

**RPTSS2017**  
**International Conference on Research Paradigms Transformation  
in Social Sciences**

**RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN VIEWS OF F.M.  
DOSTOEVSKY IN XIX CENTURY**

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***Abstract***

The article considers the significance and role of the Orthodox Church and religion in the historical heritage of Dostoevsky in Russia in the XIX century. Particular attention is paid to understanding the specifics of the Orthodox faith in the writer's work. The identified scientific problem reveals the writer's connection with the spiritual nature of man, with his inner moral world, which changed in different historical epochs.

The article gives a detailed analysis of the interpretation of Dostoevsky's Orthodox faith, reveals the individualism of the writer, manifested in the context of the key content of the Russian religious tradition. Understanding these features of Orthodoxy in Dostoevsky's worldview will help to supplement and generalize the notion of the Orthodox Church in Russia as an important spiritual institution in the system of modern historical knowledge.

The article first disclosed that one of the obvious achievements of the present period in understanding the originality of Dostoevsky's "creativity" was the interconnection of the spiritual, moral and poetic level of the writer's work, which led to the emergence of Dostoevsky's special artistic methods.

The article describes a monastic tradition in the Russian Church, which is connected with the evangelical virtue reflected in Dostoevsky's work. In addition, after studying the life of the Russian clergy shown in Dostoevsky's works, one can make personal observations of practical importance for historical science.



## 1. Introduction

The relevance of the article is explained by the role of religion and the Orthodox Church in the worldview of F.M. Dostoevsky. He belonged to the type of people for whom the problem of the spirituality of human existence was not limited to religious or cultural interpretations. F.M. Dostoevsky was a pragmatist in the issues of the disclosure of the Orthodox faith. It was an undeniable fact for him that the Church and faith were an attribute of human nature, where human activity was a powerful regulator of behavior. As a consequence, spiritual problems represented the main component of the worldview of F.M. Dostoevsky. These features of the spiritual and historical heritage of F.M. Dostoevsky are that his religious views are not only embodied in artistic forms, but, as a rule, these spiritual elements reach their true heights, for example, in his mentality and faith, which today have a definite significance for modern science. Therefore, the article focuses on the Orthodox faith as an integral part of the worldview of F.M. Dostoevsky.

## 2. Problem Statement

Problem identification in this article is based on the historical facts of private life of the writer, which is reflected in the memoirs, letters. The personal spirituality of the writer was an important component in the work of Dostoevsky. The contents of the various components of the Christian faith was for Dostoevsky the basis for the formation of the main ideas and images in his works, and in fact through the study of these images one can currently comprehend ideas about the role of the Orthodox Church in the life of the writer (Levitsky, 1971).

Without dismissing the generated scientific approaches to understanding the views of Dostoevsky related to social, political, and other interpretations, the article summarizes the understanding of religion and of the Orthodox faith that Dostoevsky shape as people's beliefs.

Dostoevsky believed that the Church and religion became the basic principles of the spiritual creation of man, thanks to which a person is spiritually perfected. Reconstruction of the views of the Orthodox Church in the world Outlook of Dostoyevsky reveals the contents of such concepts as the problem of sin and redemption, humility and repentance. An important element in the historical retrospective of the works of Dostoevsky is the specificity of ideas about the basics of Orthodox faith.

## 3. Research questions

Dostoevsky endeavored to consider the diversity of socio-historical problems through the prism of interaction between society and the individual, the social environment and the person operating in this environment, and also by resolving internal conflicts and contradictions in the worldview of the heroes of his artistic and journalistic works.

The study of Dostoevsky's social activities, socio-historical and religious views, which make up the organic part of his worldview, is one of the urgent problems of modern Dostoevsky studies. The worldview of the thinker was a reflection of his social activities, those dynamic socio-economic and political and spiritual processes that Russian society experienced in the middle - second half of the XIX century. First of all, this refers to the era of the "great reforms" of the 1860s and 1870s, which were the main, most fruitful part of Dostoevsky's work. "Dostoevsky's world outlook," writes B.I. Bursov, is the most complicated problem that can ever be." And he continues: "For all of us, Dostoevsky is a colossal phenomenon, primarily of our national culture, which carries the decisive signs of the search for a national spirit" (Bursov, 1979).

Dostoevsky's work as a brilliant artist reflected the multidimensionality of various events of Russian reality of the 1840s-1870s. Nevertheless, the main themes of his literary and journalistic research were topics related to the position and role of the Russian people in the historical process, the role of the individual in society, much of the topic concerned life and death, as well as Russia as a phenomenon of world and European civilization. Of course, these problems do not exhaust the author's many-sided creativity. The discovery of Russian reality in the real form, without embellishments and smoothing out social contradictions in Russian literature of the second half of the nineteenth century, was the greatest discovery of Russian culture. Dostoevsky became the source of this kind of discovery after Pushkin.

Dostoevsky, like his predecessors and contemporaries, carefully studied the nature of the spiritual and moral qualities of not only the Russian people, but also individual individuals. He was in some respects "the most Russian of all Russian writers," believes EA. Costin (Costin, 2016). This opinion cannot be disagreed.

Dostoevsky was one of the first in Russian literature and, perhaps, the only one, who came close to revealing the most complicated historical and philosophical spiritual and moral theme - "to find man in man." This means to expose the very essence of the human soul in all its manifestations and shades, in everything beautiful and ugly. No, probably, such detail of human relations at the level of perception of the soul, spiritual qualities served through the prism of morality, whatever the writer would have realized and not presented to the court of the public.

The accuracy of many of Dostoevsky's prophecies is connected with a deep penetration into the nature of man, into his inner moral world, which changed little during the long historical period, but remained unchanged in the main manifestations. "Of all the Russian writers, Dostoevsky - just a writer of the future wrote M.I. Tugan-Baranovsky in the article "Moral Look of Dostoevsky" (Tugan-Baranovsky, 1908).

Much of what Dostoevsky reflected in his works was embodied in the Russian reality of the twentieth century. Many of his theses have been accurately reflected in later events. "I am convinced that Russia will be the judge of Europe. Neither side will be satisfied with the decision" (Pomerants, 1999).

Dostoevsky is widely known not only in our country and not only among specialists in the study of his work. In 1971, Western Slavic scholars established the International Society of Dostoevsky. The society conducts great research work on studying the work of the great writer, holds regular international conferences.

Russian society of Dostoevsky was founded in the early 1990s; it unites over 200 specialists. The branches of the company operate in Moscow, Petersburg, Petrozavodsk, Tomsk, Kolomna, Kaliningrad, Omsk, Rostov-on-Don and other cities. International Dostoevsky readings are held in Staraya Russa in the Dostoevsky House Museum, in St. Petersburg. A well-known researcher I. Volgin established the Dostoevsky Foundation (Volgin, 2010).

Concluding the historiographical analysis, one should note that despite a large number of different works, the religious views of F.M. Dostoevsky were mostly presented in a more general format and the phenomenon of the Orthodox faith was often "dissolved" in more narrow-group studies.

#### **4. Aim of research**

The purpose of the study of this article is the historical legacy of Dostoevsky, which became not only an impetus for the spiritual renaissance in Russia, but also contributed through the works of the thinker of the reconstruction of his own original concept of faith and knowledge. Through his own analysis of the Orthodox faith, Dostoevsky concludes that the Orthodox Church is the component of the intuitive, asserting principle in man. The position of the Orthodox Church and of faith in Russia by Dostoevsky is quite stable. In general, the historical legacy of Dostoevsky is literally permeated with

Christian motives. He admired the ideals of Orthodoxy, the principles of faith, he was proud of the historical mission of Russia - the keeper and defender of Christian traditions. The thinker wrote in the essay "The Eastern Question" that Russia is "the leader of Orthodoxy, the patroness and guardian of his "Christianity is the only refuge of the Russian land from all its evils," Dostoevsky remarked in a letter to N.A. Lyubimov in June 1879 (Lepakhin, 2002; Kostin, 2016).

Dostoevsky did not take Christianity in an abstract way. He considered Christianity the bearer of freedom, dialectically linking freedom with responsibility. In the essay "Wednesday" from the "Diary of the Writer" for 1873, he noted: "By making a person responsible, Christianity thereby recognizes his freedom." Religious views of the writer were not static, were not unequivocally and unconditionally formed from childhood. Throughout life, with changes in destiny, they underwent a rethinking, becoming ever more multifaceted and deeper. And, for Dostoevsky, the authenticity of the historical existence of Christ mattered. He believed that the question of the existence of Christ would actually confirm the possibility of the incarnation of the Ideal in life: "Many think that it is enough to believe in the morality of Christ in order to be a Christian. Not a moral of Christ, not the teaching of Christ will save the world, namely faith in God. "In addressing the "atheists" - Renan and others, Dostoevsky remarked: "And there is no doctrine; there are only random words, and most importantly - the image of Christ, from which all teaching proceeds" (Ivanov, 1995).

Science again returned to the question of the historical authenticity of the person of Christ. The authors have quoted above the statements of a number of ancient authors who confirmed the real earthly existence of Jesus Christ. Scientific researches of the 20th and 21st centuries also fully confirm the existence of Christ: cuneiforms were found, many new facts in favor of the fact that Christ is not a myth, but a real face. In a famous entry on the day of the death of Maria Dmitrievna's first wife, Dostoevsky noted: "Christ was everlasting, from the age of the Ideal, to which man aspires and according to the law of nature." He called it "the ideal of man in the flesh" (Samarin, 1918).

Dostoevsky was afraid of the growing influence of science. The cult of reason did not subordinate moral ideals to the individual's pragmatic goals. Absolute principles of morality that are outside man are necessary, and an absolute moral ideal. Where is the criterion of morality of any belief? "It is not enough to determine morality by fidelity to one's beliefs. One must still continuously incite the question: are my beliefs correct? The test is the same - Christ ... but then there is not philosophy, but faith, and faith is a red color ". In the Orthodox faith are concentrated those moral qualities that people valued above all: kindness, gentleness, forgiveness, love. Christocentrism permeates Dostoevsky's entire religious worldview, but by the time the novel "Crime and Punishment" was created, Dostoevsky has entered a new stage of spiritual evolution. A significant place in Dostoevsky's religious views was occupied by the idea of enlightening the Russian people by attaching it to Christian values and traditions. "Our people have been enlightened for a long time," the writer said, "accepting Christ and his disciples in themselves," "with him, with Christ, he certainly took true enlightenment" (Krugovoy, 1965).

The writer objected to the estimates, which considered the Russian people's poor acquaintance with Christianity as a religion. "They say that the Russian people do not know the gospel well, do not know the basic rules of faith. How is the true representation of Christ possible without the doctrine of faith? This is another matter. But the heart knowledge of Christ and the true idea of him exist completely. It is transmitted from generation to generation and merges with the hearts of people.

## **5. Methods of research**

The use of various methods of scientific research in the article is systematic. The authors used the experience of various historical and religious tendencies. Historical and problem-chronological methods are used, as well as the method of causal comparison - the method of hermeneutic interpretation of the

text. A special place is occupied by the phenomenological method. These methods of research allowed us to recreate a holistic picture of Dostoevsky's historical legacy and his contribution to the understanding of the Orthodox faith in Russia in the 19th century.

## 6. Conclusion

Thus, the Russian Orthodox Church and faith occupied a significant place in the historical legacy of Dostoevsky. Since childhood, familiar with Christianity through education in the family in accordance with the traditions and values of Orthodoxy, Dostoevsky believed in God all his life. In the initial period of creativity, the young writer did not touch on the problem of Christianity in his works and indirectly drew attention to this topic. In the years of hard work and exile, indulging in agonizing reflections on his fate, he gradually came to establish faith in God.

A textual analysis of a number of published works of Dostoevsky confirms the specifics of the writer's attitude to religion and the Orthodox Church, which was manifested in the fact that when reprinting the writer's works, it was not always possible to obtain reliable information characterizing Dostoevsky's views on religion and faith. Accordingly, the works published during the writer's life were more objective in relation to Dostoevsky's spiritual worldview. In this regard, the authors of the article revealed specific textological elements that testify to the possibility or impossibility of editing Dostoevsky's works, which contained facts about the Orthodox faith. The Orthodox faith was comprehended by Dostoevsky not only as a dogma, but also as an objective paradigm of the organization of social life. The Russian Orthodox Church became a spiritual institution for Dostoevsky, in which social harmony was achieved on the basis of love for one's neighbor. With the help of the analysis of Dostoevsky's creativity in the future, it is possible to work out criteria for an impartial assessment of his religious views.

Currently, the creative activity of the writer is a stimulus for the development of religious thought in Russia. Through the content of Dostoevsky's works one can define his personal concept of faith in God. Through a complex search for truth, Dostoevsky comes to the conclusion that Orthodoxy and the Church are instinctive, meaningful beginnings in man. Trying to understand faith and its origins, Dostoevsky believed that only a subconscious gaining faith in God will provide reliable knowledge.

In general, Dostoevsky's understanding of the Orthodox faith did not contradict the values of the secularized modern man, since Dostoevsky's beliefs were "natural morality" in man. The temptation of an unbelieving personality became for Dostoevsky not only a private component. In his works, the writer has shown that the enthusiasm of the unbeliever can lead to unpredictable social consequences, since the spiritual and moral principle in a person is destroyed, and this can deprive a person of freedom.

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