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**CHURCH SLAVONIC AND RUSSIAN PARALLELS IN
DEMOLITION OF CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS**

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Abstract

The system of the Russian literary language was formed under the powerful influence of extra linguistic factors that had affected the evolution of the language and become relevant to the reality of the language functioning. This article discusses the realities of the middle of XVII century: on the one hand, the formation and development of Russian literary language of the national period, on the other – the unprecedented phenomenon, the Schism (Raskol) that divided the people into Old Believers and «New» Faith followers. Russian medieval society had certain cultural and religious values and customs. Russian Orthodox Church reform began with the editing of sacred texts; this event led to the transformation of national worldview and caused a change in the cultural and religious consciousness. Eventually, elimination of established medieval values led to the transformation of cultural and religious customs and traditions of the nation, having split the Russian world. The split was manifested in the implementation of the opposition of «Us» - «Them», having a significant impact on the formation of the national cultural pattern.

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Keywords: Russian literary language, Church Slavonic language, the Schism (Raskol) of the Russian Orthodox Church, Archpriest Avvakum, petitions.



1. Introduction

Mutual relations between language and society are one of the most important problems of linguistics, because, from the whole functional paradigm, the literary language is especially affected by socialization and further change. According to A.I. Gorshkov (1965), «the literary language, reflecting the social life of the people in its development, reflects social differences that exist in human society at certain stages of its development in one form or another» (Gorshkov, 1965, p.11). At the present stage of the evolution of philological thought, the literary language is presented as a specific historical category, which should be considered from a historical perspective (Kolesov, 1989, pp.5-6), hence, extralinguistic factors influencing the course of language evolution and leading to the improvement of the colossal part of the language subsystem can be considered from the point of view of their history.

2. Problem Statement

At the present stage of the development of philological science, there is a tendency to equate extralinguistic factors with social factors, which is quite natural, since «language never exists outside society, for language is a semiological phenomenon. Its social nature is one of its internal properties» (Saussure, 1977, p. 59). This is why extralinguistic or social factors are «parameters of social (extralinguistic) reality, which cause changes in the language of both global and more individual nature» (Mikhailchenko, 2006, p. 244).

In the opinion of E.D. Polivanov (1968), linguistic factors should be judged with extreme caution, since «social factors can predetermine the ultimate goal of language development», but cannot change its direction, «the nature of linguistic processes» (Polivanov, 1968, p.101).

The impact of social factors on any language occurs exclusively with the help of its native speakers, because «the customs of a nation are reflected in its language, and, on the other hand, it is to a large extent that language forms the nation» (Saussure, 1977, p.60). At the same time, the language shapes the worldview (Kornilov, 2003); it happens under the powerful influence of the history and culture of the people, its customs and traditions, and also interrelations with social institutions, including the church, which in the Middle Ages had a significant influence on the society.

3. Research Questions

The close interconnection of language and religion could not but leave a mark on the world perception of each person and the nation as a whole, which allowed us to talk about the religious worldview as the result of «understanding the world through the prism of religion». This, in its turn, is «the consequence of the objectification of the latter in a language» and exists «in the form of linguistic units' meanings in two coherent planes – the plane of the linguistic and mental space of the people and the plane of the mental world of each particular individual» (Yakimov, 2014, p.130). Thus, Orthodoxy has become an integral part of Russian culture and one of the leading factors in the formation of the national worldview, which can be defined as «the result of the reflection of the objective world by the ordinary (linguistic) consciousness of a specific language community, a particular ethnos» (Kornilov, 2003, p.112).

4. Purpose of the Study

In this regard, we should consider such an unprecedented phenomenon as the splitting of the Russian Orthodox Church created by the revision of liturgical texts. That splitting constituted the core of the church reform of the mid-17th century, it would seem useful to view this phenomenon in the context of the development of the Russian literary language and also the interference of the Old Church Slavonic language as the language of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as the reflection of this phenomenon on the formation of a national linguistic world view.

Among all the events of the «rebellious» age, the church reform is an outstanding and extremely ambiguous phenomenon, having captured the views of all the strata of Russian society for three and a half centuries. According to the point of view of the professor of the Moscow Theological Academy N.F. Kapterev, the purpose of the church reform is first and foremost the subject of a dispute. Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich (Alexis I The Quietest) resorted to the church reform as a powerful means of strengthening absolutism. Similar goals were pursued by Patriarch Nikon, who, in the person of the patriarch, saw not only the book and ritual corrections, but also the liberation of the church from the overwhelming dependence of the state as the main task of his patriarchate: «Nikon believed and taught that the priesthood is higher than the kingdom, and in every possible way tried to realize this idea during his patriarchate» (Kapterev, 1909, p. 5). There is an alternative point of view, according to which V.M. Zhivov, assessing the influence of church reform on the Russian society of the XVII century, speaks of the formation of a new cultural system and emphasizes not only the religious aspect of the reform, but also its moral component. From V.M. Zhivov's perspective, the restoration of moral values and piety destroyed in the Time of Troubles (Smutnoe Vremya) was the goal of the reform; in its turn, it led to the general review of the heritage (Zhivov, 2002, pp. 339-340). Anyway, the «Church dissent», which is a powerful extralinguistic factor, had a significant impact on changing the national worldview and leading to the deformation of cultural and religious consciousness.

5. Research Methods

The role of the Old Believers' ideologists in the history of the state, including the archpriest Avvakum, is complex and contradictory, therefore, fundamental scientific works by N.F. Kapterev, A.M. Panchenko, V.M. Zhivov, and many others are devoted to this problem. Since the phenomenon of the linguistic worldview of Archpriest Avvakum is of special interest for our research, it seems advisable for us to turn to a number of linguistic works devoted to the development of this problem; those might include the works of O.A. Kornilov, S.A. Zenkovsky, T.I. Vendina and others. In the course of the study, methods of system research and analysis were actively used, as well as statistical methods, the method of comparisons and analogies, the method of generalizations, etc.

6. Findings

In the ecclesiastical reform of the XVII century, intended by Alexei Mikhailovich and his confessor, the archpriest Stefan Vonifatiev, and realized by the patriarch Nikon, one can hear the echoes of the theory of Philotheus (1863), the monk of Pskov Yeleazarov Convent, about Moscow as the Third Rome: «As two Romes have fallen, and the third Rome exists, and the fourth will never happen: your Christian kingdom will be one and only» (Philotheus, 1963, p. 338). As a result, Russia from the «successor to Byzantium» started being thought of as equal to it, and after the fall of the empire, dated 1453, Russia inherited the title of «the first» and «the last Rome». Proceeding from this,

Russia was subject to the idea of being the God's favoured people on the national basis (not alien to other nations). S.A. Zenkovsky (1995) notes that «it is inherent in every people to consider themselves particularly important and especially responsible before the God, the world, humanity or history for preserving or disseminating ideas, traditions or types of civilizations among other nations» (Zenkovsky, 1995, p.27). This judgment could not but be reflected in the language of the Russian nation, according to Academician V.V. Vinogradov (1978) «Slavic-and-Russian language claims exceptional importance in the sphere of high literary ideology» (Vinogradov, 1978, p. 39). N.S. Trubetskoi (1990) emphasized this in his works, claiming the «connection between Church Slavonic and Great Russian elements» to be the main feature of the Russian literary language and «extending special privilege to this language» (Trubetskoi, 1990, p.125).

The reason for the splitting was the discrepancies found in the manuscripts of Church Slavonic monuments in the 16th century due to the need to revise texts for their further replication in printing houses. Penmen, and afterwards printers, often distorted canonical texts. As for non identical translations of books from Greek originals, they were made at different times, resulting in actual approval of new rituals that had not been known to Greek Church. The revision of discrepancies in liturgical books is not only religious, but also linguistic in nature, as all the liturgical texts contained different types of discrepancy and the variety of interaction between Church Slavic and Russian linguistic elements that had taken root over centuries (Bekasova, 2008, 2016).

The revision of liturgical texts and rituals was the first stage of the church reform and, at the same time, a stumbling-block between the successors of the «old» and «new» faith, each of them trying to get their truth over to the tsar. As a result, a large number of petitions from «zealots of ancient piety» unloaded on Alexei Mikhailovich, one of which was the spiritual leader of Old Believers, «fiery» Archpriest Avvakum, who had led the struggle for the patristic tradition and sent five petitions to the tsar. S.A. Zenkovsky (1995) believes that these messages had never been read by Alexei Mikhailovich, who was more concerned with foreign policy matters, but at the same time they became «pamphlets» or «editorials» reproduced in manuscript copies and influenced the Old Believers' movement (Zenkovsky, 1995, pp. 315-316). These petitions illustrate the inconsistency of that religious reform from the religious viewpoint and explain the reasons for the splitting: «Вся церковная правда суть разумвающимъ истинну издава обрѣтающимъ разумъ по Христу Исусу, а не по стихиямъ сего мѣра, занюже мы страждемъ и умираемъ и кровию свою проливаемъ – All ecclesiastic laws understand the truth and build-up our mind, we should follow the commandments of Christ, but not our passions, we suffer for Him and die for Him and we shed our blood for Him» (Avvakum, 1927, pp. 758-759).

To some extent, Avvakum's petitions represent unprecedented texts that allow one to trace the connection between language and consciousness, which manifests itself in a constructive way. Although his petitions were made as official documents with an established structure, their structure, being destroyed in some degree, brought these messages closer to private letters (Mironova, 2016, p.156).

To a certain extent, the texts of petitions reflect not only the ideology of the Middle Ages, but a meaningful idea of the world; at the same time the social status of Avvakum, being subject to the traditional religious view of the world, and consequently the traditional religious value system, could not be ignored. The value-based relationship of people to the world serves as the basis for «processing their language, because what is devoid of value, either not nominated at all, or, even if it is nominated, it is neither lexically nor word-formingly detailed or differentiated» (Vendina, 2002, p. 278). God serves as the norm for religious consciousness, this is the highest traditional value of a

medieval man; Nikon and his henchmen encroached on this value, and therefore «мерзокъонъпредБогомъ—in the sight of God, he is a detestable person» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 728).

In one way or another, in the consciousness of Avvakum, the opposition of «Us» - «Them» is formed, where the God, the tsar and Old Believers, ready to die for Christ, are on the same side, and also one can see the evil spirit, the patriarch Nikon and followers of Nikon on the other side. The opposition of «Us» - «Them» gets a linguistic embodiment, so, in the petitions of archpriest Avvakum, the author is represented as a sinful churchman and a sinful archpriest, and Nikon is a wolf, an abjuror, a villain, and a murderer (Bekasova&Mironova, 2015b).

It is necessary to note the «special», almost personal relationship between Avvakum and God, for example: «нынѣ слышу во церквахъ Христа моего глаголющиневоскреша», «Христамоегоприобрязу»—«Now I can hear with my own ears about the resurrection of my Christ in churches» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 724), «I will have my Christ» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 725), etc. Alexei Mikhailovich is undoubtedly a «friend», Avvakum calls him «равноапостольнымгосударем—the Equal-to-the-Apostles sovereign», «христолюбивымгосударем—the Christ-loving sovereign» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 753) and «православнымцарем—the Orthodox Tsar» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 754) (for more details, please refer to: Bekasova&Mironova, 2015a).

According to Avvakum, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich is innocent of the splitting; Patriarch Nikon is the main culprit and enemy of Christianity, subject to the ideas of «древняго отступника Иулиана, и египтянина Феофила, патриарха Александрова града, и прчихъ еретикиубиць, яко християнъ погубляти—the ancient apostate Julian, and the Egyptian Theophilus, the patriarch of Alexandria, and some other heretics and murderers, who killed Christians» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 728). That is why Patriarch Nikon «Христаонъ, Никонъ, не исповдуеть въ плоть пришедша; Христане исповдуеть нынѣ царя быти, и въскресение Ево, яко иудисъ крываетъ—does accept Christ as Saviour, does not acknowledge Christ to be the King, and does not believe in his Resurrection, as Judah» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 728). Followers of Nikon «на страшнѣмъ судѣ будутъ слыть никоніане, яко древни ариане— will be as ancient Arians at the Last Judgment» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 728). Addressing his petition to Feodor Alexeyevich, «the Son of Church», Avvakum (1927) says «какъ бы ты мнѣ далъ волю, я бы ихъ, что Илія пророкъ, всѣхъ перепласталъ воединѣ день—if you had given me the power, I would have plowed that field in one day, as the Prophet Elijah» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 768). However, Avvakum still prays for followers of Nikon to find salvation and hopes to impart wisdom to them: «Спаси, спаси, спаси ихъ, Господи, ими жъ въ исудьбами! Излей на нихъ вино, или масло, да въ разумъ придуть!—May the Lord save them, save them, save them! Pour out wine or oil to them; let them come to their senses!» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 768).

7. Conclusion

Church dissent, which began with the editing of liturgical literature, had a significant impact on the establishment and formation of a new national worldview of the Russian society. Within the framework of a single, originally Christian Orthodox religion, «единакуплвлъ всѣхъ на пороудила, едина мативъ всѣмъ намъ Церковь, единый покров - небо, единосветило - солнце—we all come from one and the same Baptismal font, the Church being Mother to all of us, the Sky being the Home for all of us, the Sun shining for all of us» (Avvakum, 1927, p. 730), the society was divided into «Us» and «Them». Elimination of established medieval values led to the transformation of cultural and religious customs and traditions of the nation, having split the Russian world.

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