

**MSC 2020****International Scientific and Practical Conference «MAN. SOCIETY.  
COMMUNICATION»****ON COMMEMORATIVE PRACTICE IN KIRILLO-BELOZERSKY  
MONASTERY (16<sup>TH</sup> – THE BEGINNING OF 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES)**

Zoia Dmitrieva (a)\*, Tatyana Sazonova (b)

\*Corresponding author

(a) Saint Petersburg Institute of History, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation,  
zvdmitr@rambler.ru(b) Saint Petersburg Institute of History, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation  
tvsaz@rambler.ru**Abstract**

The article, based on the documentary of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, examines one of the aspects of the medieval society life – the attitude of the Goritsky Monastery nuns to death and remembrance of deceased. The commemorative practice was developed in Russia in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Its principles were formed at the Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery and became the basis for the practice of other Russian monasteries. In the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, the “Code of Abbot Theodosius” (1530s) involved the keeping of several “senaniks” (synodic books), in which the donators were recorded depending on the rate of the contribution. “Donations” could be land grants, church vestments, icons, books, church and everyday items, cattle, money and a great variety of property. Contributions, as a rule, were estimated in money and recorded in special books, as well as in economic documentation. Donators, who gave land and “great” money (100 rubles or more) were registered in the kormovyye books. Their names were commemorated on their birthdays or anniversaries of death during monastic meals. The bookkeeping for recording “contributions” and commemorating the dead in monasteries was provided for by the Stoglavyy Sobor in 1551 (Chapter 75). The article uses kormovyye, donation and income-expense books of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, which reflect various aspects of the commemorative practice of medieval monasteries. Informational analysis of this group of sources was carried out with modern methods of study, including paleography, textology, and codicology. The prosopographic method made possible to reveal the social origin of the nuns in Goritsky Monastery.

2357-1330 © 2021 Published by European Publisher.

*Keywords:* Russian Orthodox Church, Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, Goritsky Monastery of Resurrection, monasticism, contributions, Russian North



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

## 1. Introduction

Commemoration took an essential part of the daily life of medieval monasteries. It was assumed that the prayers of monks were more effective than of laypeople, especially if they were addressed to the saint. At the same time, the monks of some monasteries made pilgrimages and donated to other monasteries. This could be explained by both local traditions and belief in the greater effectiveness of the local saints' prayer. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery already became one of the Russian spiritual centers, where there was cult of St. Kirill Belozersky (Anisimova, 2019).

## 2. Problem Statement

The founding date of the Goritsky Monastery of Resurrection is unknown, there are different points of view on this issue. However, sources state that a special period in the life of the monastery was associated with the activities of Princess Evfrosinia Staritskaia, who took the name Evdokia as a monk (Litvina & Uspenskij, 2018). After her tonsure (1563), the Goritsky Monastery became a place for the obedience of representatives of the Russian society elite, including the widows of princes. At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, special veneration of the princesses-nuns Evdokia and Alexandra, who were martyred, developed in the Goritsky Monastery. The shrines with their relics became the center of pilgrimage and they later got the status of locally revered saints (Miller, 2016).

## 3. Research Questions

The documentation of the Goritsky Monastery of the 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> centuries preserved poorly. However, references to the contributions of the Staritsas at Goritsky have survived in the kormovyye, income-expence and donation books of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery (Dmitrieva, 2017). Thus, thanks to this range of sources, it becomes possible:

- 3.1. to find the names of inhabitants of Goritsky Monastery in the 16<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and their official status before tonsure;
- 3.2. to identify the nature of their contributions;
- 3.3. to show the place of Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery in the system of Russian North's spiritual connections.

## 4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to identify the presence of commemorative connection between the Goritsky Monastery of Resurrection and the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery on the basis of materials from the kormovyye, donation and income-expence books of the latter one.

## 5. Research Methods

The documentary heritage of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery (materials of kormovyye, donation and income-expence books) was used with the help of the methods of paleography and codicology. These

methods made it possible to determine the dates of the records, the completeness and reliability of the information identified. The study of the biographies of the Goritsky Monastery's nuns was carried out using the prosopographic method, which involves the analysis of historical processes through the examination of the biographies of people from selected social group within certain chronological and territorial limits. It is closely related to the methods of historical biography, genealogy, sociology, cultural and anthropological approach (Balachenkova & Tsyarkin, 2017; Nechayeva, 2017; Usachev, 2015).

## 6. Findings

Among all the people who made contributions to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, the inhabitants of the Goritsky Monastery were also mentioned in the donation book. Chronologically, the first of them was the nun Evdokia, in the world Princess Evfrosinia Andreevna Staritskaia, nee Khovanskaia (1516–1569). She was an important participant in the political events of the 1550s–1560s and was forced to go into convent as a nun in order to save her son – the appanage prince Vladimir Andreyevich – from the anger of Ivan IV Vasilyevich (Panova, 2018). She made her first contribution to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery even before the tonsure. It was after the execution of her husband – the appanage prince Andrei Ivanovich Staritsky (1490–1537). Then Evfrosinia-Evdokia made contributions regularly until her martyrdom in 1569 (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 30–32 v.). In 1564–1566, there were several donations from the nun Alexandra. Perhaps, she was this nun Alexandra, who, according to legend, was drowned in Sheksna River in 1569 along with Evdokia by the tsar order. It is supposed that in the world she was Juliania Dmitrievna, nee Paletskaya, the wife of the tsar's younger brother Yuri Vasilyevich Khovansky. After the death of her husband, Juliania took her tonsure on April 30, 1564 at the Novodevichy Convent with the name of Alexandra (Sergeev, 2019). Despite the version, which was suggested by N. Karamzin, about her death together with Evdokia-Evfrosinia Staritskaia, there is another point of view, which states that she died in 1574 in the Novodevichy Convent and was buried in the basement of Smolensk cathedral (Belyaev et al., 2019). Another daughter-in-law of Evfrosinia Staritskaia – Princess Solomonida, daughter of Prince Konstantin Ivanovich Akhmetekovich Sogorsky, wife of Daniil Vasilyevich Khovansky – in the end of 1668 made her tonsure at the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery and contributed to it the patrimony in Poshekhonsky district (small village Tutanovo “with hamlets”) (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 101 and v.). Another representative of the Moscow elite, the Staritsa at Goritsky Princess Agafya (worldly name unknown) (d. 1627), who was the eldest daughter of the boyar Ivan Vasilyevich Bolshoy Sheremetev (d. 1577) and widow of Astrakhan Tsarevich Mikhail Kaibulovich (d. about 1575), made some donations to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery in 1586/87 and 1607 (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 156 and v.). For her contribution, she was buried there (Shablova, 2012). In 1592, a donation was given by Tsaritsa-Staritsa Marfa – Maria Feodorovna, nee Nagaya, the seventh wife of Tsar Ivan IV (1553–1611) – who was tonsured in the Nikolo-Vyksinskaia hermitage in 1591 after the death of her son, Tsarevich Dmitry Ivanovich (1582–1591) (RGB NIOR, n.d., 23 v., 24). Two contributions were associated with the princely Golitsyn family. They were made by the wives of two Yuryevich brothers, while they stayed in Goritsky: in 1597/98 it was the nun Sophia, in the world Princess Solomonida Grigorievna Golitsyna, the widow of the boyar Prince Vasily Yuryevich Golitsyn (d. 1584), nee Zhelyabuzhskaia (d. 1623), who later became the hegumenia of Ascension Convent in the Moscow Kremlin (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 392 v., 393); in 1606/07 – Irina,

widow of the boyar Prince Ivan Yuryevich Golitsyn (d. 1582/83), daughter of Prince Ivan Fedorovich Mstislavsky (d. 1586) (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 480; Pavlov, 2018). In 1607, there was a record in donation book about Staritsa Paraskeva, in the world – Feodosia Mikhailovna (d. 1621), nee Solovaya, who was the second wife of Tsarevich Ivan Ivanovich, the son of Ivan IV (1554–1581) (Nikolskij, 1910). In 1608/09, a contribution “to the prayer service” was made by the Staritsa Maria, a representative of the influential at that time Belskik-Skuratov family (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 485 v., 486), though it was not possible to identify her with a certain person (Bashnin & Korzinin, 2017). Staritsas at Goritsky from Kargopol also contributed to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery. In the late 1570s – early 1580s, it was Daria Grigorieva – Mezchnikov’s wife, daughter of Feodosiy the Fifth Bryantsov, Staritsa “Vaskina mat” (Vaska’s mother), whose monastic name was not written; in 1599 and 1618 – Fotinia Mezchnikova “from the Mountains of the convent”; in 1600 – Alexandra Mokhnatkina. It is possible that Staritsa Leonida Vasilieva, Osyutin’s wife, who was later mentioned in the donation book lived in Goritsky (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 296–299, 482, 491 v.). In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there were five records of contributions made by Staritsas at Goritsky from peasants. The first three of them date back to 1555/56 and were made by Staritsa Elena, the daughter of Boris Vesheozersky (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 227), who came from the Veschezerskaya volost, Charondskaya district. In 1578 the contribution was made by “Feodulia, and in the world she was Nechay Babinsky’s wife”, and in 1580 – a peasant woman from the village Sima of Kirillov district (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., pp. 304, 320). It was not possible to identify the worldly name and social origin of the Staritsa at Goritsky Domna Morozova. She and her niece and apprentice “kryloshanka Fetinia” provided several donations in the late 1560s, and the last one Fetinia made in memory of Domna, i.e. after her death (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 251 v., 252). Donations of Staritsas at Goritsky included absolutely different things. The richest contributions were made by the benefactress of the Goritsky monastery – princess-nun Evdokia Staritskaia. After her husband’s death, she contributed 100 rubles for his commemoration, then another 100 rubles for prayers for her and her son Prince Vladimir Andreevich’s health, and then 150 rubles for the commemoration of her parents, brother and sister (Alekseev, 2010). After taking the tonsure in 1563, the nun Evdokia organized a gold embroidery workshop in the Goritsky Monastery, in which genuine masterpieces of “goldwork” were created, being part of the cultural heritage not only of the Belozersk Region, but of the whole Russia as well. In the 1560s, her contributions to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery included the products of her workshop: aërs (shrouds for covering liturgical vessels), epitaphioses, khorugvs. Moreover, for the rizas of the icons, she gave a gold torc and silver tsatas with gilding (gold or silver decoration of an icon in the form of a torc, which was attached to a riza at the level of the saint’s chest), decorated with precious stones (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 30). In May 1566, the nun Evdokia contributed to Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery more than 20 icons, including the image of the Virgin of Tenderness in a silver icon case, an epitaphios with the “revelation” of John the Apostle embroidered on it, a “curtain” to icons and a silver charka, as well as 4 bookmarks braided with gold and silver and decorated with pearls. A year later, the princess-nun added to the icon of the Virgin of Tenderness a golden cross with pearls and stones (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 30 v., 31 v.). In 1568/69, representatives of Staritskie family donated 75 rubles of money and more than 4 thousand pood of rye and oats (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 32). The last contribution to Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery Evdokia-Evfrosinia Staritskaia made shortly before her death in the fall of 1569. It was an icon of the Virgin of Tenderness in a silver riza, decorated with

precious stones and pearls, silver tsatas and other ornamental elements made of precious metals (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 32 and v.). The contributions of representatives of the royal family and princesses included patrimonial lands, large sums of money, icons in silver rizas, liturgical books, richly decorated church items, expensive fabrics and other costly things. For example, the Tsaritsa-Staritsa Marfa donated a covering for the shrine of St. Kirill and silver tableware in 1592 (RGB NIOR, n.d., 23 v., 24). Lower-birth nuns made contributions according to their ability. Thus, Staritsa Ulyana gave a contribution for the soul of the deceased Staritsa Anna Agisheva in “two cells, two cages, and two canopies, and three granaries”, estimated at 10 rubles, and for her own soul – 5 rubles, a horse, a cow and an ox (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 226). The purpose of the contributions to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery could have been the introduction of the names of deceased relatives for daily or eternal commemoration, as well as for prayers for health. So, the first donation of Princess Evfrosinia Staritskaia was made “for the soul” of her executed husband, Prince Andrei Ivanovich. The Tsaritsa-nun Marfa’s contribution was made shortly after the tragic death of her son, Tsarevich Dmitry Ivanovich (RGB NIOR, n.d., 23 v., 24). A special kind of contribution was making a donation for one’s own soul, which assumed that the commemoration would begin after the death of a donor. Such, for example, was the contribution of the princess-nun Evdokia-Evfrosinia in 1569. In the donation book it was written that the icons, which she gave, should be placed at her coffin after her death, and a silver charka – on the coffin during the requiem (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 31 v.). The Staritsa Ulyana assigned one part of the contribution for the commemoration of Staritsa Anna Agisheva, and other – for her own soul (Arkhiv SPbIIRAN, n.d., 226).

## 7. Conclusion

Documentary materials of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery make it possible to state that in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup>–early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, there were close spiritual connection between this monastery and the nuns of the Goritsky Monastery of Resurrection. Nuns of Goritsky came to Kirillov and made contributions according to their financial situation, hoping for the prayers of the monks. Among the contributions were absolutely different things, some of which were made by the hands of nuns of Goritsky in the Staritsa gold embroidery workshop, founded by the princess-nun Evdokia-Evfrosinia. Some of these masterpieces have survived and are currently in the collection of the Tretyakov Gallery, the Russian Museum and the Kirillo-Belozersky Museum-Reserve.

## References

- Alekseev, A. (2010). Pervaja redakcija vkladnoj knigi Kirillo-Belozerskogo monastyrja (1560-e gg.) [First Redaction of the Contribution Book of Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery] *Vestnik cerkovnoj istorii*, 3–4(19–20), 17–117.
- Anisimova, T. (2019). «Podtverzhenie» dukhovnoj gramoty Kirilla Belozerskogo 17 maja 1551 g. [“Confirmation” of Spiritual Charter of Kirill Belozersky May 17, 1551]. *Old Russia. The Questions of Middle Ages*, 2(76), 30–34. <https://doi.org/10.25986/IRI.2019.76.2.003>
- Arkhiv SPbIIRAN. (n.d.). *Arhiv Sankt-Peterburgskogo instituta istorii Rossijskoj akademii nauk* [Archive of Saint Petersburg Institute of History of Russian Academy of Sciences]. Coll. 115. № 1074.
- Balachenkova, A., & Tsyppkin, D. (2017). Vozmozhnosti tekhnologicheskogo analiza istoricheskikh bumag v istochnikovedcheskom issledovanii pamjatnikov [Methods of Technological Analysis of Paper

- Documents in Source-study Investigation of Written Sources]. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. History*, 62(2), 375–399. <https://doi.org/10.21638/11701/spbu02.2017.213>
- Bashnin, N., & Korzinin, A. (2017). *Novye dannye k biografii oprichnika Maljuty Skuratova* [New Data for the Biography of Oprichnik Malyuta Skuratov]. *Russian History*, 2, 172–188.
- Belyaev, L., Grigoryan, S., & Shulyaev, S. (2019). *Nekropol' Smolenskogo sobora Novodevich'ego monastyrya XVI–XVII v. issledovanija 2017–2018 g.: metody i rezul'taty* [The Grave Vault of the Catholicon of Novodevichy Convent, 16th – 17th Centuries: The Results of Field Research (2017–2018)]. *Old Russia. The Questions of Middle Ages*, 4(78), 112–127. <https://doi.org/10.25986/IRI.2019.78.4.009>
- Dmitrieva, Z. (2017). *Vkladnaya kniga Kirillo-Belozerskogo monastyrya 1559/1560–1620-e gg.* [Contribution Book of Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery of 1559/1560–1620s]. *The Journal of Education and Science "ISTORIYA" ("History")*, 8, 5(59). <https://history.jes.su/s207987840001876-2-1>
- Litvina, A., & Uspenskij, F. (2018). *Manifestacija svjazi s pravjashchim domom v zhenskikh imenakh: rannie Romanovy i sem'ja Dmitrija Godunova* [Relationship to the Ruling House, as reflected in female personal names (early Romanovs and Dmitry Godunov's family)]. *Old Russia. The Questions of Middle Ages*, 4(74), 63–79. <https://doi.org/10.25986/IRI.2018.74.4.006>
- Miller, M. (2016). *Female monasticism in an age of challenge: the Convent of the Intercession in Suzdal (1700–1800)*. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. History*, 4, 87–103. <https://doi.org/10.21638/11701/spbu02.2016.408>
- Nechayeva, M. (2017). *Monastyrskie landshafty i prosopografija monashestva: tochki peresechenija* [Monastery Landscapes and Monkhooood Prosopography: Intersection Points], *Nauchnyi dialog (Scientific Dialogue)*, 10, 236–248. <https://doi.org/10.24224/2227-1295-2017-10-236-248>
- Nikolskij, N. (1910). *Kirillo-Belozerskij monastyr' i ego ustrojstvo do vtoroj chetverti XVII veka (1397–1625)*. 1(2): O sredstvakh sodержanija monastyrya [Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery and its Organization before the Second Quarter of the XVII Century (1397–1625). 1(2): About the means of maintaining the monastery]. *Sinodalnaya tip.*
- Panova, T. (2018). *Sostav semej starickogo knjazja Vladimira Andreevicha* [Composition of Families of Prince Vladimir Andreevich Staritsky]. *RSUH / RGGU bulletin. Series: History. Philology. Cultural studies. Oriental studies*, 4(37), 98–108.
- Pavlov, A. (2018). *Pravjashchie krugi Rossii na zavershajushchem etape Smutnogo vremeni* [The Elite of Russia at the end of Time of Troubles]. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. History*, 63(3), 729–747. <https://doi.org/10.21638/11701/spbu02.2018.304>
- RGB NIOR. (n.d.). *Rossijskaya gosudarstvennaya biblioteka. Nauchno-issledovatel'skij otdel rukopisej* [Russian State Library. Scientific Research Division of Manuscripts]. Kirillo-Belozersky collection. № 78/1317.
- Sergeev, A. (2019). *Politicheskaja dejatel'nost' i zemlevladienie knjazheskoj aristokratii Moskovskogo gosudarstva XVI v.: knjaz'ja Paleckie* [Political Activity and Land Tenure of the Princely Aristocracy of Muscovy State of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century: Prince's Paletsky]. *Old Russia. The Questions of Middle Ages*, 3(77), 43–59. <https://doi.org/10.25986/IRI.2019.77.3.005>
- Shablova, T. (2012). *Kormovoe pomianie v Uspenskom Kirillo-Belozerskom monastyre v XIV–XVII vekah* [Food Commemoration in the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery in the XIV–XVII Centuries]. Saint Petersburg: Renome.
- Usachev, A. (2015). *Datirovannye rukopisnye knigi XVI v., perepisannye v monastyryakh central'noj Rossii* [Dated Handwritten Books of the XVI Century, Copied in the Monasteries of Central Russia]. *Domestic Archives*, 4, 23–31.