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## OLD RUSSIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE: PHILOSOPHICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

*Мойлашова О.В.*

Nizhnevartovsk State University, Nizhnevartovsk, Russian Federation

*The article deals with the monuments of ancient Russian literature of the genre of hagiography as an important phenomenon of the ancient Russian cultural heritage. Old Russian hagiography, turned to the past, is designed to maintain a continuous connection with the present and future. She calls admire the exploits of the ancient Russian saints, who, thanks to the basics of asceticism, followed the path of salvation, heroically taking on hard work and hardships in order to achieve the Christian moral and religious ideal.*

**Keywords:** ancient Russian cultural heritage; spiritual practices; hagiography; ancient Russian saints; asceticism

## ДРЕВНЕРУССКОЕ КУЛЬТУРНОЕ НАСЛЕДИЕ: ФИЛОСОФСКО-АНТРОПОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ

*Мойлашова О.В.*

Нижневартовский государственный университет, Нижневартовск,  
Российская Федерация

*В статье рассматриваются памятники древнерусской литературы жанра агиографии как важное явление древнерусского культурного наследия. Древнерусская агиография, обращенная к прошлому, призвана поддерживать непрерывную связь с настоящим и буду-*

*цим. Она призывает восхищаться подвигами древнерусских святых, которые благодаря основам аскезы или путем спасения, героически принимая на себя тяжелый труд и лишения ради достижения христианского нравственного и религиозного идеала.*

**Ключевые слова:** *древнерусское культурное наследие; духовные практики; агиография; древнерусские святые; подвижничество*

A person begins to get acquainted with the ancient Russian cultural heritage from the school bench. Old Russian literature is one of the components of the Old Russian cultural heritage. «For Russian religious and philosophical thought, the memory of the past does not represent a simple accumulation of rational knowledge. This is what a person considers through the prism of living modern reality, intuitively experiences, referring to his conscience, and, finally, what he keeps in his heart» [2].

Monuments of ancient Russian literature began to be studied in all their variety of genres in the schools of our country relatively recently. Previously, only A Word about Igor's regiment was included in the school curriculum. "The current school curriculum includes a survey study of The Tale of Bygone Years, «The instruction» («Poucheniye») by Vladimir Monomakh, The Tale of Peter and Fevronia of Murom, The Life of Sergius of Radonezh, The Life of Alexander Nevsky, The Word of the Destruction of the Russian Land, A word about Igor's regiment, The Tale of the Devastation of Ryazan by Batu, The Tale of the Shemyakin Court [9]. Students meet the main characters of ancient Russian literature not only at literature lessons, but also at history lessons (Sergius of Radonezh, Alexander Nevsky).

The people of medieval Rus' hoped for the spiritual benefits of a future life, this was an incentive to improve their character, lead a virtuous life and difficult spiritual feats. For example, the description of the holy Ancient Russia Sergius of Radonezh testifies to this: «the monk practiced in the desert and the feat of silence (hesychia) and, having tasted the divine sweets of silence,» could no longer retreat from this form of asceticism, which flourished at that time throughout the Orthodox world. Only the elders, who came to him to "become like" his

life and begged him to take hegumenship over them, tore him off the path of individual spiritual work. Under the leadership of Sergius, they hoped «to be honored with the future blessings of pleasure» [1, p.185].

In our opinion, from the point of view of philosophical anthropology, the monuments of ancient Russian literature of the hagiography genre are of great interest, because in the Russian humanitarian tradition “firstly, hagiography is considered as a historical source ... secondly, hagiography can be analyzed as a literary monument ... in thirdly, hagiography can be approached as a source of information about mentality (options: about the mentality of an era, a hagiographer, a saint) [12]. As noted by one of the deepest Russian thinkers, historian V.O. Klyuchevsky: «The purpose of hagiography is to show clearly on a separate existence that everything that the commandment requires of us is not only feasible, but has been fulfilled more than once, therefore, it is obligatory for conscience, because of all the requirements of good for conscience, only the impossible is not necessarily. A work of art in its literary form, a hagiography processes its subject didactically: it is edification in living faces, and therefore living faces are instructive types in it» [6, p.260]. The lives describe the lives of the saints. Saints are people who have taken upon themselves a feat (asceticism, martyrdom, hermitism, hesychasm). The monastic path is the path of salvation. According to the ancient Russian scribes, the ancient Russian saints, the heroes of the hagiographical genre, followed this path. Often at the present time we can observe such a phenomenon as «Christianity in words» [8, p.7]. This is due to the disconnect between faith and works. In this case, people use only the doctrine which they: «keep, value, love ..., but do not live by it» [8, p.7]. Back in the IX century, in the Slavic hagiography of Constantine (Cyril) the Philosopher, who was the first enlightener of the Slavs, there is a definition that, thanks to a brief formula, combines two forms of philosophizing – theoretical and «practical»: «the knowledge of things divine and human, as far as person can draw closer to God» [7]. Thus, for the first time Christian philosophers countered the ancient purely speculative (contemplative philosophy (knowledge of things divine and human) with the «practical” philosophy, the phi-

losophy of the real “work” of improving and saving a person on the paths of religious practice» [1, p.62].

According to Orthodoxy, only such a person can be considered a real Christian who actually fulfills the prescriptions of Christian morality in his daily life. And those who are reputed to be pious, but whose actions do not correspond to beautiful speeches, they are not true Christians: «Many will say to Me in that day: Christ! Christ! Have we not prophesied in Your name? And did they not cast out demons in your name? And did not many miracles work in your name? And then I will declare to them: I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of iniquity» (Mat. 7:22–23); Not everyone who says to Me: «Christ! Christ, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven» (Mat. 7:21).

The saints prove with their whole lives that a person can not only draw closer to God with words. They show throughout their lives that it is possible to «avoid evil and do good» (Ps. 33:15). In Orthodoxy, it is customary to believe that monasticism, with its ascetic way of life and way of life, is most consistent with the norms of the Gospel. The way of life of the saints, about which the ancient Russian literature of the genre of hagiography narrates, is completely devoted to serving God. And this is impossible without ascetics – regular efforts that subordinate the body and soul of a person to the Spirit. So: «in the Ancient Paterik, to the question of who a monk is, the following definition is given: a monk is one who makes coercion in everything in himself» [4].

The word *ascesis* comes from the Greek word *askeo*, which means I exercise. Asceticism or feat is the method by which the practice of asceticism is carried out. In turn, asceticism, according to the interpretation of the philosophical dictionary, is the principle of behavior and a way of life characterized by the utmost possible abstinence in meeting needs, “mortification of the flesh”, and rejection of earthly goods in order to achieve a moral or religious ideal. Ascetism [Gr. ἄσκησις from ἀσκέω - exercise], in pagan Greece the word “A.” denoted exercises of the body (Herodotus, Thucydides), exercises of the mind and will (sophists) [11]. The word *ascesis* is connected with the word *ascetic*. This is «a person who heroically took on hard work or deprivation

in order to achieve a lofty goal» [10, p. 531]. The Old Russian saints were real ascetics, for whom “Asceticism is not only a person’s desire for salvation, but his zeal and strength to stay in real (through non-acquisitiveness, fasting, virginity, etc.) communion with God. «We must through many tribulations enter the Kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22) ». Struggling with passions, they made efforts to achieve the Christian ideal. The saints of ancient Russia constantly drew attention within themselves, analyzed their consciences, thoughts, words and deeds.

As St. Ioann Maksimovich, Metropolitan of Tobolsk and Siberia, notes: «Let the sunflower plant (Iliotropion) serve as the emblem of our turning to God for us ... the sunflower represents a kind of miracle in nature: it constantly turns its head towards the sun and, together with it, turns from the east to west, even on cloudy days, it loves the sun so much» [13, p. 98]. Therefore, the saints of the ancient Russian cultural heritage are similar to iliotropion. Khoruzhy S.S. in his work «The Phenomenon of Russian Elderhood. Examples from the spiritual practice of the elders» notes: «traditions that develop the art of spiritual practice are traditions of a special kind that are created to gain mystical and ascetic experience – a specific experience of transcending, overcoming the local existence» [5].

A person at all times needs to know his history, his roots, cultural heritage, traditions and customs in order to preserve the moral, ethical, moral qualities that were laid down by our ancestors. Old Russian culture on the example of the literature of the genre of hagiography is a source that has absorbed the entire spiritual ideal of the Russian people. The moral state of society depends on the knowledge of native literature, history, philosophy. The phrase «fortitude» accompanies a person throughout his life. Starting from the school bench at the lessons of history, literature, when students hear about the strength of the spirit of the heroes of history or ordinary people. «Russian religious philosophy has its roots in ancient spiritual and mystical practices. This concept continues to accompany an adult in his daily life» [3]. Therefore, it is very important to make regular efforts that bring the body and soul of a person under the Spirit. This is achieved by ordinary people, the laity, through heartfelt prayer, fasting, and correlation of their whole life, all their not only deeds, but also thoughts, with the Gospel. It is necessary

to form basic values, moral and cultural values. In our opinion, one of the leading roles in this belongs to the ancient Russian cultural heritage.

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