

The Tobol'sk Bishop's House as an Actor of the Colonization of Siberia in the 17th Century¹

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Abstract—During the development of Siberia, the Russians created an authentic “living space” on the colonized lands, based on their religious traditions and practices. This article shows the role of the Tobol'sk Bishop's House in shaping the sociocultural environment in the developed territory in accordance with the norms of the Christian way of life. The bishop's house is understood as a regional institution of the Russian Orthodox Church, which organized and controlled the spiritual sphere of the life of the local society. Fulfilling its mission, the Tobol'sk cathedra, established in 1620, used the centuries-old experience of the Russian Orthodox Church and at the same time responded to specific challenges associated with the huge scale of the controlled territory and considerable remoteness from the center, the lack of priests and their ambiguous moral character, specifics of the gender composition of the first Russian settlers, and disagreements with local governors on the issue of delimitation of powers. The main concerns of the Siberian bishops of the 17th century were the maintenance of the moral state of society, the ordering of the church sphere, and the intercalation for the convicted and disgraced among the population of Siberia, including *yasak*-payers. During the 17th century a system of diocesan administration was established. The regional features of this system were expressed in the variety of principles for the allocation of tithe *uezds* and the pace of replacement of secular tithers with spiritual customers (representatives of the clergy). The ecclesiastical court organized by the Tobol'sk Bishop's House was an important tool to contain commotion both among the clergy and in the lay community. The Orthodox landscape that had developed on the territory under its jurisdiction made it possible to satisfy the spiritual needs of the local society. By the end of the 17th century, the diocese had at least 225 churches, including monastic ones. Most of them were in Western Siberia, the most developed part of the diocese and close to its center. The problem of providing parishes with priests was solved, and widely revered regional shrines appeared. The Christianization of the indigenous population was carried out mainly by monasteries. Using various forms of influence on the flock, the Tobol'sk Bishop's House had a great influence on the religious and moral state of the local society and became one of the leading actors in the colonization process.

Keywords: Russian colonization of Siberia, Siberian and Tobol'sk diocese, Tobol'sk Bishop's House, tithes, tithers, spiritual *zakazchiks*, church court, monasteries, Christianization

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The early colonization of Siberia is a complex and multivector process of integrating the vast territories of North Asia into the Russian civilizational space. The rooting of a way of life colored by Orthodox religiosity in the new lands was one of the important markers of this integration since in the Middle Ages it was the religious worldview that determined the life strategies of people and regulated ethics and behavior in society. Developing in a natural way, this process had an organizational beginning. By the 17th century, the Russian Orthodox Church had developed a stable hierarchical

structure, principles, and practices of regional governance.²

The Siberian and Tobol'sk diocese was established in 1620. The history of the Tobol'sk Bishop's House in the 17th century has an extensive historiography. It has repeatedly become the subject of attention in the context of studying the history of the Orthodox Church in Siberia.³ There are several directions in the research

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² As the Moscow patriarchate was established in 1589, there were 14 dioceses, including the Patriarchal Region and four metropolises. See: D. V. Zaitsev, “Diocese,” in *Orthodox Encyclopedia* (Moscow, 2008), Vol. 18, p. 500.

³ See: A. V. Dulov and A. P. Sannikov, *Orthodox Church in Eastern Siberia in the 17th–Early 20th Centuries* (Irkutsk, 2006), Part 1 [in Russian]; *History of the Yekaterinburg Diocese* (Yekaterinburg, 2010) [in Russian]; N. N. Pokrovskii and N. D. Zol'nikova, “Russian Orthodox Church and Old Belief in Siberia in the 17th–18th centuries,” *Vopr. Ist. Sibiri Nov. Vremya*, No. 2, 29–45 (2012).

of this topic: biographies and activities of the Siberian bishops;⁴ formation of a bishopric;⁵ structure, staff, and financial support for the activities of the Bishop's House;⁶ and its contribution to the development of culture.⁷ A significant breakthrough in this topic was provided by the publication of two collections of documents, which included act materials, inventories of bishop's property and estates, office documentation, and literary monuments.⁸ In modern historiography, one of the most discussed topics has become the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical authorities.⁹

In this article, we intend to show the role of the Tobol'sk Bishop's House in creating a sociocultural environment in the developed territory in accordance with the norms of the Christian way of life. It will be presented as a regional institution of the Russian Orthodox Church, which organized and controlled

the spiritual life of the local society. The actor's approach makes it possible to focus attention on the Bishop's House as a participant in the transformations, driven by its own motives and having the appropriate experience for this.

As is known, the activities of diocesan bishops were regulated by canon law, the decisions of the Moscow consecrated synods, and the orders of the highest secular and ecclesiastical authorities. When appointed to the cathedra, the bishops received orders from the supreme authority, which determined the main directions of their activity. The orders to the first Siberian bishops were like the order to the first Kazan Archbishop Gurii in 1555.¹⁰ They are identical in describing the areas of activity of the bishops and are close in the degree of detail in building relations with the indigenous population and local secular authorities. The similarity of these documents is natural since the historical missions of the first Kazan and Siberian bishops were the same—the rooting of Orthodoxy in the recently annexed lands with a heterodox autochthonous population.

By the time the decision was made at the end of 1620 to create an archiepiscopal see in Tobol'sk, the Russian colonization wave had reached the Yenisey, and the territory of Western Siberia was already covered with a kind of network of Muscovite rule, the nodes of which were Russian fort cities founded in the late 16th–early 17th centuries. In areas suitable for agriculture, rural settlements were formed near the cities.

While receiving standardized orders, the Siberian hierarchs faced serious challenges on the spot related to the huge scale of the controlled territory and significant remoteness from the center; the lack of priests and their ambiguous moral character; the peculiarities of the gender composition of the Russian pioneers, which was significantly dominated by men; and disagreements with local governors on the issue of delineation of powers. Eight Siberian bishops were engaged in overcoming these challenges during the 17th century: archbishops Cyprian (1621–1624), Macarius (1624–1635), Nektarios (1636–1640), Gerasim (1640–1650), and Simeon (1651–1664); metropolitans Cornelius (1664–1677/78), Pavel (1678–1692) and Ignatius (1692–1700).

According to the instructions, one of the most important functions of the bishops was pastoral service: to teach that the clergy performed their duties conscientiously, and the laity “live to fulfill the Christian law according to the commandment of God and

⁴ See: N. A. Abramov, *City of Tyumen': From the History of the Tobol'sk Diocese* (Tyumen', 1998) [in Russian]; M. D. Arkhipova, Cyprian Starorushanin: A Figure of the Russian Orthodox Church and Spiritual Culture of the First Third of the 17th Century, *Extended Abstract of Cand. Sci. (Hist.) Dissertation* (Voronezh, 2004); P. N. Butskinskii, “The opening of the Tobol'sk diocese and the first Tobol'sk Archbishop Cyprian,” in P. N. Butskinskii, *Works*, in 2 vols. (Tyumen', 1999), Vol. 2, pp. 199–250; P. N. Butskinskii, “Siberian Archbishops: Macarius, Nektarios, Gerasim (1625–1650),” in P. N. Butskinskii, *Works*, in 2 vols. (Tyumen', 1999), Vol. 2, pp. 251–310; Priest I. A. Nikulin, *His Grace Ignatius (Rimskii-Korsakov), Metropolitan of Siberia and Tobol'sk* (Yekaterinburg, 2015) [in Russian].

⁵ See: L. P. Shorokhov, *Corporate–Patrimonial Land Tenure and Monastic Peasants in Siberia in the 17th–18th Centuries* (Krasnoyarsk, 1983) [in Russian]; N. S. Kharina, Tobol'sk Bishop's House from the 17th Century to the 1760s, *Extended Abstract of Cand. Sci. (Hist.) Dissertation* (Barnaul, 2012); S. N. Shcherbich, “Resurrection patrimony of the Tobol'sk Sophia House at the end of the 17th–18th centuries,” *Vestn. Arkheol., Antropol. Etnogr.*, No. 1, 104–111 (2013).

⁶ See: Priest I. A. Nikulin, “The structure of the Tobol'sk Bishop's House in the 1690s,” *Vestn. Yekaterinb. Dukhovn. Seminarii*, No. 2, 120–138 (2014); Priest I. A. Nikulin, “Were there categories in the system of administrative–territorial governance of the Siberian diocese in the 17th century?,” in *Church. Theology. History: Materials of IV International Scientific and Theological Conference* (Yekaterinburg, 2016), pp. 187–191; Priest I. A. Nikulin, “The evolution of the forms and size of the royal prestimony of the Tobol'sk Bishop's House in the 17th century,” *Tserkov'. Bogoslovie. Ist.*, No. 1, 325–330 (2020); N. S. Kharina, “Management system of the Tobol'sk Bishop's House,” *V Mire Nauch. Otkryt.*, No. 11.3, 857–873 (2011).

⁷ See: E. K. Romodanovskaya, *Russian Literature in Siberia in the First Half of the 17th Century. (The Origins of Russian Siberian Literature)* (Novosibirsk, 1973) [in Russian]; Ya. G. Solodkin, *Siberian Annals of the 17th–First Half of the 18th Century: Controversial and Little-Studied Issues* (Nizhnevartovsk, 2018) [in Russian].

⁸ See: *Tobol'sk Bishop's House in the 17th Century* (Novosibirsk, 1994) [in Russian]; *Literary Monuments of the Tobol'sk Bishop's House of the 17th Century* (Novosibirsk, 2001) [in Russian].

⁹ See: I. A. Silaeva, “The relationship of church and secular authorities in Siberia in the 17th century in the works of N.N. Ogloblin,” *Izv. AltGU, Ist. Nauki Arkheol.*, No. 2, 43–47 (2019); Ya. G. Solodkin, “On the history of relations between church and secular authorities in Siberia in the first half of the 17th century,” *Vestn. VGU, Ser.: Ist. Politol.Sotsiol.*, No. 2, 84–88 (2019).

¹⁰ See: “Instruction to the Kazan Archbishop Gurii 1555,” in *Acts Collected in the Libraries and Archives of the Russian Empire by the Archeographic Expedition of the Imperial Academy of Sciences* (St. Petersburg, 1836), Vol. 1, pp. 259–261. The only known order to the Siberian archbishops is the order to the Siberian archbishop Macarius of 1625. Published in Tobol'sk Bishop's House..., pp. 213–215. Most likely, it was not much different from others.

the holy apostles and holy fathers.”¹¹ During the episcopal services, the Siberian bishops delivered sermons, but this mainly took place in Tobol'sk. Very few facts are known about their trips around the diocese.¹² Over the entire 17th century, none of them visited places east of Tobol'sk. The only way for the bishops to address most of the flock was through “messages”—sermons in the form of texts. The earliest episcopal epistle known to us dates to 1647. It was written by Archbishop Gerasim in connection with the appearance of the Mother of God to the Tyumen' resident Mariya Semenova. In the vision, the Mother of God instructed Mariya to tell the laity “that Orthodox Christians in the city and in the *uezd*... should not swear at each other with obscene and other gross words and should not defile their Christianity.”¹³ The news of this apparition received a wide response in Tyumen', and Archbishop Gerasim responded with a lengthy sermon on the perniciousness of swearing.¹⁴ The message and the story of the apparition of the Mother of God were sent to the governors of the Siberian cities with instructions to gather people “from young to old” within three days in the cathedral church and read them the bishop's teaching.¹⁵ The message of Archbishop Simeon about the need to observe the norms of Christian life, sent in April 1653 to the inhabitants of the Yakut town, has also survived. The reason for it was the rumor that reached the bishop about the unrighteous life of the Orthodox population on the Lena River.¹⁶ The series of epistles of Metropolitan Ignatius is known and well-studied, in particular those devoted to the controversy with the Old Believers.¹⁷

Bishop's houses had one more lever of influence on the flock—the right to judge on spiritual matters. The sanctions imposed by this court varied from purely ecclesiastical (excommunication from the church, penance, sending to a monastery for correction, removal from office, deprivation of dignity) to ordinary secular ones (fines, physical punishment). The authorities considered these punishments not so

much a punitive measure as an educational one. Thus, in 1622, a letter of Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich to Archbishop Cyprian instructed to “humble” the perpetrators for “spiritual deeds” “according to the rule of the holy fathers, so that they would be relieved from all lawlessness in advance.” The recurrence of a spiritual crime entailed a more severe punishment. However, the church court did not have the right to take the most stringent measures that only secular authorities could apply to criminals.¹⁸

In addition, Siberians did not always unconditionally recognize the right of persecution of the bishop and his representatives for their “lawless” way of life from the point of view of the Church. Thus, the service people assured Archbishop Cyprian that they had a letter that allowed them to bring “women and girls” from Rus' and “sell them for work” in Siberia.¹⁹ Archbishop Simeon in 1653 asked the tsar to give him a charter that would allow him to “control and appease all kinds of lawless deeds.”²⁰ He explained his request by the fact that the violators refused to obey the pastor, stating that “we are the sovereign's servants, and the archbishop does not care about us.”²¹

The diocesan system of government was aimed at total control over society, which was to be facilitated by the creation of a network of tithe districts. Even the first Archbishop Cyprian, having entered the cathedral, took care of this problem. Traditionally, tithes in dioceses were correlated with the borders of *uezds* or camps, and county towns became the places of residence of tithers. Diocesan children of the boyars [“children of the boyars” is the name of the position of people in the service of the archbishop] were appointed to these positions. The responsibilities of the tithers included overseeing the activities of the parish clergy, identifying violators of the norms of Christian life and morality, investigating spiritual crimes, holding a lower court in civil cases between “church people,” collecting church taxes to the Sofia treasury and fines from the laity on the decisions of the spiritual courts. Malicious violators were escorted to the bishop's court. The tithes issued wedding letters (permits for weddings), novice letters (appointment of junior deacons to parish churches), and funeral memorials.²² They regularly traveled around the territories under their jurisdiction “for church dogmas and hierarchal spiritual affairs.”

Probably, initially the tithe districts of the Siberian diocese covered several *uezds*. By the middle of the 17th century, four tithes were formed: Tyumen', Verkhotur'e, Berezov, and Tomsk.²³ Tobol'sk and the surrounding districts were under the direct control of the

¹¹ *Tobol'sk Bishop's House*..., pp. 213, 214; *Acts Collected in Libraries and Archives*..., p. 259.

¹² See: Archpriest P. I. Mangilev and Priest I. A. Nikulin, “Russian bishop of the 17th century on a trip around the diocese (on the example of the Siberian Metropolitan Ignatius (Rimskii-Korsakov),” *Khrist. Chtenie*, No. 2, 216–227 (2021).

¹³ St. Petersburg Branch of the Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences (hereinafter, SPb ARAN), Fund 21, Inventory 4, File 6, Fols. 124–124 verso.

¹⁴ SPb ARAN, Fund 21, Inventory 4, File 6, Fols. 124 verso–126.

¹⁵ SPb ARAN, Fund 21, Inventory 4, File 6, Fol. 124.

¹⁶ See: *Ancient Church Charters of the East Siberian Region (1653–1726) and Information about the Daurian Mission Collected by the Missionary Archimandrite Meletius* (Kazan, 1875), pp. 1–5.

¹⁷ See: Priest I. Nikulin, *His Grace Ignatius (Rimskii-Korsakov), Metropolitan of Siberia and Tobol'sk*...; T. V. Panich, “‘Spiritual Homily’ by Athanasius Kholmogorskii and ‘Siberian Epistles’ by Ignatius (Rimskii-Korsakov): Comparative Analysis Experience,” *Vestn. Yekaterinb. Dukhovn. Seminarii*, No. 34, 166–179 (2021).

¹⁸ See: *Tobol'sk Archbishop's House*..., p. 197.

¹⁹ *Tobol'sk Archbishop's House*..., p. 196.

²⁰ *Literary Monuments*..., pp. 300, 301.

²¹ Russian State Archives of Ancient Acts (hereinafter, RGADA), Fund 214, Inventory 3, File 400, Fols. 412, 413.

²² See: B. N. Florya, “Tithers,” in *Orthodox Encyclopedia* (Moscow, 2006), Vol. 14, p. 449.

apparatus of the Bishop's House. At the same time, the process of expanding the area of responsibility of the Tobol'sk see followed the advance of the colonization wave to the east. By the middle of the 17th century, Russian colonization reached the Kolyma and Anadyr.

The vastness of the diocese and the different degree of development of its western and eastern parts were reflected in the further process of formation of tithe districts. We tend to believe that during the 17th century, there was no single principle of their allocation. This is evidenced by the "Roster who in which city from the spiritual rank was ordered to be *zakazchik* [the head of the tithe]" of 1698.²⁴ Along with the secular division, the distances between settlements, population density, and the number of churches in individual areas were also considered. It follows from the "Roster" that there were 15 tithes. Thus, on the territory of Western Siberia the following tithe districts were allocated: Verkhotur'e and Pelym with *uezds*, Turinsk with an *uezd*, Tara with an *uezd*, Tyumen' with an *uezd*, Berezov, Surgut, settlements along the Iset' River, settlements along the Pyshma River, and settlements along the Nitsa River. The allocation of settlement tithes was clearly because by the end of the 17th century these areas were well developed, and there was a kind of "cross-strip" (neighboring settlements could belong to different *uezds*); therefore, when allocating tithes, a geographical approach was used. Tobol'sk and its surrounding area were still not allocated as a separate tithe. The secular administrative—territorial division of Siberia developed along the path of structuring into larger territorial units—districts [*raziady*] that united several *uezds*. However, there was a different trend in church division. The only tithe that coincided with the boundaries of the district was Tomsk, which included Tomsk, Ketsk, Narym, and Kuznetsk forts with *uezds*. The Yenisey district was divided into three tithes: Yeniseisk and Krasnoyarsk with *uezds*, Turukhansk, and Dauria (Irkutsk, Nerchinsk, and Dauria forts). Independent tithes were Yakutsk with an *uezd* and Ilimsk with an *uezd*.²⁵ The scattered nature of the forts over the vast territory of Eastern Siberia and the poor understanding of the diocesan authorities about their location led to confusion in assigning one or another settlement to a specific tithe.²⁶

The "Roster" was compiled by Metropolitan Ignatius in response to the charters of Tsar Peter I and Patriarch Adrian of 1697–1698 on the appointment of only persons of "clerical rank" to the positions of tithers. This decision was made back at the church council

of 1675. However, in the Siberian diocese, "secular" tithers were preserved until the mentioned charters, which became a reaction to the high-profile case of their large-scale abuses.²⁷ In our opinion, the duration of the preservation of this level of management in the Siberian diocese was largely generated by its size and the temporality of the colonization processes. First, many clergymen should have been concentrated in the region, enjoying the confidence of the bishop and capable of carrying out church administrative functions. Second, the "secular" tithers were more mobile and were not burdened with other responsibilities as opposed to parish priests and abbots of monasteries.

In the Siberian diocese, administrative changes were slower but in line with the general trend of the Russian Orthodox Church: the inclusion, along with tithers, in the system of spiritual court and supervision over the moral state of society of representatives of the black and white clergy (*zakazchiks* of spiritual affairs and priestly elders²⁸), and then the gradual transfer of the functions of tithers to them and the final liquidation of this institution. Already the first Archbishop Cyprian began to involve monastery abbots in the diocesan administration. Thus, sending in the early 1620s Abbot Timofei to organize a monastery in Mangazeya, the bishop instructed him, together with the tither Vasilii Stogov, to "take charge of all our spiritual affairs."²⁹ The practice when the bishop entrusted to conduct investigations on spiritual matters to the monks who managed the bishop's Ust'-Nitsa estate became common.³⁰

In Eastern Siberia, the situation developed in such a way that the diocesan leadership had to speed up the transfer of all management functions to representatives of the black clergy. When the Daurian tithe was formed, Metropolitan Pavel, simultaneously with sending a tither there in 1683, appointed the abbot of the Selenga Trinity Monastery, Theodosius, as the spiritual *zakazchik*. The bishop ordered him "to talk to and teach from the Divine Scripture the local Russian people who live abnormally and not in a Christian manner, who do not follow the law of our true Orthodoxy," and also to supervise the parish clergy. The head of the diocese, in fact, delegated his pastoral powers to Abbot Theodosius in a separate territory.

After the dismissal of the Daurian tither A. Belyaev in 1687, his duties were assigned to the spiritual *zakazchik*, Abbot Theodosius.³¹ According to the order of

²³See: "Census Book of the Tobol'sk bishop's court of 1651," in *Tobol'sk Bishop's House...*, p. 249.

²⁴RGADA, Fund 214, Inventory 3, File 1363, Fol. 443.

²⁵RGADA, Fund 214, Inventory 3, File 1363, Fol. 443.

²⁶*Ancient Church Charters...*, pp. 25, 53, 75, 76.

²⁷N. N. Pokrovskii, "The Siberian case of tithers," in *New Materials on the History of Siberia in the Pre-Soviet Period* (Novosibirsk, 1986), pp. 146–189.

²⁸*Zakazchiks* of spiritual affairs (spiritual customers) were representatives of the black and white clergy endowed with special powers by the bishop. Priestly headmen were established by the council in 1551; they were elected from the parish clergy and performed fiscal and supervisory functions in their social group.

²⁹G. Miller, *History of Siberia* (Moscow, 2000), Vol. 2, p. 309.

³⁰SPb ARAN, Fund 21, Inventory 4, File 10.

Metropolitan Ignatius, given to the Selenga Abbot Misael in 1693, his powers in spiritual affairs were also supplemented with the functions of a tither. Thus, he received the right to change negligent church and chapel elders; to humble the “mischievous” priests and assign them to a monastery for correction; and, if the punishment does not take effect, to transport them to Tobol'sk.³² The scale of the Eastern Siberian tithes prompted the endowment of fiscal functions to spiritual customers, who, in turn, received the right to appoint *zakazchiks* from the parish clergy to collect metropolitan taxes in remote areas.³³ This approach was implemented by Metropolitan Ignatius throughout the diocese in 1698.

The charter of Peter the Great did not talk about the liquidation of the institution of tithers but only about the appointment of persons of clergy rank to these positions. However, the “Roster” of 1698 shows that this link in the system of diocesan administration was abolished, and the Metropolitan entrusted the management of tithers to the “*zakazchiks*.” In the tithe districts covering the city and county, two persons were appointed as *zakazchiks*: the abbot of the city monastery and the priest of the cathedral church. There were no monasteries in Surgut and Yakutsk; thus, only cathedral priests became customers there; and in the Turukhansk, Ilimsk, and Dauria tithes, only the abbots of the Turukhansk, Kirensk, and Selenginsk Trinity monasteries. Three *zakazchiks* were appointed for the Tomsk tithe: the archimandrite of the Aleksei Monastery, the archpriest of the Trinity Cathedral, and the priest of the Epiphany Church. In Tyumen' and Berezovo, the positions of *zakazchiks* were given not to cathedral priests but to priestly elders who served in the Tyumen' Spas Church, priest Ivan Vasil'ev, and in the Berezovo Resurrection Church, priest Vasilii Klimantov. It follows from this that the personalities of the appointed *zakazchiks* were important for Metropolitan Ignatius. This assumption is confirmed by the choice of *zakazchiks* in settlement tithes. Thus, in the Nitsyn slobodas (settlement) the *zakazchik* was the priest of the Trinity Church of the Metropolitan Ust'-Nitsyn sloboda Athanasius Filippov; in the Pyshmin slobodas, the priest from the Nev'yansk fort Ivan Euplov (and not the abbot of the Nev'yansk Epiphany Monastery); in the Iset' slobodas, the abbot of the Rafail's Trinity Monastery Filaret (and not the abbot of the larger Dalmatovo Assumption Monastery). At the beginning of the 18th century, spiritual *zakazes* became the unit of intradiocesan division instead of tithes, but the abbots of the monasteries remained customers of the surrounding churches, which may indicate the effectiveness of the practice of involving the black clergy in management.³⁴

³¹SPb ARAN, Fund 21, Inventory 4, File 10.

³²SPb ARAN, Fund 21, Inventory 4, File 10, Fol. 47.

³³SPb ARAN, Fund 21, Inventory 4, File 10, Fol. 134.

One of the most acute problems was the shortage of parish priests, without whom it was impossible to establish the spiritual life of an Orthodox person. At the same time, at first the central authorities even recommended that Archbishop Cyprian build new churches only when absolutely necessary, “where it is impossible to be without a church.”³⁵ This recommendation was dictated primarily by financial difficulties. The clergy of all early churches were supported by the state; thus, an increase in the number of priestly places led to new government expenses in distant Siberia.

Since the territory was just being developed by the Orthodox population, the practice of the European part of Russia of inviting and supporting a priest by the parish community was hardly feasible. The appointment of priests from the exiled was also a rare occurrence. Therefore, the main way to solve this problem was to transfer clergy from other dioceses according to instructions from Moscow.³⁶ By the end of the 17th century, personnel difficulties were overcome. Vacant positions began to be filled by the sons of priests, who began from childhood to serve their fathers in the church as clerics and then were ordained to the priesthood, as well as through promotion through the ranks of clergy. Sometimes priests even competed for places in parish churches; almost all of them were already “fed from the church,” that is, at the expense of the parish community.³⁷

The question remains open about the number of churches and chapels in the Siberian diocese during the 17th century. The personal decree of Peter the Great of February 18, 1696, on giving a salary to the Siberian Metropolitan, mentions that, according to the testimony of the metropolitan solicitor, the bishop received income from 160 churches.³⁸ This number of churches began to appear in literature.³⁹ However, our calculations based on the income and expenditure book of the Tobol'sk Bishop's House for 1696/97 showed that in reality there were about 225 cathedral, parish, and monastery churches, of which 145 were located on the territory of the Tobol'sk district.⁴⁰ The document does not reflect the total number of cha-

³⁴N. D. Zol'nikova, *Siberian Parish Community in the 18th Century* (Novosibirsk, 1990), p. 19; M. Yu. Nechaeva, *Monasteries and Authorities: Management of the Monasteries of the Eastern Urals in the 18th Century* (Yekaterinburg, 1998), p. 22.

³⁵*Tobol'sk Bishop's House...*, p. 180.

³⁶See more details: I. L. Man'kova, “Parish clergy in Siberia in the 17th century: Problems of formation and support, in *Images of Agrarian History of the 9th–18th Centuries: In Memory of N.A. Gorskaya* (Moscow, 2013), pp. 181–198.

³⁷See: *Ancient Church Charters...*, p. 49.

³⁸*Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire (PZS)*, 1st. ed., No. 1541, p. 235.

³⁹N. N. Pokrovskii and N. D. Zol'nikova, *Russian Orthodox Church and Old Belief...*, p. 30.

⁴⁰RGADA, Fund 241, Inventory 1, File 860, Fols. 10–14 verso.

pels; it only notes that there were 141 chapels in Tyumen', Verkhotur'e, Pelym, and Turinsk and their districts,⁴¹ but, judging by the collection of "data money" (duties) to the metropolitan treasury, there were chapels in Eastern Siberia. By that time, church authorities faced the problem of registering churches for taxation into the bishop's treasury.⁴² The situation was even more difficult with control over the construction of chapels, which began to be actively erected in new settlements, since they fully provided prayerful communication, but were cheaper for the laity. To build a church or chapel, it was necessary to obtain permission from the bishop. However, the population of Eastern Siberia did not particularly follow this rule, apparently due to the great distance from Tobol'sk.

Parish churches and chapels formed the framework of the Orthodox landscape of Siberia and served as the foundation of the traditional way of life of the Orthodox population. With the active participation of the Tobol'sk bishops, the spiritual life of the local society became more diverse, and the Orthodox landscape became more complex. An important indicator of the rooting of Orthodox traditions in new lands was the acquisition of local shrines, which the Siberian bishops not only actively supported but sometimes even initiated. Thus, Archbishops Cyprian and Nektarios did a lot to preserve the memory of Ermak's campaign and the glorification of the ataman and his companions in the providential Christian spirit.⁴³

Archbishop Nektarios supported the initiative of the residents of the Abalak village to build the Church of the Sign after the visions of the widow Mariya Ivanova in 1636 and the discovery of the miraculous Abalak Icon of the Sign of the Mother of God. At the Tobol'sk Bishop's House, the first edition of the Legend of the appearance and miracles of this image was compiled and then expanded. Metropolitan Cornelius contributed to the glorification of the miraculous Abalak icon, becoming an eyewitness to several miracles: the deliverance of Tobol'sk from a natural disaster and the healing of the metropolitan himself. By his order, a ritual was established for the annual offering of a miraculous image from Abalak to Tobol'sk.⁴⁴ Even at the beginning of his episcopal service in Siberia, he promoted special veneration of the folding icon *Trinity and the Sign of the Virgin Mary*, found by a boy on the Bobrovka River in 1664. In connection with this event, the Church of the Sign was built in the Bobrovka churchyard instead of a chapel.⁴⁵ Metropolitan Ignatius in 1694 testified to the relics of the righteous Sim-

eon in the village of Merkushino, Verkhotur'e *uezd*, and became the author of an early edition of his life, thereby laying the foundation for widespread veneration of the saint.⁴⁶

The process of taking root by Orthodoxy in Siberia was accompanied by the involvement of the autochthonous population of other faiths in this religious system. Mass forced Christianization in Siberia in the 17th century was not carried out, but there are known cases when servicemen baptized captives for the purpose of enslavement or marriage, which was unlikely to be voluntary. The authorities sought to stop this practice. The royal charters and orders instructed bishops to baptize indigenous people exclusively voluntarily. The bishops were instructed to "keep the best with them, teach them the entire Christian law and give them peace of mind," and send the rest to monasteries for baptism.⁴⁷ A soft version of religious conversion was envisaged, including through the creation of an image of the diocesan bishop not only as an educator but also as a defender of people of other faiths, for which the duty of the bishops included accepting petitions from the "Tatars" about oppression. The attractiveness of Orthodoxy was also supported by material incentives, in particular, baptismal gifts.⁴⁸ At the same time, there was a risk of a formal change of faith, which was well understood by the diocesan leadership. Therefore, newly baptized people were not allowed to live with unbaptized relatives, and their compliance with Orthodox rituals was monitored. The Siberian bishops were especially concerned about everyday contacts between Russians and non-Russians. They believed that the new settlers were adopting habits that were incompatible with Christian rules.⁴⁹

There is no evidence of the presence of the "best" non-Russians at the bishop's court for the purpose of baptism. These were probably isolated cases. The main guide for Christianization were monasteries, where those wishing to be baptized had to undergo catechesis for six weeks. In 1653, the Khanty of Northwestern Siberia even turned to the tsar with a request to organize a monastery in the former estate of the Koda Alachev princes, so that they would have the opportunity to be baptized. This was the beginning of the Kondinskii Trinity Monastery.⁵⁰ In 1683–1684,

⁴⁵See: *Parishes and Churches of the Yekaterinburg Diocese* (Yekaterinburg, 1906), pp. 343, 344.

⁴⁶See: P. I. Mangilev, "On the history of the text of the Life of Simeon of Verkhotur'e," in *Problems of Russian History* (Yekaterinburg, 2001), Vol. 4: *Eurasian Borderland*, pp. 293–301.

⁴⁷See: *Tobol'sk Bishop's House...*, p. 213.

⁴⁸Recently, the topic of reward for baptism has been considered in line with the concept of gift exchange. See: A. Yu. Konev and R. O. Poplavskii, "Gift in the policy and practice of Christianization of the Siberian non-Orthodox (based on materials from Western Siberia at the end of the 16th–18th centuries)," *Vestn. Arkheol., Antropol. Ethnogr.*, No. 4, 165–174 (2018).

⁴⁹See: *Lit. Monuments...*, p. 308.

⁵⁰RGADA, Fund 214, Inventory 3, File 400, Fols. 154–154 verso.

⁴¹RGADA, Fund 241, Inventory 1, File 860, Fol. 10.

⁴²See: *Ancient Church Charters...*, p. 46.

⁴³On the initiative of Archbishop Cyprian, a synod was drawn up for the Ermak Cossacks and their commemoration was established in Siberian churches. Under Archbishop Nektarios, the bishop's clerk Savva Esipov wrote the first Siberian chronicle.

⁴⁴See: "The Legend of the Appearance and Miracles of the Abalak Icon of the Mother of God," *Lit. Pamyatniki...* pp. 167–179.

Abbot Jonah and his brethren described the situation in one of the petitions:⁵¹

The *yasash* [taxed] Ostyaks [Khanty] come running to that monastery for their old age, who cannot pay the *yasak* [tax], and they baptize them into the Orthodox Christian faith and tonsure them into the monastic rank for the sake of Christ and their spiritual salvation, like other brothers, because that monastery was built according to their Ostyak petition from 14 towns.

By that time, 10 Khanty monks and about 20 Khanty oblates lived in the monastery.⁵² Local secular authorities played a major role in regulating the process of Christianization, accepting petitions from those wishing to be baptized.

It is impossible to assess the scale of Christianization in Siberia in the 17th century, but we can judge about it from indirect data. Thus, in March 1690, the *starets* (elder) of the Turukhansk Trinity Monastery Barsanuphius with two investors brought church utensils—356 m of cloth, 712 m of canvas, 2 000 spoons, 100 knives, and 1 000 nails—from Moscow through Verkhotur'e.⁵³ Most likely, canvas and cloth were intended not only for clothing for the elders but also for baptismal shirts and gifts for the newly baptized. Judging by the volume of belongings brought from Moscow, it can be assumed that the Turukhansk Monastery, which at the end of the 17th century possessed another Siberian shrine—the relics of the righteous Basil of Mangazeya—became one of the centers of Evenki baptism.

⁵¹RGADA, Fund 214, Inventory 3, File 1058, Fol. 73.

⁵²RGADA, Fund 214, Inventory 3, File 1058, Fol. 71.

⁵³RGADA, Fund 214, Inventory 3, File 953, Fol. 72.

Thus, during the 17th century, a system of diocesan administration was created to control the church sphere of life and the moral state of society throughout Siberia. The regional features of this system were expressed in the variety of principles for the allocation of tithe districts and the pace of replacement of secular tithers by spiritual *zakazchiks* (representatives of the clergy). The institution of the church court was an important tool for curbing “unrest” both among the clergy and in the lay community. The Orthodox landscape formed under the leadership of the Tobol'sk Bishop's House made it possible to satisfy the spiritual needs of the local society. The overwhelming majority of churches were in the most developed and the closest to the diocesan center of Western Siberia. The problem of providing parishes with priests was solved. Widely revered miraculous and revealed icons appeared in the region, and cults of local saints were formed—the Righteous Basil of Mangazeya and Simeon of Verkhotur'e. The Christianization of the indigenous population was carried out mainly by monasteries. Using various forms of influence on the flock, the Tobol'sk Bishop's House had a great influence on the religious and moral state of the local society and became one of the leading actors in the colonization process.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that she has no conflicts of interest.

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