

Russian Orthodox Church and Democratic Transition in Russia

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Introduction.

This research project primarily concentrates on the developments in the relations between the Russian Orthodox Church (hereafter - ROC), on the one hand, and the state and society in Russia, on the other, during the last several years. The period under review, if strictly defined, embraces the years 1991 - 1999, i.e. from the time of obvious collapse of the Communist state in the USSR until the nowadays.

The main goal of the author was to show, how the Church reacts to different political, social, economic, cultural changes in Russia, in what way it participates in complicated developmental processes. The revival of the ROC itself, which has been severely suppressed during the period of the Communist rule, is an important background of the research undertaken.

The period of democratic reforms in Russia (whatever their evaluation might have been) coincided with the times of dynamic revival of the ROC. Disappointing results of the economic reforms, atmosphere of social crisis, political instability and absence of normally functioning parliament and political parties enjoying popular support, - all these factors

provide for strong social interest in the role of the ROC in the current development of Russia. It is simultaneously a symbol of hope for ones, and the target of bitter criticism and even hate for the others. The supporters state, that the ROC is the main or only reliable force of national salvation. The opponents see it as a conservative force, separated from the major part of society and doomed to become an ethnographic reservation in the near future.

The main hypothesis of this research project is that the influence of the ROC in the Russian society keeps on enjoying steady growth. This process may be not as swift, as in the first years of democratic reconstruction, but this is absolutely natural because there are no more existential consequences influencing the private lives of the people as it was in 1991 or 1993. The Church has become an organic component of the Russian political, cultural scene and of Russian private life, and the latter consideration seems to be of primary importance.

The Church is criticised for the following: cultural conservatism, close co-operation with the government, lack of clear response to the challenges of modern life, and, finally, absence of a working social doctrine. The position of the author of the current project can be summed up as follows: 1. Church's foundation lies in the Gospel, is not a political party and can not redefine its teaching according to the demands of the day; Church's conservatism is a sign of stability in the times of general disorientation. 2. The ROC is divided from the state, but

not from the people, and it can not refrain from expressing its opinion on the main problems of the day, or even interacting with administration at various levels in order to pursue goals natural for the Church, i.e. help the poor, assist the sick, homeless, unemployed etc. 3. It is important to remember, that the ROC's role in all fields of Russian life is also historically motivated. 4. The ROC responds to the «spirit of the day» not from the position of ready secularisation and adaptation, but from the stance of wise evaluation, counsel against evil and struggle against moral and cultural degradation. 5. Generally speaking, the current situation can be qualified as a conflict between the multifaceted liberal thinking, which wants the Church to abandon its tradition for the sake of satisfying the tastes of secular groups, and the ROC and its supporters, which see the Church's role in securing Orthodox tradition as the only true path to God, preventing the society from cultural and ethic denigration. 6. Church is eager to participate in different social service projects, there has been a clear shift in this direction after the Bishop's Council of 1994; however, the resources are limited, as the Church was able to act freely and restore itself only during the last several years. 7. It must be understood, that the ROC is preaching in the society, which, though Orthodox historically, is strongly secular and often unable to perceive clearly the message of the Church.

Chapter 1. The sources and their evaluation.

The range of sources used by the author is quite wide. First, official publications of the ROC, such as the periodicals «Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate» (Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarii) or «Moscow Church Messenger» (Moskovsky Tserkovny Vestnik), or separate documents (for example, speeches of the Patriarch at the annual meetings of the Moscow clergy, or collections of documents (for instance, deeds of the ROC Council of Bishops or various collections of the Patriarch's speeches, messages and statements). Second, legislative documents, such as the previous and the current Russian laws on the freedom of consciousness and commentaries to the latter. Third, several monographs, representing attempts to review the current trends in Russian religious life, activities of the clergy and religious associations . Fourth, periodical publications of various parties, societies and associations, whose programs, though different in details, all resort to religious rhetoric. Fifth, numerous publications of the Russian periodical press, reflecting complicated processes of interaction between the ROC and the Russian society at large. Sixth, the data of a number of opinion polls and social surveys, that show the patterns of religious thinking in contemporary Russia to the extent such types of research can approach the attainment of this goal. Seventh, collections of documents, dealing with specific events in the Church life but also relating to the interaction between the ROC

and society ⁱ. Eighth, interviews with bishops and clergy published in the periodical press or separately ⁱⁱ.

The scholar of the topic of this project confronts a serious problem, dealing with abundant, but uneven information. For instance, distortions and over-exaggerations are extremely wide-spread in the press reports on certain events or positions of concrete personalities.

Chapter 2. Russian Orthodox Church and the main issues of democratic development in Russia.

No one can deny, that the election of the new Patriarch Alexy II by the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1990 played an important role in the gradual formation of the new type of Church-state relations. 1990 was the time when the perestroika was fully under way, and the Communist state made several concessions to the religious. For example, it was at last decided to substitute the totalitarian-atheist Law on Cults of 1929 with a new «Law on Freedom of Consciousness and Religious Organisations». Seemingly a liberal act on the side of authority, the document was still strongly anti-clerical. It ignored the unity of the ROC, qualifying every parish as an independent agent in the Church-state relations. As before, the ROC, its dioceses and parishes were not granted the status of a legal body. Contrary to the past, the Local Council of the 1990 strongly protested against the deficiencies of the law project in a

special statement. The role of the new Patriarch in the struggle for the rights and unity of the Church became obvious ⁱⁱⁱ.

By that time the state (represented by the part of higher bureaucracy) was ready to show greater respect to the ROC than before: the enthronement of the new Patriarch was held in the Epiphany Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin. As a result of contacts between Patriarch Alexy II and Soviet President M.Gorbachev, the ROC's criticisms of the law were taken into account. The law was promulgated on October 1, 1990. The Church now had the right for property, for religious education. Any voluntary interference of administration into the Church affairs was prohibited. In a month the Law on Freedom of Faith was adopted by the parliament of the Russian Federation (then a part of the Soviet Union).

1990-1991 was the period of euphoria: churches and monasteries started being returned back to the Church, publication of religious books and periodicals began, religious congregations (brotherhoods and sisterhoods) appeared in considerable numbers signifying the formation of Orthodox civic associations. According to the public opinion surveys, the percent of people who either changed their position to the religious one, or dared to declare themselves as religious under the circumstances of liberalisation grew from 10% in 1988 to 29% in 1990-1991 ^{iv}.

At the same time the ROC experienced serious problems connected with the activities of different

sectarian preachers and the messengers of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA) Synod, who did their best to strengthen their positions in the Russian society. It was easy, as on the local level neither the laymen, nor the authorities had any clear idea of the differences between confessions and denominations, and general positive attitude towards the religion was strong (the slogan of spirituality [duhovnost] was very popular).

1991 was the year of maximum aggravation of tension between the Communist conservatives and the liberally minded politicians, surrounding B.Yeltsin. In many aspects relations between the ROC and the Russian Federation authorities was closer and friendlier, than that between the Church and the Soviet establishment. For example, Christmas was approved to be an official day off. The ROC was officially registered (for the first time under the Soviet regime) in May 1991.

The Patriarch sided with the anti-totalitarian forces: he deplored the bloody suppression of the democratic movement in Lithuania (Vilnius) as a sin, announced, that the abortive coup of the August 1991 could not be blessed by the Church as illegal and leading to the loss of lives ^v. It was clear, that the ROC is not going to be an ally of the collapsing Communist state. On July 10, 1991, the Patriarch blessed the first nationally elected President of the Russian Federation, saying that the people of the country has to learn once again what is creative spiritual labour and individual search of truth ^{vi}.

The role of the ROC in preventing the conflict from turning into a civil war can not be underestimated. Dissolution of the atheist regime could have been applauded if it did not lead to the division of the state. In his message to the Church in August 1991, the Patriarch pointed out, that the dramatic events of that month put an end to the atheist regime and expressed hope, that the Communist ideology would never return back ^{vii}. It was important to stress, that the emergence of the newly independent states did not mean any changes in the Church unity. Of course, schism and even anti-canonical movements appeared as a result of ultra-nationalist movement in Ukraine, but generally speaking, the ROC secured its unity. Nowadays the borders of the countries existing in the boundaries of the former Soviet Union do not coincide with the borders of the Church. This fact is important for the understanding of the essence of Church-state relations.

The struggle between the legislative and executive powers in autumn 1993 became one more serious trial for the ROC. The Patriarch stopped his official visit to the USA and immediately returned to Moscow. The negotiations organised by the Church nearly brought the conflict to the peaceful solution. However, the opposition was not ready for concessions and the strife followed unfavourable scenario.

After 1993 the political life in Russia started being characterised by considerable tension and animosity. This factor made the Church reconsider its attitude to the

participation of the clergy in legislative and executive bodies of all levels (decision of the Holy Synod in October 1993). In the beginning of perestroika many priests and bishops were elected into the Soviets of all levels. That development signified the revival of the Church and testified to the wide social support of the ROC. It was the period of considerably united anti-Communist social movement. Now the social and political forces became more and more fragmented, showed mutual animosity, called for disobedience and protest. Of course, it was impossible for the Church people to side with different political parties, as that would have meant the division of the Church itself.

Some analysts argues, that the clerics could have contributed more to the reforms and legislature be they, say, members of parliament - Duma (lower chamber of the Fedral Assembly). However the reality does not support this argument. First, the authority of the Church does not rely on the number of its representatives in the legislature, and it cannot resort to political struggle as a party, because the Church is an overwhelming entity. Second, the Christian parties of early 1990s were mostly not ROC oriented: led by true believers, they never the less were oriented on the Western models of Christian democracy. Third, the defeat of the Christian parties has shown, that the electorate does not connect its political expectations with them (Russian Christian-Democratic Movement of Victor Aksyuchits ^{viii}; Russian Christian-Democratic Union of Valery Borshchov, Gleb Yakunin and

Vitaly Savitsky^{ix}; Russian Christian-Democratic Party of Alexander Chuyev^x; Christian-Democratic Union of Russia led by Alexander Ogorodnikov^{xi}. Only Russian Christian-Democratic Movement dared to participate as an independent party in the parliamentary elections of 1995, and the turnout was as low as 0,3%^{xii}.

The fate of the Russian Christian-democratic parties was pitiful. They have lost all of the achievements of the early 1990s. A scholar of Russia's contemporary religious problems A.Shchipkov pointed out, that in general Christian democracy, oriented on European tradition, does not easily find its way in the Russian society because it has no social and ideological foundation in the Orthodox Christianity. Bound to co-operate with Protestants, Christian democracy in Russia will not be able to play a serious role in political life in the near future^{xiii}.

It is important to note, that in the period of 1995-1996 the values of Orthodox Christianity generally defined as «spirituality» (duhovnost) was used by several movements, which did not indeed represent the religious stratum of the Russian society. (They tried to follow the pattern, worked out by the Russian National Sobor, led by the former KGB General A.Sterligov, who thought, that Orthodox Christianity is equal to «Russian idea», and hoped to manipulate the ROC to his own interests, but without visible result^{xiv}.) Now, it was the «Derzhava» (Strong state) movement, later the Congress of Russian Communities (KRO). The latter party at a

certain stage of development realised the necessity to make its Orthodox stance clearer and to get rid of politicians, well-known for vulgar pragmatism.

Further developments on the political scene brought to life new parties and associations with a clearer Orthodox orientation. One may suppose, that it was consoling for the ROC to see the Orthodox minded personalities stepping into political arena (not the Church itself, but the Church-oriented people). Among these parties and movements we paid attention to the following:

1. All-Russia Social Movement «Orthodox Russia». Some observers maintain, that it was supported by the Presidential administration and related to the former head of the Federal Council - V.Shumeiko. Officially it is headed by A.Burkin, who stressed high morals, economic stability and security as main aims of the movement ^{xv}. «Orthodox Russia» struggles for the revival of Orthodox spirituality and way of life, for the promotion of Orthodox believers into the ruling circles.

2. All-Russia Christian Union, led by the Duma deputy, son of the famous deceased priest, M.Men. This is an attempt to coin together Western Christian democratic values and Russian Orthodox Christian tradition. Several minor Christian democratic movements had signed co-operation agreements with the union. This organisation belongs to the liberal part of political spectrum, and is quite ecumenical in its program, what can explain good advertising by the pro-Catholic press

^{xvi}. Quite important to note: nowadays it is no more necessary to be a Christian believer in order to join the movement like the union is: one just has to share Christian values (from the Orthodox point of view this is a definite devaluation).

3. Union of Orthodox Citizens was officially established in January 1999 (it has a two years history of activity as Orthodox Political Council, though) is a wide association of parties, unions, movements (more than 40) and private persons, pursuing the revival of Orthodox values and life-style. The union sees itself as a tool of constructing new political atmosphere, based on Orthodox Christian values, and of defending the ROC and its believers from the massive anti-Christian campaign ^{xvii}.

The emergence of the Union of Orthodox Citizens on the political scene is a logical development of relations between the Church circles and the radical liberal forces of the Russian establishment. The ROC declined from the corrupt deal with the so called democratic movement, i.e. refused from applauding the ill-defined reforms leading to the suffering of the overwhelming part of the population and other disastrous results. As a consequence, a wide anti-Church campaign has been started in the Russian mass media, reflecting the dissatisfaction of the widespread eclectic consciousness (mixed with strong esoteric elements) with the refusal of the Church to play into the relativist game of «market theology».

Under such circumstances it was quite natural for the people associating themselves with the Church to organise the Union of Orthodox Citizens. Its final goals demand clericalisation of politics, governmental support to the ROC, primary stress on social, not private, interests, restoration of the traditionalist Russian state, strict monitoring of mass media for the sake of public morals etc. As stressed by member of the Russian Social-Political Centre A.Savelyev, such political organisation could not enjoy wide support in Russia, where the majority of population «suffer from a special kind of spiritual malady, which turns a person into a 'new man', for whom the spiritual-ethical being does not exist»^{xviii}. Never the less similar associations keep on appearing. In February 1999 a Russian Orthodox Party was established in the Moscow district.

The monarchist movement is a special trend in Christian politics. One of the well-known groups is the Christian Revival (Hristianskoye Vozrozhdeniye) of V.Osipov. It was founded in 1990 on the basis of the Christian-Patriotic Union. Stands for the restoration of the Orthodox monarchy in Russia. By 1993 had as few as 800 members.

In 1998-1999 the activities of the Orthodox monarchists have risen in connection with the issue of glorification of the Tsar Nicholas II, members of his family and servants killed by the bolsheviks in 1918. The indecision of the Holy Synod of the ROC and of its Local Council of Bishops, which in 1997 agreed to postpone

the glorification until the Local Sobor of the ROC in 2000 arouse disappointment in a considerable fraction of the Orthodox Christians. A strong Orthodox social movement demanding earlier glorification had developed at a great speed. One of its leaders is the priest A.Shargunov, a well-known preacher, bitter critic of the present political regime and its social-economic policy. In 1995 he made a mistake, allying himself with the Communists, but later abandoned that position ^{xix}. According to him, the glorification will mean national repentance ^{xx} and pave the way to the salvation of Russia.

Several public opinion polls had been held in order to clarify the percent of religious population and to outline the leading patterns of religiosity. The major part of such surveys were held in 1996-1997 ^{xxi}. The question about the possibility of «religious renaissance» was the main underlying idea of Kaariaainen and Furman's study. The results have shown, that 88% relate to the religion positively (very negatively - 4%), 55% found, that religion was important and gave answers to many ethical questions. Many people stated themselves to be believers, answers to concrete question differed: 38% believed in God as a Person, 40% - as a «vital force», 20% in the resurrection of the dead, 30% - in reincarnation and 41% - in astrology. Only 7% regularly visited churches for prayer, and only 4% prayed at home. The authors made a conclusion, that the percent of «traditional believers» was as low as 4%, and was represented by the social outsiders of middle and old

age, low income, poor educational level, dissatisfied with the current changes in the Russian society. The scholars refused to see any substantial youth religiosity growth. They pointed out, that the Russians are entering the state of eclectic world outlook, which sympathises with religion, but does not contain any serious belief ^{xxii}.

Several observers refused to accept such reasoning, pointing to the main result - overwhelming positive attitude to the Orthodox Christianity (from 88 to 60%) (one more survey was conducted by T.Varsanova of the Centre for Sociological Studies, Moscow State University). Of course, the answers to special questions with theological contents differed, as many people were only at the initial stage of their religious life and might have been poorly oriented in the specific aspects of the religious teaching. The critics pointed to the difficulties, confronted by the scholars of contemporary Russian religiosity, i. e. impossibility to calculate matters, relating to the spiritual life of the people. For example, A.Morozov wrote, that good knowledge of dogmatic teaching is characteristic of sectarian cults, but not of the ROC, which did not reject non-diligent believers. I.Siluyanova stressed, that the statistics of the ROC development and daily observations of a church daily visitor submitted conclusions different from that of the surveys conducted: the role of faith and religion in Russian life is at least not diminishing, and in fact growing ^{xxiii}.

Russian Independent Institute of Social and National Problems had been monitoring public opinion from 1993, in a series of surveys a special attention had been paid to the political views of the religious. According to the results, 45,6% of respondent were believers, though the research project was not aimed as specifying their religious stand in detail. The conclusion stated, that feelings about social and economic change, attitudes towards reforms, government and political problems showed serious coincidence of points of view among believers and non-believers. However the religious had shown more reserved approach to various forms of open social protest ^{xxiv}, in so doing representing a more stable and reliable part of citizens.

By the end of the 1997 the surveys have shown, that the Church and the army were the first to enjoy credit of the population. More than that, 27% replied, that the ROC must enjoy certain privileges (40% were against that). Under the circumstances, when the civic society has not emerged in Russia, and the government and parliament do not enjoy the support of the people, the ROC becomes the only institute, that unites all Russians ^{xxv}. One more sample of information can give an insight into the current changes in public opinion. In January 1999, the channel TV-6 asked the audience to respond to the question about the necessity for the Orthodox Christianity to become the state religion. 75% replied «yes» ^{xxvi}.

It is important to review the development the ROC has undergone during the last several years, in order to see clearly, that despite its distancing from politics and supposedly vague (or «non-existent») social policy, the Church did not lose its vigour and revived actively. We can compare the numbers of dioceses, parishes, monasteries and clergy (priests and deacons) in 1991 (93; 12,000; 117 and 10,000 respectively) ^{xxvii}, in 1993 the number of parishes grew to more than 14,000, and clergy - more than 12,000 ^{xxviii}; by the end of 1996 the ROC had 123 dioceses, 395 monasteries ^{xxix}, in 1997 the number of parishes reached 18,000 ^{xxx}, in 1998 the number of priests and deacons nearly reached 20,000, monasteries - 478 ^{xxxi}. These dynamics shows clearly, that the Church organisation is growing, in so doing reflects the attitude of a considerable part of society to the Orthodox Christianity, i.e. need in it.

The Church is being criticised by its opponents for «totalitarian expansion», but in reality the ROC has more than limited resources to meet the spiritual needs of the people. The dioceses are still too spacious for the bishops to keep in touch with every parish on a regular basis. The economic situation of parishes and monasteries is disastrous. During the decades of atheism the churches and monks' living quarters (if not exploded) served as concentration camps, prisons, factories, storehouses, and now incredible enthusiasm and economic wit are needed to restore the premises to the minimum acceptable state. The lack of educated

clergy keeps on being one of the serious problems. For, example, Moscow Ecclesiastical Academy together with Moscow Ecclesiastical Seminary have approximately 500 students, Theological Department of the St.Tikhon Orthodox Theological Institute - around 255 students. This is not much even for a city like Moscow with a population of more than 10 mln. Of course there are Orthodox colleges and institutes practically in every diocese, but the lack of funds and lecturers constitute serious problems for them ^{xxxii}.

Under the present circumstances life of a regular cleric of the ROC is quite complicated economically, and one has to be really devoted to the Church, if he chooses to become a priest. This is important to keep this in mind, while analysing information of the press about «the priest driving a jeep being an everyday sight» ^{xxxiii} or «the income of the Moscow priest never falling lower than one thousand US per month» ^{xxxiv}. The invectives aimed against the ROC in general and every its representative separately has become a regular practice of the Russian mass media.

Every analyst working with the Russian press will easily name the authors of the anti-ROC publications: S.Bychkov, N.Babasyan, Ye.Komarov, A.Nezhny, Ya.Krotov, Z.Krahmalnikova etc. There are several main lines of attack, which can be collectively characterised by the words: «the Church dare to be what it is, not paying attention to what its critics want it to be». Important to note, that such well-known representative of the

religious dissident movement as A.Ogorodnikov, a person not in the most friendly relations with the ROC, strongly insisted in his interview on the necessity of Church unity under the guidance of the Moscow Patriarchate, as any other way led to sectarianism ^{xxxv}. That notion is supported by facts. For example, well-known dissident, who was imprisoned for his criticising the Soviet oppression of the Church, G.Yakunin, refused to follow the decisions of the Holy Synod about clerics not participating in elections as candidates and started attacking the ROC publicly. As a result he was expelled from the clergy and later anathematised. Yakunin proclaimed himself Orthodox Luther and joined the canonically non-existent «Kiev Patriarchate», the leader of which had once been severely criticised by Yakunin as a KGB agent and a corrupted personality ^{xxxvi}. During the famous trial against Dr.Dvorkin, who was accused of slander by several sects, Yakunin stated, that he belonged to all sectarian cults.

In many instances, the anti-Church feelings of the journalists have personal psychological roots. For instance, Ya.Krotov had once applied for ordination as a Deacon of the ROC, but was refused, and later joined the same fake «Kiev Patriarchate». His anti-ROC articles can be easily taken for fruits of revenge ^{xxxvii}. Close to that is the case of S.Bychkov, whose hatred to the Church overcomes any bounds of rationality even from the most liberal point of view. The explanation lies in his futile attempts to make a career of a Church historian:

observers more than once pointed to the low professional quality of Bychkov's writings ^{xxxviii}.

Several topics were chosen to show the specific features of newspaper criticism. It took the place of the hypocritical piety so widespread on the pages of the Russian press in early 1990s. Now, on the contrary, every event in Church life is commented on with mockery, what is acknowledged even by those observers, who do not sympathise with the ROC ^{xxxix}. It is hard to clarify, what kind of special calculation (is any) underlies every small «campaign of criticism», and the solution of this problem lies beyond the scope of academic research. However the structural peculiarities of such criticisms deserve attention.

Patriarch Alexy II until now has remained comparatively above any criticism from the liberal press. Even Communists tried to express their dissatisfaction with the head of the ROC in an indirect way. But it is different with the bishops, whose biographies and activities are constantly analysed, sometimes with a ready conclusion: struggle for power is under way, the Church is closely co-operating with dark forces: Nationalists-Communists, Mafia or corrupted bureaucracy.

There is a factor of internal Church life, which is being manipulated by the press for the purpose of criticism. That is the discussion about the ROC's ecumenical contacts. To put it briefly, the participation of the ROC in the World Council of Churches (WCC) is

being criticised by many bishops and clerics as a useless heritage of the Soviet period. It is well-known, that the Church was compelled to join the WCC under the pressure from the Communist authorities, quite often the ecumenical contacts were used by the Soviet secret service. At the same time the Russian Church has not witnessed any changes in the theological positions of the other members of the WCC in the direction of Church unity. On the contrary, new issues absolutely unacceptable for the Orthodox Christians appeared on the agenda of the WCC (i.e. female priesthood, rights of the sexual minorities etc.). Quite understandably, these developments have made the Orthodox participation in the WCC questionable for the members of many Churches (in Serbia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Russia and others). In 1997 a considerable group of Russian clerics addressed the Bishop's Council of the ROC with a message, asking for immediate withdrawal from the WCC, the Protestant members of which have moved much farther away from the Orthodox Christianity, than 35 years ago^{xi}. While it is natural for the Church members to hold discussions on certain crucial problems, the issues of ecumenism turned into a tool of struggle against the bishops, used by their opponents from the right. The former secretary of the late Metropolitan Ioann of Saint Petersburg and Ladozh - K.Dushenov, publisher of the «Rus Pravoslavnaya» (Orthodox Russia) newspaper is the most notorious of them. In a series of articles he elaborated a theory of

anti-Orthodox plot, mastered by the enemies of Russia though the late Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) (1929-1978), known for his wide contacts with Western Churches and supposedly supporter of the idea of union between Catholics and Orthodox. Metropolitan Nikodim was the number two figure in the ROC of his time, has close relations with the Soviet authorities and promoted a very big group of bishops (the Patriarch included), now representing the influential majority in the ROC leadership. K.Dushenov insists, that such figures as Metropolitan Cyrill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomensk, Metropolitan Vladimir of Saint Petersburg and Ladozh are all promoting covert Westernisation of the ROC, being the faithful heirs of Metropolitan Nikodim. K.Dushenov went as far as to start criticising the Patriarch himself. In a series of brochures titled «Orthodoxy or Death», the current activities of the ROC Holy Synod was put in a general context of the anti-Church activities of the «renewalists» (obnovlentsi) of the post-revolutionary period, subservience to the Communist Party in the Stalin-Krushchev-Brezhnev period and the movement of «neo-renewalists» (neo-obnovlentsi) ^{xii}, started by a limited number of Russian clerics, who want to start the Church reforms patterned to their personal views ^{xiii}. In another article K.Dushenov pointed out openly, that the «liberal-ecumenical faction» led by Metropolitan Cyrill prevents important decisions being taken by the Church leadership ^{xliii}. One of the leading officials of the ROC

External Relations Department led by Metropolitan Cyrill, Hieromonch Illarion (Alfeev) pointed out, that the ecumenical slogans had become a tool in the struggle against the members of the current Holy Synod of the ROC, as practically all of its members had participated actively in different ecumenical activities ^{xliv}.

We have described the attack from the so-called conservative circles, but liberals follow suit. For nearly two years the Moscow newspaper «MK» wages a war against Metropolitan Cyrill and several other bishops. The main underlying idea is that the Church is a corrupted institute, where Metropolitan Cyrill and his entourage receive incredible income from mismanaging humanitarian aid and tax-evasions. Hints were spread, that Metropolitan Cyrill wants to become a Patriarch ^{xlv}. The wave of anti-Church publications had become so substantial, that the conservative Orthodox newspaper «Radonezh» started reviewing them regularly ^{xlvi}.

The journalists, seemingly representing the centrist, or neutral, position referred to the bishops of the ROC in a manner bound to show their «objectivism». So, a member of the Analytical Centre «Time» (Vremya) A.Morozov pointed out in his article, that a great number of bishops, brought up by Metropolitan Nikodim had a perfect practice of interaction with the Soviet nomenklatura (officials of the ruling class), were mediocre theologians and perfect practitioners, who managed to seize tenaciously the Church property, once confiscated by the state. The Nikodimians burdened the

state with a feeling of guilt and forced it to start the policy of protectionism towards the Church ^{xlvii}. Such «negative» advertising tends to show the leading figures of the ROC as the leftovers of the Soviet regime, not differing seriously from the former party officials. This is an unfair position, at least because it does not resort to facts, but only manipulate speculative constructions. The article also points to the particular inability of the bishops: to reform the theological education, develop wide missionary activities, cope with the wide movement of the Orthodox brotherhoods, and initiate strong social programs.

The latter is an example of how the Church is being criticised for not doing what it can not do. On the atmosphere of incredibly dynamic development of contemporary Russia one can easily be convinced, that the ROC is just unwilling «to work». But a fair analysis of the Church history testifies, that the ROC had been nearly mortally wounded by the regime. Its survival, to say nothing of its mystical meaning, is not only a fact, but also a painful and complicated process, not to be judged by the restoration of the Christ the Savior Cathedral in Moscow, but by the facts of life of distant and poor dioceses, lacking funds and cadres.

However, one can not reject the importance of bishops in the Church life. Unfortunately we have only one attempt of a serious research of biographies of the ROC bishops and their activities. N.Mitrokhin and S.Timofeeva of the Information-Research Center

«Panorama» have published a handbook «Bishops and Dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church». A short preface represents an attempt to summarise the data. The majority of bishops were born in 1937-1956 (60%), they grew up in the time of Krushchev's anti-Church campaigns and Brezhnev's stagnation. Many of them had been the pupils of the late Patriarch Pimen or Metropolitan Nikodim. The majority come from the urban families of workers or intelligentsia, mostly from Moscow and Saint Petersburg (16%) and Western Ukraine (20%). It is not always clear, what kind of secular higher education was received by this or that bishop. The data obtained states, that 20% had such education, and 20% had received secondary technical education. As for theological education, the level is very high: 81% (120 bishops) of all (in 1997) had graduated from Ecclesiastical Seminaries and then from Academies. 65% of graduates had received the degree of Candidate of Theology. The conclusion is being made, that the level of their research was mediocre, as only one dissertation of 78 had been published ^{xlviii}. Such statement seems badly proved. The data presented in the handbook, as admitted by the authors themselves, is in many instances erroneous. This was also proved by a review by the deputy-editor of the Moscow Patriarchate Publishing House ^{xlix}.

Returning back to the topic of relations between the ROC and the mass media, which quite often is being called «the fourth power». After a certain period of

silence, the Church leadership decided to take action. The Holy Synod had deplored the newspapers «MK» and «Rus Pravoslavnyaya» for their slanderous, anti-Church publications on October 3, 1997ⁱ. It had put the conservative-traditionalist «Radonezh», published by Ye.Nikiforov, in an awkward position, as he tried to show good relations with the Patriarchy and Synod, on the one hand, and published certain materials, showing sympathy with anti-ecumenical movement in the Orthodox circles and in so doing indirectly assaulting several Metropolitansⁱⁱ. In an interview to the Church official newspaper Metropolitan Cyrill softly criticized «Radonezh» and explained, that the publications of «MK» and «Rus Pravoslavnyaya» were aimed at destroying the Church unity. Metropolitan paid special attention to the figure of the late Metropolitan Ioann of Saint Petersburg and Ladozh, who was and is a slogan-figure for the right-wing Orthodox opposition groups. Metropolitan Cyrill tried to prove, that the late Metropolitan Ioann has never been as anti-ecumenically minded, as some people want to show him beⁱⁱⁱ.

In the atmosphere of the strong anti-Orthodox and anti-Church campaign, which included not only insults of the ROC hierarchy, but also anti-Christian lamentations on such crucial issues as the law on freedom of consciousness, law on sexual education of children, demonstration on TV of the movie by M.Scorsese, offending the feelings of the religious people etc., a Union of Russian Journalists (Tovarishestvo russkih

zhurnalistov) was organised in February 1998. The Union proclaimed the strengthening of the Russian state and creation of the nationalist information system as its main purpose^{liii}. Though not openly stating its Orthodox orientation, the Union definitely has the same standing as the Union of Orthodox Citizens.

The above-mentioned clashes between the Church and the social circles outside it are being described by observers as manifestations of the critics' «hatred»^{liv}. However there may be other reasons. The Paris edited «Russian Thought» newspaper, which was called by Patriarch Alexy II «Roman Thought», had for a period of time been publishing a supplement «Church and Social Messenger» (Obshchestvenno-tserkovny vestnik), which later incorporated into the general contents of the newspaper. The Messenger served as tribune for the critics of the ROC, and published a series of articles about Russian bishops, where they had been shown as corrupted morons or monsters plunged in lewdness^{lv}.

Fortunately there exists normal debate on the problems of Church development and its relations with society. Though not covered by the press reports in sufficient detail, the activities of the Moscow Patriarchate in this field is quite abundant. Such events as annual «Christmas Readings», Orthodox Conferences in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Conference on the Health of the Nation, numerous activities of the Orthodox Nations Foundation, establishment of Orthodox culture departments in various colleges (military among them)

reflect the attempts of the ROC to nourish politicians, social workers and other professionals, who would understand the importance of Orthodox Christian values for the state-building of Russia.

The discussion of the Law on the Freedom of Conscience and the Religious Organisations very vividly demonstrated the problems, existing in relations between the ROC and its followers, on the one hand, and some other social groups on the other.

The previous Law on the Freedom of Faith (veroispovedanij) was adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation on October 25, 1990. It was adopted in the time of liberalisation of the state-Church relations. The law was based on the principle of absolutely liberal attitude to the activities of the religious associations. Any such association could be registered after it declared the fact of its existence, if its charter and activities did not contradict the law. The law did not draw any line of distinction between the Russian based and foreign connected religious associations. According to the Rules of Registration of the Religious Associations' Charters of 1994, the government authority had to register any association, which had submitted all necessary documents in compliance with the law^{lvi}. However, the later developments had shown many weak sides of the law.

First of all, thousands of foreign missionaries of different kind had flooded Russia, some of them (according to the analytic paper, presented by the

Presidential Administration Department of Relations with Political Parties, Civic Associations, Factions and Deputies of the Chambers of the Federal Assembly on February 10, 1995) co-operated in their activities with the Russian Evangelical religious organisations and rendered assistance to them, the others pursued proselitic (and sometimes political) goals, fostered the dissemination of fundamentalist, separatist or nationalist ideas. The third represented religious cults already rejected by the Western societies and looked for material gains in Russia ^{lvii}. The project of the new Law on Freedom of Consciousness and Religious Associations was proposed for discussion.

During the hearings at the Duma many deputies and experts criticised the ROC for alleged lobbying the new law in order to gain privileges and suppress the other religions. Wide discussion was opened in mass media, and new possibilities were found to attack the Church. During the parliamentary hearings floor was given to the representatives of many cults, which at that time were actively penetrating Russia (and the adequate information about their activities abroad was not widespread), such as followers of R.Hubbard's «scientology», representatives of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness or the Russian-made Roerich cult. They all criticised the ROC for plotting against freedom.

During the long period of editing and negotiating the law was adopted by the Federal Assembly and sent

to the President for promulgation. President Eltsin vetoed the law on July 23, 1997 as contradicting the Constitution. The newspapers discussed the critical attitude to the law project of US President Bill Clinton and Pope John-Paul II ^{lviii}. Liberals applauded them, conservatives of all shades spoke about the interference into internal affairs. Centrists wisely pointed out, that it is irrational to apply American standards to Russian realities and reasoned, that the US religious legislation itself has some strict regulations, not to speak about Greece, Israel etc. ^{lix}

With active support of the Presidential Council on Interaction with Religious Associations Director A.Loginov, the text was changed and submitted to Duma on September 4, 1997. By September 26 the law had been adopted by both chambers and signed by the President ^{lx}.

The new law introduced two types of religious association - groups (not less than 3 persons) and organisations (not less than 10 persons). Organisations (not less than three) have a right to establish centralised religious organisations. All these religious bodies have to be registered by the authorities after the submission of required documentation, the charter and the fundamentals of religious teaching included. The group, wishing to establish an organisation, if it does not belong to a recognised central organisation, has to prove, that it has existed in Russia for 15 years. Foreign religious organisations have the right to open

representative offices, but cannot be engaged in religious activities. However the Russian religious organisation can open the representative office of a foreign religious organisation, and that allows the foreign representatives act through the Russian organisation. Foreigners, temporarily visiting Russia, have no right to establish religious organisations. The law complicated the process of religious education, as it depended on the permission of local administration. The age, when the child can decide his religious orientation, was also not clear^{lxi}.

The property of the religious organisation, which decided to shift allegiance to the other central religious organisation, was to be returned to the central organisation^{lxii}.

Wave of lamentations flooded the pages of the Russian press. Director of the private Institute of Religion and Law A.Ptchelintsev announced, that the new law would help to turn the ROC into the state church, that Europe would reject Russia for violation of human rights etc.^{lxiii} N.Babasyan in «Russian Thought» described the adoption of the law as the victory of the ROC^{lxiv}. However it was hard to ignore the fact, that the majority of traditional confessions of Russia agreed with the text of the law. Never the less, practically every newspaper severely criticised the law, speaking about the Orthodox aggression. The ROC was depicted as the source of national danger, awful consequences of the law were predicted^{lxv}.

The orthodox circles were also not completely satisfied by the law. The Union of Orthodox Citizens pointed out, that the sphere of the ROC's social, educational, cultural activities is growing day by day, and its relations with the state need additional legislative foundation.

The expert of the Duma, former priest V.Polosin (now a Moslem) pointed out, that to the main «revolutionary» stipulation of the law in chapter 8: religious organisations prevailing in this or that territory have the right to participate in the adoption of decisions relating to their interests^{lxvi}. That was really a new development, giving special rights not only to the ROC, but also to Moslems, Buddhist and other religions.

The practice had shown, that the new law did not constitute serious problems in the activities of a majority of religious organisations. However some of them have not registered yet, though the time limit is the end of year 1997. It must be stated, that according to statistics, Russia had around 60 large and medium confessions in 1997. There were 14,5 religious associations, of which 55% were Orthodox, 20% - Protestant, and around 20% - Moslem. More than 400 representatives of foreign religious organisations kept on their activities in Russia, though only 10% have registered with authorities^{lxvii}.

Orthodox Christians view the new law as a fair admission of the historical and real role of the ROC in the life of Russian society.

As we have seen, the mass media is a sphere of severe battles on religious problems in Russia. And the ROC confronts serious difficulties here. There are very few TV and radio programs, reflecting its views on the problems of the day. For example, the only Orthodox radio program «Radonezh» (three hours of daily broadcasting) is a private enterprise. The other «Christian Civic Channel» is in opposition to the ROC leadership, and is more clinging to the Catholic position.

As for the press, there is still not nation-wide daily or weekly Christian newspaper. Of course this to a certain extent reflects the general crisis of the Russian press, but that is only part of the truth. If «Radonezh» review can be considered a nation-wide periodical with shattering publication timetable, there are many local Orthodox Christian newspapers, such as «Pravoslavnaya Moskva» (Orthodox Moscow), «Pravoslavny Sankt-Peterburg» (Orthodox Saint-Petersburg), «Pravoslavnaya Gazeta» (Orthodox Newspaper) in Ekaterinburg, «Vedomosti Pravoslavnoj Zhizni» (News of the Orthodox Life) in Kaliningrad, «Sobornaya vest» (Sobor's Message) in Saint Petersburg, «Rus Derzhavnaya» (Russia the Strong State) in Moscow, «Tatyanin den» (Tatyana's Day) in Moscow, «Vera-Eskom» in Syktyvkar, «Bagovest» (Church-Going Bell) in Samara, «Blagovest» in Ryasan, «Slovo utesheniya» (Word of Consolation) in Ivanovo, «Voronezh pravoslavny» (Orthodox Voronezh) in Voronezh, «Pravoslavnoye slovo» (Orthodox Word) in Nizhny Novgorod and many others. We can state, that

Orthodox media has emerged nearly in all Russian provinces, and it fulfils not only the function of preaching, but also of evaluating the current developments from the Orthodox Christian point of view. The problem is, that the circulation is still low.

The Orthodox Internet sites are also in the state of maturation. The most famous ones are the site of the ROC, «Forum» of the Deacon A.Kuraev, «Sobrnost» and several others. Many dioceses and churches try to open their pages.

The analysis of a wide scope of media sources has shown, that Russian Orthodox Church has turned into an important centre, guiding a wide scope of charity activities, social service in hospitals and hospices, educational and cultural programs. Restoring the cultural and ethical heritage, ruined by the previous regime, the Church involuntary, but not unwillingly turns into an important centre of authority for everyone seeking ways of national revival of Russia.

Conclusions.

Russian Orthodox Church is an inalienable part of Russian life in all its manifestations: history, culture, way of life etc. It would have been absolutely irrational to ignore this fact and not to state, as it was done in the preface to the new law on the freedom of consciousness, that the Orthodox Christianity plays specific role in Russia. The public opinion polls have shown it right: the

society is in the process of approaching Orthodox Christianity, and the observations concerning the growth of public interest in the ROC are true to fact. The legislation, so severely criticised by the liberal press, did not bring any detrimental results, but fixed the accepted status of traditional religions (not only of the ROC).

The analysis of the ROC's interaction with the Russian society in the context of the democratic transition should be understood against the current political background. It is widely admitted, that the developed political party structure has not emerged in Russia. The Christian-democratic experiments have failed, and other Christianity oriented parties and associations do not enjoy wide support. For this reason, it is absolutely natural, that the ROC (though as a matter of principle, and not shrewd calculation) distanced itself from all political forces, in so doing showing concern about the fate of the society in general. This is a positive approach, manifesting readiness to accept all views, if they do not contradict basic values of Christianity and can at the same time serve the cause of national revival

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Currently the ROC is actively promoting the dialogue on the Christian values in economic development, elaborates different social programs, fosters Christian educational and cultural projects.

Divided from the state, not engaged politically, the ROC remains an important uniting force in Russian

society, a strong factor of spiritual unity, so necessary for the overcoming of the current crisis.

Russia is a multinational secular state, and for this reason it is absolutely unfair to speculate about the ROC trying to become a state religion, which is both unfeasible and impossible. On the contrary, an independent strong institute of moral authority can play a positive role of moderator and peace protector only if it stands above any political involvement.

In connection with the forthcoming parliamentary and presidential elections the importance of the ROC for the Russian elite will be growing. The future will show, whether the Church managed to educate Russian politicians or not.

On the grass roots level the ROC still confronts a serious problem of revitalisation, or to put it more clearly, institutionalisation and active development of basic elements of Christian social media. The social activities centred around the parishes should become more active, and influence the basic social changes. Until now the civic activities of the Orthodox population only show initial signs of growth.

Church itself is not a democratic institution. If Gospel was implemented in people's lives, democracy would not have been needed. Russia is not a democratic state, still emerged in numerous leftovers of the Communist regime. At the same time democratic institutes of their own kind exist in Russia and keep

developing. The Church's role is to help people do that for their own benefit.

Notes and bibliography.

ⁱ For example, series of collections of articles and documents like these: «Razorvat ekumenicheskoye koltso» (Break the Ecumenical Ring). Moscow, 1998; «Vatican: natisk na vostok» (Vatican: Thrust on the East). Moscow, 1998; «Shkola tserkovnoj smuty» (School of Church Disorder). Moscow, 1997. A series of brochures, titled «Antihrist v Moskve» (Anti-Christ in Moscow) have been published since 1995 by the Civic Committee «For the Ethical Revival of the Fatherland». The documents are grouped according to topics: campaign against pornography, against the demonstration on TV of the anti-Christian movie of M.Scorsese, against abortion and sexual education in secondary schools etc.

ⁱⁱ «Vybor sudby. Problemi sovremennoj Rossii glazami russkih arhiereev» (Choice of Fate. Problems of Russia as Seen by Russian Bishops). Saint Petersburg, 1996.

ⁱⁱⁱ Tsypin V., Rev. «Istorija russkoj tserkvi, 1917-1997» (History of the Russian Church). Moscow, 1997, p. 484; see also «Journal Moskovskoj Patriarii», Moscow, 1990, # 9, p. 10.

^{iv} «Religioznii organizatsii» (Religious organizations). A Handbook. Moscow, 1994, p. 111

^v «Obrasheniye» (Address of August 21, 1991). // Patriarch of Moscow and All of Russia Alexy II. «Tserkov i duhovnoye vrozhdeniye Rossii» (Church and the Spiritual Revival of Russia. Homilies, Speeches, Messages and Addresses, 1990-1998) [hereafter - Church and the Spiritual...]. Moscow, 1999, p. 573.

^{vi} Patriarch Alexy II. «Slovo na torzhestvennoj tseremonii privedeniya k prisvyage Presidenta Rossii B.N.Eltsina» (Address at the Inauguration Ceremony of the Russian President B.N.Yeltsin). // Church and the Spiritual..., p. 636.

^{vii} «Journal Moskovskoj Patriarhii», 1991, # 10, p. 3.

^{viii} The party declared itself as a «social-political association (party) uniting those standing for the reforms of all sides of life on the basis of Christian ethical norms». It was founded in April 1990 by V.Aksyuchits (now close to the former Russian Vice-Premier B.Nemtsov) and two former priests G.Yakunin and V.Polosin. For some time cooperated with «Democratic Russia» movement, but later deplored the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and promoted the slogan of «enlightened patriotism». In 1990 formed its independent faction in the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet. Initial membership was 15-20,000. In 1992-1993 tried to join other patriotic parties in the Congress of the Civic and Patriotic Forces, and later in the «Derzhava» movement. Was defeated at the elections of 1995. See tracts by V.Arsyuchits: «Miropraviteli tmy veka sego»

(Dark Rulers of This Century), Moscow, 1994;
«Ideokratiya v Rossii» (Power of Ideas in Russia).
Moscow, 1995.

^{ix} Later changed its name to Christian-Democratic Union - Russian Christians. Founded in 1992 in Saint Petersburg. Main slogan: «Through spirituality to the revival of Russia». After 1993 elections was represented in Duma by V.Borshchev, V.Savitsky and G.Yakunin (who joined them in the meantime). At the 1995 elections received only 0.28% of votes.

^x Was founded in May 1990 by those Moscow members, who broke away from the Russian Christian-Democratic Union and united around the «Christian-Democratic Messenger». In 1995 elections joined the «International Union» block and was defeated. Membership figures unknown. (Data on Christian-democratic parties see in: «Religiozniye objedineniya Moskovskoj oblasti» (Religious Associations of the Moscow District). Moscow, 1998, pp. 254-257.

^{xi} Was founded in 1989 by a famous dissident and Orthodox Christian activist. Proclaimed the slogans of European Christian-Democratic tradition, joined the International of Christian Democracy in 1989. The party is well-known for its beneficiary activities. Split in 1990. From September 1992 - member of the «New Russia» block. Used to have 6.300 members in 1992.

^{xii} One may say, that the defeat should be explained by the Western oriented character of Russian Christian

Democrats of all types. But the ultra-right forces, manipulating the Orthodox Christian slogans, such as the «Russian National Unity» («Russky poryadok» (Russian Order), Moscow, 1998 # 1, p. 5) or the followers of the I.Ogorodnikov (not to be mixed with A.I.Ogorodnikov of the Christian-Democratic Union of Russia), leader of the former All-Russian Social-Christian Union of the Liberation of the People («Desnitsa» (Right Hand), Moscow, 1998 # 1, p. 6), or the National-Patriotic Front «Pamyat» (Memory) (see: «Pamyat», Moscow, 1997 # 4, p. 5-6), they all remain marginal groups enjoying minimum support of the population, quite often being unable to even to participate in the political process. One specific feature of many nationalist groups is their referral to the authority of the late Metropolitan Ioann of Saint Petersburg and Ladozh, whose literary heritage is abundant. This outstanding figure in Church history is being used as a symbol «positive» bishop in the criticisms of the ROC leadership and in publications, containing apology of the ideas of «Russian imperialism», «strong state», «non-aggressive nationalism» etc., see: «Pravoslavnyj patriot» (Orthodox Patriot), Moscow, # 6, 1997, p. 3, 14.

^{xiii} Shchipkov A. «Vo chto verit Rossiya» (What Does Russia Believe in?). Saint-Petersburg, 1998, p. 42-43.

^{xiv} Sterligov A. «Rossiya i russkoye dvizheniye segodnya» (Russia and the Russian Movement Today). // «Russky sobor» (Russian Sobor), Moscow, 1993, # 6, p. 2, 6.

^{xv} «Pravoslavnaya Presnya» (Orthodox Presnya), Moscow, # 1, December 1997, p. 1-2. See also: Burkin A.

«Otvetstvennost vlasti» (The responsibility of Authority). // «Desyatina» (The Tith), Moscow, # 3, 1997, p. 1.

^{xvi} See: Yarmak O. «Vtoroye pokolenije hristianiskih politikov v Rossii, realnost i perspektivi» (The Second Generation of Christian Politics in Russia: Reality and Perspectives). // «Tserkovno-obshchestvenny vestnik» # 20 (Supplement to the Paris «Russkaya mysl»).

^{xvii} See: «Informatsionny listok Soyuza pravoslavnikh grazhdan» (Information Bulletin of the Union of Orthodox Citizens), # 1, May 1998.

^{xviii} Savelyev A. «Tserkov i pretendenty na 'simfoniyu'» (The Church and the Aspirants for «Symphony»). // «NG-religiya», Moscow, January 23, 1998.

^{xix} Priest A.Shargunov and several other priests, members of the Public Committee «For the Ethical Revival of the Fatherland» (Za npravstvennoye vozrozhdeniye Otechestva), describing their position as anti-Communist, supported A.Zhuganov as a candidate for Presidency as a manifestation of their severe dissatisfaction with the official policy, ignoring the necessity to stop the spread of pornography, propaganda of violence etc. See: «Antihrist v Moskve» (Anti-Christ in Moscow). Special issue, Moscow, 1996, pp. 10-15.

^{xx} Preface by A.Shargunov. // «Bogom proslavlenny tsar» (Tsar Glorified by God). Vol. 3. Moscow, 1997, p. 9-11.

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- ^{xxi} See, for example: Kaariainen K., Furman D. «Veruyushchiye, ateisti i prochiye (evolutsiya russkoj religioznosti)» [Believers, Atheists and Others. Evolution of Russian Religiosity.]. // «Voprosi filisofii» (Philosophical Issues), Moscow, # 6, 1997.
- ^{xxii} The review in Kiryazjev O. «Traditsionno veruyushchih stanovitsya menshe» (The Number of Traditional Believers Diminishes). // «NG-religiya», Moscow, September 25, 1997.
- ^{xxiii} Morozov A. «Skolko pravoslavnykh v Rossii» (How Many Orthodox in Russia); Siluyanova I. «Dokazatelstva torzhestva very» (Proofs of the Faith Triumph). // «Ng-religiya», Moscow, October 23, 1997.
- ^{xxiv} Mchedlov M. «Ot apatii do ekspropriatsii» (From Apathy to Expropriation). // «NG-religiya», Moscow, November 27, 1997.
- ^{xxv} «NG-religiya», Moscow, December 25, 1997.
- ^{xxvi} «Radonezh», # 1, January 1999, p. 10.
- ^{xxvii} Tsypin V. Op. cit., p. 505.
- ^{xxviii} Patriarch Alexy II. From the Speech at the Meeting of the Moscow Diocese on December 20, 1993. // Church and the Spiritual... Moscow, 1999, p. 350.
- ^{xxix} Patriarch Alexy II. «Obrashcheniye Svyateishego Patriarha Moskovskogo i Vseya Rusi Aleksiya II k kliru, predstaviteleyam stavropigialnykh monastyrej i prihodskim sovetam hramov g.Moskvy na eparhialnom sobranii» (Address to the Clergy, Representatives of Stauropegion Monasteries and the Parish Councils of Moscow at the

Meeting of the Moscow Diocese on December 12, 1996).
Moscow, 1997, p. 1.

^{xxx} Patriarch Alexy II. «Obrashcheniye Svyateishego Patriarha Moskovskogo i Vseya Rusi Aleksiya II k kliru i prihodskim sovetam hramov g.Moskvy na eparhialnom sobranii» (Address to the Clergy and the Parish Councils of Moscow at the Meeting of the Moscow Diocese on December 16, 1997). Moscow, 1998, p. 1.

^{xxxi} Patriarch Alexy II. «Obrashcheniye Svyateishego Patriarha Moskovskogo i Vseya Rusi Aleksiya II k kliru i prihodskim sovetam hramov g.Moskvy na eparhialnom sobranii» (Address to the Clergy and the Parish Councils of Moscow at the Meeting of the Moscow Diocese on December 23, 1998). Moscow, 1999, p. 9.

^{xxxii} Ibid., p.12, 15.

^{xxxiii} «Novoye vremya» (New Time), Moscow, # 4, 1999.

^{xxxiv} «Sreda» (Wednesday), Moscow, December 16, 1998.

^{xxxv} Shevchenko M. «Yesli nazvalsya hristianinom, to dolzhen byt pohti svjatym» («If You Have Called Yourself a Christian You My Be Nearly a Saint»). // «NG-religiya», February 18, 1998.

^{xxxvi} «Argumenti i fakti» (Arguments and Facts), Moscow, # 37, 1997.

^{xxxvii} Kuraev A., Deacon. «Kak delayut antisemitom» (How One Is Made an Anti-Semite). Moscow, 1998, p. 146.

^{xxxviii} See, for example: «Radonezh», Moscow, # 18, December 1998, p. 12-13.

^{xxxix} «NG-religiya», Moscow, January 23, 1998.

^{xi} Message of the Clerics of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Bishop's Council in 1997. // «Razorvat ekumenisheskoye koltso» (To Brake the Ecumenical Ring). Moscow, 1998, p. 122-127.

^{xii} A group of clerics attempted to initiate reforms in their parishes with an idea of protracting them into the entire Church in future. The main figures were priests G.Kochetkov and A.Borisov. Their attempts of home-made modernization of church services together with the poorly proved theological innovations aroused a movement of protest inside the ROC. As a result of fighting with a priest, opposing his views, G.Kochetkov was proscribed to conduct services, and now his followers are on the brink of forming a sectarian formation. See: *Sovremennoye obnovlenchestvo - protestantizm «vostochnogo obryada»* (Contemporary Renewalism - Protestantism of Eastern Rite). Moscow, 1996.

^{xiii} See: «Pravoslavije ili smert» (Orthodoxy or Death), Moscow, # 1, 1997, 8-12; Dushenov K. «Nikodimovshina» (Nikodim's Movement). // «Pravoslavije ili smert», Special issue, 1997, p. 1-23; Dushenov K. «Mertvij sezon» (Dead Season). // «Pravoslavny patriot» (Orthodox Patriot), Moscow, # 6, 1997, p. 4-5.

^{xiiii} Dushenov K. «Pogovorim na chistoru» (Lets Speak Frankly). // «NG-religiya», February 18, 1998. See: «Pravoslavije ili smert» (Orthodoxy or Death), Moscow,

1, 1997, 8-12; Dushenov K. «Nikodimovshina» (Nikodim's Movement). // «Pravoslavije ili smert», Special issue, 1997, p. 1-23.

^{xliv} Hieromonch Illarion (Alfeev). «Otkrovennost za otkrovennost» (Frankness for Frankness). // «NG-religiya», February 18, 1998.

^{xlv} «Pokusheniye na Patriarha» (Assault on Patriarch). // «MK», Moscow, October 22, 1998. See also similar publications: «MK», January 1, November 4, December 2, 26, 1997, January 6, April 7, June 25, September 5, 1998.

^{xlvi} See, for instance: «Radonezh», Moscow, # 2-3, February 1999, pp. 6-7.

^{xlvii} Morozov A. «Uspeshniye shestidesyatniki» (Successful Generation of the 1960s). // «Ng-religiya», November 11, 1998.

^{xlviii} Mitrokhin N., Timofeeva S. «Episkopi i eparhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi» (Bishops and Dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church). Moscow, 1997, pp. 11-22.

^{xlix} Polishuk E. «Ostorozhno, nedobrokachestvenny produkt» (Danger, Poor Quality Produkt!). // «Pravoslavnoya knizhnoye obozreniye» (Orthodox Book Review). Moscow, June 1998, p. 4.

ⁱ «Radonezh», Moscow, # 16-17, October, 1997, p. 23.

ⁱⁱ By the way, the publishing policy of «Radonezh» has not changed radically since then, see, for example, a reprint of an article from the Ukrainian newspaper - «Nikodim». // «Radonezh», # 2-3, February, 1999.

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- ⁱⁱⁱ «O presse tserkovnoj i psevdotserkovnoj» (About Clerical and Pseudo-Clerical Press). // «Moskovskij tserkovnyj vestnik» (Moscow Church Messenger), Moscow, # 3, 1998, p. 1-2.
- ⁱⁱⁱⁱⁱ «Rus derzhavnaya» (Russia - Strong Power). Moscow, # 2, 1998, p. 3.
- ^{liiii} Morozov A. «Vnutrennyaya i obshchestvennaya zhizn tserkvi...» (Internal and Social Life of the Church...). // «NG-religiya», December 25, 1997.
- ^{liiii} «Russkaya mysl» (Russian Thought), Paris, February 5-11, 1998, p. 18-19.
- ^{liiii} «Svoboda sovesti i prava cheloveka v Rossijskoj Federatsii» (Freedom of Consciousness and Human Rights in Russian Federation). Ed. by Bukalova N.A., Kurakova L.P. Analytic Messenger, # 13, Moscow, 1995, pp. 65, 77.
- ^{liiii} Freedom of Consciousness and Human Rights in Russian Federation. # 13, Moscow, 1995, p. 113.
- ^{liiii} The Pope was dissatisfied, that Catholicism was not named among the traditional religions of Russia, which it is not, and President Clinton just stressed the necessity to simplify the registration of «new religions and confessions». See: «Radonezh», # 12, July 1997, p. 9.
- ^{liiii} Gavrilov N. «Vozvratnoye srednevekovye» (Returned Middle Ages). // «NG-religiya», Moscow, November 11, 1997.
- ^{liiii} «MK», October 9, November 11, 1997.

^{lxi} See commentary to the law in: Religious Associations of the Moscow District. Moscow, 1998, 13-92.

^{lxii} This stipulation was criticized by the followers of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA), as now it became impossible for the clerics of the ROC to shift their allegiance to ROCA with property in their hands.

^{lxiii} «Novaya gazeta» (New Newspaper), Moscow, December 15-21, 1997.

^{lxiv} Babasyan N. «Svoboda sovesti v nepravovom prostranstve» (Freedom of Consciousness in the Illegal Space). // «Tserkovno-obshchestvenny vestnik», Paris, October 2, 1997, p. 1-2.

^{lxv} «NG-religiya», August 28, 1997.

^{lxvi} «Radonezh», # 16-17, October 1997, p. 17.

^{lxvii} «Tserkov i obshchestvo» (Church and Society), Moscow, # 1-2-, 1998, p. 18-19.

^{lxviii} A Moscow priest Vladimir Siloviev once pointed out, that even Mafia criminals can be accepted, if they show signs of repentance. See: «Argumenti i fakti», Moscow, # 1-2, 1998, p. 16.