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**MISSIONARY SERVICE OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
AMONG THE SAMOYED PEOPLES:  
MISSIONOLOGICAL AND ETHNO-CULTURAL ASPECTS**

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## INTRODUCTION

**Relevance of the research topic.** Research in the field of Orthodox theology is an integral part of the formation of scientific knowledge in the Russian Federation. The development of theological knowledge takes place in theoretical and applied directions. In addition to the study of history, sacred texts, and traditions, it is important to study and conduct theological analysis of modern phenomena of culture, secular, and church life. One of the priority areas of theological development is research in the field of missiology since this discipline studies the action by which the Church actualise itself in the world.

The very nature of the Church presupposes continuous missionary activity based on Christ's great commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). The mission is based on Divine Revelation, which is unchangeable, corresponding to the Creator's plan for the salvation of his Creation.

However, missionary service is carried out in a rapidly changing world, which perceives the Word of God differently in a historical perspective through the prism of contemporary culture and scientific picture of the world, which determines the thinking of representatives of different epochs and social groups. Therefore, missiology consists of historical, theoretical, and practical sections. Applied missiology deals with the comprehension of the results of mission and methods of preaching. Even though Orthodox mission is universal in nature, missionary service is carried out in a specific ethno-cultural and social environment. This implies the need to differentiate methods of work in accordance with the diversity of cultural forms of different peoples and social groups. This fact requires a thorough study of the characteristics of the addressee of the mission. This brings applied missiology closer to other branches of scientific knowledge: cultural studies, sociology, ethnology, psychology, and philology.

It follows from the above that direct missionary work should be preceded by certain stages: analysing and theorising about the current state of a particular mission recipient and choosing missionary methods relevant to the characteristics obtained.

The Russian Orthodox Church has foreign missions within the territory of the canonical responsibility of the Moscow Patriarchate, as well as missions within the Russian Federation. Since not all peoples of our Fatherland are enlightened by the Light of the Gospel, mission among indigenous peoples, including the small peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East, is one of the priority areas, as indicated by the definition of the Council of Bishops in 2013, para. 33 <sup>1</sup>.

To date, missionary activity in this area is carried out on a regular basis based on missionary stations. However, there is not always a strategic plan for missionary activity, much less serious research and development in this area. Most missions are based on the subjective experience, personal motivation of the missionary and his personal qualities and abilities, since in most cases missionary activity is carried out spontaneously, based on personal understanding of the goals of the mission and methods of their achievement by a particular missionary. Reliance on subjective opinion in solving systemic problems inevitably leads to a deterioration in the quality of work in the long term. For the missionary ministry of the Church to be effective and expedient, systematic scientific research in the field of missiology should be conducted, with subsequent adjustment of existing missionary programs.

In the context of the current political instability in the world, the administrative and diocesan authorities are very concerned about the presence among the Samoyed peoples of representatives of religious confessions that are non-traditional for our culture. Since the 1990s, adherents of movements formed and financed by some Western countries have been uncontrollably entering the territory of the Russian Federation. At present, the policy of the authorities about small

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<sup>1</sup> On Various Directions of the Missionary Activity of the Church (adopted by the 2013 Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. "Resolutions...", p. 33) // Collection of Documents of the Russian Orthodox Church. Activities of the Russian Orthodox Church. Vol. 2. P. 1. M. Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church, 2014. P. 418.

indigenous minorities is aimed at preserving their traditional way of life <sup>2</sup>. The activities of Protestants, on the other hand, contribute to the disconnection of Samoyeds from their traditional way of life, and there have been cases of Samoyeds destroying their pagan cultural monuments <sup>3</sup>.

All this creates an unstable situation in the regions and draws the attention of the authorities to the problems of the indigenous population. Orthodoxy is not a state religion in the Russian Federation, but in many regions, it is a traditional religion, and Orthodox Christianity has historically been a state-forming religion.

This study is aimed at finding effective means of mission in which the Church would not lose its influence in the territories of canonical responsibility, but would also contribute to territorial integrity, regional stability, and the salvation of the Samoyed peoples in the eschatological perspective.

**Degree of theoretical development of the research topic.** This research involves the analysis of sources from different directions. First, these are theological works, including those devoted to missiology and theology of culture, for example, the thesis for the degree of Doctor of Theology by Hegumen Serapion (Mitko) on "Orthodox missiology in the system of theological knowledge" <sup>4</sup>. This work is devoted to the analysis of the current state of missiology, as well as the development of the structure of modern theological knowledge in the field of Orthodox mission. For the uniformity of the structure of further research in this area, it is advisable to use the categorical apparatus and system of concepts proposed by the author, based on the principle of subject-subject relations between the participants of missionary activity, called the actor and the addressee.

In addition to this study, the intra-church development of missiology was carried out based on the theological seminaries and academies of the Russian

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<sup>2</sup> List of measures of state support for the indigenous minorities of the North, implemented in 2017–2020 // Indigenous Minorities. Government of Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug – Yugra: [website]. URL: <https://kmns.admhmao.ru/gosudarstvennaya-podderzhka/> (accessed 17.10.2020).

<sup>3</sup> In Salekhard, scientists discussed the preservation of sacred places of Yamal indigenous peoples // IA Sever-Press: [website]. URL: <https://sever-press.ru/2014/12/04/v-salekharde-uchenye-obsudili-sokhranenie-svyashchennykh-mest-korennykh-narodov-yamala/> (accessed 19.07.2021).

<sup>4</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegum.* Orthodox missiology in the system of theological knowledge: monograph. Moscow: Unity-Dana, 2021. 335 p.

Orthodox Church. In cooperation with the Synodal Missionary Department, headed until 29 December 2021 by Metropolitan John (Popov) of Belgorod and Sary Oskol, the Belgorod Orthodox Theological Seminary (with a missionary orientation) carried out work in this area under his leadership. Two editions of the textbook on missiology<sup>5,6</sup> were the realisation of their joint project.

In addition, it should be noted the significant contribution to the development of missiology of the major foreign missiologists: His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios (Yannoulatos) of Tirana and All Albania<sup>7</sup>, Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware)<sup>8</sup> of Dioclesia, Bishop Seraphim (Sigrist)<sup>9</sup>, Athanasios Papathanasiou<sup>10</sup>, James J. Stamoolis<sup>11</sup>, and Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann<sup>12</sup>.

Protestant missiologists deserve special attention. Among the Western missiologists we will consider only those who in one way or another have influenced the development and formation of Orthodox missiology. First and foremost are David Bosch<sup>13,14</sup>, Peter Penner<sup>15,16</sup> and Christopher Wright<sup>17,18</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Missiology: textbook / edited by archbishop John (Popov). Belgorod: Belgorod. Orthodox Spiritual Seminary (with missionary orientation), 2009. Seminary (with missionary orientation), 2009. 464 p.

<sup>6</sup> Missiology: textbook / edited by Archbishop John (Popov). 2nd edition revised and supplemented. Moscow: Synod. missionary department of the Russian Orthodox Church, 2010. 400 p.

<sup>7</sup> *Anastasios (Yannoulatos), archbishop, "Even to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Studies on the history of the mission. M. : Poznanie, 2018. 224 p.*

<sup>8</sup> *Kallistos (Ware), Metropolitan of Diokleia. The Seed of the Church. The Universal Vocation of Martyrdom. Witney. Oxford : St. Stephen's Press, 1995. 24 P.*

<sup>9</sup> *Seraphim (Sigrist), bishop. A Life Together: Wisdom of Community from the Christian East. Orleans: ParacletePress, 2011. 200 p.*

<sup>10</sup> *Papathanasiou A. N. Future, The Background of History: Essays on Church Mission in an Age of Globalization. Monreal : Alexander Press, 2005. 144 p.*

<sup>11</sup> *Stamoolis J. J. Orthodox theology of mission today. M. PSTBI, 2003. 448 p.*

<sup>12</sup> *Schmemmann A., protopresv. Church, World, Mission. Thoughts on Orthodoxy in the West. M. St.-Tikhonov Theological Institute, 1996. 272 p.*

<sup>13</sup> *Bosch D. J. Transformations of Missionalism: Paradigm Shifts in the Theology of Missionary Activity. SPb. Christian Society "Bible for All", 1997. 636 p.*

<sup>14</sup> *Bosch D. J. Believing in the Future: Toward a Missiology of Western Culture. Christian Mission and Modern Culture. Valley Forge, PA : Trinity Press International, 1995. 69 p. ; Idem. Hermeneutical Principles in the Biblical Foundation for Mission // Evangelical Review of Theology. 1993. № 17. P. 437–451 ; Idem. Reflection on Biblical Models of Mission // Toward the Twenty-first Century in Christian Mission / ed. by J. M. M. M. Phillips, R. T. Coote. Grand Rapids : Eerdmans, 1993. P. 175–192 ; Idem. Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective. London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1980. 277 p.*

<sup>15</sup> *Penner P. Missiology and Hermeneutics. Reading biblical texts in the context of mission. Cherkassy: Colloquium, 2014. 312 p.*

<sup>16</sup> *New Horizons of Mission: collection of articles / edited by P. Penner, V. Ubeyvolk, I. Rusin, R. Zagidulin. Cherkassy: Colloquium, 2015. 440 p.*

<sup>17</sup> *Wright C. J. H. Mission of God. Cherkassy: Colloquium, 2015. 592 p.*

<sup>18</sup> *Wright C. J. H. The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 2010. 304 p. ; Idem. Truth with a Mission: Reading All Scripture Missiologically // The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology. 2011. № 15, H. 2. P. 4–15.*

Also, among Western Protestant missiologists whose research has been related to ethnocultural aspects, it is worth mentioning one of the outstanding missiological anthropologists Paul Heibert<sup>19</sup>, who was a missionary in India, then taught in a seminary in the USA. Besides him, Charles H. Kraft wrote about missiological anthropology in the context of cross-cultural Christian theology<sup>20</sup>. He analysed culture, modes of transmission, Christianity, and their interaction.

One of the outstanding missionaries of the Russian Orthodox Church was St Innocent (Popov-Veniaminov), whose works are also of great interest in the context of missionary activity and its comprehension<sup>21, 22</sup>. The works of St Innocent are of value for this study because of the ethno-cultural aspect, which is close to the problem area of this study. In the same context, special attention should be paid to the works of Archimandrite Makarius (Glukharev), the founder of the Altai Spiritual Mission<sup>23</sup>, and St. Makarius (Nevsky)<sup>24</sup>. Their works are more descriptive in nature. It is worth noting the attempt to transfer Christian meanings into the language and images of another culture by St Nicholas (Kasatkin) in the Japanese mission<sup>25</sup>. Within the framework of this study the principles of his translation activity<sup>26</sup>, conditioned by local tradition, which differ from the approach of missionaries within the Fatherland, are of particular interest.

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<sup>19</sup> *Heibert P. G.* The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions. Grand Rapids : Baker Academic, 2009. 218 p. ; *Idem.* Anthropological Insights for Missionaries. Grand Rapids : Baker Academic, 1986. 316 p.

<sup>20</sup> *Kraft C. H.* Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologising in Cross-cultural Perspective. New York : Orbis Books, 1979. 445 p. ; *Idem.* Culture, Communication, and Christianity: A Selection of Writings. Pasadena : William Carey Library, 2001. 504 p.

<sup>21</sup> *Innokenty (Popov-Veniaminov), archbishop.* Indication of the way to the Kingdom of Heaven. Kiev : Tip. Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, 1867. 60 p. ; *He also.* Collected Works and Letters : in 7 vol. M. Moscow Patriarchate Publishing House, 2015.

<sup>22</sup> *Innokenty, Metropolitan of Moscow, St.* Instruction to the priest appointed for the conversion of foreigners and guidance of converts to the Christian faith // Works of Innokenty, Metropolitan of Moscow. Book 1 / collected by Ivan Barsukov. M. In Synod. type, 1886. P. 239–263.

<sup>23</sup> *Makarius (Glukharev), archimandrite Makarius Glukharev, the founder of the Altai mission : with biographical sketch, portraits, view and two facsimiles / edited by K. V. Kharlampovich.* Kazan : Central Printing House, 1905. 558 p.

<sup>24</sup> *Macarius (Nevsky), archbishop.* A discourse on the salvation of the soul. How to begin the salvation of the soul. SPb. : [b. i.], 1908. 16 p.

<sup>25</sup> *Nicholas (Kasatkin), Equal to the Apostle, Diaries.* Vol. 1–5, 1870–1912 // ABC of Faith : [site]. URL: [https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Nikolaj\\_Japonskij/dnevniki/](https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Nikolaj_Japonskij/dnevniki/) (accessed 03.12.2020).

<sup>26</sup> *Kartasheva N. V.* Cultural aspects of missionary translations of Saint Nicholas of Japan // Bulletin of Moscow University. Series 19 : Linguistics and Intercultural Communication. 2017. № 1. P. 90–103.

A systematic study of the history of Russian missionary work, including in an ethno-cultural context, is carried out in the work of A. B. Efimov, "Sketches of the History of Russian Missionary Work" <sup>27</sup>. From the very beginning and throughout its history, the Orthodox mission promoted the development of national cultures and was not accompanied by assimilation on the part of the culture of which the preacher was a carrier. One of the researchers of the Orthodox mission in a different ethno-cultural environment was Metropolitan Kliment of Kaluga and Borovsk who studied the history of the Orthodox mission in America <sup>28</sup>.

Among the researchers of missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church in the North there are both Christian authors and secular national scholars. In the pre-revolutionary period, N. A. Abramov, a member of the Russian Geographical Society and a graduate of the Tobolsk Theological Seminary, wrote about mission in the North in the 19th century <sup>29</sup>, as well as Hegumen Irinarkh (Shemanovsky), one of the most famous missionaries of the Ob North <sup>30</sup>. Among contemporary researchers of Christianisation and religious beliefs there were those who exaggerated the success and importance of the mission and saw in it benefits for both the state and the indigenous peoples, e.g.: C. V. Bakhrushin <sup>31</sup>, P. N. Butsinisky <sup>32</sup>, N. Gorodkov <sup>33</sup>, V. N. Lvov <sup>34</sup>, P. Sumarokov <sup>35</sup>; there were also those who wrote in the interests of Soviet power, without sufficient evidence pointing to the violent

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<sup>27</sup> *Efimov A.B.* Essays on the history of missionary work of the Russian Orthodox Church. M. PSTGU, 2007. P. 70–78, 127–198.

<sup>28</sup> *Kliment (Kapalin), Mt.* Orthodoxy in Alaska: a retrospective of development in 1741–1917. Tver : Tverskaya Fabrika Pechaty, 2014. 429 p.

<sup>29</sup> *Abramov H. A.* On the introduction of Christianity among the Berezov Ostyaks // Journal of the Ministry of Public Education. 1851. № 12. P. 1–22 ; *He also.* Description of the Berezov region // Notes of the Russian Imperial Geographical Society. 1857. Vol. 12. P. 327–448.

<sup>30</sup> *Shemanovsky I. S.* History of the Obdorsk Spiritual Mission, 1854–1904. M. Printing house of A. I. Snegireva, 1906. 188 p.

<sup>31</sup> *Bakhrushin S. V.* Essays on the history of colonisation of Siberia in the XVI and XVII centuries. M. : edition of M. and S. Sabashnikovs, 1927. 212 p.

<sup>32</sup> *Butsinisky P. N.* Baptism of the Ostyaks and Voguls under Peter the Great. Kharkov : Tip. Provincial Board, 1893. 104 p.

<sup>33</sup> *Gorodkov N.* Enlightenment of the foreigners of Western Siberia with Christian faith // Tomsk diocesan bulletins. 1888. № 17. P. 9–16.

<sup>34</sup> *Lvov V. N.* Samoyeds. M. Shk. book, 1912. 32 p.

<sup>35</sup> *Sumarokov P.* Missionary work in Siberia // Christian reading. 1883. № 9–10. P. 411–434.



nature of baptism with the help of armed Cossacks, e.g. A. G. Bazanov <sup>36</sup>. Among the earliest articles of the modern period, we should include the article by N. A. Smirnov <sup>37</sup>, devoted to the history of missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Special attention should be paid to the works devoted to the everyday life and religious beliefs of the peoples under study. The customs of the Nenets are examined by L. V. Khomich <sup>38</sup> – a specialist in the field of ethnography of Samoyedic peoples. The ethnic development of the Nenets and Enets in the period from the 17th to the 20th centuries was first presented in the monograph by V. I. Vasiliev <sup>39</sup>. In the context of the formation of ethnic groups of Samoyedic peoples, the article by A. Parpola <sup>40</sup>, as well as the article by V. G. Volkov <sup>41</sup>, which is a synthesis of modern cultural, archaeological, and genetic achievements in this field, is of great interest. In addition to the history of settlement, B. O. Dolgikh <sup>42</sup> describes the everyday life and communal organisation of the Nenets in the XVI-XVII cc. in the 16th-17th centuries.

The religious views of the Nenets were described in the monographs of L. A. Lar, Candidate of Historical Sciences <sup>43</sup>. The cultural and historical prerequisites for the spread of Christianity in Siberia from the position of cultural analysis are considered in the monograph by A. S. Kuzmina <sup>44</sup>.

Numerous aspects of the theme of the dynamics of the mission addressee state are presented in the reports of synodal missionaries at the descriptive level in the archive of the Synodal Missionary Department of the Moscow Patriarchate.

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<sup>36</sup> *Bazanov A. G.* Essays on the history of missionary schools in the Far North: Tobolsk North. JI. Institute of the Peoples of the North named after P. G. Smidovich Glavsevmorputi under the USSR Council of People's Commissars, 1936. 132 p.

<sup>37</sup> *Smirnov H. A.* Missionary activity of the Church (second half of the XIX century – 1917) // *Russian Orthodoxy: Milestones of History*. 1989. P. 438–462.

<sup>38</sup> *Khomich L. V.* Nenets. Historical and ethnographic sketches. JI. Nauka. Leningr. department, 1966. 339 p.

<sup>39</sup> *Vasiliev V. I.* Problems of the formation of the North Samoyedic nationalities. M. Nauka, 1979. 243 p.

<sup>40</sup> *Parpola, A.* The problem of Samoyed origins in the light of archaeology: On the formation and dispersal of East Uralic (Proto-Ugro-Samoyed) // *Per Urales ad Orientem. Iterpolyphonicum multilingue / University of Helsinki*. Helsinki. 2012. P. 287–298.

<sup>41</sup> *Volkov V. G.* Ancient Samoyed and Yenisei migrations in the light of genetic data // *Tomsk Journal of LING and ANTR*. 2013. № 1 (1). P. 79–96.

<sup>42</sup> *Dolgikh B. O.* Essays on the ethnic history of the Nenets and Ents. M. Nauka, 1970. 269 p.

<sup>43</sup> *Lar L. A.* Shamans, and gods / ed. by V. N. Basilov. N. Basilov. Tyumen : IPOS, 1998. 81 p. ; *He also.* Cult monuments of Yamal Hebidya ya / edited by P. V. Boyarsky. Tyumen : IPOS SB RAS, 2003. 169 p.

<sup>44</sup> *Kuzmina A. S.* Christianisation of Indigenous Peoples of the Ob North: Cultural Aspect. SPb. Info-da, 2004. 134 p.

Since this study partially touches upon the issues of ethnography and cultural anthropology, it is necessary to consider the main works of scholars of this direction for a comprehensive consideration of the problem by highlighting the ethno-cultural aspects of the mission. The problems of cultural anthropology are considered in the works of K. Hirtz <sup>45</sup>, K. Lévi-Strauss <sup>46</sup>, M. Mead <sup>47</sup>, M. Harris <sup>48</sup>, and E. Evans-Pritchard <sup>49</sup>. In addition, such scholars as N. N. Miklukho-Maclay <sup>50</sup>, B. K. Malinovsky, N. N. Miklukho-Maclay, B. K. Malinovsky, K. Malinovsky <sup>51</sup>, G. G. Gromov <sup>52</sup> and others. Analysis of their works allows us to divide the main research methods into stationary and expeditionary, which differ in the quality and quantity of collected information. The expeditionary method allows to collect in a short period of time the necessary information for cross-cultural research, and the stationary method allows to learn more deeply the material and spiritual culture of the people, as well as everyday life, but the small coverage of the territory makes it impossible to compare it with other areas. These data allow for more detailed planning of missionary expeditions with maximum efficiency.

Some aspects of missionary work in an ethnocultural context are presented in earlier works by the author of this study.

**Aims and objectives of the research.** The aim of this dissertation research is to identify the factors that contribute to improving the quality and effectiveness of the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples in the long term in the context of intercultural communication.

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<sup>45</sup> Hirtz K. Common sense as a cultural system / translated from English by A. Zakharov // *Untouchable reserve: debates on politics and culture*. 2007. № 4 (54). P. 19–42 ; *He*. Interpretation of cultures. M. Russian political encyclical, 2004. 560 p.

<sup>46</sup> Lévi-Strauss K. Primitive thinking / per., introductory article and notes by A. B. Ostrovsky. M. Republic, 1994. 384 p. ; *He*. Recognising others. Anthropology and problems of modernity / transl. from Fr. E. Chebucueva. M. Text, 2016. 158 p.

<sup>47</sup> Mead M. Culture and the World of Childhood : a monograph / per. Y. A. Aseev. M. Direct-Media, 2007. 878 p.

<sup>48</sup> Harris Marvin. Culture, People, Nature: An Introduction to General Anthropology. Harlow : Longman, 1997. 491 p.

<sup>49</sup> Evans-Pritchard E. History of anthropological thought / translated from English by A. L. Yelfimov ; article by A. A. Nikishenkov. A. Nikishenkov. M. Vost. lit., 2003. 358 p.

<sup>50</sup> Miklukho-Maclay N. N. Collected Works : in 5 vol. M. ; L. : ANS SSSR, 1950–1954.

<sup>51</sup> Malinovsky B.K. Scientific Theory of Culture. M. : O.G.I., 2005. 184 p. ; *He*. Scientific principles and methods of research of cultural change / per. V.G. Nikolaev // *Anthology of Cultural Studies*. Vol. 1. Interpretations of Culture. SPb. University Book, 1997. P. 371–384.

<sup>52</sup> Gromov G. G. Methodology of ethnographic expeditions. M. Izd-vo Mosk. un-sta, 1966. 108 p.

The following **tasks** will contribute to the achievement of this goal:

1. Provide a theological analysis of the main definitions.
2. Classify a variety of approaches to missionary activity.
3. To analyses the methodological recommendations to missionaries of the pre-revolutionary period.
4. Provide a missiological analysis of the ethnocultural context in light of current scientific evidence.
5. To analyses the national religious images of the Samoyeds and to determine the religious context.
6. To study the peculiarities of the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples before the revolution.
7. To analyses the current state of the structural units of the Russian Orthodox Church in the territories of the Samoyed people.
8. Using the data of modern science and theology, consider the current problems of mission among the Samoyedic peoples.
9. To identify promising directions for further missionary activity among the Samoyed peoples.

**The object of the study** is the process of Christianisation of the Samoyed peoples by the Russian Orthodox Church.

**The subject of the study** is the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples.

**The hypothesis of this study** is that the mission of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples has not been sufficiently effective because some essential aspects of the Samoyed peoples' culture have not been considered, which will be revealed in this study. Taking these aspects into account when drawing up a strategy for missionary work will lead to optimisation of missionary activity and increased mission effectiveness in the future.

**Scientific novelty of the dissertation research.** This study is the first systematic theological analysis and substantiation of the missionary activity of the

Russian Orthodox Church among indigenous, including small-numbered peoples living in the territory of the Russian Federation.

Samoyedic peoples (Nenets, Nganasans, Enets, Selkups) have not been previously studied as the recipients of the mission.

Western researchers have analysed the experience of the Christian Church in the context of Roman Catholic and Protestant mission. Missiology in the West has a serious scientific base, its methodology and is a developed discipline within theology. Given that the standard for the direction of postgraduate studies in the field of theology was approved in the Russian Federation in 2014, today this direction of scientific knowledge is quite young and not as developed as in the West. However, the fact that the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church has not received the same attention from the scientific community as in the West does not mean that the Eastern Church has no practical and theological experience on this issue. This area is a promising area of research work. This study attempts to theologially understand the results of the missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples of the indigenous and small-numbered peoples of the North from the point of view of applied missiology by comparing data from various fields of science in the context of Orthodox mission. Analyses of ethnographic and cultural anthropological data will allow us to develop a scientifically sound method of modern Orthodox mission in a particular ethno-cultural context. Also, in order to solve specific problems of mission we need to turn to modern medicine, in particular nutrigenomics and dietetics.

**Theoretical and practical significance of the study.** This work represents an attempt to comprehensively comprehend the methodology and development of missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples to transform modern strategies of missionary activity based on the materials obtained. The results of this study may be useful in compiling a textbook on missiology or as informational material for the staff of diocesan missionary departments.

The results of the study can be used as a basis for the preparation and writing of methodological recommendations of the Synodal Missionary Department to

missionaries and diocesan departments for missionary ministry in the Northern dioceses. The work can serve as a manual during the seminary subject "missiology". The methodological part of the work can be the basis for further scientific study of the mission of the Russian Orthodox Church among other indigenous minorities.

**Methodology and methods of the dissertation research.** The theoretical and methodological basis of the study is a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach to the study of ethnocultural and missiological aspects of the activities of modern missionaries in the context of intercultural contacts with representatives of indigenous, including small-numbered peoples. Of great importance in the consideration of the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church was the systematic approach, which made it possible to comprehensively reveal the internal logic of the formation and development of the mission of the Russian Orthodox Church in the context of pagan culture and tradition. An important role was also played by an appeal to the historical method when some issues were considered in retrospect or from the position of finding out the root causes of this or that phenomenon. This served a more complete and objective solution to the tasks set out in the thesis.

The method is based on the identification of the effectiveness of theoretical provisions on the examples of modern missionary stations, as well as the method of diachronic analysis of the work of Russian Orthodox Church missionaries among the Samoyeds, monitoring and analysing printed sources of information, conversations and interviews. The study analysed historical documents about the Samoyeds, identified general patterns in the historical development of mission and forms of church life organisation, and studied the activities of certain missionaries.

Also, in the study of this topic apply critical-analytical approach, system-complex approach, which together lead to a more accurate justification of the goals and objectives.

**The empirical / source base of the research.** Ethnocultural mission is conditioned by active practice. Diaries and reports of missionaries from both the pre-revolutionary period and modern times were used as a basis for empirical research.

Current information on the activities of modern missionary stations and Northern dioceses was analysed on the basis of data provided by the Synodal Missionary Department, as well as the websites of the mentioned dioceses.

**The statements put forward for defense of the thesis:**

1. Missionary activity is a unique intercultural communication that requires new forms and methods for successful implementation.

2. The most promising approach for mission among the Samoyeds is the incarnational approach, as a form of churching the whole culture of the people: language, customs, everyday life, and beliefs.

3. Caring for the treatment of sick Samoyeds, the teaching of literacy to their children, and material assistance to the poor will contribute to the quality of mission. Coercion, threats and demands for high quantitative indicators are not compatible with missionary service, both in relation to the direct actors of the mission and the addressees. In the pre-revolutionary period, the following factors significantly reduced the effectiveness of the mission: ignoring the peculiarities of the Samoyeds, frequent changes of missionaries, and ignorance of the language and culture of the addressee of the mission.

4. The perception of Christian doctrine did not lead to a paradigm shift in thinking, which remained pagan in essence, leading to religious syncretism. The more Christian images and plots were approximated to pagan myths, the more they were perceived in the context of pagan culture.

5. Obdorsk missionaries of the pre-revolutionary period pointed out the correspondences of religious systems and corrected the ideas of the Samoyeds with the help of biblical stories and hagiographies of saints. In the long term, this method proved to be ineffective and untenable.

6. Modern Samoyeds do not have a formed Christian identity. The availability of technical and administrative opportunities does not significantly change the current situation. Single cases of Samoyed people accepting baptism do not contribute to the formation of Christian identity.

7. At the present stage missionary activity can be carried out more effectively. It is necessary to Christianise the culture itself, to create an environment for the spiritual formation of the personality of newly converted Christians in accordance with the historically established culture and peculiarities of the Samoyed people's everyday life. In this case, it will be possible to achieve an increase in the short-term effectiveness of the mission (acceptance of baptism as a result of missionary activity) and long-term effectiveness of the mission (growth in faith through the reception of doctrinal aspects and transition to a new form of cultural self-identification).

8. The preservation of the traditional way of life of indigenous peoples is an important task for the missionary, since changes in traditional ways of life may entail deterioration of health and, in the long run, lead to the extinction of certain peoples belonging to the Samoyedic group.

### **Publications:**

Articles in journals included in the List of peer-reviewed scientific editions, in which the main scientific results of dissertations for the degree of Candidate of Sciences should be published:

1. Ethnocultural Strategies in Contemporary Orthodox Mission <sup>53</sup> .
2. To the problem of missionary reception of religious images of Samoyed peoples in the mission of the Russian Orthodox Church at the present stage <sup>54</sup> .
3. Modern problems of missionary work among the Samoyed peoples <sup>55</sup> .
4. Christianity and the national identity of the Nenets <sup>56</sup> .

In addition, the results of the study are reflected in the following publications:

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<sup>53</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegum., Iakovov D., priest* Ethno-cultural strategies in modern Orthodox mission // Humanitarian Vedomosti TSPU named after L.N. Tolstoy. 2018. № 1 (25). P. 101–110.

<sup>54</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest.* To the problem of missionary reception of religious images of Samoyedic peoples in the mission of the Russian Orthodox Church at the present stage // Vestnik of St. Philaretov Institute. 2020. Vol. 35. P. 137–147.

<sup>55</sup> *Tserpitskaya O. L. L., Iakovov D. V., priest.* Modern problems of missionary work among the Samoyedic peoples // Voprosy Theologii. 2021. Vol. 3, № 1. P. 97–105.

<sup>56</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest.* Christianity and the national identity of the Nenets // Voprosy Theologii. 2022. Vol. 4, № 2. P. 299–308.

1. Ethno-cultural strategy of missionary activity <sup>57</sup>.
2. Methodology of ethno-cultural studies of the mission field <sup>58</sup>.
3. Orthodox parishes in the history and documents of the Church <sup>59</sup>.
4. Secularisation as a driving force for ritualism <sup>60</sup>.
5. Der zustand der inneren mission der Russisch-Orthodoxen Kirche zu beginn des XX. Jahrhunderts <sup>61</sup>.

**Approbation and results of the thesis.** The research findings were validated on 14 March 2018, 19 November 2018, 21 March and 19 December 2019, 11 May 2020, and 11 May 2021 at the UCAD postgraduate seminars.

At the conference "Psychological and Social Approaches to the Analysis of Interreligious Dialogue" at the Moscow State Pedagogical University (MGPPU) on June 19, 2017, the paper "Ethnocultural Strategies in Modern Orthodox Mission".

At the Christmas Readings in January 2019 within the VIII direction "Missionary Service of the Russian Orthodox Church": 29 January at the conference "The Mission of the Church in the Modern World", 28 January at the round table: "Principles and methods of mission among indigenous, including small-numbered peoples of Russia, as well as their pastoral care".

At the Ioasaf Readings in the National Research University "BelSU" at the section "Secular and religious in the heritage of Peter the Great: a modern view" on 22 November 2021 the paper "Secularisation as a driving force of ritualism".

**The volume and structure of the thesis.** The thesis consists of 141 pages comprising of an introduction, three chapters divided into three paragraphs, a conclusion, and a reference list of 208 references used.

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<sup>57</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest.* Ethno-cultural strategy of missionary activity // Intercultural Communication and Peacebuilding. 2015. Vol. V. P. 137–145.

<sup>58</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest.* Methodology of ethno-cultural studies of the mission field // Proceedings of Belgorod Theological Seminary (with missionary orientation). 2015. Vol. III. P. 145–150.

<sup>59</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest.* Orthodox parishes in the history and documents of the Church // The Gospel in the context of contemporary culture. 2016. Issue. IV. Part.1. P. 326–333.

<sup>60</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest.* Secularisation as a driving force of ritualism // The Gospel in the context of modern culture : a collection of scientific articles. X International Scientific and Practical Conference, Belgorod, 20 May 2022 Belgorod : Publishing House "Belgorod" of the National Research University "Belgorod State University", 2022 P. 191–194. 191–194.

<sup>61</sup> *Yakovova E. V., Yakovov D. V.* Der zustand der inneren mission der Russisch-Orthodoxen Kirche zu beginn des XX. Jahrhunderts // *Experientia est optima magistra.* 2023. Vol. XII. P. 431–436.



## **CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES**

When considering the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples, it is worth paying special attention to the very concept of "mission", which has a theological basis, universal forms, principles, and methods. To speak about a specific case of practical missionary activity, it is important to comprehend the phenomenon of mission itself, its goals and objectives, to identify the most important aspects, to conduct a theological analysis of the main definitions, and to identify the specific features of mission in a particular historical and cultural context. Terminological accuracy in describing the phenomenon or process under study is the key to successful correlation of the information obtained in an interdisciplinary approach.

Practical missiology is related to philology, cultural anthropology, and history. The task of this stage of the study is to examine the concept of "mission" and theoretically categorise the various approaches to missionary activity. Based on the data obtained, we will be able to analyse pre-revolutionary methodological recommendations for missionaries who carried out their ministry among the Samoyedic peoples. This will allow us to identify the specific features of this mission, as well as the factors that influenced the outcome of missionary work during this period.

The findings will enable us to more correctly identify the key points that require more detailed consideration in the following chapters.

## 1.1 Theological analysis of definitions

The Missionary Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church gives the following definition of mission: "Mission (witness) – preaching to awaken faith – is inherent in the very nature of the One Holy Cathedral, and Apostolic Church and consists in proclaiming the Good News to the whole world: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). It aims at the salvation of every human being" <sup>62</sup>.

As we begin to consider the history and current state of the Russian Orthodox Church's mission among the Samoyed peoples, it is necessary to identify and clarify the key terms needed to conduct and describe the theological analysis. The abundance of homonymous words associated with the concept "mission" can be misleading and lead to terminological disputes and confusion. To avoid this, we will use the terminology adopted in the current and most comprehensive study in the field: "Orthodox Missiology in the System of Theological Knowledge" <sup>63</sup>.

Hegumen Serapion points out that the concept of "missionary service" describes a special practice of church life associated with the feat. While "missionary activity" is considered a more general concept, more neutral and less meaningful, the concept of "missionary work" reflects the labor-intensive and practical nature of the activity <sup>64</sup>. The idea of service is ecclesiastical, while activity and work are predominantly secular concepts, in some documents referring to the practice of proselytizing <sup>65</sup>. The concept of missionary work in the professional context acts as a characteristic of missionary practices that require certain knowledge, skills, and abilities. The situational use of the terms indicates the existence of ideas about the ideal of missionary work and its actual practices.

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<sup>62</sup> Concept of Missionary Activity of the Russian Orthodox Church (adopted by the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on 27 March 2007, Journal No. 12) // Collection of Documents of the Russian Orthodox Church. Activities of the Russian Orthodox Church. Vol. 2. p. 1. M. Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church, 2014. P. 368.

<sup>63</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegum.* Orthodox missiology ... P. 152. 152.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* P. 156.

<sup>65</sup> On Orthodox Mission in the Modern World (adopted by the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1994) // Collection of Documents of the Russian Orthodox Church. Activities of the Russian Orthodox Church. Vol. 2. p. 1. M. Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church, 2014. P. 364.

"The subject of the mission is expressed by the concept of the actor and its object by the concept of the addressee of the mission" <sup>66</sup>. To emphasise the absence of subject-object relations and to present the nature of mission as a dialogical process, we will use the concepts of "actor" and "addressee" of mission.

The actor can be represented as a cathedral mission actor, an individual actor and deviant mission actors <sup>67</sup>.

The addressee of mission can be characterised based on criteria of ecclesiological certainty or uncertainty, and in relation to the boundaries of the Church, the addressee can be external and internal <sup>68</sup>.

The mission actor acts as a subject of missionary service, missionary activity, and missionary work. The class of concepts methodologically related to the actor also includes mission and missionaryism, missionary (synodal, diocesan, parish), missionary imperative and other terms with the adjective "missionary" in various declension variants: missionary challenges, missionary opportunities, missionary responsibility of the bishop, priests, and laity.

Terms related to mission addressee include the territory of pastoral responsibility, the mission field, and the mission field map.

Separately, it is worth noting that missiology studies Orthodox mission in its various manifestations, which constitute the mission research field. And the mission field represents the addressee of the mission, positioned geographically.

Most often the ministry of the Orthodox missionary is carried out far beyond the church fence. For the most part, the missionary is required to engage in dialogue with secular society to communicate spiritual experiences.

The missionary fulfils the command of God by acting as a co-worker: "For we are co-workers with God, and you are God's field, God's building" (1 Cor. 3:9).

Missionary service should be based on love for people and the desire to communicate the practice of the Church's communion of God. Regardless of social, gender, racial or any other characteristics, every person can be with God through

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<sup>66</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegum. Orthodox missiology ... P. 177.*

<sup>67</sup> More about it: *Serapion (Mitko), hegum. Research field of the mission actor // Culture and Art. 2019. № 5. P. 1–7.*

<sup>68</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegum. Orthodox missiology ... P. 178.*

personal participation in the life of the Eucharistic community as well as in the sacraments of the Church. For a quality and meaningful presence in the Church, it is not enough to know the doctrinal truths and formally lead a Christian lifestyle. It is necessary spiritual rebirth and presence with God in various spheres of earthly life. For this purpose it is necessary to fill people's life and culture with the Gospel content. In addition, an important factor is the preservation of the cultural identity of the peoples to whom the mission is addressed.

From the Gospel we know that the first missionaries were the apostles: "But when he had called the twelve, he gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases and sent them out to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick" (Luke 9:1, 2). 9:1, 2), "After this the Lord also chose other seventy disciples and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself wanted to go" (Luke 10:1), from which it follows that a mission is not only a God-pleasing work, but also a God-established one. The Lord sent out disciples to preach before and after the death and resurrection of the cross: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20). The apostles fully fulfilled the command given to them by God and preached the Gospel of God in different countries.

Thus, the Revelation of God, originally given to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, was fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. The New Testament Revelation spread to other nations through the apostles. The place and way of life of the nations determined the specifics of each apostle's preaching. The Divine Revelation, which is one in spirit and essence, took different forms depending on the state of the final recipient of the mission. The initial division of preaching style was due to the presence of mission recipients rooted in the Jewish tradition as well as from the Gentiles. This distinction can be seen even in the extant texts of the Gospels: Mark describes in detail Jewish customs and rules, targeting Gentile readers who were not familiar with the subtleties of the Law, temple worship, and

Jewish traditions, while Matthew elaborates on Roman legal and cultural peculiarities. For example, Mark, in chapter 12, describes how Jesus observed a widow donating 2 mites. For Roman readers, Mark clarifies that 2 mites constitute one Roman codrant <sup>69</sup>.

At times, differences in methods due to culture, tradition, and location of the recipients caused other apostles to doubt their appropriateness and necessity. This led to the convening of the Apostolic Council, which cancelled the necessity of fulfilling the Old Testament regulations for Gentile Christians.

Since then, the missionary ministry carried out by the Church has not stopped. If we consider not the entire history of Church mission, but only what is most important for the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church, it is important to note that one of the significant missionaries is Saint Prince Vladimir, whose memory lives in the hearts of Russian people after millennia. Having baptised Russia in 988 on the banks of the Dnieper, the holy prince for many centuries determined the vector of development of culture and statehood, having laid a solid foundation of Christ's faith in the foundation of the Russian state. Orthodoxy became an integral part of Russian culture. Images of Christ and the saints are explicitly or indirectly present in art from deep antiquity to our days. But Vladimir was only the one who laid the foundation of the faith. His work was developed by missionaries from other Local Churches. The mission of the Russian Church was just beginning its existence. In addition, it required ecclesiastical reception of many pagan rituals that had been practiced in Russia. Some of them were adopted and incorporated into the tradition of the Russian Orthodox Church, for example, St. George's Day festivities and baking pancakes for Shrovetide. Some traditions have been abolished (jumping over the fire, sun worship), and some have never been eradicated (pagan burial rites, veneration of house worshippers). The presence of its own traditions gives the local Church unique features, conditioned by the historical path of Orthodoxy in its territories, but the pagan origin of these traditions can for many centuries close for

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<sup>69</sup> *Iannuarius (Ivliev), archim.* of the Gospel of Mark. Theological and exegetical commentary. M. Izd-vo BBI, 2018. P. 308.

ordinary believers the true meaning of the rites and the Christian theology itself. Therefore, in addition to the oral instruction in the faith, the people's own culture, which was transformed under the influence of the accepted faith, was of great importance in the churching of the people.

One of the most revered saints in Russia is the Venerable Hegumen Sergius of Radonezh. In the Middle Ages, it was monasteries that were powerful spiritual and cultural centers. They promoted the spread of Christianity and increased the literacy of the population. Therefore, important spiritual tasks of that period were the creation and management of new monasteries. The monks with their labour-built buildings, took care of teaching literacy to ordinary people and served the cause of spreading the Christian faith throughout Russia, which was the best missionary activity.

To illustrate the examples and peculiarities of the Russian mission it is necessary to refer to the activities of outstanding Orthodox missionaries: St. Stephen of Perm, St. Philotheus of Leshchinsk, St. Makarius (Glukharev) – the enlightener of the Altai region, St. Innocent, who developed the missionary experience of St. Stephen of Perm (XIV century), as well as St. Nicholas of Japan.

A vivid representative of the Orthodox mission in the ethno-cultural aspect is St Makarius (Glukharev). He enlightened the Altai people in the south of the Tobolsk diocese and laid down some principles of mission among the nomads, which the Altai people were at that time. The first steps in the mission were the construction and arrangement of a temple, the establishment of a school and the treatment of the nomads. The baptised nomads were settled near him, taught to cultivate the land, grow vegetables, and bake bread. He helped many of them to build houses and generally took care of their material needs. In addition to his personal efforts, Archimandrite Makarius asked for help from his acquaintances, who sent medicines, books, food, and money <sup>70</sup>. Based on his writings, in 1838 Archimandrite Makarius outlined his ideas on the reorganisation of missionary work: "Thoughts on ways for the successful spread of Christianity among Jews, Gentiles, and Mohammedans in

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<sup>70</sup> *Efimov A. B. op. cit. P. 160.*

the Russian Empire" <sup>71</sup>. In addition to the sedentarisation of the nomads and their education, Archimandrite Makarius saw the most important points of his program as the translation of the Holy Scriptures into Russian and the spiritual revival of the Russian people. In his opinion, only this could lead to the revival of the missionary cause <sup>72</sup>.

A contemporary of St. Makarius was St. Innocent of Moscow. During this period the missionary ministry received new opportunities for development. St. Innokenty, thanks to his excellent education, was engaged in scientific activity. This enabled him to contribute to the development of society. He was always open to the flock and showed special concern both for the spiritual health of the Russian people and for the culture of the small peoples of Siberia and America.

In his writings, he studied the impact of missions on indigenous cultures. One of his most famous works, the article "Instruction to a priest Appointed for the Conversion of Non-Christians" <sup>73</sup>, is of particular interest in the framework of our study. In it, the saint outlined his own practical experience of mission, describing the reaction of pagan peoples to the preaching of Christianity and compiling methodological recommendations for missionaries when working with the cultural tradition of the pagan people, who had already been influenced by European civilisation since the time of St Innocent.

Without the transport that modern missionaries have, he travelled to Alaska, Kamchatka, Yakutia, Primorye, and Priamurye. At that time there were no translations of doctrinal and liturgical texts into indigenous languages. Therefore, one of the distinctive features of St Innocent's work was translation activity. He compiled a scripture, made translations of texts of the Holy Scriptures and some prayers. St Innocent's research in the language and culture of small peoples made him one of the first ethnologists among Orthodox missionaries. In addition to all

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<sup>71</sup> *Makarius (Glukharev), archim.* Thoughts on ways for the most successful spread of the Christian faith among Jews, Mohammedans and pagans in the Russian Empire / archim. Makarius (Glukharev) ; with a foreword by priest S. V. Strakhov.. M. : type. A. I. Snegireva, 1894. 131 p.

<sup>72</sup> *Efimov A. B.* op. cit. P. 163.

<sup>73</sup> *Innokenty, Metr. of Moscow, St. Instruction ...* P. 239–263.

this, St Innocent conducted natural scientific observations and governmental activities, and organised the Orthodox Missionary Society.

Today's missionaries are required to make such efforts only on special occasions. There are many translations of the Scriptures in a variety of languages, and virtually anywhere in the world can be reached by modern transport, but the same methodological problems remain. In order to communicate the Gospel intact, it is necessary not only to translate the words into another language, but also to match the original meaning to the specific cultural code of the recipient of the mission. The missionary needs to know the specifics of the mentality of the people being enlightened and their cultural tradition.

As an example of a successful mission, we can look at the activities of St Nicholas of Japan based on his letters <sup>74</sup>. He was engaged in the enculturation of the Gospel in Japan. St Nicholas' mission became a phenomenon of intercultural interaction. It took him eight years to learn the language and culture of his mission recipient. The Japanese mission was based on translation activities, which contributed to the actualisation of religious and cultural-historical meanings of Christian culture in the linguistic reality of the pagan culture. According to N. V. Kartasheva, candidate of cultural studies, "The main method of St. Nicholas Kasatkin's missionary ministry can be defined as a consistent combination of Orthodox Christian doctrine with the best aspects of the specific Japanese ethnics; the fullest and quickest possible transfer of the dogmatic foundations of Christianity to the soil of the traditional Japanese worldview" <sup>75</sup>. However, in his translations he avoided using traditional philosophical vocabulary so as not to erase the differences between Confucianism and Christianity. Our study will also focus on this problem in the second chapter on religious imagery.

Thus, we see that mission as a witness of faith in Jesus Christ originates directly from the command of God and has existed for two millennia around the world and eleven centuries in Russia, being at the same time a super task, which is

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<sup>74</sup> *Nicholas (Kasatkin), Equal to the Apostle*, Diaries. Vol. 1–5, 1870–1912.

<sup>75</sup> *Kartasheva N. V.* op. cit. P. 92–93.



realised through the direction of missionaries from God and the Church to a new people and each person from this people, who acts as the addressee of the mission.

It is the direct responsibility of every Christian to continue the tradition of missionary activity. The Church as the guardian of Divine Revelation, which is "the pillar and confirmer of the Truth" (1 Tim. 3:15), is concerned not only with transmitting the intact doctrine of the salvation of mankind to the whole world, but also with preserving it in the Local Churches; therefore, not only the missionaries, but also the parishes in which the missionaries are nurtured, are important for a successful mission. The existence of Orthodox parishes is a necessary condition for spreading the faith because witnessing without the saving Church Sacraments is not enough, hence the second stage of missionary activity after witnessing is the creation of a parish community and, consequently, a Local Church. The most important examples for modern mission are the holy missionaries of past centuries. Venerable Sergius as a model of spiritual guidance and building communities and monasteries. Archimandrite Makarius as a model of mission among nomads, enlightener, and organizer of the life of the Altai people. Like St. Makarius, St. Innokenty worked in a different cultural environment. In addition to writing literacy and teaching the Altaic people, the saint was engaged in scientific activity, creatively comprehended his practical experience, and studied the life and traditions of the recipient of the mission.

For this study it is important to note that for successful preaching in a different culture, which is closely related to the life of the Russian people, but not assimilated by them, it is worth paying attention to the ethnographic study of the customs, life and beliefs of the people; to have access to translations of the Holy Scriptures and liturgical texts into Russian and into the languages of the addressees of the mission; to pay special attention to the spiritual revival of the Russian people as the backbone of the mission as a whole, as well as to the practice of inculcating in the nomads a sedentary way of life through teaching them agriculture, which archimandrite Makarius managed to do, but may not always be accessible to representatives of northern latitudes, where farming is impossible for objective reasons.

Thus, based on Scripture, as well as philological data and hagiographical examples from the history of the Church, we have established that the missionary is a messenger of special quality and significance. Missionaries are messengers of the Church and, in theological interpretation, of God Himself. Their task is to transmit the gracious experience of the divine communion by joining people to the Church through the sacraments and teaching the revealed truths of the faith. However, due to the differences between the actor and the addressee of the mission, as well as cultural and social characteristics in general, missionary activity cannot be carried out according to a universal template. The presence of unique circumstances requires the application of special forms and methods of missionary activity.

The identification of several patterns and characteristics of successful missions raises the question of having a methodology that reflects the most important principles and methods of work in different contexts. We need to identify the main types of missionary activity to be able to select the most appropriate for the context under study.

## 1.2 The main types of missionary activity

At present in the Russian Federation there are rather few scientific works devoted to the analysis of missionary work from a culturological point of view, although it is culturology that acquires great importance in the cause of mission, especially in the New Age. In the first centuries of Christianity, preaching was most often conducted without considering the ethnic characteristics of the recipient of the mission, despite the significant differences between Judeo-Christians and Christians converted from the Gentiles, which served as a reason for the convening of the Apostolic Council. As time passed, however, the gospel message became more and more rooted in the tradition of certain peoples and reflected in their culture and customs. Thus, missionaries gradually began to spread the rituals of local churches rooted in different cultures.

The dissertation research of candidate of cultural sciences N. V. Kartasheva "Russian Orthodox missionaryism as a cultural phenomenon: on the example of the

activity of St. Innokenty (Veniaminov)" <sup>76</sup> is devoted to the consideration of the phenomenon of missionary activity from the point of view of intercultural communication and the correlation of church teaching and national customs. Kartasheva distinguishes three levels of missionary activity: general humanitarian; general-cultural; specific-cultural.

The general humanitarian level does not emphasise mission as such in any way. It is concerned with describing the impact of mission on the humanities of humanity. Thus, mission can be viewed from theological, historical, and philosophical perspectives.

The general cultural level already considers mission in the context of culture itself as a part of it. The dissemination of religious teachings is, in a sense, a means of dissemination and reproduction of culture. This fact allows us to distinguish two different directions of cultural analysis:

1. The phenomenon of mission is considered as a derivative of religious culture. The content of mission is analyzed, as well as the very process of its formation, conditioned by religious consciousness and historical changes in dogmas and their interpretations. In addition, interfaith influences and borrowings are considered. The forms of mission in historical and contemporary contexts are examined.

2. The next aspect is functional. In contrast to the first direction, in which mission is seen as part of religious culture, in this approach missionary work is understood as a communicative and integrative function underlying interethnic contacts. In this case, missionary work will be linked to cultural anthropology. Missionaries face new tasks, the solution of which leads to the search for the supranational content of Christianity and local church aesthetics.

In addition to transmitting the tradition itself in the form of rituals and teachings, the missionary solves practical problems: how fully and without cognitive

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<sup>76</sup> *Kartasheva N. V.* Russian Orthodox missionaryism as a cultural phenomenon: on the example of the activity of St. Innokenty (Veniaminov) : autoref. dissert. ... kand. kulturolog. nauki : 24.00.02 // Scientific electronic library disserCat : [site]. URL: <https://www.dissercat.com/content/russkoe-pravoslavnoe-missionerstvo-kak-yavlenie-kultury-na-primere-deyatelnosti-sv-innokenti> (accessed 21.08.2020).

distortions the recipient of the mission perceives the Christian tradition within his cultural code. In addition, it is worth noting that missionary activity was quite often accompanied by global political processes: colonisation and cultural expansion. In addition to state and social interference in mission affairs, there was also a set of intra-church attitudes that influenced the missionaries of their time.

The third level of scientific analysis is concrete-cultural. It considers the missionary practice of a particular confession. The history of the mission of the Russian Orthodox Church is inextricably linked to the process of formation of statehood in Russia. Consequently, when considering the mission, an important aspect will be the relationship between the Church and the state, as well as the relationship between religious culture and Russian culture in general.

The above-mentioned approaches to the cultural study of mission are related to such a wide range of phenomena that their comprehensive study is not possible within the framework of this study. However, these aspects will make it possible to structure the study of the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples.

The missionary's work is largely determined by the specifics of the cultural environment in which he preaches. First, the missionary is himself a carrier of a particular culture, which, in one way or another, will influence the culture of the people to whom he will preach. This influence may be positive, or on the contrary, it may become a significant barrier to preaching through personal dislike of the missionary and his culture by the indigenous people. There may be several reasons for this: the addressee of the mission will feel the danger of preserving the identity of his culture; there may be a divergence in the basic values of the actor and the addressee; the form of preaching contradicts the ethical norms of the people. The image of the missionary and his actions in everyday life, which are not directly related to the sermon, also play an important role.

There are two related approaches to mission: "enculturation" and "religious syncretism". The first term refers to the incorporation of the gospel into the culture and its inner transformation, while the second term refers to the reinterpretation of

the gospel in the "spirit of culture," that is, the substitution of the timeless value of the gospel for the temporal ideals and aspirations of the people. The missionary's main task is to maintain a balance between form and content. Everything related to the cultural life of the people must be reinterpreted and evaluated in terms of the Gospel ideal. The missionary does not impose new forms of tradition and ritual; he replenishes the culture of fallen humanity with Divine light. The missionary's task is to Christianise the culture, not to fill the old consciousness with new ritual forms.

Each nation values its own traditions, its own language, and its own history. It is unacceptable to impose on the addressee the form of culture that is accepted in the missionary's homeland. The special art is to understand the history of a nation and its national heroes from the perspective of the Christian faith, to point out the Providence of God for that nation and the value of Christ's sacrifice for every person on the globe. This is achieved through the missionary's personal spiritual experience and immersion in the national environment to appreciate the beauty and depth of the culture of the people to whom he preaches. Without love for the tradition of the people, their life, that is, the very people to whom the missionary is sent, his words will not have the power without which mission is impossible. Because mission itself is not about bringing people into the Church as an organisation. It is a testimony of faith and the richness that faith gives, and in the words of Apostle Paul: " If I speak with human and angelic tongues, but have not love, I am a tinkling brass or a sounding cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1).

One measure of missionary success is the numerical growth of the Church. In different circumstances, missionaries will face specific challenges based on the specifics of the place, cultural, historical, and political reality. Depending on the context, approaches to mission will vary. For the further stages of the study, we need to refer to the classification of missionary methods <sup>77</sup>.

One of the most appropriate for the task of this study is the classification proposed by James J. Stamoolis, who divides methods into three categories:

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<sup>77</sup> The results of this stage of the research have been published: *Serapion (Mitko), hegum., Iakovov D., priest, Ethno-cultural strategies ...* P. 101–110.

"1) Using the local language and ordaining local people is an incarnational approach;

2) Reliance on state power and support – a political approach;

3) Attempting to arrange one's life among the non-Orthodox indigenous population and influence them by personal example – the method of Orthodox presence" <sup>78</sup>.

According to James J. Stamoolis, "the incarnational approach, which is not a mechanical translation of the gospel from one language to another, but the incarnation of the truth of God in the language and culture of the converted people, can be appreciated as missionary work of the highest grade" <sup>79</sup>.

This approach is characterised by special attention to and concern for the culture of the people being educated. This approach requires language learning and translation activities. The opportunity to pray in the mother tongue and the ordination of indigenous people leads to the embedding of Christianity in the culture and traditions and, subsequently, in the historical memory of the enlightened people.

In an earlier study we observed the result of applying the incarnation approach on the territory of some subjects of the Russian Federation: Mari El, Mordovia, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Chuvashia <sup>80</sup>.

In the pre-revolutionary period, the inhabitants of the above territories were baptised into the Orthodox Church, and some of them were ordained. These events become naturally inscribed in the history of the people, so Christianity is not a stranger there. Paganism as an older form of religious life is still manifested in the culture and mentality, but Christianity is no longer considered only the faith of Russians.

From the point of view of the diffusionist approach in ethnography, the Christianisation of these peoples was greatly influenced by the very fact that many Russians, equal in number to the indigenous population, lived with them. This statement is true for all the above-mentioned subjects of the Russian Federation,

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<sup>78</sup> *Stamoolis J. J. op. cit. P. 189.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), Igum. and Iakovov D., priest. Ethno-cultural strategies ... P. 104.*

except for Chuvashia, where the indigenous population significantly prevails quantitatively. Therefore, we are talking about the incarnational approach, and not just the presence of Christians in the regions.

During the missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church in the pre-revolutionary period, indigenous peoples formed their personal Orthodox experience of God-communion. It is reflected in the legends and history of the people. Modern representatives of these peoples piously keep the memory that all their ancestors were baptised and had Christian names. Orthodoxy has become their national faith, perhaps because many cultural elements have a connection with Orthodox culture and the heroes of folk tales have Christian prototypes. Nyurgun Botur, the hero of the Yakut national epic *Olonkho*, is an example. He has quite a lot of similarities in his portrait description with Saint George the Victorious. Apart from appearance, the descriptions of their lives and feats coincide in many respects <sup>81</sup>.

In this approach, it is important to remind indigenous peoples of the richness of their spiritual culture. It is important not to point out their own superiority and condescending concern for unenlightened small peoples, but to awaken their historical memory, if they have had a positive experience of encountering Christianity. If this encounter is for the first time, then it is necessary to take all possible measures to ensure that Christianity is not identified with the culture of the people to whom the missionary belongs, and to look for common features between the Christian tradition and the culture of the people being enlightened. This is what the Apostle Paul did in Athens, pointing not to any deficiency of the Gentiles, but to their special piety and honoring of the yet unknown God (Acts 17:22-23). The same principle was followed by Orthodox missionaries of the past: St Stephen of Perm, St Nicholas of Japan, St Makarius (Glukharev) and others.

There are moments in the history of the Church when missionary activity was closely linked to the political ambitions of the state, which was conquering new lands. Missionaries were representatives of the Church, but they were also citizens

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<sup>81</sup> The Mystery of the Yakut George the Victorious // *Yakutskiye eparchial vedomosti: the life of Orthodox Yakutia*. 2012. № 1. P. 35–37.

of their Fatherland, which imposed on them obligations unrelated to religious teaching. "It is an approach concerned with offering the potential convert the benefits of a political or material nature that he would receive if he became a Christian" <sup>82</sup>.

This type of missionary activity belongs more to the representatives of the colonial policy of the Roman Church when the political development of new lands was accompanied by the conversion of the indigenous population to the Latin faith. This method was less characteristic of the Russian Church.

The Tale of Bygone Years preserves the words of the Equal-to-the-Apostles Prince Vladimir about the necessity for all his subjects to be baptized: "If anyone does not find himself in the morning on the river, whether rich or poor, or beggar or laborer, he will be disgusted with me" <sup>83</sup>. Thus, the very baptism of Russia was done largely through a political method. However, the Orthodox missionaries themselves rarely resorted to it. Rather, it was in the interests of politicians and businessmen to organise Orthodox missions in the territories under development. For example, A. B. Efimov points out that "Grigory Ivanovich Shelikhov, a merchant, played a decisive role in the organisation of Orthodox education in America..." <sup>84</sup>. At the same time, the state and businessmen benefited from the spiritual and educational activities of Orthodox missionaries among the indigenous population, while the missionaries' use of offers of benefits for adopting the faith had the opposite result. James J. Stamoolis believes that "although there are countries on earth where a nationwide conversion could be achieved, Orthodox theologians today avoid such tactics. Based on the examples of the missionaries of the past, modern Orthodox thought follows the path of the incarnational method. Moreover, today it recognizes that the time when religion could be imposed has faded into oblivion." <sup>85</sup>. Pressure on a person in any form is frowned upon, so this method is no longer applicable in the conditions of modern reality.

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<sup>82</sup> *Stamoolis J. J.* op. cit. P. 209.

<sup>83</sup> *Nestor the Chronicler.* The Tale of Bygone Years // *Izbornik* : a collection of works of Ancient Rus' literature. M. Khud. lit., 1969. P. 72.

<sup>84</sup> *Efimov A. B.* op. cit. P. 116.

<sup>85</sup> *Stamoolis J. J.* op. cit. P. 212.



The peculiarity of the method of Orthodox presence is the internal orientation of actions. Based on the data of our own ethno-cultural research, we found that this approach can be applied to some subjects of the Russian Federation, whose population is rooted in a non-Christian religious tradition, e.g. The Republic of Adygea, the Republic of Buryatia, North Ossetia-Alania <sup>86</sup>.

During historical development, the inhabitants of the above-mentioned subjects have changed the paradigm of searching for religious experience and identity to searching for national identity, most often returning to paganism. It is rather difficult to talk to pagans about God, as Christianity forces a person to abandon the habitual life and take upon himself "the yoke of Christ" (Matt. 11:29), while paganism describes the surrounding reality in an understandable mythological paradigm of thinking.

Often, preaching under the circumstances is fruitless. The missionary is under special circumstances. He is required to live a life of faith, bearing witness to Christ by the very fact of his presence. This is a difficult task. The missionary's personality, much less his faith, is not initially of interest to people of another culture, among whom the missionary is in a distinct minority and perhaps disadvantaged. If we turn to the experience of the Russian missionaries of the nineteenth century, we see that the basis of their activity under such conditions was a social and educational concern for the indigenous people. They tried to help people based on their own small capacities and the most important needs of their potential flock. The missionaries' concerns included medicine, education, and technical improvements in living and working conditions. This kind of care disposed the recipients of the mission to fellowship and to receive the Word of God. The authority acquired allowed them to begin missionary work through word and prayer, inviting the local people to their conversations and services. This method was successfully used by Russian missionaries of the 19th century, representatives of the Altai, Kamchatka, and Siberian missions.

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<sup>86</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegum., Iakovov D., priest. Ethno-cultural strategies ... P. 104.*

In the current paragraph we have considered three levels of the phenomenon of missionaryism: the general humanitarian, who influences the development of spiritual experience and humanitarian knowledge of humanity as a whole; the general-cultural, which considers mission as part of culture; the specific-cultural, which allows us to highlight the influence of a particular religious culture on a specific process in the life of the people. Having considered the ministry of some modern missionaries, we have seen that their activity is carried out in different conditions. This fact allows us to classify the methods of work depending on external circumstances. We have considered the modern classification of approaches to missionary activity: the incarnational approach as a form of churching the whole culture of the people; the political approach as religious-political symbiosis with the aim of expansion; the method of Orthodox presence as a form of witnessing to Christ when more fruitful work is impossible <sup>87</sup>.

With the help of the obtained data, we can analyse the methodological recommendations of the pre-revolutionary period and give a characteristic of the missionary activity carried out by the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples in the specified period, having previously divided the participants into the actor and the addressee of the mission.

### 1.3 Actor and addressee in Obdorsk mission documents

A relevant domestic work on missiology is the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Theology by Hegumen Serapion (Mitko) on the topic: "Orthodox missiology in the system of theological knowledge". In this work the author considers the biblical and theological foundations of mission and introduces the concepts of the actor for the subject and the addressee of mission for the object of missionary activity <sup>88</sup>.

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<sup>87</sup> *Stamoolis J. J.* op. cit. P. 188–241.

<sup>88</sup> See also: *Serapion (Mitko), hegum.* Research Field ... P. 1–7.

In view of the reasoned validity of the proposed classification, we will use it for a more complete consideration and analysis of the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples; moreover, it will avoid objectification of the addressee of the mission.

The mission actor is the whole Church. However, in the context of this study, it is the bishops who govern the dioceses located in the area inhabited by small indigenous peoples united under the common name of Samoyeds. On their behalf, clergy and laity permanently residing in these places or seconded by the Synodal Missionary Department of the Russian Orthodox Church for a certain period perform their ministry. In such a case, the ruling bishop delegates a part of his authority to these persons: "In the language of canon law, this means that the bishop's ministry is ordinariate, and the ministries delegated by him are extraordinary" <sup>89</sup>.

Unlike the priesthood, missionary service is available in the Orthodox Church for men and women. During past centuries, this was not important in the mission field, as the education of the indigenous population was mainly the responsibility of clergy due to the objective difficulties of travelling due to weather conditions and the lack of widespread public education. Nowadays, logistical problems have been solved by means of modern technology, and educational activities in public institutions are mainly carried out by women who can be involved in missionary service: "It is the participation of women in missionary service that determines the possibility of its realisation as a special apostolate of the laity" <sup>90</sup>.

The missionary ministry of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples takes place in the regions of the Russian Federation on the territory of their permanent residence, which is fixed by governmental decree <sup>91</sup>. Thus, the zone of canonical responsibility in this case coincides with the territory of pastoral responsibility <sup>92</sup>. However, the full-fledged nurturing of the Samoyed peoples cannot

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<sup>89</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegum. Orthodox missiology ...* P. 182.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* P. 184.

<sup>91</sup> Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 24 March 2000 № 255 "On the Unified List of Indigenous Minorities of the Russian Federation" (as amended and supplemented) [Electronic resource] // Garant.ru : information and legal portal. URL: <https://base.garant.ru/181870/> (accessed 26.08.2020).

<sup>92</sup> *The Concept of Missionary Activity of the Russian Orthodox Church ...* P. 370. 370.

be realised within the boundaries of a particular diocese. To coordinate missionary work within several dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Synodal Missionary Department operates. Joint activities of administrative structures are realised in church-wide and inter-diocesan missionary projects.

The direct realisation of church missionary projects is carried out in the individual ministry of specific missionaries. To understand the specifics of this mission, it is necessary to consider both church-administrative structural units and the personalities of missionaries in the historical aspect and in modern times.

As part of this study, it is important to consider the permissible options for creative reflection on a variety of religious traditions and to verify the results in the context of the Orthodox faith.

Consideration of the current state of the mission field is key to choosing a direction for the development of Orthodox mission.

The addressee of mission can be internal and external to the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as ecclesiologically definite and indefinite. Unbelievers and unbaptised people represent the external addressee of mission. Through catechesis there is a transformation of the external addressee of mission into an internal addressee of mission. A person's attitude to the boundaries of the Church characterizes his or her ecclesiological state and status: an incorrect confession of faith makes a person a heretic, a violation of moral norms a sinner, and a lack of communion a schismatic<sup>93</sup>. At the same time, the state of incomplete participation in the life of the Church is characterised as ecclesiologically indeterminate. In addition, the external addressee of mission is divided into a correspondent and an opposing addressee: "The correspondent addressee encompasses an audience oriented towards a benevolent reception of the gospel message and ultimately towards conversion. Missionary theology directed at the correspondent addressee includes a significant educational element and makes extensive use of the addressee's cultural language as the primary means of mission. Faithful truths are

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<sup>93</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegum. Orthodox missiology ... P. 233. 233.*

revealed in images adapted to the level of perception of the addressee" <sup>94</sup>. It is this status that most of the indigenous peoples of the North are suited to. Having pantheistic pagan consciousness, representatives of these peoples willingly accept new religious ideas, supplementing the pantheon of spirits and gods.

The opposing addressee enters a polemic, acting as an opponent and critic of Christianity. However, such a state is not characteristic of the indigenous peoples of the North. When they do not want to be perceived by missionaries, they do not make contact at all and avoid talking about faith.

Historically, the relationship between the mission actor and the addressee has been recorded in various documents of a descriptive nature. But to consider the missionary aspect specifically, we should turn first to the instructions that were written at different times for mission actors between 1867 and 1904:

1. "Instruction to the priesthood of the Obdorskaya Peter and Paul Missionary Church" <sup>95</sup>.

The missionary of the newly opened Tazovsky camp during this period was Hieromonk Irinarkh (Yakhontov). This instruction describes the staff of the missionaries, their personal salaries, and the allocation of 600 r. in silver for the needs of expeditions with travelling churches. The schedule of services in Obdorsk and among the nomads is described: the first missionary is constantly with the nomads, visits Obdorsk 2-3 times a year to replenish supplies; the other two serve for 3 months in Obdorsk and travel with the nomads for 3 months, replacing each other. The deacon does not participate in retreat services, so he is engaged in teaching among Russian and Samoyed children, as well as keeping accounts. Separate instructions are given for reporting on the condition of the reindeer missionary herd and the income received from it. This instruction was approved by Archbishop Varlaam.

After receiving this instruction, the missionaries did not leave Obdorsk to preach, and soon left the missionary camp altogether. The main reason was that the

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid. P. 237.

<sup>95</sup> *Shemanovsky I. S. History of the Obdorsk Spiritual Mission, 1854–1904. P. 56–62.*

new instruction determined their every step and was also characterised by too severe requirements. It was extremely difficult and incomparable to a monastic yoke to get to a semi-detached hut in the Tazovsky camp without endangering one's life, and even more so for a family priest.

This instruction contributed to the deterioration of the mission and the frequent change of missionaries because of overly exaggerated demands that led to a shift from actual action to the writing of satisfactory reports. The only mission success of this period was the revival of school education.

2. "Instruction for Missionaries of Obdorsk, Surgut and Kondinsk Missions" <sup>96</sup>.

From 1885 the Tobolsk cathedra was headed by Bishop Abrahamy (Lestnitsky). The new archpastoral instruction was based on the old one with some changes that gave missionaries more freedom. The time and duration of missionary journeys could now be chosen by the missionaries independently, observing the order among themselves. In the new instructions there were prescriptions for missionaries to rest after expeditions to tidy up reports, prepare gifts for the newly baptised and other matters. His Eminence Bishop Abrahamy paid more attention to the instructions concerning the topics for sermons, moral talks, and translations of troparion's, Litanies and absolutions from prayers into the languages of the Samoyed peoples.

After the new instructions came into force, the number of missionary journeys increased, and they became longer. Previously baptised people began to come to the missionaries themselves, and to bring pagans for conversations. Sometimes the Samoyeds asked to perform services on their own.

3. "New Instruction for Missionaries of the Nizov Mission" <sup>97</sup>.

In the first paragraph of the instruction the identity of the Nizov and Obdorsk missions was given. This instruction was drawn up by the missionary department of the brotherhood of St. Demetrius of Solunsk and approved on 31 December 1891 by Bishop Justin (Polyansky). According to this instruction, the head of the mission is

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<sup>96</sup> Temporary changes in the Obdorskaya and Surgutskaya missions // Tobolskiye Eparchial Vedomosti. 1892. No. 3–4, Offic. ed. P. 25–29.

<sup>97</sup> Temporary changes ... P. 29–31.

given a wide range of powers: he fully directs and organizes the work of the mission, demands reports from his subordinates, and is himself accountable to the ruling bishop. Thus, a more rigid vertical of authority is built, in contrast to the previous recommendations. An important point is the requirement to erect chapels or large wooden crosses at the site of the Liturgy to remind the natives of Christianity. Deans become accountable to the chief of mission and are involved in missionary work.

The practice of recording baptismal data in a special book was introduced, indicating methods of conversion and further observation of the place and way of life of the Samoyeds. It is required to pay special attention to education and to send able children to Obdorsk.

The disadvantage of this instruction was that the head of the mission often had no authority among his subordinates, as he was younger in rank than, for example, the bishops of the Berezovsky and Surgut districts. Such a range of authority would have been appropriate for a vicar bishop due to the specificity of relations between clergy. Therefore, this instruction did not bring positive results.

During the short time Bishop Justin oversaw the diocese, three mission chiefs were replaced, as well as the regular missionaries. The last two mission chiefs lived in Berezov and had nothing to do with the Obdorsk Samoyeds, and there was only one missionary left in Obdorsk, who never travelled to the nomads again. The frequent change of missionaries worsened the attitude of pagans to Christianity, and the baptised turned away from the Church. In addition, the missionaries did not have time to earn the trust of the locals, and they no longer sent their children to the schools. The Tobolsk governor N. M. Bogdanovich in a letter to the new bishop, Metropolitan Agafangel (Preobrazhensky), pointed out the necessity of attracting sisters from the Kondinsky community to treat the sick, educate children and help the poor, since, having no benefit for themselves, the Samoyeds did not accept sermons about abstract things. In addition, he pointed out the need for the assistant chief of mission to be proficient in Samoyedic languages <sup>98</sup>.

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<sup>98</sup> *Shemanovsky I. S. History ...* P. 105–110.

4. "Practical Directions for Missionaries in their Preaching Among the Gentiles"<sup>99</sup>.

The new bishop, Archbishop Anthony (Karzhavin), personally went to Obdorsk to familiarise himself with the situation of the mission. In 1898 he issued a new instruction in addition to the "Instruction to the priest appointed for the conversion of non-Christians and guidance of converts to the Christian faith" compiled by St Innocent of Moscow and approved by the Holy Synod, published in 1895.

This instruction places less emphasis on administrative instructions. It emphasizes the need to teach the faith rather than to insist on baptism, because those who are hastily baptised quickly fall away from the faith and are a negative example to their fellow believers and a stain on the missionary's reputation. Much attention is given to the spiritual life and disposition of the missionary. Many references to the Holy Scriptures are given.

Archbishop Antony pointed out to the Obdorsk missionaries the inadmissibility of hasty baptism with a short period of baptism (1-2 days) and those who do not know a single prayer from memory, and therefore have very superficial ideas about the faith. In order to eliminate the errors of the mission, Lord Anthony drew up special regulations: the necessity of taking a receipt when converting adults in the presence of two competent witnesses about his sincere desire to lead a morally pure and God-pleasing life; the necessity of keeping books of baptised persons, indicating all the circumstances of the baptism (data on the duration and degree of catechesis; which prayers he knows by heart; the missionary's conclusion about the readiness to accept baptism); the requirement to get married when illegitimate children were found; the requirement to give baptism to individuals who had been baptized. Lord condemned the excessive leniency of missionaries towards the Samoyeds in matters of baptism.

For the first time the instruction raises the issue of qualitative rather than quantitative conversion. Archbishop Anthony endeavours to consolidate the efforts

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid. P. 119–130.



of the Obdorsk Mission and the clergy of the Samoyed parishes of Berezovsky and Surgut counties. For this purpose, a missionary congress was held on 1 September 1904 with the participation of the Tobolsk anti-Muslim missionary priest Efrem Eliseev, and on 8 September 1904 the "Obdorsk missionary brotherhood in the name of St. Gury, Archbishop of Kazan and Sviyazhsk" was opened to attract laymen to the mission.

5. "Instruction to parish priests serving in the benefices of the Tobolsk diocese as 'benefice anti- schismatics missionaries'" <sup>100</sup>.

This instruction is the last in chronology and is devoted to the issue of missionary work in the districts where schismatic Old Believers live. All 18 paragraphs of the instruction are administrative and disciplinary in nature and are not relevant to the topic of this study.

Having analysed 5 instructions for missionaries of the Obdorsk mission in the period from 1867 to 1903, we can point to a certain regularity in the relationship between the actor and the addressee of the mission. First, it is worth noting voluntariness. Where there was pressure and coercion on any of the participants in missionary activity, a decrease in the quality of work could be observed. For example, Samoyeds refused to be baptised under the threat of violent destruction of their idols, missionaries refused to undertake expeditions under detailed and very severe demands from the diocesan authorities. Much less effective were the recommendations of bishops who had not visited Obdorsk personally and were not familiar with the real conditions of the mission. The least demanded were the instructions of an administrative nature, which from the outside determined the form of the work of the missionary camp. The most effective instructions were those which gave the missionaries freedom of action, but with a clearly defined purpose, and practical recommendations concerning the organisation of spiritual life in specific conditions. From this we can conclude that the task of the mission leader is

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<sup>100</sup> Instruction to parish priests who are in the benefices of the Tobolsk diocese as "benefice anti-Raskolniki missionaries" // Tobolsk diocesan bulletins. 1903. № 22. P. 413–418.

to creatively determine the current direction of the missionary work, based on long-term quality considerations, and to be able to change it freely if necessary.

Requirements to improve the quantitative measures of mission effectiveness were detrimental to the mission. This only led to increased performance on paper in reports.

The local population also made special demands on missionaries, the neglect of which led to a decline in mission performance.

As the practice of implementing the instructions showed, the most important point is that a missionary should stay for a long time on the mission staff, not directly among the nomads. It takes time to earn the trust of the Samoyeds, and the harsh climatic conditions forced missionaries to leave the Obdorsk mission too quickly. Consequently, an important point of instruction was that the missionaries should rest and be able to regain their strength and health for further service. The nomads came to the missionaries they already knew and even brought pagans to talk to them and to be baptized.

Of great importance to the success of the mission was the knowledge of the language of the mission's addressee. Therefore, the instructions noted the need to translate the most basic prayers and liturgical texts into the languages of the Samoyeds. Missionaries who knew the language were more trusted.

The experience of the sisters of the Kondin community was especially valuable in the mission, since the Samoyeds could not listen to the preachers' stories on abstract topics that had no practical meaning in their lives. An important step in the mission was to care for the sick, to teach children to read and write, and to provide material assistance to the poor. After that, the local people became more open and receptive to the preaching, which contributed to the conscious acceptance of baptism.

In the first chapter we carried out a theological analysis of the main definitions related to missionary service. For this purpose, we divided mission actors into actor and addressee, categorising the addressee in relation to the boundaries of the Church.

We also identified a class of concepts methodologically related to the actor and addressee of mission, explaining their meaning and the difference between them.

We have learnt that mission is a special witness of faith in Jesus Christ. It originates directly from God's command and has existed for two millennia around the world and eleven centuries in Russia. We have considered examples of missionary activity of the most significant saints of the Russian Church. The specificity of their activity was conditioned by external conditions, as well as by the peculiarities of the addressee of the mission.

For successful preaching in a different culture that is closely related to the life of the Russian people, but not assimilated by them, it is worthwhile to pay attention to ethnographic study of the customs, life and beliefs of the people. Missions that have the Holy Scriptures and liturgical texts translated into the languages of the mission recipients are more effective. Of great importance is the spiritual revival of the Russian people as the backbone of the mission. In some missions among the nomads, attempts were made to instill in the nomads a settled way of life by teaching them agriculture. Archimandrite Makarius (Glukharev) succeeded, but this approach is not available to nomads in the northern latitudes, where farming is impossible for objective reasons.

On the basis of Holy Scripture, we have established that missionaries are messengers of the Church and, in theological interpretation, of God Himself. Their task is to transmit the gracious experience of the communion of God by joining people to the Church through the sacraments and teaching the revealed truths of the faith. However, due to the differences between the actor and the addressee of the mission, as well as cultural and social characteristics, missionary activity cannot follow a universal pattern. The presence of unique circumstances requires the application of special forms and methods of missionary activity.

We have identified a number of regularities and distinctive features of successful missions, we have considered three levels of the phenomenon of missionaryism: general humanitarian, which influences the development of spiritual experience and humanitarian knowledge of mankind as a whole; general-cultural,

which considers mission as a part of culture; specific-cultural, which allows us to highlight the influence of a particular religious culture on a specific process in the life of the people.

We also considered the modern classification of approaches to missionary activity: the incarnational approach as a form of churching the whole culture of a people; the political approach as religious-political symbiosis for the purpose of expansion; and the method of Orthodox presence as a form of witnessing to Christ when more fruitful work is not possible.

With the help of the obtained data, we analysed the instructions to the missionaries of the Obdorsk mission in the period from 1867 to 1904, as well as historical evidence about the consequences of their application, we identified the peculiarities of the mission and were able to assess the effectiveness of the application of the instructions of the priesthood in practice, preliminarily dividing the participants into the actor and the addressee of the mission.

Important parameters of the mission were: voluntariness, personal visitation of the mission by the bishops and familiarity with the real conditions of service, no requirement to increase the quantitative indicators of mission effectiveness, and the long-term stay of the missionary in the mission staff with the possibility of regular rest and recuperation.

It was extremely important to know the language of the mission's addressee, as well as to care for the treatment of the sick, teaching children to read and write, and providing material assistance to the poor.

To understand what kind of recommendations would be effective in modern conditions, it is necessary to study in more detail the history and culture of the addressee of the mission, to understand the history of the transformation of the beliefs, everyday life and culture of the Samoyeds, and to analyse the current state of the structural units of the Russian Orthodox Church operating in the territory where they live.

## **CHAPTER 2. ETHNO-CULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE ORTHODOX MISSION AMONG THE SAMOYED PEOPLES**

Since the analysis of recommendations from the pre-revolutionary period has shown us certain specific problems, to draw up an up-to-date picture of the current state of the mission in this chapter we need to draw up a comprehensive picture of the mission's addressee. We are interested in the history of the Samoyed peoples, their beliefs, traditions and rituals. The totality of these insights will enable us to consider the ethno-cultural aspects of the mission.

Understanding the origins of the Samoyeds, as well as discovering related cultures, will give us a deeper understanding of their mentality. For the same purpose, we need to familiarise ourselves with their mythology, their national religious images, and to identify cultural points of reference for missionary activity, like Christianity.

It is important for us to assess how effective the path of evangelical enculturation was and what missionaries of the pre-revolutionary period relied on in their work. For this purpose, we will have to study the key points of the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples before the revolution.

In reviewing the history of mission, we will pay special attention to the methods as well as to the evaluation of the quality of missionary results. We will identify the conditions that contributed to the success of missionaries, the factors that hindered the establishment of mutual understanding between the actor and the recipient of the mission, and the accompanying material problems that hindered the fulfilment of missionary work.

## 2.1 Ethnogenesis and cultural genesis of Samoyedic peoples

Initially, we will turn to modern scientific data to analyse hypotheses of the origin of the Samoyeds, their historical migrations, and contacts with representatives of other cultures. We will consider the criteria of indigenous small-numbered peoples, as well as refer to modern scientific research in the field of genetics.

Samoyeds is the general name of small indigenous peoples who speak or have spoken the languages of the Samoyedic language group of the Uralic language family and live in the North of the Russian Federation. Currently, they include representatives of four peoples: Nenets, Enets, Nganasans and Selkups. Previously, this group included five more extinct peoples, united by the common name of Sayan Samoyeds: the Kamasins, Karagas, Koibals, Motors, and Taigians. The only representatives of the Samoyedic peoples who emerged from the Samoyedic group of the Uralic language family because of Turkisation were the Soyots. Consequently, they are not of interest to us within the framework of this study.

According to the RF Government Resolution No. 255 of 24 March 2000 <sup>101</sup>, the peoples under study are included in the list of small-numbered indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation. According to the data of the All-Russian population census of 2010, the number of the peoples under study is as follows: Enets – 227 people, Nenets – 44 640 people, Nganasans – 862 people, Selkups – 3 649 people <sup>102</sup>. According to the data, we see that the Nenets are currently the most numerous people of the group, and the Enets are practically on the verge of extinction. Most of the Samoyed peoples live in the Yamal-Nenets and Nenets Autonomous Districts, Arkhangelsk, and Tyumen Oblasts, as well as in the territory of the Taimyrsky Dolgano-Nenets District of the Krasnoyarsk Krai, Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous District, and the Komi Republic.

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<sup>101</sup> Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 24 March 2000, No. 255 "On the Unified List of Indigenous Minorities of the Russian Federation". ...

<sup>102</sup> National composition of the population according to the All-Russian Population Census 2010 // Federal State Statistics Service : [website]. URL: [http://www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/perepis2010/croc/Documents/Vol4/pub-04-01.pdf](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/Documents/Vol4/pub-04-01.pdf) (accessed 19.07.2021).

To understand the mentality of the peoples studied and the peculiarities of the formation of culture, it is necessary to study the history of their origin, as well as to familiarise oneself with national mythology, traditions and beliefs.

The ethnic formation of the peoples of the Far North received much attention in the Soviet period. B. O. Dolgikh studied the origin of the Nganasans, Dolgans and Enets; L. V. Khomich studied the genesis of several elements of traditional culture and events in the ethnic history of the Nenets; the ethnic history of the North-East, Siberia and Kamchatka are reflected in the monograph by I. S. Vdovina; G. I. Pelikh considered the history of the origin of the Selkups. Nevertheless, to date there are no works in which the origin of a particular ethnic group among the representatives of the peoples of the North would be described from the initial stages of formation to its current state in historical and chronological sequence.

The Soviet historical literature on this issue has always noted the need to use the data of various sciences: ethnography, anthropology, linguistics, cultural studies, archaeology, etc. This position was substantiated by S. A. Tokarev and was also used by Yu. This position was substantiated by S. A. Tokarev <sup>103</sup>, and was also used by Y. V. Bromley <sup>104</sup> and I. S. Gurvich <sup>105</sup> in relation to the peoples of the North. The state of modern science allows us to use genetic data to establish kinship ties and the origin of ethnic groups.

The general theory of formation and ethnic development of modern peoples has not yet been fully developed, partly due to the lack of a common terminology and, accordingly, different interpretations of the concepts of "ethnogenesis" and "ethnic history" by scientists. In a broad sense, ethnogenesis is the development of an ethnos at all stages of its ethnic history, in a narrow sense – only at the initial stage. S. A. Tokarev defines ethnogenesis as a set of "elements that made up a given ethnicity and its culture, and those historical processes that resulted in the formation

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<sup>103</sup> Tokarev S. A. To the statement of the problems of ethnogenesis // Soviet Ethnography. 1949. № 3. P. 15.

<sup>104</sup> Bromley Yu. V. Ethnos, and ethnography. M. Nauka, 1973. P. 237–238.; *He also*. Ethnography at the present stage // Kommunist. 1974. № 16. P. 67.

<sup>105</sup> Ethnogenesis of the Peoples of the North / ed. by I. S. Kuznetsov. P. Gurvich. Academy of Sciences of the USSR ; Miklukho-Maclay Institute of Ethnography. N. N. Miklukho-Maclay Institute of Ethnography. M. Nauka, 1980. 277 p.

and development of the people" <sup>106</sup>. In addition to S. A. Tokarev, contributions to the development of the theory of ethnos were made by N. N. Cheboksarov, M. G. Levina, A. K. Agaeva, S. T. Kaltakhchyan, V. N. Kozlova, P. M. Rogacheva, M. A. Sverdlina, M. S. Junusov, and V. I. Kozlov. Here we should also mention the passionary theory of ethnos by L. N. Gumilev, the dualistic theory of ethnos by Y. V. Bromley and the information concept of ethnos by S. A. Arutyunov and N. A. Arutyunov. A. Arutyunov and N. N. Cheboksarov.

Of particular importance due to the novelty and objectivity of the method is the research of V. G. Volkov, reflected in the article " Ancient Samoyed and Yenisei migrations in the light of genetic data" <sup>107</sup>. In his work he uses a modern method of DNA analysis of carriers of archaeological cultures. In this way it is possible to establish the genetic kinship of representatives of different groups, as well as the directions of their migrations in antiquity.

The essence of the method is that mutations (SNPs) of the male Y-chromosome are passed on to all descendants in the male line. People who share SNP markers form a specific haplogroup. In women, changes in mitochondrial lineages can be tracked in a similar way. The data obtained in this way make it possible to create a phylogenetic tree, which can provide comprehensive information about the place of residence of the ancestor of a large group of people, as well as about the direction of migration of descendants up to the present time.

Often, speakers of the same language are biological relatives. Consequently, speakers of closely related languages may have a common ancestor. Thus, it is possible to establish the haplogroup of the speakers of the fore-language of a particular language group using genetic data.

Volkov cites in his paper the results of genetic studies of the first decade of the XXI century, which indicate the percentage of haplogroups to which the male population of Samoyedic peoples belongs:

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<sup>106</sup> Tokarev S. A. op. cit. P. 15.

<sup>107</sup> Volkov V. G. op. cit. P. 79–96.



"Nenets: I – 3 per cent, N1b – 56.8 per cent, N1c – 40.5 per cent, Q – 1.4 per cent, R1a1 – 5 per cent.

Nganasans: C – 5 per cent, N1b – 92.1 per cent.

Northern Selkups: C – 1.5 per cent, N1b – 6.9 per cent, Q – 66.4 per cent, R1a1 – 19 per cent, R1b – 6.1 per cent" <sup>108</sup>.

The most numerous haplogroups are N1c and N1b, except for the Selkups. Between themselves, these haplogroups are closely related and belong mainly to Finno-Ugric peoples. Volkov points out that "the starting point of the migrations of the genetic ancestors of the Uralic peoples' genetic ancestors was South-East Asia" <sup>109</sup>.

Currently, there are three different versions of the location of the Samoyedians' ancestral homeland. The supporters of the first version (D. V. Bubrich, A. P. Dulzon, J. H. Toivonen, I. N. Shebeshtien) tend to consider the Samoyedians' ancestral homeland to be the north of Eastern Europe; according to another version it is the territory of the Sayan Mountains (representatives of the Sayan theory: V. I. Vasiliev, G. D. Verbov, B. O. Dolgikh, M. A. Kastren, G. N. Shebeshtien). I. Vasiliev, G. D. Verbov, B. O. Dolgikh, M. A. Kastren, G. N. Prokofiev, I. E. Fischer, V. N. Chernetsov, L. V. Khomich) <sup>110</sup>. According to the third version, the Samoyeds came out of West Asia (A. M. Maloletko <sup>111</sup>, G. I. Pelikh <sup>112</sup>).

Genetic data confirm the "Sayan" version, but the ancestral homeland of haplogroup N1b may not coincide with the ancestral homeland of the Samoyedic languages. Volkov V.G. assumes that the movement of the mentioned group was carried out along the route from the Sayan along the Yenisei with access to the Lower Priobie <sup>113</sup>, which corresponds to the linguistic data of E. A. Helimsky <sup>114</sup>.

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<sup>108</sup> Volkov V. G. op. cit. P. 80.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Peoples of Western Siberia: Khanty. Mansi. Selkups. Nenets. Enets. Nganasans. Ketj / edited by I. N. Gemuev, V. I. Molodin, Z. P. Sokolova. I. N. Gemuev, V. I. Molodin, Z. P. Sokolova. M. Nauka, 2005. P. 399.

<sup>111</sup> Maloletko A. M. Ancient peoples of Siberia: Prehistory of man and language. Uralic people. Tomsk : Izd-vo Tomsk University, 1999. 280 p.

<sup>112</sup> Pelikh G. I. Origin of the Selkups. Tomsk : Izd-vo Tomsk University, 1972. 424 p.

<sup>113</sup> Volkov V. G. op. cit. P. 81.

<sup>114</sup> Helimsky E. A. Samoyedic linguistic reconstruction and Samoyedic prehistory // *Comparativistics, Uralistics : lectures and articles*. M., 2000. P. 13–25.

Materials of ethnonymy in combination with historical and folklore sources allow us to identify ethnic subdivisions within the Nenets and other North Samoyedic peoples, regarding which we can assume their South Siberian or autochthonous origin. Some generic names of the Samoyeds find analogues in the region of the Sayan Plateau.

Archaeological data indicate a certain similarity between the Late Neolithic comb ceramics of the Trans-Urals and the dimpled comb ceramics of the Volga-Kama area of the East European Plain. M. F. Kosarev considers the Volga-Kama as the initial territory where the formation of the Samoyedic language family took place during the developed Neolithic. From here, as he believes, the Samoyeds in the Late Neolithic moved beyond the Urals and gradually spread further eastwards to the entire Ob-Yenisei forest-steppe interfluvium up to the area of modern Krasnoyarsk <sup>115</sup>, in the vicinity of which complexes of Neolithic monuments with comb ceramics were found, genetically linked by A. P. Okladnikov with the Samoyedic ethnos <sup>116</sup>.

Genetic data confirm the connection of the Samoyeds with the cultures of the comb-pit tradition. The area of distribution of these cultures coincides with the habitat of representatives of haplogroup N1b. The study did not reveal genetic traces of migrations from Eastern Europe to the forest zone of Western Siberia. The presence of representatives of haplogroups N1b and N1c1 was confirmed in both zones, but the migration took place in the east-west direction. The obtained data may be the basis for the assumption that the cultures of Western Siberia and Eastern Europe, namely, the cultures of the pit and comb and comb and pit tradition, may have a common origin.

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<sup>115</sup> Kosarev M. F. Ancient cultures of the Tomsk-Narym Priobie. M. Nauka, 1974. 168 p. ; *He also*. Ethnocultural areas of Western Siberia in the Bronze Age // From the History of Siberia. 1973. Issue. 7. P. 65–77.

<sup>116</sup> Okladnikov A. P. From the history of ethnic and cultural relations of the Neolithic tribes of the Middle Yenisei (to the question of the origin of the Samoyedic tribes) // Soviet Archaeology. 1957. № 1. P. 26–55.

Some researchers have suggested that the Samoyeds included part of the population of the Tashtyk culture <sup>117, 118</sup>. Archaeologists consider the cultures of the Ob-Irtysh basin (Ust-Polui and Potchevash) to be Samoyedic, and V. F. Gening believes that in the middle of the 1st millennium A.D. Samoyedes lived west of the Urals: "If we have managed to establish the kinship of the Kushteryak and Karalkulov types with the West Siberian cultures of the middle of the 1st millennium A.D., then we can consider the population of the Urals to be Samoyedic in origin" <sup>119</sup>.

The combination of data from genetics, archaeology, linguistics, and other applied disciplines has allowed us to identify the ancestral homeland of the Samoyed peoples, their language and culture. During the migrations in the course of ethnic history, the distant ancestors of the modern Samoyeds met representatives of different cultures, beliefs, rituals, culture and way of life. The movement of the Samoyed ancestors from the Sayan territory to the North and the spread from Krasnoyarsk to Eastern Europe has in many respects caused a great deal of intercultural communication, the result of which was either complete dissolution of the Samoyed people ("Sayan mountaineers", Kamasins, Koibals, Karagas, Kashins, Motors and Taigians) in the Russian or Turkic population, or adaptive perception of the culture and religious beliefs of other peoples. Today there are quite a few dialects of the Nenets language, and depending on where communities live, beliefs and customs change greatly. In the framework of this study, the ethnogenesis and cultural genesis of the Samoyed peoples is a basis for a deeper understanding of the origin of beliefs and way of life of modern representatives of ethnic groups, but to form a missionary strategy of interaction with the Samoyed peoples, it is necessary to pay special attention to the study of their mythology and religion as a basis for intercultural communication.

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<sup>117</sup> *Mogilnikov V. A.* To the question of the Samoyed belonging to the cultures of the Iron Age of the Middle Priobie // Origin of the aborigines of Siberia and their languages : materials of the interuniversity conference, 1113 May 1969 / edited by Prof., Dr. of Historical Sciences A. P. Dulzon. Tomsk : Tomsk Univ. Publishing House, 1969. P. 177–179.

<sup>118</sup> *Alekseev V. P.* To the origin of the Tashtyk population of the South / edited by A. P. Smirnov // Problems of archaeology of the Urals and Siberia: a collection of articles dedicated to the memory of Valery Nikolayevich Chernetsov. M., 1973. P. 220–232.

<sup>119</sup> *Gening V. F.* Southern Urals in the III–IV centuries A.D. // Problems of archaeology and ancient history of the Ugric people : [collection]. M. Nauka, 1972. P. 274.

## 2.2 Mythology and religion of the Samoyeds

Intercultural communication is at the heart of missionary activity. In the interaction of representatives of different cultures, unintentional distortions of the meaning of those actions and statements that serve as a means of communicating certain information may occur. To convey not only external linguistic and traditional forms, but the content of the message itself, it must be communicated in a way that considers the cultural code of the recipient of the mission.

The culture of small indigenous peoples is reflected in their traditional way of life, which over the centuries has reproduced many elements of pagan beliefs. Migrations have resulted in intercultural contacts with representatives of other pagan tribes, as well as with Christians. This contributed to a change in the composition of the pagan gods' pantheon and transformation of the images of the folk epic's characters. New heroes were added, some gods were forgotten, and some were identified with biblical characters and Christian saints under the influence of missionaries.

Missionaries read national images that embody Christian ideas and values and build on them.

In the culture of Samoyedic peoples, similarities can be identified between the pagan antagonist gods and the antithesis of God Almighty and the devil known in Christian culture.

The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Brockhaus and Efron in the dictionary article devoted to Tobolsk province provides ethnographic characteristics of the Samoyeds, which, among other things, affect the peculiarities of religious beliefs of indigenous peoples <sup>120</sup>. The traditional culture of the indigenous peoples of the North is characterised by "a pronounced veneration of Heaven, Earth, Water and Fire as markers of the main spheres of the universe. In the religious and mythological representations of the Ob-Ugric and Samoyedic peoples, the cult of Heaven is

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<sup>120</sup> Brockhaus and Efron's Encyclopedic Dictionary : in 12 vols. : biographies / ed. : B. M. Karev, M. N. Khitrov. Reprint of the edition 1890–1907. M. : Soviet Encyclopedia, 1991. (Biogr. word. and reference).

associated with the supreme deity, which is Torum for the Khanty, Noomi-Torum for the Mansi, and Noum for the Nenets" <sup>121</sup>.

The self-name of the Nenets' religion of the late 16th – early 18th century is not precisely known. The Samoyeds practiced animism: they worshipped various spirits. At the same time, their language lacked the concepts of "shamanism" and "shaman". Despite this, the term "Nenets shamanism" can be found in studies. The ancient polytheistic religion of the Samoyeds was based on the personification of the forces of nature and a dualistic worldview.

The cosmogony of the Nenets began to take shape only in the late 18th and early 20th centuries. By that time, their culture had been influenced by missionaries, which contributed to the introduction of the biblical concept of creation into their worldview.

Due to the lack of writing, mythological tales were passed on to descendants orally. Yu. B. Simchenko found inconsistencies between shamanic tales and the ideas of ordinary people about the universe <sup>122</sup>.

Christian themes were intertwined with traditional pagan beliefs. The Samoyedi beliefs contain the traditional pagan idea of the World Tree and the three worlds. The universe (ya'tir) is divided into three levels: the Upper (nuv'nyangy), the Middle and the Lower: "The earth has seven floors, as well as seven heavens, which are arranged in layers above each other" <sup>123</sup>. They are inhabited by people, animals and spirits who are the masters of heaven, earth, fire, rivers, natural elements, bodies of water, forests, and other things. In the Lower World live evil spirits, bringing people disease and death. According to different versions, the Upper and Lower worlds consist of seven or nine levels.

The Samoyedic mythological picture of the world is based on the ideas of space and chaos, as well as space and time, which can be divided into three stages:

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<sup>121</sup> *Spodina V. I.* Ritual and ritual practices associated with the veneration of the objects of the universe as an integrator of axiosphere of ethnic culture // *Finno-Ugric World*. 2013. № 4. P. 70–76.

<sup>122</sup> *Simchenko Y.B.* *The culture of reindeer hunters of Northern Eurasia: ethnographic reconstruction*. M. Nauka, 1976. P. 9.

<sup>123</sup> *Lehtisalo T.* *Mythology of the Yurako-Samoyeds (Nenets)*. Tomsk : Izd-vo Tomsk State University, 1998. P. 12.

"The first is the birth of the gods, the second is the emergence of the world from chaos and the third is the emergence of man and animals" <sup>124</sup>.

The demiurgic gods Noum and Nga attract special attention. Noum is the god of the shining sky: "Noum means sky and sky god among the Samoyeds" <sup>125</sup>. Shamans ascend to the Celestial Sphere (nuv'tid) to interact with the light spirits. Noum Wesoko rules the world and orders the fate of people, he is also responsible for the change of seasons, heat and cold, the appearance of storms and winds.

According to some sources, Noum was also called Ilevbarte, which means "life-giver", "creator" <sup>126</sup>. However, B. M. Zhitkov, studying the Yamal Nenets, wrote that only baptised Samoyeds sacrifice to Noum, and Ilibyom-berti is the most important spirit for the Samoyeds, because all wild reindeer in the tundra belong to him. At the same time, he pointed out: "Sometimes it appeared as if Noum and Ilibyom-berti were one and the same" <sup>127</sup>.

The demiurge of the Lower World, Nga, rules over spirits hostile to humans. He demands sacrifices, feeds on the souls of the dead and on blood food. If people forget about him and do not make sacrifices, he sends disease and death. The souls that fall to Nga after death go to earth to harm all living things. Like Noum, he lives on the last tier of his world, where shamans can enter for sacrifices. In earlier times Nga was a master spirit, but since the 19th century in folklore under the influence of Christianity he becomes an evil deity and is called the Devil: "Noum does what is best for the Samoyed, and the Devil does what is worst. <...> The Devil, as Noum's enemy, therefore, constantly antagonises the Samoyed, whom Noum loves, and has created everything for him" <sup>128</sup>.

In the lower world dwell the spirits of various diseases: the spirit that brings diseases is called Khabchaminrena; the spirit that sends ugliness is called Madna; the spirits that take away a person's mind are Injutsyada and Hansosyada; Sustana is

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<sup>124</sup> Lar L. A. World order, cosmos and deities in the worldview of the Nenets in the XVIII – early XX century // *Izvestiya RGPU named after A. I. Herzen*. 2009. № 89. P. 10.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> *Khomich L. V.* op. cit. P. 195.

<sup>127</sup> *Zhitkov B. M.* Yamal Peninsula. St. Petersburg, Tip. M. M. Stasiulevich, 1913. P. 226.

<sup>128</sup> *Kushlevsky Y.I.* The North Pole and the land of Yalmal: travelling notes. SPb. : type. M.V.D. : lit. by K. Stremer, 1868. P. 116–117.

the spirit of dystrophy; Teri Namge is the spirits that take the images of underground monsters.

To the Samoyeds, Noum and Nga are gods, although they are in fact demiurges, as they both descended from the "Universal Mother" called Ya'Munya.

Ya'Munya transmits to people the souls created by Noum and controls the fates of people recorded in the book of Il'padar. She is honoured as the guardian of the family and the souls of children.

The elder gods of the Middle World are Ya'Nebya – "Mother of the Earth" and Ya'Mal Vesako – the owner of the Yamal land. Ya'Nebya gives birth to all living things and preserves the family hearth and home. It is very difficult for people to reach the spirits of the Upper and Lower Worlds, so they turn to the nearest host spirits: Pe'Erv is the master of the mountains, Si'iv min'Erv is the master of the winds, Pedara'Erv is the master of the forest, Id'Erv is the master of all water on earth, Ilebyam'Pertya is the master and giver of furs, game, beasts, the keeper of deer herds, Tu'Erv and Tu'Hada are the master and mistress of fire.

The most revered is the cult of fire "Tu", inextricably linked with the home hearth, which is kept by the protector of the house Tu'Hada. She is invoked in childbirth, for protection from illness and for purification in case of violation of sacral and ritual regulations. As sacrifices, she is presented with the meat of a hunted animal or domestic ritual deer. The woman as a mistress of the plague keeps and feeds the home fire.

The deity of the water cult is Id'Erv. He gives people fish. Id'Erv is honored by fishermen and reindeer herders.

Shamans are the guides to the world of spirits for the Nenets. Their authority for the tundra Samoyeds is unquestionable: "Shamanic practice was the main sphere of Nenets' religious life and reflected in ritual actions the most important concepts of the traditional worldview of the people" <sup>129</sup>.

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<sup>129</sup> Lar L. A. Traditional religious worldview of the Nenets : autoref. dis.... candidate of historical sciences : 07.00.07. URL: <https://dlib.rsl.ru/viewer/01003202051#?page=1> (accessed 20.07.2021).

Missionaries were opposed to shamans in the minds of the people but did not have the same authority and trust. Traditional rules of life were too deeply rooted in the Samoyed culture. Archpriest Peter Popov reported on the attitude of the natives to the missionaries as follows: "Samoyeds and Ostyaks are reluctant to bend their ears and hearts to accept new beginnings of faith that are contrary to their sensuality, and beginnings of a new life that do not agree with their age-old customs" <sup>130</sup>.

Domestic religiosity of Samoyeds differs from the religion of shamans. It has a practical orientation and has features of syncretism. The modern religious beliefs of the Samoyeds are the result of continuous intercultural communication with Russian Orthodox migrants, Ukrainian Protestants and Muslim communities.

In November 2015, in preparation for an expedition to Yamal, we received information about the religious beliefs and traditions of modern Samoyeds from the staff of the I.S. Shemanovsky Yamalo-Nenets District Museum and Exhibition Complex. The most widespread is the practice of making sacrifices before hunting and after returning. Part of the food and fat is thrown into a ritual fire to placate the spirits of the forest. The killing of reindeer is a ritual sacrifice that culminates in the consumption of the blood of the newly killed reindeer. L. A. Lahr in his article "Yamal Hebidya ya – sacred places on Yamal" <sup>131</sup> writes that at the sites of sacrifices there remain rotted hides and skin, skulls of polar bears and reindeer, burnt logs, scraps of cloth on sims (sacred staves), and traces of reindeer blood on the faces of idols.

Another class of spiritual entities are the household gods Mād'hehe. They include the mistress of the chum Myad'puhutsya, as well as the spirits of ancestors – Ngytyrma or Sidryang and the guardians of the bed – Vav'ter.

The household gods of Hehe, located outside the plague on a sacred site, are called Syadei.

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<sup>130</sup> Cited in: *Sofronov V. Yu.* Christianisation of the Tobolsk North. Tobolsk : D. I. Mendeleev TSPI, 2007. P. 63.

<sup>131</sup> For more details see: *Lar L. A.* Yamal Hebidya ya – sacred places on Yamal // *Vestnik archeologii, antropologii i etnografii.* 2004. № 4. P. 162–173.



In their appearance Myad'hehe can vary greatly. Among them one can find human figures, images of natural forces and elements – sacred stones, figures of deer, loons, wolves, bears and others.

"Mäd'hehe was inherited from the male line. They were made by special people and consecrated by shamans. The main purpose of "Khehe" is to protect the tent and its inhabitants from evil spirits. Sometimes, during camps, pet spirits are brought into the tent and placed on the place of honour at the opposite wall to the entrance.

For help in earthly affairs, the figures of patron spirits are sewn new clothes and fed with reindeer blood. Sacred objects can be handmade or taken from cult sites or ancient settlements. They can be figurines, unusually shaped stones or other objects.

The cult of dead ancestors is widespread among the Samoyeds. Each plague has a chest used to store ritual paraphernalia and dolls. This chest is transported on a sacred narta "khehe khan". To honor a deceased relative, a doll symbolising the deceased is made. According to Samoyedic beliefs, the soul of the deceased moves into it after death. By interacting with the doll in a certain way, Samoyeds believe that they are communicating with the deceased. They may be asked for advice and help, and on holidays or days of remembrance of the deceased, the doll is drunk with vodka. Strangers are not shown or talked about these dolls. The Nenets, with whom we communicated during the expedition, called these dolls Myad'puhutsya, but in scientific publications this name refers to the mistress of the plague. On the pages of the NAO unofficial blog called "ChUMoteka" there is a text that confirms the disagreement between the "aboriginal" and scientific view of the same cultural phenomena:

"Nenets often do not separate the concepts of *mäd'puhutsya*, Ya'Munya (Goddess of the Lon of the Earth) and Ya'Nebya (Earth-Mother). Some researchers believe that *mäd'puhutsya* was the material embodiment of Ya'Nebya (Earth-Mother), the wife of the supreme deity Noum; others that it is a representation of the same spirit – an underground old woman who lives on the second earth and comes

out from there at the call of the spirits, who, in turn, are instructed by the shaman to summon her" <sup>132</sup>.

Most sources describe Myad'puhutsya as the mistress of the plague, guardian of the home, patroness of women, childbearing, and motherhood. She was kept at the headboard of the bed and passed from mother to daughter.

During the missionary-ethnographic expedition between November 2015 and February 2016, field material was collected during interviews with residents of the settlements of Seyakha, Mys Kamenny, Novy Port, Salemal and Panaevsk, as well as the district centre of Yar-Sale, Yamal District. The information provided by the staff was confirmed, but the Samoyeds were evasive when asked about their beliefs and especially about sacred objects. When asked directly about Myad'pukhutsya dolls, they react emotionally and try to find out where the missionary got this information from.

This kind of caution towards outsiders is supported against the background of the aggressive attitude of Protestant missionaries to the pagan shrines of the Samoyeds. Sever-Press news agency <sup>133</sup> reports on the scientific conference "Development of the Arctic – a new turn in the development of national science and innovation" held in Salekhard on 4 December 2014, which included a seminar "Sacred places of indigenous peoples of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District: history, identification, preservation". The reason for this seminar was a report by Andrei Plekhanov, an employee of the research centre for Arctic studies of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, who during a scientific expedition encountered the phenomenon of burning their cultural monuments by newly enlightened Nenets Baptists. According to the centre's director, it is necessary to carry out preventive work among tundra people to avoid new acts of vandalism. Earlier, scientists of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District included more than 700 sacred sites and burial places of the indigenous peoples of the North into the electronic database.

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<sup>132</sup> *Kotkina I. V.* Peace to you, sikhirtya // Chumoteka: unofficial blog of NAO. URL: [http://www.chumoteka.ru/2011/08/blog-post\\_17.html](http://www.chumoteka.ru/2011/08/blog-post_17.html) (accessed 30.10.2020).

<sup>133</sup> See: In Salekhard, scientists discussed the preservation of sacred sites of the indigenous peoples of Yamal ...

It is worth noting that the precedent of the destruction of pagan sanctuaries of the Samoyeds by Christian missionaries' dates to the Orthodox mission of 1826. L.A. Lar notes that "in 1826 the sanctuary of Vesoko was visited by archimandrite Veniamin, who led the mission, to convert the Nenets (Samoyeds) of the Arkhangelsk province to Christianity. On Veniamin's order the sanctuary of Vesoko was destroyed and the idols were burnt to the ground. Despite the complete destruction of the most revered sacred place, the Nenets repeatedly made attempts to restore it" <sup>134</sup>. The Samoyeds did not damage the cross set up by Archimandrite Veniamin but placed nearby their wooden idols for sacrifices. This indicates a pantheistic worldview, which is expressed in reverence for all gods.

Over the centuries, the culture and nomadic lifestyle of the Samoyeds have been under attack by authorities seeking to transform their way of life and beliefs. Beginning in the 17th century, the Nenets resisted the invasion of their nomadic life by the Moscow State and then the Russian Empire. The resistance was accompanied by armed rebellions in the struggle for their territories, way of life and beliefs. The Nenets attacked not only Russian colonists, but also baptised members of the Khanty population. Obdorsk in the 18th century was the border of the Christian and pagan world. At that time, an ideological alliance of Ostyaks and Samoyeds led by a famous representative of the era, Prince Taisha Gindin, was formed in Western Siberia:

"In 1718, with the assistance of the Obdorsk prince Taisha Gyndin, a detachment of Samoyeds and the prince's brother Mikishka was sent to the baptised Ostyaks of neighbouring volosts "to take revenge on the newly baptised Samoyeds for their treason against paganism". Cruel massacres were committed against baptised Samoyeds and Ostyaks: in Lyapinskaya volost "two people were killed to death, and those killed were abused, their breasts were cut off and their secret ears were cut off and put in their mouths" <sup>135</sup>.

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<sup>134</sup> Lar L. A. *Yamal Habidya ya ...* P. 162.

<sup>135</sup> *Perevalova E. V. Northern Khanty: ethnic history.* Ekaterinburg: Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 2004. P. 68.

However, this prince himself was later baptised thanks to the works of St Philotheus of Leshchinsk, Metropolitan of Siberia and Tobolsk (1650-1727), the founder of fruitful missionary work in the North of Siberia. Already on his first journey from Tobolsk to the Far North in 1712, many of the Ostyaks were baptised in the Sosva River, as well as the Obdorsk prince Taisha Gyndin (baptised Alexius).

By 1720 a significant part of the native population had been baptised. In a famous letter Peter I thanked Metropolitan Philotheus for the fact that the Lord "christened the Vogul, Ostyak and Kyshtym clans, numbering forty thousand and more" <sup>136</sup>.

The constant confrontation between Christian missionaries and pagans led by shamans took place against the background of the struggle of state authorities for power and territories with the indigenous population, as well as internecine wars. The most significant of these are the Yamal tundra uprisings of 1825-1841 (the Vauli Rebellion) <sup>137</sup>, and Mandalada (the Yamal Rebellions of 1934 and 1943) <sup>138</sup>. Since the general literacy of the population began to increase only in the Soviet period, such historical information was often kept in the form of oral traditions in the form of folklorised text with elements of mythologisation. For more details see R. I. Laptander's article "Nomadic History in the Oral Stories of Yamal Nenets" <sup>139</sup>. For our study, these events are of value not in their historical context, but in their influence on the formation of national images and self-identification of the Samoyeds. For many centuries, the Samoyeds have been in contact with representatives of other cultures, but their traditional way of life has not been destroyed. Samoyedic culture partially adopted the images of Russian Orthodox

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<sup>136</sup> According to the reports of the schema-monk Theodore (Philotheus Leshchinsky, former Metropolitan of Tobolsk), – on the illegal actions of the Tobolsk Supervisory Court in relation to baptised foreigners // Description of documents and files kept in the archive of the Most Holy Governing Synod. Vol. 4. (1724 r.). St. Petersburg. V Synodalnaya tipi, 1880. Stb. 248.

<sup>137</sup> From the history of the Nenets people of the 30–40th of the XIX century (Movement of Vauli Piettomina) // Eastern Literature: medieval historical sources of the East and the West : [website]. URL: [http://www.vostlit.info/Texts/Dokumenty/Russ/XIX/1820–840/Nenec\\_borba/text.htm](http://www.vostlit.info/Texts/Dokumenty/Russ/XIX/1820–840/Nenec_borba/text.htm) (accessed 30.10.2020).

<sup>138</sup> Uprisings on Yamal 1934, 1943 ("Yamal Mandalada") // Chronos : world history on the Internet : [site]. URL: <http://www.hrono.ru/sobyty/1934sssr.html> (accessed 30.10.2020).

<sup>139</sup> Laptander R. Nomadic history in Yamal Nenets oral stories / ed. by V. N. Davydov, D. V. Arzyutov // Siberian Collection – 4. Facets of the social : anthropological perspectives for the study of social relations and culture. SPb. Kunstkamera, 2014. P. 124–140.

culture. This was natural for the pantheistic worldview of the Samoyeds and was organically accepted by the national consciousness.

As a result of mutual cultural influences over several centuries, Nenets people have come to regard Jesus Christ as a host spirit who gives health to all family members <sup>140</sup>.

This attitude is since previously the spirits of the lower world, who inflicted diseases, had no antagonists. It was possible to sacrifice to them, so that the disease passed by. Now Christianity has made it possible to invoke the help of a powerful spirit who can give health. This fact made it possible to introduce into the Samoyedic pantheon a Christian God with the ability to heal people, as explicitly stated in the Gospel. Since the paradigm of thinking itself did not change, the indigenous population organically perceived Jesus as a spirit who could help, but whom they did not know before the Russians appeared.

In preparation for a missionary trip to Yamal in November 2015, we received from the Salekhard Diocesan Office a modern text of the Lord's Prayer in Nenets, compiled by translator Eun Sub Song (see Appendix #1). It follows from the text of this prayer that the Father of Jesus Christ is the god Noum. Perhaps, at the early stages of acquaintance of the Samoyeds with Russian culture and Christian tradition, such identification contributed to the spread of Christianity among the Nenets. However, this comparison does not stand up to criticism from the point of view of dogmatic theology, and therefore is not useful for the Christian mission.

When comparing Samoyedic mythology and Christian theology, the correlation of God the Father and Noum looks incorrect.

1) Universal Mother Ya'Munya gives birth to Noum. God the Father is the beginningless.

2) Noum and Nga are brothers whom the Universal Mother brought forth from the mire <sup>141</sup>. The devil, being a creature, cannot be equal to the God who created him. Such a comparison demeans God.

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<sup>140</sup> The results of this stage of the research are published in the article: *Iakovov D.V., priest. To the Problem of Missionary Reception of Religious Images ...* P. 137–147.

<sup>141</sup> *Lar L. A. Arrangement of the world of the cosmos and deities ...* P. 10.

3) Noum is a demiurge, he, like Nga, creates animals from matter. Their power is strictly limited: Noum rules the upper world, Nga the lower. God the Father in Christianity has full power and is Omnipresent:

"How shall I go from Thy Spirit? And from Thy face shall I flee? If I ascend into heaven, you are there; if I descend into hell, you are there. If I take up my krill early, and dwell in the last of the seas, Thy hand shall guide me, and Thy right hand shall keep me" (Psalm 138:7-10).

4) Noum is married to Ya'Nebya. God the Father begets the Son before the age without a mother and has no wife at all.

These discrepancies will contribute to the formation of an incorrect image of God, which does not correspond to the provisions of Orthodox dogmatic theology. The worship of a defective spirit put in the place of the First Person of the Holy Trinity is a substitution, a lie and idolatry. Such a substitution cannot be justified by the difficulties of intercultural communication and the search for correspondences in the language of the Samoyedic cultural code, as it leads to syncretism.

The religious worldview of the Samoyedic peoples is in a mobile state. The main source of God-knowledge for them is nature. Religion is an instrument of influence of the initiated persons on the Upper, Middle and Lower worlds. Such a worldview favours the emergence of syncretic teachings that include paganism, Christianity and everyday beliefs. These concepts lay false foundations in the worldview of the mission recipient. The message of Christ and His sacrifice is already present in the semantic field, but the pagan paradigm of thinking does not allow us to see the Gospel context of the narrative. Continuing to work towards the reception of the Samoyeds' religious images will not only fail to enlighten them but will also make the task more difficult for subsequent missionaries, who will have to reassemble the Samoyeds' scattered information about the Christian faith into a coherent dogmatic system.

As a result of studying the mythology and religious beliefs of the Samoyeds, we found a great degree of influence of Christian missionaries on the worldview of the mission recipient. However, the perception of Christian doctrine did not lead to

a change in the paradigm of thinking itself, which remained pagan in essence. The more Christian images and plots were approximated to pagan myths, the more they were perceived in the context of pagan culture. The new religious images expanded the pantheon of pagan gods either by combining characters (Nga and the devil) or by incorporating them into the general system without any transformation (Jesus Christ as a helping spirit). Thus, we found a vulnerability in the missionary strategy based on the identification of similar images from different cultures. The missionaries faced a difficult task: to point out the conformity of the religious systems and then to continue their explanatory work, correcting the Samoyed people's perceptions with the help of biblical stories and saints' hagiographies.

In the long term, this method has shown its low efficiency and failure. More correct in the long term will be the method of religious paradigm shift. A comparative analysis of the characters and the very structure of religious representations will provide an opportunity to reevaluate traditional religious forms and representations. Thus, the analysis of the beliefs of the Samoyeds in the context of the Orthodox mission has shown the advantage of the comparative method over the identification of religious systems and has determined the prospects for the development of missionary activity in this direction at the present stage. For a more accurate transmission of the Divine Revelation to the Samoyed peoples, it is necessary to identify new forms and missiological aspects of pastoral ministry among the Samoyed peoples.

### 2.3 History of the Orthodox Mission among the Samoyeds

To develop the idea of the previous paragraph, we need to turn to the history of missionary activity among the Samoyed peoples. In reviewing the historical evidence, we will focus on the attempts to form a Christian worldview among the recipients of the mission, as well as on the factors that influenced the missionary process itself. We will identify the most correct missionary decisions that allowed

us to increase the effectiveness of the work, as well as the circumstances that prevented missionaries from achieving the goals set for them by the priesthood.

The prerequisite for the beginning of missionary activity was the acceptance of the Trans-Ural Samoyeds into Russian subjection in the 16th century. In 1525 the Moscow prince Vasily III issued on this occasion a grant: "To the Samoyad of Yugra, which live along the Ob River, to Prince Karachey Sed, Prince Lekhey, Prince Tomyl, Prince Belogolov, Prince Yarkoma, and all land people of the Samoyad of Yugra, which live along the Ob River" <sup>142</sup>. However, this time does not coincide with the beginning of missionary activity. Even though Boris Godunov issued in 1600 a decree on the construction of churches for baptised foreigners, according to which churches were built in Obdorsk and Beryozovo <sup>143</sup>, there was no purposeful missionary work among the Samoyeds. In 1620 Archbishop Cyprian was appointed to the newly established Tobolsk diocese. The indigenous population considered this a threat to their freedom. According to A. V. Golovnev, this circumstance provoked intensive development of reindeer herding: "the transition to large herd reindeer husbandry was initially not so much an economic event as a means of preserving independence" <sup>144</sup>.

The Samoyeds learnt about Christianity mainly through communication with Russian settlers. They were baptised for selfish reasons, solving their economic or political problems in this way <sup>145</sup>. In addition, Tsarevna Sophia issued a decree from 1685, which allowed Samoyeds to keep the faith of their ancestors <sup>146</sup>.

Historically, mission among the Samoyed peoples began in the 18th century, although the Tobolsk diocese had existed since the 17th century. Its borders coincided with the Tobolsk province until 1895, when an independent Omsk diocese

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<sup>142</sup> The letter of complaint of Grand Duke Vasily III to the Samoyeds about accepting them as subjects / edited by E. V. Vershinin // *Obdorsky Krai and Mangazeya in the XVII century : collection of documents*. Ekaterinburg : Thesis, 2004. P. 10–11.

<sup>143</sup> *Sumarokov P. op. cit.* P. 421–422.

<sup>144</sup> *Golovnev A. V. Speaking cultures: traditions of Samoyedians and Ugrians*. Ekaterinburg : Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 1995. P. 100–103.

<sup>145</sup> *Glavatskaya E. M. Russian power and the indigenous population of the Urals and Trans-Urals in the 17th century* // *Yearbook of the Research Institute of Russian Culture*. 1995. P. 23.

<sup>146</sup> *Glavatskaya E. M. When all the tambourines are silent... or Tale about how Tsar Peter decided to baptise the pagans of Siberia* // *Ural Collection. History. Culture. Religion*. Ekaterinburg. 1998. Vol. 2. P. 62.



was formed by separation from the Tobolsk diocese. Preaching among the indigenous population became the direct duty of Orthodox missionaries after Peter Alexeevich's decree of 1706, which secured the right to baptise natives exclusively to Orthodox priests. This step was intended to encourage the sedentary lifestyle of indigenous peoples and introduce them to Russian culture, which would ultimately strengthen the state's position <sup>147</sup>.

The greatest missionary activity was concentrated in the Nizovy Krai (otherwise known as the "Lower Ob"), which included the northern territories of Tobolsk Province, inhabited mainly by alien tribes. Geographically it included Kondinskaya and Obdorskaya volosts of Beryozovsky uyezd, as well as territories of Surgut uyezd of Tobolsk province. The centre of the Obdorskaya volost was the village of Obdorskoye (Obdorsk), now the town of Salekhard in the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District.

Within the Tobolsk diocese in the second half of the XIX century lived various non-believing peoples; among them Samoyeds (Nenets), Ostyaks (Khanty), Voguls (Mansi), Selkups adhered to pagan beliefs.

Due to the predominance of the Samoyeds in the mission field of Obdorie, the missionaries paid the greatest attention to preaching among this part of the population.

In addition to cultural and language barriers, the work of the missionaries was complicated by the remoteness of the reindeer herders' camps from Obdorsk (sometimes hundreds of miles) and, consequently, the need for long journeys to the tundra.

St Philotheos of Leshchinsk, Metropolitan of Siberia and Tobolsk (1650-1727), is considered to be the founder of fruitful missionary work in the North of Siberia. According to Peter I's decree of 1706 on the baptism of the northern peoples, Metropolitan Philotheos was to go to the North. There he was to build temples and chapels, baptise local inhabitants and destroy idols. The 1707 expedition to the

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<sup>147</sup> *Minenko N. A. Russian peasant community in Western Siberia, XVIII – the first half of the XIX century* / ed. by A. P. Derevyanko. Novosibirsk : Novosibirsk University Press, 1991. P. 14.

Beryozov Khanty was fruitless. Later Metropolitan Philotheus took the schema with the name Theodore in the Tyumen monastery <sup>148</sup>. But, according to the new tsar's decree of 1711, it was necessary to continue missionary work. This decree for the first time threatened those who would not be baptised with the death penalty.

During the journey of the schemitropolitan from Tobolsk to the Far North in 1712, many of the Ostyaks were baptised in the river Sosva, as well as the Obdorsk prince Taisha Gyndin (baptised Alexis). The missionaries did not seek to baptise the natives by force, even though they had the opportunity to do so, but preached the Gospel.

By 1720 a significant part of the native population was baptised. In the tsar's letter Peter I expresses gratitude to the metropolitan, who "christened the Vogul, Ostyak and Kyshtym clans, numbering forty thousand and more" <sup>149</sup>.

After the death of the saint in 1727, missionary work among the Samoyeds weakened for a long time. The reason for this, church historian N. Abramov saw in the fact that "he [*Metropolitan Philotheos*] found no imitators among the Siberian clergy" <sup>150</sup>.

Beryozovsky uyezd had only 4 parishes in 1781 <sup>151</sup>. Missionary activity in the Obdorsk region had almost completely ceased by 1789, and in fact even the formal Christianisation of the Ob North failed. According to I. S. Shemanovsky, author of the History of the Obdorsk Mission, this was due to a rumour of forced baptism of the Samoyeds. The governing Senate decided to suspend missionary activity. This lasted until 1825.

Thus, we see that the political approach in missionary activity in the territory of the North was not favourable both to the missionaries and to the state itself, for which reason it was not used.

It was only in the second quarter of the 19th century that the mission in the Northern territories of Siberia was resumed. This was facilitated by the Decree of

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<sup>148</sup> *Butsinsky P. N.* op. cit. P. 56.

<sup>149</sup> According to the denunciations of the schema-monk Theodore ... Stb. 248.

<sup>150</sup> *Butsinsky P. N.* op. cit. P. 93.

<sup>151</sup> *Zolnikova N. D.* Siberian parish community in the XVIII century / edited by N. N. Pokrovsky. Novosibirsk : Nauka. Sib. otd-edition, 1990. P. 25.

the Holy Synod of 24 December 1828 "On the Establishment of Missionaries in the Tobolsk and Kazan Dioceses for the Conversion of Foreigners to Orthodoxy"<sup>152</sup>. It was based on the provisions of another, earlier document – the "Statute on the Administration of Foreigners"<sup>153</sup> of 22 July 1822, adopted on the initiative of M. M. Speransky.

In general, as is well known, the most favourable conditions for the development of missionary work in Russia developed precisely during the period of the Holy Synod, which initiated the establishment of missionary societies, guided, and coordinated their activities<sup>154</sup>. For example, the decree of 1828 directly indicates the need for missions: "In those parts of the state where there are peoples who have not learnt Christianity or who are not sufficiently confirmed and instructed in it after conversion, to establish special missionaries"<sup>155</sup>.

Thanks to these circumstances, a decisive step was taken, which in fact laid the foundation for the Obdorsk Spiritual Mission.

Archbishop Eugene (Kazantsev; in the pulpit 1826-1831) visited Obdorsk during his trip to the Beryozovsky region in 1829. Lord was struck by the fact that most of the natives, although they consider themselves Orthodox, "not only have no idea about the basics of the Christian religion, but even do not know the name of Jesus Christ and are in idolatry"<sup>156</sup>.

With great regret Archbishop Eugene said: "It could not have occurred to them, a hundred years or more after their baptism, that they did not know the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, did not know their own names and called St Nicholas the Russian

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<sup>152</sup> On the establishment of missionaries in the Tobolsk and Kazan dioceses to convert to Orthodoxy // RGIA. F. 796. Inv. 109. C. 1552. L. 11.

<sup>153</sup> Statute on the management of aliens // Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire. Collection 2nd. Vol. 38. № 29126. P. 394–417.

<sup>154</sup> Missionary work // Domestic History: History of Russia from ancient times to 1917 : an encyclical in 5 vol. Vol. 3 / ed. : B. L. Yanin (chief editor) [and others]. M. Big Russian Encyclopedia, 1994. P. 613–617.

<sup>155</sup> *Tsyplin V. A.* History of the Russian Orthodox Church. Synodal and newest periods, (1700–2005). 3rd edition, revised. M. Sreten Monastery, 2007. P. 121.

<sup>156</sup> Eugene (Kazantsev), Archbishop of Yaroslavl and Rostov / A. V. Uriadova, Igum. Seraphim (Pitersky), Mon. Meletia (Pankova), J. E. Z. // Orthodox Encyclopaedia. Vol. 17 / edited by Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexy II. M. : Orthodox Encyclopaedia, 2008. P. 74–78.

God"<sup>157</sup>. Lord was so distressed by this circumstance that at first, he even wished to devote himself personally to missionary work in the North.

I. S. Shemanovsky in "Chronological review of memorable events in the Berezovsky region" testifies about this event: "Tobolsk Archbishop Eugene, having familiarised himself with the sad situation of the foreigners of the Berezovsky region, decided to leave the diocese for 5-6 years and live with the Ostyaks, Vogulichi and Samoyeds, learn their language, translate church books into their language, teach their children literacy, the Law of God, and teach them to be churchmen"<sup>158</sup>.

However, he was refused by the Holy Synod. Nevertheless, one of the most important results of Lord Eugene's trip was the establishment of the Obdorsk mission in 1831.

The initial period (1828 to 1888) was marked by the search for ways and means of conducting missionary work. It was a period when missionaries gained experience in practical work with the indigenous population in the polar tundra.

After visiting Obdorsk, Archbishop Varlaam (Uspensky) of Tobolsk and Siberia took measures to organise purposeful missionary work there. In 1846 Lord sent in 1846 to open a missionary school in Obdorsk a graduate of Tobolsk seminary priest Peter Alexandrovich Popov, who later devoted 22 years to the mission among the Samoyeds. He laid the foundations of missionary work in the Tobolsk North, including various areas: school education; trips to tundra herds; study of local languages and dialects, as well as translation of fragments from the books of the Holy Scriptures into these languages; and church building.

At the initial stage, before the beginning of full-fledged missionary activity, priest Peter was engaged in divine service and the fulfilment of demands; he taught literacy to children in the school he founded; he studied the language of the tundra people, as well as their manners and customs. During this period, he appealed to the Beryozov zemstvo authorities to establish a travelling church in Obdorsk.

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<sup>157</sup> *Sulotsky A. I. Works. In 3 vol. Vol. 2. On the Siberian clergy. Tyumen : Izd-vo Y. Mandrika, 2000. P. 256.*

<sup>158</sup> *Shemanovsky I. S. Izbr. works. In 2 vol. Vol. 1. M. Soviet Sport, 2011. P. 180–181.*

Missionary activity in Obdorsk uyezd received a significant impetus for further development thanks to the visit of Gustav Khristianovich Gasford. The West Siberian Governor-General Gustav Khristianovich Gasford visited Obdorsk on 30 December 1852, where he met with the priest Peter Popov.

The Siberian governor received a lot of useful information from the Obdorsk priest. The essence of some of them he would then state in the report on his trip: "The Samoyeds, who have received holy baptism, are very few; their religion and rituals consist in the worship of a single God, sometimes in the form of idols, and sometimes in different, striking objects of nature. Their priests, or shamans, take advantage of the inattention of our clergy, who do not accompany the foreigners when travelling in the tundras, persuade the people not to change the faith of their fathers and convince the wandering tribe that sacrifices to the creator can be made not only in Russian permanent and often very distant from their nomadic temples, but in any place..."<sup>159</sup>.

Peter Popov appealed to the Governor-General with a request for assistance in the construction of a folding travelling church, which could be conveniently transported on sledges and set up in tundra conditions.

Gusford readily supported the missionary and promised to help. The fact that the promise was fulfilled is evidenced by P. Popov's entry in his travel journal: "I decided to ask the government to build a travelling church <...>. I also expressed this idea to the Governor-General of Western Siberia in 1852: during his visit to Obdorsk two years later a travelling church was arranged and sent to Obdorsk"<sup>160</sup>.

The Council of the Main Administration of Western Siberia discussed the results of the audit and came to the conclusion that "it was necessary to act on the adult generation by spreading the Christian faith, with the acceptance of which foreigners become inclined to settle down and get some notion of citizenship, and on the younger generation by teaching them literacy in schools in the peasant

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<sup>159</sup> On the successful conversion of the Samoyeds to Orthodoxy and the establishment of the Ostyaks of Tobolsk diocese in the faith / RGIA. F. 796. Inv. 134. C. 2064. L. 2.

<sup>160</sup> Journal of missionary actions of the Obdorsk mission priest Peter Popov for 1863 // GUTO GA in Tobolsk. F. 156. Inv. 25. C. 127 (5). L. 384–391 bs.

villages nearest to the nomadic places, where the children learnt the rules of the Christian religion and the Russian language..."<sup>161</sup>.

Thus, we see that the missionaries did not use a political approach, but the state authorities considered the Christian faith as a basis for increasing the literacy of the indigenous population and sought to induce the tundra people to settle down through Christianity. At this stage the goals of the state and church authorities coincided, as the priest Peter Popov saw the lack of education as the main obstacle to the Samoyeds' churching.

The development of the school for Russian and Samoyed children was hampered by insufficient funding, which made it difficult for tundra people children to study at full boarding. In November 1860 P. Popov, for example, wrote: "From 15 September to the present time I have been teaching literacy to 18 children in the school, including 4 foreign boys. The school teaches children to read the church and civil press, writing, prayers and church singing"<sup>162</sup>.

Gradually a routine of missionary activity was formed throughout the year, which was never broken without reason. Peter Popov worked with the children until the end of November, and then left with his helpers for the tundra on reindeer. The missionaries took with them a travelling church and travelled from one camp to another to meet with the nomads, travelling more than a hundred miles.

By Christmas the missionaries were eager to return home. At that time the fairs began, and many of the tundra people whom Father Peter had instructed in the faith came to the church to be baptised. In the spring the children's classes continued.

The most important component of missionary work in the Far North is the need to travel to remote camps, which may be dozens of miles apart and hundreds of miles from the township centre.

The experience of priest Peter Popov showed that, despite all the difficulties of travelling in the tundra, it is the long-distance missionary journeys that bring missionaries the most significant results.

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<sup>161</sup> *Shemanovsky I. S. Izbr. works. Vol. 1. P. 202.*

<sup>162</sup> *Travelling journals of the missionaries of the Obdorsk mission (60–70th XIX c.) / comp. and comment. V. Templing, intro. art. and comment. S. Turov. Tyumen : Yury Mandrika Publishing House, 2002. P. 19.*

It should be noted in passing that such trips to the inaccessible places of the Far North also helped to mark the Russian presence in these remote Arctic territories.

The fact is that the priest Peter Popov had a rule that all missionaries travelling to the tundra with a travelling church strictly observed. When after the services the travelling church was folded up to move on, they made sure to mark the place where the altar stood. And on this place, they put a wooden cross. Hundreds of such crosses were placed by missionaries on both sides of the Gulf of Ob along the shore of the Arctic Ocean over two decades.

In addition to teaching children and missionary work in the tundra, priest Peter Popov compiled an "Ostyak-Samoed-Russian dictionary" and translated the Gospel of Matthew into Ostyak. During his missionary journeys Peter Popov began to write down some words and expressions from these languages, accompanied by a translation into Russian. Over time he accumulated dictionary entries. Their value lay in the fact that the correctness of the translation of each word (or concept) was repeatedly verified and confirmed in conversations and conversations with native speakers of the languages – representatives of nomadic tribes.

In the winter of 1866, Father Peter, who stayed in Obdorsk on the arrival of many nomads there, made the following entry in his journal: "When the foreigners left for the tundras, I had the opportunity to bring the Ostyat-Samoed dictionary into greater completeness and order and rewrite it" <sup>163</sup>. Father Peter intended to complete the dictionary by summer to present it to Archbishop Varlaam II (Uspensky; in the pulpit 1862-1872) in June.

In fact, Peter Popov presented the dictionary he had compiled to the spiritual consistory in a report dated 15 June 1867.

Lord, having got acquainted with the dictionary, left a very favourable resolution: "The work of this missionary in compiling a dictionary in two foreign

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<sup>163</sup> Travelling journals ... P. 52.

languages deserves all praise, and therefore now to give him my full paternal gratitude for this work" <sup>164</sup>.

Archbishop Varlaam also ensured that the dictionary was thoroughly checked, with the obligatory participation of tundra people.

Having gathered six people from the tundras (three from the Samoyeds and the same number from the Ostyaks) and having invited Russian burghers who knew the foreign languages (P. N. Roslyakov, P. Kudrin and Y. Yerlykov), from 8 to 17 January 1868 the dean held six meetings to check the dictionary. He read out words and phrases in the languages of tundra people, and they had to explain whether their understanding of the meaning of this or that word (phrase) coincided with the meaning given in the dictionary. Having passed such a test among the local population, the dictionary was sent to the Holy Synod for further consideration. In gratitude to priest Peter Popov for his work in compiling the dictionary, in a letter to the Holy Synod, His Eminence Varlaam pointed out: "If priest Popov's dictionary withstands the final censorship, where it should, then for such labour of his in compiling the dictionary and his 22 years of service in the missionary post in Obdorsk, may I be permitted to elevate him to the rank of archpriest" <sup>165</sup>.

Thus, the study of the languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and the experience of compiling a dictionary laid the foundation for the missionary principle that later became generally accepted: missionary work among the indigenous peoples of the North requires mastering their language and then involving them in the Russian language environment for the purpose of education and enlightenment.

The experience of Archpriest Peter Popov shows that a missionary at that time had to combine different qualities, skills, and abilities. He had to fulfil the duties of parish priest and missionary preacher, schoolteacher, and, in addition, to study the languages of the people to be baptised.

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<sup>164</sup> From the history of the Obdorsk mission / compiled by V. Y. Templing. V. Y. Templing. Tyumen : Mandr and K, 2004. P. 39.

<sup>165</sup> From the history of the Obdorsk mission. P. 69.



Another peculiarity of missionary activity in Obdorie and Nizovy Krai was that until the end of the XIX century there was not a single stone church in this vast territory. Archpriest Peter Popov reported to the bishop about the condition of the old wooden church: "The church is unsightly, small, blooming, with a fence without any amendments since its construction, dilapidated to the point of unbearable cold, so that in winter it is impossible to be in the church without a coat and pimples, and even candles are blown through the walls in a strong storm, and the walls shake sensibly, and the fluctuation of lamps is noticed" <sup>166</sup>.

The first stone church on Yamal was the modern church in honour of the Holy Faithful Apostles Peter and Paul. After several meetings of the committee for the reconstruction of the wooden church, Father Peter reported to his superiors: "No matter how desirable it is to build a temple of God at the end of the universe, however, the merchants flatly refused to donate to the short-lived wooden church and spoke in favour of building a stone church in Obdorsk. This opinion is so reasonable in principle and so feasible in terms of means and time that one cannot but agree with it" <sup>167</sup>.

By common efforts, a stone church was built in a convenient place for the tundra people who came to the town for the fair.

Summing up, it should be noted that the activities of the Obdorsk spiritual mission, which relied in the period under consideration mainly on the experience and authority of Archpriest Peter Popov, shows that for the establishment of missionary activity among the indigenous population in the Far North were necessary:

1. Organisation of school education, enlightenment of Samoyeds in the broad sense of the word.
2. Organisation of visits to their permanent or temporary (camp) places of residence to establish close trusting contact with them.

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid. P. 153.

<sup>167</sup> From the history of the Obdorsk mission. P. 80.

3. Study of the language(s) of the indigenous minorities of the North, both for direct communication with them and for the translation of catechetical and liturgical literature into the national languages.
4. Participation in temple building, as temple attendance is necessary primarily for the indigenous population living sedentary lives (in cities and towns).

It should also be noted that the experience of missionary work in Obdorie during this period showed that the work of missionaries cannot be successful if it is done by the labours of missionary priests alone, who diligently fulfil their obedience.

First, the success of the mission is determined by the position of the diocesan authorities: to what extent they consider missionary work a priority; to what extent they support the requests and initiatives of the missionaries; to what extent they care about the welfare of the mission – that is how successful the work will be.

The success of the mission also depends on the support of local (county and volost) and regional (provincial) authorities; the degree of interest of a wide range of parishioners in contributing to missionary work also plays a major role.

The experience gained in the Obdorsk Spiritual Mission during the ministry of Archpriest Peter Popov revealed the need to take these circumstances into account when organising missionary work in the northern territories of the Tobolsk diocese.

This allowed us to improve missionary activity in the future, considering the achievements and mistakes, adjusting it according to the requirements of the time.

Archbishop Feognost (Lebedev), who headed the Tobolsk pulpit from 1856, called the mission "Obdorskaya antipagan"<sup>168</sup>.

In 1869 hegumen Averky arrived to head the Obdorsk mission. For five years he headed the Tazovsky station, and in total he stayed in the mission for 12 years, but because of his advanced age he could not travel to the North.

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<sup>168</sup> *Irinarkh (Shemanovsky), hierom. History of the Obdorsk Spiritual Mission (1854–1904) // Pravoslavnyi blagovestnik. 1905. № 5. P. 202.*

To support the mission, the Tobolsk Diocesan Committee in 1877 established the "five years" <sup>169</sup> – an increase in salary for every five years of service of about 10 per cent on the salary to motivate missionaries.

Despite the measures taken, the mission was in a state of decline. Missionaries did not remain in their posts for long. In 1891, the priest Sergius Milavsky took charge of the mission, but less than a year later he was dismissed for negligence in "converting foreigners to Christianity" <sup>170</sup>. In the period from 1894 to 1906 the mission was promoted by John Egorov, a native of baptised Khanty, who later became a deacon.

In 1894, a project for the reorganisation of the Obdorsk mission was submitted to the Synod for consideration, which was approved in 1898. He founded a missionary brotherhood in the name of St Gury, Archbishop of Kazan, and Sviyazh Wonderworker <sup>171</sup>. Being a well-educated native of a noble family, Hieromonk Irinarkh managed to establish the work of the mission, created a library, and organised an ethnographic museum. All this contributed to the accumulation and systematisation of the experience gained by the missionaries during their expeditions.

After Archbishop Anthony (Karzhavin) visited Obdorsk, a women's missionary community was established. Women missionaries were to be engaged in educational activities as well as social work, practically replacing mothers to newly baptised girls <sup>172</sup>.

Five nuns from the Wirowski Monastery in Sedlec Province (present-day Poland) were sent to help with the affairs of the Obdorsk Mission <sup>173</sup>. In 1907 a women's community was established in honour of the icon of the Mother of God "Joy of All Who Sorrow".

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<sup>169</sup> Report of the Tobolsk Diocesan Committee of the Highest Approved Orthodox Missionary Society for 1877. Tobolsk, 1878. P. 13.

<sup>170</sup> *Irinarkh (Shemanovsky), hierom.* History of the Obdorsk Spiritual Mission (1854–1904) // Pravoslavnyi blagovestnik. 1905. № 12. P. 151.

<sup>171</sup> Statutes of the Obdorsk missionary brotherhood in the name of St. Gury, Archbishop of Kazan and Sviyazhsk Wonderworker // Tobolsk Eparchial Gazette. 1904. № 22. P. 351–355.

<sup>172</sup> *Mashanov M.* Obdorskaya mission // Church-social life. 1906. № 4. P. 134.

<sup>173</sup> *Tutolmin G.* The urgent and blatant need to renew and expand the Berezovsko-Obdorskaya mission // Tobolskie eparchial bulletins. 1918. № 16–17. P. 215.

Hegumen Irinarkh left the Obdorsk mission on 23 October 1910. On his personal petition he was transferred to the Tver diocese. After him the mission was headed for a year by priest Gury Mikhailov. However, at the beginning of the 20th century missionary activity became haphazard and irregular. In 1918, after the Red Army occupied Tobolsk province, the mission was impossible and ceased to exist in the early 1920s. The last Obdorsk missionary was priest A. Shikhalev. He preached among the indigenous people in 1919 <sup>174</sup>.

The Christian presence among the Samoyeds dates to the 16th century and continues to the present day. In fact, an Orthodox mission before the revolution was carried out from 1706 to 1919, but in two centuries it has yielded virtually no results. Despite the investment of money and the efforts of missionaries, the modern Samoyeds do not have a formed Christian identity. There were many reasons for this: harsh climatic conditions that made it difficult for the missionaries to travel across the tundra; inattention of the missionaries, which was used by shamans to exhort the Samoyeds not to change their ancestral faith; lack of sedentarisation and education among the indigenous population; lack of money and capable preachers; lack of knowledge of the language and culture of the recipient of the mission; lack of temples. However, the missionary activity of the priest Peter Popov, despite all these shortcomings, was exemplary under the given conditions. His recommendations on the organisation of missionary work have not lost their relevance in the present conditions. At the same time, some of the problems that priest Peter pointed out have been solved today: the state has taken over school education; churches have been built by the Russian Orthodox Church in places of permanent residence of Samoyeds; modern means of transport help to get to the tundra people, etc. However, some of the problems remain unsolved. Missionaries must study the language and culture of the Samoyed peoples to establish close trusting contact with them. There is still a shortage of talented preachers. There are also difficulties in the reception of Samoyedic culture and its traditions, as well as

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<sup>174</sup> *Sofronov V. Yu.* Missionary and spiritual-educational activity of the Russian Orthodox Church in Western Siberia (late XVII – early XX cc.) : dissertation . ...Dr. of Historical Sciences : 07.00.02. Barnaul, 2007. P. 92.

the reception of national images. These missiological aspects of the activity of Orthodox preachers at the present stage form the range of problems to be considered in the next chapter.

### CHAPTER 3. MISSIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF PASTORAL CARE OF MINISTRY AMONG THE SAMOYED PEOPLES

The first two chapters of the dissertation examined the general methods of missionary work and their specific application among the Samoyed peoples in the pre-revolutionary period. The work of missionaries was complicated by the following factors: lack of basic education and literacy among the population; lack of regular contacts with the population, lack of trust in missionaries; ignorance of the indigenous language; lack of liturgical literature, utensils, and temples themselves; nomadic lifestyle of Samoyeds. In addition to all the above, the pagan culture and worldview of the indigenous peoples was a significant barrier to missionary activity. However, despite the difficulties in the contact of different cultures, "missionaries did not aim at cultural assimilation and Russification of the enlightened peoples" <sup>175</sup>. To a large extent, the preservation, as well as the systematic study of their cultures, became possible thanks to the labours of the mission. Deputy Chairman of the Synodal Missionary Department of the Russian Orthodox Church (until 29 December 2021), Doctor of Theology, Hegumen Serapion (Mitko) in his article "Orthodox Mission among Indigenous Minorities: History and Modernity" points out that it was "the national policy of the Soviet state that led to the loss of many fundamental elements of cultural identity, the destruction of the traditional way of life, and the reduction of the use of the native language" <sup>176</sup>. At the same time, though, the development of infrastructure in the regions and the spread of the Russian language have partially solved the logistical and linguistic problems faced by missionaries in the pre-revolutionary period. The development of technology allows access to a variety of information, including liturgical literature. The loss of traditional religious identity, as well as the inclusion of indigenous peoples in the

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<sup>175</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegumen*. Orthodox mission among indigenous peoples: history and modernity // The Light of Christ enlightens all: an almanac of St Philaret's Orthodox Christian Institute. 2017. Vol. 24. P. 73.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.* C 74.

context of Russian cultural space, shifts the emphasis of missionary activity at the present stage.

The Russian Orthodox Church has a vast territory of canonical responsibility in which missionary activity is systematically carried out. In addition to the Russian Federation, it includes parishes in various countries around the world. Such geographical diversity requires special attention to the cultures and mentality of the people to whom the preaching is addressed. The impossibility of using a single universal method suitable for all cases requires the development of specific missionary strategies that consider the specifics of a particular situation. As an example of a missionary strategy, we will consider one of the most important areas of domestic mission: the education of indigenous peoples, including the small-numbered peoples of the North.

Various attempts to Christianise the indigenous population have been made from the eighteenth century to the present day. During this time a great deal of experience has been accumulated and the results of the mission have become visible. Some regions have never been Christianised, while the inhabitants of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) still retain the memory that in past generations all their ancestors were baptised, so Orthodoxy is not perceived only as the religion of Russians and has its own national traditions.

We believe that the diversity of the results of missionary activity is related to the degree to which Orthodoxy is embedded in the culture and life of the people to whom the sermon is addressed.

At present, through the efforts of the staff of the Synodal Missionary Department and the staff of local diocesan offices, active preaching activities are being carried out among the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East. The indigenous peoples of these territories, whose numbers do not exceed 50,000, have the status of small-numbered peoples. The 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation introduced the concept of "small-numbered indigenous people". There is also a Unified List of Small Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Federation

(2000), which now includes 40 peoples, and a List of Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East of the Russian Federation (2006).

For a people to have the status of indigenous and small-numbered people under the law, it is necessary for them to recognise themselves as an independent ethnic community (self-identification), to live in their ancestral territory, to have national crafts, distinctive culture and native language. The number of the people on the territory of Russia should not exceed 50 thousand people. Such a distinction allows to provide the IPs with a special status and state benefits for the preservation of these peoples.

The residence of indigenous minorities in the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church implies a special pastoral responsibility for these peoples. While preserving their traditional way of life, most indigenous people remain pagans. This is facilitated by the culture of their ancestors, as well as state programmes <sup>177</sup>, aimed at preserving and promoting the folklore, traditions, language and folk arts and crafts of small indigenous minorities.

The Orthodox Church, concerned for the salvation of all peoples, endeavours to bring to people the Gospel teaching and the Church Sacraments that promote Christian life in God. However, the pagan worldview and culture of peoples can be a significant obstacle to evangelisation. The task of this stage of the research is to identify missiological aspects of the transmission of the Divine Revelation, stored in the Russian Orthodox Church, to small indigenous peoples, using the example of the Samoyed peoples.

### 3.1 Missionary Service of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Samoyed peoples at the present stage

As we begin to analyse the current state of mission and identify factors for increasing its effectiveness in the twenty-first century, we need to consider the

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<sup>177</sup> A list of state support measures ...



mission actor. In addition to the internal state of the addressee, as well as the external circumstances accompanying the mission, the missionary's personality, and the availability of appropriate structural units, as well as material and technical resources, are of great importance.

We will begin our consideration of the current state of mission by analysing the structural divisions of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The development of technology, changes in the political system, the scientific and technological revolution, and other factors have enabled missionaries to overcome language, logistics, and information problems. Today, the ability to move quickly across the tundra, to easily access information, and to communicate in Russian, a language that all missionaries understand, are solutions to the problems of the last century, but in the present, they have provided the basis for the development of new missionary challenges: the activities of new religious movements and the revival of pagan beliefs.

New religious movements of the Protestant persuasion, pagans, and Muslim communities are active in the present-day territory of the Samoyeds. According to the missionary department of the Salekhard Diocese <sup>178</sup>, the following religious organisations operate in its canonical territory:

- Russian Orthodox Church – 27;
- Islam – 18, of which:
  - Regional Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District of the Central Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Russia – 16;
  - Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Asian part of Russia – 1;
  - Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Siberia (Omsk Muftiyat) – 1.

Non-traditional denominations – 20, of which:

- Evangelical Christians Baptists – 10;

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<sup>178</sup> Report of the Missionary Department of the Salekhard Diocese for 2019 // Archive of the Chancellery of the Salekhard Diocesan Office. F. 8. C. 64. L. 1–8.

- Christians of the Evangelical Faith – 3;
- Evangelical Christians – 1;
- Christians of the Evangelical Faith – Pentecostals – 5;
- Jehovah's Witnesses\* – 1.

Also, religious groups: Russian Orthodox Church – 9; Islam – 2; Evangelical Christians-Baptists – 6; Christians of the Evangelical Faith – 1; Evangelical Christians – 3; Jehovah's Witnesses\* – 3; Seventh Day Adventists – 1; Orthodox Church of Old Believers of Inglin – 1.

These indicators reflect the current missionary challenges in the territory of the Salekhard Diocese. At the same time, non-traditional denominations pose a great threat, as Muslim communities are migrant communities that do not proselytise.

According to the Mufti of the Regional Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Khaidar Takhirovich Khafizov, every fifth person in Yamal is a Muslim: "Today, the share of the Muslim population in cities is 15-20 per cent. All of them needed spiritual support. Today our spiritual directorate includes 14 local Muslim religious organisations located in cities and towns of the Autonomous Okrug" <sup>179</sup>. For Russia as a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional state there is nothing strange in this, but for Orthodox missionaries such a share of Muslims in a non-traditional territory is an undoubted challenge. Village Muslims are loyal to the Orthodox and even turn to missionary priests for help: they ask them to sanctify their homes or shops and take holy water <sup>180</sup>. Indigenous cultures are treated loyally.

Protestant missionaries with leadership in Western countries pose a great danger from the point of view of government agencies, cultural scientists, and clergy. In 2014, the scientific conference "Arctic exploration – a new turn in the development of domestic science and innovation" was held in Salekhard. One of the

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<sup>179</sup> *Starostin A.* Mufti Khaidar Khafizov: sufficient Islamic infrastructure has been created in Yamal, it is necessary to deepen educational work // Central Spiritual Board of Muslims of Russia : [website]. URL: <http://www.cdum.ru/news/47/2505/> (accessed 17.10.2020).

<sup>180</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest.* We are at home, that is in Yar-Sale // LIVEJOURNAL : blog "Chronicle of priestly service". URL: <https://dan-prophet.livejournal.com/47851.html>. Date of publication: 29.11.2015.

\* This marker denotes the organisation "Jehovah's Witnesses", which has been liquidated, recognised as extremist, and banned by the court on the territory of the Russian Federation.

most important issues of the conference was the preservation of the cultural heritage of the Samoyeds. Svyatoslav Alekseev, Director of the Scientific Centre for Arctic Studies of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Candidate of Historical Sciences, told how Andrei Plekhanov, an employee of the Centre, encountered acts of vandalism among the Nenets who had adopted a new faith during an expedition: "Newly converted Baptists started burning their cultural monuments" <sup>181</sup>. The problem of literal reading of the texts of the Holy Scriptures or their arbitrary interpretations in the spirit of Protestantism led to the destruction of monuments of Samoyedic culture: destruction of sacred sites, burning of sacred narta, etc. The incidents provoked a ripple effect among the Nenets. These incidents provoked unrest among the tundra people, contributing to social destabilisation in the region. The way of mastering traditional culture, which was proposed by Protestants, consisted in the destruction of cultural monuments and a complete break with the pagan tradition.

The opposite direction of the movement of religious life can be found among the representatives of Nenets shamanism. L. A. Lar <sup>182</sup>, candidate of historical sciences, researcher of Samoyeds, wrote about this phenomenon. The culture and life of both tundra and sedentary Samoyeds is built around shamans, who are still found today. Young hunters make sacrifices to the spirits, sacred dolls and objects are kept at home, and in times of trouble people remember the shamans, seek them out and turn to them. The preaching of Christianity often takes place in the environment of folk shamanism, where everything the missionary says is perceived through the prism of the pagan worldview. What does not fit into the culture, life and traditions of the Samoyeds causes their inner rejection, while neutral things fit into the established polytheistic system of pagan gods and spirits.

In contrast to non-believers and non-Orthodox proselytising preachers, dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church operate in places where Samoyeds traditionally live. The Samoyeds (Nenets, Nganasans, Selkups and Enets) live

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<sup>181</sup> See more...: In Salekhard, scientists discussed the preservation of sacred sites of Yamal's indigenous peoples ...

<sup>182</sup> Lar L. A. Nenets shamans // Novosibirsk Branch of the Russian Geographical Society (RGS) : [website]. URL: <http://www.rgo-sib.ru/science/74.htm> (accessed 30.10.2020).

predominantly in the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District, the Nenets Autonomous District, and the Taimyrsky Dolgano-Nenets District of Krasnoyarsk Krai. There are currently three dioceses located in these administrative entities: the Naryan-Mar, Salekhard and Norilsk dioceses. These dioceses have missionary departments. There are also Naryan-Mar and Salekhard missionary stations. The parishes within the administrative boundaries of the Nenets Autonomous District, the Leshukonsky and Mezensky districts of the Arkhangelsk region, and the archipelagos of Novaya Zemlya and Franz Josef Land are united by the Naryan-Mar diocese.

The Salekhard Diocese was formed by the decision of the Holy Synod of 30 May 2011 (Journal No. 43) within the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District by separation from the Tobolsk-Tyumen Diocese. Currently, the chairman of the missionary department is priest Peter Bogdan. Since 2015 to the present, the Synodal Missionary Department of the Russian Orthodox Church has been sending missionaries on long-term missionary trips to the Salekhard Diocese. Clerics of the diocese, together with Synodal missionaries, perform divine services in remote settlements of the diocese. Archbishop Nikolai (Chashin), the administrator of the Salekhard Diocese, takes an active part in missionary expeditions to populated areas of the diocese.

The decision to establish the Naryan-Mar Diocese was made at a meeting of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church chaired by His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia at the end of December 2011. Bishop Jacob (Tislenko) was elected to govern the diocese. The website of the Synodal Missionary Department has information about the existence of an active missionary camp, which is located at the Cathedral of the Naryan-Mar Diocese<sup>183</sup>. His Grace James makes missionary trips to remote parishes of the diocese both personally and by recruiting missionaries from other dioceses.

From 09.05.2015 to 26.05.2015. with the blessing of Bishop Jacob of Naryan-Mar and Mezensk and the Rector of Perervin Theological Seminary, Archpriest

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<sup>183</sup> Missionary Station Naryan-Mar // Missionary Review : [official website]. URL: <http://infomission.org/stans/naryan-marskaya-eparhiya/missionerskij-stan-naryan-mar/#/1> (accessed 30.10.2020).

Vladimir Chuvikin, a missionary trip of seminary students led by Archpriest Alexei Kharin to the Naryan-Mar Diocese took place: "Summing up our missionary activities in Ust-Kara, we can say that during our stay there 17 people received the sacrament of Holy Baptism, 8 dwellings and the local school building were consecrated, 6 meetings were held at the local club (with film screenings and spiritual talks), one meeting was organised at the school with students and teachers, and 3 sambo wrestling classes were held with schoolchildren" <sup>184</sup>.

On the Patriarchate's website there is a mention of a missionary expedition on the territory of the diocese by PTSU students led by their teacher Archpriest Konstantin Gipp <sup>185</sup>. This is the third expedition from 2014 to 2017 in the settlement of Karataika. "On Saturday, 29 April, 9 people, adults and children received Baptism. On Sunday 30 April, the Divine Liturgy was served, at which 35 people were present and 28 people received Communion. After the Liturgy, the first marriage was celebrated in these places", <sup>186</sup> – such indicators speak of a fairly successful missionary activity. The participants of the expedition also visited a reindeer herding camp, which testifies to the missionary activity among the indigenous population.

Missionary activities on the territory of the diocese are supported by the local authorities in the person of the NAO Governor Igor Koshkin <sup>187</sup>: "In conditions when attention to the territory of the Russian Arctic is growing and the influence of foreign religious cultures on the inhabitants of remote settlements of the Far North is increasing, the development of missionary projects of the Russian Orthodox Church should be a priority" <sup>188</sup>. The concern of local authorities about the activities of modern Western religious organisations is caused by concern for the territorial

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<sup>184</sup> Missionaries from Moscow worked in the Naryan-Mar diocese // Faith and Time : [website]. URL: <http://www.verav.ru/common/message.php?table=news&num=39057> (accessed 30.10.2020).

<sup>185</sup> A missionary trip to remote parishes of the Naryan-Mar diocese was made by PSTU students // Russian Orthodox Church : official website of the Moscow Patriarchate. URL: <http://eparchia.patriarchia.ru/db/text/4903019.html> (accessed 30.10.2020).

<sup>186</sup> Missionary expedition to the Naryan-Mar diocese // Russian Orthodox Church : Kozelsk diocese : [official website] URL: <http://kozelsk-eparhia.ru/2017/05/02/nastoyatel-khra/> (accessed 30.10.2020).

<sup>187</sup> Igor Koshkin was Governor of the NAO from 14 September 2014 to 28 September 2017.

<sup>188</sup> Missionary activity of the Church in the Far North was discussed in NAO // Arkhangelsk Diocese : [official website]. URL: <http://www.arh-eparhia.ru/news/184/47041/> (accessed 30.10.2020).

integrity of the Russian Federation and coincides with the Russian Orthodox Church's concern for the purity of the faith in its canonical territory: "The Neocharismatic sects of Bill Prankard (Canada) and Kenneth Copeland (USA) are actively recruiting adherents among the indigenous minorities of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug (NAO) and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (YNAO). Experts note that the activities of sectarians contribute to the development of inter-ethnic conflicts and have irreversible consequences for the traditional way of life of the Nenets" <sup>189</sup>. Thus, missionary projects are in demand in the territory of the Naryan-Mar diocese not only by the church, but also by the secular authorities.

The Norilsk and Turukhansk Diocese of the Krasnoyarsk Metropolitanate of the Russian Orthodox Church was established on 30 May 2014 as an independent diocese by separating it from the Yenisei Diocese within the Norilsk City District, as well as the Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) and Turukhansk Districts of the Krasnoyarsk Territory. At the same time, it is included in the Krasnoyarsk Metropolitanate. The ruling bishop is Bishop Agafangel of Norilsk and Turukhan. The duties of the chairman of the missionary department of the diocese are performed by Archpriest George (Yuri) Viktorovich Itskov, dean of the Taimyrsky district. The website of the Krasnoyarsk Metropolis in the section "News of the Norilsk Diocese" contains information about missionary trips made by the chairman of the department:

"On 20 August, Archpriest Georgy Itskov, Chairman of the Missionary Department of the Norilsk Diocese, made a missionary trip to the village of Potapovo, located 90 kilometres from the city of Dudinka. During the visit, Father Georgy celebrated a prayer service in the local Iveron church and led a procession. A requiem liturgy was also held for the deceased residents of the Potapovo settlement" <sup>190</sup>;

"On 17 December, Archpriest Georgy Itskov, head of the missionary department of the Norilsk Diocese, completed a five-day trip to remote settlements

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<sup>189</sup> Missionary activities of the Church in the Far North were discussed in the NAO.

<sup>190</sup> Krasnoyarsk Metropolis: Events of the Norilsk Diocese // Official website of the Krasnoyarsk Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church. URL: <http://www.kerpc.ru/news/37995> (accessed 30.10.2020).

in the Taimyr District. Father Georgy visited the village of Karaul, the settlements of Nosok and Ust-Port, where he performed prayer services and requiem services, consecrated the dwellings of the faithful, and met with residents and employees of municipal authorities" <sup>191</sup>.

The Synodal Missionary Department regularly sends clerics of the Belgorod and Sary Oskol diocese to carry out missionary obedience in the territory of the above dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church.

We see that at the present stage there is an opportunity to carry out missionary activity in the territory of the dioceses mentioned above. The Synodal Missionary Department provides methodological and personnel support to the northern dioceses, including those that carry out missionary work among the Samoyed peoples. These dioceses are headed by bishops who are interested in missionary work and who actively participate personally in missionary expeditions to remote villages. Diocesan offices have missionary departments with full-time staff. There is local support from government authorities at all levels, from the village to the federal level. Residents are loyal to the missionaries and attend meetings without coercion to give pre-baptismal talks, they ask the missionaries for help in their everyday needs and willingly make contact. We will have to identify the most important areas of work for missionaries to be more effective in the long term and to increase the quality and quantity of the Church.

### 3.2 Enculturation and reception of culture as a mission challenge among the Samoyed peoples

Like Christian culture, Samoyedic culture consists of beliefs, material artefacts and rituals. We have examined in Chapter 2 the methods of relating religious images and the paradigm of thinking itself. However, we face the challenge of reconciling the new Christian paradigm of thinking with the traditional way of

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<sup>191</sup> Krasnoyarsk Metropolis: news of the Norilsk Diocese // Official website of the Krasnoyarsk Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church. URL: <http://www.kerpc.ru/news/34762> (accessed 30.10.2020).

life of the Samoyeds. Over the centuries of their stay in the North, a special way of life was formed, which was largely conditioned by ethnic beliefs. The nomadic way of life, the way of farming, household items, as well as nutrition – all this is a complex combination of factors that allow the Samoyeds to survive in the harsh climatic conditions of the Far North. An attempt to artificially interfere with a way of life that has evolved over centuries can have negative consequences for the mission itself, as well as for the lives and health of indigenous peoples. The task of this stage of the study is to analyse the contemporary problems of mission and to propose theologically reasoned options for their solutions.

The clergy face a difficult task: to unite the Samoyed culture with the Christian faith. To keep the core of the faith intact, selecting rituals and traditions appropriate to the real conditions of life of the indigenous people, meeting all the needs and demands of ordinary people. In transmitting theological knowledge and Orthodox tradition, one of the most important points is the formation of an appropriate cultural environment, since the common pagan festivals and accompanying traditions have a powerful influence on the Samoyed people's way of life. Some of the most powerful pagan forms, which are fundamentally unacceptable for a Christian, are the worship of pagan gods, the use of blood, and ritual sacrifices. In the 15th chapter of the book of Acts the apostle James says: "Therefore I presume not to hinder those who turn to God from the Gentiles, but to write to them that they abstain from things profaned by idols, from fornication, from strangling and from blood, and that they do not do to others what they would not do to themselves" (Acts 15:19-20). Some elements of pagan culture, forbidden by the Apostles' rules, are still preserved in Samoyedic culture today. At the same time, the apostles did not prescribe to new Christian converts to aggressively oppose the historically established practices of their culture but pointed out the necessity of personal asceticism and abstinence. Hence the methodological error of Protestants demanding the immediate destruction of cultural heritage sites, which eventually led to conflict with the authorities and negative assessments of their activities by both the secular community and other Samoyeds.



The current state of the religious culture of the Samoyed peoples is a mixture of everyday pagan beliefs, shamanism, and Christianity. The missionary is compelled to analyse everyday religiosity with a view to its subsequent adjustment. There are traditions that Christianity can adopt and preserve as a marker of cultural identity, while others require radical revision. In this paragraph we will look at some of the topical problems that are the most acute and significant for modern mission as an example, since it is not possible within the scope of this research to address all the problems of indigenous minorities relevant to missionary activity, because of the breadth and specificity of the topic.

The initial problem for the Christianisation of the Samoyeds is their nomadic way of life. For centuries Christianity has been the religion of sedentary inhabitants, and where preaching began among nomads, sooner or later missionaries inculcated the aborigines with a sedentary way of life, as, for example, did St Makarius (Glukharev) in the Altai <sup>192</sup>. He promoted not only religious enlightenment of people, but also introduced them to modern culture and civilisation, contributing to their socialisation.

However, neither the missionaries of past periods, nor even more so today, have been able to reproduce this experience among the Samoyeds. Previously, this was hindered by climatic conditions (reindeer grazing requires constant changes in the location of camps), and today we can add to them measures of state support <sup>193</sup>, aimed at preserving the traditional way of life of small indigenous minorities of the North.

Consequently, the missionary must consider the impossibility of replicating the church's mission experience in other regions. The nomadic lifestyle of the mission recipient creates certain problems for missionaries. These include the use of blood, the lack of fixed churches, the use of alcohol, the lack of the necessary intellectual environment, and dual faith.

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<sup>192</sup> *Efimov A. B.* op. cit. P. 160.

<sup>193</sup> A list of state support measures ...

The initial category of modern problems is problems of gastronomic nature. Culture includes not only beliefs and rituals of the people, but also everyday life itself and, first, traditions of food behaviour.

Nutrition cannot be viewed solely in terms of taste preferences and religious prohibitions. It is an important part of human biological life. There are medical studies that point to a certain correlation between the food consumed and DNA genes. The modern discipline of nutrigenomics explores these patterns: not only do genes determine the body's susceptibility to certain types of food, but nutrition also has some influence on activating or blocking inherited diseases <sup>194</sup>.

In addition, we cannot make a universal nutrition plan for all inhabitants of the planet, because in modern science "it is generally recognised that the population adapts to natural living conditions. During the period of adaptation, the human body develops mechanisms of habituation to the food available in a given region" <sup>195</sup>.

In this context, we can note that the problem of alcohol consumption is not specific to the Samoyed peoples – it is a problem of most aborigines of the Far North, and it has no pronounced religious basis. However, modern scientific research confirms the direction of state support measures aimed at preserving the traditional way of life. In the article "Nutrigenomics as an important factor in the design of human diet" <sup>196</sup>, devoted to the mechanisms of alcohol dependence formation in the representatives of the circumpolar group: Nenets, Selkups and Khanty, the authors convincingly prove that aborigines who lead a non-traditional way of life use alcohol more often than migrants and aborigines who adhere to the traditional way of life. The folklore material of the Yamal peoples does not contain references to the use of toxic substances, nor to lavish feasts at the end of legendary tales. The ritual shamanic practice of Yamal aborigines also does not use toxic substances, unlike the practices

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<sup>194</sup> See more: *Mutch D. M., Wahli W., Williamson G.* Nutrigenomics and Nutrigenetics: the emerging faces of nutrition // *The FASEB Journal*. 2005. № 19. P. 1602–1616 ; *Ordovas J. M., Mooser V.* Nutrigenomics and nutrigenetics // *Curr Opin Lipidol*. 2004. № 15 (2). P. 8–101.

<sup>195</sup> *Edelev D. A., Sidorenko M. Yu, Perminova M. A.* Nutrigenomics as an important factor in the design of human diet // *Food Industry*. 2011. № 4. P. 15.

<sup>196</sup> *Deryabina S. V. V., Biktimirov T. Z., Sabitov I. A.* Mechanisms of formation of alcohol addiction and attitude to psychopharmacotherapy in ethno-cultural environment of aborigines of the Far North // *Ulyanovsk Medical and Biological Journal*. 2011. № 2. P. 119–129.

of other small-numbered peoples of the North. Thus, alcohol is not a traditional element for Samoyedic culture. The Nenets mostly consume one type of alcoholic beverage – vodka<sup>197</sup>. This was possible due to intercultural contacts and the transition to non-traditional lifestyles in cities and settlements.

Thus, the problem of reception of Samoyedic culture is much deeper than philosophical comprehension of the ritual forms of the people's life and filling them with Christian content. We should consider the nutrition of Samoyeds as the basis of their traditional way of life, health, and culture. Harsh climatic conditions do not allow Samoyeds to fast according to the monastic statutes adopted in the Russian Orthodox Church, and force them to consume the blood of reindeer. We will consider this problem in the context of modern medical data (dietetics and nutrigenomics) and theology (canon law and biblical studies)<sup>198</sup>.

In the history of the mission there are known attempts to Christianise the Samoyeds. They were carried out on the principle of converting nomads to a sedentary way of life. This entailed a change in the type of diet of the indigenous peoples. However, it did not go painlessly for them. The transition from the Asian type of diet to the European protein-carbohydrate diet resulted in a deterioration of their immune health:

"Under the 'European' type of diet, the BSD individuals accounted for 47.95 per cent, i.e., almost half of this group, whereas under the traditional diet, the BSD group accounted for 34.4 per cent"<sup>199</sup>.

Doctor of Medical Sciences Y. G. Sukhovey believes that it is the type of nutrition that is the main factor in the deterioration of aboriginal health: "The destruction of food traditions of the indigenous peoples of the Tyumen North is accompanied by a higher prevalence of the phenomenon of "PDB" among the

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<sup>197</sup> Svetlichnaya T. G. Lifestyle and health of Nenets in conditions of permanent island residence in the Arctic // *Human Ecology*. 2019. № 12. P. 22.

<sup>198</sup> For more information see: *Tserpitskaya O. L., Iakovov D. V., priest, op. cit. P. 97–105.*

<sup>199</sup> *Sukhovei Y. G., Unger I. G., Beresneva L. A. et al. Features of the immune status of the aboriginal population of Yamal in conditions of "Europeanisation" of traditional nutrition // Experimental and clinical gastroenterology. 2009. № 6. P. 112.*

indigenous peoples of Yamal who have switched to the "European" (protein-carbohydrate) type of nutrition" <sup>200</sup>.

We cannot ignore this data, because mission implies love and responsibility before God for the peoples we are addressing. Especially when we are talking about small peoples who are almost on the verge of extinction.

H. A Pashina points out that the way of life of representatives of indigenous peoples of the North is an adaptive benchmark that will reveal the mechanisms of health preservation of resettlers. Because harsh climatic conditions are not extreme for aborigines because of adaptation that took place over many generations. To maintain full life activity the peoples of the North have chosen a certain way of life, which includes the diet and type of nutrition, the way of farming and certain traditions. It is the totality of these factors that is the basis for maintaining their full health <sup>201</sup>.

Cultural prescription implies consideration of forms of preserving the traditional lifestyle and nutrition of Samoyeds. But for successful missionary activity, it is also necessary to identify factors contributing to the health of missionaries who do not have similar adaptive mechanisms.

There is several scientific publications (which will be discussed below) devoted to the issue of nutritional disorders in the North and the subsequent development of diseases, such as: chronic infectious diseases, arterial hypertension, obesity, diabetes mellitus, coronary heart disease, atherosclerosis and others. I. E. Ionova points out that the prevalence of these diseases in the Far North (in particular, the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District) is higher than in the middle zone of Russia, but indigenous people are less susceptible to these diseases than migrants <sup>202</sup>.

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<sup>200</sup> *Sukhovei Y. G., Petrov S. A., Bout A. A. et al. A., But A.A. et al.* Modern peculiarities of nutrition of indigenous peoples of Yamal. Alimentary markers of immune status disorders // *Ural Medical Journal*. 2011. № 6 (84). P. 20.

<sup>201</sup> For more details see: *Pashina N. A.* Physiological features of the immune status of the indigenous (small-numbered) population of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug : autoref. diss. ... Cand. of Biological Sciences : 03.00.13. URL: <http://www.rad.pfu.edu.ru:8080/tmp/avtoref4313.pdf> (accessed 17.10.2020).

<sup>202</sup> See: *Ionova I. E.* Peculiarities of nutrition and health of indigenous (small-numbered) and immigrant population of the Far North : author's thesis. ... candidate of medical sciences : 14.00.07. URL: [https://static.freereferats.ru/\\_avtoreferats/01004061569.pdf](https://static.freereferats.ru/_avtoreferats/01004061569.pdf) (accessed 17.10.2020).

Before analysing the peculiarities of the nature of nutrition of the indigenous and native population of the North, let us turn to the normative recommendations on the composition and quality of nutrition. The diet of an adult should contain balanced proteins, fats, and carbohydrates, as well as vitamins, polyunsaturated fatty acids, amino acids, and macro- and microelements:

"Essential nutrients (essential nutrients) include:

- some amino acids (valine, isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, threonine, tryptophan, phenialanine);

- polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs – linoleic, linolenic and arachodonic acids);

- vitamins (fat-soluble A, D, E and K and water-soluble B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B12, C;

- macro- and microelements <...> the energy value of the daily diet (energy requirement) for a conditionally average person is determined as 2,500 kcal (SanPiN 2.3.2.1078-01)" <sup>203</sup>.

The most frequent violations in the nutritional system of Russian residents are: "excessive consumption of animal fats, deficiency of complete animal proteins, vitamins (ascorbic acid, riboflavin (B2), thiamin (B1), folic acid, retinol (A) and beta-carotene tocopherol (E)), polyunsaturated fatty acids, minerals (calcium, iron), trace elements (selenium, zinc, iodine, fluorine) and dietary fibre" <sup>204</sup>. Special attention in this article is paid to the essential trace element selenium, which is "one of the most important components of the body's antioxidant defence system" <sup>205</sup>.

We will use these data when analysing the traditional northern type of diet. The basis of the Samoyedic diet is meat and blood of reindeer, fish of the whitefish family, and pike. In publicly available publications, we can obtain information on

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<sup>203</sup> Motovilov K. Y., Poznyakovskiy V. M., Motovilov O. K. et al. Food – the main factor of human health and longevity // Food. Ecology. Quality. Proceedings of the XIV International Scientific and Practical Conference. In 2 vol. 1 (A – L). 2017. P. 8–9.

<sup>204</sup> Pastushkova E. V., Mysakov D. S., Chugunova O. V. Some aspects of the nutrition factor and human health // Health and education of the XXI century. V. Some aspects of the factor of nutrition and human health // Health and Education in the XXI century. 2016. Vol. 18. № 4. P. 69.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid. P. 69.

the elementary composition of these foods, as well as familiarise ourselves with the expert opinions of nutritionists.

In the article "Components of a healthy diet in reindeer meat"<sup>206</sup> N. V. Perova gives a professional assessment of the nutritional value of the basis of the Samoyedic diet. This article presents a table of distribution in the daily calorie percentage of nutrients based on WHO data (see Appendix 2) and indicates that reindeer meat is indicated for people with a predisposition to cardiovascular diseases caused by atherosclerosis. The high potassium content is noted, as well as the antioxidant selenium. Data from the table of deer meat composition indicate a high protein content (22-25 g per 100 g of weight). In addition, deer meat contains an optimal ratio of saturated and unsaturated fatty acids, as well as omega-3, polyunsaturated fatty acids. As N. V. Perova notes: "Venison is also rich in vitamins, it contains vitamin A, all groups of vitamins B, vitamin C"<sup>207</sup>.

Of particular interest for our study is the article by I. V. Pershina<sup>208</sup>. This paper describes the reason for the increased calorie consumption in the Far North, as well as the decreased energy role of carbohydrates and increased role of fats and, to a lesser extent, proteins. This circumstance is the basis for the formation of a polar metabolic type and explains the deleterious effects when switching to a European protein-carbohydrate diet. Severe climatic conditions reduce the digestibility of protein, vitamins and minerals. A significant unfavourable factor for health is the pollution of Arctic water resources with heavy metal salts. The author points out significant problems for the peoples of the North: "Low content of selenium in drinking water of the North reduces anticarcinogenic, antioxidant activity and depresses the immunity of the organism, or low content of fluorine is characteristic for low-mineralised river waters of the North, which contributes to a higher incidence of dental caries"<sup>209</sup>.

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<sup>206</sup> Perova N. V. Components of a healthy diet in reindeer meat // Educational programme. Atherosclerosis. Questions of dietetics. 2005. № 4. P. 38–41.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid. P. 41.

<sup>208</sup> Pershina I. V. Features of nutrition of the inhabitants of the Far North // Scientific Bulletin of the Arctic. 2019. № 6. P. 97–107.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid. P. 98.

This is a problem systematically faced by migrants, including modern missionaries <sup>210</sup>.

100 g of venison contains the daily norm of vitamins, "but it should be noted that vitamin C is destroyed by heat treatment, so deer meat was often consumed in raw, frozen or dried form, and deer blood was drunk still warm" <sup>211</sup> – this specification is of principal character for our study, as it contains medical grounds for the use of blood by indigenous people, but this practice contradicts Christian canons (Rule 63 of the Holy Apostles; Rule 67 of the Sixth Ecumenical Council) and the Holy Scriptures (Gen. 9:5; Lev. 3:17; Lev. 17:11-12; Lev. 17:14; Lev. 19:26; Deut. 12:16; Deut. 12:23; Acts 15:20).

We have considered the theological aspect of the use of blood in the article "To the Question of Modern Problems of Missionary Work among the Samoyed Peoples" <sup>212</sup> and concluded that there are substantial grounds for revising this prohibition based on medical indications in the conditions of the Far North.

Firstly, the above verses of the Holy Scripture speak about the soul of an animal, but modern versions of the translation of the Holy Scripture speak about life as such, and not about the soul as an immaterial substance. Archimandrite Iannuarius (Ivleev) believes that the biblical understanding of man and animals is not characterised by divisions, including dichotomies and trichotomies, which are the legacy of the ancient philosophy of Aristotle and Plato <sup>213</sup>. The fact that the identification of blood with the human soul is found in ancient authors, such as Virgil, Empedocles, Pythagoras, etc., was pointed out by A. P. Lopukhin in *The Explanatory Bible* <sup>214</sup>. Thus, the above works are clearly not about the eating of the soul as such.

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<sup>210</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest.* Exploring culture, studying language // LIVEJOURNAL : blog " Chronicle of priestly service". URL: <https://dan-prophet.livejournal.com/44040.html>. Date of publication: 11.11.2015.

<sup>211</sup> *Pershina I. V.* op. cit. P. 99.

<sup>212</sup> The results of this stage of the research have been published: *Tserpitskaya O. L., Iakovov D. V., priest,* op. cit. P. 97–105.

<sup>213</sup> *Iannuarius (Ivliev), archim.* Man in the Holy Scripture (exegetical approach) [Electronic resource] // Centre for Christian Psychology and Anthropology : [website]. URL: <https://www.xpa-spb.ru/libr/Iannuarij-Ivliev/chelovek-v-Svyashhennom-Pisani.html> (accessed 12.10.2020).

<sup>214</sup> *The Interpretative Bible, or Commentary on All the Books of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.* In 11 vols. Vol. 1 / edited by A. P. Lopukhin. [Reprint reproduction]. Stockholm : Institute of Bible Translation, 1987. P. 60.

Secondly, reference to Jewish sources and interpretative traditions suggests that these prohibitions referred to sacrificial blood (which contains life), with which people atoned for their lives in the cult of Yahweh <sup>215</sup>. The Jewish Encyclopaedia indirectly indicates that this prohibition was taken up under the influence of religions of other peoples of the ancient East <sup>216</sup>.

In the Book of Acts this prohibition was influenced by the Judeo-Christians: "Not abstaining from all these things for Gentile converts to Christianity would cause the Jews extreme disgust towards them and would give rise to much embarrassment, temptation and all kinds of disorder. Although it concerns bodily objects, it is necessary to abstain from them, because they produced great evil" (Chrysostom, cf. Theophilus)." <sup>217</sup>.

Thus, at the present stage of the mission, referring to the words of Christ: "Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth defiles a man...". Do you not yet understand? Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the belly and is spewed out? And what comes out of the mouth – out of the heart – this defiles a man" (Matthew 15:11, 16-18); as well as a number of quotations from the letters of Apostle Paul (Titus 1:14; 1 Cor. 8:4-10; 1 Cor. 10:25; Gal. 5:1), in which he allows the strong in faith to eat even idolatrous food, we consider it possible, with the blessing of the Council of Bishops, on the principle of *oikonomia*, to level this prohibition for the indigenous peoples of the North because of the harsh climatic conditions, guided by the data of modern medicine, nutrition, nutrigenetics, as well as biblical studies.

Kopalchen, which is raw meat that has undergone natural rotting for several months, should also be included in these rules. For locals, this product is a source of protein and enzymes. It also contains some corpse poisons: cadaverine, neurin and

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<sup>215</sup> Torah with commentaries by Rashi and Soncino / per. F. Gurfinkel // Shabbat Shalom! : Shabbat weekly : [website]. URL: [http://www.shabat-shalom.info/books/Tanach-ru/Chumash\\_Rashi/29.htm](http://www.shabat-shalom.info/books/Tanach-ru/Chumash_Rashi/29.htm) (accessed 16.10.2020).

<sup>216</sup> Blood // Electronic Jewish Encyclopaedia : [site]. URL: <https://eleven.co.il/judaism/commandments-and-precepts/12243/> (accessed 12.10.2020).

<sup>217</sup> The Interpretative Bible, or Commentary on All the Books of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. In 11 vols. Vol. 10 / edition of the successors of A. P. Lopukhin. [Reprint reproduction]. Stockholm : Institute of Bible Translation, 1987. P. 116.



putrescine. They do not have a negative effect on Samoyeds due to mitridatism (immunity to toxins), but consumption of this product by migrants can be fatal <sup>218</sup>.

Thus, the food culture of indigenous peoples is a whole system aimed at survival and health maintenance in the Far North. Modern research proves that the risk of disease development is reduced if the traditional type of nutrition is maintained, for example, the risk of arterial hypertension is significantly reduced when the residents of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug consume river fish (chekur, pike, ripple) and reindeer venison. The combination of certain products, such as venison and cloudberry, as well as pike and pike, is of particular importance. Some imported products also contribute to reducing the risk of arterial hypertension, for example: onions, buckwheat porridge and grey bread <sup>219</sup>.

Nevertheless, not all traditional features of the culture agree with scientific data. Despite the beneficial properties of pike, locals refuse to eat it for various reasons. In Syunai-Sale they do not consider pike to be a noble fish, so they feed it to dogs <sup>220</sup>. In Nenets mythology there is a legend that Nga, the lord of the Lower World, is "the creator of pike, burbot and harmful insects: mosquitoes, midges, gadflies and spiders" <sup>221</sup>.

It is necessary to use scientific data to overcome pagan superstitions and prejudices that contradict the Christian understanding of the relationship between God and man, but at the same time to show care and indulgence for the infirmities of the human body. Samoyeds must be given the opportunity to transform their own culture. In matters of faith, we must be steadfast in exhorting them to abandon sacrifices to spirits and pagan traditions, but to show leniency in food, based on medical evidence, in view of the harshness of the nomadic lifestyle and the Arctic climate.

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<sup>218</sup> *Pershina I. V.* op. cit. P. 99.

<sup>219</sup> *Andronov S. V., Lobanov AA Lobanov, Kostritsyn V. V. et al.* Risk of arterial hypertension in the consumption of river fish and venison by residents of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District // *Nutrition Issues*. 2016. Vol. 85, № 2. P. 63.

<sup>220</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest.* How I caught the Internet, or a few words about the past three weeks at once // LIVEJOURNAL : blog "Chronicle of priestly service". URL: <https://dan-prophet.livejournal.com/48054.html>. Date of publication: 28.12.2015.

<sup>221</sup> *Lar L. A.* Arrangement of the world of the cosmos and deities ... P. 12.

The missionary's task is not to make the recipient of the mission like himself. The missionary's task is not to make the recipient of the mission like himself, but to creatively understand the recipient's culture in its various manifestations. To help it overcome pagan superstitions and transform its inner structure by the power of the Spirit of God and the Gospel message. Reflecting on the works of Nektarios Hatzimichalis <sup>222</sup>, James J. Stamoolis emphasised this understanding of mission: "Going only to one's own kind or going to strangers with the aim of making them like oneself does not correspond to the biblical concept of mission. It contradicts what Scripture says about God's intentions for humanity. The New Testament says that at the second coming and the last fulfilment of time, all nations will be gathered for judgment (see: Matt. 25:31-46) and redemption (see: Rev. 7:9-10). Therefore, the Church must come to all people, enclosing all nations" <sup>223</sup>.

In the future, missionaries are faced not with the question of personal asceticism of the newly converted representatives of small indigenous peoples, but with the question of Christianising the culture itself, creating an environment for the spiritual formation of the personality of the newly converted Christians in accordance with the historically established culture and peculiarities of the Samoyed peoples' everyday life. For modern Nenets, the issue of accepting Christianity, in fact, becomes an act of renunciation of their culture and acceptance of the "Russian faith". This way of putting the question sharply reduces the effectiveness of missionary activity. The strategic task of the missionary is to show the universality of the Christian faith, as well as the diversity of cultural forms in various Local Churches.

Accordingly, the problem of enculturation and reception of culture among Samoyedic peoples turns into the problem of formation of ethno-confessional identity. The results of our study show that it is not only undesirable, but fundamentally impossible to copy and even adapt Russian religiosity. The culture of the Samoyeds includes beliefs, a form of social relations, traditions, everyday life,

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<sup>222</sup> *Hatzimichalis N.* Orthodox Ecumenism and External Mission. Athens : Porefthendes, 1966. 62 p.

<sup>223</sup> *Stamoolis J. J.* op. cit. P. 317–318.

including food. All the above aspects require not standardisation, but Christian reflection and inner transformation. In this case, it will be possible to achieve an increase in short-term (acceptance of baptism by the natives because of missionary activity) and long-term effectiveness of mission (growth in faith through the reception of doctrinal aspects and transition to a new form of cultural self-identification), which is the problem of the next stage of our research.

### 3.3 The Problem of Ethno-confessional Identity Formation Samoyed peoples

The mission problems discussed in the previous paragraph (nomadic lifestyle, alcohol intolerance, blood consumption, immune system disruption when changing dietary patterns) have a biological basis. They influence the religiosity of Samoyeds but are secondary to beliefs. The basis of the traditional way of life is the pagan religious paradigm of indigenous thinking, which determines their consciousness and customs. Therefore, to increase the effectiveness of the mission in the long term, it is necessary to remove obstacles of a biological nature and to focus the main efforts on changing the paradigm of thinking of the recipient of the mission.

First, it is worth addressing the self-identification of the mission recipient in its current state. The traditions, everyday life and beliefs discussed in the previous chapters are the basis of national identity. Most Nenets have never heard of the migrations of their genetic ancestors, but they have heard the legend of the Sikhirtya people who inhabited the northern lands before the Samoyeds arrived. This knowledge is probably the beginning of folk identity. Until recently, in Soviet science, the legend of the Sirtya (*short for Sikhirtya*) could not be the subject of scientific study due to its apparent mythological nature. However, modern scholars have been able to extract from this myth the knowledge encoded in it. In the article

“"Chuchuna" and "Sikhirtya" – Chukchi "terraki"”<sup>224</sup> the authors step by step prove that the Sikhirtya are not fictional characters, but real beings who turned out to be Chukchi hunters. The name of the Sikhirtya people is translated by the word "avoid", "alienate". When considering the legends of the Bolshezemeel tundra, similar characters can be found in Yakutia from Khatanga to Indigirka under the name "chuchuna", in the Komi forests they are known under the name "yagmort", and in Arkhangelogorodchina as "leshy". Referring to publications in journals, as well as the works of Professor P. L. Dravert and ethnographer G. V. Ksenofontov, the authors prove that they are one and the same character, or rather – Chukchi terraki hunters carried away in light single-seat kayaks to the West by the current of the Chukchi Sea.

Well-adapted to the harsh conditions, they could survive for long periods of time in the sea and on land with a knife, rope and flint. However, for their tribesmen, hunters who fell into the water or were carried away by the current were considered dead, so they could not return to the village and communicate with people. Sometimes their comrades even helped a hunter who had fallen into the water to drown, as he was already fated to die.

The hunters could travel in this way for several years; accustomed to the harshest conditions, they could easily find food and survive the harshest cold. The Chukchi Terraks settled on the coast of Yakutia, Yamal and even reached the Murmansk region. Hunters stole reindeer, used their hides and sometimes stole women.

Of particular interest is the authors' comment on the disappearance of "chuchun" and "sirtya" in modern times:

"In Soviet times (after the 1940s), with the development of modern means of communication, polar aviation and icebreaker fleet, Chukchi lone hunters stopped

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<sup>224</sup> *Lisnichenko V. V., Lisnichenko N. B. "Chuchuna" and "Siirtya" – Chukchi "terraki" // Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M. V. Lomonosov : [website]. URL: <https://narfu.ru/university/library/books/2071.pdf> (accessed 30.11.2020).*

disappearing in the ocean. At the same time, the "chuchuna" and "Siirtya" disappeared in the Polar Region" <sup>225</sup>.

This article is an attempt to demythologise the beliefs of the Samoyeds. This method can be successfully applied to missionary work. By revealing in this way, the real information encoded in myths, legends and tales, it is possible to identify the main features of the Samoyed identity and offer them true faith to replace mythologised knowledge.

The Christian faith is a monotheistic religion that preaches one God for all peoples in fulfilment of Christ's missionary commission: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to do all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). Historically, however, each nation has formed beliefs in its own local gods. The Lord in his mercy reveals himself as God to the Jewish people, but this does not mean that he is exclusively the Jewish national deity. With the coming of Christ into the world, the task of universal vocation, of building up the people of God, is set before believing people.

The apostles were the first preachers of Christ throughout the world among the various peoples and their cultures. Being of Jewish descent, they did not impose Jewish culture on other peoples, but spoke the common language of modern Greco-Roman culture. They had the task of creating Christianity in a different cultural environment. Subsequent generations of Christians in the local churches, without encountering other peoples, were in many ways bound to a single culture. On the territory of the Christianised countries their own national tradition and, consequently, a unique Christian culture was formed.

Difficulties arose later when a common spiritual culture developed – the canon of the books of Holy Scripture and the experience of interaction between people from different regions created a common cultural environment for Christians. Missionaries from the North, Africa, the Far East, and the Americas encountered peoples outside the environment whose ways of life were fundamentally different.

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<sup>225</sup> *Lisnichenko V. V., Lisnichenko N. B. op. cit.*

Some peoples were nomadic, others had never grown bread, many required translations of the Scriptures into their national languages, and idolatry and human sacrifice had to be eradicated. Those elements of culture that went against the accepted order of Christianity were supplanted or replaced by Christian practices. For many peoples, however, the destruction of their religious basis for their way of life could be critical. The destruction of the habitual way of life and its subsequent changes were hard experienced by any people. The change of culture was identified with the destruction and loss of national identity.

At present, small-numbered peoples are in most cases in a state of cultural decline. The traditional way of farming, nomadic way of life, language, shamanism and a fragmentary idea of the pantheon of pagan gods and spirits of their people are the sum of the spiritual heritage that allows them to identify their own religious and national belonging. The state most often takes steps to preserve their culture through support of pagan cults. However, to a greater extent it resembles historical reconstruction. We share K. S. Gadzhiev conviction that "any attempts to artificially create a national identity are doomed to failure" <sup>226</sup>. On this basis, even if the indigenous peoples themselves perceive paganism as a condition for preserving their own identity, we believe that it was the Orthodox missionaries who initially made efforts to preserve national cultures and succeeded in this direction in many ways. Christian enlightenment made it possible to preserve national cultures, giving many peoples a written language and later laying the foundations of national ethnography.

Religion, in particular the Christian faith, is a powerful culture-forming factor. However, the preservation and transformation of cultural heritage requires both the introduction of a universal dimension to culture and the existence of internal potential. There is a need for people capable of learning, creating, and developing culture – the so-called cultural elite. In different cultures the number of such people is approximately the same: 100-200 people. However, it is easier to recruit 200 people out of a hundred million people than out of a thousand people of the indigenous population, who graze reindeer and lead a nomadic way of life. In this

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<sup>226</sup> *Gadzhiev K. S. National identity: conceptual aspect // Voprosy filosofii. 2011. № 10. P. 12.*

case, Christianity may be the beginning of the death of their traditional way of life and way of life. If we transmit not the cultural form, but the tradition of the Spirit and faith, then the missionary should become a point of support for the national culture, just as St Innocent created the Aleut culture. Unfortunately, it was later destroyed by American politics. To cherish culture and form a cultural elite, it is necessary to raise missionaries by vocation. Over the two-thousand-year history of Christianity, different confessional practices of attitude to culture have developed: the Catholic Church, with the support of European conquerors, built a colonising policy, seeking to bring everyone to the European model of lifestyle and faith; Protestants believed in predestination and the impossibility of salvation for those who were not originally determined to it; the Orthodox, on the contrary, without Russifying or Hellenising everyone, created authentic forms of faith. Examples of successful missions include the experience of Stephen of Perm, the enlightener of the Zyryans; the Estonian mission; and the Japanese Orthodox Church. Unlike Catholics, who must repent to the peoples for their past colonising policies, representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church have not russified the representatives of indigenous peoples.

It is worth noting that the endeavour to preserve the language and culture of the mission recipient is not in itself the primary goal of the missionary. Most representatives of indigenous and minority peoples speak Russian, so immersion in their history and culture is an auxiliary means to enhance preaching.

Sometimes belonging to a particular linguistic and cultural tradition will hinder the reception of the gospel, especially if national identity is identified with religious culture. In such a case, concern for the preservation of national identity would be contrary to the primary purpose of mission. A similar situation occurred at the baptism of the Tatars, when a new nation was created, the Kryashen, who separated themselves from the Tatars based on religion.

The missionary's primary goal is to lead the nations to Christ and to promote their salvation to eternal life. Most often this requires learning the language and culture of the people who are the recipients of the mission. Love for the people being

educated requires that the missionary cherish their culture and traditions. In this case, it is the incarnational approach that will be most effective in mission. Its application will make it possible to preserve the culture of the people and fill it with Gospel content. However, the successful implementation of this kind of missionary strategy requires church-wide efforts: the formation of national elites through appropriate education, as well as the training of church ministers from the local population. In the case of the Samoyeds, it is worth paying attention to the introduction of the module "Fundamentals of Orthodox Culture" in boarding schools for nomadic children, as well as to provide material opportunities for their subsequent spiritual education in educational institutions of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The specificity of the nomadic lifestyle of the recipient of the mission requires that special attention be paid to ensuring that the historically established forms of Orthodox culture of other regions are not mechanically transferred to the newly formed dioceses and missionary regions. A new and creative rethinking of the foundations of Orthodox parish life in the missionary regions is needed. It is necessary to preserve the purity of the Orthodox faith, but at the same time not to resort to radical measures of influence. The missionary must have experience in personal prayer, anti-sectarian activities, and social ministry in addition to direct preaching <sup>227</sup>.

In our opinion, the missionaries faced two significant problems: bigotry and language. In both cases, the situations are more complex than may appear at first glance. The Samoyeds had heard about Christ before from Orthodox missionaries in the pre-revolutionary and modern period, as well as from Protestant preachers. But since missionary activity was not intended to change the very paradigm of thinking, the message about Christ was incorporated into traditional religiosity and endowed Jesus Christ with specific healing properties, equating him with helper spirits in the pantheon of gods <sup>228</sup>.

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<sup>227</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegum.* Orthodox mission ... P. 72–80.

<sup>228</sup> *Iakovov D. V., priest.* To the problem of missionary reception of religious images ... P. 137–147.



Issues related to the use of the national language are still relevant. In our opinion, the missionary should know the language and culture of the recipient of the mission, even if the recipient speaks the language of the missionary <sup>229</sup>, this will contribute to the emergence of trust and greatly facilitate the process of communication. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the Nenets know Russian better than the dialects of neighbouring settlements (in this case, we are talking about schoolteachers, not respondents of a random sample) <sup>230</sup>. In view of this circumstance, Samoyedic people are more willing to take the Holy Scriptures in Russian for familiarisation. This situation creates a problem of liturgical language.

The Church Slavonic language is consonant with Russian. This fact makes it difficult to convey the meaning of liturgical texts, since the same-sounding words in Russian and Church Slavonic mean completely different concepts. If most parishioners of Orthodox churches still have great difficulty in understanding the meaning of liturgical texts, this is all the truer for representatives of small indigenous peoples. It is very difficult for them to master their literary language because of the prevalence of spoken rather than written language in the tundra. Intellectual development requires an appropriate intellectual environment, which is practically non-existent now.

In this case it is worth referring to the historical experience of holy missionaries. As early as 1838 Archimandrite Makarius (Glukharev) drew up his own programme for the transformation of missionary work in Russia – "Thoughts on Ways for the Most Successful Propagation of Christianity among Jews, Gentiles, Mohammedans in the Russian Empire", which did not lose its relevance two centuries later. The most important point of this programme was the publication of the Holy Scriptures in Russian and their distribution among the Russian people, because in them St. Makarius saw the basis for the revival of missionary work <sup>231</sup>. He considered it necessary to give the people the complete Bible in Russian. We

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<sup>229</sup> *Tserpitskaya O. L.* Orthodox spiritual mission in the context of global modernisation processes. St. Petersburg. Publishing house of St. Petersburg University, 2011. P. 45–48.

<sup>230</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest.* Affairs of everyday life // LIVEJOURNAL : blog " Chronicle of priestly service". URL: <https://dan-prophet.livejournal.com/46161.html>. Date of publication: 23.11.2015.

<sup>231</sup> *Efimov A. B.* op. cit. P. 163, 168.

believe it would be expedient to continue the translation tradition of Archimandrite Makarius and to also give the liturgical texts and prayer books to the Samoyeds in Russian. This would contribute to a deeper understanding of the fundamentals of the Christian faith and would be consistent with their cultural and linguistic level of understanding.

Gradually, this would provide an opportunity to overcome the people's two-faiths, changing the understanding of the foundations of the Christian faith and the very paradigm of thinking through participation in church prayers, worship and reading the Bible translated into modern Russian.

Orthodox missionaries face a difficult task. In today's postmodern era it is necessary to qualitatively restructure missionary activity. To be able to move away from the forms of pre-revolutionary missionary practice, carried out partly under the influence of the policy of imperialism, and to adopt the postmodern discourse of the "other"<sup>232</sup>. The missionary must move away from subject-object relations and see a certain otherness in the recipient of the mission. The missionary must then lovingly build a communication that will preserve the existing forms of spiritual and material heritage, transform them through faith, and form a qualitatively new cultural identity that does not copy the identity of the missionary by introducing a universal dimension.

Having analysed the history and current state of the culture of the Samoyedic peoples, as well as the mission of the Russian Orthodox Church addressed to these peoples, we can propose a classification and strategy for further missionary activity.

Mission among the Samoyed people at the present stage includes 4 categories:

- mission in educational institutions among children of tundra people living 9 months a year in boarding schools;
- mission among tundrovniks living a traditional nomadic lifestyle;
- mission among the Samoyeds who moved to settled areas;
- mission among migrants arriving in places where indigenous minorities live.

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<sup>232</sup> *Kirichek Y. A.* Discourse of the "other": from philosophical traditions to the theory of identity // Scientific Yearbook of the Institute of Philosophy and Law of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences. 2013. Vol. 13. Vol. 4. P. 42–53.

Based on the principles of the incarnational approach according to James J. Stamoolis<sup>233</sup>, the main emphasis of missionary activity should be on the training of indigenous clergy, as well as on the formation of positive national images of Orthodoxy in the face of contemporaries. The writer Anna Nerkagi can serve as such a role model. Being a native Nenets, Anna is a practicing Orthodox Christian and is known and respected among the Nenets. Her image could become the basis for awakening the inner actor among the Samoyeds. Joint efforts of church hierarchs and missionaries, heads of administrations of the subjects of the Russian Federation, where Samoyeds live, are needed to form a national elite with a Christian identity. For this purpose, it is necessary to pay special attention to the first type of modern mission – mission among students in boarding schools. The clergy of dioceses should take an active part in the upbringing of the younger generation, help them to creatively comprehend the heritage of their people in the context of Orthodox faith and culture, and nurture the most talented children into candidates for training in theological schools with a view to ordination. The most capable of them should be financially stimulated for high achievements in the sciences and good behaviour.

In carrying out missions among the tundra people, it is important to avoid automatically transferring the established forms of church life in Central Russia to the extreme conditions of the North. It is necessary to creatively rethink the basics of parish life in these conditions. For missionary work in this area to be fruitful, it is necessary to return to the practice of travelling churches and to assign indigenous clergymen to feed them. If it is not possible to supply indigenous clergy, missionary outreach expeditions should be carried out as often as possible for the purpose of publicity and worship. Perhaps the pre-Petrine practice of elected clergy would be appropriate here. And in case of success, it is possible to consider the possibility of establishing a bishop's cathedra with the purpose of placing a representative of the natives as a bishop to feed the nomads, but this issue requires a separate consideration, which goes far beyond the scope of our study and requires a long period of preparation. As measures to improve the effectiveness of mission, it is worth

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<sup>233</sup> *Stamoolis J. J. op. cit. P. 189–208.*

considering the need to establish dioceses or bishoprics for nomadic peoples, but even the existing structure requires the development of new preaching formats.

Particular attention should be paid to indigenous people who have moved to settled areas. Missionaries should carry out anti-sectarian work, as well as social ministry<sup>234</sup>. One should not forget about the presence of Muslim communities, as well as representatives of Protestant denominations in places where Samoyeds permanently reside. In addition, as noted earlier, the transition to a sedentary lifestyle of the Samoyeds is accompanied by a decline in immunity and, therefore, the development of infectious and non-infectious diseases. Therefore, missionaries must show concern and special pastoral care for peoples genetically unfit to live in modern conditions. The interest of missionaries in preserving the health of the recipient of the mission will contribute to the establishment of trusting relationships and will be an example of brotherly love realised in social ministry.

The latter type of mission is not directly mission among indigenous peoples, but it is the basis for it. Migrants living in non-traditional territories also need pastoral care and social ministry. However, it is they, being carriers of predominantly Orthodox culture, who can become the basis for building a parish community and assisting the Orthodox mission<sup>235</sup>. It is in Russian people that the Reverend. Makarius (Glukharev) saw the basis for the revival of the mission. However, the category of migrants includes not only Russian and Orthodox people, among them may be non-Russians and non-Orthodox, representatives of other nations. And they must also be cared for in the spirit of Christian love and compassion, more so by pointing out to the Samoyeds that Christianity is not only the faith of Russians.

As a result of our research, we have identified four main areas of missionary activity at the present stage: children's mission, tundra mission, mission among aboriginal settlers, and mission among migrants in relation to the indigenous population. We have established that the preservation of the traditional way of life

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<sup>234</sup> *Serapion (Mitko), hegum. Orthodox mission ...* P. 72–80.

<sup>235</sup> *Efimov A. B. op. cit.* P. 163.

of indigenous peoples is an important task for the missionary, since changes in traditional forms of life may entail deterioration of health, and in the long run lead to the extinction of certain peoples belonging to the Samoyedi group. The State provides as much support as it can through programmes aimed at preserving traditional ways of life. The task of the Church is to consolidate efforts with the State and support the idea of preserving the traditional way of life by giving it a Christian basis of activity. In addition, it is important to give modern Samoyeds examples of holy and God-pleasing life close to their way of life, especially those of their tribesmen. Missionaries must separate material and spiritual cultures to revise the basic forms and approaches of missionary activity. The requirement for the recipient of the mission to change the paradigm of religious thinking must be coupled with the willingness of the mission actor to change the paradigm of missionary activity.

## CONCLUSION

The results of our study have shown that the more widely all aspects of the life of the recipient of the mission are covered, the easier will be the enculturation of the Gospel and, therefore, the easier will be the Christianisation of the very identity of the people, up to the establishment of the Local Church.

Due to certain differences between the actor and the addressee of the mission, their interaction will be an intercultural contact. The difference in the cultural and social characteristics of all mission participants makes it impossible to use a universal mission algorithm for all situations. Each unique circumstance increases the need to find and apply new forms and methods of missionary activity.

The most appropriate approach for mission among the Samoyeds is the incarnational approach as a form of churching the whole culture of the people. For successful preaching in a different culture, it is worthwhile to study ethnographically the customs, life, and beliefs of the Indigenous peoples. It is also necessary to have the Scriptures and liturgical texts translated into the national languages.

Having analysed the instructions for the missionaries of the Obdorsk mission from 1867 to 1903, we found that the missionary activity was positively influenced by the absence of pressure from the diocesan authorities on the missionaries, and in turn, on the Samoyeds. Practical advice on how to organise spiritual life in specific conditions, as well as care for the recreation and health of the missionaries, increased the effectiveness of missionary work. The trust of the local population in the missionaries and the objective effectiveness of the mission increased due to the care for the treatment of sick Samoyeds, teaching their children to read and write, and material assistance to the poor.

The recommendations of bishops who had not visited Obdorsk personally and were not familiar with the real situation and climatic conditions reduced the effectiveness of the mission. Demands to increase the quantitative indicators of results inevitably harmed the mission. Ignoring the peculiarities of the Samoyeds led to a deterioration in the quality of their contacts with the Russian Orthodox Church,

such as frequent changes of missionaries, as well as ignorance of the language and culture of small peoples.

From this we concluded that the challenge for the leader is to creatively determine the current direction of missionary work, based on long-term quality considerations, and to be able to change it freely as needed, based on an understanding of the uniqueness of the mission recipient.

For a deeper understanding of the foundations of the Samoyed peoples' mentality and national identity, we used modern data from genetics, archaeology, linguistics, and other applied disciplines, which allowed us to identify the ancestral homeland of the Samoyed peoples', their language and culture.

As a result of studying the mythology and religious beliefs of the Samoyeds, we found a great degree of influence of Christian missionaries on the worldview of the mission recipient. However, the perception of Christian doctrine did not lead to a change in the very paradigm of thinking, which remained pagan in essence, leading to religious syncretism. The more Christian images and plots were approximated to pagan myths, the more they were perceived in the context of pagan culture. The new religious images expanded the pantheon of pagan gods either by combining characters (Nga and the devil) or by incorporating them into the general system without any transformation (Jesus Christ as a helping spirit). Thus, we found a vulnerability in the missionary strategy based on the identification of similar images from different cultures.

St Nicholas of Japan was able to keep Christianity in Japan from being identified with Confucianism by not using established cultural and religious forms as a matter of principle.

The Obdorsk missionaries of the pre-revolutionary period used the opposite method: they pointed out the conformity of religious systems and corrected the ideas of the Samoyeds with the help of biblical stories and hagiographies of saints.

In the long term, this method has shown its low efficiency and failure. The method of religious paradigm change is more correct in the long term. The analysis of Samoyed peoples' beliefs in the context of Orthodox mission has shown the

advantage of the comparative method over the method of conformity of religious systems and has determined the prospects for the development of missionary activity in this direction at the present stage.

The Christian presence among the Samoyeds dates to the 16th century and continues to the present. In fact, an Orthodox mission before the revolution was carried out from 1706 to 1919, but despite the investment of resources and the efforts of missionaries, the modern representatives of Samoyed peoples do not have a formed Christian identity. There were many reasons for this: harsh climatic conditions, which made it difficult for missionaries to move across the tundra; inattention of missionaries, which was used by shamans to exhort Samoyeds not to change the faith of their ancestors; lack of sedentarisation and education among indigenous peoples; lack of money and capable preachers; ignorance of the indigenous language and culture by missionaries, lack of temples. However, the missionary activity of the priest Peter Popov, despite all these shortcomings, was exemplary even in these conditions. His recommendations on the organisation of missionary work have not lost their relevance in the present conditions. At the same time, some of the problems pointed out by priest Peter have been partially solved today: the state has taken over school education; churches have been built by the Russian Orthodox Church in places of permanent residence of Samoyeds; modern means of transport help to get to the tundra people, etc. The problems are still unresolved. However, some of the problems remain unsolved. Missionaries must study the language and culture of the Samoyed peoples to establish close trusting contact with them. There is still a shortage of talented preachers. There are also difficulties in the reception of Samoyedic culture and its traditions, as well as the reception of national images.

At the present stage, missionary activity can be carried out more effectively. The Synodal Missionary Department provides methodological and personnel support to the northern dioceses, including those that carry out missionary work among the Samoyed peoples. These dioceses are headed by bishops who are interested in missionary work and who actively participate personally in missionary



expeditions to remote villages. Diocesan offices have missionary departments with full-time staff. There is local support from government authorities at all levels, from the village to the federal level. Residents are loyal to the missionaries and attend meetings without coercion to give pre-baptismal talks, they ask the missionaries for help in their everyday needs and willingly make contact.

However, even the availability of technical and administrative possibilities does not significantly change the current situation. Single cases of baptism by Samoyeds do not contribute to the formation of Christian identity.

In the future, missionaries are faced not with the question of personal asceticism of the newly converted representatives of small indigenous peoples, but with the question of Christianising the culture itself, creating an environment for the spiritual formation of the personality of the newly converted Christians in accordance with the historically established culture and peculiarities of the Samoyed peoples' everyday life. For modern Nenets, the issue of accepting Christianity, in fact, becomes an act of renunciation of their culture and acceptance of the "Russian faith". This way of putting the question sharply reduces the effectiveness of missionary activity. The strategic task of the missionary is to show the universality of the Christian faith, as well as the diversity of cultural forms in various Local Churches.

Accordingly, the problem of enculturation and reception of culture among Samoyedic peoples turns into the problem of formation of ethno-confessional identity. The results of our study show that it is not only undesirable, but fundamentally impossible to copy and even adapt Russian religiosity. The culture of the Samoyeds includes beliefs, a form of social relations, traditions, everyday life, including food. All the above aspects require not standardisation, but Christian reflection and inner transformation. In this case, it will be possible to achieve an increase in the short-term (acceptance of baptism by the natives because of missionary activity) and long-term effectiveness of mission (growth in faith through the reception of doctrinal aspects and transition to a new form of cultural identity).

As a result of our research, we have identified four main areas of missionary activity at the present stage: children's mission, tundra mission, mission among aboriginal settlers, and mission among migrants in relation to the indigenous population. We have established that the preservation of the traditional way of life of indigenous peoples is an important task for the missionary, since changes in traditional forms of life may entail deterioration of health, and in the long run lead to the extinction of certain peoples belonging to the Samoyedi group. The State provides as much support as it can through programmes aimed at preserving traditional ways of life. The task of the Church is to consolidate efforts with the State and support the idea of preserving the traditional way of life, bringing to it a Christian basis of activity, identifying historical and contemporary examples of Christian life among the Samoyed peoples themselves. In this way the foundation for the formation of ethno-confessional identity can be laid. Missionaries must separate material and spiritual cultures to revise the basic forms and approaches of missionary activity. The requirement for the addressee of the mission to change the paradigm of religious thinking must be paired with the willingness of the mission actor to change the paradigm of missionary activity.

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## APPENDIX 1

## Нум'Ерв'Түё"ма

Нумгана мэна Нисява"!

Пыдар нюмл хэбидя нэя.

Параҗодадавар тоя.

Ватор, нув'нянэнда тотрев', я'ниня җани'тарем'нэя.

Тюку яля'няна" нэлом'мэдава" тамбю".

Маня" нянана" җатебясавэй җатебясялмдемба"мана" тотрев',  
җатебина" ха"авра".

Сидна" нён хорпю", сидна" вэнзухуд нэда".

Параҗодадавар,

Ныхыр, Юнар пилибт" таня".

Аминь <sup>236</sup>.

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<sup>236</sup> *Iakovov D.V., priest. Exploring Culture, Learning Language.*

## APPENDIX 2

Distribution in daily calories of the percentage of nutrients <sup>237</sup>.

**Table 1.** Dietary composition (in % calories) for the prevention of hypercholesterolaemia and cardiovascular disease (according to several international recommendations).

Power component	First stage	Second stage
Total fat	< 30 %	< 30 %
Fatty acids:		
Saturated	< 10 %	< 7 %
Polyunsaturated	<10 %	< 10 %
Monounsaturated	10–15 %	10–15 %
Carbohydrates	50–60 %	50–60 %
Protein	10–20 %	10–20 %
Cholesterol	< 300 mg/day	< 200 mg/day
Total calories	Sufficient to achieve and maintain the desired weight	

**Table 2.** WHO Dietary Guidelines

Name	% of calories and daily intake
Total fat	15–13 %
Saturated fatty acids	< 10 %
Polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs)	6–10 %
Omega-6 polyunsaturated fatty acids	5–8 %
Omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids	1–2 %
Fatty acid transformations	< 1 %

<sup>237</sup> Perova N.V. op. cit. P. 38, 41.

Monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs)	10 %
Total carbohydrates	55–75 %
Simple carbohydrates	< 10 %
Total protein	10–15 %
Dietary cholesterol	< 300 mg
Table salt	<5 g/day
Raw fruit and vegetables	> 400 g
Dietary fibre	24 g

**Table 3.** Average composition of reindeer meat

Components (nutrients)	Content per 100 g weight
Protein, g	22 – 25
Fats, g	2 – 7
Potassium, mg	300 – 430
Magnesium, mg	23 – 30
Iron, mg	2,8 – 5,0
Zinc, mg	2,0 – 4,9
Copper, mg	220 – 410
Selenium, mg	24 – 92