

CHAPTER 6

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX
THOUGHT IN THE
CHURCH'S CLERICAL
ACADEMIES

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INTRODUCTION

WITH a few notable exceptions, such as this volume, the study of Russian religious thought has largely overlooked what might best be called Russian Orthodox thought—that is, the ideas, arguments, and narratives generated by Orthodox churchmen and professionally trained theologians as they sought to make sense of and give meaning to the world around them.¹ This chapter seeks to further the recovery and exploration of Russian Orthodox thought by illuminating what was arguably the most important intellectual and institutional development in the Russian Church since the founding of the Holy Synod (1721–1722), namely the establishment of clerical academies (*dukhovnye akademii*) in the dioceses of St. Petersburg (1809), Moscow (1814), Kiev (1819), and Kazan' (1842).²

¹ For an attempt to explain the historical and conceptual origins of this scholarly oversight, see Michelson and Kornblatt (2014, 9–13).

² My decision to translate *dukhovnaia akademiia* (pl. *dukhovnye akademii*) as clerical academy, instead of theological academy or spiritual academy, is mainly based on context and etymology. The schools were imagined by their founders and administrators to be institutions for preparing young men for clerical service (*dukhovnoe sluzhenie*), especially those born into the clerical estate (*dukhovnoe soslovie*) to fathers who already belonged to the clergy (*dukhovenstvo*). Theology (*bogoslovie*) and theological science (*bogoslovskaiia nauka*) were just two of the areas of study offered at these schools. For a fuller explanation, see Michelson (2017, 252n1).

Over the course of their existence, which lasted until the early years of Bolshevik rule, these four schools graduated thousands of undergraduate students (*kandidaty*) and hundreds of master's students, a significant number of whom went on to earn doctoral degrees from the same schools. Upon graduation, four-year students regularly entered the priesthood, where they would then oversee a local church and its parishioners, which suggests that the intellectual reach of the academies extended well beyond the lecture hall. Dozens of graduates from these advanced schools were tonsured as monks, which allowed them to enter monastic life or, more commonly, take up administrative positions at the diocesan, episcopal, and synodal levels. As the Russian Church struggled through the revolutionary unrest of 1905–1917, the two most important bodies to consider and enact ecclesiastical reforms, the Pre-Conciliar Commission (1906) and the Russian Church Council (1917–1918), were staffed by academy instructors and former students. From top to bottom and across the breadth of its vast network, Russia's nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Church was populated by graduates of the academy system.

These schools similarly produced scores of Orthodox intellectuals, who used scholarship, journalism, lectures, and sermons to promote their understandings of Orthodoxy not just to parishioners, but also to educated audiences that were increasingly concerned about philosophical materialism and atheism and what seemed to be their ideological progeny—nihilism, anarchism, and terrorism. These Orthodox intellectuals and their conferees within the clerical academies initiated, participated in, and/or tried to adjudicate a range of public debates, from the social and cultural role of monasticism in Russian history (Michelson 2017, 186–7) to the Name-Glorifying (*Imiaslavie*) controversy examined elsewhere in this *Handbook* (see Chapter 19). They similarly wrote book reviews about recent publications, including works like *Vekhi*, also highlighted in this *Handbook* (see Chapter 13), and published essays related to current events and new religious movements. Some of them joined the Moscow Psychological Society and attended meetings of the Religious-Philosophical Gatherings, both of which are also featured in this *Handbook* (see Chapters 13 and 15).

Equally important is the fact that many social and political activists in fin de siècle Russia, including those who carried the banners of revolution, came from these very same schools and the seminaries that fed into them (Manchester 2008). In sheer numbers, ranging from faculty members and graduates to publications and outreach programmes, it was the Church's four clerical academies, more so than the salons and societies of capital-city Russia, that constituted the centre of Russian Orthodox thought in the century leading up to the revolutions of 1917. The scope of these institutions, the longevity of their historical existence, and the variety of ideas emanating from them prevent a detailed discussion of their content. What follows instead is a brief, often cursory, and ultimately only suggestive account of the contours and directions of Russian Orthodox thought as it took shape in the clerical academies during the late imperial period and as it became meaningful for successive generations of educated clergy and laity.

HISTORY OF THE CLERICAL ACADEMIES

Each of the Church's four institutions of higher education enjoyed histories that predated their official establishment as clerical academies.³ The oldest of these schools was the Kiev Academy, which traced its institutional origin back to the founding of the Kiev Brotherhood School in 1615 and the founding of its immediate successors, the Kiev Mohyla Collegium in 1631 and the Kiev Mohyla Academy in 1701, both of which were named after Metropolitan Petro Mohyla (1596–1647). The history of this academy and its foundation in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth brought the school into regular contact with Roman Catholic culture, including Jesuit-trained instructors and Catholic texts, which was to have a long-lasting effect on intellectual developments at the school. Clerical education in Kiev initially, and for nearly two hundred years, was conducted in Latin, as it was for the other three schools that eventually became clerical academies. This fact gave the curriculum in Kiev a decidedly Scholastic inflection, as partly evidenced by the subjects taught there in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as well as the holdings of its library, even as the school sought to distinguish Eastern Orthodoxy from Roman Catholicism (Shevchenko 2011; Isichenko 2015). One result of this linguistic and theological legacy was the Kiev Academy's commission in the nineteenth century to translate the writings of the Latin Fathers into Russian and provide scholarly commentary about those texts. Just as importantly, the Kiev Collegium and the original Kiev Academy educated two or three generations of eighteenth-century hierarchs, including Feofan (Prokopovich) (1681–1736), who, among other things, spearheaded Peter I's ecclesiastical reforms, aligned the Church with the Petrine state, and offered an Orthodox apology of political absolutism. The geographic location of the future Kiev Clerical Academy on the Right-Bank of the Dnepr River also meant that the school would play a key role in ascribing a Russian national identity to Orthodoxy as part of a larger project to bolster imperial and synodal rule in the empire's western borderlands, a region framed by religious, linguistic, cultural, and ethnic variety and, by the early twentieth century, antagonisms (Hillis 2013).

It was a graduate of the Kiev Collegium, Simeon of Polotsk (1629–1680), and one of his students, Sil'vestr (Medvedev) (1641–1691), who helped to found the Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy in 1687, the school that eventually became the Moscow Clerical Academy. Originally located at Moscow's Zaikonospasskii Monastery, the Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy emphasized Greek-language study during its first decade or so, before changes in curriculum made Latin the dominant language of instruction and scholarship. What this Greek heritage imparted to the school, especially after its reestablishment as a clerical academy, was a capacity to engage, interpret, and translate the Greek Fathers, which became the principal responsibility of the Moscow Academy

³ The information in the next several paragraphs mainly comes from Sukhova (2006, chapter 1), *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'* (1890–1907, vol. 1, 254–7; vol. 21, 268–70), Chistovich (1857), Askochenskii (1863), Smirnov (1879), and Znamenskii (1891–1892).

during the nineteenth century. The academy's location in the city of Moscow and then, after 1814, at the Trinity-Sergius Monastery some forty miles north of Moscow meant that for its entire history the academy was situated in Russia's Orthodox heartland, as opposed to the empire's periphery like Kiev (and Kazan') or the centre of imperial power like St. Petersburg. One result of the Moscow Academy's cultural geography, as well as its later commitment to the Greek Fathers, was that its faculty, staff, and students understood themselves to be the inheritors and articulators of true enlightenment (*prosveshchenie*), as opposed to the false enlightenment of French atheism and materialism (Bogoslovskii 1917), a juxtaposition which put them into conflict with the salon circles and radical groups that started to take up residence in Moscow in the 1840s and in St. Petersburg a decade later. They also regularly imagined themselves to be defenders of authentic Orthodoxy against Scholastic influences still circulating in Kiev and ladder-climbing careerists looking for administrative jobs in St. Petersburg, even as those same instructors, administrators, and students splintered into competing ideological groups in the last decade or so of the old regime (Bogdanova 2007).

Of the four advanced schools established in the nineteenth century, it was the St. Petersburg Clerical Academy that most fully embodied the administrative prerogatives of empire and synodal governance. That institution traced its origins back to 1721, when, in the midst of Feofan's and Peter I's ecclesiastical reforms, a Slavonic school was established by Feodosii (Ianovskii) at the Aleksandr Nevskii Monastery in St. Petersburg. Reorganized as the Slavic-Greek-Latin Seminary in 1725 and the Aleksandr Nevskii Academy in 1797, the future St. Petersburg Academy regularly trained students in a wide variety of fields commensurate to what was imagined at the time to be the educational needs of well-rounded agents of state and church, including rhetoric, oratory, history, geography, medicine, foreign languages, mathematics, and physics, as well as philosophy and theology. More broadly, it was over the course of the eighteenth century that clerical training in St. Petersburg was increasingly organized around key imperatives of the absolutist state, namely the inculcation of Orthodox 'enlightenment' and 'good morals' among the laity (*mirskie*). Graduates of the St. Petersburg Academy regularly filled synodal, episcopal, diocesan, and monastic offices, as befitting a school located in the capital city.

The last of the nineteenth-century academies to be established was the Kazan' Clerical Academy, which originally opened its doors in 1723 as a diocesan school, before becoming a seminary in 1733 and an academy in 1797 (the academy was reorganized and reopened in 1842). The school's location some 450 miles east of Moscow among a diverse population that, in addition to Russian Orthodoxy, practised various forms of Sunni Islam, Protestantism, nature religion, and Old Belief, and that often identified with linguistic and ethnic groups other than Slavic-Russian, including Tatar, Chuvash, Mari, and German, helped to determine the principal responsibility of the Kazan' Academy and its predecessors, namely missionary work, apologetics, and anti-schismatic propaganda. In this sense, the Kazan' Academy developed an activist, proselytizing identity prior to and well beyond its (re-)opening in 1842, a cultural, professional, and institutional identity that shaped the ways in which its faculty, staff, and student body imagined

their roles in relation to the academies in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Kiev and to other institutions and offices of the Russian Church.

The impetus to reorganize the schools in Kiev, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Kazan' originated in the late eighteenth century among members of the Holy Synod, including hierarchs Gavriil (Petrov) (1730–1801), Amvrosii (Podobedov) (1742–1818), Irinei (Klement'evskii) (1753–1818), and especially Metropolitan Platon (Levshin) of Moscow (1737–1812), all of whom were educated at the Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy in Moscow. Their intent was to standardize clerical education, centralize its administration, address fiscal and material deficiencies, excise foreign (i.e. Roman Catholic and Protestant) influences, and teach the basics of Orthodox literacy, mainly on the assumption that a proper understanding of right belief would help parish priests fulfil their clerical responsibility to cultivate authentic Orthodoxy among parishioners. These initial plans to reform clerical education began in earnest in 1807, when Emperor Alexander I (r. 1801–1825) formed a committee to review the Church's educational system and recommend changes.

Metropolitan Platon's place in both synodal and governmental discussions about these educational reforms, as well as the prestige of his episcopal office in Moscow and his personal authority, meant that his understanding of theology, education, and Orthodoxy's role in contemporary society helped to inform the initial founding of the academy system.⁴ Platon's theological disposition was largely indebted to what might best be called conservative Orthodox Enlightenment. For Platon this entailed a Christian apologetics that sought to reconcile faith and reason and ground Russia's existing sociopolitical order on Christian tenets of toleration, dignity, free will, and providence. Platon also expressed a burgeoning restoration consciousness, which imagined that Orthodoxy was presently out of joint and that it could only be made right by recovering and restoring authentic Orthodoxy.⁵ Most significantly, Platon advocated an Enlightenment pedagogy of Orthodox virtue, which understood Christian practice as ascetic mastery of the moral self. The result of such practice was not only personal salvation but also a well-ordered state and society. More broadly, Platon's participation in founding the academy system occurred in a period of intense concern in Russia about the fate of Orthodoxy and monarchy, spurred mainly by the anticlerical and antimonarchical politics of revolutionary France and disruptions to Europe's Christian order brought about by the Napoleonic wars. The new clerical schools were to be part of this

⁴ Platon's legacy at the Moscow Academy was not limited to his role in formulating its curriculum and ethos. A scholarship fund was established in his name to help needs-based students pay for their education. Students who benefited from this programme regularly added the suffix Platonov to their surnames, e.g. N. P. Giliarov-Platonov and V. D. Kudriavtsev-Platonov, both of whom, as we shall in what follows, became important Orthodox intellectuals and scholars (Kedrov 1914).

⁵ A key figure in the later restoration movement was another 'student-Platonik,' A. M. Ivantsov-Platonov (1836–1894). A graduate of the Moscow Academy and instructor of church history at the St. Petersburg Academy and then at Imperial Moscow University, Ivantsov-Platonov later became an active Orthodox intellectual, helping to edit the monthly *Orthodox Review*, writing articles about contemporary church issues, several of which were published in I. S. Aksakov's *Rus'*, and publishing several of A. S. Khomiakov's Russian and foreign language writings.

imperial and ecclesiastical effort to secure the future of Orthodox Russia against external enemies (Wirtschafter 2013; Michelson 2017, 65–7).

The establishment of the four clerical academies in the decades between 1809 and 1842 was mainly determined by two imperial charters (*ukazy*), the first in June 1808, the second in August 1814 (*Polnoe sobranie zakonov [PSZ]* 1830, 30: 368–95, 32: 910–54). Both charters make it clear that the government was invested in these institutions of higher education for the sake of imperial administration, which in this context was directed towards measures that could strengthen ‘good morals and Christian teaching’ among Orthodox ‘youth’. The intent of this state-sponsored education was to cultivate the ‘moral and physical capacities’ of young men entering the clergy, so that they would acquire ‘true piety’ and, thus, become ‘pious and enlightened servants of God’s word’. Here state agents and hierarchs in the Russian Church focused on the ‘inner formation’ of students towards a life in ‘active Christianity’, which was to be the ‘only goal of these schools’. In addition to observing biblical instructions to fear the Lord, to orient one’s life towards the dictates of providence, and to follow ‘mentors and caretakers’ who were well practised in Christian humility, students were expected to gain Orthodox knowledge, not to mention professional skills, through the study of theology, which constituted the bulk of course work at the academies. The 1814 charter initially established studies in dogmatic theology, hermeneutics, polemical theology, moral theology, and canon law under the broad heading ‘Theological Sciences’. Courses would soon include introduction to theology, homiletics, pastoral theology, and, perhaps most importantly for the history of Russian Orthodox thought, patristics, which helped to formalize and orient the reception of the Church Fathers and their writings in Russia’s late imperial period (Chistovich 1857, 23–9; *PSZ* 1873, 552; 1887, 238).

Students enrolled in the clerical academies also took courses in the ‘historical sciences’, which encompassed Church history, Russian history, and world history. These courses were to be organized around a ‘philosophy of history’ derived from the works of Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, Antoine-François-Claude Ferrand, William Robertson, Johann Matthias Schröckh, and other European theologians and historians deemed ideologically acceptable. Instructors were to teach students about ‘significant events’ in history, the relationship of the past to the present, and the ways in which those same events reveal the providential course of humanity’s ‘moral’ and ‘rational’ advancement, ‘the formation and transition of civil societies, the fundamental reasons for the rise and fall of states, the fate of false religions, and the success of the one true Christian religion’ (*PSZ* 1830, 32: 925; Chistovich 1857, 296–9).

Equally significant in clerical education were courses in the ‘philosophical sciences’. At the academy level, such courses focused on learning about the ‘opinions of the most renowned philosophers, comparing them to each other, and correlating them to a general principal’. Pride of place among ‘ancient philosophers’ was reserved for Plato,⁶ the only philosopher mentioned by name in the 1814 charter. But the interpretation of

⁶ Plato’s major works were translated into Russian by V. A. Karpov (1798–1867), a graduate of the Kiev Clerical Academy and a professor of philosophy at the St. Petersburg Academy.

philosophical texts was not to be derived from the sources themselves. Those who drafted the charter cautioned that the study of philosophy should always be interpreted according to ‘Evangelical truth’ and the dictum that ‘Christian doctrine’ is always superior to philosophy itself. The main courses initially taught by faculties of philosophy were the history of philosophy and moral philosophy, the latter of which was assumed to help students discern ‘not only the most beneficial truths’, but also answer ‘the most difficult questions about the [proper] structure of civil societies and the foundations of rights [*prava*] and laws’ (PSZ 1830, 32: 925–7).

I highlight theology, history, and philosophy not because they were the only courses required for clerical education. All four schools also offered courses in composition, literature, mathematics, and ancient and modern languages, with additional courses added later and with specialized courses in Islam, Tibetan Buddhism, ethnography, the history of Christian missions to ‘Tatars’ and ‘Mongolians’, and related language instruction offered at the Kazan’ Academy (PSZ 1887, 238–9). Rather, history, philosophy, and theology constituted the sources and the conduits for much of Russian Orthodox thought. Although circumscribed by statist and ecclesiastical prerogatives that prohibited the circulation of certain texts and discussions about them, academy instructors introduced several classes (*kursy*) of students to an array of European thinkers related to those fields of study, including Gottfried Leibniz, Christian Wolff, Johann Heinrich Jung-Stilling, Karl von Eckartshausen, Franz Xaver von Baader, F. H. Jacobi, Friedrich Schiller, Wilhelm Tennemann, Immanuel Kant, and Friedrich Schelling (Michelson 2017, 69–71). As these foreign language texts were read, interrogated, and incorporated into lecture courses and scholarship, and as instructors and librarians expanded their collections of European titles,⁷ they began to reshape the contours and content of Russian Orthodox thought beyond doctrinal concerns towards questions that soon dominated (and still resonate in) Russian public discourse.

Much of the criticism in Russia against European rationalism and historicism, for example, developed in the clerical academies. This criticism is partly evident in a lecture series on speculative theology delivered at the Moscow Academy in 1841–1842, which challenged the methodological naturalism of modern European philosophy and theology (Golubinskii 1868). Just four years later, N. P. Giliarov-Platonov (1824–1887) wrote extensive critiques of German idealism and Hegel’s ontology while enrolled at the same school, criticisms that he brought to the Slavophiles when he joined them in the 1850s and that were later republished in a leading journal of lay religious thought, *Questions of Philosophy and Psychology* (Giliarov-Platonov 1899a, 1899b). This cross-cultural and cross-intellectual transfer between Russia and Europe accelerated in the last half of the nineteenth century, as study abroad (*komandirovka*) in European universities, which

⁷ The libraries at the Moscow and Kiev academies, for example, later acquired works by Johann Herder, Friedrich Schleiermacher, G. W. F. Hegel, Arthur Schopenhauer, Ferdinand Christian Baur, François Guizot, Auguste Comte, Victor Cousin, W. M. L. de Wette, Bruno Bauer, Karl Rosenkranz, Eduard Hartmann, Kuno Fischer, Herbert Spencer, Friedrich Lange, Albrecht Ritschl, and Wilhelm Windelband, just to name a few of the foreign-language authors whose works were housed in those schools (Korsunskii 1885; Krylovskii 1896; Popov 1900).

included course work with scholars like Adolf Harnack and Wilhelm Dilthey, became a key component of academic training.⁸ More significantly, it was through the genres of history, philosophy, and theology that educated clergy and laity in Russia talked about and conceptualized religion, culture, society, consciousness, autocracy, empire, Europe, the West, Orthodoxy, other Christian confessions, and the Russian people (*russkii narod*) and its historical trajectory.

DEFENDING RUSSIAN ORTHODOXY

Shaped by threats from revolutionary Europe, distress about foreign influences on Orthodox Christianity, and the practical demands of staffing local churches with priests who knew something about theology and doctrine, faculty members at the clerical academies formulated new narratives and interpretations about Russia's dominant confession. Within a generation or two of the opening of the Moscow Academy, for example, archpriest A. V. Gorskii (1812–1875) developed an influential philosophy of Church history which posited the idea that the providential advancement of the Russian Church towards higher stages of Christian existence, culminating in pneumatic Christianity, could be discerned in and plotted according to the hypostatic realization of the Triune God (Mel'kov 2012, 95–110). The very first class of students to graduate from the Kiev Academy (1823) learned that the history of Western philosophy—ranging from that of the ancient Greeks to German idealism—vacillated between a multitude of false or misguided teachings that regularly terminated in political and cultural catastrophe. What stood opposed to this ersatz philosophy were the 'true principles of philosophy [*liubomudrie*]', which exclusively resided in the 'Orthodox Christian faith', understood in this context as the guardian of 'Evangelical truth'. Here biblical stories about the Fall, God's 'chosen people', and the Incarnation were scripted onto contemporary stories about Russian Orthodoxy as the sole bulwark against the anthropocentric temptations of deicide and regicide spilling over from the West (Askochenskii 1863, 74–5 *passim*). More broadly, instructors in the last half of the nineteenth century sought to create a uniquely Russian Orthodox philosophy to counter Catholic and Protestant philosophy, as well as philosophical rationalism, materialism, and atheism (Shevtsov 2017; Solov'ev 2017). In fact, questions about Russia's cultural relationship to Europe and Orthodoxy's confessional relationship to Roman Catholicism and Protestantism were regularly addressed in the clerical academies, which quickly became centres of public debate about the West, modernity, and Russia, especially in the decades following the Emancipation of 1861 (Shevtsov 2013).

By the mid-nineteenth century, instructors at the four clerical academies began to orient their lectures and scholarship towards ideological challenges at home. Concerned

⁸ For example, see the account of I. V. Popov's study abroad at the University of Berlin and the Ludwig-Maximilian University in 1901–1902 in 'Zhurnaly Soveta' (1902) and 'Zhurnaly Soveta' (1904).

about reductionist theories of religion gaining hold among university students, P. F. Iurkevich (1826–1874), a professor of philosophy at the Kiev Clerical Academy and, later, at Imperial Moscow University, helped to develop an Orthodox anthropology of moral-psychological asceticism to combat the materialist anthropology of N. G. Chernyshevskii, N. A. Dobroliubov, and like-minded critics of church and state (Michelson 2017, chapter 3). In a similar vein, V. D. Kudriavtsev-Platonov (1828–1891) used his position as professor of philosophy at the Moscow Clerical Academy to interpret Russian Orthodoxy as a rational religion of moral theism (*teizm*). The intent here was to make Orthodoxy a modern religion of social order and moral freedom in response to the challenges of emancipation and to make Orthodoxy meaningful to audiences tempered by advancements in the natural and social sciences (Gillen 2014). As scientific scepticism and methodological naturalism started to threaten the validity of domestic miracle stories and miracles recorded in the Bible, professionally trained theologians formulated new ways to talk about supernatural intervention, whereby God's free personality was demonstrated in his capacity to intervene in the natural world so as to facilitate the human capacity to overcome sin—new narratives and concepts that became hallmarks of Orthodox anthropology and psychology (Shevzov 2014). By the early twentieth century, the Church's four clerical academies and their ancillaries had published hundreds of Russian-language works on church history, church law, providence, revelation, eschatology, the kingdom of God, the Antichrist, Christian morality, the Trinity, disbelief, and the relationship between church and state—that is, categories of church theology that have long interested intellectual historians of modern Europe, as well as the very stuff that makes up theology and the philosophy of religion,⁹ but which have generally remained outside the purview of Russian intellectual history.

Much if not all of these currents of thought came from and were framed by a singular development in the intellectual history of the clerical academies. Commonly called the patristic revival or the first neopatristic movement, this involved a project to translate the entire works of the Church Fathers into Russian and to support those translations with biography, history, and exegesis. The impetus behind the patristic turn was in large part the same one that initiated the Church's educational reform, namely the belief that Russian Orthodoxy had deviated in some measure from the tenets and practices of right belief and that such deviations could only be corrected by restoring authentic Orthodoxy, imagined in this context to be located in patristic Christianity. This particular concern was compounded around the time the first three clerical academies opened their doors (1809–1819), when Catholic and Protestant mysticism gained favour among members of Alexander I's retinue, as well as with the emperor himself. The specific need in this instance was to recover and disseminate mystical texts written by Church Fathers, especially those Fathers favoured in the Eastern Church (Kotsiuba 2011). As we shall in what follows, the initial direction of the neopatristic movement in the clerical academies

⁹ For representative titles, see Dickey (1987), Cremer (1995), Howard (2006), Wolfe (2013), and Coyne (2015).

soon changed, a reorientation that was to shape the course of Russian Orthodox thought and practice throughout the late imperial period.

The scope and duration of this project, which totalled thousands of pages of patristic texts translated into Russian, even more pages of commentary and analysis, and nearly one hundred years of effort (ca. 1821–1918), meant that the patristic revival eventually incorporated hundreds of instructors, staff members, and students from all four academies. Perhaps the single most important figure in this project, at least during its first five decades, was Filaret (Drozdov) (1782–1867). Shortly after serving as rector of the St. Petersburg Academy (1812–1819), where he also taught hermeneutics and canon law (Chistovich 1857, 190–2), Filaret became Metropolitan of Moscow (1821–1867). It was from that office that Filaret directed the Church's patristic revival. Like his predecessor, Platon (Levshin), and any other prelate at that time, Filaret understood clerical education, including patristic-based studies, as key to strengthening Russia's monarchical and ecclesiastical order in the face of internal and external threats. This understanding was shaped by Filaret's interpretation of the Napoleonic wars, which in his words had brought the 'darkness' of 'the West' to the very heart of Holy Russia. In response to what he later called the 'dogmatic terrorism' of German philosophical materialism, rationalism, and atheism, which in his estimation was infiltrating Orthodox Russia by stealth, Filaret reconfigured the patristic revival as Christian resistance to epistemological colonization from abroad. The theology, philosophy, and history courses offered at the clerical academies during his tenure as Metropolitan of Moscow were part of this resistance (Michelson 2017, 67–9, 104).¹⁰

The practical and material consequences of the patristic revival transformed the Church's four clerical academies from what might have been narrow vocational schools into dynamic centres of intellectual outreach to educated clergy and laity, which in turn helped to reshape the public notion of what it meant to be a Russian Orthodox believer in the late imperial period. Translating the Church Fathers from Greek, Latin, Syriac, and other languages into the vernacular necessitated foreign-language instruction, course work in patristic studies, the staffing of review and editorial committees, and the establishment of serial publications to bring these translations to a Russian audience. Regular and irregular periodicals were eventually established at each of the four academies: *Christian Reading* (1821–1917) at the St. Petersburg Academy; *Works of the Holy Fathers in Russian Translation* and its *Supplements* (1843–1865, 1871–1872, 1880–1891) at the Moscow Academy, followed there by *The Theological Herald* (1892–1918); *Orthodox Interlocutor* (1855–1917) at the Kazan' Academy; and *Works of the Kiev Clerical Academy* (1860–1917) in Kiev. These periodicals, which over the course of their print runs published works by Athanasius, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, Gregory of Nyssa, Dionysius the Areopagite, John Chrysostom, Origen, Tertullian, and Augustine, just to name a few, were soon complemented by Orthodox 'thick' journals. These included *Orthodox Review* (1860–1891) and *Faith and Reason* (1884–1917), both of which were

¹⁰ For a sense of Filaret's philosophical and theological orientation relative to the intellectual contexts in which he operated, see Gavriushin (1998, 2001).

originally staffed by graduates of the Moscow Academy and oriented towards public outreach, with *Orthodox Review* being one of the first Church journals directly to engage and invite contributions from educated society.

The content of these periodicals was more than patristic translations. Scholars from the academies also published articles about Eastern Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Russian saints, other Orthodox saints, Old Belief, sectarianism, liturgy, sacraments, theology, and doctrine, as well as historical documents and sermons, speeches, and memoirs by priests and prelates. During the last half of the nineteenth century, editors of those journals still in print turned their attention to events of the day. This move to a more public orientation in Russian Orthodox thought is partly captured in a speech delivered to instructors and students at the Moscow Academy in November 1891 by Antonii (Khrapovitskii) (1863–1936). Celebrating the opening of the Academy's new monthly journal, *The Theological Herald*, Antonii declared that the principal goal of Orthodox scholarship was intellectual outreach to lay members of the Church who had grown disaffected with the tenets and stewardship of their faith and to ordained members of the Church who had become indifferent towards psychological and material hardships suffered by the faithful (Antonii 1892). Over the next twenty-five years, and especially during the revolutionary upheavals of 1905–1917, thousands of articles appeared in the pages of the Church's academic journals, offering commentary on war, politics, foreign and Russian literature, art, confessional diversity, atheism, the intelligentsia, reform, reaction, secularization, the social question, cultural ferment, and, perhaps most importantly, institutional problems and ideological divisions within and between state, society, and the Russian Church. Reflecting the variety of opinions and currents of thought that had accumulated in the clerical academies since their founding, these articles offered a host of differing, often antagonistic, responses to the problems of revolution, suggesting, as if we needed more evidence, that Russian Orthodox thought was variegated, contingent, and diverse (Shevzov 1986). Expressing the highly charged atmosphere of that time, Russian Orthodox thought soon ran the gambit of political ideologies, ranging from socialist revolutionary and Christian socialism to reactionary monarchy and right-wing anti-Semitism.

The patristic revival reconfigured the intellectual histories of Russian Orthodox thought, lay religious thought, and even Russian secular thought. Translations of the Church Fathers and the supporting scholarship that followed soon flooded Russian Orthodox schools, journals, and scholarship with previously unavailable or rarely considered patristic concepts, as partly evidenced by course books assigned to those schools and the content of academic lectures (Filaret 1865; Soliarski 1875; Makarii 1884). Students enrolled in the academy system, as well as members of educated society interested in Orthodox Christianity, were introduced to patristic writings about God, creation, Christ, the Holy Spirit, human nature and psychology, churchness (*tserkovnost'*), free will, providence, suffering, good and evil, and more, all of which were used to make sense of contemporary and historical events in Russia and Europe, such as the Crimean and Russo-Turkish wars, Russia's Great Reforms, the counter-reforms that followed,

demands for freedom of conscience, and more than a century of revolutionary unrest across the Continent.

In particular, patristic ideas about monasticism and asceticism migrated to the centre of Russian Orthodox thought in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, resulting in a renewed emphasis on ascetic practice and consciousness as core components of Orthodox identity and community. The clerical academies helped to introduce Russia's reading public to patristic—and, thus, new—interpretations of fasting, renunciation, poverty, humility, abstinence, labour, otherworldliness, and obedience, which tended to favour moral and psychological asceticism, often rendered as 'purity of heart' and 'purity of mind', over the physical rigours of somatic asceticism. Coupled with the Church's long-standing fears about Western influences and their domestic progeny undermining Holy Russia, this asceticism discourse increasingly framed the conflict between Russia and the West as a struggle between the obedient, humble, tranquil, and Christ-loving Russian *narod* and the decadent, militaristic, prideful, and atheistic peoples (*narody*) of Europe. In fact, Orthodox intellectuals, both lay and clerical, repeatedly made patristic asceticism the plot device that determined the course of a people's national and/or confessional history (Michelson 2017).

The patristic revival in the Church's clerical academies did not remain exclusive to those schools or the Church. It also resonated in educated society, and, later, in lay journalism and scholarship, and in philosophical 'gatherings'. The brevity of this article only allows me to highlight two examples of this crossover, that of the early Slavophiles and that of V. S. Soloviev.¹¹ Of the two instructors initially responsible for directing patristic translations at the Moscow Academy, one of them, archpriest F. A. Golubinskii (1791–1854), worked closely with a leading Slavophile thinker, I. V. Kireevskii (1806–1856), as well as his wife, N. P. Kireevskaia (1809–1900), and their spiritual elder (*starets*), Father Makarii (Ivanov) (1788–1860), to translate the works of Simeon the New Theologian, Maximus the Confessor, Isaac the Syrian, and other Eastern Fathers into Russian. It was through these texts, in conjunction with Father Makarii's guidance, that patristic asceticism entered Slavophile thought and practice, which was imagined in this instance to be the formation of an Orthodox self, capable of resisting the temptations of Western rationalism, decadence, solipsism, despondency, and enmity towards others (Engelstein 2009). Conversely, Slavophile interpretations of patristic texts started to find their way into clerical schools no later than the mid-1860s, when the Russian Church ended its censorship of A. S. Khomiakov's 'theological writings' and began to publish them in the pages of *Orthodox Review*. In turn, instructors, staff members, and students at the academies increasingly read the Church Fathers, as well as Russian Church history, with a Slavophile inflection,¹² suggesting an interactive engagement between the Church's patristic revival

¹¹ Two other examples that come to mind are V. A. Kozhenikov's scholarship on asceticism, published in 1909 in *Christian Reading*, and P. A. Florenskii's writings after he joined the Moscow Academy in 1904.

¹² One such Slavophile churchman was Ioann (Sokolov) (1818–1869), who graduated from the Moscow Academy in 1842 before joining the faculty of church law at the St. Petersburg Academy in 1844. Ioann later served as the rector of the Kazan' Academy (1857–1864) and the St. Petersburg Academy (1864–1866). See Barsov (1872).

and Slavophile and neo-Slavophile religious thinking, which has yet to be fully explored by historians.¹³

A similar crossover occurred in the intellectual biography of Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900), imperial Russia's most important lay religious thinker. A few years after studying at Imperial Moscow University with Pamfil Iurkevich, whose Orthodox anthropology helped to inform Soloviev's critique of 'Western philosophy', and after spending an academic year (1873–1874) studying at the Moscow Clerical Academy with Viktor Kudriavtsev-Platonov, who shared the concept of theism with him, Soloviev introduced a key concept to Russia's Christian discourse, the idea of *theosis* or deification (Gillen 2012). This idea posits the notion that God created humans so that they could be like a god in their consciousness and behaviour. Although deification (initially *obozhestvlenie* in Soloviev's writings, then *obozhenie*) traces its theological roots back to the Church Fathers and their ascetic practices, Soloviev's interpretation of deification was decidedly, if only gradually, anti-patristic and anti-ascetic, modes of religiosity that Soloviev believed had outlived their pedagogical value in the course of providential history. Instead, Soloviev directed his reading of deification towards androgynous visions of eschatological renewal in Christian empire (Michelson 2017, 160–70). One of several critiques of Soloviev's interpretation of deification came from I. V. Popov (1867–1938), a professor of patristic studies at, and a graduate of, the Moscow Clerical Academy. In an effort to convince his readers that patristic concepts of deification were still relevant in contemporary Russia (ca. 1903–1909), Popov did two things. He derived his reading of *obozhenie* exclusively from patristic texts and grounded its practice in various forms of patristic asceticism, while still allowing Soloviev to have his say on the matter; and he interpreted *obozhenie* not as an eschatology of androgynous wholeness but as a practical, if ultimately mystical, act of personal decentring and collective reconciliation in an age destabilized by revolutionary upheaval and 'banal eudemonism' (Michelson 2017, 188–96). The significance of the idea of deification in lay religious thought around that time is clearly demonstrated in this volume by Ruth Coates in Chapter 14 of this *Handbook*. The role that churchmen and academic theologians played in defining its meaning, as well as the meanings of God, man (*chelovek*), history, freedom, society, culture, the West, Russia, and myriad other concepts, suggests the importance of Russian Orthodox thought in Russian intellectual history as a whole in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

CONCLUSION

From the perspective of the Russian state, which played a major role in founding the Church's system of higher education and drafting revisions to its curriculum and

¹³ Outside the frame of patristic studies, instructors at the Kiev and Moscow academies helped to spearhead a revival of Slavophilism in the last decades of the old regime, which greatly impacted students at those schools.

administration, the clerical academies and the network of seminary schools just below them were part of a long-term project to rationalize the institutions of empire and generate subjects loyal to the regime, which after 1833 deployed Orthodoxy as one of the key pillars of autocracy. Those schools also came to be seen by some state agents and opinion makers as educational bulwarks against internal and external threats to the imperial order of Orthodox Russia. For high-ranking members of the Church, the academy system also constituted the means by which perceived deviations from Orthodoxy could be corrected through the inculcation of right belief among faculty and students, who would then disseminate the tenets, practices, and rites of authentic Orthodoxy to parishioners, as well as to wayward members of the imperial court, the nobility, educated society, and the clergy itself.

What actually resulted over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was something much more complex than could have been anticipated when the Church schools first opened. Yes, the clerical academies were those very things envisioned by officials of church and state. They helped to protect and guide Orthodox Russia for several generations, or at least the Orthodox Russia of imperial and ecclesiastical imaginations. But the academies also became incubators of diverse modes of Russian Orthodox thinking that were innovative, responsive, provocative, critical, and, for many readers and participants at the time, persuasive, even if there was no single current that could lay exclusive claim to right belief. What had started out as a project to identify and inculcate authentic Orthodoxy eventually revealed the fact that Orthodoxy could be interpreted and experienced in a variety of ways, each clamouring for the mantle of authenticity (Dixon 2006). Similarly, the clerical academies helped to generate scholarship (and activism) that eventually undermined Russia's synodal church, as well as autocracy (Hedda 2008), both of which came to an end in 1917. Perhaps most importantly, the establishment of the clerical academies helped to embed Orthodox thought and the study of Orthodox practice in a host of modern narratives, devices, analytics, and categories, such as nation, history, identity, essence, trajectory, deviation, psychology, sociology, self, and other. It was in those schools and in the minds and writings of their instructors and students that Russian Orthodoxy became modern.

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