷. This was a complete victory for the Church; monasticism was now subject in every respect to its archpastors, the judicial rights of diocesan bishops were strengthened, and the relationship between bishops and monasteries took on a normal canonical character. The Council of 1675 and the letters patent issued to the bishops by Tsars Ivan Alekseevich and Peter during their joint reign confirmed the legitimacy of the 1667 ruling; thus, the situation remained unchanged until the end of the 17th century⁷⁰⁸.

The absence of normal, orderly, and consistent relations between diocesan bishops and the monasteries under their jurisdiction naturally had a detrimental effect on the conduct of ecclesiastical court cases. Monastery abbots, often forced to devote too much attention to administrative matters, had neither the time nor sufficient authority to maintain strict discipline. Their rights and duties stemmed not so much from the monastery's charter or the orders of the diocesan bishop as from the privileges granted to the monastery and, in part, simply from custom. We have already mentioned the council of elders, whom, for example, Chapter 14 of Joseph of Volokolamsk's charter granted the right to impose disciplinary penalties on those who violated the charter. If the abbot and the council elders maintained good relations with one another, things went smoothly; but if there were tensions and disputes between them, unanimity vanished and discord could arise in the monastery. All these circumstances made it difficult to maintain strict discipline in the monasteries. The general state of the monasteries required, on the one hand, certain measures by the church authorities and, on the other, the promotion of capable individuals from within the monastic community itself. Unfortunately, however, neither of these things occurred.

8. The Episcopate

In the 16th and 17th centuries, the monastic community was able to participate in the country's general ecclesiastical life and act outside the monastery walls. It was common for the abbots of large monasteries to participate in the proceedings of ecclesiastical councils. Even at provincial assemblies—which, especially in the 17th century, were convened from time to time by the government to discuss a wide variety of issues—monastery abbots were present alongside the bishops⁷⁰⁹. From the signatures on council resolutions and from the description in the tsar's archive for 1575–1584, it is evident that all monasteries were classified by rank. This classification shows which monasteries enjoyed special respect and veneration, which were headed by archimandrites, and which by igumens. From 1561, when the abbot of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery was elevated to the rank of archimandrite, he enjoyed the right of precedence among all abbots. Second in rank was the archimandrite of the ancient Nativity Monastery in Vladimir, followed by the abbots of the Novospassky Monastery in Moscow, the Yuryevsky Monastery in Novgorod, and the Chudov and Simonov Monasteries in Moscow. The archimandrite of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery ranked 12th, and that of the Iosifo-Volokolamsky Monastery ranked 19th⁷¹⁰. Since all these documents contain only final resolutions, they do not provide insight into the actual roles of individual figures.

In Russia, according to the canons of the Eastern Church, only monks could be ordained as bishops; therefore, there was a close connection between the church hierarchy and the broader monastic community. In the 16th and 17th centuries—and indeed in earlier periods as well—a Russian bishop would spend several

⁷⁰⁶ Gorchakov. Mon. Order. p. 91. Cf. various documents in: Notes of the ORSA. 2 (1861); AAE. 3. No. 225, 262, 275.

⁷⁰⁷ PSZ. 1. 412.

⁷⁰⁸ Gorchakov. Op. cit. p. 95. PSZ. 1. No. 442 (1669, verdict in criminal cases), or AAE. 4. No. 204 (1675). In 1667–1675, as a result of the activities of the Spiritual Office (a division of the Monastic Office), which was likely established after 1667, the 1667 ruling was violated, necessitating a ruling by the Council of 1675. Kapterev. Secular Episcopal Officials. p. 211. New tensions arose during the reign of Peter the Great, prompting Patriarch Adrian to compile a collection of decrees on matters of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Kalachov, N. "On the Significance of the Kormchaya in the System of Ancient Russian Law," in: Readings. 1847. 4. Appendix 4. pp. 11–80: "Articles on the Patriarchal Court." These "Articles on the Patriarchal Court" are based on the decrees of the Stoglav, the charter of 1625 (confirmed in 1657), and the decrees of Patriarch Joasaph from 1668 and 1671. Ibid. pp. 15, 16, 67, 69. Moreover, the Patriarchate once again compiled a collection of decrees by the Tatar khans regarding the rights of the Church, which, however, was not submitted to the tsar for approval (ibid., p. 2).

⁷⁰⁹ Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. pp. 84–86; and also in: Readings. 1912. 2. 2. Miscellany. pp. 39–41.

⁷¹⁰ Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. p. 85.

years in a monastery prior to his episcopal consecration. The title of metropolitan or archbishop was, in fact, merely an honorary title associated with the dignity of the see; in ecclesiastical and administrative matters, diocesan metropolitans, archbishops, and bishops had equal rights. It was common for the abbot of a monastery to be immediately elevated to the rank of metropolitan, archbishop, or bishop. For example, in 1491, Archimandrite Zosima of the Simonov Monastery in Moscow, and in 1495, Hegumen Simon of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, were immediately consecrated as Metropolitans of Moscow. Simon's successor, Metropolitan Varlaam, who had been archimandrite of the Simonov Monastery, became Metropolitan⁷¹¹ by order of the Grand Prince. Metropolitan Daniel had previously been abbot of the St. Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery, and Metropolitan Joasaph had been abbot of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery; Macarius, the future Metropolitan of Moscow, was the archimandrite of the Luzhetsky Monastery in Mozhaishk, and later became Archbishop of Novgorod. Metropolitan Athanasius (1564–1566) was a monk at the Chudov Monastery in Moscow, and prior to that, an archpriest and the tsar's spiritual father; he was tonsured a monk shortly before his consecration⁷¹². St. Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow (1566–1569), served as abbot of the Solovetsky Monastery (1548–1566) for 18 years prior to his consecration. In the 17th century, Joseph, archimandrite of the Simonov Monastery, was elected Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia (1642–1652)⁷¹³.

The years he spent in the monastery could not help but influence his views, especially at that time. The monastery served as a school for him, where he not only grasped the general foundations of the ascetic life but also became acquainted with the prevailing views and perspectives on ecclesiastical and political issues, and these views shaped him. Subsequently, in every sphere of life outside the monastery, he would preserve the spiritual atmosphere of his monastery, act in accordance with its spirit, and evaluate all aspects of church life based on the traditions of his monastery.

Such a spiritual mindset played an important role in the 16th century. In this regard, the St. Joseph of Volokolamsk Monastery occupies a truly unique place in Russian church history. The most influential movement in 16th-century church life is associated with St. Joseph and his monastery. Throughout the entire history of the Russian Church, no other monastery—whether for a limited or extended period—has played such an important role in the life of the Church as this monastery; moreover, the Josephite movement has continued to influence the general course of Russian ecclesiastical life right up to the present day—sometimes more weakly, sometimes more strongly. Throughout the 16th century—or, more precisely, beginning in 1522—no fewer than 19 monks and abbots of this monastery left its walls to assume various episcopal sees and deeply embed the views of the monastery's founder into the life of the Church. Seven of these bishops had previously been abbots of the monastery; others were consecrated from among the ordinary monks⁷¹⁴. From 1555 to 1581, the archiepiscopal see of Kazan was consistently held by graduates of the Iosifov Monastery. In the 17th century, the Volokolamsk Monastery ceased to play its former role in filling episcopal sees. There is only one known instance when the abbot of the monastery, Alexander (1682–1688), was elected Archbishop of Veliky Ustyug (1688–1699)⁷¹⁵. Monks of the Josephite Monastery, such as Metropolitan Daniel, Bishops Vassian (Sanin), Vassian (Toporkov), and Savva (Cherny), as well as Metropolitan Makarii, who came from the Pafnutiev Monastery—which was in the spirit of the Josephites—spread and affirmed the views of their school through their actions and writings. The views that prevailed at the Stoglav Council were those expressed by representatives of this movement⁷¹⁶. The spirit of the monastery was subsequently preserved in the activities of a whole series of hierarchs. Similarly, the strictly ascetic community of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery during the time of St. Sergius nurtured a whole host of founders of new monasteries, who introduced into their own monasteries the same order of monastic life that had been practiced at St. Sergius's monastery. The ascetic school of the Non-Possessors is inconceivable without the spirit and outlook that prevailed in the deserts beyond the Volga in the second half of the 15th century. As soon as this spirit faded—whether it was beneficial or harmful to the development of monasticism—no outstanding figures emerged who would exert a significant influence on church life.

⁷¹¹ PSRL. Vol. 4, pp. 157–158, 165; Vol. 8, pp. 219, 230; Vol. 6, p. 252.

⁷¹² AI. Vol. 1, No. 173.

⁷¹³ Makarii. 11. p. 96.

⁷¹⁴ Gerontius, Archimandrite. The St. Joseph Monastery in Volokolamsk. pp. 44–45.

⁷¹⁵ Gerontius. Ibid. p. 45.

⁷¹⁶ Cf.: Klyuchevsky. Lives. p. 291. It is no wonder that Joseph is called the “Russian star” in the troparion. Gerontius. Ibid. p. 48. As early as the 19th century, monks were making copies of Joseph's Rule. Popov, N. “Collection of Manuscripts from the Simonov Monastery,” in: Readings. 1910. 2. pp. 14, 15.

Several bishops emerged from the Solovetsky Monastery in the 17th century, but they cannot be credited with having had a particularly notable impact on church life. However, St. Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow (1566–1568), who was closely associated with the Solovetsky Monastery, proved through his deeds and martyr's death that the sense of religious responsibility had not entirely faded within monastic circles⁷¹⁷.

Thirteen abbots of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery became bishops in the 16th and 17th centuries⁷¹⁸, but only two of them played an important role in the life of the Church. These were Metropolitan Job of Novgorod (1697–1716), whose efforts to establish new schools and train the secular clergy deserve high praise, and Patriarch Joasaph II (1667–1672), who served as abbot of this monastery for 11 years (1656–1667) served as abbot of this monastery; the elderly patriarch, however, was not a particularly active figure. His role at the Council of 1667, which vigorously and successfully defended the rights of the Church, was not very significant.

When considering the process of the secularization of monastic life, one cannot help but wonder why the episcopate did not take any decisive action to halt this process, and why no measures were taken to improve conditions in the monasteries—even if only by each bishop within his own diocese. But these bishops themselves lived in monasteries where ascetic practices were assigned a very specific, limited role, and where religious formalism—a rigid “obsession with ritual”—had taken root. In the 17th century, we find no outstanding advocates among the church hierarchy for the purification and improvement of monastic life. Metropolitan Hilarion of Ryazan (1657–1673) was one of the few diocesan bishops who succeeded in raising the standard of monastic life in the monasteries of his diocese⁷¹⁹. Another Hilarion, the Metropolitan of Suzdal (1682–1705), who in the mid-17th century led a very austere life at the Florishcheva Hermitage (near Vladimir), wrote in 1694 in a letter to the abbot of that hermitage—where violations of the communal rules had become frequent—about the measures he, Hilarion, had taken against such violations during his own tenure as abbot. Under his leadership, this hermitage was known for the strictness of its rules. Tsar Fyodor Alekseyevich held the humble abbot in high esteem, and it was not without the tsar's approval that Hilarion was elevated from the rank of abbot of a small hermitage to the office of Metropolitan of Suzdal⁷²⁰. The two most outstanding and truly educated hierarchs of the second half of the 17th century — Job, Metropolitan of Novgorod (1697–1716), and Athanasius, Archbishop of Kholmogory (1682–1702) — devoted their attention primarily to improving parish life and training the clergy⁷²¹.

The lack of attention paid by diocesan bishops to matters of monastic life further contributed to the secularization of monastic life. After the abolition of the Monastic Office and the Council of 1667, diocesan bishops gained greater opportunities to carry out successful work in their dioceses, but the absence of suitable individuals hindered their success.

Two hierarchs stand out particularly sharply from among the Russian episcopate: St. Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow (1566–1568), and Patriarch Nikon (1652–1666). Their fates share a common thread: a clash with state authority. The ecclesiastical and historical background of these clashes was of a different—one might even say opposite—nature. And the very nature of this struggle—brief for St. Philip, but protracted for Patriarch Nikon—was also different. It cannot be said that both archpastors belong equally to the history of Russian monasticism. Their personal monastic biographies unfolded differently.

For Nikon, the splendid vestments of a noble prince of the Church completely overshadowed the humble monastic habit; the nature of his actions, too, did not correspond to the monastic spirit. His concerns and goals were connected primarily with matters of general church life; in the grandiose program he attempted to implement—arrogantly relying on his own energy, his talents, and his unshakable confidence in the righteousness of his cause—there was no room for issues related to monastic life. Nikon was a great figure; he came from the very heart of the Russian people, and the emergence of such a figure proves what forces lay dormant within the people; and his opponents—one need only recall the no less famous Archpriest Avvakum

⁷¹⁷ Makarii, Bishop. Christianity within the Arkhangelsk Diocese, in: Readings. 1878. Vol. 3. p. 52.

⁷¹⁸ Gorsky. Description. 2. pp. 122–123.

⁷¹⁹ Filaret. Review. 1. p. 234.

⁷²⁰ AAE. 4. No. 311; Barsukov. Sources of Russian Hagiography. p. 218. The Life of Hilarion in: Proceedings of the Vladimir Academic Archival Commission. 10 (1908). A short work: Jerome. The Life of Hilarion, Metropolitan of Suzdal (1867)—was unavailable to me.

⁷²¹ Chistovich, I. “Metropolitan Job of Novgorod,” in: Stranik. 1861. 2; works: Postnikov. “Athanasius, First Archbishop of Kholmogory” (1866); Veryuzhsky. Athanasius, Archbishop of Kholmogory (1914)—unfortunately, these are also unavailable to us. See also: PBE. 1. p. 1087; 2. pp. 181, 182.

and other schism leaders—demonstrated the intensity with which these forces could manifest themselves. As is often the case with great historical figures, Nikon's natural talent was combined with spiritual rigidity; his energy, which often turned into despotism, was combined with timidity; and his principled stance was combined with self-interest. This figure has been both reviled and celebrated by his opponents and admirers, writers, and scholars alike. Despite the vast body of literature devoted to Nikon, it cannot be said that his personality and works have been studied with exhaustive thoroughness⁷²².

In the history of Russian monasticism, Nikon does not occupy a particularly prominent place; the years he spent in the monastery before his consecration as a bishop had no significance for his life, and the ascetic training (if one can even speak of such a school in relation to Nikon) he underwent at the Solovetsky Monastery and at the skete of Eleazar of Anzer had no influence on his passionate nature. A simple monastic cowl was not a fitting garment for his nature, which was better suited to the luxurious golden regalia of the Patriarch of Moscow, for they outwardly embodied his religious views. It is impossible to characterize Nikon's works and fate in a brief essay, since they cannot be understood solely on the basis of the ecclesiastical-political or historical atmosphere of seventeenth-century Russia; —they were the consequence, or rather the culmination, on the one hand, of the church hierarchy's attempt to resolve the problem of relations between the state and the Church in a Christian state; on the other hand, his reforms were directed against certain phenomena within church life that were too deeply rooted in the country's ecclesiastical history.

The life of Metropolitan Philip appears in a different light; his activities can certainly be viewed within the context of the history of Russian monasticism. That monasticism actively participated in shaping the idea of "Moscow—the Third Rome" and put forward St. Philip, the archpastor of the Church, to put this idea to the test in practice. The conflict between St. Philip and Tsar Ivan revealed just how widely theory and practice diverged and how often the former was distorted by the latter. For St. Philip, the issue concerned the duties of a primate toward secular authority, and he resolved the matter as his office required, based on a church-ascetic perspective.

St. Philip came from the boyar family of the Kolychevs (born in 1507); his secular name was Fyodor, and he spent his youth in Moscow during the reign of Vasily III, in the era we have already described. In his biography of Metropolitan Philip, ^{*723*} G. Fedotov highlighted the intensity of the political struggle that unfolded in Moscow at that time; this did not leave the young Kolychev unscathed, and at the age of thirty, Fyodor decided to leave Moscow. He traveled north and entered the Solovetsky Monastery as a novice (1537). As his hagiography recounts, he was distinguished by his willingness to perform any physical labor and humbly carried out all that was required of him. He later took monastic vows. His spiritual guide was the elder Jonah. Monk Philip spent several years in complete seclusion in a dense forest outside the monastery. After 11 years as a monk, when Philip was already 41 years old, the brotherhood, at the suggestion of the abbot who was retiring, elected him as the new abbot of the monastery (1548). It was then that new traits emerged in the character of this humble ascetic: with great zeal, he set about organizing the monastery's affairs and demonstrated a special talent for this work. Perhaps it was in this activity that the energetic nature of a 16th-century boyar's son—temporarily subdued by the monastic cowl—found an outlet. Philip's years of leadership were a period of economic prosperity and enrichment for the monastery. He rebuilt the monastery buildings, constructed a new, more spacious livestock yard, a brick factory, and a large mill; he established a shoemaking workshop and even designed, as his hagiography recounts, a complex and efficiently functioning machine for harvesting crops. However, the abbot also ensured that the monastic community led a strict life.

Philip led the monastery for 18 years. In 1566, he received a message from the tsar summoning him to Moscow. It is unclear why the tsar chose Philip. In Moscow, both the political and ecclesiastical situations were extremely tense. This was the time of the notorious Oprichnina—a period of executions of boyars and others who, for one reason or another or entirely without cause, had incurred the tsar's wrath and fallen into disfavor. The atmosphere in ecclesiastical affairs was also turbulent. Metropolitan Athanasius (1565–1566), who likely had neither the strength nor even the ability to curb or even mitigate Ivan's frenzied passions, left the metropolitan see—"due to illness," as reported in one of the documents of that era—and retired to the Chudov Monastery. The new candidate for the metropolitan see, Archbishop German of Kazan, held negotiations with the tsar prior to his consecration—if we are to fully trust the testimony of Prince A.

⁷²² For the main literature on Nikon, see Chapter XII.

⁷²³ Fedotov, G. Saint Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow (1928). Especially pp. 120–137, 206–220; Rozhdestvensky, S. "Metropolitan Philip," in: RBS.

Kurbsky—and as a result, his candidacy was rejected. Although Abbot Philip had received an invitation to Moscow while Athanasius was still in office, it is likely that Ivan intended to appoint Philip, if not to the Moscow See, then to some other see. The official act of Philip's enthronement as Metropolitan of Moscow shows that even after Ivan's proposal to appoint Philip as metropolitan, the situation remained tense, for the new candidate made a remark to the tsar regarding the Oprichnina, agreeing to assume the see only on the condition that it be abolished. Although this proposal angered the tsar, he nevertheless reaffirmed his desire to see Philip as metropolitan. The tsar rejected the demand to abolish the Oprichnina, declaring to the Council that the Oprichnina did not fall within the metropolitan's jurisdiction, but agreed that Philip, as metropolitan, should retain the ancient right (and duty) of mourning, which had been formally and effectively abolished during the time of the Oprichnina. This concession by Ivan—and, perhaps, pressure from the Council of Bishops—forced Philip to withdraw his demand and agree to his enthronement. The act of July 20, 1566, is also notable for containing a promise by the future metropolitan not to interfere in the affairs of the Oprichnina, sealed by the signatures of Philip and the bishops. This remarkable act is unique in its kind in the relations between the Church and the state in Muscovite Russia. If we had lived in that era, we would have sensed what a crushing blow this dealt to the grandiose ideological construct of “Moscow—the Third Rome”!⁷²⁴

From the very beginning, the metropolitan's position was difficult, as he refused to turn a blind eye to the tsar's crimes. The years 1566–1568 were a time of particularly frequent executions and other atrocities. The metropolitan's hagiography states that all of this finally compelled him to exercise the right to lament that had been granted to him. Since this effort yielded virtually no results, the metropolitan resolved to take open action. One day in March 1568, the tsar entered the church where the metropolitan was serving at the time, surrounded by oprichniki and dressed himself in the black robes of an oprichnik. The metropolitan refused to bless the tsar, and when the boyars serving as oprichniki reminded him that the tsar was waiting for his blessing, Philip delivered a loud, admonishing speech. The next clash between the metropolitan and the tsar, which also occurred during a divine service, intensified the tsar's anger; however, at that time he did not dare to act openly against Philip, who was strengthened by his conviction that he was fulfilling his duty as archpastor. The hagiography recounts in detail the struggle between the two authorities, while other sources supplement this tragic picture with accounts of the king's arrogant and furious actions and the metropolitan's humble steadfastness. The king, feeling insulted, saw his anger turn into a thirst for revenge. The metropolitan's relatives were subjected to persecution, confiscation of property, and executions; Philip's enemies among the bishops, along with false witnesses from the brotherhood of the Solovetsky Monastery, slandered the metropolitan, leveling against him, among other things, the fantastical accusation of practicing witchcraft; finally, an ecclesiastical trial was held against the metropolitan, who had already embarked on the path of martyrdom. The court sentenced him to defrocking and imprisonment in the Otroch Monastery in Tver. On December 23, 1569, the notorious Malyuta Skuratov—Tsar Ivan IV's chief aide in his atrocities and their direct executor—appeared at the monastery and strangled the martyr.

In 1590, the abbot of the Solovetsky Monastery requested permission from Tsar Fyodor, Ivan's son, to transfer the coffin containing the martyr's remains to his monastery, which was granted. Upon the exhumation of the grave, the martyr's remains were found to be incorrupt. Healings and other miracles took place at his grave in the Solovetsky Monastery. In 1636, the martyr was canonized, and in 1646, his relics were transferred to the monastery's cathedral. A few years later, in 1652, Tsar Alexei sent a special delegation to the Solovetsky Monastery, led by the future Patriarch Nikon, who at that time was Metropolitan of Novgorod. The delegation brought the saint's relics to Moscow. In the divine service in honor of St. Philip, the Church refers to him as the “champion of truth,” thereby expressing its judgment on Tsar Ivan.

9. Asceticism in the 16th and 17th Centuries

Although the 16th and 17th centuries can only be described as an era of crisis and secularization for Russian monasticism, phenomena of a different nature did occur even during this period. Like embers smoldering beneath the ashes, beacons of true Christian asceticism lay hidden within the monastery walls. Through the thick veil of religious formalism and indifference, the spirit of genuine asceticism broke through, and from the monastic masses emerged individual figures who embodied the archetype of the ascetic in this sorrowful era. As a rule, these ascetics sought refuge far from the large and renowned monasteries, which

⁷²⁴ Fedotov. Ibid. p. 104.

earlier, in the 14th and 15th centuries, had been centers of monastic asceticism and renunciation of the world. Russian piety and holiness gradually withdrew from the world, only to reappear in later times, in the 18th and 19th centuries, to cautiously and, as it were, timidly reveal themselves to the world—like blazing sparks or rays of sunlight, visible only to the God-loving soul who persistently seeks them, or to the researcher who strives to peer deep into the monastic life of that era.

The difficulty for the researcher also stems from the fact that Russian hagiographic literature on this era is not as abundant as that on the 14th–15th centuries. Two circumstances must be taken into account here. The activities of Metropolitan Makarii and the still-vibrant ascetic tradition contributed to a growing interest in the 14th–15th centuries and in literary accounts of the exploits of the saints of that era. But later, due to the secularization of monastic life and the brotherhood's preoccupation with economic concerns, there was neither time nor energy left for literary activity. In the 17th century, the monastic community did not produce publicists and writers of the caliber we know from the first half of the preceding century. And yet, some manifestations of 17th-century spirituality might have found expression in literature had the upheaval of the Petrine era not shaken the very life of the Church so violently. Much was lost, and some things survived only in fragments or in legends and folk memory, although this material found its way into folklore precisely because reliable accounts by contemporaries were not recorded on paper by the diligent hand of a monk. The monastic community itself no longer noticed or valued many manifestations of spirituality within its own ranks. Admiration for ascetic feats and an understanding of their meaning were no longer, as before, a matter of course. From all this, it is evident that our knowledge of the few ascetics of the 16th and 17th centuries is woefully inadequate.

The names of some ascetics, who in spirit still belonged to the monasticism of the fifteenth century, have already been mentioned (Chapter IV). They lived during a transitional period when a crisis in monasticism had already begun to emerge. They belonged to both eras, for they carried within themselves the last glimmer of the radiance of the ascetic feats of the monastic tradition of Muscovy, and the lives of these ascetics of piety, standing on the threshold of a new era, were filled with this radiance.

In the Russian Church's calendar, there are few saints from the second half of the 16th and 17th centuries who are universally venerated by the entire Church—most are locally venerated saints. This may be explained by the fact that, during the patriarchal and synodal periods, the Russian Church only occasionally paid attention to the issue of canonization, although popular piety continued to venerate many as yet uncanonized ascetics as saints. The initiative for canonization coming from above, as was the case during the time of Metropolitan Makarii, was a very rare occurrence in the 17th–19th centuries. Therefore, the Russian Church knows of many ascetics who truly pleased God but were not officially glorified; yet it is in them that the spirit of Christianity shines, and this light softens the shadows of the era⁷²⁵.

The ascetic spirit—a spirit of strict renunciation of the world, following the example of the ascetics of the 14th–15th centuries—lived on in the Venerable Cyril of Novoezersk († 1532), Cornelius of Komel († 1537), and Alexander of Svir († 1533)⁷²⁶. In the early 17th century, the hagiography of St. Cyril was written, along with accounts (up to 1648) of 17 posthumous miracles that occurred at his grave; in 1648, he was glorified and received universal veneration within the Church⁷²⁷. The pan-Russian ecclesiastical glorification of St. Cornelius, who immediately after his death enjoyed local veneration, was performed in 1600 by Patriarch Job⁷²⁸. St. Alexander of Svir was glorified as early as the Council of 1547. In the Far North, Anthony, known as the Siysky, stood out for the austerity of his life; as a hieromonk, he founded a hermitage on the banks of the Siya River (Kholmogory District), which later grew into a monastery with extensive land holdings. Anthony is also known as an icon painter, and his icon of the Holy Trinity, which remained intact after a fire, is among the greatest sacred relics of the Russian North. In 1579, Anthony was canonized as a saint of all Russia⁷²⁹.

Two figures are particularly significant for the Moscow center: Nil of Stolobensk († 1554) and Nicander of Pskov († 1581). Both led the lives of hermits: the former lived for more than 20 years in complete

⁷²⁵ On canonizations in the 17th–19th centuries, see: Golubinsky. *History of Canonization in the Russian Church* (1903).

⁷²⁶ Cf. Chapter III, 4.

⁷²⁷ Klyuchevsky. *Lives*. p. 319; Golubinsky. *History of Canonization*. p. 130.

⁷²⁸ *Ibid.* p. 120; Konoplev. *Op. cit.*, in: *Readings*. 1895. 4. pp. 86–101.

⁷²⁹ Golubinsky. *Op. cit.*, p. 117; Makarii, Bishop. *Historical Information on the Monastery of St. Anthony of Siy*, in: *Readings*. 1878. 3.

renunciation of the world in a cave on an island in Lake Seliger, while the latter lived as a silent ascetic. Nilus founded neither a monastery nor a hermitage; it was only after his death that a hermitage arose at the site of his ascetic labors, which later became a prosperous monastery and attracted many pilgrims; in the 19th century, it was one of the most revered holy sites in central Russia. It is likely that as early as the late 16th century, Nilus was venerated as a locally honored saint⁷³⁰. Nikandr's life was not as peaceful as Nil's; he moved from place to place many times to hide from visitors who came to see him. The Annunciation Hermitage was later established at the site of his repose, and in 1686, Nikandr was glorified for the miracles that occurred at his grave⁷³¹.

In addition to the ascetics already mentioned, the Russian Church's calendar of saints contains the names of numerous saints who were monastics and who, for their humble lives, renunciation of the world, and piety, were revered by the local population as people who had pleased God and were subsequently glorified as locally venerated saints⁷³².

When reading accounts of the exploits of 17th-century Russian saints, we discover two distinctive features: first, a relatively widespread inclination toward hermitage and seclusion, and second, a desire to mortify the flesh through physical suffering, such as wearing heavy chains—previously, these practices had not been particularly common among Russian ascetics.

Galaktion of Vologda († 1612), who was likely never tonsured as a monk, led the life of a recluse and stylite in his hut: he chained himself to the wall and received food consisting of bread and water through a small window; he predicted that the city of Vologda, where he lived, would be captured by the Poles—which indeed happened in 1613—and Galaktion himself died a martyr's death at the hands of Polish soldiers⁷³³. His contemporary, Irinarkh († 1616) of the Borisoglebsky Monastery near Rostov, was forced to leave his monastery because the brethren were dissatisfied with the particular austerity of his life. His hagiography bears witness to the decline of monastic life during the Time of Troubles. Irinarkh moved to another monastery and shut himself in his cell, placing heavy chains on his legs and shoulders. Three years later, however, he was able to return to the Borisoglebsky Monastery and once again shut himself in his cell, chaining himself to a bench; he lived in this position for more than 30 years⁷³⁴. Vassian († 1624), known as Totemsky or Tiksenky, performed similar feats of asceticism in the Totemsky District of the Vologda Region; he was a recluse who lived in his cell, chained by a heavy chain to the wall, received food through a small window, and went out to the church only from time to time to receive Communion. Diodorus († 1633), a monk of the Solovetsky Monastery, lived as a hermit. Dissatisfied with monastic life, he moved to a small island in the White Sea, then went into the dense forests along the Onega River, and finally founded a hermitage near the city of Olonets. Dissatisfaction with the way of life at the Chudov Monastery prompted another monk, named Nicodemus, to leave the monastery; he set off northward and chose a place for himself in the midst of the vast swamps of the Kargopol District. News of the harshness of his life reached Moscow. Nicodemus spent over 30 years in the marshes and died in 1640.⁷³⁵ Simon Volomsky († 1641) was also a hermit; he took refuge in the dense forests of Vologda and was killed by peasants from nearby villages, who believed he intended to found a monastery and that their land would then be transferred to the monastery; In addition, there was Simeon of Verkhoturye († 1642), a strict ascetic who preached Christianity to the indigenous Voguls, and Leonid of Ust-Nedum († 1654), who founded a hermitage in the impenetrable forests of Perm⁷³⁶.

⁷³⁰ Golubinsky. *Op. cit.* pp. 155, 314; "The Nile Hermitage," in: Readings. 1875. 3; Uspensky, V. *Historical Description of the Nile Stolobensk Hermitage* (1867; 3rd ed. 1886).

⁷³¹ Golubinsky. *Op. cit.* p. 132; Klyuchevsky. *Op. cit.* p. 392; Serebryansky. *Op. cit.* pp. 317–326, 538–545, 568 ff. (Life of Nicander).

⁷³² Let us name just a few particularly famous ascetics: Gennady of Vologda († 1565), Herodion of Iloezer'sk († 1564), Joseph of Zaonikievsk († 1612); Adrian of Andrusovo († 1549), Adrian of Poshekhonsk (d. 1550), Simon of Soigino (d. 1561), Zosima of Vorbozom (d. second half of the 16th century), Leontius of Lekhnovo (d. 1611), Arsenius of Novgorod (d. 1570), Martyr Zelenetsky (d. 1603), Agapitus Markushevsky (d. 1584), Ignatius Vologodsky (d. 1592), Sergius Shukhtovsky (d. 1609), Christopher Koryazhensky (d. ca. 1572), Theodosius of Totma (d. 1568), Ferapont of Monzen (d. 1591). Cf.: *Historical Dictionary of Saints* (1836; 2nd ed. 1862); Golubinsky, *op. cit.*; Barsukov, *op. cit.*

⁷³³ IRI. 4. p. 64; the claim that he descended from the Belsky family is legendary.

⁷³⁴ Klyuchevsky. *Op. cit.* p. 323; *Dictionary* (1862). pp. 105–107; Golubinsky. *Op. cit.* p. 158; Platonov. *Old Russian Legends about the Time of Troubles*. p. 293.

⁷³⁵ IRI. 6. p. 366; Klyuchevsky. *Op. cit.* p. 334; *Dictionary* (1862). p. 181.

⁷³⁶ Klyuchevsky. *Op. cit.* p. 346; IRI. 3. p. 607; Golubinsky. *Op. cit.* pp. 129, 136.

The way of life at the Solovetsky Monastery compelled the monk Eleazar, who aspired to a truly ascetic life, to leave the monastery. He settled on Anzer Island (about 25 km from the monastery); a few years later, when other monks inclined toward austere asceticism gathered around him, Eleazar decided to found a skete. The monastic cells were located a verst apart from one another. Only on Saturday evenings did the hermits gather together for a communal evening service and the Sunday Liturgy; afterward, they would disperse again to their cells. Discipline at the hermitage was very strict, and Eleazar's own life served as an example to the brotherhood. As already mentioned, Eleazar drew up a rule for his skete. He passed away in 1656.⁷³⁷ In the life of the skete hermit Eleazar, we see an attempt, after a long hiatus, to return to the monastic order based on the ancient skete rules, in contrast to the communal monasteries, which by then had already undergone significant secularization.

Examining the lives of the ascetics mentioned here, we observe that not all were satisfied with the conditions that had developed in the monasteries at that time; this dissatisfaction compelled the ascetics to leave their monasteries in order to seek refuge in complete renunciation of the world. The search for remote, secluded places—somewhere in the midst of dense forests and swamps—where one could labor for Christ without hindrance speaks not so much of a new ascetic movement as of dissatisfaction with the secularization of monastic life. These 17th-century ascetics were no longer able to spark a general revival of monastic life. They remained isolated figures, each with their own individual character, but by no means did they indicate any changes in the general sentiments and views of the 17th-century monastic community.

10. The Missionary Work of Monks

The territorial expansion of the Muscovite state and the incorporation of pagan peoples and tribes gave the Russian Church the opportunity to preach Christianity among these peoples. The monastic community, of course, was expected to take its rightful place in this endeavor. Unfortunately, however, it made fewer efforts in this field than was necessary. The church hierarchy did too little to direct the spiritual energies of the monastic community toward fulfilling this mission, even though the Moscow government repeatedly emphasized the importance of missionary work for the episcopate and monasteries⁷³⁸. In this sphere as well, the independent initiatives of individual monks played a more significant role. Monuments have preserved the names of far from all the missionaries in monastic cowls; this is especially true of remote regions, such as Siberia.

Kornilii, the abbot of the Pskov-Pechersk Monastery whom we already know, was one of those missionaries whose preaching met with great success. He preached among the pagan Estonians and also engaged in debates with the Calvinists who had penetrated these regions in the mid-16th century⁷³⁹.

In the northern and northwestern lands, in the areas surrounding Lake Ladoga, monks from the Valaam Monastery preached Christianity to the pagan Karelians; Arsenius of Konev († 1447) deserves special mention. Among the pagan peoples of the North, St. Cyril of Chelmogorsk († 1367) carried out his missionary work with great success⁷⁴⁰.

In the Perm and Vyatka regions, where St. Stephen the Bishop († 1396) served the cause of Christian preaching with great self-sacrifice, and Bishop Pitirim († 1455) successfully continued his work, St. Trifon of Vyatka († 1613) labored at the end of the 16th century; the monks of the Pyskor Monastery also did much to spread Christianity. In the Far North, in Pomorye, where the Solovetsky Monastery⁷⁴¹ became a stronghold of the Christian faith in the 15th–16th centuries, two names hold a special place in the history of the Russian Christian mission: Theodoret of Kola and Trifon of Pechenga.

Theodoret, born around 1480, entered the Solovetsky Monastery at the age of 14, took monastic vows, and remained there for 15 years under the spiritual guidance of the monk Zosima; He then moved to the Monastery of St. Alexander of Svir, and from there to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery; around 1529, he

⁷³⁷ Yakhontov. *Lives of Northern Russian Ascetics*. p. 197 ff.; *The Book of the Saints*, in: *Readings*. 1887. 4. No. 324. *The Life of Eleazar* in: *Collected Works*. 1860. 1.

⁷³⁸ See, for example, the letter from Ivan IV to Guriy, Archbishop of Kazan, in: *AI*. 1. No. 241; as well as the Code of 1649, Chapters 20, 21, 26; *DAI*. 5. Nos. 241–244; *Makarii*. 10. p. 72; *AI*. 5. No. 69, 75; letter to the Archbishop of Siberia, in: *Ivanov. Description of the State Archive of Old Cases*. 1 (1850). p. 263.

⁷³⁹ Dobroklonsky. *A Guide to the History of the Russian Church*. 12 (1889). pp. 131, 132.

⁷⁴⁰ *Makarii*. 2nd ed. 6. p. 357; Golubinskii. *History of Canonization*. p. 148; Serebryanskii. *Op. cit.* pp. 342–344; Klyuchevskii. *Lives of the Saints*. p. 236.

⁷⁴¹ *The Russian Church in Northern Pomorye in the 15th–17th Centuries*, in: *Prav. Sob.* 1860. 2. pp. 3 ff.

returned to the Solovetsky Monastery and, after Zosima's death, decided to lead the life of a hermit; Theodoret found a secluded and wild spot on the banks of the Kola River and spent nearly 12 years there, together with another hermit named Mitrofan, in complete renunciation of the world and solitude. In 1540, both hermits went to Novgorod to see Archbishop Makarii, who ordained Theodoret as a hieromonk and appointed him as his spiritual father. In 1542, when Macarius became Metropolitan of Moscow, Theodoret, along with several monks, returned to the Kola Peninsula and founded the Trinity Monastery there. Already during his time at the Solovetsky Monastery, Theodoret had learned the Lappish language, and now he began to preach the teachings of Christ to them; his missionary work proved very successful, but it did not last long. Disputes with the monastic community, which was dissatisfied with the ascetic rigor of the hermit, hindered his activities, and in the end, Theodoret was forced to leave the monastery he had founded and interrupt his missionary preaching. He then served for several years as abbot of a small hermitage in the Belozersk region, where he became closely acquainted with the non-possessors and the elder Artemy. In 1551, when Artemy briefly administered the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, the tsar, upon his recommendation, appointed Theodoret as archimandrite of the Euthymius Monastery in Suzdal. At the Council of 1554, during the discussion of the case of Bashkin and Artemy, Theodoret's name was also mentioned; he was wrongfully convicted as an accomplice of Artemy and exiled to the Kirillov Monastery. In 1557, however, at the tsar's behest, he traveled to Constantinople and brought back a letter from the patriarch confirming the coronation of Ivan IV as tsar. Upon his return from Constantinople, Theodoret sought refuge at the Prilutsky Monastery near Vologda, and from there he went again to Kola to preach Christianity. Theodoret died around 1577. Thus, the life of this austere ascetic was woven into the maelstrom of the era's ecclesiastical and political events, while remaining a remarkable example from the history of Russian monasticism⁷⁴².

The life of another missionary, St. Trifon of Pechenga, was more peaceful than that of Theodoret. His hagiography has come down to us. In his youth, he left his parents' home and lived as a hermit in the forests of Novgorod. He then traveled north to the Kola Peninsula and preached there, on the banks of the Pechenga River, to the indigenous pagan Lapps—even before Theodoret's missionary work began. Trifon then undertook a long journey to Novgorod to obtain permission to build a church and a blessing to preach the Gospel. He returned with several skilled craftsmen, and they built the church. In Kola, which had already become a Russian settlement, Trifon found a hieromonk who consecrated the church and tonsured him as a monk. Now he could baptize the pagans, and his church became the center of his missionary work. Later, Trifon founded a monastery attached to the church, and in 1556 he received a charter from the tsar granting him the neighboring lands and fishing grounds. He built a second church for the converted natives and continued to preach Christianity for nearly 30 more years, until his death in 1583.⁷⁴³

The Moscow government paid special attention to the Christian mission in the Ponizovye region, which was reflected in the intensive monastic colonization of this area (see Chapter VII). When Bishop Gury (1555–1563) was appointed the first Archbishop of Kazan in 1555, he was instructed to pay special attention to the conversion of pagans and Muslims to Christianity⁷⁴⁴. Many noble Tatars were then sent to various monasteries for Christian education and conversion; those who were baptized—the newly baptized—retained their estates⁷⁴⁵. Monasteries and even parish churches received large tracts of land; for example, in the Kazan District as early as the end of the 16th century, 65% of the cultivated land was owned by church institutions. Earlier (in Chapters VII and VIII), we examined in considerable detail the process by which the monasteries

⁷⁴² Shestakov, P. "Archimandrite Theodoret, Enlightener of the Lopars, and Saint Trifon of Pechenga," in: ZhMNP. 1868. 7. p. 242 ff.; Makarii. 2nd ed. 6. pp. 330–332.

⁷⁴³ The Life of Trifon in: Prav. Sob. 1859. 2. pp. 89–120; IRI. 4. p. 582; Golubinsky. Op. cit. p. 156; Shestakov. Op. cit.

⁷⁴⁴ AAE. 1. No. 241; DRV. 5. p. 241; Pokrovsky, I. The Kazan Bishop's Residence (1902). p. 6. The Archbishop (and later Metropolitan) of Kazan held the third place in order of precedence among the bishops (1st—Moscow; 2—Novgorod). DAI. 4. No. 102; SGGD. 2. p. 59.

⁷⁴⁵ DAI. 1. No. 97; Hessen, G. "The Life of Prisoners in the Muscovite State," in: Russian Past. 2 (1923). p. 61. On the history of the Christian mission in the Ponizovye region, see: Mozharovsky, A. "An Account of the Progress of Missionary Work Aimed at the Enlightenment of the Kazan Indigenous Peoples from 1552 to 1867," in: Readings. 1880. 1; Nikolsky, N. V. "Christianity Among the Chuvash of the Middle Volga Region in the 16th–18th Centuries," in: Kazan Bulletin. 28, no. 1 (1912); Smirnov, I. N., "The Cheremis," in: Proceedings of the Kazan Academy, 6 (1889); idem, "The Votyaks," in: Proceedings of the Kazan Academy, 8, no. 2 (1890); idem, "The Permyaks," in: Proceedings of the Kazan Academy, 9, no. 2 (1891); ibid., The Mordvins, in: Proceedings of the Kazan Society 10–12 (1892–1895); Peretyatkovich, G., op. cit. (1877 and 1882); as well as earlier works by N. N. and N. A. Firsov (1864 and 1868). On the granting of estates to the newly baptized Tatar nobility, see numerous documents in: Archive of Prince V. I. Bayushev. Historical and Legal Materials from the Region of the Former Kazan Palace Office. 1 (1882).

in the Ponizovye region accumulated wealth and explained why the government pursued such a policy. However, missionary activity, as evident from the reports of Kazan Metropolitan Hermogenes (1589–1606), did not develop with much success, since the Muslim clergy gradually managed to restore their influence over the Tatar population⁷⁴⁶. Nor was there any particularly active missionary work by the numerous monasteries in the 17th century; moreover, any escalation of political tensions—such as the Razin Uprising (1667–1671), in which many Tatars participated—led to the apostasy of people who had already been baptized, and the government was forced to take countermeasures⁷⁴⁷. In the southwestern part of the Ponizovye region, which belonged to the Ryazan Diocese, the indigenous population consisted of pagan Mordvins and Muslim Tatars. Here, in connection with the colonization that advanced southward in the mid-17th century (the Shatsky, Tambov, and Kadomsky districts), Archbishop Misail of Ryazan (1651–1656) launched a particularly vigorous missionary campaign. Several monasteries were founded in this region as well, but only the Purdishchevsky Monastery⁷⁴⁸ deserves special mention among them.

In Siberia, monasteries and towns were built simultaneously. “Where there is a town,” writes Slovtsov, the first historian of Siberia, “there is a voivode’s administration, firearms, and a monastery, in addition to a church”⁷⁴⁹—but the process of Christianization proceeded very slowly here; as early as 1620, when a separate diocese was established in Tobolsk, its first bishop, Cyprian (1621–1624), received instructions from Patriarch Filaret to pay special attention to the conversion of pagans and Muslims, Cyprian even brought several monks with him to Tobolsk specifically to preach the Gospel. His successor, Bishop Macarius (1624–1635), received a special message (“Memory”) from Moscow reminding him of the conversion of pagans⁷⁵⁰. Special mention should be made of the Dormition Monastery on the banks of the Iset River (it was founded in 1644 by the monk Dalmat and is therefore known as the Dalmat Monastery); the monks who labored there were not averse to missionary work. It was not until the end of the century (1681) that a special mission was organized for Eastern Siberia—Abbot Theodosius and 12 monks were sent to Selenginsk to convert all people of other faiths to the Orthodox faith, and, as they were ordered, without any coercion. It is interesting to note that Tsar Fyodor proposed at the Council of 1682 to establish a new diocese in Eastern Siberia for the conversion of people of other faiths, but the bishops rejected this proposal; it was decided only to send monks and priests from Tobolsk to Eastern Siberia from time to time⁷⁵¹.

The reasons for the limited scope of missionary activity lay primarily in the monks’ insufficient education and in the almost complete lack of initiative and enthusiasm on the part of the church hierarchy to preach the Gospel. It was not until the following century that missionary activity in Russia began to revive, but the initiative here came primarily from the government, which acted out of political considerations.

11. Social and Charitable Activities of Monasteries

Various historical documents show that monasteries were engaged in charitable work even before the 16th–17th centuries. Sixteenth-century land registers, when describing monastic lands and estates, very often mention special shelters for the poor who were supported by alms or the monastery’s charity⁷⁵². St. Euphrosynus devotes a separate chapter (24) to charity in his monastic charter; according to his charter, monasteries must feed pilgrims free of charge for the first three days of their stay at the monastery⁷⁵³. Ascetics such as Nil of Sora and Artemius wrote in their works that if a monastery possesses property, it should be used to help the poor. The Josephites Pafnuti Borovsky and Joseph Volotsky not only fed the poor in their monasteries but also helped neighboring villages with bread and other food supplies during years of poor harvests. The Kirillov Monastery⁷⁵⁴ did the same. We have already noted that on August 15, the Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God—the patronal feast of the monastery’s church—money was distributed to the

⁷⁴⁶ 1. Makariy. 10. p. 72; Mozharovsky. Op. cit. pp. 7, 23; AAE. 1. No. 358.

⁷⁴⁷ Mozharovsky. Op. cit. pp. 23, 30, 32. PSZ. 2. No. 867; Code of 1649. Ch. 16, § 44; 20, §§ 70–71; 25, § 24. On the conversion of certain Tatar princes, see: Velyaminov-Zernov. A Study of the Kasimov Tsars. 3 (1866). pp. 207–215.

⁷⁴⁸ Vozdvizhensky, I. History of the Ryazan Hierarchy. p. 122.

⁷⁴⁹ Slovtsov. Historical Survey of Siberia. 1 (1836). p. 58.

⁷⁵⁰ This letter is found in: Ivanov. Description. 1 (1850). p. 263.

⁷⁵¹ AI. 5. Nos. 69, 75; Bystrov, F. “The First Christians in the Siberian Region (1586–1631),” in: Prav. ob. 1866. 2. p. 377; Sumarokov. “Missionary Work in Siberia,” in: Christian Readings 1883, nos. 9–10; 1884, nos. 5–6.

⁷⁵² Census Records of the Muscovite State. Vol. 1, No. 1. pp. 76, 279, 611, et al.

⁷⁵³ Serebryansky. Op. cit. p. 325.

⁷⁵⁴ Makarii. 7. p. 299; AI. 1. No. 204.

poor at the Josephite Monastery. The Trinity-Sergius Monastery was particularly well-known for its charitable works. “There,” wrote Herberstein (in the second quarter of the 16th century), “a great multitude of people flock annually to venerate the shrine... And no matter how many people gather, there is always enough food for everyone, and there always remains as much as is needed to feed the monastery’s servants, so that there is never a shortage or a surplus there.” Foreigners also wrote about the charitable works of other monasteries⁷⁵⁵. According to the Code of 1649, beggars who live on the monastery grounds and are fed by the monastery are subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction⁷⁵⁶.

After the conquest of Kazan, the tsar ordered that the captives be sent to monasteries for Christian instruction, and the newly baptized lived at the monasteries’ expense⁷⁵⁷. In the 17th century, using income from the monastery estates in the Patriarchal District, a shelter for 412 beggars was established in Moscow, and alms were distributed in churches on major holidays. Every year at Christmas, Easter, and Forgiveness Sunday, the Chudov Monastery sent bread, fried fish, porridge, kvass, and monetary gifts to the Moscow prison for the prisoners. Metropolitan Job of Novgorod (in the late 17th century) sent substantial funds from the treasury of the diocesan monasteries to maintain a shelter for the poor, two hospitals, and two night shelters in Novgorod⁷⁵⁸. At the Savvo-Storozhevsky Monastery near Moscow, there were two hospital cells with 48 beds for monks and laypeople. (To characterize the era and illustrate just how petty the interference of secular authorities and the tsar himself in the daily life of the monastery could be, it is worth noting that in 1688 the tsar ordered the number of beds to be reduced to 30⁷⁵⁹.)

After the Time of Troubles, orphanages began to appear in some monasteries. The government welcomed their establishment, and in the middle of the century (1651), many orphans—children of servicemen who had fallen in battle—were sent to the Trinity-Sergius Monastery; at that time, there were up to 600 orphans there, who not only received shelter and sustenance but were also taught to read, write, and learn trades. A large number of children, as evident from a letter dated 1636, were placed in a house built specifically for them at the Solovetsky Monastery, where they were supported by the monastery but, in return, were required to perform light work in the monastery garden⁷⁶⁰. The orphanage at the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery was particularly well-organized. The children were assigned to cells; they received food, clothing, and gifts at Easter from the monastery. The orphanage was run by a special monk-tutor—the “elder for the orphans.” The children performed various tasks; the older ones worked in the garden or as apprentices in the monastery kitchen. By the age of 18–20, they were already referred to as “young men” (see Chapter VIII) and received from the monastery plots of land where they ran their own farms, while continuing to perform certain tasks for the monastery. Some became coachmen; those who learned a trade settled in the monastery settlement and were counted among the monastery’s artisans. Orphans mainly came from villages located on monastery land⁷⁶¹.

Only a few specific cases are mentioned here, which, of course, cannot provide a complete picture of the monastery’s charitable activities in their entirety, but even these indicate that much good was accomplished in this regard. We have already written about the enormous contributions made from the treasuries of various monasteries during the Time of Troubles and during wars; these contributions amounted to very large sums. In this regard, both the state and society benefited from monastic estates.

Chapter X. Monasticism and Ecclesiastical Literature of the 16th–17th Centuries

1. Apologetic and Polemical Writings. Hegumen Joseph of Volotsk

The activities of representatives of the monastic community in the field of ecclesiastical and political journalism were of immense importance to the ecclesiastical and political life of Russia in the first half of the 16th century, although the monastic community was active in other spheres as well. Despite the process of

⁷⁵⁵ Herberstein. *Moskovia*. Ed. by V. F. D. Steinen (1926); p. 92; Chteniya. 1884. 4. p. 24.

⁷⁵⁶ Filaret. *History of the Russian Church*. Vol. 3, p. 211.

⁷⁵⁷ DAI. 1. No. 149; Zverinsky. 3. No. 2231; Hessen. *Op. cit.* p. 61.

⁷⁵⁸ Filaret. *Op. cit.* Vol. 4, p. 240; Readings. 1863. Vol. 4, Appendix, p. 22.

⁷⁵⁹ Belokurov. *Materials*. pp. 163, 166.

⁷⁶⁰ Arseny. *Op. cit.* p. 3; Dosifey. *Description of the Solovetsky Monastery*. 1 (1853). p. 267 ff.

⁷⁶¹ Petrov, V. “Monastic Rags,” in: *Deeds and Days*. 1923. 3.

secularization, the monastic community continued to produce many remarkable figures who either actively participated in the country's ecclesiastical life or considered it their duty to express their views on various aspects of ecclesiastical life in writing. This sense of religious responsibility was particularly evident among those monks who were compelled to write apologetic works when, in the last quarter of the 15th century and the first half of the 16th century, dangerous religious unrest emerged among various segments of the faithful. On the one hand, this unrest arose not without foreign influences; on the other hand, it can nevertheless be explained by purely Russian conditions of church life. Since the new movements that emerged at that time showed a clear deviation from the teachings of the Orthodox Church, representatives of the church hierarchy and the monastic community immediately began an energetic struggle against heretical deviations. As a result, apologetic and polemical works appeared that attest to the theological education of their authors and, at the same time, reflect the characteristic features of religiosity in ecclesiastical circles.

The heretical movement of the Judaizers, already mentioned earlier (Chapter IV, 3), posed a danger of widespread dissemination and forced the Church to wage a decisive struggle against it, all the more so because some members of the Novgorod clergy were involved in the heresy, and even Metropolitan Zosima (1490–1494) showed a certain inclination toward the views of the Judaizers⁷⁶².

In the struggle against the members of this sect and its teachings, Hegumen Joseph of Volotsk played a special role—that of a polemicist, apologist, and the most active opponent of the heresy. He composed a very extensive work, later titled **The Enlightener**. This book is, without a doubt, one of the most significant works of Old Russian ecclesiastical literature, as has been established both by Russian historians⁷⁶³ and by a thorough study undertaken in modern times by Holzward⁷⁶⁴.

"The Enlightener" consists of 16 chapters, or "words," and is divided into two parts. The first 12 chapters comprise the polemical-apologetic section, while the last four discuss measures for combating heretics. **The Enlightener** is the primary source for understanding the views of the Judaizers⁷⁶⁵; at the same time, it provides insight into Joseph's theological education and the theological knowledge of his era in general.

In the first sermon, Joseph refutes heretics who denied the Holy Trinity and expounds the orthodox doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which he borrows almost verbatim from the writings of Nikon of Montenegro (11th century)⁷⁶⁶. The Jewish-oriented group's denial of the Holy Trinity was also linked to their denial of the Incarnation of the Son of God: For them, Christ is merely a prophet like Moses. The Judaizers also rejected the Church's teaching on His Resurrection. Joseph devotes his second homily to this error, in which, to defeat the heretics with their own arguments, he draws on quotations from the Old Testament prophets. In the third sermon, the author refutes the claims that one must adhere only to the Law of Moses, and in the fourth sermon, he speaks of God's divine providence and His omnipotence, which the Judaizers denied. The three subsequent treatises (the fifth, sixth, and seventh) deal primarily with the veneration of icons, with Joseph drawing on

⁷⁶² On the external history of this religious movement, see: Gehring, Joh. **Die Sekten der russischen Kirche** (1898). pp. 11–16; Arndt, A., in: **Z. f. Kath. Th.** 38 (1914). Kostomarov, N. **Russische Geschichte in Biographien**. Leipzig, 1886. pp. 292–322; Makarii. 6. pp. 81–118; Golubinsky. 2. 1. pp. 560–607; Panov. "The Heresy of the Judaizers," in: *ZhMNP*. 1877. 2; Nikitsky. An Essay on the Internal History of the Church in Veliky Novgorod, in: *ibid.* 1879. 7; Ilyinsky, F. "Metropolitan Zosima and Deacon Fyodor Kuritsyn," in: *BV*. 1905. 10. pp. 212–235; Dolgov, S. "The Moscow Council of 1490 Against the Judaizers," in: *Chteniya*. 1902. 3. p. 113; Sedelnikov, A. "The Council of 1490 on the Inquisition," in: *Proceedings of the Commission on Old Russian Literature*. 1 (1932). pp. 33–58; as well as: **Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart**. 4 (1930). pp. 2159–2165 (with errors); an older work: Servitsky, "An Attempt at a Study of the Heresy of the Novgorod Heretics," in: **Prav. ob.** 1862. 6–8, – is now outdated.

⁷⁶³ Makarii. 2nd ed. pp. 7, 184; Golubinsky. Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 606; Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 219. Cf. the work by P. Znamensky (published anonymously), "The Enlightener, St. Joseph of Volotsk," in *Prav. Sob.* 1859, no. 3, which has not lost its value to this day; Khrushchev, *Op. cit.*, p. 133.

⁷⁶⁴ Holzward, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

⁷⁶⁵ It cannot be said that the religious roots of this movement have been definitively clarified. V. Bochanovsky ("Russian Freethinkers of the 14th–16th Centuries," in **Novoe Slovo**, 1896, no. 12, p. 170) links the views of the Judaizers to those of the Hussites; F. Ilyinsky, on the contrary, traces them back to the views of the Bogomils (Russian Bogomils of the 15th Century, in: *BV*. 1905. 6. p. 447). In essence, the views of this sect had a distinctly rationalist character; their doctrine was based primarily on the Old Testament and rejected the New Testament teachings on the Trinity and the Person of Christ, as well as the veneration of the Cross and icons; furthermore, they were opposed to the church hierarchy and monasticism. For scholarly discussions, see also: Peretz, V. "New Studies on the Judaizers of the 15th Century and Their Literature," in: *Univ. Kiev*. 1908. 10; Bederzhitsky. "Notes on the Literature Concerning the Judaizers," in: *Russ. Philol. Rev.* 1911. 3–4; *ibid.* "The Literary Activity of the Judaizers," in: *ZhMNP*, 1912, no. 3; as well as Speransky, *Op. cit.*, and Petukhov, *Op. cit.*

⁷⁶⁶ Makarii. 2nd ed., vol. 7, p. 187.

numerous quotations from the Church Fathers (John Chrysostom, John of Damascus, Andrew of Crete, John Climacus, and others). The seventh homily is particularly detailed, in which Joseph provides explanations about icons of various subjects and discusses the meaning of icon veneration in general. His explanations are not entirely original (he draws here on Damascene's well-known writings against the iconoclasts), but this homily stands out for the purity and clarity of its style, as well as for the strength of faith expressed in it. Chapters 9 and 10 are devoted to refuting the arguments of those who rejected the apostolic writings and the works of the Church Fathers. In the eleventh and twelfth discourses, Joseph explains the religious significance of monasticism.

These 12 discourses, which constitute the theological section of **The Enlightener** (⁷⁶⁷), also demonstrate Joseph's erudition. He constantly refers to the Old and New Testaments and frequently quotes Scripture. Numerous quotations from the Old Testament attest to Joseph's skill in polemics: he refutes the claims of Judaizers who rejected the New Testament by citing the Old Testament, which they themselves acknowledged. In his religious and dogmatic views, Joseph proceeds from the recognition of the infallibility not only of Holy Scripture but also of all "divine writings," to which he counts the works of the Holy Fathers, the acts of the martyrs, the lives of the saints, and even certain apocryphal writings⁷⁶⁸. In this regard, Joseph appears to us as a typical Old Russian theologian, professing his faith with firm conviction, as a man of Ancient Rus' for whom Holy Scripture and church tradition hold equal significance and equal authority; Joseph does not separate dogma, worship, and even liturgical tradition from one another; for him, they are closely intertwined and, taken together, constitute the content of religious teaching and faith. It is remarkable that Joseph devotes three entire chapters (the fifth, sixth, and seventh) to the subject of icon veneration, thereby emphasizing how significant it was in the religious life of the Orthodox world. Later, we will see how another exponent of 16th-century Russian religiosity, the elder Artemy—whose Christian views differed in many respects from those of Joseph—defended the veneration of icons with equal fervor, attributing to it just as great religious significance as St. Joseph did.

This fusion of dogma and worship into a single whole is a characteristic feature of the religiosity of Muscovite Russia. During the schism of the 17th century, this identification would lead to tragic events, driving people—unwavering in their convictions—to martyrdom. It would be incorrect to call this formalism or to attribute it to the rigidity of religious life. This type of religiosity—in which the heavenly is seen in the earthly and the divine in the human—still requires interpretation and in-depth study.

The last four words of "The Enlightener" are devoted to the means of combating heresy. They characterize Joseph's personality in a certain way. It was precisely these views of his that sparked a very heated debate over what the Church and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, as well as secular authorities, could and should do to eradicate heresy and punish its instigators. Furthermore, the question arose as to whether secular authorities had the authority to take measures against ecclesiastical freethinkers—heretics. Joseph answers both of these questions in the affirmative. As a Christian ruler who derives his authority from God, the Grand Duke is obligated to protect the purity of the faith from heretical distortions and to punish heretics. This view is expressed particularly forcefully in the fourteenth sermon, in which Joseph demands that the Grand Duke subject heretics to "cruel punishments and death"⁷⁶⁹.

Joseph also insists on the punishment of heretics in three specific letters. In a letter to Bishop Niphon (1493), Joseph writes that heretics deserve not only imprisonment but also execution; the only ones who should not be executed are bishops guilty of heresy⁷⁷⁰. To urge Grand Prince Ivan III to take decisive measures against heretics, Joseph wrote a letter in 1504 to the prince's spiritual advisor, in which he again speaks of the punishment and execution of heretics⁷⁷¹. He writes about the same thing in a letter to Grand Prince Vasily (after 1505), asserting that sinners and heretics can be destroyed and punished both by human hands and by

⁷⁶⁷ The publisher of **Prosvetitel** (4th ed., Kazan, 1904) expressed the opinion that the first 11 words were composed before the last five words (12–16), shortly after the Council of 1490 (p. 15).

⁷⁶⁸ "In addition to the writings of the Old and New Testaments—to which he adds the apocryphal and non-canonical books—Joseph attributes infallibility to the works of the Fathers, the acts of the martyrs, and the lives of the saints... The infallibility of the divine Scriptures and church tradition, and the inadmissibility of any criticism whatsoever—these are self-evident to Joseph," Holzwart argues (Holzwart. *Op. cit.*, pp. 266, 268); cf. the list of individual sections of Joseph's teachings (Ibid., pp. 293, 311).

⁷⁶⁹ "Prosvitel" (1857). pp. 539, 597, 601, 604, 588.

⁷⁷⁰ Epistle to Niphon, in: RIB. 6. p. 825.

⁷⁷¹ Readings. 1847. 1.

ecclesiastical excommunication: these are one and the same⁷⁷². Other followers of Joseph shared these views. For example, Metropolitan Daniel, in his treatise “How One Ought to Obey the Authorities and Pay Them Honor,” writes at length about the necessity of combating heretics with the help of secular authorities⁷⁷³.

Joseph’s views on how to combat the heresy of the Judaizers—in particular, his insistent demand that heretics be put to death—provoked strong disapproval in other monastic circles, namely among the non-possessors of the monasteries beyond the Volga. They considered it their duty not only to criticize Joseph’s arguments but also to express their own point of view on this matter. The “Treatise of the Elders of the Vologda Monasteries Against Joseph” was likely composed with the guidance or assistance of Prince-Monk Vassian⁷⁷⁴. From the introduction to the “Treatise” (“the elders of all the Vologda monasteries gathered together and undertook this task”), it is clear that the Non-Acquirers’ position, in its final form, was the result of preliminary discussions. First and foremost, the Non-Acquirers believe that a distinction must be made between “unrepentant heretics” and “those who repent and curse their own heresy.” While the former deserve, at most, imprisonment, the latter “are received by the Church of God with outstretched hands,” for “the Son of God became incarnate for the sake of sinners, having come to save those who were perishing,” “and to us, in this new grace, the Lord has revealed a Christ-loving union, that we may not condemn brother against brother, but leave the judgment of human sins to the one God.”

While the “Scripture” of the elders from beyond the Volga was, so to speak, a solemn declaration, the prince-monk Vassian sought to provide practical assistance to the condemned heretics⁷⁷⁵ and to spread the views of the non-possessors. A natural polemicist himself, Vassian writes that one must first try to lead those who have strayed back to the true path through the power of the word—that is, apparently, through preaching and debate. Like the elders of the Volga region in their “Writing,” Vassian acknowledges the Church’s right and duty to subject unrepentant heretics to ecclesiastical excommunication, while secular authorities may imprison or execute them on their own initiative; but if, as Vassian argues, heretics who have already repented are executed, then they are no longer heretics but martyrs, and the sin for these executions falls upon their executioners⁷⁷⁶.

This immediately raises the question: why, then, is there this controversy, in which the representatives of the opposing sides—Joseph and Vassian, true to their characters—formulate their opinions so sharply, if in the end both still consider the execution of heretics permissible? But although their positions appear similar at first glance, in reality their attitudes toward heretics are not the same—rather, they are opposite.

For Joseph, a Christian who has strayed onto the path of false doctrine is permanently expelled from the Christian community; given his religious formalism, he lacked the inner strength to make one more attempt to extend a helping hand to the misguided. For the Non-Acquirers, however—including Vassian—heretics, as long as they had not been excommunicated from the Church, remained Christians, and it was the duty of the Church and all Christians to help their misguided souls. Here, in fact, love—the highest, grace-filled power of Christ’s teaching—must be manifested. Joseph’s attitude toward heretics, however, reveals the same harshness and intransigence characteristic of the rules in his monastic charter regarding the punishment of guilty monks—in both cases, there is a reluctance to understand the soul of the erring person or to help him in his distress. Such formal religious strictness is not unique to Joseph. This trait was later very often evident in Russian religiosity. It was also characteristic of Nikon—although he viewed Joseph very disapprovingly—as well as of Avvakum, Patriarch Joakim, and nearly all the leaders of the Russian schism.

And on yet another issue, differences between Joseph and the Non-Acquirers become apparent. In seeking means to combat heresy, Joseph makes no distinction between the Church and the state, viewing them solely as authorities that command and punish. This lack of distinction lies at the heart of his views on the relationship between the state and the Church, on their mutual support, and on the service of the tsar to the Church and the Church to the tsar. In this, as we believe, lies a serious divergence between Josephism and the idea of “Moscow—the Third Rome,” which did not presuppose a definitive merger of the rights and duties of secular and ecclesiastical authority, for Philotheus’s ideology attached particular importance to the duties,

⁷⁷² DRV. 16 (1791). pp. 423–424.

⁷⁷³ Zhmakin. Op. cit. pp. 406–424 (work by Daniel).

⁷⁷⁴ DRV. 16 (1791). pp. 424, 428; on Vassian’s participation in the drafting of the letter, cf.: Khrushchev. Op. cit. p. 188; Zhmakin. Op. cit. p. 69.

⁷⁷⁵ See: Zhmakin. Op. cit. p. 69; Appendices. 10. p. 506.

⁷⁷⁶ Collected Laws, 1863, Vol. 3, pp. 199, 201, 204.

rather than the rights, of the Orthodox sovereign. Nor should we forget that Philotheus's writings, in which he expressed his ideas, appeared at a time when Joseph's writings against heretics were widely circulated and when memories of the events associated with the uprising of the Judaizers were still very fresh in Moscow, for the monk Philotheus was almost a contemporary of those events. Since he did not emphasize his opinion on the special rights and duties of an Orthodox sovereign in the struggle against heresy—or even sidestepped the issue altogether—his views likely did not coincide with those of Joseph. To summarize our comparison of Joseph's views and those of the Non-Acquirers on this issue, we can say that the Non-Acquirers considered excommunication to be the highest ecclesiastical punishment for heretics and distanced themselves from the measures that secular authorities might apply against them.

A similar attitude toward heresy and heretics was expressed in his writings by the Elder Artemy⁷⁷⁷. Later, when Artemy lived in Lithuania and wrote a series of apologetic and polemical works against the Lutherans there, he repeatedly expressed the conviction that the religious-psychological causes of heresy lie in religious quests, which are inevitable both in the lives of individuals and in the entire church community, and that this is a manifestation of human free will, which wavers in the choice between good and evil. According to Artemy, the very sinfulness of human nature constitutes a prerequisite for a person easily straying onto the path of error⁷⁷⁸. The arguments of Artemy, who in a certain sense brings the movement of the non-possessors to a close, contain something unusual for the religiosity of that era, when religious questions were usually resolved in an overly formal manner. His inclination toward a psychological exploration of the process of religious life brings Artemius closer to the Elder Nilus of Sora. The views of Artemius and Nilus reflect the influence of the Church Fathers, and on many issues a certain spiritual kinship is evident between them; Nilus's influence on Artemius is also noticeable, but Artemius's writings also reveal themes that are not particularly reflected in Nilus's works. This will be discussed below; for now, to shed more light on the figure of Artemy, let us examine his biography in greater detail, which turned out to be connected with the so-called heresy of Matthew Bashkin, which became the final chapter in the history of the dispute between the Josephites and the Non-Acquirers.

On the one hand, the Bashkin case serves as the prelude to the Artemy case; on the other hand, Bashkin's heresy demonstrates that even within official Orthodoxy, religious quests were taking place and religious movements were emerging, and that the 16th-century Russian experienced a certain spiritual dissatisfaction that compelled him to seek answers to his questions outside his Church. Although there is no direct connection between the Judaizers and Matvey Bashkin, they are united by their rejection of church tradition.

Bashkin was born into a wealthy family and was, for his time, a very well-read man. As he read the Holy Scriptures, various questions and perplexities arose in his mind. To find a way out of this state of mind, he turned to a Moscow priest and confided to him during confession his doubts regarding various passages of the Holy Scriptures. Bashkin's persistence in his questioning astonished the priest, who was likely unaccustomed to hearing confession from such spiritual children, and he decided to report Bashkin to Father Silvestr, who was close to the tsar. And so the whole affair came to light. Bashkin and some of his like-minded followers were interrogated, and at the Council convened in Moscow in 1553, Bashkin expounded his "heretical doctrine"⁷⁷⁹. By comparing Bashkin's confessions with the testimonies of contemporaries who were present at the Council, his teaching can be characterized as follows: Bashkin defended the view that it is both possible and necessary to interpret Holy Scripture—the Gospel and the Apostolic Epistles—according to one's own understanding. Based on this, Bashkin rejected the tradition of the Church and the teachings of the Holy Fathers; by rejecting dogmatic doctrine, he also did not recognize the decrees of the Councils. He denied the entire Christological doctrine as well: according to Bashkin, the Son of God is not equal to God the Father, and therefore Christians should address only the Father in their prayers; For him, the Incarnation and Christ's salvific work did not exist either. The Church is merely a free community of believers; repentance and the Eucharist are not sacraments, and in the Eucharist, believers are given plain bread and wine; Repentance is not necessary for the forgiveness of sins—for believers, adherence to moral standards in life is quite sufficient, and there is no need for worship services. Bashkin also rejected the veneration of saints, the Cross, and icons.

⁷⁷⁷ AAE. 1. No. 239. p. 253.

⁷⁷⁸ RIB. 4. pp. 1221, 1384, 1232.

⁷⁷⁹ On Bashkin's views: AAE. 1. No. 239, 238. Makarii. 2nd ed. 6. pp. 250–258; Golubinsky. 2. 1. pp. 821–825

Bashkin's heresy consisted, for the most part, of the same rationalist ideas as those of the Judaizers. The Council of 1553 did not impose the punishments that had been applied against the Judaizers: Bashkin and his followers were sentenced to life imprisonment. During interrogation, Bashkin admitted that he had devised his teachings not without conversations with "Lithuanian people." Since Calvinism and Socinianism were widespread in Lithuania at that time, it is evident that Bashkin's freethinking was influenced by the West⁷⁸⁰.

During the interrogation of Bashkin and his followers, it became clear that he had been in contact with certain monks from the deserts beyond the Volga and had discussed various issues with them. The name of the elder Artemy was mentioned. This was enough to summon him to the Council for questioning. Artemy, a zealous preacher of the views of the non-possessors, was a thorn in the side of the Josephite-leaning hierarchy. During his tenure as abbot at the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, where Artemy had sought to raise the standard of monastic life, he had made many enemies who now wished to take advantage of the situation.

In late 1551 or early 1552, Artemy resigned as abbot and retired to a hermitage in the Trans-Volga region. E. E. Golubinsky believes that Artemy was initially summoned to the Council against Bashkin as a learned monk⁷⁸¹; however, when Bashkin and the other defendants slandered him, claiming that he himself "did not follow Christian law," Artemy secretly fled Moscow but was detained along the way and returned to Moscow as a defendant. At the Council, witnesses—monks from the Trinity-Sergius and Kirillov monasteries—testified, accusing Artemy of religious freethinking: he was charged with making critical remarks about Joseph of Volotsk and his writings, opposing the persecution of the Novgorod heretics (that is, those who practiced Judaism), and uttering other "blasphemous and heretical words." All these accusations were baseless, often unfounded, and distorted Artemy's actual views. Artemy did not deny some of the charges, such as breaking the fast; he admitted to the Council that he had once eaten meat at a reception hosted by the tsar. Nor did Artemy deny that, during his time at the Pechersk Monastery near Pskov, he had discussed various religious issues with "Lithuanian people." There was no heresy in Artemy's views, but he was a man who did not wish to confine his religious life within the narrow bounds of Josephite formalism; he opposed monastic land ownership, and his views on the foundations of monastic life differed from those of Metropolitan Makarii, the bishops at the Council, and the vengeful false witnesses. Artemios was doomed to become a victim of the victorious Josephites, for his condemnation would deal a twofold blow to the Non-Acquirers' faction: to eliminate its strongest representative and to bring a charge of heresy against all the Non-Acquirers, which, of course, excluded them from ecclesiastical and political life and ensured the unconditional dominance of the Josephites therein.

In his **History of the Russian Church**, Makarii Bulgakov writes about the activities of the Non-Acquirers with hostility and even bias, but does not dare to declare Artemius a heretic, because the sources provide no grounds for doing so, and considers him a man who "generally liked to speculate freely on sacred matters of faith," was, so to speak, a religious liberal—and yet Makarii justifies the Council's verdict⁷⁸². After a thorough examination of all available material, E. E. Golubinsky was unable to determine what Artemy's heresy consisted of and is inclined to regard him as a victim of ecclesiastical-political intrigue⁷⁸³.

2. Elder Artemy. His Ascetic-Mystical and Apologetic Writings

In comparison with the lenient sentence in the Bashkin case—who indeed rejected the very foundations of Orthodox doctrine—Elder Artemy was sentenced very harshly, namely, to defrocking (he was a hieromonk) and confinement in the Solovetsky Monastery. Artemy did not remain long at this monastery, where the future Metropolitan Philip was the abbot at the time. Under circumstances unknown to us, he fled and resurfaced in

⁷⁸⁰ As early as the 1530s, the first reports about Luther appeared in Moscow, as evidenced by the treatise "On Luther and His Heresy," written in 1536. Popov, A. **Review of Russian Chronographs**. 2 (1869). p. 130. Maxim the Greek wrote a refutation of Luther, primarily concerning the veneration of icons (Works 1, pp. 485–494). Even before the Polish Sejm of 1552, which granted the szlachta freedom of religion, Calvin's teachings had penetrated Poland and Lithuania, and at the same time, Socinianism was spreading rapidly there. Cf.: Völker, K., **Kirchengeschichte Polens** (1930); Grabowsky, Th. From the History of Calvinist Literature in Poland (1906); Lyubovich, N. History of the Reformation in Poland: Calvinism and the Antitrinitarians (1883); Wotschke, Th. History of the Reformation in Poland (1901); Sokolov. The Relationship of Protestantism to Russia in the 16th and 17th Centuries (1880).

⁷⁸¹ See Golubinsky's attempt to reconstruct Artemy's biography (Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 832–836); and also: Sadkovsky. Op. cit., pp. 60–85.

⁷⁸² Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 6, p. 265.

⁷⁸³ Golubinsky. Vol. 2, Part 1, p. 835.

Lithuania. There he wrote many works of an apologetic and polemical nature, directed against Calvinism and, in part, against Theodosius the Crooked⁷⁸⁴. These works are interesting not only for their content but primarily because they provide an opportunity to become acquainted with Artemy's religious and ascetic ideas.

These ideas deserve our attention, for they characterize Artemius's views on the ascetic life, and they reveal a certain deviation from the views of Elder Nilus. Nilus considered "intellectual prayer" () to be the focal point of spiritual practice on the path to salvation and deification. Artemius, on the other hand, speaks more of "spiritual love," which he considers the foundation of ascetic feats and the monastic life, and which consists in serving one's neighbor⁷⁸⁵. In doing so, Artemius reveals his conception of the monastic life. According to Artemius, to attain spiritual love, one must first flee from one's neighbors and strive in monastic solitude; only then will a true need for love arise. Of course, Artemy disapproves of and rejects communal living, especially since the foundations of cenobitic monasticism were then almost universally undermined by a failure to observe the monastic rule. Moreover, communal living leads to "carnal speculation," for which monastic wealth provides fertile ground⁷⁸⁶. The attainment of spiritual love is possible only for a person "living in seclusion," for a monk in a skete, where—living alone or, at most, in pairs, in renunciation of the world, in silence, and in spiritual contemplation—one can gradually acquire spiritual love. Solitude, reading the Holy Scriptures and ascetic writings, silence, and prayer should fill life in the hermitage. External poverty and the sense that one is merely a stranger in this earthly world are of particular value because they open up the possibility of freeing oneself from earthly cares and devoting oneself entirely to the gathering of the soul⁷⁸⁷.

After describing the external prerequisites for the gathering of the soul by a person who has resolved to lead an ascetic life, Artemius moves on to characterizing the spiritual and moral nature of the ascetic. This nature is threefold: it consists of the sensory, the psychical, and the spiritual. On the path to spiritual perfection, human nature passes through three stages, which Artemius—drawing on the ascetic writings of the Fathers, primarily Isaac the Syrian—calls "self-crucifixion."

At the first stage, a person's moral sensibility is stirred by fear of the Last Judgment, and the person is compelled, to the best of their ability, to perform good deeds. This practice, which Artemius calls "the crucifixion of the flesh," is nothing other than the struggle against sensual and emotional passions. In this state, the temptation to fall into despair usually arises, but it is overcome by patience, endurance, and prayer for God's gracious help. Prayer is especially necessary, for the Lord always hears unceasing prayer and comes to the aid of the ascetic in his spiritual struggle. The ascetic Christian gradually finds a new foundation for performing good deeds: he no longer does them as a slave—out of fear—but as a servant—for the sake of reward. And then the ascetic is given the opportunity to ascend to the second step⁷⁸⁸. If his new state is firmly established within him, then he truly ascends to this second step—the step of "active spiritual love." He comes to understand the necessity of keeping the Lord's commandments not out of fear of Judgment and not for the sake of reward, but out of love for God. Love for God, having penetrated the human soul, eradicates carnal passions, sanctifies the soul, and transforms it. The ascetic gradually returns to a state of "original purity." If he does not waver in his desire to abide in love for God, then not only is his soul transformed, but also his mind, which thereby acquires the capacity for spiritual contemplation. Prayer is the best means of attaining this capacity; with a transformed mind, a person comes to know that he is a son of God. This sense of sonship strengthens the bond between the Christian and God, a bond that was established at baptism but was severed by sin. The sense of one's sonship to God is a gracious gift of the heart that influences the entire spiritual being of a person; Divine light elevates the person walking the path of self-crucifixion to the threshold of the third stage of spiritual perfection, which Artemy calls "the glory of the Cross." Elder Artemy considers this threshold between the second and third stages of self-crucifixion to be a boundary that a Christian can cross only in the afterlife. There, in eternal life, the Lord grants to those who have preserved their sonship to God

⁷⁸⁴ RIB. 4. Fourteen of Artemy's works are published here. Five of them date from the Moscow period of his life (pp. 1359–1373, 1382–1390, 1390–1400, 1400–1420, 1432–1441); 9 were written in Lithuania (after 1555): the 1st: pp. 1201–1266; the 2nd: pp. 1266–1273; the 3rd: pp. 1273–1287; the 4th: pp. 1287–1328; 5th: pp. 1423–1432; 6th: pp. 1420–1423; 7th: pp. 1441–1448; 8th: pp. 1328–1359; 9th: pp. 1373–1381. Of particular importance are: 1. To the Lyutorians' teachers; 4. To the heretic Simon Budny; 5. To him as well. See also: Pliss, V. "Simon Budny and the Reformation in Lithuania," in: *Christian Readings* 1911, 2, 9, 10.

⁷⁸⁵ RIB. 4. pp. 1228, 1259, 1261, 1249.

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid. pp. 1223, 1260, 1224, 1261, 1236, 1271.

⁷⁸⁷ Ibid. p. 1261.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid. pp. 1232, 1275, 1342.

the beholding of the Divine mysteries, which fills the enlightened one with ineffable and unceasing joy. In earthly life, only a few—the perfect, the saints—receive the gift of the “glory of the Cross,” the grace of God, and abide on the third stage⁷⁸⁹.

Self-crucifixion is the source of a person’s grace-filled enlightenment; it makes him a witness to the divine truth contained in Holy Scripture. Only an enlightened person can perceive the truth and correctly understand Scripture. Thus, self-crucifixion is the cornerstone of a true understanding of the Lord’s commandments and of Holy Scripture as a whole. Christians who have not accomplished the feat of self-crucifixion are in danger of misinterpreting Holy Scripture and even falling into heresy. Self-crucifixion is an act of humility and repentance. An unenlightened mind is a breeding ground for arrogance; it is a carnal mind, incapable of correctly understanding the Lord’s commandments. It does not understand them because it does not seek Divine truth but pursues its own interests; it remains outside of Divine grace. A person with a carnal mind reads the Divine Scriptures but either fails to understand them at all or misunderstands them. Such perverse thinking drives a person into the arms of the tempter, Satan, and makes him a heretic⁷⁹⁰.

These ascetic reflections by Artemius, scattered throughout his apologetic and polemical writings, shed light on his personal views, but they could not serve the purposes of defending Orthodox church doctrine during his time in Lithuania. The people for whom he wrote about Church doctrine were under the strong influence of Calvinists and anti-Trinitarians active in Lithuania, so that not only did they not accept Artemius’s views, but were simply unable to comprehend his ascetic-mystical views, which drew from the sources of patristic asceticism and Orthodox mysticism. Another part of his writings, in which he discusses various issues of religious life, took on practical significance. Of particular significance are his writings addressed to the Calvinist pastor Simon Budny and other Lithuanians⁷⁹¹.

In these writings—or, rather, epistles, some of which are very brief—Artemius emphasizes the need for Christians to know the Holy Scriptures and even to study them regularly in order to understand them correctly and guard against heresy, but he strongly objects to an excessive focus on the Old Testament at the expense of the Gospel⁷⁹². The Gospel is of paramount importance because the New Testament preaching of Christ abrogated the Old Law⁷⁹³. Since Simon Budny, in his anti-Trinitarian statements, denied the doctrine of the Trinity, Artemy was compelled to refute his arguments⁷⁹⁴. He strongly opposes Calvinist doctrine and emphasizes the necessity of good works for salvation. Faith without good works is not Christian faith, but heretical pride and a departure from God, although Artemy also speaks of the extreme importance of moral perfection, the struggle against passions, and the importance of self-crucifixion, without which no salvation is possible⁷⁹⁵. In his writings, Artemy defends the Christian liturgy. Both of his opponents, Simon Budny and Ivan Zaretsky, rejected the Holy Eucharist and its grace-filled effect on the faithful, as well as all forms of worship in general. In refuting these errors, Artemy draws on passages from the Epistles of the Apostle Paul and argues against Protestant views on the sacraments and the liturgical life of Christians in general⁷⁹⁶. In both letters to Budny, he writes about the necessity of preserving tradition and notes in this regard that tradition⁷⁹⁷ was also recognized in the Old Testament. In connection with the demand for moral perfection, Artemy emphasizes how important self-denial and moderation in all things are for Christians, and speaks of the educational significance of fasting; he reminds his opponents that Christ Himself went into the desert and fasted there. Therefore, the monastic life is a God-pleasing endeavor; it helps people on the path to salvation, for its foundations are moderation and self-denial, the struggle against passions and pride⁷⁹⁸. Finally, we note

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid. pp. 1278, 1343, 1298, 1299.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid. pp. 1341, 1335, 1406, 1303, 1324, 1275, 1301, 1444, 1384, 1407.

⁷⁹¹ Simon Budny was likely initially of the Greek Orthodox faith; later he became a Calvinist and, in the mid-16th century, served as a Calvinist pastor in the town of Kletsk (near Minsk in Lithuania), where he zealously preached Calvinist doctrine. He wrote two works: 1. Catechism (1562, in Belarusian) and 2. On the Justification of Man (in Russian). Subsequently, Budny joined the Antitrinitarians; Malyshevsky, I. “A Forged Letter from the Polovtsian Ivan Smera to Grand Prince Vladimir,” in: TKDA. 1876. 2. pp. 507–513; Pliss, V. Op. cit.

⁷⁹² RIB. 4. pp. 1442 (No. 4: to Simon Budny), 1231 (to a Lutheran teacher), 1343 (No. 8: to an unknown recipient); and also: RIB. 4. pp. 1265, 1309.

⁷⁹³ Ibid. pp. 1205–1208, 1278, 1350.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 1314.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid. pp. 1203, 1265, 1326, 1342, 1443.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid. pp. 1251, 1277–1279.

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid. pp. 1253, 1264, 1268, 1348.

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid. pp. 1210, 1255, 1358–1359, 1265, 1422.

that Artemius defends the Christian custom of making the sign of the cross, as well as the veneration of saints and icons⁷⁹⁹.

It is evident from all of Artemius's apologetic writings that he was a faithful son of the Orthodox Church. Perhaps the charges brought against him at the Council of 1553–54 *may have had some basis at the time, but Artemy subsequently renounced his religious liberalism entirely (if indeed he ever held such views) and atoned for it through his polemical activities directed against Protestant propaganda in Lithuania.*

3. Zinovy of Otensk and His Writings

While pure theology plays a secondary role in Artemy's apologetics, it occupies a primary place in the writings of the monk Zinovy of the Otensky Monastery (in the Novgorod region). There are gaps in Zinovy's biography, and the process of his spiritual development remains insufficiently clarified to this day. He died in 1568 at the Otensky Monastery, where he had apparently been exiled: in the 1520s, Zinovy was associated with the monk Maxim the Greek, and following Maxim's conviction, he was likely exiled or confined to the Otensky Monastery. The reasons why Zinovy left Moscow—whether he did so voluntarily or by order of the authorities—remain unclear to this day. The fact that Zinovy, after his death, was buried in the cathedral of the Otensky Monastery near the tomb of St. Jonah indicates the great respect the monastic community held for him⁸⁰⁰. One might think that the monastery authorities would hardly have dared to bestow such an honor on an exile. On the other hand, more than 40 years had passed since Zinovy arrived at the Oten Monastery, and during that time he had earned the respect of the monastic community and the abbots through his scholarship; furthermore, one must take into account the local sentiments in Novgorod, which often manifested as opposition to the authorities in the capital⁸⁰¹.

Zinovy did not participate in the ecclesiastical and political life of his era⁸⁰²; his seclusion in his monastic cell turned out to be a great stroke of luck for history, since thanks to him we know of the only 16th-century theologian who demonstrated a certain degree of independence and originality in his writings⁸⁰³. His writings, like Joseph's **The Enlightener**, were composed for polemical purposes, but Zinovy's polemics are of an entirely different nature. They are not overloaded with quotations, as Joseph's are. Zinovy prefers to conduct his own independent investigation of the issues under discussion; in his polemics, he reveals a clear concept, strikes his opponent with his own weapons, draws logical conclusions, and does not neglect rational arguments to substantiate his assertions. Zinovy wrote two major works: "A Demonstration of the Truth to Those Who Inquired About the New Doctrine" and "A Lengthy Epistle Against the Perversity of Kosoy"⁸⁰⁴. The first work, which is very extensive, is of particular significance because, on the one hand, it clarifies the content of Kosoy's heretical views, and on the other, it characterizes Zinovy as a skilled polemicist and theologian.

The aforementioned Moscow Council of 1553–54, *while investigating Bashkin's false teachings—for which many monks from monasteries beyond the Volga were summoned as witnesses—drew attention to the preacher of yet another "godless heresy," a monk named Theodosius Kosoy, and thoroughly interrogated him. Unfortunately, the interrogation record has been lost, and Zinovy's work *The Testimony of Truth* remains our only source of information about Theodosius Kosoy and his religious views.*

Biographical details about Kosy paint him in a rather unfavorable light: he was a servant of a Moscow boyar, stole from his master, and fled to the Belarusian region. Later, Kos entered a monastery and took monastic vows. After he was brought to Moscow and interrogated, he fled again and turned up in Lithuania, where he settled and spread his views with some success.

⁷⁹⁹ Ibid. pp. 1211, 1250, 1295–1297, 1444–1445, 1243, 1247, 1270, 1284, 1446.

⁸⁰⁰ See: Andreev, N. "Monk Zinovy of Oten on Icon Veneration and Icon Painting," in **Seminarium Kondakovianum**, vol. 8 (1936), pp. 259–262; the author attempts to reconstruct Zinovy's biography. The main work on Zinovy: Kalugin, F., *Zinovy, Monk of Otensk, and His Theological-Polemical and Ecclesiastical-Moral Writings* (1894)—was, unfortunately, unavailable to me. Cf. the Russian review of this work: Bochanovsky, V., in: *ZhMNP*. 1894. 11; and also: Kalugin, F., "The Homiletic Works of Monk Zinovy of Otensk," in: *ZhMNP*. 1893. 2 and 5; Tarasiy, Hieromonk, "A Turning Point in Old Russian Theology" (1927).

⁸⁰¹ Cf.: Pomyalovsky, M., "On the Question of Moscow-Novgorod Relations in the 15th–16th Centuries," in: *ZhMNP*. 1898. 9.

⁸⁰² Rzhiga. "Maxim the Greek as a Publicist." p. 8.

⁸⁰³ Golubinsky. 2. 2. pp. 224–225, 227–228; and also: Tarasiy, Hieromonk. Op. cit.

⁸⁰⁴ Zinovy of Otensk: 1. "The Testimony of Truth," in: *Prav. Sob.* 1863–1864 (Kazan, 1863) and 2. "The Long Epistle," in: *Chteniya*. 1880. 2; Golubinsky (2. 1. p. 827; 2. 2. p. 230) considers Zinovy to be the author of only the first work. Cf.: Gudziy. *History of Old Russian Literature* (1938). p. 282.

Zinovy writes that he learned of Kosoy's heretical teachings by chance. One day—after 1554 but before 1566, when Zinovy was writing his treatise—two monks from a neighboring monastery, accompanied by a layperson, came to see him at the Otensky Monastery and asked him various questions about church doctrine, salvation, Holy Scripture and its authenticity, and whether the Old and New Testaments could truly be considered “Divine Scriptures.” The discussion continued, and a total of 12 conversations took place. During these conversations, Zinovy's questioners mentioned the name of the monk Theodosius the Crooked and explained in detail his views on church doctrine. Although Zinovy refers to Kosoy as a disciple of Artemy (that is, the Elder Artemy known to us), one cannot agree with Zinovy's view, since Kosoy's views, which are heavily tinged with crude rationalism, bear very little resemblance to Artemy's views as reflected in his writings. Kosoy and Bashkin's views have much more in common, although it cannot be determined with certainty where and when these two “heresiarchs” interacted or whether they actually knew one another⁸⁰⁵. It is not out of the question—and we are almost certain of this—that Kosoy, either entirely on his own or through certain acquaintances in Moscow, came to criticize church doctrine and formulated his own teachings. Kosoy's heresy proves to us, on the other hand, that certain religious views of the Judaizers had not yet completely faded from Moscow society, for Kosoy's teachings repeat those very same views, albeit with some deviations and alterations. Kosoy, too, recognizes only the writings of the Old Testament—“the Law of Moses”—as authoritative and true, and rejects the New Testament writings. Kosoy declares the canons of the Church and the works of the Holy Fathers to be null and void, although he attempts to justify some of his religious views with quotations from the writings of Basil the Great or John Chrysostom. Kosoy categorically denies the doctrine of the Trinity, the divinity of Christ and His salvific work, and the sacraments; he rejects the veneration of the Mother of God and the saints; he calls the church's worship and all liturgical rites in general idolatry; and he does not recognize the church hierarchy. From Zinovy's conversations with people influenced by Kosoy's views, the critical rather than the positive aspect of his teaching is more evident; the latter consists only of very vague and indistinct assertions that true religion must consist in worshiping the one God “in spirit” (⁸⁰⁶).

“The Demonstration of Truth” was composed by Zinovy in the form of a dialogue between himself and his questioners. However, a careful examination of the book's content reveals that its positive part—consisting of Zinovy's answers and refutations—is not specifically directed against Kosoy's heresy, as historians of the Russian Church believe⁸⁰⁷, but was written by Zinovy for other reasons. On the one hand, this is evident from the internal logic of the responses, which, so to speak, form an interconnected theological system; on the other hand, his responses are much more extensive than would be necessary merely to refute Kosoy's erroneous views. The Otensky Monastery, where Zinovy sought refuge and where he met with Kosoy's followers, is located in the Novgorod region. It was here, six decades ago, that the Judaizing sect originated, and its false teachings, despite the measures taken by the government and church authorities, have not disappeared entirely. In the Novgorod region, ties with the West were felt more strongly and vividly than in the Moscow center; foreign, Western religious views and opinions found their way into Novgorod through various channels; the population there was at a higher cultural level than in Moscow; social relations there also differed greatly from those that had developed in other parts of Northeastern Rus', giving rise to entirely different types of people; and in the religious life of Novgorod society, we find certain distinctive features and a great deal of originality: in addition to the Judaizers, one may mention the views of Novgorod chroniclers on ecclesiastical matters and the unique character of Novgorod hagiography⁸⁰⁸. When Zinovy arrived at the Otensky Monastery, all this distinctiveness of the local conditions could not have gone unnoticed by him. It is clear that his attention was drawn first and foremost to religious and ecclesiastical matters. He felt obliged

⁸⁰⁵ Cf.: Golubinsky. Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 819, 820.

⁸⁰⁶ Zinovy. *The Testimony of Truth*. Chapters 4, 21, 22, 8, 29, 26, 30, 23, 27, 43, 44, 45. Cf.: Makarii. 2nd ed. 6. pp. 275–278; Emelyanov, I. “The Teachings of Theodosius the Crooked,” in: TKDA. 1862. 6; Golubinsky. 2. 1. pp. 820, 825–830; Sadkovsky. “Elder Artemy,” in: Readings. 1891. 4. pp. 106–109; Malyshevsky. Op. cit. pp. 518–524; Sokolov, I. “The Attitude of Protestantism Toward Russia in the 16th and 17th Centuries” (1880). pp. 266–267.

⁸⁰⁷ Cf.: Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 6, p. 273; Vol. 8, p. 467; Golubinsky. Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 826; Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 225. It is unclear whether this work actually appeared by chance, merely because monks came to Zinovy and began telling him about Kosoy's views. Cf.: Zinovy. “A Lengthy Epistle,” in: Readings. 1880. Vol. 2. Introduction by N. Popov. p. 1.

⁸⁰⁸ Cf.: Bestushev-Ryumin, **Geschichte Russlands**, 1 (1877), 230 ff., 265, 273 ff.; Lyubavsky, M., **Ancient Russian History until the End of the 16th Century** (1918); Nikitsky, *Essays on the Life of Veliky Novgorod*, in: ZhMNP. 1869. 10; Grekov, B. *The Novgorod House of St. Sophia* (1914).

to serve the Church to the best of his ability and knowledge. The appearance of Kosoy's followers in his cell and his conversation with them provided an opportunity to criticize the new heresy and thereby give his work a timely, contemporary resonance. Thus, his theological-apologetic work grew into a major apologetic and polemical treatise.

A certain logic is evident in Zinovy's exposition of his theological system. Although Theodosius the Crooked and his followers had no doubt regarding God's existence, Zinovy nevertheless chose to begin with a discussion of this dogma. In doing so, he displayed a characteristic not found in other Old Russian ecclesiastical writers, namely, a desire to explain and support his assertions with evidence drawn from reason, or ratio. This tendency to prove his theses through logically sound inferences appears repeatedly in Zinovy's writings; it is also evident in his judicious and appropriate citation of Scripture, suggesting that the work was composed following preparatory research on a predetermined topic, rather than arising spontaneously during conversations. The ability to correctly employ "scientific methods" is a remarkable feature of his writings. Zinovy rises above the scholarly standards of his time; he can truly be considered the first representative of scientific theology in Ancient Rus'.

He proves God's existence through an examination of the cosmos. The spontaneous generation of living beings on earth is unthinkable; therefore, there is a God who created them. All people and all nations believe in God, whether truly or falsely. This means that the sense of faith is inherent in human nature and has been instilled in the human soul by God. Inanimate nature, too, is not without a cause; it could not have arisen on its own from nothing—therefore, there is a God who created the universe. The preservation of the world—in which various elements constantly struggle against one another yet remain in stable harmony—is possible only through the Creator's Providence; Zinovy also cites this argument as proof of God's existence. The connection between creation and the Creator is manifested in the Creator's Providence⁸⁰⁹. After presenting the cosmological and teleological proofs of God's existence and building upon them, Zinovy explains the Trinity of God and the Divine Essence. God, as the first cause of all things, animate and inanimate, and as the Creator and Preserver of the universe, can only be a Living Essence, a Living God. If God is Living, then He must necessarily possess within Himself the Word and the Spirit. If the Divine Essence did not possess the Word and the Spirit, It would not be the Living God. Since God is the first cause of all things, He is eternal, without beginning, infinite, and omnipotent; His Word and His Spirit possess these same attributes. Zinovy supports his arguments with a number of quotations from the Book of Genesis and other sources. Zinovy devotes considerable attention (chapters 23–27) to the Church's teaching on the Incarnation of Christ and His economy, which was rejected by the Judaizers, Bashkin, and Kosoy alike. Drawing on Old Testament promises, Zinovy writes that God knew from the beginning about the future fall of man and foresaw the Incarnation of His Son, which He proclaimed to Israel repeatedly and in many ways during the Old Testament era. Since man is God's highest and most perfect creation, the salvation of the human race could be accomplished only by the Son of God, Christ, for that which is perfect can be saved only by the most perfect, and that which is precious—by the most precious. The possibility of salvation, the mystery of God's Incarnation—which is beyond the grasp of the human mind—and the possibility of the birth of the Son of God from a Virgin are all contained in God's omnipotence. And in the Old Testament there are many promises of this, writes Zinovy, in order to convince opponents who relied primarily on the Old Testament.

The theological section of the work concludes with an explanation of these issues. In the following chapters (28–42), Zinovy defends the veneration of icons, the relics of saints, the Cross, and church tradition, as well as the necessity for Christians to practice repentance, prayer, and fasting; he supports the latter primarily with references to the ascetic writings of St. Basil the Great. Zinovy also uses these works to justify the existence of the episcopate, monasteries, and monasticism in general (chapters 43–46). Here, Zinovy is compelled to address the issue—controversial at the time—of monastic landholdings, specifically the right of monasteries to own inhabited land and derive income from it⁸¹⁰.

⁸⁰⁹ The Testimony of Truth. Chapters 5–12, 14–19, 20.

⁸¹⁰ See also: Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. pp. 467–492 and Golubinsky. 2. 2. pp. 225–229. For a comparative characterization of Zinovy and Joseph, see: Makarii. 2nd ed. 7. pp. 492–494; and also in: Tarasius, Hieromonk. Op. cit. pp. 7–16, 32–40, 98–110, 137, 146. Hieromonk Tarasii, who submitted this work in 1899–1900 as a dissertation to be defended at the Kazan Theological Academy, shares the Josephite views on monasticism and monastic estates (pp. 40–46). This is a very telling indication of how deeply these views were rooted in Russian monasticism.

In his second work—the “Long Epistle,” which is much shorter than the first—Zinovy addresses various non-dogmatic issues. The work is a sort of collection of eight responses by Zinovy to letters sent to him by various individuals from Lithuania seeking his opinion on the heresy of Kosog. These were questions about whether churches are necessary for communal prayer, about the veneration of icons, about the necessity of baptism and the Eucharist for believers, about the veneration of saints and their relics, and about the priesthood. In his final response, Zinovy writes about the Church’s right to combat heresy and heretics. This work lacks the systematic structure characteristic of **The Truth of Testimony**. Zinovy likely wrote the responses at different times, and they were later compiled into a single collection, which is why repetitions are common here.

4. Metropolitan Daniel

A prominent figure in Moscow’s literary circles was Metropolitan Daniel (1522–1539), who has already been mentioned numerous times in this work. His ecclesiastical and political activities, as well as his writings, are covered in detail in one of the best monographs on the history of the Russian Church, written by V. Zhmakin. Daniel’s skillful ecclesiastical politics, which often forced him to kowtow to the grand ducal authority; his struggle against the non-possessors, which he waged with passion and hatred; his arrogance; his admiration for the Josephite views and his desire to implement them in the life of the Russian Church—all of this characterizes Daniel as a man and as a prince of the Church. But at the same time, he appears to the researcher as a model of Old Muscovite education and erudition. Contemporaries’ opinions of Daniel are quite contradictory: Boyar Ivan Beklemishev-Bersen considered him an incompetent church leader⁸¹¹; more objective was Daniel’s ideological opponent and victim of his hostility, the monk Maxim the Greek, who describes him as a theologically educated man⁸¹². E. E. Golubinsky shares Maxim the Greek’s opinion in his **History of the Russian Church**; literary historians rank Daniel among the most significant Old Russian writers, noting the liveliness of his language and his talent for public writing⁸¹³. In addition to the works devoted to monastic life, which we have already described, Daniel wrote several more treatises and epistles⁸¹⁴. These are compiled into two collections, which are named accordingly: one is the **Sobornik** and the other is the **Sbornik**. The “Sobornik” includes 16 sermons, 6 of which are devoted to issues of monastic life; the “Sbornik” contains 14 epistles. These works address dogmatic and ethical issues⁸¹⁵.

Four homilies (the 5th through 7th and the 11th) are devoted to dogmatic issues; they are apologetic in nature and were composed by Daniel with clear reference to the heresies of the Judaizers. The content of these homilies consists of an interpretation of the dogmas concerning the Incarnation and the household of Christ. The 5th homily is devoted to expounding the Church’s teaching on the dogma of the Incarnation; it serves as an introduction to the other three homilies. With the help of well-chosen quotations from the writings of the Holy Fathers (it is interesting to note that the author, unlike Joseph and Zinovy, refers almost exclusively to the New Testament and the Holy Fathers, and sometimes even to liturgical books) Daniel sets forth the dogmatic teaching on the Son of God as perfect God and perfect Man and observes that the speculations reflected in the heretical teachings—namely, that Christ merely appeared to assume human nature—are erroneous and heretical. Christ is a divine-human Person with two natures and two wills (this first thesis is more clearly and better expressed by Daniel), consubstantial with both the unbegotten Father and created man, except for sin, He Himself is neither unbegotten nor created, but “begotten before all ages”—this is how clearly Daniel formulates the Christological dogma. It must be acknowledged that Daniel’s dogmatic views lack the vagueness or obscurity that characterized, for example, the views of the prince-monk Vassian⁸¹⁶. The 6th homily is closely connected to the 5th. In it, Daniel states that the Incarnation and the Crucifixion of Christ are testimony to the Savior’s boundless love for sinful humanity, therefore the claims made by Judaizers—that the assumption of human nature and the humiliating Passion on the Cross are unworthy of God—are fundamentally false; they represent an attempt to diminish the gracious love of God and His Son toward us.

⁸¹¹ AAE. 1. No. 172. p. 142; Makarii. 2nd ed. 6. pp. 169, 170, 171, 172.

⁸¹² Maximus the Greek. Works, vol. 1, p. 530.

⁸¹³ Golubinsky. Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 703; Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 221. Speransky, M. History of Old Russian Literature. The Moscow Period (1921). p. 146; Gudzii. Op. cit. (1938). p. 279; Makarii. 2nd ed., vol. 7. p. 295; Zhmakin. Op. cit. p. 259, etc.

⁸¹⁴ On Daniel’s works, see: Zhmakin. Op. cit. pp. 263–270.

⁸¹⁵ Ibid. p. 263.

⁸¹⁶ Makarii. 2nd ed., vol. 6, p. 203.

In the Son's Incarnation, Daniel continues his reflections in the 7th Sermon, both God's boundless wisdom and His infinite love were expressed; for thanks to Christ's Incarnation, it was possible to "outwit the cunning of the evil one," "Satan was bound," "hell was destroyed," and humanity was redeemed and saved. The final sermon is devoted to Divine Providence, its meaning, and its manifestations in human life.

The remaining homilies in the first collection (the *Sobornik*) address issues of moral theology. Daniel teaches that a person must believe and act in all things in accordance with the Divine Scriptures (1st homily). This is especially necessary for church pastors, who are obligated to stand unwaveringly and steadfastly for the truth of the Church (2nd homily). In addition to the Divine Scriptures, one must honor church tradition and observe the prescriptions, rites, rules, laws, and canons preserved within it, for through this we become Christians in essence, and not merely in appearance, in our lives (3rd homily). The 8th word is particularly interesting, in which Daniel speaks about the attitude of Christians toward earthly authority and the divine establishment of authorities. Civil authority is obligated to demand the observance of divine laws—that is, the laws of the faith—from those subject to it, and to punish the guilty in the event of their non-observance or distortion by any heretics or false teachers. Preserving the purity of the faith and defending it against heretics is the duty of all believers. The remaining words (the 9th, 10th, and 12th–16th) are devoted to relationships among people in public life; here it speaks of the need to overcome internal temptations, which often manifest themselves externally as well: lies, anger, pride, vanity, strife, slander, and intrigue, since they damage relationships between people and corrupt social life. Daniel emphasizes the special religious and educational significance of confession for believers (the 12th word).

It is no exaggeration to say that the 13th word, titled "On the World and Those in the World," is the most original. In it, the author answers a question that deeply concerned people of that era: Is it possible to be saved while remaining in the world (that is, without becoming a monk)? Daniel confidently states that if a Christian lives according to the Lord's commandments both in public life and in family life, the gates to the Kingdom of Heaven are always open to him. With great skill and in beautiful, vivid language, Daniel sets forth the foundations of Christian asceticism for people living in the world. Renouncing all earthly things does not mean that one must cease all activity; on the contrary, one must be an active person, but earthly values should not evoke a passionate attachment to them, and one must never forget the eternal bliss of the Kingdom of Heaven. Negligence in earthly affairs is a sin rather than a virtue for a Christian. It can be said that Daniel eloquently addresses issues of social ethics and thereby contributes to the development of Old Russian Christian sociology; in the 13th sermon, we find many characteristic details and examples that reflect the moral atmosphere and social life of the 16th century, making this work a valuable source on the history of Old Russian culture⁸¹⁷.

The second collection, simply titled *Collection*, contains the six letters already mentioned, which deal with monastic life; the remaining letters, addressed to various individuals, touch on moral issues; they are relatively brief (only the 13th letter is quite lengthy) and, in terms of significance, are inferior to the writings in the first collection, ⁸¹⁸ *. When reading Metropolitan Daniel's "Collection," one fully agrees with the assessment by E. E. Golubinsky already cited here and, at the same time, is once again struck by the diversity of the characters of 16th-century Russians and the variety of their roles in the historical life of the era. Reading these works, one forgets that their author was a proud, cunning, and vengeful prince of the Church and politician; and even if one does recall this, one is struck by how political cunning of the worst kind could coexist in a single person with such great talent. Daniel, a faithful disciple of Joseph, in some of his writings goes beyond the boundaries of the Josephite school and overcomes its religious formalism.

But if we turn once more to his biography, we will see that these "departures from the school," evident in his writings, did indeed influence his ecclesiastical and political career. One of his epistles, which was not included in the *Collection*, was directed against the strife within the boyar faction and the boyars' high-handedness during the minority of the future Tsar Ivan IV. This epistle, composed in January 1539 and sent out as an archpastoral letter to all dioceses, marked the culmination of his literary and theological work; it cost him his metropolitan see, which he was forced to relinquish a month after the document was distributed. Daniel ended his life at the Joseph Monastery, where he had once taken monastic vows⁸¹⁹.

⁸¹⁷ Zhmakin. Op. cit. p. 263 ff.

⁸¹⁸ Cf.: Makariy. 2nd ed., vol. 7, pp. 345–367.

⁸¹⁹ Monuments of Ancient Russian Literature. Vol. 4, pp. 194–199 ("By the Humble Daniel, Metropolitan of All Russia, on Humility and Unity"). Cf.: Macarius. Vol. 6, pp. 206–207.

Abbot Joseph, Elder Artemy, Monk Zinovy, and Metropolitan Daniel were the most outstanding ecclesiastical writers of the 16th century. But to this list we must also add the name of Monk Philotheos, whose writings are of an ecclesiastical-political nature. All of these are highly interesting figures, although the scope of their activities and their influence on church life varied. They belong to an era in which one can trace the roots of all of Russia's subsequent ecclesiastical and spiritual history. The intensity and tension of ecclesiastical and political events were reflected in the apologetics and polemics, in the asceticism and dogmatics of all the writings of that time. For it was precisely during that era, during the lifetime of the generation that realized that only in Russia, only in Moscow, the Third Rome, had the purity of the Orthodox faith been preserved—it was precisely then that people appeared who called the purity of the faith into question, who attacked the Church's teachings, began to preach new heresies, and, worst of all, gained quite a few followers. All the theological works of that era are closely linked to this phenomenon. It is clear that the defenders of the Church emerged from the monastic community. They drew their spiritual strength not only from their conviction that their cause was just; they also drew from the spiritual sources of the preceding era—the 14th and 15th centuries—when Russian monasticism experienced its heyday, an era that found its theoretical culmination in the ascetic writings of St. Nilus of Sora and historically ended with the dispute between the Josephites and the Non-Acquirers. In the theological works of that era, one can discern the roots of future developments. We understand that much of what was written then was not original and does not correspond to our current notions of scholarly theology. But this does not diminish the significance of 16th-century theological works, for the pioneers cannot be judged by the standards of a more mature era. For its time, it was a brilliant flash that, unfortunately, faded in the following century. For the second half of the 16th century and the entire 17th century produced not a single significant ecclesiastical writer among the Russian monastic community: the monastics, immersed in the management of their monasteries' affairs, remained silent. Only the reform efforts undertaken by Patriarch Nikon and the theological dispute over the time of the transubstantiation of the Holy Gifts, which flared up in the last quarter of the 17th century, broke this silence. But first, we must examine some other phenomena related to the ecclesiastical and literary activities of the monastic community in the 16th and 17th centuries.

5. Hagiographic and Historical Writings

If we compare the literary activity of the monastic community in the 16th and 17th centuries, we find a very noticeable decline in the 17th century. From the early 1570s through the end of the 17th century, we find not a single writer whose education, talent, and eloquence could be ranked alongside those mentioned in the preceding paragraphs. On the one hand, the new generations lacked an inner connection to the past and were deeply immersed in the most acute events of their own era; on the other hand, the process of secularization of monastic life could not help but have a negative impact on the spiritual state of the monastic community. Although a detailed list of all the works written during this century and their authors would include many names belonging to members of the monastic community, these writers were not of particularly great significance for Russian ecclesiastical literature⁸²⁰. We will mention here only the works that we consider to be the most important and original.

Hagiographic literature, which flourished during the era of Metropolitan Makarii, fell into decline after his time. From the 11th century until Makarii's time—that is, until 1528, when, while still in Novgorod, he drew educated monks and others into hagiographic writing—a total of only 33 hagiographies had been composed in Ancient Rus'; during Makarii's era, 49 hagiographies or other works of hagiographic content were written, 28 of which were composed by monks⁸²¹. Among the hagiographies written in the second half of the 16th century and the first quarter of the 17th century, the following deserve mention.

Monk Misail of the Solovetsky Monastery composed a hagiography of Basil the Blessed and a canon to the saint that became very popular among the people. At the Antoniev Monastery in Novgorod, the hagiography of St. Anthony the Roman was revised, and around 1558, a monk from the same monastery named Nikifor wrote a new, very extensive hagiography of Anthony. Based on the notes of the monk Herman, a contemporary of St. Nil of Stolobensk, Philotheus Pirogov, a monk of the Boldino Monastery, wrote the life of this saint and a canon in the late 16th century. In 1590, at the Solovetsky Monastery, in connection with the transfer of the relics of St. Metropolitan Philip to that monastery, an unknown monk composed a life of the

⁸²⁰ For the best discussion of this, see: Filaret. Review. 1–2.

⁸²¹ Golubinsky. 2. 2. pp. 181–182, 184–187.

saint. Monk Sergius of the Danilov Monastery in Pereyaslav and Voivode S. R. Olferiev jointly composed “The Tale of St. Prince Roman of Uglich” and a canon to St. Prince Daniel of Moscow. Shortly before 1600, Monk Nathanael of the Korniliev Komel Monastery wrote the hagiography of the monastery’s founder, the Venerable Kornilius, and a canon in his honor. At the behest of Patriarch Job, Archimandrite Ion Dumin of Vologda compiled yet another (the third in number) hagiography of St. Prince Alexander Nevsky, which was essentially just a reworking of the first two hagiographies⁸²².

From 1627 to 1632, work was underway on compiling a grand hagiographic collection. Hieromonk German Tulupov († 1637) served as the editor of this extensive work. He used Metropolitan Makarii’s Menaion as his basis, supplementing it with lives not included in Makarii’s Menaion; he included some lives in his collection in multiple versions. Since German transcribed the lives in their entirety, without any abridgments, his collection holds a certain scholarly value⁸²³.

In connection with the glorification of Metropolitan Philip, the monk Gerasim Firsov of the Solovetsky Monastery wrote three works in 1652: the saint’s hagiography, a eulogy in his honor, and a canon⁸²⁴.

The hagiographic literature of the 16th–17th centuries is rounded out by the Chetii-Minei of St. Dimitri of Rostov († 1709), the first volume of which was printed in 1689. These Menaia, which from the very beginning became widely circulated and beloved by the Russian people, are composed in narrative form, a task that required considerable preliminary scholarly research on the source material. Their popularity among the Russian people is unparalleled, and the name of the renowned compiler of these Menaia is well known even in the most remote corners of Russia. A native of Southern Rus’ (he was born near Kyiv in 1651) and a graduate of the Kyiv-Bratsk School[], **Dimitri Tuptalo devoted his entire life to zealous, tireless work toward the Christian enlightenment of the Russian people; he was a brilliant preacher—his sermons have not lost their value to this day—and wherever he served the Church, his works bore good fruit. As abbot of a monastery in Southern Rus’, then as Metropolitan of Siberia (1701–1702), and finally Metropolitan of Rostov (1702–1709), he was distinguished by the purity of his soul and thoughts, as well as by his erudition, intelligence, and brilliant eloquence, imbued with deep piety. In his dioceses, the metropolitan paid special attention to the education of the parish clergy and the organization of schools. At the same time, he devoted much of his time to his extensive literary works. His profile was atypical for the monastic community of Muscovy; St. Dimitri belonged to the South Russian monastic order of the Kyiv Metropolis, where monastic life, the worldview of church circles, and their education were shaped by historical conditions different from those that had developed in Moscow**⁸²⁵.

It should also be noted that in the first half of the 16th century, the monastic community was engaged in the composition of works of historical content. Moreover, as already mentioned, monks, being literate, were the compilers and copyists of Old Russian chronicles. In the late 1520s, the so-called “Sophia Chronicle”—the Novgorod Chronicle—was compiled in Novgorod. The initiative and overall direction of this work belonged primarily to Archbishop Makarii. This chronicle covers Russian history up to 1538 and is distinguished by the comprehensiveness of its content and its historical accuracy⁸²⁶. The “Book of Ranks,” which we are already familiar with—and whose origin and compilation are also closely linked to the name of Metropolitan Makarii—can also be considered a historical work of sorts, one in which hagiographic material is extensively used.

In the field of Old Russian historiography, the works of another Metropolitan of Moscow—Joasaph—deserve special recognition. Joasaph Skripitsyn was initially a simple monk; later, from 1529 to 1539, he served as abbot of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery. In 1539, he was enthroned as Metropolitan of Moscow, but he held this high office only until 1542, when, under pressure from a clique of boyars during the minority of Ivan IV, he was forcibly removed from the throne and exiled to the Kirillov Monastery. In 1547, Joasaph, not without the patronage of Metropolitan Macarius, received permission to return to the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, where he died in 1555 or 1556, on June 26⁸²⁷. In terms of his ascetic and ecclesiastical-political

⁸²² Makarii. 10. pp. 226–227.

⁸²³ Klyuchevsky. Lives. pp. 297, 298; on I. Milyutin’s collection of the Menologion, see: Ibid. p. 298 and Makarii. 11. p. 222.

⁸²⁴ PDP. 188 (1916). On other, less significant hagiographic works: Filaret. Review. 1. 303, 316, 319, 351, 354, 360, 367, 369; Makarii. 11. pp. 220–222.

⁸²⁵ On St. Dimitri of Rostov, see the monograph: Shlyapkin, I. A., St. Dimitri of Rostov and His Time, 1651–1709 (1891).

⁸²⁶ Golubinsky. 2. 2. p. 192; The Sofia Chronicle, in: PSRL. 6.

⁸²⁷ Makarii. 2nd ed. 6. pp. 207–209; Nikolsky. Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery. 1. 1. p. LXVIII; Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 740.

views, he was very close to the Non-Acquirers and maintained close ties with the famous Maximus the Greek, who, thanks to his intercession, was released from the monastery dungeon. Joasaph's anti-Josephite views were very clearly evident in the hagiography he compiled of Archbishop Serapion of Novgorod and in his critical remarks on the Stoglav⁸²⁸. His ecclesiastical views and attitude toward the "Moscow—the Third Rome" ideology were expressed with particular clarity in his "Confession," where he emphasizes his—as Metropolitan of Moscow—canonical connection with the Patriarch of Constantinople⁸²⁹. For his time, Joasaph was a highly educated bishop; he had his own library and participated in the editing of the Typikon (its liturgical section), which was being revised at the Trinity-Sergius Lavra. Recently, historians of Russian literature have concluded that Joasaph was one of the authors—or even the principal author—of the Western Russian edition of the Chronograph and the Nikon Chronicle, which was compiled in the mid-16th century⁸³⁰.

Cornelius, abbot of the Pskov-Pechersk Monastery (1529–1570), also deserves special attention⁸³¹. As an igumen, Cornelius proved himself to be an outstanding figure. He oversaw the organization of monastic life, directed the construction of new buildings at the monastery, successfully engaged in Christian missionary work among the pagan population of Estonia, and devoted considerable attention to promoting icon painting within the monastery. The new structures he erected—more specifically, the massive fortification wall surrounding the monastery—played a fateful role in his destiny. During a visit to the monastery in 1570, Tsar Ivan IV—who was then waging an exhausting and unsuccessful war against the Polish King Stefan Batory—accused the abbot of treason: Cornelius, he claimed, had erected this stone wall against his troops in support of Stefan; the tsar struck the elderly, venerable abbot with an axe and hacked him to death. The monastery's synodicon recounts this event as follows: "From this mortal life, he was sent by the earthly tsar to the Heavenly King in his eternal dwelling in the year 7078 (1570), on the 20th day of February"⁸³². The martyr's remains were preserved incorrupt, and Cornelius came to be venerated in the monastery and the surrounding areas as a saint⁸³³. In more recent times, it has been established that Abbot Cornelius was the chief compiler of the Pskov Chronicle, which was part of the 1547 Compilation⁸³⁴. Cornelius also wrote the "Chronicle of the Pechersk Monastery." It is noteworthy that, while studying the history of his monastery's founding, Cornelius subjected the sources—often replete with legendary material—to rigorous, one might say, scientific-historical criticism and wrote his "Chronicle" based on carefully verified material. In this sense, Cornelius was one of the first in Rus' to apply a critical method to historiography. "The Chronicle of the Kiev Caves Monastery," unfortunately, does not allow us to draw conclusions about its author's ecclesiastical and political views—whether he was close to the Josephites or the Non-Acquirers—for in his concise and clear narrative, faithful to historical facts, he avoids expressing opinions on the issues that divided these two factions. St. Hegumen Cornelius appears to us as an educated man of his time, with an energetic, businesslike character, and as a strict abbot whose administration of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra was marked by a certain level of asceticism. His martyr's death gave rise to numerous legends surrounding his figure, which were zealously preserved by subsequent generations of the monastic brotherhood and reinforced the people's reverence for the saint. But even without these legends, the historian values Hegumen Cornelius as one of the last representatives of the finest circles of monasticism in 16th-century Muscovy.

6. The Writings of Monk Hermolaus-Erasmus

An overview of the multifaceted activities of 16th-century writers who belonged to the monastic order would be incomplete without mentioning one of the most original authors among them. This figure has only

⁸²⁸ Rozanov, S. "The 'Nikonian' Chronological Compilation and Joasaph as One of Its Compilers," in: IORAS. 1930. 13. p. 277; Stoglav. Ch. 100; Shakhmatoff, A. "The Ioasaf Chronicle," in: ZhMNP. 1904. 5.

⁸²⁹ Golubinsky. 2. 1. p. 740.

⁸³⁰ Ibid. p. 620. Rozanov. Ibid. pp. 268–270. Lavrov, N. "Notes on the Nikon Chronicle," in: LZAK. 34 (1927). 1. p. 55. This chronicle is called the Nikon Chronicle because its manuscript belonged to Patriarch Nikon.

⁸³¹ Serebryansky. Op. cit. pp. 21, 39–46, 339–341, 345, 370. I am indebted to art historian N. E. Andreev (Prague) for much of the information about Abbot Cornelius; he informed me of his research conducted at the Pskov-Pechersk Monastery in 1937–1938 and of his monograph based on the findings of that research, which, unfortunately, was confiscated without any justification by the German authorities during the war of 1939–1945 and has since been lost.

⁸³² The Book of the Saints, in: Readings. 1887. 4. p. 55 (No. 157).

⁸³³ Golubinsky. History of Canonization. p. 332.

⁸³⁴ Nasonov, A. "From the History of Pskov Chronicling," in: Historical Notes 18 (1945). p. 261.

recently attracted the attention of literary historians: we are speaking of Ermolai the Sinner, or Ermolai-Erasmus. Very little is known about his life, only isolated details. We know only that his career spanned the mid-16th century; he was likely the archpriest of the Church of the Savior in Moscow from 1550 to 1555, and later took monastic vows; Yermolai belonged to Metropolitan Makarii's inner circle in the 1550s, when the Russian "intelligentsia" first made its mark in literary works; it was thanks to their education that the metropolitan's grand literary undertakings were realized. Within this circle, Ermolai-Erasmus emerged as an extraordinary publicist, offering original responses to certain questions related to the social relations of his era⁸³⁵. He is credited with 16 different works, 11 of which were undoubtedly written by him.

First and foremost, "An Admonition to His Own Soul" deserves mention—a lyrical reflection on the meaning of repentance in general and, in particular, for those vested with authority and the right to judge, on their religious responsibility, and on the moral danger of clerical arrogance, the "dignity of earthly greatness." At the same time, the author does not forget to remind us that spiritual authority rules over the soul, while secular authority rules only over the human body⁸³⁶. His "Book on the Holy Trinity" is also remarkable. In it, Hermolaus attempts to show that the principle of the Trinity lies at the foundation of "all things." In the first part of the "Book," he expounds the Orthodox doctrine of the Holy Trinity, drawing on well-chosen quotations from Holy Scripture. But trinity, according to Hermolaus, is inherent in the entire universe—he writes about this in the second part of the "Book." Human beings, as the highest creation, are inconceivable without unity within trinity, for their constituent parts—spirit, soul, and body—can exist only thanks to such unity; conversely, without these three parts, a human being cannot be whole and harmonious. The third part of the *Book* consists of prayers addressed to the Holy Trinity, set forth in poetic form:⁸³⁷. Ermolai's reflections, written with clarity and internal logic, are distinguished by the simplicity of their language and expressions; one cannot deny the author's knowledge and theological education.

Hermolaus also displayed an interest in social issues. His moral-theological reflection titled "A Discourse on Love and Truth and on the Victory over Enmity and Falsehood"⁸³⁸ has survived; in it, the author expresses his views on social inequality in Moscow society of the 1550s. He accuses the Moscow elite, the "nobles," of a lack of Christian love; their wealth is multiplied at the expense of the hardship of others—the truly working classes, primarily those who sustain their meager existence through hard daily labor. These assertions by Yermolai-Erasmus remind us of the remarks made by Prince-Monk Vassian regarding social inequality in Moscow society and the words of Metropolitan Joasaph concerning the tax burden that oppressed the peasantry in the mid-16th century.⁸³⁹ Even more characteristic is his "Letter to the Tsar" Ivan, as well as the treatise on the economic significance of the peasant class, which he presented to the tsar. Here he outlines a program of urgent land reforms which, through the just distribution of land and a reduction in taxes (to *15 percent of the harvest!*), *could improve the peasants' situation and thereby strengthen their productive capacity. As a result, Erasmus believes, the general welfare of the kingdom will increase, and the Christian commandments of justice and love will be fulfilled, to the greater glory of the tsar. Along the way, the author makes some observations on the state of trade and proposes various improvements*⁸⁴⁰.

The writings of this unique "specialist" in a monastic cowl are characteristic, perhaps, not so much of monasticism as of the broader picture of the era—an era of no less historical tension than the time of Peter's reforms, and of no less significance for the fate of Russia. When a historian attempts to identify in Peter's reforms the causes and roots of various phenomena in Russian history—political, social, economic, and ecclesiastical-political—he comes to the conclusion that these roots lie much deeper, that they date back to the 16th century, primarily to the first half of that century. Although, by today's standards and perceptions, all these figures who appeared on the ecclesiastical-political and cultural scene may seem of little significance,

⁸³⁵ Shlyapkin, I. "Ermolai the Wise, a New Writer of the Time of Ivan the Terrible," in: Collection in Honor of S. F. Platonov (1911). pp. 550, 553. Nikolsky, N. "More on Erasmus the Sinner," in: Bibliographic Chronicle 1 (1914); Rzhiga. "The Literary Activity of Ermolai-Erasmus," in: LZAK 33 (1926). pp. 103–200; Yavorsky, A. "On the Question of the Literary Activity of Ermola-Erasmus," in *Slavia*, 9 (1930–31). pp. 59–80, 273–299.

⁸³⁶ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. pp. 555–562.

⁸³⁷ Rzhiga. Op. cit. pp. 173–176.

⁸³⁸ Ibid. p. 157.

⁸³⁹ Cf. Chapter VI; Stoglav, Chapter 100. (832) Rzhiga. Op. cit. pp. 173–176.

⁸⁴⁰ On this work, see: Rzhiga. Op. cit. pp. 193–199; also pp. 152, 158, 186; partially in: Zhmakin. Op. cit. pp. 69–71. Cf.: Sobolevsky, A. "Materials and Notes on Old Russian Literature," in: IORAS 17 (1912), pp. 2, 94–96.

for their own era—and for its cultural and ecclesiastical-political atmosphere—they were major and distinctive figures.

7. Seventeenth-Century Literature

The 17th century was paler, more impersonal, and less creative. In monastic circles, we observe a decline in spiritual and cultural interests. The social and economic concerns and difficulties of this century cannot be explained solely by the consequences of the Time of Troubles⁸⁴¹. In essence, the causes lay in the circumstances of the preceding century. In a certain sense, this justifies the opinions and assessments already mentioned here, expressed by publicists who, although they drew attention to the existing conditions, did not yet possess the knowledge necessary to predict future developments and draw corresponding conclusions. The monastic community did not respond to these difficulties, and isolated journalistic writings are not worth mentioning. In ecclesiastical and political life, there were no such acute problems as, for example, the issue of church land ownership, which had so deeply troubled people a century earlier.

Among the monks of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery—whose community did not particularly distinguish itself in the field of ecclesiastical literature in the 16th century—there were nevertheless several writers worthy of mention. The monastery's cellarer, Avraamy Palitsyn (d. 1627), composed his famous "Account of the Siege of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery" during the Time of Troubles. This work is, on the whole, a very good source on the history of the Time of Troubles, and its author cannot be denied literary talent⁸⁴².

Another cellarer of this monastery, Simon Azarin (d. 1665), is known primarily as the author of the work **On the Newly Revealed Miracles of the Venerable Sergius* (of Radonezh)*, which supplements earlier hagiographies of this saint⁸⁴³. Another of Azaryin's works, "The Life and Deeds of Our Father Archimandrite Dionysius," was also very popular; it recounts the activities of this outstanding figure. This work complements Palitsyn's "Tale," and together they provide a picture of the monastery's involvement in events of national significance during the Time of Troubles, when Archimandrite Dionysius (1610–1633) served as the monastery's abbot⁸⁴⁴. Less well known is Azaryin's third work, "The Tale of the Ruin of the Muscovite State," in which the author writes about the causes of the Russo-Polish War of 1654—an attempt to justify the necessity of this war in the eyes of the people, possibly commissioned by the government⁸⁴⁵. Azarin is also the author of an extensive monthly calendar of annual holidays and Russian saints, which has survived only in manuscript form. The "Prayer Canon to St. Dionysius" concludes Azarin's literary career⁸⁴⁶.

Of particular interest are the travel notes on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem (1651–52), written by *Hierodeacon Iona, nicknamed "the Little One"*⁸⁴⁷. *Iona's narrative contains a very detailed description of Jerusalem and its holy sites; it is distinguished by its simplicity and authenticity and is free from the fictional elements characteristic of other "pilgrimages to holy places" by Old Russian writers.*

A very extensive work was compiled by the monk Arseny Sukhanov, who was also the cellarer of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery. In connection with the planned revision of liturgical books, Arseny was commissioned by Patriarch Nikon to travel to Constantinople and familiarize himself there, on the spot, with liturgical rites and books. Arseny recorded the results of this journey (1649–1653) in a book he titled **Proskynitar**⁸⁴⁸. Arseny's **Proskynitarion** is divided into three parts; the first contains his travel diary (Arseny visited Iasi in Moldavia, Constantinople, many islands of the Greek archipelago, Egypt, and Jerusalem, and returned to Moscow via the Caucasus and Georgia); the second part is entirely devoted to a

⁸⁴¹ We refer to the work: Platonov, S. F. *Essays on the History of the Time of Troubles in the Muscovite State* (1899).

⁸⁴² "The Tale" (first published in 1784) contains 86 chapters, of which chapters 1–6 are devoted to the period from 1584 to 1611; chapters 7–58 contain a detailed account of the siege of the monastery; the final chapters, 59–86, depict the state of all of Rus' during the Time of Troubles. On Avraamy, see: Kedrov. *Op. cit.* and the same author, "Avraamy Palitsyn as a Writer," in: *Russkaya Arkhivnaya Gazeta*, 1886, no. 8; "The Tale" in: PDP, vol. 8 (1883).

⁸⁴³ Klyuchevsky. *Lives*. pp. 350–351.

⁸⁴⁴ This work, "The Life and Deeds of Our Father, Archimandrite Dionysius," has been published many times (1st ed. 1809) and is very popular.

⁸⁴⁵ "The Tale of the Ruin of the Muscovite State and the Entire Russian Land," in: *Readings*. 1881. 2 (1st ed.).

⁸⁴⁶ Gorsky. *A Historical Description of the Holy Trinity-Sergius Lavra*. 2 (1890). p. 15.

⁸⁴⁷ This work, "The Tale and Legend of the Journey to Jerusalem and Constantinople," has been reprinted many times: 1836; 1849; in: *Readings*. 1871. 1; PDP (1882); the best edition in: PPS. 42. Edited by S. Dolgov, with information about Iona in the introduction.

⁸⁴⁸ Arseny Sukhanov. *Proskynitarion*, in: PPS (1889). On Sukhanov: S. Belokurov, Arseny Sukhanov (1891).

description of Jerusalem and its holy sites, while the third part describes the liturgical rites of the Greek Church. In addition, Arsenius brought back with him many manuscripts (up to 700) of liturgical and theological content, which were to serve as the basis for Patriarch Nikon's undertaking to revise the liturgical books.

As for theological literature specifically, no works of particular originality have survived from the 17th century. The number of works written at that time was relatively large, but they are not significant in terms of content⁸⁴⁹. However, the works that resulted from the dispute over the timing of the consecration of the Holy Gifts or were written in connection with Nikon's revision of the liturgical books deserve greater attention. The first issue was discussed primarily by representatives of the monastic community, whereas in the extraordinarily abundant literature that arose in connection with the revision of the books, the monastic community no longer played the leading role. But before we name the most notable works, it is worth making a general observation about 17th-century ecclesiastical literature. The language of this literature is distinctive. Writers of that era were characterized by a particular penchant for verbosity and rhetoric, which, however, lacked true eloquence; they marred the language with a multitude of Russified Polish, Latin, and, to some extent, Greek words—a negative consequence of Western and southwestern influences. Taken together, all this tires the reader and hinders comprehension; thus, the practical value of these works was diminished even for their contemporaries. Perhaps for this reason, most of them remained in manuscript form and are known to us primarily from catalogs or brief archival descriptions.

"The Word on the Kingdom of Heaven" (1626), written by the monk Anthony, nicknamed Podolsky, who may have been a native of Southwestern Rus'⁸⁵⁰, is not without originality. In the six chapters of the "Word," the author first discusses the nature of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation of Christ—the Source of our salvation—and then attempts to depict the Kingdom of Heaven, describing the bliss of the saints, their incorruptibility, and their "age" (chapters 1–4); the second part (chapters 5 and 6) contains a comparative analysis of earthly values and heavenly bliss. Although Anthony's "Word" is not without internal logic and sincere piety, the excessive rhetoric and ornate language diminish the value of this work⁸⁵¹. It is also worth mentioning the exegetical work on the Book of Genesis—*The Six Days* by Athanasius, Archbishop of Kholmogory (1682–1702)—and his *Confession of Faith*, an exposition of the Nicene Creed⁸⁵².

Ignatius Rimsky-Korsakov was a very versatile writer. A member of the service nobility, and having served for some time as a chamberlain at the court of Tsar Alexei, he entered the Solovetsky Monastery in 1677; by 1685, he was already the archimandrite of the Novospassky Monastery, and during the controversy over the transposition of the Holy Gifts, he was among the most zealous supporters of Patriarch Joakim. His relationship with the new Patriarch Adrian did not develop very well, and his appointment as Metropolitan of Siberia may have been a kind of honorary exile. His life ended tragically: Ignatius lost his mind, was retired in 1700, and died in 1701. In the 1780s and 1790s, he composed three hagiographies: 1) "The Life of St. Princess Anna of Kashin," 2) "The Life of St. Simeon of Verkhoturye," and 3) "The Life and Testament of Patriarch Joachim." The last of these works, written with a specific purpose—to promote the canonization of Joachim, a plan that did not meet with Patriarch Adrian's approval—is closely linked to the position of the "Orthodox Party" in the dispute over the transposition of the Gifts; this work is not particularly objective and takes the form of a panegyric, yet it remains an important source on the history of its era. In addition, Ignatius is the author of "An Explanation of the Image of Sophia, the Wisdom of God," two polemical works directed against Protestantism and Catholicism, three works against schism that gained particularly wide renown, and, finally, "News of the Russian Tsardom" and "A Word to the Army," composed in connection with the Crimean campaign of 1685. The latter two works are political in nature; they were intended to support the government of Princess Sophia; "Interpretation of the Image of Sophia" also contains allusions to Princess Sophia's "wisdom"⁸⁵³.

⁸⁴⁹ Cf.: Filaret. Obzor. 1–2, where these works are listed rather than analyzed.

⁸⁵⁰ Cf.: Makarii. 11. pp. 223–227; published in: Prav. sob. 1864. 1. pp. 108–126, 227–246. See also Makarii. 10. p. 195.

⁸⁵¹ Anthony of Podolye composed several more works of a moral and edifying nature; Makarii. 11. p. 224; in addition, the polemical work "On Purifying Fire" (Makarii. 10. p. 195), which was written in connection with the revision of books in the first quarter of the 17th century.

⁸⁵² Filaret. Review. 1. No. 367.

⁸⁵³ Shlyapkin. St. Dimitri of Rostov. pp. 168–169; "The Life and Testament of Patriarch Joakim," in: OLDP (1879) and PDP. 1880. No. 2. Polemical works: Lebedev, A. "Historical Research in the Archives of Southern Russia," in: Readings. 1884. 3; see: Tsvetaev. "From the History of Foreign Confessions in Russia" (1866). pp. 215–236. Writings against schism: Epistles (Kazan, 1855); the

As an example of a bishop who was concerned with maintaining order in his diocese, one can point to Paul, Metropolitan of Ryazan (1681–1686). He was the author of a lengthy “Circular Letter” to the clergy of his diocese. In this epistle, the metropolitan, addressing the parish clergy, writes that while touring the diocese and visiting churches, he discovered many irregularities in the celebration of divine services; he supports his instructions with excerpts from Holy Scripture and canonical books, which attests to his sound education. Paul insistently demands that parish priests and monastery abbots conduct divine services according to the liturgical books revised under Patriarch Nikon and after him—a practice that, apparently, was not followed everywhere. Metropolitan Paul was one of the few bishops of that time who delivered oral sermons⁸⁵⁴.

It is known that sermons from the pulpit were not given much attention in Muscovite Rus', and this was explained not only by the clergy's lack of education or negligence, but also by the distinctive nature of Old Russian religiosity⁸⁵⁵. Compared to the 11th–13th centuries—think of Luke the Jew, St. Theodosius of the Caves, Metropolitan Hilarion, Cyril of Turov, and St. Abraham—the later period lagged far behind in this regard. In the 17th century, after 1654 and especially after 1686, when the Kiev Metropolis came under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarch⁸⁵⁶, ecclesiastical and religious influences from Kiev began to permeate Moscow's life intensively. As a result, there was a certain revival of ecclesiastical preaching. St. Dimitri of Rostov deserves special mention; although he occupies such a significant place in the history of ecclesiastical education during the last quarter of the century, he was not a figure typical of Moscow monasticism, for his spiritual formation took place in Southwestern Rus' with its distinctive system of spiritual education⁸⁵⁷. Moscow monasticism and the episcopate themselves did very little to advance ecclesiastical preaching. One can mention only a few circular letters, which were read to the people from the pulpit and served as substitutes for sermons. Let us name three of them: two were written by Patriarch Nikon and one by Metropolitan Ion of Rostov (1652–1691). Patriarch Nikon usually delivered sermons himself, which was a great rarity at the time; unfortunately, his sermons have been lost⁸⁵⁸, but two circular letters (1656) have survived. One of them was composed on the occasion of the founding of the Monastery of the Cross. The Patriarch writes about the salvific significance of Christ's death on the Cross and offers a dogmatic interpretation of the three-fingered sign of the Cross⁸⁵⁹. The second letter was written during an epidemic in Muscovy (1656); it is addressed to the people and calls on the faithful to repent and purify themselves morally. Here, Nikon refutes the then-widespread superstitious belief that it is a sin to take any measures against an epidemic, which was viewed as God's punishment; he justifies such measures with quotations from Holy Scripture⁸⁶⁰. Metropolitan Jonah's extensive archpastoral letter contains moral instruction addressed to both the parish clergy and the people of his diocese. In it, Jonah writes about the ministerial duties and proper way of life of priests, sets forth the foundations of Christian morality for the laity, and vehemently condemns the widespread vice of drunkenness⁸⁶¹.

Hieromonk Karyon Istomin (d. 1717) of the Chudov Monastery in Moscow was a remarkable figure. He lived at the cusp of two eras, when the traditions and worldview of Muscovite Russia were shaken by Peter the Great's reforms and new traits began to emerge in the spiritual character of society. Karion was a zealous advocate and practitioner of the Enlightenment. One of the first students at the school run by the brothers Ioannikiy and Sofroniy Likhudov at the Zaikonospassky Monastery⁸⁶², he studied for a time at the Kiev

remaining works have survived only in manuscript form. The work by Abramov, N., “Metropolitan Ignatius Korsakov,” in **Stranik**, 1862, was unavailable to me. On the relationship between Ignatius and Patriarch Adrian: Ustryalov, **History of Peter the Great**, vol. 3, Appendix 7, p. 536.

⁸⁵⁴ This letter appears in: Piksanov, A., **Ancient Letters and Acts of the Ryazan Region** (1854), No. 51, and Vozdvizhensky, T., **Historical Review of the Ryazan Hierarchy** (1820), pp. 171–181. Cf.: Filaret. *Review*. 1. No. 236; and also: Solovyov. *History of Russia*. 14. p. 90.

⁸⁵⁵ Filaret. *Obzor*. Vol. 1, No. 367; Petukhov. *Op. cit.*, p. 234.

⁸⁵⁶ PSZ. Vol. 2, Nos. 1198 and 1199.

⁸⁵⁷ Cf. note 820 and Popov, M., *St. Dimitri of Rostov and His Works* (1910).

⁸⁵⁸ Makarii. 12. p. 269 ff.

⁸⁵⁹ IRI. 4. pp. 831–860; Makarii. 12. pp. 255–257.

⁸⁶⁰ PSZ. 1. No. 188.

⁸⁶¹ AI. 4. Nos. 172–177.

⁸⁶² Mirkovich. “On Schools and Education During the Patriarchal Period,” in: ZhMNP. 1878. 7. Smentsovsky, M. *The Likhuda Brothers. A Study in the History of Church Education and Church Life in the Late 17th and Early 18th Centuries* (1899); on the Likhuda brothers, see Chapter XI.

Academy (in 1681 and 1687)⁸⁶³. In Moscow, he served as a proofreader at the Imperial Printing House, belonged to the innermost circle of the extremely conservative Patriarch Joakim (1674–1690)—which may indicate Karion’s “diplomatic” talent—and carried out some of the patriarch’s important assignments. Karion also enjoyed the full trust of Joachim’s successor, Patriarch Adrian (1690–1700), and served as something of a personal secretary to him. Later, he headed the Imperial Printing Office. In 1712, Karion traveled to Novgorod to teach at a school founded by Metropolitan Job, but he did not stay there long. He was close friends with St. Dimitri of Rostov and assisted him in compiling hagiographic material for his Menologion. Karion Istomin wrote several sermons and other works, collected in a manuscript anthology with the curious title **Veseliti** (a title characteristic of the corrupted language of the time), many poems, “The Primer,” intended for teaching not only “young men” but also “young women” (!), and even “Citizenship of Good Manners”—a manual on etiquette⁸⁶⁴. Karion represents a new type of Russian monk from the late 17th century. We will encounter similar figures later in connection with other topics in our book. At that time, there was a prevailing trend of donning a monastic cowl to further one’s career. But given the circumstances of the era, which called for a revival of general and ecclesiastical education, the activities of such individuals were nonetheless of a positive nature.

Chapter XI. Western Influences and the Theological Debate on the Transubstantiation of the Holy Gifts

1. The Penetration of Western Influences in the 17th Century

In the last quarter of the 17th century, monasticism once again became actively involved in the religious life of Moscow. The theological dispute over the timing of the consecration of the Holy Gifts during the Divine Liturgy is notable in that it clearly reveals two distinct currents within Moscow’s monastic community: the “Greek Orthodox” and the “Western,” or “Roman Catholic.” The penetration of Roman Catholic dogmatic doctrines was not sudden or unexpected; on the contrary, it was the result of a whole series of historical circumstances known in the literature under the general term “Western influences.” This is not the place for a detailed examination of their full diversity and their impact on various aspects of Muscovite life and culture even before the reforms of Peter the Great⁸⁶⁵. We can focus only on those influences that manifested themselves in the realm of religious worldview.

As is evident from our account, two convictions took deep root in the hearts of the Muscovites of the 16th and 17th centuries: first, the conviction that Christianity had remained pure and uncorrupted only in the Greek Orthodox faith—or even in its “Russian Orthodox” expression—and, second, that the life of human society must be built upon the foundation of Christ’s teachings and develop in accordance with them. These views had long been established among the Russians, from the very beginning of Christianization—recall Metropolitan Hilarion’s **Slov** (11th century) (Chapter I)—and had only continued to develop and strengthen since then. The writings of the monk Philotheus and the idea of Moscow as the “Third Rome” expressed therein were merely a solemn proclamation of these views.

Along with the conviction in one’s own orthodoxy and, as a consequence, in one’s own exceptionalism, a certain religious pride also takes root. Confidence in the truth of Orthodoxy is, in and of itself, a perfectly normal, non-sinful manifestation of religiosity, but unnecessary exaggerations often go beyond the bounds of

⁸⁶³ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. Appendix. pp. 77–79. On Karyon Istomin: Brailovsky, S. “Karyon Istomin: His Life and Works,” in: CHOLDP. 1889. 4–6; idem. “On the Biography of Karyon Istomin,” in: ZhMNP. 1891. 8.

⁸⁶⁴ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. pp. 256, 263, 283, 368, 370, 442; Appendix, p. 79.

⁸⁶⁵ “The Greek influence was ecclesiastical,” writes V. O. Klyuchevsky, “while the Western influence was secular. The Greek influence permeated the whole of society without permeating the whole person; the Western influence permeated the whole person without permeating the whole of society” (Geschichte Russlands, Vol. 3, p. 283). For reference, I will mention only the most significant works that will help to clearly present the overall picture of Western influences: S. Platonov, **Moscow and the West** (1925); N. Petrov, “On the Influence of West Russian Literature on Old Russian Literature,” in: **TKDA**, 1872, nos. 4, 5, and 7 (this old work is still quite relevant); Klyuchevsky, V. “Western Influence in Russia in the 17th Century: A Historical-Psychological Essay,” in **Questions of Philosophy and Psychology**. 36, 38, and 39 (1897); idem. **Geschichte Russlands**. 3. pp. 281–307; Milyukov, P. **Sketches of Russian Cultural History**. 2 vols. (1898–1901); Brückner, A. The Europeanization of Russia (1888); Luther, A. History of Russian Literature (1925); Winkler, M. Russian History since the Beginning of the 17th Century, in: Propylaea World History. 9 (1933). pp. 310–420.

true piety. The Russian people combined their conviction in their own orthodoxy with a pronounced hostility toward other Christian denominations and labeled any form of Christianity that was not Russian Orthodox as heresy. This type of religious consciousness was not, in essence, something typically Russian; objectively speaking, it was characteristic of all medieval religiosity, but there was also a Russian contribution—a negative one—to the history of the inevitable “Una Sancta” [One Holy Church]. These features of Russian religious consciousness led to the fact that apologetics—justified in and of itself—took on an overly confrontational character, that defense in word and deed was conducted with excessive hostility, and that a lack of knowledge about Western Christianity was evident.

As a result of the penetration of Roman Catholic influences, first into the ecclesiastical life of the Kiev Metropolis and then, through Kiev, into that of the Moscow Metropolis, Roman Catholic doctrine gained adherents even among the Russian monastic community. As early as the 14th century, a portion of the Russian people, who were Greek Orthodox by faith, maintained unity with the Russian Church only in terms of unity of faith and canons, but not in hierarchical terms, for they had been severed from their Mother Church as a result of the establishment of a separate Kyiv Metropolis (1448, finalized in 1458)⁸⁶⁶. In 1569, Lithuania and Southwestern Rus’ united into a single state as a result of the Union of Lublin, and the Greek Orthodox dioceses of the Kyiv Metropolis were thereby politically subordinated to the Polish kings. Poland was a Roman Catholic country; economic and cultural ties between the Catholic and Orthodox populations paved the way for Catholic influence, especially since this influence found strong support from the Polish government.

From a historical perspective, it was fateful that Rus’ judged the Roman Catholic Church by the standards of Polish Catholicism, for Polish Catholicism had driven a wedge between the Russian people, the Russian Church, on the one hand, and the Roman Catholic Church, on the other—mutual understanding and objective assessment were hindered and even became impossible. Russians formed their impression of the Catholic Church through their encounters with Polish Catholicism. The Polish government’s policy in the purely Russian lands under its control led to political and ecclesiastical circumstances becoming closely intertwined, and the words “Pole” and “Catholic” became synonymous for the Russian people. Poland’s intervention in the Russian Time of Troubles (an ill-advised policy during the appearance of False Dmitry) and the clumsy attempts by the Polish clergy to promote Catholicism in Russia had particularly grave consequences. In the centuries following the Time of Troubles, Russian-Polish relations, disputes, and wars were only superficially of a national-political nature; in reality, the issues at stake went beyond state borders and spheres of influence. These events had a deeper, ecclesiastical-historical significance, for they ultimately deprived the Churches of the opportunity to unite. The mistakes of both governments and the church hierarchy—who passed hasty judgments based on phenomena of local significance—along with the bitterness of the leaders of various factions and their unworthy deeds, which cast a dark shadow over the entire history of the Union in Poland and Western Rus’, all of this turned the two Christian denominations into enemies. “Schismatics” and “heretics” now stood opposed to one another, and no other political movement, no other literary controversy, was marked by so much mutual prejudice, accusation, and vilification. These were two hostile camps that, nevertheless, could not do without one another.

Western cultural influences, and especially Western education, penetrated ever more deeply into the spiritual life of Southwestern Rus’; this became particularly evident in the second half of the 16th century. Gradually, these new trends reached Muscovy, and this process continued into the following century⁸⁶⁷. These

⁸⁶⁶ From 1037 onward, Kyiv served as the seat of the head of the Russian Church, the Metropolitan of Kyiv. Metropolitan Cyril II (1240–1280) lived alternately in Kyiv and Vladimir on the Klyazma River; his successor, Metropolitan Maxim (1283–1305), moved permanently to Vladimir in 1299. Metropolitan Peter (1308–1325) relocated his residence from Vladimir to Moscow. The southwestern Russian dioceses were located in Lithuania at that time. In 1448, Jonah was appointed Metropolitan of Moscow. Casimir IV, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, recognized Jonah’s canonical jurisdiction over the Lithuanian dioceses by a special charter (1451). In 1458, Gregory Mamma, Patriarch of Constantinople, appointed a special “Metropolitan of Kyiv”—Gregory Bulgarin—to administer the nine Lithuanian dioceses (Bryansk, Smolensk, Przemyśl, Turov, Lutsk, Vladimir-Volyn, Chełm, and Galicia). After the death of Metropolitan Jonah (1461), the Metropolitans of Moscow received the title “of Moscow and All Rus’.” From that time on, the Kiev Metropolis followed its own distinct historical path. See on this subject: Sokolov, D. *History of the Division of the Russian Metropolis* (1900); Sokolov, P. *The Russian Bishop from Byzantium and the Right to His Appointment until the Beginning of the 15th Century* (1913); as well as: Makarii, vols. 4–5, and Golubinsky, vol. 2, p. 1.

⁸⁶⁷ From the extensive literature on this subject, we mention: Sobolevsky, A., *Western Influence on the Literature of Muscovy in the 15th–17th Centuries* (1899); Shlyapkin, A. *Op. cit.*; Florovsky, A. *The Conflict of Two Traditions in Intellectual Life in Eastern Europe in the 16th–17th Centuries*. Prague, 1937; Chodnicki, K. *The Orthodox Church and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. 1370–1632* (1934).

influences took particularly deep root in the field of school education; schools appeared in many cities, founded mostly by Orthodox brotherhoods, whose curricula and teaching methods reflected Western influences. In 1615, the Kyiv Brotherhood School was founded; in 1631, Metropolitan Petro Mohyla established a college that later developed into the Kyiv Theological Academy. It is known from the history of the Kyiv College that the system of academic and theological education there was almost exactly the same as in the Jesuit colleges, with their scholastic teaching methods. Gradually, certain Catholic theological doctrines began to find their way into South Russian theological literature. Many members of the clergy, monastic community, and episcopate who were educated there or deepened their knowledge by reading such literature were inclined to accept these doctrines and thus became proponents of Catholic views in the ecclesiastical life of the Kyiv Metropolis⁸⁶⁸. But since other monks⁸⁶⁹ and bishops firmly adhered to the teachings of the Greek Orthodox Church, a rather fierce controversy arose right there in the Kyiv Metropolis, resulting in the publication of numerous theological treatises⁸⁷⁰.

In Moscow, all of this was closely monitored, and nearly all ecclesiastical writings produced in the Kyiv Metropolis were suspected of “Latin heresy”; defensive measures were also taken. We will mention only the most notable of these. Thus, in 1620, under Patriarch Filaret, a Council was convened in Moscow, which decreed that the sacrament of baptism be re-administered to Catholics and Uniates if they wished to convert to the Russian Church; under Patriarch Joasaph (1634–1641), this decree was even incorporated into the Trebnik (1639), and it was not until the Council of 1667 that the rebaptism of Catholics was definitively prohibited⁸⁷¹. In 1628, Tsar Mikhail and the patriarch ordered the burning of the writings of Archimandrite Cyril Tranquillion of Chernihiv; at the same time, all books of the Lithuanian press—that is, those published in Lithuania or Ukraine—were banned. Prior to this, they had been widely circulated in Moscow, found their way into monastic libraries, and were acquired by the clergy and bishops⁸⁷². In 1644, a collection known as the “Book of Cyril” was published, intended to denounce “the Romans and Latins, as well as the Lutherans and Calvinists,” in order to “silence those heretical tongues”⁸⁷³. However, another collection gained wider circulation—the “Book on Faith,” which subsequently came to mean so much to the Old Believers (schismatics). It was written by Hegumen Nafanail of the St. Michael’s Monastery in Kyiv around 1644 and was printed in Moscow with some changes in 1648.⁸⁷⁴

Neither the government nor the church authorities could halt the spread of South Russian influences. Another significant factor was that as early as the 1330s and 1340s, many monks—due to persecution by the Poles—fled, either individually or in groups, from the Kyiv Metropolis to Muscovy and dispersed among various monasteries⁸⁷⁵. Patriarch Nikon needed educated people for the revision of the liturgical books he had

⁸⁶⁸ Shlyapkin. *Op. cit.*, pp. 108 ff.; Kharlamovich, K. *Western Russian Orthodox Schools of the 16th and Early 17th Centuries* (1905); Golubev. *Metropolitan Peter (Mogila) of Kyiv and His Associates*. Vol. 1 (1883); Makarii (Bulgakov). *History of the Kyiv Academy* (1843); Titov, F. *Higher Education in Kyiv Ukraine* (1924); Golubev. *History of the Kyiv Theological Academy. The Mohyla Period* (1886); Petrov, N. *The Kyiv Academy in the Second Half of the 17th Century* (1885).

⁸⁶⁹ An interesting representative of the Greek Orthodox party was the monk Ioann Vishensky (died in the first quarter of the 17th century). See: Zhitetsky, I. *The Literary Activity of Ioann Vishensky* (1890); Franko, I. *Ivan Vyshensky and His Works* (1895); some of his writings were published in: *AYUZR*. 2 (1865). pp. 205–270; *Arkh. YUZR*. 1. 7 (1887). pp. 19 ff. and in: Golubev, S. *Metropolitan Peter (Mogila) of Kyiv*. 1 (1883). Appendix. pp. 67 ff. Vishensky’s writings provide a wealth of material on social relations and monastic life in Southern Rus’ of that era.

⁸⁷⁰ This literature is very abundant. We will mention only the following: “Monuments of Polemical Literature in Western Rus’,” in: *RIB*. 7 and 19; Arkhangelsky, A. “The Struggle Against Catholicism and Western Rus’ Literature of the Late 16th and First Half of the 17th Centuries,” in: *Readings*. 1888, 1; further: Makarii, 10; as well as the work by A. Florovsky mentioned above. Specialized monographs: V. Zavitnevich, “The Palinode of Zacharias of Kopysten and Its Place in the History of Western Russian Polemics of the 16th and 17th Centuries” (1883); Sumtsov, N., Ioanniki Galyatovsky (1884); *ibid.*, On the History of South Russian Literature of the 17th Century. 1. Lazar Baranovich (1885); Sichevskaya, K., Pamva Berinda, in: *Readings of the Nestor the Chronicler Society*. 23. 1 (1912); Otrokovsky, V. “Taras Zemka, a 17th-Century Southern Russian Figure,” in: *Collection of the Department of the Russian Language*. 96. 2 (1921).

⁸⁷¹ Makarii. 11. pp. 25 ff.; 12. pp. 171, 195–197; Grenkov, A. “The Council Held in Russia Under Patriarch Filaret in 1620 and Its Decrees,” in: *Prav. Sob.* 1864. 1. pp. 153–180. On the measures against Catholics adopted during the reign of Tsar Alexei, see: Makarii. 11. p. 232.

⁸⁷² *SGGD*. 3. No. 77; Makarii. 11. pp. 48 ff.; Shlyapkin. *Op. cit.* pp. 108, 100.

⁸⁷³ Makarii. 11. p. 122.

⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 11, p. 124.

⁸⁷⁵ Bagaley. *Op. cit.*, in: *Readings*. 1887. 2. p. 162; Makarii, Bishop. “Historical Description of the Krasnogorsk Monastery,” in: *Readings*. 1880. 3. p. 81; Belokurov. *Materials* (1888). pp. 79, 162, 164.

undertaken, and he could find such individuals only in the Kiev Metropolis. This explains why, at that time, many monks from South Russian monasteries appeared in Moscow, participating in the revision of the books as scribes, proofreaders, and translators⁸⁷⁶. Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, despite his ecclesiastical conservatism, recognized that church life was suffering from a lack of education and knowledge among the clergy. Western influences had even penetrated the royal family: Princess Sophia and Tsarevich Fyodor were being raised in a spirit quite different from what had been customary in the past⁸⁷⁷. In 1649, Tsar Alexei sent a special message to the Metropolitan of Kyiv requesting that he send to Moscow “teachers to translate the Greek Bible into the Slavonic language, to serve us, the great sovereign, for a time.” Just as Moscow had invited Maxim to perform the same task at the beginning of the 16th century, so now suitable people from outside were needed—so negligible had the achievements of education been over the past century. Among others, three monks arrived in Moscow at that time who deserve special mention. They were Arseny Satanovsky, Damaskin Ptitsky, and Epiphany Slavinsky⁸⁷⁸.

Monk Epiphany Slavinsky played a particularly important role both in the revision of liturgical books undertaken under Patriarch Nikon and in the controversy that later arose over the transposition of the Holy Gifts. He was a figure who did not distinguish himself in Moscow through any activity particularly noticeable to the casual observer; on the contrary, he was a humble, talented, and morally upright man who always remained in the shadows. He was a typical scholar who kept his distance from the hustle and bustle of Moscow. But thanks to his character and his education, he was able to influence others and mentor students who later played active roles in public life.

Epiphanius was probably born in the city of Pinsk, in Western Rus', into a wealthy family. He studied at the Kiev Brotherhood School before 1631—that is, before Metropolitan Peter (Mogila) reformed the school, when the Greco-Slavic tradition still prevailed there. During that time, he received his education and acquired considerable philological knowledge of the Greek and Slavic languages. Epiphanius spent 10 or 12 years in some schools in western Poland, which gave him the opportunity to thoroughly study Polish and Latin. In the early 1640s, he took monastic vows at the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, and by 1642 he was already teaching at the same Brotherhood School where he had once been a student. He taught there until 1649. During this time, Epiphanius stood out for the diligence with which he devoted himself to scholarly pursuits. But that was not the only reason he attracted attention in Moscow. From a work later written by his student, the monk Euthymius, “On the Most Wise Hieromonk Epiphanius of Slavintsy,” it is evident that Epiphanius belonged to that small group of Kyiv scholars who kept their distance from Polish-Catholic influences, remained strictly Orthodox, and remained faithful to the teachings of the Greek Orthodox Church⁸⁷⁹. This is precisely why he was treated with trust and recognition in Moscow; it is possible that his opinion on the need to correct liturgical books strengthened Nikon's resolve to carry out the reform—this, too, can be read in Euthymius's work “On the Most Wise Hieromonk Epiphanius.” For nearly 30 years—Epiphanius died in 1675—he worked in Moscow on revising liturgical books and translating the works of the Church Fathers⁸⁸⁰.

2. Monk Euthymius and Patriarch Joachim as Representatives of Moscow Conservatism

It would be unfair to claim that only ignorant people lived in Moscow at that time. Alongside the well-known ecclesiastical conservatism and religious rigor, there was also a strong desire for education and knowledge. While some turned their gaze toward the West, others sought to draw knowledge from an ancient source: the Greek Orthodox world. A group of people drawn to Greek culture gathered around Epiphanius, who was active at the Chudov Monastery—it is difficult to say whether this was a true school⁸⁸¹—and, by constantly interacting with Epiphanius, helping him transcribe books, and reading various works, they were able to broaden their horizons.

⁸⁷⁶ Kapterev, N. “Patriarch Nikon as a Church Reformer and His Opponents,” in: Prav. Sob. 1887. 1. p. 145.

⁸⁷⁷ Cf. the characterization of Alexei in: Kljutschewskij, V. *Geschichte Rußlands*. Vol. 3.

⁸⁷⁸ AYUZR. Vol. 3, No. 259, pp. 323–324; Einhorn, V., “On Relations,” in: Readings, 1893, Vol. 2, pp. 38–39; Kljutschewskij, Vol. 3, p. 302.

⁸⁷⁹ See Euthymius's treatise on Epiphanius, in: Evgeny. Dictionary of Clerical Writers. Vol. 1. pp. 178–183; and in: Osten (1865). p. 70; Shlyapkin. Op. cit., p. 149; Einhorn. Op. cit., p. 1113. On Epiphanius, see: Pevnitsky, V. “Epiphanius of Slavintsy, One of the Leading Figures of Russian Ecclesiastical Literature in the 17th Century,” in: TKDA. 1861. 2–3; Rotar, I. “Epiphanius of Slavintsy, a Literary Figure of the 17th Century,” in: Kiev Articles, 1900, no. 10–12.

⁸⁸⁰ Eingorn. Op. cit., in: Readings. 1899. 2. pp. 1013–1026; Rotar. Op. cit. 11. p. 199 ff.

⁸⁸¹ Rotar. Op. cit., vol. 12, p. 383.

A remarkable figure in Epiphanius's circle was the monk Euthymius, who later assisted Patriarch Joakim in his struggle against the "heresy of bread-worship." Euthymius (d. 1705) was a simple monk at the Chudov Monastery, but it was perhaps more than just chance that brought him together with Epiphanius, who had taken refuge and was working at the same monastery. Euthymius was a naturally gifted and highly inquisitive man; he mastered the Greek language very well and became Epiphanius's chief assistant; later, he further refined his theological knowledge and emerged as a translator and ecclesiastical writer⁸⁸². His opponent in the theological dispute and a supporter of the "Latin Party," Hieromonk Sylvester Medvedev, referred to him in his **Penitential Confession** as "a zealot for the truth, a champion of the Church, and a defender of the faith"⁸⁸³, and although this was said not without a certain degree of guile and calculation, Euthymius's life and work nevertheless attest to the fact that he was distinguished by his conviction, a particular directness in expressing his point of view, and an aversion to all non-Orthodox influences that bordered on hostility. When, in the 1880s, a fierce dispute flared up in Moscow society over the transposition of the Holy Gifts, Euthymius became one of its leading participants and the most zealous aide to the poorly educated Patriarch Joakim, and perhaps he was the true instigator of Joakim's harsh and rigorist measures against the "heresy of bread-worship." Euthymius and Joachim were the last of the Mohicans of Moscow conservatism, the last champions of the idea that "Moscow is the Third Rome."

In no other figure did the dying Moscow conservatism manifest itself with such force and intensity as in the figure of Patriarch Joachim (1674–1690). He was born in 1620 into the Savelov family, a not particularly wealthy family of military servants, and initially served in the military in Southern Rus', not far from Kyiv. After the death of his wife and children, he decided to take monastic vows and in 1655 entered the Mezhygorsk Monastery in Kyiv. It is unknown how he came to know Patriarch Nikon—perhaps during a visit to Moscow on some business—but it is known that in 1657 Nikon appointed him as the builder of the Iversky Monastery, which he had founded. A contemporary and enemy of Joakim, Deacon Theodore—initially one of the "bread-worshippers" and later a zealous supporter of the schism—claimed with venomous irony that Joakim had previously been illiterate and only began to study at the Iversky Monastery; before that, he could neither read nor write, knew nothing about church matters, and did not understand the liturgy at all (perhaps Theodore meant to say that Joachim was not religious by nature at all. – I. S.). He was a mercenary soldier who lived in remote villages and hunted hares (!), and rarely went to church, only on major holidays⁸⁸⁴. Even if Theodore is exaggerating, one must still acknowledge that, even for his time, Joachim was an uneducated man; however, he possessed a practical mind and common sense, which, combined with the literary talent of Euthymius—who served as something of a personal secretary to him—enabled him to participate in theological debates. It is perhaps to this common sense—or, in Theodore's words, cunning—that Joachim owes his rapid rise to the pinnacle of ecclesiastical power.

Thanks to the support of Boyar F. Rtishchev, who was himself a great advocate of Western education—which suggests that Joachim knew how to find friends and patrons even among those who did not share his views—he was appointed abbot of the St. Andrew Monastery in Moscow, then treasurer at the Novospassky Monastery, which was particularly close to the royal family, and by 1664, Joachim was already archimandrite of the Chudov Monastery in Moscow. He won the special favor of Tsar Alexei through his "devotion to ritual" and his affability, as the same Deacon Theodore sarcastically notes. In 1673, when Joachim—likely not without the tsar's intervention—was appointed Metropolitan of Novgorod, he had already risen to the highest ranks of the church hierarchy. There, Joachim proved himself to be an authoritative hierarch, governing his diocese with strictness and devoting his primary attention to the observance of church formalities. However, some of Joachim's administrative measures proved beneficial; for example, his decrees concerning the parish clergy and the new system for collecting taxes from the clergy, which he later introduced (in 1675 and 1687) for the entire Russian Church. He took great care to ensure the financial well-being of the parish clergy by distributing land to parishes; under his leadership, the Monastery Office was abolished (1677), and regarding

⁸⁸² Among other things, Euthymius translated several works by Dionysius of Alexandria, several catechetical discourses by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, and wrote several works of a moral and edifying nature himself. Filaret. Review. 2nd ed. Vol. 1. pp. 259–261; Brailovsky, S. "The Sermon on Mercy by the Chudov Monk Euthymius," in: PDP. 100 (1894); Description. 2. 3. Introduction. pp. 424, 447, 461, 501, etc.

⁸⁸³ Description. 2. 3. p. 501; Osten (1865). p. 93; Shlyapkin. Op. cit. p. 231.

⁸⁸⁴ Materials for the History of the Schism. Ed. N. Subbotin. 6 (1879). p. 227. Shlyapkin. Op. cit. pp. 140–141. Cf. unfounded assertions regarding Joachim's education in: Lyubimov, S., "The Struggle Between Representatives," in: ZhMNP. 1875. 180. p. 127; as well as in the work: N. A. A., "The Moscow Patriarchs: Patriarch Joachim," in: Readings. 1847–48. pp. 123–136.

the jurisdiction of the clergy, Joachim succeeded in completely removing secular authorities from interfering in ecclesiastical courts⁸⁸⁵.

Strictly speaking, Joachim owed his career to Patriarch Nikon, but his treatment of the former patriarch during the latter's stay at the final place of his exile, the Kirillov Monastery (which was Joachim's doing), paints him in a negative light from a human perspective. All attempts and even requests by Tsar Fyodor to alleviate Nikon's plight were rejected by the headstrong and self-centered Joachim. At the same time, Joachim was a zealous supporter of Nikon's reforms and a persecutor of his ideological opponents. He persecuted schismatics with cruelty, religious fanaticism, and intransigence. But all those aspects of Moscow life that revealed Western influences also met with Joachim's resolute resistance and condemnation. "Foreigners" and "Latins" were always heretics to him; he refused to receive foreign ambassadors, to sit or eat with them at the tsar's table, and he did not allow foreigners to attend the divine services he conducted. Reading his will, we see before us the image of a religious fanatic and formalist—and this at a time when cultural and religious formalism in Moscow was already on the wane. Although figures such as Ioakim were not typical of the last quarter of the 17th century, their very existence proves that Moscow's religious conservatism and formalism gave way to new people and new views not without a struggle⁸⁸⁶.

3. Simeon of Polotsk and Silvestr Medvedev as Bearers of Western Influences

The penetration of Western influences into Moscow life was facilitated not only by their content but, to a much greater extent, by the activities of their supporters, which were highly successful. Hieromonk Sylvester Medvedev stood at the center of the "Western," or "Latin," party; his theological education—and indeed his entire spiritual development—were shaped by constant personal interaction with such people, through whom he was able to learn the Western way of thinking and acquire a Western education, having become convinced of their advantages.

Such was, for example, the famous Simeon of Polotsk, who exerted a multifaceted influence on Moscow's cultural life and whose activities take us back to the prehistory of the theological dispute over the transubstantiation of the Holy Gifts. Simeon Petrovsky-Sitnianovich, born in 1629 in the Polotsk region of Belarus and therefore usually referred to in literary history as Simeon of Polotsk, was the leading champion of Western enlightenment in Moscow from the time he settled there in 1663. Compared to his contemporary and ideological opponent, Epiphanius Slavinetsky, he was a completely different man; the educational background he received also differed markedly from that of Epiphanius. In the 1640s, he studied at the Kyiv Collegium, where the renowned South Russian preacher and scholar Lazar Baranovich (1620–1693), who later, as Archbishop of Chernihiv (1657–1692), played a significant role in the ecclesiastical life of the Kyiv Metropolis⁸⁸⁷. His name should be mentioned here because, in his later correspondence with Patriarch Joakim regarding the transubstantiation of the Holy Gifts, Lazar Baranovich supported the Roman Catholic doctrine, and it can be assumed that Simeon's theological views took shape during his studies at the Kyiv College. At that time, the scholastic system of teaching flourished at the college; it influenced the spiritual makeup of his personality and was reflected in his writings. After graduating from the college, Simeon returned from Kyiv to Polotsk, took monastic vows there, and became a teacher at the local school. During Tsar Alexei's visit to the city, Simeon of Polotsk was granted the honor of addressing the tsar in person and presenting him with a greeting poem written specifically for the occasion, thereby drawing the tsar's attention to himself. Thus, his future career began right there in Polotsk.

In 1660, Simeon of Polotsk had the opportunity to visit Moscow, and once again he did not miss the chance to present the tsar with a panegyric in verse and attract his attention. After the capture of Polotsk by Polish troops (1661), Simeon moved to Moscow in 1663. Thanks to letters of recommendation from Archbishop Lazar Baranovich to Metropolitan Paisius Ligaris of Gaz, who was living in Moscow at the time and enjoyed the special favor of Tsar Alexei, Simeon managed to establish connections at the tsar's court,

⁸⁸⁵ AI. 4. Nos. 175, 259, 228, 204, 253; 5. Nos. 135, 167, 156, 183, 186; especially 4. No. 204 and 5. No. 75.

⁸⁸⁶ The Life and Testament of Patriarch Joachim. Ed. N. Barsukov, in: OLDP. 62 (1879). Shlyapkin. Op. cit., pp. 139–144; Belov. Op. cit., in: ZhMNP. 1887. 1; Smentsovsky. The Likhuda Brothers (1899).

⁸⁸⁷ Scholastic influences are clearly evident in Baranovich's sermons. Two collections of Baranovich's writings were particularly well-known and widely circulated in the 17th century: *The Spiritual Sword* (Kyiv, 1666; 2nd ed. as early as 1686) and *The Trumpets of Sermon Words* (Kyiv, 1674; 2nd ed., 1686). Although Baranovich subscribed to the Roman Catholic doctrine of the transubstantiation of the Holy Gifts, he, like many South Russian theological scholars, rejected the Filioque in his polemical writings. On Baranovich: cf. note 865, as well as: Einhorn, op. cit., and Makarii, vol. 12, pp. 535–540, 553.

skillfully employing his poetic talent in the process. At the same time, he began teaching at the school of the Zaikonospassky Monastery, where one of his students was Silvestr Medvedev, who would later become Hieromonk⁸⁸⁸. We will not delve into Simeon's purely literary activities; we will focus only on those events from the Moscow period of his life that are connected with the ecclesiastical events of the era.

Simeon arrived in Moscow at a time when relations between Tsar Alexei and Patriarch Nikon had become particularly strained⁸⁸⁹ and, at the same time, a polemic had flared up with the leaders of the schism. Simeon was tasked with subjecting the views of the schismatic teachers to a thorough critique. Thus his first major work, **The Scepter of Governance**, came into being; it was initially regarded as an official document of the 1666 Council against schism. Simeon composed this work with considerable scholastic sophistication and polemical skill, demonstrating a superb knowledge of ecclesiastical literature; in doing so, he even drew upon quotations from the writings of Maximus the Greek and Zinovy of Otena, as well as from the decrees of the Stoglav Council, yet at the same time, his work is not free from certain errors, from distortions of the views and statements of representatives of the opposing party, from harsh condemnation of the leaders of the schism, and even from the use of numerous expletives—a practice also characteristic of medieval polemical writing⁸⁹⁰.

His career flourished; he was appointed tutor to the tsar's children: the eldest, Tsarevich Alexei, and after his death (1669), the future Tsar Fyodor and Tsarevna Sophia. The latter's inclination toward Western culture and their sympathy for its manifestations can certainly be attributed to Simeon's influence. The best period of his life began; he lived in luxury, and the tsar's court became the center of his activities, where he preached, wrote congratulatory poems, plays, and other literary works. He zealously supported the proposal to establish an academy in Moscow, which, according to a plan sketched out by himself or his student Silvestr Medvedev, was to be organized on the model of the Kiev Collegium. Until his death in 1680, Simeon was a respected figure, a recognized scholar, and a renowned man of letters.

Simeon of Polotsk's multifaceted activities at the tsar's court and in Moscow society (he established connections with many boyar families and with the clergy), as well as his growing popularity, attested to the increasing influence of Western culture in Moscow. His monastic cowl—which he had donned by chance—his sermons ⁸⁹¹, filled with rhetoric and pathos, and his diplomatic skill in dealing with the stern Patriarch Joakim, who by nature and conviction was Simeon's antagonist—all of this kept him above suspicion in Moscow's conservative circles. He managed to prove his "orthodoxy" in his work **The Crown of Faith** (1670). **The Crown** was, so to speak, an attempt to expound Orthodox dogma. Simeon based this exposition not on the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, but on the "Apostles' Creed" (chapters 4–16), which, strangely enough, did not initially arouse suspicion among Moscow's conservatives, although in Moscow this alone could have been regarded as a "heretical tendency"—though, Simeon sharply criticizes the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Filioque here. It was only in later polemics that the monk Euthymius accused him of this error, as well as of using evidence drawn from the works of Anselm, Duns Scotus, Thomas Aquinas, and Bellarmine. At that time, all the "Latin deviations" contained in Simeon's sermons were compiled by Euthymius as incriminating evidence⁸⁹². It is clear that Simeon's entire worldview was not that of Moscow, and the people who associated with him or studied under him gradually became adherents of Western enlightenment and, to some extent, of his "Latin leanings," especially since Simeon of Polotsk was not the only one spreading such views in Moscow.

Among those who resolutely rejected Moscow's cultural conservatism and recognized the superiority of Western culture was, of course, Hieromonk Simeon Medvedev, known by his secular name Sylvester, a remarkable figure not only for his tragic fate but also for his character. The importance of the role he played in the theological debates of his time prompted his triumphant opponent, the monk Euthymius, to write a

⁸⁸⁸ Maykov. *Essays* (1889). pp. 8–17; Makarii. 12. p. 640; On Simeon of Polotsk: Popov, V. *Simeon of Polotsk as a Preacher* (1886); Tatarsky, I. *Simeon of Polotsk: His Life and Work* (1886); as well as an earlier work: Pevnitsky. *Simeon of Polotsk*, in: *Pravda Obraztsova* 1860. Vol. 10, pp. 193–232; Vol. 11, pp. 327–356.

⁸⁸⁹ Makarii. Vol. 12, pp. 443, 592.

⁸⁹⁰ Maykov. *Op. cit.*, pp. 27 ff.; Makarii. Vol. 12, p. 681. The first edition was published in 1667.

⁸⁹¹ Polotsky's collections **Obed Dushevny** and **Vecherya Dushevnyaya**, published in 1682–83, contained: the former—*Sunday sermons*; the latter—*sermons for the feasts of the Lord and the Mother of God*; they are moral and edifying in nature, containing sharp condemnations of vices, superstitions, and the views of schismatics, etc. Pevnitsky. *Op. cit.* 11. P. 327 ff.

⁸⁹² Pevnitsky. *Op. cit.* 10. Pp. 218 ff.; Osten (1865). Pp. 130–137.

biography of Silvestr's spiritual development, which was later supplemented by other studies⁸⁹³. In 1665, Silvestr Medvedev served as a clerk in the Secret Chancellery under Tsar Alexei⁸⁹⁴. He did not serve there for long; by 1672, he was living in the Molchanskaya Hermitage, and from about 1675 onward, he is known as a monk. A year later, we find him at the Zaikonospassky Monastery in Moscow, where Simeon of Polotsk was staying at the time. They communicated constantly, and from that time on, Simeon's influence on Sylvester became evident. Conversations with Simeon of Polotsk and reading books from his personal library—which contained many South Russian and Western works (his opponent Euthymius reproached Sylvester precisely for studying these Latin books)—enriched Sylvester's education and fostered his curiosity. He assisted Simeon of Polotsk in various research projects⁸⁹⁵. After Simeon of Polotsk's death (August 25, 1680), possibly on Simeon's recommendation, Sylvester was appointed builder of the Zaikonospassky Monastery and became head of Simeon's school, where he was then also entrusted with teaching Latin⁸⁹⁶.

That same year, Silvestr gave his first public lecture on theological matters. The story goes as follows: shortly before that, a certain Jan Belobotsky had arrived in Moscow; in connection with Polotsky's plans to establish a higher school in Moscow, Belobotsky sought to obtain a teaching position at this school, which did not yet exist. His background and religious beliefs were quite obscure; he came from Western Rus', but was not a Catholic, and from his words it appeared that he did not belong to any particular denomination at all, while at the same time he categorically rejected the sacrament of Holy Communion of the Christian Church. Rumors of Belobotsky's "Lutheran heresy" reached the patriarch, and Joachim demanded that he set forth his "confession of faith." Medvedev was entrusted with refuting Belobotsky's written "confession of faith," a fact that, on the one hand, indicates that Medvedev was above any suspicion at the time, and on the other, attests to the high regard in which his theological education was held. On July 11, 1681, a meeting was held in the patriarch's chambers, during which Medvedev refuted Belobotsky's Calvinist-influenced views by expounding the Eastern Church's teaching on the sacrament of Holy Communion⁸⁹⁷. This victory in the theological debate likely inspired Medvedev and spurred him on to further theological research. He wrote a treatise titled "The Living Bread," in the form of a dialogue between a teacher and his student, in which he openly expounded the Catholic doctrine regarding the time of the transubstantiation of the Holy Gifts: "The students' question: At what moment during the Divine Liturgy is the bread transformed into the Most Pure Body and the wine into the Most Pure Blood of Christ? The Teacher's Answer: The Most Pure Body and Blood are transformed by the words of Christ, spoken by the priest during the Divine Liturgy over the bread: 'Receive'."⁸⁹⁸

⁸⁹³ This is the well-known "Osten," compiled at the behest of Patriarch Joakim by the monk Euthymius from various documents and supplemented with explanatory notes and writings by Euthymius himself (1690). The first edition was published in Kazan in 1865. A brief biography of Silvestr Medvedev is provided by S. Belokurov in the preface to his work "The True News" in: Readings. 1885. 4; a thorough monograph: Prozorovsky, A. "Silvestr Medvedev," in: Readings. 1896. 2–4; and also: Kozlovsky, I., "Silvestr Medvedev," in: TKDA. 1895. 2, 3, 5.

⁸⁹⁴ The Secret Order was simply the tsar's chancellery; this title did not conceal any special government secrets, as had previously been assumed. See: A. I. Zaozersky, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich in His Household (1917).

⁸⁹⁵ Osten (1865). 74; Description. 2. 2. No. 151.

⁸⁹⁶ Prozorovsky. Op. cit., in: Readings. 1896. 2. pp. 183–185. Probably between 1681 and 1684, Medvedev wrote two works: 1. "Table of Contents of Books and Their Authors," in: Readings. 1846. 3. Section 4. pp. 1–90; 2. "A Brief Reflection on the Years 7190, 91, and 92 (i.e., 1682–1684—I. S.), and What Occurred in Civil Affairs During Them," in: Readings. 1894. 4. pp. 1–197. Edited by S. Belokurov. (Another, later edition in: University of Kyiv. 1895–1896. Edited by I. Kozlovsky.) This is a very good, objective description of the Streltsy uprising of 1682; cf.: Introduction. p. XXXVI. See also: Shmurlo, E., "On the Notes of Silvestr Medvedev," in: ZhMNP. 1889. 262. pp. 335–369. Medvedev wrote this "Contemplation" at the request of Princess Sophia. A very important source on the history of the events of 1682–1684. Older editions (in: Tumansky, Notes on the Life of Peter the Great, Vol. 1, Part 6; and in: Sakharov, A., Notes of Russian People, Vol. 1, 1841) are not without errors.

⁸⁹⁷ Prozorovsky. Op. cit. pp. 198, 203, 205, 208; Shlyapkin. Op. cit. p. 145. Belobotsky's "Confession of Faith" and Medvedev's "Review" in: Monuments to the History of Protestantism in Russia, in: Readings. 1884. Vol. 3, No. 20. Cf. also: Gavrilov, N. "Preachers of the German Faith in Moscow and Patriarch Joakim's Attitude Toward Them," in: Stranik. 1873. Vol. 3, pp. 125–137.

⁸⁹⁸ Shlyapkin. Op. cit., p. 146; Description, vol. 2, no. 3, p. 470. This response signified a departure from the teaching of the Greek Orthodox Church, according to which, in the Divine Liturgy, the consecration takes place not after the recitation of the words of institution, but only after the epiclesis—that is, the prayer to the Holy Spirit for the transformation of the bread and wine into the Holy Gifts. See: Makarii (Bulgakov). Orthodox Dogmatic Theology. 2 (1868). p. 381. See also: Hoppe, A. *Die Epiklesis der griechischen und orientalischen Liturgien und der römische Konsekrationskanon* (1864); Gass. *Symbolik der griechischen Kirche* (1872); Franz J. Th., *The Eucharistic Transubstantiation and Epiclesis in the Greek and Oriental Liturgies* (1879); Höller, J., *The Epiclesis in the Greek-Oriental Liturgies* (1912); Streitz, *The Doctrine of the Lord's Supper in the Greek Church*, in: *Jb. d. deutsch. Th.* 9–13 (1864); Spain, Th. "Doctrina Theologiae orientalis separati de S. Eucharistia," in: OCA 13. 3 (1928); 14.

4. The Debate Over the Time of the Consecration of the Holy Gifts

The Roman Catholic doctrine set forth by Medvedev in his work had long since found its way into South Russian liturgical and ecclesiastical writings. It is clearly expressed in Gedeon Balaban's Service Book (1604) and in the Vilna edition of the Service Book (1610). The most widely circulated Service Book by Metropolitan Peter Mohyla (1629 edition) still contains Greek Orthodox teachings, but the 1639 and 1646 reprints are already Roman Catholic. Furthermore, this doctrine is expounded in a wide variety of South Russian theological works that were widely circulated in Muscovy⁸⁹⁹. Among these, it is worth mentioning Theodosius Safanovich's book **Exposition on the Holy Church** (1667), which went through four editions in Southern Russia between 1667 and 1674; translations of this book into Russian (it was written in the Little Russian, or Ukrainian, dialect) have been preserved in 17th-century manuscripts. For his interpretations of the Eastern Church's liturgy, the author primarily drew on the works of Simeon of Thessaloniki († 1429)⁹⁰⁰ and other writers; moreover, the teaching on the time of the consecration of the Holy Gifts was presented in accordance with Roman Catholic doctrine⁹⁰¹. As already mentioned, Simeon of Polotsk expounded a similar teaching at almost the same time in his work **The Scepter of Governance** (1666) and in a conversation with Epiphanius Slavinsky that took place in 1673. But at that time, Polotsky was still a very influential figure, and, moreover, after Nikon's exile, there was no firm ecclesiastical authority in Moscow⁹⁰². In 1682, Tsar Fyodor died; Princess Sophia, who had taken the reins of government into her own hands, and her favorite, Prince V. V. Golitsyn, were sympathetic to Western influences⁹⁰³, so for some time the church authorities took no action. Sylvester Medvedev was able to continue his scholarly pursuits undisturbed, and it was precisely then that he wrote the treatise "Animal Bread," already mentioned here.

Genuine theological disputes flared up a few years later, when the Orthodox faction received substantial support from the "wisest of the laity," the Greeks Ioannikios and Sofronios Likhudov. They arrived in Moscow in 1685 with a recommendation from the Patriarch of Constantinople to teach at the academy, which was awaiting its opening⁹⁰⁴. From the very beginning, Silvestr Medvedev viewed both brothers with hostility, for their arrival thwarted his plans. The fact was that Polotsky—or Silvestr—had drafted the academy's charter, which had been presented to the tsar. However, the charter was not approved, and Sylvester was merely permitted to continue directing the school at the Zaikonospassky Monastery; only two special buildings had been constructed for the school, which apparently occurred not without the intervention of Joachim⁹⁰⁵, and Sylvester viewed this as a personal insult. Meanwhile, the academy's charter had been revised (it is possible that the monk Euthymius also participated in this revision), and as a result, it was decided to teach Greek instead of Latin. The academy was to become the guardian of the purity of the Greek faith and a

1 (1929). A historical-theological overview of the Orthodox doctrine of the liturgy is provided in: Heiler, Fr. **Urkirche und Ostkirche**. 1 (1937). pp. 250–262. Cf. also: Casel, O. "Die ostkirchliche Opferfeier als Mysteriengeschehen," in **Der Christliche Osten** (1939). pp. 59–74, especially 68–71.

⁸⁹⁹ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. pp. 115, 117–118; Golubev, S. Peter Mogila. 1 (1883). p. 373; S. P. Peter Mogila, in: Readings. 1877. 1. pp. 142, 124. On Mogila, see also the monograph: Viller, M., **La Confession orthodoxe de Pierre Mogilas**; and also in: Jugie, **Theologia dogmatica christianorum orientalium**, vol. 3 (1930).

⁹⁰⁰ Prozorovsky. Op. cit. pp. 221–222. Simeon, Archbishop of Thessaloniki († 1429), thanks to his writings (Migne. PG. 155), which constitute the "mystical theology" of the Greek Orthodox Church, ranks among the most famous and revered theologians of the Eastern Church. St. Cyril of Jerusalem († 386) laid the foundation for mystical theology with his "Catechetical Orations." The most significant representatives of mystical theology were Dionysius the Areopagite (5th century), Maximus the Confessor (d. 662), Sophronius of Jerusalem (d. 638), Germanus of Constantinople (d. 738), Theodore of Andida (11th century), and Nicholas Cabasilas (d. 1371). Cf. PRE. 13, p. 612 ff. See also the very interesting work: Engdahl, R., "Beiträge zur Kenntnis der byzantinischen Liturgie," in **Neue Studien zur Geschichte der Theologie und Kirche**, vol. 5 (1908).

⁹⁰¹ Shlyapkin. Op. cit., p. 134.

⁹⁰² After Nikon's deposition and exile, there was some confusion in Moscow; the new patriarch, Joasaph II (1667–1672), was very old; then Pitirim served as patriarch for a short time (October 1672–April 1673), followed by an "interregnum" until July 26, 1674, when Joakim was enthroned. Furthermore, the full attention of the government and church authorities was absorbed by the struggle against schism.

⁹⁰³ The best overview of the 1680s and early 1690s is provided in: Belov, E. A. "The Moscow Turmoil at the End of the 17th Century," in: ZhMNP. 1887. Vol. 9, pp. 99–146; Vol. 10, pp. 319–365.

⁹⁰⁴ On the Likhud brothers, see the excellent work: Smentsovsky, M., *The Likhud Brothers* (1899); and also: Smirnov, *History of the Moscow Slavic-Greek Academy* (1855).

⁹⁰⁵ Smentsovsky. Op. cit. pp. 37 ff.

bulwark in the struggle against heresies⁹⁰⁶. It was also forbidden to invite people from the Lithuanian and South Russian lands to teach, “because at first such people appear to be entirely pious, but then, little by little, they begin to sow corrupt teachings and undermine the integrity of the faith”⁹⁰⁷.

The personal relationship between Medvedev and the Likhuds was also far from cordial. For the Greek brothers, whose claims somewhat resembled those of Simeon of Polotsk, a special stone house was built at the Zaikonospassky Monastery—where Sylvester Medvedev served as abbot—after some effort on their part. As it turned out, those who would soon become adversaries in the heated dispute lived and wrote their polemical works in the same monastery. However, a close relationship developed between the Likhudas and Euthymius, for Euthymius was able to gain theological knowledge from them and exploit their animosity toward Medvedev.

However, at first Euthymius—who likely became acquainted with Medvedev’s work **The Animal Bread** very soon—himself attacked Medvedev and wrote a response to **The Bread**, titled **From the Holy Fathers in Defense of the Eastern Church**⁹⁰⁸. In refuting Medvedev’s claims, Euthymius draws on excerpts from the Church Fathers and on his conversations with Epiphanius Slavinsky; he believes that the doctrine of the transubstantiation of the Holy Gifts, as set forth by Medvedev, was borrowed from the “Orthodox Confession” by Peter Mohyla from 1645, which, in Euthymius’s view, was “Latin.” It is difficult to say to what extent Euthymius was independent in his reasoning⁹⁰⁹. But the paragraph in which Euthymius extols the “sound reasoning” of Greek theology may indicate the assistance he received from the learned Likhud brothers.

Medvedev, likely most outraged by Euthymius’s derisive remarks about “Latin scholarship”—though this was entirely justified, since **The Bread of Life** is written in a businesslike, scholarly style—now writes **The Book on the Manna of the Bread of Life** with great irritation and polemical fervor. Later, during interrogation (in the fall of 1689), Medvedev would tell⁹¹⁰ that he wrote “Manna” “by decree of Princess Sophia Alekseyevna”⁹¹¹. In “Manna,”—known only from copies, since it was burned by order of the Council of 1690—once again sets forth in detail the Roman Catholic doctrine of the transubstantiation of the Holy Gifts, with numerous quotations from the works of the Church Fathers, from South Russian writings, and even from Goar’s **Service Book**⁹¹².

It was the treatise “The Bread of Life” that prompted Euthymius not only to enter into the polemic but also to enlist the Likhudov brothers, with their theological knowledge, as his strongest weapon. Since the brothers did not speak Russian, Euthymius either translated Medvedev’s treatise for them—which is unlikely—or familiarized the brothers with the “heretic’s” main arguments. The brothers wrote their response in Greek, which was then translated into Slavonic at the Imperial Printing House under Euthymius’s editorship⁹¹³. “Akos, or a Remedy Opposed to the Poisonous Bite of a Serpent”—this is how the authors titled

⁹⁰⁶ The revised charter (Medvedev’s draft, unfortunately lost—possibly destroyed by his opponents) in: DRV. 2nd ed. Vol. 6, pp. 397 ff.; cf.: Smentsovsky, op. cit., pp. 42–46.

⁹⁰⁷ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. p. 147.

⁹⁰⁸ Readings. 1885. Vol. 4. p. XVII.

⁹⁰⁹ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. p. 148.

⁹¹⁰ Investigative Cases Concerning F. Shaklovit. 1 (1884). No. 15. p. 544.

⁹¹¹ Sofya Alekseyevna (born in 1657), daughter of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, was a gifted, intelligent, and ambitious woman; she frequently and eagerly attended the lessons that Simeon of Polotsk gave to her brothers, the tsarevichs Alexei and Fyodor; the princess was drawn to a Western-style education and read extensively and eagerly. In 1682, after the death of Tsar Fyodor, when the brothers Ivan and Peter were proclaimed tsars—it should be noted that Patriarch Joakim personally facilitated the accession of the young Tsarevich Peter (Ustryalov, **History of Peter the Great**, vol. 1, p. 16; Belov, op. cit., in: ZhMNP, 1887, Vol. 1, p. 109 ff.)—Sophia deemed the moment opportune to take power into her own hands, become the ruler of the state, and personally govern the country, given the minority of both tsars, which she did. During her reign (1682–1689), Sophia showed clear sympathy for Western influences and Western education. Deposed by Peter in 1689, she was confined to the Novodevichy Convent in Moscow and taken as a nun; she died there in 1704. On Sophia, see: Aristov, **The Moscow Turmoil During the Reign of Princess Sophia** (1871); Belov, E., op. cit.; Shmurlo, E., “The Fall of Princess Sophia,” in **ZhMNP**, 1896, no. 1; and also: Solovyov, **History of Russia**, vols. 13–14.

⁹¹² Shlyapkin. Op. cit., p. 150. Medvedev’s theological knowledge was very extensive; in his work **The True Gospel**, we find quotations from many Church Fathers and references to them. After his arrest, an inventory was made of his personal library, which contained 603 books—in German, Latin, and Polish—and among them only 18 books in a Slavic language. Readings. 1885. 4. Preface. p. XXXV.

⁹¹³ Description. 2. 3. No. 299. p. 461; the manuscript was written in Euthymius’s own hand.

their work⁹¹⁴ and emphasized that it was written by order of both tsars, Princess Sophia, and with the patriarch's blessing. This shows that in November 1688, the head of the Russian Church also took part in the theological dispute.

But Medvedev was not alone. For example, a priest named Savva Dolgii zealously distributed excerpts from **Manna** and copies of it throughout Moscow. There was also a certain deacon named Afanasy, who prepared these copies and made excerpts in Medvedev's cell; and to speed up the distribution of the work, he enlisted the help of several more copyists. During interrogation, a cantor from the Zaikonospassky Monastery testified that in the winter of 1687–88, *"many noblemen (probably some boyars—I. S.) and members of the guest guard came to him—that is, to Seliverstka, many noblemen (probably some boyars—I. S.) and guests from the hundred came... and their conversations, he said, were about the words of Christ" (that is, about the time of the Transfiguration)*⁹¹⁵.

From these circles—which either shared Medvedev's views or showed a certain interest in them—another treatise emerged, titled "Exposure of the Newly Concealed Wolves," whose author fiercely argues against "dark-minded foreigners" (that is, the Likhuds), using abusive terms such as "rabid dogs," "vile bats," "blind owls," and "wolves that cannot be tamed among Christ's sheep." After a rather lengthy introduction, the author sets forth Roman Catholic doctrine, drawing primarily on South Russian writings⁹¹⁶. Although the Likhuda brothers considered Medvedev to be the author of "Exposure," this is hardly the case. The language of the work, the abundance of profanity, and the quotations from South Russian writers—all of this speaks against Medvedev's authorship; it does not correspond to either his character or the style of his works. Even the monk Euthymius referred to the author of this work as "the nameless one."

At that time, Medvedev was busy working on his own polemical treatise, intended to refute the claims of **Akos**, which very clearly and distinctly expounded the Orthodox doctrine regarding the time of the Transfiguration, making extensive use of theological literature—for one cannot deny the theological erudition of the Greek brothers. In early fall of 1688, Medvedev finally completed his critique of **Akos**. It was titled **True News for the Orthodox and a Secular Account of the New Administration of Ancient Books in the Moscow Kingdom**. This is an extensive work⁹¹⁷, consisting of two parts. The first part, comprising about a quarter of the entire work, is devoted to the history of the revision of liturgical books from the early 17th century—primarily during the era of Patriarch Nikon and continuing through the Council of 1667—and includes the author's fair and critical remarks regarding this undertaking. It is not entirely clear why Medvedev wrote this introduction; perhaps he wanted to show that many errors had crept into the works used by his opponents. Next, without any connection, comes the second part, which is a scholarly theological study⁹¹⁸, in which the author firmly defends his point of view. Perhaps it was precisely this stubbornness on Medvedev's part that led to his losing his position as proofreader at the Royal Printing House in the fall of 1688, where he and Euthymius were the most knowledgeable and capable specialists⁹¹⁹.

The "Orthodox Party," however, continued its polemic against Medvedev. A work titled **The Testimony of Truth** appeared, undoubtedly written by Euthymius, although the author speaks in it on behalf of Sophronius Likhud⁹²⁰. In it, Euthymius argues against both Medvedev's **True News** and the "Exposure" by the "anonymous author," which Euthymius this time attributes to Medvedev and holds him accountable for the propositions contained in that work. In addition, a representative of the church hierarchy—Archbishop Athanasius of Kholmogory, some of whose theological works have already been mentioned here—joined the debate. Two of his works—which, unfortunately, have survived only in manuscripts and are known only from highly unsatisfactory descriptions—are devoted to the question of the transubstantiation of the Holy Gifts according to the teachings of the Greek Orthodox Church⁹²¹.

⁹¹⁴ "Akos, or Healing" is known only from manuscripts. See a detailed description in: Description. 2. 3. Nos. 299, 300, and 301.

⁹¹⁵ Investigation Files on F. Shaklovit. 1. No. 29.

⁹¹⁶ Shlyapkin. Op. cit., p. 154 ff.

⁹¹⁷ "The True News," in: Readings. 1885. 4. pp. 1, 79.

⁹¹⁸ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. p. 157.

⁹¹⁹ Belokurov, in: Readings. 1885. 4. p. 19.

⁹²⁰ Cf. the opinion of A. Gorsky in: Description. 2. 3. No. 299. p. 469.

⁹²¹ These are: 1) "A Brief Book of the Orthodox Confession... on the Transubstantiation of the Body and Blood of Christ" and 2) "The Order of Services on Holy Thursday... The Consecration of the Mysteries and on Transubstantiation"; cf.: Shlyapkin. Op. cit. p. 164.

This issue, however, gradually went beyond the scope of a theological dispute. Both points of view became widely held among the people. A wide variety of people visited Medvedev and engaged in discussions with him; he also had like-minded allies among the Moscow clergy: Priest Savva, Deacons Athanasius and Jacob, and Monk Anton Muromets. Even within the Moscow garrison, in the streltsy regiments, the “Latin Party” attracted interest and gained adherents⁹²². A very characteristic feature of the religiosity of that era was the circumstance—seemingly inexplicable at first glance—that the “Latin Party” found support in circles close to the schism. In the course of the reforms undertaken by Nikon, the authority of the Greeks and their theology declined in the eyes of both Nikon’s opponents and even those who were undecided. Medvedev, in the first part of **The True News**, once again subjected this authority to sharp criticism, pointing out errors in Nikon’s corrections. Another significant factor was that the “Greek,” or “Orthodox,” faction was led by Patriarch Joachim, whose harsh measures and persecutions aroused enmity and hatred among the schismatics and those who secretly sympathized with them. In **Osten**, edited and partly written by Euthymius, there is mention of heated debates among the people. After all, there was also an external aspect to this theological dispute that provided fodder for such discussions, as it was of great importance to the Muscovites. According to the rite of the Divine Liturgy, when the priest celebrating the liturgy utters the words of institution, “Take, eat,” he bows his head, and at that moment the bells ring. There was a widespread custom whereby people who were not attending the Liturgy—whether at home or on the street at that time—would make the sign of the cross. At that time, external rites were imbued with “liturgical” significance, and the era of schism further intensified this ritualistic belief⁹²³.

The theological dispute gradually became a matter for society as a whole and proved to be linked to political sentiments in Moscow. Relations between Princess Sophia and the young Tsar Peter were becoming increasingly strained⁹²⁴. Medvedev belonged to Sophia’s faction: he socialized frequently with the head of the Streltsy Office, Okolnichy Fyodor Shaklovity, who owed his career to the princess and incited the Streltsy regiments in her favor; moreover, Medvedev enjoyed the favor of the all-powerful Prince V. V. Golitsyn, the princess’s favorite⁹²⁵, and of the princess herself. These were the grounds for bringing political charges against Medvedev. The Patriarch sided with Peter at that time, whose pro-Western sentiments had not yet manifested themselves as sharply as those of Sophia and Golitsyn; moreover, Peter was still young, and the faction of his mother, Tsarina Natalia, had always supported the old Moscow ways, which the Patriarch embodied. Ioakim’s personal animosity toward Medvedev also played a role; rumors reached the patriarch that Medvedev spoke mockingly of him, as some witnesses later testified during interrogation. Moreover, rumors circulated that Golitsyn’s inner circle had decided to appoint Medvedev as patriarch in place of Ioakim or, at the very least, to make him Ioakim’s successor⁹²⁶. It would have been strange if, after that, Ioakim had not come to hate Medvedev.

On August 8, 1689, Sophia’s government was overthrown, and she spent the last 15 years of her life in a nun’s habit at the Novodevichy Convent; she died in 1704. On September 9, Prince Golitsyn was sent into exile; Shaklovity and other supporters of Sophia were arrested, subjected to biased interrogation and torture. On September 12, Shaklovity was executed. Medvedev was forced to flee, but he was recognized and captured along the way. As a traitor and conspirator against Tsar Peter, Medvedev also did not escape interrogation and torture; moreover, his enemies were given a prime opportunity to give false testimony against him, for in reality, as is evident from the investigation into Shaklovity’s case, Medvedev had no connection whatsoever

⁹²² Investigation Files. Nos. 29, 30, and 26.

⁹²³ In Peter Mohyla’s **Service Book** (1639) and in other South Russian works, this action of the priest offering the Gifts is particularly emphasized. Shlyapkin. Op. cit., p. 115; Prozorovsky. Op. cit., p. 225.

⁹²⁴ Platonov. Lectures (1915). pp. 474, 478; specific details: Shmurlo, E. Op. cit., in: ZhMNP. 1896. 1.

⁹²⁵ Prince Vasily Vasilyevich Golitsyn (1643–1714) was a well-educated man; he took a keen interest in Western Europe, encouraged Western cultural influences and Western-style education, and organized his private life in the Western manner. Golitsyn had plans for various reforms. From 1682 to 1689, he oversaw foreign affairs (through the Ambassadorial Office) and enjoyed Sofia’s boundless trust and personal favor. After Sofia’s fall (August 8, 1689), Golitsyn was exiled to the north, where he died on April 21, 1714. On Golitsyn, see: Brückner, A. **Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte Russlands im 17. Jahrhundert** (1887); Petrovsky, “Prince V. V. Golitsyn,” in: **Russian Articles**, 1875, No. 5; Gordon, General. Tagebuch; and also: De la Neuville (French ambassador to Moscow). *Relation curieuse et nouvelle de Moskovie*. Paris, 1698 (abridged Russian translation in: *Russkiye Stat’i* 1891, nos. 9 and 11); Solovyov, nos. 12–14.

⁹²⁶ Investigation Files. 1. Nos. 26 and 30; Belov. Op. cit., p. 365, note. In the well-known work by Archbishop Arseny of Kholmogory, **The Shield of Faith**, it is even stated that Medvedev incited the people to revolt and to the murder of Patriarch Ioakim and others, which, in our opinion, cannot be true. Cf.: Description. 2. 3. No. 310. p. 503.

to his conspiracy. Despite this, Medvedev was sentenced to death. He became a victim of political and religious passions. “It seems that Medvedev’s only fault,” writes E. Belov, who thoroughly studied the “investigative files,” “was that Princess Sophia and V. V. Golitsyn, respecting his intellect, dreamed of appointing him patriarch should their plans succeed”⁹²⁷. “Medvedev,” writes I. Shlyapkin, who objectively and thoroughly studied the entire history of the dispute over the transposition of the Holy Gifts, “did not fall victim to his own character or to error, but rather to historical circumstances that turned out unfavorably for him and to the intrigues of the Likhuds”⁹²⁸.

But Medvedev was not executed immediately; at first, he was handed over to the patriarch for a church trial. In January 1690, a Council was held which, “strictly speaking, was not a Council,” as I. Shlyapkin quite rightly notes, for only four bishops and the patriarch participated in its proceedings. Medvedev was defrocked (he was a hieromonk) and sentenced to life imprisonment; his work **Manna** was burned⁹²⁹. Despite this sentence, the secular authorities handed Medvedev over to be executed, and he was executed on February 11. Shlyapkin believes—perhaps quite justifiably—that this did not happen without the intervention of Joachim⁹³⁰.

“Osten” published an article titled “On the Rostrig, Former Monk Silvestr Medvedev,” to which his “Confession of Repentance” is appended⁹³¹. It is unknown whether this “Confession of Repentance” was actually written by Medvedev himself. It bears no signature, unlike Savva Dolgoy’s “Confession of Repentance,” who, as a follower of Medvedev, also appeared before the ecclesiastical court; a harsh condemnation of his own theological views, the acceptance of the Orthodox doctrine regarding the time of transubstantiation, and, finally, the anathema of his own writings—which were composed with such zeal and conviction—all of this raises doubts in the reader’s mind. Perhaps the “Confession” was read aloud to Medvedev when the patriarch’s representatives came to his cell to extract a recantation from him. They knew full well that his days were numbered, so the “Confession” could have been left unsigned. For Joakim and Euthymius, this “Confession” was simply indispensable. For Joakim—because it dealt a blow to Medvedev’s supporters, since his martyr’s death could only confirm, in their eyes, the righteousness of his convictions, and now the “Confession” nullified all his theological arguments. For Euthymius, it served as confirmation of the “Orthodox Party’s” correctness and could serve as a sort of reward for the efforts he had expended while participating in the polemic.

Medvedev’s **Confession** helped to undermine the position of the “Latin Party,” since some bishops in the Kiev Metropolis openly or secretly shared Medvedev’s theological views⁹³², and the situation within the Moscow episcopate was far from straightforward. While Archbishop Athanasius of Kholmogory unequivocally sided with the “Orthodox Party”—as confirmed by his previously mentioned writings—the position of Metropolitan Adrian of Kazan, the future patriarch, as well as that of Job, the archimandrite of the Vysokopetrovsky Monastery and later Metropolitan of Novgorod, was not entirely clear—if, of course, one can trust the remarks of Archimandrite Gabriel and Hierodeacon Damascene (the former belonged to the “Latin Party,” and the latter to the “Orthodox Party”)⁹³³. Archimandrite Ignatius Rimsky-Korsakov (who served as Metropolitan of Siberia from 1692 to 1700 he served as Metropolitan of Siberia), who wrote **The Life and Testament of Patriarch Joakim**, in which the patriarch is glorified as a saint—a move with which the author likely intended to pave the way for his canonization⁹³⁴. An intermediate position in the dispute between the two parties was taken, for example, by Markell, Metropolitan of Pskov (1681–1690) and Kazan (1690–1698), a well-educated man who knew Latin, French, and Italian, and who, after Joachim’s death, was one of the candidates for the patriarchal throne⁹³⁵. Metropolitan Pavel (Moravsky) of Ryazan (1681–1686), judging by his circular letter to the clergy of his diocese, shared “Latin” views⁹³⁶. Archimandrite Gavriil Dometsky of the Simonov Monastery also belonged to the “Latin party.” At first he kept a low profile, but

⁹²⁷ Prozorovsky. Op. cit. pp. 324–377; Belov. Op. cit. p. 365; Shlyapkin also holds this view (Op. cit. pp. 208, 211, 234).

⁹²⁸ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. p. 235.

⁹²⁹ AI. 5. Nos. 194, 339.

⁹³⁰ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. p. 201; Solovyov. 14. p. 137.

⁹³¹ Osten (1865). pp. 83–90; another version in: Readings. 1870. 2. pp. 1–12. Cf. Shlyapkin’s opinion (Op. cit., p. 208).

⁹³² Shlyapkin. Op. cit. pp. 176–201.

⁹³³ Ibid. pp. 165–166.

⁹³⁴ Ibid. pp. 169, 212. Cf. also the anti-Catholic essay by Ignatius Korsakov, in: Readings. 1884. Vol. 3.

⁹³⁵ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. p. 167.

⁹³⁶ Solovyov. 14. p. 90; Shlyapkin. Op. cit. p. 168; Filaret. 1. No. 236; Piskarev. Op. cit. No. 51.

after Medvedev's execution he was transferred to the Iversky Monastery. In 1704, Dometsky administered the Yuryev Monastery in Novgorod, within the diocese of Metropolitan Job, and it was during this time that he wrote the treatise "105 Questions," in which he defended the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. The treatise by Hierodeacon Damaskin of the Chudov Monastery, "105 Answers to Dometsky," brings the controversy over the time of transubstantiation to a close⁹³⁷.

The dispute between the "Greek," or "Orthodox," and "Latin," or "Western," factions was quite characteristic of the last quarter of the 17th century. Medvedev's views and writings undoubtedly exerted a certain influence on church life. What was the cause of this influence? Was it the infiltration of Catholicism into the ecclesiastical life of Muscovy? Did this open up any new possibilities for the union of the Churches? The answer to the latter question can be confidently given in the negative. Even if one of the theological doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church had been adopted (let us assume that Medvedev and his followers had prevailed, and their views had been accepted by all and sanctioned from above), many other issues would still have had to be resolved. Moreover, one must not forget that Peter did not hold the Roman Catholic Church in particularly high regard, as he was clearly under Protestant influence. As a result of the schism in the second half of the 17th century, all religious issues took on a highly acute and painful character. The "Latin Party" was a consequence of South Russian ecclesiastical influence, and although there were many supporters of the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation in Little Russia, hostility toward the Roman Catholic Church was too great. For example, Lazar Baranovich shared the Catholic doctrine, but he was a staunch opponent of the Roman Catholic Church. It was precisely from Southern Russia that, alongside Catholic influence, anti-Catholic polemical literature also found its way to Moscow. While the former can be considered a factor favoring union, the latter was, of course, a means of opposing it.

The activities and views of Medvedev and his followers should be viewed in an entirely different light. This was nothing less than the penetration of a completely new system of thought into the intellectual world of Muscovy. Muscovite conservatism, now in the second half of the 17th century—especially after the upheavals of the Nikon era—could no longer remain frozen in its rigidity. Western influences fostered the growth of critical thinking, just as Protestant influences had fueled the criticism of Bashkin or Kosoy in the mid-16th century; and the question of the preposition, especially due to the differing opinions on it, provided the first opportunity for practical application of this new, emerging, and liberation-seeking way of thinking. Quite by chance, this issue turned out to be dogmatic. We would not be mistaken in saying that for Medvedev—though certainly not for his opponents—this was not a dogmatic but a scientific issue. Medvedev noted that the teachings of the Orthodox Church were not as systematized as those of the Roman Catholics⁹³⁸. Therefore, the work **The True News** is particularly characteristic of him. In Medvedev's biography, one must, on the one hand, seek the origins of Russian scholarly theology, and on the other, it represents a chapter in the history of Russian critical thinking—a constant feature of the Russian character and mindset, with its quests and dissatisfaction. Medvedev would have seemed more at home on the historical stage of the new, Petrine Russia; there he would have found a role befitting his education, intellect, and curiosity, and could have become one of Peter's aides in his reforms. Joachim, undoubtedly responsible for Medvedev's death, deprived Peter of one of his future associates—perhaps intentionally, out of hatred and revulsion for everything that was seeping into Muscovy from the West.

Chapter XII. The Schism and Monasticism

1. Religious and Psychological Causes of the Schism

The seventeenth century was a "difficult century" for both the Russian state and the Russian Church. It began with the Time of Troubles and ended with the schism and the whirlwind of Peter's reforms. The Time of Troubles gave rise to a new national and state identity: the former, class-based identity was shaken to its foundations, and the political and social upheavals led to the birth of a genuine national identity—at last, the primary tasks of the state and the people were recognized. The consequences of the Time of Troubles were

⁹³⁷ Shlyapkin. Op. cit. pp. 164–166; RBS. p. 54; on Damaskin: Yakontov, I. Hierodeacon Damaskin, a Russian Polemicist of the 17th Century (1884) (not available to me); cf. the review by N. Petrov in: ZhMNP. 1884. 4.

⁹³⁸ Cf. expositions of the Eastern Church's doctrine of transubstantiation: Heiler. Op. cit. 1. pp. 257 ff.; or: Gass. Symbolik. pp. 225 ff.

felt throughout the 17th century, which resembled a stormy sea: the government's economic and financial difficulties, popular unrest, numerous zemsky sobors, the government's attempts to reform various aspects of public life or, at the very least, to introduce certain improvements, wars with neighbors intended to resolve national challenges dating back to the 15th and 16th centuries, and finally, the constant infiltration of Western influences into the country's life, which undermined the traditional way of life in old Moscow—with its long-established customs and views—as well as the entire structure of Muscovite culture—this was, perhaps, too much for a period of just 100 years. All these phenomena concealed the seeds of Peter's future reforms, and yet Peter's Russia came into being amid great suffering...⁹³⁹

The life of the Russian Church during this "difficult century" was also turbulent. Not only because the Church had to exist under these conditions, but also because the political and social upheavals did not leave the internal order of the Christian Church—and the clergy—unscathed. The clergy's state of mind and worldview began to lose their former strength and clarity. The sixteenth century had not yet known doubt: Bashkin and Kosoy, the forerunners of later Russian religious quests, were atypical for their era; the criticism from the Non-Possessors stemmed not from a sense of doubt, but from a healthy desire for reform; but after the Time of Troubles, the idea of "Moscow—the Third Rome" lost its former clarity and exceptional appeal, ceasing to be a national and religious ideal, for political and social upheavals had not left it unscathed. In a sense, the seventeenth century was a time of testing for this idea—a test of how far it could be put into practice, whether everything in it truly had to remain unchanged, and whether every aspect of this idea was unquestionably correct. At the same time, doubts were growing as to whether everything held equal religious significance; it was necessary to understand what was eternal and immutable, and what was temporary and subject to change. These doubts and questions troubled the church hierarchy, the rest of the clergy, and even the lay faithful.

The hierarchy wavered between taking measures to preserve the status quo and correcting errors: on the one hand, it fought against foreign influences—as in the first quarter, under Patriarch Filaret as well as in the last quarter under Patriarch Joakim—and on the other, it is forced to recruit scholars from Southern Rus' who were clearly under Western influence, and, moreover, to undertake various improvements and corrections throughout the entire century. It is therefore not surprising that the church hierarchy did not always follow a straight path; its ranks included many unwavering adherents to the idea of "Moscow—the Third Rome," but only a few of the hierarchs were prepared to fight tenaciously for this idea. Consequently, at decisive moments, it was not the church hierarchy but the subordinate clergy and the masses of lay believers who fought with conviction and steadfastness—if not for the entire "Moscow—the Third Rome" ideology as a whole, then at least for its individual elements. And this happened not only because those in authority were attempting to somehow alter or improve these elements, but because it was precisely these elements that were dear to the religious sentiment of the people.

Liturgical life was the focal point of religiosity in that era: it took the place of dogmatic awareness and knowledge of dogma; the entire faith of the people was embodied in it; it was the most sensitive part of the believer's heart. Despite a lack of knowledge of dogma, an Orthodox Christian in Moscow was well acquainted with the content of the lengthy divine services, with which he had formed an inner bond; he knew the words of the prayers and the liturgical rites. Religious rites take root easily in the believer's soul; they are more understandable to him than dogmas, especially when the Church and the ecclesiastical hierarchy take care to preserve them. When, however, the church hierarchy attempted to change the rites that were so dear to popular piety, the question arose: Had the hierarchy, by acting in this way, set out on an erroneous and ruinous path? Would its actions lead to apostasy, to heresy? The very raising of these questions shook the religious consciousness of many contemporaries. Thus, due to insufficient knowledge of dogma and an overestimation of the significance of rituals and church customs, a close connection arose between two entirely different things. The reform of the rites was regarded as a change in the faith and condemned as a betrayal of the faith. On this religious and psychological ground grew the ecclesiastical upheaval of the 17th century—known as the Schism—which proved fateful for the Russian people. Patriarch Nikon himself fought relentlessly for the revision of the liturgical books (undertaken by his order, though not conceived by him) more out of self-importance and pride than out of a principled recognition of the necessity of this revision.

⁹³⁹ Cf.: Platonov. Lectures (1915). pp. 315 ff., especially 317–318; and also: Shmurlo, E. History of Russia. Munich, 1922. pp. 190–248, where a brief overview of the most important events of the 17th century can be found. Cf. also an interesting characterization of this century in: Florovsky, G. The Paths of Russian Theology. Paris, 1937. pp. 57 ff.

2. Revisions to the Liturgical Books Prior to Patriarch Nikon

Nikon's measures to revise the liturgical books and alter certain liturgical rites did not, in essence, contain anything new; they were merely the final link in a long chain of similar measures that had either already been carried out before him or were to be carried out in the future. Nikon acted too harshly and abruptly, which was due not to any pressing necessity but rather to his own character; he generally had little understanding of the religious spirit of his flock, which is why his "reforms" led to a catastrophe that inflicted an incurable wound on the Russian Church and caused a portion of its members to break away⁹⁴⁰. The presence of the breakaway group ("Old Believers," as they called themselves, or "schismatics," as the official Church referred to them for a very long time) outside the Mother Church could not help but affect the main body of the Russian Church, for its spiritual energies were to a significant extent diverted from the fulfillment of its direct duties and directed toward combating the schism.

After the conversion of Rus' to Christianity, the books necessary for conducting divine services, as well as the liturgical rites themselves, were borrowed from the Greeks or the South Slavs. Due to prolonged use, the books fell into disrepair; new books were produced by copying the old ones, which—given the lack of education among the copyists, who were mainly monks—led to the appearance of errors and mistakes. Corrections to the books, undertaken on the initiative of individual copyists, only multiplied the number of defects. Even different manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures from that era often differ significantly from one another. The situation was even worse with liturgical books—the Service Book, the Typikon (Statute), the Triodion, the Book of Hours, the Octoechos, and others⁹⁴¹—for errors and discrepancies were found both in the liturgical rites themselves and in the explanations accompanying them. Another significant factor was that the same liturgical code was not always used; rather, as we have already noted (Chapter VIII), the Studite Code, which had been used initially, was replaced by the Jerusalem Code⁹⁴². Nor was there uniformity in the liturgical practices of the Greeks and Slavs, to which one might have turned for reference.

The first attempts to correct errors that had crept into the liturgical books were undertaken as early as the 14th century under Metropolitans Alexius (1354–1378) and Cyprian (1390–1406). But in the 15th century, two events occurred that gave the subsequent history of the correction of the books a tragic character: the Union of Florence (1439) and the fall of Constantinople (1453). As a result of these events, doubts arose in Moscow regarding the purity of the Greeks' faith. And although Greek books were subsequently used as the basis for the revision of church books, there were still voices among those who did not consider these books to be authentically "Orthodox." When the monk Maxim, a Greek by nationality, was entrusted with the task of revising the books, he discovered many gross errors while comparing the Russian church books with the Greek ones; in some cases, in his opinion, these errors had an almost heretical undertone⁹⁴³. For the champions of the idea of "Moscow—the Third Rome," such assertions were utterly unbelievable, and the Greek scholar himself was accused of heretical speculation, and on top of that, there were the intrigues of Metropolitan Daniel, a supporter of Joseph, for whom the close relationship between Maxim and the prince-monk Vassian had long been a thorn in his side. The Councils of 1525 and 1531 examined all the charges against Maxim (most of which were unfounded) and sentenced him to confinement in the monastery⁹⁴⁴.

⁹⁴⁰ However, it would be incorrect to explain the Russian schism solely as a protest against the revision of the books. The history of the schism shows that it was a very complex phenomenon in Russian religious life, the multifaceted nature of which, unfortunately, cannot be fully explored here. We refer the reader to works that may be helpful in this regard: Melnikov, P., **Letters on the Schism** (1862) (also in: **Severnaya Pchela**, 1862); Gilyarov-Platonov, N., **The Logic of the Schism: Letters to Ivan Aksakov**, in: **Russkoe Obozrenie**, 1895, no. 10; Gromoglasov, I. "The Russian Schism and Universal Orthodoxy," in: BV, 1898, nos. 4–5; Golubinsky, E. "On Our Polemic with the Old Believers" (1905); Rozanov, V. "The Psychology of the Russian Schism," in: *Religion and Culture* (1901); Borozdin, A. *Russian Religious Dissent* (1907); *The Truth of the Old Faith* (collection) (1916); Kartashov, A. "The Meaning of Old Belief," in: *Collection in Honor of P. B. Struve*. Prague, 1925; Florovsky, G. *The Paths of Russian Theology* (1937).

⁹⁴¹ On liturgical books, see Heiler, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 297 ff.; Kattenbusch, vol. 1, p. 498; and also: Lübeck, K., **Die christlichen Kirchen des Orients** (1911), pp. 120 ff.

⁹⁴² Kapterev. Patriarch Nikon and Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich. Vol. 1 (1909). pp. 213–216; Makarii. Vol. 8. pp. 75 ff.

⁹⁴³ Maximus the Greek. Works. Vol. 1, pp. 28, 30; Vol. 3, pp. 51–60, 62, 67, etc. Cf.: Makarii. 2nd ed., Vol. 6, pp. 179 ff.

⁹⁴⁴ Macarius's account of these events (2nd ed., vol. 6, pp. 177–195) cannot be considered entirely objective. Golubinsky argues (Vol. 2, Part 1, pp. 663, 712 ff.) that Maximus was a victim of intrigues and his insufficient knowledge of the Russian language, and that the charges of heresy brought against him were groundless. We share this view.

The Stoglav Council was forced to acknowledge that certain liturgical rites were performed differently in various places. The young Tsar Ivan himself said at the Council: “For now we see and hear that, apart from the Divine Statute, many church rites are not performed in full, not according to the sacred rules and not according to the statute”⁹⁴⁵, and the Council agreed with the tsar’s statement. The Stoglav Council resolved to correct the church books based on good translations, but nothing was said about where or how to obtain these good translations—and, most importantly, nothing was done to that end. Although a printing house was opened in Moscow after the Stoglav Council, making it possible to avoid the errors that arose when copying church books by hand, in practice this did nothing to correct the texts, for the first printed books were published based on manuscripts that already contained errors; in a sense, book printing even hindered the cause, since early printed books subsequently came to be regarded as infallible standards.

The first systematic attempt to correct the church books was undertaken in the early 17th century. In 1617, a special commission was formed for this purpose: it included Archimandrite Dionysius of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, Monk Arsenius the Deaf, who had a relatively good command of Greek, Monk Anthony Krylov, and Priest Ivan Nasadka. After a year and a half of work, this commission corrected the Service Book and simultaneously concluded that other liturgical books also contained errors. But Dionysius’s fate turned out to be just as tragic as that of Maximus the Greek: charges were brought against him and his assistants, accusing them of making heretical corrections, for in the rite of the blessing of water on the Feast of the Epiphany (January 6), they had struck out the words “and by fire” from the prayer to the Holy Spirit, considering them a later and meaningless insertion. The Council of 1618, which examined this issue, did not have the necessary evidence to determine whether the correction was correct or erroneous. The zeal of his opponents and slanderers prevailed. Dionysius and Arsenius, though completely innocent, could not escape exile to a monastery⁹⁴⁶. Fortunately, Theophanes, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, arrived in Moscow at that time and convinced the new Patriarch Filaret of the correctness of the correction made by Dionysius. The Council of 1619 exonerated the unfortunate man, but the insertion “and by fire” remained in the Service Book; it was not until 1626 that letters from the Patriarchs of Jerusalem and Alexandria to Patriarch Filaret of Moscow prompted the removal of this insertion from the Service Book⁹⁴⁷.

Although Filaret recognized the need to correct the church books, he approached this matter with extreme caution and deliberation. The Liturgical Statute, printed in 1610 and later recognized as a book containing many errors, was withdrawn from use and burned by order of Filaret. Under Filaret, several books were corrected—a task undertaken, among others, as before by the monk Arseny Glukhoi and the priest Ivan Nasedka—and the corrected books were printed. However, the older editions, which contained numerous errors, were not withdrawn and remained in use in some places, especially in remote areas, which, of course, led to discrepancies in certain prayer books and liturgical rites⁹⁴⁸. Although nearly all liturgical books were printed during the patriarchates of Joasaph (1634–1641) and Joseph (1642–1652), the proofreaders were not up to the task, and the editions from those years contain many errors and obscure passages in the explanations, especially the Statute of 1633.⁹⁴⁹ But the main point was that, although the unconditional necessity of correcting the books had been recognized in Moscow even before Patriarch Nikon, this work was, unfortunately, undertaken reluctantly and with great indecision, for Moscow lacked educated people qualified for this task—people who, first and foremost, had to have a good command of the Greek language— and, moreover, they did not have the most essential materials at their disposal. In May 1649, Tsar Alexei appealed

⁹⁴⁵ Stoglav. Chapters 5 and 23 (the tsar’s question); chapters 16, 6, 9, 10, 12, 33, 34. Zinovy Otensky also discusses these same events (*The True Testimony*, pp. 952, 955, 958–961). See also certain accusations leveled against Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod (PSRL, vol. 6, pp. 221, 232), which also attest to differences in liturgical rites; furthermore, the well-known dispute over the “Alleluia” in Pskov and the question of the sign of the cross—whether made with two fingers or three. Makarii. 8. pp. 129, 91 ff.

⁹⁴⁶ Makarii. 11. pp. 173–199; Kazansky, P. “The Revision of Liturgical Books under Patriarch Filaret,” in: *Readings*. 1848. 8; on Dionysius, see: Skvortsov, D. *Dionysius of Zobnikovo*, Archimandrite of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery (1890).

⁹⁴⁷ Makarii. 11. pp. 10 ff.; RIB. 2. 902; 10. 189–190.

⁹⁴⁸ Mansvetov. *Church Statutes*. pp. 311 ff., 319 ff.; idem. “How Church Books Were Compiled in Our Country,” in: *Supplements*. 1883. 4; Makarii. 9. pp. 43, 66, 89, 120.

⁹⁴⁹ Mansvetov. *Church Statutes*. p. 319; Kapterev. *Patriarch Nikon and His Opponents in the Matter of Correcting Church Books and Rites*. Vol. 1. *The Time of Patriarch Joseph* (1887; 2nd ed., expanded and revised, 1913); 1st ed. also published as an article: “Patriarch Nikon as a Church Reformer and His Opponents,” in: *Prav. ob.* 1887. 1–2, with minor variations.

to Metropolitan Silvestr (Kossov) of Kyiv with an urgent request to send to Moscow “teachers to translate the Greek Bible into the Slavonic language”⁹⁵⁰.

It was then that three monks arrived in Moscow: Arseny Satanovsky, Damaskin Ptitsky, and Epiphany Slavinsky, who played an important role in the work of correcting the books⁹⁵¹.

3. Patriarch Nikon

On April 15, 1652, Patriarch Joseph died, and under his successor, Patriarch Nikon, the history of the revision of church books entered a new phase.

Nikon was the son of a peasant; he was born in 1605 in Nizhny Novgorod and was given the name Nikita at baptism. His mother died shortly after giving birth, and Nikita was raised by his stepmother, who treated the child poorly, so his childhood was not an easy one. It is likely that even then, in his childhood, he developed a strong will, which at times apparently faltered and gave way to nervous weakness—a trait that later often manifested itself in his behavior. “Nikon,” wrote V. O. Klyuchevsky, “was one of those people who calmly endure terrible pain but groan and fall into despair at the prick of a pin. He had a weakness common among strong but impatient people: he grew bored with tranquility and was unable to wait patiently; he constantly needed excitement, whether it was a bold idea or a grand undertaking, or even just a quarrel with an unpleasant person. It was like a sail that is only itself in a storm, but in calm weather flutters helplessly on the mast like a rag”⁹⁵². Nikita was physically strong and stately; he was a talented man with a keen curiosity. He learned to read and write at a very early age, as evidenced by his later words, sermons, and the few writings that have survived to this day. Reading books—almost all of which were religious in nature at the time—gave his spiritual development a certain direction: he entered the Zheltovodsky Monastery to take monastic vows. However, his father dissuaded him from this intention, and Nikita returned home. At the age of 20, he married and became a priest: by then, he was already sufficiently literate for this. At first, he served in a rural parish; later, upon recommendation, he was assigned a parish in Moscow. Dissatisfaction with his life, and later the death of all three of his children, turned Father Nikita’s thoughts back to his former aspiration to become a monk.

He persuaded his wife to enter a convent, while he himself set off for the north, and there, at the skete of the austere ascetic Eleazar (whom we have already mentioned), he took monastic vows. But Nikon was not the sort of man who could devote himself entirely to the discipline of asceticism. Eleazar, for his part, governed the hermitage with great strictness and demanded that his disciples submit completely to the spiritual guidance of the elder. After a quarrel with Elder Eleazar, Nikon left the hermitage and entered the Kozhezersk Hermitage. This took place around 1639–1640. Three years later, the brotherhood elected him abbot.

In 1646, Nikon traveled to Moscow on business related to his hermitage; he was introduced to the young, impressionable, and very pious Tsar Alexei, who spoke with him on several occasions. Abbot Nikon’s entire demeanor—his stately bearing, majestic figure, eloquence, strong will, and energetic facial features—made a profound impression on Alexei. Gentle and quiet by nature, the tsar was inclined to surround himself with energetic people and appoint them to key positions in the state and the Church. The impression Nikon made on the tsar was likely so strong that later, when a dispute flared up between the now-mature tsar and the patriarch, Alexei could not bring himself for a long time to take a firm stand against Nikon. At the tsar’s request, Nikon was appointed archimandrite of the Moscow Novospassky Monastery, which was close to the royal family. The pious Alexei frequently visited this monastery and enjoyed attending Nikon’s particularly solemn divine services. This solemnity was very much to the tsar’s liking. Nikon began to meet with him often, visiting the tsar’s palace every week, celebrating Matins for the tsar, and engaging in long conversations with him. Nikon often used these meetings to ask the tsar for clemency on behalf of various people—mostly common folk—who had been unjustly punished by the authorities; these requests, accompanied by a clear explanation of the case, not only always found understanding with the young tsar but also deeply moved the sensitive Alexei. The tsar’s trust in Nikon and his influence at court grew day by day, while at the same time the popularity of the archimandrite of Novospassky among the Muscovites increased.

In 1649, the ancient Novgorod See became vacant, and Nikon was appointed Metropolitan of Novgorod. He governed his diocese energetically, authoritatively, and independently. Showered with honors

⁹⁵⁰ AYUZR. 3. No. 259. p. 323.

⁹⁵¹ Rotary. Epiphany of Slavintsy, in: Kiev Articles 1900, 10–12. Cf. Chapter XI.

⁹⁵² Kljutschewskij. Geschichte Rußlands. 3. p. 327.

and privileges—even more so than the patriarch himself—Nikon ruled there like a true prince of the Church. Upon the establishment of the Monastic Office (1649), Nikon, while still an archimandrite, signed the relevant document—“under duress,” as he later explained—although he did not approve of the existence of such an office, since, in his words, it “contradicts the Holy Gospel, the rules of the Holy Fathers, and the laws of the Greek emperors in every respect.” He even called the 1649 Code “a lawless book” and the decrees of the Monastic Order “diabolical”⁹⁵³. Under his leadership, the Novgorod Metropolis was exempted from the jurisdiction of the Monastic Order in all matters, and, contrary to the Code, the tsar granted the metropolitan numerous estates⁹⁵⁴. Nikon’s activities in Novgorod demonstrate that even there he was inclined toward reforms aimed at eliminating various flaws in church life.

His friendship with the tsar continued. Nikon traveled to Moscow, corresponded with the tsar, and the tsar submitted completely to Nikon’s spiritual authority, as Nikon possessed a strong character. During the Novgorod uprising of 1650, when Governor Khilkov lost his composure, it was Nikon who demonstrated both character and resolve. During Nikon’s trip to the Solovetsky Monastery, from where he was to bring the relics of St. Philip to Moscow, Patriarch Joseph died, and everyone in Moscow knew that Nikon, the tsar’s favorite, would become the new patriarch⁹⁵⁵.

During his reign—brief but turbulent—Nikon sought to resolve two issues. The first was the revision of the liturgical books; the second problem arose from the complex personal relationship between the tsar and the patriarch—or, more precisely, from the latter’s principled views and the former’s traditional views on the relationship between the state and the Church (see Chapter X). We are unable to discuss this issue in detail here because, first, it falls outside the scope of our topic, and second, the dispute between secular and ecclesiastical authority has a long history, and it would take too much space to recount it. However, we would like to offer the reader a brief characterization of Patriarch Nikon, his views, and his activities, as presented by N. Kapterev on the basis of a four-year study and which, at the time, sparked quite a sharp controversy⁹⁵⁶; despite everything, this characterization is accurate.

“Nikon, as a church reformer,” N. Kapterev argues, “was a creation of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, whose agenda he merely carried out in his church reform efforts. Nikon himself, although at one time deeply engrossed in his church reform activities, never considered them the main task of his patriarchate; consequently, after he left the patriarchal see, he lost all interest in them... The true, essential spirit of Nikon’s patriarchate—in which he himself saw the primary task and the entire meaning of his patriarchate, toward which he constantly and persistently strove while occupying the patriarchal see, and for which he fought tirelessly and passionately even after leaving the patriarchal see— —was his desire not only to free ecclesiastical authority from state authority, since the latter then dominated it, but also to establish the position he defended, namely, that the priesthood is superior to the kingdom”⁹⁵⁷.

His enthusiasm for an idea that was, in itself, correct left Nikon no time to thoroughly consider the finer details of the book-revision project. Generally speaking, it is still unclear to what extent Nikon recognized the necessity and appropriateness of the revisions from a purely ecclesiastical and religious-moral standpoint. Research by N. Kapterev has shown that, in reality, Nikon was not the initiator of the book revisions that took place during his time. Nikon was forced to continue the work of revising the books, but this compulsion was precisely at odds with his character and could not inspire in him a genuine interest in the matter.

It cannot be denied that, outwardly, Nikon presented his measures for revising the books in a very solemn manner; perhaps this “solemnity” gave him some satisfaction, since he had to spend time on this matter, but inwardly, all of this was alien to him. This explains the haste with which the “reforms” were carried out, the complete disregard for the opinions of those who objected to him, the rudeness in implementing the

⁹⁵³ Gorchakov. The Monastic Decree. p. 77; “Patriarch Nikon’s Opinion on the Code,” in: Notes of the ORSA. 2 (1861). pp. 423–497, especially 449, 451, 453, 456.

⁹⁵⁴ Makarii. 11. pp. 193–196; Gorchakov. On Land Holdings. pp. 330, 337. On Nikon’s church policy, see: Kapterev. Patriarch Nikon and Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich. 2 vols. (1909–1912); as well as the works of Zyzykin and Zhukov.

⁹⁵⁵ For a biography of Nikon up to 1652, see Makarii. 11. pp. 162–166; cf. also: Bonwetsch. “Nikon,” in: PRE.

⁹⁵⁶ We are referring to the controversy of the 1980s between N. Kapterev and N. Subbotin; see Kapterev, N., Patriarch Nikon and His Opponents (1913). pp. 185–203; Subbotin’s “justification” of Nikon’s activities was continued by M. Zyzykin’s idealization of him in the work *Patriarch Nikon*. 3 vols. (1931–1937).

⁹⁵⁷ Kapterev, “The Relationship Between State and Church Authority in Ancient Rus’ Before Nikon’s Patriarchate,” in: BV. 1910. 1, 20, 21. See also Kapterev’s characterization of Nikon in: Patriarch Nikon and Tsar A. M., vol. 1 (1909), pp. 60–62. G. Florovsky’s individual observations are excellent (The Paths of Russian Theology, p. 63).

measures, and the harsh measures taken against his opponents. In this struggle, Nikon revealed the full strength and integrity of his character: he perceived protests against the reforms as personal hostility toward himself—it should be noted that in this regard Nikon was partly right—and this gave rise to the illusion (more so, in truth, among later generations than among his contemporaries) that he was wholly devoted to the cause of these reforms. This trait lent the entire history of the book revisions under Nikon a dramatic tone and led to tragic consequences⁹⁵⁸.

4. The Revision of the Scriptures under Patriarch Nikon

It is not our task to provide a detailed account of the history of the schism; for us, it is important only to show what role the monastic community played in the wave of protests and in the struggle against Nikon's reforms. Therefore, we intend to offer the reader only the most concise overview of the history of the schism and the monastic community's participation in the protests against the reforms.

On July 25, 1652, Nikon was enthroned as Patriarch of Moscow with great pomp. The work of revising the liturgical books, which had been underway under Patriarch Joseph, continued: the monks Epiphanius Slavinsky, Arseny Satanovsky, and Damaskin Ptitsky continued to work on the collation; the monk Arseny Sukhanov had been sent to the East as early as 1650 to familiarize himself with the rites of the Greek Church and bring the necessary documents (Greek books, manuscripts, etc.) to Moscow. The **Kormchaya**⁹⁵⁹, sent to press in 1649 and published during Nikon's reign, and the **Shestodnev**, printed in 1650, were corrected after being compared with Greek manuscripts. At the end of 1650, Metropolitan Gabriel of Nazareth arrived in Moscow, bringing letters from the Patriarch of Jerusalem to the tsar and the Patriarch of Moscow. Gabriel repeatedly commented on the "differences" in Moscow's liturgical rites; Patriarch Paisius of Jerusalem, who had visited Moscow, also spoke to the tsar and Patriarch Joseph about the "Moscow differences" before leaving Russia (1650). Nikon, then still the Metropolitan of Novgorod, was naturally aware of these Greek views thanks to his constant communication with the tsar. Nikon also heard similar reproaches from the former Patriarch of Constantinople, Athanasius (1633, 1633–1635, 1651), who arrived in Moscow in April 1653 and ordered the transcription of **960** for Nikon, **The Rite of the Hierarchical Celebration of the Liturgy in the East**⁹⁶¹, the solemnity of which particularly appealed to Nikon.

Nikon took the first step in implementing his reforms in the spring of 1653—before the beginning of Great Lent, he issued an instruction ("reminder") to the rectors of all Moscow churches: when reading the prayer of St. Ephrem, which holds a special place in the Lenten service, to perform prostrations strictly "according to the tradition of the holy apostles and fathers"—that is, not all 17 prostrations should be full prostrations, but only 4 full prostrations should be made, with the rest being waist prostrations. This first "Greek innovation" caused great confusion among some Moscow priests, especially among the protopopes Ivan Neronov, Avvakum Petrov, and Daniel of Kostroma, whose names and activities occupy such an important place in the history of the schism. Protopope Avvakum⁹⁶² described this confusion with piercing clarity in words that have been quoted a thousand times: "We gathered and fell into deep thought," Avvakum wrote in his **Life**, "we see that winter is coming, our hearts have grown cold, and our legs are trembling."

This emotional turmoil among the first Moscow opponents of the Nikonian innovations would persist for a long time; from it would first grow a mood of despair, and then a determination to fight for the "old faith" to the bitter end. Neronov decided to submit a petition to the tsar as the defender of the Orthodox faith; this is a very characteristic trait of schisms—seeking help, support, and protection from secular authorities.

⁹⁵⁸ We have already cited the most important literature on Nikon and his ecclesiastical policy. We would also like to draw special attention to the work: Palmer, William. **The Patriarch and the Tsar**. London, 1871–1876. 6 vols.; this work collects and translates nearly all the primary sources. In addition, Palmer included in his work several studies on Nikon.

⁹⁵⁹ On **The Rudder** and its significance for the Russian Church, see: Hermann. Op. cit. p. 23 ff.; the relevant literature is cited there. See also: Makarii. 2nd ed. Vol. 8, pp. 143 ff.

⁹⁶⁰ Makarii. Vol. 11, pp. 118 ff.; Vol. 12, pp. 117, 125.

⁹⁶¹ On these relations, see: Kapterev, N. *The Nature of Russia's Relations with the Orthodox East in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (1885).

⁹⁶² On Protopope Avvakum, see: "Das Leben des Protopopen Awwakum von ihm selbst." Translated and with a preface by R. Yagodich (1930). For additional literature, see the bibliography. The best characterization of Avvakum is found in the works of Myakotin and Melnikov. For the full range of issues related to the schism, see the introduction by I. Barskov and P. Smirnov to Avvakum's writings, in: RIB. 39 (1927), as well as the introduction and commentary by N. Gudzia in: *The Life of Protopope Avvakum* (1934); cf. also: Jagoditsch, in: *Kyrios* 1 (1936). pp. 410–413.

The schismatics sacredly upheld their loyalty to the idea of “Moscow—the Third Rome.” Later, they would lose this firm faith in the Orthodox kingdom and accuse the empire of heresy. They would leave this place, which had long been sacred to them, and set out on a journey from desert to desert, from village to village, to find the lost “Civitas Dei” [City of God], proclaiming everywhere the imminent end of the world. Eventually, the schism would lose its unity, split into separate factions, and trigger a monstrous proliferation of sects.

Neronov’s petition and the ensuing disputes with its author, as well as the support given to Neronov by the Moscow clergy⁹⁶³, convinced Nikon that it would be wiser to carry out his initiatives not solely in his own name. He asked the tsar to convene a Council⁹⁶⁴ to discuss the revision of liturgical rites and books. In the spring of 1654, in addition to the tsar and the patriarch, five metropolitans, four archbishops, one bishop, several archimandrites and abbots, and 13 protopopes⁹⁶⁵ gathered at the tsar’s palace for the Council. Nikon presented to the Council issues concerning distortions in certain liturgical rites that had no dogmatic significance, substantiating his proposals with references to the Greek Typicons. The Council resolved to correct all liturgical rites, bringing them into conformity with the Greek Typicons, and to conduct divine services in their corrected form henceforth; the same decision was made regarding the correction of liturgical books, and Patriarch Nikon was granted full authority to carry out these reforms. Only one member of the Council, Bishop Paul of Kolomna, added a note to his signature stating that, on the matter of prostrations during Great Lent, he could not agree with the Council’s resolutions⁹⁶⁶.

From the very beginning, Bishop Paul of Kolomna vehemently opposed the proposed reforms—it is difficult to say whether this was due to personal disagreements between the bishop and the patriarch⁹⁶⁷, — and became the first victim among the conservative monastic community; later, in Old Believer writings, he was glorified as a saint and considered the first martyr of the schism. Paul’s severe punishment cannot be justified, as Makarii Bulgakov attempts to do in his **History of the Russian Schism** (1855)⁹⁶⁸. Paul was deposed from the episcopate, exiled north to the Paleostrovsky Monastery, and even—as described in Old Believer writings—flogged on Nikon’s orders.

It now became clear to Nikon that soon, when the corrected and newly printed books were distributed to the churches and the old ones were withdrawn, new opponents of the reforms would emerge⁹⁶⁹. But Nikon’s decision to continue revising the books was reinforced by the fact that Patriarch Macarius of Antioch and Patriarch Gabriel of Serbia, who had visited Moscow in 1654 and 1655, also made no secret of their opinions regarding the Moscow “divergences.” Nikon decided to convene another Council and, by having two other patriarchs in attendance besides himself, lend greater authority to his decrees. This Council, in which the Eastern patriarchs participated, sat from March 25 to 31, 1655, and resolved to continue the revision of the books⁹⁷⁰.

⁹⁶³ Makarii. 12. pp. 125–138; Vvedensky, S., “Protopope Daniel of Kostroma,” in: BV. 1913. 4.

⁹⁶⁴ The organization of the Moscow Ecclesiastical Councils of the 16th and 17th centuries depended entirely on the will of the tsar, who, as the head of secular authority, held all the levers of power in his hands. The tsar was the initiator of the Councils, and without his will they could not have taken place. He determined the time and place of the sessions, as well as the composition and number of participants; he opened the sessions, ratified the council’s decisions, giving them the force of law, and ensured their implementation through his royal decrees and orders. See: Kapterev. Patriarch Nikon and Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich. Vol. 1 (1912, 2nd ed.). pp. 82, 62.

⁹⁶⁵ The Acts of the Council of 1654 were initially published by Nikon as an appendix to **The Tablets** (1656) and later appeared as a separate volume: **The Council Acts of 1654 on the Correction of Church Books** (1873).

⁹⁶⁶ Makarii. 12. pp. 139–145; Makarii. *History of the Russian Schism*. p. 160.

⁹⁶⁷ Bishop Paul came from the same region as Nikon; they had known each other since their youth. Furthermore, Paul was a relative of the hieromonk Anthony; this Anthony, in 1652, during the election of a new patriarch, was chosen by lot from among three candidates and thus became the sole candidate for the patriarchal throne; however, since Tsar Alexei wished to see Nikon as patriarch, Anthony was forced to renounce the patriarchal office. Makarii. *History of the Russian Schism*. p. 178; Melnikov. *Essays on the Priesthood*. p. 14; Pogodin, M. “Remarks on the Homeland of Patriarch Nikon and His Opponents,” in: Moskvityanin. 1854. 19 (this work is not available to me).

⁹⁶⁸ Makarii. *Op. cit.* p. 180.

⁹⁶⁹ During Nikon’s patriarchate, the following revised liturgical books were printed and distributed to churches: 1. The Service Book (1655). 2. The Tablet (1656)—a book containing an exposition of the Liturgy. 3. The Small Prayer Book (1656). 4. Lenten Triodion (1656). 5. *Irmologion* (1657). 6. Gospel (1657). 7. Psalter (1658) and 8. Service Book (1658). Makarii. *Op. cit.*, p. 182.

⁹⁷⁰ The report on the Council of 1655, issued by order of Nikon, was included in the 1655 Service Book as a preface; later, P. Stroeve published it in his **Description of the Tolstoy and Tsar’s Library**. Of particular value is the travel diary of Archdeacon Paul of Aleppo, son of Patriarch Macarius of Antioch, who accompanied the patriarch during his journeys to Moscow in 1654–1655 and

Shortly after the Council, in early May 1655, an envoy from Patriarch Paissios of Constantinople arrived in Moscow. He brought letters addressed to the tsar and to Nikon, as well as the acts of the Council of Constantinople, which had been specially convened by Paisius to discuss and approve the report sent to him by Nikon regarding the Council of 1654 and its resolutions. It is noteworthy that this Council approved the defrocking of Bishop Paul. In his letter to Patriarch Paissius, Nikon posed 26 questions to him so that he would have a legitimate basis for his efforts to revise the books and rites. Paissius sent him answers to these questions, the text of the Creed, explanations regarding the singing of “Alleluia,” the three-fingered sign of the cross, and certain liturgical rites. It was especially important for Nikon to have the Creed with the Council’s explanations regarding the immutability of the Nicene (should be: Nicene-Constantinopolitan. – Translator’s note) Creed, to which not a single word may be added and from which not a single word may be removed⁹⁷¹. It is well known that the amendment to the 8th article of the Creed, removing the word “true,” provoked the strongest protest from the Old Believers⁹⁷² and became something of a dogmatic justification for the schism. Shortly after the Council of 1655 and Paissius’s letter, the revised Service Book and the “Skrizhal” were published, the latter with two appendices: one on the three-finger sign and one on the Creed⁹⁷³.

In April 1656, Nikon convened the third and final Council dedicated to the revisions of the books, and the 8 bishops, 22 archimandrites, and 9 abbots delivered the final verdict on the two-finger and three-finger signs of the cross: the two-finger sign was declared heretical, and those who made the sign of the cross with two fingers were condemned, for they did not follow the teaching of the Church. The Acts of the Council were included in the *Skrizhal* as a separate chapter:⁹⁷⁴.

The Council of 1656 was, so to speak, the final official act in the matter of revising the liturgical books and rites, which took place during Nikon’s patriarchate. Thus, this period lasted no more than four years, which can be considered the prelude to the Russian schism—it was then that the Russian Church’s attitude toward it was defined, and it was then that the first adherents of the schism appeared. If we look at the very first opponents of the reforms, we see that almost all of them came from the ranks of the “white” clergy—that is, the parish clergy, not the monastic clergy—with the exception of Bishop Pavel of Kolomna, who belonged to the monastic order. In general, it can be said that Nikon’s measures were a matter that affected only a narrow circle, primarily the Moscow clergy. The broad masses of the people, the clergy, and the monastic community were still expressing their dissent in a very vague manner. Nikon was still at the height of his power, but when a turning point occurred in his fate, the protest movement against the reforms began to spread, and the schism grew even in the most remote corners of the Muscovite state; this was partly due to the fact that some opponents of Nikon’s reforms left Moscow and began to spread propaganda against the reforms throughout the country.

On July 10, 1658, Nikon voluntarily and arbitrarily abdicated the patriarchal throne and left Moscow, thus bringing his rule over the Russian Church to a de facto end. This act reflected the sheer willfulness of his nature. However, the action that Nikon had intended to take to strengthen his power and improve relations with Tsar Alexei turned out to be a blow against himself. This act was not a consequence of the cooling of his

1666; see: *Travels of Macarius*. London, 1829–1836. 2 vols. (part of the diary has been translated into Russian: *Readings*. 1890. 4) and later in: Palmer, W., vol. 2. On the Council of 1655: *Macarius*. 12. pp. 172 ff.

⁹⁷¹ Macarius. History of the Russian Schism. pp. 161–165; Macarius. 12. pp. 179 ff.; Paissius’s letter in: Christian Readings. 1881. 1 (original and translation).

⁹⁷² The eighth article of the Old Believers’ Creed reads: “And in the Holy Spirit, the True and Life-Giving Lord, who proceeds from the Father, who is worshiped and glorified together with the Father and the Son, of whom the prophets spoke, and whose Kingdom will have no end.” These additions, inserted as a result of an incorrect translation, did not appear in Moscow until the 16th century. Makarii. History of the Russian Schism. pp. 23–25.

⁹⁷³ Makarii. 12. p. 186.

⁹⁷⁴ Ibid. 12. pp. 191–195; Makarii. History of the Russian Schism. pp. 170–175. On the emergence of the two-fingered sign of the cross in Russia: ibid. pp. 25–31; and also: Kapterev. Patriarch Nikon and His Opponents (1913). pp. 58–61, 78–96, 189–203; Golubinsky. “On Our Polemic with the Old Believers” (1905, also in: Readings. 1905. 3). pp. 153–196; Ivanovsky (Guide. Vol. 2. pp. 126–135) defends the three-finger sign of the cross as the only correct gesture; his work served as a reference guide for Synodal missionaries. The Council’s verdict was too hasty, likely adopted at Nikon’s insistence, and its justifications do not stand up to criticism, for the two-finger sign of the cross contains no heresy. Cf. the justification of the measures taken by Nikon: Makarii, vol. 12, pp. 221–223.

relations with the tsar over the past two years; rather, it was a consequence or direct manifestation of Nikon's views on the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical authority⁹⁷⁵.

Having left the patriarchal see, Nikon withdrew from the further history of the revision of the books, but not from the history of the Russian schism. One might even say that the shadow of Nikon and his deeds continued to haunt his opponents, who wished to see him as the Antichrist or the forerunner of the Antichrist; a multitude of writings appeared, the subject of which was not even his activities, but Nikon's very person⁹⁷⁶. The falling-out with the tsar significantly undermined the positive aspects of his reforms regarding the revision of the books and, in a sense, contributed to the deepening of the schism⁹⁷⁷.

5. The Monastic Opposition to Nikon's Measures

The opposition to the reforms, which had taken shape in Moscow, spread ever further and wider. It manifested itself in various ways: 1) through the composition of polemical writings, 2) through the stubborn rejection of the "Nikonian books," and, finally, 3) through open struggle against ecclesiastical and secular authorities, which was particularly evident in the famous revolt of the monastic community at the Solovetsky Monastery. Both the episcopate and the monastic community took part in the struggle for the "old faith" against the newly printed books—the former less actively, the latter more so.

Bishop Paul was the first hierarch of the Russian Church to openly express his disagreement with Nikon's reforms right from the very beginning. Bishop Alexander of Vyatka (1657–1674) also protested openly; although he had signed the resolution of the 1656 Council, several years later (1663), at a time of particularly tense relations between the tsar and Nikon, who had left his see, sent a lengthy letter to the tsar in which he denounced Nikon and the revision of the books he had initiated; among other things, he objected to the removal of the word "true" from the Symbol of Faith. At the Council of 1667, Alexander recanted his accusations, acknowledged the error of his views, and accepted the Council's decrees. Nevertheless, it should be noted that through his writing he once again demonstrated the conservatism and oppositional sentiments of the episcopate⁹⁷⁸. Alexander proved to have more courage than other bishops who, in their hearts, were also opposed to Nikon's reforms—such as, for example, Macarius, Metropolitan of Novgorod († 1663), or Marcellus, Archbishop of Vologda († 1663)—but instead of voicing open protest, they preferred to delay the implementation of the reforms or, to use a modern term, sabotage them⁹⁷⁹. This group of bishops also included the bishop who anonymously circulated his "Indictment of Patriarch Nikon"⁹⁸⁰.

Given this attitude of the diocesan bishops toward the reforms, the newly revised liturgical books certainly made their way to distant cities and monasteries, but this by no means meant that the clergy and monastic community would use them to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. Metropolitan Jonah of Rostov, who supported Nikon, was forced to address the flock of his diocese with several circular letters, seeking to correct the liturgical rites—for example, the blessing of water only on the eve of the Feast of the Epiphany (January 6). The abbot and monastic community of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, who later insulted and humiliated Nikon after he was exiled to their monastery, refused to comply with these directives from their ruling bishop⁹⁸¹. Throughout the second half of the 17th century, strong opposition to the "Nikonian books" arose time and again in many monasteries, as evidenced by numerous letters from diocesan bishops⁹⁸². Elijah, the archimandrite of the Solovetsky Monastery, personally signed the decree of the Council of 1654, but he returned to his monastery by no means as a supporter of Nikon's reforms and, until his death († 1659), remained in full agreement with the monastic community, which, at the monastery council on July 8, 1658,

⁹⁷⁵ We are referring to Nikon's fundamental views on the necessity of the spiritual authority's subordination to secular authority, and on the primacy of the "priesthood" over the "kingdom." Patriarch Nikon's opinion on the Code, in: Notes of the ORSA. 2 (1861), especially pp. 456, 449, 451, 453; cf. also: Pavlov, A., "The Theory of Eastern Papism," in Prav. ob. 1879, no. 12, and Undolsky, V., "Patriarch Nikon's Review of Tsar A. M.'s Code," in Rus. arkh. 1886, vol. 2, pp. 615–620.

⁹⁷⁶ Peretz, V. "Rumors and Speculation," in: IORAS 5, 1909, no. 1, pp. 123 ff.

⁹⁷⁷ On Nikon's fate after he left the See, see: Makarii, vol. 12, pp. 326–524, 683–751; Nikolaevsky, P., The Life of Nikon in Exile (1882).

⁹⁷⁸ Proceedings of the Council of 1667, in: DAI. 5. No. 102. p. 447 or in: Materials. 1. p. 79; Kapterev. Patriarch Nikon and Tsar A. M. 1 (1909). p. 494.

⁹⁷⁹ Kapterev, op. cit., p. 492; Melnikov, "Essays on the Priesthood," in: Complete Works, vol. 7 (1909), p. 14; Makarii, History of the Russian Schism, p. 274.

⁹⁸⁰ Kapterev. Op. cit. p. 500; "Indictment of Patriarch Nikon," in: Chronicle of Russian Literature. 5 (1863). Part 2.

⁹⁸¹ Iona's Epistle, in: Readings. 1884. 1. Miscellany. pp. 21–22.

⁹⁸² See, for example, regarding the Ryazan Diocese, in: Pksanov. Ancient Documents (1851). No. 51.

resolved not to accept the new books and to conduct divine services according to the old books. No other monastery rejected Nikon's reforms with such determination as Solovetsky.

In general, the views of the opposition ranged from discouragement to religious fanaticism; the latter, however, being a disease of the religious consciousness of that era, was characteristic not only of Archpriest Avvakum but also of Patriarch Nikon. The elder Bogolep Lvov of the Kozhezersky Monastery, who from the very beginning rejected Nikon's "heretical" reforms, refused for 10 years to confess to the monastery's spiritual father and did not receive Communion for 20 years so as not to tarnish the "purity" of his faith—behavior quite characteristic of such fanaticism⁹⁸³. Such cases were by no means isolated; their number grew with each passing year, and this was happening even before the verdict of 1667. Here is another example: the strict ascetic Avraamy, a hieromonk at the Monastery of the Mother of God near Nizhny Novgorod who was closely associated with Avvakum, left his forest hut—where he had until then led a life filled with prayer and complete renunciation of the world—and came to Moscow to present his petition to the tsar, in which he launched a scathing attack on Nikon's reforms. He was one of those schismatics who called Nikon the "Antichrist," as is evident from his "Questions and Answers," which he wrote in response to the unsuccessful exhortations of two metropolitans—Paul of Krutitsy and Hilarion of Ryazan; the same opinion of Nikon is expressed in his other writings: "Letter to a God-Lover" and "Treatise on the Deception of the Antichrist"⁹⁸⁴. Exiled to Pustozersk, Avraamy preached there about the Antichrist who had already been born, and in 1681, by order of Patriarch Joakim, he was burned at the stake along with his like-minded followers, the fanatical Old Believers. Archimandrite Spiridon Potemkin († 1663) was also among Nikon's staunchest opponents; he composed an extensive work—*The Book on the True Faith*⁹⁸⁵.

Among the most prominent schism-mongers were two other representatives of the monastic community who, although they were in close contact with one another, were nevertheless very different people. Dosiphei, the abbot of the Nikolsky Monastery near Tikhvin, was among the first to preach against all innovations. To preserve the purity of his faith, he left the monastery and went to a small hermitage near the town of Poventsia (in the north); from there (around 1685), he traveled south to the Don Cossacks, where the schism had many adherents. When the government began cracking down on the schism on the Don, Dosifei left the Don and resurfaced some time later (after 1688) in the North Caucasus, where he died around 1691. Dosifei was a zealous preacher of the Old Belief everywhere he went and was considered one of the greatest authorities among the early Old Believers, but he opposed religious fanaticism and condemned it, including, among other things, self-immolation, which had spread among fanatical schismatics in the 1680s. He refused to recognize those who self-immolated as martyrs for the faith⁹⁸⁶.

A different figure was another schismatic leader, the monk Cornelius, one of the most influential figures among the Old Believers, who was even glorified by them as a saint. His hagiography was one of the most widely circulated Old Believer writings and serves as an important source on the early history of the schism. At the age of 15, Cornelius took monastic vows at the Korniliyevo-Komel Monastery and spent more than 20 years there; he then began wandering from monastery to monastery, eventually reaching Moscow and entering the Chudov Monastery, where he served as a baker for Patriarch Joseph, then for Metropolitan Affoniy of Novgorod, and finally for Nikon, whom he thus knew well personally. In Novgorod, he met the aforementioned Hegumen Dosiphei. From Novgorod, Cornelius returned once more to Patriarch Joseph and was appointed overseer of the monastery's dungeon, but he held this position for only a short time and soon transferred to the Chudov Monastery as an ordinary monk. From the very beginning of the revision of the liturgical books, he opposed Nikon and, together with Dosipheth, fled to the Don. Three years later, Cornelius left Dositheus and went to the Kirillov Monastery, where there was also strong dissatisfaction with the reforms; but when they eventually began to conduct services using the new liturgical books there, he moved to the Nilov Hermitage, which at that time had become one of the strongholds of the opponents of the reforms, and Cornelius was among the most active figures in this opposition. Forced to leave the Nilov Hermitage, he fled to the forests along the Vyg River, where by that time many adherents of the Old Belief had already gathered. Cornelius became the leader of the Old Believers. He gave his blessing for the founding of a community, which later in the history of the schism came to be known as the "Vyg Community." Cornelius

⁹⁸³ Acts, in: DAI. 5. No. 102. p. 458; Materials. 1. No. 11.

⁹⁸⁴ Materials. 7 (1885). Nos. 3, 4, and 5.

⁹⁸⁵ Smirnov. Internal Issues in the Schism (1898). pp. 12, 137; Materials. 6. p. 230; cf. Makarii. 12. pp. 627 ff.

⁹⁸⁶ Smirnov. Op. cit. pp. XXIV–XXVII; Makarii. History of the Russian Schism. p. 273; DAI. 12. Nos. 130, 134, 180.

died on March 21, 1695, at the age of 125, according to his hagiography. The Vyg Community, which became a hotbed of fanatical religiosity, was founded on the strictest ascetic rules of labor and renunciation of the world: this is what Cornelius demanded of his spiritual children. In the 18th century, the Vygovskaya community played a crucial role in the schism among the “bezpopovtsy” (priestless); nearly all the schismatic leaders of this movement came from it⁹⁸⁷.

6. The Revolt at the Solovetsky Monastery

The monastic opposition to the “Nikonian innovations” and the revised liturgical books was particularly evident in the revolt of the brethren of the Solovetsky Monastery⁹⁸⁸. No other event contributed as much to the spread of the schism as this monastic revolt—an exceptionally unique chapter in the ecclesiastical history of the Russian people. Monasticism, which for many centuries had been a faithful ally of the Church and the state, played a leading role in shaping Old Moscow culture and worldview, and was generally the main driving force in church life—this monasticism suddenly and openly opposed both the church hierarchy and state authority. We must not forget that the monastic brotherhood, whatever its nature, always enjoyed immense religious authority in the eyes of the people, and the Old Russian monastery still remained the focal point of popular religiosity and piety. Opposition sentiments, which had been manifesting themselves to a greater or lesser extent in many monasteries, finally erupted with tremendous force in the revolt of the Solovetsky monastic community, which proved decisive for the future history of the monasteries. This revolt proved that the monastic community as a whole was opposed to Nikon’s reforms, and although monasteries and monks later accepted the “Nikonian innovations,” this was not an expression of internal religious agreement with Nikon’s reforms or a continuation of his work, but rather an outward submission; the acceptance of the reforms signified capitulation to the power of the state rather than to the authority of the Church. The monastic community’s external, forced submission had important consequences for its future role in the ecclesiastical life of Russia. In our view, the roots of this new type of relationship between the monastic community and the state, and between the monastic community and the Church, are to be found not only in the reforms of Peter the Great, who pushed monasteries into the background of church life, but also in the early history of the schism. The monastic community, of course, remained within the bosom of the Russian Church as before, but the former internal bond and close mutual support had suffered a serious wound that could not be fully healed during the 18th and 19th centuries. This also explains why monastic life during this period seems, as it were, paralyzed.

Events at the Solovetsky Monastery unfolded relatively slowly, for the secular authorities hesitated to take decisive action, while the ecclesiastical authorities remained indifferent. The delay in taking action against the uprising can also be explained by the monastery’s remoteness from Moscow, the Moscow authorities’ lack of awareness regarding the situation at the monastery, and, above all, the tsar’s personal attitude toward these events. It should not be forgotten that the years 1658–1666 were spent untangling the most complex web of contradictions between the patriarch and the tsar, which undoubtedly weakened Moscow’s position and strengthened that of the monastery. The monastery’s position was more advantageous, since the monastic community was better informed about what was happening in Moscow than Moscow was about affairs at the monastery. As a stauropegial monastery, subject directly to the patriarch, the Solovetsky Monastery always maintained representatives in Moscow who, of course, promptly informed the monastery authorities and the monastic community about the prevailing sentiments in Moscow, about the hostility toward “Nikonian innovations,” and about the fact that opponents of these innovations could be found even among influential boyar families and within the tsar’s own family. The government in Moscow, however, was forced to rely solely on the official reports from the monastery’s abbot. Archimandrite Elijah, having returned to the monastery after the Council of 1654—whose resolutions he had signed—did nothing to transition to worship

⁹⁸⁷ Anderson, V. *Old Belief and Sectarianism* (1903). p. 131 ff.; Druzhinin. “On the Life of Cornelius, the Hermit of Vygovsk,” in: *ZhMNP*. 1884. 9; Ostrovsky, D. *The Vygovsk Hermitage and Its Significance* (1914); Filippov, I. *History of the Vygovsk Hermitage* (1862) (not available to me).

⁹⁸⁸ Makarii. 12. p. 630; Makarii. *History of the Russian Schism*. p. 215; a number of documents in: *AAE*. 4; *DAI*. 5; *AI*. 4; *Readings*. 1846. 3. Section 1; Kazansky, P. “Who Were the Perpetrators of the Solovetsky Uprising,” in: *Readings*. 1867. 4; Syrtsov, I. “The Uprising of the Solovetsky Old Believer Monks,” in: *Pravda Sbornik* 1880, nos. 1, 2, 4, 5–7, 10; 1881, nos. 1, 2, 4, 5 (also published separately: Kazan, 1881); *Materials*, vol. 3. An important but not entirely objective source is the work by S. Denisov, leader of the Vygovskaya Old Believer community, **The History of the Fathers and Martyrs of Solovki** (1st ed. 1788; 2nd ed. 1788; 3rd ed. 1789).

using the new liturgical books, and the monastery continued to use the old ones. On July 8, 1658, the monastic community resolved not to accept the “Nikonian books” at all.

Opposition intensified because more than 100 opponents of Nikon’s reforms were exiled from Moscow to the monastery; upon their arrival, they added fuel to the fire. Among those exiled were Prince Lvov, a zealous follower of Archpriest Avvakum, and the monk Theoktist, who wrote treatises here on the kingdom of the Antichrist; in addition, many of the monks who opposed the innovations left their monasteries and flocked to the Solovetsky Monastery. For example, Hegumen Savvina of the Nikanor Monastery, who later became one of the main instigators of the uprising, also went there.

But, of course, there were also opponents of the reforms among the monastic brotherhood itself. One of Nikon’s most influential enemies was the monk Gerasim Firsov. He was a man of strong character, a typical leader, highly capable, and not without a theological education. As early as 1658, Gerasim wrote “A Letter to a Brother on the Position of the Fingers,” which was the first attempt to justify the two-finger sign using ecclesiastical literature; this work subsequently gained widespread circulation and recognition among the Old Believers. Although at the Council of 1666 Gerasim revised his beliefs and offered a confession—which, it seems, was not sincere—this work retained its authority among the Old Believers. Gerasim was exiled to the Joseph Monastery, where, by decree of the Council, he was to compose a refutation of his “Epistle to a Brother,” but he delayed—probably because he did not want to do so—and he never composed such a refutation until his death in 1667.⁹⁸⁹

From 1658 to 1666, correspondence continued between Moscow and the Solovetsky Monastery, as well as between Moscow and Archimandrite Sergius, who had been sent to the monastery specifically to admonish the brethren. The brethren sent five “petitions on the faith” to the tsar⁹⁹⁰. Particularly noteworthy is the last petition, dated September 23, 1667, in which the religious views of the monastic community were expressed⁹⁹¹. This petition was, so to speak, a detailed explanation of the reasons why the monastic community could not accept either the new books or the decrees regarding changes to liturgical rites. In terms of its content, the petition of September 23 is not a scholarly theological critique, but rather an exposition of an eschatologically colored ideology that began to take shape at that time among opponents of Nikon’s reforms, only to later become a defining feature of the entire religious worldview of the schism.

The end times are approaching, when the Antichrist is to appear, the petition states. Faith is waning throughout the world; apostates and traitors to the Christian faith have appeared everywhere; only Russia, until recently, had preserved it in unblemished purity—but then Nikon came with his disciples. Now they are attempting to impose an “unknown new faith” on the Orthodox Christians of the Moscow Tsardom; they have corrupted the “true” old books by making corrections in them borrowed from the Greek apostates, and have introduced sinful alterations into the divine liturgy. When one sees all this, one recalls Christ’s words about the decline of faith before His Second Coming: “I tell you, He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?” (Luke 18:8). But Russia and its Orthodox people can still avert destruction and return to the true path if the tsar, following the example of his predecessors who pleased God, abolishes the “Nikonian innovations” and restores the uncorrupted “old faith.” The brethren of the Solovetsky Monastery do not recognize the decrees and oaths of the Council of 1666–1667, for this Council was uncanonical, since the bishops who participated in it were “Nikonites” who had fallen away from the true Old Faith. The monastic community will remain faithful to the true faith to the point of shedding blood, and, if necessary, they are ready to lay down their lives and die in the Old Faith⁹⁹².

The authors of this letter envisioned the very real possibility of the collapse of the idea of “Moscow—the Third Rome,” and thus, the end of the world. For them, this was not an illusion, but a firm, unshakable conviction. The idea that the Muscovite state was the last bastion of pure Christianity was deeply rooted in the popular consciousness, and for Nikon’s opponents it was even more compelling than for its creator, the monk Philotheus, since in the time that had elapsed since the proclamation of this idea, it had permeated all spheres of life—both private and cultural-political—the life of the Church, the state, and the people. Tsar Alexei himself, Nikon, and the bishops of the 1666 Council were all wholeheartedly and with all their minds committed to this idea. The monks of the Solovetsky Monastery failed to take just one point into account.

⁹⁸⁹ Materials. 3. p. 107; 2. p. 116; Nikolsky, N. “Writings of the Solovetsky Monk Gerasim Firsov,” in: PDP. 188 (1916).

⁹⁹⁰ Materials. 2. Nos. 14, 30, 31, 43, 45.

⁹⁹¹ Ibid. pp. 213–262. This petition was not presented to the tsar. Syrtsov. Op. cit., in: Prav. sob. 1880. 1. p. 164; AI. 4. No. 248.

⁹⁹² Syrtsov. Op. cit., pp. 169–173.

They viewed this idea as purely religious or from a solely religious perspective, whereas the tsar and Nikon saw the full complexity of this ecclesiastical-political construct, which did not allow for a separation from Byzantium. The very subtle difference in the interpretation of this idea's substance lay not solely in the tsar's or Patriarch Nikon's philhellenism; it was connected to the role that this idea assigned to each of them. Each was a guardian, a bulwark, and a source of vitality for this idea—one as the Orthodox tsar, the other as the primate of the Church. The dispute between Tsar Alexei and Nikon showed, however, that even they did not interpret this idea in the same way. The state-political element of this idea was, of course, more important to Alexei than to Nikon, who, while not denying its significance, sought to play a more significant role in establishing this idea than the one the tsar was able and willing to assign to him.

Thus, the same idea was viewed differently from three perspectives. Alexei's position was strengthened and justified by the fact that the Eastern patriarchs sided with the tsar—albeit more for practical than for principled reasons—for, on the one hand, the question of relations between the state and the Church after 1453 had a completely different meaning for the Eastern patriarchs than it did for Moscow; and on the other hand, they did not wish to oppose the will of the secular authorities—authorities that could assist them both materially and diplomatically in the struggle against the Turks and had indeed done so on more than one occasion⁹⁹³. The decrees of the Council of 1666–1667, which the tsar, of course, considered entirely Orthodox and just, vindicated him in religious and moral terms in his dispute with Nikon, and at the same time convinced him of the need to support Nikon's reforms and implement them in the Russian Church with the help of secular authorities. For Alexei, the period of doubt and hesitation he had experienced during the early years of the reforms—for example, in connection with Avvakum—was now behind him. Over the course of his 20-year reign (from 1646 to 1666), the young man who had been under Nikon's influence grew into an autocratic ruler whose views on state, church, and politics had gained greater clarity and definition. We must not forget another factor: namely, Western influences on the tsar and the associated realization that the state lacked educated people. The tsar viewed the implementation of Nikon's reforms as evidence of some success in the field of theological education, which not only did not contradict his ideas about “Moscow—the Third Rome,” but also lent the very idea an inner perfection. This is the answer to the question of why the tsar and the leaders of the schism became adversaries. In short, all of this can probably be summarized as follows: both sides professed the same idea of “Moscow—the Third Rome,” but while Tsar Alexei saw this idea as a living organism that could not remain frozen in time or in a state of stagnation, the other side—the schismatics—advocated preserving the idea exactly as it had appeared at the time of its proclamation, and viewed any attempts to revitalize it as heresy. This finally compelled the state authorities to take action against the Solovetsky Monastery's opposition, which had gone too far.

The situation was further exacerbated by the fact that the Council's verdict of May 13, 1667—issued with unnecessary haste—justified the government's intervention, while the monastery's brethren now viewed their opposition to the reforms as martyrdom for the old faith. At its final session on May 13, 1667, the Council issued a verdict that had very serious consequences: Nikon's innovations were not only definitively approved, but moreover, those who did not accept them were excommunicated from the Church and anathematized. Following the categorical demand to adopt the liturgical books, revised and printed in 1654–1666, and to conduct divine services exclusively according to these books, after a clear formulation of all the revisions (this was done to avoid misunderstandings and errors) and the condemnation of their perverse interpretations, the Council's verdict states: “We hereby convey this conciliar decree and testament to all the aforementioned Orthodox clergy and command them to preserve it unchanged and to submit to the Holy Eastern Church. But if anyone disobeys our commands and does not submit to the Holy Eastern Church and this consecrated Council, or begins to speak against us and resist us, we shall, by the authority granted to us by the All-Holy and Life-Giving Spirit, expel such an adversary—if he belongs to the consecrated clergy—and strip him of every sacred office and grace, and consign him to anathema; but if he is of the lay order, we shall excommunicate him, sever him from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and condemn him to anathema as a heretic and a rebel, and cut him off from the Orthodox communion, the flock, and the Church of God, as rot and a useless limb, until such time as he comes to his senses and returns to the truth through repentance”⁹⁹⁴.

⁹⁹³ Kaptelev. *Russia's Relations with the Orthodox East* (1885).

⁹⁹⁴ DAI. 5. No. 102. p. 487. The Council's verdict included the following points: 1) divine services were to be conducted only according to the new, revised books, because this revision was correct; 2) in the 8th article of the Creed, the word “true” was omitted;

By this decree, adherents of the Old Faith—or, more accurately, of the Old Rite—were excommunicated from the Orthodox Church; thus, May 13, 1667, can be considered the beginning of the Russian schism.

Although after this verdict Tsar Alexei could consider his measures against the brethren of the Solovetsky Monastery—who did not recognize the legitimacy of the verdict—to be entirely justified, the government nevertheless delayed taking action against the monastery. Further negotiations were held with the monastic community. The new archimandrite, Joseph, arrived at the monastery (1668–69) *accompanied by streltsy to compel the community to recognize him as their abbot. The monks, however, who had large food supplies and 90 cannons mounted on the fortress walls and towers, barricaded themselves inside the monastery and opened fire on the streltsy*⁹⁹⁵.

In 1672, another detachment of streltsy (775 men) was dispatched under the command of Ievlev, who was ordered to first attempt to persuade the monastic community to submit. When these attempts failed, Ievlev ordered the monastery to be shelled, but the monastery had more gunpowder and cannonballs than the streltsy; moreover, the streltsy's camp was poorly organized, and the siege of the monastery proceeded sluggishly. On May 12, 1673, Tsar Alexei issued a decree promising a full pardon to the rebellious monks if they opened the monastery gates and submitted to the Council's verdict, but the monastic community held firm. An outbreak of scurvy among the streltsy finally forced Ievlev to lift the siege and return to Moscow.

In the fall of 1674, Prince Ivan Meshcheryakov was sent to Solovki with 1,700 streltsy and cannons, having received orders to immediately suppress the rebellion. Once again, the monastery came under fire; the monks, in turn, also opened fire on the Moscow detachment—and not without success. On December 28, 1674, at a council of the monastic community, it was decided not to mention the tsar's name during divine services; some monks, such as the treasurer Gerontius, Hieromonk Paul, and others, disagreed with this and were thrown into the monastery dungeon. The siege continued until early 1676; finally, on January 22, Meshcheryakov—thanks to the help of a monk named Theoktist who had fled the monastery and showed him a secret passage into the monastery—managed to storm the monastery at night. A full-scale battle ensued; many monks were killed. The ringleaders of the uprising—such as the abbot Nikanor—were sentenced to death; those who refused to submit to the Council's decree of May 13, 1667, were exiled to other monasteries; a small number of monks who submitted to the tsar and the Council remained at their monastery. A large number of the monastic community managed to escape.

Scattered throughout the forests of the Russian North, wandering from one desert to another, these wandering monks became the main proponents of the schism and champions of the Old Faith; in their stories, they reviled Nikon, calling him the “son of the underworld,” “apostate,” and “forerunner of the Antichrist,” and—not without success—called on the people to hold fast to ancient piety. The siege and fall of the Solovetsky Monastery made a deep impression on adherents of the Old Belief and their sympathizers; the warrior monks gained the aura and glory of martyrs for the faith, and the wandering monks carried this glory with great zeal to the most remote corners of the country. In the famous Streltsy uprising of May 15, 1682—which broke out after the death of Tsar Fyodor (1676–1682), when some confusion reigned at the top and a

3) “Alleluia” in the doxologies was to be pronounced three times with the addition of “Glory to You, O God”; 4) the three-fingered sign of the cross was prescribed; 5) the Jesus Prayer was to be recited in the established form: “Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us sinners”; 6) a four-pointed cross was to be depicted on the prosphora (ibid., pp. 485–487). The “Oath” of 1667, by which adherents of the Old Rite excommunicated themselves from the Orthodox Church, acquired fundamental canonical significance upon the Old Believers’ return to the bosom of the One Church. This “Oath” sparked considerable controversy in the literature; among the most important works are: “On the Oaths of the Moscow Council of 1667,” in: Christian Readings, 1872, no. 5; Filippov, T., “On the Oaths of the Council of 1667,” in: Citizen, 1876, no. 17; Pavel, Hegumen. “On the Oaths of the Council of 1667,” in: Vyatka Diocesan Gazette. 1871, no. 4; Grenkov, A. “The Decree of the Moscow Council of 1666–1667,” in: Prav. Sob. 1863. 5, 9, 11, and 12; Ivanovsky. Guide. 2. p. 150; Golubinsky, E. “On Our Polemic with the Old Believers,” in: Readings. 1905. 3.

⁹⁹⁵ Dosifei. Description of the Solovetsky Monastery. 1. p. 151; Syrtsov. Op. cit. pp. 281, 347; The Solovetsky Monastery, as Moscow's stronghold on the White Sea—primarily against the Swedes—was particularly heavily fortified. P. Kazansky (Readings. 1867. 4. p. 6) believes that it was precisely this “militarization” of the monastery—which constantly housed a sizeable garrison of streltsy—as well as the monastery's trade that contributed to the secularization of the monastery. But one cannot agree with this view, for the monks' religious fanaticism could not have been a consequence of secularization. Certainly, the presence in the monastery of numerous exiles—those who sympathized with the schism and therefore participated in the resistance—played a certain role here. Cf.: Syrtsov. Op. cit., p. 372 ff.

struggle for power began—the schism played a significant role, not to mention the sympathy of the uprising’s leader, Prince I. A. Khovansky’s sympathy for the Old Believers⁹⁹⁶.

However, the measures taken by the Church under Patriarch Joakim (1674–1690) were of great significance for the spread of the schism and its internal development, as well as for the formation of its ideology—particularly its relationship to the state and the emerging empire. Patriarch Joachim was a staunch opponent of the schism, although his own religious views did not differ greatly from those of the Old Believers, and he waged a struggle against the schism using the harshest measures. On April 7, 1685, a decree was issued (⁹⁹⁷) under which adherents of the schism were to be persecuted and punished as elements hostile to the state; thus, the state decided to intervene in purely ecclesiastical matters. The decree threatened schismatics and their sympathizers with various punishments, including the burning of Old Believers as rebels and traitors to the state. Thus, both of these dates—May 13, 1667, and April 7, 1685—became the starting points in the history of the schism. The first date marked the religious separation of the Old Believers, while the second marked the civil and legal separation of the schismatics for a very long time⁹⁹⁸.

For the monastic community, the schism had various consequences, some of them extremely severe. The monks’ participation in the schism as instigators of opposition to Nikon’s reforms severed the ties binding the monastic community to the church hierarchy and, during the era of Peter the Great, cast suspicion on them for hostility toward the state—a suspicion that, in a certain sense, had its grounds; finally, one must not forget that the segment of the monastic community that was least susceptible to the process of secularization took part in the schism. It is quite telling that for the monastic community that remained within the Church, the first half of the 18th century was a time of complete literary barrenness; it seemed to be living in a state of paralysis. The schism lies at the root of why, during the imperial era, the monastic community felt out of place and was unable to find a specific purpose for itself. For a relatively long time, it stood at a crossroads; some monks found a way forward, while others—the majority—remained in this state until 1917.

Chapter XIII. The Era of Secularization (1701–1764)

1. Peter the Great and His Attitude Toward Monasticism

In the last decade of the 17th century, Russian monasticism entered the third and final period of its history. Two events were decisive for its internal development and external fate: the schism and those measures taken by Peter the Great that are commonly referred to as “church reform.” But if we compare the life of the Russian Church before and after the reform, it becomes clear that this term should be used with a certain degree of caution. Yes, church life in Russia at the end of the 17th century was far from ideal; it truly needed many serious changes—but these changes did not take place. Even after the reform, the same flaws remained in church life, indicating the one-sided and imperfect nature of the transformations. In the most important matter—the education of the clergy—not even the most urgent measures were taken.

However, the reform brought about fundamental changes in the state’s attitude toward the Russian Church. These changes were extremely significant—“The Spiritual Regulations” established relations between the Church and the state on an entirely new basis. The Church lost its legal independence and became a state institution—the Department of the Orthodox Faith; this designation remained in official documents well into the 19th century. The “Spiritual Regulations” established a new relationship between the state and the Church, characterized by the state assuming guardianship over the Church; its interference in church affairs became the legal norm, and the state upheld this principle unwaveringly. Of course, even in Muscovy—that is, even before Peter the Great—secular authorities very often interfered in church affairs, and the Russian Church frequently faced pressure from the state; however, such interference was not considered normal; the conceptions of the relationship between the state and the Church before and after Peter the Great were not

⁹⁹⁶ For details on the siege, see Syrtsov or: Makarii. History of the Russian Schism. pp. 240–258.

⁹⁹⁷ PSZ. 2. No. 1102.

⁹⁹⁸ It was only by a decree of April 17, 1905, that the official designation of the Old Believers as “schismatics” was abolished; it orders that henceforth “the designation ‘Old Believers’ be applied, in place of the currently used term ‘schismatics,’ to all followers of the various interpretations and communities who accept the fundamental dogmas of the Orthodox Church but do not recognize certain rites adopted by it and conduct their divine services according to old-print books.” (Quoted from: Golubinsky, E. “On Our Polemic with the Old Believers.” pp. 238–239.)

merely different, but directly opposed. Now the Russian Church is losing its former, very high status in Muscovite Russia and is being reduced by Peter's ecclesiastical reform to the status of a mere state institution. This role was entirely in line with Peter's plans, as he demanded of the Church not only a purely spiritual ministry but, above all, a state-political one. In Peter's state, according to its founder's vision, everything was supposed to serve the state and benefit it—in the sense that he understood such benefit⁹⁹⁹.

For the church hierarchy, as well as for the monastic community, this new situation—created by Peter's reforms—was undesirable simply because the relationship between the state and the Church had now been given a clear and firm legal definition. The Muscovite state had no clear definitions of the legal relationship between secular and ecclesiastical authority. These relations were built and sustained on tradition, on the ways of the past—one might even say, on a sense of the past—as well as on the actual power and might of the autocratic tsar¹⁰⁰⁰. Even the Code of 1649, which devotes considerable space to ecclesiastical matters, did not define in detail the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical authority, nor did it provide clear legal norms governing these relations. For the secular authorities, administrative practice, as well as state and ecclesiastical-political ideology, still served as a substitute for a legal code. For example, in the so-called Charter of 1654, which actually sets forth legal norms for fiscal matters in Russia, one can find some deviations from customary law; yet even there it is emphasized that the tsar rules “as is pleasing to the Lord God and to us, the great sovereign, righteously and sinlessly”¹⁰⁰¹. If the Code of 1649 had provided a detailed legal definition of the relationship between the state and the Church and, at the same time, had established the primacy of the state, then the Church, it can be stated with complete certainty, would have recognized this as well; the verdict of the Council of 1667, which clearly supported the tsar in his dispute with Patriarch Nikon, retroactively confirms our assumption. From all that has been said here, it is clear that church leaders, with the exception of Patriarch Nikon, were not overly concerned with the legal definition of the relationship between the state and the Church in principle, but they were very interested in ensuring—not in principle, but in practice—with regard to their privileges, jurisdiction, and of church-owned lands—to preserve for the Church the status of a “state within a state” [*status in statu*], which they sought to achieve at the Councils of 1667 and 1675 and for which they secured the abolition of the Monastery Office (1677).

It was precisely these circumstances that were unacceptable to Peter's state and political plans, and his church reform—or, rather, the first steps toward it—were directed primarily against this “*status in statu*” in order to subsequently clarify and codify the relationship between the state and the Church once and for all. For the monastic community and monasteries, this background to the church reform had more serious consequences than the abolition of the patriarchate and the establishment of the Most Holy Governing Synod in 1721.

The ecclesiastical and political events of the past century were still too fresh and too dangerous for Peter, who had taken the reins of state governance into his own hands. In the 17th century, situations arose on more than one occasion that had no place in his mature concepts of state and politics. Perhaps it is worth recalling once again such phenomena as Patriarch Filaret's role in governing the state during the reign of Tsar Mikhail, Nikon's church policy, the decrees of the Councils of 1667 and 1675 regarding the privileges of the Russian Church, and the energetic activities of Patriarch Joakim, who abolished the Monastery Office and sought to defend the Church's independence from the state in every respect, and who was, so to speak, a “little Nikon” at heart; and finally, Peter's personal clashes with the last Patriarch, Adrian, in 1690–1700. The previously widespread view of Adrian's inactivity or passivity cannot be considered well-founded; as demonstrated in a study specifically devoted to his ecclesiastical policy¹⁰⁰², Adrian—who, by nature, lacked

⁹⁹⁹ On Peter the Great's church reform, see Verkhovskaya, P., *The Establishment of the Spiritual Collegium and the Spiritual Regulations*, 2 vols. (1916); as an introduction to the topic, the following work is recommended: Stupperich, R., *Staatsgedanke und Religionspolitik Peters d. Gr.* (1936) (*Osteuropische Forsch.* N. F. 22); Brückner, A., **Peter the Great** (1879). The new status of the Russian Church and its subordination to the state were definitively established by decrees dated November 19, 1817, and March 15, 1824. (PSZ, vol. 34, no. 27106, and vol. 39, no. 29919; cf. also no. 30037 of August 26, 1824).

¹⁰⁰⁰ Cf.: Philipp W., **Ivan Peresvetov and His Writings on the Renewal of the Moscow Empire** (1935), pp. 42 ff., which provides a concise overview of this state-political ideology.

¹⁰⁰¹ PSZ. 1. No. 122. This departure from tradition can also be found in the “New Trade Charter” (PSZ. 1. No. 408) and in the 1682 draft law on charity, which, even before Peter the Great, refers to “European customs.” Cf.: Vladimírsky-Budanov. *Review* (1888). p. 211.

¹⁰⁰² Skvortsov. *Patriarch Adrian. His Life and Works in Connection with the State of the Russian Church in the Last Decade of the 17th Century* (1913) (also in: *Prav. Sob.* 1912–1913).

Joakim's energy and Nikon's combative qualities—nevertheless displayed an unwavering desire to defend the Church's privileges. This passive resistance and the conservatism of his views suggested that ecclesiastical reform—and indeed all of Peter's planned reforms—would have met with opposition on his part. As long as Peter's mother, Queen Natalia (d. 1694), was alive and her conservative entourage supported Moscow's old ways, Adrian's position was favorable; moreover, Peter was still absorbed in his “amusing” pursuits. But after 1694, Peter's role in governing the state increased significantly. He was, of course, well aware of Adrian's aversion to foreigners and to Western influences in general¹⁰⁰³. After 1694, Peter began to interfere in church affairs. There was, of course, nothing new in this, for his father, Tsar Alexei, had already acted in the same way, but it soon became clear that Peter had gone “on the offensive.” However, another 20 years passed before Peter established a new relationship between the state and the Church through the “Spiritual Regulations”¹⁰⁰⁴.

After the death of Patriarch Adrian (October 15, 1700), Peter established only a temporary ecclesiastical authority and appointed the relatively young Archbishop Stefan Yavorsky of Ryazan as locum tenens of the patriarchal throne¹⁰⁰⁵. Archbishop Theophan Prokopovich, Peter's chief assistant in carrying out church reform, in his famous work **The Truth of the Monarch's Will** (1722)¹⁰⁰⁶ attempted to justify and legitimize the monarch's right to issue new laws, thereby providing a legal basis for the **Spiritual Regulations**¹⁰⁰⁷. “The sovereign monarch may lawfully command the people,” writes Theophan, “not only everything necessary for the great benefit of his fatherland, but also whatever he pleases—provided it is not harmful to the people and does not contradict the will of God. The basis for this power of the monarch is the aforementioned fact that the people have submitted to the ruler's will and surrendered all authority over themselves to him. This includes all manner of civil and ecclesiastical rites, changes in customs, the wearing of clothing, the construction of houses, and the rites and ceremonies at feasts, weddings, funerals, and so on and so forth”¹⁰⁰⁸.

We have specifically quoted this statement because it is very interesting from a psychological standpoint: in it we see a certain echo of Nikon's innovations and an attempt to justify Peter's possible innovations in the realm of church ritual, but here this is done, of course, from a different perspective than in Nikon's case. The “Spiritual Regulations” themselves bear the same character of justification and rationale; as G. Florovsky excellently observed, they were more of a “discourse” than a “code”¹⁰⁰⁹, for Theophanes, the

¹⁰⁰³ In the preface to the new edition of Peter Mogila's **Orthodox Confession**, Adrian wrote that foreigners, like “wolves in sheep's clothing,” had infiltrated Russia. Sokolov. **The Attitude of Protestantism Toward Russia in the 17th Century**. p. 139. The monk Euthymius (an opponent of Medvedev), whom we already know and who belonged to Adrian's innermost circle, wrote to him that Lutherans and Calvinists were conducting propaganda against the Orthodox Church. “The Church has many enemies, but no defenders are in sight”—with these words, Euthymius concludes his message. Description. 3. 2. No. 310. p. 496.

¹⁰⁰⁴ It is not our task to provide a detailed description of the Spiritual Regulations. We wish only to emphasize a fundamental point. When the Spiritual Regulations became law, the Russian Church, as a local Church, became part of the Russian state, and the Holy Synod became a state institution rather than a church one. Only in doctrine and worship did the Russian Church preserve its unity with the Ecumenical Eastern Churches. What was important for the Russian Church was not that Peter the Great replaced the patriarchate with collegial governance, but that a completely new system of relations between the state and the Church had emerged: The “Russian Church” became the “Orthodox Church in Russia,” that is, it was placed under state control and came to be governed on the basis of state legislation. Cf.: Temnikovskiy, E. “One of the Sources of the Spiritual Regulations,” in: Collection of the Kharkiv Historical and Philological Society 18 (1909). p. 5; idem, “The Position of the Emperor of All Russia in the Russian Orthodox Church in Connection with the General Doctrine of Ecclesiastical Authority” (1909), p. 15; as well as the above-mentioned work by P. Verkhovsky and my article in **Kyrios**, 5 (1940–41), p. 66 ff.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Cf.: Stupperich. Op. cit. Ch. 2.

¹⁰⁰⁶ On this work by Theophanes, see: Gurvich, D., “The Truth of the Monarch's Will” by Theophanes Prokopovich and Its Western European Sources (1915). On Theophanes, see also: Samarin, Yu. “Stefan Yavorsky and Theophanes Prokopovich,” in: *Collected Works*, vol. 5 (1880) (1st ed. 1844—with omissions, as the censors at the time did not allow certain passages to be published); Kartashov, A., “On the Question of Theophan Prokopovich's Orthodoxy,” in: Collection in Honor of D. F. Kobeko (1913); Koch, H., **Die russische Orthodoxie im Petrinischen Zeitalter** (1929); Florovsky, G., **The Paths of Russian Theology** (1937). Especially pp. 89 ff. An older work has retained its value to this day: Pekarsky, P., *Science and Literature in Russia under Peter the Great* (1862); on Theophan's biography: Chistovich, I., *Theophan Prokopovich and His Time* (1868) and Titlinov, B., “Theophan Prokopovich,” in: RBS.

¹⁰⁰⁷ On the Spiritual Regulations, see the seminal work by P. Verkhovsky, which provides a detailed survey of the literature on relations between the state and the Church in Muscovite Russia and after Peter's reforms. N. Kedrov's work “The Ecclesiastical Regulations in Connection with the Reforms of Peter the Great” (1886) (also in: *Prav. ob.* 1885) is very weak and one-sided.

¹⁰⁰⁸ *The Truth of the Monarch's Will*, in: PSZ. 7. No. 4870. p. 628.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Florovsky. Op. cit. p. 84 ff. Cf.: Verkhovskaya. I. p. 156.

author of the “Regulations,” considered it necessary to justify and substantiate all legislative provisions: the specter of opposition loomed before Theophanes and Peter! In reality, there was no such danger: the Church’s internal forces had been too severely weakened by the schism; moreover, the reforms primarily affected the clergy and monastic orders in terms of their class interests—the Church’s doctrine remained untouched, and the general masses had no reason to view Peter’s innovations from the same perspective as they did Nikon’s. The roots of the religiously motivated opposition to Peter’s reforms should be sought in the sentiments sparked by the schism, rather than in the Protestant spirit of his church reform.

For the future of the Church in Russia, and especially for monasticism, it was particularly significant that Peter’s reforms transformed Muscovy into a police state: from then on, all aspects of public life were regulated by the state, including even private life¹⁰¹⁰. This fact—the transformation of the state of the Muscovite tsars into a police state as a result of Peter’s reforms—did not leave the Church and its institutions unscathed. Interference in church affairs or their regulation by secular authorities was now largely motivated not by a desire to bring about any improvements, but by concerns for the state’s or the economy’s benefit; concern for the common good was almost always the main driving force behind Peter’s reforms. Numerous decrees and orders concerning monasticism and monasteries were characterized precisely by a police-state nature and considerations of utility. These decrees were not separate stages of a well-thought-out nationwide reform of monastic life, but were most often issued in response to the state’s sudden needs and requirements. There was only one fundamental principle underlying all the decrees concerning monasticism, monasteries, and monastic life: the desire to make monasteries useful to the state. Although, of course, Peter’s unique view of monasticism as a Christian and ecclesiastical institution also made itself felt.

Peter the Great was not an atheist. On the contrary, he was religious, but his religiosity was not of a church-based nature. Raised in an atmosphere of Old Testament-style Moscow piety, Peter retained throughout his life the religious conviction that God is the Creator of the world and its Provident, and a sense of his responsibility as a monarch before God was always characteristic of Peter. He referred to himself as a “Christian sovereign,” not only in the “Spiritual Regulations” but even in the Military Regulations (1716), and he viewed autocratic power as a divine institution. Theophan Prokopovich called Peter “a Christian sovereign, the guardian of orthodoxy and of all holy order in the Church”¹⁰¹¹, and this was also Peter’s own firm conviction. Theophan now uses this conviction—long characteristic of his royal ancestors and the entire nation—to justify the establishment of a state church in Russia. The idea of a state church was entirely consistent with Peter’s views on the role and tasks of the Church within the state¹⁰¹². These views were shaped in part by the influence of foreign Protestants from the German Quarter in Moscow. For Peter, the Church was primarily a moral and educational force that should serve the interests of the state. He did not reject the liturgical life of the Church; he himself often attended divine services, and after military victories he always ordered thanksgiving services to be held; after the conquest of Azov (1697), he founded a monastery there; later, in St. Petersburg, he founded the Alexander Nevsky Monastery and transferred the relics of St. Alexander Nevsky there—these are well-known facts from his life. He was also no stranger to Church doctrine, as his contemporaries could gather from conversations with the tsar¹⁰¹³.

Although Peter was very fond of reforming and improving everything, he made no attempts—either on his own or on behalf of the church hierarchy—to introduce innovations of the kind that had been introduced before him in the 17th century. Perhaps, thanks to his common sense and great intellect, he recognized the flaw in Nikon’s approach: before introducing his innovations, Nikon should have focused on improving spiritual education and only then proceeded with reform. Better than any of his contemporaries, Peter understood that it was necessary to raise the educational level of both the clergy and the entire population; otherwise, the planned transformation of Russia could not be carried out. Perhaps the reason also lay in the fact that he had a completely different view of the nature and role of the Church in the state than did the Russian clergy and the Russian people. It was precisely the clergy—especially the episcopate and the monastic order—that Peter did not trust. He saw the hostility with which both the episcopate and the monastic order

¹⁰¹⁰ Particularly characteristic is the “Regulations for the Chief Magistrate,” which sets forth the tasks and duties of the police. PSZ, No. 3708. A concise and clear account of Peter’s reforms is provided in: Shmurlo, E., *History of Russia* (1922), pp. 270–342.

¹⁰¹¹ *Spiritual Regulations*. Part 1. Introduction. PSZ 6, No. 3718. *Military Regulations*. PSZ 5, No. 3006, Art. 20.

¹⁰¹² On Peter’s concept of the state, see: Stupperich. *Op. cit.* p. 23.

¹⁰¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

viewed him and his reforms¹⁰¹⁴, not only from a religious and cultural perspective but also from a political one. Were not the episcopate, the clergy, and the monastic community involved in the Streltsy uprising, which had made such a strong and terrifying impression on him? Did he not sense that even the locum tenens of the patriarchal throne, Stefan Yavorsky, did not inwardly approve of the reforms he had conceived? Peter came to the conclusion that, in order for the Russian Church to support his plans for the Europeanization of Russia, it would have to be radically transformed and reformed. Only then—once the hierarchy and the clergy had been reformed, and once education had made them an obedient instrument in his hands—only then would it be possible to attempt a more profound reform of church life. But Peter had little time left for church reform, so he managed to accomplish only what seemed to him to be the most important aspect of it—the creation of an entirely new relationship between the state and the Church and the transformation of the highest ecclesiastical authority.

It would be unfair to place all the blame for the negative aspects of church reform on Peter alone. If there had been at least one person among the Russian hierarchs at that time who would have assisted him and enjoyed his trust, the church reform of 1721 would have taken on a completely different character. But the hierarchy was headed at that time by the timid and insincere Stefan Yavorsky, a man lacking in political and statecraft vision, who, moreover, had no accurate understanding of the true needs of the Church. As for Theophan Prokopovich, this bishop cared little for the welfare of the Russian Church—a self-centered, ambitious, and vengeful individual, he was still forced to restrain himself somewhat under Peter, but after the emperor's death, all the worst traits of his character came to the fore.

Peter's measures concerning monasticism and church estates can be explained primarily by his negative attitude toward Christian asceticism and his aversion to all forms of inactivity and idleness in human and public life—which, in his view, found their clearest expression in monastic life. If the monasteries had owned less land—or none at all—Peter might not have intervened so thoroughly in this sphere. To him, these lands seemed as good as lost to the state; therefore, as he carried out his reforms—which coincided with the Northern War, a conflict that demanded ever-increasing resources—he focused particular attention on utilizing monastic wealth in the most radical manner for state purposes. On the other hand, the measures that in one way or another encroached upon the internal order of monastic life were prompted by his suspicion that the monastic order was a hostile element in state and political terms. Peter was well aware of the role of monasticism in the schism, which he viewed not only in ecclesiastical terms but also in state-political terms; he was also aware of monasticism's aversion to Western culture. In short, Peter had no doubt that monasticism in his time could only hinder the implementation of reforms¹⁰¹⁵. All of this explains why, continuously for a quarter of a century, Peter literally persecuted the monastic order and interfered even in the minutiae of monastic life. He did almost nothing to reform it or introduce any improvements; no, instead, Peter did everything he could to undermine the authority of monasticism and render it powerless.

2. Government Measures Regarding Monasteries, Monastic Estates, and the Monastic Order

Peter the Great's church reform established a state church in Russia, and this laid the groundwork for church institutions, powers, and property to henceforth serve not only the Church but also the state¹⁰¹⁶. January 25, 1721, can be considered the birth of state-sponsored Christianity in Russia, because on that day the "Spiritual Regulations" became the fundamental law defining the Russian Church's place in the empire, although individual reforms concerning monasteries were already in full swing by that time. These measures, the first of which date back to 1696–1698¹⁰¹⁷, ushered in a long era of secularization that concluded under Empress Catherine II in 1764. This 70-year period was nothing less than an attempt—not so much to improve monastic life as to place monasticism in conditions that completely altered its position within the Russian

¹⁰¹⁴ Solovyov. 17. p. 246. Not all of the episcopate viewed Peter's reforms negatively. Theophan was one of his most famous aides. In addition, mention should be made of Bishop Mitrofan of Voronezh, who, admittedly, died as early as 1709; Metropolitan Job of Novgorod († 1716); and perhaps Archbishop Athanasius of Kholmogory, who spoke favorably of Peter's reforms when they began, but who died as early as 1702. Cf.: Skvortsov. Patriarch Adrian. p. 112.

¹⁰¹⁵ Platonov. Lectures (1915). p. 485.

¹⁰¹⁶ The Spiritual Regulations were drafted by Theophan Prokopovich at Peter's behest. On January 25, 1721, a manifesto was published establishing the Collegium of Spiritual Affairs (PSZ, No. 3718; cf. also: PSPiR, Vol. 1, 2nd ed., No. 1), and on February 14, it was solemnly inaugurated. On that day, the name "Collegium of Ecclesiastical Affairs" was replaced by another—"Most Holy Governing Synod." For more details on this, see P. Verkhovsky.

¹⁰¹⁷ PSZ, vol. 3, nos. 1541 and 1664.

Church and in the life of the people—an attempt to push monasticism into the background of national life. These measures sometimes—for example, during the reign of Empress Anna Ioannovna (1730–1740)—took on the very character of persecution, which completely disrupted internal monastic life and continued to have a lasting impact, so that during the Synodal era monasticism remained, as it were, in a paralyzed state. Over the course of its 200-year existence, the Holy Synod repeatedly discussed the issue of monasteries in earnest, but took no action to raise the standard of monastic life. It seemed that the Holy Synod—and indeed the entire Russian church hierarchy of the Synodal era—was entirely satisfied with the state of the monasteries. It would not be an exaggeration to assert that it was not Peter’s church reform nor his initial measures, but rather synodal administration and the Russian episcopate of the 18th–19th centuries that were to blame for the fact that monasticism remained in a state of decline.

Peter’s view of monasticism as a church institution was formulated relatively late, namely in the decree of January 31, 1724, which was drafted jointly by Peter and Theophan Prokopovich¹⁰¹⁸. Even the title of this decree is quite telling: “A Declaration on When and for What Reason the Monastic Order Began, What the Way of Life of the Ancient Monks Was, and How the Present Monks Should Be Reformed, Though in Some Ancient Manner.” This was nothing more than a belated justification for measures that had already been undertaken and, at the same time, were still to come. “True monks were such that not only did they demand nothing from people,” the “Declaration” states, “but they also did not want people to see or hear about them...” What then happened was that certain hypocrites approached the Greek emperors, and especially their wives (probably a reference to Peter’s first wife, Empress Eudoxia, and her conservative entourage. —I. S.), and monasteries began to be built not in the deserts, but in the cities themselves and in places close to them, and they demanded financial support for this supposed sanctuary; even worse, they did not wish to labor themselves, but sought to live off the labor of others, to which the emperors... were themselves... proved to be quite inclined. ...This also began to spread widely among us... For the present way of life of monks is merely a pretense and a mockery of other laws, and no small amount of evil arises from it, since the majority are idlers, and since the root of all evil is idleness, it is well known to all how many superstitions, schisms, and even troublemakers have arisen... Do they, however, devote themselves to understanding the Divine Scriptures and teachings? By no means. And as for the fact that, they say, they pray—well, everyone prays... What benefit does society derive from this? Truly, it is just an old proverb: “neither for God nor for people,” since the majority flee from taxes and from laziness in order to eat bread for free. Yet there is a way of life for these idle people—not one of idleness, but one that is pleasing to God and not shameful—namely, to serve the truly poor, the elderly, and infants.” The “Proclamation” contains a justification of Peter’s views on monasticism and all his measures to reduce the number of monasteries and to use monastic estates for state purposes.

The Monastic Order, as already mentioned, had been abolished in 1677, and now, in 1696, Peter, in a special decree, required the diocesan bishops to submit an accurate annual report on the revenues and expenditures of the monasteries and diocesan sees to the Grand Palace Office; Two years later, in 1698, this decree was reaffirmed and supplemented with a requirement for a particularly detailed report on grain reserves, as well as an order that no construction or repairs be carried out in monasteries without the tsar’s permission¹⁰¹⁹. On January 24, 1701, the Monastic Office was reinstated¹⁰²⁰. The decree of 1701 and subsequent decrees required that an inventory of monasteries and monastic estates be compiled without delay and that the number of monks be precisely determined; monasteries were permitted to retain only as many monks as were necessary for conducting religious services and managing the estates (the number of monks thus established in each monastery was called the “staff quota”); monastery residents who had not taken monastic vows were subject to expulsion; the tonsure of new monks was permitted only if vacancies were announced in the established

¹⁰¹⁸ Chistovich. Op. cit. p. 139. Decree titled “Proclamation on When and Under What Circumstances the Monastic Order Began,” in: PSPiR. 4. No. 1197. Peter had already offered a negative assessment of the monasticism of his time in a decree dated December 31, 1701. PSZ. 4. No. 1886.

¹⁰¹⁹ AAE, vol. 4, No. 315; PSZ, vol. 3, No. 1664. The decree of December 31, 1701, established an annual stipend for monks of 10 rubles and 10 quarters of bread; in 1705, this allowance was cut in half, a reduction that was definitively enshrined in the Table of 1710. Gorchakov. On Land Holdings. p. 473; Kedrov. Op. cit. p. 229. This Table set a monk’s annual stipend at 6 rubles and 5 quarters of bread, with a small supplement for the abbot. PSPiR. 4. Appendix. pp. 333–335; regarding the fact that even this stipend was not always paid, see: *ibid.* 2. p. 998.

¹⁰²⁰ PSZ. 4. No. 1829; cf. also No. 1834.

quotas¹⁰²¹. The “Addendum to the Spiritual Regulations Concerning Monks” (1722)¹⁰²² prohibited the tonsure of men under the age of 30, while women could be tonsured only between the ages of 50 and 60; exceptions were permitted only with the Synod’s permission; for military personnel and civil servants, tonsure was prohibited entirely; Entry into a monastery was also prohibited for individuals burdened by debt, those who were married, and those with minor children; serfs could take monastic vows only with the landowner’s permission; illiterate individuals were allowed to enter a monastery only with the knowledge of the tsar or the Synod¹⁰²³.

“The Monastic Order of 1701 was, according to M. Gorchakov, the highest central institution for all of Russia, dedicated, in the overall scope of its activities, to Peter’s reform goals”¹⁰²⁴. Abolished in 1720, it was reestablished in 1721 and remained in operation until the end of 1724. During this period, the Monastic Office served as the highest authority on nearly all matters related in one way or another to monastic life. The aforementioned “Addendum to the Spiritual Regulations” prohibited the founding of new monasteries without the Synod’s permission; the construction of hermitages or sketes was definitively banned; small monasteries or hermitages with fewer than 30 monks were to be either closed or merged with other monasteries; in the event of a monastery’s closure, its church would become a parish church; furthermore, the Synod received permission from the tsar to close even large monasteries if necessary¹⁰²⁵.

The “Addendum” (§ 35) also required that illiterate monks learn to read and write; for this purpose, special cells for instruction were to be set up in the monasteries; in 1723, a new decree was issued, according to which all monks under the age of 30 were to be sent to Moscow to the Zaikonospassky Monastery for instruction. The fact that only three monks were sent for instruction between 1723 and 1727—two of whom later fled, while four reported for instruction voluntarily—¹⁰²⁶—speaks to how this decree was received by the diocesan bishops. The “Proclamation” of 1724 included a plan to establish two theological seminaries in St. Petersburg and Moscow, whose graduates were subsequently to become instructors at those same seminaries; upon reaching the age of 30, they could, if they wished, take monastic vows. Afterward, they were required to undergo a three-year probationary period at the Alexander Nevsky Monastery and were then employed in scholarly work—for example, to produce translations or compose sermons; These scholarly monks were entitled to better food and clothing than ordinary monks; with due diligence and exemplary conduct, they became candidates for the positions of monastery abbots, seminary rectors, and diocesan bishoprics¹⁰²⁷. This project, which for the time being remained only on paper, contained the seeds of a future class of scholarly monastics, which, as will be shown in detail below, was not a positive development in the life of the Russian Church.

Peter’s desire to improve all branches of industry was evident here as well, combining a focus on practicality with fanciful idealism. The *Addendum*, for example, recommends “introducing arts and crafts” in men’s monasteries, where monks should engage in carpentry and other trades; in women’s monasteries, needlework was very widespread, and the “Proclamation” of 1724 contained a plan to bring “skilled” lace-makers from Brabant—that is, from the city of Lille—to Russia and send them out as instructors to women’s monasteries¹⁰²⁸. At the same time, monasteries and monastic buildings were used for charitable purposes: many monasteries housed orphans, the sick, the mentally ill, and war invalids, and some monasteries became so overcrowded that there was nothing to feed these people; many monks were rudely and unceremoniously expelled from the monasteries, and the monastic estates were left unattended. Subsequently, the Monastic Order was forced to readmit the expelled monks to the monasteries in order to restore the monasteries’

¹⁰²¹ Ibid. Nos. 1834, 1839, 1886, 1948.

¹⁰²² This “Addendum” appears in: PSPiR. 2. No. 596; PSZ. 6. No. 4022; it is also included in later editions of the Regulations.

¹⁰²³ PSPiR, vol. 2, no. 596, 671; vol. 4, no. 1197.

¹⁰²⁴ Gorchakov. Monastic Office. p. 123; on the jurisdiction of the Monastic Office, see: *ibid.* pp. 123–128.

¹⁰²⁵ PSPiR. Vol. 2, No. 596, §§ 44, 45, 48; Vol. 4, Nos. 1200, 1244, 1379; Vol. 3, No. 1091. According to a report from 1724, the number of monks was as follows: in men’s monasteries—14,534; in women’s monasteries—10,673; for a total of 25,207. Chudetsky. “An Attempt at Research,” in: TKDA. 1877. Vol. 4, p. 46.

¹⁰²⁶ PSPiR. 3. No. 1099, 1136; 5. No. 1929. From three monasteries (Andronikovskiy, Perervinskyy, and Nikolskiy, all three in the Moscow Diocese), the monastic community was expelled, and the monastery premises were transferred for educational purposes. PSPiR. 4. Nos. 1316, 1328, 1284.

¹⁰²⁷ PSPiR. 4. No. 1197. 2.

¹⁰²⁸ PSPiR. 2. No. 596. § 18; 4. No. 1197. 1. § 12.

disrupted operations; the new residents of the monasteries, especially war invalids, often ran amok, and fights and other incidents of this nature occurred; at times, the monasteries were even robbed¹⁰²⁹.

The state authorities, not neglecting the internal life of the monasteries, issued a series of decrees aimed at improving it. The “Addendum to the Spiritual Regulations” states that abbots must be elected by the monastic community¹⁰³⁰. It also contained a requirement that monasteries live according to communal rules; it was forbidden to charge a fee for tonsure; after a monk’s death, everything in his cell became the property of the monastery or the Synod, and monks were forbidden to make wills; transferring from one monastery to another—which had been quite common in earlier times—was now strictly prohibited; a monk was permitted to make such a transfer only once in his lifetime, and then only with the written permission of the abbot. Diocesan bishops were required to ensure that this decree was strictly observed. Abbots were required to keep a register of the monastic community and to be held accountable for any monks who fled; fugitive monks were put in chains upon capture. Leaving the monastery was permitted only with the abbot’s permission and for a short period of time¹⁰³¹. Life in the monastery was not to be disrupted by visits from the monks’ acquaintances or relatives. Monks were, however, permitted to visit their relatives four times a year, but each time only with the abbot’s permission; nuns, on the other hand, were forbidden even this—they could visit their relatives only when accompanied by elderly and trustworthy fellow nuns, and even then only in the event of someone’s illness or death. To prevent monks from drafting petitions or any other writings of an oppositional nature, they were strictly forbidden to keep writing paper, ink, and quills in their cells¹⁰³².

In 1720, the monastic authorities received an order to immediately send all granted and uncontested charters and other “curiosities” of this sort found in the monasteries to the Monastic Office and to cease storing them in the monasteries henceforth. Thanks to this measure, the Monastic Office received important documentation regarding monastic estates: prior to this, the Office had consistently lacked documents and had been unable to form a clear picture of monastic affairs, as evidenced by the census of peasant households conducted in 1701, when some dioceses failed to submit any information at all¹⁰³³.

This decree was closely linked to the issue of jurisdiction over monasteries, monastic estates, and the people living on them. With the restoration of the Monastic Office, the decrees of the 1667 Council were not officially annulled—since only a new council decree could repeal them—but simply ceased to be in force as a result of government decrees. This was nothing less than the restoration, with regard to the jurisdiction over the clergy and church estates, of the legal norms established by the Code of 1649. Even before 1701, in many political trials—especially those related to the Streltsy uprisings of 1682 and 1698—clergy and monks were interrogated and convicted without the participation of Church representatives in the judicial proceedings, which violated the 1667 decree. The Monastery Office often adjudicated legal cases without Church representatives, through the hands of secular judges. Furthermore, many trials were conducted not even in the Monastery Office, but in the Transfiguration Office—a sort of personal chancellery of the tsar¹⁰³⁴.

¹⁰²⁹ PSPiR. 2. No. 596. §§ 46 and 47; No. 997; 3. No. 1153; 2. No. 536, 595; in 1723, a curious decree was issued stipulating that “retired soldiers” be assigned to “vacant positions” in monastic staffs, which was subsequently repealed. PSZ. No. 4141, 4455, 4672. According to the “Addendum,” certain monasteries, such as Chudov and Voznesensky, were required to establish hospitals and night shelters on their premises, while the Novodevichy Convent was to establish an orphanage. PSPiR. 2. No. 1279. The “Proclamation” of 1724 contained a plan to transform monasteries into hospitals, so that some monks would care for the sick, while others, the “farming monks,” would work the land to support these hospitals. PSPiR. 2. No. 1197. 1. § 1–8. Through a series of decrees, Peter attempted to shift the responsibility for supporting war invalids onto monasteries and their land holdings: PSZ. 4. No. 1856 (1701); 5. No. 3409 (1719); 7. No. 4183 (1723); No. 4450. Part 1, §§ 1 and 3 (1724); cf. also: 6, No. 3576, where the decree of April 8, 1720, is declared invalid.

¹⁰³⁰ PSPiR. 2. No. 596. § 49. Only the abbot of the newly founded Alexander Nevsky Monastery was appointed by the government; this provision was confirmed by later decrees. PSZ. No. 2959; § 50 requires abbots to administer monasteries in accordance with the monastic charter and to have an assistant who, in the event of the abbot’s illness or absence, can take over the administration of the monastery. Spiritual Regulations. Chapter on Bishops. § 7.

¹⁰³¹ PSPiR. 2. No. 596, § 30, 51–53, 31–33; Nos. 426 and 954; 4. No. 1456; Spiritual Regulations. Chapter on Bishops. § 8; PSZ. Nos. 1834, 2985, 3172.

¹⁰³² Addendum to the Spiritual Regulations. PSPiR. Vol. 2, No. 596; Vol. 2, No. 984; PSZ. No. 1834.

¹⁰³³ Znamensky. Church Estates under Peter the Great, in: Collection of Laws, 1864. Vol. 1. p. 140; Gorchakov. The Monastic Office. p. 131. In 1701, the Monastic Office counted only 137,823 peasant households on monastic lands, not including the Astrakhan, Pskov, and Siberian dioceses, which were not under its jurisdiction.

¹⁰³⁴ A decree dated December 16, 1700, ordered that all disputes between clergy and laity be referred to the competent authorities. PSZ, No. 1818. Gorchakov, op. cit., pp. 132–136, 195. With the establishment of the Senate as the supreme governing body of the

On January 28, 1725, Peter the Great died. After his death, new government measures concerning the monastic order not only continued his policies but proved to be even harsher, especially under Empress Anna (1730–1740). Under Catherine I (1725–1727), numerous decrees issued by Peter were first and foremost reaffirmed. For example, it was ordered that monks who had fled their monasteries be stripped of their monastic status, brought before a secular court, and subjected to public flogging; it was also ordered that the sick, war invalids, the mentally ill, and even convicted criminals (convicts) be sent to monasteries; ordination as monks was permitted only for widowed priests, while others had to petition the Synod for permission to take monastic vows. A decree—which had previously failed to gain traction—was reissued regarding the enrollment of young novices in the school at the Zaikonospassky Monastery. In reality, this decree was now meaningless, for after all the measures implemented earlier, there were simply no young novices left in the monasteries¹⁰³⁵.

Since the number of monks, especially in small monasteries, had declined sharply, during the reign of Peter II (1727–1730) certain decrees were issued that softened the previous measures taken against monasteries of this category. Some small monasteries were reopened, and the monastic community returned to them¹⁰³⁶. The brief period of Peter II's reign, during which Theophan Prokopovich temporarily lost his former role in the Synod and in church administration in general, was a time of various relaxations for the monastic community and a resurgence of opposition sentiments. For a time, the idea of restoring the patriarchate gained traction. In the entourage of the underage Peter (who was only 11 years old in 1727), the conservative family of Prince A. G. Dolgoruky played a leading role; their youngest daughter, Ekaterina, was betrothed to the young emperor. Peter II was the son of the ill-fated Tsarevich Alexei, son of Peter the Great, in whom opposition church circles had also placed their hopes; the Dolgorukys and some members of the church hierarchy dreamed of undoing the consequences of Peter the Great's church reforms during the reign of the young Peter II. But Peter II's sudden death from smallpox on January 18, 1730, thwarted these plans¹⁰³⁷.

The ten-year reign of Empress Anna Ioannovna (1730–1740) was particularly trying for the Russian Church, and hardest of all for the monastic community¹⁰³⁸. Later, during the reign of Empress Elizabeth, the gifted preacher Archbishop Dimitri Sechenov described Anna's reign as an "unfortunate time": "Christian dogmas... were reduced to fables and deemed worthless; God's holy saints were not honored; the traditions of the apostles and the holy fathers were rejected. And above all, there was such persecution of the very defenders of piety—the clergy—bishops, priests, and monks were tortured, executed, and defrocked... Monks, priests, and devout people were taken away to distant Siberian cities... And they were so terrified that even the shepherds themselves, the very preachers of God's word, fell silent and did not dare to speak a word about piety"¹⁰³⁹. This was the era of "German domination," "for whom the golden age had only just begun," writes K. Stelin in his **History of Russia**. "They became the absolute masters of the great state." Biron "regarded everything Russian with contempt," and "the fact that, over time, he concealed this contempt less and less makes the Russians' anger against the foreign yoke—which was already entirely justified—all the more understandable; this contempt also explains well the verdict of Russian historiography on this figure, who clearly lacked much of what was needed to become a fully-fledged statesman. He was considered a connoisseur of horses, but the Russians did not credit him with an equally good understanding of his own people, even though he was placed in an extremely high position, second only to the Empress herself"¹⁰⁴⁰. The dominance of the Germans aroused hatred and horror among all strata of the population. The arrogant

entire empire, the Monastic Office was placed under its authority. PSZ. 4. No. 1829, 1834; cf. also No. 2321, 2349, 2571, and others. Cf.: Zavyalov. Op. cit. p. 64.

¹⁰³⁵ PSPiR. 5. Nos. 1678, 1778, 1492, 1787.

¹⁰³⁶ Ibid. Nos. 1716, 1767, 1772, 1786, 1907. Leonid, Archimandrite. "On the Abolished Monasteries Located in the Kaluga Diocese," in: Readings. 1862. Vol. 2. p. VI.

¹⁰³⁷ Verkhovskoy. Op. cit. 1. pp. XXVI–XXVII; Collection. 63. pp. 696 ff., 793; Georgy Dashkov, in: RBS. p. 135; Platonov. Lectures. p. 546. See also: Bahnson. Stamm-und Regententafeln. Vol. 3, No. 81.

¹⁰³⁸ On Anna's church policy, see: Titlinov, B., *The Reign of Anna Ioannovna* (1905); Chistovich, Feofan Prokopovich, pp. 316 ff.; Verkhovskoy. Op. cit., vol. 1, p. XXXII ff. See also the description of Anna's reign in Empress Elizabeth's Manifesto. PSZ, vol. 11, No. 8506.

¹⁰³⁹ Sermon delivered on March 25, 1742, in: Popov, N. Court Preachers during the Reign of Empress Elizabeth, in: Tikhonravov. Chronicle. 2. p. 12. Archimandrite Kirill Florinsky referred to Biron and his agents as "the devil's emissaries." Solovyov. 21. p. 182.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Stdhlin. 2. pp. 222, 223.

favorite Biron, the heartless Osterman, who combined good diplomatic skills with scheming, the Empress herself—intellectually limited and possessing an extremely harsh and cruel temperament¹⁰⁴¹—and finally, the Secret Chancellery, where Biron’s agents called the shots—these people ruled Russia, and the instruments of their power were exile and the scaffold¹⁰⁴².

At this time, the chief proponent of Peter’s church policy was Theophan Prokopovich, who had managed to earn the trust of Anna and Biron¹⁰⁴³. Until his very death (1736), Theophan was an all-powerful dignitary in the Synod and was now able to take revenge on all his former enemies. As early as 1731, the Synod was completely subordinate to the Cabinet of Ministers, which was headed by Osterman¹⁰⁴⁴. Previous decrees were reaffirmed and made more stringent by new ones; diocesan bishops were held fully responsible for even the slightest offenses committed by those under their authority, with a fine of 100 rubles imposed; subsequently, in 1734, the fine for taking monastic vows in violation of the law—since only widowed priests and retired soldiers were permitted to do so—was raised to 500 rubles, while the abbot of the monastery was sentenced to lifelong exile, and the newly tonsured monk was stripped of his monastic rank and subjected to corporal punishment¹⁰⁴⁵. Diocesan bishops were prohibited from sending monks as their representatives to secular institutions, as well as from conducting negotiations there through their mediation¹⁰⁴⁶. Monastery abbots were tasked not only with maintaining order within their monasteries but also with reporting all offenses committed by monks directly to the Synod; those found guilty were either conscripted into the army or exiled to the Siberian mines. The Synod was completely excluded from judicial matters; it was only supposed to strip the guilty of their monastic status, but even this it did only on the government’s orders¹⁰⁴⁷. A good example of monastic life at that time is the situation in which the Moscow Ascension Convent was run for over a year by a captain of the Semenovskiy Regiment instead of the abbess, who was being interrogated in St. Petersburg at the time¹⁰⁴⁸.

The so-called “monk trials” were particularly devastating for monastic life and the monastic community. During these investigations, many monks—primarily on political charges—were expelled from the monasteries: the young were conscripted into the army, while the elderly were stripped of their monastic status and sent to perform forced labor in the Urals or Siberia. These purges were carried out by the aforementioned Secret Chancellery, and as a result, the number of monastics decreased significantly. While in 1724, according to a report, there were 25,207 monks and nuns in the monasteries, by the end of Anna’s reign there were only 14,282 (7,829 monks and 6,453 nuns). After the death of the Empress, whose reign had caused the Russian Church much suffering, the Synod compiled a report for the government that painted a shocking picture of the decline of monastic life: some monasteries stood completely empty, while in others there were so few monks left—and they were so frail—that there was no one to conduct divine services; during the investigations, a particularly large number of monastery abbots were dismissed and taken into custody, and the administration of the monasteries was in a most deplorable state; there were not even signs of monastic life in daily monastic existence; the theological seminaries lacked teachers, and there was no one to invite to replace them. The Synod’s report concluded that monasticism in Russia was on the verge of complete destruction; therefore, the Synod requested that the ordination of monks be permitted once again, not after a three-year novitiate, but after only a six-month probationary period. The government of Regent Anna responded favorably to this petition and granted it¹⁰⁴⁹.

¹⁰⁴¹ Cf. the characterization of Anna in: Shcherbatov, M. M., “On the Corruption of Morals in Russia,” in: *Russian Articles*, 1870. Vol. 7, p. 50. On the role of A. I. Osterman in implementing Anna’s church policy, see: *Monuments of Russian History*. Ed. Kashpirov (1873). Vol. 3, p. 260; PSZ. Vol. 11, No. 8506.

¹⁰⁴² Platonov. *Lectures*. p. 552; Korsakov, D. “Anna Ioannovna,” in: RBS; on Biron: Stroeve, V. “The Biron Era and the Cabinet of Ministers” (1909). *Memoirs* are a very important source for the era of Anna: Manstein, General. *Historical, Political, and Military Memoirs on Russia, 1727–1744*. With a biography of the author, compiled by Hubert (Leipzig, 1771; in German: *ibid.*, 1771; in Russian in: *Russkiye Izvestiya*, 1875).

¹⁰⁴³ Chistovich. *Op. cit.* pp. 257, 295, 316; Titlinov. *Op. cit.* pp. 146, 162.

¹⁰⁴⁴ PSPiR. 7. Nos. 2505 and 2531 (both from 1731). The Cabinet of Ministers was established on November 1, 1731, “for the benefit of the state and our loyal subjects,” as stated in the decree. PSZ. 8. No. 5871; the Synod was required to submit monthly reports (“reports”) to the Cabinet.

¹⁰⁴⁵ PSZ Nos. 6177, 6189, 6574, 6561, 6585.

¹⁰⁴⁶ PSZ No. 7993.

¹⁰⁴⁷ PSZ Nos. 7660 and 7538, as well as No. 8543.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Zavyalov. *Op. cit.*, p. 72.

¹⁰⁴⁹ N. M. *Russian Monasticism in the 18th Century*, in: Stranik. 1884. 1. pp. 212, 435 ff.; PSZ. Nos. 8303, 8309, 9382.

It is clear that under such a church policy—for which the government had neither justification nor even a reasonable basis—church life presented a disheartening picture. But the same was true at that time for other aspects of Russian life as well, due to the government's general policy, since the country and its people were held in utter contempt and disdain. "The Germans' rule lasted ten years," writes S. Platonov, "ten years during which the Russians were insulted in their finest sympathies and feelings"¹⁰⁵⁰.

Under Empress Elizabeth (1741–1761), the Church and monasticism were finally able to breathe freely. At the very least, the pious empress did not resort to the measures that had been commonplace before her reign, but on many issues she remained faithful to the line taken by her father, Peter the Great. Her personal piety kept her from making unnecessary attacks on the Church, but her church policy was determined by the general principles of administrative policy¹⁰⁵¹. The purges of monks ceased, and the Empress authorized the use of state funds to restore two particularly revered monasteries—Valaam and Konevsky—both of which had fallen into complete disrepair as a result of measures taken in the 18th century. She also ordered that the Trinity-Sergius Monastery be designated a lavra (1744); many monasteries received financial assistance¹⁰⁵². However, monastic tonsure continued to be controlled by the government; only in the dioceses of Southern Russia (the Little Russian monasteries) did the bishops and the abbot of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra have the right to perform tonsure at their own discretion. It was not until 1761, shortly before her death, that the empress issued a decree permitting free monastic ordination. During her reign, monasteries continued to serve as shelters for war invalids, elderly soldiers, the mentally ill, and juvenile offenders. In 1758, a plan was discussed to remove these residents from the monasteries and build special shelters for them, to be maintained using the monasteries' land holdings; however, the plan remained only on paper¹⁰⁵³. Under Peter III (1761–1762), a ban on voluntary monastic ordination was reimposed, not only in the dioceses of Great Russia but also in those of Southern Russia¹⁰⁵⁴.

As a result of all these policies, which did more to destroy than to build up monastic life, monasticism was reduced to a deplorable state. By 1762, there were only 7,659 monks and 4,733 nuns remaining—even fewer than in 1740¹⁰⁵⁵. We have too little material from the first half of the 18th century to form a clear picture of the internal life of the monasteries. Numerous decrees and orders do not provide an accurate picture: one must always bear in mind that they were drafted with a certain bias (especially during Anna's reign) in order to justify one measure or another. These persecutions did little to restore and revitalize monastic life. At that time, there was a lack of both spiritual strength and energetic, gifted individuals capable of finding the right path to revitalizing monastic life. Later, in the second half of the 18th century, certain efforts were made in this direction, but first the monastic community had to undergo yet another reform carried out by the state authorities—a reform whose necessity, on the one hand, had long been overdue, but on the other hand, was fraught with many shortcomings. Nevertheless, this reform eliminated the most significant causes contributing to the secularization of monastic life, so that, at last, it became possible to consider a fundamental reform of internal monastic life.

3. The Secularization of 1764

The secularization of 1764 marked the culmination of a series of measures that had merely restricted the monasteries' rights to use their land holdings and directed a portion of the income from them directly into the state treasury, while ownership rights remained with the monasteries as before. The reasons for this lay in the fact that Peter the Great had not developed a specific plan, and his successors were content with half-measures. Monastic estates became a source from which the government could draw resources when it needed money. Since Russia's economy—largely due to the costs associated with Peter's reforms, and in subsequent

¹⁰⁵⁰ Platonov. Lectures. p. 556.

¹⁰⁵¹ On Elizabeth's church policy, see: Vedenyapin, P., "The Legislation of Empress Elizabeth Petrovna Concerning the Orthodox Clergy," in *Prav. ob.* 1865, nos. 5, 7, 10; Znamensky, P., "The Parish Clergy in Russia Since the Time of Peter's Reforms" (1873). pp. 242, 441–459; idem. *Theological Schools in Russia before the Reform of 1808* (1881). pp. 175 ff., 188. There is another interesting biography of Elizabeth: Bain, N. *The Daughter of Peter the Great* (Westminster, 1891).

¹⁰⁵² IRI. 3. pp. 618, 486; 4. p. 662; PSZ. No. 8959; simultaneously, by a decree dated July 8, 1744 (PSZ. 12. No. 8960), Elizabeth confirmed the Lavra's right to own all its estates. Gorsky. *Historical Description*. 2. p. 129.

¹⁰⁵³ PSZ, Nos. 9591, 10665, 11332, 1079; cf. No. 8583, according to which disabled officers were to maintain order during religious services.

¹⁰⁵⁴ PSZ. Nos. 11441, 11481.

¹⁰⁵⁵ IRI. Vol. 2, p. 81.

decades also as a result of mismanagement—was constantly experiencing financial difficulties, the government repeatedly dipped into the revenues from monastic and church estates. This amounted to outright plunder. Monastic authorities lost all interest in any economic improvements: they could have pursued them, but the government was concerned only with immediate gain and was unwilling to wait for these improvements to bear fruit. The revenues from monastic estates were used for various purposes by various institutions, and the government itself had no clear idea of how they were distributed. Moreover, the oversight and administration of these estates were subject to constant reorganizations, which also did nothing to improve the situation.

When, on January 24, 1701, oversight of monastic estates was transferred to the Monastic Office, it simultaneously gained the right to control all church estates—those formerly held by the patriarchate, dioceses, and monasteries—as stated in the decree. However, the Monastic Office did not receive precise instructions regarding the limits of its authority. It existed for about 20 years and, during that time, did not develop any definite structure. Its tasks consisted of exercising control, collecting revenues—which it was to use according to Peter’s own instructions—and, finally, conducting a land survey¹⁰⁵⁶. This survey lasted nearly 10 years, and its result is known as the “Table of 1710”; only parts of it have survived. From the decree of December 30, 1701, and several later decrees supplementing it¹⁰⁵⁷, it is evident that Peter initially did, after all, have a certain plan regarding the use of revenues from monastic estates: part of them was intended for the maintenance of monasteries, while another part was earmarked for various educational and charitable purposes.

Thus, the Monastic Office began to distinguish between two categories of income: “designated” income, intended for the maintenance of ecclesiastical institutions, including the monastic order, and “non-designated” income, intended for the state treasury for the educational and charitable purposes specified by Peter¹⁰⁵⁸. Monasteries that possessed too little land were exempt from taxes and were not included in either of these categories. The cost of maintaining a single monk in 1701 was set at 10 rubles and 10 quarters of grain per year; subsequently, under the “Table of 1710,” they were reduced and, finally, in 1724 brought down to 6 rubles and 5 quarters of grain per year, with a slight allowance for abbots and hieromonks¹⁰⁵⁹. But in addition to this, very often—especially during the Great Northern War—completely unexpected tsarist decrees were issued concerning, among other things, monastic economy. If the tsar needed horses for the cavalry, the monasteries in the western counties were required to supply them; if the dragoons’ horses needed hay, the monasteries were required to immediately take upon themselves the task of supplying them with hay; if tobacco-growing specialists (tobacco masters) brought in from abroad needed lodging and food, the monasteries were also required to provide for this¹⁰⁶⁰. Peter’s original plan to use part of the income from monastic estates for charitable purposes proved unfeasible due to the costs of waging war, and the money and income in kind were used primarily for military needs and other unplanned expenditures of the state treasury¹⁰⁶¹. Some monastic estates were subordinate to specific departments—the Preobrazhensky or the Postal Department—while others were assigned to state-run factories. To increase revenue from these estates, the Monastic Department leased them to private individuals, provided the tenants agreed to enter into a contract on the condition of paying an additional rent. It reached the point where even the former owners of these lands—that is, church institutions—could lease them, provided they were willing to enter into the appropriate contracts.

This became most common after 1710, while at the same time the significance of the Monastic Office and the scope of its activities gradually waned. This process culminated in a decree dated August 17, 1720, by which the Monastery Office was abolished. By a decree dated October 16, 1720, the estates were returned to their former owners, and their administration was once again entrusted to the abbots of the monasteries. The monasteries continued to make only the contributions previously established by the Monastery Office,

¹⁰⁵⁶ Gorchakov. *Monastic Order*. pp. 102, 122 ff.; Zavyalov. *Op. cit.* p. 50. Works: Zavyalov. *The Question of Church Estates under Empress Catherine II* (1900) and Verkhovskaya, P., *The Real Estate of the Holy Synod, Bishops’ Residences, and Monasteries* (1909)—the most important sources on the history of the entire era of secularization, 1701–1764.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Gorchakov. *Op. cit.* p. 139; PSZ. No. 1886.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Cf. Milyukov, **The State Economy** (1890), p. 495.

¹⁰⁵⁹ PSZ, No. 1886; Gorchakov, *On Landholdings*, p. 473.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Gorchakov. *The Monastic Order*. p. 140. Appendix. Nos. 6, 10, and 11.

¹⁰⁶¹ Zavyalov. *Op. cit.* p. 60; PSZ No. 1926, 2462, 3659; Gorchakov. *Imperial Decree*. p. 165 ff.

while the collection of revenues from monastic estates was now overseen by the Chamber Collegium (the fiscal service)¹⁰⁶².

For Peter, the practical, rather than the legal, aspect of the matter was of utmost importance; that is, he was not concerned with the question of who was or should be considered the owner of the estates—the state or the Church. This is evident from the fact that the “Spiritual Regulations” devote little attention to this issue. The matter is addressed here only in the most general terms: “The Spiritual Collegium must examine who owns the church lands and how, and where the grain and profits—if they are monetary—are spent. And if anyone steals church property, the Spiritual Collegium must take action against that person and recover what was stolen” (Part 3, § 9). It is clear that the Synod had to pay special attention to the question of who should administer church estates, especially after the decree of October 16, 1720. This issue was already discussed at the Synod’s first session on February 14, 1721, and a request was made to the tsar to the following effect: “Should the estates... be placed under the jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical College alone, given that they have fallen into disrepair and neglect under civil administrators, and the Ecclesiastical College has sworn an oath to uphold both loyalty and the interests of His Imperial Majesty no less than the other colleges? And the ‘Spiritual Regulations’ stipulate that such administration shall fall to the Spiritual Collegium.” This was a rather liberal interpretation of the paragraph cited above, but the tsar rendered his decision: “So be it”—and the estates were once again returned to the administration of ecclesiastical institutions¹⁰⁶³.

When the Synod thoroughly examined the financial condition of these estates and the organization of revenue collection from them, it decided to reestablish the Monastery Office, but this time as an administrative body of the Synod itself. In response to the Synod’s petition of March 10, 1721, Peter ordered the Monastic Office to be reestablished, but this time under the Synod. The Synod was tasked with collecting revenues through the Monastic Office and transferring them to the Chamber Collegium¹⁰⁶⁴. The Synodal Monastery Office was renamed on December 14, 1724, to the Chamber Office of the Synodal Administration and existed under this name until September 29, 1726, when it was renamed again, this time to the College of Finance of the Synodal Administration. This College existed until April 15, 1738, when, by decree of Empress Anna, it was removed from the Synod’s jurisdiction and transferred to the Senate. From that day forward, all church estates came under the authority of government agencies¹⁰⁶⁵.

During this period, the activities of the Synod’s Monastery Department and the Chamber Office consisted exclusively of collecting revenues from the estates and transferring them to the state treasury. As these initially purely administrative measures indicate, the government gradually came to hold the view that church property, including monastic land holdings, should be considered state property; however, it took several more decades before this view was enshrined in state law.

Already in the final years of Peter’s reign, revenues from “designated” estates were spent exclusively on state needs¹⁰⁶⁶. An important step toward reducing expenditures on the maintenance of monasteries and freeing up a portion of the revenues from “designated” estates was the decree of 1724, which ordered the compilation of monastic staff lists—the famous decree we have cited many times, in which Peter’s attitude toward monasticism and monastic life was particularly fully expressed. However, this decree had a practical rather than an ideological purpose, namely: it was intended to reduce the number of monks and thereby cut Church expenditures. On May 22, 1724, the Synod, acting on Peter’s specific personal instructions, prepared the so-called “1724 Staff Lists,” but for some time they were not implemented, as the emperor’s death prevented this¹⁰⁶⁷. The Synodal Administration’s Board of Finance of 1726, in which all matters were now decided not by clergy but by secular officials—who had effectively removed it from the Synod’s jurisdiction and appealed to the Senate in important cases—did not approve the 1724 staffing regulations and appealed to

¹⁰⁶² Gorchakov. *Op. cit.* p. 167; PSZ. No. 3659.

¹⁰⁶³ PSPiR. Vol. 1, No. 3; PSZ. Vol. 6, No. 3734, § 5. Peter’s decision is known only from the decree of June 26, 1741. PSZ. No. 8406.

¹⁰⁶⁴ PSPiR, vol. 1, nos. 30, 41, 79, 273, 729.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Zavyalov. *Op. cit.* pp. 66–70. PSZ, No. 4567. On the organization of the Synodal Monastery Office and the Chamber Office, see: Barsov, T. *Synodal Institutions of the Past* (1897). pp. 171–184. The reform carried out in September 1726 was linked to the reorganization of the general Synodal administration; on July 15, 1726, the Synod was divided into two departments, one of which handled day-to-day affairs, while the other dealt with ecclesiastical courts and the administration of estates. PSZ, vol. 7, No. 4559. Cf.: Barsov. *Ibid.* pp. 187 ff.

¹⁰⁶⁶ PSPiR. 1. No. 313.

¹⁰⁶⁷ PSZ. 7. No. 4488; PSPiR. 4. Nos. 1237, 1266.

Empress Catherine I (1725–1727) with a request not to implement them, to which she gave her consent¹⁰⁶⁸. The consequence of the 1724 staffing regulations not being approved was that the highest authorities made the issue of monastic estates a subject for discussion. The Supreme Privy Council and the Senate decided to leave everything unchanged and not to implement the 1724 statutes, which, in a certain sense, could be considered a victory for the Synod, since the Board of Finance continued to function as a department of the Synod, and this, to some extent, preserved its influence over the conduct of affairs within the board. This arrangement was subsequently confirmed by a decree dated February 6, 1727.¹⁰⁶⁹

Although officially the Collegium of Economy remained a body accountable to the Synod, under Empress Anna, by a decree of March 17, 1733, it was required to submit reports not to the Synod but to the Senate, from which the Synod could obtain information regarding these reports¹⁰⁷⁰. This relatively complex bureaucratic reporting system was abolished by a decree dated April 15, 1738, when the matter of monastic estates was definitively removed from the Synod's jurisdiction¹⁰⁷¹.

From April 1738 to July 15, 1744, the Collegium of Economy was entirely under the authority of the Senate. It now assumed all the powers of the former Monastic Office, which it had held prior to 1677 and after 1701¹⁰⁷². These were the most difficult years for church and monastic estates. The Synod, however, found the decree of January 2, 1739, particularly objectionable. Previously, according to the "Addendum to the Ecclesiastical Regulations," the personal property and money of deceased bishops and monastery abbots passed into the ownership of the Synod; now, however, a procedure was introduced whereby all inheritances were to be transferred without delay to the disposal of the Board of Finance and were not to be released from there without a decree from Her Majesty¹⁰⁷³. Estates were being ruined because taxes imposed on them exceeded their income; moreover, these taxes were constantly increasing—for example, due to expenses related to the horse breeding farms established by Biron. Many estates were in arrears; the situation for both designated and non-designated estates was equally unbearable. The Tax Arrears Office, established under Empress Anna, dispatched military detachments to collect the arrears by force. If the treasury and granaries of a monastic estate were empty, the monastic peasants were subjected to outright plunder¹⁰⁷⁴.

Under Empress Elizabeth, concessions and reforms began once again. Immediately after her accession to the throne (1741), the Synod addressed her with a message regarding the state of the Church, in which it accused the Collegium of Economy of incompetence. However, it was not until three years later, on July 15, 1744, that the Empress ordered the College of Finance to be abolished and the administration of church and monastic estates to be transferred back to the Synod. For this purpose, the Synod established the Office of Synodal Financial Administration¹⁰⁷⁵. To manage this Office, the Synod appointed two archimandrites and one abbot. But these administrative reforms did little to improve the economic situation of the monastic estates. They continued to be burdened with taxes that exceeded their income, and the peasants on these estates had been utterly ruined during the years of Anna's reign. The newly appointed administrators—who, as in the old days, were once again village elders—set about their work with great severity. The situation escalated to the point of unrest among the monastic peasants¹⁰⁷⁶. The Synod's hopes that now, during the reign of the pious Elizabeth, the government would change its attitude toward church estates were not fulfilled. The revenues from these estates had long been flowing into the state treasury, and the treasury simply could not do without them now. Despite all her inner piety, despite her favorable disposition toward the church hierarchy and

¹⁰⁶⁸ See "Journal of the Supreme Privy Council" of September 25, 1726, § 4, in: Collection. 56. p. 100.

¹⁰⁶⁹ PSZ. 7. No. 5005; PSPiR. 5. No. 1907.

¹⁰⁷⁰ PSZ, No. 6354.

¹⁰⁷¹ Only the former patriarchal estates, which had been transferred to the Synod in 1721 following its establishment, remained under synodal administration; the Synod, in anticipation of possible new decrees from Peter, prudently did not transfer these estates to the synodal Monastery Office but kept them under its direct authority. Now, however, following the decree of May 15, 1738, these estates were also removed from Synodal administration and transferred to the Board of Finance. Zavyalov. Op. cit., p. 74; PSZ, vol. 10, No. 7679.

¹⁰⁷² PSZ, No. 7639 (1738), 7850 (1739), 8074 (1740).

¹⁰⁷³ PSPiR. 2. No. 596. § 61. Zavyalov. Op. cit. p. 75. It should be borne in mind, however, that the personal property of church hierarchs could be substantial: hierarchs owned precious vestments, sacred vessels, icons, books, etc.

¹⁰⁷⁴ 1. Znamensky. Op. cit.; Prav. Sob. 1864. 1. p. 274; cf.: Zavyalov. Op. cit. p. 77 ff.

¹⁰⁷⁵ PSZ. 12. No. 8993; cf. Zavyalov. Op. cit. p. 77. Earlier, by a decree dated June 26, 1741, the Collegium of Finance had been temporarily transferred to the Synod. PSZ. No. 8406.

¹⁰⁷⁶ PSZ. 13. No. 10168; Zavyalov. Op. cit. p. 100; Solovyov. 24 (1874). pp. 242, 360, 363.

monasticism, Elizabeth, for purely state and economic reasons, could not accommodate the Synod's wishes¹⁰⁷⁷. Furthermore, she was firmly convinced of the correctness of her father's views, those of Peter the Great¹⁰⁷⁸. It became clear to the government that the complete secularization of church estates was necessary. A decree dated September 30, 1757, paved the way for this; under its terms, retired officers were appointed to manage these estates, which were taxed on the same basis as those belonging to landowners, though the taxes levied for the maintenance of monasteries remained at their previous levels¹⁰⁷⁹.

Elizabeth's successor, Peter III, took a decisive step in the same direction. His decree of March 21, 1762, removed the administration of these estates from the Synod and reestablished the old Collegium of Economy. As a government body subordinate to the Senate, the collegium administered the estates through retired officers, as had already been provided for by the decree of September 30, 1757¹⁰⁸⁰. The decree of March 21, 1762, also reorganized the financial aspects of the matter on an entirely new basis. In addition to the per capita tax (levied on every male) common to all, which amounted to 70 kopecks, the peasants of these estates were required to pay an additional 1 ruble. However, the land they had previously cultivated for the benefit of the owners of church and monastic estates now passed into their personal use. Thus, they became state peasants, exempt from payment in kind and corvée labor. The ruble tax was remitted to the Board of Economy. Monasteries and diocesan bishops received stipends based on the staffing tables of May 22, 1724, and these were even increased¹⁰⁸¹. Paragraph 6 of this decree is particularly telling: all legal disputes between landowners and peasants regarding arrears and peasant uprisings—with the exception of charges of murder—were terminated, and the court documents were to be destroyed. This was a genuine amnesty that put an end once and for all to all lawsuits related to peasant unrest during the reign of Elizabeth¹⁰⁸². Also of interest is § 7, according to which officers who managed estates received 10% of any increase in revenue as a bonus. A Senate decree dated April 6, 1762, ordered the establishment of the Board of Economy and the drafting, as soon as possible, of staffing schedules for the maintenance of monasteries¹⁰⁸³.

It is known that this decree caused great disappointment and discontent among the church hierarchy. Metropolitan Timofey of Moscow wrote to the renowned Metropolitan Arseny Maceevich of Rostov: "Nunc non Vestram Sanctitatem, sed omnes nos dolenda ista tetigit metamorphosis, quae vitam nostram ad gemitus et dolores ducit" [Not only Your Eminence, but all of us have been touched by this sorrowful change, which leads our lives to sighs and suffering]¹⁰⁸⁴. But in reality, this was not a change, as the Metropolitan of Moscow believes, but rather a logical continuation of Elizabeth's measures, which had been implemented with some hesitation. The most opportune time had come to resolve this issue, although perhaps some preliminary measures should have been taken first. Furthermore, the decree was not as "unjust" as A. Zavyalov believes¹⁰⁸⁵.

While the overall church policy of Empress Catherine II (1762–1796) was certainly influenced by her personal religious views¹⁰⁸⁶, the secularization of 1764 was, first and foremost, a continuation and culmination of a whole series of measures implemented in the 18th century. Catherine liked to call herself the successor to Peter the Great's reform efforts, which shaped her fundamental attitude toward secularization; her personal

¹⁰⁷⁷ Vedenyapin. Op. cit., in: Prav. ob. 1865. 3. p. 220; PSZ. 14. No. 10765.

¹⁰⁷⁸ In this regard, a characteristic example is Elizabeth's decree ordering that war invalids be housed in monasteries and supported at the monasteries' expense, as well as her dissatisfaction that the Synod had made too little effort in this regard. PSZ. 14. No. 10765.

¹⁰⁷⁹ PSZ. 14. No. 10765; Zavyalov. Op. cit. pp. 96–100. It may be assumed that only Elizabeth's sudden death (December 25, 1761) prevented the secularization of church estates.

¹⁰⁸⁰ PSZ. 15. No. 11481. On Peter III, see the monograph: Bain, N. *Peter III, Emperor of Russia: The Story of a Crisis and a Crime* (Westminster, 1902).

¹⁰⁸¹ Previously, archimandrites of stauropegial monasteries received 100 rubles a year; by decree of March 21, 1762, they began to receive 500 rubles, abbots of second-class monasteries 200 rubles, and those of third-class monasteries 150 rubles.

¹⁰⁸² The issuance of this decree by Peter III was an extremely rare event in the 18th century, when serfdom in Russia had reached its peak. This decree played a role in the later peasant uprisings during the reign of Catherine II and in the time of Pugachev.

¹⁰⁸³ PSZ. 15. No. 11498.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Russ. Art. 25 (1879). p. 586, and also in: Solovyov. 25 (1875). p. 147. See also the letter from Arseny Matseevich to Count A. P. Bestuzhev-Ryumin after Catherine's accession to the throne; ibid. p. 146.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Zavyalov. Op. cit. pp. 123, 125.

¹⁰⁸⁶ On Catherine's religious views, see my article in: *Jahrbuch für Geschichte Osteuropas*. 3 (1938); and also: Titlinov, B., Gavriil Petrov, Metropolitan of Novgorod and St. Petersburg (1916)—a thorough study of the Russian Church under Catherine II, in which the empress's views are described in various places. See also the earlier work: Znamensky, P., "Lectures on the History of the Russian Church during the Reign of Catherine II," in Prav. Sob. 1875.

religious views contributed to the reform being carried out in the shortest possible time. The fact that this reform addressed not only the issue of church property but also the number of monasteries and monastics was linked to Catherine's view of monasticism as an institution of the Christian Church.

It is probably worth providing a brief overview of her views. We have already noted in another work (see note 1081) that this great empress of the 18th century, who belonged to both denominations—the Evangelical faith of her homeland and the Greek Orthodox faith in Russia—only in name, was devoid of inner piety; and she judged religious and ecclesiastical matters solely from a state-political perspective. This was bound not only to dishearten her father but also to astonish her Orthodox subjects, unless they themselves were under the strong influence of the deistic ideas of the Enlightenment. Catherine II's religious views did not extend beyond the framework of deism. Thanks to her great intellect and historical insight, she refrained from imposing her own religious views on the broad masses of her people. Even before her accession to the throne, Catherine had demonstrated to everyone how highly she valued all aspects of church ritual; thereby, the empress increasingly won the sympathy of the church hierarchy and the people, in contrast to her husband, who, as heir to the throne and later as emperor, neglected the rites and therefore remained a stranger, a “German,” to the Russian people. It was precisely these deviations by the “Orthodox” emperor from the traditions of the Russian Church and his decrees—which, following the “good old days” of Empress Elizabeth, once again demonstrated the state's crude interference in church affairs—that greatly troubled the hierarchy¹⁰⁸⁷. Catherine understood the psychological situation very well, and in her manifesto of June 28, 1762, the reason for the emperor's deposition was explained primarily in religious terms: “It became clear to all true sons of the Russian fatherland what danger was befalling the entire Russian state as a result of this very act, namely: our Orthodox Greek Church was the first to sense the upheaval and the destruction of its ecclesiastical traditions, so that our Greek Church was already extremely vulnerable to the ultimate danger of a change in the ancient Orthodoxy of Russia and the adoption of a law of a different faith”¹⁰⁸⁸.

Catherine liked to call herself the “Orthodox Empress”¹⁰⁸⁹, and in the history of her reign, which she herself compiled, it was stated: “Catherine was enthroned; she had been placed there to defend the Orthodox faith” [Catherine was enthroned to defend the Orthodox faith]. She also referred to herself as “chef de l'Église grecque” [head of the Greek Church] or “chef de son Église” [head of her Church]¹⁰⁹⁰. She took pleasure in emphasizing that she viewed her activities as a religious duty; in her outlook, the Lutheran concept of a religious attitude toward one's calling—“profession”—was combined with the idea of the Christian duty of an Orthodox tsar. The words of Bossuet, which she chose as the motto for her “Instruction,” were likely interpreted by her in light of these convictions: “Seigneur mon Dieu! Sois attentif à ma voix et donne-moi de l'intelligence pour juger Ton peuple selon Ta sainte loi et selon la justice” [My God, hear me and grant me the wisdom to judge Your people according to Your holy law and according to justice]¹⁰⁹¹. This was the official aspect of her religiosity. However, a look into Catherine's inner religious life reveals a completely different atmosphere. Her letters and conversations with her close associates paint a different picture. She was not a “churchgoing” person—church laws and customs were merely a necessity for her; she never turned to them out of inner conviction. This served as grounds for Prince M. M. Shcherbatov to pose the following question: “Does she have faith in God's law? For if she did, then God's law itself could have corrected her

¹⁰⁸⁷ My collected works, pp. 571, 574. Cf. the above remarks on the decrees concerning church estates; moreover, there were rumors about Peter III's plans to introduce certain “Protestant innovations.” See the letter from Count Mersy-Argento to Count Kaunitz (May 28 and June 18, 1752), in: Collection, vol. 18, pp. 371 and 391; and also: Bolotov, Notes, vol. 2, p. 172; Mémoire de la princesse Dachkoff, vol. 1, p. 41; Russian Archives, 1871, p. 2055; and also the decree of March 26, 1762, which is not included in the PSZ, in: Russian Articles, vol. 6 (1872), p. 567.

¹⁰⁸⁸ PSZ. 16. No. 11582; The manifesto issued in connection with the coronation on July 7, 1762, once again justified the events of June 28: the Empress proclaimed that this was required of her by “her very office in the sight of God (!), His Church, and the Holy Faith.” PSZ. 16. No. 11598; the death of Peter III was presented as a manifestation of the will of Divine Providence. PSZ. 16. No. 11599. Cf. my cited work, p. 574.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Collection. 7. p. 156.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Russian Archives, 1865, p. 490; Collection, 13, p. 378 (to Voltaire, dated December 27, 1773); 33, p. 142 (to Grimm, dated April 23, 1781).

¹⁰⁹¹ “Instruction.” Ed. Chechulin (1907). Although the bishops (the so-called Commission of Archbishop Innokenty) praised Catherine's efforts (Titlinov, Gavril Petrov. pp. 131–134), the Russian Church and its interests nevertheless remained outside the scope of the Legislative Commission; the clergy was not represented in it by its own deputies; only the Synod sent a single representative to the Commission. Florovsky, A. The Composition of the Legislative Commission, 1767–1774 (1915). p. 57; Stöhlín. 2. p. 468. Cf. also my op. cit.

heart and guided her steps onto the path of truth. But—no! She is intoxicated by the mindless reading of modern writers. She holds no regard whatsoever for Christian law (though she pretends to be quite devout)”¹⁰⁹². Catherine’s church policy can best be characterized by her own remark, made even before her accession to the throne: “Respecter la religion, mais ne la faire entrer pour rien dans les affaires d’État” [Respect religion, but do not allow it to influence state affairs in any way]¹⁰⁹³.

Immediately after Catherine’s accession, the issue of church and monastic estates began to be discussed. On July 16, 1762—that is, two weeks after her accession to the throne—the Senate, “at the request of the clergy,” passed a resolution to return the estates to church institutions and to levy an additional 1 ruble from monastic peasants in addition to the 70 kopecks per capita tax, an additional 1 ruble was to be collected from monastic peasants, which was to be divided into two parts: 50 kopecks to the treasury for the support of disabled veterans and 50 kopecks to the church institutions to which the monastic peasants were being returned; these estates were to be overseen not by administrators appointed by church institutions, but by village elders elected by the peasants. Two days after this decree, on July 18, a joint session of the Senate and the Synod was held, during which the opinions of the Synod members were divided; Archbishop Dimitri Sechenov expressed the view that a special commission should be formed, consisting of representatives of the clergy and the government, to draw up staffing plans for diocesan sees and monasteries and to determine the procedure for distributing income from the estates.

Catherine, having received a report on this meeting, had not yet formed a definite opinion on the matter herself, and her manifesto of August 12, 1762, was likely issued after she had discussed the issue with Count A. P. Bestuzhev¹⁰⁹⁴. This extremely verbose manifesto¹⁰⁹⁵, which offers a critical assessment of the aforementioned decrees of Peter III, shows that Catherine was not without criticism of the actions of her predecessors, who had failed to understand Peter’s attitude toward church estates and were unwilling to continue the work he had begun in his spirit. “We have neither the intention nor the desire,” the manifesto states, “to appropriate church estates for ourselves, but we do possess the authority granted to us by God to enact laws regarding their best use for the glory of God and the benefit of the fatherland. And to that end, under God’s protection, we intend to bring the organization of the entire clergy to perfection, in accordance with the ecclesiastical regulations followed by our most beloved grandfather, Emperor Peter the Great, by establishing for this purpose a special commission composed of ecclesiastical and secular persons under our own supervision.” Furthermore, referring to the Senate’s resolution (dated July 16) and the Synod’s petition, the manifesto ordered—until such time as this commission had begun its work and rendered its decision—that: 1) the estates be returned to the clergy; 2) the Economic Collegium be abolished and the officers removed from administration, 3) a per capita tax of 1 ruble be collected from monastic peasants, or “according to the nature of the localities and necessities”; the peasants were to continue to be used for labor, but at the same time “they were not to be exhausted by any excessive levies or unnecessary labor.”

On November 29, 1762, a new imperial decree established the Commission on Church Estates, with three members representing the Church and five representing the government¹⁰⁹⁶. The commission received specific instructions for its work. “We desire,” the instructions conclude, “that church property be put to the best possible use for God’s work—that is, for the promotion of piety and for the benefit of the people.” The manifesto’s goals were noble, but, unfortunately, it did not lead to an increase in piety nor did it benefit the people. In connection with the formation of this commission, the government issued several additional decrees.

As early as January 8, 1763, another manifesto by Catherine appeared, from which it is evident that, first, the decrees of Peter III and the manifesto of August 12 had caused confusion among the monastery peasants and a reluctance to pay the additional poll tax, and second, the clergy had likely taken too zealous an approach to managing the estates returned to their control, so that the latest manifesto recommended “keeping” the peasants “in good order”¹⁰⁹⁷. On May 12, 1763, Catherine established the Collegium for the

¹⁰⁹² Shcherbatov. “On the Corruption of Morals in Russia,” in: Russian Articles, 1871. p. 686; and also: Dolgoruky, I. M. “A Journey to Kyiv in 1777,” in: Readings, 1870. Vol. 3. p. 8; my cited work, pp. 574–576.

¹⁰⁹³ Collection. 7. p. 97.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Solovyov. 25 (1875). p. 148; cf. Catherine’s letter to Count A. P. Bestuzhev. Collection. 7. p. 135.

¹⁰⁹⁵ PSZ. 16. No. 11643.

¹⁰⁹⁶ PSZ. 16. No. 11716; on the Commission’s activities: Zavyalov. Op. cit. pp. 127 ff.

¹⁰⁹⁷ PSZ. 16. No. 11730; additionally, *ibid.*, Nos. 11745, 11747, 11789, and 11791 (on the management and accounting of revenues and expenditures).

Administration of Ecclesiastical Estates¹⁰⁹⁸. The Board of Economic Management was composed of secular officials and was subordinate to the Empress and the Senate; it was required to consult the Synod only on purely ecclesiastical matters. Finally, on February 26, 1764, the famous decree on church estates was issued, which put an end to the centuries-long—dating back to 1503—dispute between the Church and the state¹⁰⁹⁹.

The most important provisions of this legislative act were as follows: 1. All estates belonging to the Synod, diocesan sees, monasteries, and parishes were definitively transferred to the Board of Finance. All church institutions were removed from the administration of these estates. The peasants living on these estates—whose number, according to the 1760 census, totaled 910,866 registered souls (that is, male individuals alone; their family members must be added to this figure)—were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Board of Economy and were henceforth referred to as “economic peasants.” 2. Instead of corvée labor and various taxes, as of January 1, 1764, peasants were required to pay 1.5 rubles per capita, which was remitted to the state treasury through the College of Economy’s “. ” 3. To support church institutions—diocesan sees, monasteries, and parish churches that had previously owned land—the Board of Economy was required to allocate a specific sum. 4. Dioceses were divided into three classes, and their funding was allocated according to their class. 5. For monasteries—initially only those in Great Russia, that is, excluding those subordinate to the Metropolitan of Kyiv—monastic budgets were drawn up¹¹⁰⁰.

These monastery lists are important to us in two respects: first, they indicate the number of monasteries that received annual support in accordance with these lists; second, the listed monasteries were divided into three classes.

For the later history of Russian monasticism, the first point proved more significant than the second. The number of monasteries was drastically reduced—that is, many monasteries were either closed entirely or merged with others—but permission was granted to preserve certain monasteries not included in the lists—the so-called “non-listed monasteries.” The future fate of these two categories of monasteries differed not only in financial terms but, more importantly, in terms of their internal spiritual development. Thus, two distinct types emerged—not only of monasteries but also of monks—two different kinds of monastic life, and two different ascetic paths. The monastic charter, as the foundation of monastic life, lost its significance for a long time.

In 1700–1701, there were 1,201 monasteries in Russia, of which 965 were for men and 236 for women¹¹⁰¹. On January 21, 1721, Peter the Great ordered the closure of some monasteries, while others, with a small number of monks, were to be merged into larger monasteries, and the number of monks was to be reduced. The “Proclamation” (1724) also contained a directive to reduce the number of monks. The “Spiritual Regulations” (§ 46, on monks) recommended that the number of monks in a single monastery not exceed 30. In the 18th century, prior to 1764, corresponding measures were taken, and during that period a total of 175 monasteries (141 for men and 34 for women) were closed or downsized as a result of mergers; however, between 1700 and 1744, 33 new monasteries for men and 4 for women were opened¹¹⁰². These figures are not entirely reliable, as the Synod and its agencies received information only about so-called “designated” monasteries, which were supported by estates; small monasteries that did not own estates and were classified as “undesigned” or “small-brotherhood” monasteries often disappeared, and the Synod had no information about them. In 1738–1741, there were 624 monasteries receiving support¹¹⁰³.

According to the legislative act of February 26, 1764, the following were included in the monastic rolls:

Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Total
Lavras (Alexander Nevsky and Trinity-Sergius)	2	–	2
Male monasteries	15	41	100
Women’s monasteries	4	18	45
			67

¹⁰⁹⁸ PSZ. 16. No. 11814; special instructions for the Board of Economy: *ibid.* No. 11844; it began operations on July 12. *Ibid.* No. 11864.

¹⁰⁹⁹ PSZ. 16. No. 12060.

¹¹⁰⁰ Cf.: Zavyalov. *Op. cit.* pp. 155–190, 190–234, 283–321, 322–340 (on points A, B, C, and D).

¹¹⁰¹ Chudetsky, P. “An Attempt at Historical Research on the Number of Russian Monasteries Closed in the 18th and 19th Centuries,” in: TKDA. 1877. 4. p. 73.

¹¹⁰² PSPiR. 4. No. 1200; Chudetsky. *Op. cit.* pp. 57, 58, 73, 74; IRI. 6. pp. 1144–1147.

¹¹⁰³ Pokrovsky, I. Russian Dioceses in the 18th Century. Appendix 2; Zavyalov. *Op. cit.* p. 235.

The stipends they were to receive from the Board of Finance were set at the following amounts (in rubles):

1st class 2nd class 3rd class Total

Lavras (Alexander Nevsky and Trinity-Sergius)¹¹⁰⁴ 2 10,070 – – 2

Male monasteries 15,2017.5 41,1311.9 100,806.3 156

Women's monasteries 4 2,009.¹¹⁰⁵ 18,475.8 375.6 67 225 207,750.4

According to a report by the Synod¹¹⁰⁶ dated January 1, 1762, there were 954 monasteries in all dioceses, with or without estates, and with 11,153 monastics¹¹⁰⁷. Following the secularization of 1764, the Synod resolved to abolish 418 monasteries. This left 536 monasteries, of which 226 received state funding, while the remaining 310 were to subsist on voluntary donations from the people¹¹⁰⁸. Thus, two types of monasteries emerged: state-funded and non-state-funded. On March 31, 1764, a supplementary decree was issued stipulating that non-state-funded monasteries were also to be divided into three classes: Class 1—20 monasteries, Class 2—56, and Class 3—85, for a total of 161 monasteries with 1,247 monks; They were to be supported either by voluntary donations from the people or by uninhabited land located near the monasteries, which the monks cultivated themselves. The remaining 149 monasteries were also to be closed. Thus, 226 state-supported and 161 non-state-supported monasteries remained, for a total of 387 monasteries¹¹⁰⁹.

The secularization reform of 1764 affected only the Great Russian monasteries; 22 years later, in 1786, a similar situation was established in the Kiev, Chernigov, and Novgorod-Seversky provinces, and in 1788—in the Kharkiv, Yekaterinoslav, Kursk, and Voronezh provinces¹¹¹⁰.

The funding allocated to the monasteries was, in reality, far too meager. It was barely enough to support the monastic community; the monastery buildings fell into disrepair and crumbled year after year, yet the abbots did not report this to the Synod for fear that the monastery would be abolished; to improve the monasteries' financial situation, the abbots sought to reduce the number of monks stipulated in the staffing regulations. Consequently, everywhere except in the largest monasteries, the number of monks soon fell below the quota established in the statutes. As early as 1771, there were 527 vacant positions in the monasteries¹¹¹¹.

Such was the external situation of the monasteries and monastic life immediately following the secularization of 1764. Monasteries and monasticism entered a new era in their history. The situation was difficult, but the church hierarchy and the monks themselves had to find ways to overcome these difficulties, and now that the monasteries had become impoverished, it was possible to reform monastic life on a purely ascetic basis.

Chapter XIV. Monasticism from the Secularization of 1764 to the Early 20th Century

1. The External History of Monasticism

The secularization of church estates in 1764 created entirely new conditions for monastic life in the Russian Church. It would seem that secularization should have put an end to the secularizing influence of the economy on monastic life. Given this circumstance, it was simply imperative for the Synod and the diocesan bishops to develop a reform of monastic life or, at the very least, to take effective measures to improve it. Nothing, however, was done, and this issue was not seriously discussed at all. Only later, 20–30 years after secularization, were there attempts by individual bishops (undertaken on their own initiative) to improve monastic life in some way, but this occurred at a time when the process of secularization was penetrating ever

¹¹⁰⁴ The Alexander Nevsky Lavra in St. Petersburg received funding along with the St. Petersburg Diocesan See.

¹¹⁰⁵ 1 monastery 2009.8; 1 monastery 2007.7; and 1 monastery 1506.38 rubles.

¹¹⁰⁶ Milyutin. Op. cit., in: Readings. 1861. 2. p. 565; Zavyalov. Op. cit., p. 266. In 1768, 1775, and 1793, the total amount of expenditures for monasteries according to their staffing levels increased. PSZ. Nos. 13061, 14361, and 17124.

¹¹⁰⁷ Zavyalov. Op. cit. pp. 346–348, table.

¹¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 274. These data are not entirely reliable, as individual monasteries moved from one category to another; some were subsequently closed, while others were reopened. Chudetsky. Op. cit., pp. 73–75, 88–102, 104–107.

¹¹⁰⁹ PSZ. 16. No. 12121; Milyutin. Op. cit., in: Chteniya. 1861. 2. pp. 568–569; Chudetsky. Op. cit. p. 74; Zavyalov. Op. cit. pp. 270–271.

¹¹¹⁰ PSZ. 22. Nos. 16375, 16649, and 16650.

¹¹¹¹ PSZ. No. 13721.

deeper into monastic life. On the one hand, these were merely isolated instances of a limited, local nature; on the other hand, these attempts did not seem to be part of a well-thought-out program of reform. And yet, as we shall see, these attempts did not pass without leaving a mark on the life of individual monasteries, exerting a beneficial influence on them. But even when the positive consequences of these improvements became apparent, the Synod failed to take advantage of the favorable opportunity. On its part, it either adopted half-measures or, if not outright countermeasures, at least implemented measures of a negative nature that undermined the effects of the improvements that had already taken place in monastic life.

During the secularization of 1764, two distinct attitudes toward this reform emerged within church circles. One viewpoint consisted of a principled denial of the state's right to secularize church property; the second was of a purely practical nature, that is, it involved considering the consequences of secularization for the Church and its institutions, weighing its negative and positive aspects, and organizing the daily life of these institutions in a way that would correspond to the new situation. Our research shows that the Church had never before recognized the state's right to such actions, and now, following secularization, considered itself robbed by the state, even though the state paid it an allowance from the state treasury in exchange for the confiscated estates—an allowance which, admittedly, did not equal the income from the confiscated estates, was nonetheless substantial—which, in essence, by no means placed the Church in a hopeless situation; moreover, as we shall see, this support was subsequently increased. Secularization was a logical consequence of the introduction under Peter the Great of a state-controlled church, which was finally established during the reign of Catherine. In view of the strengthening of absolutist imperial power under Catherine, any struggle by the Church against state control of the church became hopeless. It was therefore necessary for the Church, taking into account the practical aspects of secularization, to adapt to its new situation. It was especially important for the monastic community to take this aspect of Catherine's reforms into account, for by acknowledging the new situation, it could have undertaken a thorough reform of internal monastic life. But the monastic community did not do so; this might have been justified had the Church truly directed all its efforts toward restoring its rights to church properties. Behind the scenes, the church hierarchy viewed secularization as a kind of plundering of the Church, but outwardly, opposition manifested itself only in the well-known speech by Metropolitan Arseny Matseevich of Rostov, who found no clear support among the hierarchy or the monastic community. Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that the economic consequences of secularization drew the full attention of the hierarchy and the monastic community. The monastic community did not mount any clear or effective opposition—after all the government measures of the 18th century, it had been left too weakened and internally crushed for that; it retained too little influence over church life to dare to oppose or openly speak out against secularization.

Arseny Matseevich belonged to that group of 18th-century bishops who hailed from Southern Russia, from Little Russia, and who, during the reign of Peter the Great, gained increasing influence within the Russian Church; the tsar, who did not trust the Great Russian episcopate, favored representatives of the South Russian hierarchy and willingly appointed them to bishoprics¹¹¹². Arsenius was born in 1697 into the family of a parish priest in the town of Vladimir-Volynsky (in Volhynia); he initially studied in Poland, and by 1715 he was already a student at the Kiev Theological Academy, which he left a year later to enter a monastery; Arseny spent two years in the monastery and then returned to the Academy to complete his education. In 1723, he became a hieromonk and preacher at the academy's church. After that, he spent another two or three years (1728–1730) at the monastery, and in 1730 he was sent as a diocesan preacher to Tobolsk, in Siberia. He did not stay there long, and after a brief stay at the Solovetsky Monastery, he set out in 1734 as a confessor with an expedition to the Kamchatka Peninsula. Due to illness, Arseny returned to Russia and lived for some time at the bishop's residence in Vologda; in 1738, he served as a hieromonk and teacher of canon law in St. Petersburg. Quite unexpectedly, on March 26, 1741, he was consecrated as Metropolitan of Tobolsk, but he served in Tobolsk for only a short time; in 1742, he was elevated to the ancient See of Rostov. There he proved himself to be a remarkable preacher and an authoritative diocesan bishop.

Arseny was a man of very strong character, stubborn and painfully irritable. His ecclesiastical and political views were such that they would have aroused strong distrust in Peter the Great. Arseny was a staunch opponent of the new relationship between the state and the Church in “ ” Russia; Peter's state-church policy elicited a sharply negative reaction and condemnation from him. Even under Peter III, when the latter issued

¹¹¹² On this, see: Kharlamovich, *The Little Russian Clergy* (1898) and Shlyapkin, *op. cit.*

his decrees on church estates, Arseny stood at the head of the hierarchy, which was extremely dissatisfied with the imperial decrees. When, under Catherine, an inventory of church and monastic estates was ordered in accordance with her manifestos of August 12 and November 29, 1762, Arseny openly opposed these measures. He sent two “reports”¹¹¹³ to the Synod, in which he very sharply condemned the decree of November 29. He held the view that church property was inviolable, and cited as an example the pagan Tatar khans, who did not dare to seize church estates; Arseny did not recognize the state’s right to interfere in the financial affairs of church institutions or to use the income from their estates for state purposes; he strongly disapproved of the staffing quotas for diocesan sees and monasteries introduced by Peter the Great. If matters continued along this path, Arseny believed, the Russian Empire would turn into a Protestant or, worse still, an atheistic state; the episcopate and monasticism would fall into complete decline, and the Church and piety would be nearly destroyed.

The Synod decided to submit the “reports” of the Metropolitan of Rostov to the Empress. The Empress, outraged by the content and language of these writings—in which she perceived a personal insult—ordered the Synod, on the grounds of insulting Her Majesty, seditious sentiments, and views hostile to the common good, to strip Arseny of his episcopal rank and exile him to a remote monastery in the north. When it became known in 1767 that Arseny had not changed his views and considered himself to have been unlawfully convicted—and that he was revered among the people as a martyr for the truth—and furthermore, as reported to the empress, that in conversation he allowed himself to allude to certain circumstances surrounding her accession to the throne and the sudden death of Peter III, – Catherine demanded that Arseny be brought to trial once again. This time, he was stripped of his monastic status and imprisoned in the Reval Fortress. Arseny spent another five years in prison, listed under the name “criminal Andrei Vral”; he was placed in a tiny cell, where he died in 1772.¹¹¹⁴ In a letter to the fortress commandant, Catherine called Arseny “a scoundrel and a hypocrite”¹¹¹⁵, which, of course, in no way corresponded to the prisoner’s character, for she herself was the hypocrite, and Maceevich’s fate would forever cast a shadow both on Catherine herself and on her church policy.

The tragic fate of the Metropolitan of Rostov made a strong and chilling impression on the church hierarchy and forced it to watch the process of secularization in silence. Only Metropolitan Pavel Konyuskevich of Tobolsk (1758–1768) protested against the closure of monasteries in his diocese, but to no avail¹¹¹⁶. The monastic community, too, did not dare to protest openly¹¹¹⁷.

The situation created by the secularization of 1764 did not remain unchanged. Although church estates had de facto disappeared, de jure the state did not revoke the rights of church institutions to own land, and over the next 100 years, state legislation established various privileges for church-owned land. By the 19th century, the land holdings of individual monasteries were no longer as extensive as they had been in the 16th and 17th centuries, yet the monasteries continued to purchase land quite successfully. Some monasteries grew wealthy even in the 19th century. In addition, certain monasteries attained considerable wealth through monetary gifts and donations of precious items. Just as in the 16th century, many monasteries in the 19th century possessed substantial capital, which their abbots knew very well how to use to improve the monastery’s prosperity.

¹¹¹³ “Reports” by Arseny, in: Readings. 1862. 2. p. 25.

¹¹¹⁴ For a very informative study on Arseny Matseevich, see: Popov, M., **Arseny Matseevich and His Cause** (1912); Titlinov, **Gavriil Petrov** (1916); Moroshkin, I., “Arseny Matseevich and His Cause,” in: **Stranik**, 1885, vol. 3. pp. 457–487, 655–672; Ikonnikov, V., “Arseny Matseevich,” in: *Russkiye Stat’i*, 1879, 4, 5, 8–10; two other archimandrites who sympathized with Arseny Matseevich were convicted at the same time as him.

¹¹¹⁵ *Prav. Sob.* 1875, vol. 3, p. 248.

¹¹¹⁶ Titov, A., “Pavel Konyuskevich,” in **Istoricheskie Izvestiya**, 1888, vol. 1, pp. 180 ff.; Tolstoy, M., “Saint Pavel, Metropolitan of Tobolsk,” in **Chteniya**, 1870, vol. 2, pp. 158, 163, 168.

¹¹¹⁷ The following incident serves as an example of monastic opposition: shortly after the secularization of monastic estates in the Kiev Metropolis (1786), Catherine II visited Kiev and wished to attend a divine service at the Mezhygorsk Monastery on the outskirts of the city. However, upon learning of the empress’s intention, the monks—according to rumors—set fire to their own monastery early in the morning on the day scheduled for the visit, and thus Catherine’s visit did not take place. Rozhdestvensky, P. Samuel Mislavsky, Metropolitan of Kyiv, in: TKDA. 1877. 4. p. 17.

Secularization did not halt the growth in the number of monasteries. Between 1764 and 1917, many monasteries were abolished, but at the same time, new ones were established. From 1701 to the mid-19th century, both before and after the secularization of 1764, a total of 822 monasteries were closed¹¹¹⁸.

Closed (excluding Siberia)	Male	Female	Total
From the early 18th century to 1764	141	34	175
During the secularization of 1764	471	118	589
After 1764 through the end of the 18th century	35	8	43
In the first half of the 19th century	13	2	15
Total	660	162	822
Resumed (excluding Siberia)	Men	Women	Total
In the 18th century	18	4	22
In the 19th century	15	2	17
Total	33	6	39

After secularization, there remained 226 regular and 161 irregular monasteries, for a total of 387 (in Great Russia). At the beginning of the 19th century, when 40 monasteries were closed in Southern Russia and Belarus, only 452 monasteries remained throughout the empire; the 19th century presents the following picture of growth in the number of monasteries:

Years	Men	Women	Total
1810	358	94	452
1825	377	99	476
1836	360	101	461
1855	415	129	544
1,887	469	202	671
1,893	507	235	742
1907	522	448	970
1914	550	475	1,025

It should be noted, however, that the number of men's monasteries grew mainly due to the reopening of old monasteries that had been abolished; women's monasteries, on the other hand, were either newly established or formed by the conversion of sisterhoods into monasteries (see Chapter XIV, 4). Thus, during the 19th century, the number of monasteries more than doubled (and the number of women's monasteries rose from 94 to 475). In 1764, there were about 1,070 monasteries throughout the empire, and by 1914, their number had grown even further¹¹¹⁹.

This increase in the number of monasteries was facilitated by the fact that, after 1764, many new decrees concerning monasteries were issued, which significantly altered the legislation of 1764. Already under Catherine, it was permitted to open new monasteries and revive old ones with the knowledge and permission of the highest authority¹¹²⁰. Catherine's son, Emperor Paul I (1796–1801), partly because of his favor toward monasticism and partly because of his disapproval of all his mother's decrees, significantly relaxed the legislation of 1764. In 1797, monasteries were permitted to expand their remaining uninhabited land holdings (vegetable gardens, hayfields, and, in part, pastures) to up to 30 desiatinas; monasteries were granted the right to establish mills and fish ponds at a considerable distance from the monastery buildings (previously, no further than 15 versts)¹¹²¹. At the same time, the standard funding for monasteries was revised, and payments for the maintenance of the monastic community were increased; even non-subsidized monasteries began to receive 300 rubles annually from the state treasury¹¹²². By a decree dated June 8, 1805, already under Alexander I (1801–1825), monasteries were granted the right to acquire uninhabited plots of land as gifts or

¹¹¹⁸ Chudetsky. Op. cit., in: TKDA. 1877. 4. p. 104 ff. In Belarus, monasteries began to be closed for the first time in 1796–97; *the last closures of monasteries occurred in 1855–1860; in the Caucasus, in Georgia, some monasteries were also closed in 1811 and 1819. Chudetsky. Op. cit. pp. 68, 73–76, 88–102.*

¹¹¹⁹ See the reports of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod for 1882, 1889, 1894, 1910, and 1916.

¹¹²⁰ PSZ. No. 15379. § 58 (decree of the Deanery Administration). For example, thanks to the efforts of Metropolitan Platon of Moscow, the Nikolo-Pesnoshsky Monastery was reopened in 1766, and the Berlyukovskaya Hermitage in 1780. Pimen. Memoirs, in: Readings. 1877. 1. pp. 250, 253.

¹¹²¹ PSZ. 24. Nos. 18273, 18590. Requests for a further increase in the size of the plots of land acquired by monasteries were rejected by a decree dated April 5, 1800. Ibid. No. 19370.

¹¹²² Ibid. No. 18273; Statutes. Part 2. Section 3. pp. 63–67.

through bequests if they needed them, but permission from the highest authority was required to purchase land. Also of great importance to the monasteries were the provisions exempting certain categories of land parcels from the land tax, which were subsequently confirmed in the Code of Laws of 1857 and remained in force, with some modifications, as law until 1917.¹¹²³ This same policy continued during the reign of Nicholas I (1825–1855); the decree of 1797 was not merely reaffirmed (in 1835), but in certain cases the conditions for acquiring land became even more favorable: very often, with the permission of the highest authorities, diocesan sees and monasteries acquired uninhabited plots of up to 300 desyatinas. Only with regard to inhabited lands did the government firmly adhere to the provisions of the 1764 legislation: in 1841, such estates were confiscated from monasteries in the western provinces, where they had remained until then, and special regulations were drawn up for these monasteries in 1842.¹¹²⁴

Between 1836 and 1861, various monasteries acquired 9,000 desyatinas of arable land and 16,000 desyatinas of forest land from state forestry offices; such acquisitions were not uncommon in the 1870s and 1880s as well.¹¹²⁵ The annual subsidies for monasteries under the new 1861 regulations were increased by 168–200 rubles¹¹²⁶. Only monasteries not included in the official roster ceased to receive state financial subsidies in 1867¹¹²⁷. In 1881, monasteries on the official roster received up to 425,000 rubles from the treasury.¹¹²⁸

The financial situation of the monasteries in the 19th century steadily improved. They received large donations from people of various social classes, especially from merchants, who rapidly amassed great wealth under Emperor Nicholas I and accumulated fortunes numbering in the millions. Monasteries received donations of money and valuables (icons, bells, vestments, etc.), and benefactors built monastery churches and other structures at their own expense. The monasteries themselves launched construction projects on a grand scale, so that their appearance changed dramatically with the emergence of large stone churches and buildings.

Such buildings were often constructed in connection with the introduction of communal rules in state-supported monasteries, as can be seen, for example, in the “Memoirs” of Archimandrite Pimen, abbot of the Nikolo-Ugreshsky Monastery (near Moscow). These “Memoirs” contain many details of monastic life in the Moscow Diocese from the early 19th century to the late 1870s. Monasteries sought to acquire large stone houses in cities and derived considerable profit from this. Some monasteries in the mid-19th century managed to establish profitable dairy or vegetable farms. In addition, the monasteries received large donations. Archimandrite Pimen’s “Memoirs” attest that the financial situation of many monasteries in the 19th century had improved considerably; one could now learn of their poverty in the second half of the 18th century only from monastic chronicles and the accounts of long-time monastic residents¹¹²⁹.

Archbishop Savva Tikhomirov’s (1819–1896) **Chronicle of My Life** contains many interesting details about the enrichment of monasteries in other dioceses. Throughout his long life, he administered three dioceses: Polotsk (1866–1874), Kharkiv (1874–1879), and Tver (1879–1896). His “Chronicle,” written with extraordinary detail and containing numerous documents, letters, and the like, describes the vast number of

¹¹²³ PSZ. 28. No. 21785; cf. No. 24246 (1810). In 1819, the provisions of this decree were extended to parish churches as well. PSZ. 36. No. 27622. Houses in cities belonging to monasteries were exempted from lodging tax and land tax; certain other levies that were to be paid to the city authorities were also abolished. PSZ. No. 22894; 24627, 28611; 2 PSZ, No. 3326; subsequently confirmed in the 1857 Code of Laws (9, § 386, 391–392). After 1819, seeking to invest their funds profitably, monasteries often purchased houses in cities.

¹¹²⁴ 2 PSZ, Nos. 26313, 15152, 15189, 15907. Reports of the Chief Prosecutor. 1836, p. 80; 1846, p. 91; 1841. pp. 39, 80; 1842. pp. 6, 12; 1856. p. 90; 1859. p. 5; 2 PSZ. No. 26736—a similar decree (1852) concerning monasteries in Georgia.

¹¹²⁵ After 1838, it was permitted to acquire uninhabited land and forests on an even larger scale, up to 150 desyatinas. 2 PSZ, No. 11518. Cf.: Code of Laws, Vol. 8, Part 1 (Forest Charter). p. 536. For example, the Trinity-Sergius Lavra acquired 1,249 desyatinas of state-owned forests. Pimen. Op. cit. p. 259. Rostislavov. Research Findings. pp. 73–74 (several examples of forest acquisitions). Rostislavov estimates (ibid., p. 86) that in the early 1870s, more than 250,000 desyatinas of land were owned by 200 monasteries.

¹¹²⁶ 2 PSZ, No. 36967.

¹¹²⁷ 2 PSZ. No. 45341; the funds released were intended to increase the staff salaries of diocesan sees.

¹¹²⁸ Stranik. 1882. 8. p. 622; Reports. 1884.

¹¹²⁹ Pimen, Archimandrite. Memoirs (1877) (also in: **Readings**. 1876. 3–4; 1877. 1). These **Memoirs** by a monk who led an austere life are an important source on the history of monasteries in the 19th century; unfortunately, we have very few other sources that are equally reliable.

donations that flowed into the monasteries from the middle-class and wealthy merchant class, from the nobility, and from people of other social classes¹¹³⁰.

The annual reports of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod reveal the numerous contributions—in the form of valuables and real estate—received by monasteries in the 19th and 20th centuries from people of various social strata. The magnitude of these contributions can be gauged by the fact that, for example, Countess Orlova-Chesmenskaya, in her will drawn up in 1848, directed that no less than 1,700,000 rubles be donated to 340 monasteries (5,000 rubles per monastery); in addition, she bequeathed valuable items to the Solovetsky and Yuryev Monasteries and the Pochaiv Lavra (in Volhynia)¹¹³¹. However, it should be noted that the monasteries could not use all these riches for economic purposes. First, many of the donations—and this is characteristic of the donors' piety—served only to lavishly decorate churches and for liturgical services; namely, numerous icons with gold settings and precious stones, liturgical vestments adorned with gold and precious stones, liturgical vessels, and iconostases decorated with gold and silver. A penchant for and love of lavish worship was characteristic of Russian piety in the 16th, 19th, and 20th centuries.¹¹³² However, it would be unfair to claim that all donations were of this nature. From the aforementioned "Memoirs" of Archimandrite Pimen and the "Chronicle" of Archbishop Savva, we know of many instances when large sums of money were donated to monasteries for specific educational and charitable purposes, for the construction of orphanages, hospitals, and schools, where many children were awarded scholarships. Thanks to such donations, monasteries—primarily women's monasteries—were able to launch extensive educational and charitable activities in the second half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century¹¹³³. Much depended on the views of the monastery's abbess. For example, the Verkolsky Monastery (in northern Russia), which was not particularly wealthy, managed—thanks to the energy of its abbot, Archimandrite Theodosius Orekhov (1829–1882)—to launch extensive educational activities in the 1870s¹¹³⁴.

Of course, not all monasteries engaged in charitable activities commensurate with their means, which often drew criticism from the public—criticism that was particularly strong in the newspapers and magazines of the 1860s and 1870s. In general, it can be said that at the beginning of the 20th century in Russia, there were no monasteries that did not have sufficient funds to support the monastic community and the monastery itself (although these funds were distributed unevenly among the monasteries); otherwise, they would not have been able to expand their charitable activities.

2. The Internal Structure of Monastic Life

During the Synodal period, despite the fact that the negative aspects of monastic life were glaringly obvious and known to the church hierarchy, at first no serious measures were either proposed or implemented to improve the situation.

¹¹³⁰ Savva, Archbishop. *Chronicle of My Life*. Vol. 5, pp. 172, 178, 216; Vol. 6, p. 276; Vol. 7, pp. 59, 221, 385; Vol. 8, p. 739. A brief biography of Archbishop Savva in: Ist. v. 1896. 66. p. 1106; 1910. 120. p. 316. Savva's "Chronicle" includes many authentic documents, letters, etc., and is therefore a very valuable work on the history of the Russian Church in the 19th century. See also: Rostislavov. *An Essay on Research*. pp. 329, 331, 232, 212, 336. Rostislavov's work, which contains a great deal of material on monasteries, should be used with some caution, because Rostislavov wrote in a biased manner.

¹¹³¹ Reports. 1848. p. 86; cf. Reports for other years. For example, in 1869, the Ivanovsky Monastery (in the Moscow Diocese) received 300,000 rubles from the widow Makarova-Zubchaninova; a certain Derzhavina founded the Znamensky Convent (in the Novgorod Diocese) and donated to it 98,279 rubles and 890 desyatins of arable land and forest.

¹¹³² Cf. the opinion of I. M. Dolgoruky in his "Notes," in: *Readings*. 1870. 2. pp. 54, 51.

¹¹³³ Pimen. *Op. cit.* pp. 103, 246, 280, 282, etc.; cf. also various passages in Savva's "Chronicle" and the Reports; for example, in 1887, 100 hospitals and 72 night shelters were supported by monasteries. Reports for 1887 (1889). p. 156; 1884. pp. 231 ff. And during wartime, for example, in 1812, monasteries donated large sums of money to military hospitals; the Trinity-Sergius Lavra alone donated 70,000 rubles. Znamensky. *A Guide to the History of the Russian Church* (1876). pp. 429–431; in 1877–78, *military hospitals were established at many monasteries*. Reports. 1877. pp. 5–29; 1878. pp. 145–146.

¹¹³⁴ See A. Grekov's very interesting work on him, "Father Archimandrite Theodosius, Abbot of the Verkolsky Monastery in the Arkhangelsk Governorate, Pinezhsky District" (1893). Theodosius Orekhov was the son of an officer. He graduated from a gymnasium and a higher agricultural school; after that, for two years (1854–1856), he wandered from monastery to monastery; in 1857, he entered the Kozhezersky Monastery as a novice and took monastic vows in 1860. As early as 1861, Theodosius became the abbot of the small Verkols Monastery; he introduced a communal rule there, and soon the nearly abandoned monastery became a place of true monastic devotion. Father Theodosius established a shelter at the monastery, as well as two boarding schools for peasant children; he built a trade school and engaged in successful educational work among the population of the surrounding villages.

The “Addendum to the Spiritual Regulations” (1722) specifically addressed all issues related to monasticism, monastic life, and the administration of monasteries. It devotes five sections to monasticism: 1) “Who and How to Accept as Monks”; 2) “On the Life of Monks”; 3) “On Nuns”; 4) “On Monasteries”; 5) “On Monastery Abbots.” In terms of its content, it is neither a precisely formulated decree nor a monastic charter. The “Addendum” is written in an overly general style and is more about monastic life than for monastic life. Even the section on abbots is written in the same vein. And yet, the “Addendum” could have served as the basis for drafting a single communal charter for all monasteries¹¹³⁵. It is likely that Theophan Prokopovich, the compiler of the “Addendum,” intended to continue working in this direction.

In 1723, possibly at Peter’s request, he wrote a charter for the newly established Alexander Nevsky Monastery in St. Petersburg—“A Description of the Monastic Life of the Monks of the Alexander Nevsky Monastery”¹¹³⁶. It consists of four chapters: 1) “Description of Monastic Life”; 2) “On Church Assemblies and Congregational Prayer”; 3) “Description of the Order of the Monks’ Meal Assembly”; 4) “Duties of the Abbot.”

A year later, the decree of January 31, 1724, with which we are familiar, was published; it contains the so-called “Proclamation on Monasticism” already cited here¹¹³⁷. The “Proclamation” also takes the form of a treatise rather than a charter. Although all of these treatises by Theophan extolled communal life, they nevertheless remained merely treatises, having no practical influence on monastic life; no special measures were taken by the diocesan hierarchs to reorganize monastic life on the basis of the cenobitic ideal.

At the same time, the decrees concerning monastic estates and the investigations carried out during the reign of Empress Anna did not leave the monastic community unscathed and had more negative than positive consequences. It can be argued that the internal life of the monasteries had never fallen into such a state of decline as was observed in the first half of the 18th century. Although officially some monasteries adhered to a communal rule while others followed a rule of private living, in reality the monks’ lives were in such disarray and disorder that certain phenomena within them can be explained only by an insufficient understanding of the published regulations and decrees. The Synod itself, in a report to Regent Anna Leopoldovna, concluded that the monastic order was “now in a state of decline” and expressed concern that Russian monasticism was on the verge of complete destruction¹¹³⁸.

The story of the Sarov Hermitage, founded in 1692, illustrates just how dire the consequences of these investigations were. Thanks to the energy and ascetic spirit of the abbots John († 1737) and Dorotheus (1731–1746), a strict communal rule was introduced here from the very beginning, and the monks’ lives were marked by a high level of spiritual devotion. But the persecution of monasticism undertaken under Anna threw everything into disarray and chaos over the course of two or three decades, so that it was not until the second half of the 18th century that the abbots, Ephrem (1758–1777), and Pachomius (1777–1794) were once again able to reintroduce the communal rule and transform the hermitage into a place of genuine ascetic devotion¹¹³⁹.

Crucially, the establishment of new monasteries and the revival of old ones were entrusted to proven ascetics. For example, the work of Hegumen Filaret (1773–1841) was highly successful; he managed to literally transform life at the Glinskaya Bogoroditskaya Hermitage (in the Kursk Diocese) by introducing the strict monastic rule of Mount Athos, as a result of which, in the first half of the 19th century, this monastery played a major role in the revival of ascetic ideals. Filaret also composed “An Extensive Instruction for the Newly Tonsured Monk,” which at that time was widely circulated among the monastic community¹¹⁴⁰. Metropolitan Gabriel Petrov of St. Petersburg and Novgorod did a great deal to revive monastic communal life; he also encouraged the introduction of the elder system in monasteries, as will be discussed below. In his

¹¹³⁵ “Addendum to the Spiritual Regulations,” in: PSZ, No. 4022, and PSPiR, Vol. 2, No. 596. The “Addendum” is included in all subsequent editions of the Spiritual Regulations.

¹¹³⁶ This “Depiction of Monastic Life” was printed as separate posters, presumably to be hung on the walls of the cells. First published in: Bogdanov. Description of St. Petersburg (1779); subsequently, Metropolitan Evgeny Bolkhovitinov included the “Depiction” in **History of the Russian Hierarchy**, vol. 2; cf.: Titlinov, B. “Theophan Prokopovich,” in: RBS, p. 433.

¹¹³⁷ PSZ. 7. No. 4450; PSPiR. 4. No. 1197; Chistovich. Theophan Prokopovich and His Time. Appendix.

¹¹³⁸ N. M. “Russian Monasticism in the 18th Century,” in: **Stranik**. 1884. 1. pp. 212, 435.

¹¹³⁹ Zverinsky. 2. No. 1141; Denisov. No. 889; Prav. Sob. 1863. 7. p. 154; The Life and Deeds of Hieroschemamonk John, Founder and First Abbot of the Sarov Hermitage (1892).

¹¹⁴⁰ This “Instruction” was published several years after it was written (Moscow, 1824). On Elder Filaret and his activities, see The Life of the Blessed Elder, Reviver of the Glinsk Hermitage, Hegumen Filaret (1860).

dioceses during the 1760s, and later in the 1780s and 1790s, the life of six monasteries was reorganized based on the communal charter; with the help of Elder Theophan Sokolov, Gabriel compiled the “Rules of Communal Life,” which were sent to the abbots of the monasteries in his dioceses to inspire the monastic community’s enthusiasm for this form of monastic life¹¹⁴¹.

The 1764 monastic regulations, as already mentioned, divided the remaining monasteries into two categories: state-supported and non-state-supported. Non-state-funded monasteries could exist only on voluntary offerings and donations from the faithful. As a result, many of the non-state-funded monasteries ceased to exist altogether; in others, the number of monks steadily declined, with many leaving for state-funded monasteries where there were still vacancies, while others set off for Southern Russia; monks of a highly ascetic disposition went to Mount Athos or to Moldavia; some of them later returned to Russia and played an important role in the revival of monastic spiritual life in the last quarter of the 18th century.

The situation was better for state-supported monasteries, which received a modest but fixed stipend from the state. These monasteries provided suitable conditions for restoring and maintaining the monastic rule. Unfortunately, however, no significant steps in this direction were taken by the church authorities¹¹⁴². As we shall see from various 19th-century sources, state-supported monasteries, with rare exceptions, lived not according to communal rules but according to rules of individual living, and even those were not strictly observed. The monks received cells and food from the monastery—food that was sometimes stored not in the refectory but in their cells—and they had to procure everything else necessary for life on their own, such as clothing; for this purpose, they received a certain sum of money from the monasteries; no duties were assigned to them; if they did take on a duty, they were paid more money for it; the only requirement was to attend divine services; the rest of the time, the monks were free to leave the monastery. Under such conditions, the abbot simply could not exercise constant supervision over the brotherhood. It is clear that this way of life for monks in state-supported monasteries did not correspond to the ascetic principles of monasticism¹¹⁴³. Despite various measures taken to restore order in state-supported monasteries—which, however, concerned only individual monasteries—the level of spiritual life among the monastic community continued to decline throughout the 19th century. When Archbishop Filaret Drozdov made his first tour of his diocese in 1821, he was very dissatisfied with the monks’ way of life, especially in state-supported monasteries¹¹⁴⁴. Most of them did not adhere to the communal rules; the brethren had become so accustomed to a very comfortable lifestyle that they fiercely resisted attempts to introduce communal living.

Archimandrite Pimen writes in his **Memoirs** that rejection of the communal rules was very widespread in state-run monasteries. Even the highly gifted and energetic Metropolitan Filaret was reluctant to introduce the communal rules in his own name, preferring a roundabout approach—through individual abbots, who gradually implemented these rules in their own monasteries. For example, at the Ugresh Monastery, where the communal rule had been in effect from its very founding (1380) until 1764, the abbot was only able to reintroduce it in 1853—and not without resistance from the monastic community—after which some of the monks left the monastery. In the 1860s and 1870s, only 10 regular monasteries of the Moscow Diocese (outside Moscow) adopted the communal rule, a development they owed largely to the efforts of the aforementioned Pimen¹¹⁴⁵. The personal initiative of individual abbots played the most important role in this matter. At the Nikandrov Hermitage (in the Pskov Governorate), the communal rule was introduced by the abbot in 1800, and it was not until 1817 that it was finally adopted by the monastic community as the foundation of monastic life¹¹⁴⁶. Abbot Hilarion faced no fewer difficulties when, as abbot of the Konevsky Monastery on an island in Lake Ladoga (1805–1823), he restored the strictest communal rules (the monastery

¹¹⁴¹ Makarii, Archimandrite. *The Life and Works of His Eminence Gabriel, Metropolitan of Novgorod and St. Petersburg* (1857). pp. 69–71, 172; Uspensky, V. *Description of the Nilov Hermitage* (1886). p. 45; cf. also: Titlinov, B., **Gabriel Petrov** (1916); Chapter 6 discusses this in detail.

¹¹⁴² In 1816, an archimandrite named Joasaph of Lebedino submitted a draft of a communal charter to the Synod; the Synod replied that the provisions contained in the Spiritual Regulations were entirely sufficient to properly organize monastic life. *Historical Description of the Chernigov Diocese*. Vol. 3. p. 232; RBS. p. 290.

¹¹⁴³ N. M. “Russian Monasticism in the 18th Century,” in: Stranik. 1884. 1. p. 210. See on this subject Pimen’s “Memoirs” and his article “Monasticism and Contemporary Interpretations of It,” in: *Readings*. 1874. 2. p. 96 ff., as well as the article “Our Monasteries” in: *Conversation*. 1872 (which was unavailable to me).

¹¹⁴⁴ Pimen. *Op. cit.* p. 121.

¹¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 90, 100, 127, 250, 256, 275, 282–286.

¹¹⁴⁶ Serebryansky. *Op. cit.*, p. 328.

was then outside the official system and in a state of complete decline); he faced the same difficulties during his tenure as abbot of the Uspensky Monastery in Tikhvin (1823–1851)¹¹⁴⁷. The extent to which the personal initiative of individual abbots could be successful is evidenced by the activities of Abbot Iona of the Vologda Diocese. Over the course of two decades in the first quarter of the 19th century, he literally rebuilt and transformed monastic life in no fewer than six monasteries. He came from a peasant family and had not received any formal education, but he was a strict, unworldly monk and an abbot with strong administrative skills; he derived his correct understanding of the authentic monastic life more from his own ascetic experience than from ascetic literature; he knew well how to eliminate various vices from monastic life and how to persuade the secularized brethren of established monasteries to observe the communal rule¹¹⁴⁸.

In the 18th century, the negative consequences of the widespread practice of taking the best monks from monasteries to serve in the diocesan clergy became apparent; this continued for an entire century, and thus the monastic brotherhood was deprived of its finest members, who in the monasteries could have served as examples of a truly ascetic life¹¹⁴⁹. Monastic life was also adversely affected by the very widespread practice whereby diocesan bishops, as punishment for misconduct, transferred monks from urban monasteries to rural ones, where—especially in state-run monasteries without a communal charter—they exerted a particularly seductive and corrupting influence on the monastic community. This practice continued until the mid-19th century.¹¹⁵⁰

The procedure for appointing an abbot was also not standardized. On the one hand, the old order—dating back to the 17th century and prescribed by the “Spiritual Regulations,” namely, the election of the abbot by the monastic community—had not been abolished; on the other hand, in the 18th century, the Synod itself appointed abbots. This practice, which essentially dated back to the 17th century, was justified in cases where monasteries that had been abolished or had fallen into complete disrepair were reestablished. The election of a new abbot from among the disorganized monastic community was a dubious undertaking, for such an abbot usually failed to gain the respect of the community, and his efforts to eliminate misconduct and vices from monastic life were therefore doomed to failure from the outset. Archimandrite Pimen writes in his **Memoirs** that choosing an abbot is generally no easy task and that not every monk who leads a good, strict life is suited to be an abbot. In Pimen’s time—that is, in the 1840s–1870s—the monastic community in state-supported monasteries itself opposed the selection of an abbot from among its own ranks. Furthermore, experience showed that when communal rules were introduced in state-supported monasteries, new abbots appointed from outside were often able to act with greater success¹¹⁵¹.

However, a measure frequently employed by the Synod—primarily in the second half of the 19th century—proved impractical: appointing diocesan bishops as abbots of monasteries as a form of punishment or in response to their requests for retirement. It should be noted—and this will be discussed in more detail below—that during the Synodal period, the Russian episcopate was drawn primarily from the ranks of learned monks, yet these learned monks almost never lived in monasteries and had little understanding of monastic affairs; such a bishop tended to view the monastery entrusted to him as his personal fiefdom; the “episcopal dignity”—which he often understood in a rather peculiar way—prevented him from fulfilling his duties as abbot in accordance with the requirements of the monastic charter. And for monastic liturgical life, the bishop’s oversight—due to the particularities of episcopal worship in the Eastern Church—tended to cause inconveniences rather than offer any advantages¹¹⁵².

¹¹⁴⁷ Collection. 113. 1 (1902). p. 21. Hilarion’s “Statute of the Konevsky Monastery” (1824) is a very rare small pamphlet that I was fortunate enough to discover at the Berlin City Library (prior to 1943). For more on this venerable champion of the monastic life, see another pamphlet: O. A. M., “An Essay on the Life of Archimandrite Hilarion, the Founder of the Konevsky Monastery” (1861). His charter was introduced by the aforementioned Archimandrite Theodosius Orekhov (cf. note 1127) at the Verkols Monastery.

¹¹⁴⁸ Pimen. Op. cit., pp. 112–114.

¹¹⁴⁹ PSZ. No. 8988 (1744); 13163 (1768); 18273 (1797).

¹¹⁵⁰ Pimen. Op. cit. pp. 246, 250, 254.

¹¹⁵¹ Ibid. pp. 101, 120, 243, 252, 255, etc.

¹¹⁵² Pimen. Op. cit. p. 363. An example is the case of Bishop Isaac (Pelovinsky) of Astrakhan (d. 1894) or Auxiliary Bishop Isidore (Kolokolov) of the Ryazan Diocese (d. 1911); see: Lvov, N. N. Drevnik, in: Krasny Arkhiv. 39. p. 148; The Fall of the Tsarist Regime, vol. 2, pp. 68, 88; vol. 4, pp. 190, 199, 308, 479, 480. Bishop Lavrenty (Nekrasov) of Tula was removed from his see in 1908 for his “liberalism” and appointed abbot of the Vysokopetrovsky Monastery in Moscow. Ist. v. 122. p. 778; BV. 1908. 4. On the era of Emperor Nicholas I, see: Materials, in: Collection. 113. Especially Part 2.

Since many monasteries—both those with a regular staff and those without—lacked a specific monastic charter, the liturgical order was also disrupted in them. In the 19th century, in urban monasteries, liturgical services were often shortened to accommodate the living conditions of the worshippers who attended, but such reductions were not infrequently made in rural monasteries as well. Archimandrite Pimen writes that it was not easy for him to introduce full observance of all the rules and requirements of the Typikon¹¹⁵³ during divine services at his Ugresh Monastery.

The Synod did not, on its own initiative, take decisive steps to introduce the cenobitic way of life in monasteries; in 1869, it merely expressed the desire that communal living be established in monasteries as an essential foundation of monastic asceticism, and reiterated its recommendation, which had already been made in 1862:¹¹⁵⁴ Just how little attention the highest ecclesiastical authorities paid to monasticism is evident from the history of the so-called “Instructions to the Abbots of Monasteries.” In December 1797, an imperial decree recommended that such “instructions” be drafted and implemented. But it was not until 1828 that were the “Instructions” drafted and distributed to the diocesan bishops; they remained unchanged until the early 20th century, with only the Church Slavonic script replaced by the civil script in new editions and some paragraphs rearranged. The “Instructions” deal exclusively with the rights and duties of the deans¹¹⁵⁵. It was not until 1910 that, at the behest of the Synod, Hieromonk Seraphim compiled a new monastic rule, which was intended to serve as the foundation of monastic life; unfortunately, we know nothing about whether this rule was ever implemented in any monastery. Due to its great length, it was more likely to instill fear in the monks and conscientious abbots than to serve practical ascetic purposes¹¹⁵⁶.

This situation persisted until 1917: there were two types of monasteries, but the application and observance of one charter or another depended on the zeal and spiritual disposition of the abbots¹¹⁵⁷. In general, life in urban monasteries was less strict than in rural ones. There were many differences in monastic practices, and any worshipper or pilgrim could notice this immediately. It is quite telling that throughout the 19th century and into the early 20th century, the Synod never once seriously addressed the issue of monastic life and only occasionally paid attention to its minor details. When, in 1906—following changes to the Fundamental State Laws in the wake of the revolutionary movement of 1904–1905—a noticeable desire for reform emerged among the episcopate and the clergy, and the Synod, largely at the initiative of Metropolitan Anthony of St. Petersburg (Vadkovsky, 1898–1912), in consultation with Emperor Nicholas II, on January 14, 1906, established the Pre-Council Assembly, which was tasked with discussing the possibility of implementing various reforms in church life—monasticism was, so to speak, once again overlooked; in any case, no special subcommittee was formed to address monastic issues¹¹⁵⁸.

3. The Growth in the Number of Monks and Nuns in the 19th Century

The 19th century saw a significant increase in the number of monastics, and the number of monasteries also grew noticeably. This phenomenon can be explained by two reasons. Following the decline of piety in the 18th century, a resurgence of religiosity took place across various segments of the population. This resurgence can be attributed primarily to the influence of Russian monastic leadership, as well as to the improved condition of monasteries following their decline in the 18th century—monasteries and monastic life once again came to align with the people’s conception of piety. One external factor should not be overlooked:

¹¹⁵³ Pimen. Op. cit. pp. 249, 265, 252, 275, 120. This applies, of course, only to the Hours, Matins, and Vespers, in which individual readings and stichera were omitted or shortened; the Liturgy has a fixed order of service and is never shortened.

¹¹⁵⁴ See: “Internal Church Review,” in: Stranik. 1897. 8. p. 560. During the first half of the 19th century, the Synod issued various directives, which, however, were addressed only to diocesan bishops and cannot be considered an attempt to reform monastic life. Cf.: Reports. 1841, 1862 (text also in: BV. 1905. 9. p. 158), 1874, 1884, and others.

¹¹⁵⁵ PSZ, No. 18273; Barsov, T. Synodal Institutions, p. 162. Appendices 43–48.

¹¹⁵⁶ Seraphim, Hieromonk. Monastic Rules for Men’s Communal Living. 3 vols. (1910).

¹¹⁵⁷ For a collection of various instructions and decrees of the Synod regarding monasteries and monasticism, see: Chizhevsky. Collection of Decrees on Monasteries (1896).

¹¹⁵⁸ On reform plans, see: Suetov. On the Special Committee Approved by His Imperial Majesty at the Holy Synod for the Development of Issues to Be Considered by the All-Russian Council (1912); Ognev. The Church Council (1905); Journals and Minutes of the Pre-Council Committee. 4 vols. (1906–07); supplementary volume: *Summaries of the Opinions of the Diocesan Bishops on the Question of Church Reform* (1906); A. R. *Historical Correspondence on the Fate of the Orthodox Church* (1912); my article: *The Pre-Council Commission of 1906*, in: *The Way* (1933). 38; cf. also: Stupperich, R., **Staatsgedanke und Religionspolitik Peters d. Gr.** (1936). pp. 105–107. Golubinsky, E. E., “On Reform in the Life of the Russian Church,” in: **Readings**. 1913. 3. p. 126.

the abolition of serfdom in 1861, which allowed peasants to freely determine their own destinies. This had a particularly significant impact on women's monasteries, where the number of novices began to grow year after year.

The restrictions on taking monastic vows introduced by Peter the Great remained in place almost entirely throughout the 18th century, but in the 19th century, these state decrees were no longer enforced with the same rigor. According to the 1738 general census, there were 14,282 monastic inhabitants in the country, including 7,829 men and 6,453 women (this figure includes monks and nuns, novices, and novice nuns)¹¹⁵⁹. The 1764 monastic regulations established a quota of 5,105 monks and nuns for 226 authorized monasteries; in addition, there were still 161 unauthorized monasteries where the number of monastics was not subject to limitation¹¹⁶⁰. By 1840, the number of monks and nuns had grown to 15,251 (including novices), and 50 years later, Russia had 12,712 monks and 27,574 nuns (a total of 40,286 people, including novices); in 1907, there were already 24,144 monks (including novices) in men's monasteries and 65,989 nuns (including novices) in women's monasteries; the number of monasteries totaled 970 (522 men's and 448 women's) (see Tables X and XI)¹¹⁶¹. The number of nuns grew particularly rapidly, a trend attributable to the rise of ascetic sentiments among Russian women in the 19th century. The history of Russian women's monasteries deserves special attention from church historians, who, in the future, when they have sufficient source material, will write in-depth studies on this topic. Here, however, drawing on the material available to us, we will touch only on the main points of this history.

4. Women's Monasteries in the 19th Century

In our view, the significant increase in the number of women's monasteries in the 19th century cannot be explained solely by the rise of ascetic sentiments among Russian women—it was not merely a manifestation of religious quest. The religious revival and spiritual quests were indeed very strong, but the fact that these spiritual quests did not extend beyond monastic life can be attributed to the influence of the monastic hierarchy. The purely historical and cultural conditions of Russia's overall spiritual history in the second half of the 19th century also played a role.

The reforms of Peter the Great, carried out with the aim of Europeanizing Russia, brought about changes in the status of women within the family and in public life. Although these changes manifested themselves slowly and in different ways across various social strata, their consequence everywhere was a strengthening of women's aspirations toward independence and education. The fact that these aspirations could have a significant impact on public life is evidenced by the role that Russian women played in Russia's intellectual history as early as the beginning of the second quarter of the 19th century¹¹⁶². If we delve into the history of Russian Romanticism, Westernization, and Slavophilism—whose ideological worlds are best reflected in the extensive correspondence of their representatives—and if we read the numerous memoirs of this period of “storm and stress” in the Russian soul, —everywhere we encounter images of gifted and inquisitive women who either exerted a beneficial influence on their male contemporaries or, through their own spiritual development, contributed to the intellectual life of the era. Religious issues were not left aside in this context. Although discussions of these issues often did not yet have a confessional character or, as was the case during the era of mystical quests under Alexander I, deviated from the teachings of the Orthodox Church, it can nevertheless be asserted that religious questions occupied a significant place in the spiritual life of Russian women; at the same time, women sought to address these issues not in an abstract manner, but individually and personally¹¹⁶³. It was precisely this aspect of Russian women's spiritual quests—one that

¹¹⁵⁹ Solovyov. 4 (ed. OP). pp. 1510, 1649.

¹¹⁶⁰ PSZ. 16. No. 12060. Book of Statutes.

¹¹⁶¹ Reports for 1890 and 1907 (1893 and 1910). See also: Preobrazhensky. The Russian Church According to Statistical Data (1897), tables containing statistical data for 1840–1891.

¹¹⁶² On the subject of the emancipation of Russian women in the 19th century and their pursuit of education, see: Shokhol, K. P., “On the Development of Higher Education for Women in Russia,” in: ZhMNP, 1912, no. 8; 1913, nos. 3 and 7.

¹¹⁶³ On the history of Russian culture in the first half of the 19th century, the following works are recommended: Zamotin, *Romantic Idealism in Russian Society of the 1820s–1830s* (1907); Gershenzon, M. The Era of Nicholas I (1910); Barsukov, N. The Life and Works of M. P. Pogodin, Vol. 1 and following (1888–1899); Koshelev, A. I. Notes (1884); Filippov, M. M. “The Fate of Russian Philosophy,” in *Russian Wealth*, 1894, nos. 1, 3, 4, 8, 9; Smirnova, A. I. *Notes* (1897); *Religious Movements under Alexander I*, ed. N. Piskanova (1916); The Turgenev Brothers' Archive. Edited by the Academy of Sciences. 4 vols. (1911–1915); Dubrovin, N. F. “Our Mystics and Sectarians,” in: Russian Articles, 1895–1896; The Utkinsky Collection (1897); Gershenzon, M. Historical

deserves special attention—that led many seeking souls to encounter the elders. We certainly do not mean to suggest that religious quests culminated in monastic life solely under the influence of one elder or another; many arrived at this decision even without spiritual guidance.

We have just discussed the important role that correspondence plays in the spiritual history of the Russians. Letters, better than printed works, reflect the diversity of the writer's spiritual life and offer the correspondent a particularly favorable opportunity to open their soul—a trait characteristic of Russians not only in the 1830s and 1840s 19th century but also in later eras—and in a reply to a letter, one could demonstrate particular trust, persuasiveness, and sensitivity. Many elders very often—especially in their correspondence with women—guided seeking souls through letters; thus, this form of religious and ascetic pedagogy resonated with recipients who otherwise would not have dared to confess.

This applies primarily to educated women; however, women's monasteries had a particularly large number of nuns who were peasant women. The abolition of serfdom in 1861 had significant consequences for the status of women in peasant families. Although conservative and patriarchal customs and traditions still persisted, legally speaking, a peasant girl—and even more so a widow—gained relative freedom and independence after the reform. She could now make independent decisions more often, even against the will of older family members. The desire for education, which had so strongly gripped all strata of the Russian people in the second half of the 19 , could also be fulfilled in a convent¹¹⁶⁴. It was precisely the women's convents that launched extensive activities in the field of public education during this era, a fact that has yet to receive adequate coverage in scholarly literature. They also successfully engaged in social and charitable work, which had always been close to the hearts of Russian women. In her daily monastic life, a Russian peasant girl found activities that were familiar to her from her parents' home: all kinds of domestic and household chores. It can be argued that entering a convent satisfied her spiritual quests without requiring a radical change in her way of life; at the same time, her social status improved, and her entire life took on a deeper meaning. Therefore, the increase in the number of women taking monastic vows should not be attributed to any particularly strong ascetic tendencies. The history of Russian women's monasteries is replete with instances of the most severe asceticism, but in most monasteries, life unfolded in an atmosphere of moderate asceticism, with the primary focus on serving the world rather than on complete renunciation of it.

Social and charitable activities played a central role in the life of women's monasteries and were far more extensive than the charitable work of men's monasteries. This can be explained not only by the difference between male and female nature, but also by the fact that many women's monasteries grew precisely because of their social and charitable mission, became examples for other monasteries in this regard, and earned the recognition and love of the people.

The Russian Church was often accused of doing little in the cultural sphere; in response, one can point to the activities of women's monasteries, and then most of these accusations would lose their meaning. True, everything came to a halt just as these activities had gained a firm foothold and were poised to flourish with particular success. For the historian, this activity remains an unexplored area, for most of the relevant material has been lost, and it is unclear whether it will ever be possible to present it comprehensively and fully in a fundamental work.

During the heyday of women's monasteries, the personal initiative of the ascetics played the leading role; these monasteries, one might say, grew on their own, created by the people without any assistance from church authorities; it is already a positive sign that church authorities did not hinder the opening of new monasteries.

Following the secularization measures of 1764, 1786, and 1788, by the late 1780s there were only 80 women's monasteries in all of Russia (75 officially recognized and 5 unofficial). By 1810, however, there

Notes (1910; 2nd ed., Berlin, 1923); Zavitevich, A. S. Khomyakov. 2 vols. (1902); Kornilov, A. The Wandering Years of Mikhail Bakunin (1925); Stankiewicz, N. V., **Works** (1890); Herzen, **The Past and Thoughts** (various editions, including in German); Stepun, F., "German Romanticism and the Philosophy of History of the Slavophiles," in **Logos**, 16 (1927); Kornilov, A. The Early Years of Mikhail Bakunin (1915), and others. A detailed bibliography (up to 1918) can be found in: Polievktov, M. Emperor Nicholas I: Biography and Reign (1918).

¹¹⁶⁴ In the early 19th century, with the increase in the number of private printing houses, many ascetic works, lives of the saints, and other edifying books became widely available. Beginning in 1821, the journal **Christian Reading** (St. Petersburg: Published by the Theological Academy) printed numerous ascetic works in Russian; some ascetic works were printed at Optina Hermitage. See Chapter XV. In the 1860s, theological journals began to discuss not only scholarly issues but also devoted considerable attention to contemporary spiritual movements and were very popular in the provinces.

were already 94 women's monasteries in Russia, a figure that can be taken as a starting point for assessing the rapid growth in their numbers during the 19th century. Four decades later, in 1855, there were already 129 convents (97 officially recognized and 32 unofficial) with 2,508 nuns and 6,606 novices (see Tables X and XI).

It should be noted that the situation of women's monasteries in both categories differed greatly from that of men's monasteries, first, in material terms, and second, in terms of their internal organization. State-supported men's monasteries were in a better financial position than non-state-supported ones. In women's monasteries, however, this difference was not particularly noticeable; moreover, non-state-supported women's monasteries were often wealthier than state-supported ones. Almost all newly founded women's monasteries, established on the personal initiative of their founders, were initially considered non-state-supported; the founder—or, less commonly, the male founder—of such a monastery would donate movable and immovable property to it. Furthermore, women's monasteries, both state-supported and non-state-supported, always had more residents than men's monasteries, so that even in state-supported monasteries there were more nuns and novices than the staffing quotas provided for. If we also take into account that men's monasteries received more generous state support than women's, it becomes clear that the abbess of a women's monastery had a much smaller amount per resident at her disposal than the abbot of a men's monastery. However, because women's monasteries were highly successful at managing their farms (keeping dairy cows and poultry and growing vegetables), they were able to significantly increase their income, so that the difference in the financial standing of men's and women's monasteries was smoothed out. And yet, the funds for the maintenance of nuns and novices in women's monasteries were quite modest, since they spent most of their annual income from farming on social and charitable causes. Archimandrite Pimen, whom we already know, provides in his **Memoirs** very interesting details about life in the communal convents of the Moscow Diocese during the time when he served as dean of the monasteries. These memoirs date to the late 1860s and contain a great deal of information about the financial situation of women's monasteries.

The Anosino-Borisoglebsky Convent was a communal convent in the 1860s, with 180 nuns and novices living there; it was founded in 1823, and at that time, only about 10 sisters lived there. In the 1860s, the convent's annual income amounted to 5,000–6,000 rubles; this sum consisted of donations from the faithful and profits from lace-making workshops, a dairy farm, and a poultry farm. The convent also had a vegetable garden, the produce from which was served at the convent table. In addition to all this, the convent maintained a hospital and a nursing home for its elderly sisters.

The Spaso-Borodinsky Convent was also a communal community, housing 170 nuns and novices; it was founded in 1830, and initially 12 sisters lived there; the convent's annual income amounted to 5,000 rubles and consisted, once again, of donations from the faithful and profits from the monastery's farms; there were no charitable institutions at the monastery.

The Trinity-Odigitria Zosima Women's Hermitage, a communal monastery, was founded in 1826; at that time, about 40 sisters lived there, and by the late 1860s, there were already 160 nuns and novices; the monastery's annual income reached 4,000 rubles, consisting of donations and profits from the monastery's farm and a large, income-generating house in Moscow that had been gifted to the monastery. This monastery did not engage in any specific social or charitable activities.

The Spaso-Vlacherna Convent, operating under a communal charter, was founded in 1854; by the late 1860s, it already had 170 nuns and novices; the convent's annual income amounted to up to 5,000 rubles and consisted, once again, of donations and profits from the convent's farm and the income-generating building in Moscow. This convent, too, did not engage in any significant charitable activities.

The Holy Cross Sisterhood, governed by a communal charter, was founded in 1856 and had 100 sisters; the convent's annual income consisted of donations and amounted to about 2,000 rubles; the sisterhood organized a free school attended by 30 girls.

The first four of the convents mentioned here also maintained monastic guesthouses, which did not generate any income¹¹⁶⁵.

These are examples typical not only of the Moscow Diocese but also of many women's monasteries throughout Russia in the mid-19th century. It was an era when monasteries were just beginning their social and charitable activities. However, if we examine the reports of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod from

¹¹⁶⁵ Pimen. Op. cit., pp. 309–311.

the 1880s or the descriptions of dioceses from that period, a completely different picture emerges¹¹⁶⁶. In 1887, for example, monasteries maintained 93 hospitals and 66 nursing homes for the elderly, two-thirds of which were run by women's monasteries, even though there were 469 men's monasteries at the time and only 202 women's monasteries (1887 report). In the 1880s and 1890s, during the reign of Alexander III (1881–1894), when the government encouraged the establishment of parish schools, such schools were opened in almost all women's monasteries, usually for girls, and always funded by the monasteries themselves¹¹⁶⁷.

A fine example of the gradual development of widespread charitable activity is the history of the Holy Virgin Lesninsky Convent (until 1914 in the Sedlets Province in Western Russia (now Poland. – Translator's note), near the town of Biała)¹¹⁶⁸. In 1683, near the forest village of Lesny (in the Biała District), two peasant shepherds found an icon of the Mother of God in the forest, from which an extraordinary radiance emanated. The icon was carved from red stone and depicted the Most Holy Virgin holding the Infant Christ in her right hand and a book in her left; above the book was a dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit. All in all, it was an extremely rare composition. Greek Orthodox priests brought the icon to the church in the village of Bukovichi, where it came to be greatly venerated by the residents of the surrounding villages. A few years later, the Roman Catholic Monastery of St. Paul was founded at the site where the icon had been found, and the Polish authorities (the region belonged to Poland at the time) ordered the icon to be transferred to that monastery. Over time, the local population converted to the Union. In 1863, following the Polish Uprising, the Roman Catholic monastery in Lesno was closed by the Russian government for the support it had provided to the rebels, but the monastery church, along with all its icons, remained in the hands of the Uniates. After 1875, many Uniate parishes in this region—some voluntarily, others under government pressure—transferred from the Union to the Russian Church; in 1881, the parish church in Lesno also became Greek Orthodox. Since the old buildings of the Monastery of St. Paul still stood at that time, Archbishop Leontius decided to establish a community of nuns in Lesno. Thus, in 1884, the Holy Virgin Mary Community was founded.

The first years of its existence were difficult for both the superior and the five sisters, as the community had absolutely no funds. But the superior, Mother Ekaterina, née Countess Efimovskaya († 1925 in Serbia), was an energetic and gifted woman. At first, the community's life was hampered by strained relations with the local population, most of whom belonged to the Uniate Church. Sister Ekaterina and two or three other sisters had medical training, and their charitable work consisted mainly of caring for sick peasants. Later, an attempt was made to open a school for children, and this attempt proved successful. Within just two years, the sisters were teaching 80 children of all faiths.

In 1889, the Lesninskaya community was transformed into a residential women's monastery, and its superior became the abbess. The monastery grew rapidly, and by 1914 it was home to 20 nuns and 300 novices (¹¹⁶⁹) and postulants; Many remained novices for a very long time because Mother Superior Catherine was in no hurry to tonsure the nuns and gave her consent only after firmly convincing herself that the sister seeking tonsure was spiritually mature enough for it. Over the course of 25 years (1889–1914), the once-small sisterhood grew into a large convent that maintained a hospital, a home for elderly women, and a free outpatient clinic that dispensed medication—outpatient care for the sick took on a particularly broad scope—and, in addition, the convent, using its own funds, provided medical training to the nuns and novices who worked in these medical institutions. In addition to schools for children, a secondary school was opened that taught various trades, and the teachers at this school also received their education at the convent's expense. The nuns and novices established a bookbinding workshop, a school for teaching embroidery, a shoemaking workshop, a workshop for making liturgical vestments, and an icon-painting workshop; they cultivated an excellent fruit garden with a greenhouse and a vegetable garden, and set up an apiary, a dairy farm, and a poultry farm. Shortly before 1914, the convent founded four more small communities nearby, complete with schools, pharmacies, and medical clinics. All of these charitable activities, of course, required funding. The

¹¹⁶⁶ Brief descriptions of dioceses, accompanied by statistical data, can be found in the PBE; they are compiled on the basis of official materials. Another important source is the **Diocesan Reports**, which began to be published in almost every diocese in the second half of the 19th century.

¹¹⁶⁷ Unfortunately, the "Reports of the Chief Prosecutor" are currently unavailable to me; previously, before 1943, I compiled various statistical excerpts from them, but they were quite incomplete, so now I can rely only on scattered notes among my papers and on my memory.

¹¹⁶⁸ My source was "A Brief History of the Lesninsky Monastery of the Holy Mother of God" (a typewritten manuscript compiled in 1925 in Serbia at the Hopovo Monastery by Abbess Nina, formerly the abbess of the Lesninsky Monastery).

¹¹⁶⁹ On monks wearing the rasophore, see Chapter IX.

government recognized the great benefit of the nuns' work at this monastery for the Orthodox mission among the Polish population and, by 1914, had transferred 1,200 desiatinas of arable land and four farms to the monastery's disposal. In 1914, the monastery's funds supported two public schools, two teacher training colleges, a secondary school, an agricultural school, and an orphanage.

When World War I broke out, the nuns and novices were required by the authorities to leave the monastery and move to other convents. A large group of nuns was given a monastery in Bessarabia, where they established two parish schools and an agricultural school. In 1920, this group of nuns, led by Mother Nina, the abbess of the Lesninsky Convent, received an invitation to travel to Serbia and settle there in the abandoned Khopov Monastery. Since the nuns faced various difficulties with the Romanian government—which viewed the monastery's activities with suspicion, seeing them as an obstacle to its policy of Romanianizing the population of Bessarabia—Abbess Nina and the sisters of her convent accepted the invitation and moved to the Hopov Monastery (near the city of Novi Sad). With limited resources, the Lesninsky Hopov Monastery was able to maintain only one orphanage there.

The history of the Lesninsky Monastery is typical of many 19th-century women's monasteries. It is clear that their social and charitable activities were particularly valued by the government, because it saw them as a means of carrying out its ecclesiastical-political mission and therefore provided material support to the convents. But even from a purely ecclesiastical standpoint, this convent directed its efforts in the right direction, and all its activities served the good of the people.

As another example, let us consider the history of the Novo-Tikhvin Convent in the Urals, near Yekaterinburg. In 1799, a small community of nuns was established there, which was transformed into a communal convent in 1809. By 1900, it had become a large monastery with six churches and numerous stone buildings, providing a home for 450 nuns and novices. Because the convent owned two farms, it was able to support a parish school, an orphanage, a hospital, and a nursing home. Believers supported the convent's charitable work with their generous donations¹¹⁷⁰.

Here are two more examples illustrating the initiatives of nuns who came from peasant backgrounds.

In the forest near Zadonsk, where St. Tikhon of Zadonsk often prayed in solitude, a chapel was built in 1813. Several women, mostly from the nearby village of Tyumino, settled in small huts near the chapel; by 1827, their number had grown to 50. They spent their time in prayer and needlework—weaving linen—and elected a superior from among themselves. In 1860, thanks to the initiative of the peasant woman E. P. Bogareva, this colony was granted the status of a sisterhood, and seven years later it was transformed into a communal convent.

In the same Voronezh Diocese, in the village of Troitskoye (Novokhopersky District), a sisterhood was established, comprising 20 peasant women; in 1878, they built a church with their own funds, and a wealthy peasant widow, H. E. Pashkova, purchased a plot of land and built a residential house on it for the sisters to live together. In 1890, the community was recognized by the Holy Synod, and in 1895 it was transformed into a communal convent¹¹⁷¹.

In the Tambov Diocese in 1887, there were 13 women's monasteries, 10 of which had been sisterhoods during their early years; the first sisterhood was established in 1783, when there was only one women's monastery in the diocese (founded in 1690). In the Penza Diocese, 10 of the 11 women's monasteries were originally communities¹¹⁷².

As already mentioned, *the 23 new women's monasteries that appeared in the 19th century grew out of these communities. With very few exceptions, these communities adhered to a communal charter. They were always established on the initiative of individual ascetics. Women and young girls would gather to engage in some form of handicraft, which began and ended with communal prayer; while working, those who could read would read aloud ascetic texts—such as the lives of the saints and other works. Eventually, a community formed in which the sisters lived together. They supported themselves with the proceeds from the sale of the items they made. Communal prayer () gradually led to the introduction of proper monastic worship; the*

¹¹⁷⁰ Description of the Yekaterinburg Diocese, in: PBE. 5. p. 353; Bulgakov. p. 65. In the Vladimir Diocese, for example, three sisterhoods were established between 1895 and 1899 (PBE. 2. p. 625), although there were already six women's monasteries there at that time, one of which—the Pokrovsky Monastery in the city of Pereyaslavl—had at least 350 nuns and novices in 1899; it maintained a hospital, a home for the elderly, and a school. PBE, vol. 3, pp. 619, 624, 625.

¹¹⁷¹ Description of the Voronezh Diocese, in: PBE. 3. pp. 866, 867.

¹¹⁷² Bulgakov. pp. 97, 89.

Divine Liturgy was celebrated by priests from nearby parishes. Finally, the sisters petitioned the Synod to transform their community into a women's monastery. Some of them took monastic vows, while others remained as sisters in the rasophore or novices for a long time. Often, such a community would attract the attention of the diocesan bishop, who would sometimes propose transforming the community into a women's monastery himself.

For example, in 1823, the Borisoglebsky Convent was established in the village of Anosino (Moscow Governorate). Its founder was Princess Evdokia Meshcherskaya (born in 1774), née Tyutcheva. She married Prince Meshchersky, who died of the flu two months after the wedding. A few years later, a small group of women (all of whom were her serfs) gathered around the princess at her estate in Anosino; they led precisely the kind of life we described above; For many years, the princess cherished the dream of transforming her small community into a women's monastery. Her correspondence with Bishop Anthony of Voronezh and Archbishop Filaret of Moscow constitutes a very interesting historical record. Eventually, she succeeded in transforming her community into a women's monastery; this took place in 1823.

The princess transferred her estate to her daughter and devoted herself entirely to monastic life. She asked Archbishop Filaret to appoint an abbess for the new convent and to allow her to remain at the convent herself. But the archbishop refused, citing the fact that he had no suitable abbess, and appointed her herself as the temporary head of the community; her tonsure as a nun was postponed. The new convent lived strictly according to the communal rule. In her work, the princess did not separate herself from her former serfs (some of whom had already taken the veil). A year later, she unexpectedly received an invitation to appear before the archbishop and give him a report on life at the convent. Filaret was known for his strictness, and the frightened abbess set off for Moscow. There she was told that the next day she was to come to the church, where His Eminence the Archbishop would be celebrating the Divine Liturgy. She went there, suspecting nothing, and during the service she was told that, in accordance with her previously expressed wish, His Eminence himself would tonsure her as a rasophore nun. The next day, Filaret appointed the nun Evgenia (her new monastic name) as abbess of the monastery. She led the community for 14 years and passed away in 1837. During those years, she sought to ensure ever stricter observance of the communal rules within the monastery. And perhaps it was precisely this that attracted women seeking monastic devotion to her convent: 40 years later, the convent was home to 180 nuns and novices¹¹⁷³.

The Spaso-Borodinsky Convent was founded in a similar manner by M. M. Tuchkova, the widow of a general who had distinguished himself during the War of 1812.¹¹⁷⁴ The Holy Cross Sisters' Community (near Moscow) was founded by the peasant woman P. R. Savatyugina; The Usman Women's Monastery (near the town of Usman in the Voronezh Governorate) owes its establishment in 1799 to N. Fedorova, the "major's daughter," who used her own funds to rebuild the abandoned and dilapidated monastery and bequeathed her property to the restored convent¹¹⁷⁵.

The founding of new women's monasteries and sisterhoods, of course, did not always proceed quickly or smoothly, since the bureaucracy of the Synodal Administration in the 19th century was even worse than that of government agencies. When, for example, Sister Paraskeva Zagrebennaya, from the Anosino-Borisoglebsky Convent we have already discussed, decided to establish a hermitage in the Vladimir Diocese, the correspondence regarding this matter dragged on for more than four years¹¹⁷⁶.

Sometimes such sisterhoods emerged with the assistance of elders, who in the 19th century devoted considerable attention to the spiritual guidance of Russian women engaged in religious quests, seeking to introduce them to church life.

One of the first to labor in this field was the elder Zosima Verkhovsky. In the second half of the 18th century, a group of ascetics and hermits leading an extremely austere life took refuge in the dense forests of Bryansk (more will be said about them in the next chapter); these ascetics were in spiritual communion with

¹¹⁷³ Abbess Evgenia, founder of the Borisoglebsky Communal Convent for Girls, in: Readings. 1875. 2; her correspondence is also found there; cf.: Pimen. Op. cit. p. 309.

¹¹⁷⁴ Pimen. Op. cit. pp. 310, 288.

¹¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 310; PSZ, No. 19110.

¹¹⁷⁶ Dobronravov, V. G. "The Svyatoezersk Hermitage," in: Proceedings of the Vladimir Scientific and Archival Commission. 11 (1909). p. 60. If the monastery's founder had connections in St. Petersburg, matters proceeded more quickly; cf., for example, the history of the founding of the Vladimir Sisters' Community (Moscow Diocese), established by Princess V. B. Svyatopolk-Chetvertinskaya. Solovyov, I. "The Vladimir Women's Community," in: Russian Yearbook, 1898. 49. pp. 869–885; the work contains many interesting details from the community's daily life.

Elder Paisius Velichkovsky of Moldavia. Among others, Elder Adrian labored here with his disciples. One of them was Zacharias Verkhovsky, the son of a high-ranking official, a former officer and nobleman. The hermitages of these monks were frequently attacked by vagrants and bandits, who believed that gold and silver—brought by people seeking their guidance and counsel—were hidden in the ascetics' humble huts. Eventually, these attacks became so unbearable that Elder Adrian and Zachary decided to leave the forest. Since Adrian had already received an invitation from Gabriel, Metropolitan of St. Petersburg and Novgorod, to come to him and assist in the restoration of several monasteries, he set out for St. Petersburg together with Zacharias. The metropolitan entrusted Adrian with the task of introducing a monastic rule at the Konevsky Monastery in the Diocese of St. Petersburg. Zacharias accompanied him and was tonsured a monk there, taking the name Zosima. He remained at this monastery for about 10 years under the spiritual guidance of Elder Adrian, and then withdrew into the forest wilderness, seeking silence and prayer. Later, in one of his letters, Zosima described the inner state of a person who devotes himself to the hermit's life and prayer in order to attain complete renunciation of the world and to feel himself standing before the Face of God¹¹⁷⁷.

After that, Zosima, together with the monk Vasilisk, set out for distant Siberia. They settled in the dense forests near the city of Turinsk. Vasilisk lived in complete solitude and silence, while Zosima would occasionally visit nearby villages to stock up on some food supplies. Twenty years passed in this way. People from the surrounding villages got to know Zosima and often asked him for spiritual guidance. One day, a widow approached Zosima with a request to take her under his spiritual care. After much pleading, Zosima allowed her to settle in a village about 30 versts (approximately 25 km) from his hermitage and to speak with him there from time to time. Then other women came who were also seeking spiritual help and advice. And so, some time later, a group of about 40 women had gathered; they formed a community and, under Zosima's spiritual guidance, led a life of physical labor and prayer. The elders Zosima and Vasilisk, after consulting with one another, decided that it would be best if this community became a full-fledged monastery. The buildings of the defunct monastery have been preserved in the city of Turinsk. Elder Zosima, who was already about 60 years old, undertook a difficult and long journey to St. Petersburg to obtain permission to establish a women's monastery in Turinsk. Zosima managed to obtain permission, but the diocesan bishop created various obstacles for the elder in this matter. Zosima then decided to travel to Russia with his spiritual daughters, hoping that there he would be able to carry out his plan. Most of the community set out with him. In 1826, they all arrived in Moscow. A wealthy widow named Bakhmeteva took the sisters into her home; later, they moved to her estate outside Moscow, part of which the widow donated for the founding of a women's monastery. Thus the Trinity Hermitage came into being, often referred to as Zosima's Hermitage. Elder Zosima continued to provide spiritual guidance to the community and passed away in 1833. In 1856, Zosima's Hermitage was transformed into a women's monastery with a communal charter¹¹⁷⁸.

The Dmitrievsky Convent in the village of Troekurov (Tambov Governorate) also grew out of a sisterhood (1853–54), which was transformed into a communal convent in 1871. The founder of the community was the austere ascetic and hermit Ilarion Fokin (1758–1853); at first he lived as an ascetic in Southern Russia (near Kyiv), then wandered from monastery to monastery for several years—a practice that was quite common in the 19th century—and finally, in 1824, he settled in the village of Troekurovo, where people began to come to him for advice and spiritual guidance. They donated money to him, with which Hilarion purchased a plot of land and built a house on it for a community of nuns¹¹⁷⁹.

In the history of the spiritual care of Russian women, a very special place belongs to the Venerable Elder Seraphim of Sarov († 1833)¹¹⁸⁰. The Kazan Diveyevo community¹¹⁸¹, founded in 1780, was for many years most closely connected to the Venerable Seraphim in its internal religious and ascetic life. He founded

¹¹⁷⁷ This remarkable letter is printed in the biography of the elder Vasilisk († 1824): *The Life of the Monk and Hermit Vasilisk* (1849) (unfortunately, I did not have access to it), and in excerpts in: Pimen. *Collected Works*, p. 298. This is likely the treatise "On the Effect of Mental Prayer," which is included in the manuscript "Narrative of Elder Vasilisk"; cf. Popov, N., "Description of the Manuscripts of the Moscow Simonov Monastery," in *Readings*, 1910, vol. 3, p. 53.

¹¹⁷⁸ Pimen. Op. cit. pp. 295–300, 310.

¹¹⁷⁹ PBE, vol. 5, pp. 853–854; RBS, pp. 86–87.

¹¹⁸⁰ On St. Seraphim of Sarov, see my book *Leben und Lehre der Starzen* (1936), as well as Chapter XV.

¹¹⁸¹ The Diveyevo community was located in the Nizhny Novgorod Diocese, but only 15 km from the Sarov Hermitage, which already belonged to the Tambov Diocese. See: Seraphim (Chichagov), Archimandrite. *Chronicle of the Seraphim-Diveyevo Monastery* (1903); this contains a wealth of material on the biography of St. Seraphim; and also: Ilyin. *St. Seraphim of Sarov* (1925). pp. 87 ff.

yet another community, a women's community—Melnichnaya. In 1842, they merged to form the Seraphim-Diveyevo Community, which was later, in 1861, transformed into the Seraphim-Diveyevo Convent. Two other monasteries in this area were spiritually guided by St. Seraphim: the Pokrovsky Convent (in the town of Ardatov) and the Spaso-Zelenogorsky Monastery. All of them were widely known for their strict observance of the monastic rule—perfect communal living, ascetic practices, and unwavering adherence to the liturgical order; the Serafimo-Diveyevo Convent was particularly renowned.

Another great elder of the 19th century—Ambrose of Optina—was deeply concerned with the spiritual well-being of devout women¹¹⁸². He founded a community of nuns in Shamordino (15 km from Optina). For many years he provided spiritual guidance to the community and passed away during a visit to Shamordino in 1891.

In this context, it is absolutely necessary to mention the name of yet another ascetic—Bishop Theophan the Recluse, whose influence on the religious life of the Russian people was immense. Two distinctive features emerge in his ministry that were not characteristic of the elders mentioned above. Here we see a different type of spiritual guidance. While for other Russian elders, direct personal communication was central to their spiritual and ascetic guidance, Bishop Theophan guided his spiritual children—and especially his spiritual daughters—through correspondence. On the one hand, this was due to his very act of seclusion; on the other hand, Theophan, by nature, was inclined toward literary activity and sought to develop his ideas about the foundations of the Christian soul—which were at the center of his interests—into a coherent religious-ascetic system. Furthermore, Theophan had received a philosophical and theological education at a theological academy (in Kyiv, 1837–1844) and did not cease his scholarly and theological pursuits even while in seclusion at the Vyshenska Hermitage. All of this gave his letters and writings such distinctive features and a style of expression that were unlike the oral teachings of other elders. Therefore, Theophan's influence extended primarily, if not exclusively, to educated people, to the Russian intelligentsia—among whom various currents of religious thought were observed in the second half of the 19th century—and especially to women.

Among his many works, the book **The Path to Salvation** is particularly famous and widely read; it was first published in 1868 and subsequently went through many editions, as did **Letters on the Christian Life**—a collection of letters to Princess P. S. Lukomskaya, which was published in 1860. This book has now been published in a German translation: ¹¹⁸³. The translator and publisher of the **Letters** notes that Bishop Theophan “sought to provide guidance for a person's spiritual life and an example of the Christian order of the soul. His letters contain advice on the Christian way of life... These letters possess a special charm; they strike the reader with the freshness of their sentiment, their heartfelt compassion, their simplicity, and the crystal clarity of their thought; they offer the opportunity to glimpse from within the very essence of Russian piety.” In the book **The Life and Teachings of the Elders** [], **we have already attempted to portray the figure of the Vyshny hermit. Here, in connection with the description of the religious quests of Russian women, we will add only that **Letters on the Christian Life**, originally addressed to a specific female correspondent whom Bishop Theophan knew personally, are composed in such a way that they can be of great benefit to many other women's souls, both in matters of daily life and in their inner spiritual struggles and doubts. Therefore, even half a century after Theophan's death (January 5, 1894), these letters are read with great enthusiasm and, as we know from personal experience, continue to this day to exert an enormous influence on Russian women. It can be said that Theophan's writings inspired a great many women to enter a convent and influenced the way of life of those who remained in the world—primarily educated women.**

The spiritual guidance of Russian women was not limited to the elders we have already mentioned. There were many other venerable and strict ascetics whose activities were of great significance for the religious quests of their contemporaries; they guided their female disciples either through personal interaction or through correspondence. We should mention Bishop Gerasim (Dobroserdov; 1809–1878), who

¹¹⁸² My book. Op. cit. p. 202 ff.; cf. also Chapter XV of this work. On the sisterhood in Shamordino: Chetverikov, S. Biography of the Optina Elder, Hieromonk Ambrose (1912) and the same author. The Optina Hermitage (1927). Elder Macarius (Ivanov) of Optina also provided spiritual guidance to certain communities of nuns (Chetverikov. Op. cit. (1927). p. 52), for example, the Holy Cross Convent; for more details: Leonid (Kavelin). Historical Description of the Belevsky Holy Cross Convent for Girls, a 3-Class Monastery (1863).

¹¹⁸³ See the recently published excerpts from this book in German translation: **Russische Frömmigkeit. Briefe eines Starzen**. Translated from the Russian, with a preface and edited by N. Bubnov (Wiesbaden, 1947).

corresponded with some nuns and provided them with spiritual guidance. His “Letters of a Spiritual Father to a Nun”¹¹⁸⁴ are particularly beautiful. Elder Ambrose of Optina also left behind numerous letters on the Christian-ascetic way of life, addressed to both men and women, in which he resolves the most complex life problems with his characteristic meekness and warmth, frankness, and profundity¹¹⁸⁵.

Among the Russian women who lived within the walls of monasteries, there were many ascetics who contributed to the establishment of a truly monastic way of life in women’s monasteries; some of them deserve special mention.

One such nun was Abbess Theophania Gotovtseva (1787–1866). She was born into a noble family of ancient lineage and was educated at the Catherine Institute for Noble Young Ladies in St. Petersburg, where she particularly excelled in the study of foreign languages. She married General A. S. Gotovtsev. But her marriage lasted only two days: her husband was ordered to go to the theater of war (this was in 1809, during the Russo-Swedish War), where he was struck by a bullet. Her young daughter died at the age of four, and a few years later, in 1818, Gotovtseva entered the Goritsky Convent as a novice, along with 12 of her serf girls. In 1837, she decided to take monastic vows and the schema. While still a novice, Gotovtseva corresponded for many years with the elder Theophan Sokolov of the Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery, and her ascetic views, as well as her efforts to introduce a communal rule in the monastery, are linked to this correspondence, for Elder Theophan Sokolov was one of the most zealous adherents and advocates of monastic communal life¹¹⁸⁶. In 1845, Nun Theophania (she took her monastic name in memory of Elder Theophan) received an invitation from Emperor Nicholas I (1825–1855) to present herself to him. It is interesting to note that this invitation came not from ecclesiastical but from secular authorities; during the Synodal era, this was a common occurrence, as the Synodal hierarchy paid little attention to monasticism. The emperor asked Theophania to found a women’s monastery in St. Petersburg with a strict communal rule, and ordered that she herself be appointed abbess. Thus, in 1845, the Novodevichy Resurrection Convent was established, where Abbess Theophania labored with tireless energy and remarkable success until her death in 1866. From the very beginning, the Resurrection Convent—which stood under the patronage of the imperial family (the abbess enjoyed great respect at court and served as godmother to several grand duchesses)—was distinguished by the large scale of its social and charitable activities. The nuns and novices (whose number exceeded 300 by the end of the 19th century) worked in various workshops. They embroidered with gold and pearls, made shoes and priestly vestments, and did laundry for orphanages and nursing homes. In the late 19th century, the convent opened a school for girls, a training school for rural teachers, a school for boys, and an excellent gold-embroidery workshop¹¹⁸⁷.

In a completely different region of Russia and under less favorable conditions, Schemanun Theophania Sidorova distinguished herself through no less remarkable efforts. She was a native of Vologda, from a modest merchant family. Born in 1800, she married the wealthy merchant Sidorov but was soon widowed (1827). For more than 20 years, she wandered from monastery to monastery and made a pilgrimage to the holy sites of Palestine; the devout widow donated all her possessions to the church and to charitable causes. It was not until she was 60 years old that she finally decided to take monastic vows (1860) at the Kholmogory Convent (in the north), which was later dissolved, and five years later she even took the great schema, taking the name Theophania. A year later, she was appointed abbess of what was then a small women’s monastery in the town of Shenkursk (on the shores of the White Sea). She led the monastery for 14 years, and under her guidance, all the rules of the monastic charter were strictly observed. In 1880, Mother Theophania fell ill; she was often confined to bed for long periods, yet she remained the nuns’ chief spiritual mentor. She passed away at a very

¹¹⁸⁴ These “Letters” appear in: *Stranik*. 1865. 1; and also in: *Questions of Nun Eupraxia and Answers by Archimandrite Gerasim*. 2 vols. (1883) (partially also in: *Dushep. cht.* 1882–83). *Bishop Gerasim was initially a parish priest; he later took monastic vows. He maintained spiritual communion with the Optina Hermitage and authored a very interesting book, *A Brief Account of the Life of the Abbot of the Vvedenskaya Optina Hermitage, Father Archimandrite Moses* (1865).*

¹¹⁸⁵ A Collection of Letters from the Optina Elder Ambrose to Monastics. 2 vols. (1908–1909).

¹¹⁸⁶ On Elder Theophanes Sokolov, see my book, op. cit., pp. 128 ff., as well as Chapter XV of this work.

¹¹⁸⁷ On Theophania Gotovtseva: V. Askochensky, *Theophania, Abbess of the Resurrection Convent* (1866) (very brief); and also: Abbess Theophania (1868), with the publication of many letters; on her convent: Snessoreva, S. The Resurrection Convent for Women in St. Petersburg (1887).

advanced age in 1888. This northern convent, located in the desolate tundra, was known for the strictness of its rules and the ascetic lives of its nuns; in 1900, it was home to 36 nuns and 86 novices¹¹⁸⁸.

And here is another figure from the same world: Abbess Filareta, née Baroness Varvara Schlippenbach, who was half-German. Like Feofania Gotovtseva, she came from a noble family; in the capital, she graduated from the St. Petersburg Patriotic Institute for Noble Young Ladies; As a very young girl, Varvara became a novice at the ancient and renowned Holy Spirit Convent in Novgorod, founded as far back as the 12th century¹¹⁸⁹; later, she moved to Kyiv, to the Florovsky Convent¹¹⁹⁰, and in 1848 took her monastic vows. For eight years, she worked as an educator—she headed a school for girls (orphans of the clergy) at the St. Michael the Archangel Convent in Odessa. In 1858, Filareta Schlippenbach was appointed abbess of the Lebedinsky St. Nicholas Convent (near the town of Chyhyryn in the Kyiv Governorate). There she organized Sunday schools for peasant children, a school for girls, and a school of icon painting. In 1875, she passed away in the midst of her charitable work¹¹⁹¹.

Abbess Taisia Solopova's "Notes"¹¹⁹² reveal to us the inner life of women's convents in the second half of the 19th century. With heartfelt candor, she writes about her personal religious struggles and difficulties, about the positive and negative aspects of monastic life in her era, and about the relationship between convents and church authorities—all of which she had come to know well through her time living in various monasteries across Russia. Her account reveals the significance of the ascetic tradition, adherence to or deviation from the communal rules, and the efforts and example of the abbess for the proper organization of monastic life. Her "Notes" attest to the fact that in women's monasteries, just as in men's, asceticism flourished not by decree of the church authorities, but drew its spiritual strength either from popular piety or from the ascetic tradition, which the "official spirit" of the Synodal period did not even attempt to support and often actively opposed. All Christian ascetics—known from the history of religious quests and church life in Russia drew spiritual nourishment from these two sources.

The history of asceticism among Russian women still awaits a thorough study; on many issues, there is still a lack of source material; it is still necessary to trace the origins of certain movements and phenomena and to thoroughly examine various influences, such as those exerted by the elders. Not all phenomena can be explained by this influence. Inner personal piety, despite occasional temporary ups and downs linked to the vicissitudes of Russia's political and economic life, never completely disappeared, although it often seemed to withdraw from the world into a kind of spiritual seclusion due to dissatisfaction with the official spirit of the Church. This popular piety strengthened Russian women ascetics, regardless of their social background; in this sense, they all drew from the same source. The examples we have cited clearly show that no social class was cut off from these sources. The history of the Russian elder movement, which will be discussed below, will reveal this phenomenon even more vividly.

At the origins of Russian women's devotion, their love for their neighbors, and their devotion to God, we see the figure of Juliana Ossorina (or Ossorgina; † 1605); in terms of her personal piety, she did not particularly stand out from other women, but her social and charitable works were remarkable: she cared for the contagiously ill and distributed alms to such an extent that she herself was forced to go hungry; this example conveys a spirit that was not typical of late 16th-century mores, yet one that brings it closer to the examples set by many Russian women of the 19th century¹¹⁹³.

Among the circle of ascetic women that formed under the influence of St. Seraphim of Sarov, the most characteristic trait was complete devotion to God. In his spiritual guidance and mentoring, St. Seraphim placed

¹¹⁸⁸ An interesting little book has been written about Schema-Abbess Theophania Sidorova, which introduces us to monastic life in a distant province: *In Memory of Schema-Abbess Theophania of the Shenkursky Convent* (1891).

¹¹⁸⁹ The Holy Spirit Borovitsky Convent was known even before 1162; initially it was a men's monastery, but in 1787 it was reestablished as a women's convent; it is known for its beautiful ancient icon of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (early 16th century).

¹¹⁹⁰ In this Kiev monastery, the liturgical rule was observed with particular strictness. Until 1917, about 500 nuns and novices found refuge there.

¹¹⁹¹ RBS, p. 76. We should also mention Abbess Emilia, the founder (1845) of the St. Nicholas Convent near Kharkiv: Kovalevsky, A. "Abbess Emilia, Foundress of the Verkhne-Kharkiv St. Nicholas Convent for Women," in: *Dushep. Readings* 1885, Vol. 2, pp. 283–311, 385–428.

¹¹⁹² *Notes of Abbess Taisia*. Berlin, 1939.

¹¹⁹³ See many examples of this in: Arseniew, N. v. **Das heilige Moskau** (1940). On Juliana Ossorgina, known as Lazarevskaya (after marrying a wealthy nobleman, she lived in the village of Lazarevskoye near Murom), see: Klyuchevsky, V. "Good People in Ancient Rus'," in: *Essays and Speeches* (1913); Fedotov, G. *Saints of Ancient Rus'* (1931). pp. 228–232.

particular emphasis on prayer and spiritual love for one's neighbor—he did not encourage social and charitable activities. From the history of the Serafimo-Diveyevo Monastery, we see that St. Seraphim—perhaps more so than other elders engaged in the spiritual care of women—demanded ascetic practice from his spiritual daughters. It is possible that the groundwork for this had already been laid at the monastery—that an ascetic tradition existed there which he continued—for a solid foundation for ascetic practice had been laid by the community's founder and abbess, Nun Alexandra Melgunova († 1794), whom the venerable one knew personally. The examples of the holy fool in Christ Pelagia Serebryakova († 1884) and other residents of these women's monasteries indicate that even after the saint's passing, the ascetic tradition did not fade away but was carried on¹¹⁹⁴.

From the pages of “Biographies of Russian Ascetics of the 18th and 19th Centuries”¹¹⁹⁵, the figures of many female ascetics emerge before us: Abbess Dorothea of the Znamensky Convent near Tambov (January volume); Abbess Antonia of the Sretensky Convent near Kashira in the Tula Diocese (ibid.); Sister Dorothea of the St. John Convent in Moscow (February); Schemanun Avraamia of the Sretensky Convent near Kashira (February); Schemanun Martha of the Arzamas Convent in the Nizhny Novgorod Governorate; two recluses, Martha and Eudokia, from Kharkiv (March); Schema-Abbess Olympiada, abbess of the Alekseevsky Convent in the city of Arzamas, Nizhny Novgorod Governorate (August); Sister Elizabeth of the Sretensky Convent near Kashira (September). Or, for example, Nun Ilaria Kobeleva (1810–1892), who entered the Kursk Trinity Convent as a novice at the age of 13, took her vows after 19 years of austere ascetic life, spent 70 years at that convent, and devoted herself continuously to charitable work throughout that time¹¹⁹⁶.

This list alone shows that some of these ascetic women came from the same monastery—evidence of the vibrant ascetic tradition that persisted there. It is noteworthy that in the Nizhny Novgorod Governorate, where the Serafimo-Diveyevo Monastery was located, monastic asceticism flourished particularly; perhaps this was a reflection of the spiritual feat of St. Seraphim of Sarov, who epitomized the pinnacle of 19th-century Russian piety. As already noted, only a few paths in the history of Russian women's pious asceticism have been more or less studied; one would hope that these paths are not lost forever to historical scholarship and that someday it will be possible to piece together a comprehensive picture of the ascetic feats of Russian women.

5. The Episcopate and the “Scholarly Monasticism”

The history of monasticism during the Synodal period is characterized by another feature: the severing of the former close ties with the episcopate. Until the 18th century, the episcopate drew its members from the ranks of monasticism; although outwardly the episcopal office separated the bishop from ordinary monks, inwardly he adhered to the same ascetic and ecclesiastical-political views as the monks. The positive and negative traits of the episcopate were explained primarily by its internal connection to the prevailing tradition. If the bishops did little to improve monastic life, it was precisely because it was something ordinary and familiar to them, and only a few bishops, as we know, were able to pass an objective judgment on it. Peter the Great was well aware of this connection between monasticism and the episcopate. Alongside measures concerning monasticism, he sought to form an episcopate composed of individuals who sympathized with his plans and with church reform. He found suitable candidates for these purposes within the Little Russian church hierarchy, which was alien to the views of the monks and bishops from Great Russia; this hierarchy was more inclined to fully accept Peter's reforms or, at the very least, did not engage in inciting opposition or covert propaganda among the clergy under its authority.

After the affair of Tsarevich Alexei—around whom conservative Old-Moscow circles within the hierarchy and monastic community had attempted to rally—Peter lost confidence in the Great Russian bishops. His chief assistant in carrying out church reform and various measures pertaining to the Church became Theophan Prokopovich; he was a native of Southern Russia and did not harbor much sympathy for the Great Russian bishops. Peter appointed the relatively young Bishop Stefan Yavorsky as locum tenens of the

¹¹⁹⁴ Cf.: my book, op. cit., and Ilyin, op. cit., p. 87.

¹¹⁹⁵ Nicodemus, Archimandrite. *Biographies of Russian Ascetics of the 18th and 19th Centuries*. 12 vols. (1908–1909); this work is organized by month, with information on the lives of the ascetics presented in chronological order according to the days of their passing. I had access only to the volumes covering January through September.

¹¹⁹⁶ RBS. p. 87.

patriarchal throne; he, too, was one of the “Cherkassians” (that is, Little Russians), as the Muscovites called him mockingly and not without hostility; when Peter noticed that Stefan Yavorsky did not truly support his church reform, he sidelined him.

It is telling how long the period of the *locum tenens* lasted—from 1700 to 1721: Peter could not immediately bring himself to abolish the patriarchate. And until the fundamental question of the form of supreme ecclesiastical authority was resolved, Peter continued his policy—filling the church hierarchy with Little Russians, and abbots of monasteries were also usually appointed from among hieromonks and archimandrites of the Kyiv Metropolis. This policy continued throughout the first half of the 18th century, particularly consistently during the reign of Elizabeth (1741–1761)¹¹⁹⁷.

The monastic community of Great Russian monasteries, faithful to the pre-Petrine tradition, viewed Little Russians with great distrust as “Latins”: this was how Patriarchs Joakim and Adrian, the monk Euthymius, and others had viewed them in their time. Bishop Joasaph Gorlenko († 1754) writes in his letters that Great Russians everywhere view Little Russians with suspicion¹¹⁹⁸. Furthermore, there were social differences between the Little Russian and Great Russian clergy. First, as long as they lived under the Polish crown (Western Russia, many of whose inhabitants migrated to Russia, still belonged to Poland), Polish-Lithuanian laws granted them certain rights equal to those of the nobility (*szlachta*). Until 1728, the clergy of the Kyiv Metropolis, like the nobility, had the right to purchase land and accept estates as gifts. During the reign of Empress Anna, it still retained some of the privileges that the Great Russian clergy did not possess¹¹⁹⁹. This was also one of the reasons for the mutual animosity between the Little Russian and Great Russian clergy, for the former looked upon the latter with contempt. Bishops from Little Russia were distinguished by particular arrogance, harsh administration, and cruel treatment of the parish clergy and monastics under their authority. One can recall a number of bishops of this type, for example, Gedeon (Vishnevsky), Bishop of Smolensk (1728–1761); Timofey (Shcherbatsky), Metropolitan of Moscow (1757–1767); Ambrose (Zertis-Kamensky), Archbishop of Moscow (1767–1771), who was killed by the people in 1771 during the “plague riot”; Pachomius (Simansky), Bishop of Tambov (1751–1766); Arsenius (Matsievich), Metropolitan of Siberia (1741–1742) and Rostov (1742–1763); Paul (*Konyuskevich*), Metropolitan of Siberia (1758–1767); Cyril (*Florinsky*), Bishop of Sevs (1766–1778)¹²⁰⁰.

Bishops from Little Russia often enjoyed remarkably rapid careers. Bishop Gedeon (Krinovsky), whose sermons made a great impression on Empress Elizabeth, became archimandrite of the Savvo-Storozhevsky Monastery at the age of 27, though he did not administer it and instead lived in St. Petersburg; a year later, he was appointed a member of the Holy Synod and archimandrite of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra; at the age of 31, he was assigned the Diocese of Pskov, but just two years later (July 22, 1763), his brilliant career was cut short by his sudden death¹²⁰¹.

Prior to the secularization of 1764, diocesan sees, like monasteries, owned vast estates and derived significant income from them. They employed a very large number of servants, especially when these sees were held by Little Russian bishops. The total number of servants and stewards ranged from 31 to 135 people. The Rostov diocesan see owned land on which 16,796 peasants lived, paying up to 5,000 rubles in rent, as well as “tributes” levied on the clergy; thus, the bishop’s total income amounted to 8,000 rubles. Meanwhile, according to the 1764 budget, only 2,014 rubles were allocated for the maintenance of the Rostov See. Perhaps this circumstance was the reason for the protest against secularization by Rostov Metropolitan Arseny Matseevich, who spoke out so resolutely and sharply against Catherine’s reform not solely on grounds of principle¹²⁰².

¹¹⁹⁷ Dobroklonsky. Guide. 4 (1893). p. 107; see also the previously mentioned work by K. Kharlamovich and I. Shlyapkin; cf. also the opinion of P. Milyukov (Essays. 3 (1930). p. 169) and Chapter XI.

¹¹⁹⁸ ODDS. 4. p. 515.

¹¹⁹⁹ Titlinov. The Government of Anna Ioannovna. p. 183.

¹²⁰⁰ Russian Historical Review, 1871, No. 3, p. 583; 1908, No. 7, pp. 40–54; Snegirev. Notes, in: Russian Archives, 1866; Collection, Vol. 10, p. 275.

¹²⁰¹ Titlinov. Gavriil Petrov. p. 46; Titov. On the Biography of Gedeon Krinovsky, Bishop of Pskov and Narva (1907).

¹²⁰² Pokrovsky. The Kazan Bishop’s Residence (1906). pp. 367, 372–381; Popov. Arseny Maceevich. p. 99. On new staffing levels for bishoprics: Zavyalov. Op. cit. p. 216. For information on the revenues received by bishoprics from the clergy, see, above all: Kapterev, N. Secular Bishopric Officials (1874). pp. 114, 135 ff.; Golubinsky. Vol. 1, No. 1. pp. 423, 436; Gorchakov. The Monastic Office. p. 236.

It was precisely the Little Russian bishops Arseny Matseevich and Pavel Konyuskevich who voiced open protests against secularization. This was the reason why Catherine came to view the Little Russians with distrust and ensured that, from 1764 onward, the bishoprics would be occupied by Great Russians. At that time (1763–64), *only 12 of the 26 diocesan bishops were Great Russians. However, Catherine's measures—which, moreover, were of a somewhat limited nature—could not bridge the gulf between the bishop and the clergy—a gulf that grew ever deeper over time*¹²⁰³.

In the mid-18th century, an intriguing treatise appeared. Its author asserts that “bishops” and “presbyters” possess the same grace of the priesthood and that the distinction between these two orders is a relatively late phenomenon that developed historically. At the same time, the author sharply criticizes the episcopate and monasticism in general, since they have strayed—both outwardly and inwardly—from the spirit of the ancient Church¹²⁰⁴. Researchers attribute this anonymous treatise, which circulated among the clergy, to Archpriest Peter Alekseev, a cleric at the Archangel Cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin. He is known for his opposition to Metropolitan Platon of Moscow and, more generally, to the episcopate and monasticism, as evidenced by his correspondence with the influential Archpriest Panfilov, the spiritual confessor of Empress Catherine. Alekseev wrote another treatise titled “Can a Worthy Priest, Having Bypassed Monasticism, Be Ordained a Bishop?”, which, in its arguments, is very similar to “Treatise Against the Bishops”¹²⁰⁵. Such arguments can be explained by the differences in social and material status between the white clergy and the so-called learned monasticism, which rapidly rose to prominence in the second half of the 18th century and, together with the episcopate and monastic clergy, constituted the black clergy¹²⁰⁶.

The scholarly monastic order consisted of individuals who had received higher education at theological academies and subsequently took monastic vows. Scholarly monks began arriving in Muscovy as early as the 17th century from Southern Russia—that is, from the Kiev Metropolis—and from Western Russia. Almost all of them were graduates of the Kiev Theological Academy at that time. Among them was, for example, Simeon of Polotsk, whom we have already mentioned. In the second half of the 17th century, they arrived in Moscow and, due to a shortage of educated theologians, took charge of all teaching activities, initially at the Moscow Slavic-Greek Academy and, in the 18th century, at the newly founded theological seminaries as well.

The “Proclamation on Monasticism” of 1724 permitted graduates of theological academies engaged in teaching to be tonsured as monks upon reaching the age of 30¹²⁰⁷. They received a higher salary than monastic monks and were usually immediately ordained as hieromonks. If they later served as rectors of theological seminaries, they were simultaneously appointed abbots of monasteries, and thus received two salaries. Under Emperor Paul, a decree was issued in 1799 stipulating that hieromonks engaged in teaching were assigned to the city cathedral and received a portion of its income. As early as 1766, bishops and learned monks were permitted to freely dispose of their property (money, books, clothing), whereas Peter’s decrees prohibited monastic monks from doing so; bishops and learned monks could bequeath their property to relatives and others, whereas the property of monastic monks passed to the state upon their death¹²⁰⁸. Thus, learned monks were wealthier than monastic monks or parish priests (with the exception of the abbots of large city cathedrals or wealthy parish churches); they were also better off than their colleagues—teachers at theological academies and seminaries—who remained in lay status.

The provision contained in the “Declaration on Monasticism” of 1724—stating that one could take monastic vows only upon reaching the age of 30—was often disregarded in their case as well. By a decree of the Holy Synod dated May 29, 1832, this violation of the canons was legalized. From then on, it was officially permitted to exempt graduates of theological academies who expressed a desire to take monastic vows from the period of novitiate in a monastery; the same applied to widowed priests who decided to become monks¹²⁰⁹. For students of theological academies, the minimum age requirement for tonsure was lowered to 25, and they

¹²⁰³ Znamensky. Parish Clergy. p. 615.

¹²⁰⁴ “Treatise Against the Bishops.” Ed. V. I. Savva, in: Readings. 1909. Vol. 1. pp. 7, 35, 26, 4.

¹²⁰⁵ Readings. 1867. Vol. 3. p. 17; Russian Archives. 1871. pp. 218–220, 230; 1892. Vol. 4. p. 456. On Alekseev as a writer, see: Filaret. Review. 3rd ed. 2. p. 384; Znamensky. Op. cit. p. 651; Sukhomlinov. History of the Russian Academy. 1. p. 280.

¹²⁰⁶ The divide between the black and white clergy—that is, between monastics and parish priests—already existed in Byzantium; see on this: Troitsky, I. E., Arsenius, Patriarch of Nicaea and Constantinople (1873).

¹²⁰⁷ PSPiR. 4. No. 1197.

¹²⁰⁸ PSZ. No. 12577, 16684.

¹²⁰⁹ Milaљ. Op. cit. p. 663.

were also tonsured immediately, without a period of novitiate¹²¹⁰. Upon receiving their academy diplomas, such students—provided their knowledge and abilities qualified them for teaching and they expressed a desire to take monastic vows—embarked on a fairly routine path in life. Shortly after their tonsure, they were ordained as hieromonks and received a teaching position at a theological seminary (particularly gifted ones remained as associate professors at the academy); later, they served as inspectors and rectors of theological seminaries. It was also customary to elevate the rector of a seminary to the rank of archimandrite, followed by the position of rector at a theological academy. It was not uncommon for such archimandrite-rectors to be men between the ages of 28 and 35. Purely nominally, they were appointed abbots of monasteries, which in reality they might have visited only once or never seen at all. The final link in this chain of advancement was episcopal consecration¹²¹¹. In such cases, the bishop had never lived in a monastery and was, in fact, a celibate clergyman¹²¹². Since the number of dioceses tripled in the 18th and 19th centuries, and vicar bishops were appointed to many dioceses, it was by no means uncommon for a learned monk to become a bishop after 10–12 years.

By the second half of the 18th century, bishops who were not learned monks had become an exceptional phenomenon. In such cases, they were almost always highly worthy individuals, but since they were not promoted to the highest ranks of the church hierarchy, they were soon forgotten even by historians of the Russian Church. In their personal lives and in their views, they were most closely connected to the truly ascetic tradition of Orthodox monasticism.

Perhaps Archbishop Varlaam (Petrov; † 1802), who, after his consecration, spent the rest of his life—34 years—in the same see, which at that time and later, in the 19th century, was a great rarity; he served in Siberia as Archbishop of Tobolsk (1768–1802). He was a true ascetic in episcopal vestments—humble, kind, and selfless—giving all his income to the needy. The clergy of the diocese loved Varlaam boundlessly because, under his predecessor, Metropolitan Pavel Konyuskevich, they had suffered greatly from harsh administrative measures; and he was also loved by the people, who came to highly value the bishop's genuinely Christian character traits. He spent his monastic youth at the Alexander Nevsky Monastery in St. Petersburg under the guidance of Elder Dositheus, and this elder raised him to be a true monk and ascetic. Barlaam was the brother of Gabriel, Metropolitan of Novgorod and St. Petersburg. This kinship contributed to Barlaam's consecration as a bishop after a brief tenure as abbot of the monastery; however, by virtue of his personal qualities, he was far more worthy of the episcopate than most of his contemporaries¹²¹³.

Archbishop Job (Potemkin; 1750–1823) of Yekaterinoslav was, as far as we have been able to ascertain, the only Russian bishop of the 18th century who was formed under the spiritual guidance of the elder Paisius (Velichkovsky), who labored in Moldavia. He was the cousin of the famous Prince G. A. Potemkin; a brilliant military career lay ahead of him¹²¹⁴, but he turned his back on it and unexpectedly retired at the age of 29; in 1779, he traveled to Moldavia, where he spent several years under the guidance of elders associated with Paisius. We then find him serving as abbot of the Dormition Monastery in Bessarabia (1785–1793); subsequently, Job became Bishop of Theodosia (1793–1797), then of Minsk (1797–1812), and finally, Archbishop of the Yekaterinoslav Diocese (1812–1823). As a diocesan bishop, he was distinguished by his exceptional energy, independent conduct in his relations with the Synod, and persistence in implementing measures to improve monastic life¹²¹⁵.

¹²¹⁰ It sometimes happened that individuals were tonsured before reaching the age of 25; for example, this was the case with Archimandrite Bukharev and Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky.

¹²¹¹ For a multitude of diverse examples of such a career as a scholarly monk, see the extremely interesting and informative “Biographical Notes” by Archbishop Nikanor (Brovkovich), which pertain to the period of the 1840s–1870s: *Biographical Notes*. 1 (1900).

¹²¹² “It is incorrect to assert,” writes St. Tsankov (*Das orthodoxe Christentum des Ostens*. Berlin, 1928. Note 125), “that bishops in the Eastern Church are monks. They may come from among the monks, but they themselves are not monks, for according to Rule 2 of the Council of Constantinople of 879, the episcopal office is incompatible with the monastic order; to become a bishop means ipso facto (by that very fact) to renounce monasticism. Beth (Beth Karl. **Die orientalische Christenheit der Mittelmeerländer. Reisestudien zur Statistik und Symbolik der griechischen, armenischen und koptischen Kirchen**. Berlin, 1902. p. 333) was entirely correct in holding that, in the case of an Orthodox bishop, it would be more accurate to speak not of monasticism but of celibacy.”

¹²¹³ On Varlaam Petrov: Abramov, N. “Varlaam, Archbishop of Tobolsk,” in **Stranik**, 1863, no. 3.

¹²¹⁴ It is noteworthy that his older brother also left St. Petersburg, went to Mount Athos, took monastic vows there, and later became the abbot of the St. Nicholas Monastery in the city of Korocha. See Chapter XV of this work.

¹²¹⁵ RBS. pp. 301–303.

Metropolitan Gabriel's closest assistant during the time he administered the Tver Diocese (1763–1770) and undertook his first attempts there to revive monastic life was Arseny (Vereshchagin; 1736–1799). Later, already as Metropolitan of Novgorod and St. Petersburg, Gabriel continued his work, thanks to which he went down in the history of monastic leadership, while Archbishop Arseny Vereshchagin, who administered several dioceses—Arkhangelsk (1773–1775), Tver (1775–1783), and Rostov (1783–1799)—was actively and successfully engaged everywhere in improving the education of the parish clergy and organizing theological schools¹²¹⁶.

In the 19th century, bishops who did not come from the ranks of the scholarly monastic community were still a rare phenomenon. I would like to mention two such bishops: Juvenal (Polovtsev; 1826–1904), Archbishop of Lithuania (1898–1904), and Flavian (Gorodetsky; 1840–1912), Metropolitan of Kyiv (1903–1912)¹²¹⁷. Juvenal Polovtsev was the only bishop to have been trained by the elders of Optina Hermitage. A nobleman by birth and an officer who graduated from the Higher Artillery School, he entered Optina Pustyn in 1847 and spent seven years there as a novice under Elder Makarii (Ivanov); after becoming a hieromonk, he spent many years in Jerusalem at the Russian mission. Later, as Bishop of Kursk (1893–1898) and then Archbishop of Lithuania (1898–1904), Juvenal was among the most worthy hierarchs of the Russian Church; his own life and his spiritual influence on those around him testified that he had not forgotten the lessons of Optina; he expressed his deep gratitude to the elders of the Optina Hermitage in his work “The Life of Abbot Moses”¹²¹⁸.

The third and most outstanding figure in the Church—who, though he did not have a brilliant external career, nonetheless lived a life of genuine asceticism—was Ignatius Bryanchaninov. He belonged to that small group of Russian bishops who drew their views from the ascetic-mystical tradition of the ancient Eastern Church, for whom this tradition became the foundation of their lives and works. Like Archbishop Juvenal Polovtsev, and even more so than he, Ignatius was a disciple of the Russian elders; he continued this tradition in his writings, which played a major role in the spiritual growth of new generations of Russian monastics¹²¹⁹.

But it would be unfair to claim that, among the scholarly monastic community—which had not undergone monastic schooling—an understanding of the meaning and significance of the ascetic foundations of the monastic life had been completely lost. Despite the internal divisions in church life, which resulted in the formation of two parallel currents within monasticism—on the one hand, “synodal monasticism,” which made no effort to return to the ancient ascetic tradition, and on the other, the elder system and other manifestations of genuine asceticism, which mutually enriched one another—on the other—the elder system and genuine asceticism nevertheless created a religious atmosphere around themselves that had a profound impact on the world. Anyone who studies the spiritual culture of Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century with keen attention and without prejudice will inevitably discover how powerful the underground ascetic current was in this culture—not only within monastery walls, but also beyond them. This was a belated manifestation of the spiritual forces of Russian Christianity, which had not found a suitable sphere of application during the Muscovite era and had been forced to hide and lie low during the godless 18th century; now, however, they were revealing themselves everywhere, and while perhaps not particularly strongly on the surface, they were nonetheless intense enough to have a significant impact. The learned monastic community

¹²¹⁶ Titov, A. “The Last Archbishop of Rostov, Arseny,” in: *Ist. v. 1886. 2.*

¹²¹⁷ Flavian Gorodetsky (1840–1912) studied at the law faculty of Moscow University; shortly before his state exams, he set out on foot for the Pesnoshsky Monastery and remained there. From 1863 to 1866, he was a novice at the Simonov Monastery in Moscow; he then served for some time as secretary to the Russian Church in Rome. From 1870 to 1880, already a monk, he served at the Russian Orthodox Mission in China. In 1880, Flavian was consecrated as an auxiliary bishop of the Don Diocese; from 1885 to 1896, he served in Poland, first as an auxiliary bishop and later as Archbishop of Warsaw, where he proved himself a staunch opponent of the Roman Catholic Church; From 1896 to 1903, he served as Archbishop and Exarch of Georgia; in 1903, he was appointed Metropolitan of Kyiv. He combined his struggle against Catholicism—a hallmark of the era of Alexander III (the 1880s and 1890s)—Flavian combined with a high degree of independence within the Synod and in his relations with the Chief Prosecutor K. P. Pobedonostsev, as well as with an ascetic lifestyle; he took a strict stance toward the monastic community in his diocese and enjoyed great authority among the parish clergy. See his biography in: Rodosky. *Op. cit.*, p. LXXIX; and also in: Niva. 1910, p. 177. In my account, I also relied on the oral testimony of his contemporary, the late Archpriest G. Prozorov († 1942), who knew Flavian well from his time in Kyiv.

¹²¹⁸ Juvenal, Archimandrite. *Biography of Archimandrite Moses, Abbot of the Kozelsk Vvedensky Optina Hermitage (1882); cf.: Chetverikov. Optina Hermitage. p. 51.*

¹²¹⁹ On Ignatius, see below, Chapter XV, and my book (*op. cit.*).

and the episcopate— —that emerged from its ranks were also not immune to this influence. Upon examining the biographies of the bishops of the Synodal era, we discover three main groups of hierarchs.

The first group consists of individuals who, from their youth, were inclined toward monastic life or came under the influence of the ascetic atmosphere we have just discussed. Teaching in theological schools or administrative work at episcopal sees did not satisfy them. After several years as bishops—during which they focused more on their inner spiritual life than on their external career—they left their sees and retired to a monastery. For the 18th century, the most characteristic example of this kind was the life of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, Bishop of Voronezh. From 19th-century history, we can recall and name several figures.

Among the earliest, we must mention one of the most remarkable figures—Ambrose of Ornatsky, Bishop of Penza (1778–1827)¹²²⁰. After graduating from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Ambrose taught for some time at the theological seminary in Novgorod; at the age of 27, he took monastic vows (1805), after which (1808–1816) he successively served as abbot at three monasteries; His stay at the Novospassky Monastery in Moscow—where, during those years, interest in ascetic feats had revived and close ties had been established with the Sarov Hermitage¹²²¹, known for its strict ascetic spirit—likely left a lasting impression on the young Archimandrite Ambrose. For the next three years, Ambrose served as vicar bishop of the Novgorod Diocese (1816–1819), and then independently administered the Penza Diocese. But administrative work was not to his liking, and in 1825 he petitioned the Synod to grant him retirement.

Ambrose spent only two years in retirement at the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery; his ascetic life, just as before during his years as abbot and head of the dioceses, was that of a hermit. He spent the entire day shut away in his modestly furnished cell; he was not inclined to receive visitors or converse with the monks; his meals were meager—often he would eat only a single piece of prosphora all day and would not touch cooked food. He distributed his money (his episcopal pension) to the needy. The letters he received remained unopened at the threshold of his cell, but the replies to these letters, as his cell attendant later testified, were written as if the ascetic had read them. Only at night would he leave his cell and stand before the church door with his hands raised in supplication until dawn—just as Elder Seraphim (they were contemporaries) did 1,000 kilometers away from him in the Sarov forest, —offering silent prayer, whether in summer or in the most bitter winter frost. On December 27, 1827, the ascetic, now a bishop, departed for the Kingdom of Heaven, toward which he had long since directed all his thoughts and his entire soul. Having renounced the world, he lived, as it were, outside of time, setting aside all cares and concerns; he was not an elder, but belonged to those ascetics of the Eastern Church who sought only inner perfection and the attainment of personal salvation.

Bishop Jeremiah (Solovyov; 1799–1884) had been inclined toward an ascetic life from his youth, but with humility—though against his own will—he followed the path in life that was destined for him. He graduated with honors from the theological seminary in Sevs, where he taught Greek, but suddenly left his post and went as a novice to the Pechersky Monastery near Bryansk, where he had to tend livestock; in 1823, he took monastic vows. However, the rector of the theological seminary—who later became the renowned preacher Archbishop Innokenty (Borisov)—persuaded him to enroll in the theological academy. After three years of study at the academy, Jeremiah—who surpassed all the students in his class in ability—suddenly failed to appear for his exams; he did this to avoid receiving a master's degree, the pursuit of which, in his opinion, was incompatible with monastic humility. Despite this, the academy subsequently awarded him a master's degree without requiring him to take the exams. In the years that followed (1827–1841), he was engaged in teaching; after his episcopal consecration, he administered several dioceses, the last of which was the Diocese of Nizhny Novgorod (1850–1857). The episcopal ministry proved to be no easy task for Jeremiah, for in his innermost being he was alien to the narrow-minded spirit of synodal church life; this ministry was filled with sorrow and conflict for him. In 1857, like Bishop Ambrose, he left his see and retired to a monastery, where he took the great schema (1861) and spent the rest of his life († 1884) in a monastic cell¹²²².

¹²²⁰ The best biography of Bishop Ambrose of Ornatsk is by V. Zhmakin, in: *Russkiye Strany* 39 (1882). pp. 129–178; and also: Poselyanin. *Russian Ascetics of the 19th Century* (1910).

¹²²¹ Cf.: Popov, *Description of the Manuscripts of the Simonovsky Monastery in Moscow* (various places).

¹²²² Rhodosky. *Op. cit.*, pp. XLI and 181; Titov, A. "Jeremiah, Bishop of Nizhny Novgorod," in: *Istorichesky Vestnik*, 1889, no. 9; *Chteniya*, 1887. 3. Bishop Jeremiah left behind two ascetic works, "Revelation from Above" (1865) and "Spiritual Healing" (1890), as well as several shorter works; cf.: RBS, pp. 164–165.

A few other names are also worth mentioning: Meletius (Leontovich; 1784–1840), Archbishop of Kharkiv (1835–1840), who was held in the highest esteem in his diocese; Jacob (Vecherkov; 1792–1852), Archbishop of Nizhny Novgorod (1847–1850), who, according to Nikanor Brovkovich, “died... quite literally from fasting-induced exhaustion”; Anthony (Amfiteatrov), Archbishop of Kazan (1866–1879)¹²²³.

We cite these examples to show that pedagogical and administrative activities in and of themselves were not an insurmountable obstacle to the strict observance of monastic vows in one’s personal life. Of course, spiritual composure and a strong character were necessary in order to renounce the world in one’s personal life while fulfilling such a responsible and high-ranking position in the secular world. If one traces the biographies and activities of the 19th-century bishops, a significant difference becomes apparent between the bishops of the first and second halves of the century. The bishops who lived in the first half of the century were more distinctive and stronger personalities than those of the second half. They suffered from the “synodal spirit,” which was penetrating ever more deeply into the heart of church life; yet, without showing outward opposition—and unwilling to expend their spiritual energy on it—they directed that energy toward personal perfection. Here, first and foremost, we should mention the names of two distinguished hierarchs, two contemporaries: Filaret (Drozdov), Metropolitan of Moscow (1821–1867), and Filaret Amfiteatrov, Metropolitan of Kyiv (1837–1857).

Metropolitan Filaret (1782–1867)¹²²⁴, who led the Moscow Diocese for 46 years, was the focal point of church life in Russia for nearly half a century; He was a hierarch whose views and spirit, permeating all his works, continued to influence the life of the Church even after his death; he was a man of strong character and immense spiritual strength and energy, a man who, thanks to these qualities, was able to conceal the inner tragedy of his soul. Outwardly, Filaret (Drozdov) appeared to be a pillar of the official Church, yet in a remarkable way he was also a pillar of the true ecclesial spirit; the conflicting assessments of this figure attest to his ability to conceal the inner tragedy of his soul. His reserve and restraint, along with his remarkable ability to keep his true views from surfacing in his public statements, enabled him—despite all his inner tragedy—to stand at the center of church life—and at what a time!—during the reign of Emperor Nicholas I. Filaret’s most faithful disciple and admirer, Archbishop Savva Tikhomirov (1819–1896), who was particularly close to him and had greater access to him than anyone else, provides much information about Filaret in his **Chronicle of My Life**, written with extraordinary pedantry; but all of it serves more to provide an external characterization of this hierarch than to reveal his soul, although Savva, of course, knew more than he wrote. In addition to everything else, Savva published a wealth of material on Filaret’s administrative activities, which researchers have yet to fully comprehend. From the pages of these books, we see a prince of the Church who was, as it were, a servant of two masters: the Heavenly One and the earthly one. Yes, Filaret often allowed himself to speak critically about the relationship between the state and the Church, but always only to a certain extent. No other hierarch of the Synodal era did as much as Filaret to provide a religious foundation and justification for Russia’s state-political system and its autocracy; the Church’s service to the state did not contradict his ecclesiastical views, which could most likely be compared to the conservative views of Joseph of Volotsk¹²²⁵. He did not use all of his great authority to propose urgent reforms. When, after Nicholas’s death, a new spirit—the spirit of the “1860s”—began gradually to permeate the life of the Russian Church,

¹²²³ Rhodos. *Op. cit.*, p. XX; Nikanor, Archbishop. *Op. cit.*, p. 26. We have mentioned only a few names here; there were many other bishops who deserve mention, but this could be the subject of a separate study devoted to the Russian episcopate of the 19th century. Perhaps another historian would have cited different names—it depends on one’s perspective. Biographies of church hierarchs are very often quite incomplete and frequently written in an official tone, especially in obituaries, so that the positive and negative aspects of the bishops’ activities are portrayed in a “Synodal spirit.”

¹²²⁴ The “Filaret literature” is extremely extensive (cf. RBS, which lists the most important works). The primary sources for assessing the ecclesiastical and church-political actions and views of Metropolitan Filaret Drozdov are his numerous letters, sermons, speeches, and administrative decrees, published by Archbishop Savva Tikhomirov in several volumes; almost all of these volumes were previously held in the Berlin State Library. In addition, important sources include: Savva (Tikhomirov), **Chronicle of My Life**, 9 vols. (primarily the first 3 volumes), as well as the correspondence between P. S. Kazansky, a professor at the Moscow Theological Academy, and his brother, Archbishop Platon of Kostroma (1860s), in: **BV**. 1903. And yet, it cannot be said that the extensive literature on Filaret satisfactorily reveals all aspects of his activities and his views; in fact, his ecclesiastical and political views still await specialized research.

¹²²⁵ Filaret. *Collection of Opinions*. Vol. 4, p. 578; Vol. 5, p. 362; Vol. 4, p. 469; Vol. 5, p. 232; Vol. 7, p. 49; Supplementary Volume, p. 143, etc.

Filaret, although he himself cautiously made some proposals (more regarding the method of church governance than in the sense of genuine reform), nevertheless resolutely opposed this spirit¹²²⁶.

Our assessment will likely provoke critical objections, but, to the extent that we have been able to gain insight into the inner world of Filaret (Drozdov), we have come to the conclusion that this hierarch was not a staunch opponent of the state-church system of his era; he merely sought, within its framework, to secure greater freedom for the Church without encroaching upon the state's guardianship over it; by eliminating certain unhealthy phenomena from church life, he wished to spiritually strengthen the Church, which was still to remain under state guardianship. It is clear that Filaret's views can be seen only as a palliative measure; "Filaret the Wise," as Emperor Nicholas called him, considered the Church's spiritual strength too weak to fight the state for its freedom—and yet none of his contemporaries knew the inner life of the Church better than Filaret himself. Filaret's era was a period when the government, exercising its right of guardianship, sought to penetrate even more deeply into the inner life of the Church, and, despite all that has been said above, it was precisely Filaret who managed to partially curb these government efforts—but only in those areas where, as he believed, no dissonance could arise in the "symphony" between the state and the Church.

Another Filaret, Metropolitan of Kyiv (1779–1857, 1837–1857)—"Filaret the Pious," as Emperor Nicholas called him—was close in his views to Filaret Drozdov and was also a conservative, but his conservatism drew on different sources than that of Filaret of Moscow. He was irreconcilably opposed to the state church in Russia and expressed his opposition by refusing to attend meetings of the Holy Synod, of which he was a member. But his authority in the Church was so great that the government tacitly tolerated such obstruction. A strict ascetic himself, who knew how to combine the dignity of a church hierarch with personal humility, he, like Filaret Drozdov, was not a supporter of far-reaching reforms. However, on one issue they held opposing views. Filaret (Drozdov) was in favor of translating the Holy Scriptures from Church Slavonic into Russian, a move viewed with disapproval by the government of Nicholas I, whereas Filaret of Kiev was a staunch opponent of such a translation¹²²⁷. Their views on monasticism also differed. Filaret of Moscow was not inclined to encourage the practice of spiritual fatherhood; one might even say that he partly disapproved of it, seeing in it a kind of encroachment on the hierarchical structure of the Church. Filaret of Kyiv, however, even during his time as head of the Kaluga Diocese (1819–1825), did much to ensure that the practice of spiritual fatherhood took deep root in the Optina Hermitage, which was under his jurisdiction; subsequently, he always treated the spiritual fathers with kindness and patronage. In terms of volume, his literary legacy cannot be compared to that of Filaret Drozdov, but the author's personality traits emerge more distinctly and clearly in his letters than in those of Filaret of Moscow. "Filaret the Pious" was not as eloquent or as logically consistent in his reasoning as Filaret of Moscow; his letters are brief—but they are filled with humility, profundity, spiritual strength, and remarkable simplicity. Upon reading his letters, the reader immediately notices how alien Filaret of Kyiv was to the official spirit of ecclesiastical authority, how he suffered from state-sanctioned ecclesiasticalism, yet bore this suffering with ascetic humility¹²²⁸.

The stance of Filaret of Moscow and his restraint toward state-sanctioned ecclesiastical authority exerted a certain influence on the hierarchs; the second, rather numerous group of 19th-century bishops was partly composed precisely of those prelates who drew conclusions from his ecclesiastical policy. These were bishops who knew how to remain within the bounds of state-sanctioned ecclesiastical authority. Some of them simply did not openly oppose the spirit of the Synodal era, while others—especially during the tenure of Ober-Procurator K. P. Pobedonostsev (1881–1905)¹²²⁹ and later, until 1917—were staunch proponents of that spirit.

¹²²⁶ In 1856, the question of the possibility of convening a Local Council of the Russian Church was raised with great caution. Cf.: *Russkiy Arkhiv*, 1883, vol. 3, pp. 175–203, which contains an abridged version of A. N. Muravyov's memorandum "On the State of the Orthodox Church in Russia," as well as: Filaret, *Collection of Opinions*, vol. 4, pp. 141, 149. Filaret's reform proposals did not go beyond a suggestion to discuss the following issues: 1. External improvements to the divine service (piety, solemnity); 2. The establishment of new dioceses; 3. Measures against schism. Chistovich, I. *Leading Figures*. p. 361.

¹²²⁷ Chistovich. *Leading Figures*. p. 361.

¹²²⁸ For more on Metropolitan Filaret Amfiteatrov, see the major work: Sergius (Vasilevsky), Archimandrite. *His Eminence Filaret, known as Theodosius (Amfiteatrov) in monastic life, Metropolitan of Kyiv and Halych*. 3 vols. (1888) (which was unavailable to me); Smirnov, D., "Filaret Amfiteatrov," in: *Collection "At the Trinity in the Academy"* (1914). pp. 223–251; and also Leskov, N., "Trifles of a Bishop's Life," in: *Collected Works*, vol. 35 (1903). pp. 22, 107, etc. His letters to Bishop Ignatius Bryanchaninov (BV. 1913. 3) and Archbishop Innokenty Borisov (TKDA. 1884. 5); on Filaret's attitude toward the Optina Hermitage, see the short article: Firsov, A. I., "The Kozelskaya Optina Hermitage," in: *Ist. v. 1899*. 3; as well as: Chetverikov, "The Optina Hermitage."

¹²²⁹ For more on K. P. Pobedonoscev, see: Steinmann, F., and Hurwicz, E., *K. P. Pobjedonoszew: The Statesman of the Reaction under Alexander III* (Sources and Essays on Russian History, ed. K. Shtelin, vol. 11). His letters to Emperor Alexander III are

They devoted themselves entirely to administrative activities, which consumed all their time and energy, leaving them neither the time nor the opportunity to care for the salvation of their own souls. The connection between bishops of this type and the faithful in their dioceses was weak and tenuous. Archbishop Nikanor Brovkovich (1826–1890), who was no stranger to this trend himself—and was perhaps even one of its representatives—recounts in his “Biographical Notes” the stories of many bishops from the 1850s–1870s and illustrates the atmosphere in which their activities took place and how abnormal the bishops’ relationships were at times, not only with the Synod but also with society and the people¹²³⁰.

Among this group of bishops, we find many remarkable preachers and many excellent administrators; it would be impossible to list them all—that would take us too far afield from our topic. The more or less successful work of the bishops was greatly hindered by the frequent transfers of bishops from diocese to diocese, a practice that had been in place since the mid-19th century and later, under Synod Chief Prosecutor K. P. Pobedonostsev, became quite deliberate. Bishops administered a diocese for two or three years, and then they were transferred to another, often at the opposite end of Russia, where local and national conditions were entirely different from those at their previous post; as a result, they did not have time to establish close relationships with the clergy and the faithful, and during their brief tenure in office, they were unable to undertake and complete any meaningful initiatives. Nikanor’s “Notes” provide many examples of how, as a result of this system of administration established by the Synod and the Chief Prosecutor, many good and beneficial initiatives undertaken by individual diocesan bishops either remained unfinished or were completely thwarted. Not only during Pobedonostsev’s time, but also earlier, a bishop who displayed a certain degree of independence or spoke the truth—such as, for example, Bishop Agapit of Tomsk (Voskresensky; 1834–1841; † 1854) or Archbishop John of the Don (Dobrozrakov; 1847–1867; † 1872), was forced to retire¹²³¹. The fate of Archbishop Irinej of Irkutsk (Nesterovich; 1783–1864), who, under Nicholas I, fell victim to state interference in the life of the Church; at first, he was even declared insane, and he spent the rest of his life in retirement at a monastery¹²³².

The third group of bishops includes those who were scholars in monastic robes. Their fate was not always an easy one either. Russian theological scholarship—primarily in dogmatics, comparative theology, apologetics, and liturgy—during the reign of Emperor Nicholas I, and to some extent later as well, did not provide opportunities for objective scholarly research due to state oversight and the conservative views of Metropolitan Filaret.

Archbishop Nikanor Brovkovich, whom we have mentioned here more than once and who made significant contributions to the field of theological studies, tells us about the difficulties he and many of his contemporaries faced while studying at the theological academy and thereafter. He writes that in the 1950s, it was customary in the academies to gloss over sensitive issues; talented instructors were often removed from teaching “dangerous disciplines” and forced to sacrifice their expertise to work in “safe” disciplines, such as Greek or Christian archaeology¹²³³. Nikanor’s “Notes” characterize not only the state of theological schools in the 1850s and 1860s but also the situation of the scholarly monastic community. To supplement our

particularly revealing: P. Pobedonoszew’s *Letters to Alexander III*, 2 vols. (1925). Some of his works have been published in German translation: **Moskovitische Studien** (1904) and **Streitfragen der Gegenwart** (1897).

¹²³⁰ Nikanor. *Op. cit.*, p. 143, et al. For a characterization of the episcopate, see also: Pevnitsky. *Notes*, in: *Russkaya Statistika*, 1905, no. 7 and following; Filaret (Drozdov). *Letters to Archbishop Alexy of Tver* (1883). p. 211; Golubinsky, E. “On Reform in the Life of the Russian Church,” p. 117; Solovyov, S. M. “Notes,” in: *VE*, 1907, No. 3, pp. 74–76.

¹²³¹ On Bishop Agapitus: Nikanor. *Op. cit.* pp. 196–200; Additions. 43. p. 526; Filaret. *Sermons and Speeches*. 2 (1887). p. 279; Barsukov. *Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow*. p. 150. On Archbishop John: Nikanor. *Op. cit.* pp. 196, 226. Nathanael (Soborov), Bishop of Astrakhan, who attempted to oppose Pobedonostsev’s “autocracy,” was forced to leave his see in 1890: *Istoricheskoe Vedomost’* 1907, vol. 106, p. 1049. Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoyavlensky), who fought against Rasputin’s influence, was transferred from the St. Petersburg Diocese (1912–1915) to Kyiv, into “honorable exile” († 1918). *The Fall of the Tsarist Regime*. Vol. 1, pp. 361, 366; Vol. 4, pp. 164, 190, 195, 266, 271.

¹²³² *Materials for the History of the Orthodox Church during the Reign of Emperor Nicholas I*, in: *Collection 113*, Parts 1 and 2; *Christian Readings* 1881, Nos. 5–6.

¹²³³ Nikanor. *Op. cit.* pp. 258, 257, 253, 254, 269; the chapter “Excerpts from the Autobiography” (pp. 253–281) is particularly important. Archbishop Nikanor Brovkovich (1826–1890), though not a supporter of the synodal system, was among those bishops who considered any struggle against this system to be futile. And yet he embodied the best qualities of the episcopate and was known as a good administrator, preacher, and writer. His works in the field of Christian and idealist philosophy are directed against positivism and materialism (major work: *Positive Philosophy and Supersensual Being*, 1875). On Nikanor, see: D. V. F-v, “Features from the Life of His Eminence Nikanor, Archbishop of Kherson,” in **Istoricheskoe Obozrenie**, vol. 50 (1892), pp. 753–763; vol. 51 (1892), pp. 651 ff.

characterization of the Synodal era, let us mention the names of two more individuals marked by the tragedy of an inquisitive spirit and talent.

One of them was Archimandrite Makarii Glukharev (1792–1847). He was distinguished by an innate talent and brilliant knowledge of the Hebrew language and the Old Testament, which enabled him to engage in wide-ranging scholarly work. He had an open heart, filled with humility and love, combined with energy and a single-minded dedication to one clear goal—the translation of the Holy Scriptures into Russian. At first, he had no intention of taking monastic vows. But after becoming a teacher at the Yekaterinoslav Seminary, where he was sent upon graduating from the theological academy, he became close friends with Bishop Job (Potemkin)—whom we already know—and several other monks from Moldavia who belonged to Job’s circle, and in this way came into contact with the ascetic spirit of the school of Elder Paisius (Velichkovsky). He took monastic vows and spent some time at the Glinsk Hermitage with Elder Filaret, studying ascetic writings. He then became rector of the Kostroma Theological Seminary. His scholarly plans—to translate the Holy Scriptures into Russian and publish the translation—did not meet with the Synod’s approval; he was even advised to cease his attempts at translating the Scriptures. Feeling wronged and outraged, he resigned from his position as rector and returned to the Glinsk Hermitage (1825). However, Makarii was not the sort of man who could simply retreat to a monastery and devote himself to a contemplative life. He was hatching a plan for missionary work among the pagan peoples of Siberia.

In 1829, he set out for Siberia, and a year later, in 1830, he founded the Altai Mission and devoted all his energy to it—his missionary exploits became one of the most remarkable episodes in the history of the Russian mission. Thanks to his linguistic knowledge and aptitude for languages, Makarii easily learned the language of the indigenous people; he compiled a dictionary and translated the Psalter, prayers, the Gospel of Matthew, the rite of baptism, and other texts into the local language. For 14 years he labored in the Altai region, tirelessly and selflessly, but never received serious support from the Synod bureaucrats, who allocated him a ridiculously meager sum of 570 rubles annually for his mission. Macarius did not seek to achieve an impressive number of converts at any cost or to present the Synod with impressive statistics; in preaching Christianity, he resorted neither to coercion nor to flattery of the natives. What mattered to him was not the number of converts, but the genuine Christian education of the Church’s new children. Even in the Altai, he continued working on the translation of the Holy Scriptures, hoping to convince the Synod through his notes of the necessity and benefit of the translation, but he did not succeed in this. Exhausted spiritually and suffering from physical ailments, Makarii was forced to return to Russia in 1843. He spent his final years in a monastery in the Oryol Diocese, planning to make a pilgrimage to the holy sites in Jerusalem should he recover; he passed away on May 18, 1847. “Macarius was a true servant of Christ God,” said Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow after his death, but this praise came too late: the talented scholar, brilliant Hebrew scholar, and austere monk had already passed into the next world, having been far more a victim of the synodal system than of his own tireless labors. His fate serves as yet another proof of how poorly this system knew how to use the resources at its disposal for the good of the Church—a system whose ossified, rigid spirit often simply destroyed them¹²³⁴

“The Story of Archimandrite Theodore Bukharev” unfolded in the 1860s, when Russia was undergoing an extremely dramatic period in its spiritual history: church life—or, rather, a portion of the clergy and the church hierarchy—came into contact at that time with the upheavals of political thought.

Theodor Bukharev (1824–1871) attracted the attention of his teachers even as a student. In 1846, he graduated from the Moscow Theological Academy and immediately took monastic vows; he later openly admitted that he did so because of his frail health and to find inner peace, as well as to devote himself entirely to theological scholarship.

The lectures on exegesis he delivered at the Moscow Academy aroused genuine enthusiasm among the students; the depth and vividness of these lectures, as well as his rejection of scholastic methods in presenting the material (characteristic of his predecessors in the department), allowed the young scholar to breathe new life into academic life. Even Metropolitan Filaret, who was not entirely immune to the scholastic

¹²³⁴ On Makarii Glukharev: Reports. 1836–1844; his letters (1905); Rodosky. *Op. cit.*, pp. 255–257; Yastrebov, I. A Brief Sketch of the Life and Work of Archimandrite Makarii Glukharev, Founder of the Altai Mission (1893); P. V. Ptokhov. Archimandrite Makarii G., Founder of the Altai Mission (1899); I. Chistovich. History of the Translation of the Bible into Russian (2nd ed., 1899). pp. 207–240; Florovsky. *Op. cit.*, pp. 187 ff. Makarii’s translations were later published in the journal **Orthodox Review** (1860–1867).

spirit himself, was initially favorably disposed toward Theodore. A lively and vivid interpretation of the Gospel and Apostolic eras also characterizes Bukharev's work **Several Articles on the Holy Apostle Paul** (published in 1861), which contains a profound comparison of the Old and New Testaments. Gogol's famous "Selected Passages from Correspondence with Friends," which had sparked heated controversy in its day, made a very strong impression on Bukharev. In defense of Gogol, he wrote the essay "Three Letters" (1848), which he showed to Metropolitan Filaret; the latter strongly disapproved of it. ("Three Letters" was not published until 1861.) Meanwhile, the young instructor encountered difficulties and friction at the academy in his relations with the rector, mainly due to certain explanations contained in his lectures, which were deemed too "liberal" and "Protestant"; soon Bukharev was elevated to the rank of archimandrite and transferred to the Kazan Theological Academy to a less controversial chair in dogmatic theology.

His lectures in Kazan once again evoked sympathy and enthusiasm among the students, for here, too, Bukharev demonstrated a new method, offered fresh interpretations, and drew on a completely new scientific and critical approach. His sermons earned him great popularity among the public. "Evenings with Father Theodor," where religious issues were vividly discussed and at which he himself was the main speaker—and in his conversations he displayed a clear inclination toward mysticism—became the center of Kazan society's spiritual life, which once again aroused the displeasure of the authorities. This time, Bukharev was transferred to St. Petersburg to the Committee on Spiritual Censorship, where, it was hoped, the spiritually exhausting nature of the work would cure him of his excessive emotional agitation.

In his new post, Bukharev made an enemy of V. I. Askochensky, the publisher of the magazine **Domashnyaya Beseda**—a man who was the embodiment of rigid religious conservatism, a "gloomy fanatic," as Bukharev would later describe him. The ban on some of Askochensky's articles sparked in him an unquenchable hatred toward Bukharev. Askochensky's letter to the Academic Council of the Moscow Academy accusing Bukharev was written in such a crude manner that the Academic Council forwarded the letter to Bukharev with a recommendation that he sue Askochensky for defamation, but Bukharev did not do so.

In 1860, his book **On Orthodoxy in Relation to the Modern Age** was published—an attempt to draw upon the foundations of Christian doctrine to regulate social relations by reconciling Christianity with socio-political life. Some of the author's arguments remain relevant to today's readers; the book takes the first steps toward addressing the issue of "Christian socialism" in accordance with the prevailing views of the time regarding the need for social reforms in Russian life¹²³⁵. Bukharev's book drew criticism and abuse from Askochensky, who called the author a "heretic" and an "atheist" and, in general, crossed all bounds of decency. Despite this, Bukharev, in his capacity as censor, allowed this criticism to be published; he published his own response in the journal **Son of the Fatherland**, where he once again set forth his arguments regarding the social mission of Christianity. But Askochensky's intrigues were not in vain—Archimandrite Bukharev lost his position as censor and was transferred to the Nikitsky Monastery in Pereyaslav. His new work, **The Apocalypse**, to which he had devoted many years, was barred from publication by the censors, and Askochensky's attacks continued. Struggling with a severe inner conflict—which was particularly exacerbated by his physical ailments and a sense of emotional despair—Archimandrite Theodore came to the decision to renounce his monastic vows. This occurred in the summer of 1863. He justified this step by explaining that it had become impossible for him to remain a monk any longer, because inwardly, with all his heart, he protested against those whom his monastic vows obliged him to obey.

This decision further deepened the tragedy of his life. Without any means of support, despised by many, and receiving help only from a few friends, Bukharev lived for another seven years. It is difficult to understand another decision he made shortly after 1863—his marriage. All his attempts to find a position proved unsuccessful. He lived on meager fees for short magazine articles and on the money given to him by a few of his acquaintances; Metropolitan Filaret also secretly sent him money on several occasions. In 1871, Bukharev died after a long illness.

In 1865 and 1866, he managed to publish two more books, which discuss the same themes as his earlier works; the second of these books, **My Apology** (1866), was his final attempt to respond to criticism—

¹²³⁵ Archimandrite Theodore Bukharev was not the only one who attempted to "reconcile" Christianity with social issues. In this regard, the sermons of Archimandrite John Sokolov († 1868)—who later became Bishop of Smolensk (1866–1868), though his career was hindered by his "liberalism"—are also significant. On him: Vinogradov, V. "The Last of the Mohicans," in: BV. 1911. 10. pp. 278 ff.; Barsov, T. "John, Bishop of Smolensk, as a Preacher," in: Christian Readings. 1872.

coming from both conservative and liberal circles—of his views on the social mission of Christianity, as well as an attempt to defend himself against a wide variety of often unfounded accusations leveled against him¹²³⁶. Bukharev was a victim not only of ecclesiastical conservatism, for even in liberal circles he found no genuine understanding. His hope, after renouncing his monastic vows, to find supporters in those circles and thereby be of service proved futile.

For Bukharev, taking monastic vows was not a soul-transforming event. As was the case with other members of the scholarly monastic community, his ordination gave rise to tragic inner conflicts rather than opening up new opportunities for scholarly work. His personal life unfolded against the backdrop of the unhealthy atmosphere of the late 1950s and early 1960s—a time when Russian conservatism, in its struggle against the spirit of the “era of reforms,” sought to assert its principles in all areas of ecclesiastical and state-political life. The antagonist of this conservatism—the liberalism of the 1960s, which was not free from currents hostile to the Church and even outright atheistic—was also unable to accept Bukharev’s views; for it, the mysticism evident in Bukharev’s writings was completely unacceptable and even somewhat suspicious, as it attested to the author’s adherence to a worldview foreign to liberals. In essence, they were right, since Bukharev had been ousted from church circles by the rigid spirit of the Synodal system solely because he had dared to voice aloud the doubts that others—such as the future Archbishop Nikanor Brovovich—had managed, after a long internal struggle, to keep hidden within themselves.

Higher theological schools also felt the impact of the spirit of the times. The 1860s were marked by a decline in the number of students and faculty members taking monastic vows. In earlier times, when Metropolitan Filaret Drozdov or Archimandrite Gregory Postnikov (Metropolitan of St. Petersburg from 1856 to 1860) served as rectors of the St. Petersburg Academy, they were the main driving forces behind monastic ordinations among the student body. Now, however, very little was being done by the rectors and professors to encourage scholarly monasticism. The number of associate professors and professors belonging to this group had noticeably decreased. There were even difficulties in finding suitable candidates to fill episcopal chairs.

In the 1970s and 1980s, this shortage was offset by the fact that widowed priests could take monastic vows; they became hieromonks, then archimandrites, and were very quickly consecrated as bishops. The number of bishops from among widowed priests was quite large in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Widowed priests had been able to receive episcopal consecration before, but this was rare. Now, however, nearly half of the bishops began their ministry as parish priests. This imparted certain new characteristics to the episcopate—not in terms of ecclesiastical views, for bishops who had risen from the ranks of the parish clergy were even more devoted to the synodal system than those who had come from the monastic order—but primarily in the area of diocesan administration. Being well acquainted with the life of the parish clergy, they paid it more attention and took greater care of its needs. The consequences of this development were entirely positive, and it would likely be worthwhile for a historian to devote a special study to this topic¹²³⁷.

¹²³⁶ On F. M. Bukharev, see: Znamensky, P., **History of the Kazan Theological Academy**, vol. 1, pp. 124 ff., 142; vol. 2, pp. 200 ff.; Savva, **Chronicle**, vol. 2, p. 724; Smirnov, *History of the Moscow Theological Academy until Its Reorganization (1879)*, pp. 138, 260, 460, 628 ff.; cf. letters from Bukharev’s contemporaries in: *At the Trinity in the Academy (1914)*, pp. 123, 237, 571; on his writings: S. A. Vengerov, *Sources for a Dictionary of Russian Writers*, Vol. 1. On the controversy regarding the “reconciliation” between Christianity and life: P. Znamensky, *Theological Controversy of the 1860s on the Relationship of Orthodoxy to Modern Life (1902)*.

¹²³⁷ In my card index, I have compiled information on 30 19th-century bishops (this is only a fraction of the total) who began their service to the Church as parish priests. I will mention here only a few names: Ambrose Klyucharev, Archbishop of Kharkiv (1882–1901), also known as an outstanding preacher; Anastasy Dobradin, Archbishop of Voronezh (1890–1906); Anthony Vadkovsky, Metropolitan of St. Petersburg (1898–1912); Anthony Rafalsky, Metropolitan of St. Petersburg (1843–1848); Gerasim Dobroserdov, Bishop of Astrakhan (1878–1888), known for the ascetic spirit of his sermons and writings; Gury Okhotin, Archbishop of Novgorod (1900–1912); Dimitri Sambikin, Archbishop of Kazan (1905–1908); Dionysius Khitrov, Archbishop of Ufa (1888–1896), a highly successful missionary and “liberal bishop” who was popular among the parish clergy for his concern for the needs of priests in remote dioceses; Innokenty Veniaminov, Metropolitan of Moscow (1868–1879), an outstanding missionary renowned for his work in Siberia; John Kratirov, Bishop of Saratov (1899–1903), unpopular among his fellow bishops, he openly opposed the “Synodal spirit” and was forced into retirement († 1909); Lawrentiy Nekrasov, Bishop of Tula (1904–1908); Nikandr Molchanov, Archbishop of Lithuania (1904–1910); Nikolai Zarkevich, auxiliary bishop of the Kherson Diocese (1884–85), known for his public lectures and published works directed against positivism; Stefan Arkhangelsky, Archbishop of Kursk (1911–1914), a proponent of “reforms,” particularly reforms of theological schools and parish life, and the author of several significant works in the field of Christian moral theology; Vissarion Nechaev, Bishop of Kostroma (1891–1903), who served as a parish priest in Moscow for 34 years and founded the journal **Spiritually Beneficial Reading** (1860); Vitaly Gregulovich, Bishop of Mogilev (1881–1885), a very

In the second half of the 1880s, a new champion of the scholarly monastic order emerged. He was the young, talented, intelligent, and energetic Archimandrite Anthony Khrapovitsky (1863–1936)¹²³⁸. A man who, for half a century, exerted a profound influence on the life of the Russian Church—often positively, but at times negatively; on the one hand, he opposed the synodal system, while on the other, he supported it; an admirer of monasticism, he nevertheless believed that monastics should not devote themselves to a contemplative life, but were called to actively and effectively influence the ecclesiastical and political life of Russia. He was a proponent of the autocratic rule of the episcopate, to be headed by a powerful patriarch. It is no coincidence that his favorite figure in the history of the Russian Church was Patriarch Nikon¹²³⁹. Anthony's cherished goal was the restoration of the patriarchal throne; he stated that the patriarchate should become the main pillar of the monarchy in Russia¹²⁴⁰. Anton Khrapovitsky saw the unity of the tsar and the patriarch as the only possible path for Russia and the Russian Church in terms of state, church, and politics. Thus, as we familiarize ourselves with his views, we see the idea of “Moscow—the Third Rome” come to life once again, along with dreams of a “new Nikon.”

Anthony Khrapovitsky encouraged monasticism as an influential institution in the life of the Church, but first and foremost he patronized scholarly monasticism. He himself took monastic vows at a very early age. Born into a noble family in 1863, he entered the St. Petersburg Theological Academy after graduating from high school and received his academic diploma in 1881 at the age of just 18. Four years later, he took monastic vows (1885), and a few months later (at the age of 22), he was ordained a hieromonk; he began teaching at the Kholm Theological Seminary, and in 1887, after defending his dissertation in philosophy, Hieromonk Anthony was appointed assistant professor at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy in the Department of the Old Testament¹²⁴¹. At the age of 27, he became an archimandrite and rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Seminary, but he held this position for only four months before being transferred to the post of rector of the Moscow Theological Academy (1890). In 1897, at the age of 34, he was ordained a bishop and appointed vicar bishop of the Kazan Diocese, while retaining his position as rector. Three years later (1900), he was granted an independent episcopal see in Ufa (1900–1902).

As an associate professor, professor, and rector of three academies, Anthony exerted a profound influence on his students through his talent and brilliant eloquence. Everywhere he went, he encouraged young men to take monastic vows. At that time, in the 1880s, the number of students who decided to become monks

*talented man; while serving as a parish priest in St. Petersburg in the early 1860s, he gained widespread popularity through his sermons and public lectures, especially among the working class and the intelligentsia; In 1860, Vitaly founded the journal *Stranik*, which maintained a high standard during the period when he served as its publisher (1860–1869); As auxiliary bishop of the Volyn Diocese (1879–1881) and Bishop of Mogilev, he distinguished himself as a champion of public education: in his diocese, he established 268 parish schools; Vladimir Bogoyavlensky, Metropolitan of Moscow (1898–1912), St. Petersburg (1912–1915), and Kyiv (1915–1918), known for his opposition to Rasputin.*

¹²³⁸ See his biography in: Collection of Selected Writings (1935), pp. III–XLVI; and also: Nestor, Archbishop. Metropolitan Anthony (Harbin, 1936), in which the author attempts to characterize Anthony's personality and activities; unfortunately, this pamphlet is largely biased.

¹²³⁹ M. V. Zyzykin's three-volume work on Patriarch Nikon, published several years ago, which attempts to rehabilitate Nikon, was written not without the influence of Anthony Khrapovitsky.

¹²⁴⁰ In this regard, Anton's article “The Restoration of the Patriarchate,” published in **The Voice of the Church**, 1912, No. 1, is particularly significant. Let us outline the main points of his biography: 1890—rector of the Moscow Theological Academy; 1895—rector of the Kazan Theological Academy; 1899—auxiliary bishop of the Kazan Diocese while retaining his position as rector; 1902–1914—Bishop of Volyn; from 1906—Archbishop; 1906–1907—member of the State Council representing the clergy; 1912–1913 – Member of the Synod; 1914–1917 – Archbishop of Kharkiv; in the spring of 1917, he was removed from office by the Provisional Government; upon the restoration of the Patriarchate in Russia (1918), Anthony was one of three candidates for the position of Patriarch; 1918 – Metropolitan of Kyiv; in late 1918, he was arrested by Petliura's Ukrainian government and exiled to a monastery in Galicia; there, Anthony wrote a book about Dostoevsky; in 1919, he was released at the request of the Entente powers and returned to Kyiv; He worked closely with Denikin's government (the White Army); in 1920, he arrived in Constantinople; In 1920, he became head of the Supreme Church Administration Abroad (the so-called “Karlovac Group” of bishops) and from that time on claimed supreme ecclesiastical authority over the entire Russian Orthodox emigration, effectively breaking off communion with the Moscow Patriarchate. He died in Belgrade (Serbia) in 1936.

¹²⁴¹ His dissertation was titled “Psychological Evidence in Favor of Free Will and Moral Responsibility”; this work was written under the influence of the philosophy of the Slavophiles, but even more so by Vladimir Solovyov (his early philosophical works, not his later ones, since Anthony was a fierce opponent of Catholicism) and the works of Dostoevsky—two thinkers who had a great influence on Khrapovitsky's views in his youth. However, it should be noted that Anthony's “neo-Slavophilism” and his ecclesiastical-political views were very far removed from those of the Slavophiles—both the “senior” (I. V. Kireevsky or A. S. Khomyakov) and the “younger” ones (such as Yuri Samarin and I. S. Aksakov).

was extremely small due to the sharply critical attitude of the academic youth toward monasticism¹²⁴². The passionate advocacy of the young archimandrite and bishop proved successful at all three academies, and soon the number of students and faculty members taking monastic vows increased significantly. Anthony published a pamphlet titled “On Scholarly Monasticism” (1889), which was widely distributed among students. On his advice, the young Archimandrite Innokenty (Belyaev)—a widowed priest who had been tonsured a monk by Anthony in Kazan—wrote a major work titled “On Tonsure into Monasticism”¹²⁴³. Other patrons of monasticism included Metropolitan Anthony of St. Petersburg (Vadkovsky; 1898–1912), who, during his tenure as rector of the St. Petersburg Academy (1887–88), *encouraged a great many students to enter monastic life, and, finally, the new rector of the St. Petersburg Academy, Bishop Sergius (Stragorodsky; 1901–1903), who later became Patriarch of Moscow († 1944).*

Anton Khrapovitsky’s work takes us into the final period of the existence of the scholarly monastic order and the episcopate of the Russian Church prior to 1917—a period that, one might say, is practically our own time—which is why we have so little objective material on this concluding phase; if, in conclusion, we attempt to draw general conclusions about the nature of these two ecclesiastical institutions, we must say that both, in essence, stood apart from authentic Russian monasticism, although both the learned monks and the bishops considered themselves to be true representatives of monasticism, and the Russian public very often perceived them as such as well. The reason for this misunderstanding lay in the fact that the church authorities, in need of candidates to fill episcopal sees, no longer hoped to raise the standard of monastic life to such a degree that they could find these candidates among the monastic brotherhood. Church life in the nineteenth century was, of course, much more complex than in the sixteenth, and the episcopate was required, by virtue of its education, to be on a level commensurate with the cultural life of the country and its people. The creation of the class of learned monastics might have been viewed positively had its development taken a different course, but the Church at that time also needed educated people to teach in theological schools. The scholarly monastic order had to serve both of these purposes, as had been envisioned by Metropolitan Filaret, who in the early 19th century began to encourage the formation of a scholarly monastic order to meet educational needs and to administer the Russian Church. However, the practical implementation of his plans led to the situation where the scholarly monastic community—and the episcopate that emerged from its ranks—essentially found themselves outside the history of Russian monasticism¹²⁴⁴.

Chapter XV. The Institution of the Elder and Asceticism in the 18th–19th Centuries

1. The Origins of the Elder System and Its Essence

As our account shows, the development of Russian monasticism from its origins to the end of the 19th century was not without friction and complications. The difficulties of this development lay in the fact that monastic life was constantly threatened by the danger of secularization, even in those times when the monks were not particularly inclined toward social and charitable activities outside the monastery walls. In the Russian Church, as we know, monasteries could never completely isolate themselves from the life of the

¹²⁴² Nikanor. Op. cit., p. 122, et al.

¹²⁴³ Innokenty (Belyaev), Archimandrite. On Taking Monastic Vows (1899); Innokenty Belyaev (1862–1913) rose rapidly through the ranks: by 1903 he was already Bishop of Tambov; in 1909 he was appointed Archbishop and Exarch of Georgia, succeeding Archbishop Nikon (of Sofia), who had been assassinated on May 25, 1908, but he died in 1913. Under Anthony’s influence, the following took monastic vows: the talented student Mikhail Gribanovsky, Bishop of Tavria (1856–1898); Ioann Alekseev, Bishop of Perm (1902–1905); and Sergiy Stragorodsky († 1946) (actually † 1944. —Translator’s note), who was a student in his final semester when Anthony Khrapovitsky began teaching at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy; and Dionysius Valedinsky, Metropolitan of the Polish Orthodox Church (as of 1947). Sergius is also known for his participation in the so-called “religious-philosophical gatherings” (1902–03) of the St. Petersburg intelligentsia; later, as Archbishop of Finland, Sergius was one of the most active members of the Pre-Council Assembly (1906); after 1918, he played an important role in the ecclesiastical life of Russia, becoming *locum tenens* of the patriarchal throne (1925–1943) (in fact, 1936–1943; until 1936, he served as deputy *locum tenens*. —Translator’s note); he died in 1946 (in 1944. —Translator’s note) as Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

¹²⁴⁴ In 1862, the Chief Prosecutor of the Synod, Akhmatov, even raised the question before the theological academies as to whether monasticism was truly necessary for episcopal consecration, which was quite characteristic of the views held at that time regarding the episcopate and its relationship to monasticism. Archimandrite John Sokolov wrote a treatise titled “On the Monasticism of Bishops” (in: Prav. Sob. 1863), which received the approval of Metropolitan Filaret Drozdov. Savva. Chronicle. 2. p. 731; 4. p. 487. John Sokolov, later Bishop of Smolensk († 1868), has been mentioned here several times; cf. note 1228.

people: at first because they were the cultural centers of the country, and later, from the beginning of the 16th century, because by that time they had become deeply embedded in the fabric of the state's political and economic life, and this drew them into the process of secularization. Although this process had gone quite far and penetrated deeply into the very heart of monastic life, a correct understanding of the purpose and meaning of monastic asceticism had not been irretrievably lost. At a certain point, a strong desire arose to revitalize Russian monasticism from within, and the ascetic and mystical tradition of the Eastern Church was to become the spiritual source of this revival. Those who sought this did not devise any plans for monastic reform from above, but sought the spiritual renewal of monasticism through the revival of the ascetic-mystical spirit within the monastic community itself. The history of Russian spiritual guidance, beginning in the last quarter of the 18th century and ending in 1917, shows that this aspiration did not remain fruitless. The process of secularization did not destroy the healthy forces of monasticism; this is attested not only by the elderhood: even outside the sphere of the elders' spiritual influence, there were many examples of genuine asceticism, and this may serve as further proof that the correct understanding of the meaning and purpose of Christian asceticism had not been completely distorted.

The elder tradition, which nurtured many genuine Christian ascetics, and asceticism outside the sphere of the elders' spiritual influence illuminated and warmed the lifeless and gloomy atmosphere of the Synodal era. It is clear that the zealots of monasticism and their contemporaries saw in the elder tradition a hope for the further revival and flourishing of the monastic life in Russia—a hope that was fulfilled only in part.

We have written about the elderhood before, in the book **The Life and Teachings of the Elders** [], **where we attempted to clarify its nature and essence, its main features, and the characteristics of its influence on the world—all illustrated by examples of elders whom we consider particularly outstanding. In this work, in connection with the general history of Russian monasticism, we will also provide a brief history of the institution of the spiritual father**¹²⁴⁵.

The tradition of the elders, which has survived to this day on Mount Athos and in other Orthodox monasteries, has existed since ancient times in the monasteries of the Eastern Church. It should be noted right away that it was not imposed from above by ecclesiastical authority. It emerged in the very first monastic communities and flourished in the fertile soil of the most ancient monasteries of the East. The spiritual fatherhood, born of the early Christian ascetic and mystical mindset, became the foundation of monastic discipline and the spiritual guidance of future monks.

Sources describing the ascetic feats of the ancient Egyptian fathers show that the spiritual fatherhood system was already flourishing there during the time of St. Anthony the Great († 356) and served as the primary means of spiritual formation for novice monks. In essence, the spiritual fatherhood described in ancient texts—compiled in the form of the lives of the holy desert fathers—was not only a means of strengthening external monastic discipline; it also served to reveal to the young ascetic, seeking Christian perfection, the inner meaning of this perfection according to Christ's teaching, so as to root him in the spirit of that teaching. Historically, the significance of the role of the elder grew in tandem with the growing importance of the spiritual father in Orthodox monasteries. A spiritually experienced elderly monk, who in the earliest ascetic writings—for example, in the Egyptian Paterikon **Sayings of the Egyptian Fathers**, a text from the second half of the 5th century, or in another Paterikon, **Verba seniorum** [*"Sayings of the Fathers"*], was referred to as **patsr pneumatikTj** or **pater spiritualis** (spiritual father), was not a priest or spiritual father in the strict sense of the word¹²⁴⁶. For the most part, he was not a priest but a monk who, with the blessing or permission of the abbot, provided spiritual guidance to young novice monks and explained to them the meaning of the ascetic life in the monastery. In small monasteries, the abbot himself usually served as the spiritual father¹²⁴⁷. Such a spiritual father—whom we will call a "starets," since this Slavic and Russian term fully corresponds to what the pater spiritualis was for his spiritual children—was chosen by the novices themselves, which from the very beginning was considered their right, understandable from a religious and

¹²⁴⁵ On the office of elder, see the bibliography below, which, in our opinion, lists nearly all works devoted to this phenomenon in the history of monastic asceticism in the Eastern Church.

¹²⁴⁶ *Apophthegmata*, in: Migne, PG 65; see the very valuable study by W. Bousset, **Apophthegmata** (1923); also worthy of attention is the work by M. S. J. Viller and K. S. J. Rahner, **Ascese und Mystik in der Väterzeit** (1939). pp. 115–121; the main literature on the subject is listed here. "Verba Seniorum," in: PG 73, pp. 855–1066. On other "Paterika" and "Flora": Viller, pp. 110 ff.

¹²⁴⁷ Smirnov, in: BV. 1904. No. 11. pp. 447 ff. Cf. also: Holl., **Enthusiasmus und Bußgewalt**, pp. 255 ff.

pastoral standpoint¹²⁴⁸. As a rule, the elders were also the spiritual fathers of their novices in the modern sense of the word “spiritual father,” but often the novices had, in addition to the elder, a special spiritual father—the spiritual father of the entire monastery—who, however, in this case did not exert a particularly great influence on the spiritual growth of novice monks, nor did he seek to do so, so as not to interfere with the elder’s spiritual guidance or hinder the novice on his monastic path.

The elder’s task was to guide the soul and will of the young monk. According to the views of the ancient ascetics, this task was an extremely grave responsibility; serving under an elder was not easy for a novice, but the elder, too, by accepting a young monk into his care, took upon himself a heavy cross. In a certain sense, the role of the elder was a means of Christian perfection for both: for the elder himself and for the novice entrusted to him. St. Ephrem the Syrian, one of the greatest and most rigorous ascetics of the Church, wrote about the duties of an elder in such a way that we come to understand both how great the elder’s responsibility was for the souls entrusted to him, and that the spiritual guidance of the novice was meant to serve the spiritual growth of the elder himself: “A soul has been entrusted to you, brother,” St. Ephrem the Syrian addresses such an elder, “gird up your loins like a man, for you are undertaking no small feat; you have taken upon yourself the task of perfect souls. Therefore, be very vigilant; this task demands great attention—do not neglect it; on the contrary, let our mutual dealings be conducted in all holiness, so that, through our inattention, the enemy may not sow anything of his own, taking advantage of the subordinate’s obedience. And the elders must be a model of every virtue for the younger ones, so as not to give cause for blame to those who seek it... A city is built piece by piece, and conflict arises over its governance. The inexperienced cannot wield a bow as well as the experienced, and it is impossible for a youth to run as fast as a man. If you place a burden beyond a youth’s strength upon him, you will harm him; and if you do not care for his education, he will be good for nothing. Likewise, beginners must be guided with discernment—do not impose burdens on them out of vanity, nor neglect their souls. But consider wisely, just as you yourself once obeyed your superiors, and in the same way, gradually teach him the lessons of asceticism... If, after completing the vigil and the usual rule, you yourself intend to stay awake, but your subordinate would like to sleep a little, grant him rest. For, as stated above, it is impossible for a youth to keep pace with an adult... If he is physically weak, do not reject him, but work with him and be patient with him, like a wise farmer who has planted a good crop in his field. Make every effort, then, to present his body as a living sacrifice, pleasing to God, so that we too may not be condemned along with those whom the apostle accuses, saying: “They have a form of godliness, but have denied its power” (1 Tim. 3:5). Therefore, teach your disciple every good work, for it is written: “If you separate the righteous from the unrighteous, you will be like My mouth” (¹²⁴⁹). The duty of spiritual guidance required great patience and humility from the elder in his dealings with the novice or monk entrusted to his care.

The elders regarded the requirements of Christian asceticism as the foundation of spiritual guidance; the Church Fathers, who carefully preserved this tradition, spoke of their special significance, drawing on both theoretical concepts and practical experience. This system of spiritual formation combines ascetic experience and Orthodox mysticism. Thus, the role of the elder converged with ascetic practice and mystical contemplation—these two paths of personal perfection, which by the time the role of the elder emerged already had a history spanning more than a century; it was precisely thanks to the role of the elder that asceticism and mysticism were united into a single system of spiritual guidance. Thus, a certain tradition of “inner work” gradually took shape, as the entire system of spiritual cultivation in Orthodox asceticism is commonly called. Its highest goal is the deification of the ascetic, which entails a long and arduous ascent toward God: purification from passions and temptations is the first step in this ascent. Only by completing this ascent through spiritual practice, through experiential practice and contemplation, and through mental prayer does the ascetic approach the highest stage; and then the gates open for him, leading into the spiritual state of mystical contemplation and silence. At this stage, he is deemed worthy of union with God and deification¹²⁵⁰

¹²⁴⁸ Smirnov. Op. cit., pp. 496–499. Smirnov’s work contains the best account of the history of the monastic elders from the 4th to the 8th centuries and an excellent characterization of its essence.

¹²⁴⁹ Selected Writings of St. Ephrem of Syria. Trans. P. Zingerle (1871). Vol. 3, pp. 227 ff. (BdKV 13); cf. quotations in my book, Op. cit., pp. 27–31.

¹²⁵⁰ For more details, see my book (p. 38), as well as: Schmidt, B., **Das geistige Gebet** (1916); Wunderle, G., **On the Psychology of Hesychastic Prayer** (1947)—a very important study of the ascetic and mystical origins of the Jesus Prayer, which refutes previous misconceptions about this ascetic practice; additionally: Baur, I., **Investigations into the Doctrine of Deification** (1917–18); Popov, I. *The Idea of Deification* (1909); by the same author: *“The Religious Ideal of St. Athanasius the Great,”* in: *BV*, 1903–

. Two great ascetics and mystics of the Eastern Church, Callistus and Ignatius Xanthopoulos (late 4th century), describe in detail the spiritual practices of Orthodox ascetics in their work **The Centuria**¹²⁵¹.

The most important thing the elders sought to teach a novice monk upon his entry into the monastery was obedience; a novice's obedience to his elder is the first necessary condition for the monk's ascent along the ladder of spiritual perfection. The aforementioned works—**Apofq̃gmata**, **Verba seniorum**, **Lavsaik**, and other early Christian patristic texts—contain many wonderful narratives and stories that give the reader an idea of the place obedience held in ascetic formation.

The writings of the Holy Fathers discuss in great detail the importance of obedience for the ascetic formation of a monk¹²⁵². St. Basil the Great devotes a great deal of space to this virtue in his **Rules**; he considers obedience to be the foundation of monasticism and the basis of the relationship between a spiritual father and his disciple. The Great Cappadocian, who became the spiritual father of Eastern monasticism, says: true and perfect obedience of a disciple to his teacher is expressed in the fact that, at the teacher's will, he refrains from what is unwise, and without the teacher's will, he does not even perform praiseworthy deeds. He advises the novice monk, with great care and after long reflection, to strive to find one who walks the path of life blamelessly, who knows how to wisely guide those striving toward God, and who has deeply penetrated the meaning of Holy Scripture. According to Basil the Great, just as God demands perfect devotion to Himself from His servants, so too does a spiritual father, who measures his demands against God's law, have the right to demand unquestioning obedience from his spiritual children¹²⁵³.

A contemporary of Basil the Great, St. Ephrem the Syrian († 373), writes about the inner connection between obedience and humility, pointing out to the monk the greatest example of humility: “On the contrary, keep in mind that our common Lord Christ humbled Himself for us, being obedient even unto death—the death on the cross.” “Understand what I am saying: may the Lord grant you understanding of all things”¹²⁵⁴. Anyone who has read *The Ladder* by St. John († c. 650) knows the importance this holy ascetic attached to obedience. For him, obedience is the “coffin of the will” and “voluntary death”¹²⁵⁵.

In addition to obedience as a means of the formation and self-discipline of monks, Orthodox asceticism also places special emphasis on teaching the novice the art of prayer, which is the most important means of spiritual perfection and an instrument of salvation. For prayer not only helps one wage a successful battle against the passions, but is also the foundation of the ascetic's spiritual ascent—that ladder that leads from experiential practice to mystical contemplation.

Even the Egyptian Fathers, such as Macarius in his **Spiritual Conversations**, speak of the importance of prayer for the Christian's spiritual life. The ascetic and mystic Nilus of Sinai (d. 453) was the first to attempt to describe the mysticism of prayer as “a conversation of the spirit with God.” “There is a higher prayer of the perfect,” he says, “a kind of rapture of the mind, its complete detachment from the sensory, when, through the inarticulate sighs of the spirit, it draws near to God, Who sees the disposition of the heart, open like a written book and expressing its will in wordless images. “Thus Paul was raptured to the third heaven and did not know whether he was in the body or out of the body”¹²⁵⁶.

John Climacus describes the state of the one who prays with these words: “Prayer, by its very nature, is a person's abiding and union with God, but in practice it is the establishment of peace, reconciliation with God, the mother and at the same time the daughter of tears, atonement for sins, a bridge for crossing

1904; Minin, P. “*The Main Trends in Early Christian Mysticism*,” in: *BV*, 1911–1914. See also in our bibliography the literature on St. Simeon the New Theologian; I particularly recommend the study by I. Hausher. The literature on Gregory the Sinaite, the greatest mystic of the late Byzantine era, is very scarce; the work specifically devoted to him by Bishop Alexei (Molchanov), “*Byzantine Mystics of the 14th Century*” (1906), leaves much to be desired. See also the short work: Bois, J., “*Grégoire le Sinaïte et l'hésychasme à Athos au XIVe siècle*,” in: **Echos d'Orient**. 5. 190102. pp. 65–73. See also: *Heiler*, vol. 1, pp. 390 ff., especially 407 ff. The study by Lot-Borodine, M. (1932–33), is very valuable and instructive.

¹²⁵¹ The text of “*The Centuria*,” in: Die Gottesschau im palamitischen Hesychasmus. Ein Handbuch der spätbyzantinischen Mystik. Introduction (very valuable) and translation by A. M. Amman (1938).

¹²⁵² See individual examples in my book, for instance, the beautiful account of Abba Dorotheus. Op. cit., pp. 31–34.

¹²⁵³ Basil the Great, in: PG 31, pp. 884 C, 632 B, 1388 B. St. Anthony the Great once said about obedience: “When you see a young monk walking toward heaven of his own accord, hold his feet, pull him down, for this is not good for him,” in: Palladius, Archimandrite. Newly Discovered Sayings from a Coptic Collection. The Sayings of the Venerable Anthony (1898). p. 14.

¹²⁵⁴ Ephrem the Syrian. Op. cit. p. 226. It is worth noting here that many ancient Orthodox writings express the view that Christ was a monk; cf. Holl. Op. cit. p. 164.

¹²⁵⁵ PG. 88. P. 706 C.

¹²⁵⁶ Philokalia. Vol. 2 (1879). p. 229.

temptations, a wall protecting against sorrows, the crushing of strife... Verbosity in prayer often distracts the mind and fills it with daydreams, while brevity usually gathers it together.” In John Climacus, we find the first description of the soul’s rapture in prayer. This mystical tradition was continued in the “Hymns” of St. Symeon the New Theologian († 1022)¹²⁵⁷.

Prayer without words, or accompanied by only a few words, found its expression in what is known as “mental prayer” (); this art was preserved with particular care by the ascetics and monks of Mount Athos, who saw in it both an ascetic practice and a path to the mystical gathering of the soul¹²⁵⁸. One of the greatest figures of late Byzantine asceticism and mysticism, Gregory of Sinai († 1346)—who wrote many works of ascetic and mystical content—also left us a description of how mental prayer is practiced. His works—“Instruction to Those Who Keep Silence,” “On Silence and Prayer,” “On Silence”¹²⁵⁹—were highly valued by the monastic community, especially by the elders, who did not forget the ascetic tradition of the Church. Wherever the tradition of the elders flourished, mental prayer was the most important and primary tool for the spiritual guidance and education of new generations of monks.

In the second half of the 18th century, following a period of decline in ascetic and mystical life in the Orthodox monasteries of the East—even on Mount Athos—a revival of asceticism and mysticism began anew, a movement that had last manifested with particular power among the Hesychasts of the 14th century¹²⁶⁰. The Greek Athonite monk Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (1748–1809), who devoted much time to studying the works of the Fathers of the Eastern Church on the inner life, compiled a collection published in 1782 in Venice in Greek under the title **Philokalia** [“Love of God”]¹²⁶¹. Nicodemus’s work was of immense significance, for it was the first time that the sources nourishing spiritual guidance had been brought together in a single collection. For the elders, “The Love of Goodness” became a sort of reference book or guide; monks now had the opportunity to learn more easily from the great ascetic fathers, and the personal influence of the elders on their novices and disciples gained greater depth.

2. The Institution of the Elders in Ancient Rus’

When one turns to the history of the elder system in the 18th and 19th centuries, the question immediately arises as to whether it existed in the monasteries of Ancient and Muscovite Rus’, and if so, in what form and how widespread it was at that time. In our essay on the history of Old Russian monastic life, we deliberately omitted this issue in order to address it here, in connection with the history of the elder system over the last two centuries.

Examining the life of the monks at the most important monastery of Kievan Rus’—the Caves Monastery of St. Theodosius—we find no signs there of the office of the elder as a special institution intended for the formation of novice monks. St. Theodosius based his abbotship on the knowledge of Byzantine monastic life that he had received from St. Anthony and from the rule, * *, brought from Constantinople. Anthony visited Mount Athos shortly after St. Athanasius’s victory over the monks of the Holy Mountain who had opposed him, at a time when the cenobitic rule had been introduced on the Holy Mountain in place of the previously accepted rule of individual living; therefore, St. Theodosius regarded communal living as the best form of monastic life. And the rule introduced by St. Theodosius took the cenobitic way as the basis for the ascetic guidance of novices¹²⁶².

This circumstance is noteworthy because in the Eastern Church during the 5th–9th centuries, the elders provided spiritual guidance to novice monks in both communal and solitary monasteries. The system of

¹²⁵⁷ See the excellent translation of these “Hymns”: Kirchhoff, P. Kilian, O.F.M., **Symeon the Theologian: Light from Light**. 2nd ed., 1951; the afterword constitutes a highly valuable study on Symeon.

¹²⁵⁸ Meyer, Ph. **Die Haupturkunden** (1894) and articles in: **ZfKG**. 11. 1890; as well as works by G. Wunderle and Porphyry Uspensky (see bibliography).

¹²⁵⁹ These works are found in: PG. 150. pp. 1329–1346, 1313–1314, 1303–1304. Cf. my book, op. cit., pp. 47 ff., 264.

¹²⁶⁰ On the Hesychasts, see in the bibliography the works of Engelhardt, F. Stein, P. Syrku, and Monk Basil; as well as: Ostrogorsky, G., “The Athonite Hesychasts and Their Opponents,” in: *Proceedings of the Russian Scientific Institute in Belgrade*, 5 (1931), and the new work by Archimandrite Cyprian, “The Spiritual Forefathers of St. Gregory Palamas,” in: *Theological Thought. Proceedings of the Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris*. Paris, 1942. pp. 102–131; here the author provides an overview of the history of Orthodox mysticism from Areopagite to Gregory Palamas.

¹²⁶¹ On Nicodemus the Hagiorite, see: Viller, M., “Nicodime l’Hagiorite,” in **Revue d’ascétique et de mystique**, 5 (1926); 5. Grumel, “Nicodime l’Hagiorite,” in **DTS**, 11. 1. pp. 487–490; cf. also: Ammann. Op. cit. pp. 7–11.

¹²⁶² Golubinsky. 1. 1. pp. 571, 605–606, 625. Priselkov. *Essays on the Ecclesiastical and Political History of Kievan Rus’* (1913). p. 168.

spiritual guidance by elders already existed in the cenobium of Pachomius the Great; later, in Palestine, at the Lavra of St. Savvas the Sanctified—whose rule combined the cenobitic and idiorrhythmic traditions—only those monks who, under the guidance of elders, had completed their training in communal life were permitted to live according to the rule of solitary life. Usually, several novice monks were under the guidance of a spiritual father (¹²⁶³). It is unknown whether the office of spiritual father survived in the monastic communities of Mount Athos during the time of St. Athanasius's (10th century) struggle to introduce the communal rule there; it is likely that the office of spiritual father was not particularly widespread in the Athos monasteries or in Constantinople. When St. Theodore the Studite († 826) speaks of the "pater spiritualis," he is referring to the abbot of the monastery. The Great Studite was a staunch advocate of communal living, in which all authority in the monastery is concentrated in the hands of the abbot¹²⁶⁴. The monastic rule introduced by Theodosius at the Kiev Caves Monastery is, as we have already noted, a special version of the Studite Rule. Like St. Theodore, Theodosius served simultaneously as both abbot and spiritual father to the monks of his monastery. He was also the monastery's spiritual director, and spiritual guidance became the primary means of caring for the monks; at the same time, one must bear in mind the great authority he enjoyed among the monks, thanks to which such a successful combination of abbot and spiritual father in his person came about, just as was often the case in the ancient monasteries of Egypt¹²⁶⁵. In the ministry of St. Theodosius, the abbot's authority pushed the role of the elders into the background, in part because in the early centuries of monasticism in Rus' it was absolutely necessary to elevate the abbot's authority to the highest degree and thereby deepen the monks' sense of obedience. For this reason, the Kiev-Pechersk Paterikon, which recounts the life of the monastery after the death of its holy founder, contains no mention of the existence of the elder system.

Similarly, we find no evidence of the elder system in other monasteries of Kievan Rus' that followed a rule of separate living.

It is only in the works of Cyril of Turov (late 12th century) that we find the first traces of the office of the elder. In his treatise "The Tale of the Monastic Order," he writes: "And you, brother, strive to find a man who possesses the spirit of Christ, is adorned with virtues, and demonstrates obedience in his way of life, above all, one who has love for the Lord, obedience to the abbot (!), and humility toward the brethren, who possesses an understanding of the Divine Scriptures and thereby guides others toward God in heaven. "Surrender yourself to him, as Caleb did to Jesus, cutting off your entire will"¹²⁶⁶. In these words we see a description of the relationship between the elder and his disciple, as it existed among the ancient ascetics.

The relationship between Abraham of Smolensk († 1221) and the local population (see Chapter II) is more difficult to define. Perhaps it was not so much a manifestation of spiritual fatherhood as it was evidence of the immense influence this holy ascetic had on the broad masses of the people—a phenomenon that could only be observed in the 19th century among the elders of the Optina Hermitage. The multitude of people who turned to Abraham for advice and instruction, his inclination toward mysticism, and his erudition (which we discussed earlier)—all of this was a very rare phenomenon in that era¹²⁶⁷.

A significant challenge for researchers of the Old Russian monastic hierarchy lies in the multiple meanings of the word "starets." First and foremost, the word "starets" referred to an elderly monk who did not hold priestly ordination—that is, who was not a hieromonk. In addition, "cathedral elders" referred to those monks who, together with the abbot, administered the monastery; often, the title "elder" was also given to the abbots themselves. Finally, "elders" also referred to those monks who provided spiritual guidance to novices. In this regard, a letter from Archbishop Simeon of Novgorod (1417–1421) to the Snetogorsk

¹²⁶³ Smirnov. *The Spiritual Father*. pp. 487–492. It is interesting to note that St. Benedict of Nursia, in his Rule (chap. 21), also speaks of "deans" (decani)—that is, experienced, elderly monks—to whom the spiritual guidance of ten novices was entrusted. PL. 66. p. 483.

¹²⁶⁴ Smirnov. *Op. cit.* p. 481. See also the extensive and fundamental work on St. Theodore: Dobroklonsky, A. *St. Theodore, Confessor and Abbot of Studion*. Vol. 1 (1913). pp. 441, 443; cf. also: PG. 99. P. 1784 A, 1717 C – 1820 B, 1822 B.

¹²⁶⁵ Smirnov. *Op. cit.* p. 477; idem. *The Old Russian Spiritual Father* (1914). pp. 22, 25; Basil the Great, in: PG. 31. p. 1185.

¹²⁶⁶ "The Tale of the Black-Robed Order," in: Kalaydovich. *Monuments of 12th-Century Russian Literature* (1821). p. 107; cf.: Golubinsky, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 797; Nikolsky, N., *Materials for the History of Old Russian Ecclesiastical Literature* (1907), pp. 65–94.

¹²⁶⁷ *The Life of Abraham*, in: *Monuments of Old Russian Literature*. 1 (1911); cf. Chapter I.

Monastery is particularly telling: in it, the word “elder” refers in two instances to an elder in our sense—*pater spiritualis* (spiritual father)—and in two others to the council elders¹²⁶⁸.

If we turn to the deeds and exploits of St. Sergius of Radonezh, this greatest saint of the golden age of asceticism and monasticism in Russia, we will see that he was, so to speak, the founder of an entire school in the history of Russian monasticism, whose representatives continued his ascetic work and themselves founded a number of monasteries. It is particularly important for us to determine: what kind of relationship did St. Sergius’s disciples have with him? Can we say that the Trinity-Sergius Lavra had a system of spiritual fatherhood? There are no hints of this in the lives of St. Sergius or the ascetics who came from his monastery. St. Sergius administered his monastery according to the communal charter; above all, he was the abbot and spiritual father. His administration of the monastery reminds us of the Kiev Caves Monastery of St. Theodosius, but it is hardly plausible to assume that St. Sergius knew anything specific about the way of life at the Kiev Caves Monastery¹²⁶⁹. At the very least, we have no evidence that a system of elderhood existed at the Trinity-Sergius Lavra.

In the 14th century, many small monasteries sprang up, some of which were founded by Sergius’s disciples in the Trans-Volga region. This vast area between the Volga and Lake Beloye became a new center for ascetic endeavors. Monks settled here in groups of two or three; often they came from the same monastery, and sometimes they met along the way, and their acquaintance developed into a close brotherhood. Over time, their sketes—which initially consisted of two or three cells—evolved into hermitages, especially if the zealous brethren managed to build a church. It is possible that during this time, a system similar to spiritual fatherhood arose in the relationships between the monks—primarily between the senior monks and the novices—but we still have no reliable information on this.

St. Cyril of Belozersk († 1427) also administered his monastery on the basis of strict communal living; all authority in the monastery rested in the hands of the abbot. In a letter to Prince Andrei Mozhaitsky, he even refers to his “spiritual children”—Prince Andrei and Hieromonk Innokenty, whom he intended to appoint as abbot. However, it is unclear what kind of spiritual relationship developed between them; was St. Cyril merely the prince’s spiritual father or, in a sense, his spiritual elder, whereas his relationship with Innocent did indeed bear some characteristics of a spiritual elder’s guidance¹²⁷⁰.

Further evidence of the existence of the spiritual father-disciple relationship in Ancient Rus’ can be found at the monastery of St. Paul of Obnorsk († 1429). Paul was a monk at the monastery of St. Sergius of Radonezh. Having received the blessing of St. Sergius, he set out for the deserted forests beyond the Volga and settled near the Obnora River. Some time later, a monastery grew up there, and Paul became its abbot. In the 15th century, a work titled “The Teaching of a Certain Elder to His Disciples on Monastic Life” was written at this monastery; it has been preserved in 17th-century manuscripts, and this may indicate that the “Teaching” was put into practice at that time. This work contains an exposition of the fundamentals of an elder’s guidance for novice monks, various pieces of advice regarding their life in the monastery and their relationships with the elders, and it also discusses mental prayer and the Jesus Prayer¹²⁷¹. Furthermore, from the life of St. Paul we know that novice monks—from whom the saint demanded obedience to the elder—were entrusted to the spiritual guidance of experienced monks¹²⁷².

And another work, described in Chapter IX, 4—“The Elder’s Instruction to Novice Monks on How One Should Live in Obedience to the Elder”—attests that in some monasteries in the late 15th–early 16th centuries, elders were responsible for the spiritual care of novices and novice monks¹²⁷³. The “Instruction to One’s Disciple on How to Sit Attentively in the Cell”—an ascetic treatise also devoted to the role of the elder—dates back to the early 16th century; the original manuscript of this work was likely written in the 14th century¹²⁷⁴. It is difficult to determine whether it was ever put into practice. In any case, the ancient tradition of the elder, widespread in the Orthodox monasteries of Egypt and Syria, was known in monastic circles in

¹²⁶⁸ RIB. 6. 45. p. 389; Smirnov. *The Old Russian Spiritual Father*. p. 26; Malinin. *Philotheus, the Elder of the Eleazar Monastery*. pp. 40–42.

¹²⁶⁹ However, Stephen of Makhreshch († 1406) came to St. Sergius from Southern Rus’ (after 1355); he may have brought with him the tradition of the Kiev Caves Monastery. Golubinsky. *St. Sergius and the Trinity Lavra He Founded* (1909). p. 82.

¹²⁷⁰ Letters in: AI. 1. Nos. 32 and 15.

¹²⁷¹ Cf. Chapter IX, 4, at the end.

¹²⁷² Konoplev. *Op. cit.* p. 71.

¹²⁷³ See Chapter IX, 4.

¹²⁷⁴ Golubinsky. 2. 2. p. 295.

Moscow during the first half of the 16th century.¹²⁷⁵ For example, the hagiography of St. Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow († 1568), recounts that Philip, upon entering the Solovetsky Monastery, spent several years under the guidance of the “godly monk” Jonah¹²⁷⁶.

The most distinct manifestations of the role of the elder can be found in the circle of and among the spiritual disciples of the “great elder,” St. Nilus of Sora (1433–1508). From his “Rule” and “Tradition” on the monastic life, it is evident that he had a very clear understanding of what the role of the elder should entail, and that he himself served as an elder¹²⁷⁷. Based on various short writings dating from the late 15th and early 16th centuries, one can even speak of a school associated with him, which included as many as three “generations” of elders and their disciples who labored in the small sketes of the Trans-Volga region. In the appendix, we provide a diagram of the spiritual relationships among them (Table VII). Nilus himself likely studied the fundamentals of the monastic way on Mount Athos, where he made a pilgrimage on the advice of the monk Paissius Yaroslavov, who is referred to as an “elder” in the writings of that time and, apparently, truly was an elder; Nilus underwent ascetic training under him. It was likely under the influence of Paissius Yaroslavov († shortly after 1503) that Nil developed a desire to journey to the Holy Mountain. Paissius himself began his monastic life at the Spaso-Kamenny Monastery, where, thanks to the abbot Dionysius (1389–1418)—who later became Bishop of Rostov, a Greek from Mount Athos—the monks were well acquainted with the lives and deeds of the monks of Mount Athos. Later, Paisius sought refuge at the Kirillov Monastery, where Nil, who was much younger than him, met him and came under his spiritual guidance. A pilgrimage to Mount Athos completed Nil’s understanding of the role of the spiritual elder¹²⁷⁸.

From the biography of St. Cassian of Mangup, we know that around 1488–1494 he was a disciple of the elder Filaret at the Ferapontov Monastery in the Trans-Volga region. St. Cassian, a Greek by birth and, before his monastic tonsure, Prince Constantine of the town of Mangup-Kale in Crimea, arrived in Moscow together with Princess Sophia Palaiologina, who later became the wife of Ivan III. In 1488 or a few years later, he entered the Ferapontov Monastery, where he took monastic vows and became a disciple of Elder Filaret. In 1494, Cassian founded a hermitage where a communal rule was established. He himself lived there as a simple monk and died at the age of 120. The view that Cassian was a disciple of Nilus has been refuted by later research¹²⁷⁹.

This was not an isolated occurrence at the Ferapontov Monastery, as evidenced by the fact that the monk Galaktion, a holy fool for Christ’s sake († 1506), who was later canonized, maintained a relationship with the monastery’s abbot, the Venerable Martinian, during his stay there that resembled that between an elder and a disciple¹²⁸⁰.

Elder Artemy, whom we already know from previous chapters, likely completed his ascetic training not without the help of one of the elders of the Trans-Volga region¹²⁸¹. However, the persecution to which the Non-Possessors were subjected in the 16th century did not leave the monastic communities of the Trans-Volga deserts unscathed; the dispute between the Josephites and the Non-Possessors had a generally detrimental effect on the development of the elder tradition in Russia. The ascetic-mystical tradition of Nil and his close disciples—Elder Artemy, who was perhaps the last educated adherent and zealous advocate of this school—was defeated by the dominant ecclesiastical-political trend of the 16th century and gradually fell into decline¹²⁸².

And yet, from the 17th-century tonsure rite, we know that it was customary at that time to entrust a novice monk to the spiritual guidance of an experienced monk—not because the role of the elder was

¹²⁷⁵ Zhmakin. Metropolitan Daniel. pp. 375, 492, 602; Petrov, N. On the Origin and Composition of the Slavic-Russian Prologue (1875). p. 116.

¹²⁷⁶ Fedotov. Saints of Ancient Rus’. p. 60.

¹²⁷⁷ Nila of Sorsk, Tradition and Rule on the Hermit Life (1849) and other editions; cf. Chapter IX, 4, and my book *Leben und Lehre der Starzen*.

¹²⁷⁸ Klyuchevsky. Lives. p. 190; Filaret. Review. 3rd ed., vol. 1, p. 106; Konoplev. Op. cit., p. 38 ff.; Arkhangelsky. Nil of Sorsk and Vassian Patrikeev. pp. 16, 30; Prav. Sob. 1861. Vol. 1. pp. 197–214; PSRL. Vol. 5. p. 236.

¹²⁷⁹ Brilliantov. The Ferapontov Monastery (1899). pp. 56–59; Zverinsky. Vol. 1, No. 810; Arkhangelsky. Op. cit. p. 55.

¹²⁸⁰ Diamonds. Collected Works, p. 17. On the ascetic Galaktion in: Readings, 1887, vol. 4, p. 147; this Galaktion should not be confused with St. Galaktion of Vologda († 1612).

¹²⁸¹ On the ascetic and mystical views of Elder Artemy, see Chapter X.

¹²⁸² On the spread of the Jesus Prayer in Muscovy (which was not always associated with the office of elder), see: Orlov, A. “The Jesus Prayer in Muscovy in the 16th Century,” in: PDP 185 (1914), introduction and texts.

considered an essential tool for the spiritual formation of monks, but simply out of fidelity to monastic tradition. At the same time, the abbot would utter to both monks—the novice and the experienced monk—almost exactly the same words as those contained in the 15th-century “Tradition.” But regarding the day-to-day relationships between the elder and his disciples, which, in fact, define the nature of the elder’s role, we unfortunately have no precise information¹²⁸³.

That is all we know about the role of the elder in Russian monasteries prior to the 18th century. Our history of this tradition is quite incomplete; however, it is clear that the role of the elder was indeed known in Muscovite Russia, even though it did not flourish during that era. It was only in the late 18th and 19th centuries that the office of elder truly took root in Russian monasteries.

3. Elder Paisius Velichkovsky and His “School”

The revival of monastic life and the office of the elder in the last quarter of the 18th century is closely linked to the figure of a strict ascetic and ardent defender of the ascetic and mystical traditions of the ancient monasticism of the Eastern Church—we are referring to Elder Paisius Velichkovsky, whose name will forever remain in the history of our Church.

In secular life, Paisius was known as Peter Velichkovsky. He was the son of a priest. He was born on December 21, 1722, in Poltava and spent his childhood surrounded by his family, in a home where piety was cherished and all church rules and statutes were strictly observed in daily life. Peter was a quiet, reserved child who loved to read; naturally, the only books kept in the house were those that conformed to his parents’ pious views; the most common book at that time was the Book of Hours, which usually served as the first book for children to read, followed by the Psalter and, finally, the lives of the saints and ascetics. Young Peter studied all of this thoroughly, not out of compulsion, but of his own free will, out of inclination and the disposition of his soul. At the age of 13, he was admitted to the “brotherhood school.” His mother wanted her youngest son, like all his ancestors, his father, and his older brother, to become a parish priest and inherit his brother’s parish, as was customary at that time. But already in his early youth, Peter felt a desire to enter a monastery and become a monk, and this desire grew stronger with each passing year. The ministry of a parish priest, which he knew well from his own observations, probably did not satisfy him. Reading ascetic writings influenced his life plans: a journey to Jerusalem, to Mount Athos, or to some monastery where pious monks labored in monastic seclusion—all of this appealed to him more than the life of a parish priest. In his biography, these pious dreams of the young student were praised by the author: “For the Lord granted him, even in his youth, the gray hair of reason, wisdom, and humility.”

One night, Peter secretly fled from school, left Kyiv, and set out on a long journey (1739). Along the way, he stopped at the Lyubech Monastery, near the town of Lyubech on the Dnieper River. The abbot of the monastery welcomed him warmly, blessed him to remain at the monastery, and even assigned him a cell. Thus, the first step toward realizing his plans was taken, for Peter’s spiritual father, Hieroschemamonk Pachomius—to whom the young man had confided his inclination toward monastic life—had advised him to go first to the Lyubech Monastery, where he would be told what to do next. Accepted as a novice, Peter performed various tasks at the monastery.

The account in Paisius’s biography explaining why he left the Lyubech Monastery characterizes monastic life during that era. From this account, we learn how important it was for the abbot of the monastery to be a monk suited for such a position, for often the collapse of a very strong monastic community occurred through the fault of the monastery’s authorities. Peter had been living at the monastery for several months when a new abbot was appointed—a headstrong, boorish man in a monastic robe who cared little for the ascetic life of the monks and understood his ministry in an entirely different spirit. He refused to go to the refectory to eat with the brotherhood, instead ordering that special dishes be prepared for him separately and brought to the abbot’s cell. Once, due to an oversight on Peter’s part—he had not received precise instructions from the abbot—the wrong meal was brought to the abbot. In his anger, he struck the innocent Peter on the cheek. Perhaps under a different abbot and in different circumstances, the young novice would have accepted the slap with humility. But in his emotional turmoil, Peter decided to flee the monastery and seek another, better place for monastic life. He left the monastery and set off for the south.

¹²⁸³ Archimandrite Innokenty, **Tonsure into Monasticism** (1899), p. 230; this instruction was delivered by the abbot during the tonsure into the lesser schema.

Fate led him to Moldavia, where, as he had heard, many ascetics had found refuge. And so he arrived at the Monastery of St. Nicholas, located on an island in the middle of the Tiasmyn River, already in Moldavia. He approached the abbot and was accepted into the monastery as a novice. The atmosphere there was completely different from that at the Lyubech Monastery, and Peter zealously fulfilled his monastic duties. Some time later, when he turned 19, he took monastic vows, initially as a rasophore, taking the name Plato. He felt at home there, and monastic life fostered his spiritual growth. But he was forced to leave this monastery as well: persecution by the Uniates began, the monastery churches were closed, and the monks were expelled.

Platon then decided to return to Kyiv and join the brotherhood of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, where his spiritual father, Hieroschemamonk Pachomius, was serving. His wish was granted, and Plato became a monk at the oldest Russian monastery. He was literate, so he was assigned to work in the Lavra's printing press; in addition, he was entrusted with engraving icons on copper. Although life at the Lavra and these tasks suited Plato's spiritual disposition, he did not abandon his earlier plans to seek salvation in complete solitude under the guidance of an experienced monk. An unexpected encounter with a former schoolmate, with whom Plato had often discussed the monastic life in the wilderness, served as the impetus for a new period of wandering.

Together with two other monks, Plato set out southward once more, hoping to reach the holy Mount Athos. Meanwhile, his pilgrimage led our pilgrim to the skete of St. Nicholas, known as Treisteny. Like the inhabitants of the ancient Palestinian lavras, some of the monks lived here according to the communal rule, while others—elderly, experienced monks—lived in huts situated around the skete, observing the rule of solitary life. It was here that Plato prayed for the first time during a divine service conducted according to the rule of Mount Athos; it was here that he first saw the austere desert dwellers who strictly observed the rules of the idiorhythm. After some time, Plato—who had performed various duties at the skete and had become well acquainted with life in the small, poor monastery—was sent to the Kyrkul Skete. There he continued to grow spiritually under the guidance of the elderly elders Basil and Onuphrius. At that time, in the monasteries and sketes of Moldavia—both communal and individual—monastic life was particularly strict. The practice of having elders guide the monks was extremely widespread, and a great many monks lived under the guidance of elders. Plato was able to experience firsthand the guidance of the elders, which he had long sought. Platon remained at this monastery for three years, until 1746, but eventually the moment he had long awaited arrived: he was given the opportunity to visit Mount Athos. With the permission of his spiritual father and the blessing of the abbot, Platon, along with another monk, set out for the Holy Mountain.

Even while at the Kyrkul Monastery, he had listened with excitement to stories about the lives of the monks on the Holy Mountain. According to his biographer, Plato's time as a novice ended with his move to Athos, and his independent ascetic life began. After a difficult journey by land and sea, he finally arrived at the Lavra of St. Athanasius. He was given a cell near the monastery. There, in utter poverty, renunciation of the world, and silence, many monks and elders found salvation. But Plato's desire to place himself under the guidance of an elder went unfulfilled: no one wanted to take him on as a novice. "Finding none such by the will of the Lord, and not receiving the obedience his soul desired, he entrusted himself to God's providence and sat alone."

The mental and spiritual state of the young anchorite, who waged a spiritual battle without the help of an elder, is described to us by Monk Gregory (1836), relying, it seems, not on ascetic writings or his own experience, but on the account of Elder Paissios himself, which was preserved in a manuscript at the Nyamets Monastery¹²⁸⁴. A life spent in solitude, silence, and the gathering of the soul, and the ceaseless recitation of the Jesus Prayer, was not easy, but Paissius "strived and prospered from strength to spiritual strength, setting his heart on ascetic progress each day and being inflamed by divine zeal for great feats, while at the same time rejoicing in the fiery divine providence", writes the monk-author. This continued for three years, after which Plato experienced a joyful encounter for an ascetic: his former spiritual father, Hieromonk Basil of Moldavia,

¹²⁸⁴ Yatsimirsky, in: Collection of ORYAS. 79. p. 521. The biography of Elder Paissius was published in 1836 at the Nyamets Monastery in Moldavian and Church Slavonic, without the author's name being indicated. The Church Slavonic text was republished by Elder Makarii of Optina in 1845 in Moscow: "The Life of the Moldavian Elder Paissius Velichkovsky." Published by the Optina Hermitage. In 1847, a new edition of the biography was released, featuring several of Paissius's own writings in the appendix; the third edition appeared in 1892 in Moscow. This latest edition served as the basis for S. Chetverikov's book *The Moldavian Elder, Schema-Archimandrite Paisius (Velichkovsky). Vol. 1* (Petlari-Eesti (Estonia), 1938–39); *I do not know whether Vol. 2, containing Paissius's letters, was ever published; this Russian edition is probably a variant of his own work on Paissius in Romanian; cf. the review in: Irenikon. 11 (1934). 66.*

arrived on Mount Athos, and, after speaking with the young ascetic, tonsured him into the lesser schema, naming him Paisius.

At the same time, Elder Basil advised him to move to a communal monastery, for the idiorhythmic life and the life of a hermit are suitable for elderly, experienced monks. From Paissius's writings, we know that he later also became an advocate of the communal monastic rule, while preserving the system of spiritual guidance for novices and newly ordained monks. Paissius's disciples, who labored in various Russian monasteries, also sought to improve monastic life by introducing the communal rule, but they themselves served as spiritual fathers, taking individual monks under their spiritual guidance. In addition, among Paissius's writings we find "A Treatise on the Order and Rules of Communal Life," in which he strongly recommends the cenobitic way of life¹²⁸⁵. However, for another three or four years, Paissius remained in solitude, pursuing the path of self-improvement. Then several young monks came to him, and although Paissius himself was still young, they asked him to accept them as novices. For the most part, these were monks who had come from Moldavia and Wallachia or from the Slavic Balkan countries. At their urgent request, Paissius was ordained a priest and became a hieromonk. This took place in 1758, when he turned 36.

Paissius now entered the second phase of his life: he not only waged a spiritual struggle for his own spiritual perfection but, as abbot and spiritual father, also provided spiritual guidance to other monks, and these efforts made him a central figure in the revival of authentic monasticism in Russia.

The small community of monks gathered around Paisius grew steadily. Fortunately, he managed to obtain from the protos of the Athos Lavra the ancient, half-ruined monastery of St. Elijah the Prophet, located near the Pantokrator Monastery; together with the brotherhood, he built a church, a refectory, and 60 cells—so much had the number of monks grown. Although the new monastery was in great need, the number of monks multiplied day by day, and the monastery's quarters soon became cramped. Yet even among the monks, intense jealousy and other ill feelings did not entirely disappear. Paissius's Slavic monastery—perhaps due to the excellent order maintained there and the ever-growing authority of its abbot—aroused unfriendly feelings among the Greeks from other Athos monasteries, as well as unjust rumors about Father Paissius and his disciples; the Turkish authorities also created all sorts of obstacles. Paissios then decided to return to Moldavia to found a new monastery there, among the mountains and forests.

In 1763, Elder Paissius, together with 60 monks and novices, set out on his journey and arrived in Moldavia, but could not find a suitable location there. It was only in Iași that he managed to obtain from the Metropolitan of Moldavia the Dragomir Monastery, dedicated to the Descent of the Holy Spirit. There, Paisius introduced the communal lifestyle and liturgical order of Mount Athos. But one rule was entirely new: in the evenings, between services, the brethren were to gather in the refectory. Paissius would come and read various ascetic writings to them, offering his own explanations as he went along. Since the brotherhood consisted partly of monks from Moldavia and Wallachia and partly from Slavic lands, these readings were held separately for the Romanians and the Slavs, alternating days; divine services were always conducted in Church Slavonic. Such was the life of the monks at the Dragomirnsky Monastery, where Paisius's gift as an elder flourished.

In 1774, following the Russo-Turkish War, part of Moldavia was ceded to Austria, including the region where the Dragomirnsky Monastery was located. Fearing for the future of his monastery under Austrian jurisdiction, Elder Paisius decided to move to the part of Moldavia that remained under Turkish rule. He appealed to the metropolitan, asking for permission for him and his brethren to relocate to the half-abandoned Secul Monastery. Paissius received this permission, but some time later the number of monks had grown so much that even the new monastery became too small for them. Then the elder was given the large Nyamets Monastery, located two hours' journey from Secul; he had to divide his community into two monastic communities, but both monasteries remained under his administration and spiritual guidance. Before his death, there were already 400 monks at the Nyamets Monastery and more than 100 at the Secul Monastery.

Paisius himself, during the long autumn and winter nights, with the help of two monks who knew Greek, worked on translating the ascetic writings of the Holy Fathers into Moldavian and Church Slavonic. This led to the translation of St. Isaac the Syrian's **Instructions**, the **Questions and Answers** of St. Maximus the Confessor, the **Teachings** of St. Theodore the Studite, the **Instructions** of Abba Barsanuphius, and others, and, finally, the Church Slavonic version of **The Love of Goodness**. The

¹²⁸⁵ Biography (1847). Pp. 58 ff. The German translation is in my book, *Op. cit.*, pp. 108–117.

translation of **Dobrotolyubie** was completed in 1793, resulting in two thick handwritten volumes. This translation was based on the aforementioned work by the monk Nicodemus (based on the 1782 Venetian edition) ¹²⁸⁶.

Paissius's earthly life, filled with fruitful works, came to an end on November 15, 1794; at the age of 72, he closed his eyes forever¹²⁸⁷.

The final period of his ministry lasted 31 years, making his name known far beyond the monastery walls; his reputation as an elder with a special gift for spiritual guidance even reached Russia. From the autobiography of Elder Theophan Sokolov, we learn that as early as the beginning of the 1770s, several monks and laypeople seeking ascetic feats, having heard of Paissius, set out to visit him at the Dragomirnsky and Nyametsky monasteries to receive guidance or even to remain there permanently under his spiritual guidance¹²⁸⁸.

One of Paissius's first disciples was the elder Hieromonk Cleopas I († after 1778), who brought the foundations of the elder tradition to the Ostrovskaya Vvedenskaya Hermitage (in the Diocese of Vladimir). Biographical information about this ascetic is very scarce: Cleopas was a model of modesty and humility. Even his disciple, the elder Theophan Sokolov, could not say much about his earlier life. Cleopas was a native of Southern Russia; he spent several years on Mount Athos, where he met Paissius and, most likely, took refuge with him at the skete of St. Elijah the Prophet. From 1760 to 1778, he served as the builder of the aforementioned Vvedenskaya Hermitage; he was entrusted with restoring it to order, both internally and externally, and thanks to Cleopas, this hermitage truly became a place of monastic devotion. He was one of the first to establish a truly monastic way of life in Russia and the founder of the system of spiritual guidance in the hermitage he revived¹²⁸⁹. The communal rule introduced by Cleopas in this monastery was later

¹²⁸⁶ These translations by Paissios were subsequently published in Russia: Isaac the Syrian in 1811, Maximus the Confessor in 1855, Theodore the Studite in 1855, and Abba Barsanuphius in 1855; the last three were published by the elder Makarii of Optina with the assistance of the Russian thinker I. V. Kireevsky; see their correspondence regarding this publication in: Chetverikov, **The Optina Hermitage**, pp. 107 ff.; Yatsimirsky, **Op. cit.**, p. 546, etc. A translation of the **Philokalia** under the title **Dobrotolyubie** was published in 1793 in two folio volumes. The printing of **Dobrotolyubie** took place with the blessing of Metropolitan Gabriel Petrov under the supervision of Elder Nazarius and Hieromonk Filaret (later Elder Filaret of the Novospassky Monastery). The official censors appointed by the Synod were Archimandrite Methodius, rector of the Moscow Theological Academy, and Hegumen Aaron, abbot of the Yakovlevsky Monastery in Rostov (Popov, "Description of the Manuscripts of the Simonov Monastery," in: *Readings*, 1910, vol. 2, p. 6). By 1857, **Dobrotolyubie** had gone through at least six editions; it is noteworthy that the next edition was not published until 1880. Later, Bishop Theophan the Recluse (Govorov) prepared a new five-volume edition, which was printed at the Russian Panteleimon Monastery on Mount Athos; three editions were published between 1878 and 1914. Theophan's **Dobrotolyubie** differs from Paissius's **Dobrotolyubie**: some parts have been expanded, while others have been abridged; as for the language, it is difficult to say whether it is Church Slavonic or Russian, for Theophan's language and style are very distinctive, replete with Slavisms and word formations used to convey Greek ascetic-mystical concepts that are not entirely clear to the reader. And yet his editions became extremely widespread among monks and devout believers; they were very difficult to obtain. The two-volume edition of Paissius's **Dobrotolubie** was reprinted once more in 1902 and also became a bibliographic rarity.

¹²⁸⁷ The most important of Paissius's works is his **Autobiography** (the manuscript was formerly held in the Library of the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg); unfortunately, A. Yatsimirsky merely provided a detailed retelling of it in: **Collection of the ORYAS**, vol. 79, pp. 515–541; also included there are excerpts from his "Statute" (pp. 533–538); an extensive bibliography (pp. 550–544), a list of Paissius's works (pp. 548–550), as well as a catalog of his library and a catalog of translations of ascetic works compiled by Paissius himself and his disciples (pp. 555–583). These bibliographic materials are of interest to historians, as they reveal which ascetic works Paissius preferred: listed there are 6 copies of "The Tradition" by Nilus of Sora, 15 manuscript books containing the works of St. Symeon the New Theologian, 14 copies of the works of Philotheos of Sinai, and 8 copies of "The Hundred" by Callistus and Ignatius Xanthopoulos. For an insight into the spiritual biography of Paisius and his disciples, see the work by Popov, N., "Description of the Manuscripts of the Simonov Monastery in Moscow" (*Chteniya*, 1910, no. 2), which contains extensive material. On the influence of Nil of Sora's writings on Paisius, see Borovkova-Maikova, Nilus of Sora and Paissius Velichkovsky. See also the bibliography by N. Arsenyev in: **Der christliche Osten**, p. 193; selected excerpts from Paissius's writings in: Chetverikov, S., "The Path of Wise Action and Spiritual Sobriety," in: **The Path**, 1926, 3, pp. 65–83; "From the History of Russian Monastic Eldership." Ibid. 1927, 7.

¹²⁸⁸ Subbotin. Archimandrite Theophan, abbot of the Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery (1862), pp. 57–75. "From the Stories of Father Theophan."

¹²⁸⁹ Yatsimirsky. *Op. cit.* p. 546; Dobronravov, V. Hieromonk Cleopas, Builder of the Vvedenskaya Hermitage (1908); Subbotin. Ibid. pp. 59–62; the book provides a very vivid characterization of this ascetic. It is worth noting that the story about bread in the desert (cf. my book, p. 132), as we were later able to establish, is very similar to a story from the life of St. Savva the Sanctified. Cotelerii, **Monumenta Eccles. Graecae**, vol. 4, p. 322.

transferred by his disciples, the monks Ignatius and Macarius, to the Nikolo-Pesnoshsky Monastery; unfortunately, however, this rule did not last long there¹²⁹⁰.

And then a whole host of ascetics leading a strict life appeared—the disciples of the elder Paissius. They spread out across all of Russia and, wandering from monastery to monastery, from hermitage to hermitage, carried the news of the “pious and wondrous Father Paissius” far and wide, thus gaining new adherents to the monastic tradition, who became their disciples. Among the first generation of Paissius’s disciples, certain names deserve special mention, although initially their sphere of influence was not particularly wide; they settled mainly in the smallest and poorest hermitages of southern Great Russia—in the provinces of Kaluga, Oryol, and Kursk.

Among them was the elder Archimandrite Theodosius Maslov (1720–1802). He was born in the town of Glukhov (Chernigov Province) into a merchant’s family; he initially sought refuge at the Svensky Monastery, but later, dissatisfied with the life of the monks there, he left for Moldavia to join the renowned Moldavian elder Vasily († 1767)¹²⁹¹, whose disciple, as already mentioned, was also Paisius. From 1767 to 1778, Theodosius served as abbot of the Tiasmyn and Merlopolyan monasteries; in 1779, he was invited to the Sofronius Hermitage in Molchany to revive monastic life there. He remained there until his death († December 9, 1802). Theodosius introduced the communal rule of Mount Athos to the hermitage¹²⁹².

Next, we should mention two more disciples of Paissius: the elders Hieromonk Cleopas II († 1817), who was tonsured by Paissius, and Hieroschemamonk Theodore (1756–1822).

In 1800, Cleopas II arrived at the Beloberezhskaya Hermitage, where Elder Vasily Kishkin was then the abbot; there, Cleopas met the monk Leonid Nagolkin, who was living as a hermit in that hermitage at the time, and together they later visited various monasteries; Cleopas died in 1817 at the Valaam Monastery¹²⁹³.

Hieroschemamonk Theodore, also the son of a merchant from the town of Karachev (Oryol Governorate), left his parents’ home in his early youth and set out for the Ploshchanskaya Hermitage; his parents brought him back home, but he ran away again, this time to the distant Beloberezhskaya Hermitage. One day, on his way to the Pechersk Lavra, the young novice heard about the “wonderful elder Paisius”—and set out to visit him at the distant Nyamets Monastery, where Paisius tonsured him and accepted him among his disciples. Theodore was quite literate and assisted Paisius by transcribing his translations. Paisius’s successor, Abbot Sophronius, tonsured Theodore as a schema-monk and sent him back to the Beloberezhskaya Hermitage. However, the diocesan bishop asked him to go to the small and poor Cholnsk Hermitage and assume the role of abbot there; yet Theodore declined this offer and agreed only to become the abbot’s assistant. Thanks to his assistance, the communal rules of Elder Paisius and the liturgical order of Mount Athos were introduced there. Meanwhile, so many people began coming to Theodore for advice and guidance that he was forced to leave the hermitage. He moved to the Beloberezhskaya Hermitage, where he remained for eight years. Finally, together with Elder Cleopas II and the monk Leonid (later of Optina), he went to the Novoezersky Monastery, which at that time was led by Elder Theophan Sokolov, from there to the Paleostrovsky Monastery, then to the Valaam Monastery (where his companion, Elder Cleopas II, passed away), and finally to the Alexander-Svirsky Monastery, where he remained until his death (April 7, 1822).

One episode from Theodore’s life eloquently illustrates that the monastic community did not everywhere strive to improve monastic life. Elder Theophan asked him to go to the Nilo-Sorsk Hermitage, which had been founded in the 16th century by Elder Nil and was at that time considered a defunct monastery. The standard of monastic life there had fallen very low. The monastic community received Elder Theodore with great hostility, and his efforts to restore order in the monastery were unsuccessful¹²⁹⁴.

¹²⁹⁰ Popov. Op. cit., p. 75, and also in: Pimen. Memoirs (in various places).

¹²⁹¹ Borovkova-Maikova. Op. cit., p. 32.

¹²⁹² Description of the Molchanskaya Sofroniev Hermitage (1856). p. 56; Muravyov. The Holy Mountain and the Optina Hermitage (1852). p. 129; Yatsimirsky. Op. cit., p. 545; Subbotin. Op. cit., pp. 15, 18; Denisov. No. 585; Zverinsky. 2. No. 933.

¹²⁹³ Yatsimirsky. Op. cit. p. 546; The First Great Optina Elder, Hieromonk Leonid (1917). pp. 14–44. In 1809–1817, all three set out on a pilgrimage to the monasteries of northern Russia, visiting the Paleostrovsky, Valaam, and Aleksandro-Svirsky monasteries, but the conditions there were likely not very conducive to the introduction of the elder system. This was particularly true of the Valaam Monastery, where, however, the elder Nazariy had taken refuge until 1804, having established monastic life there in strict accordance with the communal charter.

¹²⁹⁴ Yatsimirsky. Op. cit., p. 545; Pimen. Op. cit., pp. 66–68. Poselyanin. Russian Ascetics of the 19th Century (1910). pp. 194–201; the books *The Life and Deeds of Schemamonk Theodore* (1839; 3rd ed. 1907) and *The Ascetic Life of Schemamonk Theodore* (1901) were not available to me.

Elder Hieromonk Athanasius Zakharov († 1823) also came from the ascetic school of Paisius. Of noble birth and a captain in a hussar regiment, Zakharov laid aside his smart uniform to don a monastic habit and went to Elder Paissius, whom he had met in Moldavia during the Russo-Turkish War. In 1777, we find him already at the Florishcheva Hermitage (in the Vladimir Diocese); later, he sought refuge at the Ploshchanskaya Hermitage (in the Oryol Diocese), where he served as an elder, and the future Optina Elder Makarii Ivanov was his novice there for 13 years¹²⁹⁵.

Paissius's fifth disciple was another Athanasius, a former government official and schemamonk, who presented Metropolitan Gabriel with a Church Slavonic translation of *Dobrotolyubie*. He later lived as a hermit in the Roslavl forests, in complete solitude and seclusion from the world, and later at the Svensky Monastery (in the Oryol Diocese); there is no evidence that he served as an elder there († 1811)¹²⁹⁶.

Paissius's sixth and youngest disciple was the elder Filaret († 1841), who, as abbot of the Glinka Hermitage (1817–1841), reformed it according to the charter of Mount Athos. He composed “An Extensive Instruction for the Newly Tonsured Monk” (1824) and was engaged in the spiritual guidance of the monks¹²⁹⁷.

Monk Pavel of the Simonov Monastery in Moscow¹²⁹⁸, Monk Gerasim of the Sofroniev Hermitage, and Schemamonk Theophan of Optina († 1819) were the last representatives of this generation of Paissius's disciples¹²⁹⁹. (For the further history of the “School of Elder Paissios” in Russian monasteries, see Table VIII.) For some time, Monk Theophanes of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, a disciple of the Pechersk elder Dosipheus and later a well-known Solovetsky hermit, lived with Paissios at the Nyamets Monastery¹³⁰⁰.

All these disciples of Paissius, either directly or through their own disciples, contributed greatly to the revival of ascetic traditions in various monasteries and to the introduction of communal rules; however, there were also other zealous advocates of monasticism who associate Paissius with a group of austere desert dwellers. These were the so-called “elders of the Roslavl forests.” The Roslavl forests are located in the south of the Smolensk Governorate and, together with the Bryansk forests, form a vast, impenetrable, dense forest massif. In the second half of the 18th century, the forests belonged to the wealthy landowner Bronievsky. The history of the emergence of this group of ascetics is not entirely clear.

The first hermit in the Bryansk Forests was likely the monk or hieromonk Joasaph (1692–1766), who, after several years of hermitage, was no longer a solitary recluse. News of his austere way of life reached the Ploshchanskaya Hermitage, and Joasaph was offered the position of abbot there to restore it from its dilapidated state. Joasaph spent five years there before returning to his forest hut. He apparently earned the respect of the peasants in the surrounding villages, and many people flocked to him seeking comfort and advice. The elder's interactions with the people seemed suspicious to church authorities—it should be noted here that many schismatics were hiding in the southern part of the Bryansk forests—and the Sevska Consistory ordered the police to arrest Joasaph; he was subjected to countless interrogations. Only a conversation with the diocesan bishop saved Elder Joasaph from exile—perhaps even to Siberia, where he might have been sent as a suspicious individual without a passport. On the bishop's orders, Joasaph was released and returned to his forests, where he passed away in 1766.

Around this time, it became known that several monks and laypeople who sought solitude were living in the forests of Roslavl—with the permission of the landowner—leading a life of the most austere asceticism. Among them, the best known are Elder Barnabas with his two disciples, Hilarion and Joseph; Nikita († 1793); Theophan; the former hierodeacon Anastasius; and a disciple of Elder Vasily Kishkin (1745–1831)¹³⁰¹, the

¹²⁹⁵ Yatsimirsky. Op. cit. pp. 545–546; Chetverikov. The Optina Hermitage. p. 44; Zverinsky. 2. Nos. 1057, 1338.

¹²⁹⁶ Yatsimirsky. Op. cit., p. 546.

¹²⁹⁷ Muravyov. The Holy Mountain and Optina Hermitage. p. 136; Yatsimirsky. Op. cit. p. 546; RBS. p. 106. Elder Filaret had four disciples (known to us): Elder Makarii (d. 1864), Filaret, Arsenii, abbot of the Svyatogorsk Monastery (Kharkiv Diocese), and Iliodor (d. 1879). Muravyov. Op. cit.

¹²⁹⁸ In the early 19th century, many copies of ascetic writings were made at this monastery; the works of Nilus of Sora and Paisius were copied repeatedly, and copies were often sent to other monasteries. Popov. Op. cit.

¹²⁹⁹ Yatsimirsky. Op. cit. p. 546; Pimen. Op. cit. p. 53. During the first week of Lent, Theophan did not eat any food at all, drinking only two cups of water a day. Filaret, Metropolitan. Letters to Archimandrite Anthony. Vol. 2. p. 391.

¹³⁰⁰ Popov. Op. cit. p. 65; Nicodemus. Biographies. July; RBS. p. 454.

¹³⁰¹ There is a great deal of information—not all of it entirely reliable—about the elder Vasily Kishkin, which characterizes him as a spiritually gifted individual. Many elders spoke of Vasily with great respect. For some details of his biography, see: Hilarion, monk. The Life of Hierodeacon Melchizedek, in: Spiritual Readings 1889, vol. 2, pp. 184–201. As far as we know, a brief work devoted to his life was published in 1915–17, but I do not have access to it.

elder and hieromonk Athanasius—one of the aforementioned disciples of Paissius, who returned to these forests after a visit to Metropolitan Gabriel, to whom he presented the Slavonic text of **Dobrotolyubiya**—It was here that Vasilisk and Zosima also began their ascetic lives; as we have already noted, they later left for Siberia, where Vasilisk passed away; Zosima became known for ministering to a community of nuns. Finally, Hieromonk Adrian, who was the spiritual father of Vasilisk and Zosima, also lived there; later (in 1790), he was commissioned by Metropolitan Gabriel to restore monastic life at the Konevets Monastery, based on the communal charter¹³⁰². Another hermit, named Arsenius, had previously been a disciple of Paissius; he came to the Roslavl forests from Moldavia. All of these elders had disciples who later contributed to the revival of monastic life by exerting a spiritual influence on abbots, such as Anatoly († 1865), abbot of the Maloyaroslav Monastery, and Moses († 1862), abbot of the Optina Hermitage. Despite the persecution of these ascetics by the police—who intended to relocate them to monasteries and sometimes forcibly expelled them from their huts—some of them still managed to evade capture: for example, Dorotheus († 1865) lived as a hermit in the forests for nearly 60 years¹³⁰³.

4. The Activities of Metropolitan Gabriel Petrov Aimed at the Revival of Monasticism

A group of hermits from the Roslavl forests emerged from those circles of monasticism that had not lost their spiritual strength or their aspiration toward a truly monastic life, despite the destructive influence of the era. This aspiration arose from within monasticism itself. Therefore, when characterizing monasticism, it deserves special recognition. Had the church authorities paid attention to this movement and given it the opportunity to exert a stronger influence on monastic life, it could have become a source of far-reaching reform. But now, looking at this phenomenon from a historical perspective, one might also conclude that perhaps it was for the best that the Holy Synod did not undertake to guide this ascetic movement from above, relying on its own administrative wisdom— —a wisdom the synodal bishops had never once demonstrated in the 200 years of the Synod's existence!—and that guidance was left to God's Providence. Thus, these spiritual forces were freely directed toward where they could find fertile ground and nourish a new revival of monasticism.

Yet neither the needs of the monasteries and monasticism nor the spiritual currents emerging within monastic circles were hidden from the finest representatives of the church hierarchy. In this regard, the activities of Archbishop Gabriel Petrov of Tver, later Metropolitan of Novgorod and St. Petersburg, deserve special recognition. Despite his outwardly illustrious position, Archbishop Gabriel remained a man and a hierarch whose moral character could not be corrupted either by the destructive influence of his career or by the spirit of the age¹³⁰⁴. His cell attendant, the famous and later glorified elder Theophan Sokolov, offered a brief but striking characterization of Gabriel¹³⁰⁵. Good-natured and equally unpretentious in conversation with the Empress as with a simple monk or parish priest, Gabriel was universally respected and loved; only the church hierarchy viewed him with a certain skepticism, as they believed that his unpretentious manner undermined the dignity of the episcopal office; They felt their dignity was wounded when, during receptions, Bishop Gabriel served them simple dishes—pies filled with peas or porridge, which the ascetic metropolitan considered a particularly sumptuous meal, for he himself was content with cabbage soup, which was cooked for him in batches to last several days. He distributed almost his entire allowance to the needy, and his cell attendant, Theophan, had to make sure he did not give everything away. Despite his heavy workload at the Synod and the many duties associated with administering the diocese, Saint Gabriel attended church services daily and strictly observed his monastic prayer rule.

¹³⁰² Pimen. Op. cit. pp. 295–300, 310; Elder Adrian wrote many works of ascetic content, which comprise 2 volumes of 600 pages each (see bibliography).

¹³⁰³ Pimen. Op. cit. p. 53; Chetverikov. Op. cit., p. 31; Gerasim. A Brief Essay (1865), pp. 1–10; Muravyov. Op. cit., pp. 135–139; Arsenyev. Op. cit., in: **Der christliche Osten**, p. 197.

¹³⁰⁴ A seminal work is dedicated to Metropolitan Gabriel Petrov (May 18, 1730–January 26, 1801) and his activities: Titlinov, B., Gabriel Petrov (1916), which also contains a general history of the Russian Church during the reign of Catherine II; as well as: Archimandrite Makarii, **The Life and Works of His Eminence Gabriel, Metropolitan of Novgorod and St. Petersburg** (1857), which has not lost its significance. The personality of Gabriel, in addition to the memoirs of Elder Theophan (see note 1298), is also reflected in his letters, in: *Russkiy Arkhiv* 1864, 1869; 1895, no. 1; 1898, no. 3; 1908, no. 2; and *Chteniya* 1902, no. 1. See also: Golubinsky. History of Canonization. p. 320 (on the relics of Gabriel).

¹³⁰⁵ Subbotin. Op. cit., pp. 63–67. Poselyanin. The Russian Church and Russian Ascetics of the 18th Century (1905), pp. 198–214.

The biography of Gabriel, written by B. Titlinov, indicates that his influence was felt in all areas of church life and was highly positive in nature. But what is important for us now is to assess Bishop Gabriel's role in the revival of monastic asceticism. Already during his episcopate in Tver (1763–1770), Gabriel took the first steps in this direction. His primary aim was to introduce a monastic rule of communal life in both official and unofficial monasteries and to ensure its effective observance. At the Nilo-Stolobenskaya Hermitage—one of the most revered among the people and, according to the 1764 records, classified as a privileged monastery, thanks to Gabriel's efforts, the guidance of novices and newly ordained monks was entrusted to experienced, elderly, and trustworthy monks—that is, the foundations of the elder system were laid, although, admittedly, they did not subsequently develop favorably there¹³⁰⁶. This was followed by measures to reform the Klopsky, Tikhvin, and Modena monasteries.

Later, already as Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, in 1782 Gabriel transferred five monks from the Sofronievskaya Hermitage—known for the strictness of its rule and way of life—to the Alexander Nevsky Lavra in order to restore the ascetic way of life there¹³⁰⁷. The Valaam Monastery, which had been almost completely destroyed by fires in the first half of the 18th century—to the point that monastic life there had fallen into complete decline—was restored through the efforts of its new abbot (1782–1801), the strict ascetic Nazarius († 1809) from the Sarov Hermitage. Nazariy was a fairly strict monk, humble and simple. Bishop Theophilus of Tambov (1788–1811), who himself had done much to improve monastic life in his diocese, recommended Father Nazariy to Bishop Gabriel. But the abbot and the brethren did not want to lose their elder, and in a letter to Bishop Gabriel, the abbot described Nazarius as a simple, uneducated, almost foolish man. “I have plenty of my own smart alecks,” Bishop Gabriel wrote in reply to the abbot, “send me your fool.” At the Valaam Monastery, Bishop Gabriel also introduced a communal rule¹³⁰⁸. Elder Adrian, a disciple of Paissius, was entrusted with the task of reviving the Konevets Monastery¹³⁰⁹. At the Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery, which was led by the elder Theophan Sokolov (1793–1832)—Gabriel's cell attendant, already mentioned here—entirely new conditions arose thanks to the introduction of the communal rule and Theophan's leadership, and the nearly ruined monastery became a place of ascetic feats¹³¹⁰. Gabriel's advice and recommendations for improving monastic life also had a lasting impact on many monasteries located outside his diocese. For example, the Simonov Monastery in Moscow owes its revival primarily to Metropolitan Gabriel, for Gabriel sent Archimandrite Ignatius from the Tikhvin Monastery—one of the last disciples of Paisius—to serve as its abbot¹³¹¹.

Metropolitan Gabriel's great merit also lies in his efforts to make ascetic writings accessible to monks. Thanks to his efforts, the first edition of **Dobrotolyubie**—a collection that became a staple of ascetic reading among monks and, later, among lay believers—was published in St. Petersburg. All of Gabriel's activities, which influenced monastic life in the later period—the first half of the 19th century—constituted the first step in laying the foundations for a genuinely ascetic monastic way of life and greatly contributed to the development of the spiritual fatherhood tradition. Thanks to this, even where the spiritual fatherhood system failed to take root, significant changes for the better still occurred in the lives of the monks.

5. The Sarov Hermitage and Venerable Seraphim

In the last quarter of the 18th century and especially in the first half of the 19th century, the relatively new Sarov Hermitage became one of the monasteries distinguished by the particular austerity of its inhabitants' lives. It owed its flourishing to a whole series of monks and abbots—here we see an example of

¹³⁰⁶ Uspensky. Description of the Nilo Desert (1886). p. 45. On Gabriel's activities concerning monasteries, see: Titlinov. Op. cit. p. 754; for a general overview of all his activities, see Chapter 6.

¹³⁰⁷ Macarius, Archimandrite. Op. cit. p. 172.

¹³⁰⁸ The Valaam Monastery and Its Ascetics (1903). pp. 147–157; Subbotin. Op. cit. p. 67. Bishop Theophilus (Raev) was among those bishops who held the office of elder in high esteem; see his letters to the monks of the Sarov Hermitage, in: Russian Articles, 1914, vol. 160, pp. 608–624.

¹³⁰⁹ Pimen. Op. cit., pp. 295 ff.; **Russian Articles**, 1835, vol. 1, pp. 119–126.

¹³¹⁰ Cf.: my book. Op. cit., pp. 128–143; Subbotin. Op. cit.

¹³¹¹ Archimandrite Makarii. Op. cit., pp. 69, 73–74; Popov. Op. cit., p. VI. When discussing the restoration of authentic monastic life at Simonov Monastery, special mention should be made of Elder Alexius (Blinsky; 1722–1812), who for 40 years (1772–1812) was the focal point of the monastery's spiritual life. L. Hieromonk Alexius, Ascetic of the Simonov Monastery in Moscow (2nd ed., 1891); we were unable to determine when the first edition was published.

how even a small number of ascetics can transform the entire life of a monastery and create a truly monastic atmosphere within it for a long time to come.

The Sarov Hermitage, located 40 km from the town of Temnikov in the Tambov Diocese, almost on the border with the neighboring Nizhny Novgorod Diocese, became a spiritual center for both of these dioceses and their monasteries. It was founded relatively late, around 1692; its founder was Hieromonk Isaac († 1737), who served as abbot of the hermitage until 1731, after which he handed over leadership to Hegumen Dorotheus (1731–1746), while he himself took the great schema (1731) under the name John¹³¹². He introduced a very strict monastic rule, similar to that of Mount Athos, which was upheld by his successors as well. It was a great blessing for the Sarov Hermitage that, for 150 years, its administration remained in the hands of true ascetic monks. Almost all the abbots of this era—Dorotheus (1731–1746), Filaret (1746–1749), Ephrem (1758–1777), Pachomius (1777–1794), Isaiah I (1794–1807), Niphon (1807–1842), and Isaiah II (1846–1858)—were worthy monks: in governing the monastery, they strove not only to strictly observe the rules of the monastic charter but also to breathe life into these rules and imbue them with inner spiritual meaning; they knew how to properly guide the novice monks who flocked to the Sarov Hermitage. It can be said that at that time, the abbot of the Sarov Hermitage also served as a spiritual father (*pater spiritualis*), as was often the case in the early Church. The inner, spiritual life of the hermitage was rooted in early Christian asceticism.

As we trace the history of the Sarov Hermitage, we see a succession of monks who led a life of strict asceticism and brought fame to the hermitage, making it a center of attraction for novice monks. Some of them deserve special mention. Hieromonk Joachim (1732–1802) spent nearly 50 years in the monastery without interruption; he served as a psalm reader and librarian, devoting much of his time to transcribing the ascetic writings (by Macarius the Great, Ephrem the Syrian, and others)¹³¹³, but he did not forget the world beyond the monastery walls and exerted a great influence on the local residents. It was likely thanks to him that the monastery came to be revered by the people as a holy place. The elder Nazarius (1735–1809), whom we already know, took refuge here until his transfer to the Valaam Monastery, and it was here that he spent the last years of his life. We should also mention his disciple Mark the Hermit († 1817), a contemporary of St. Seraphim; Hieromonk Pitirim († 1789); and Hieromonk Hilarion (1776–1841) from the Valaam Monastery, a disciple of Elder Nazarius. Hilarion arrived in Sarov in 1797 and spent 44 years in the hermitage; he served as the monastery's spiritual father and contributed greatly to preserving its spiritual atmosphere. He left behind a collection of wonderful "Letters" on the Christian life, the content of which reflects the influence of St. Seraphim. After his death, the main pillar of the hermitage became Hegumen Isaiah II (Putilov; 1786–1858, abbot from 1846 to 1858), the son of a wealthy merchant; He arrived in Sarov in 1805 and lived there until 1858, never once leaving the monastery grounds; during his tenure as abbot and at his initiative, Hieromonk Abel wrote the history of the hermitage, *¹³¹⁴ *.

But no one glorified the hermitage as much as its humble monk, whom the Russian Church canonized in 1903—St. Seraphim of Sarov. And no other Russian saint so wonderfully combined in his life the renunciation of the world and service to it as Seraphim, who set an example of true Christian holiness. We have already attempted once to characterize this ascetic and man of God; here we will briefly repeat that description¹³¹⁵.

St. Seraphim helped many people living in the world, even though he himself had no contact with the events that shaped that world. Like the ancient Christian ascetics and some of his fellow monks in the Sarov Desert, Seraphim lived as a hermit in the seclusion of the forest for more than 50 years; only in the final years

¹³¹² In 1732, John was arrested by agents of the Secret Chancellery; he was accused of possessing certain writings directed against the powerful Theophan Prokopovich (see Chapter XIII). This was a period of persecution against monks, which began under Anna Ioannovna, as we have already noted. John remained in prison in St. Petersburg until his death (April 4, 1737). RBS, p. 139.

¹³¹³ The copying of ascetic works was a constant practice at the Sarov Hermitage; for example, a monk named Boniface copied the following works there: *The Hundred Chapters* by Callistus and Ignatius Xanthopoulos (1814), various ascetic works by Basil the Great and John of Damascus (1815); Thomas à Kempis (!) (1816), a collection of individual short works, which he titled *The Spiritual Baptismal Font* (1817), yet another collection of ascetic writings by Basil the Great (1820), excerpts of ascetic content attributed to Mark the Ascetic (1821), and others. Popov. Op. cit. pp. 12, 17, 19, 23, 44, 69.

¹³¹⁴ Denisov, No. 889; Zverinsky, Vol. 2, No. 1141; Prav. Ob., 1863, Vol. 7, p. 154; Abel, Hieromonk, The Communal Sarov Hermitage (1853). pp. 7–15; *ibid.*, including some letters by Monk Hilarion (pp. 167–174), as well as: Ilyin. St. Seraphim of Sarov (1925); RBS. pp. 141 (Isaiah), 178 (Joachim).

¹³¹⁵ On St. Seraphim, see my book: *Leben und Lehre der Starzen* (1936). pp. 209–258; Ilyin. *Selected Works* (here is a list of the most important literature); Seraphim (Chichagov), Archimandrite. *Chronicle of the Seraphim-Diveyevo Monastery* (1903).

of his earthly life (1759–1833), after a long period of ascetic struggle and in the full awareness of his spiritual maturity, did he find the courage, for a period of 8 years (1825–1833) to respond to the troubles and needs of this world and to offer spiritual assistance to laypeople; his ministry as an elder radiates the wondrous light of Christian love for the world, which he had conquered within himself once and for all.

Like many other Russian ascetics, Seraphim came from a wealthy merchant family. This is a very characteristic feature in the biographies of Russian ascetics of piety, who were raised in an atmosphere of worldly enterprise typical of their ancestors over several generations; —they had many opportunities to enjoy the blessings of this world and not to think about renouncing it, yet time and again we see examples of how the spirit of piety manifests its power in the life of a Russian Christian family, gaining greater sway over many, many people than earthly temptations. And Prokhor Moshnin was one of those who, from his youth, regarded the values of this world as nothing. The young, strong, and stately Prokhor was drawn to the monastic life.

At the age of about 20, he came to the Sarov Hermitage on the advice he received during a pilgrimage to the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra from the elder Dositheus († 1788), who was living there in seclusion. For seven years of his novitiate, Prokhor's spiritual father was Hieromonk Joseph. In 1786, Prokhor took monastic vows under the name Seraphim. Shortly thereafter, Bishop Theophilus, who maintained close ties with the hermitage, ordained Seraphim as a hierodeacon (1793). During those years, as he recounted shortly before his death, he had visions: the Most Blessed Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ Himself appeared to him and blessed him. For no other Russian saint was the Mother of God to such a degree the focal point of mystical experience and the object of such devout veneration as for St. Seraphim¹³¹⁶. This aspect of Seraphim's religious and mystical experience not only distinguishes him from his contemporaries but also places him in a special position in the history of Russian mysticism—or, rather, of Russian mystical quests. In our book, we have specifically highlighted this circumstance and described it in detail.

At the end of 1794, Seraphim withdrew to a small forest hut built in a dense, impenetrable spruce forest, two hours' walk from the desert, and there began his life as a hermit, which lasted 30 years (1794–1825). He took off his black monastic robe and wore a white cassock. Seraphim always carried a knapsack loaded with stones on his back to mortify his overly strong flesh, the Holy Gospel was always with him, everywhere he went; under his cassock, on his chest, he wore a heavy iron cross weighing 20 pounds; he wore the same cross on his back, and an iron belt around his waist. In the winter, he chopped wood in the forest for his stove, which, however, provided only a little warmth to his cell during severe cold spells; in the summer, he worked in the garden and ate what he grew himself; later, he began to subsist solely on grass and hay, which he gathered in the forest and boiled. For three years—more than 1,000 days and nights—Seraphim spent in unceasing prayer, kneeling on a huge rock with his hands raised high—thus he performed the feat of pillar-standing. And all this was only the beginning of his ascetic endeavors.

It was then that he was tempted. One day, while the saint was chopping wood in the forest, robbers attacked him and demanded money, which they believed he had taken from devout believers. When the reverend replied that he had nothing, they struck him with an axe. Although Seraphim also held an axe in his hands and was strong enough to defend himself against the robbers, he chose not to resist them. He lay on the ground unconscious and covered in blood until late at night. Early in the morning, covered in blood, he made his way to the monastery. The abbot told him to see a doctor, but, overcome by exhaustion and weakness, Seraphim fell asleep before the doctor arrived. As the venerable one himself later recounted, at that moment the Mother of God appeared to him once more, with a royal crown on her head, and the apostles Peter and John stood to her right and left, just as they had in his first vision. The Queen of Heaven—as Seraphim liked to call the Mother of God—turned toward the spot where, later, after the saint awoke, the doctors were standing, and, pointing to the sick man, said, “Why are you toiling?”—and then, turning to the apostles, she said: “This one is of Our kind!”—and at that very moment, Seraphim awoke. The venerable one refused the doctors' help; he lay in his cell for several weeks without getting up. His robust constitution held out, and in the end he rose from his sickbed, but he remained permanently stooped and could no longer walk without the aid of a staff. This is how he is depicted in icons: in a white robe, wearing bast shoes, with a heavy, stone-filled knapsack on his shoulders—he continued to carry this knapsack even after his recovery, but his facial features remained unchanged.

¹³¹⁶ Cf. my essay: “The Veneration of the Mother of God in Russian Piety and Popular Religion,” in: **Kyrios**. 5 (1940–41).

A few months later, the reverend returned from the monastery to his forest hut. After the death of Abbot Isaiah I (1807), the brethren asked Seraphim to assume the abbacy, but he humbly declined this honor. Now Seraphim undertook a new ascetic feat: for three years he lived in complete silence and did not speak even to the monks who brought him prosphora for the Divine Liturgy and bread to eat. He tried to hide his face from people, covering it whenever anyone approached him. For Seraphim, the feat of silence was merely a preparation for a new and higher feat.

On May 8, 1810, he returned from the forest to the hermitage, which he had not visited for three whole years. He appeared at the monastery during Vespers—it was the eve of the feast of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker—and silently went to his cell. On the very feast day of St. Seraphim, he came to the early Divine Liturgy, received Holy Communion, and was blessed by the abbot, Father Nifont. Then he returned to his cell and shut himself in. Seraphim embarked on a new feat—the feat of seclusion. He spent fifteen and a half years in seclusion. In the winter, he spent all his time in an unheated cell, dimly lit by the light of a lamp before the icon of the Queen of Heaven. At first he slept sitting on a log, and later—lying in a coffin that he had carved out for himself. As before, in the forest hut, Seraphim wore iron chains on his body; to make his life even more difficult, he carried firewood from one side of the cell to the other. During the day he read the Holy Scriptures aloud; at night he offered the mental prayer—“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me”—and devoted himself to fasting and guarding his heart. During this time, St. Seraphim experienced various visions while praying, which he later recounted to some of his disciples. On Sundays and feast days, he received Holy Communion, which, with the abbot’s blessing, was passed to him through a small window in the door of his cell after the early Liturgy. When the diocesan bishop arrived at the hermitage and approached his cell, the door did not open even for His Grace. Only after 10 years of seclusion did Seraphim allow people to enter his cell—he silently gave his blessing for this.

On November 25, 1825, the door to the hermit’s cell opened, and from that time on, a period of spiritual leadership began for Seraphim—a time of service to the world—a great, grace-filled feat filled with boundless love. Pilgrims flocked to his cell in droves. As he conversed with them and instructed them, Elder Seraphim advised them to remember the Lord unceasingly and to pray constantly, especially through mental prayer. Father Seraphim used to say that this prayer encompasses all sobriety and vigilance; one must always keep this prayer in one’s soul and heart, offering it while walking and while sitting, while working, and in church before the start of the Divine Liturgy. By invoking the name of God, you will find peace, purity of soul and body, and the Holy Spirit—the source of all good—will rest upon you and preserve you in the fear of God and in purity. At the end of the conversation, the elder would recite a prayer of dismissal, give his blessing, and kiss the visitor, saying, “Christ is risen, my joy!”—and the person would leave his cell with tears of emotion in their eyes.

Shortly before the end of his life as a hermit, an extraordinary power emanated from Seraphim: he healed Mikhail Manturov, a landowner and devout Christian who had long suffered from paralysis of the legs. And this was only the beginning of many miraculous healings; through the saint’s prayers, the sick—whether suffering from long-standing and severe ailments or suddenly stricken with illness—were restored to health. Many people witnessed his service to the world. Many of his prophecies also came true. Here is just one example: in 1831, during the Polish uprising, a company of a certain regiment was marching through the Sarov Hermitage. The company commander, likely a man of faith, ordered the soldiers to stop so they could receive the elder’s blessing. The elder granted his request and blessed each soldier individually. And suddenly he said that no one from that company would die. The company fought throughout the entire Polish campaign, took part in the storming of Warsaw, and not a single soldier from it was killed.

The elder showed special love for one of his visitors—Nikolai Motovilov, who suffered from a leg ailment—and healed him of his affliction. In November 1831, in a forest clearing near the hut—where St. Seraphim had lived as a hermit since 1825 and received visitors, Motovilov received instruction from the elder on attaining the Holy Spirit¹³¹⁷ and was granted, together with the saint, a vision of the manifestation of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, spiritual guidance for women ascetics played a major role in the life of St. Seraphim, as evidenced by the history of the Diveyevo sisterhood, which was later transformed into a convent.

¹³¹⁷ N. Motovilov’s notes “The Teaching of St. Seraphim on the Acquisition of the Holy Spirit” were first published in 1903 in **Moskovskie Vedomosti** (see the text in my book, pp. 230–245)—previously, they had not been approved by ecclesiastical censorship. See also: Florensky, P., **The Pillar and the Affirmation of Truth** (1914). Ch. 5 (Letter 5).

The life of Elder Seraphim during the last eight years before his passing became truly the life of a saint. Through his deeds, filled with love, he had long since transcended the boundaries of this earthly world. And for the devout believers who came to his forest cell, he was no longer just an ordinary man, but a saint who remained in the flesh solely out of love for people. His outward appearance took on features marked by the radiance of another, heavenly world.

On Sunday, January 1, 1833, the elder prayed for the last time during the Divine Liturgy. In his cell, he sang Paschal hymns all day long, and three times he went to the spot he had chosen for his grave. The next day, January 2, he was found in his cell, kneeling in a posture of prayer but lifeless, before the icon of the Queen of Heaven known as “The Tender Heart”—the Venerable Seraphim had passed into eternal life. Despite the great veneration shown by several generations of believers, who came with reverence to pray at his grave, the Synod did not view this veneration particularly favorably. Officially, St. Seraphim was canonized only in 1903; on July 19, 1903, the transfer of his incorrupt relics took place. Anyone who has lived in Russia knows how deeply this saint is venerated across all walks of life¹³¹⁸.

6. Optina Hermitage and Its Elders

The Optina Hermitage occupies a very special place in the spiritual and religious life of nineteenth-century Russia. The hermitage itself and the skete where the Optina elders lived and labored eventually became famous throughout the country. It was here that the Optina School took shape, exerting a powerful influence on Russia’s spiritual life for nearly an entire century (1828–1922). First and foremost, we should mention the elders Leonid (1828–1841), Makarii (1841–1860), Ambrose (1860–1891), Joseph (1892–1911), Varsonofius († 1913), Nectarius († 1928), and Anatolius († 1922). The hermitage lived according to strict communal rules: neither the abbot nor the monks owned anything personally; they all ate together with the abbot in the refectory; even such small items as tea or sugar were provided to the monks by the hermitage, not to mention clothing and shoes. Only for the elders in the skete was food prepared separately and brought to their cells. Each monk had his own cell; novices and monks—numbering about 300 at the beginning of the 19th century—received their assignments from the abbot or the cell attendant. The liturgical schedule was observed with particular strictness: all services prescribed by the Typikon were performed in the proper sequence, and the brethren were required to attend them; the inner spirit of the desert was so unified, and it penetrated so deeply into the minds and souls of the inhabitants, that the abbot or the elders had no need to compel the monks to do anything or to reprimand them. This spirit also influenced the worshippers and visitors to the monastery, who, while staying there, also regularly attended the divine services.

This structure of the monastery’s internal life took shape only in the 19th century, although Optina had been founded in ancient times. Archpriest Sergiy Chetverikov, who was closely connected to Optina both inwardly and—outwardly, with his ascetic appearance resembling that of an elder, visited the monastery on numerous occasions and, drawing on his own observations and impressions, wrote a wonderful book about the Optina Hermitage: *¹³¹⁹

This ancient Russian monastery is located on the banks of the Zhizdra, a narrow but deep tributary of the Oka River, on the edge of a vast, dense pine forest. The monastery is surrounded by white stone walls with small towers at each of the four corners; there are gates in the middle of the walls on all four sides. The walls and towers serve as a reminder of the monastery’s readiness for military defense; at the same time, they inspire believers to reflect on the need to protect their souls from the attacks of the spiritual enemy. Inside the monastery walls stand several churches, the largest of which is the monastery’s main church, dedicated to the Entry of the Theotokos; along the walls are the monks’ cells and various outbuildings. There is also a monastic cemetery here, where the departed monks are buried. Touching epitaphs offer insight into the deceased and their monastic lives. For example, the monument erected over the grave of Elder Leonid reads: “He left a memory of himself in the hearts of many who found comfort in their sorrows.” The churches at Optina Pustyn

¹³¹⁸ As far as we know, the first mention of St. Seraphim in print appeared in the work “A Brief Account of the Life of the Elder of the Sarov Desert, the Schemamonk and Ascetic Mark” (1839), which included some of Seraphim’s teachings; later, in the journal *Mayak* (1845, Issue 16), a short article titled “The Tale of Seraphim’s Feats” was published. The first biography devoted specifically to him appeared in 1863: “The Life of Elder Seraphim, Hieromonk of the Sarov Hermitage, Hermit, and Recluse” (St. Petersburg, 1863); it was likely written by one of the monks of the Sarov Hermitage.

¹³¹⁹ We were fortunate enough to know Archpriest Sergius Chetverikov († 1947) personally; from him we heard many stories about the Optina elders whom he knew, beginning with Father Ambrose. We draw upon his book *The Optina Hermitage* (1927) in this work.

are neither opulent nor particularly beautiful, but everything about them is harmonious, simple, and unpretentious; everything is so cozy and comforting that one does not want to leave. The services are neither drawn out nor rushed and are performed with great fervor.

The elders of Optina usually lived in a skete. A skete is a part of the monastery where ascetic monks seeking silence and solitude take refuge. The Optina skete is located in the forest, half a kilometer from the monastery itself. Those unfamiliar with the way there will not be able to find it right away. The skete is surrounded by a wooden fence. Holy icons are painted on the gate. To the right of the holy gate stands a small cottage where Elder Ambrose lived, and to the left is another cottage where his teacher, Elder Macarius, found refuge. With reverence and his head uncovered, the worshipper opens the gate and steps onto the holy threshold of the skete, a place of prayer and deep reverence. A rich scent of flowers greets him; they grow here on both sides of the wide, sand-strewn path; flowers surround the church, reaching right up to the porch, growing along the narrow paths leading to the refectory, to the cells, to the apiary with its beehives, to the pond, to the cypress-lined avenue, and to the graves. And amid all this splendor lie the bright, clean cells of the hermits, with their small, transparent windows¹³²⁰.

The external history of Optina is similar to that of many other small monasteries of Ancient Rus'. Founded in the 15th century, it was completely destroyed by Polish troops during the Time of Troubles. Based on old synodic records, it can be assumed that prior to its destruction, this monastery was "coeducational," and it became a men's monastery only after its restoration, shortly after the Time of Troubles. In 1717, under Peter the Great, the hermitage was closed for several years; it was reopened in 1726, but throughout the 18th century it remained a small monastery with fewer than ten monks. Metropolitan Platon Levshin of Moscow (1775–1812), who, like Metropolitan Gabriel Petrov, revived and restored many monasteries in his diocese¹³²¹, also turned his attention to this hermitage, picturesquely situated on the riverbank. He entrusted Archimandrite Makarii (Bryushkov), abbot of the Pesnoshsky Monastery (1788–1811), with the task of restoring the monastery to order¹³²². This Makarii was associated with the school of the elder Paisii Velichkovsky, with whom he corresponded. Macarius sent the monk Abraham—who later became the abbot of Optina—to the hermitage; Abraham was primarily responsible for the hermitage's physical layout.

The primary credit for organizing the monastic community's internal life belongs to Abbot Moses Putilov († 1862). Previously, he had sought refuge in the Roslavl forests, where he served as abbot of one of the hermitages. When, on , 1820, Bishop Filaret of Kaluga (Amfiteatrov, later Metropolitan of Kyiv) founded a skete near Optina, Moses settled there, and in 1825 the bishop appointed him abbot of the skete. Moses invited several other hermits (Anthony, Hilarion, and Savvatiy); all of them were adherents of a strict communal rule in the spirit of Paissius's teachings and observed it scrupulously. Moses's tenure as abbot (1825–1862) was the most important period in the formation of Optina's distinctive spirit and the unique structure of its internal life¹³²³.

The system of "starets" was introduced here by Father Leonid Nagolkin (1768–1841)¹³²⁴. Lev Nagolkin grew up in a middle-class family; he served a merchant for about 10 years but then left that position and came to Optina in 1794, where he spent two years. From there, he moved to the Beloberezhskaya Hermitage (in the Oryol Diocese), where the abbot was Elder Vasily Kishkin, a friend of Elder Paissius. Father Vasily tonsured him as a monk with the name Leonid. Through Elder Vasily Kishkin, Leonid became acquainted with the rule and traditions of Mount Athos and learned about the teachings of Paissius. When Father Vasily stepped down as abbot to live in solitude, the brethren elected Leonid as their abbot (1806). Leonid was also a disciple of Elder Theodore († 1822), who at that time was living in the Beloberezhskaya Hermitage and was also one of Paissius's disciples. Four years later, Leonid renounced the abbotship and,

¹³²⁰ Tschetwerikoff. *Das russische Starzentum*. pp. 67–69.

¹³²¹ Until 1799, the Kaluga Governorate belonged to the Moscow Diocese; the Kaluga Diocese was established in 1799.

¹³²² Archimandrite Makarii Bryushkov, acting on the instructions of Metropolitan Platon of Moscow, reorganized several monasteries in his diocese, introducing a communal charter there: the Pesenoshsky Monastery, the Borisoglebsky Monastery in Dmitrov, and the Old Golutvin Monastery near Kolomna. Pimen. *Op. cit.*, pp. 242, 253; "Historical Sketch of the Berlyukova Hermitage," in: *Readings*. 1875. 2. p. 35; Popov. *Op. cit.*, p. 75. However, this communal charter was not observed for long. Pimen. *Ibid.*

¹³²³ Leonid, Archimandrite. "Abolished Monasteries of the Kaluga Diocese," in: *Readings*. 1862. 2; Tschetwerikoff. *Op. cit.* p. 30; Pimen. *Op. cit.* p. 53.

¹³²⁴ The First Great Elder of Optina, Hieromonk Leonid (Lev in the schema) (1917). pp. 1–15, 53–72, 123–189, 242–275, 306–321; his letters: *ibid.* pp. 329–401. See my book (pp. 143–156).

together with Elder Theodore, returned to the forests surrounding the hermitage. There, in complete solitude, lived the elder Cleopas, whom we already know. In the woods, Leonid took the great schema. But the ascetic life of these hermits did not last long; pious people seeking the monastic life began to come to them. Then they went to the Valaam Monastery, where they lived in a small skete. At that time, Father Leonid began to serve as a spiritual father: he helped those who turned to him with spiritual counsel. He was about 40 years old at the time. The role of spiritual father was not recognized by all monks then; the superiors viewed it with particular suspicion, seeing in it a certain diminishment of their honor and rank. The abbot of the Valaam Monastery likely shared similar doubts, for Theodore and Leonid (Elder Cleopas had died in 1817) were forced to leave Valaam and move to the Alexander-Svir Monastery. In 1822, Elder Theodore passed away. Until 1829, Leonid found refuge in this monastery; he had many disciples, including lay devotees, and his reputation as a spiritually gifted elder spread far beyond the monastery walls.

The elders Paisius (Velichkovsky), Vasily Kishkin, Cleopas, and Theodore provided spiritual guidance almost exclusively to the monastery's residents. They accepted novices into obedience, and their primary concern was the spiritual formation of the monastic community. Leonid brought this era of the elders to a close and ushered in a new one. He brought the tradition of the elders out of the monastery's seclusion and extended it to the outside world, making it a blessing for all people seeking spiritual help and counsel. Thus, the deeds of Elder Leonid marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the monastic elders.

This new era became particularly evident in 1829, when Father Leonid returned to Optina Hermitage, where he labored until his death on October 11, 1841, laying the cornerstone of the spiritual fatherhood tradition at the hermitage. Leonid's works contributed to the transformation of Optina into a spiritual center of Russia, to which many people flocked to seek help and spiritual counsel on various matters of Christian life. The elder's life story contains many examples of how this grace-filled ascetic—sometimes through strictness, sometimes through meekness, and often through a profound joke—spiritually helped people who came to him from the world. More than any other Optina elder, Leonid was distinguished by a unique simplicity of character and instruction, and for this reason he was close to the broadest strata of the Russian people. The people loved and appreciated this manner of address, for they themselves imbue their own jokes and proverbs with far more meaning than appears at first glance. There was much in Leonid's conduct that resembled holy folly in Christ, that "sancta simplicitas" [holy simplicity], which speaks to the people more than the most learned instruction¹³²⁵.

Elder Makarii Ivanov, the continuator of the tradition of the elders at Optina, was a completely different man. Thanks to him, many Russian writers, poets, and thinkers were able to imbibe the ascetic spirit of Christianity. In the spiritual history of nineteenth-century Russia, the influence of the elders undoubtedly occupies a very special place; without it, it is impossible to form a clear picture of the views and philosophical constructs of the people of that era¹³²⁶. Elder Makarii was of noble birth. During his pilgrimages to the Ploshchanskaya Hermitage, he met its abbot, the elder and hieromonk Athanasius, a disciple of Paisius. The entire atmosphere of the hermitage and his conversations with Elder Athanasius influenced the tender, sensitive, and somewhat artistic nature of the young nobleman; he decided to take monastic vows. He lived as a monk in the hermitage for 24 years (1810–1834), 13 of which (1810–1823) he spent under the guidance of Elder Athanasius († 1823). From him, Macarius inherited a penchant for the in-depth study of the ascetic writings of the Holy Fathers.

More than other elders, Makarii based his monastic practice on the writings of the Church Fathers, rather than solely on his own spiritual ascetic experience. His cell, filled with countless books, gave visitors the impression of a scholar's study. "His spiritual guidance had its own distinctive features. He spoke with visitors calmly, without joking. Leonid possessed the gift of quickly grasping the essence of things, combined

¹³²⁵ Karsavin. "Das Starzentum in der russischen Kirche," in: **Zeitwende**. 3 (1927). May, June; see also: Hilprich, St., O.S.B., **Die Torheit um Christi Willen**, in: **Z. f. Askese und Mystik**, 6 (1931); and also: Alexy (Kuznetsov), Hieromonk, **Foolishness for Christ's Sake and the Life of the Pillars** (1913).

¹³²⁶ The following individuals, who were more or less associated with the Optina Hermitage, can be mentioned: S. O. Burachek, V. I. Askokhensky, I. M. Snegirev, M. P. Pogodin, S. P. Shevyrev, M. A. Maksimovich, A. K. Tolstoy, V. A. Golubinsky, A. N. Tolstoy, T. I. Filippov, I. V. Kireevsky, A. S. Khomyakov, P. A. Bulgakov, L. A. Arnoldi, A. N. Muravyov, D. A. Obolensky, E. N. Norov, N. V. Gogol, N. N. Strakhov, F. M. Dostoevsky, P. A. Yurkevich, Vladimir Solovyov, K. Leontiev, Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich (K. R.), and, finally, Leo Tolstoy. In 1912, V. Troitsky defended his dissertation, "The Influence of the Optina Hermitage on the Russian Intelligentsia and Literature," at the Moscow Theological Academy (cf.: *Journals of the Academy*, in: BV. 1913. 4. Appendix. p. 415), which examines the spiritual influence of the hermitage and its elders.

with a wit characteristic of an intelligent Russian peasant, and this gift was further developed throughout his life rich in experience. Makarii was completely immersed in the study of ascetic writings; throughout his life, he strove for an ever-deeper understanding of them. His conversations were full of quotations. He could converse with equal ease with a simple, devout worshipper, a learned theologian, or a visitor with a philosophical education... Elder Makarii's wooden cell welcomed an even more diverse crowd of visitors than Father Leonid's cell. Even at the threshold of this cell, filled with books and icons—as if human wisdom were united here with Christian piety—a visitor could sense its very special spirit; and his outlook could be completely transformed after an hour or two of conversation with the elder... Many marveled at the simplicity and ease with which Macarius resolved the most difficult theological questions. His letters, which reached even the most remote corners of Russia, were of particular importance for the spiritual guidance of the community. He guided many of his spiritual sons and daughters through his letters, without ever meeting them face to face. Some women's monasteries also remained under his spiritual guidance. His extraordinarily extensive correspondence was later published in several volumes, and yet this publication covered only a portion of his letters"¹³²⁷.

For 20 years (1841–1860), Elder Makarii stood at the center of Optina's spiritual life. And he is credited with yet another achievement: under his guidance, many patristic and ascetic works were translated into Russian and published. F. A. Golubinsky, a philosopher and theologian, professor at the Moscow Theological Academy; the Slavophile thinker I. V. Kireevsky; and several educated monks who were serving at Optina at that time became his assistants in this endeavor. The elder's cell came to resemble an editorial office; it was here that the works of the Church Fathers were translated, with every word of the translation carefully weighed, which is why the Optina publications are distinguished by their elegant language and precise rendering of the most difficult expressions found in ascetic and mystical works. Let us mention only the most important publications: the biography and writings of Elder Paisius Velichkovsky, the works of Elder Nilus of Sora, the works of Abba Barsanuphius, the life and works of Symeon the New Theologian, The Great Catechetical Discourses of St. Theodore the Studite, the works of St. Isaac the Syrian in four volumes, The Questions of St. Maximus the Confessor to Phalassius, and others.¹³²⁸

In the early 1860s, the Optina Hermitage suffered great losses. On September 7, 1860, Elder Macarius passed away; two years later, the monastery's long-time abbot, Archimandrite Moses, died; and in 1865, his brother, the austere ascetic Anthony—who had come to Optina with him from the forests of Roslavl and played a significant role in the spiritual life of the monastery—passed away. But in the person of the new abbot, Archimandrite Isaac (1862–1894)—a disciple of the elders Leonid and Macarius—the hermitage once again found a good shepherd. Two other ascetics who contributed to the preservation and deepening of the monastery's ascetic spirit deserve mention: the skete's abbots, Hieromonks Hilarion (1860–1873) and Anatoly (Zertsalov; 1874–1894), both disciples of Elder Macarius.

In the second half of the 19th century, the spiritual life of Optina came to center on the elder, Hieroschemamonk Ambrose (Grenkov, 1812–1891). Archpriest S. Chetverikov, who knew him personally and conversed with him, gave us a vivid portrait of "Father Ambrose," who, in his character and in his spiritual guidance as an elder, managed to combine the gifts of both his predecessors—Leonid and Macarius. "Ambrose had a 'big and loving heart,'" writes S. Chetverikov, "he was highly educated in theology, possessed great practical wisdom, a lively and cheerful disposition, and a strong inclination toward practical work; he loved to interact with people." Unlike the elders Leonid and Makarii, Alexander Grenkov (Ambrose's secular name) graduated from the theological seminary in Tambov and then taught for some time at a theological school that provided elementary education to the children of clergymen. A steadfast desire for the monastic life gradually took root in his religious soul; after an illness (he had been frail since birth), Alexander firmly resolved to become a monk. On the advice of a hermit elder who lived near his native village, Grenkov went to Optina (1839) and for some time was under the guidance of Elder Leonid. Shortly before his death, Father Leonid said to Father Makarii, pointing to Ambrose: "I'm handing him over to you from one end of the room to the other. He's really taken a liking to us elders." Thus, at the behest of his elder, Ambrose transferred to Father Macarius's care. Ambrose became one of those who placed their knowledge and strength at the disposal of Elder Macarius, who was preparing the publication of ascetic writings.

¹³²⁷ My book, pp. 160–161.

¹³²⁸ See the correspondence between Elder Makarii and I. V. Kireevsky: Tschetwerikoff. Op. cit. pp. 49, 107 ff.

Very characteristic of Ambrose is his remark about his physical ailments: “In the monastery, it is beneficial to be a little sick. A monk should not seek serious medical treatment, but only receive light care.”

Elder Ambrose’s sphere of influence was even broader than that of his predecessors. Like Macarius, he became a spiritual father not only to the monks of Optina but also to countless people living far beyond the monastery walls. His tenure as abbot lasted two decades, from 1874 to 1891; he passed away on October 10, 1891.

Countless pilgrims visited Elder Ambrose; they came to him for advice and spiritual guidance and left his little cottage in the skete comforted and joyful. In his cell, Ambrose had long conversations with Vladimir Solovyov, F. M. Dostoevsky, and Leo Tolstoy—men so dissimilar to one another that they may be judged in various ways, yet all were outstanding Russian thinkers whose works found wide circulation and recognition even beyond the borders of their homeland. And perhaps not every reader who reflects on their views—or on the changes in their views—realizes just how significant the spirit of the Optina Hermitage and the Optina elders Makarii and Ambrose were in this regard. The influence of the Optina elders was decisive in reconciling many members of the Russian intelligentsia—both famous and unknown—with the Church. Bishop Theophan the Recluse also worked toward this end; through his writings, he succeeded in bringing many who had strayed back into the Church.

Elder Ambrose’s extensive correspondence helped significantly expand and deepen the Optina Hermitage’s influence on the world. As already mentioned, he devoted a great deal of attention and time to the religious life of women. Just as the Diveyevo Convent entrusted itself to the spiritual guidance of St. Seraphim, the Shamordino sisterhood, founded by Elder Ambrose, remained under his spiritual care¹³²⁹.

S. Chetverikov, who was well acquainted with the life and spirit of Optina, concluded in his work that after Elder Ambrose’s passing, “the tradition of the elders at Optina Hermitage did not die out, but it never again attained its former strength and influence”¹³³⁰.

Elder Joseph († 1911), a disciple of Ambrose, continued his mentor’s work and earned the respect and love of believers who came to him at Optina with their inner struggles and concerns. After his death, Elder Anatoly († 1922)—referred to as “the Younger” (to distinguish him from the skete’s abbot, Hieromonk Anatoly the Elder)—became the center of the desert’s spiritual life; he, too, was a disciple of Elder Ambrose; with his manner toward visitors, filled with mercy and warmth, he—according to S. Chetverikov, who knew Father Anatoly personally—resembled St. Seraphim of Sarov¹³³¹. At the same time as Father Anatoly, Elder Nektarios († 1928), a disciple of Hieromonk Anatoly the Elder, lived as a monk at Optina. Nektarios came to the hermitage as a young man, possessing an innate inclination toward solitude, and lived in the skete; only after the death of Elder Joseph did he take on the role of an elder, but his sphere of influence on the world was narrower than that of the other elders¹³³².

The unbroken succession of generations of elders was, of course, of immense importance for the inner life of the Optina Hermitage. But the Optina elderhood constituted an entire era in the history of the elderhood in general, for the Optina elders devoted their spiritual energies to people living in the world; this was a kind of act of love on the part of Russian monasticism, and the main goal here was to help each individual bear their burdens and serve them in their needs. Moreover, the elders sought not only to serve people in the spirit of Christian love, but even more so to bring into the Church those who stood at its threshold, so that their future lives might be built in the spirit of Christian morality. Perhaps the elders’ successes in this endeavor were not always sufficiently evident; perhaps a future historian will question even the very fact of the elders’ real impact on the world under the historical conditions in which their work took place—and yet the elderhood was a powerful ascetic movement in the history of monasticism during the Synodal period, a highly fruitful phenomenon in the ecclesiastical life of Russia.

In any case, the elderhood of this period was a holistic phenomenon that developed spontaneously, from below, without any influence from above on the part of the hierarchy. It was a unique breakthrough

¹³²⁹ Ibid. pp. 55–96; my book. pp. 194–206.

¹³³⁰ Tschetwerikoff. Op. cit. p. 97.

¹³³¹ Ibid., p. 100.

¹³³² On Elder Nektarios, see: V. Sh. “Notes on Fr. John of Kronstadt and the Optina Elders.” From Personal Memoirs (Bela Crkva, Serbia, 1929). pp. 51–60. The author states that Elder Nektarios died in 1928 outside the monastery walls. One chapter of the book (pp. 20–50) is devoted to Elder Varsonofius. He had previously served as an officer, then retired and joined the monastic community of Optina Pustyn. Varsonofy passed away shortly before the outbreak of World War I, in 1914; unfortunately, I have no precise information about him.

through the barriers that “state-sanctioned churchdom” had erected around the souls of believers and monks; the elder system manifested a striving for the revival of the early Christian ascetic spirit, stronger in some monasteries and weaker in others.

7. Other Centers of the Elder Tradition

Russian eldership was, in the full sense of the word, an ascetic movement—or current—in monastic life over the last two centuries, for Sarov and Optina were not its only centers. Thanks to the efforts of Elder Paissius’s direct disciples, other monasteries also joined this movement, which was reviving the ascetic spirit of the early Church. These were monasteries and hermitages where Paissius’s disciples labored for long periods or at least for some time, and where their efforts bore fruit.

Among these monasteries was the Sanaksar Hermitage (in the Tambov Diocese), founded in 1659 during the period of monastic colonization of the Ponizovye region—at that time, it was one of the most remote monasteries. The monastic community at this hermitage was always very small, and in 1753 the hermitage was placed under the jurisdiction of the Sarov Hermitage. It was only during the two terms of abbotship of the elder and hieromonk Theodore Ushakov (1762–1774, 1783–1791) that monastic life at the hermitage was set on the right path and a communal rule was introduced. The final quarter of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century marked the heyday of ascetic devotion in this hermitage, which was closely linked to the Sarov Monastery and other hermitages characterized by a strictly ascetic way of life¹³³³.

Another center of ascetic devotion was the Ploshchanskaya Hermitage, mentioned here on more than one occasion, which in 1764 was classified as a non-active monastery. Elder Joasaph, who served as abbot of the hermitage from 1741 to 1746, deserves special mention, as does Elder Alexius (Blinsky; 1722–1812), who transferred to the Simonov Monastery in 1772. Elder Athanasius (Zakharov; † 1823) labored in the desert for many years; under his spiritual guidance, the future Optina Elder Father Macarius Ivanov found salvation here. Another disciple of Elder Athanasius, Alexander, during his tenure as abbot of the Spassky Monastery (1810–ca. 1820), truly transformed monastic life there by introducing a communal rule¹³³⁴.

Thanks to the efforts of Elder Paissius’s disciples, the lives of the monks at the Beloberezhskaya Hermitage (in the Oryol Diocese) were transformed. This hermitage was founded relatively late, around 1661, by Hieromonk Serapion (better known by the name he took upon receiving the great schema—Simeon), but by the early 18th century, the hermitage had fallen into complete disrepair; Archimandrite Pitirim, abbot of the Pokrovsky Monastery in Bryansk, revived it in 1721, but it was abolished in 1764. Despite this, several monks remained at the hermitage—forgotten, so to speak, by the Synod, but not by God—and through their labors they raised the life of this monastery to a considerable level of asceticism; it was not until 1817 that the hermitage was “officially revived” by the Synod. From 1801 to 1809, Hieroschemamonk Theodore, a disciple of Paissius, lived here; in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Elder Makarii Zlobin († 1839), a disciple of Elder Cleopas II, also sought refuge in the hermitage. As already mentioned, Elder Vasily Kishkin and Elder Leonid of Optina served as abbots here for several years (1806–1811). This small, poor hermitage, largely thanks to Elder Vasily Kishkin (abbot from 1800 to 1806 and from 1811 to 1827), became renowned among monks for the austere lifestyle of its inhabitants¹³³⁵.

The monastic life was also of a high standard at the Bogoroditskaya Sofroniyevskaya Hermitage, which was founded as early as the 16th century, was later destroyed by the Tatars, and was reestablished around 1630, becoming known as the Bogoroditskaya Hermitage. Until 1656, it was affiliated with the Molchensky Monastery in Putivl (Kursk Diocese). Thanks to the efforts of two strict ascetics, Sofronius and Nikon, Patriarch Nikon granted this monastery independence, and Abbot Sofronius, during his long tenure as head of the monastery, maintained monastic life there at a high standard. After his death, the monastery came to be commonly known as the Sofronius Hermitage. Even the 1764 regulations stipulated a considerable

¹³³³ Zverinsky. 2. No. 644; Denisov. No. 888; Subbotin. Op. cit., pp. 56–59; The Life of Father Theodore, Former Abbot of the Sanaksar Monastery (1847) (small brochure); Poselyanin. Russian Ascetics (1905), pp. 285–291.

¹³³⁴ Zverinsky. 2. No. 1057; Denisov. No. 630; Stroev. Op. cit. p. 913; Orthodox Russian Monasteries. p. 373; Misail, Bishop. The Ploshchanskaya Monastery of the Mother of God (1897). pp. 8, 10; Popov. Op. cit., p. 9. A monk named Athanasius Gorovsky made many copies of Paissius’s works here. It is possible that this was the well-known elder Athanasius. Cf. also: PBE, vol. 1, p. 592.

¹³³⁵ Zverinsky. 1. No. 92; Denisov. No. 626; Orthodox Russian Monasteries. p. 919; Stroev. Op. cit., p. 376; Pimen. Op. cit., pp. 66–68; Hilarion, monk. The Life of Hierodeacon Melchizedek, in: Spiritual Readings 1889. 2, pp. 186–187; Hilarion, monk. The Life of Elder Makarii of Beloberezhsk. Ibid., pp. 290–302; as well as the work: The Elders of the Bryansk Beloberezhsk Hermitage, based on the notes of Hieromonk Israel, in: Oryol Diocesan Gazette, 1909, pp. 44–45 (not available to me).

number of monks for it—30 in all. In 1779, the elder Theodosius Maslov moved to Sofronius's Hermitage with most of the monks from the Tyasma Monastery; he lived there until 1803, and under his leadership, the communal rule of Mount Athos was introduced at the monastery. The monk Gerasim, a disciple of Paissius and a strict hermit, also found refuge here¹³³⁶.

Another monastery where the ascetic precepts of Elder Paissius were preserved with particular care was the Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery¹³³⁷, where the zealous guardian of these precepts, Elder Archimandrite Theophan Sokolov, served as abbot and superior for 40 years (1793–1832). During his long life (1752–1832), Theophan was destined to meet in person nearly all the strict ascetics and elders of his era and to experience their influence firsthand. He came from the noble Sokolov family; at the age of 14, Feodor (his secular name) decided to enter a monastery, but his parents would not let him go. In 1771, he was living in Moscow, where he began working as a civil servant. The terrible plague that was raging in Moscow at the time—which Theophan later described in his **Notes**—and the calamities it caused further strengthened his inclination toward the monastic life. In 1772 or 1773, he was finally able to fulfill his desire.

He went to the Sanaksar Hermitage, where the elder Theodore Ushakov served as abbot. From him, Theophan Sokolov learned the ascetic foundations of monastic life and remained a devotee of monastic eldership for the rest of his life. Around this time, he met the ascetic Bishop Tikhon of Zadonsk, and this encounter could not fail to leave a lasting impression on the young monk. When, in 1774, Elder Theodore Ushakov was forced to leave the hermitage due to the interference and intrigues of secular authorities, the monk Theophan also left the monastery and moved to the Vvedenskaya Ostrovskaya Hermitage, where Elder Cleopas I was then living. There, Theophan spent three years under the spiritual guidance of Cleopas, from whom he learned much about the way of life of the Athonite monks and about Elder Paissios. He then received permission and a blessing from his elder to go to Mount Athos. On the way, Theodore Sokolov and several other monks stopped at the Tiasmin Monastery, where Elder Theodosius Maslov was serving as abbot at the time. Despite Theodore's pleas, Elder Theodosius did not bless him to continue on to Mount Athos—and he had to remain in Tiasmin. There, Theodore Sokolov was tonsured a monk with the name Theophan, and Elder Theodosius took him under his spiritual guidance.

Theophan always recalled with great warmth the time he spent under the guidance of Elder Theodosius. Unfortunately, this did not last long. The situation of the Greek Orthodox monasteries in that part of Moldavia which, under the Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainardji (1774) between Russia and Turkey, had been ceded to the Porte, was very difficult due to various forms of persecution by the Turkish authorities. Therefore, Elder Theodosius decided to relocate the monastic community of the Tiasmyn Monastery to Russia. It should be noted here that among the monastic community was a monk named Athanasius, a man of great humility who loved to perform the hardest and dirtiest work in the monastery. This Athanasius was none other than a brother of Bishop Job, already mentioned here, and a relative of the powerful Prince G. A. Potemkin. Only the elder Theodosius knew this secret about the humble Athanasius and hoped that if he were sent to St. Petersburg with a request for relocation, his family connections would ensure the success of the endeavor. With Elder Theodosius's blessing, Athanasius chose the monk Theophanes as his companion. Theodosius's petition was successful; by order of the Empress, Elder Theodosius and most of the monastic community received permission to relocate to Russia, where the Sofronius Hermitage had been set aside for them. At first, Theophanes also remained at this monastery, but soon, at the behest of Metropolitan Gabriel, some of the monks who had moved from Tyasmin—including Theophanes—were recalled to St. Petersburg, to the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, to put monastic life there in order.

Thus, instead of remaining under the guidance of the elder Theodosius, Theophanes found himself in the capital, in a completely different atmosphere, which, of course, could not satisfy his ascetic inclinations. But there, Metropolitan Gabriel himself came to know him well. Theophan did not remain the monastery's cellarer for long, for Metropolitan Gabriel took him into his own service as a cell attendant. In no time at all, Theophan became the metropolitan's confidant and secretary, and the metropolitan soon realized that

¹³³⁶ Yatsimirsky. *Op. cit.* p. 545; Pimen. *Op. cit.* p. 19; Subbotin. *Op. cit.* pp. 15, 18; Description of the Putivl Christmas Sofronius Hermitage (1846).

¹³³⁷ Zverinsky. 2. No. 868; Denisov. No. 565; Orthodox Russian Monasteries. p. 128. The Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery was founded in 1507 by St. Cyril of Novoezersky († 1537), a disciple of St. Cornelius of Komel. This monastery was distinguished by the strictness of its monastic life; it always adhered to the communal rule; its land holdings were modest; we have found no documents indicating that it engaged in trade or the exchange of land holdings.

Theophan could help him restore a truly monastic way of life in the monasteries. Metropolitan Gabriel, a man of simple heart and humility, valued Theophanes not only as a strict monk but also because he needed his advice, for Theophan, thanks to his association with the elders and his time in the monasteries, was able not only to correctly assess the causes of the decline in monastic life but also to propose measures for its correction. Thus, Theophan's name became closely associated with that of Bishop Gabriel in the implementation of monastic reforms. Thanks to Theophanes's assistance, these reforms were based on the ascetic views of the elder Paisius Velichkovsky and were carried out by the monks whom Theophanes had recommended to Gabriel. For 10 years, Theophanes served as the metropolitan's cell attendant—though in reality, he was not merely a cell attendant, but his chief assistant and advisor. And all this time, he remained a simple monk. Against his will, the metropolitan ordained Theophan as a hieromonk (1785) and in 1791 appointed him abbot of the Modena Monastery (in the Novgorod Diocese) to restore the monastery, which had been almost completely destroyed. Hieromonk Theophan labored there for two years, and in 1793 he was sent by the abbot to the Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery.

The residents of the town of Belozersk repeatedly complained to the metropolitan that in this ancient monastery—once so famous—there was no trace left of true monastic life, and they asked him to take measures to save the monastery from complete desolation. Father Theophan found the monastery in an extremely pitiful state: an infirm hieromonk served there, who, due to senile frailty, was no longer able to conduct divine services. From time to time, a priest from a neighboring rural parish would serve at the monastery. The monastic community consisted of only two monks and eight novices, who lived as they pleased. The monastery buildings had fallen into complete disrepair, for nothing had been done for many decades, and due to a lack of funds, nothing could be done to save the church and other buildings from ruin.

The fate of the Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery can be considered typical of many remote monasteries—it was a consequence of government measures carried out in the 18th century, when the Board of Economy literally plundered the monasteries, leaving the monastic structures—often very fine stone buildings—to their own fate and the forces of nature, rather than using these structures for any practical purpose. Year after year, rain poured in through the leaky roofs and snow fell inside. The monks moved from completely dilapidated cells to others that were in slightly better condition, and no one cared about the preservation of the monastery buildings. Then came secularization and the 1764 state budget, but the funds allocated to the monasteries were barely enough to feed the small number of monks. It was not until the early 19th century that the financial situation of the monasteries improved, as we have already mentioned, and it became possible to erect new buildings. It is known from the history of many monasteries that in the first half of the 19th century, all monastic funds were spent on construction. Archimandrite Pimen, whom we have already mentioned here, recounts in his **Memoirs** how much time he devoted to construction matters during his tenure as abbot. The same was true in other monasteries¹³³⁸.

Theophan was also forced to devote a great deal of time and effort to the external improvement of the monastery, so that its appearance was completely transformed during his tenure as abbot. At the same time, however, he was also restructuring the monastery's internal life. He introduced a communal charter, and the number of monks in the monastery grew year by year. Theophan served as spiritual father with great success, providing spiritual guidance to many novices and newly ordained monks. Shortly before Theophanes's death, Archimandrite Pimen—then still a young novice—visited the Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery and found it greatly transformed: both the monastery's external appearance and its internal condition had improved significantly; order reigned there and an ascetic spirit was palpable; the monastery had once again regained the affection of the faithful. For more than 30 years, Elder Theophan labored in this monastery, establishing here the views of the Paissian School on the monastic life.

Father Theophan's spiritual influence extended to neighboring monasteries entrusted to his supervision. Among these was the Goritsky Convent; Elder Theophan provided spiritual guidance to the Goritsky sisters and was very fond of this convent. During the last three years of his life, Father Theophan was no longer the abbot, but he continued to provide spiritual guidance to the sisters of the Goritsky Convent.

On December 3, 1832, Elder Theophan passed away, having lived a long and fruitful life. His image was overshadowed for later generations by those of the Optina Elders, and Father Theophan is little known in the history of Russian monasticism. Yet it is the duty of the researcher to highlight his role in the history of

¹³³⁸ Pimen. Op. cit., various places.

monasticism, for he was one of those figures who made a great contribution to the revival of monastic life at the end of the 18th century¹³³⁹.

The figure of Theophan serves as a fitting conclusion to the characterization of those elders and ascetics who belonged to the school of Paisius Velichkovsky. However, the spiritual centers and figures mentioned do not exhaust the ascetic movement of that era. Even outside the framework of Paisius's school, this movement manifested itself with no less force and did not pass without leaving its mark on monasticism.

8. St. Tikhon of Zadonsk

When we look closely at this ascetic movement, another remarkable figure appears before our eyes alongside the wondrous image of St. Seraphim of Sarov: St. Tikhon of Zadonsk.

These saints, Tikhon and Seraphim, are held in special veneration by the devout Russian people not because they lived in the spirit of authentic Christianity in modern times, but because their example of asceticism and holiness is particularly close to the pious ideal of a people who valued humility, simplicity, a warmth open to the world, and an inner connection with that world. When reading the lives of such Russian ascetics as the Venerable Seraphim and St. Tikhon, and involuntarily comparing them to the saints of the Catholic Church, we are reminded of St. Francis of Assisi, whose image is very close to the Christian ideal of Russian piety. It is no wonder that some scholars have compared St. Francis with St. Seraphim¹³⁴⁰.

St. Tikhon was born in 1724 into the family of a poor rural psalm-reader and lost his father at a very early age; the entire family lived on the meager earnings of his mother, who worked for peasants for a pittance. In 1735, the boy was brought to Novgorod to attend a theological school, and in 1740, as one of the school's top graduates, he entered the local theological seminary. Thanks to his exemplary conduct and diligence, he was appointed a Greek teacher for the lower grades even before his final exams, and after the exams, he became a rhetoric instructor. His relatives, who lived in extreme poverty, urged him to take a position as a rural priest to improve the family's situation. But Timofey Sokolovsky (whose secular name was Tikhon) declined this request. Later, he recounted certain events that had befallen him, which he interpreted as a sign from above to choose a different path.

Relatively late in life, at the age of 34, Timofey took monastic vows under the name Tikhon on April 10, 1758. A few months later, he was ordained a hieromonk and appointed inspector (prefect) of the theological seminary. A year later (1759), he became an archimandrite, abbot of the Zheltikov Monastery, and rector of the theological seminary in Tver. Thus, Tikhon embarked on the customary path of a scholarly monk; it was precisely at this time that the scholarly monastic order had finally established itself as a distinct class and taken on stable forms. However, his pedagogical work did not satisfy his inner spiritual desire to enter some distant monastery and devote himself to a life of solitude; the longing for ascetic feats grew stronger within him.

On May 13, 1761, Tikhon was consecrated as a bishop and appointed vicar bishop of the Novgorod Diocese. But as early as February 3, 1763, Bishop Tikhon was granted independent administration of the Voronezh Diocese. At that time, it was one of the poorest dioceses. Through the efforts of the Board of Economy, the monasteries and the bishop's see had been utterly ruined; the parishes were few in number and extremely poor. Furthermore, many Old Believers lived in the diocese—they had gained greater freedom under Catherine—and many who were nominally Orthodox were also committed to the schism. The diocese, located on the outskirts of the country, was overrun with troublemakers, and superstition and vice were extremely widespread among the people. Bishop Tikhon faced such immense and demanding tasks that at first he lost heart and petitioned the Synod to grant him retirement, but his request was denied.

Tikhon served as diocesan bishop for more than four and a half years. His initial confusion quickly passed, and in a short time Bishop Tikhon managed to accomplish a great deal. The parish clergy were of a low educational and moral standard, and Tikhon began to work with great zeal in the field of spiritual

¹³³⁹ The primary source for Theophan's biography is his **Notes**, which, though brief in length, vividly immerse the reader in the atmosphere of the elder's life and monastic life in general during that era. These "Notes" are included in the book: Subbotin, N. Archimandrite Theophan, Abbot of the Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery (1862). pp. 55–75. See excerpts from them in my book (pp. 128–139). See also Subbotin's biography of Theophan (pp. 1–54) and his letters containing various ascetic instructions (pp. 76–178). Letters from Abbess Theophania Gotovtseva to Theophan have also been published: Abbess Theophania (1868). Archimandrite Pimen's accounts of Theophan and his monastery are particularly interesting. Pimen. Op. cit., pp. 33–37, 45–47.

¹³⁴⁰ For example, in Lodyzhensky's deeply insightful works: **Superconsciousness** (1911) and **The Invisible Light** (1912).

education. His Grace punished those who had erred very severely for their transgressions. He composed various kinds of sermons and explanations for the clergy, elucidating the teachings of the Church; he wrote about the duties of priests, the moral foundation and significance of the priestly office, pastoral care in parishes, and other topics. He devoted much time and energy to the theological seminary and the two theological schools he had founded. When visiting parishes, Bishop Tikhon strove in his sermons to explain to the people the meaning of the Christian life, and he also composed written sermons for parishioners. From the history of the Voronezh Diocese during Bishop Tikhon's tenure, it is known that the saint was never idle and that he devoted himself entirely to his archpastoral duties. The 13 monasteries in the diocese were also constantly under his watchful eye. Later, he wrote several instructions for monks and two special works: "Instruction to Monks" and "Admonition to Those Who Have Turned from This Vain World to Christ."

With particular zeal, Bishop Tikhon fought against the superstitions widespread among the people, denouncing them in his sermons. The inner power of his words moved people, and he succeeded in eradicating many pagan customs that had previously been widespread in everyday life.

Despite such active and demanding administrative duties, Bishop Tikhon did not neglect his inner, spiritual life. He spent his nights in prayer, composing various writings, or reading the Church Fathers, especially St. John Chrysostom, whom he held in very high esteem. But his constitution could scarcely withstand such a strenuous life, and he was often ill. The bishop was forced to appeal a second time to the Synod with a request to be granted retirement. This time, the Synod granted his request, and in 1767 Bishop Tikhon was relieved of his see.

At first, the bishop spent his retirement at the Tolshevsky Monastery, but the unhealthy climate forced him to move to the Zadonsky Monastery, located on the banks of the Don River in the same Voronezh Diocese. Thus began the final period of his life, during which he devoted himself entirely to inner spiritual and ascetic endeavors. Outwardly, the saint's life was simple, almost poor: he lived in a small cell, slept on a thin straw mattress under an old, worn-out sheepskin coat, wore a simple monastic robe made of coarse fabric, and always wore bast shoes in his cell. All his possessions fit into an old leather knapsack; only the leather-bound books added some variety to the meager furnishings of his cell. The bishop's meals were so simple and meager that his cell attendant, Chebotarev, often tried to persuade the ascetic to eat at least a little more. Prayer was the main focus of his life; he attended all the divine services daily, loved to read during the services, and sang along with the monks in the choir. In the early years, Bishop Tikhon celebrated the Divine Liturgy in his episcopal vestments, but later, out of humility, he began to attend services in his simple cassock; only at lunch in the refectory would he occasionally don a mantle or an epitrachelion. In between services, he immersed himself in reading the Holy Scriptures; at lunch, his cell attendant, in accordance with the monastery's rule, would read aloud from the Scriptures to him. St. Tikhon spent his nights almost always without sleep, in prayer.

He told his cell attendant that he had to struggle with various temptations. He was particularly tormented by the thought of whether he had the inner right to shirk the duties imposed by his episcopal office and to no longer serve Christians, but to concern himself only with the salvation of his own soul. His inner turmoil grew so intense that Tikhon decided to write to Metropolitan Gabriel of St. Petersburg, for whom he had once served as vicar, and ask him for some kind of assignment. But on the night before he was to send the letter, the bishop had a dream that convinced him to tear up the letter. At that very time, another incident occurred that strengthened his resolve to remain in the monastery forever. One day, Saint Tikhon was sitting on the threshold of his cell, lost in thought—thoughts he later described as temptations of self-exaltation. Suddenly, a holy fool living in the monastery named Kamenev ran up to him, struck the bishop on the cheek, and said to him, "Do not be conceited." In this slap, Tikhon saw a rebuke of his inner weakness. No one spoke of his inner torments, of carnal and spiritual temptations, or of inner listlessness and despondency with such candor as St. Tikhon. To exhaust himself physically, he worked in the garden and chopped wood.

His contemporaries spoke at length of his humility, his Christian love for people, and his spiritual insight. Gradually, the saint's inner life found peace; he withdrew more and more from active public life and lived almost as a hermit; his fasts grew longer and longer, and he devoted more and more time to prayer. For the last three years, he never left his cell.

He was led to the cell by a vision he had in a dream. In a subtle dream, he saw a feast in a meadow before transparent crystal palaces; he wanted to go to that meadow, but some force prevented him from doing so, and then he heard a voice: "In three years you may enter, but for now, work hard." In his cell, he spoke

only with his cell attendant, and even then extremely rarely. Like St. Seraphim, he saw the Most Holy Virgin Mary with two apostles. Once, he happened to receive another slap—in a dream: a priest carried an infant out of the altar in his arms, wrapped in a veil. Tikhon kissed the infant on the right cheek, and the infant struck him in return on the left cheek. When the saint awoke, he found that his left cheek and left leg were paralyzed; this occurred a year before his death. In his final days, his voice had grown extremely weak; only his cell attendant could make out what he was saying. One day, Tikhon told his cell attendant that he had three days left to live, and at the end of that time he indeed departed to the Lord; this happened early in the morning on August 13, 1783.

The veneration of Tikhon among the people began shortly after his passing, particularly because, year after year, there were increasing reports of miraculous healings at his tomb in the monastery church. Before his canonization, which took place in 1863, up to 100 healings had been officially recorded there. As early as 1845, the saint's remains were found to be incorrupt, but Emperor Nicholas I did not grant permission to canonize Saint Tikhon. It was not until the reign of Alexander II, on August 13, 1863, that his relics were solemnly uncovered and Saint Tikhon was canonized.

During his time at the Zadonsk Monastery, St. Tikhon of Zadonsk wrote a number of works, most of which are devoted to questions of moral theology. These include his major work, **On True Christianity** (1770–1771), as well as “Letters to Friends” and “Monastic Letters” (both collections date from 1772–1775); these contain various kinds of guidance and instruction, composed in the form of responses to questions or letters addressed to him. In his final years (1777–1779), the saint worked on the book **Spiritual Treasure, Gathered from the World**, a collection of brief reflections (157 in total) that describe many of the saint's mystical experiences. **The Treasure** superbly reflects the spiritual character of its author—an ascetic and a mystic. The saint's reflections on natural phenomena and their meaning, included here, are also beautiful. St. Tikhon's works have been published numerous times and are among the most widely read books among the faithful. St. Tikhon's work **On True Christianity** was likely influenced by Arndt's treatise of the same title, which the saint held in high regard¹³⁴¹.

9. Selected Examples of Asceticism

To provide a more complete picture of asceticism in the 18th and 19th centuries in its basic features, we must also mention a few other individuals.

Among the church hierarchy of the 18th century, Bishop Joasaph Gorlenko (1705–1754) stood out particularly for his inner piety. Like St. Tikhon, he was the embodiment of meekness, warmth, and Christian love. As Bishop of Belgorod (1748–1754), Joasaph earned the deep affection of both the people and the clergy—a rare occurrence in the 18th century, when a deep divide typically separated the episcopate from the clergy. In all matters of diocesan administration, Bishop Joasaph demonstrated a deep understanding of the plight of poor rural priests and did everything in his power to alleviate the financial hardships of the clergy. In his personal life, Joasaph was an extremely strict ascetic. It is likely that the severity of his fasting was the cause of his untimely death. Immediately after Joasaph's passing, the local faithful began to venerate him, and healings of the sick frequently took place at his grave. When his tomb was opened, his relics were found to be incorrupt, and on September 4, 1911, he was canonized by the Russian Church as a saint¹³⁴². St. Joasaph and St. Tikhon of Zadonsk exemplify the close connection between the episcopate and the faithful, and this at a time when the separation of the church hierarchy from the flock was becoming increasingly apparent—a

¹³⁴¹ Popov, A. *St. Tikhon of Zadonsk and His Moral Teachings* (1916); Lebedev, A. *St. Tikhon of Zadonsk and His Life, Writings, and Canonization* (2nd ed., 1890, written in a popular style). The “Notes” of the cell attendant V. P. Chebotarev were published in: Tikhon. *Works* (1899). 5. pp. 1–18. The first biography of the saint, based in part on the accounts of his contemporaries, was compiled as early as 1796 by the future Metropolitan Evgeny Bolkhovitinov: *Description of the Life of Tikhon of Voronezh* (St. Petersburg, 1796); as well as: *A Description of the Life and Deeds of His Eminence Tikhon, Bishop of Voronezh* (Moscow, 1837). After his canonization, many new works about Tikhon appeared, most of them intended for the general public; these, like the *Menaion* of St. Dimitry of Rostov, became widely circulated. The prevalence of the saint's icons can be compared only to those of St. Sergius of Radonezh and St. Seraphim of Sarov. The first edition of his works (1836) was incomplete. A complete edition was published in 1889–1895 in five volumes; the two-volume edition of **The Works of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk** (St. Petersburg, 1910) is not entirely complete. See the bibliography in: RBS (1912), p. 589. Also see: Arseniew, N. v., “Die Grundzüge des russischen Frömmigkeitslebens,” in: **Russische Blätter**. 1929. 2; idem, in: **Der christliche Osten**. pp. 191–193; **Die Urgestalt der Brüder Karamasov**. Commentary by Prof. Komarovich, in: Dostoevsky, F. M. **Werke**. 1929. Piper Edition. p. 60.

¹³⁴² Grechev, B. “Saint Joasaph,” in: BV. 1911. 2–3. Zhevakhov, H. “Saint Joasaph Gorlenko, Bishop of Belgorod and Oboyan (1705–1754). Materials for a Biography.” 3 vols. (1909–1911).

phenomenon that was extremely widespread during the Synodal period and highly detrimental to the religious life of the people.

Another remarkable figure in the hierarchy was Bishop Ignatius Bryanchaninov (1807–1867), who earned special recognition among the monastic community thanks to his ascetic life, his connections with the elder tradition, and his writings. Ignatius's spiritual development was far from typical for 19th-century bishops. Dmitry Alexandrovich Bryanchaninov was the son of a landowner from the Vologda Governorate. "My childhood was filled with sorrow," Bryanchaninov later admitted, and this referred in part to his disputes with his father, who wanted his son to choose a career befitting his noble birth. But the young Dmitry dreamed of a monastic cell. He humbly submitted to his father's will and went to St. Petersburg to receive an officer's education at the Military Engineering School.

In terms of the broader narrative of his life, his admission to the Engineering School proved to be very important, for it was there that Bryanchaninov, thanks to his abilities, caught the attention of Grand Duke Nikolai Pavlovich, who was a special patron of the Military Engineering School; and when, in 1825, Nicholas ascended to the Russian imperial throne, he did not forget the diligent military engineer Bryanchaninov. But his studies brought Bryanchaninov no inner satisfaction: "A terrible emptiness was born and had already grown in my soul; a hunger arose, an unbearable longing for God. I began to mourn my own negligence, to mourn the neglect to which I had subjected my faith, to mourn the sweet stillness I had lost, to mourn the emptiness I had acquired—an emptiness that weighed me down, terrified me, and filled me with a sense of orphanhood and deprivation of life. And indeed—it was the anguish of a soul that had strayed from its true life, from God. I recall: walking through the streets of St. Petersburg in a cadet's uniform, with tears pouring from my eyes like rain... In solemn reflection, I took off the cadet's uniform and put on an officer's uniform. I regretted parting with the cadet's uniform: in it, when coming to the house of God, I could stand among the crowd of soldiers, among the crowd of common people, and pray and weep to my heart's content"¹³⁴³. This is how he later described his state of mind. But Dmitry and some of his friends knew how to find time between classes and drill to satisfy their inner spiritual needs. A small circle of religiously minded cadets formed around Dmitry and his friend Mikhail Chikhachev; in the evenings, after lectures and services, they would gather not only to discuss religious matters but also to pray¹³⁴⁴. In early 1827, Bryanchaninov was commissioned as an officer; however, toward the end of that same year, he fell seriously ill and was finally able to submit a request for resignation, which was granted, and he was discharged from service. Now he could fulfill his intention—to enter a monastery.

At first, he went to the Alexander-Svir Monastery, where Elder Leonid was then living, to meet him. Bryanchaninov completed his novitiate at the Kirillo-Novoezersky Monastery under the guidance of Elder Theophan Sokolov—Dmitry remained in his service for about three years. He then spent some time at the Ploshchanskaya Hermitage, from there moved to Optina to meet Elder Leonid once again, and finally entered the Glushitsky Monastery near Vologda. There, in 1831, he was tonsured a monk and given the name Ignatius.

Shortly thereafter, now a hieromonk, Ignatius was appointed abbot of the small but ancient Pelshensk Monastery. Here, deep within the dense Vologda forests, Ignatius was able to devote himself to spiritual life far from the world, and it seemed that his youthful dreams had finally come true. But at that very time, during one of his visits to the Engineering School, Emperor Nicholas remembered him and learned from the director that Bryanchaninov had resigned and had even taken monastic vows. The sovereign inquired of the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg about Bryanchaninov's whereabouts and was informed that he was in charge of a small monastery. By the tsar's decree, Ignatius was sent to St. Petersburg. There, the 26-year-old hieromonk was "promoted" to archimandrite, and the tsar ordered that he be appointed abbot of a monastery located not far from the capital.

This was the Sergiev Hermitage, which had fallen into a state of disrepair. It was restored with the tsar's funds, and Father Ignatius administered it for 24 years; thanks to the ascetic views and diligence of the young abbot, a truly monastic life was revived at the monastery. The emperor once said to him: "I like you, just as I did before! You owe me a debt for the upbringing I gave you and for my love for you... I am giving you the Sergiev Hermitage; I want you to live there and turn it into a monastery that, in the eyes of the capital, would serve as a model for other monasteries." But even without this wish from the tsar, Ignatius's abbotship

¹³⁴³ See my book (p. 169). His letters in: BV. 1913. 1–2; Readings. 1875. 2.

¹³⁴⁴ See: Leskov, N. *Engineers Without Greed*. Complete Works, Vol. 2 (1903); in German: Leskow, N. *Die Rechtschaffenen*, in: Corona, Vol. 3, Nos. 3–4.

was bound to benefit the monastery, for his views on the monastic life were shaped not only by his personal experience but even more so by the influence of the elders Leonid and Theophan, from whom he gained both a correct understanding of the foundations of monastic life and a conviction in the advantages of the communal rule.

Moreover, for Ignatius himself, the years spent in the desert were of great significance: it was a time of his spiritual growth, his formation as a monk, a strict ascetic, and a devotee; it was also a time of thorough study of the works of the Church Fathers, which became the foundation for his later work, **Ascetic Experiences**, which was highly regarded in monastic circles.

In 1857, Archimandrite Ignatius was consecrated as a bishop and appointed to the Stavropol (then Caucasian) See. In 1861, he retired from the See and moved to the Nikolo-Babaevsky Monastery (in the Kostroma Diocese). Until his death (April 30, 1867), he lived here, secluded from the world, working on his writings; from this place, he maintained an extensive correspondence with many believers, who often sought his advice regarding their monastic or lay lives. His most significant works are **Ascetic Experiences**, **Ascetic Sermon**, **A Tribute to Modern Monasticism** (rules of external conduct and guidelines regarding the inner life of monks), **On the Jesus Prayer. A Conversation Between an Elder and a Disciple,** “On Enduring Sorrows,” and others.¹³⁴⁵

His writings indicate that Ignatius was both an ascetic and a mystic. He belonged to those representatives of Eastern Christianity who regarded the ultimate goal of asceticism not merely as the salvation of the soul, but as deification. Archimandrite Pimen, whom we have often mentioned and who knew Bishop Ignatius personally, writes that Ignatius was very dissatisfied with monasticism at that time and held up the ancient monks as an example—monks who had managed to preserve their original purity solely because they had withdrawn from worldly vanity¹³⁴⁶. Bishop Ignatius was deeply distressed by the harsh attacks on monasticism characteristic of the early 1960s; these attacks can be explained not only by the negative phenomena that occurred in the lives of monks but also by the anti-Christian sentiments of liberal circles in society. Ignatius was convinced that this was not merely criticism of monasticism, but an attempt to subject monastic life—part of which took place outside the monastery walls—to various temptations by any means necessary. Therefore, Ignatius believed, it was best for monks to keep as far away from the world as possible: first, to preserve moral purity, and second, to avoid giving cause for such criticism¹³⁴⁷.

The spiritual character of Bishop Ignatius Bryanchaninov is typical of those Russian bishops of the Synodal era who drew spiritual strength from the ascetic tradition of the Eastern Church and maintained ties with the healthy segment of Russian monasticism. Not only were they themselves examples of Christian ascetic practice, but they also contributed to the revival of monasticism. Through their labors and writings, they helped ensure that individual monks and even entire monasteries embarked on the correct ascetic path, and that many shortcomings were eliminated from monastic life. The desire to live in the spirit of Christian asceticism never faded in monastic circles, and one can cite a number of examples of genuine asceticism, when monks—either on their own initiative or under the influence of ascetic elders such as St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, Bishop Ambrose of Ornatsk, Bishop Theophan the Recluse, Bishop Ignatius Bryanchaninov, and others, waged a spiritual battle, walking the path of renunciation of the world.

Archimandrite Nicodemus’s work, **Biographies of Russian Ascetics of the 18th and 19th Centuries** (¹³⁴⁸), recounts the lives of many ascetics from among Russian bishops, monks, and laypeople. We do not have sufficient reliable material on each of them to verify the accuracy of the information presented here. Regarding many worthy ascetics, only inaccurate, often contradictory accounts and memoirs have come down

¹³⁴⁵ Pimen. Op. cit., pp. 22–24, 68–70, 101–111, 404–407. Biography of Ignatius in: Works. 1 (1885). pp. 1–80; the first edition of his works, in 4 vols., was published in 1867–1868; the second edition, in 5 vols., in 1885–1886; Letters, in: Readings. 1875. 1; BV. 1913. 1–2 (No. 3—letters from Metropolitan Filaret Amfiteatrov to Ignatius); his polemic with A. I. Herzen, in: BV. 1913. 2. On Ignatius: Ignatius, Hieromonk. In Search of the Living God, in: Voice of the Church. 1913. 1–2; major work: Sokolov, L. Ignatius Bryanchaninov. His Life, Personality, and Moral-Ascetic Views. 2 vols. (1915)—unfortunately unavailable to us. “Ascetic Experiences,” in vol. 1, 2nd ed.; “Ascetic Sermon,” in vol. 4; “A Tribute to Monasticism,” in vol. 5. Cf. my book (p. 168), where some of his letters are reprinted.

¹³⁴⁶ Pimen. Op. cit., p. 407.

¹³⁴⁷ **Ascetic Experiences**, in: Collected Works, Vol. 1 (1867), p. 532, and **The Book of the Fathers** (1903), p. 184.

¹³⁴⁸ Nicodemus’s work is supplemented by the accounts of the monk Parthenius regarding his travels to the holy sites of Russia (see bibliography); these describe numerous manifestations of true asceticism in monasteries and in the secular world. The same work also contains his account of the lives of monks on Mount Athos, in Moldavia, and in Jerusalem.

to us—or, in some cases, only such information that does not allow us to form a correct picture of these ascetics. Therefore, in our overview, we are, on the one hand, compelled to limit ourselves to only the most well-known ascetics, and on the other hand—in some cases, in the absence of detailed biographical information—to content ourselves with merely a brief mention of their names.

The name of Georgy Mashurin enjoys particular renown; he was an ascetic and hermit who, out of Christian humility and a sense of his unworthiness to hold the “angelic rank” of a monk, remained a novice his entire life. Mashurin (1789–1836) was a nobleman and an officer in a hussar regiment. In our book, we have mentioned more than once that in the 18th and 19th centuries, many exchanged their elegant officer’s uniforms for monastic robes, and that people who could have had brilliant careers chose instead to become soldiers of Christ—and Mashurin was among these warriors. In 1818, he retired from the army and entered the Zadonsky Monastery as a novice, where St. Tikhon had previously lived as a monk. A year later, he shut himself away in a small cell that was heated only in winter, during particularly severe frosts. Beneath his cell, George dug a pit resembling a cave; during the day he prayed on his knees in this cave, spent his nights reading the Holy Scriptures or ascetic writings, and ate only occasionally. This ascetic practice continued for about five years, after which he left his cave and withdrew to his cell. George was highly revered by the people; many came to him for advice as they would to an elder. But he very rarely allowed visitors into his cell. He corresponded with many believers, offering them advice on life in the world. These letters had already been published in five editions by 1870; they were read no less widely than the letters of Elder Ambrose of Optina or Bishop Theophan Govorov, especially among laypeople. Georgy Mashurin was a rare example of an ascetic who, while not formally a monk, lived a life more monastic than that of many who had taken monastic vows. His life of seclusion lasted 17 years¹³⁴⁹.

Theophan of Solovki (1739[?]-1819) was a strict ascetic, hermit, and desert dweller. He was likely a native of Southern Russia; he first came to the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra and practiced there under the guidance of Elder Dositheus († 1788), then set out on a pilgrimage, first to the Nyamets Monastery to Elder Paisius Velichkovsky, and from there on foot to the Solovetsky Monastery (1778). There he spent many years in a forest hut, having absolutely no contact with people, not even with the monks of the Solovetsky Monastery. A very interesting handwritten narrative is dedicated to him; it recounts Theophan’s struggle with a demon who often came to the hermit’s hut and tried to force him to abandon the ascetic life. Such demonological stories are relatively rare in Russian hagiography and accounts of ascetic lives. Theophanes died on July 26, 1819, at the age of 120; as the narrative reports, he was completely weakened by old age and spent the end of his life in the Solovetsky Monastery hospital¹³⁵⁰. Another austere ascetic of the Solovetsky Monastery was Theophan’s contemporary, the schema-monk Gerasim (1740–1848). At first, he sought refuge in the forests of Roslavl under the guidance of the elder Arsenius. In 1823, after many years of wandering through holy sites, he arrived at the Solovetsky Monastery, where for 10 years (1823–1833) he lived as a hermit in a small cave in the forest, and later in a forest hut.

Several remarkable monks also lived at the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra during the second half of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century. First and foremost, we should mention the aforementioned Elder Dositheus, who spent many years in seclusion in a cave. It was he who advised the future Elder Paisius—at that time a young novice—to go to Moldavia to Father Basil and there learn the fundamentals of the monastic life. Several decades later, he sent Theophan of Solovki to Paisius for the very same purpose. Elder Dositheus spent 30 years in seclusion and died at a very advanced age († 1788); his disciple was likely the schemamonk Michael († 1815). Hieroschemamonk Vassian also lived here, and Emperor Alexander I once (in 1816) had a long conversation with him. Another strict ascetic from this monastery, Hieroschemamonk and Elder Parthenius (1790–1855), was particularly renowned and revered. He demanded only one Christian virtue from his visitors and spiritual children: to devote all their free time—time not taken up by labor or worldly pursuits—to prayer. His biography recounts a vision he was granted. In this vision, the Mother of God appeared to him, and he asked Her what the duties of a monastic were; in response, he heard: “There is only one duty—to pray ceaselessly for the whole world”¹³⁵¹.

¹³⁴⁹ Poselianin. *Russian Ascetics* (1910); Mashurin’s *Letters* (2 vols.), which have been reprinted many times (5th ed., 1870).

¹³⁵⁰ Nicodemus. *Biographies*. July; on the content of “The Tale of the Hermit Theophanes,” see: Popov. *Op. cit.*, pp. 65–66; Yatsimirsky. *Op. cit.*, p. 546; *Solovetsky Ascetics of Piety of the 18th and 19th Centuries*, pp. 22–23.

¹³⁵¹ *The Tale of the Life and Deeds of the Elder of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, Hieromonk Parthenius* (1898). p. 27; Poselyanin. *Russian Ascetics* (1910). pp. 452 ff.; Nicodemus. *Op. cit.* September.

The figure of the hermit and hierodeacon Melchizedek (1715–1840) takes us back to the ascetics of the Roslavl forests. He was born in the city of Sumy (near Kharkiv) into the family of a wealthy merchant. At the age of 25, at his father's behest, he was betrothed. By chance, Maxim (Melchizedek's secular name) met an elderly monk who told him that he should not live in the world but should enter a monastery. He set out on a pilgrimage to the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra and remained there as a novice. Later, he sought refuge in the Sofronius Hermitage. There, Maxim had to endure some temptations from other monks, so he left for the Beloberezhskaya Hermitage, where he took monastic vows under the name Michael. A few years later, he took the great schema under the name Melchizedek and was ordained a hierodeacon. At that time (1800), a new abbot, the elder Vasily Kishkin, arrived at the hermitage, and Melchizedek—who was already advanced in years—remained in constant spiritual communion with him. Melchizedek spent 50 years at the Beloberezhskaya Hermitage; he was already 95 years old when, suddenly (1810), for reasons that remain unclear, as his biographer writes, he decided to go to the Roslavl forests and settle there in a forest hut. At that time, other hermits were also living in those forests, such as Isaiah and Andrew. The elder Melchizedek found no peace from the multitude of visitors, so he decided to move to other forests, in the vicinity of the town of Mosalsk (Kaluga Governorate), where he lived as a hermit for 12 years alongside Father Isaiah. And once again, people began to come to him to converse with him and receive comfort and advice. When Isaiah passed away, Melchizedek took another monk, Michael, as his disciple, and together they decided to return to the Roslavl forests, where Melchizedek spent the last three years of his life with his disciple. He passed away on July 9, 1840, at the age of 125¹³⁵².

At the Gethsemane Skete near the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, several highly revered ascetics and elders also lived: the ascetic Philip, who took refuge in a small cave, and the elders Isidore, Alexander, Gregory, Herman († 1918), and Hilarion¹³⁵³. Elder Barnabas Merkulov (1831–1906) is particularly renowned. He was the son of a peasant (his secular name was Vasily) and learned the trade of a tinsmith. At the age of 20, he came to the Trinity-Sergius Lavra and entered it as a novice. His spiritual mentor was Elder Gregory. While still a novice, Vasily took part in the founding of a nuns' community, over which he later served as abbot. When Elder Gregory passed away (1862), Vasily went to live with another elder named Daniel, who passed away in 1865 and, before his death, told Vasily that he, too, would eventually become an elder. In 1865, Vasily took monastic vows under the name Barnabas. In 1872, he became a hieromonk. Even then, despite his youth, visitors began to come to him. He settled at the Gethsemane Skete, and from 1873 until his death on February 17, 1906, Elder Barnabas attracted many believers. His manner of interacting with devout people resembled that of the elders Leonid and Ambrose of Optina: he liked to present his teachings and advice in the form of proverbs or jokes. The sisterhood he founded in the village of Vyksa (near Ardatovo in the Nizhny Novgorod Diocese) was transformed into a women's monastery in 1878, and Elder Barnabas remained the spiritual father of the sisters of the monastery throughout his life¹³⁵⁴.

¹³⁵² Hilarion, monk. The Life of Hierodeacon Melchizedek, in: *Spiritual Readings* 1889, vol. 2. pp. 184–201.

¹³⁵³ I have little information about these elders. A small brochure is dedicated to Elder Alexander: *On the Life and Deeds of the Hermit Elder of the Gethsemane Skete, near the Trinity-Sergius Lavra* (Moscow, 1900); on Elder Isidore: Florensky, P., **The Salt of the Earth**, that is, a narrative of the life of the hieromonk Abba Isidore of the Gethsemane Skete, collected and arranged in order by his unworthy spiritual son, Pavel Florensky (Sergiev Posad, 1909). Neither of these works was available to me. P. A. Florensky (1881–?) was a very interesting figure and an original thinker: a physicist, natural scientist, philologist, philosopher, and theologian, he graduated from the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics and the Moscow Theological Academy; in 1911, he was ordained a priest; he is the author of numerous works, most of which remain unpublished. Particularly well-known is his book **The Pillar and Ground of the Truth** (1914)—a philosophical, theological, ascetic-mystical, and mathematical-philosophical treatise. Excerpts from it appear in: **Ostliches Christentum. Dokumente**. Edited by N. F. Bubnov and H. Ehrenberg. Vol. 2: **Philosophie** (Munich, 1925). pp. 28–194; on his spiritual development—p. 410. Florensky offers a distinctive assessment of the elder tradition: “St. Seraphim of Sarov and the great Optina elders—Elders Leo and Leonid (in Florensky's account, Leo and Leonid turned out to be different individuals, whereas ‘Leo’ is the name that Elder Leonid received upon taking the great schema. — I. S.) and Macarius, and especially Ambrose—gather within themselves, as in a fiery focal point, the sanctity of the people. They are half-saints, no longer monks in the narrow sense of the word. Through them, as through farsighted lenses, the Coming One is visible. Their entire character here is new, unique, and apocalyptic. Only the blind can fail to see this. It is either recklessness or madness to proceed not following them but bypassing them, for that would mean arbitrarily seeking to shorten the course of world history as it has been ordained from time immemorial. It would mean rejecting the words of the Lord Jesus: “Which of you, by worrying, can add a single cubit to your stature?” (Matt. 6:27; Luke 12:25). Ibid., p. 72 (emphasis added by the editor).

¹³⁵⁴ Berkov, A. *The Elder-Comforter, Hieromonk Barnabas* (1940); this pamphlet is based on another book about Father Barnabas: *The Biography of the Late Elder-Comforter Father Barnabas, Founder and Builder of the Iversky Vyksinsky Convent* (1907).

In the first half of the 19th century, Elder Filaret (1752–1842) of the Novospassky Monastery was greatly revered in Moscow. He came from the forests of Roslavl, where he spent 11 years (1799–1810) in complete seclusion. It was thanks to him that the well-known Russian thinker I. V. Kireevsky renounced his deist beliefs and returned to the Church; Kireevsky's wife was Elder Filaret's spiritual daughter, and it was she who advised her husband to turn to the elder. Later, after Elder Filaret's death but following his advice, Kireevsky met the Optina Elder Makarii, whom he began to assist in publishing ascetic works¹³⁵⁵. Elder Filaret was also the spiritual father of Metropolitan Filaret Drozdov.

In the 19th century, the Valaam Monastery gained particular renown. When Elder Nazarius received a commission from Metropolitan Gabriel in 1782 to restore this monastery, it was in a state of external desolation and internal spiritual decline. In 1723, a fire destroyed nearly all the monastery's buildings, and until Father Nazarius arrived, only a few monks remained there. After restoring several of the monastery's buildings, Nazarius began to focus primarily on the internal organization of monastic life, and the number of monks under his guidance steadily increased. Several decades later, the monastery was renowned for its particularly strict way of life. But by the late 1820s, various deviations from the monastic rule had once again become apparent, prompting Elder Leonid to leave for the Optina Hermitage in 1829.

In the middle of the century, the Valaam monk Schemamonk Theoktist became famous for the austerity of his ascetic practices; before taking monastic vows, he served in the navy, arrived at Valaam in 1827, took his first vows in 1835, and the great schema in 1853. For the last 10 years of his life, he lived in a forest hut and was noted for the particular austerity of his ascetic practices; young monks would come to him, and he would instruct them on the monastic life. He passed away at an advanced age in 1863.

At that time, the Valaam Monastery enjoyed particular renown among the people, and the number of pilgrims and visitors grew from year to year. The monastery's appearance changed dramatically: Abbots Damaskin (Kononov, 1839–1871) and Jonah (Dmitriev, 1879–1891) launched a massive construction program, and the monastery's current appearance—with its stone churches, monastic cells, guesthouses for pilgrims, and numerous utility buildings (mills, a pumping station, a power plant, etc.), is a testament to the efforts of these resourceful and enterprising abbots. However, Damaskin was an abbot who combined economic enterprise with a knack for maintaining internal order in the monastery, and the monks felt the heavy hand of their stern abbot. During his tenure, the number of monks exceeded three hundred¹³⁵⁶.

The aforementioned work by Archimandrite Nicodemus contains biographies of many other ascetics from various Russian monasteries who lived during the last two centuries; thanks to these ascetics, the gloomy atmosphere of the Synodal era—burdened by numerous negative phenomena—is somewhat mitigated. The ascetic spirit did not fade away during this period; it was evident to a greater or lesser extent in all Russian monasteries. It was particularly vivid in the deeds of the elders, who, as a rule, sought refuge in monasteries with a small number of monks.

The significance of the elder tradition for monastic life and the interest in ascetic writings led to a focus in scholarly research, on the one hand, on the history of Orthodox asceticism as a whole, and on the other, on the history of the elder tradition. Works devoted to the history and essence of the ascetic-mystical life of the Eastern Church are appearing. Even at the Moscow Theological Academy, some students choose the spiritual fatherhood and its history as the topic of their dissertations. A gathering of monastic representatives from various monasteries, held at the Trinity-Sergius Lavra in 1911, resolved that the most important tasks of the monasteries are the preservation of the spiritual fatherhood tradition—including the spiritual guidance of novice monks by their spiritual fathers—and fidelity to the ancient ascetic tradition¹³⁵⁷. This theoretical recognition of the importance of the elder's authority is, in itself, the best proof that the elders' efforts were not in vain. However, the aspirations expressed at the 1911 meeting were never put into practice, for a few years later, monastic life in the Russian Church came to an abrupt end.

¹³⁵⁵ Nicodemus. *Op. cit.*, August; Savva. *Chronicle of My Life*. Vol. 2, p. 283; *Spiritual Readings*, 1866, Vol. 3, pp. 201–206 (brief biography of Elder Filaret); Kireevsky, I. V. *Works*, Vol. 1, Preface.

¹³⁵⁶ *The Valaam Monastery and Its Ascetics* (1889). pp. 16, 23, et al. RBS. pp. 51–52 (Damascene); 319 (Jonathan). See also: Shmelev, I. *Old Valaam* (1936). pp. 80, 122

¹³⁵⁷ BV. 1913. 4. pp. 399, 400. *Proceedings of the Academy*. See also: Arseniew, N. v. **Das heilige Moskau** (1940), which discusses the influence of the elders at length. On the Russian elders of Mount Athos in our time, see: Fülz-Müller, R. "Bei dem Starez der 'Stummen Wüste.' Im Dorfe der Asketen," in: *Berliner Tageblatt*. 1926. 419 (September 5).

Conclusion

Our book does not provide a detailed history of Russian monasticism, but it does describe all the most important developments and the most significant figures.

Throughout the three periods of this history, the nature of monasticism changed. This applies both to monastic life and to the views of monks (even those belonging to the same generation) regarding the foundations of monastic asceticism, a fact that became particularly evident in the dispute over the meaning of asceticism that flared up in the early 16th century.

From our perspective, the existence of these two schools of thought was of paramount importance for the entire subsequent history of Russian monasticism. This dispute demonstrated, first and foremost, that within monasticism itself—after five centuries of its existence in Russia and following the heyday of monasticism in the 14th and 15th centuries—a need had arisen to clarify the essence of Christian asceticism in general and the foundations of monastic life in particular, as well as a need to define these foundations as precisely as possible in order to set monastic life on the right path.

The initiative came from a group of monks who sought to establish a close connection with the ascetic-mystical spirit of ancient monasticism; in this regard, Elder Nil of Sora and his companions deserve special recognition in the history of Russian monasticism. It is remarkable that their initiative took place in the final decades of the fifteenth century, when the process of secularization had not yet manifested itself as clearly as it did at the beginning of the sixteenth century. From this, we can conclude that Nil and his companions arrived at their ascetic views not because they were trying to combat secularization, but because they realized what the true foundations of monastic life were.

Their opponents, the Josephites, were forced to articulate their view on the purpose of monasticism primarily as a response to the initiative of the Non-Acquirers; yet this does not diminish the significance of their viewpoint for historians—not even because of its political content, but rather because it proved to be extremely important for the future history of Russian monasticism. Therefore, we have designated the period when this controversy flared up as a turning point in the history of the development of monasticism and its self-awareness.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, the external and internal history of monasticism unfolded almost exclusively in the spirit of the victors—the Josephites—a spirit that brought about numerous negative consequences for monastic life. The state of the monasteries urgently demanded reform—this was the primary task of the church hierarchy. The secularization of 1764, by depriving the monasteries of their land holdings, in a sense facilitated the implementation of such a reform, since the negative phenomena associated with land ownership had disappeared. However, because the ecclesiastical authorities of the Synodal period did not implement any particularly significant measures from above, monasticism may have faced the danger of complete decline. Nevertheless, as we have seen, not all the healthy forces within monasticism itself were lost.

In this regard, the greatest credit for the revival of monastic life must be given to the Russian monastic elders of the 18th–19th centuries, who in Russia are directly and most closely associated with the name of Elder Paisius Velichkovsky. Other manifestations of genuine ascetic devotion indicate that the danger of secularization was not equally threatening to the future of monasticism everywhere. The works and deeds of the elders are proof that monasticism—especially among the younger generations of monks in the late 18th and 19th centuries—still possessed healthy vitality and that there was a strong desire within it for a truly monastic way of life. This fact deserves the attention not only of Church historians but also of cultural historians, for it speaks to the strength of religious aspirations among all strata of the population, as well as to the fact that popular piety, in a certain sense, influenced monastic life from the outside.

In the 19th century, the elders influenced the spiritual life not only of monks but also of laypeople living outside the monastery walls. Through the elders' ministry to the world, Russian monasticism began to shed its insularity and self-absorption, which were typical of Orthodox monasticism. This is a rather important point. The ascetic school of Father Paisius Velichkovsky—with which nearly all the elders maintained a spiritual connection and which itself initially retained this insular character—eventually took on the mission of serving not only monks but also people living in the world. Thus, the ascetic tradition of the Eastern Church took on a new form within the Russian elder tradition. This happened of its own accord, spontaneously, without any pressure from church authorities, who lacked a genuine inner connection with ordinary believers. The very essence of the elder tradition led to the gradual restoration of a spiritual kinship between the monastic community and the people.

It is impossible to answer with certainty whether monasticism had sufficient vitality to continue its spiritual growth and maintain close ties with the faithful, or how soon the good fruits of Christian life would have ripened, since by the end of the second decade of the 20th century the history of Russian monasticism came to an abrupt halt under external pressure, as a result of events in Russia's political history. How and when monasticism will be revived in Russia, what form it will take then, and whether this will ever happen at all—these questions will be answered by historians who will study this topic in the future, after a considerable lapse of time. For now, however, the history of Russian monasticism appears to be a complete phenomenon that can be examined from beginning to end within a historical perspective.

In concluding our study, we would like to remind the reader of the words of an expert on the history of Russian monasticism, Prince Sergei Nikolaevich Trubetskoy († 1905), a thinker little known in the West: “Monasteries are the most precious treasure of our lives, our pride—no matter how arrogantly and contemptuously they may be regarded by those who do not understand the spiritual life, who do not even want to consider why so many people choose this path of self-sacrifice. One can, of course, speak of moral laxity in some monasteries, and of the monks' laziness, idleness, and vices—nowhere has the contrast between the ideal and reality been so great as in monasteries, though nowhere else has it been experienced so deeply and painfully. “We value monasteries as institutions in which the teachings of the Church are embodied in life itself... We value monasteries, despite their shortcomings and weaknesses, for the sake of those holy pearls that shine from within their walls. They were a place of spiritual and moral education for the people”¹³⁵⁸.

¹³⁵⁸ Quoted from: Arseniew, A. v., **Die Kirche des Morgenlandes** (1925), in: **Sammlung Göschen**, No. 918, p. 8.