

The Russian Orthodox
White Clergy
in the Seventeenth Century

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The aim of this study is to shed light on the world of the white clergy in seventeenth-century Russia, in order to give a fuller understanding of their role in society and influence in their communities, locally and nationally. In the Russian Church, the white clergy were the married non-monastic priests, deacons and minor clerics who served in parishes, endowed churches, and cathedrals, as well as in non-parochial fields. Pre-Petrine Russia, or Muscovy as it was generally called by foreigners, was an essentially Orthodox society with a strongly religious outlook, within which the clerical estate played a crucial role. Consequently, an understanding of the white clergy promotes a better knowledge of the religious, cultural, and social life of the country, yet there have been few detailed scholarly investigations of the topic this century. In this study I redress this lacuna, in addition to examining common myths and stereotypes concerning Russian priests.

Chapter I investigates the processes of ordination and clerical training in the Muscovite Church; chapter II examines the social origins of the white clergy. Chapters III and IV focus on the parish clergy, assessing clerical livelihood and the parish priest's role in his community. Chapter V concentrates on the cathedral clergy and their link with the State, whilst chapter VI considers the contribution to society of extra-parochial ministries such as regimental and hospital chaplaincies. Chapters VII, VIII and IX discuss the widowed clergy, clergy families and episcopal supervision, respectively. Data for this thesis has been drawn from primary source material in diocesan, patriarchal and government archives. The field of study includes all regions of Russia, concentrating in particular on the eparchies of Vologda, Moscow, Ustiug, Kholmogory, Novgorod and Tobol'sk.

Acknowledgements

Materials for this dissertation were collected in St.Petersburg (from the Russian State Historical Archive, the St.Petersburg Institute of Russian History, and the Saltykov-Shchedrin State Library), in Moscow (from the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts and the V.I.Lenin State Library), in Vologda (from the State Archive of Vologda Province and the Vologda Babushkin library), in Tobol'sk (from the Tobol'sk State library), and in London (from the British Library, the University of London Library, and the School of Slavonic and East European Studies). I would like to thank the staff of those institutions, and in particular Christine Thomas of the British Library, Katya Medvedeva of the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library, Valentina Aleksandrovna Nesterova of the Tobol'sk State Library, Irina Meliushina of the Vologda Babushkin Library, and Muza Dmitrievna Ukhova of the Vologda District State Archive, who procured invaluable material for this research. I acknowledge the generous help of anthropologist Elena Perevalova of the Tobol'sk State Museum, and the willing assistance of the curators of the Kirillo-Belozersk Monastery Museum and the Vologda District Museum, each of whom allowed me special access to view seventeenth-century religious artefacts from the churches and episcopal palaces of Siberia and northern Russia.

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Notes on Transliteration and Abbreviations

Russian spellings in this thesis have been transcribed following a modified Library of Congress system. I have translated the names of churches and well-known monasteries into English wherever possible; lesser-known monastery names have not been translated.

Abbreviations used in footnotes and bibliography

- AAE** *Akty, sobrannye v bibliotekakh i arkhivakh Rossiiskoi imperii arkheograficheskoiu ekspeditsiei imp. Akademii nauk.* 4 Vols. (Spb.1836).
- AI** *Akty istoricheskie, sobrannye i izdannnye arkheograficheskoiu kommissiei.* 5 Vols. (Spb.1841-42).
- AIu** *Akty Iuridicheskie.* (Spb.1838).
- AIuB** *Akty otnosiashchiesia do iuridicheskago byta drevnei Rossii.* 3 Vols. (Spb 1884).
- Almazov** A.Almazov, 'Tainaia ispoved' v pravoslavnoi vostochnoi tserkvi', *Zapiski Imperatorskago Novorossiiskago universiteta.* Vol.65 (Odessa, 1894).
- AMG** *Akty Moskovskago gosudarstva.* ed. N.A.Popov, 3 Vols. (Spb.1890).
- ASP** 'Akty XVII veke o Shegovarskom prikhode Shenkurskago uezda', *ChOIDR* 1879 Bk 1 nos.1-3.
- Belliustin** I.S.Belliustin, *Description of the Clergy in Rural Russia: Memoirs of a Nineteenth-Century Parish Priest.* transl. by G.Freeze (Ithaca, 1985).
- ChOIDR** *Chteniia v Imperatorskom Obshchestve Istorii i Drevnostei Rossiiskikh.*
- DAI** *Dopolneniia k aktam istoricheskim, sobrannye Arkheograficheskoi kommissii.* 12 Vols. (Spb.1846-72).
- DAV** Vereshchagin. ed. *Drevnye akty otnosiashchiesia k istorii Viatskago kraia.* (Viatka, 1881).
- DGGP** *Drevniia gosudarstvennyia gramoty, nakazaniia pamiati i chelobitnyiia, sobrannia v permskoi gubernii.* (Spb.1821).

ABBREVIATIONS

- DGPV** *Drevnie gramoty i drugie pis'mennye pamiatniki kasaiushchiesia Voronezhskoi gubernii.* eds. N.Vtorovyi and K.Aleksandrovyi-Dol'ikov, 3 Vols. (Voronezh, 1851-3).
- Dokuchaev-Barskov** K.Dokuchaev-Barskov, *Tserkovno-prikhodskaiia zhizn' v gorode Kargopole v XVI-XIX vekakh*, (Moscow, 1900).
- DRV** *Drevnaia Rossiiskaia Vivliofika.* ed. Nikolai Novikov, 20 Vols. (Spb.1788-91).
- Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii** N.A.Skvortsov, ed. *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii v XVII veke*, (Sergiev Posad 1916)
- GAVO** Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Vologodskoi oblasti.
- GPB** Gosudarstvennaia Publichnaia Biblioteka, Otdel Rukopisei.
- Khristorozhdestvenskaia tserkov'** 'Khristorozhdestvenskaia tserkov' v Sergievskom posade', *ChOidr*, 1891, Bk.3
- LZAK** *Letopis' zaniatii arkheograficheskoi kommissii.*
- LZAK 14** P.Ianovskii, 'Opisanie aktov novgorodskago sofiiskago doma', *Letopis' zaniatii arkheograficheskoi kommissii.* Vol.14 (Spb.1902).
- LZAK 27** M.G.Kurdimov, 'Opisanie aktov khраниashchikhsia v arkhive Imperatorskoi Arkheograficheskoi kommissii. Kolleksiia P.I.Savvaitova', *Letopis' zaniatii arkheograficheskoi kommissii.* Vol.27 (Spb.1915).
- M** Moscow.
- MTS** *Moskovskaia tserkovnaia starina.* ed.by A.I.Uspenskii. 4 Vols. (Moscow, 1904-06).
- MTS 2** N.D.Izvekov, 'Moskovskiiia kremlevskiiia dvortsovyia tserkvi i sluzhivshiiia pri nikh litsa v XVII vek', *Moskovskaia tserkovnaia starina.* Vol.2 (Moscow, 1906).
- NY** New York.
- O nepravdakh rechakh,** A.N. Zertsalo, 'O nepravdakh i neprigozhikh rechakh Novgorodskago metropolita Kipriana', *ChOidr* 1896, Bk.1.
- OpMAMIu** *Opisanie dokumentov i bumag khраниashchikhsia v Moskovskom arkhive Ministerstva iustitsii.* Vol.16. (Moscow, 1910).
- OSS** N.I.Suvorov, *Opisanie sobraniia svitkov, nakhodiashchikhsia v Vologodskom eparkhial'nom drevnekhranilishche.* 13 Parts. (Vologda 1899-1917).

- Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti** S.I.Kotkov, ed. *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti XVII veka: Vladimirskaia kraia*. (Moscow, 1984).
- Paul of Aleppo** Paul of Aleppo, *Travels of Macarius: Bishop of Antioch*, Pt.4: Muscovy, transl. by F.C.Belfour (London,1833).
- PDR** S.P.Znamenskii, 'Prikhodskoe dukhovenstvo na Rusi', *PO* Vol.21 (M.1866) pp.1-35, 131-169; Vol.22 (M.1867) pp.62-90, 181-221, 307-321.
- PNG** Archimandrite Makarii, *Pamiatniki tserkovnykh drevnostei. Nizhegorodskaia Guberniia*. (Spb 1857).
- PO** *Pravoslavnoe Obozrenie*
- Posol'stvo** 'Posol'stvo d'iaka Fedota Elchina i sviashchennika Pavla Zakhareva v Dadianskuiu zemliu', *ChOISR* 1887 Bk 2.
- Pososhkov** Ivan Pososhkov, *The Book of Poverty and Wealth*, ed. and transl. by A.P.Vlasto and L.R.Lewitter (London, 1987)
- PS** *Pravoslavnyi sobesednik*
- PSZ** *Polnoe sobranie zakonov rossiiskoi imperii*. Vols.1-3 (Spb.1830).
- RGADA** Rossiiskii (formerly Tsentral'nyi) gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov.
- RGIA** Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, St.Petersburg.
- RH** *Russian History*.
- RIB** *Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka*. 39 Vols. (Spb.1875-1927).
- RIB 12, 14 and 25** 'Akty Kholmogorskoii i Ustiuzhskoi eparkhii', 3 Parts, Vols 12,14 and 25 of *Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka*. (Spb.1890-1908).
- SEER** *Slavonic and East European Review*.
- SKE** 'Saraiskaia i krutitskaia eparkhii', *ChOISR* Vol.203 1902 Bk.4.
- SIB** 'Saraiskaia i krutitskaia eparkhii', *Sobranie istoriko-iuridicheskikh aktov I.D.Beliaeva*. ed. by D.Lebedev (Moscow, 1881).
- Spb** St.Petersburg.
- SPIRIAN** Sankt-Peterburgskii Institut Rossiiskoi Istorii Akademii Nauk (formerly LOI).

ABBREVIATIONS

Spiritual Regulation *The Spiritual Regulation of Peter the Great.* transl. and ed. by A.V.Muller, (Seattle, 1972).

SMA *Sbornik Moskovskago Arkhiva ministerstva iustitsii.* Vols.5 and 6 (M.1913-14).

SR *Slavic Review.*

Statir 'Statir' (Shekel), transl. by A.Vostokov, *Opisanie russkikh i slovenskikh rukopisei rumiantsovskago muzeia.* (St.Petersburg, 1842) no.411, pp.629-633.

Veriuzhskii V.Veruzhskii, *Afanasii, arkhiepiskop Kholmogorskii i Vazhskii* (Spb.1908).

VKS N.S.Suvorov, *Opisanie vologodskago katedral'nago Sofiiskago sobora,* (Vologda, 1863).

GLOSSARY

Russian Orthodox clerical ranks

arkhiepiskop / arkhieri = archbishop
arkhimandrit = archimandrite, abbot
beloe dukhovenstvo = 'white' married clergy
chernoe dukhovenstvo = 'black' monastic clergy
chernyi pop / iereimonakh = hieromonk; monk ordained as priest
chtets = reader
desiatskii pop = deputy supervisor
d'iakon = deacon
d'iachok = sacristan, cleric in minor orders
d'iakonitsa = deacon's wife
episkop = bishop
ierei / pop / sviashchennik = priest
igumen = hegumen, prior of a monastery or hermitage (below archimandrite in rank)
kliuchar' = senior cathedral priest, deputy to archpriest
metropolit = metropolitan
nastoiatel' / stroitel' = Father Superior of monastery or hermitage
nastoiatel'nitsa / igumenia = abbess
starets / chernets / inok = monk
staritsa = nun
patriarkh = patriarch
pevets = chanter
ponomar' = sacristan; cleric in minor orders, below d'iachok in rank
popad'ia = priest's wife
popovskii starosta = priest supervisor
prichetnik / tserkovnosluzhitel' = clerics in minor orders (d'iachki and ponomary)
prosfirnitsa / prosvirnitsa / prosfirnia = widow who baked communion bread
protoierei / protopop = archpriest, the senior priest in a cathedral church
protod'iakon = senior cathedral deacon, above ordinary priest in rank
sviashchennosluzhiteli = ordained clergy
vdovoi pop = widowed priest
vkladchik = donor or resident of monastery who has not been tonsured
zakashchik = ordained administrator or area-supervisor

General Russian terms

antimins = ^{antimiasion} ~~corpora~~: a square of linen with a relic of a saint sewn into it, without which the liturgy cannot be celebrated
chasovnia = chapel, not consecrated for divine liturgy and not joined to a church
desiatil'nik / deti boiarskie / nedel'shchiki = lay official employed by bishop
mir = parish council, laity
patrakhil'naia gramota = permit for widowed priest to remain serving in his parish
pistsovye knigi = census books
pomest'e = estate awarded for service
posad = tax-paying urban settlement inhabited by traders, craftsmen and hired workers

pridel = side-chapel joined to church
s'ezzhaia izba / prikaznaia izba = administrative office of the provincial governor
ruga = stipend, payment in cash or kind
sinodik = book of remembrance for commemoration of the dead
sobor = cathedral
tiaglets = tax-payer
trapeza = annex or side room to church, where meetings were held
tserkov' / khram = church
uezd = county, administrative unit
ustav = ceremonial book regulating liturgical conduct of clerics
volost' = district, an administrative unit smaller than an *uezd*
votchina = inherited estate
voevoda = provincial governor

Muscovite measures and currency¹

Length:

1 *arshin* = 28 inches (72.12 cm)
1 *sazhen'* = 7 feet (2.133 metres)
1 *versta* = 0.663 miles (1.0668 km)

Area:

1 *chetverik* = 1/6 acre (0.07 ha)
1 *osmina* = 2/3 acre (0.27 ha)
1 *chetvert'* = 1.35 acres (0.55 ha)
1 *desiatina* = 2.7 acres (1.1-1.5 ha)
1 *kopna* = 1/10th of a desiatina

Volume:

1 *charka* = 1/5 pint (0.123 litres)
1 *vedro* = 3.25 gallons (12.3 litres)
1 *chetvert'* (grain measure) = 126.39 pounds (8 bushels)
1 *chetverik* = 1/8th of a chetvert = 15.8 pounds

Coins:

1 Muscovite *den'ga* = 0.5 kopecks;
200 *den'gi* = 1 rouble
1 *altyn* = 3 kopecks; 6 Muscovite dengi,
1 *polupoltina* = 25 kopecks
1 *poltina* = 50 kopecks; 16 altyns
1 *poltora* = 1.5 roubles
1 *rouble* = 100 kopecks
1 *grivna* = 20 Muscovite den'gas; 10 kopecks
100 *grivny* = 1 rouble

¹ For Russian measures, currency and general terms in this thesis, I have referred to the following works: S.G.Pushkarev, *Dictionary of Russian Historical Terms from the Eleventh Century to 1917*, ed. by G.Vernadsky and R.Fisher (New Haven and London, 1970); S.Solov'ev, *History of Russia*, Vol.26, transl. and ed. by L.A.J.Hughes (Gulf Breeze, 1994); Ivan Pososhkov, *The Book of Poverty and Wealth*. ed. and transl. by A.P.Vlasto and L.R.Lewiter (London, 1987); L.A.J.Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, (New Haven, 1999); J.Blum, *Lord and Peasant in Russia From the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century*, (Princeton, 1961).

English clerical terms used in this thesis:

benefice = a living from a church position

emolument = a fee, payment for a service

glebe = a piece of land serving as part of a clergyman's benefice and providing income

incumbent = the holder of an ecclesiastical benefice

living = a position as priest with an income or property

pluralism = holding more than one ecclesiastical office or benefice, at a time

sacrament = an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. The seven sacraments of the Orthodox Church are baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, ordination, and matrimony.

secular = ~~married~~, non-monastic clergy, not bound by a religious rule

simony = the buying selling of ecclesiastical benefices or privileges. Simony takes its name from the biblical story of Simon Magus, who offered money to purchase the power of the Holy Spirit: Acts of the Apostles, chapter 8 verse 8.

Preface

'We had an opportunity to admire their humility, and the high degree of Christian faith which they displayed.'

Paul of Aleppo, 17th century.¹

'They are scarcely better behaved than the populace, for they often stagger drunk through the thoroughfares of the city.'

Johannes Korb, 17th century.²

Stereotyped images of Muscovite priests, like those quoted above, have long abounded, but little is really known about the clergy or their world. As Nancy Sheilds Kollman has pointed out, 'the history of Orthodoxy in Old Russia is perhaps the least known aspect of the history of the country in the entire pre-Petrine era'.³ The Russian Orthodox clerical estate consisted of two parallel orders: the secular married clergy, known as the 'white' clergy (*beloe dukhovenstvo*), and the 'black' monastic clergy (*chernoe dukhovenstvo*). It was the white clergy who were ordained to serve in parish churches, cathedrals, and convents, and they are our focus here. They played a key role in their communities, and their combined service influenced all spheres of Muscovite society. In churches and cathedrals, in the tsar's own bedchamber and the humblest village hut, white priests chanted the prayers and performed the rituals that were believed to bring good luck and assurance of eternal life. Married priests were present in the regiments, prisons, hospitals, convents, even in the monasteries; they reached into the remotest corners of the tsardom and beyond. By understanding their role, we can gain a better knowledge of the religious, cultural, and political life of the Muscovite State, and gain insights into the beliefs of the people, yet historical scholarship has unjustly neglected the seventeenth-century white clergy. The aim of this thesis,

¹ Paul of Aleppo, *The Travels of Macarius*, trans. by F.S.Belfour (London, 1833) Pt.4 p.346.

² Johannes Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary of Legation*, Reprint (London, 1968) 2 p.181.

³ S.H.Baron and N.S.Kollman, eds. *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Russia and Ukraine*, (Illinois,1997) p.4

therefore, is to fill a lacuna in scholarly knowledge by presenting an in-depth study on the Muscovite white clergy, to dispel myths, find out realities, and reassess previous judgements. I will examine the ordination process, clerical education, remuneration, and duties of the clergy, and will consider in detail their wives, families and social origins, as well as their relationships with their communities, colleagues and higher authorities of Church and State, from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the death of the last patriarch, Adrian, in 1700.

What has been written on the Russian priesthood to date? During the last two centuries a number of histories of the Russian Church have been published, but the majority focus on the monastic hierarchy and Church politics, telling us little about the lower clergy.⁴ Ecclesiastical history was largely neglected in the Soviet period,⁵ and works that did appear were usually general histories with a strong ideological bias.⁶ In the post-Soviet era so far, relatively few new publications on Muscovite Church history have been produced in Russia, whereas in contrast, a considerable number of monographs on various aspects of Orthodox life were written by pre-Revolutionary Russian citizens, twentieth-century émigrés and non-Russians.⁷ Several regional studies

⁴ Metropolitan Makarii, *Istoriia Russkoi Tserkvi*, (Spb.1857, M.1996); E.Golubinskii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, 2 Vols (M.1901,1904); A.V.Kartashev, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi tserkvi*, 2 Vols, (Paris,1959).

⁵ Most Soviet studies on Siberia, for instance, entirely overlooked the major role the Church played in the 17th-century colonisation process: eg. S.V.Bakhrushin, *Ocherki po istorii kolonizatsii sibiri v XVI i XVII v.*, (M.1927).

⁶ N.M.Nikol'skii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, (M.1930). Soviet studies on the Church almost invariably concentrated on peasants on Church lands: eg. S.B.Veselovskii, *Zemlevladienie mitropolich'ego doma*, M.1947) and I.A.Bulygin. *Monastyrskie krest'iane Rossii v pervoi chetverti XVIII veka*, (M.1977). However, several documentary collections about 'anti-feudal' protests have proved useful for Church history: V.S.Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe antitserkovnoe dvizhenie v Rossii v XVII veke*, (M.1986); Buganov, V.I., ed. *Vosstanie 1662 goda v Moskve: sbornik dokumentov*, (M.1964).

⁷ For example, *Moskovskaia tserkovnaia starina*, 4 Vols. ed.by A.I.Uspenskii, (M.1904-05); N.Suvarov, *Opisanie vologodskago gorniago Uspenskago monastyria*, (Vologda,1885); L.Denisov, *Pravoslavnie monastyri Rossiiskoi Imperii*, (Spb.1910); Igor Smolitsch, *Russisches Mönchtum 988-1917*, (Amsterdam,1978); M.A.Thomas, 'Muscovite Convents in the 17th Century', *RH* 10 (1983) pp.230-42. Others are cited in

include Church affairs,⁸ and a few examine various aspects of parish life in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries.⁹ Popular religion, ecclesiastical reform, canon law and Church Schism have been well-researched by historians in recent years, several of whom touch upon matters pertaining to the lower clergy.¹⁰

Monographs specifically on the Russian Orthodox white clergy are considerably fewer. The eighteenth-century parish clergy have been the subject of several in-depth studies during the past thirty years, most notably by Gregory Freeze and James Cracraft,¹¹ and certain aspects of the sixteenth-century parish priesthood have been researched by Jack Kollman.¹² Prior to the Russian Revolution, the seventeenth-century white clergy were

the bibliography.

⁸ Most notable for Siberian Church history are G.F.Müller, *Istoriia Sibiri*, 2 Vols. (M.1937) and P.N.Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri i byt eia pervykh nasei'nikov*, (Kharkov,1893). More recent works to include mention of Russian Orthodoxy in 17th-century Siberia are G.V.Lantzeff, *Siberia in the Seventeenth Century: A Study of Colonial Administration*, (Berkeley,1943); A. Wood (ed.) *The History of Siberia*, (London,1991); G.Diment and Y.Slezkine, *Between Heaven and Hell: the Myth of Siberia in Russian Culture*, (NY,1993).

⁹ These works include sections on the clergy, but concentrate on the parish community: M.Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe samoupravlenie na Russkom Severe v XVII*, 2 Vols (M.1909-12); S.V.Iushkov, *Ocherki iz istorii prikhodskoi zhizni na severa Rossii v XV-XVII v.*, (Spb.1913); N.D.Zol'nikova, *Sibirskaiia prikhodskaiia obshchina v XVIII veke*, (Novosibirsk,1990); V. Shevzov, 'Popular Orthodoxy in Late Imperial Rural Russia', Unpubl. PhD thesis, (Yale,1994).

¹⁰ A.Almazov, *Tainaia ispoved' v pravoslavnoi vostochnoi tserkvi*, 3 Vols. (Odessa, 1894); Eve Levin, *Sex and Society in the World of the Orthodox Slavs, 900-1700*, (Ithaca,1989); P.Bushkovitch *Religion and Society in Russia: the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, (Oxford,1992); G.Michels, 'Myths and Realities of the Russian Schism: the Church and its Dissenters in Seventeenth Century Muscovy', Unpubl.PhD thesis (Harvard,1991); C.J.Potter, 'The Russian Church and the Politics of Reform in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century', Unpubl. PhD thesis, (Yale,1993); M.Cherniavsky, 'The Old Believers and the New Religion', *Slavic Review*, 25 (1966) pp.1-39, *Tsar and People: Studies in Russian Myths*, (New Haven,1961); R.O.Crummey, *The Old Believers and the World of the Antichrist*, (Madison,1970); P.Meyendorff, *Russia, Ritual and Reform*, (New York, 1991); N.Lupinin, *Religious Revolt in the Seventeenth Century: the Schism of the Russian Church*, (Princeton,1984); S.A.Zenkovskii, *Russkii raskol staroobriadchestva*, (Munich,1970).

¹¹ G.Freeze, *The Russian Levites: Parish Clergy in the Eighteenth Century*, (Cambridge, Mass.1977); J.Cracraft, *The Church Reform of Peter the Great*, (Stanford,1971).

¹² J. Kollman, 'The Moscow Stoglav Church Council of 1551', Unpubl. PhD thesis,

the subject of studies by P.Znamenskii, S.Smirnov, and a number of antiquarians who wrote for scholarly journals,¹³ and earlier this century Pierre Pascal produced a study on Archpriest Avvakum.¹⁴ However, the scope of these works is limited: most use relatively few primary sources, virtually no archival sources, and they all entirely omit significant spheres of the white clergy's world, such as chaplaincies, widowhood, and clergy families. For the past seventy years no monographs on the seventeenth-century white priesthood have appeared and the subject has been largely over-looked by modern researchers. Whilst the research of Paul Bushkovitch, Eve Levin, Cathy Potter and Georg Michels touches upon the clergy and has been very useful for our present purpose, none of these studies concentrates specifically on the white clergy.¹⁵

This present study attempts to fill this gap through an analysis of primary source material from the seventeenth century. Compared to later centuries, Muscovite records are few and fragmentary, precluding the kind of comprehensive statistics that can be produced for the Imperial era of Russian history. Nonetheless, sufficient information has survived to illustrate the lives of the clergy and to allow us to draw conclusions. Data for this purpose has been drawn from many thousands of petitions, wills, decrees, laws, tax books, patriarchal instructions, episcopal letters, Church Council resolutions, memoirs, saints' lives, penitentiaries, and most importantly, the virtually untapped diocesan records of Vologda and Moscow, in addition to Church records from Kholmogory, Ustiug, Novgorod, Siberia. The majority of these documents have been found in the archives of Moscow, St.Petersburg and Vologda, and in numerous

(Michigan,1978) and 'The Stoglav Council and the Parish Priests', *RH* 7 nos.1-2 (1980) pp.65-91.

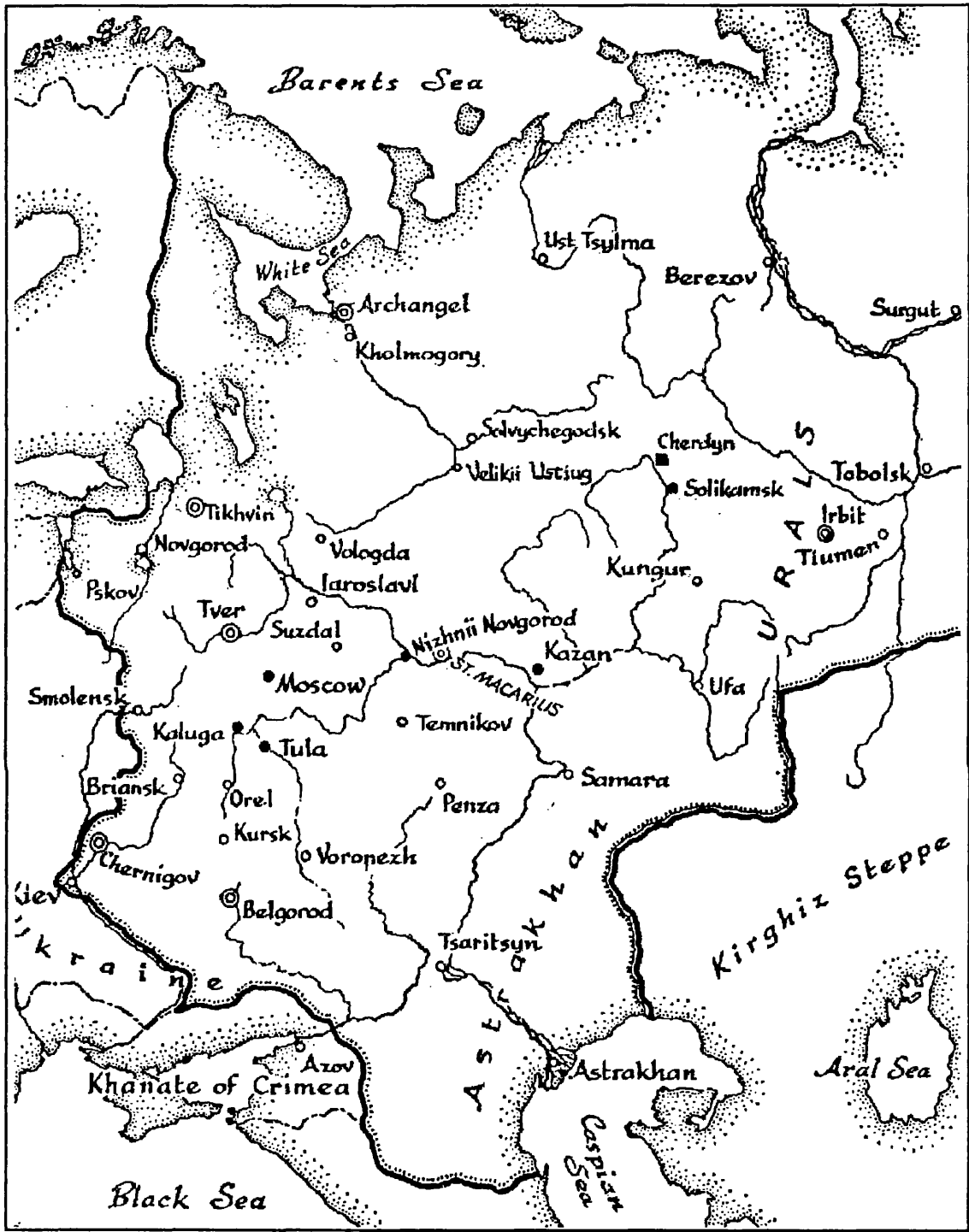
¹³ P.V.Znamenskii,'Prihodskoe dukhovenstvo na Rusi', *PO* Vol. 21, 1866, and 'Material'nyia sredstva prihodskago dukhovenstva v drevnei Rusi,' *PO*, Vol.22, 1867, Nos.1-4; S.Smirnov, *Drevne-russkii dukhovnik. Izsledovanie po istorii tserkovnago byta*, (M.1914). See also Iushkov and Bogoslovskii, cited in fn.9 above. Articles on the clergy appeared in pre-Revolutionary journals such as *Pravoslavnyi sobesednik*, *ChOIDR*, and many diocesan newspapers, several of which are listed in the bibliography of this thesis.

¹⁴ P.Pascal, *Avvakum et les debuts du raskol*, (Paris,1938).

¹⁵ See footnote 10.

volumes of published primary material, most of which was collected by nineteenth-century Russian scholars and now lies in the libraries of Moscow, St.Petersburg, Vologda, Tobol'sk and London. In addition to Russian sources, I will draw on the copious descriptions of Russian life written by foreign travellers between the sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries. Although these accounts of the clergy are coloured by the authors' own prejudices and limited by their unfamiliarity with Russian language and culture (and in some cases are merely copies of earlier descriptions), many of them provide a valuable record.¹⁶ The present work cannot claim to illuminate every area of the white clergy's lives; there is ample scope for future researchers, but it is hoped that this study will go some way towards raising the interest of Russianists and Church historians in the somewhat neglected pre-Petrine world.

¹⁶ Travel accounts consulted for this thesis include the works of Sigmund von Herberstein, Giles Fletcher, Richard Hakluyt, Adam Olearius, J.Crull, John Struys, Samuel Collins, Guy Miede, Foy de la Neuville, Johannes Korb, John Perry, F.C.Weber, Paul of Aleppo, and others cited by L.P.Rushchinsky, *Religioznyi byt russkikh po svedeniiam inostrannykh pisatelei XVI i XVII vekov*, (M.1871).



Russia in the Seventeenth Century¹

¹ Adapted from N.Riasanovsky, *A History of Russia*, 4th edition (Oxford, 1984) p.184.

Introduction

Conflict and Co-operation

The seventeenth century was an era of change for Russia, or Muscovy, as it was generally known by foreigners. Massive population decrease was suffered at the beginning of the century owing to famine and enemy invasion during the Time of Troubles, which lasted approximately from 1598 to 1613 in central Russia and longer in the north,¹ while in 1654-55 the Great Plague killed up to a quarter of all Russians. Politically, Muscovy entered an era of stabilisation with the election to the throne of the first Romanov tsar in 1613, a dynasty that was to rule Russia until 1917. Since the acceptance of Christianity by Prince Vladimir of Kiev in 988, the Russian Orthodox Church had held a religious monopoly in the Muscovite State. No Russian subject of the tsar could belong to any other denomination, religion, or ideology.² Heresy was a State crime; offenders were liable to be executed.³ The Crown gave the Church extensive judicial privileges too, and in return the government expected wholehearted support from the clergy. After Tsar Aleksei succeeded to the throne in 1645, the traditional relationship between Church and State began to change as Muscovy gradually made its first tentative moves towards modernisation, which unwittingly heralded the Age of Reform of the eighteenth century. Partly in response to changes from without, the Orthodox Church itself initiated sweeping reforms within its own ranks which shall be discussed in this study.

¹ The Time of Troubles lasted until 1619 in northern Russia.

² Official policy wavered for non-Russians: ethnic minorities like the Tatars and Kalmyks were usually allowed to practice their own religions, but were forbidden from marrying or proselytising Russians.

³ PSZ 2 no.1163 pp.647-50 (1685).

INTRODUCTION

In the middle of the seventeenth century, two major events shook the Russian Church. Firstly, Tsar Aleksei's Law Code (*Ulozhenie*) of 1649 undermined the exclusive jurisdiction of the Church and eroded the judicial immunities of the clerical estate. Traditionally, the clergy were liable only to the judgements of their bishop, except in cases involving theft, treason and murder, but the promulgation of the *Ulozhenie* curtailed the Church's prerogatives, leaving the provincial clergy within the jurisdiction of local governors (*voevody*), who proved to be notoriously corrupt and unjust.⁴ Although ecclesiastical legal immunities were to some extent restored in 1667 and 1669,⁵ governors were reluctant to relinquish their authority, and the lower clergy became pawns in an on-going battle between Church and State. Governors illegally tried to tax, judge and punish the clergy, whilst bishops protested and defended them in order to uphold their own jurisdiction.⁶ The second shock to hit the Church was the Great Schism, which began in 1653 in reaction to Patriarch Nikon's efforts to reform the Russian Church and bring it into line with the Greek Orthodox Church. Many Muscovites believed that Nikon's reforms were no less than heretical and consequently became opponents of the established church. The Schism itself is not the subject of this study, but it profoundly affected the clergy and provides the backdrop to their world in the second half of the century. The lives and writings of priests who joined the Schism will be referred to here because they provide a unique record of church life in the seventeenth century.⁷

⁴ *AAE* 4 nos.155, 161 (1667); *PSZ* 1 no.442 p.800 (1669), 1 no.505 p.869 (1672); See also *Muscovite Law Code (Ulozhenie) of 1649*, Pt. 1: Text and Translation. ed. and transl. by R.Hellie (Irvine,1988), and R.Hellie, 'The Church and the Law in Late Muscovy: Chapters 12 and 13 of the *Ulozhenie* of 1649,' *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 25, (1991), pp.179-199.

⁵ *AAE* 4 no.161 (1667); *PSZ* 1 no.442 p.800 (1669).

⁶ Many examples of this struggle can be found in 17th-century records, such as *OSS* Pt.7 pp.11,65, Pt.10 pp.72,90; *RIB* 12:270; *AAE* 4 no.176 (1670); *DAI* 10 no.101 (1683); *ChOidr* 1882, Bk.2, Smes', pp.14-15; *AMG* 2 no.610; *PDR* 22 p.188.

⁷ The Schism itself is the subject of many works, some of which are cited in the bibliography of this thesis.

INTRODUCTION

The Russian Orthodox white clergy were caught in the middle of the struggle between Church and State, and between Orthodoxy and Schism. In addition, three other areas of contention affected their lives. Between the married white clergy (*beloe dukhovenstvo*) and the monastic black clergy (*chernoe dukhovenstvo*), and between the lower clergy and the Church hierarchy, there were underlying tensions that sometimes erupted into open hostilities. Of far greater significance, however, was the clash between clergy and laity, most acutely felt in the association of a priest with his parishioners. Each of these relationships was complex and contradictory, alternately involving antagonism and interdependence. The story of the Russian white clergy which follows is a story of conflict and co-operation.

Chapter One

Orders and Ordination

'He has power to bind and to loose, and to perform all sacerdotal functions, judging according to the rule of the holy Apostles and Fathers and by our blessing through the laying on of hands.'

Muscovite Rite of Ordination¹

Ordination in the Russian Church, as in other churches of Eastern Christianity, is and always has been regarded as one of the seven sacraments, or holy mysteries, of the Church. Outwardly, it was conferred by a bishop laying his hands on the head of a properly-prepared candidate and saying a prayer of consecration, but in the unseen spiritual realm it signified the bestowing of divinely-sanctioned grace which empowered the recipient to perform priestly duties and administer all sacraments, except ordination itself. The Church traced the origins of holy ordination back to the first century of our era when the resurrected Christ gave his Apostles power to bind and to remit sins. In an unbroken line, this power was passed from generation to generation of correctly-ordained priests through the rite of ordination. To the average Muscovite, this sacramental and mystical aspect of the clergy's functions was all-important,² whereas preaching and knowledge were of little significance. As a result, clerical education was minimal, -- a fact which generated sharp criticism from Western European observers. In the late sixteenth century the English traveller Giles Fletcher wrote that the Russian clergy were 'utterly unlearned', an opinion shared by his compatriot John Perry a century later.³ At the end of the seventeenth century Johannes Korb commented that 'the height of learning consists of committing to memory some

¹ 'Gramota stavlenaia sviashchennikom,' 16th century: *RIB* 6 no.133.

² This emphasis on the sacramental aspect of the priesthood eventually led to a fierce debate over the Eucharist in the 1680s, which is discussed by C.Potter, 'The Russian Church and the Politics of Reform in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century', Unpubl.PhD thesis (Yale University, 1993) pp.450,462 (hereafter 'The Russian Church').

³ Giles Fletcher, *Of the Russe Commonwealth* (London, 1591) pp.84-85; J.Perry, *The State of Russia Under the Present Czar*, 1716, Reprint (New York, 1968) p.209.

articles of their creed', and a few years later F.C.Weber derogatorily asserted that preaching was unknown in Russia prior to the eighteenth century.⁴ These stereotypical comments have been repeated by historians ever since.⁵ However, there were moves afoot in the seventeenth-century Russian Church to improve the standard of the white clergy.⁶ In this study I will draw on surviving data from diocesan records of Moscow, Vologda, Kholmogory and Ustiug, as well as documents from other regions, to consider how ordinands were selected, trained and ordained for the white clerical orders, and assess how adequate those processes were in seventeenth-century Muscovy.

Canonical criteria

Of the three major, or holy, orders in the Muscovite Orthodox church, consisting of bishop, priest and deacon, the senior rank was that of bishop (*arkhierei*), which was only attainable by monastic clergy.⁷ The highest post open for members of the white clergy was the position of cathedral archpriest (*protoierei* or *protopop*), followed by, in order of descending seniority, the posts of cathedral deputy (*kliuchar' pop*), protodeacon (*protod'iakon* or *arkhid'iakon*),⁸ priest (*ierei*, colloquially called *pop*), and deacon (*d'iakon*). Priests and higher ranks had the right to celebrate the liturgy,

⁴ Johannes Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary of Legation*, 1700, Reprint (London, 1968) 2 p.196; F.C.Weber, *The Present State of Russia*, 1722, Reprint (New York, 1968) 1 p.324.

⁵ J.G.King, *The Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church in Russia*, (London, 1772) p.273; Rushchinskii, *Religioznyi byt russkikh po svedeniiam inostrannykh pisatelei XVI i XVII vekov*, (M.1871) pp.170-6, 282, 329; I.Pokrovskii. *Russkiiia Eparkhii v XVI-XIX vv, ikh otkrytie, sostav i predely*, (Kazan, 1897) 1 p.264; 'Totma Ecclesiastical Seminary', *Vologodskie eparkhial'nye vedomosti*, 1890 no.6 (March 1890) p.97.

⁶ There has been very little detailed research on how 17th-century Church reforms affected the lower clergy, useful exceptions being P.Bushkovitch, *'Religion and Society in Russia*, (Oxford, 1992), and C.Potter, 'The Russian Church', albeit that the white clergy are the primary focus of neither.

⁷ The rank of bishop was divided into four further categories: bishop, archbishop, metropolitan, patriarch. For the purposes of this thesis, they are all referred to as bishops or prelates, except when referring to specific individuals.

⁸ P.Day, *The Liturgical Dictionary of Eastern Christianity*, (Tunbridge Wells, 1993) pp.21-22, 244.

whereas deacons could only assist with the Eucharist, not celebrate it. The two lowest ranks of holy orders were the lector (*chtets*) and subdeacon (*pod'iakon*), which were frequently conferred in one and the same ceremony as ordination to the diaconate or priesthood. There were also two ranks of minor orders in the Muscovite Church, collectively known as *prichetniki* (referred to here as minor clerics), which consisted of *d'iachok* and *ponomar'*.

⁹ The *prosfirnitsa* baked the communion bread and was usually a widow: this rank will be discussed in chapter eight.¹⁰ Entry into the minor orders did not require ordination, but did require the approval of a bishop. The duties of the *d'iachok*, equivalent to the Greek *anagnosteis*, and *ponomar'*, like the Greek *paramonarios*, were somewhat similar to that of sacristan in the English church: they were responsible for ringing the bells, keeping the church clean, and assisting at divine service.¹¹ In addition, they lit the candles, prepared fire for the incense, and occasionally accompanied the priest on home visits. The *d'iachok* held the higher position of the two: he took a greater role in reading and chanting during the services and assisting in the sanctuary, hence had to be literate.¹² To a considerable degree, the ranks of *d'iachki* were the pool from which the major orders of clergy were drawn. There were usually several young unordained assistants in Muscovite churches as well, most of them sons or nephews of clergymen and eager to help, judging from instructions to the *ponomar'* of a church near Moscow to 'guard the bells, and do not let small boys ring them in an unseemly manner (*bezchinno*)'.¹³

⁹ Plural: *d'iachki* and *ponomary*, *prosfirnitsy*. Although a minor cleric's duties were similar to those of a sexton or sacristan, neither is an accurate rendering, hence I have not attempted to translate the Russian terms.

¹⁰ *Prosfirnitsy* were included in references to church *prichetniki*. In some cases this rank was held by a man, the most famous being St. Feodosii: *A Treasury of Russian Spirituality*, ed. by G. Fedotov (London, 1950) p. 19.

¹¹ *RIB* 12 no. 278 Ust. (1697); the role of *paramonarios* is first mentioned in Council of Chalcedonia. *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, ed. by F. A. Brokgauz and I. A. Efron. (Spb. 1893) 48 p. 529.

¹² *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, 21 p. 322, P. Day, *The Liturgical Dictionary*, p. 215, 252. In 1868 the role of *diachok* was discontinued in the Russian church.

¹³ *Aiu* no. 287 (1686).

Strict requirements were laid down by the Russian Church governing the age, education, marital status, and morals of candidates for each clerical rank. The Stoglav Council of 1551 decreed the minimum age to be twenty-five years for deacons and thirty for priests, thus reaffirming the decisions of earlier Russian councils in 1274 and 1503, which themselves reflected decisions of much earlier ecumenical councils.¹⁴ A subdeacon could be ordained at twenty years of age. Early in the seventeenth century these minimum ages were not always adhered to strictly in practice, for individual bishops held the power to decide each case,¹⁵ but diocesan records show that prelates became more stringent in rejecting under-age candidates later in the century.¹⁶

In 1274 the Church Council of Vladimir ruled that a candidate for the white priesthood must be literate and live a pure life, having remained chaste in youth and having married a legal wife.¹⁷ All subsequent Russian councils reiterated these requirements.¹⁸ A candidate for the priesthood had to decide before ordination whether he was planning a career in the white or black clergy structure, for no priest or deacon could marry after ordination, neither could he remarry. If his wife died he had to accept demotion to minor orders or retire to a monastery; only under certain conditions and with a permit from their bishop were widowed clergy allowed to perform sacerdotal functions.¹⁹ In some eparchies these rules were applied to d'iachki as well.²⁰ Ordinands

¹⁴ Canon 11 of the Council of Neocoesaria in 315 and canon 21 of the Council of Carthage 394 (repeated in 6th Ecumenical Council at Trullan in 680) imposed the age limit of 30 for priests because Christ began his work at 30. *RIB* 6 no.6 p.92; D.Cummings, *The Rudder* (Illinois,1956) pp.516, 616, 307, 309; J.Kollman, 'The Moscow Stoglav Church Council of 1551', Unpubl. PhD thesis (University of Michigan, 1978) p.378 (hereafter 'The Moscow Stoglav').

¹⁵ Archpriest Avvakum states in his autobiography that he was ordained deacon at the age of twenty and priested two years later: *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.137.

¹⁶ *RIB* 5 no.150; *SKE* p.109; *OSS* Pt.12 p.116.

¹⁷ *RIB* 6 no.6 pp.87-92. The subject of clerical literacy is addressed on pp.35-45.

¹⁸ *RIB* 6 no.6 p.90-91; E.E.Golubinskii, 'History of the Russian Church', *ChOidr* 1901 Bk.3 p.460; Kollman, 'The Moscow Stoglav', p.336.

¹⁹ *RIB* 6 no.6 pp.87-92; See chapter seven for a full discussion on widowed priests.

²⁰ *OSS* Pt.11 p.48 no.37 (1653), Pt.5 p.60 no.118 (1688), Pt.8 p.115 no.157 (1699-1700). In some cases widowed d'iachki were permitted to remarry.

had to endure a barrage of questions concerning their private life, laid down in the Church rules: 'test them on sinful matters, if they committed sexual sin by sodomy, or bestiality, or masturbation, or theft, unless in childhood, or if before marriage they slept with their wives, or had slept with many, or committed adultery'.²¹ If the answer was affirmative to any of these questions, the candidate was debarred from holy orders. Whilst some leniency was allowed for sins committed in youth or before baptism, the Church was strict about requiring sexual chastity of its clergy and their spouses.²² Other moral failings that precluded ordination were drunkenness and rapaciousness, and no man who had been involved in sorcery, or had been a false witness, brigand, or murderer, voluntarily or involuntarily, could be a clergyman in either major or minor orders.²³ The Church also required positive moral attributes of its ordinands, who were to be 'hospitable to strangers, God-loving, chaste, just, virtuous, abstinent',²⁴ but virtues such as these were naturally difficult to attest. Physical attributes were easier to ascertain: Church Councils forbade bishops from ordaining anyone from outside their eparchy nor any slave 'unless he has been released by his master in the presence of many witnesses and given a letter of release'.²⁵ Self-castration, blindness and deafness also rendered a candidate ineligible for ordination.²⁶

Selection and ordination

The vast majority of Muscovite churches were built and maintained by parishioners, who traditionally had great autonomy in the selection of their clergy. When choosing a priest, they almost always preferred to nominate a local man whom they knew rather

²¹ *RIB* 6 no.6 p.91.

²² 'Nomokanon Ioanna Postnika', *ChOidr* 205 1903 Bk.2 pp.52-56; Golubinskii, 'History of the Russian Church', p.461. For a fuller discussion of sexual sins and canon law see chapters seven and eight, and Eve Levin, *Sex and Society in the World of the Orthodox Slavs 900-1700*, (Ithaca, 1989), pp.253-57.

²³ *RIB* 6 no.6 p.91 (1274); Golubinskii, 'History of the Russian Church', p.460.

²⁴ Kollman, 'The Moscow Stoglav', p.336; *AI* 1 no.109; *AI* 4 no.62; *AAE* 4 no.184; Makarii, *Istoriia Russkoi Tserkvi*, XI pp.98-101; *DAI* 1 no.181

²⁵ *RIB* 6 no.6 p.90.

²⁶ *SKE* p.109 (1694); Levin, *Sex and Society*, p.257.

than a stranger, and most frequently elected a man who had previously acquired church experience by serving in minor orders.²⁷ The candidate, for his part, had to obtain a letter of nomination (*vybor*) from parishioners, or if a church was owned by a monastery or private patron, he needed to obtain their written permission.²⁸ Bishops generally respected the right of the parish or patron to elect their clergy, hence when a priest's son in Onochest asked to be ordained to his deceased father's benefice, the bishop replied: 'if you are literate, petition the parishioners'.²⁹ Sometimes a church was built by the priest and people together, in which case the clergyman and his descendants had a say in the election of staff.³⁰ Church rules required candidates for clerical orders to be ordained to a specific church,³¹ but occasionally we meet a situation where this was not so. In 1677-78 priest Grigorei of Kozel'sk was elected by parishioners who planned to build a church. He was duly ordained by the bishop, but the church was never built, 'and now I am wandering about without a parish', he wrote.³² Grigorei's misfortune was caused by the negligence of his bishop, who failed to verify that the church was built before he ordained its priest, but the vast size of Russian eparchies made it very difficult for bishops to check applications thoroughly.

Before ordination, a priest-elect came to an agreement with his parish or patron regarding terms and conditions, which were often written up in a contract. The agreement could be for a permanent incumbency or for a limited period,³³ and usually enumerated the remuneration package and listed the duties required of the clergyman. Typical is the following contract signed by a new priest of Tavrensk volost': 'I, priest

²⁷ *SKE*, pp.72,99,100,158; *RIB* 5 no.292 (1670); *AAE* 4 no.331; and see chapter two.

²⁸ *SKE* p.84 (1686), p.75 (1695), p.143 (1690), p.49 no.11 (1682), p.52 no.17 (1684), p.83 (1686), p.66 (1694), p.85 (1686).

²⁹ *OSS* Pt.7 p.82 (1687/8).

³⁰ *RIB* 14 nos.157,165 *Khol.*(1649-50); *DGPV* 2 p.155; A.N.Piskarev, ed. *Drevnie gramoty i akty riazanskago kraia*, (Spb.1854) no.23.

³¹ *RIB* 6 nos.131,133 pp.903, 915.

³² *SKE* p.45-6 no.5. Usually a church had to be built before a bishop would ordain its priest: *SKE* p.71 no.3 (1680/1).

³³ *SKE* p.59 no.4 (1693), p.83 no.5 (1685) p.99 no.20 (1693), p.100 no.21 (1694) p.109 (1694); *ASP* no.3 (1649).

Kiril, will sing vespers, matins and the hours on holy days and Sundays at the Church of the Prophet Elijah and St. George, except if I am sick or on a journey [...] and I will go without delay to the sick and to newly-delivered mothers'.³⁴ Contracts were as much for the benefit of the priest as the parish, for they specified how much church land the new clergyman could use and who was to be responsible for paying episcopal fees, thereby reducing the chances of later disputes or appropriation of church land by laymen. In one written agreement from rural Vologda, for instance, parishioners promised their newly-elected priest Grigorii use of the church house, barn, and out-buildings, and two-thirds of the church land, whilst the d'iachok had one third. In addition, the contract specified, 'there is a field by the Sheksna river of which priest Grigorii will own two-thirds, and one-third [of the revenue from the field] will pay for church requisites, and the d'iachok has no shares in it'.³⁵

The next stage in the selection process took place at the bishop's palace, where the candidate was required to appear in person to present his letters of nomination and prove that he was literate. The ordination rules demanded: 'he is to be given a Psalter, or book of the Apostles, or gospel to read before the prelate, and then the prelate is to send him to a confessor for confession [to ascertain] if he is worthy of the priesthood'.³⁶ In addition to a literacy test, ordinands underwent a spiritual test through pre-ordination confession, upon which bishops relied heavily to detect any impediments to holy orders.³⁷ To ensure that the ordinand was legally free to enter the clerical estate, he was questioned in the Patriarchal office and had to provide a guarantor that neither he nor his father were slaves, tax-payers (*tiaglets*), nor conscripted into military

³⁴ *RIB* 32 no.335. Other examples are *RIB* 14 no.139 Ust.(1626), *RIB* 12 no.254 Ust.(1695); *OSS* Pt.7 p.60-63 (1684), Pt.11, p.189, n.169 (1679); *SKE* p.109 (1694); *PDR* 21 p.139. Remuneration will be discussed in chapter three.

³⁵ *OSS* Pt.5 pp.61-62 no.119 (1688). Other contracts are in *OSS* Pt.10 p.77 no.58 (1679); *ChOIDR* 206 1903 Bk.3 Smes', no.13.

³⁶ *RIB* 6 no.131 pp.901-2.

³⁷ For the rite of confession for ordinands, see *RIB* 6 no.132 pp.909-912 and *RIB* 6 no.131 pp.901-2; Almazov, 65 Pt.2b p.2.

service.³⁸ Candidates were evidently turning up at the Novgorod episcopal palace without the correct testimonials during the 1650s, prompting Metropolitan Makarii to issue guidelines for townspeople who wanted to send a d'iachok to be ordained: 'In the letter of nomination they must write that he is literate, humble, skilled in the church rule and informed about Divine Scripture, not a drunkard, nor a gamester (*zershchik*), nor a thief, brigand, murderer, or perjurer, and has not been a slave or serf in a boyar's house, and is legally married in a first marriage to a maiden, and is at least thirty years old, or twenty five if he is to be a deacon, and at the top of that letter, the d'iachok's confessor must testify that he is worthy of the priesthood.' Any candidate who turned up without these documents would be turned away.³⁹

The rite of ordination was always performed by a bishop in a service of divine liturgy, during which he clothed the ordinand in liturgical vestments, shaved his crown, conferred upon him a clerical cap (*skufia*), and gave him his ordination certificate.⁴⁰ Without an ordination certificate a priest could not legally serve in any church. Hierarchs periodically sent their agents to examine the ordination certificates of clergy in their eparchy to ensure that they were valid, and when a new bishop was consecrated, each clergyman had to bring his ordination certificate to be signed by the incoming hierarch. Clerics who failed to have their certificates countersigned could be fined or suspended.⁴¹ If an ordination certificate was lost or destroyed in a house fire, as happened quite often, the loss had to be reported and a replacement ordination

³⁸ *SKE* p.59 no.4 (1693). *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.1-12; *SKE* p.60 no.4 (1693), p.61 no.5 (1693), p.67 no.10 (1694).

³⁹ *AAE* 4 no.331 (10 May, 1654); *RIB* 6 nos.6,131.

⁴⁰ Paul of Aleppo, pp.340-41,351-52; *RIB* 6 no.131 p.901-8; A.Dmitrievskii, *Bogosluzhenie v russkoi tserkvi v XVI veke*, (Kazan, 1884) pp.353-55; Day, *Liturgical Dictionary*, pp.215-6; C.Zvegintzov, *Our Mother Church. Her Worship and Offices*, (London,1948) p.206-7.

⁴¹ Paul of Aleppo, p.347; *AI* 4 no.259 (1675); 'Materialy dlia istorii patriarkha Pitirima', *ChOIDR* 1897 Bk.1 no.xii. Examples of ordination certificates can be found in *RIB* 35 nos.10,135,281,339, *RIB* 32 nos.75,327,562; *RIB* 6 no.133; *RIB* 14 no.12 Ust.

certificate (*blagoslovennaia*) was issued, for a fee.⁴² The theft or counterfeiting of ordination certificates was an extremely serious offence.⁴³ A deacon in Sol' Vychegodsk in 1661 and a priest's son in Belozersk uezd in 1667 were caught fictitiously claiming to have been priested and conducting sacerdotal functions without proper ordination, for which they were referred to the highest civil authorities for punishment.⁴⁴ A clerical cap, or *skufia*, was as important to a priest as an ordination certificate, for it represented his apostolic blessing and was confiscated if he was placed under episcopal interdiction.⁴⁵ Foreigners were fascinated by the sacred nature of the Russian *skufia*, and several commented on the fact that it had to be removed before anyone could punch a priest.⁴⁶ They were quite correct, as can be seen from a court case in 1628 between priest Andrei Ageev and a peasant farmer. The two men got into a fight at a wedding, but their dispute came before the episcopal court not merely because of the injuries they sustained, but because the priest's *skufia* had fallen to the ground in the fight, and each man accused the other of the heinous crime of having thrown it off.⁴⁷

A particular grievance of Muscovite clergymen was the cost of ordination. Many young candidates had to travel long distances from remote villages to reach their bishop's palace, and were subject to expensive bureaucratic delays during the ordination procedure.⁴⁸ Traditionally, candidates from parishes under patriarchal

⁴² *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.12,68,104,281,291,304,344; *OSS* Pt.3 p.6, Pt.9 p.110, Pt.10 p.114, Pt.11 p.206, Pt.12 p.171.

⁴³ Ordination certificates were sometimes stolen by malicious colleagues, eg. *OSS* Pt.7 pp.36,70.

⁴⁴ *Vologodskie gubernskie vedomosti*, 1865 nos.1-24 p.202; *OSS* Pt.11 p.130 no.119.

⁴⁵ A.Dmitrievskii, *Bogoshuzhenie v russkoi tserkvi*, p.355; *Vologodskie eparkhial'nye vedomosti*, (1890) no.24 p.400.

⁴⁶ Olearius, *The Travels of Olearius in Seventeenth-Century Russia*. transl. and ed. by S.H.Baron (Stanford, 1967) p.238; Samuel Collins, *The Present State of Russia*, (London, 1671) p.5; *The Voyages and Travels of John Struys*, transl. by John Morrison, (London,1684) p.152; Herberstein, *Notes Upon Russia*, transl. by R.H.Major, (London, 1851) p.57.

⁴⁷ *RIB* 25 no.56.

⁴⁸ *RIB* 12 no.248 Ust.; *SKE* p.124 no.5; S.Solov'ev, *Sochineniia*, (M.1991) 6 p.201 .

jurisdiction which were far from Moscow had been allowed to be ordained by their closest prelate, but Patriarch Iosif ruled that they had to make the journey to Moscow for ordination, because, critics claimed, the Patriarch wanted to be sure of collecting the fees.⁴⁹ Ordination costs varied slightly from eparchy to eparchy, yet were always burdensome. In addition to the basic ordination charge (*novichnaia poshlina*), a presentee for major orders had to pay an incense fee (*na ladan*), a cassock fee (*podriznaia poshlina*), a fee for presenting his petition (*poshliny s chelobit'ia*), and a vestry clerk's fee, bringing the total cost of ordination to as much as four roubles.⁵⁰ This equated to half the average stipend of a parish priest, -- a considerable sum for a young man to find.⁵¹ Candidates for minor orders did not have to appear in person before the bishop, but had to pay a fee of about half a rouble for their permit.⁵² In 1675 Patriarch Ioakim acknowledged that the fees for ordination had been too high under former patriarchs, and, 'not wishing to see priests and deacons suffer delay and great loss,' he issued a decree limiting the cost of ordination to two roubles.⁵³ Ioakim's decree is very revealing. I translate it here in full because no paraphrase could describe so well the bureaucratic rigmarole that ordinands faced at the patriarchal palace.

'At the hearing at the Patriarchal palace they write in the register the year, month and date, town, church and name, and rank to which [the candidate is to be] ordained; and they write a petition for ordination after the hearing,[...] and on that petition the vestry clerk notes: "[send] to a Patriarchal palace priest (*krestovomu popu*)⁵⁴ to be confessed," and in accord with that petition a priest confesses him and notes at bottom of that petition: "according to his confession he is worthy of the priesthood". And after confession, ordinands go to the Patriarchal treasury (*kazenni prikaz*) and are recorded in the books, and charged a rouble, or more or less, by whomever the Patriarch authorises; and then with that same petition they go to the vestry clerk and he writes: "send to the metropolitan for ordination", and that is recorded in the books, and they are led to be ordained by the metropolitan that the

⁴⁹ I.I.Shimko, *Patriarshii Kazennyi prikaz*, (M.1894) p.204.

⁵⁰ GAVO f.496 op.1 d.5; *AI* 4 no.259, p.563; N.I.Subbotin, *Dokumenty iz istorii raskola*, (M.1874) 1 p.192; E.M.Pritezhaev, *Novgorod-sofiiskaia kazna* (Spb.1875) pp.43-47.

⁵¹ Clerical stipends are discussed in chapter three.

⁵² *OSS* Pt.11 pp.49-53, Pt.11 p.64 no.51; Pritezhaev, *Novgorod-sofiiskaia kazna*, p.45.

⁵³ *AI* 4 no.259.

⁵⁴ *Krestovye* confessors were usually monastic priests employed in the palaces of bishops or patriarchs (*Krestovaia palata*). An entirely different kind of *krestovoi* priest was an itinerant priest who had no permanent living: *DAI* 12 no.17.

patriarch has delegated.⁵⁵ Having ordained them deacon or priest, the metropolitan records them in his books and charges them a fee of a rouble, or more or less, and signs that same petition. [...] And with that petition the metropolitan's sub-deacon or clerk leads him to the Patriarchal treasury office, and in accord with the petition, his ordination is entered in the books, and the sub-deacon or clerk signs it; then the vestry clerk receives that petition and enters it in the scroll, and the newly-ordained deacon or priest is taken away with a Patriarchal sub-deacon for training.[...] And then the Patriarchal clerks write up the ordination certificate and take it to the vestry clerk, who brings the certificate to the Patriarch, or to a metropolitan the Patriarch has designated, and he signs it. Then it will be taken to the Patriarchal treasury office to receive a seal, and will be recorded in the books as having received the seal, and given to the priest or deacon, and then that certificate is taken to church to the Patriarch, or designated metropolitan. After pronouncing prayers and teaching, he gives that certificate and rite of ordination to the new priest or deacon. Then the newly-ordained priest or deacon goes with that ordination certificate to the Moscow priest-supervisor's office (*tiun*) to be recorded in the books, and they give him a permit and charge him a fee, and on the permit they write that he can serve in accordance with the ordination certificate without hindrance. And in all the above, priests and deacons are caused great delay and incur losses of four roubles or more.⁵⁶

It is unlikely that Patriarch Ioakim's admirable attempts to standardise ordination fees had significant influence in other eparchies, where each bishop ruled autonomously and not all were honest.⁵⁷ Simony, the buying and selling of ecclesiastical benefices, was a scourge faced throughout Christendom, and the Russian Church had long sought to extirpate it.⁵⁸ Church councils of 1274, 1503, 1654 and 1666-67 condemned the practice whereby a prelate extorted a high price from ordination candidates or took a bribe for a valuable benefice,⁵⁹ but bishops were not the only people exacting a toll from new clergymen. Every middleman, from the district administrator down to the lowest clerk, was out to exact a share from ordinands, and the situation appears to have remained much the same during the following centuries.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Patriarchs readily delegated out the job of ordaining new clergy to any other prelates who happened to be in Moscow.

⁵⁶ *AI* 4 no.259.

⁵⁷ Metropolitan Kiprian of Novgorod was a profiteer who took excessive fees from clergy for ordinations, according to Zertsalo: 'O nepravdakh rechakh', pp.i,1. Archbishop Iosif of Kolomna was also accused of overcharging his clergy: A.A.Titov, 'Iosif arkhiepiskop kolomenskii', *ChOidr* 1911 Bk.3 pp.51-57.

⁵⁸ On simony in the English church, see P.Heath, *The English Parish Clergy* (London,1969) pp.36-38, and R.O'Day, *The English Clergy* (Leicester,1979) pp.78,108-9.

⁵⁹ *RIB* 6 no.6 pp.87-88; *PSZ* 1 no.412; Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.137.

⁶⁰ Archpriest Ivan Neronov and Ivan Pososhkov accused episcopal officials of overcharging or taking bribes from ordinands. (Subbotin, *Dokumenty*, 1 pp.192-4;

At parish level, too, there was a certain amount of trafficking in clerical appointments, whereby parishioners or patrons were granting benefices to clergymen who paid the largest bribe, or who were willing to take the job on the worst terms. In a letter to the archimandrite of Tikhvin monastery in 1654, Metropolitan Makarii of Novgorod expressed his concern that 'many ordination candidates come to us and lie, and say that there is no priest at their church, and they bribe a few parishioners and petition us to be ordained, and then there is a lot of hostility about it all at that church, because at that church there is [already] a priest'.⁶¹ How widespread such corruption was we cannot tell, but episcopal court records contain many legal disputes over rights to benefices that are similar to the situation Makarii described. One such quarrel arose in Vas'iansk volost' in 1683, where a peasant who wanted to be elected priest brewed up a large amount of beer and invited parishioners to a party to solicit votes. He won over the support of his friends and relatives, but other parishioners wrote to the bishop complaining that the church already had a priest and could not afford to pay two.⁶² Church livings were occasionally being sold off by priests themselves, most probably by pluralists who had more than one benefice or by priests who had no sons to follow after them.⁶³ By 1666 the situation was serious enough to motivate the Moscow Church Council to pronounce to priests and parishioners that 'it is wrong and illegal to

Pososhkov, p.171). See also Metropolitan Makarii of Novgorod's instructions to the archimandrite who served as his district administrator in Tikhvin: 'And if you, for your profit, send us candidates who are unskilled or illiterate, or revellers, or boyars' slaves, you will be put under severe interdiction by us'. (*AAE* 4 no.331). Extortive archimandrites are also mentioned in *RIB* 14 no.203 Khol.; *DAI* 12 no.64; and Zertsalo, 'O nepravdakh rechakh', pp.2-3; *RGIA* f.834 op.5. d.53. Criticisms were voiced against corrupt Church officials in the 18th and 19th centuries: Belliustin, pp.155-58; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, pp.53-58; *PDR* 22 p.69.

⁶¹ *AAE* 4 no.331.

⁶² *OSS* Pt.12 p.27 no.244. Other example are *OSS* Pt.7 p.123, Pt.12 pp.59,78,124; *SKE* p.100.

⁶³ In 19th-century Russia some priests were offering their benefice and their daughter's hand in marriage to the d'iachok who paid them the highest price, according to priest Ioann Belliustin (Belliutsin, pp.105-115). This may also have occurred in Muscovy, and may be the kind of clerical malpractice the Church Council of 1666-67 condemned: *PSZ* 1 no.412; *DAI* 5 no.102 p.473 art.30.

sell Christ's churches and clerical positions'.⁶⁴ It is not surprising that there should have been competition over benefices: since most priests relied on donations from parishioners for their livelihood it was obviously an advantage to find a prosperous urban parish rather than a poor rural one.⁶⁵ The problem appears to have spread as the number of clergymen grew and competition became fiercer, and by the nineteenth century parish positions were being sold to the seminary students who could pay the most. As one priest wrote in his memoirs, 'the better the position, the higher the price'.⁶⁶

During the course of the seventeenth century, Muscovite bishops began to tighten their control over clerical appointments as part of a wider programme to strengthen Church hierarchical control.⁶⁷ Whilst the relative dearth of data obscures any reliable quantification of statistics, an analysis of extant petitions for ordinations and transfers suggests that as the century progressed, prelates became more rigorous in ensuring that candidates met canonical requirements.⁶⁸ Under-age applicants appear to have been rejected more consistently after 1660,⁶⁹ and ordinands were questioned to ensure that no other candidate with prior claims to the position was being over-looked.⁷⁰ Priests

⁶⁴ *PSZ* 1 no.412; Foreigners' conflicting views on simony in Russia are recorded by Rushchinskii, *Religioznyi byt*, p.109.

⁶⁵ On the clerical economy see chapter three.

⁶⁶ Belliustin, p.110.

⁶⁷ Church measures to strengthen hierarchical control are discussed further in chapters four and nine of this thesis, and by V.Veriuzhskii, *Afanasii, arkhiepiskop Kholmogorskii i Vazhskii*, (Spb.1908); C.J.Potter, 'The Russian Church', pp.63,156,167,302-490; M.Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie na Russkom Severe v XVII v.*, (M.1909-12) 2 pp.26,31,35.

⁶⁸ *OSS* Pt.11, p.191, n.172 (1672); *SKE*, pp.58-91 (1692-3), p.106 (1690), p.109 (1694), p.128 (1694), p.120 (1691), p.125 (1693), p.137 (1686). According to G.Michels, after 1679 priests had to read and sign an oath to Patriarch Ioakim before they received their ordination certificates: G.Michels, 'Myths and Realities of the Russian Schism: the Church and its Dissenters in 17th century Muscovy', Unpubl.PhD thesis (Harvard,1991) p.403 (hereafter 'Myths and Realities'). I have only found evidence of this oath being mandatory for Moscow archpriests: eg. *AI* 5:218, p.373.

⁶⁹ *SKE* p.109; *OSS* Pt.12 p.116 no.126; *RIB* 5 no.150.

⁷⁰ Candidates with prior claims were usually family members of the former incumbent: eg. *SKE* pp.83,84,138.

transferring from one post to another were required to furnish proof that their transfer would not leave former parishioners without spiritual care.⁷¹ Candidates were frequently, perhaps always, required to bring a parishioner from the nominating parish, who acted as guarantor that the candidate's papers were genuine and that he was eligible to be ordained.⁷² When a candidate in Ustiug diocese was rejected by the bishop because of his ignorance and unorthodox views, both the candidate and his sponsor were incarcerated in the episcopal prison on the grounds that the sponsor, as representative of the parish, bore the responsibility for choosing an unsuitable candidate.⁷³ Furthermore, bishops began to insist that parishes or patrons provide adequate maintenance for their clergy,⁷⁴ and forbade the laity from dismissing their priest without episcopal permission.⁷⁵ These measures enabled prelates to sift out unsuitable or surplus clergy elected by the laity, and in some cases bishops installed a priest of their own choosing in a parish, without reference to parishioners' wishes.⁷⁶ Nonetheless, episcopal control over appointments was limited by the fact that parishioners held the purse-strings, for the great majority of clergymen were paid by their congregation.⁷⁷ Knowing the strength of their position, parishes at times dismissed their bishop's appointee and ignored orders to reinstate him, or subjected the new priest to a barrage of fabricated accusations to drive him out. Parishioners of the Church of the Intercession in Tushamsk volost' retaliated against the Metropolitan of Tobol'sk's unilateral appointment of priest Dmitrii Irodionov to their church in 1698 by not paying Dmitrii his stipend and by accusing him of a long list of illegalities, such as always being senselessly drunk, failing to turn up at church, swearing at parishioners,

⁷¹ *SKE* p.134 (1683). There are many similar examples in *SKE* pp.42-187.

⁷² *OSS* Pt.11 p.190 no.170 (1672).

⁷³ *RIB* 12 no.252 Ust.(1695).

⁷⁴ *SKE* pp.59,85,96,140.

⁷⁵ *OSS* pt.7 pp.54-57; *RIB* 25 no.27; *RIB* 12 no.148; *LZAK* 14 p.67; Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 p.31.

⁷⁶ *RIB* 12 no.261 Ust.(1696); *OSS* Pt.7 p.36, no.3 (1693); Archimandrite Melety, ed. *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty vostochno-sibirskago kraia 1653-1726*, (Kazan,1875) no.77 (1699).

⁷⁷ See chapter three.

and overcharging them for prayers. Aware of their schemes, the Metropolitan did not concede to the petitioners' request to have Dmitrii replaced by a priest they had nominated, but ordered a full investigation and legal confrontation between the priest and his accusers.⁷⁸ Sometimes bishops found themselves powerless in the face of lay hegemony over appointments. Metropolitan Markell of Pskov complained to the government in 1685 that churches in Pskov eparchy were run entirely by parishioners, who dismissed good priests and appointed their preferred candidates, entirely disregarding the prelate's orders.⁷⁹

Preparation for the priesthood

In the field of clerical training, also, bishops attempted to increase their authority during the seventeenth century. Education in pre-Petrine Russia has been the subject of many scholarly works and disputes, and few can disagree that the curriculum was limited and standards were low.⁸⁰ Less than five percent of Muscovite men could read or write.⁸¹ The clergy were among this small literate sector of society yet were poorly-educated by Western criteria, prompting foreigners to contemptuously describe them as 'void of all manner of learning'.⁸² This view was shared by a small number of Russian hierarchs and thinkers from the sixteenth century until well after the time of Peter the

⁷⁸ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, no.77. For similar accusations against episcopal appointees see *RIB* 12 no.261 Ust. and SPIRIAN f.117 op.1 d.661.

⁷⁹ *AI* 5 no.122. Another example of parishioners disregarding episcopal orders is *OSS* Pt.7 p.109 nos.1-9 (1697). The laity retained considerable control over clerical appointments in most parishes in the 18th and 19th centuries, except in Siberia, where bishops were able to dominate appointments by the mid-18th century: Vera Shevzov, 'Popular Orthodoxy in late Imperial Rural Russia: 1860-1914', Unpubl.PhD thesis (Yale,1994) Ch.2, pp.207-11; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.157; N.D.Zol'nikova, *Sibirskaiia prikhodskaiia obshchina v XVIII veke*, (Novosibirsk,1990) pp.151,180.

⁸⁰ Debates on literacy in 17th-century Russia are summed up by C.Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.31, and G.Marker, 'Literacy and Literacy Texts in Muscovy: a Reconsideration', *SR*, 49 p.88.

⁸¹ C.Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.31; G.Marker, 'Literacy and Literacy Texts in Muscovy', *SR*, 49 p.88; Pokrovskii, *Russkie Eparkhii* 1 p.264; *Vologodskie eparkhial'nyia vedomosti*, March 1890, no.6, p.97.

⁸² Perry, *The State of Russia*, p.209; Fletcher, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, pp.84-85; Olearius, *Travels*, p.237; Rushchinskii, *Religioznyi byt*, p.170-76; King, *Rites and ceremonies*, p.273.

Great.⁸³ Country priests were, Ivan Pososhkov claimed, 'ignorant of the fundamental tenets of the Christian faith'.⁸⁴ How justified was this low opinion of clerical education? To begin with, there were no seminaries or universities for the Muscovite clergy to attend, whereas the majority of the English clergy were university-educated graduates by the mid-seventeenth century.⁸⁵ The opening of two new Moscow schools in the 1680s barely affected the clerical estate at all; the vast majority of clergymen continued to receive only a rudimentary education, as their fathers had, learning from a primer (*bukvar*) which contained an ABC and a prayerbook, following on to the Book of Hours, Psalms and Book of the Apostles, in the home of a clergyman or occasionally in a monastery.⁸⁶ Primary sources indicate that most priests ensured that their sons were literate so that they could assist in parish work and eventually take over the benefice,⁸⁷ but some Muscovite priests neglected to give their sons even a basic education. Diocesan records contain several cases of priests' sons who were ineligible to apply for a church job because they were illiterate,⁸⁸ and the problem was sufficiently widespread for the Council of 1666-67 to order all priests to teach their sons to read.⁸⁹

⁸³ Archbishop Gennadii of Novgorod (1496-1504) appealed for improvements in clerical education, and hierarchs of the 1551 Church Council called for more clerical teachers to train up sons of clergy: *AI* 1 no.104; Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council and the Parish Priests', *RH* 7 1980 p.68. Peter the Great viewed improvements in education as the key to his Church Reform: *The Spiritual Regulation of Peter the Great*, transl. by A.V.Muller (Seattle, 1972) p.31; J.Cracraft, *The Church Reform of Peter the Great*, (Stanford, 1971) pp.93-4, 262-76; *PDR* 22 pp.480-84.

⁸⁴ Pososhkov, p.167. Pososhkov completed this book in 1724.

⁸⁵ W.Johnson, *Russia's Educational Heritage*, (New York, 1969) pp.23-24; R.O'Day, 'Clerical Standards of Living and Life-Style', *The English Clergy: 1558-1642*, (Leicester, 1979) p.176.

⁸⁶ A.I.Sobolevskii, *Obrazovannost' moskovskoi Rusi XV-XVII vekov*, (Spb. 1894) p.20; M.Okenfuss, *The Discovery of Childhood in Russia* (Newtonville, 1980) pp.8, 10, 12. Nikon and the anonymous priest of Orel were educated in monasteries before becoming parish priests: *Statir*, no.411 p.630; Ivan Shusherin, *Izvestie o rozhdenii i vospitanii o zhitie Nikona patriarkha* (Spb. 1817), p.3; Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.31.

⁸⁷ For example, see *OSS* Pt.7 p.92; *Alu* no.287; *RIB* 23 pp.1043, 1059-60.

⁸⁸ *SKE* p.83 (1686), p.138 (1686); *RIB* 12 no.125 Ust.(1679); *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.176 (1679).

⁸⁹ N.I.Subbotin, ed. *Materialy dlia istorii raskola za pervoe vremia ego*

Although these cases of complete illiteracy refer to non-ordained sons, never to men in holy orders, there were evidently a number of clergymen whose literacy standards were poor. Some could read but not write, like d'iachok Ivan Kirilov of Komel'sk volost', who had to arrange for a deacon to write up all his letters and teach his children.⁹⁰ When priest-supervisors took statements from the clergy of Moscow eparchy in the 1690s, there were a few priests and deacons who could not sign their own names. Their statements were signed on their behalf by other clergymen, who added the phrase 'he could not write' (*'pisat' ne umeet'*).⁹¹ The clerics who did not sign were not considered to be illiterate, for the term used for illiteracy was almost invariably '*gramote ne umeet'*'; conversely, '*gramote umeet'*' was used for d'iachki who had passed the pre-ordination literacy test.⁹² Whilst some may not have signed for themselves because they were absent or disabled by age, disease, or accident (the same phrase is used for an old priest who was crippled),⁹³ it is likely that a few could read the church chant but not write at all. Others may have been able to manage the Old Church Slavonic script on which a clergyman's education was based, but could not write in the *skoropis'* script used by scribes and for everyday use. A young deacon of Glazovo village had to sign for his older colleague, priest Iosif, in 1695 because Iosif was unable to write in the fast short-hand of *skoropis'* (*'skoro pisat' ne umeet'*).⁹⁴ A few decades later Ivan Pososhkov claimed that some sub-standard d'iachki were able to pass the literacy test and be ordained because, he wrote, 'the bishop's assistants accept gifts from the candidate, make him learn certain psalms by heart and then, having marked them in advance, see to it that he reads these same psalms to the bishop. Finding that he reads the Psalter with accuracy and intelligence, the bishop supposes that all his

sushchestvovaniia (M.1875-94) 2 p.188.

⁹⁰ *OSS* Pt.10 p.124 (1688).

⁹¹ 'Skazki popov Krutitskoi eparkhii', *SKE* p.239 nos.18,19, p.253 no.19, p.267 no.12.

⁹² *SKE* pp.83,138: '*gramote ne umeet'*'; pp.113, 137, 139: '*gramote umeet'*'. Another ambiguous phrase is '*pisat' ne mogu'*' in *SKE* p.63.

⁹³ *SKE* p.54 no.19 p.135.

⁹⁴ *SKE* p.56 no.21 (1695); a similar case is p.54 no.19.

reading is of the same quality and so ordains him priest'.⁹⁵ Pososhkov's comments, written in the early eighteenth-century, must be balanced by the fact that Pososhkov was an ardent reformer who was very critical of the Church and somewhat given to exaggeration.⁹⁶ No similar complaint has come to light amongst seventeenth-century documents, nor is there any mention of a priest or deacon who could not read in his church satisfactorily.⁹⁷ On the contrary, it is rare even to find cases of priests not signing their own names, like those cited above.⁹⁸ Extant copies of beautifully-executed manuscripts and literally thousands of letters, petitions, wills and contracts written and signed by seventeenth-century clerics testify to their writing skills.⁹⁹ In this respect my findings agree with those of Russian historian A.I.Sobolevskii, who stated that in all the documents known to us there is not one mention of an entirely illiterate priest.¹⁰⁰

Nonetheless, hierarchs of the Church had long recognised that there were inadequacies in the training of the parish clergy,¹⁰¹ and began to take positive measures to improve clerical literacy during the second half of the seventeenth century, albeit that the emphasis was on teaching the skills of reading, writing, book-copying, and church

⁹⁵ Pososhkov, p.171.

⁹⁶ Vlasto and Lewitter also comment that some of Pososhkov's statements are misleading: Pososhkov, p.161.

⁹⁷ The only complaints of unsatisfactory literacy I have found were against minor clerics, like d'iachok Ivan Iakovlev of Romanov volost', whose colleague reported to the bishop that he 'is very bad at reading and cannot write' (*OSS* Pt.9 p.97).

⁹⁸ In addition to the Moscow clerics cited in footnotes 93-96, an Astrakhan deacon could not sign his name (*pisat' ne umeet'*) in *AI* 4 no.202 p.434. Other than these, I have only found mention of a few d'iachki and monastic clerics who could not sign their names: eg. Subbotin, *Materialy*, 3 p.33 xliii; G.Michels, 'The Solovki Uprising', *The Russian Review*, 51 Jan.1992 p.13.

⁹⁹ Almost all the primary sources cited in this thesis were written or signed by clergymen. Numerous episcopal instructions were copied out by priest-supervisors (eg. *AI* 5 no.154). For examples in a particularly fine hand see RGIA f.834 op.5 d.18,19 (1652-54), op.2, d.1502.

¹⁰⁰ Sobolevskii, *Obrazovannost' moskovskoi*, p.5; cf. Okenfuss, *The Discovery of Childhood*, p.10.

¹⁰¹ *AI* 1 no.104; Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council and the Parish Priests', *RH* 7 1980 p.68.

chanting, rather than on higher education. From mid-century the Patriarchal Printing Office was producing more primers for new students,¹⁰² and bishops were ensuring that all ordinands could at least read. In Suzdal, for instance, clergy were dismissed because of ignorance and consequently lost clerical status.¹⁰³ In Moscow eparchy, Metropolitans concentrated on clerics in minor orders, from whom the next generation of priests would be drawn. D'iachki had to undergo a literacy test at the Metropolitan's office or at a monastery, and obtain the signature of the examiner to testify that they had passed.¹⁰⁴ Whilst serving in office, they were subject to spot-checks. In Liven and its surrounding district, for example, the archpriest was ordered by the prelate to take statements from parishioners in all parish churches 'to ensure that church d'iachki and minor clerics were suitable for church rank (*chin*)'.¹⁰⁵

As part of this process, there appears to be a growing tendency by prelates to ordain candidates to the diaconate for an interim period before priesting them, rather than allowing fast-track ordinations from the laity or minor orders directly to the priesthood, as happened previously.¹⁰⁶ It is not uncommon to come across situations like that faced by Iakov, the son of a retired priest of Sud'bishch. His father and parish asked the metropolitan to ordain Iakov as priest, but instead the Metropolitan replied that he 'has ordained him as deacon to learn church work, and ordered that until he is ordained, the church must hire a priest'.¹⁰⁷ Bishops frequently refused to ordain an applicant until he had undergone further training.¹⁰⁸ D'iachok Tarasei Ivanov applied for ordination to

¹⁰² Okenfuss, *The Discovery of Childhood*, p.11.

¹⁰³ I.Rumiantsev, *Nikita Konstantinovich Dobrynin*, (Sergiev Posad, 1916) 2 p.3.

¹⁰⁴ *SKE* p.144-5 (1692), p.113 no.3.

¹⁰⁵ *SKE* p.137.

¹⁰⁶ *SKE* pp.118,125,128,137; *RIB* 35 nos.10,135,339, *RIB* 6 no.133 p.916. In 1549 Herberstein wrote that Russian priests had usually served for a long time as deacons, but there is no evidence of this in the early 17th century: *Notes Upon Russia*, p.56.

¹⁰⁷ *SKE* pp.118,120,128.

¹⁰⁸ *OSS* Pt.12 p.116; *SKE* p.109. One Moscow d'iachok, whose father has just been widowed, petitioned to be appointed deacon 'to learn' (*dliia naucheniia*), probably because he was unable to write his own name. His father, priest Vasilei, signed for him. *SKE* pp.125,146.

his deceased father's benefice in 1689, but was refused until he had completed a period of residential study at Dukhov monastery in Novosil' 'for church instruction (*nauchenie*)'.¹⁰⁹ D'iachok Ivan Vasil'ev of Bolkhov town was told to spend another year learning from his father, a widowed priest, before he could be ordained. When Ivan's father died within the year, the metropolitan ordained Ivan to the diaconate, not to the priesthood.¹¹⁰

Not only were candidates tested and interrogated, but they were also given teaching at the time of ordination,¹¹¹ and in some eparchies copies of *A bishop's teaching to a newly-ordained priest* and John Chrysostom's *On the Priesthood* were printed and distributed, along with sermons, to provide basic instruction on piety and pastoral care.¹¹² In addition, new clergy had to undergo post-ordination training before being released to their parishes, according to the rules of ordination: 'A newly-ordained deacon or priest must serve in the main cathedral church for six weeks. He must always read the Gospel in divine liturgy, and be supervised to ensure he has read slowly and knew the words and chants. And at Matins and Vespers that ordinand must read the psalter and hymns and know how to use the censer and perform all sacerdotal duties; he must learn it thoroughly and well'. During the training period, new deacons were supervised by experienced deacons, priests by priests, and no one was allowed to spend less than six weeks training.¹¹³ There is evidence that these rules were followed in central Russia, at least. Ordination registers for Moscow eparchy in 1653 record the priest and church that each ordinand was sent to for his post-ordination training,¹¹⁴ and Paul of Aleppo observed a few years later that when a priest or deacon was

¹⁰⁹ *SKE* p.118.

¹¹⁰ *SKE*, p.128 (1694).

¹¹¹ Ordination certificates included lengthy teaching: eg. *MTS* 2 Prilozhenie no.4; *AI* 4 no.259 (1675).

¹¹² *AAE* 4 no.184 (1671); *DAI* 12 no.35; *RIB* 14 no.201 Khol.(1695); *RIB* 6 p.101-110; *Pouchenie sviatitel'skoe k novopostavlennomu iereiu*, (M.1670,1696); Potter, 'The Russian Church', pp.183,349.

¹¹³ *RIB* 6 no.131 pp.903-4.

¹¹⁴ *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.253-279 (1653).

ordained 'he cannot return home until he has said mass fifteen times in the Cathedral, so as to be well instructed.¹¹⁵ The six-week post-ordination training period was still being enforced under Patriarch Ioakim in 1675.¹¹⁶ Once priests were installed in their own parishes, they were inspected periodically by priest-supervisors and other episcopal agents to ensure that standards were maintained.¹¹⁷

Although lax bishops may have allowed sub-standard ordinands to slip through the net, there are plentiful examples of members of the white clergy who applied themselves to reading, studying, teaching and preaching from the religious works that were available.¹¹⁸ Ivan Nasedka of St.Clements was an avid reader: from early in the century he was employed as a corrector of books for the patriarchal office, 'having read many divine books and having understood their meaning well', he claimed.¹¹⁹ Stefan Vonifat'ev of Annunciation cathedral (1645-56) enjoyed a high reputation as a learned man and good preacher,¹²⁰ and his successor, Andrei Savinnovich Postnikov (1666-1676), was familiar with Kievan teaching.¹²¹ Nasedka and Postnikov were both commissioned to write treatises against Lutheranism; the latter's shows a good knowledge of Scripture, church history, and dogma.¹²² Archpriest Nikita Vasilevich II (1676-85) was a promoter of education,¹²³ and Petr of the Cathedral of the Purification (1648-62) was learned in Greek and Church writings and an author of treatises. Later in life he collected a large library, patronised promising clerics like

¹¹⁵ Paul of Aleppo, p.347.

¹¹⁶ *AI* 4 no.259.

¹¹⁷ On episcopal supervision, see chapter nine.

¹¹⁸ The range of books available to a Muscovite cleric was primarily limited to writings of the early Church fathers, histories, and portions of the Bible: S.P.Luppov, *Kniga v Rossii v XVII veke*, (L.1970); M.V.Kukushkina, *Monastyrskie biblioteki russkogo severa*, (L.1977). On preaching, see chapter four, and Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, pp.150-175.

¹¹⁹ *MTS* 2 p.112-113.

¹²⁰ *MTS* 2 p.87; Subbotin, *Dokumenty*, 1 p.272; S.Solov'ev, *History of Russia*, 11 pp.247-48.

¹²¹ *MTS* 2 pp. 88,102-3.

¹²² *MTS* 2 pp.102-9.

¹²³ *MTS* 2 p.110.

Epifanii Slavinetkii, and worked on a new translation of the Bible from the Greek until his death in 1675.¹²⁴ Contrary to Olearius' assertion that no Russian could understand a word of Latin or Greek,¹²⁵ there is evidence that fluency in these languages was not unknown among Moscow deacons and priests, although it was not until after the turn of the century that foreign languages began to be widely taught.¹²⁶

Far less is known about provincial priests than Moscow clergy, yet there were evidently erudite clergymen outside the capital as well, for we know of several who were familiar with Patristic writings and able to use them as a basis for their own compositions. Nizhnii Novogorod archpriests Konon and Ivan Neronov, for example, had both studied John Chrysostom's works.¹²⁷ Neronov's Life, written in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century, provides valuable information on the education and career path possible for an ordinary parish priest. Born near Vologda in 1591, Neronov began his church career in Ustiug as a lodger in the home of a church reader, from whom he learned to read and write, and later moved to a village near Iuriev on the Volga. There he lived with a priest called Ioann, and following the path of many aspiring churchmen, he became Ioann's d'iachok and son-in-law. When troubles forced him to flee temporarily to Trinity-St.Sergius monastery, he took the opportunity to spend his sojourn 'ceaselessly reading the books of Holy Scripture'. Some years after this Ivan and his wife took up residence in Nizhnii Novgorod with an old priest named Ananii, who was 'a very learned man in the Holy Scriptures.' Having studied and served for a long time under Ananii, Ivan began a preaching ministry, reading and explaining

¹²⁴ *MTS* 2 pp.88,123.

¹²⁵ Olearius, *Travels*, p.238.

¹²⁶ *DAI* 5 no.26 pp.98-154 (1666); C.Potter, 'The Russian Church', pp.46,51; Cracraft, *Church Reform*, p.93; L.Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, (New Haven,1999) p.344. Few clergy attended the Slavonic-Greek-Latin Academy in Moscow, founded in 1685, but in the early 18th century there was a high proportion of clergy sons learning Latin and Greek at Metropolitan Dmitrii's school in Rostov (1702-09). Peter I obliged priests' sons to learn Latin in 1708.

¹²⁷ Subbotin, *Dokumenty*,1 pp.1-178, 339 no.87.

works of theology to adults and teaching children to read.¹²⁸ Neronov's main teaching tools, the works of John Chrysostom, were later recommended by the Spiritual Regulation of Peter the Great in 1721 as essential for a good clerical education,¹²⁹ and are still acclaimed for their stylistic brilliance today.¹³⁰

Another self-taught priest like Neronov was an anonymous priest of Orel whom we know of only from a collection of sermons he wrote in the 1680s. From a non-clerical family in northern Russia, this priest acquired elementary literacy skills in a monastery after which, motivated by his own love of learning, he read the sermons and theological works of John Chrysostom, Simon Polotskii, and Ukrainian theologian Kirill Trankvillion, then began to compose his own sermons.¹³¹ White clergymen like the Orel priest were able to continue their education privately because, in addition to possessing their own books, many had access to books of a religious nature in their church libraries and local monasteries.¹³² The polemics that arose from the Schism in the Russian Church bring to light several other well-read clerics who would otherwise have remained unknown. Nikita Dobrynin of Suzdal wrote numerous letters, petitions and theological compositions,¹³³ as did priest Lazar of Romano-Boris-Gleb in 1668,¹³⁴ and Fedor Ivanov, a chapel deacon of Annunciation cathedral from 1659-67

¹²⁸ Subbotin, *Dokumenty*, 1 pp.1-178.

¹²⁹ 'Every preacher must have at hand the books of Saint John Chrysostom and read them diligently': *Spiritual Regulation*, p.44.

¹³⁰ John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood* (NY.1984), *On Wealth and Poverty* (NY.1984), *On Marriage and Family Life* (NY.1986).

¹³¹ *Statir*, pp.630-31.

¹³² Monastic libraries were often very extensive: see for instance, GPB f.717, Solovetskii monastery collection, and *Materialy i soobshcheniia po fondam otdel rukopisnoi i redkoi knigi biblioteki akademii nauk SSSR*, ed. by A.I.Kopanev (M.1966) pp.131-142. According to Luppov, ordinary churches in 17th-century Russia had on average 35-40 books, although some had only 14-17; Luppov also cites research on books in Ustiug churches, of which 60% were servicebooks, 19.6 % were Holy Scripture and commentaries, and 20.3% were patristic works and readings: Luppov, *Kniga v Rossii v XVII veke*. (Leningrad, 1970), pp.19,164-67.

¹³³ Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, Vols 1 and 2; Subbotin, *Materialy*, (1878) 1 pp.1-178.

¹³⁴ Subbotin, *Materialy*, 1 pp.179-285.

who has been described as one of the most outstanding publicists of the seventeenth century.¹³⁵ Although these men had little formal education, their writings are long and complex, strengthened by examples from theological writings, from Russian, Byzantine and biblical history and from the Bible. They are, as L.V.Titov has commented, no simpleton's work.¹³⁶ Patriarch Nikon also began his career as an able, intelligent parish priest who loved learning. But above all stands Archpriest Avvakum, described by G.P.Fedotov as 'an author of genius, undoubtedly the best writer among the Muscovites'.¹³⁷ Avvakum's writings reveal his familiarity with patristic works, biblical history, and Holy Scripture, yet are universally hailed as innovative, and he was renowned as a charismatic preacher as well. The son of a humble village priest, Avvakum spent most of his life in the provinces and had little formal study, yet his writings reveal that he had taken every opportunity to read and learn.¹³⁸ We shall probably never know how many other Muscovite parish priests were of similar calibre, for fire and revolution have destroyed many seventeenth-century records, whilst others may yet remain undiscovered in Russia's provincial archives. It is unlikely, however, that Avvakum, Ivan Neronov, Nikita Dobrynin and those listed above were unique; rather, their writings and lives are known to us only because they became involved in the Schism or were connected with the palace. We do know for certain, however, that there were many Muscovite clergymen who had an appreciation for books. Numerous annotations on manuscripts and early printed books attest to a lively interest by parish clergymen who could obtain them, and a willingness to invest time and care in copying and preserving them.¹³⁹

¹³⁵ L.V.Titov, 'Letter of deacon Fedor to son Maksim', in *Khristianstvo i Tserkov' v Rossii feodal'nogo perioda*, ed. N.N.Pokrovskii, (Novosibirsk, 1989) pp.87,93; *MTS* 2 pp.113-14.

¹³⁶ Pokrovskii, *Khristianstvo i Tserkov'*, p.87.

¹³⁷ *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.134.

¹³⁸ Okenfuss has aptly observed that Avvakum and his compatriots 'were shrewd and, by their own standards, well-read Christian clergy and literati'. Okenfuss, *The Rise and Fall of Latin Humanism in Early Modern Russia*, (Leiden, 1995) p.44.

¹³⁹ Examples of books owned, copied, bound or donated by 16th and 17th century parish priests can be found in GPB f. 588. Sobranie M.P.Pogodina, op.1 nos.156, 167, 179,187,202,204,255,355; RGIA f.834 op.2 d.1502; *Opisanie rukopisei solovetskago*

Western critics like Fletcher and Weber were wrong in claiming that Russian priests were 'utterly unlearned both for other knowledge and for the word of God', and incorrect in maintaining that sermons were an eighteenth-century innovation.¹⁴⁰ On the contrary, there were more clerical readers and preachers amongst the Muscovite white clergy than has commonly been credited. Even so, the state of clerical education remained low throughout the century because the hierarchy failed to invest in and insist on adequate higher education for the parish clergy. Neither patriarch, prelates, priests nor parishes, with very few exceptions, saw any need for a university education for the clergy, and although there is evidence that fluency in Latin was not unknown among deacons and priests who served in the capital, foreign languages were not widely taught because they were viewed with suspicion as a vehicle for heretical propaganda.¹⁴¹ Ironically, though, it was lack of education that facilitated the spread of heresy and schism in Russia. Through ignorance many clergymen taught their flocks erroneously, or failed to correct their misconceptions.¹⁴² Feofan Prokopovich and Ivan Pososhkov were probably right in claiming some years later that poorly-educated priests, who were unable to understand, let alone combat heresy, were to a large extent responsible for the genesis and continuation of the Schism that shook the Russian Church to its foundations.¹⁴³ As Muscovy gradually opened its doors to the Western

monastyrnia nakhodiashchikhsia v biblioteke Kazanskoi Dukhovnoi Akademii, (Kazan, 1881) 3 pp.68,155,171,267,289; *Rukopisnye knigi sobraniia M.P.Pogodina*, Catalogue Pt.1. (Leningrad 1988) nos.98,135,144,159,220,252; *Izdaniia Kirillovskoi pechati XV-XVI vv.* (Spb. 1993) nos.2,3,6,25,36,45, 58, 80,83,101,116,117,120, 122,131,139; *Opisanie rukopisei i knig, sobrannykh dlia imperatorskoi akademii nauk v Olonetskom krae*, ed. V.I.Sreznevskii (Spb. 1913) p.293 no.260, pp.57,97,108, 154,250,281,285,314,403,424; GPB: *Apostol*, (M.1606); *Margarita*, (M.1641).

¹⁴⁰ Fletcher, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, pp.84-85; Weber, *The Present State of Russia*, 1 p.324.

¹⁴¹ Clerical fear of 'heretical' foreign learning is evident in the writings of deacon Fedor, priest Ivan Nasedka, Archpriest Avvakum, and Patriarch Ioakim in *MTS* 2 pp.112-14; Okenfuss, *The Rise and Fall of Latin Humanism in Early Modern Russia*, (Leiden, 1995) pp.30,41,44; 'Testament of Patriarch Ioakim', ed. by G.Vernadsky, *A Source Book for Russian History*, (New Haven,1972) pp.361-63.

¹⁴² In some parishes, priests were teaching old rites through ignorance even late in the century: Michels, 'Myths and Realities,' pp.409-410,413,419,443; V.S. Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie v Rossii XVII veka*, (M.1986) nos.125,129.

¹⁴³ Pososhkov, pp.168-170; *Spiritual Regulation*, pp.30-31.

world, the need for higher clerical education began to be recognised by the last decades of the seventeenth century,¹⁴⁴ but it was only as a result of Peter the Great's reforms the following century that schooling was made compulsory for clergymen and that foreign languages, the key to the riches of Western European learning, began to appear on the curriculum.¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, it is to seventeenth-century bishops that credit belongs for tightening up selection procedures for ordinands and enforcing almost universal literacy amongst their white clergy, thereby providing the groundwork for the revolutionary modernisation of clerical education that followed in the eighteenth century.

¹⁴⁴ C.Potter, 'The Russian Church', pp.46,51; J.Cracraft, *The Church Reform of Peter the Great*. (Stanford, 1971) p.93; L.Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, (New Haven,1999) p.344.

¹⁴⁵ It was only in 1721 that bishops were legally required to found schools, and not until 1780 were there seminaries in every eparchy: Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council and the Parish Priests', *RH* 7 pp.67-68; Cracraft, *Church Reform*, p.93.

Chapter Two

Social Origins and Mobility

'His grandfather and forefathers were born in this village, and his father and great grandfather died as priests.'

Petition for ordination of a new priest, Khalezvo village, 1694¹

The social origins of the Muscovite white clergy was a subject that generated heated debate amongst pre-Revolutionary Russian scholars. Vladimirskii-Budanov, Poboinin and their supporters emphasised the mixed social origins of the seventeenth-century parish clergy and denied that the clerical estate had any hereditary aspect until much later. This view was supported by the opinions of eighteenth-century English travellers like J.G.King, who in 1772 wrote that the Muscovite secular clergy were 'often taken from the common peasants'.² On the other side of the debate were Russian historians Znamenskii and Golubinskii, who maintained that priests' sons had been following their fathers into clerical jobs since the earliest years of Christianity in Rus'.³ Scholarly research on this subject was for the most part superficial and of limited scope, with few sources cited to back up opinions, and in recent years the issue has elicited almost no interest at all among historians. The origins of the clerical estate is, however, a matter of significance for an in-depth study of the white priesthood, and will be considered here in order to elucidate the means by which clergymen found jobs and to illuminate the relationships that existed between clergymen and their bishops, and between priests

¹ *SKE* pp.100-101.

² King, *Rites and Ceremonies*, p.273, possibly citing John Perry, *The State of Russia Under the Present Czar*, (1716), p.215. M.Vladimirskii-Budanov agreed with this position in *Gosudarstvo i narodnoe obrazovanie v Rossii XVIII veka*, (Iaroslav, 1874) pp.97-8, as did I.Poboinin, 'Ocherk vnutrennei istorii goroda Toroptsy v xvi i xvii vekakh', *ChOISR* 1902 Bk.2 p.189.

³ Znamenskii and Golubinskii regarded the priesthood as well on the way to becoming hereditary by the 17th century: *PDR* 21 pp.165-7; E.E.Golubinskii, 'History of the Russian Church', *ChOISR* 1901 Bk.3 p.449. Iushkov considered that the priesthood took on a hereditary aspect only from the end of the 17th century: S.V.Iushkov, *Ocherki iz istorii prikhodskoi zhizni na severe Rossii v XV-XVII v.* (Vologda, 1913) pp.45-46.

and their parishes. By tracing the source of manpower in and out of the clerical estate, we can shed light on social mobility in the Muscovite State, and simultaneously expose trends and attitudes of Church, government and society in the changing world of seventeenth-century Russia.

Muscovite law allowed room for social mobility into and out of the clerical estate until the close of the century and beyond.⁴ A large number of clergy sons (*popovichi*) who were not ordained became scribes, copyists, clerks, and landlords' stewards, having benefited from a basic education received at home.⁵ The State bureaucracy (*prikazy*) was another field where literate clergy sons would naturally look for jobs, but entry was not always easy. In response to lobbying by chancellery staff who wished to safeguard jobs for their own sons, the government periodically issued laws prohibiting the employment of priests' and deacons' sons in Moscow Chancelleries and provincial government offices,⁶ but these laws were rescinded or ignored when there was a staff shortage. Consequently, there were an inordinate number of clergy offspring working as civil servants (*prikaznyĕ liudi*) in the seventeenth century, including a few prominent heads of departments.⁷ Popovichi are also mentioned in Church records working as icon-painters, church elders, assistants at episcopal investigations (*poniaty*), and elected representatives of their communities (*tseloval'niki*).⁸ A few joined the

⁴ On the closing of entry into the clerical estate in the 18th century, see Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, pp.186-217.

⁵ *OSS* Pt.8 p.40, Pt.10 pp.164-65; Pt.12 p.38; *Rukopisnye knigi sobraniia M.P.Pogodina*, Pt.1 no.132; *Materialy dlia istorii Vladimirskoi eparkhii* (Vladimir, 1894) 1 p.150; *SKE* p.143 (1690); Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, 2, Prilozheniia pp.14-15 (1659).

⁶ Gramota of Tsar Mikhail (27 Nov.1640), *ChOIDR* 1882 Bk.1 Smes', p.12; *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.1-111.

⁷ Borivoj Plavsic, 'Seventeenth-century chanceries and their staffs', *Russian Officialdom: the Bureaucratization of Russian Society from the 17-20th Centuries*, ed. by Walter M.Pintner (North Carolina,1980) pp.30,38-39,42. Chancellery staff with clerical roots are mentioned in *AI* 4 nos.173,202; *AI* 5 no.151; *DAI* 3 no.41, *DAI* 5 no.67, *DAI* 8 no.7, *DAI* 12 no.86; *AIuB* 2 no.152; V.Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui i ego okrestnostei*, (M.1851) no.57.

⁸ *Dokuchaev-Barskov*, pp.15-16,26; *OSS* Pt.7 p.108 no.3, Pt.8 p.40, Pt.10 p.20 no.232, Pt.11 pp.26-28, Pt.12 p.38 no.42; *RIB* 29 pp.608-09 no.60;

regiments, whilst others became common peasants.⁹ Some of these unordained sons were debarred from ordination because they were illiterate or twice-married,¹⁰ others may have pursued a secular career by choice, but many left the clerical estate because they simply could not find a church job. Competition over church livings in the central regions of Russia could be fierce, particularly by the last quarter of the century, yet few clerics were willing to emigrate to frontier regions where priests were in desperately short supply.¹¹ The growing number of *popovichi* who failed to find any permanent employment became a problem for the Church and a menace to their communities, judging from complaints.¹² Unemployed *popovichi* were accused of disorderly behaviour in churches,¹³ living as 'vagabonds or engaging in disreputable business and brigandage', and a host of them appeared before ecclesiastical and civil courts throughout the country charged with theft, drunkenness, disorder, assault, or rape.¹⁴ Recognising that clerical over-population was causing problems, Tsar Aleksei attempted to draft surplus clergy sons into the army in December 1660, but rescinded this ruling two months later due to ecclesiastical discontent. Instead, the Tsar decreed that clergy sons were allowed to engage in legal trade or be enrolled as soldiers if they wanted to, but priests were ordered to 'ensure that their sons, brothers, and relatives refrain from unfitting or criminal activity of all kinds'.¹⁵ If convicted of crime, unordained relatives of clergy were tried by the civil courts, not the ecclesiastical courts.¹⁶ The government finally succeeded in removing 'superfluous' *popovichi* from

'*Khristorozhdestvenskaia tserkov*,' pp.30-33.

⁹ *OSS* Pt.4 p.30, Pt.10 pp.70,164-65, Pt.11 p.50; *DGPV* pp.42,132,146 xiv.

¹⁰ *SKE* pp.56, 83,113,137,229; *OSS* Pt.1 p.38, Pt.5 p.60, Pt.8 p.115, Pt.9 p.97.

¹¹ There was a shortage of clergy in Siberia, the Don, and in the regiments.

¹² *PDR* 21 p.167; S.Solov'ev, *History of Russia*, transl. by A.Muller (Gulf Breeze,1980), 24 p.186.

¹³ Metropolitan Makarii, *Istoriia Russkoi Tserkvi*, (Spb.1882) XI p.84; *AAE* 3 no.264; *OSS* Pt.13 p.60 no.71 (1655).

¹⁴ *RGADA* f.1433 op.1 d.10 (1679), f.1107 op.1, Pt.2 no.2869 (1681), f. 1441 op.6 d.50 (1658), f.1443 op.2 d.48, 60 (1687); *AMG* 3 no.623 (1663); *AluB* 3 no.371 (1639); *OSS* Pt.8 p.57 no.95, Pt.3 p.87 no.182, Pt.8 p.93 no.140; Solov'ev, *History of Russia*, 24 p.186.

¹⁵ *PSZ* 1 nos.289,291.

¹⁶ *PSZ* 1 no.412

the protecting umbrella of the Church early in the following century, when Peter the Great reduced the number who could be employed in churches and conscripted the rest into State service.¹⁷

Seventeenth-century laws, which allowed social mobility out of the clerical estate, also allowed limited movement into it. Literate candidates who were not slaves, tax-payers (*tiaglets*), or army conscripts were legally entitled to apply for ordination, and the church-building boom and colonisation of Siberia during the seventeenth century opened up new church positions.¹⁸ Ordination to the white priesthood was almost unheard of for scions of the Muscovite nobility or service class, by whom it was regarded as a degradation, although they could be found in monastic orders, within which there were attractive prospects for advancement to the bishopric.¹⁹ The attitude of the Muscovite nobility was not so different from that of the English gentry at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the poverty and low social status of the lower clergy in England were such that few well-born sons served as resident parish priests, for 'men think it a stain to their blood to place their sons in that function, and women are ashamed to marry any of them', wrote Edward Chamberlain in 1669.²⁰ For Muscovite sons of peasants and townsmen, on the other hand, entry into the white clerical estate could represent an upward step on the social ladder, for it provided

¹⁷ OSS Pt.8 p.159 no.188; Hughes, *Peter the Great*, p.346; Cracraft, *Church Reform*, p.245.

¹⁸ On the construction of new churches in 17th century Muscovy see chapter three.

¹⁹ Many of Russia's national saints were of noble origin, including Fedosii of the Kievan Caves, Sergius of Radonezh, Aleksei of Moscow. Noblemen who entered the monastic orders in the 17th century include Patriarchs Filaret and Ioakim, and Metropolitan Ioann of Siberia. The monastic orders appear to have attracted entries from a far wider social spectrum than the white priesthood. *AI* 4 no.248; Veriuzhskii, pp.7-8; N.Skosyrev, *Ocherk zhitiia mitropolita Tobol'skago i vseia Sibiri Ioanna Maksimovicha 1651-1715* (Tobolsk, 1904), p.3; W.Palmer, *The Patriarch and the Tsar* (London, 1871-76) 6 pp.1525-6.

²⁰ The English gentry entered the clerical orders in greater numbers after Church reforms in the 1640s, but even then it was more likely to be as absentee vicars, rather than as resident curates in the parish. A.Tindal Hart, *Clergy and Society, 1600-1800* (London,1968) pp.46,59.

certain judicial immunities and a means whereby an able man could climb to higher echelons of society. Patriarch Nikon came from peasant stock and began his Church career as a village priest. Indeed, as Cathy Potter has observed, a career in the Church provided the only route to influence and power attainable by the lowest classes,²¹ hence it is not surprising that in seventeenth-century documents we find mention of clergymen who were the offspring of peasants, traders, or artisans.²² Serfs, too, were ordained at the instigation of landowners who wanted them in churches on their estates, and even fugitive slaves sometimes managed to have themselves illegally ordained to clerical rank.²³ The clerical estate gradually closed to outsiders in the eighteenth century with the introduction of the poll-tax registry in 1719-21, and with increasingly stricter educational requirements for priests after the opening of church schools from the 1720s.²⁴

Long before the clerical estate became a legally closed class in the eighteenth century, however, Muscovite clergymen were helping their relatives to obtain church livings, thereby making it harder for outsiders to enter. Priests' sons were inheriting their fathers' benefices throughout the seventeenth century, and sons-in-law, grandsons, brothers, uncles and nephews stood next in line. In fact, diocesan records reveal that priests from non-clerical origins were massively out-numbered by those with a clerical background, suggesting that eligible candidates from clergy families had a significant advantage in the competition for Church jobs. Examples are plentiful from early in the century,²⁵ and as the volume of records increases in the second half of the century, so

²¹ Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.53.

²² *RIB* 35 no.434 p.878 (1634); Veriuzhskii, pp.188-196; *OSS* Pt.12 p.27 no.244 (1683), Pt.8 p.112-115 no.156 (1699); *DAI* 5 no.68 p.327 (1675); *RIB* 12 no.105 Ust.(1672); *Statir*, no.411 p.630; Perry, *The State of Russia*, p.215.

²³ *PSZ* 1 no.412 p.704; *DAI* 5 no.102 p.490 (1666-67).

²⁴ Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, pp.186-217.

²⁵ A small sample of the total can be found in: *RIB* 12 no.42 Ust.(1641); *RIB* 14 nos.157,165,299, 318 Khol (1626-49); *RIB* 25 nos.54,177,178,256 (1601-41); *RIB* 2 no.222 (1626); *ChOIDR* 1896 Bk.2 pp.22-23 (1629-31); *DGPVG* 2 p.155 (1623); *PNG* p.264 (1618); *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, p.250; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.137,175.

the evidence of hereditary priesthood grows.²⁶ Many churchmen could trace their clerical ancestry back several generations.²⁷ It is not rare to find whole family dynasties serving in various capacities in parishes or cathedrals,²⁸ or monopolising eminent positions.²⁹ At Viaznikov in 1665, for instance, the archpriest, hegumen, and archimandrite were all brothers,³⁰ and at the end of the century the archpriest of Archangel'sk and kliuchar' of Kholmogory were brothers.³¹ The abundance of cases of this kind reveals the importance of family connections for a cleric who hoped to obtain a benefice.³² Let us look more closely at the evidence.

We can get a rough idea of how many sons followed their fathers into the Church in the middle years of the seventeenth century from the suffixes *syn popov* (literally 'son of priest') and *syn d'iakonov* ('son of deacon'), which Muscovite scribes sometimes appended to the names of clergy sons.³³ *Popov* eventually evolved into a surname in later centuries,³⁴ but during our period it can still be used to identify clergy offspring when we have no information other than the name.³⁵ Manuscript 424 of the Synodal

²⁶ Diocesan records of Vologda, Moscow, Kholmogory and Ustiug contain numerous examples of clergy sons in orders. In addition, see RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.8, 31, f.1432 op.1 d.30; *AMG* 1 no.610, 2 no.771; *AluB* 1 no.7 i,ii; *RIB* 5 no.372; *RIB* 32 no.327; K.P.Pobedonostsev, 'Istoriko-iuridicheskie akty XVII-XVIII v.' *ChOidr* 1886 Bk.4 p.275; 'Tserkovnyia zemli v Rostovskom uezde XVII v.' *ChOidr* 1896 Bk.2 p.22-23.

²⁷ *AMG* 2 no.770; *SKE* pp.96,100; *RIB* 12 no.125 Ust.

²⁸ *SKE* p.55 no.20; *RIB* 14 no.206 Khol.; *OSS* Pt.8 pp.82-84; *DAI* 2 no.70.

²⁹ *AMG* 3 no.665; *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, pp.74-75.

³⁰ Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, p.50 no.1.

³¹ *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, p.120.

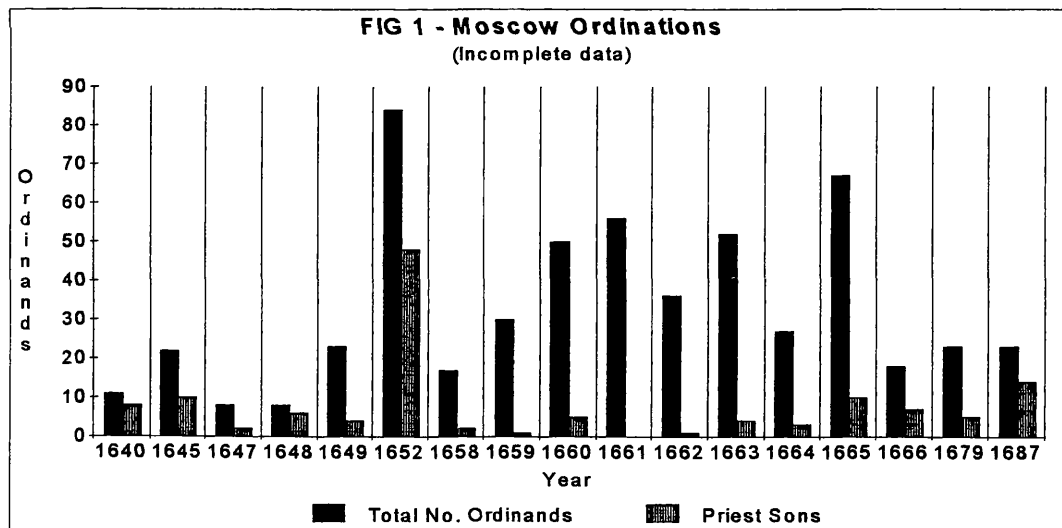
³² RGADA f.1432 op.1 d.32, 40, f.1433 op.1 d.26 (1680); Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, Prilozhenie no.55; Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, 2 p.3-88; G.Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.200,436-37.

³³ See for example, *OSS* Pt.7 p.157, Pt.8 pp.10,40,70,105, Pt.10 p.161, Pt.11 no.156. The suffix 'Popov' occasionally referred to the grandson of a priest, but 'syn popov' was invariably a priest's son. *SKE* pp.113-14 (1685). Archpriests' sons were often suffixed 'syn protopopov', and descendants became 'Protopopov': eg. *RIB* 12 no.42 Ust.(1641).

³⁴ Popov and Protopopov had been used as surnames by some Muscovite families for several generations prior to the 17th century, but its widespread use as a surname began later. See also Plavsic, 'Seventeenth-century chanceries and their staffs', p.30.

³⁵ *MTS* 3 p.21; *OSS* Pt.7 p.157. The suffix is not always added, hence it doesn't necessarily hold true that all names *without* 'syn popov' are *not* clergy sons.

Library collection contains incomplete lists of ordinands in Moscow eparchy dating from the early 1640s to 1679, and although these lists are fragmentary, they provide a clue to the pattern of ordinations in and around the capital during those years (see fig.1).³⁶ Between 1640 and 1652 ordinands surnamed *syn popov* and *syn d'iakonov* make up a little more than half the total ordinations recorded, suggesting that at least half of all ordinands during this period may have been sons of clergy. However, using this criteria there appears to be a significant fall after this peak. There are no ordination records for the years 1653-57, but for the period 1658 to 1665 the number of ordinands specified as clergy sons has sharply declined. For example, in 1659 only one ordinand out of thirty was specified as a clergy son, and out of fifty-six ordinands listed in 1661, not one single name has the suffix *syn popov*.³⁷ From 1666 onwards the number of ordinands who are definitely clergy sons begins to grow again, returning to just over fifty percent of the total ordained in 1687.³⁸



³⁶ *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.1-900. Where names are given we can positively recognise ordinands who are clergy sons by the suffix 'syn popov' or 'syn d'iakonov', but we do not know the origins of men listed without any suffix. Ms.424 also lists 21 ordinations for the year 1646 but fails to supply their names.

³⁷ *Ibid*, nos.418-826.

³⁸ *Ibid*, nos.827-900; *SKE* pp.42-187; *MTS* 4 p.84.

What could account for the apparent hiatus in the number of clergy boys presenting for ordination in Moscow? Firstly, it must be emphasised that the records are so incomplete as to be possibly misleading. Moreover, clergy sons may simply not always have been designated as such, and certainly the lists do not show up ordinands who were the brothers, nephews or grandsons of clergymen. It is possible that official policy was discouraging the ordination of priests' sons, but this theory is extremely unlikely for reasons that will be discussed below. The most likely solution to the riddle lies in the fact that in 1654 the bubonic plague swept through Russia, decimating the population.³⁹ Local and foreign witnesses to the devastation observed that in Moscow, Kolomna and Kashir most of the clergy died, having contracted the plague by visiting the sick and burying plague victims, and a large proportion of priests who survived had to retire to monasteries because their wives died.⁴⁰ In Kazan twenty-two clergymen and their families died in July 1654 alone, and by August the governor was reporting that 'now there are few priests in Kazan churches, sire, and many priests died, and those who remain are ill'.⁴¹ In the aftermath of the plague, Patriarch Nikon ordained many new clerics to fill the empty places left by victims. Deacon Paul of Aleppo witnessed these events in the capital: 'We stayed over a year, and always we saw him ordaining priests and deacons. Bishops were also given permission to ordain. We too ordained many. They were all persons from the Patriarchal domain, bringing with them testimonials from relatives and friends and townsmen, that they were deserving to be admitted to holy orders'.⁴² With whole clergy families wiped out, new ordinands had to be drawn from a wider cross-section of society for a long time, thus many of the

³⁹ *DAI* 3 no.119 (1654).

⁴⁰ In Kolomna town the number of priests and deacons was reduced from fourteen to just two; in Moscow the staff of Annunciation cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin was reduced from eleven to three priests: Paul of Aleppo, pp.329-331, 346; *Gorod Kashin: Materialy dlia ego istorii*, ed. by I.Kunkino (M.1903) no.27; *DAI* 3 no.119 lvi (1654); *MTS* 3 p.51, 4 pp.1-3,97; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.147. For the period 1653-57, ms. no.424 provides only a long list of permits issued to widowed priests instead of ordinations: *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.280-417.

⁴¹ Paul of Aleppo, p.346; E.Malovyi, ed. *Drevniia gramoty i raznye dokumenty*, (Kazan,1902) pp.15-19 no.6.

⁴² Paul of Aleppo, pp.346,413.

ordinands in the decade after 1654 were from non-clerical origins, as synodal lists suggest.⁴³

A decade or so after the plague, the white clerical estate began to recover its hereditary aspect as sons and relatives of clergymen were again being ordained in large numbers, leaving little room for outsiders from non-clerical origins.⁴⁴ Out of ninety-one surviving documents relating to transfers and ordinations in Moscow eparchy between 1662 and 1699, 87% of nominees were from clerical families, -- 67% were sons and 20% were brothers, uncles, nephews or sons-in-law of clergymen. The hereditary nature of these livings can be seen by the fact that 44% of the ordinands were appointed to the same churches where their fathers had served (or were currently serving) as priests, and 12% were appointed to benefices in which their grandfathers had served as well. In contrast, only one of the listed ordinands was of non-clerical origin during this period.⁴⁵ A similar result is gained by a survey of 600 records in Vologda eparchial archives dealing with parish affairs in the seventeenth century. In almost a third of these documents we find evidence of clerical dynasties: either several members of a family all serving as clergymen, or sons and relatives succeeding to the benefice of a deceased or retired clergyman.⁴⁶ Of 119 nominations for ordination put forward by parishes and incumbents in Vologda and Belozero provinces during the time of Archbishops Simon and Gavril (1664-1707), 83% were relatives of clergymen, either sons, grandsons, brothers, nephews, uncles, cousins, or sons-in-law.⁴⁷ Three

⁴³ The same situation faced the Muscovite State Chancelleries. After plague decimated staff, new personnel had to be employed from non-chancellery families. Plavsic, 'Seventeenth-century Chancelleries,' p.28.

⁴⁴ It probably took nearly two decades for the clerical estate to recover its hereditary aspect in Moscow eparchy.

⁴⁵ *SKE* pp.42-187: these figures include nominations by parishes and priests, but exclude the accompanying job applications from d'iachoki, since the latter almost invariably omit family information. The solitary ordinand of non-clerical origin was the son of a peasant.

⁴⁶ *OSS* Pts.1-5,7-13 (Pt.6 deals only with monastic affairs). Of 732 records relating to parish priests, 132 dealing primarily with collection of episcopal fees have been excluded from this survey of elections, leaving 600 records.

⁴⁷ *OSS* Pts.1-5,7-13. These figures are first-time nominations for ordination to the

percent were third generation clergymen and in several cases candidates were fourth generation clerics, following in the footsteps of their great grandfathers.⁴⁸ The origins of sixteen (13%) of the candidates are not known, and only four candidates (3%) were definitely not from clerical families.⁴⁹ Sixty percent of records concerning clergy in Kholmogory eparchy mention kinship links between clerics.⁵⁰ Diocesan records from elsewhere in Russia are fragmentary, but those that exist support the above findings.

The high incidence of priests who inherited their positions from kinsmen was not a phenomenon that happened by accident, but by active promotion on the part of clergymen, with the connivance of parishes, and through indulgence of bishops. Priests installed their sons as d'iachki or ponomary, and then petitioned the prelate for their ordination when they were old enough.⁵¹ By claiming that they were old or infirm, clergymen were able to have their sons ordained as assistant priests even in parishes which normally could support only one priest.⁵² If he had no sons, a priest would commonly choose and train up a son-in-law to succeed him.⁵³ The efforts of incumbents on behalf of their relatives were of great significance in assisting young clerics to find a position,⁵⁴ but the advantage was mutual, for sons and sons-in-law

priesthood, but do not include transfers of previously-ordained priests and deacons, because transfers rarely contain information on family origins. Sixty-nine (58%) date from 1660-1699, the remainder are from the time of archbishop Gavril (1684-1707), but precise dates not always known.

⁴⁸ *OSS* Pt.3 p.92, Pt.7 pp.77,154, Pt.9 p.98 no.173, Pt.10 p.133 no.112.

⁴⁹ *OSS* Pt.7 p.155, Pt.9 pp.143,180, Pt.12 p.235.

⁵⁰ *RIB* 12 no.125 Ust.; *RIB* 14 nos.157,165,174,203,206,318,299,368; Veriuzhskii also found that in Kholmogory records 1685-98 minor clerics were most often sons of priests: Veriuzhskii, pp.188-199.

⁵¹ *RIB* 21 pp.1043, 1059, 1060; *RIB* 23, p.1060; *SIB* 108 no.8; K.P.Pobedonostsev, 'Istoriko-iuridicheskie akty,' *ChOISR* 1886 Bk.4 p.275 (1693); 'Tserkovnyia zemli v Rostovskom uezde XVII v.' *ChOISR* 1896 Bk.2 pp.22-23v (1629-31); *ChOISR* 1883 Bk 1 Smes', p.11. (1627).

⁵² *OSS* Pt.7 pp.66,77,78,149,153,156, Pt.12 pp.115,180; *SKE* pp.49,55,120.

⁵³ *RIB* 2 no.222; *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, p.250; *MTS* 2 p.215; *SKE* p.57 no.2, p.58 no.3, p.61 no.6, p.146; *OSS* Pt.3 p.52 no.89, Pt.8 p.38, Pt.9 p.97 no.84, Pt.10 p.124 no.98, Pt.10 p.182 no.183, Pt.11 p.196 no.180, Pt.12 p.113 no.120; *SIB* 108 no.8.

⁵⁴ Sons of deceased priests were sometimes ordained due to recommendation by a colleague of their father's: *SKE* p.55 no.20, p.56 no.21.

were expected to help the older priest and to provide for family dependants when he grew too old to work or died.⁵⁵ Whilst acknowledging the need for parish approval, the white clergy evidently considered that they had a birthright to be appointed to a benefice that had been held by a previous family member. Typical is the attitude of a d'iachok from Vodozhsk volost who petitioned for ordination on the grounds that 'the position at that church, lord archbishop of God, has been ours since time immemorial, our grandfather's and great grandfather's'.⁵⁶ By the last quarter of the century, the notion that benefices were an inheritable right had become so entrenched in the minds of clergymen that there were law suits between competing priests, who each backed their claims to a church job by producing evidence that their kinsman had once been priest at the disputed church.⁵⁷ Not surprisingly, the white clergy were most insistent in preserving family rights to churches that their ancestors had built or helped finance.⁵⁸ They regarded these positions as inheritable like *votchina*, which may be why priest Roman Vasil'ev of Novgorod complained to his bishop in 1690 against a deacon who was taking up an appointment at a church which Roman claimed was assigned (*zakrepleno*) to his sister. Roman demanded that the deacon pay half the church income to his sister for her maintenance and dowry (*na propitanie i na pridanoie*).⁵⁹ Even cathedral posts were being viewed by clergy as their family legacy by the end of the century. In 1697 a hegumen who had formerly been archpriest of Liven cathedral until widowed, protested to Metropolitan Tikhon that the new archpriest was not one of his relatives: 'I, your intercessor, have grown-up grandsons who are priests and d'iachki, and one of them could be in my place as archpriest'.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.8; OSS Pt.1 p.38 no.68, Pt.2 p.45 no.404, Pt.5 p.24 no.43, Pt.7 p.123, Pt.8 p.51, Pt.10 p.124 no.98; SKE pp.49,63,108,120.

⁵⁶ OSS Pt.10 p.133 no.112 (1693).

⁵⁷ OSS Pt.3 p.90; SKE pp.100-01 (1694).

⁵⁸ RIB 14 nos.157,165; DGPV 2 p.155; Veriuzhskii, pp.198-200.

⁵⁹ LZAK 14 p.93. In response to Roman's petition, the bishop ordered an inquiry but, as with so many 17th century cases, the outcome is unknown.

⁶⁰ SKE p.150 (1697).

The inheritance of benefices by priests' sons and relatives was made possible by the fact that parishioners preferred to elect a cleric they knew,⁶¹ and many of their petitions specifically ask for the ordination of their clergyman's offspring 'because he is a local man' (*starinnoi*).⁶² In a society without seminary education, sons of clergy were the best-prepared candidates for Church jobs, a fact which ordinary Muscovites recognised by electing them 'because he is very literate and is familiar with church work' (*gramote gorazde i tserkovnoi krug emu v obychei*), as one petition reads.⁶³ By no means all popovichi were nominated: there are documented cases of parishes rejecting a priest's son because he was a drunken lout, or choosing an outsider who was willing to accept lower remuneration terms.⁶⁴ Even so, Church records indicate that the majority of congregations showed remarkable loyalty to their clergy by nominating candidates who were 'of priestly birth' (*rodnogo popovo*).⁶⁵ When a clergyman with young children died or was forced to retire to a monastery after being widowed, it was not unusual for his parish to hire a temporary priest to serve until the deceased's son was old enough to be ordained.⁶⁶ If there were no eligible sons, the parish frequently elected his grandson, son-in-law, brother or nephew instead.⁶⁷ Most of our examples are from the last third of the century because of the paucity of earlier records, but documents from the first half of the century that have survived indicate that Muscovites had long recognised the hereditary rights of clergy families.⁶⁸ Peasants and townsfolk in Ustiug and Vologda eparchies were electing clergymen's sons and relatives to church jobs from the very first

⁶¹ *SKE*, pp.46,53,55,57,59,90; *OSS* Pt.7 p.123, Pt.8 p.51, Pt.10 p.183 no.186, Pt.11 p.192 no.174; *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 d.20.

⁶² *SKE* p.72 no.6, p.99 no.20, p.100 no.21, p.158 no.7; *RIB* 5 no.291.

⁶³ *OSS* Pt.11 p.194 no.178 (1672)

⁶⁴ *LZAK* 14 p.78; *SKE* p.186 no.18; *OSS* Pt.12 p.118, n.132; *RIB* 14 no.77 Ust.

⁶⁵ *OSS* Pt.3 p.67 no.124, Pt.7 p.60, Pt.9 pp.98-99 no.173, Pt.11 p.76 no.60, Pt.11 p.194 no.178, Pt.12 pp.188-89 no.307; *SKE* p.100 no.20. In contrast, applications from monasteries for the ordination of a black priest never referred to the candidate's parentage.

⁶⁶ *SKE* p.59 no.4, p.83 no.5, p.100-01, p.121 no.12; *OSS* Pt.3 p.55; Pt.11 p.191 no.172; see also chapter eight.

⁶⁷ *OSS* Pt.3 p.92; *SKE* p.67 no.11, p.49 no.12, p.62 no.6; p.70 no.3, p.80 no.2; *SIB* 109 no.11 (1689); *LZAK* 14 p.105.

⁶⁸ D'iachok posts were often inherited also: *Aiu* nos.285,302.

years of the century,⁶⁹ and by the 1650s parishioners were referring to a deceased priest's kin as his heirs (*naslediem*).⁷⁰

Bishops, like parishioners, consistently favoured petitions for the ordination of clergy sons. It has been suggested by some scholars that Muscovite prelates discouraged the white priesthood from assuming a hereditary nature and even condemned the practice of sons inheriting their father's benefices, but I believe this view is incorrect, stemming from a faulty interpretation of Church Council resolutions⁷¹ and from applying eighteenth-century concepts to seventeenth-century situations. Outspoken condemnation began to be voiced only from the 1720s,⁷² and not during the preceding century. The Stoglav Church Council of 1551 ruled that the son, brother or relative of a widowed clergyman should inherit his job,⁷³ and a century later the Church Council of 1666-67 endorsed this ruling by referring to clergy sons as 'heirs'. The Council forbade priests and parishes from selling church livings, but not from inheriting them: 'priests must diligently teach their children literacy and piety so that they will be worthy of the priesthood and heirs (*naslednitsy*) after them of the church and position.'⁷⁴ In theory, hierarchs of the Church may not have approved of hereditary priesthood as a *concept*, but in practice they upheld it, as the evidence of numerous petitions and ordinations in diocesan archives proves. Not only did they ordain an inordinate number

⁶⁹ *RIB* 14 nos.157,165 and *OSS* Pt.11 p.76 no.60. See also fn.26 above and *RIB* Vols.12,14 and 25, and *OSS* Pts.1-13.

⁷⁰ For example, one parish whose priest died childless wrote that 'he left no heir to his benefice': *OSS* Pt.11 p.76 no.60 (1659).

⁷¹ Vladimirskii-Budanov has claimed that the 1666-67 Moscow Church Council condemned the practice of clergy sons inheriting benefices, a view reiterated by G.Freeze. I believe this to be an incorrect interpretation: the Church Council's condemnation of the selling of Church positions was directed against simony, bribery, and the kind of trafficking in church livings discussed in chapter one. *PSZ* 1 no.412; *DAI* 5:102 p.473 art.30; M.Vladimirskii-Budanov, *Gosudarstvo i narodnoe obrazovanie*, pp.97-8; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.185.

⁷² Pososhkov, p.172; *Spiritual Regulation*, p.70; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.190-191.

⁷³ *AAE* 1 no.229. The proviso was added that the heir had to be literate and suitable.

⁷⁴ *PSZ* 1 no.412.

of clergy sons, but frequently we read of situations in which a prelate upheld a son's claim even if it required the dismissal of another incumbent to make way for the rightful heir, as it were.⁷⁵ Such cases occurred as early as 1626, when priest Il'ia of Nizhni Novgorod was able to petition his prelate for his deceased father's post at St. John's Church, as a result of which the priest holding that position was dismissed and Il'ia installed.⁷⁶ Candidates and their supporters were at pains to point out in their petitions for ordination that the nominee was a relative of the previous incumbent, or 'of ancient priestly lineage' (*iz veku popovskie porody*), knowing that this would further their cause with the bishop.⁷⁷ They judged correctly, for prelates recognised that by ordaining heirs, they reduced the number of clerical dependants who would otherwise be an embarrassment to the Church.⁷⁸ If he was not motivated by sympathy for his inferior clergy, a bishop was almost invariably motivated by the desire to reduce the number of petitioners and beggars at his door.⁷⁹ As the number of eligible clergy sons began to outnumber vacant church livings in central Russia by the last quarter of the seventeenth century, prelates were under increasing pressure to ordain family members to posts within the same church in order make the division of church land and income easier.⁸⁰

To a large degree, bishops probably viewed the ordination of clergy sons as necessary for the Church. Literacy was a canonical requirement for the priesthood, but in a society that was, in the words of Gary Marker, 'a profoundly illiterate society', there

⁷⁵ For example, see *RIB* 5 nos.292,372,375,376; *RIB* 12 no.105 Ust.; *OSS* Pt.2 p.45, Pt.7 pp.4,109-115; *SKE* p.186 no.18.

⁷⁶ *RIB* 2 no.222.

⁷⁷ *OSS* Pt.3 p.67 no.124, Pt.7 p.60, Pt.9 pp.98-99 no.173, Pt.11 p.76 no.60, Pt.11 p.194 no.178, Pt.12 pp.188-89 no.307; *RIB* 14 no.59 Ust.; *SKE* pp.100-01.

⁷⁸ On episcopal policies toward clerical widows and orphans, see chapter eight.

⁷⁹ In Vologda, for example, the archbishop ruled in favour of a deceased priest's family 'so that his holiness the archbishop will not be petitioned [again]...' *OSS* Pt.10 p.175 no.169. Eighteenth century bishops likewise ordained orphaned clergy sons in order to provide for their families: Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.194.

⁸⁰ Court cases did arise between family members over division of church land, but less often than between unrelated individuals: see chapter three.

were few eligible candidates other than children of clerics.⁸¹ Prelates knew that priests' sons were familiar with Church rules and rites, having helped their fathers since boyhood,⁸² and there were no doubts about their legal status, either, whereas bishops were greatly concerned that men from other social estates sometimes lied about their status to enter the clerical estate under false pretences.⁸³ The Church hierarchy were apprehensive that ordinands from non-clerical backgrounds were profaning the priesthood by 'being ordained as priests and deacons, not because of the priesthood, but because they do not want to be slaves and peasants', as the 1666-67 Council stated.⁸⁴ Prelates had good reason to worry: one provincial priest of non-clerical background candidly wrote in the 1680s that he decided to be a clergyman only because it was easier than agricultural work or trade.⁸⁵ The bishops' anxieties were to a large extent generated by the State's insistence that serfs and men of tax-paying status (*tiaglo*) should not evade their duties by becoming priests. Indeed, it was the government's rather than the Church's interests that were most threatened by this sort of status-changing, and by 1666-67 the Church had to be seen to support the Crown in this matter.⁸⁶

The Muscovite government actively encouraged sons to follow their fathers into trades. With State co-operation, chancellery clerks found jobs for their sons and relatives in the same office, just as priests found jobs for their sons in the same church.⁸⁷ Nonetheless, this kind of nepotism, as Borivoj Plavsic calls it,⁸⁸

⁸¹ G.Marker, 'Literacy and Literacy Texts in Muscovy', *SR*, 49 pp.74-88.

⁸² *RIB* 23 pp.1043,1059-60.

⁸³ *PSZ* 1 no.412 p.704.

⁸⁴ *PDR* 22 pp.63,69; *PSZ* 1 no.412 p.704; *PSZ* 5 no.2985; *DAI* 5 no.102 p.490.

⁸⁵ *Statir*, no.411, p.630.

⁸⁶ The government severely restricted social mobility of tax-payers and serfs: *AIuB* 2 no.253; *ChOIDR* 1882 Bk.1 Smes', p.12; *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.1-111.

⁸⁷ The monopoly of Chancellery families in State offices was protected by the government: outsiders were only admitted into the civil service when there was a shortage, as happened after the plague. Plavsic, 'Seventeenth-century Chanceries,' p.28.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p.28.

had its drawbacks within the Church. Family dynasties entrenched in parishes or cathedrals could become power blocs capable of concealing corruption and immorality, or opposing episcopal authority.⁸⁹ Episcopal secretary Boris was able to plunder the Suzdal cathedral treasury with impunity in 1664 because he was protected by his kinsmen, the archpriest and kliuchar', and his two brothers on the bishop's staff.⁹⁰ Priest Grigorei of Resurrection church in Shuia was investigated in 1677 for irregularities connected with the appointments of his son as kliuchar' and his nephew as d'iachok,⁹¹ and in 1696 Archpriest Prokofei of Shenkursk cathedral was reprimanded after his son was found guilty of embezzling funds.⁹² When one family had a monopoly on a parish, the priest and his relatives could gang up to deprive an outsider of his share of church revenue. This happened in Podkubensk volost' in the 1650s when a priest and ponomar', who were kinsmen, carried out a systematic campaign of terror to drive out their colleague, priest Anfinogen, and appropriate his land.⁹³ Similar incidents were not uncommon, but of more concern to authorities of Church and State was the fact that armed clerical clans could hold out against bailiffs who had been sent to arrest a family member. At White Lake in Northern Russia, a priest was fiercely defended by his Karelian kinsmen when an episcopal agent came to dismiss him in 1696; likewise, a clergy family in Riazan eparchy was able to withstand the local governor's efforts to arrest one of their number in 1692-93.⁹⁴ The strength of these clans could be reinforced through marriage alliances with other clergy families. Throughout the century there is evidence of a high degree of clerical intermarriage, and this trend appears to have increased as the century progressed, with some families marrying several daughters to popovichi.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ *RIB* 14 no.205 Khol.; *OSS* Pt.8 p.82-4; 'O nepravdakh rechakh', pp.2-3.

⁹⁰ *AMG* 3 no.665 (1664).

⁹¹ Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, Prilozhenie no.55 (1677).

⁹² *RIB* 14 no.203 Khol. Similar cases are found in *RIB* 14 nos.30,206 Ust.; *OSS* Pt.4 p.48.

⁹³ *OSS* Pt.13 p.60. Other cases like it are *OSS* Pt.12 pp.59,65,118.

⁹⁴ *RIB* 5 no.391; *LZAK* 5 Pt.1-IV pp.30-130.

⁹⁵ For examples of inter-clergy marriages see *Tobol'skii arkhieiskii dom v XVII veke*, ed. by N.N.Pokrovskii (Novosibirsk, 1994) 4 p.206 no.80; *SKE* pp.57-58,146; *OSS*

Not all ordinands were priests' sons, and not all clergy sons were ordained, but there can be no doubt that seventeenth-century Muscovites recognised a hereditary aspect to the white priesthood. From the earliest years of the seventeenth century, clergy sons and relatives had privileged access to clerical positions. Although the demographic decline caused by the Great Plague in 1654 necessitated the ordination of many priests from non-clerical backgrounds for a decade or more, by the 1680s clergymen again viewed the inheritance of church livings as their birthright, albeit by custom rather than by law. These attitudes were underpinned by the approval of Muscovite society: with remarkable frequency parishioners elected priests' sons and grandsons, and bishops ordained the scions of clergy families who met canonical criteria. Only in the eighteenth century did opposition to the inheritance of benefices surface, as reformers strove to raise clerical standards through education. Pososhkov argued that candidates should only be ordained because they were worthy of the priesthood, not just because they were related to a priest,⁹⁶ and Peter the Great attempted to reduce the incidence of clerical dynasties dominating parishes. The Spiritual Regulation of April 1722 declared that 'in many churches a priest does not accept outsiders among the churchmen, but fills the vacancies of that office with his sons and kinsmen...This is especially harmful because it is thereby easier for a priest to act unrestrainedly, to be unconcerned with church ritual and order, and to conceal schismatics...Bishops must most zealously eliminate this evil.'⁹⁷ Despite the efforts of synod, bishops were unable to eliminate the 'evil', and by the nineteenth-century the hereditary nature of the white clergy was widely regarded as 'one of the plagues of the Russian Church'.⁹⁸

Pt.7 p.39 no.36, Pt.8 p.93 no.140, Pt.9 pp.97,158, Pt.10 pp.86,124,162-3; Potter, 'The Russian Church', pp. 48-9; *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, p.250.

⁹⁶ Pososhkov, p.172.

⁹⁷ *Spiritual Regulation*, p.70; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.188-191.

⁹⁸ J.Gagarin, *The Russian Clergy* (London,1972) p.17, citing the Moscow Gazette, 1860s. This harsh judgement was probably based on the type of problems discussed on pp.61-62, but was nonetheless somewhat unjust.

Chapter Three

The Priest and His Parish

Part One: Clerical livelihood

'The clergy have no stipend from the Sovereign, they receive no offerings from the laity, and God knows how they should subsist.'

Ivan Pososhkov (b.1652)¹

The Muscovite parish clergy were not centrally funded by either Church or State, nor were they paid an obligatory tithe by parishioners, as in the English church during the seventeenth century.² Instead, the majority of parish priests were dependent for their livelihood on their congregation's willingness to pay for services. Under this system, a clergyman's prosperity was directly affected by the size of his parish, the generosity of its inhabitants, and the competition he faced from other clergy, -- factors which differed markedly from parish to parish. As late as May 1784 the Russian government could not obtain comprehensive data on clerical income because, Synod reported, 'no data were presently available and it was impossible to compile full data, for each church was unique'.³ Scholars of Muscovite history over the past century and a half have likewise concluded that no comprehensive statistics are possible on the subject of clerical remuneration or parish size due to variations between churches and the paucity of data.⁴ However, sufficient information exists to allow us to draw tentative conclusions

¹ Ivan Pososhkov, *Book of Poverty and Wealth*, pp.6,174. Pososhkov completed this work in 1724.

² Only cathedrals and endowed churches received State subsidies. Endowed churches are discussed on pages 76-77, cathedrals in chapter five. On remuneration in the English church see A.Tindal Hart, *Clergy and Society, 1600-1800*, (London,1968) and R.O'Day, *The English Clergy 1558-1642*, (Leicester,1979).

³ Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.119.

⁴ A.Kamkin, *Pravoslavnaia tserkov' na severe Rossii*, (Vologda, 1992) p.126; *PDR* 22 p.62; Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council and the Parish Priests', *RH*, 7 nos 1-2, 1980, p.83; G.Liubimov, *Istoricheskoe obozrenie sposobov soderzhaniia dukhovenstva*, pp.134-35; M.Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe samoupravlenie na Russkom Severe v XVII*, (M.1909-12) 2 pp.37-67.

on the number of clergy and households there were in Russian parishes, to identify the sources of clerical income, and to analyse the results of this system of remuneration. Cathedral clergy will be considered separately in chapter five.

Parish staff and size

After the decimation of the 1654 plague, the parish clergy's numbers appear to have recovered from the mid-1660s, and by the end of the century there were more clergymen than vacant benefices in the well-populated central regions of Russia.⁵ However, the number of priests serving in each parish did not proliferate as alarmingly as Church historians have sometimes claimed. Znamenskii and Pokrovskii, for instance, misleadingly cite instances of six or eight priests serving at one church as if these were typical,⁶ and other scholars follow suit, quoting these examples as the norm.⁷ In fact, such staff levels were exceptional for parish churches.⁸ Whilst cathedrals and monasteries frequently had large clerical staffs, the majority of parish churches had only one or two priests. For example, episcopal surveys show that in provincial towns in Moscow eparchy the one-priest church was predominant. Twenty-eight churches in Chern' town and district were surveyed in 1689, of which seventeen churches had one priest, six churches had two priests, two had three priests, and the remaining three had no resident priest. In Liven, there were forty-one churches, of which thirty-eight had one priest, and only two churches had two priests. All the churches in Chernavsk had one priest only (see tables 1-3 on pages 73-75).⁹ Documents from other towns and

⁵ The clerical unemployment problem is discussed in chapter six.

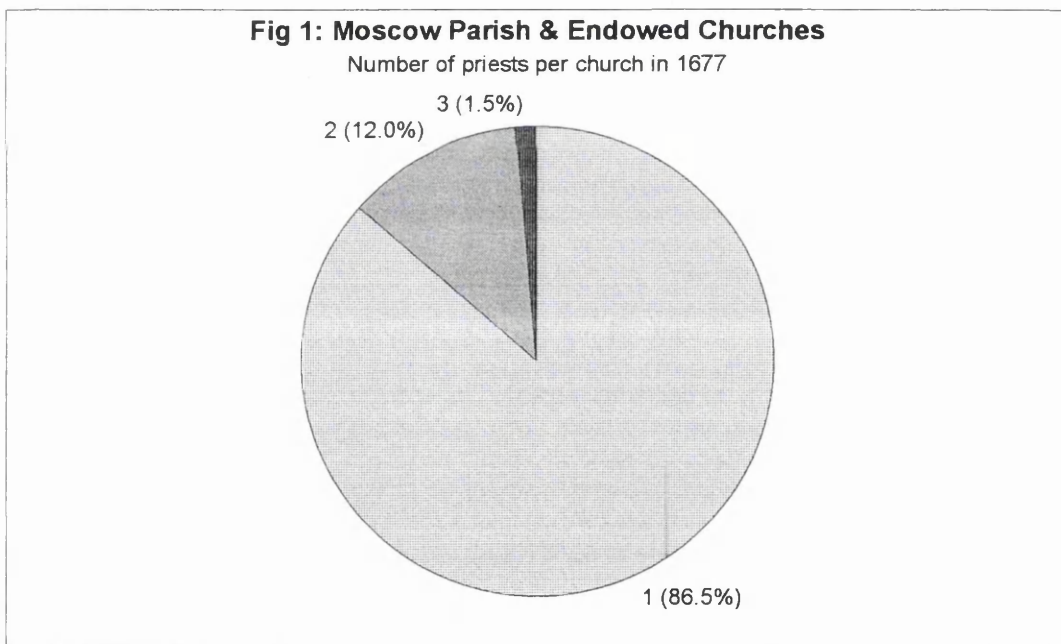
⁶ *PDR* 21 pp.136-37, *PDR* 22 pp.67-68, and S.P.Znamenskii, *Rukovodstvo k russkoi tserkovnoi istorii*, (Kazan,1870) p.230; Pokrovskii. *Ruskiia Eparkhii*, 1 no.357.

⁷ G.Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, pp.109-10; S.Smirnov *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, (M.1914) p.34; *Pravoslavnaia bogoslovskaia entsiklopediia*, (Spb.1904) 5 p.106.

⁸ As evidence of high clerical staff levels, historians sometimes quote a patriarchal gramota of 20 March 1650 listing 13 churches with multiple clergy, most of which had 2 or 3 priests, but three of which had 4,6 and 8 priests respectively. However, the Patriarch's words imply that these 13 are the total number of churches with multiple priests in Iaropolchesk volost'; other churches in the volost' were evidently staffed by one priest only. Moreover, some of the churches listed may be district cathedrals or monastic churches, which normally had larger staffs: *AAE* 4 no.326.

⁹ *SKE* pp.229-274.

villages in Moscow eparchy dating from 1662-1699 support these findings. We have staff information on ninety-one churches, of which 52% had one priest, 31% had two priests, 3% had three priests, and only one had four priests. A further 12% of churches were temporarily over-staffed, in almost all cases due to family members being ordained and later transferring.¹⁰ In Moscow town itself the results are similar. Excluding cathedrals and palace churches, there were approximately 197 parish and endowed churches in Moscow in 1677, the majority (87%) of which were staffed by only one priest, whilst considerably fewer (12%) had two priests, and a mere three churches had three priests (see fig.1). Most churches employed at least one other junior cleric to assist the priest (a deacon, d'iachok and/or ponomar'), but surprisingly 18% of Moscow churches employed only one solitary priest with no assistant at all.¹¹



Although comprehensive data for most other regions of Russia is lacking, records from northern Russia and Siberia suggest similar results to those in the central regions. Each

¹⁰ *SKE* pp.42-187.

¹¹ *DAI* 9 no.107. Most Moscow churches also employed a prosfirnitsa to bake the communion bread. The total number of churches and cathedrals in Moscow, including the Kremlin, was about 242 in 1658: *Russkie eparkhii*, 1 pp.234-5,174-5.

of the nine Tobol'sk parish churches receiving royal stipends in 1696 had only one priest, assisted by one d'iachok and one ponomar. Only monastic or cathedral churches had two priests.¹² In Vologda eparchy there were 582 churches in 1691, the majority of which were served by one priest, according to diocesan records dating from 1618 to 1707,¹³ and churches in the northern eparchies of Kholmogory and Ustiug appear to have had only one priest in most cases.¹⁴ Information on other eparchies is fragmentary, and there is no definitive data on the total number of clergymen serving in seventeenth-century Muscovy, but the figures we have indicate that the norm in most churches was one or two priests, and a similar number of clerics in minor orders, which is considerably fewer than some scholars have suggested.

During the second half of the seventeenth century, parish applications for ordinations had to state how many priest-places the church had. Some churches had official sanction for just one priest (*odno mesto popovskoe*), others were two-priest churches (*mesto dvoepopskoe*), less often there were three priest-places (*tri mesta popovskikh*), and very rarely four.¹⁵ Prelates were cautious about ordaining additional priests beyond the quota, but occasionally we find cases of over-staffed churches in central Russia.¹⁶ In almost all these instances the surplus priest was a kinsman of the first.¹⁷ As we have previously noted, prelates were generally sympathetic to requests from priests for the ordination of their sons, especially if an elderly clergyman needed assistance, and parishioners were often happy to support the application, but the

¹² *Tobol'sk: Materialy dlia istorii goroda XVII i XVIII stoletii*, (M.1885) p.7.

¹³ Pokrovskii, *Russkie eparkhii*, 1 p.308; OSS Pts.1-5,7-13. Vologda diocesan records mention only 54 churches (7% of total) with two priests, and only one with three priests.

¹⁴ *RIB* vols.12,14,25; Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 p.25.

¹⁵ One-priest churches: *SKE* p.109 no.4, p.154 no.3, 156 no.5, p.160 no.9, two-priest churches: *SKE* p.114, p.161 no.11, p.163 no.1. Three priest places: *SKE* p.54 no.19, p.65 no.9, p.107 no.24. Four priest-places: *SKE* p.73 no.7.

¹⁶ *SKE* p.42 no.1, p.44 no.4, p.71 no.4, p.93 no.5, p.134 no.2, p.49 no.12, p.95 no.8, p.135 no.3.

¹⁷ OSS Pt.5 p.45,72,78, Pt.10 p.180, Pt.11 p.205, Pt.3 pp.48, 51, 68, 57, Pt.7 pp.65,66,77,78,149,153,156,137, Pt.12 pp.115, 121,146,236,237,239 297,239 343. *SKE* p.152 no.2, p.160 no.9, p.50 no.12.

appointment of additional clergy caused an economic strain on parish resources. Very frequently one of the clerics was eventually forced out by his colleagues.¹⁸ When priest Nikita, one of two priests at St.Piatnitsa's, became critically ill in 1683, his son Parfen was ordained to take his place. Nikita recovered and the parish could not support three priests, so Parfen had to transfer elsewhere.¹⁹ Fortunately the church-building boom of the seventeenth century provided job opportunities for some of these displaced clerics.²⁰ Prelates were usually willing to ordain an additional clergyman to a parish that was large numerically or geographically, at the request of parishioners. Episcopal offices received numerous petitions from parishes asking for two priests because 'it is impossible for us to manage without a second priest in the parish', or 'our parish, lord, is spread out over a large distance'.²¹ Even so, the number of churches with two priests appears to have been considerably less than churches with only one priest, and only rarely do we find a church with three or more priests.²² In contrast to episcopal cathedrals which could support several priests, few parishes could support more than two. On the contrary, it is not unusual to find requests from parishes which had been without any priest at all for over a year.²³

Likewise, few churches could support more than two clerics in minor orders. The average number of prichetniki serving in each church appears to have been between one and three, and even in relatively wealthy Moscow, fifty percent of all parish and endowed churches in 1677 employed only one assistant cleric (either a deacon,

¹⁸ *SKE*, pp.42,44, p.48 no.9, 49 no.12, p. 53 no.17, p.93 no.5, pp.108-111 nos.4,5, p.95 no.8, p.134 no.2.

¹⁹ *SKE* p.135-6 no.3 (1685).

²⁰ Diocesan registers contain many petitions asking for the appointment of priests to newly-built churches in central Russia during the 1680s and 90s: *SKE* pp.52,60,70,71, 91,117,121,134,136,140,149,180. Between 1628 and 1658 the patriarchal oblast grew from 2580 to 3651 churches: Pokrovskii, *Russkie eparkhii*, 1 pp.174-75,234-35.

²¹ *SKE* p.113 no. 4, p.159 no.8, p.115 no.5, p.116 no.6, p.152 no.2; *OSS* Pt. 7 p.159; *APS* no.1 (1646).

²² See footnote 9 above.

²³ *OSS* Pt. 11 p.190 no.170, Pt.11 p.202 no.192; *SKE* p.56 no.1, p.42 no.1, p.44 no.4, p.59 no.4.

d'iachok or ponomar'), whilst nearly a fifth employed none at all.²⁴ For many provincial churches, though, it is impossible to assess the number of prichetniki accurately because minor clerics frequently lived with the priest, in which case they did not show up in official censuses or tax registers.²⁵ Furthermore, when clergymen within the same family were willing to share the available resources between themselves, the number of d'iachki and ponomary could be higher than the average. It was very common for priests to install their sons and relatives as minor clerics, and all live together in one house, especially as bishops did not usually charge the usual d'iachok appointment fee for sons and nephews who lived in the same abode as the priest.²⁶ Prelates did not object to the prevalent practice of clergymen sharing their allotments with kin, but if a relative was employed as a d'iachok he had to comply with Church rules on marriage and literacy.²⁷ In addition to sons who were ordained to holy orders or minor orders, unordained clergy sons helped in the parish as acolytes, swelling the number of church dependants in each parish. Still, parish staffs may not have been perceived as unduly excessive until the end of the century, judging by Synod's declaration in 1722 that *after 1700 bishops were ordaining priests in excess of the number of clergy recorded in 'old census books and ancient records'*.²⁸ By the turn of the century, however, the number of prichetniki had multiplied sufficiently to draw Peter the Great's attention. More to the point, Peter viewed minor clerics as a potential source of manpower for the State, hence he ruled that each parish should have no more than one priest and two d'iachki, and conscripted the rest.²⁹

²⁴ This statistic excludes Kremlin palace churches and is based on *DAI* 9 no.102.

²⁵ Even when land and tax registers (*pistsovye and dozornye knigi*) record the number of clergy houses in a locality, they do not mention how many clergymen actually lived in one household.

²⁶ *SKE* p.87 no.11, p.137 no.5, p.159 no.8 (1680s); A.Titov, 'Iosif arkhiepiskop kolomenskii', *ChOIDR* 1911 Bk.3 Vol.238 p.56: In 1675 Kolomna clergy complained that archbishop Iosif was charging them fees for sons who lived with them.

²⁷ *OSS* Pt.3 p.43, Pt.9 p.120 no.100, Pt.10 p.82 no.183, Pt.13 p.60.

²⁸ Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.112-114.

²⁹ Hughes, *Peter the Great*, p. 347; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.114. Peter I also ruled that priests could not install more than one son as a minor cleric.

If church staff size on its own was not a problem, it became one if the parish size was insufficient to support all the clergy. There are very few reliable statistics on parish size in seventeenth-century Muscovy, but population estimates indicate that the national average was one church for every 700-1000 persons in Russia in 1650.³⁰ From these figures it can be seen that not everyone went to church on Sundays, but not all the tsar's subjects were Orthodox Russians, in any case.³¹ Unfortunately, such estimates are of little use in calculating the actual size of individual parishes because there was no such thing as a typical parish in Muscovy. The number of households varied greatly from church to church, even within the same town, as can be seen from tables 1, 2 and 3 (pages 73-75). Parishes in the Moscow eparchy districts of Chern', Liven and Chernavsk in 1689 ranged in size from as small as seven households to as large as 219 homes. Although the average two-priest church in these towns had more parishioners than one-priest churches (103 homes compared to 57 homes), this was not invariably the case. Archangel church in Zatrutskoe had one priest serving a parish of 117 families, from whom he might expect to earn a comfortable living, whilst the two priests who ministered at Devich'e church had to share the income from only twenty-seven families. Parishes in Liven had an average of sixty-nine homes per church, considerably larger than the Chern' and Chernavsk averages of forty-four and forty-five families per church respectively.³²

Rural priests could find themselves with many more parishioners than their urban colleagues. Viatka district, for instance, in 1680 had on average one priest and one d'iachok per 97 households, whereas in Viatka town there were one priest and one

³⁰ The population of Muscovy in 1650 has been estimated at 10 million, and the number of tax-paying churches has been calculated at about 10,000, a figure which may perhaps be increased by a quarter if we include non-taxed churches and cathedrals. G. Vernadsky, *A History of Russia*, 5, The Tsardom of Muscovy 1547-1682, Pt.2, (New Haven, 1969) p.746; A. Preobrazhensky, ed. *The Russian Orthodox Church*, (M. 1988) p.83; Pokrovskii, *Russkie eparkhii*, 2 p.28 no.1.

³¹ In contrast, the ratio in England in 1990 was one church per 6,000 people: *Church of England Year Book*, (London, 1993), pp.166,171.

³² *SKE* pp.229-274.

d'iachok per 24 households.³³ Sazhin village in central Russia had two priests serving 300 homes, and St.George's pogost had three priests serving 164 families, with responsibilities extending to 520 families in surrounding hamlets.³⁴ Rural parishes in the north of Russia and Siberia were often sparsely-populated, but extending over vast areas. In Shenkursk uezd in the North there were only two priests serving 207 homes in 1646, many of which were scattered far from the churches and completely cut off from them for much of the year.³⁵ Hamlets in the huge Tobol'sk hinterland, excluding the town itself, were served by only two churches: Transfiguration, which served all the hamlets to the north of Tobol'sk, and Nativity for all the hamlets to the south.³⁶ According to the estimate of P.A.Slovtsov there were a hundred married clergymen and 13,700 laymen in Asiatic Russia in 1622, which was approximately one priest for 274 families, assuming that roughly half the clergy total were in major orders and half in minor orders.³⁷ In reality, however, most of Siberia's clergy were clustered in the main towns, although even there parish priests rarely had less than eighty, and usually over a hundred, families in their care.³⁸ As a result of the shortage of priests and the vast distances between churches, a large proportion of the Russian population in Siberia and the North relied on the ministrations of itinerant chapel priests, and many people were without religious services at all.³⁹

Size was not necessarily indicative of wealth, however. Some parishes consisted of three hundred or more families, but if populated by poor peasants, the clergy could be

³³ That is, 199 clergy homes and 9716 lay homes in the uezd, 98 clergy homes and 1162 lay homes in the town. The urban figures probably include Viatka cathedral, which will have had several clergy on its staff: *DAI* 8 no.40 (1678-1681) pp.132-134.

³⁴ *SKE* p.58 no.2; *AIuB* 2 no.139 iv (1671).

³⁵ *ASP*, no.1.

³⁶ P.N.Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri i byt eia pervykh nasel'nikov*, (Khar'kov,1889), pp.114-115.

³⁷ P.A.Slovtsov, *Istoricheskoe obozrenie Sibiri s 1585 do 1742*, (M.1838) 1 pp.148-9.

³⁸ Tax registers for 1624, in Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.22-3,30,35,63,66,76, 87,94, 106-110,114-115,149,150,163,168.

³⁹ *AIuB* no.192 (1611); Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.286-298; 'A report from the voevoda of Tobol'sk' (31 Jan.1623), *Russia's Conquest of Siberia*, ed. B.Dmytryshyn (Oregon,1985) pp.107-114. On itinerant chapel priests, see chapter six.

as destitute as their parishioners. Conversely, a small parish was not necessarily a poor one: whole teams of clergy were sometimes maintained by a single wealthy patron.⁴⁰ The number of homes in a parish could decrease dramatically due to famine, plague, or military call-up, resulting in the impoverishment of the clergy.⁴¹ Destitution forced priests of Iur'evits-Povol'skii to petition the Patriarch for financial help because in the 1650s 'there was plague in all rural parishes, and many parishioners, townspeople and peasants, died to a man, and others left due to harvest failure and poverty, without trace, and because of that the churches are impoverished and fall into heavy debt'.⁴² In some cases, priests were left with no parishioners at all.⁴³ Although the church-building activity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries provided additional jobs for priests, its resulting division of parishes was a further cause of clerical pauperisation.⁴⁴ When new churches were built, pre-existing churches lost a proportion of the households on whom they had depended for income, sometimes leading to bitter disputes.⁴⁵ This happened in Ustiug uezd in 1682 after Grigorii Mylnikov, a landowner and former parishioner of the Church of Tsar Constantine, built a new church. The clergy of Tsar Constantine Church began to suffer a severe depletion in their income when a large number of local families, who had up until this time attended the parish church, began to go to the new church. After a lengthy court battle the parish was divided in half and each church was awarded fifty households, a less than satisfactory settlement for the parish clergy.⁴⁶ Although the Church hierarchy recognised that the division of parishes caused problems, the situation remained unchanged until the following century. Peter the Great forbade the construction of new churches without

⁴⁰ The Strogonovs were generous patrons in northern Russia: Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 1 p.64; *Statir*, pp.629-633.

⁴¹ Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.59; *SKE* p.45 no.5 (1678) pp.256,268; *Materialy dlia istorii Vladimirskoi eparkhii*, 1 p.174 (1688/9).

⁴² Pokrovskii, *Russkie eparkhii*, 1 p.352.

⁴³ *SKE* p.45 n.5 (1678); *OSS* Pt.10 p.160 no.146 (1698); *PDR* 22 pp.65-66.

⁴⁴ Giles Fletcher noticed the harmful effects of parish division in the late 16th century: *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, p.86. On new churches, see footnote 20.

⁴⁵ *SKE* p.96 no.9; N.A.Solov'ev, *ChOIDR* (1896) Bk.3 p.107-113.

⁴⁶ *RIB* 14 no.65 Ust.(1682).

royal approval from 1714 and ordered parish size to be restricted to a minimum of 100 households in 1722, -- for the purpose of diverting manpower and resources for the building of St.Petersburg and the war effort, not for the benefit of the clergy, -- but it was not until the 1780s that the combined efforts of Church and State succeeded in exerting a greater control over parish size.⁴⁷

Table 1: Homes, clergy and church land (in chetverti) per parish: Chernavsk town and district, Moscow eparchy, 1689.

church	homes	priests	di'achki	fields	meadows
Alamtso	16	1		0	0
Borok	21	1		0	0
Chemako	25	1		0	0
Iakovlevo	27	1		20	0
Zapolnoe Terb.	31	1		0	0
St.Nicholas,Chernavsk	35	1		20	0
Krasnoe Poliano	38	1		0	0
St.Sergius	41	1		0	0
St.Piatnitsa,Chernavsk	46	1		20	0
St.Nikita,Chernavsk	51	1			
Vishnego	60	1	1	0	0
Dormition, Chernavsk	67	1		20	0
Terbunovo	71	1		0	0
Intercession cathedral	99	1	1	0	0
total	628	14			

Figures based on statements by priests: Saraiskaia i krutitskaia eparkhii, ChOidr Vol.203 pp.229-74. NB. It was not unusual for two neighbouring churches to have the same name.

⁴⁷ Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.112-116. In 1770 Synod ruled that city parishes must have at least 20 households, rural parishes at least 40; by 1783 these rules had taken effect.

Table 2: Homes, clergy and church land (in chetverti) per parish: Chern' town and district, Moscow eparchy, 1689.

Church	homes	priests	di'achki	fields	meadows
Bortnogo	0	0	2	20	0
Ploskoe	11	0	1	0	0
St.Nicholas, Chern'	18	0	2	20	0
Repnoe	7	1	2	20	25
Intercession, Chern'	18	1		20	0
Holy Cross, Chern'	31	1	1	30	0
Spasskoe	31	1	1	0	0
Nicol'skoe	31	1		10	0
Chemousovo	32	1	2	20	0
Starogo Roskatso	38	1	1	20	0
Ivanovskoe	41	1		0	0
Dupen	43	1	2	20	0
Pokrovskoe	49	1	1	0	0
Troetskoe	50	1	1	20	0
Znamenskoe	51	1		0	0
Transfiguration, Spaskoe	54	1	1	20	0
Lipits	57	1	1	20	0
Rozhdestvenskoe	57	1	1	0	0
Vedenskii, Gorok	59	1		20	0
Bogoroditskoe	73	1		0	0
sub-total	722	17	19	260	25
Devich'e	27	2	3	20	0
Arkhangel'skoe	59	2	1	20	10
Nicol'skoe Vel'i	78	2	0	20	0
Skarodnovo	94	2	2	20	0
Poliano	120	2	2	20	0
Saviour, Spasskoe	152	2		0	0
sub-total	530	12	5	100	10
Ershovo	116	3		20	0
Raevo	170	3	1	20	0
sub-total	286	6	1	40	0
total	1538	35			

Figures based on statements by priests: Saraiskaia i krutitskaia eparkhii, ChOidr Vol.203 pp.229-74. NB. It was not unusual for two neighbouring churches to have the same name.

CLERICAL LIVELIHOOD

Table 3: Homes, clergy and church land (in chetverti) per parish: Liven town and district, Moscow eparchy, 1689.

Church	homes	priests	d'iachki	fields	meadows
Trinity cathedral, Liven	10	1		0	0
Dormition, Krasnoe	15	1		20	0
St.George, Zatrutskoe	30	1		0	0
Archangel, Serbolovo	30	1	1	0	0
Transfig, Serbolovo	30	1		0	0
St.Dmitrii, Zatrut.	30	1		0	0
St.George, Kras.stan	30	1		20	20
Ascension, Zatrutskoe	33	1	1	0	0
Archangel, Serbolovo	36	1		0	0
St.Dmitrii, Liven	40	1	3	20	0
Archangel, Krasnoe	45	1		20	0
Epiphany, Serbolovo	47	1	1	20	0
Cosmas, Zatrutskoe	48	1		0	0
Intercession, Zatrutsk.	49	1		1	5
Serbolovo	50	1		20	0
St.Nikita, Serbolovo	55	1		20	0
St.Dmitrii, Zatrutskoe	57	1		0	0
St.Nicholas, Zatrut.	62	1		20	0
St.George, Krasnoe	64	1	1	0	0
Dormition, Liven	66	1	2	20	10
Epiphany, Zatr.	67	1		0	0
St.Dmitrii, Zatrutskoe	68	1		0	0
Intercession, Liven	70	1	1	10	20
Archangel, Zatr.	70	1		20	20
Mokretskoe	72	1		0	0
Epiphany, Zatrutskoe	77	1		20	15
St.Nikita, Serbol.stan	86	1	1	0	0
Archangel, Krasnoe	90	1		20	20
Saviour, Serbolovo	90	1		50	0
St.Paraskeva, Krasnoe	92	1	3	20	0
St.George, Serbolovo	102	1	2	25	5
St.Nicholas, Krasnoe	104	1	2	110	0
Nativity, Mokretskoe	110	1		0	0
St.George, Liven	114	1	1	20	20
Presentation, Mokretsk	115	1	1	0	0
Archangel, Zatrutskoe	117	1		20	20
Intercession, Zatr.	119	1			
Piatnitsa, Liven	219	1		20	0
sub-total	2609	38			
St.Nicholas, Liven	125	2	2	0	0
St.Nicholas posad	165	2	3	20	40
sub-total	290	4			
total	2899	42			

Figures based on statements by priests: Saraiskaia i krutitskaia eparkhii, ChOIDR Vol.203 pp.229-74.
 NB. It was not unusual for two neighbouring churches to have the same name.

Remuneration

The Muscovite government was generous in its financial support for monastic foundations but barely ten percent of the white clergy received State support (*ruga*), the majority of whom served in cathedrals.⁴⁸ There were also a relatively small number of churches which were maintained by the Crown, whilst being in every other respect like ordinary parish churches. Most of these endowed churches were located in the central provinces of Russia or in Siberia. Throughout the century the government tried to induce clergy to move to the newly-colonised territories in the east by promising stipends, and by 1683 there were approximately 150 endowed Siberian churches.⁴⁹ Parish priests in Tobol'sk, the episcopal capital of Siberia, received between five and eight roubles as well as about ten chetverti (approximately 1263.9 pounds) of grain annually,⁵⁰ which was somewhat less than cathedral priests were paid, but similar to the stipends which the government paid to ordinary Siberian settlers and soldiers during the first half of the century.⁵¹ Deacons and d'iachki were paid approximately half the amount paid to a priest, and ponomary received a little less than a d'iachok. However, inflation in Siberia meant that salaries could quickly lose their value, and the clergy did not get the pay rises that certain other sectors of society received.⁵² The

⁴⁸ Kotoshikhin claimed there were 1500 endowed churches in the mid-17th century, which Freeze estimates was 15-20% of all Russian churches, but I would agree with Kollman that this figure is possibly too high, and almost certainly includes cathedrals and side-chapels, which were counted as separate units. A closer scrutiny of Russia's voluminous State and patriarchal archives may shed more light on this subject and on the 17th century clerical economy in general, which deserves more research than there is space for here. G.Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.265, fn.11; Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council and the Parish Priests', *RH* 7 p.84.

⁴⁹ This estimate excludes monastic churches: Pokrovskii, *Russkie eparkhii*, 1 p.521.

⁵⁰ The Russian diet was based on rye grain, and a 10-chet. grain allowance would have provided a clergy family with about a pound of bread per person each day. For more information on the Muscovite diet and average Russian grain allowances and norms, see R.Smith and D.Christian, *Bread and Salt*, (Cambridge, 1994) pp.20-23,255-57.

⁵¹ In 1600 the Turin priest was paid 8 roubles and 7 chet. grain. In the 1630s, the State paid its Siberian settlers the following annual stipends: cathedral priests 10 r. and 26 chet. grain, archpriests 25 r. 60 chet. grain; captains 25 r., 50 chet. grain; ordinary soldiers and strel'tsy 5 r., 9 chet. grain. Butskinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.99,108,186,248; G.F.Müller *Istoriia Sibiri*, (M.1937) Vol.1 pp.388-89 (1600), Vol.2 p.182 (1604); *Tobol'sk. Materialy*, p.7 (1696); *AluB* 2 no.143 (1622-23);

⁵² In 1629 the annual State stipend of a post driver was 10 roubles, but five years later

payment of State ruga was, in any case, unreliable, since government officials responsible for its delivery did not always pay out on time.⁵³ In the central regions of Russia, stipends paid to priests serving in State-endowed churches varied greatly: a full stipend could amount to about ten roubles annually, but many received only a small subsidy of two roubles or less, and some churches received only goods in kind for the running of the church, such as wax, incense and communion wine, rather than salaries for the clergy.⁵⁴ Priests on a stipend of only one or two roubles were worse-off than labourers, and therefore were forced to rely on offerings, by-employments and other means of support to make ends meet.⁵⁵ Even on a stipend of six roubles, priest Vasilei Grigor'ev of Turin found it necessary to supplement his income with part-time work as a locksmith and bookbinder during the early 1620s.⁵⁶ Almost all the clergy of endowed churches had to look elsewhere for support when Peter the Great began to phase out State stipends from 1698.⁵⁷

By far the majority of parish churches had no State funding of any sort. Instead, each parish had its own unique system of remunerating their clergy. English visitors to Muscovy were surprised to find that the clergy did not receive a fixed tithe of corn and other produce from parishioners, like their Anglican contemporaries. Giles Fletcher observed that a Muscovite priest 'must stand at the devotion of the people of his parish, and make up the incommes towards his maintenance, so well as he can, by offerings,

it had risen to 20 roubles after post-drivers petitioned for a cost-of-living rise: Butsinkii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.88-91.

⁵³ *DAI* 6 no.11 p.55 (1670); 9 no.96 (1682); *RIB* 35 no.337 p.637 (1624); *RIB* 23 p.186 (1673).

⁵⁴ D'iachki received about 4 roubles on a full stipend. *AI* 3 no.149 p.241 (1627); *RIB* 23 p.186 (1673); A large list of subsidies and stipends paid by the Crown to Moscow clergy in 1677 is listed in *DAI* 9 no.107.

⁵⁵ In comparison, the average salaries for salt-workers ranged from 3 roubles for a labourer up to 25 roubles for a master pipe-layer: Smith and Christian, *Bread and Salt*, p.55.

⁵⁶ *AIuB* 2 no.143.

⁵⁷ *PSZ* 3 nos.1664,1711. By 1782 there were only 202 endowed churches left: Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.111.

shriftes, marriages, burials, dirges, and prayers for the dead and the living'.⁵⁸ Fletcher was correct: one of the prime sources of income for the parish clergy was emoluments for *potreby*, a term which included various prayers and religious rites performed at the individual request of parishioners. Taking payment for confession was forbidden by Church canons,⁵⁹ but in practice it was one of the most profitable of a cleric's duties. Not only was a confessor paid an offering of a few kopecks each time his spiritual children confessed, but he also received extra payments and gifts on religious holidays, and was frequently remembered in their wills.⁶⁰ Deaths in the parish generated a steady income from funerals, burials and requiem masses, although it was the prelate who collected the lion's share of burial and marriage payments, rather than the priest.⁶¹ In addition to emoluments, some clergymen received a stipend paid by their parishioners or patron, the precise amount of which was often stipulated in a contract.⁶² It was usually paid in grain, but the amount varied from parish to parish. Priest Fedor of Shubatsk volost was paid twelve chetverti of rye and the same in oats annually, whereas another church in the same eparchy paid its deacon three times that amount.⁶³ One Ustiug priest received an ample stipend totalling thirty chetverti in grain (rye, oats and barley) and smaller amounts of wheat and peas, in addition to two roubles cash;

⁵⁸ Fletcher, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, pp.86-87; C.Cross, 'The Income of the Provincial Urban Clergy, 1520-1645', *Princes and Paupers in the English Church: 1500-1800*, ed. R.O'Day (Leicester,1981) pp.80-86.

⁵⁹ D.Cummings, *The Rudder*, (Illinois, 1956) p.316.

⁶⁰ A confessor's spiritual children were the penitents who came to him for confession. The Domostroi advised pious Christians to give generously to their confessor: *The Domostroi*, transl. by C.J.Pouncy, (Ithaca,1994) pp.75-78. Smirnov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, pp.73-74,77-81. Royal confessors could be paid between half a rouble and 50 roubles: *RIB* 23 pp.52,664,17,34; *MTS* 4 pp.140-154. Bequests to confessors are discussed in chapter four.

⁶¹ Bishops had the right to collect all marriage and burial fees, although they sometimes granted this right to cathedral or monastic clergy. A respectable funeral could cost a family 1-2 roubles or more, according to Hellie: *The Economy and Material Culture of Russia*, pp.501-02, 507-10.

⁶² *RIB* 14 no.174 Khol.; *RIB* 14 no.65 Ust.(1682). Fletcher estimated in 1591 that clerical income amounted to 30-40 roubles annually, but this figure is far too high; only a few cathedral priests came near this figure: *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, p.87.

⁶³ One chetvert' = 126.39 lbs. *OSS* Pt.11 p.187 no.166 (1672), Pt.11 p.189 no.169 (1679), Pt.10 p.124 no.98 (1688).

other parishes paid their clergyman much less, but for most we have no definitive data at all.⁶⁴

This system of clerical remuneration by the parish had major short-comings. Unlike a village tradesman, a priest was not free to set his own fees for the religious services upon which he relied for his living, but was hampered by Church rules that forbade him from demanding payment at all.⁶⁵ Instead, payments were voluntary, determined by local custom and the generosity (or otherwise) of the parish. Neither could promises of *ruga* guarantee a reliable wage, for the amount was often inadequate to support a family, and sometimes was not paid at all.⁶⁶ Clergy of the church of the Virgin of Vladimir in Ustiug, for instance, were reduced to destitution within a year or two of their appointment because the landowner who built the church paid them so meagrely, by his own admission.⁶⁷ Dependant status put the clergy at a considerable disadvantage: few could afford to risk offending their clients. When priest Andrei of Liven posad displeased his parishioners, they deserted *en masse*. 'Taking their icons out of my church', he wrote, 'they have placed them in different churches, and they commemorate their dead in other churches instead of our parish church, I don't know why, and they summon [other] priests to their homes for prayers instead of me'.⁶⁸ Likewise priest Iakov of Peremyshl lost over half his parish in 1689 when they defected to another church, leaving him with a barely viable parish of only eighteen families.⁶⁹

A second source of support for clergy was land, an asset which could be relied on to produce food when parishioners or government failed to pay. Glebe was commonly provided by parishioners for the clergy's private use in addition to, or instead of, a

⁶⁴ *RIB* 14 no.76 Ust.(1695).

⁶⁵ Chapter 45 of the *Stoglav*, *Rossiiskoe zakonodatel'stvo X-XX vekov*, (Moscow, 1985) Vol.2.

⁶⁶ *RIB* 14 no.76 Ust.; *OSS* Pt.5 p.28, Pt.8 p.87 no.128, Pt.10 no.61.

⁶⁷ *RIB* 14 no.65 Ust.(1682).

⁶⁸ *SKE* p.256.

⁶⁹ *SKE* p.268.

stipend, and could consist of fields, meadows and kitchen gardens.⁷⁰ Theoretically, when new cadastres were compiled in the early 1620s each parish church should have been assigned thirty to sixty chetverti of land (40-80 acres), a proportion of which was for maintenance of the clergy, and the rest to be leased out to pay for the running of the church.⁷¹ Churches that received land from the Crown were in a relatively comfortable position, but most often the parish community or landowner who built the church was responsible for allotting glebe for their clergy, hence the size of plots varied enormously.⁷² In many cases there was a discrepancy between the amount of land shown in census books (*pistsovye knigi*) as belonging to a parish, and the amount actually farmed by the clergy. Most clergymen had considerably less than the figure shown, and a large proportion received no glebe at all. An analysis of statements made by clergy of ninety-five churches in Moscow eparchy in 1683-84 reveals that 29% had smaller allotments of land than recorded in the *pistsovye knigi*, 52% had no allocation of meadowland, and 20% had no land at all. Although the size of holding considered necessary to support a peasant household was thirty chetverti of good arable land (40 acres), more for poor soil,⁷³ it was not unusual for parishioners to allow their clergy to

⁷⁰ Ustiug clergy employed by the Strogonov family were assigned arable land but no ruga, whereas as certain neighbouring landowner-patrons paid ruga and grain instead of land: *RIB* 14 nos.65 Ust.; *RIB* 14 nos.139,174 Khol.; *SKE* pp.188-228.

⁷¹ Allocation of land from adjacent estates to churches was first made obligatory in 1620, but cancelled in 1676, then revived in 1680, repeated in 1684. The standard size of such holdings was fixed at 10-20 chetverti. Land allotments were calculated on the three-field system for autumn sowing, spring sowing, and fallow. Pososhkov, p.163 fn.29; J.Blum, *Lord and Peasant in Russia*, (Princeton,1961) p.621. P.V.Znamenskii, 'Zakonodatel'stvo Petra Velikogo otnositel'no dukhovenstva,' *PS*, 1863, 10 p.127; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.127; A.P.Dobroklonskii, *Rukovodstvo po istorii russkoi tserkvi*, 3 p.57; *PSZ* 1 nos.633 art.14 (10 March 1676), *PSZ* 1 no.700 art.18 (10 Aug.1677), *PSZ* 2 no.832 art.4 (25 Aug.1680), *PSZ* 2 no.890 art.2 (26 Aug.1681), *PSZ* 2 no.1074 art.4 (Apr.1684); I.Shimko, *Patriarshii Kazennyi prikaz*, (M.1894) p.102.

⁷² For example, sixty three percent of churches in Peremyshl town and district had received grants of land from the Crown: *SKE* pp.118-228 (1683-4). It is not known what proportion of parish churches in other eparchies received Crown land, but it seems to have been relatively small.

⁷³ Blum, *Lord and Peasant*, p.237-640. Blum estimates that the average peasant holding was frequently only 14 -18.6 chetverti per home in second half of the century.

till only a few acres of church land.⁷⁴ In Liven town and district, for which we have the most detailed figures, the majority of priests (58%) tilled a meagre glebe of between one and ten chetverti (1.3 - 13 acres), which was barely subsistence level; sixteen percent tilled a medium-sized plot sized between twelve and thirty chetverti (15 - 40 acres), and thirteen percent had no glebe at all.⁷⁵ This trend appears to have been common in other regions.⁷⁶ A priest from Sizmo village, Vologda eparchy, told his bishop he could not survive as he had only three and a half chetverti of rye fields, barely any meadow, and received no stipend from his parish.⁷⁷ With inadequate land to support their families, clergy were forced to lease tillage and pasturage at their own expense, if they could afford to, or to rely on by-employments.⁷⁸

It is a well-known fact that the higher clergy of the Muscovite Church steadily acquired inheritable real estate (*votchina*) during the pre-Petrine era, but such land acquisitions rarely ever came into the possession of the lower clergy.⁷⁹ On the contrary, parish church land was steadily eroded by laymen throughout the seventeenth century. When churches were destroyed by enemy invasion their lands were often distributed to laymen as service estates (*pomest'e*), and glebe was illegally seized from active churches.⁸⁰ A survey of church assets by Metropolitan Varsonofii of Sarai and Podonsk in 1684 revealed an appalling rate of illegal seizure: 34% of clergy questioned in ninety-five parish churches replied that their glebe had been seized by noblemen,

⁷⁴ See Lodma church records in *RIB* volume 25, and statements by priests of Cherni, Liven, Chernavsk, Peremyshl and Novosil: *SKE* pp.188-228 (1683-84).

⁷⁵ *SKE* pp.208-228.

⁷⁶ *LZAK* 14 p.107; *OSS* Pt.3 p.12 no.18, Pt.8 p.101 no.147; *RIB* 12 no.29 Ust.; *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.1.

⁷⁷ *OSS* Pt.3 p.44 n.64 (1682).

⁷⁸ For examples of clergymen leasing land see 'Akty Koriazhemsk monastyria', *LZAK* 23 nos.101,166; *SKE* pp.188-28, and below.

⁷⁹ Despite the Ulozhenie of 1649, monasteries and prelates remained major landowners, and in 1687 the patriarch owned about a fifth of all peasants: Hughes, *Peter the Great*, p.332. On estates held by prelates and monasteries see Cracraft, *Church Reform*, pp.83-85, *AAE* 4 no.33 (1648).

⁸⁰ *DAI* 6 no.137, p.408-410; *AI* 5 no.137 p.235-6; Pokrovskii, *Russkie eparkhii*, 1 no.346-7, Shimko, *Patriarshii Kazennyi prikaz*, pp.137-8; and *LZAK* 5 Pt.4 pp.56-61.

townsmen or peasants.⁸¹ Likewise records from Vladimir, Viatka and Vologda provinces show that church land provided easy pickings for avaricious laymen, who sometimes took advantage of new priests who did not know the parish boundaries.⁸² Parish priests had great difficulty claiming it back, for even when the highest ecclesiastical and civil authorities ruled in their favour, it was not unusual for the illegal possessor to simply refuse to comply.⁸³ Despite obtaining an injunction from the Crown, a rural priest in Novosil district was still unable to reclaim his illegally-seized glebe because, he reported, the predatory landowners 'ignore the Great Sovereign's ukaz and decrees, they set up boundaries and build new fences, not in accord with the land registers'.⁸⁴

Expropriation of church land was so widespread by the early 1680s that Patriarch Ioakim embarked on a nation-wide campaign to claim it back. He sent a decree to all urban and rural clergy ordering them to petition for church lands to be reassessed whilst State assessors from the Land Chancellery were undertaking a general survey,⁸⁵ so that 'henceforth the churches of God will not decrease and priests and minor clerics not be impoverished and driven out by hereditary landowners and service landowners'. The Patriarch commanded all clergymen to watch carefully, 'so that scribes do not assign occupied or empty church lands over to landowners, and exchange good land and fields close to churches for bad land far from churches, or write it down as less than formerly, out of friendship with landowners.' If any priest found the land

⁸¹ Statements by priests of Chern', Liven, Chernavsk, Peremyshl and Novosil: *SKE*, pp.188-228.

⁸² *OSS* Pt.12 p.54. Pre-1685 cases of clergy land being seized or disputed can be found in: 'Opisanie moskovskago Bogoiavlenskago monastyria', *ChOIDR* 1876 Bk.4 p.175 (1653); *RIB* 12 no.29 Ust.(1627); *RIB* 14 no.165 Ust.(1649-1650); *RIB* 5 no.259 (1667); *RIB* 12 no.116 Ust.(1677); *OpMAMIu* 16 no.722 (1674-81); *OSS* Pt.1 pp.1,23 (1618,1678), Pt.3 pp.55,46; Pt.5 p.28 (1676), Pt.10 pp.61,77 (1673,1679), Pt.11 pp.17,21,63,142, (1641-69), Pt.12 pp.51,54,78,84,91,100 (1678-84).

⁸³ For example, see cases in *DAV* no.100 (1615) and *Materialy dlia istorii Vladimirskoi eparkhii*, pp.52,158 (1630,1679).

⁸⁴ *SKE* p.200 no.12 (1684).

⁸⁵ *PSZ* 2 no.890 p.348 (1681).

assessment to be incorrect, he was to dispute it with the scribe and immediately inform the patriarchal agent's office. Clergy of new churches built after the land survey were instructed to petition the State scribe to have their church fields and meadows entered in the land registers and to obtain a copy of that entry.⁸⁶

Patriarch Ioakim's measures to recover church land received the Crown's support, but redress was hindered by obstructive landowners and peasants, by scribes greedy for bribes, and by the lack of powers of enforcement.⁸⁷ A further hindrance was ignorance and apathy among the clergy: seventeen percent of priests who were questioned in Moscow eparchy in 1684 and 1689 said they did not know whether or not their church owned any land, most attributing their ignorance to the fact that they had no land deeds or copies of land register entries.⁸⁸ Infuriated, the patriarch threatened expulsion for any priest who failed to defend church property.⁸⁹ Ioakim's threats motivated some priests to obtain copies of the land registers so that they would know their parish borders, and bishops began to insist that parishes provide enough land for their clergy,⁹⁰ but there is no evidence of any significant improvement in clerical landholdings.⁹¹ Disputes between clergy and laity over land ownership continued to appear before the courts, which prelates complained was causing priests 'much wasted time, losses, and ruination from other people's offences'.⁹² The priests of Khylnov in

⁸⁶ *AAE* 4 no.285 (11 June,1685).

⁸⁷ *PSZ* 2 no.890, p.348 (26 Aug.1681); *PSZ* 2 no.913 (9 April 1682); *AI* 5 no.137; *LZAK* 14 p.62; Znamenskii, *Zakonodatel'stvo Petra*, p.127.

⁸⁸ *SKE* pp.188-228 (1683-84) and pp.229-274 (1689), St.Nicholas, Krasnoe stan and St.Demetrius, Liven posad.

⁸⁹ *AAE* 4 no.285.

⁹⁰ When parishes applied for the ordination of a priest or deacon, bishops required them to furnish proof that there was land or other means of clerical support: see chapter one. At the end of the century Archbishop Afanasii of Kholmogory ruled that clergy should be assigned 25 chetverti (33.75 acres) of arable fields and 30 kopen (8.1 acres) of meadow: Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 p.37.

⁹¹ *LZAK* 14 p.62 (1685); Znamenskii maintains that most clergymen remained without land: Znamenskii, *Rukovodstvo*, p.230.

⁹² *RIB* 12 no.201 (1689); *OSS* Pt.5 p.93, Pt.7 pp.99,104 (1695), Pt.8 pp.79,87,91 (1694-95); *Materialy dlia istorii Vladimirskoi eparkhii*, pp.41,72-74; RGADA f.1443 op.2 dd.6,53,55; f.1433 op.1 d.82.

Viatka uezd had to repeatedly fight for their glebe, each time paying out fees and gifts to clerks, secretaries, and governors to have their case heard.⁹³ Even ancient glebe was encroached upon. A priest of Komelskii volost' complained to Archbishop Gavriil of Vologda in 1695 that parishioners had taken his fields, 'and since time immemorial that is priest's land (*popovskaia zemlia*), lord; my grandfather priest Pantelemon, when he was a priest at St.Nicholas, sowed his rye on that land, and it is not church land or the people's (*mirskoi*) land'.⁹⁴ Numerous churches still failed to provide sufficient land for incumbents, who had to lease fields from local monasteries or parishioners.⁹⁵ The clergy of Lodma in northern Russia became impoverished from the high rent they had to pay to the parish treasurer for the use of church meadows between 1688 and 1698, forcing them to appeal for help to the archbishop on several occasions.⁹⁶

Glebe, so essential to the livelihood of many parish priests, had to be tilled and mowed by the clergy themselves. Some clerics had a hired worker or serf to help,⁹⁷ but time-consuming agricultural work necessarily reduced the hours available for a priest's pastoral and liturgical duties, and may account for the number of parishes that needed two priests or several minor clerics. A clergy farmer, distracted by work in the fields and smelling of manure like any 'boorish peasant', was unfit to approach the altar and offer the sacraments, in the view of eighteenth-century thinkers.⁹⁸ However, a small

⁹³ The Khylnov clergy's legal expenses are listed in *DAV* no.100 (1615), no.154 (1684), no.160 (1696).

⁹⁴ *OSS* Pt.8 p.91 no.127 (1695).

⁹⁵ *LZAK* 9 no.90 (1696); *SKE* pp.188-228, pp.229-274: St.Nicholas, Krasnyi stan and St.Demetrius, Liven posad.

⁹⁶ *RIB* 25 nos.276,303,309

⁹⁷ References to servants in clergy homes are found in *DAI* 5 no.41; *RIB* 12 no.245 Ust., *RIB* 14 no.206 Khol.; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.178, and numerous other documents. According to Hellie, the Church could not own slaves under canon law: R.Hellie, *Slavery in Russia 1450-1725*, (Chicago, 1982) pp.474-75. It seems, however, that individual clergymen frequently did own slaves and serfs, judging from extant deeds of purchase and wills, such as *RIB* 5 nos.15, 170 (1653, 1662); *AIuB* 2 no.152. iv.; 'Istoriko-iuridicheskie akty', *ChOIDR* 1886 Bk.4 p.272-75 (1689-1693); 'Petition from deacon Spiridon, 1646', *Russia's Conquest of Siberia*, p.223.

⁹⁸ Pososhkov, p.174; Belliusin, p.126; A.P.Volynskii and V.N.Tatishchev, cited by Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.118.

number of Muscovite clergymen enjoyed the profits of church land without having to work it themselves because their churches owned hamlets or shops donated by pious benefactors, from which rent revenues were paid for the maintenance of the church and its staff,⁹⁹ although compared to cathedrals and monasteries the landholding assets of parish churches appear to have been very meagre.¹⁰⁰ Churches that were fortunate enough to receive regular quitrent from populated hamlets could maintain relatively large staffs: Lyskovo village church in Nizhnii Novgorod uezd, for instance, supported four priests, a deacon, a d'iachok, two ponomars and a prosfirnitsa on the income generated from leased land.¹⁰¹ Landowning parish clergy who had charters from the Crown or Church granting judicial and financial immunities held an even greater advantage, but these charters, like the land itself, belonged to the clergy only as long as they served at the church. When the priest died or moved away, the land and charters became the property of the next incumbent. In some cases, though, such rights could be inherited with the good-will of the parish. When priest Grigorei of St. Johns on the Tolshma river died in 1634, his immunity charter remained in the possession of his under-age sons whilst a temporary priest served, presumably until Grigorei's boys were old enough to be ordained.¹⁰² Such charters were of little use to churches after 1698, when Peter the Great began to abrogate them at the same time as he abolished State stipends to clergy.¹⁰³ A final category of landholding clergy, about whom we know very little, owned land (*votchina*) in their own right and even called themselves *votchniki*.¹⁰⁴ Few in number, these clerical *votchniki* were found principally in

⁹⁹ V.N. Storozhevii, *Materialy dlia istorii deloproizvodstva pomestnago prikaza vologodskomu uezd v XVII veke*, (Petrograd, 1918) pp.276-8; *RIB* 12 no.21 Khol.; *DAI* 6 no.137, p.408-410; *LZAK* 14, p.107.

¹⁰⁰ P.Ivanov lists landholdings of certain churches and monasteries in *Opisanie gosudarstvennago arkhiva starykh del*, pp.344-358.

¹⁰¹ *PNG* p.408.

¹⁰² *RIB* 14 no.28 I and II Ust.(1623,1634).

¹⁰³ *PSZ* 3 nos.1664 (1698) and 1711 (1699).

¹⁰⁴ *Votchina* was inheritable land. See for instance an agreement made in 1679 between *votchniki* priests' sons and another priest whom they contract to serve at their church: *RIB* 12:125 Ust.

northern Russia, where they inherited churches their fathers or grandfathers had built and owned, independent of parishioners.¹⁰⁵

Land, stipends and emoluments were the chief means by which the clergy derived their income from their parish, but a large proportion of clergymen also relied on by-employments to make ends meet. Indeed, the importance of part-time occupations to the clerical economy is a subject which has been almost entirely overlooked by scholars of Russian history, despite the prevalence with which such activities are mentioned in seventeenth-century sources. In common with clerics in Western Europe, the Muscovite parish clergy used their literacy skills to supplement their income by teaching pupils, copying manuscripts, or binding books for customers.¹⁰⁶ Icon-painting and restoration was yet another typical side-line for clerics.¹⁰⁷ For restoring a few icons in Vologda cathedral in the 1640s a deacon was paid twenty kopecks; for a larger job two local priests were paid five roubles;¹⁰⁸ and for painting icons in Archbishop Afanasii's new cathedral in 1694 a Kholmogory priest and his relatives earned 100 roubles.¹⁰⁹ Muscovite clergymen were not averse to making money through purely secular activities, either. One northern clergyman worked part-time at a monastery mill, another worked as a book-keeper for a salt-works operation.¹¹⁰ Priests in Riazan and

¹⁰⁵ *RIB* 14 nos.108,157,165 Khol.; Veriuzhskii, pp.198-200. For a 16th-century case of a priest's wife owning votchina, see S.Levy, 'Women and the control of property in sixteenth-century Muscovy.' *RH* 10 pp.205-7. See also *AIuB* 1 no.107. In the 19th century Synod ruled that non-noble clergymen who inherited land or serfs had to give up their rights to their inheritance: *Sbornik tserkovno-grazhdanskikh postanovlenii v Rossii*, ed.by N.Aleksandrov, (Spb.1860) p.15.

¹⁰⁶ Examples are in the following sources: *AAE* 3 no.184 (1629); *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, p.260; *MTS* 2 p.223; *AIuB* 1 no.143 (1622-23); *ChOIDR* 203 1902 Bk.4 Smes', no.5 (1687); *GPB* f.588 d.255; *RGIA* f.834 op.5 d.18 (1652), op.5 d.19 (1654), op.2, d.1502. By-employments were commonly pursued by the English parish clergy, too: R.O'Day, 'Clerical standards of living and life-style, *The English Clergy: 1558-1642*, pp.182-83.

¹⁰⁷ A noted Siberian icon-painter in the 1630s was archdeacon Matvei of Tobol'sk cathedral: I.V.Shcheglov, *Khronologicheskii perechen' vazhneishikh dannikh iz istorii Sibiri*, (Surgut,1993) p.70.

¹⁰⁸ *VKS* pp.118-9,121.

¹⁰⁹ *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, pp.74-5.

¹¹⁰ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.85 l.26; *OSS* Pt.8 p.10.

Putivl' hired out their boats for a fee;¹¹¹ and an inordinate number of clerics supplemented their stipends by taking in paying lodgers.¹¹² Those with sufficient capital loaned money out, presumably on interest, and sued clients who failed to repay their loans on time.¹¹³ Many clergymen were part-time shopkeepers, sometimes creating serious competition for local traders.¹¹⁴ In response to complaints from Novogord vendors that clerical traders were not paying taxes, the government decreed on 25 March 1648 that 'if any children of priests, deacons, d'iachki, or monastery servants engage in trade, or if priests, deacons, or d'iachki themselves engage in large-scale trade or sit in shops, you are to order them to be taken to the posad and have tax (*tiaglo*) imposed on them'.¹¹⁵ Bootlegging clergymen made a profit brewing and selling liquor, an activity which aggravated the hostility of both Church and State towards clerical commerce.¹¹⁶ The Church hierarchy viewed trade as unfitting for the priestly rank, as did the Crown, thus a royal decree of 22 January 1669 forbade ordained or tonsured persons from keeping any shops or businesses at all, adding that 'priests and deacons are to be maintained by their church'.¹¹⁷ Neither decrees nor pronouncements had any effect, it seems, for a significant proportion of the clergy were evidently still

¹¹¹ *OpMAMTu* 16 no.798 (1681-2), no.820 (1681).

¹¹² Documents from all regions of Russia indicate that many clergymen had lodgers in their homes. See, for example, *PSZ* 1 no.506 (1672); *DAI* 5 no.41 p.206 (1667); 'Moskovskii Kitai-gorod v XVII veke', *ChOIDR* 1893 Bk.2 pp.1-30; N.V. Rozhdestvenskii, ed. 'Kvartiranty v dvorakh Moskovskago dukhovenstva', *ChOIDR* 1905, Bk.2, Vol.213, Smes', no.5 pp.57-65.

¹¹³ *RIB* 14 no.131 Khol.; *OSS* Pt.11 p.55 no.40, Pt.12 pp.38,61,156; RGADA f.196 op.3 dd.686,1952. B.A.Holderness's study on English clerical money-lenders argues that they provided needful service for their communities by supplying credit in rural regions, which may have been the case in Russia too: 'The clergy as money-lenders in England, 1550-1700', *Princes and Paupers in the English Church*, pp.195-211.

¹¹⁴ Clerical shopkeepers are mentioned in numerous records, among them *OSS* Pt.10 p.49 (1671); *Tobol'sk: Materialy*, 1 p.1 (1624), p.6. (1655); Storozhevskii, *Materialy dlia istorii deloproizvodstva*, pp.276-8; *LZAK* 14 pp.37,43,47,52.

¹¹⁵ *AAE* 4 no.24. *Tiaglo*-payers had to pay State taxes and perform labour.

¹¹⁶ *AAE* 4 nos.105,118; *PSZ* 1 no.412 p.703 (1667), *PSZ* 2 no.862 (1681), *PSZ* 3 no.1612 art.13 (1697); *OSS* Pt.3 p.2 no.18.

¹¹⁷ *PSZ* 1 no.442 pp.800-01.

relying on their marketing enterprises in 1681, when a Church Council expressed concern that clergymen were building shops on top of cemeteries.¹¹⁸

The frequency with which by-employments are mentioned in the sources suggests that the means of support provided by parishioners was very often insufficient to maintain clergy families, particularly in view of the assortment of fees that clergymen had to pay to their bishop. The largest of these dues was the Church tithe (*dan*) which was levied on every church at a fixed annual rate that was assessed periodically on the number of houses and clergy per parish. Some churches were charged only half a rouble, others considerably more, but on average the tithe was probably about one rouble per church.¹¹⁹ Although Richard Hellie lists the tithe as one of the church charges imposed on the general populace, it was usually the responsibility of the priest to pay it.¹²⁰ In addition, the clergy had to pay their bishop a variety of other dues that differed from one eparchy to another, such as the tithe-collector's fees and transport costs, a clerk's fee, a cathedral tax, an Easter egg tax, a festival fee, the bishop's visitation expenses, and a *novozhenaiia* fee of seven kopecks if their children married,¹²¹ on top of which Patriarch Ioakim imposed a further almshouse tax of one grivna.¹²² The combined cost of all these supplementary fees could be as much as two roubles, which, in addition to the prelate's tithe, made a sizeable hole in the pocket of a clergyman.

¹¹⁸ *AI* 5 no.75 art.11 (1681).

¹¹⁹ *RIB* 14 no.29 Ust.; *AI* 4 nos.195,240; *AI* 5 no.172; *PDR* 22 pp.181-221; Znamenskii, 'O sborakh s nizshego dukhovenstva v kaznu eparkhial'nykh arkhieriev, *PS* 1, 1866, pp.37-55; Dokuchaev-Barskov, p.17 (1677). In an effort to redress inequalities in tithe rate, Metropolitan Ioakim of Novgorod introduced a standardised tithe rate for his eparchy in 1672: Pritezhaev, *Novgorod-Sofiiskaia kazna*, pp.49,68,76.

¹²⁰ Hellie, *The Economy and Material Culture of Russia*, p.512. Less often the prelate's tithe was paid by the church elder or patron, as in *Materialy dlia istorii Vladimirskei eparkhii*, pp.136,150,151,164,167, and *RIB* 14 no.65 Ust.(1682). In some northern parishes, the laity paid one-third of the church levies, the clergy paid two-thirds: *RIB* 14 no.108 Khol.(1612).

¹²¹ Pritezhaev, *Novgorod-Sofiiskaia kazna*, pp.51-66,206; *OSS* Pt.12 p.18 (1675); *RIB* 14 no.60 Ust.(1682).

¹²² *AAE* 4 no.275; *PSZ* 2 no.956 p.468 (1682).

A priest who received an annual income of eight roubles¹²³ might have to pay out three roubles in fees to his bishop and possibly five roubles to feed and clothe his family each year, which would use up his entire income.¹²⁴ Little wonder that priests needed land, by-employments or emoluments to make ends meet. Moreover, the clergy were obliged to pay certain State obligations. Whilst all clergymen were exempt from military conscription,¹²⁵ those who lived on 'black' State land had to pay the government rent (*obrok*) and taxes, and perform labour along with the laity.¹²⁶ During war-time the burden increased.¹²⁷ In 1637, for instance, the government imposed a tax on church lands to pay for fortifications in Poland, in 1655 the clergy had to supply horses for the war effort,¹²⁸ from 1661 they had to pay a two-grivna (half-rouble) tax for the redemption of prisoners-of-war,¹²⁹ and in 1684 the clergy were taxed a further rouble per house to pay the cavalry and infantry.¹³⁰ The financial burden of regular impositions was hard to bear, especially in a bad harvest year, or if the number of households in the parish had decreased between assessments.¹³¹ During wartime, these

¹²³ As noted above, 8 roubles was considered a generous State stipend for an ordinary priest.

¹²⁴ The average annual cost of maintaining an ordinary Muscovite family has been estimated at between 2.15 and 3.13 roubles for food, and 1.5 roubles for clothing: Smith and Christian, *Bread and Salt*, p.55.

¹²⁵ *PDR* 22 pp.181-182,186-7.

¹²⁶ In addition to *obrok*, State dues included a post-driver tax, a *strel'tsy* tax and a tax for Siberian supplies: *RIB* 12 nos.37,177 *Ust.*; *RIB* 35 no.93 (1610). Ustiug cathedral clergy's hearth tax (*podymnye den'gi*) obligations in 1638 are listed in *RIB* 12 no.39. One example of the labour imposts is a royal decree in 1654 that priests, as well as other civilians, must repair bridges and roads: *DAI* 3 no.119 xxxiii, xli. Government agents were merciless in collecting fines from rural priests who failed to pay *obrok* on the grain and hay they reaped: *RIB* 38 pp.55,59,62.

¹²⁷ Military requisitions and obligations from clergy are recorded in *AIu* nos.223,230; *AI* 3 nos.195,216,242; *AI* 4 no.216; *AI* 5 nos.53,82; *AAE* 1 no.281; *AAE* 4 no.16

¹²⁸ *RIB* 12 no.37 *Ust.*(1637): the 1637 tax was levied at 40 altyn per chet. of land; *LZAK* 27 nos.392-4,398-401 (1655).

¹²⁹ Clerical payments of the POW tax are mentioned in SPIRIAN f.171 Novgorod, V nos.206,209 (1675-79); *RIB* 12 no.198 *Ust.*; *LZAK* 27 no.115; *AAE* 2 no.52, *AAE* 4 nos.228,232; *DAI* 1 no.77; *AI* 3 no.109,135; *AI* 4 nos.33,216; *AI* 5 nos.37,141,264; *PSZ* 2 no.956; *DGPV* 3 p.48 cvii; *DAV* no.157, and elsewhere.

¹³⁰ *RIB* 12 nos.145 *Ust.*(1684).

¹³¹ A demographic change could result in a priest being charged a high tithe rate for a depopulated parish, as happened in the following cases: *SKE* pp.256,268; *Materialy*

burdens could be ruinous. The clergy of churches in Sol' Vychegodsk uezd, who lived on 'black' land and thus were already over-stretched by State and Church taxes, were reduced to near-destitution when a one-rouble tax for the 1687 Russian war effort was imposed on them. In desperation they petitioned their bishop for permission to go to Moscow to appeal for relief because 'from those great excessive lay impositions we are being ruined'.¹³²

As a result of insufficient income and high episcopal and State taxes, clerical poverty was widespread, particularly in rural areas. Its effect can be seen in the difficulties which the lower clergy had paying bishops' fees. Episcopal archives contain many cases of priests arrested for non-payment, or petitions from hard-pressed clergymen pleading for a reduction in payment, or asking for more time to pay.¹³³ Sometimes parishioners paid the tithe for an impoverished cleric, or, to avoid imprisonment, the clergy fled leaving churches empty. One northern church was empty for years, parishioners complained, 'because of the high cost of the prelate's tithe in former years'.¹³⁴ A great many clergymen were in debt, a large proportion of whom came before the courts when they were unable to repay even small sums to their creditors: most of the clergy sued for debt owed sums of three roubles or less, sometimes just half a rouble.¹³⁵ During the second half of the century there was a slight increase in the number of cases of debt and non-payment of fees in Vologda eparchy, suggesting that Patriarch Ioakim's efforts to secure church land failed to materially improve the clergy's

dlia istorii Vladimirskoi eparkhii, p.174 (1688/9). Laymen who were communally liable for State taxes could face similar problems.

¹³² *RIB* 12 no.177 Ust.

¹³³ A sample of these appeals and arrests can be read in *OSS* Pt.3 pp.34,47,66,76, 81,88, Pt.4 p.57, Pt.5 p.92, Pt.7 pp.37,82,160 (g),115, Pt.8 pp.101,103, Pt.9 p.141, Pt.10 pp.144,158, 160,181,185, Pt.11 p.206, Pt.12 p.32; *RIB* 14 no.64 Ust.(1682); *RIB* 12 no.177 Ust.; *LZAK* 14 p.12.

¹³⁴ *RIB* 14 no.65 (Ust.1682); Pritezhaev, *Novgorod-sofiiskaia kazna*, pp.74-5; *AIuB* 1 no.31, xxv; *Materialy dlia istorii Vladimirskoi eparkhii*, pp.150,151,164,167,174; *SKE* p.257.

¹³⁵ *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 d.13, 21, 58 (1686-87), f.1433 op.1 d.41 (1682); *LZAK* 27 no.622; *SKE* p.46 no.6; *RIB*12 nos.159,225 Ust.

economic situation.¹³⁶ Not infrequently do we find cases of priests who had fallen into utter destitution, without sufficient means to feed the family.¹³⁷ Others, facing financial difficulties, resorted to overcharging their parishioners for religious services.¹³⁸ In so doing they risked an episcopal fine or dismissal, but given the uncertain nature of clerical remuneration, it was perhaps natural that many clerics tried to negotiate the highest price possible for the rites they performed. During the plague of 1654, when demand for clerical services was unusually high and competition low, priests who survived the pestilence could charge extortionate rates. According to one contemporary, 'those who survive grow immensely rich, doing all the funerals for a fee, asking what they will'.¹³⁹ Poverty appears to have driven desperate clerics to outright crime. 'Many priests and monks have taken to robbery and theft and [illegal] financial dealings', the Moscow Church Council concluded in 1666-7.¹⁴⁰ The council's disciplinary measures to punish the guilty do not appear to have reduced the incidence of clergymen charged with pilfering from parish funds, stealing the church plate, horse-theft, or outright armed robbery, who continued to appear before the courts in consistently high numbers to the very end of the century.¹⁴¹

Clerical Disputes

Inequalities in parish revenues and outright poverty gave rise to frequent disputes between the clergy of Muscovite parishes. Indeed, nearly fifteen percent of surviving documents from Vologda diocese record clerical quarrels over land and income.¹⁴²

¹³⁶ Cases of clerical debt in Vologda can be found in *OSS* Pt. 1 p.36, Pt.3 pp.29,59, Pt.5 p.27, Pt.7 pp.108,159, Pt.8 pp.54,64, Pt.9 pp.9,60,90,128, Pt.10 p.81, Pt.11 p.42, Pt.12 pp.4,74,119,120,161,227, Pt.13 p.63.

¹³⁷ *RGADA* f.1433 op.1 d.45 (1683); *OSS* Pt.10 p.185.

¹³⁸ Accusations of extortion are in *OSS* Pt.11 p.72 no.58 (1659), Pt.7 p.83 (1688); *SKE* p.56 n.21 (1695); Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, no.77. However, parishioners sometimes falsely accused their priest merely to get rid of him.

¹³⁹ Paul of Aleppo, p.331.

¹⁴⁰ *PSZ* 1 no.412.

¹⁴¹ *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 dd.3,15,16,17,44; f.196 op.3 dd.708,923; *LZAK* 27 no.792, *OSS* Pt.4 p.48, Pt.8 pp.10,15, Pt.9 p.42, Pt.12 p.117; *RIB* 12 nos.269,287 Ust.

¹⁴² *OSS* Pts 1-5,7-13. Of 600 records referring to parish clergy (excluding records which deal primarily with episcopal fees and permits) dating from 1618-1707, nearly

Likewise, disputes between clergy represent one-tenth of Moscow diocesan records relating to transfers, ordinations and permits dating from 1662-1699.¹⁴³ Arguments frequently erupted between neighbouring parish churches over who had the right to collect emoluments from local households.¹⁴⁴ This source of revenue was so important to the clerical economy that the priests of two churches in Ozatskaia volost fought a legal battle over just five poor peasant homesteads,¹⁴⁵ and parish clergy of Riazan took each other to court over the right to conduct services on board boats moored to a wharf.¹⁴⁶ Competition between churches took on a new character after the Schism. Priests who served by the new liturgical books complained of being squeezed out by congregations who preferred a neighbouring priest who used the old rites.¹⁴⁷ Just as often quarrels arose between two churches over ownership of fields, houses, and barns, whilst battles between churches and monasteries over property were even more common.¹⁴⁸

The most common disputes found in episcopal archives are between staff members of the same church, usually over the sharing of land and income. The total revenue and resources of each parish was usually divided between the clergy so that the priest received two-thirds, or in some cases three-quarters, while the d'iachok received one-third or less.¹⁴⁹ A great many quarrels arose when one clergyman took more than his share, or when there were more clerics than a church could comfortably support.

15% involve clergy disputes.

¹⁴³ *SKE* pp.42-187.

¹⁴⁴ RGADA f.1443 op.2 d.55; f.1433 op.1 d.40; *OSS* Pt.3 pp.12,41, Pt.8 p.49; *RIB* 14 no.65 Ust.; *LZAK* 27 no.560; *LZAK* 14 p.40,114; *SKE* pp.99,172.

¹⁴⁵ *OSS* Pt.7 p.127 nos.1,2 (1699).

¹⁴⁶ RGADA 1433 op.1 d.7 (1679-82).

¹⁴⁷ *OSS* 11 p.164; Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, p.50 no.1 (1665).

¹⁴⁸ Many of these disagreements can be found in diocesan records from Vologda (eg. *OSS* Pt.3 pp.19,37-39, Pt.10 p.135, Pt.13 p.10, *LZAK* 27 no.708); Novgorod (*LZAK* 14 p.112), and Moscow (*SKE*, p.168,172; RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.2).

¹⁴⁹ The division of revenue varied from one to church to another: some priests received three-quarters of the revenue, others only a third if there were several other clergymen: *OSS* Pt.7, pp.60-63,68,76, Pt.9 p.69; *RIB* 14 no.108 Khol.

Occasionally these disagreements erupted between two priests at one church, but more often they were between a priest and his assistant minor cleric. 'For many years', petitioned a d'iachok of Iarbozersk volost against his priest, 'he alone has owned all the church land and the hamlets, and will not divide it with me,[...] and without land, I am starving at the church of God, lord, and cannot keep working'.¹⁵⁰ A ponomar' who had served for over twenty years appealed to his archbishop against the priest and d'iachok, who refused to give him any land. 'I, your orphan', he wrote, 'with my two sons perform ponomar' service in the church of God and we read the psalms and from the books, and we are only maintained, lord, by alms from parishioners'.¹⁵¹ Quarrels often flared into full-scale feuds, one clergy family against another. Brothers, sons, uncles, nephews, wives and mothers attacked and accused members of the rival family.¹⁵² Sometimes within the same family brother turned against brother, son-in-law against father-in-law, cheating one another out of their share and evicting their kin, often as a result of failed attempts to share meagre parish resources.¹⁵³ Grigorei, a Vologda priest, allocated one quarter of his land to support his brother Kozma and family in 1659, but when Grigorei's son inherited the benefice several years later he chased his uncle Kozma out and would not let his cousin serve as d'iachok.¹⁵⁴

Petty quarrels quickly became vicious. In order to oust rivals, some clerics resorted to denouncing colleagues for irregularities or making up fictitious charges.¹⁵⁵ Episcopal archives contain many petitions like the one from a d'iachok of Dubrovsk volost' in

¹⁵⁰ *OSS* Pt.10 p.87 no.71 (1684).

¹⁵¹ *OSS* Pt.7, p.76 (1686). Similar cases can be found in RGADA f.1433 op.1 dd.53,59,69.

¹⁵² Diocesan records from Moscow, Vologda and Riazan contain examples of such fights: eg. *SKE* pp.229-274; RGADA f.1443 op.2 d.48, f.1433 op.1 d.11,76; *SIB* 109 no.15 no.110/2; *OSS* Pt.3 pp.62-63, Pt.12 pp.65,187.

¹⁵³ *SKE* pp.49,96; *OSS* Pt.10 p.124.

¹⁵⁴ *OSS* Pt.3 p.43. Similar disputes appear in *OSS* Pt.5 p.60, Pt.7 pp.45,122,123, Pt.9 pp.120,150.

¹⁵⁵ There are numerous complaints by clergy that colleagues had lodged false petitions against them, a few of which are in *SKE* pp.109,172,190; *RIB* 25 no.84; *OSS* Pt.2 pp.65,69, Pt.3 p.44, Pt.7 pp.60-63,119,156, Pt.10 p.71, Pt.12 p.156; RGADA f.1443 op.2 d.48 (1687).

1665 accusing the priest at his church of serving without a transfer permit, or a report from a minor cleric in Vologda eparchy in 1676 denouncing his priest for performing an uncanonical marriage.¹⁵⁶ Another common ploy was to accuse a colleague of failing to pay episcopal dues, a charge which never failed to elicit an episcopal investigation.¹⁵⁷ Numerous arguments between clergy ended as violent punch-ups, brawls, even shoot-outs.¹⁵⁸ The priest and deacon of a church in Shuisk Gorodok were engrossed in a bitter dynastic feud that came to the notice of their bishop after their gunfights caused serious damage to the church building.¹⁵⁹ Death-threats were not uncommon, either. One Shuia priest appealed to the tsar for defence against his colleague, who 'beat me, that priest Aleksei, and swore at me and ripped the vestments from me in the sanctuary [...] and his brother black priest Iosif of Shuia hermitage beat me almost to death'.¹⁶⁰ A priest in Korkutsk volost' viciously beat up his d'iachok using the church censer as a club,¹⁶¹ and the priest of Verino village was accused of contracting an assassin to murder his d'iachok.¹⁶² Many times parish help was enlisted to drive out an unwanted colleague, but this strategy did not always work, for parishioners were often sympathetic to the wronged party.¹⁶³

The depressing frequency with which clergymen fought amongst themselves is an indication that in a great many churches there was a disproportion between the number of staff members and the economic resources at their disposal. It also reveals the uncertainty of the clerical economy, the stress of depending on the fickle good-will of the laity, resulting in insecurity and desperation. Fear of destitution, as much as

¹⁵⁶ *OSS* Pt.3 pp.19,33.

¹⁵⁷ See for example *OSS* Pt.3 pp.43,44.

¹⁵⁸ *RGADA* f.1433 op.1 dd.11,12,13,42,47,75, 76,77, f.1443 op.2 d.45; *OSS* Pt.3 pp.62-63, Pt.8 p.116, Pt.10 p.68.

¹⁵⁹ *OSS* Pt.9 pp.124-5 no.102 (1689).

¹⁶⁰ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.134 (1631).

¹⁶¹ *OSS* Pt.3 pp.62-63 no.113 (1694).

¹⁶² *OpMAMlu* 16 no.872 (1683-6).

¹⁶³ *OSS* Pt.3 pp.44,62-63, Pt.7 pp.36,45,54-57,76, Pt.11 p.76, Pt.12 pp.59,118; *SKE* p.186 no.19.

destitution itself, accounts for the grasping suspicious attitude that was all too prevalent among the Muscovite clergy. Competition between clergymen over land and livelihood appears to have been more intense in rural parishes than in urban ones, judging by the frequency and violence with which arguments erupted in the former. But wherever disputes arose, they were, as Gregory Freeze has observed of this same phenomenon amongst eighteenth century clergymen, detrimental to the prestige of the clerical estate. Moreover, these disagreements were a financial drain on the already overstretched resources of the white clergy, for they often resulted in long and expensive legal battles.¹⁶⁴ Bishops took disputes seriously and attempted to dispense justice, regularly ordering avaricious priests to give dispossessed colleagues their rightful share of revenue, but they did not have the means to investigate each case thoroughly.¹⁶⁵ The general rule followed by prelates was that the cleric who paid the episcopal tithe was in the right.¹⁶⁶

Although prelates took no evident pleasure from these sordid disputes, ultimately they and their episcopal staff were the only winners, pocketing sizeable legal fees.¹⁶⁷ The inadequacies of the system of clerical remuneration were painfully exposed in the feuding and fighting between clergy, in the disturbing rates of debt and theft by clerics, and in the reliance of priests on by-employments to make a living. Although staffing levels in parish churches were rarely as excessive as has previously been thought, clerical incomes were reduced by the sub-division of parishes, the appropriations of local laymen, and the failure of parishioners to provide sufficient land or an adequate salary for their clergy. As a result, clerical poverty was widespread, and perhaps even

¹⁶⁴ *PSZ* 3 no.1612 (Dec.1697) Articles 12 and 13 of Patriarch Adrian's instructions to priest-supervisors are specifically concerned with the collection of court costs from clerical disputes over church income and land. The guilty party was fined 1 grivna (10 kopecks) per day from when the case began till when it was decided.

¹⁶⁵ Bishops were inundated with petitions of this sort, as diocesan records show: eg. *OSS* Pt.5 p.60, Pt.7 pp.45,54-56,76,92, Pt.10 pp.87,149, Pt.12 p.233; *RGADA* f.1433 op.1 dd.13,42,60,77.

¹⁶⁶ *OSS* Pt.3 pp.43-44 no.64 (1682), Pt.7 p.76 (1686), Pt.12 p.156 no.165 (1691).

¹⁶⁷ *OSS* Pt.7 p.127 nos.1,2 (1699).

increased. Seventeenth-century prelates considered that provision of adequate land was the ideal solution and frowned upon the lower clergy's enthusiastic involvement in private commercial enterprises to supplement their incomes, but eighteenth-century thinkers and bureaucrats viewed both farming and trade as improper for a priest and detrimental to the Church.¹⁶⁸ The Spiritual Regulation of 1721 decreed that parishioners should pay a specified tax to the clergy, 'so that, as far as possible, they will have complete self-sufficiency,' and several decades later Catherine the Great agreed that the clergy needed 'adequate support free from popular control', but ultimately nothing was done.¹⁶⁹ No equivalent to Queen Anne's Bounty was provided to eliminate clerical poverty in Russia,¹⁷⁰ hence clergymen remained dependant on the goodwill of their parishioners and the mercy of their bishops.

¹⁶⁸ Pososhkov, p.174; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.118; Bellius†, p.126.

¹⁶⁹ *Spiritual Regulation*, p.55; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.118.

¹⁷⁰ Queen Anne's Bounty was introduced in England in 1704-1717 to provide adequate remuneration for clergy of poor parishes. It was derived from donations from the laity and Crown, and by taxing rich clergy: *Princes and Paupers in the English Church*, pp.231-32.

The Priest and His Parish

Part Two: Clergy and Society

'They do not obey church prohibitions or punishments, because in the countryside the church buildings belong to the laity, and the clergy are elected to the churches by the laity. If a priest or deacon begins to teach the lay people or to prohibit any sin, those people dismiss the priest or cleric from the church.'

Petition from deacon Artemei of Ustiug to Tsar Aleksei, c.1652¹

Muscovite parishes in the seventeenth century were largely under the control of the laity. In the great majority of cases it was the parishioners or patron who called the tune: they built and maintained the churches, appointed and paid the clergy at their own expense, and only rarely did individual bishops succeed in reducing parish autonomy until well into the following century. The church elder, who was elected by the laity to oversee church funds, had greater authority in the parish than the priest, and the church building and its side-room (*trapeza*) were regarded by parishioners as a community centre, or village hall, where meetings and beer-drinking parties took place alongside divine services. Parish clergy were in an anomalous position of subservience to the people, whilst representing Church authority. It is not the aim of this present work to describe parish life *per se*, a subject which has been dealt with by previous scholars.² Rather, it is our task to assess the role of the clergyman within the parish setting and evaluate his links with, and value to, his wider community, -- a relationship which brought forth conflicts, but necessitated also mutual co-operation.

¹ *ChOidr* 1907 Bk.1 Smes' no.4.

² The parish, rather than the clergy, is the focus of research by M.Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie na Russkom Severe v XVII v.* 2 Vols. (M.1909-12), S.V.Iushkov, *Ocherki iz istorii prikhodskoi zhizni na severe Rossii v XV-XVII v.* (Vologda,1913), N.D.Zol'nikova, *Sibirskaiia prikhodskaiia obshchina v XVIII vek.* (Novosibirsk,1990) and V.Shevzov, 'Popular Orthodoxy in Late Imperial Rural Russia', Unpubl.PhD thesis (Yale,1994).

PART ONE: ROLE OF THE PARISH CLERGY

Spiritual pastorship

In the eyes of the Church, the chief responsibility of a parish priest was to teach his flock the tenets of the Orthodox faith.³ Teaching traditionally took the form of public reading from holy writings and saints' lives during church services, alongside private counselling during confession, but in the late 1630s a reformist movement arose amongst the clergy called the Zealots of Piety (*bogoliubtsy*).⁴ The reformers endorsed public preaching as a means to teaching church decorum and moral reform, but their support base among the secular clergy does not appear to have been very extensive. Zealots we know of were mostly from Moscow and towns along the central Volga, but not far beyond, and there was clearly a great deal of opposition to their reforms from their ordained colleagues. Daniil of Kostroma, Login of Murom, Avvakum of Iurevets, and Ivan Neronov were all subject to violent attack and expulsion by hostile clergymen and townsmen, and Stefan Vonifat'ev was called a 'pious hypocrite' by angry Moscow priests.⁵ Moreover, the swiftness with which the Zealots' movement foundered after a rupture in the leadership in the early 1650s, following Patriarch Nikon's alteration of traditional rites, is an indication of its unpopularity. Indeed, the reformers' introduction of preaching and single-voice chanting (*edinoglasie*) were disliked by clergy and laity alike, not only because they made the services longer, but because innovations were viewed with suspicion and hostility by the Muscovite Orthodox.⁶ Few parishioners

³ Prelates' exhortations emphasise teaching as the priest's primary duty: eg. *AAE* 4 no.115; *PSZ* 3 no.1612 art.8 (6 Dec 1697); *RIB* 14 no.196 Khol.; Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.51; N.A.Popov, ed. 'Materialy dlia istorii Arkhangel'skoi eparkhii', *ChOISR* 1880 Bk.2 p.6.

⁴ For further details on the Zealots of Piety, see N.V.Rozhdestvenskii, ed. 'K istorii bor'by s tserkovnymi bezporiadkami', *ChOISR* 1902 Bk.2 Smes', pp.1-31; P.Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, pp.54-59,150-2, and Lupinin, *Religious Revolt in the 17th c.* (Princeton,1984).

⁵ RGADA f.27 op.1 dd.68,69; S.A.Belokurov, *Iz dukhovnoi zhizni moskovskago obshchestva XVII v.* (M.1902) p.49; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.141,142,146; G.Michels, 'Myths and Realities' pp.32-63,50-53,238-39. For further information on Avvakum, see *RIB* Vol.39, *LZAK* Vol.24, P.Pascal, *Avvakum et les debuts du raskol*, (Paris, 1938).

⁶ Belokurov, *Iz dukhovnoi zhizni*, p.49; RGADA f.27 op.1 d.68,69; *Life of Archpriest*

wanted preachers telling them to change their habits, and the attempts of the Zealots to stamp out traditional amusements incited a furious reaction.⁷ Drained by the turmoil of the Schism, the reform movement ultimately left little trace. There is no evidence of any lasting spiritual or moral improvement, and priests who did preach to their congregations during the last quarter of the seventeenth century appear to have been influenced by Simon Polotskii and Ukrainian clerics, rather than by the Zealots.⁸

To the end of the century and beyond, the primary mode of teaching the faith to parishioners continued to be undertaken on a one-to-one basis when penitents came to confess, for as S.Smironov has pointed out, confession in Old Russia was not only a sacramental rite but also an edifying conversation.⁹ It was not unusual for Russians to come to confession only once a year, usually during Lent, and a great many did not come for years on end,¹⁰ but even so, a confessor's teaching could have great influence in the lives of pious Muscovites. Iuliania Osorina of Murom rarely went to church, but her exemplary charitable deeds early in the seventeenth century were largely prompted by the teaching of her priest, Potapei.¹¹ Precepts learnt from a parish priest were often followed unswervingly by the ^{parishioner} ~~catechumen~~ till death: statements made by Old Believers interrogated before the episcopal courts show that they held fast to the rites and beliefs they had been taught by their confessors many years previously.¹² Few priests held the influential position of a royal confessor, whose counsel could change the course of the nation. Archpriest Stefan Vonifat'ev's teaching is clearly reflected in royal decrees

Avvakum, p.139. On edinoglasie, see Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, pp.57-59.

⁷ *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.140; *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, pp.260-1.

⁸ The anonymous northern priest who wrote a collection of sermons called *Statir* in the 1680s admits he was following the example of Polotskii: *Statir*, p.632; Sermons in 17th-century Muscovy are discussed by Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, p.150-176.

⁹ S.Smironov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, (M.1914), pp.133-36. Confession, counselling and teaching are still linked in the modern Orthodox Church.

¹⁰ See below: footnotes 93-100.

¹¹ 'Povest' ob Iul'ianii Osor'inoi', *Pamiatniki literatury Drevnei Rusi: XVII vek*, (M.1988) Bk.5 pp.99.

¹² Barsov, 'Sudnye protsessy,' *ChOIDR* 1882 Bk.3 no.5 (1683-84); G.Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.164-65,367,382,540; *RIB* 38 p.479; *ChOIDR* 1905 Bk.2 Smes', no.4 p.49.

issued by Tsar Aleksei prohibiting neo-pagan practices and ordering Muscovites to go to church and keep the Orthodox fasts.¹³ Prelates were aware of the influence a priest could have on his flock, for good or for evil, and as the Schism spread they became more vociferous in commanding clergy to be diligent in teaching their spiritual children true Orthodoxy.¹⁴ Patriarch Ioakim's threats of dismissal for neglecting to teach were accompanied by copies of 'Spiritual Exhortation' (*Uvet Dukhovniy*), which was written to help priests combat schism and distributed free of charge to all eparchies,¹⁵ but in many parishes these measures were too little and too late to equip the clergy to counter the heresy and heterodoxy they encountered.¹⁶

Almost all Muscovite communities wanted their own priest, even though it would have been cheaper for them to share one with another village or to have none at all.¹⁷ The reason was simple: only a priest could administer the 'life-giving' sacraments of the Orthodox Church: baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, and matrimony.¹⁸ They wanted him to bless the most important rites of passage in their lives, and to say prayers for them when death threatened. Countless petitions and

¹³ Decrees of 5 Dec.1648 and 13 Dec.1649, cited by P.Ivanov, *Opisanie gosudarstvennago arkhiva starykh del*, p.296 and in *AI* 4 no.30 p.124. Certain later decrees also reflect Stefan's moral influence, eg *AAE* 4 no.115 (10 March 1660). In contrast, Stefan's successor Andrei Postnikov was more interested in promoting his own interests than promoting the tsar's piety.

¹⁴ See fn.3.

¹⁵ Potter, 'The Russian Church,' p.414.

¹⁶ In Vologda eparchy, parish priests were still using the pre-Nikonian rites in 1672 (*OSS* Pt.11 p.164). As Michels has demonstrated, priests were often teaching old rites till late in the century simply because they had not been taught the new ones themselves: 'Myths and Realities', pp.409-410,413,419,443.

¹⁷ Petitions for a priest can be found in *RIB* 24 p.192 no.20 (1641); *ASP* no.1 (1646); Müller, *Istoriia Sibiri*, 2 pp.265,531,534,476; *SKE* pp.52,60,70,117,134,180. Vera Shevzov's research on 19th century parish communities reveals likewise that a priest was considered indispensable, and all communities wanted one. V.Shevzov, 'Popular Orthodoxy in late Imperial Rural Russia: 1860-1914', Unpubl.PhD thesis (Yale,1994) p.286.

¹⁸ A priest could administer six of the seven sacraments of the Orthodox Church; only a bishop could administer ordination. Muscovite religious rites are described by Olearius, *Travels*, pp.273-276, King, *Rites and Ceremonies*, pp.10,336-8, and other foreign visitors to Russia.

innumerable contracts testify to the concern of Muscovites that their clergyman should be diligent in visiting the sick, saying prayers for newly-delivered mothers, administering extreme unction to the dying and conducting religious services.¹⁹ Parishioners liked to have prayers said for a great variety of other occasions as well, for, as one Englishman observed during his stay in Muscovy, 'this is thought to be more holy, and effectual, if it be repeated by the Priest's mouth, rather than by his owne'.²⁰ The priest's instruction manual for the performance of these duties was the *trebnik*, the full version of which contained the canons, prayers, rules, penances, and rites he needed for almost every occasion.²¹

These rites were a clergyman's bread and butter, so to speak, but his status as the community's link with heaven could be enhanced by the appearance of supernatural phenomena in his parish.²² The parish clergy were the chief beneficiaries of the numerous miracle cults that sprung up in the seventeenth century. Although these cults frequently began with the laity having dreams or experiencing healing which they attributed to a saint's icon or relics, it was the priests who publicised the wonders.²³ In Glumovo village in 1647 and in Shuia in 1666, for instance, miraculous icons gained widespread fame only after the parish clergy began holding services in the icon's honour, as a consequence of which a steady stream of supplicants came bringing alms

¹⁹ For example, *RIB* 14 no.174 Khol.(1657); *SKE* p.42 no.1 (1662), *OSS* Pt.7 p.73 (1686).

²⁰ Giles Fletcher *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, p.87. The 16th-century *Domostroi* recommended that a priest be called for all occasions: *The Domostroi*, pp.75-78,179.

²¹ There are many extant copies of well-used *trebniki* inscribed with the names of the priests who owned them in GPB, RGIA and the British Library. As Pavlov has pointed out, the fact that Peter the Great's *Spiritual Regulation* accused priests of holding blindly to the *trebnik* by issuing excessively long penances provides a measure of proof that priests were actually using the *trebnik*: A.Pavlov, *Nomokanon pri Bolshom Trebnike*. (M.1897), pp.65-66.

²² There are several recorded cases of Muscovites attributing their delivery from natural disasters to divine intervention and consequently becoming generous benefactors of the Church: *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, p.15; *Vologodskie eparkhial'nyia vedomosti*, (1864) pribavleniia p.26; *AI* 4 no.170 p.330-1 (1662-3).

²³ New cults that began in 1636,1647 and1657 are recorded in *AI* 4 no.20 p.52; *RIB* 21 p.524; *Tobol'skie eparkhial'nyia vedomosti*, 1882 nos.1-24 p.489.

and offerings.²⁴ As a guard against fraud, the Church ordered priests to record details of cures so that an official commission could verify the claims.²⁵ These records show that the clergy themselves frequently reported that they had experienced miracles, no doubt in part because they were in close proximity to the shrines and predisposed to believe.²⁶ In a few cases, however, there may have been a certain amount of manipulation of miracles for private profit. Olearius described two clergymen in Arkhangel'sk who were convicted of fraudulently imputing miracles to icons to make the people contribute alms.²⁷ A case from Kargopol illustrates how easy it was for a shrewd cleric to orchestrate a miracle cult. On 25 September 1632 priest Gerasim of Trinity church in Kargopol claimed he had a dream in which St.Makarii told him to have an icon painted and sent to Khergozersk monastery. Thereafter, the new icon caused a number of miracles to occur. Of the forty-one miracles listed at the monastery, however, eight were experienced by priest Gerasim himself, and a quarter of the total were experienced by members of the clergy. By creating for himself a role as St.Makarii's spokesman, Gerasim evidently gained a reputation for being a holy man in Kargopol and its environs. We do not know if his renown increased the attendance and offerings at his own parish church, but his icon brought fame and financial benefit for Khergozersk monastery, as a result of which Gerasim became an honoured guest at the monastery and a trusted friend of the abbot. He was quite possibly using the icon story to prepare himself a comfortable nest for the time when widowhood or old age

²⁴ *AAE* 4 no.323 (1647); Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, prilozhenie, no.86; Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, p.107. In the 19th century too, miracles were of use to clergy: see S.Dixon, 'How holy was Holy Russia?' *Reinterpreting Russia*, ed. by G.Hosking and R.Service (London, 1999) p.33.

²⁵ Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, prilozhenie no.86 (1666), *AAE* 4 no.323 (1647); *LZAK* 27 no.669 (1665). According to Bushkovitch, the Church hierarchy tightened control over local cults after mid-century: *Religion and Society*, pp.107-09.

²⁶ 'Povest' ob Iul'ianii Osor'inoi', *Pamiatniki literatury Drevnei Rusi: XVII vek*, p.101; Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, pp.107,108-9,115,116,119,124.

²⁷ Olearius, *Travels*, p.250. Similar tactics of promoting miracle cults for personal gain were occasionally used by clerics in medieval England: B.Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, (Aldershot, 1987) pp.68-76.

forced him into the cloister, knowing his past record assured him of a warm welcome at Khergozersk, without the usual fee.²⁸

Administrative and charitable duties

Possessing literacy skills in a predominately illiterate community, the clergy traditionally served as village school teachers, a role that was endorsed by both the Church hierarchy and the laity.²⁹ Teaching was very basic, consisting of little more than reading and writing using the Slavic primer and learning portions of scripture by memory.³⁰ This duty was usually the job of the minor clergy, and was sometimes listed in a cleric's contract: parishioners of St.Nicholas church near Moscow, for instance, stated in their ponomar's contract that they expected him to teach small boys 'and carefully oversee and instruct them, so that they are reading the books as it is written and not incorrectly, [...and ensure] that they don't take the books out of the church to their homes without asking or without anyone knowing'.³¹ Only in the eighteenth century did the clergy begin to lose their monopoly on teaching, as State reforms reduced the parish church's function as the centre of education.³² In addition to educational and religious duties, Muscovite parish clergymen had a number of administrative obligations to fulfil for their congregations, chiefly in the sphere of writing up and signing their petitions, transactions, and official documents, and witnessing and executing their wills.³³ A confessor's signature on a deed of bondage or

²⁸ 'Skazanie o chudesakh', *ChOidr* 1902 Bk.3 Smes', no.1 pp.4-30. Widowed clergy are the subject of chapter seven.

²⁹ *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, pp.248-50,260; *OSS* Pt.5 p.24 no.43 (1673); *AAE* 3 no.184 (1629). The Stoglav Council of 1551 recommended that qualified clerics should be appointed in each town to teach children, and the 1666-67 Church Council likewise ordered priests to teach their children: Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council and the parish priests', *RH* 7 pp.67-68; *DAI* 5 no.102 p.473.

³⁰ On Muscovite education see chapter one, pp13-14.

³¹ *AIu* no.287 (1686).

³² Cracraft, *Church Reform*, pp.93-94,262-76; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, pp.150-155; Hughes, *Peter the Great*, pp.298-309.

³³ A sample of the numerous petitions, wills and contracts written by clergy for the laity can be found in *RIB* 21 pp.807-10; *RIB* 12 no.147 Ust.; *AIuB* 1 nos.86-106; *AIuB* 2 no.221 iv,vi; *AIuB* 3 no.279; *LZAK* 14 p.61; *DAI* 9 no.55; *AI* 5 no.13; *Pamiatniki*

release certificate was a legal requirement until 1628, and even after this date priests were asked to sign deeds because it was necessary to have a literate person's signature.³⁴ In legal disputes between laymen, plaintiffs and defendants alike called upon their priest as a witness, for a confessor's evidence could be crucial.³⁵ In a court case in Vologda in 1642 the testimony of priest Sergei saved a widow from being disinherited by her in-laws, who had claimed that she had not been legally married to the deceased.³⁶ Many legal battles were averted by the intervention of parish priests, who were frequently called upon to mediate in disputes, to reconcile quarrelling parties, write up their agreements and help them settle out of court. 'Our spiritual father priest Paramon of St.Piatnitsa's reconciled us', reads a typical legal agreement between two peasants of Lezhskii volost.³⁷ In one unhappy case, a Voronezh priest abused his role as reconciler to take revenge on an enemy. Priest Iakov and his cronies enticed their victim into a house by promising a reconciliation with another man, legal records tell us, 'and having tied him up, they began to torment and torture him, and having tortured him,[...] they extorted twenty roubles from him'.³⁸

Muscovite churches traditionally doubled up as safe-deposit boxes for parishioners to store their valuables, hence parish priests were encumbered with the onerous task of serving as a kind of local banker for their communities.³⁹ This was an obligation that laid on the clergyman a great deal of trouble, not to mention temptation, for thefts from

delovoi pis'mennosti, nos.89, 90,129, 157,159, 183; *OSS* Pt.2 p.10, Pt.7 p.84, Pt.8 pp.16,32, Pt.9 pp.56,99,111,117, Pt.12 p.117.

³⁴ For example, priest Gerasim signed a deed for the release of a serf in 1682: *AIuB* 1 no.93 v (1682). According to Smirnov, the Archbishop of Kholmogory ordered his clergy to not sign any deeds of bondage or release in 1683: *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, pp.99-100.

³⁵ *OSS* Pt.11 p.34 no.27 (1650), Pt.11 p.37 no.30 (1652), Pt.11 p.45 no.36 (1653), Pt.11 p.64 no.52 (1657), Pt.11 p.67 no.55 (1658).

³⁶ *OSS* Pt.13 pp.17-33, no.21/9.

³⁷ *OSS* Pt.11 p.101 no.88 (1664); Other examples of reconciliation are in Pt.11 p.125 no.114, I (1667); Pt.11 p.173 no.150 (1670); *RGIA* f.834 op.5 d.51 (1692).

³⁸ The record ends with Iakov's imprisonment pending trial: *DGPV* 2 p.87 (1641).

³⁹ *OSS* Pt.1 p.35 no.19 (1696); Pt.7 p.13 (1655); Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 p.39.

churches were not at all uncommon and brought blame upon the priest, even when he was innocent.⁴⁰ In 1688 one thousand roubles was stolen from a box placed for safe-keeping in the crypt of St. Demetrius' church in Novgorod.⁴¹ In another Novgorod case, priest Kozma of St. Prokopiĭ's was sued for the return of a gold reliquary cross which he had been given custody of, but Kozma was unable to return it to its rightful owners because Metropolitan Nikon had seen the costly cross and expropriated it.⁴² Apart from storing valuables in the church, the clergy had little to do with general parish finances. Instead, the church elder and treasurer, who were elected by the parochial council (*mir*), managed the parish funds and leased out church land to tenants.⁴³ Only on rare occasions do we find mention of a priest acting as treasurer.⁴⁴ Under Archbishop Afanasii, however, Kholmogory parish clergy began to take a more prominent role in parish business.⁴⁵ In order to reduce the power of the laity, Afanasii decreed in October 1685 that at each church the priest was to take control of the finances, and the elder would henceforth be an assistant, subordinate to the priest, -- a reversal of the former status quo.⁴⁶ Afanasii's policies were not a complete success: the laity retained more control than he wished.⁴⁷ Even so, his reform elevated the role of the clergy, the effect of which can be seen from 393 letters concerning parish business in the archives of the Church of St. George and Epiphany in Lodma. There survive 252 letters written during the sixteenth century, but only three of them mention the parish priest at all: he evidently had no say in the parish economy. Likewise, the clerical role is

⁴⁰ Clergy were occasionally accused of theft from deposited property or from church funds: *RIB* 35 no.115 p.204; *RIB* 12 nos.269,287 Ust.; SPIRIAN op.1 f.117 d.175; RGIA f.834 op.5 d.40.

⁴¹ *LZAK* 14 p.82.

⁴² *LZAK* 14 p.20 (1652).

⁴³ *RIB* 25 no.67; *RIB* 12 nos.818,828; Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 pp.41-3.

⁴⁴ *RIB* 12 no.144 Ust.(1683); *RIB* 12 nos.6,7,9,10,11,12 Khol. From 1613 to 1621 priests of Kuropol'sk Saviour church served as treasurers (*prikashchiki*), with responsibility for collecting rents from church hamlets and paying expenses, such as repairs and payments for processional cross-bearers.

⁴⁵ *RIB* 25 no.277-279 (1630s).

⁴⁶ *RIB* 14 no.195 (Oct.1685); Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 p.86.

⁴⁷ *RIB* 25 nos.276,303,309; Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 p.46.

negligible in the 141 letters written between 1600 and 1686: the Lodma priest is mentioned in only twenty, almost all of which are concerned with purely clerical matters such as the payment of episcopal dues or appointment of new clergy. In contrast, after 1686 every letter from the Kholmogory episcopal office was addressed primarily to the priest rather than to the parochial council, as had formerly been the case, and in virtually every letter the clergyman takes a central role in parish financial affairs that were previously undertaken exclusively by the laity.⁴⁸ Afanasii's policy, purportedly generated by his concern that church elders had been pilfering from parish funds, was an intrinsic part of his plan to use parish priests as his local administrators, thereby extending episcopal control into the remotest corners of his eparchy.⁴⁹

Afanasii was not the only hierarch to make use of the white clergy for administrative purposes and for the maintenance of central authority. Church and State alike placed demands on parish priests that foreshadowed Peter the Great's 'service clergy'. Scholars have tended to underestimate the degree to which Peter's exploitation of the clerical estate was a continuation or intensification of his predecessors' policies.⁵⁰ From early in the seventeenth century the State required clergymen to sign on behalf of elected civic officials, such as tax collectors and prison guards, and to draw up documents and sign for army recruits.⁵¹ Clergymen were liable to be called on by the government to serve as witnesses during tax assessments, or when there was a legal dispute over property boundaries.⁵² Like civil servants in a Justice department, the white clergy were burdened with numerous legal duties, especially priest-supervisors, whose

⁴⁸ *RIB* 25 nos.246-394.

⁴⁹ SPIRIAN f.117 op.1 d.465 (1658); *RIB* 14 no.473 Khol. The policies of Archbishop Afanasii are the subject of V.Veriuzhskii, *Afanasii, Arkhiiepiskop Kholmogorskii i Vazhskii*, (Spb.1908).

⁵⁰ Cracraft, *Church Reform*, pp.76-77,100, 246, Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, pp.27-30; Hughes, *Peter the Great*, pp.345-47; E.Anisimov, *The Reforms of Peter the Great*, transl. by J.Alexander (Armonk, 1993) p.208,210

⁵¹ Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, p.261; *DGPV* 1 p.55 xix (1627), 3 p.155 (1670); *RIB* 24 pp.931-1042 (1646).

⁵² *AIuB* 2 nos.132,135,136 iii and iv,137; *DAI* 2 no.56 p.133 (1627); *RIB* 35 no.55 p.98 (1606); *RIB* 38 p.92 (1597).

responsibilities extended to interrogating witnesses and judging defendants.⁵³ In both civil and episcopal courts, confessors had to assist in cases involving their parishioners and to sign their statements.⁵⁴ Theoretically, priests did not have to reveal the secrets of the confessional, but in practice they were required to disclose the intentions of their spiritual children in certain cases, even if it meant relying on statements made in confession. Information provided by a confessor could have a significant bearing on cases involving separation, divorce, and other moral issues. When a nobleman's wife left him in 1662, for instance, the wife's confessor was summoned to court to give evidence regarding charges against her,⁵⁵ and similarly, when a Vologda woman was charged with bigamy, her father-in-law's confessor was interrogated. The Vologda priest's evidence that the father-in-law had approved of her second marriage could only have been known through the confessional, and was crucial to resolving the case and rescuing her from life-long incarceration in a convent.⁵⁶ Legally, though, the confessor was not bound to disclose his spiritual children's secrets: 'interrogate confessors in chancelleries about oral commands and wills, but do not interrogate the confessor about what has been told to him in repentance', Tsar Fedor decreed in 1680.⁵⁷ Fedor's successor Peter, in contrast, made it a legal duty for priests to disclose any 'illegality [...] treason or mutiny' revealed in confession. Those who failed to do so were liable to be tried for treason themselves.⁵⁸

Long before Peter the Great issued his decree of 20 February 1724 making parish priests responsible for keeping registers of births, deaths and marriages,⁵⁹ the seventeenth-century white clergy were being used as registrars by both Church and

⁵³ The role of priest-supervisors is discussed in chapter nine.

⁵⁴ *LZAK* 27 no.792 (1668); *OSS* Pt. pp.4,5,7,9,26,85,106, Pt.8 pp.23,25,29,57, Pt.11 pp.14,25,26,29,30,31,34,37,45,48,53,64,67,76,79,91,121,125,135,143,145,173, Pt.12 pp.24,72, Pt.13 pp.4,17; Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, p.261 no.11 (1621).

⁵⁵ *OSS* Pt.11 p.91 no.73. A similar example is *OSS* Pt.10 pp.78-79 no.60 (1679).

⁵⁶ *OSS* Pt.10 p.105 (1685).

⁵⁷ *PSZ* 2 no.827 (1680); *LZAK* 27 nos.835,860 (1669,670).

⁵⁸ *Spiritual Regulation*, Article 11 of the Supplement, 28 April 1722, pp.60-61.

⁵⁹ *PSZ* 7 no.4480 pp.266-67 (1724): Petrine registers were called *Metricheskie knigi*.

State. They had to furnish their episcopal office with data on the number of marriages, illegitimate births and irregular deaths there had been in the parish, and were required to keep four registers listing full particulars of the names, dates and addresses of all persons presenting for marriage and baptism, and their sponsors.⁶⁰ Successive Muscovite governments called on the parish clergy to supply information and statistics on the deceased after the great plague of 1654 and subsequent epidemics.⁶¹ Neither was Peter the first ruler to exploit clerics for publicising 'the monarch's commands'.⁶² From the earliest years of the seventeenth century, parish clergy were obliged to announce every royal birth, death and marriage,⁶³ to read out the tsar's letters in times of war or natural disaster, to order the people to pray for the royal family and for the tsar's armies, and to announce news of victories.⁶⁴ Parish priests had to be ready to perform a variety of other duties for the State when needed, such as administering the oath of allegiance,⁶⁵ billeting troops, and serving as *tseloval'niki* to collect the government's grain requisitions from the people.⁶⁶

For the provision of social welfare, too, the Muscovite State looked to the ordinary parish priest. The role of the Russian Orthodox Church in social work has been

⁶⁰ *DAI* 5 no.102 p.461-2 (1666-7). The Church hierarchy wanted this information to facilitate the full collection of their fees and to prevent uncanonical practices. Many examples of birth, death and marriage reports from priests can be found in Vologda diocesan records (*OSS*) and Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.37.

⁶¹ *AIuB* 2 nos.132,136 iii,iv, 137; *DGPV* Vol.1 pp.154,162, Vol.2 p.3; *DAI* 4 no.29; *DAI* 11 no.42.

⁶² *PSZ* 5 no.3169 (17 Feb.1719); Hughes, *Peter the Great*, p.345.

⁶³ *RIB* 35 nos.371,341,353,448; *PSZ* 1 nos.235,444,446,464,495; *PSZ* 2 nos.748,878,881,1356, *PSZ* 3 no.1378,1406,1417; *AAE* 2 no.31; *DAI* 8 nos.9,102; *RIB* 5 no.287.

⁶⁴ *AAE* 2 nos.28,57,58,67,73; *AAE* 3 no.333,334; *PSZ* 1 nos.47,514; *DAI* 3 no.123, *DAI* 4 no.16, *DAI* 8 no.33; *Letopis' Dvinskaiia*, p.96; *DRV* pt.11, vii, p.173; *RIB* 14 no.144 Khol.; *RIB* 35 nos.69,429.

⁶⁵ Administering the oath was usually the cathedral archpriest's responsibility (see chapter five), but parish priests performed this role in certain districts on Crown land, or when Moscow nobles were sick and unable to go to the cathedral to take the oath: *PSZ* 2 no.620 p.3 (1676); *RGADA* f.1107 op.1, pt.2.d.3453 (1688).

⁶⁶ *AI* 3 no.280 (1614); *Rukopisi biblioteki tobol'skago gubernskago muzei*, Pt.1 pp.25,33 nos.93,121,126 (1636-45), Pt.2 p.19 no.166 (1653-54).

unjustly denigrated, not only by Soviet and Western historians, but also by Russian scholars.⁶⁷ Papkov was one of the few pre-Revolutionary Russian historians to perceive the seventeenth-century parish as a centre of 'good works and enlightenment', whilst other scholars denied it.⁶⁸ Extant documentary evidence suggests that Papkov was correct. Almost every church provided some form of free accommodation for the elderly poor and widows who were 'maintained by the church'.⁶⁹ Paupers, orphans and other homeless wanderers were housed either in huts in the priest's yard (*dvor*) or within his own house.⁷⁰ We know of several altruistic clergymen who fed as many as a hundred unfortunates every day.⁷¹ Monasteries cared for the needy too, but parishes were arguably more numerous and accessible. The government confirmed parish charitable obligations by sending war refugees to be homed with clergymen in 1618-21 and 1648-51, and by taxing the clergy for the redemption of prisoners-of-war after 1661.⁷² The Church too, expected white priests to take responsibility for the poor. In 1677/8, for instance, Patriarch Ioakim ordered all paupers' shacks in Moscow streets to be demolished and the inhabitants sent to parish churches, where they were to build themselves new huts on church land, and in 1682 he taxed the lower clergy to pay for

⁶⁷ Not only the Muscovite Church, but also the 19th-century Russian Church has been accused of negligence in social welfare. A step towards redressing this misconception is S.Dixon's study, 'The Church's Social Role in St.Petersburg, 1880-1914', *Church, Nation and State in Russia and Ukraine*, ed. G.Hosking, pp.167-192.

⁶⁸ Iushkov, *Ocherki*, pp.49,92; A.Papkov, 'Drevnerusskie prikhody,' *Bogoslovskii Vestnik* (M.1897) nos.2-4; M.Bogoslovskii *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie na Russkom Severe v XVII v.* 2 Vols. (Moscow 1909-12); 'Pechalovanie dukhovenstva za opal'nykh', *ChOIDR* 1876 Bk.1. Most research on Russian charity has concentrated on the post-Petrine period, eg. 'Blagotvoritel'nost' v drevnei Rusi', *Trudovaia Pomoshch'*, 1901 no.6; D.Ransell, *Mothers of Misery*, (Princeton,N.J.1988); A.Lindenmeyr, *Poverty is not a Vice*, (Princeton,1996).

⁶⁹ Parish-maintained homes for the poor are mentioned in *DAI* 6 no.90; *OSS* Pt.8 p.81; Storozhevii, *Materialy dlia istorii deloproizvodstva*, I-XIV; *MTS* 4 p.17; Kunin, *Gorod Kashin*, no.20; Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, p.91; G.N.Anpilogov, *Riazanskaia pistsovaia pripravochnaia kniga*, (Moscow, 1982), p.324.

⁷⁰ *RIB* 12 no.245 (Ust) p.1150-1; *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.186, (1683); *OSS* Pt.3 p.3 no.1 (1652), Pt.11 p.139 no.129 (1668).

⁷¹ Ransell, *Mothers of Misery*, p.24.

⁷² *RIB* 38 pp.446,484,465; *LZAK* 27 n.115; *AAE* 2 no.52; *DAI* 1 no.77; *AI* 5 no.37,264; *AI* 5 no.141; *DAV* no.157; *DGPV* 3 p.48 cvii, *PSZ* no.956; *AAE* 4 nos.228,232; *AI* 4 nos.33,216; SPIRIAN f.171 Novgorod, Pt.5, nos.206,209.

Moscow almshouses.⁷³ Clergymen sometimes employed homeless persons as servants, in which capacity they provided cheap labour for the cleric. Deacon Dmitrii Stefanov of Dmitrov uezd agreed to provide food, clothes and shelter for the four children of a destitute foreigner, on the understanding that they would 'serve him in everything and do all sorts of work', according to the written contract between the two men.⁷⁴ But taking in strangers could incur risks: it was not uncommon for a priest to find himself robbed or betrayed by those he sheltered. After priest Nikifor of Moshka village and his wife had looked after an orphaned beggar-girl for seven years, she tried to extort money from them by falsely accusing the priest of rape.⁷⁵ A similar charge was made against priest Aleksei of Totma by a protégée who had become pregnant out of wedlock; she later admitted accusing him 'so that the priest would have to pay the fine'.⁷⁶ Despite these problems, priests could not escape from the obligation to shelter these people, for the Muscovite State offered no alternative to paupers other than to find aid from the Church, and the Petrine government basically continued these policies. Peter's plans for orphanages and hospitals relied largely on parish clergy to serve as carers and administrators.⁷⁷

In an effort to extirpate religious dissent, the Crown, in league with the Church, looked to the lower clergy to police the countryside and inform on schismatics. In a decree of 10 March 1660, Tsar Aleksei commanded all priests to record the names of

⁷³ Zabelin, *Materialy*, p.1085; *AAE* 4 no.275; *PSZ* 2 no.956 p.468 (1682).

⁷⁴ Kholmogorov, 'Istoricheskie materialy', *ChOISR* 1911 Bk.3, pp.154-190. Also *RIB* 12 no.245.

⁷⁵ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.186; RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.45 (1683).

⁷⁶ An episcopal fine was levied for illegitimacies, payable by the father. *RIB* 12 no.245 (Ust) pp.1150-51. In another case, a woman who lived with a priest's family stole their property: *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.130. Other cases of theft from priests are RGADA f.1107 op.1 Pt.2 d.2988 (1682); *OSS* Pt.8 p.35, Pt.9 p.63, Pt.11 p.81; Pt.12 p.178; *LZAK* 27 nos.522,730; *RIB* 25 nos.54,55; *AI* 5 no.223.

⁷⁷ Cracraft, *Church Reform*, pp.96-97. A decree of 1704 ordered midwives to take malformed infants to the parish priest, who was required to report the matter to the Monastery prikaz. Peter also ordered that orphanages were to be founded near parish churches 'as is seemly', and orphanage carers were to be paid from 'surplus' parish revenue: *PSZ* 4 no.1964, *PSZ* 5 no.2856.

parishioners who failed to appear in church or attend confession and send these details to the local governor.⁷⁸ This decree was regularly re-issued in succeeding years with only slight variations, and it continued to be official policy even in the eighteenth century.⁷⁹ For most of the seventeenth century, it seems, hopes were high that by this means dissenters could be weeded out.⁸⁰ Lists of non-attender's were duly compiled, and a number of parish priests denounced schismatics in their congregation.⁸¹ A few even became fervent crusaders against Schism, like priest Ermolai of Beser'genev and his friends, who volunteered to hunt out dissident clerics along the Don and Chira rivers in 1686 and were paid expenses by the tsar for their endeavours, but their efforts ultimately failed owing to their own internal quarrels.⁸² In November 1683 Archbishop Gelasii of Ustiug confidently informed the tsars that 'by the denunciation of parish priests and deacons and lesser clergy against schismatics, many people, men and women, have been taken to the episcopal prison.' The denounced dissenters had abandoned their errors and rejoined the true faith, he asserted.⁸³ This sanguinity proved misfounded: schism continued to spread, largely because too many parish priests were turning a blind eye.⁸⁴ Even so, measures to detect schismatics had the useful side-effect of supplying the government with more information on the populace, and by 1699 priests were being told to keep a record of the names of all their parishioners, not just dissenters.⁸⁵ For the average Muscovite parish clergyman,

⁷⁸ *AAE* 4 no.115.

⁷⁹ *PSZ* 5 no.3169 (17 Feb. 1719); *Spiritual Regulation*, p.48 (1721).

⁸⁰ *PSZ* 1 no.570 p.966 (1 March 1674); 'Materialy dlia istorii Arkhangel'skoi eparkhii', *ChOIDR* 1880 Bk.2, p.6; *LZAK* 14 p.55; *DAI* 11 no.39,42; *DAI* 8 no.92 p.317; *PSZ* 3 no.1612 art.9 (Dec.1697).

⁸¹ Some examples of priests' reports from Novgorod parishes are in *RGIA* f.834 op.2 d.1849-1855 (1690-97). Denunciations of schismatics: *LZAK* 14 p.15, and see fn.124-32 below.

⁸² *DAI* 12 no.17 iii-v.

⁸³ *DAI* 10 no.101.

⁸⁴ Metropolitan Kornilii of Novgorod warned that any priest who covered up for a schismatic would be expelled: *DAI* 8 no.92 p.317 (25 Feb.1681); *LZAK* 14 p.99 (1692).

⁸⁵ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, no.80. Priests were told to list the names of women and children as well.

however, there was no reward for his labours on behalf of the State: few received government stipends, and many were burdened with crippling State taxes and imposts as well as episcopal ones.⁸⁶

PART TWO: THE PRIEST AND PEOPLE

'Holy Russia'

Any discussion on the role of the clergy in Muscovite society necessarily raises the question of how they fitted notions of 'Holy Russia' which became widespread in the nineteenth century.⁸⁷ The clergy themselves believed that Muscovy was the last bastion of true Christianity.⁸⁸ Muscovy was indeed a land of churches and cathedrals, but the behaviour of neither priests nor parishioners fits the picture of a pious holy people. Hierarchs of the Church expected priests to be role models of exemplary conduct, and to this end regularly exhorted them to maintain 'an upright character and a pure life',⁸⁹ but many clerics fell short of this ideal. Their most common weakness was drunkenness.⁹⁰ The scale of clerical intemperance was considerable, judging from repeated episcopal threats to clergy,⁹¹ and instructions to bailiffs to arrest clerics found

⁸⁶ The sufferings caused by State taxes on clergy can be seen from a petition from destitute Ustiug clergymen in 1684: *RIB* 12 p.145 Ust. State impositions on the clergy are discussed further in chapter three.

⁸⁷ S.Dixon, 'How holy was Holy Russia? Rediscovering Russian Religion', *Reinterpreting Russia*, ed. by G.Hosking and R.Service, (London, 1999) pp.21-39; S.Hackel, 'Questions of Church and State in 'Holy Russia' : some attitudes of the Romanov period.' *Eastern Churches Review*, III, Spring 1970, pp.3-17.

⁸⁸ Muscovite priests perceived Protestants and Catholics as heretics and mistrusted them intensely: see *AI* 3 no.92 p.114 (1643); *PSZ* 1 no.85; Olearius, *Travels*, pp.278-9; *MTS* 2 pp.112-14; Okenfuss, *Ukrainian Humanism*, pp.30,41,44.

⁸⁹ Makarii, *Istoriia Russkoi Tserkvi*, XI p.98-100; John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood*, pp.70,76. Extracts from this work were frequently used in 17th-century episcopal circulars and compositions, eg. *DAI* 1 no.181; Subbotin, *Dokumenty*, 1 p.339; *Velikaia Minei Cheti* for 8 November. (Reprint, Spb.1869-1899).

⁹⁰ Intemperance was a weakness common to a great many Muscovites. The problem of insobriety still plagued Church attempts to reform the 19th-century Russian clergy and laity: Dixon, 'The Church's Social Role in St.Petersburg, 1880-1914', *Church, Nation and State in Russia and Ukraine*, ed. G.Hosking, pp.178-184.

⁹¹ *AI* 4 nos.62,151, *AI* 5 nos.122,152,186,203,244; *AAE* 3 no.264; Butskinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, p.292; N.V.Rozhdestvenskii, 'K istorii bor'by s tserkovnymi besporiadkami', *ChOidr* 1902 Bk.2 p.19.

guilty of public drunkenness.⁹² Visitors from Western Europe were amazed by the Russian propensity for excessive drinking, but they were particularly shocked that the clergy were as frequently inebriated as the laity.⁹³ Parishioners, on the other hand, did not object to their priest drinking with them and even expected him to join their drinking circles and beer parties.⁹⁴ Unlike the bishops, they did not expect moral perfection from their priest,⁹⁵ but they did complain if his excesses resulted in brawling or dereliction of duty, as happened not infrequently.⁹⁶ Few clerics, though, had the criminal record of priest Vasilei of Kumzersk volost', a heavy drinker renowned for beating up and knifing anyone he did not like.⁹⁷ Alcoholic, lazy and immoral priests were almost certainly in the minority, but they tarnished the reputation of the priesthood and inspired satirical literature against the clergy, like the *Tale of Priest Sava*, and the *Tale of the Rich Merchant*.⁹⁸ The fact that unsuitable men were ever

⁹² RGADA f.1443 op.1 d.4, op.2 d.42; f.1433 op.1 d.3; *RIB* 12 nos.231,265, 14 no.69; *LZAK* 27 no.889; Iushkov, *Ocherki*, pp.47,121; Veriuzhskii, p.143.

⁹³ Herberstein, *Notes Upon Russia*, p.56; Olearius, *Travels*, pp.143,146,166, 269; W.Palmer, *The Patriarch and the Tsar*, (London,1871-76) 5, Appendix p.117; Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary*, 2 p.181; Guy Meige, *A relation of three embassies from Charles II to the Grand Duke of Muscovie*, (London,1669) p.89.

⁹⁴ *RIB* 5 no.391; *RIB* 25 no.55; Samuel Collins, *The Present state of Russia*, p.91; *ChOidr* 1907 Bk.1 Smes' no.4; RGADA f.27 d.195; *MTS* 2 p.212; Zabelin, *Materialy*, Pt.1, preface, p.51.

⁹⁵ In many aspects the Muscovite parish situation parallels that of the Greek Orthodox Church in Cyprus, researched by Engleziakis, who writes: 'The priest was a man like other men and his parishioners did not have great expectations of him nor did they suffer great disappointments'. B.Engleziakis, 'The Church of Cyprus in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *Studies on the History of the Church in Cyprus, 4th-20th Centuries*. transl.by N.Russell; ed.by S.& M.Ioannou (Aldershot, 1995) pp.239-40.

⁹⁶ Examples of clerical debauchery are found in *OSS* Pt.1 p.23, Pt.3 p.55; Pokrovskii, *Tobol'skii arkhieieiskii dom*, p.206 no.80 (1623), p.216 no.91 (1625), pp.229-30 no.105 (1626); Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, nos.1,9,19,77. Accusations of clerical drunkenness, brawling and immorality account for approximately 5% of the six hundred records in *OSS* relating to parish priests in Vologda eparchy 1618-1707.

⁹⁷ Vasilei's congregation reported him to the bishop in 1678 for having knifed at least two people to death: *OSS* Pt.1 p.23 no.48.

⁹⁸ 'Skazanie o pope Save', 'Sluzhba Kabaku', *Russkaia demokraticheskaia satira XVII veka*, ed. by V.A.Adrianova-Perets (M.1977) pp.37-50,55-57; 'Povest' o Karpe Sutulov', *Medieval Russia: A Sourcebook*, transl. by B.Dmytryshyn (Orlando,1967) pp.497-503; Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.68; *Smekh v drevnei Rusi*, ed. by D.S.Likhachev, A.M. Panchenko, N.V. Ponyrko, (Leningrad, 1984). Muscovite clergy were not alone in being satirised by laymen. There is a substantial literature on religious

ordained at all reflects badly on parishes and patrons who elected them, and suggests that nominators either failed to check candidates' credentials properly, or were more interested in appointing someone who was willing to take the lowest terms and do what they wanted.⁹⁹ One church frankly wrote to the Archbishop of Vologda that they wanted their priest to stay because 'he is obedient to us peasants'.¹⁰⁰

Perhaps the low state of piety amongst the Muscovite populace drove some clerics to drink, for although virtually every village wanted its own church, there is ample evidence that a large proportion of Russians were not regular church-goers.¹⁰¹ Throughout the century clergymen complained that divine services were being disturbed by the congregation chatting and by fraudulent beggars, and that many people of all ranks were failing to attend church services, religious processions, or confession.¹⁰² It was not only schismatics who were staying away, for the problem of non-attendance was evident long before the Nikonian reforms.¹⁰³ Some absentees claimed they had never been taught to go to church, others performed their own rites by themselves,¹⁰⁴ but a majority, it seems, were simply out shopping.¹⁰⁵ Priest Grigorii of Tobol'sk was one of many clerics to protest against Sunday trading: in 1637 he wrote that his church was surrounded by shops and 'during services the singing cannot be heard because of the shouting of these people, and from dogs it has become very

parody and mock ritual in Western Europe: see for instance, M.M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, transl. H. Iswolsky, (Bloomington, 1984); R. Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: The Ritual Year 1400-1700*, (Oxford, 1994).

⁹⁹ *DAI* 5 no.102; see also chapter 1.

¹⁰⁰ *OSS* Pt.11 p.202 n.189 (1672).

¹⁰¹ *AAE* 4 nos.19,324; *AI* 4 nos.30,151; *AI* 5 no.156; *PSZ* 2 nos.1095-6.

¹⁰² 'K istorii bor'by s tserkovnymi besporiadkami', *ChOidr* 1902 Bk.2 Pt.4 pp.22-23; *ChOidr* 1907 Bk.1 Smes', no.4; "Materialy dlia istorii Arkhangel'skoi eparkhii", *ChOidr* 1880 Bk.2 p.6; *LZAK* 17 p.314-5 nos.24-5, 28; *PSZ* 1 no.47; *AAE* 4 no.115; *RIB* 5 no.391; *AI* 4 nos.30,151; Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, pp.168-190 nos.111,114-18,123,126,148,152,134, 168,171,176,180 (1665-6).

¹⁰³ *AI* 4 no.30 p.124 (13 Dec.1649); *PSZ* 1 no.47 p.245 (25 Oct.1650); *AAE* 4 no.115 (10 March 1660).

¹⁰⁴ Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, p.169 no.111, p.189 no.155, p.190 no.156; G.Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.503; Pososhkov, pp.176-77.

¹⁰⁵ *PSZ* 2 nos.1089,1095-6; *AAE* 4 nos.19,324; *AI* 4 nos.30,151; *AI* 5 no.156.

dirty'.¹⁰⁶ A northern deacon reported in 1652 that 'during divine service the tavern officers come with bailiffs to the side-room (*trapeza*) or into the church to collect debts from everyone, and the service cannot be heard for the noise'. Judges and tax-collectors also carried out their business in the trapeza during divine services, disturbing worship.¹⁰⁷ Such problems were sufficiently widespread to motivate the government to ban trading during divine service and processions, but disturbances continued.¹⁰⁸

Muscovite bishops blamed the white clergy for low church attendance by the people,¹⁰⁹ and Soviet historians blamed the bishops, yet neither accusation is entirely just, for even the most zealous preachers and prelates met with apathy and antagonism from the laity.¹¹⁰ Then, as now, materialism emptied the churches, but a further obstacle to the pure Orthodox 'holiness' of seventeenth-century Russia was the pervasive folk religion that had long influenced the lives of Muscovites, great and simple, as the research of Ryan, Sokolov and Zguta has shown.¹¹¹ The extent to which dual faith influenced popular religion has been the subject of scholarly debate which need not be repeated here;¹¹² suffice it for me to outline the situation as it affected the seventeenth-century clergy. Although both Church and State condemned neo-pagan practices and magical rituals that flourished alongside Christianity and forbade clergy

¹⁰⁶ Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, p.292.

¹⁰⁷ *ChOidr* 1907 Bk.1 Smes', no.4.

¹⁰⁸ *AAE* 4 no.324 (1647); *PSZ* 1 nos.412, 414 (1667); *PSZ* 2 no.976 p.485 (1682); *RIB* 12:138 Ust.(1683).

¹⁰⁹ *AI* 4 no.151 n.296-99; *DAI* 5 no.102 p.484; Pososhkov, pp.176-77.

¹¹⁰ The Zealots of Piety in the first half of the century, and hopeful preachers like the anonymous priest of Orel (author of *Statir*) in the second half, met with widespread apathy or hostility. Soviet historians like A.Preobrazhensky erroneously blamed the Church hierarchy for the neo-paganism of the people (*The Russian Orthodox Church*, p.88), but dual-faith had always co-existed with Christianity, and does not appear to have increased in the seventeenth century.

¹¹¹ W.F.Ryan, *The Bathhouse at Midnight. Magic in Russia*, (Stroud,1999); Y.M.Sokolov, *Russian Folklore*, transl. by C.Smith, (Hatboro,1966); R.Zguta, *Russian Minstrels*, (Oxford,1978). See also E.M.Thompson, *Understanding Russia. The Holy Fool in Russian Culture*, (NY.1987) pp.104-5).

¹¹² A resumé on recent scholarship of this subject can be found in Dixon, 'How holy was Holy Russia', *Reinterpreting Russia*, pp.23-26.

from indulging such practices,¹¹³ priests who tried to stop traditional customs had little success.¹¹⁴ In 1648 Tsar Aleksei issued laws prohibiting 'devilish games', but the very fact that the same prohibitions had to be re-issued in 1649, 1653, 1657, 1681 and 1684, suggests that the majority of clergymen accommodated their parishioners' superstitions and kept silent.¹¹⁵ To do otherwise would be to incur public wrath and jeopardise their job, and in any case, clergy who had grown up in a village milieu and received little education naturally shared superstitious beliefs with their flock, failing to understand that many rituals and magic practices clashed with pure Orthodox theology.¹¹⁶ Clergymen composed oral and written spells for their own use and that of their flock, according to the research of Ryan and Sokolov,¹¹⁷ and an investigation into witchcraft in Lukh 1656-1660 revealed that local priests had consulted the town's faith-healer, who was later condemned for sorcery.¹¹⁸ Occasionally clergymen were themselves prosecuted for delving in magic.¹¹⁹ From the overwhelming evidence one

¹¹³ Kollman, 'The Moscow Stoglav', p.535; *AI* 3 no.92 p.96 (24 Dec.1627); *AAE* 4 no.98 (1657); *PSZ* 2 no.1362, p.48 (23 Dec.1689).

¹¹⁴ Avvakum, Neronov and their colleagues met with violent opposition when they tried to extirpate certain local customs: *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.140; *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, pp.260-61

¹¹⁵ *AI* 4 no.30 p.124 (13 Dec.1649); P.Ivanov, *Opisanie gosudarstvennago arkhiva starykh del*, p.296; *PSZ* 2 no.1101 (24 Dec.1684); *PSZ* 2 no.1362, p.48 (23 Dec 1689). Bishops likewise let ancient customs alone, according to W.Ryan, 'Witchcraft Hysteria in Early Modern Europe: Was Russia an Exception?', *SEER* 76 no.1 (Jan.1998). See also Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, p.56.

¹¹⁶ Chapter 41 of the Stoglav Council in 1551 forbade clergy from indulging their parishioners' superstitions by placing baby caul or soap on the altar, and salt under it. W.Ryan, *The Bathhouse at Midnight*, p.19. The vast array of magic rites that were in use in Muscovy are detailed by Ryan. For a 19th century perspective, see R.Glickman, 'The peasant woman as healer,' in *Russia's Women*, (Berkeley,1991) p.152.

¹¹⁷ Clerical interest in magic was not unique to Russia, but was common throughout Europe: Ryan, *The Bathhouse at Midnight*, pp.26,167,201; Sokolov, *Russian Folklore*, p.253.

¹¹⁸ V.Kivelson. 'Through the prism of witchcraft', *Russia's Women*, p.76.

¹¹⁹ It is likely that superstition and interest in magic were widespread among the lower clergy, but I have found very few legal prosecutions in the 17th century. Priest Iakov, formerly of Tobol'sk cathedral, was found in possession of herbs or roots used for magical purposes in 1625, and a Nizhnii Novgorod d'iachok was found with *rafl'i* (geomantic texts) in 1628, and Russian historian Dubasov claimed that some 17th-century Tambov clergymen were involved in sorcery, but not one single accusation or prosecution has come to light in the relatively extensive diocesan records of Vologda,

can only conclude that 'Holy Russia' was not a reality, but a construct of the Muscovite Church and State, the hierarchy's ideal of how things should have been, -- and the dream was later embellished by nineteenth-century Slavophiles and nationalist historians.

The clergy in the community's eyes

The parish clergy were, theoretically, in a position of strength *vis-à-vis* parishioners. They were the *literati* of Muscovite society, the representatives of God, the Church and, to some degree, the State. The most potent tool of a priest's limited authority was the confessional, through which he learned the secrets of his parishioners, imposed penances on sinners, and denounced non-attendees.¹²⁰ However, every one of these advantages was offset by the disadvantage of the priest's economic dependence on his parish. His fate was irreversibly linked to that of his parishioners: when they were well-off, he could hope to share in their blessings; when they were impoverished, he too became destitute. Ultimately, most clerics were mere hirelings contracted by the laity and reliant on their offerings, which, a Russian priest wrote two centuries later, 'inflict the maximum humiliation and disgrace.'¹²¹ Due to his disadvantageous position, a clergyman was vulnerable to pressure and blackmail by parishioners. Blackmail took two forms: firstly, priests could be forced to do something against their will. Priest Sergei of Resurrection church in Vologda was forced by a landowner to conduct an uncanonical marriage for one of his peasants and to sign illegal documents for him in the 1640s. When Sergei later refused to comply, the malevolent landowner informed the bishop that Sergei was a tobacco-smoking drunkard who neglected church services and did not pay episcopal fees, all of which the other parishioners denied

Moscow, Ustiug or Kholmogory. There were more convictions in the 18th century, presumably as a result of reforms initiated by the Church and State to extirpate superstition and raise clerical standards. *AI* 3 no.137 p.224 (1625); *RIB* 8 no.11 viii (1626); *RIB* 35 no.367 (1628); Ryan, *The Bathhouse at Midnight*, pp.419-422; Solov'ev, *History of Russia*, Vol.17 p.165.

¹²⁰ 'Materialy dlia istorii Arkhangel'skoi eparkhii', ChOISR 1880 bk.2, p.6.

¹²¹ Belliutsin, p.122; Iushkov, *Ocherki*, p.65.

vehemently.¹²² Many other clergymen faced the same pressures.¹²³ If a clergymen indulged illegal requests, he risked being detected and punished by his prelate. Two d'iachki and their uncle, a monastic priest, were forced to falsify a will for a landowner, but when later convicted by the episcopal court, their claim that they had been threatened did not save them from a lashing.¹²⁴ The second form of blackmail forced a clergyman to keep silent against his better judgement, for priests who were brave enough to speak out boldly against parishioners' wrong-doings chanced dismissal.¹²⁵ It cannot have been easy for a poor cleric to impose a penance on the rich, nor to refuse a bribe for overlooking their sins.¹²⁶ Parishioners were under no obligation to confess to their parish priest, but could have as their confessor a priest from another church or monastery.¹²⁷ In order to prevent people from moving from one confessor to another to find one who would indulge their sins, Church Councils forbade priests from accepting new spiritual children without permission from the former confessor, except in emergencies.¹²⁸

Faced with economic pressure, relatively few clergymen were willing to denounce schismatic parishioners in the second half of the century, in spite of threats by prelates.¹²⁹ A number of priests accepted bribes to turn a blind eye, like priest Ivan Larionov of Novgorod eparchy, who was denounced himself by a colleague who

¹²² *OSS* Pt.13 pp.17-33 no.21.

¹²³ *OSS* Pt.4 p.51 no.570; *AI* 4 no.202 p.432-3; *LZAK* 14 p.122. Cases of priests performing illegal marriages, either because they were coerced or for a bribe, are in *OSS* Pt.2 p.46, Pt.3 pp.33,60, Pt.5 pp.25,68, Pt.7 pp.67,103,106, Pt.8 p.137, Pt.9 pp.2,63, Pt.11 p.126; Pt.13 p.17; *DAI* 5 no.102 p.490 (1667).

¹²⁴ *OSS* Pt.10 p.90 (1684).

¹²⁵ *ChOidr* 1907 Bk.1 Smes', no.4 (1652); *OSS* Pt.11 p.210 no.200 (1673).

¹²⁶ *LZAK* 14 p.99 (1692); Smirnov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, pp.187,189.

¹²⁷ *The Domostroi*, p.92; *DAI* 11 no.42 (1683). Smirnov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, pp.30-3; *AluB* 1 no.7 ii,iii; *RIB* 12 no.852, *Alu* nos.386,358 i,ii; *AI* 4 no.35 p.125; *AAE* 4 nos.115,155.

¹²⁸ *DAI* 5 no.102 p.490 (1666-67); S.Smironov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, pp.61-62.

¹²⁹ *DAI* 8 no. 92 p.317 (1681); *LZAK* 14 p.99; Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, Commentary p.207, nos.157,158.

wanted his job,¹³⁰ but diligent priests who did inform on non-conformists faced possible retribution. After reporting dissenters to the authorities, priest Vasilei of Viaznikov was murdered in 1665,¹³¹ another priest from Kuzaransk was abducted and disappeared without trace.¹³² Dissenters tried to drown Onega priest Mark in 1689 because, they told him, 'you, priest, informed on us and gave a statement'.¹³³ In any case, schismatics found that reports against them were easily countered by false accusations against the informer. When priest Petr of Charonsk sent his archbishop a list of locals who had failed to attend confession in 1684-85, the defendants immediately wrote to the prelate accusing Petr of vague charges of 'misdemeanours and disorderliness', that appear to have been trumped up.¹³⁴ Priests of Pudozhsk in northern Russia who denounced their schismatic congregation consequently found themselves accused of extortion and negligence,¹³⁵ as did priest Iakov Sazonov of Galileisk.¹³⁶ There are many similar cases of clergy accused on false or dubious grounds.¹³⁷ In some eparchies the prelate believed the parish and dismissed the unfortunate priest without investigating the charges, but by the end of the century bishops were getting wise to these tactics, and did not believe parishioners' accusations so readily.¹³⁸

The parish clergy's economic dependence and lowly status as hirelings engendered widespread contempt toward the clerical estate. As Metropolitan Markell of Pskov pointed out to the tsar, 'because the churches are run by the laity, in contradiction of

¹³⁰ LZAK 14 p.99 (1692).

¹³¹ Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, p.138. Priest Vasilei's murderer was never caught, but is presumed to have been either the schismatics or the fugitives he denounced.

¹³² Barsov, 'Sudnye protsessy', *ChOIDR* 1882 Bk 3 no.10 p.38.

¹³³ Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.526,529-530.

¹³⁴ DAI 11 no.77 (1684-5).

¹³⁵ AI 5 no.223 p.378 (1693).

¹³⁶ RIB 5 no.391 (1696).

¹³⁷ OSS Pt.11 p.210 n.200 (1673); SKE, p.64, n.8, (1693); LZAK 14 pp.91,105 (1690,1693).

¹³⁸ See for instance RIB 12 no.261 Ust.(1696) and Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, no.77 (1698).

the Rule, the priests are poor and the lower clergy are regarded as slaves by the church elders, but no one dares speak against them'.¹³⁹ An appeal to Tsar Aleksei from deacon Artemei of Ustiug, written about 1652, illustrates the extent of the clergy's problems:

'The peasants gather in the trapeza to drink beer till they are drunk, and from that drunkenness there is a great noise and unseemly swearing [...] And if any priest or deacon tries to stop such irreverence, they do not obey us, they say to us abusively: "this has always been the way here, and the priests before you, who were better than you, didn't forbid us doing this, they drank with us and blessed us." [...] After Christmas and before Epiphany young people play games and blaspheme in the trapeza after vespers, saying all sorts of shameless words, and no one can stop them; they do not obey the church authorities, [saying]: "the church and the trapeza buildings are ours, we will play if we want to." [...] And they do not obey church prohibitions or punishments, because in the countryside the church buildings belong to the laity, and the clergy are elected to the churches by the laity. If a priest or deacon begins to teach the lay people or to prohibit any sin, those people dismiss the priest or cleric from the church. And those peasants say: "you take care of your church work, but what we do is none of your business".'¹⁴⁰

Artemei's appeal to the Crown had no perceivable effect, for thirty years later Archbishop Gelasii was still trying to stop Ustiug church-goers from using church buildings for business meetings, parties, and fist-fights.¹⁴¹ Parishioners in North Russia were arguably a rough lot, for they callously forced their clergy to pay a double share of the government's one-rouble war-tax in 1684 and beat up priests who could not afford to pay.¹⁴² Disrespect towards the clergy was encountered not only in the north, however, but throughout Russia. Numerous petitions were sent to bishops and tsars from parish clergymen appealing for justice against laymen who threatened them, swore at them, robbed them, refused to obey their religious instruction, or dismissed them without just cause.¹⁴³ Priest Kiril of Ustiug was driven out of his job in 1685 by

¹³⁹ *AI* 5 no.122 (1685).

¹⁴⁰ *ChOidr* 1907 Bk.1 Smes', no.4 (c1652).

¹⁴¹ *RIB* 12 no.138 Ust.(1683).

¹⁴² Petition of clergy of Ustiug, Totma, and Sol' Vychegod'sk: *RIB* 12 no.145 Ust.(1684).

¹⁴³ Clergy threatened and abused: *RGADA* f.196 op.3 d.2003 (1689); *OSS* Pt.2 p.7

parishioners who did not like him summoning them to confession; priest Ivan Barashkov of Koldask was cheated out of his salary and expelled by a church elder in 1695.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, clergymen were physically attacked by laymen with alarming frequency. Priest Boris Fomin of Tanazhsk was beaten up and robbed by a local family in 1600, and thereafter lived in fear of their threats to murder him, burn his children or hamstring his livestock.¹⁴⁵ In a few cases death threats were actually carried out. In 1640 widowed priest Luka of Tunbzhsk volost' was knifed to death by peasants during an argument after the Sunday service, and in 1695 d'iachok Mishka of Vologda was assaulted in church and later murdered by village ruffians.¹⁴⁶ The parish clergy had little defence against injustice other than an appeal to their bishop who, in some cases, was powerless to help. When clergy petitioned Metropolitan Varlaam of Rostov about the disrespect and irreverence of the laity, the prelate ordered the people to obey, but they replied: 'the metropolitan is in charge of the priests and clerics, but we are the tsar's people'.¹⁴⁷

Landowners were even more arrogant in maltreating ordinary clerics and disobeying bishops.¹⁴⁸ A d'iachok of Kubensk volost' was seized from church, robbed, and kept

(1640), Pt.4 p.51 (1680), Pt.5 pp.15,55 (1669,1686) Pt.7 p.11 (1653), Pt.8 pp.34,71 (1669,1694), Pt.10 p.130 no.106 (1690), Pt.11 pp.50,133,123 (1654,1666,1667), Pt.13 no.17 (1642); *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.114 (1621), no.129 (1628), no.130. Clergy robbed: RGADA f.1107 op.1 Pt.2 d.2988 (1682); *OSS* Pt.8 no.35 (1670), Pt.9 no.63 (1671), Pt.11 no.81 (1660), Pt.12 no.178 (1699); *LZAK* 27 nos.522,730 (1661,1668); *RIB* 25 nos.54,55; *AI* 5 no.223 (1693).

¹⁴⁴ *RIB* 12 no.148 Ust.; *RIB* 14 no.76 Ust. Similar cases are in *RIB* 25 no.204; *OSS* Pt.11 pp.72,168,185,206; *LZAK* 27 no. 589.

¹⁴⁵ *RIB* 14 no.211 Khol. Other cases of clergymen assaulted by laymen are in RGADA f.196 op.3 d.674; *RIB* 25 no.55; *OSS* Pt.1 p.15, Pt.5 pp.26,49, Pt.7 p.14, Pt.8 p.137, Pt.9 p.58, Pt.10 pp.86,90,130, Pt.11 no.31, Pt.12 no.124; *LZAK* 27 nos.515, 825; *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.145 (1642); *AI* 5 no.223 (1693).

¹⁴⁶ *OSS* Pt.9 p.142; *DAI* 2 no.70. Other cases of clergymen murdered by laymen are in *OSS* Pt.13 p.65; Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, p.138.

¹⁴⁷ *ChOIDR* 1907 Bk.1 Smes', no.4. In a few cases, bishops ordered parishes to reinstate clergy who had been unjustly dismissed, but the parish ignored the prelate's demands: *RIB* 12 no.148 Ust.; *RIB* 14 no.76 Ust.; *RIB* 25 no.204; *OSS* Pt.7 p.109, Pt.11 no.168; RGADA f.1443 op.1 d.5.

¹⁴⁸ *LZAK* 5 Pt.1 pp.30-130; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.138,139,140,147;

fettered for two days without food in 1674, apparently for offending a nobleman.¹⁴⁹ A year later a rural priest in Vologda eparchy was severely beaten up on the orders of a landowner, who then imprisoned him, evicted his family, and expropriated all his belongings, after which the priest was never seen again.¹⁵⁰ But the clergy could expect little help from government officials, because they were the worst offenders, punishing and imprisoning clergymen at will, in contravention of the law.¹⁵¹ Clergy of Novgorod, Pskov, Vologda and Ustiug were subject to extortion and illegal taxation by local governors; those who could not pay were imprisoned.¹⁵² Governor Afanasii Traurnikht of Ustiug swore at the clergy and assaulted them until he was put under investigation by the Crown in 1683 for fatally wounding a priest.¹⁵³ Similar episodes occurred elsewhere, several of which were investigated by government commissions, but noblemen who were convicted could expect their punishment to be of short duration, after which the clergymen who reported them faced retaliation. When deacon Kiril of Tobol'sk accused governor Kurakin and secretary Ivan Perenosov of various illegalities, the governor was found guilty, but swiftly obtained a royal pardon, whilst the deacon was made to suffer humiliation and imprisonment.¹⁵⁴ Indeed, in Siberia, where governors ruled as despots without fear of royal intervention, the clergy suffered the worst injustices. They were beaten and imprisoned, forced to conduct illegal marriages, and pressed into service as clerks, leaving the churches without services.¹⁵⁵ Successive archbishops of Tobol'sk complained that 'the governors humble these black and white priests and deacons in front of the government office, in front of all the

RGADA f.1443 op.1 d.6 (1692).

¹⁴⁹ *OSS* Pt.10 p.71 no.48 (1674).

¹⁵⁰ *OSS* Pt.5 p.26 no.50 (1675)

¹⁵¹ *DAI* 2 no.101. p.278 (1644-45); *DAI* 3 no.5 p.33 (1645).

¹⁵² *OSS* Pt.7 no.65 (1664-84); *DAI* 10 no.101 (1683); *AAE* 4 no.176 (1670); *PDR* 22 p.188.

¹⁵³ *DAI* 10 no.101 (1683)

¹⁵⁴ *ChOidr* 1908 Bk.3 Smes', no.2 (1645-47).

¹⁵⁵ *DAI* 2 no.101 p.278, *DAI* 3 no.5 p.33; Dmytryshyn, *Russia's Conquest of Siberia*, p.108; Solov'ev, *History of Russia*, 17 p.163; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.147; Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, p.291.

people they beat [them] with lashes, and thus the priestly rank is profaned and greatly shamed.¹⁵⁶

Clerical protests against social injustice

The powerlessness of the parish clergy against figures of authority severely hampered their ability to stand up against social injustice or to be a community spokesman on behalf of the downtrodden. Nonetheless, priests were not as passive as has been previously thought.¹⁵⁷ On the contrary, there is evidence that they frequently took the side of the poor and oppressed. Priest Vasilei Ivanov of St.Antip's church paid off a prisoner's substantial debts to rescue him from prison in 1642, for example,¹⁵⁸ and other clergymen incurred personal risk by writing and signing petitions against unjust landowners.¹⁵⁹ Despite the disapproval of their bishops, parish priests supported their parishioners' efforts to repel incursions by land-hungry monasteries. Priest Pavel of Nekrasovich village gathered two hundred peasants and orchestrated the defence of their land against monastic aggressors during a dispute with Pafnut'ev monastery in 1655.¹⁶⁰ On several occasions the clergy of Ustiug appealed on behalf of their flock to Tsar Mikhail against their governor's excessive taxation and cruelty towards townsmen and peasants during the 1630s,¹⁶¹ but the successful defence of the community was due to the united efforts of all the Ustiug clergy, monastic and married, led by the archimandrite, hegumen, and cathedral archpriest, who carried greater authority than ordinary clerics. Parish priests who attempted on their own to defend the oppressed rarely succeeded. Avvakum tried to save orphans and widows from merciless officers, but was beaten almost to death for his efforts; Ivan Neronov was viciously lashed and

¹⁵⁶ Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.189,291; Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.117.

¹⁵⁷ Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.180.

¹⁵⁸ *RIB* 24 p.407 no.3.

¹⁵⁹ See, for example, *DAI* 10 no.57 (1682).

¹⁶⁰ *RIB* 5 no.69 (1655). A similar case is cited in Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, p.121.

¹⁶¹ Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 Prilozhenie pp.1-45, nos.1-3 (1637); *LZAK* 22 no. p.256 (1639-41).

imprisoned in fetters for a month after he denounced governor Feodor Sheremet'ev for his cruelty,¹⁶² and when Siberian priests reproved the Narym governor for raping married women, the clergymen and the victims' husbands were beaten with the knout.¹⁶³

Although the lower clergy could rarely speak out alone against the powerful, they quietly defied them by sheltering fugitives. Strict laws were periodically issued by the government forbidding citizens from harbouring strangers in order to discourage serfs from fleeing their masters,¹⁶⁴ but in spite of the risk of harsh punishment, parish priests took the lead in sheltering runaways.¹⁶⁵ Many clerics who did so were threatened, fined, beaten or expelled as a result of charges brought against them by angry serf-owners. Fines could be ruinous: a priest in Viazma was fined forty-five roubles for harbouring a runaway peasant in 1689, and another cleric was sued the stupendous sum of 160 roubles for a similar offence two years later.¹⁶⁶ Landowners did not always find it easy to get their runaways back, though, and often resorted to accusing their opponent of various misdemeanours in the hope of frightening him into giving up the fugitive. One man accused a priest in Kuisk volost of concealing a peasant who was the plaintiff's debtor, and in order to effect a prosecution he also accused the priest of illegally trading in alcohol and tobacco, a very serious charge that was sure to draw the prelate's attention.¹⁶⁷ It could be argued that priests who harboured serfs profited from

¹⁶² *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.138,147; *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, pp.262-3.

¹⁶³ Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, p.285. Lone parish priests who did try to rescue the oppressed had few literate admirers to sing their praises, hence accounts of their bravery are rare.

¹⁶⁴ *PSZ* 2 nos.997, 1072, 1181 (1683-86); *PSZ* 3 no.1625 (1698). Fines were set at 25 roubles for a first offence, 50 r. for a second offence, and 100 r. or exile to Siberia for a third.

¹⁶⁵ Evidence that clergy were prominent shelterers of fugitives comes from all regions of Muscovy: RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.27, 28 (1680), f.1107 op.1 pt.2 d.3441 (1687); *OSS* Pt.3 p.3 no.1 (1652), Pt.8 pp.46,82-84 (1680,1695), Pt.9 p.146 no.126 (1695), Pt.11 p.129 (1668); *OpMAMlu* 16 no.793, Gorod Dobryi (1680-82); *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.181 (1680).

¹⁶⁶ *SIB* 109 nos.14,25.

¹⁶⁷ RGADA f.1107 op.1 pt.2 d.3441 (1687).

their labour, which in many cases is probably true, but for no apparent ulterior motive clergymen also harboured battered wives, sometimes taking personal risks and joining forces with other clerics to protect them.¹⁶⁸ Priest Artemei Semenov of Zaozersk gave refuge to the wife of a Belozersk man in 1680, but when the angry husband petitioned the archbishop for her return, Artemei took the woman to another village and handed her to the d'iachok, who led her to another priest in a more distant village. The husband won a court injunction ordering Artemei to return his wife, but the clergyman ignored the order and the case dragged on over a year.¹⁶⁹ There are cases where clergy forcefully resisted handing over refugees. In 1692 priest Evsignei and his sons, aided by parishioners of Voskresenskoe village, successfully fought off six attempts by governor V.A.Daudov to reclaim a family of peasants who had fled from him nine years previously. The thirty soldiers Daudov sent were chased off by clergy and villagers armed with bows, muskets, clubs and axes. But all too often the clergy were ultimately forced to return fugitives to their masters, and even Evsignei's redoubtable family had to hand back their protégés eventually.¹⁷⁰

In times of civil disturbance and open rebellion, the parish clergy frequently came out in open support of the people. Contrary to Gregory Freeze's assertion that prior to 1760 the clergy's role in revolt was modest,¹⁷¹ we find parish clergymen appearing on the rebels' side in almost every civil disturbance of the seventeenth century. Not only did they conduct prayers and processions in support of insurgents, and write their petitions, but they were also found in the midst of rioting mobs, sometimes even leading them. Chancellery records show that a considerable number of clergymen were amongst rioters in the disturbances of 1650 and 1662,¹⁷² and an even greater proportion joined

¹⁶⁸ Barsov, 'Sudnye protsessy, *ChOidr* 1882 Bk 3 no.10 pp.35-40 (1695); *RIB* 38 p.446 (1648-51); *OSS* Pt.8 p.46 (1680).

¹⁶⁹ *OSS* Pt.8 p.46 (1680).

¹⁷⁰ *LZAK* 5 Pt.1 pp.30-130. Other cases of clergy forced to hand over fugitives are *OSS* Pt.3 p.3 no.1 (1652) and *DAI* 8 no.50 p.224.

¹⁷¹ Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.180.

¹⁷² *Vosstanie 1662 g.*, nos.17,31,49-50,68,64-65,85,157,179,213,250-251,253,259;

the Razin rebellion of 1667-72.¹⁷³ The significance of clerical participation on Razin's side has been well-documented by Paul Avrich, who writes:

'An essential place in the rising was occupied by the lower clergy, an astonishing number of whom sided with the insurgents, some doubtless out of fear but the majority from genuine sympathy with Razin's cause. At one point defections became so numerous that Patriarch Ioasaf issued a circular to every parish, urban and rural, cautioning the priests "not to be allured by the enticements of the bandit and traitor Stenka Razin and his comrades". But his warning went largely unheeded.'¹⁷⁴

In the Moscow uprising of 1682 clerics led stone-carrying mobs against the palace, and in 1698 priests processed with icons during the strel'tsy revolt 'to draw the common people to the side of the mutineers,' according to contemporary observers.¹⁷⁵ In the view of the Muscovite government, priests who administered holy communion to insurgents were responsible for instilling them with a sense of holy war.¹⁷⁶ Presumably most of the clergy involved in these riots believed in the rightness of the cause, but some were just curious and hoped to share in the plunder,¹⁷⁷ and others joined out of fear of reprisals by the rebels.¹⁷⁸ It is probable that the clerical participants, like many Muscovite rioters, did not think they were rebelling against the Crown, but against the tsar's governors, officials, and nobles, at whose hands the clergy frequently suffered. Above all, parish clergymen were there with the people because they were born amongst the people, and were dependent on them rather than on the Crown for their livelihood. Inevitably, however, governmental troops restored order and the clergy who had been involved were tortured, exiled, or executed for treason along with other participants.¹⁷⁹ Korb witnessed the execution of several priests in 1699 for supporting strel'tsy rebels, commenting in particular on the lingering death of one young cleric

AMG 3 no.587; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.361.

¹⁷³ AI 4 no.226 p.482-95; AI 4 no.202 LV.

¹⁷⁴ P.Avrich, *Russian Rebels*, p.92.

¹⁷⁵ Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary*, 1 p.193; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.358-9.

¹⁷⁶ PSZ 3 no.1648, p.484.

¹⁷⁷ *Vosstanie 1662 g.*, nos.17,31,49-50,68,64-65,85,157,179,213,250-251,253,259.

¹⁷⁸ AAE 4 no.52 (1651).

¹⁷⁹ *Vosstanie 1662 g.*, nos.49,50,65,68,85,179,250; Avrich, *Russian Rebels*, pp.92-95.

who was broken on the wheel for having 'invoked the help of God for happy success of the impious plot'.¹⁸⁰

The very nature of the priest's role as churchman, civil servant, and parish employee meant that in times of crisis his loyalties were inevitably divided. In the uprisings cited above, clergy loyalty to the people often exceeded loyalty to the government.¹⁸¹ The same could be said of the many parish priests who failed to report dissenting parishioners. Sometimes a priest was caught between duty to his flock and fear of his bishop. Several Vologda priests found themselves in grave trouble with episcopal authorities in 1680 after they signed a petition for their parishioners, who were peasants of Metropolitan Iona of Rostov. The petition was an appeal to the Crown against the Metropolitan's extortion and injustice, but, fearing the wrath of the Church hierarchy, the priests were reluctant to become involved. Hounded and threatened by parishioners, they eventually gave in and signed, perhaps reasoning that an episcopal lashing may be preferable to a beating at the hands of an angry mob.¹⁸² Of course, not all clergy sided with the people. One priest refused to sign a petition from the Shuia townfolk to the tsar against an unjust nobleman in 1628, and was imprisoned as a result of their retaliatory petition against him.¹⁸³ During the Pskov uprising in 1650, priest Obrosim remained true to the Crown and persuaded others to not take part, but in consequence he was beaten up, his home was destroyed, and even after the disturbances had been quelled he was ostracised by townfolk for his disloyalty to them.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁰ Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary*, 1 p.193.

¹⁸¹ *DAI* 8 no. 92 p.317 (1681).

¹⁸² *OSS* Pt.4 p.51 no.570.

¹⁸³ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.129.

¹⁸⁴ *AAE* 4 no.52 (1651).

Parish support for their clergy

Although there exist numerous cases in which the lower clergy suffered humiliation and abuse from the laity, there are just as many instances of clergymen receiving support and appreciation from their communities. There was, it seems, a system of mutual defence in many Muscovite parishes. In the case of priest Evsignei of Voskresenskoe village, cited above, governor Daudov's attempt to have the priests arrested and dismissed failed due to the unflinching assistance these clergymen received from their community.¹⁸⁵ In 1689 villagers near Lake Onega chased off bandits who were attacking their priest and his family,¹⁸⁶ and we know of several clergymen who were rescued from episcopal arrest by loyal parishioners.¹⁸⁷ When the Metropolitan of Novgorod's deputy went to a parish in Northern Russia in 1696 to dismiss the priest, peasants threatened him 'with arguebuses and pole-axes and hatchets, and with cudgels and pikes'.¹⁸⁸ Less spectacular, but very effective, were the scores of petitions that can be found in episcopal archives from parishioners in support of their priest. Some appeal for their priest's release from prison or reinstatement after dismissal,¹⁸⁹ others ask for the prelate's intervention to help a cleric wronged by a colleague or local bully.¹⁹⁰ Bishops generally took notice of parish opinion in these matters, and many clerics were saved from oppression or dismissal due to the people's support. A Vologda parish priest, for instance, avoided losing his job after his congregation wrote to the bishop countering a false claim that he had fathered an illegitimate child, and a landowner in Siamsk volost was excommunicated after a parish reported him for persecuting their priest.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁵ LZAK 5 pt.1 pp.30-130.

¹⁸⁶ Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.525.

¹⁸⁷ Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, p.124, n.102; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.407-8, 421, 433.

¹⁸⁸ RIB 5 no.391 (1696).

¹⁸⁹ SPIRIAN f.117 op.1 d.650, l.7; SIB 26 (1691-2).

¹⁹⁰ OSS Pt.3 p.44,62-63, Pt.7 pp.45,54-57,76, Pt.11 pp.17-33,76,123; SKE p.186 no.19; DAI 11 no.10 I,II (1684); LZAK 14 p.114 (1695).

¹⁹¹ OSS Pt.11 p.185 no.162, p.210 no.200 (1673).

Muscovites could show remarkable loyalty to their confessor. After the Peace of Stolbovo had been concluded with Sweden in 1617, Russians were allowed to leave occupied Ivangorod, but the authorities would not permit priest Vasilei to emigrate, his son reported, 'because he was a priest, and many Russian people were his spiritual children, and because of that many Russians stayed'.¹⁹² Similarly, an inordinate number of Russians trustingly stood by their confessor after the Church Schism began in 1653, even when it meant exile or death. Priest Kozma resigned from All Saints church in Moscow because of the Nikonian reforms, and twenty of his spiritual children left with him. Three hundred men and women followed dissenting priest Dement'ian of Tiumen into opposition, and Avvakum likewise brought over a proportion of his spiritual children, whom he himself numbered at 'five or six hundred'.¹⁹³

Appreciation for a confessor was frequently expressed through bequests. Occasionally a grateful parishioner would bequeath a field or hamlet to their local church for the maintenance of the clergy. One Moscow parish church was left a house worth four hundred roubles by a rich widow in 1680,¹⁹⁴ but bequests of real estate to parish churches were very few in comparison to lands left to monasteries, and rarely of much value.¹⁹⁵ A villager of Komaritsk volost' willed a third share of his land and livestock to priest Vasilei Ignat'ev, but when the priest went to claim his inheritance he found that floodwaters had washed away most of the meadow and what was left was mortgaged. Despite this setback, Vasilei gained one horse and two calves from the bequest.¹⁹⁶ Bequests of cash or clothes were more commonly left to the white clergy than land. Wealthy Muscovites are known to have willed generous sums of between

¹⁹² *RIB* 38 p.479.

¹⁹³ *ChOIDR* 1905 Bk.2 Smes', no.4 p.49; *DAI* 8 no.50 I,II pp.216-17; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.137,141,164,172.

¹⁹⁴ *AIuB* 2 no.148, XX.

¹⁹⁵ A Vologda man, for instance, left two hamlets to a monastery but only a kaftan to his priest: *RIB* 35 no.355 p.693. Land legacies to parish churches are recorded in *RIB* 14 nos.108,117,129 Khol; *RIB* 12 no.147 Ust.

¹⁹⁶ *RIB* 12 no.147 Ust.

fifteen and thirty roubles to their confessor,¹⁹⁷ but poor peasants frequently remembered their priest in their will, too.¹⁹⁸ The amount bequeathed was often just enough to pay the clergyman to say requiem masses in the deceased's memory, half a rouble or a few sacks of rye grain, but even this was an indication of their approval.¹⁹⁹

Further evidence that a large number of priests were well-regarded by their parishioners is found in their willingness to appoint his son and care for his family after his death, 'for the sake of the labours of our spiritual father', as one parish put it.²⁰⁰ The most striking testimony of parishioners' esteem, and the most abundant, is the numerous petitions they wrote to the Church authorities asking for their widowed cleric to be allowed to remain as parish priest because, they attest, he was worthy of the priesthood.²⁰¹ 'He 'lives in purity' one letter reads, 'he is very literate and decorous', another states, whilst others avow 'he is devoted to the church', 'he lives piously and humbly, does not get drunk or do evil, and the church of God is never without services', 'he is good and humble...and teaches us sinners the Word of God and the true path, and is not given to drink or knavery', 'he is a spiritual father to us all, he is diligent and cares for the church of God, and commits no kind of scandal'.²⁰² There are a profusion of similar letters signed by long lists of petitioners, indicating that a great many Russians felt a certain degree of regard for, or at least loyalty to, their clergy.²⁰³

¹⁹⁷ Smirnov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, pp.77-81.

¹⁹⁸ *RIB* 21 pp.807-810; *OSS* Pt.2 p.10, Pt.7 p.84, Pt.8 pp.16,32, Pt.9 pp.99,111, Pt.11 pp.56,117, Pt.12 no.117; *AIuB* 1 nos.84 ii, 86 i-iv; *AIuB* 2 no.228; *DAI* 9 no.55 p.131; *RIB* 35 no.355 p.693.

¹⁹⁹ *RGADA* f.196, op.3, Novgorod, d.1000 (1684); *RIB* 35 no.292 p.494; *RIB* 14 nos.50,98,100 Khol.; *RIB* 12 nos.73,113,114, Ust.

²⁰⁰ *OSS* Pt.11 p.186 no.165 (1672), Pt.7 pp.155,156, On the numerous cases of ordination of sons and care of clergy families, see chapters 2 and 8.

²⁰¹ The 1666-67 Moscow Council gave bishops discretionary authority to allow widowed clergy to retain their posts: see chapter seven.

²⁰² *OSS* Pt.7 p.73 (1686), Pt.9 p.94 no.77 (1664-84), Pt.11 pp.191,194,201 (1672), Pt.12 p.147 no.155 (1689).

²⁰³ *OSS* Pt.3 no.31 n.40 (1675), Pt.5 pp.39,77 (1679,1697), Pt.9 pp.93,95 (1683), Pt.11 pp.197,200,201,202 (1672), Pt.12 no.82 no.96 (1682); *LZAK* 27 nos.588,624,645,846, 864,865,868,870,878-887. There are many similar petitions in the Moscow diocesan records: *SKE* pp.42-187.

In contrast, there are considerably fewer petitions from disgruntled parishioners who did not want their priest to stay, or his son to succeed to his post. One parish priest, Grigorii of Kitovo, was so highly honoured by his flock that after his death they buried him in the church and revered him as their local patron saint.²⁰⁴

Ordinary parish priests were of inferior status to their cathedral and monastic colleagues, and were more frequently victimised by brutish laymen, but they were not superfluous to their society's needs. When F.C.Weber described them in 1722 as 'less honoured than any other persons in Russia', he revealed his own lack of understanding of the deep and contradictory relationship between priests and people.²⁰⁵ But he was correct in describing the clergy as burdened with heavy imposts: even before the Petrine reforms, the Muscovite white clergy were a 'service clergy' encumbered with the demands of Church and Crown. They were expected to carry out administrative and policing duties, to teach Orthodoxy to the masses, to extirpate heresy and heterodoxy, and to live an exemplary life, without receiving sufficient religious education or independent financial support. Their honour was dragged down by reliance on the voluntary offerings of parishioners, a demeaning system of remuneration that robbed the clergy of independence when action was needed, and silenced them when they should have spoken. But, although apathy, disrespect and ill-treatment were widely encountered by parish priests, there is plentiful evidence that they made a positive contribution to their communities, not least by providing the main source of social welfare for the nation's poor and oppressed. Hundreds of petitions and wills provide proof that clergymen were regarded by the people as indispensable social workers, counsellors, teachers, administrators, scribes, and, above all, as the community's mediator with heaven.

²⁰⁴ 'Nekanonizovannye sviatye goroda Shui', *ChOIDR* 1893 Bk.2 pp.18-19.

²⁰⁵ Weber, *The Present State of Russia*, 1 p.67.

Chapter Five

The Cathedral Clergy

'A priest in Muscovy is a personage of very great dignity, before whom Governors and other magistrates stand in fear and awe, whilst he is seated.'

Paul of Aleppo, 17th century¹

The above statement, penned by a deacon in the delegation of Patriarch Makarius of Antioch during the 1650s, stands in stark contrast to the picture of down-trodden Russian priests detailed in the previous chapter. But there is no contradiction here: deacon Paul was not describing the ordinary parish priests of rural Russia, but the clerical dignitaries of Moscow, amongst whom were the clergy of the Kremlin cathedrals. Moscow archpriests held the highest positions attainable to the secular clergy, and were men of wealth and influence. In the provinces, too, cathedral clergy held an honoured place in society, and were more prosperous than their parish colleagues. Following the policies of earlier tsars, the Romanov rulers of seventeenth-century Muscovy generously funded the building of cathedrals and granted land, stipends and privileges for their clergy. This royal support was not motivated merely by piety, however, but was a reward for services that were considered to be crucial to the stability of the State. Just as the parish clergy existed in an almost symbiotic relationship with their parishioners, the cathedral clergy were linked to the Crown. They were special agents of the government, for as well as performing many of same civic duties as the lower clergy,² they played an important role in upholding law and order, promoting political fealty, and providing 'supernatural support' for royal power.³

Muscovy was a realm of cathedrals. The tsardom's three main cathedrals, dedicated to the Dormition, Annunciation, and Archangel Michael, were located inside the Moscow

¹ Paul of Aleppo, p.352.

² On parish clergy's role as government agents see chapter four.

³ G. Klaniczay, *The Uses of Supernatural Power*, (Cambridge,1990) p.125.

Kremlin, but there were at least seven other major cathedrals in the capital, each of which supported up to sixteen priests, deacons and d'iachki, in addition to side-chapel priests, singers, bakers and watchmen.⁴ Large staffs of fourteen or more clergymen were also employed at major episcopal cathedrals in the provinces,⁵ and St.Sophia in Novgorod had a staff of forty-three persons in total, including psalmists and watchmen.⁶ Every sizeable Muscovite town had at least one cathedral, although they were not all the seat of a bishop. There were many non-episcopal district cathedrals,⁷ varying in staff size from seven priests and deacons down to just one priest, the smaller of which were only distinguished from parish churches by their title (*sobor*, rather than *tserkov'* or *khram*), by their function as the district's main church, and by the fact that the staff received some form of maintenance from the government.⁸ Episcopal and large district cathedrals were presided over by an archpriest, who managed a staff consisting of a deputy (*kliuchar'*), several priests, a protodeacon, deacons, minor clerics, and sometimes chapel priests as well.⁹ The archpriest supervised liturgical affairs and managed the cathedral's economic resources with the assistance of the *kliuchar'*.¹⁰ He was, furthermore, an episcopal supervisor of the highest level, with authority not only to supervise his own staff, but holding wide powers to judge clergy and laymen from the surrounding district.¹¹ The *kliuchar'* was responsible for the maintenance of cathedral property, which entailed the leasing of lands and overseeing

⁴ The main Moscow cathedrals were Dormition, Annunciation, Archangel, Saviour, Purification, Nativity, Resurrection, Chernigov, Alexander Nevskii, and St.Nicholas: *RIB* 23 p.1007-1013 (1669). G.N.Shmelev, *Iz istorii moskovskago Uspenskago sobora*, (M.1908) pp.1-2; *DAI* 5 no.102 p.475.

⁵ By mid-century the main provincial episcopal cathedrals were located in Novgorod, Rostov, Iaroslavl', Kazan, Sviazhsk, Riazan, Murom, Tver, Kashin, Suzdal, Vologda, Smolensk, Pskov, Astrakhan, Tobol'sk, Viatka, Polotsk, Kolomna and Kashira: Pokrovskii, *Russkie epakhii*, 1 pp.55-58,95,260-62,314-65; *VKS* p.92.

⁶ *AAE* 3 no.306 (1641); *AAE* 3 no.282 (1638).

⁷ I follow G.Freeze's term 'district cathedral' to refer to non-episcopal cathedrals.

⁸ *RIB* 12 no.244 Ust.(1694); *AI* 2 no.69 p.86 (1606); *PNG* pp.16-17; *SKE* pp.229-274.

⁹ The largest cathedrals had two *kliuchari*.

¹⁰ *RIB* 12 no.243 Ust.; *RIB* 14 nos.45,51 II Ust.

¹¹ *RIB* 12 no.197 Ust.; *SKE* pp.170-171 nos.12-13; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.216. Archpriests also supervised certain monasteries: *AAE* 4 no.312.

of interior furnishings, such as icons, books, plate, vestments, candles, incense and other supplies.¹² Next in precedence ranked the protodeacon, who played a major role in the running of the cathedral and in special services, and accordingly received a higher stipend than ordinary priests or deacons.¹³ Deacons held a more important function in cathedral life in the Eastern Church than in the West. They were responsible for leading much of the chant during the Liturgy and reading the gospel, and were essential participants in the consecration rite of new churches, a task for which they were sent around the eparchy by their bishop. This duty could involve considerable travelling: when a new church was built in Western Siberia in 1600, a deacon had to come from distant Perm on the other side of the Urals to perform the rite of consecration, and in the late 1690s deacon Lavrentii Ivanov was sent thousands of miles from Tobol'sk to consecrate a Russian chapel in China.¹⁴

The process of appointment to a cathedral living usually required three stages: the candidate had to apply for a vacancy, he had to have a suitable recommendation, and his nomination had to be approved by the bishop and the tsar.¹⁵ The prestigious positions in the Moscow Kremlin cathedrals were usually filled by priests whose education was above the average and who were already known to the tsar or patriarch.¹⁶ Appointments sometimes rewarded loyal service: priest Ermolai of Tolbuisk village was appointed to the post of kliuchar' of Archangel cathedral by Tsar Mikhail after helping the tsar's mother when she was incarcerated by Boris Godunov,

¹² *RIB* 3 pp.5-12,15,17,24,27,30,66,71,121-23,418-9,517,566; *RIB* 14 no.203 Khol.; *RIB* 12 no.250 Ust.; *RIB* 24 no.29 p.197; Shmelev, *Iz istorii moskovskago Uspenskago sobora*, pp.5-15.

¹³ A protodeacon was a deacon, not a priest, whereas in the English Church an archdeacon is actually a high-ranking priest. Russian protodeacons' responsibilities and salaries are recorded in *RIB* 14 no.51 Ust.; Shmelev, *Iz istorii moskovskago Uspenskago sobora*, p.12; *RIB* 3 pp.9,18,82,90,134; *DRV* Pt.10 pp.1,202,206,214; J.Crull. *The Present and Ancient State of Russia*, p.314.

¹⁴ Müller, *Istoriia Sibiri*, 1 pp.388-89; Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, no.46.

¹⁵ *RIB* 12 no.97 Ust.

¹⁶ *MTS* 2 pp.111-113. In 1619 priest Ivan Nasedka was promoted to Annunciation after being brought to Tsar Mikhail's attention by Patriarch Filaret.

and in 1685 Merkurii Gavrilovich was appointed royal confessor on the recommendation of Patriarch Ioakim, under whom he had served faithfully in Novgorod.¹⁷ Several Moscow archpriests were appointed from the provinces, possibly due, as Izvekov has suggested, to the intercession of a relative at court, whilst others were promoted from palace churches.¹⁸ A candidate applying for a post in a provincial cathedral needed a reference from the staff, and if there were parishioners, as district cathedrals often had, those parishioners also had a say.¹⁹ Sons of cathedral priests were generally first in line for any vacancies, initially as minor clerics and later to their father's post, but there was always fierce competition.²⁰ One candidate got the job as protodeacon of Ustiug Dormition cathedral only after he offered to take reduced pay.²¹ The tsar was involved in the appointment of staff to episcopal cathedrals, but bishops had a free hand to demote, dismiss and transfer the staff of district cathedrals at will, sometimes without reference to the priest concerned. Upon the request of a rich merchant, the Archbishop of Ustiug agreed to transfer priest Iakov Feodorov at short notice from his post at Totma cathedral to the merchant's own church, but changed his mind after the cathedral staff and townspeople petitioned against his transfer.²² In newly-colonised eastern Siberia there were so few priests available that when the archpriest of Irkutsk ostrog died in 1687, the bishop appointed a d'iachok as the new

¹⁷ 'Paleostrov: ego sudba i znachenie v obonezhskom krae', *ChOIDR* 1868 Bk.2 p.39.

¹⁸ *MTS* 2 pp.84,110,129. Royal confessors Merkurii and Feofan were transferred to Moscow from Novgorod, archpriest Timofei of Purification cathedral came from Kholmogory, Petr Afanasev of Resurrection came from Smolensk. Royal confessor Nikita Vasilevich II was formerly priest at Nativity palace church; archpriest Aleksei of St.Saviour's (1645-75) was formerly priest at St.Evdokia's.

¹⁹ *RIB* 14 no.75 Ust.; *RIB* 14 no.174 Khol.; *RIB* 12 nos.64,181,224,231, Ust.; *AMG* 2 no.611.

²⁰ *DAI* 2 no.84; *OSS* Pt.3 p.65 n.118, Pt.7 p.92; *SKE* pp.87,150,151,163,165; *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, no.512; *AMG* 1 no.610; *AMG* 3 no.665; *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, p.120; *PNG* p.264; *RIB* 12 nos.92,105,270,231 Ust.; *RIB* 14 no.174 Khol.

²¹ *RIB* 12 no.30 Ust.(1628).

²² *RIB* 12 no.224 Ust. Unilateral episcopal appointments are also in *RIB* 12 no.231 Ust.; *SKE* p.108; *LZAK* 14 p.80; *OSS* Pt.9 p.116 no.174, Pt.7 p.92.

archpriest and conferred on him extensive supervisory powers, -- a rare case of fast-track promotion to the top.²³

Services rendered by cathedral clergy in support of the Crown

The chief function of Muscovite cathedral clergy was, in practice though not in theory, to glorify the tsar rather than to glorify the Almighty. To a large extent, the liturgical life of a cathedral revolved around the life-cycle of the reigning dynasty.²⁴ As well as reciting daily public prayers for the royal family, the clergy were obliged to offer up special prayers for the tsar and his kin upon the occasion of every royal birth, marriage, coronation, and death, to commemorate royal requiems and name days.²⁵ Upon the birth of each tsarevich and tsarevna, two clergymen from each provincial cathedral came to Moscow from all corners of the tsardom to offer holy water and icons, and on the rare occasions of a royal visit to the provinces, such as Peter I's visit to Archangel in 1693, local cathedral clergy met the sovereign with full pomp and honours.²⁶ Moscow Kremlin priests, especially archpriests of Annunciation cathedral, who until 1696 were the confessors to the Romanov tsars, were personally involved in every important event in the life of the ruler and his family, from birth to death.²⁷ Both in private and in public, the tsars of Muscovy felt the need to have a priest always to hand. They employed priests in the palace, took clergy with them on journeys near and far,²⁸ and literally surrounded themselves with clerics in major ceremonies.²⁹ For the tsar personally, the presence of his confessor was probably a comforting guarantee of

²³ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, nos.14,15.

²⁴ The royal calendar has been published as *Dvortsovye razriady*, 4 Vols (Spb.1852-55).

²⁵ *RIB* 35 nos.371,341,353,448; *PSZ* 1 nos.235,444,446,464,495; *PSZ* 2 nos.748,878,881,1356; *PSZ* 3 no.1378,1406,1417; *AAE* 2 no.31; *DAI* 8 nos.9,102; *RIB* 5 no.287.

²⁶ *SPIRIAN* f.117 op.1 d.340; *AI* 3 no.28; *AIu* no.375; *LZAK* 14 p.10; *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, p.63; *PSZ* 3 no.1406, *PSZ* 2 no.748; *MTS* 2 pp.98-112.

²⁷ *PSZ* 2 nos.648,748,931; *PSZ* 3 nos.1378,1406,1417; *MTS* 2 p.97; *AAE* 2 nos.1,9,32,47; *DAI* 7 no.1; *DAI* 5 no.1x; *DAI* 10 no.15.

²⁸ *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, p.63,77-78; *MTS* 2 pp.84,98-111.

²⁹ *PSZ* 1 no.415 p.721 (1667).

supernatural support and, at the same time, protection against divine disfavour. The confessor was both counsellor and holy man, sometimes sharing this role alongside unordained 'holy men' of doubtful provenance, like the *bogomol'tsy* whom Tsar Aleksei liked to keep at his court.³⁰ In public ceremonies, such as the Blessing of the Waters and the Palm Sunday Processions, the attendance of the clergy was an overtly political gesture, providing a majestic display of pomp and splendour which glorified the tsar and presented, as R. Wortman has noted, 'a hieratic image of the Christian Emperor'.³¹ As priests of the Almighty, furthermore, their presence declared to the Muscovite people a message of divine approbation, with a warning of 'touch not the Lord's anointed'.³²

Upon the outbreak of war, Russian monarchs traditionally looked to the Church for support. Cathedral clergy were expected to raise the morale of troops with ceremonious send-offs before a campaign and with icon processions to greet the army along their route.³³ Cathedrals, along with monasteries, materially assisted the war effort by providing horses, recruits, fodder, clothes and other supplies from church lands and by billeting military personnel when required.³⁴ Archpriest Foma of Astrakhan cathedral was instructed by the government to arrange a spectacular icon procession to greet the Russian army in May 1614, and was also told to tidy up his house in preparation for billeting a State official arriving with the regiments.³⁵ Cathedral clergy disseminated official war propaganda to the people, and prayed for

³⁰ *RIB* 23 pp.1100-01 (1669); E. Thompson, *The Holy Fool*, pp.44,104-05.

³¹ R.S. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, Vol.1, p.35; R. Crummey, 'Court Spectacles in Seventeenth-Century Russia,' *Essays in Honour of A.A. Zimin*, ed. by D. Clarke Waugh (Columbus, 1983); Nancy S. Kollman, 'Pilgrimage, Procession and Symbolic space in Sixteenth-century Russian politics,' *Medieval Russian Culture*, ed. by M. Flier and D. Rowland, (Berkeley, 1984) Vol.2.

³² *The Holy Bible* (RSV, 1952) 1 Samuel 24 no.10; Rulers of other societies similarly enlisted religious support; see G. Klaniczay, *The Uses of Supernatural Power*, (Cambridge, 1990), and *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, ed. by D. Cannadine and S. Price (Cambridge, 1987).

³³ *DAI* 6 no.12, p.59, II; *AI* 3 no.280 p.446; *DRV* Pt.11 nos.v,vii.

³⁴ *AI* 2 no.323 p.383-4; *DAI* 4 no.14; *DAI* 8 nos.28 vi,40.

³⁵ *AI* 3 no.280 p.446.

the tsar's army.³⁶ When triumph ensued (or when the government wished the people to think they had won), cathedrals were the main podium from which the news was announced and the venue for the celebrations.³⁷ When forced to admit defeat, the government placated critics by ordering the war dead to be honoured with requiem masses in cathedrals and monasteries, where their names were inscribed in the *sinodiki* for eternal commemoration.³⁸

The government viewed cathedral clergy as civil servants, and laid upon them many more administrative tasks than parish priests had.³⁹ Cathedral priests carried higher judicial responsibilities: they supervised vast numbers of clergy and laity who fell within episcopal jurisdiction,⁴⁰ and assisted State officials in investigating serious crimes such as murder or fraud.⁴¹ They were expected to be on hand for any exceptional circumstances, occasionally even auditing government account books outside the capital.⁴² Archpriests of the Moscow Kremlin cathedrals were authorised to sit with the highest dignitaries of Church and State at the Moscow Church Councils and sign the Council resolutions, which had a bearing on Muscovite civil jurisprudence.⁴³ They were entrusted with politically sensitive tasks in diplomatic affairs. Priest Ivan Nasedka was amongst a deputation sent to Denmark in 1621 to undertake negotiations for a proposed royal marriage between Tsar Mikhail and a relative of King Christian IV,⁴⁴

³⁶ *AAE* 2 nos.28,57,58,67,73, *AAE* 3 nos.333,334; *PSZ* 1 nos.47,514; *DAI* 8 no.33, *DAI* 4 no.16; *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, p.96; *DRV* pt.11, vii, p.173; *RIB* 14 no.144 Khol.; *RIB* 35 no.429.

³⁷ *RIB* 35 no.69 p.139; *DAI* 3 no.123.

³⁸ *RIB* 35 no.503; *PSZ* 2 nos.739,1343.

³⁹ See chapter four.

⁴⁰ See chapter nine.

⁴¹ *RIB* 12 no.74 Ust.; *RIB* 14 no.36 Ust.

⁴² *DAI* 3 no.117, p.440-1 (1654).

⁴³ The 1654 Council resolutions were signed by nine archpriests, and thirteen archpriests signed the 1666-67 resolutions: N.I.Subbotin, ed. *Deianie moskovskogo sobora 1654 goda o knizhnom ispravlenii* (M.1873); *DAI* 5 no.102 p.475. Archpriests were included in the typical Muscovite legislative formula: 'The Tsar and Patriarch decree, and all archimandrites, hegumens, archpriests and the consecrated assembly assent (*ulozhit*)': *AAE* 4 no.19 (1647/8).

⁴⁴ *MTS* 2 p.112.

and archpriest Nikita of Annunciation cathedral was given responsibility for interrogating a foreign envoy who arrived in Moscow to offer his monarch's allegiance in 1639-40.⁴⁵

As part of their diplomatic duties, archpriests were regularly sent by the government, in consultation with the patriarch, to restore order during times of civil disturbance. Priest Vasilei of Moscow Dormition cathedral was commissioned by Tsar Aleksei to investigate reports of rebellion at Solovetskii monastery in August 1666, for example,⁴⁶ and archpriest Mikhail of Chernigov cathedral was dispatched to calm an insurrection in Pskov in 1650.⁴⁷ Provincial archpriests were similarly sent out to trouble-spots to restore order, serving also as under-cover spies. Priest Kiril Andreev of Kholmogory cathedral was sent by order of the tsar to persuade schismatics in prison in Sumsk ostrog to recant in the early 1670s, after which he was despatched to Solovetskii monastery during a rebellion to convince insurgent monks to surrender and to report any information he could find out on the rebels' arms stores and grain supplies.⁴⁸ In 1688 a Novgorod archpriest was commissioned to negotiate with insurrectionists and restore order at Paleostrov.⁴⁹ In their own home communities, too, the senior cathedral clergy were expected to uphold the law in times of trouble. In the midst of the Stenka Razin rebellion archpriest Andrei of Ostrogozhsk saved his town for the tsar when, conferring with loyal citizens, he caught local rebels and handed them over to a bailiff,⁵⁰ while archpriest Dmitrii Polikarpov of Dubrovna persuaded his fellow-citizens to surrender the town to the Muscovite army in 1655.⁵¹ Cathedral priests were mediators between the Crown and the people: they appealed to the ruler

⁴⁵ 'Posol'stvo', pp.260,273.

⁴⁶ N.I.Subbotin, ed. *Materialy dlia istorii raskola za pervoe vremia ego sushchestvovaniia*, Vol.3 p.26.

⁴⁷ *DAI* 3 no.74; *SMA* 6 no.20.

⁴⁸ *ChO IDR* 1883 Bk.4 Smes', p.65 no.18. On the State's use of clerics as spies, see also *AMG* 1 nos.315,396 (1632), *AMG* 2 no.594.

⁴⁹ Barsov, 'Sudnye protsessy', *ChO IDR* 1882 Bk 3 no.7;

⁵⁰ *DAI* 6 no.12 vii p.61 (1670).

⁵¹ *AMG* 2 no.722,737,783.

to have mercy on rebels and interceded for condemned criminals, but ultimately their loyalties were to their employer, the tsar.⁵² However, there could be a price to pay for being a representative of the government. The kliuchar' of Astrakhan cathedral was executed by Cossack rebels in 1671 for remaining loyal to the Sovereign,⁵³ and archpriest Vasilei of Moscow barely escaped with his life when an incensed mob turned on him, after he attempted to stop them from entering the palace grounds during the 1682 uprising.⁵⁴

To the clergy of cathedrals outside the capital, the government delegated the vital political task of promoting allegiance to the Crown. When a new monarch came to the throne, all ranks of people -- from the nobility down to the peasants -- were obliged to come to their local cathedral to kiss the cross and swear an oath of fealty on the Gospel, in the presence of the archpriest and town governor or secretary.⁵⁵ Cathedral clergy were authorised to oversee the swearing of allegiance by foreigners and to baptise native subjects into the Orthodox faith, thereby witnessing their submission to both tsar and patriarch.⁵⁶ Locally-elected collectors of state taxes and tribute (*iasak*) were required by law to swear an oath of fealty before the clergy of their town cathedral, 'so that good men among the iasak-payers can collect the tsar's iasak, without supplement'.⁵⁷ The Muscovite Law Code demanded the participation of a cathedral priest or monastic superior in the resolution of certain legal disputes.⁵⁸ Contesting parties and their witnesses were taken to the cathedral church to swear on

⁵² 'Pechalovanie dukhovenstva za opal'nykh', *ChOIDR* 1876 Bk 1 pp.209,261; *RIB* 5 no.86; *LZAK* 14 p.92; *AMG* 3 no.587.

⁵³ *AI* 4 no.202 p.486.

⁵⁴ Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.358-59.

⁵⁵ *AMG* 2 no.246 (1645); *DAI* 7 no.2 p.3-4 (1676); *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, p.37 (1676); *PSZ* 2 no.624 (1676); *Tobol'sk: Materialy*, p.7 (1682); *AI* 5 no.82 p.131 (1682).

Monastic superiors could also administer the oath.

⁵⁶ *DAI* 8 no.12, p.30 (1678); *AMG* 2 no.935 (1656). In special circumstances parish priests administered the oath: *PSZ* 2 no.620 p.3; *DAI* 7 no.2 pp.3-4; *RIB* 8 no.11 xxiii p.467.

⁵⁷ *DAI* 8 no.28 pp.77,81 (1678-79); *Aiub* 2 no.230 xxxii (1680).

⁵⁸ Supplement to the Ulozhenie, *DAI* 8 no.108; *DAI* 9 no.86; *RIB* 14 no.178 Khol.; *PSZ* 2 no.741; *PSZ* 3 no.1612.

the Gospel before the archpriest, who, as the representative of both Christ and the Crown, had the responsibility of warning the plaintiff and defendant that perjurers would be severely punished in this life and the next.⁵⁹

The clergy's role in maintaining law and order and promoting political allegiance to the Crown was fulfilled in conjunction with provincial governors, but archpriests were not only assistants to the tsar's officials, they were also inspectors who watched them. Peter the Great was not the first monarch to encourage his deputies to report on one another; his ancestors before him had long used the Church to keep an eye on government officials outside the capital.⁶⁰ Although in some towns the archpriest was the local governor's confessor,⁶¹ archival sources show that rivalry and enmity between religious and secular authorities was not uncommon in the provinces. Whenever a new governor or secretary (*d'iak*) was appointed, he went directly to the cathedral, most probably to take an oath of fealty, before receiving the keys to the provincial administrative office (*s'ezzhaia izba*).⁶² The cathedral clergy, diligent in their role as the tsar's watchdogs, were not slow to report misdeeds. If a governor or secretary failed to attend services at the cathedral to celebrate or commemorate the royal family's special occasions, he could find himself reported to the tsar for treason. Financial corruption, illegal trading activities, excessive cruelty, disrespect toward the tsar's name, sub-standard Orthodoxy, and heresy were among charges levelled against provincial officials by cathedral clergy.⁶³ Some denunciations could be quite serious: one priest accused the governor of Venev of reading out a treasonous letter to the people and selling tobacco, but even lesser accusations could be construed as treason

⁵⁹ *PSZ* 2 no.741 (1678), 3 no.1612 (1697); *RIB* 14 no.178 Khol.(1667).

⁶⁰ Hughes, *Peter the Great*, p.111; Butsinskii *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.189,291, Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.117.

⁶¹ *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, p.15; *RIB* 12 no.279 Ust.(1698).

⁶² *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, pp.37-42,50-1 (1676-85).

⁶³ *ChOIDR* 226 1908 Bk.3 Smes', no.2 (1645-47); *DAI* 10 no.101 (1683); *OpMAMTu* 16 no.659 (1671).

on grounds of dubious loyalty or depleting the tsar's treasury.⁶⁴ The government took such charges seriously and initiated investigations in a number of cases, sometimes resulting in the removal and punishment of the accused official.⁶⁵

The fact that cathedral priests were more willing to denounce corruption than ordinary parish clergymen is an indication of their higher status, but also of the greater measure of protection against retaliation they were afforded by both Church and State. Parish priests were often isolated and unknown, hence more vulnerable to attack, whereas archpriests were under the special protection of the tsar. They were, moreover, usually well-connected, with influence and influential friends, and possessed a greater degree of financial security.⁶⁶ Significantly, when Avvakum was archpriest of Iurievets he was protected by State authorities, but he was threatened and assaulted by officials when he was an ordinary village priest and after his demotion.⁶⁷ Cathedral clergy were not immune from retaliatory counter-accusations or violence by noblemen whom they had exposed, but they were usually vigorously defended by their prelate, who knew them personally and could always be counted on to uphold his own ecclesiastical jurisdiction against secular incursions, even if he had no love for his clergy.⁶⁸ In 1642 a false accusation of armed robbery was lodged against archpriest Fedor Varfolom'ev of St.Sofia cathedral in Vologda, as a result of which Fedor was imprisoned and tortured to extract a confession. Archbishop Varlam rallied to his defence with an appeal to the tsar: 'archpriest Fedor was with me, your intercessor, in the cathedral every day, praying to God for your majesty and did not ride anywhere [...] and the archpriest is a

⁶⁴ Possession of tobacco was illegal in Muscovy at the time: *OpMAMlu* 16 no.655 (1671) 57-82, Venev town.

⁶⁵ *ChOIDR* 226 (1908) Bk.3 Smes', no.2 (1645-47).

⁶⁶ Corrupt governors were more likely to be denounced by powerful individuals, like influential merchant Grigorii Strogonov, or by groups of people, rather than by solitary low-status persons. On corruption, see Hughes, *Peter the Great*, p.114.

⁶⁷ 'Life of Archpriest Avvakum', pp.138-141,146.

⁶⁸ *OpMAMlu* 16 no.872 (1683-6); *RIB* 12 no.270,223 Ust.; *RIB* 2 no.176 xii; Butsinskii *Zaselenie Sibiri*, p.189. Accusations by governors: *OpMAMlu* 16 no.872 (1683-6); *RIB* 8 no.11 xxxiii p.467.

good and humble person and does nothing evil'.⁶⁹ Most at risk from bullying of this kind were the clergy of district cathedrals, like priest Mark Matveev of Roslavl, who was unjustly imprisoned and deprived of his job by governor Gorchakov in 1654, but even Mark was able to obtain justice by appealing to the Crown.⁷⁰ However, the position of the provincial clergy was weakened by the fact that the tsar relied heavily on governors to investigate disputes and accusations involving cathedral clergy, a fact which undermined clerical defences against lay injustice.⁷¹ Moreover, governors were responsible for distributing all State grants, and could inflict considerable difficulties on the cathedral clergy by withholding or delaying their stipends.⁷²

State support for the cathedral clergy

Recognising the valuable services rendered by the cathedral clergy, the Crown rewarded them generously. One of the features that distinguished a cathedral from a parish church was that the clergy of the former received the chief part of their personal income directly or indirectly from the State, rather than from parishioners.⁷³ Many, but not all, cathedrals were endowed with stipends (*ruga*) which were paid by the government annually, usually in cash and kind.⁷⁴ In 1621 the archpriest of St. Michael's cathedral in Nizhnii Novgorod was paid ten roubles cash and thirty chetverti of rye and oats each year (3791.7 lbs.), whilst the four cathedral priests received six roubles and twenty-four chetverti of grain (3033.36 lbs.).⁷⁵ St. Sofia's cathedral in Tobol'sk, like other frontier locations, was not a popular posting, but the cathedral stipend was higher than the provincial average because the government was eager to settle colonists in

⁶⁹ *RIB* 2 no.176 xii (1642).

⁷⁰ *AMG* 1 no.610; *AMG* 2 nos.722,737,783 (1655-56).

⁷¹ *RIB* 12 no.13 Ust.; *OSS* Pt.10 no.72 n.49; *AI* 3 no.223 p.381; *AI* 3 no.137.

⁷² *DAI* 6 no.11 p.55 (1670), 9 no.96 (1682); *RIB* 35 no.337 p.637 (1624).

⁷³ District cathedrals often had parishioners whose donations paid for candles, incense and other running costs of the cathedral: *RIB* 12 nos.64,181,224,231 Ust.; *AMG* 2 no.611.

⁷⁴ *AAE* 2 no.16; *DAI* 1 no.131; *DAI* 3 no.36; *DAI* 9 no.107; RGADA f.1107 op.1 Pt.2 d.2792.

⁷⁵ *RIB* 17 p.22 (1621-1622). The deacon was paid 3 roubles and 24 chet'. grain, and the ponomar' received 20 altyn, 8 chet'.

Siberia. The archpriest received twenty-five roubles and sixty cherveti of grain (7583.4 lbs.), equivalent to an ataman's or captain's pay; priests were paid ten roubles and twenty-six chetverti of grain (3286.14 lbs.).⁷⁶ In some cases, cathedral clergy were granted tax exemptions instead of stipends,⁷⁷ or were granted the right to collect monetary payments from State peasants. The clergy of St. Nicholas on the Oka river, for instance, were permitted to collect Crown dues from the houses in three and a half hamlets instead of receiving State ruga.⁷⁸ An important source of revenue for episcopal cathedrals was their right to issue marriage permits, consecrate new churches, and collect the fees for these services from the local parish and monastic clergy.⁷⁹ These lucrative fees, which amounted to hundreds of roubles each year for staff of St. Sofia Novgorod, could be granted by either the Crown or the bishop, but could only be revoked by royal ukaz.⁸⁰ Parish priests did not always hand over marriage fees without a fight, especially in Siberia, hence the government granted the archpriest of Temnikov a permit to take State bailiffs to apprehend obstructive clerics.⁸¹ Archpriests were frequently successful in obtaining permits and charters granting various concessions.⁸² One Novgorod archpriest obtained a permit from Tsar Mikhail allowing him to keep alcohol and heat his house in summer, thereby bypassing local regulations because he had many visitors, he claimed, 'and without it no one will come'.⁸³

⁷⁶ The Tobol'sk deacon received 8 roubles and grain. In contrast, ordinary parish priests in Siberia received 5-8 roubles annually, strel'tsy and new settlers received 5 roubles in the 1630s: Butskinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.186,248; *Tobol'sk: Materialy*, pp.4,30-31. See also chapter three.

⁷⁷ *DAV* no.98. On clerical tax obligations see chapter three.

⁷⁸ *RIB* 12 no.47 Ust.; *AI* 3 no.65.

⁷⁹ *AAE* 3 no.306, 4 no.155; *AI* 2 no.106; *RIB* 12 no.139,12 no.1; *PNG*, pp.16-17; Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, no.30 (1690).

⁸⁰ *AAE* 3 no.306.

⁸¹ *DAI* 8 no.26 p.73-4 (1678). Vologda diocesan records contain many examples of priests concealing marriage permits: *OSS* Pts.1-13.

⁸² *AAE* 3 no.67; *AIuB* 1 no.31 xxv.

⁸³ *DAI* 1 no.136. A similar concession to a Riazan priest is in *RIB* 2 no.218 (1618).

The chief source of income for the majority of cathedral clergymen appears to have been land that had been donated by the Crown.⁸⁴ Occasionally land revenues were supplemented by State stipends, but a great many clergy depended entirely on their hamlets and other real property, which could consist of fields, meadows, mills, forests and fishing rights.⁸⁵ Cathedral estates, or the income therefrom, were divided between the clergy for their maintenance, with shares apportioned in accord with the rank of each clergyman.⁸⁶ In Ustiug, hamlets and positions were inheritable: if a son inherited his father's job, he took over the hamlets that had been assigned to his father, albeit that the land remained the property of the cathedral.⁸⁷ Clergy of small district cathedrals appear to have farmed their own glebe like ordinary parish priests,⁸⁸ but for the most part, cathedral lands were tilled by enserfed peasants or sharecroppers.⁸⁹ Provincial cathedrals rarely owned more than fifty peasant households, -- in contrast to the 9,084 households owned by the patriarch,⁹⁰ but even so, the duties of managing their immovable assets took up an immense amount of the clergy's time, judging from the paperwork they have left behind.⁹¹ Tenants had to be found and rents collected, and in bad years droughts and floods destroyed any profit.⁹² Court cases had to be fought and petitions written to defend cathedral lands and revenues from avaricious laymen or

⁸⁴ Occasionally private donors, like the Stroganov family, provided land for cathedral clergy, eg. Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 1 p.64.

⁸⁵ *AI* 3 no.133 p.208; *RIB* 35 no.337 p.637; *DAI* 6 nos.65,129; *DAI* 7 no.65 p.307.

⁸⁶ *RIB* 12 no.19 Ust.(1617), *RIB* 14 no.62 Ust.(1682).

⁸⁷ *RIB* 12 no.92 Ust. (1666).

⁸⁸ Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.23 (1627-28) no.49 (1683).

⁸⁹ In common with all ecclesiastical landowners, cathedral clergy were proprietors of peasants but they had no personal inheritance rights. Cathedral peasants are mentioned in *AIu* no.222 iii; *LZAK* 23 no.6; *OpMAMiU* 16 no.634 ii (1682-86), no.682, Chernavsk (1673); *AI* 2 no.69; Shmelev, *Iz istorii moskovskago Uspenskago sobora*, nos.14-15 p.202 (1634/5); Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.49 (1683).

⁹⁰ Of the 148,997 peasant households owned in 1678 by the Church, 3,475 were owned by two hundred cathedrals and churches, a large proportion of which were Moscow Kremlin cathedrals. Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 1, p.64; Ivanov, *Opisanie gosudarstvennago arkhiva*, pp.344-358; Hughes, *Peter the Great*, pp.332,533-34.

⁹¹ *RIB* 12 no.19 Ust.; Shmelev *Iz istorii moskovskago Uspenskago sobora*, no.14 p.202. See also *RIB* Vols.14 and 25.

⁹² *RIB* 12 nos.53,139 Ust.

hostile tax-collectors.⁹³ After being illegally charged State taxes in 1643, archpriest Vasilei and the staff of Ustiug were obliged to take a petition to Tsar Mikhail asking for defence and for their immunity charters to be reconfirmed.⁹⁴ When a new monarch came to the throne, all cathedrals, like landowning churches and monasteries, had to spend time and money arranging for their deeds and charters to be counter-signed by the new sovereign in Moscow, otherwise the deeds became invalid.⁹⁵

In addition to their regular income, cathedral clergy received occasional grants of valuable cloth from the government,⁹⁶ and *molebennyi* and *slavlennyi* money at Easter and Christmas, which amounted to about one rouble per priest, somewhat less for a minor cleric, each time.⁹⁷ Prelates also gave gifts and charters to the staff of their own cathedrals.⁹⁸ Ustiug archpriest Maksim and his staff had a charter from their bishop requiring three priest-supervisors and nine monasteries to pay them *slavlennyi* money, which brought in a total of about five and a half roubles on each festival.⁹⁹ When Archbishop Simon arrived in Vologda after his consecration in 1664, he gave out cash gifts of half a rouble or more to all twenty persons employed at St.Sophia's, and regularly invited the ordained clergy to feasts at the episcopal palace.¹⁰⁰

These were only small perks compared to the huge sums received by clergymen who lived in Moscow, where approximately two hundred and forty cathedrals and endowed churches were on the government payroll.¹⁰¹ Cathedral staff were all paid stipends, but the precise sums appear to have been very variable, depending on the church and on

⁹³ For example, *RIB* 35 no.325 (1623).

⁹⁴ *RIB* 12 no.47 Ust.

⁹⁵ *RIB* 35 no.325 p.605 (1623); *DAI* 6 no.129, p.378 (1675); *VKS*, p.188; *DAV* no.33.

⁹⁶ Cloth grants to clergy, military servitors and workmen are listed in *RGADA* f.396, *Oruzheinaia palata*, opis' 1, *RIB* Vol.23, and *DAI* 1 no.131 p.189.

⁹⁷ *DAI* 6 no.11; *DAI* 9 no.96; Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.55; *RIB* 12 no.139.

⁹⁸ *RIB* 14 no.57 Ust. (1683).

⁹⁹ *RIB* 12 no.139 Ust. (1683)

¹⁰⁰ *VKS*, p.91.

¹⁰¹ Pokrovskii, *Russkie eparkhii*, 1 pp.234-5,174-5; *DAI* 9 no.107.

the whims of the tsar. Archpriests could receive a basic pay of twenty to thirty roubles, cathedral priests might receive ten to fifteen,¹⁰² but this sum was augmented by numerous cash bonuses and grants of cloth paid out for festivals, special services, and commemoration of deceased royal relatives.¹⁰³ Clergy of the Kremlin cathedrals and palace churches were especially well-placed to benefit from the tsar's munificence.¹⁰⁴ Typical is an entry in the debit books of the Privy Chancellery recording that palace priest Iosif was paid ten roubles 'because he read the gospel to the Great Sovereign,' or that a d'iachok of St.Evdokia's was given ten roubles 'for the marriage of his daughter'.¹⁰⁵ These occasional sums were equivalent to a rural priest's income for a whole year. Archpriests who served as confessors to the royal family received the largest sums and most valuable presents, especially the tsar's confessor.¹⁰⁶ In 1625 Tsar Mikhail paid his confessor forty sables and damask cloth, with a fifty-rouble bonus for confession; Tsar Aleksei gave his confessor Lukian Kirillov over a hundred roubles annually plus regular grants of cloth and furs.¹⁰⁷ Aleksei's next confessor, Andrei Postnikov, received unusually large sums.¹⁰⁸ Between November 1669 and February 1670, for example, he was paid a thousand roubles, and on many occasions was sent gifts in kind such as silk cloth, bulls, rams, chickens and sturgeon.¹⁰⁹ Tsar Fedor paid his confessor 515 roubles annually, plus 615 litres of wine and 1148 kilos of salt, as well as a bonus of a hundred roubles each year for confession.¹¹⁰ The wife, children and servants of a royal confessor also received costly gifts, usually of cloth and furs.¹¹¹

¹⁰² *DAI* 9 no.107; *RIB* 23 p.306 (1674). Paul of Aleppo, p.352.

¹⁰³ *RIB* 23 p.17,34,1028,1091,1507 (1669); *MTS* 2 pp.148-154.

¹⁰⁴ *RIB* 23 p.1007-1013.

¹⁰⁵ *RIB* 23 p.593 (1665), p.360 (1675).

¹⁰⁶ *MTS* 2 pp.122,140-148.

¹⁰⁷ *RIB* 23 pp.17,34,664,1028,1507; *MTS* 2 pp.140-154. In addition to receiving personal gifts, royal confessors were entrusted with alms for distribution to the poor.

¹⁰⁸ A royal confessor was only replaced after his death or retirement. Tsar Aleksei's confessors were Stefan Vonifat'ev (1645-56), Lukian Kirillov (1657-1666), and Andrei Savvinovich (1666-1676).

¹⁰⁹ *RIB* 23 pp.70,79,266,678,839,982,995,1243,1249,1255,1271,1372,1404, 1484; *MTS* 2 p.146.

¹¹⁰ 50 vedro wine and 70 pud salt.

¹¹¹ *MTS* 2 pp.144-8, Prilozhenie, nos 5-18.

On top of all this, Moscow cathedral clergy received income from their immense landholdings¹¹² and commercial enterprises, for which they had royal charters granting tax exemptions and duty-free privileges.¹¹³ Most notable among businessmen-archpriests were Feodor of Archangel, Merkurii Gavrilov of Annunciation, and Aleksandr of St.Saviour cathedral.¹¹⁴ Aleksandr owned a consortium of shops, some of which he had obtained by lending out money and confiscating the property of defaulters. By means of financial privileges obtained through his brother-in-law, Archimandrite Ioasaf of Trinity-St.Sergius monastery, Aleksandr was able to profit from Trinity monastery landholdings as well, eliciting a complaint from indignant monks in 1655.¹¹⁵

Clearly, a Moscow archpriest could be a wealthy man, respected by society, honoured by magnates, and referred to as 'most reverent archpriest', (*prechestnyi protopop*), but his prosperity and dignity were entirely due to the tsar's favour.¹¹⁶ Archpriests used this favour to obtain boons, not only for themselves, but also for others, and consequently received a steady stream of petitioners requesting help. Due to their intervention, friends found jobs, destitute clerics received alms, and prisoners on death-row were reprieved.¹¹⁷ Noblemen, archimandrites, and bishops from out of town carried their favour by bringing gifts when they visited Moscow, so that they could

¹¹² Moscow Annunciation cathedral owned 638 peasant households in 1700, nearly twelve times as many as other cathedral clergy, and twenty times the average in the North. P.Ivanov, *Opisanie gosudarstvennago arkhiva*, p.350.

¹¹³ *PSZ* 2 nos.1229, 1325; *PSZ* 3 no.1711.

¹¹⁴ *RIB* 23 p.360 (1675); *PSZ* 2 nos.1133, 1153, *PSZ* 3 no.1390; *LZAK* 14 pp.37,43,47,52.

¹¹⁵ *LZAK* 14 pp.37,43,47,52; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.200; RGADA f.27 d.192 (1655).

¹¹⁶ *PSZ* 1 no.397 (1666); *DAI* 5 no.26 p.110 (1666-7). Avvakum wryly commented on the honour he received whilst in favour: *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.163. After he and Ivan Neronov lost that favour, they became outcasts.

¹¹⁷ *LZAK* 14 p.92 (1690); *Vosstanie 1662 g.*, no.157; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.141; 'Pechalovanie dukhovenstva za opal'nykh', *ChOIDR* 1876 Bk 1 p.261; *RIB* 23 p.1231,1255,1307-8,1374.

later call on their help.¹¹⁸ In 1642, for example, boyar Morozov asked archpriest Nikita of Annunciation cathedral to help him obtain a loan of grain from Nizhnii Novgorod Pecherskii monastery,¹¹⁹ and in 1650 Archimandrite Tikhon from Pecherskii asked his fellow-townsmen archpriest Ivan to intercede at the palace for him concerning a dispute in 1650.¹²⁰ Metropolitan Kornilii of Novgorod addressed many letters to archpriest Merkurii Gavrilov, a former *kliuchar'* of Novgorod, asking him to put in a good word with the tsar for the Metropolitan's financial interests.¹²¹ In the provinces, too, archpriests were useful intercessors. When Ustiug governor Ivan Kikin imprisoned one of Archbishop Aleksandr's officers, the captive's release was effected only by the mediation of archpriest Timofei, who was Kikin's confessor.¹²²

If a conflict arose between a Moscow archpriest and his bishop, royal protection was a potent weapon for the former. Confident in the knowledge that Tsar Alekei was his shield, royal confessor Stefan Vonifat'ev attacked Patriarch Iosif's stand on the use of the single-chant rite (*edinoglasie*) in Muscovite churches, calling him a wolf rather than a pastor. Despite appeals to Constantinople, Iosif was unable to touch Stefan.¹²³ Stefan's successor Andrei Postnikov made enemies among the Church hierarchy,¹²⁴ but Patriarch Ioakim could not have him removed and punished until after Tsar Aleksei's death in 1676, despite the fact that the archpriest had been found guilty of serious misdemeanours. After Postnikov's removal, Ioakim insisted that future royal confessors profess a vow of loyalty to the patriarch.¹²⁵ Outside Moscow, cathedral clergy were not so secure in their inviolability, but still stood a better chance than parish priests in

¹¹⁸ *RIB* 14 no.71 Ust.(1688-9); *RIB* 5 no.86 (1656); *RIB* 2 nos.222.

¹¹⁹ *RIB* 2 nos.229.

¹²⁰ S.Arkhangel'skii, ed. *Nizhnii Novgorod v XVII veke: Sbornik dokumentov*, (Gor'kii,1961) no.72.

¹²¹ *LZAK* 14 pp.67-68,76,89.

¹²² *RIB* 12 no.279 Ust.(1698)

¹²³ *ChOIDR* 1887 Bk.3 Smes', no.9.

¹²⁴ The fact that Postnikov received royal gifts and privileges of greater value than prelates did little to endear him to the latter: eg. *RIB* 23 p.1300.

¹²⁵ *AI* 5 no.218, p.373 (1693); Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.403.

their battles with a prelate, just as they did in their conflicts with lay officials. Archpriest Semen Adamov felt confident enough in his position to denounce his Archbishop, Lazar of Chernigov, in 1676,¹²⁶ and archpriest Ivan and clergy of St. Sofia cathedral in Novgorod won a head-on conflict with Metropolitan Athfonii in 1641. The clash came about after the prelate tried to usurp the cathedral staff's traditional right to collect marriage permit fees, but after Tsar Mikhail had ruled in their favour the metropolitan dismissed the archpriest and protodeacon in retaliation. The tsar ordered them to be reinstated, issuing a rebuke to the prelate.¹²⁷ This was a major victory for the white clergy, but they were not all so fortunate. In a dispute between the Viatka cathedral clergy and their archbishop over ownership of land, the Sovereign awarded the property to the prelate, despite the fact that the cathedral had owned it since the sixteenth century.¹²⁸ Similarly, Toropets cathedral priests lost their court battle with Metropolitan Kornilii of Novgorod in 1677 when the patriarch awarded cathedral land to the prelate.¹²⁹ And, apart from looking after their royal confessors, tsars rarely interfered in episcopal jurisdiction over the clergy, hence there are plenty of cases of cathedral priests and archpriests who were sent to prison by their bishops without any demur by the Crown. In 1638 archpriest Kornilii of Belozersk was sent to a monastery prison for forgery, and in 1696 archpriest Iannuarii of Belozersk was arrested for an 'ecclesiastical misdemeanour', without any apparent chance of appeal.¹³⁰

Although cathedral priests ranked as the highest of the white priests and theoretically were above ordinary monks, in the ecclesiastical scale of precedence they ranked below monk-priests, among whom were hieromonks, hegumens and archimandrites.¹³¹ Rivalry between the black and white clergy, which became a bitter issue in later

¹²⁶ *DAI* 9 no.1.

¹²⁷ *AAE* 3 nos.306,316.

¹²⁸ *DAV* nos.24,98,133.

¹²⁹ *DAI* 7 no.65 p.307.

¹³⁰ *RGADA* f.196 d.867; *OSS* Pt.7 p.108. For other cases see *RIB* 14 no.197 Khol. and Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, 2, pp.6-7,46.

¹³¹ *Skrizhal*. (Moscow, 1655); *OSS* Pt.9 p.69 no.45 (1677).

centuries, was not so dormant in the seventeenth century as has been previously thought by scholars.¹³² Disputes frequently erupted between the two orders of the priesthood over land, income and authority, and when these quarrels came before the courts, prelates usually ruled in favour of the monastic clergy.¹³³ There seems to be no coincidence that when two brothers, hegumen Moisei and archpriest Merkurei, were convicted of harbouring schismatics in Viaznikov in 1666, the white priest was punished more severely by Church authorities than his monastic brother, who was guilty of the same offence.¹³⁴ Moreover, monastic clergy were given a disproportionate share of power at all levels of Church administration. Not only did monks alone have access to the bishopric, but the best jobs on a bishop's staff, such as treasurer and confessor, were invariably reserved for monastic clerics, and not always ordained ones at that.¹³⁵ Archpriests resented being subordinate merely because they were married, and in several instances they actively resisted giving place. Nizhnii Novgorod archimandrite Makarii complained to the patriarch in 1639 that 'archimandrite Ferapont of Annunciation monastery does not come to the cathedral, because the archpriests in the cathedral church do not give place to him; and the archpriests do not give place to hegumen Volodimer of Dukhov monastery and hegumen Varsonofii of Semeonov monastery, and because of that, lord, they rarely come.[...] I have spoken to Nizhnii Novgorod archpriests and cathedral and parish priests and deacons many times, that they do not come to the cathedral for services; but the archpriests, lord, and brothers and priests and deacons do not listen to me, your

¹³² For instance, see Freeze's comment in *The Russian Levites*, p.47.

¹³³ Disputes between black and white clergy are found in: *RIB* 14 nos.11,14,32 Ust.; *RIB* 12 no.255 Ust.; *RIB* 2 no.212; *RIB* 5:69 (1655); *SKE* p.168,170-171,172; *LZAK* 14 pp.98,112; *OSS* Pt.7 p.42; *AI* 4 no.232; *SIB* nos.109 no.20 (1690-2); *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 d.23. Unusually, an Ustiug archbishop dismissed a monk in favour of a parish priest in 1697, because the monk had no permit to be in the diocese: *RIB* 12 no. 273 Ust.

¹³⁴ Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, no.17 p.144-45.

¹³⁵ In virtually all Church records we find monks serving as episcopal confessors and treasurers, positions that had excellent prospects for promotion. The only exception I have found is widowed priest Nikon, a Karelian who served as episcopal treasurer under Archbishop Silvestr of Vologda, until being removed by archbishop Nektarii in 1613: *VKS*, *Prilozhenie*, p.177-78.

intercessor'.¹³⁶ In the early 1670s a quarrel over precedence flared up between archpriests and hegumens in Novgorod, as a result of which the latter petitioned Metropolitan Ioakim, protesting that they had to stand and sit below the city's three archpriests during services. The issue at stake was, essentially, whether the monastic clergy were superior to the married clergy. The metropolitan, being a monk himself, not surprisingly ruled that monks came before seculars, stating that 'hieromonks are above secular priests in honour, and even more so are hegumens above secular priests in honour.' Not only were the archpriests relegated to a place below that of the Novgorod hegumens, but if the hegumen of a smaller rural monastery happened to be in the cathedral for services, the archpriests were told to stand and sit below him.¹³⁷

Despite this blow to their prestige, cathedral priests generally enjoyed a high standing in their community. There are a few documented cases of abuse by members of the public, but on the whole these appear to have been isolated occurrences compared with dishonour suffered by the parish clergy.¹³⁸ On the other hand, financial problems were no strangers to the staff of provincial cathedrals. They suffered cash-flow difficulties when drought or flooding ruined the fields on which they depended for the bulk of their income, and their State stipends were frequently delayed, or did not arrive at all, necessitating lengthy efforts by clergy to rectify the matter.¹³⁹ They had to fight expensive legal battles when outsiders encroached on their rights and properties, especially when a case was referred to Moscow, for, as protodeacon Dmitrii of Ustiug wrote whilst encountering bureaucratic delays in the capital, 'without giving gifts, no business can be done in Moscow at all'.¹⁴⁰ As a result of these problems, cathedral

¹³⁶ *RIB* 2 no.212.

¹³⁷ *AI* 4 no.232 p.502.

¹³⁸ Zealots of Piety were chased out by townsfolk, Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.32-116; *DAI* 10 no.3 ix p.12; *RIB* 12 nos.223,270 Ust.

¹³⁹ *DAI* 6 no.11; *DAI* 9 no.96; *DGPV* 1 p.34 xi; *RIB* 12 no.244 Ust.

¹⁴⁰ Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 pp.66-67; *RIB* 12 nos.8,13,16,551,239; Arkhangel'skii, *Nizhnii Novgorod v XVII veke*, nos.185-189.

clergymen were sometimes forced to take out loans or mortgage their fields.¹⁴¹ Provincial archpriests were sometimes even found amongst the unemployed clerics who came to Moscow looking for work. Former archpriest Aleksandr of Sviiazhsk cathedral was amongst jobless priests who applied in 1650 to be posted to the Don army, one of the least-desirable clerical positions, but he was turned down.¹⁴² Moscow archpriests were not immune to financial problems, either. In 1633 archpriest Ioakim of St.Alexander Nevskii cathedral was assigned a house plot behind the fish market. 'And there I built a house', he wrote several years later, 'but I could not dig out a cellar because it was too cramped and slimy,...and it was very crowded from the fish market and fishmongers, and this year in summer the fishmongers poured water continuously which made it so muddy that my house rotted, and then there was a fire. And now I and my wife and children have nowhere to go'. In response to Ioakim's appeal, Tsar Mikhail allowed him to sell his house and move to another site on State land, but his case shows that not all archpriests lived in luxury.¹⁴³ Ioakim's predicament can be explained by the fact that Kremlin clergy were usually assigned house-plots on Crown land, without necessarily getting a choice of location. In some cases Moscow clergymen were able to buy expensive properties in high-class neighbourhoods next door to boyars,¹⁴⁴ but clerical tenure on the land was never quite secure. In 1673 the Archbishop of Vologda obtained royal permission to have priest Feofan of St.Basil's cathedral in Belozero evicted and his house demolished in order to build an episcopal palace, and in 1676 Patriarch Ioakim moved his offices into the former houses of an archpriest and a kliuchar'. In 1702 all the Kremlin clergy who lived between Nikol'skaia

¹⁴¹ *LZAK* 14 p.13; *AIu* no.249; *RIB* 12 nos.103,133 Ust.; *MTS* 2 Prilozhenie, no.46.

¹⁴² *RIB* 29 pp.471-2 nos.24-25.

¹⁴³ *AI* 3 no.92 p.117.

¹⁴⁴ Priest Aleksei of St.Nicholas had a house next door to boyar Larion Semenovich Miloslavskii that was sold for four hundred roubles in 1694. Aleksei of Annunciation cathedral bought a house opposite boyar Odoevskii in 1647/8, and royal confessor Lukian lived next door to Prince Trubetskii in 1657: *MTS* 2 pp.159-60; K.P.Pobedonostsev, 'Istoriko-iuridicheskie akty XVII-XVIII v.', *ChOISR* 1886 Bk.4, p.195-7, 280; N.P.Vinogradov, 'Tserkov sviatitelia Aleksii, chto na Glinishchakh', *MTS* 4, p.22; *ChOISR* 1909 Bk.3 Smes', no.4 (1670-76).

gate and Troitskaia gate were evicted from their homes when the area was cleared for the construction of an armoury.¹⁴⁵ Cathedral clergy in Siberia faced greater hardships. The tough life on the eastern frontier drove several archpriests to drink, to crime, or to flight. Archpriest Ivan Drozdov of Tobol'sk was sent back to Moscow in 1627 for disorderliness, and his predecessor archpriest Iakov was convicted of knifing a hegumen.¹⁴⁶ The three clergymen sent from Moscow to serve at Tobol'sk cathedral on Tsar Mikhail's order in 1621 all spurned their promotion and fled back to the west. After being caught and forcibly returned, under threat of being demoted and exiled as ordinary priests to distant Siberian outposts, the priests chose to conform and remain at Tobol'sk rather than be sent into rural poverty.¹⁴⁷ Financially and socially, they acknowledged, it was better to be on the cathedral staff than to join the rural parish clergy.

Problems notwithstanding, up until 1698 the cathedral clergy were secure in the assurance that the tsar was their chief benefactor and protector and, as a result, they were among his most devoted subjects. Unlike the parish clergy, archpriests and their staffs rarely supported any of the rebellions or uprisings that shook the Muscovite State during the seventeenth century, and even the Great Schism swung only a handful of cathedral clergymen over to Old Belief.¹⁴⁸ Fewer were implicated in non-religious revolts. An archpriest was accused by the Ustiug governor of being involved in a riot in 1648,¹⁴⁹ and Pskov archpriest Kondrat Kozmin was accused of colluding with

¹⁴⁵ *DAI* 6 no.90 p.310-11; *MTS* 2 p.159-60.

¹⁴⁶ N.N.Ogloblin, *Obozrenie stolb'tsov i knig sibirskogo prikaza, 1592-1768*, (Moscow, 1895) Ch.XXI pp.19-20; *RIB* 8 no.11 viii.

¹⁴⁷ Pokrovskii, *Tobol'skii arkhieieiskii dom*, no.70 (1622); Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibirii*, p.187.

¹⁴⁸ Archpriests Login of Murom, Nikita of Suzdal, Daniil of Kostroma, Avvakum of Iurivets, Merkurei Grigor'ev of Viaznikov, and deacon Fedor of Annunciation cathedral were convicted of schism or harbouring schismatics. Serapion, the former archpriest of Smolensk, and Ivan Neronov recanted. On clergy who refused to submit to the Nikonian reforms see Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.32-116, and Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*; *DAI* 5 no.102.

¹⁴⁹ Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.361

townsmen in 1662 to rescue a condemned deserter from the gallows, but such cases are uncommon.¹⁵⁰ During the Stenka Razin rebellion, rebel Cossacks controlling Astrakhan in 1671 tortured and killed cathedral priest Fedor Negodiaev and Metropolitan Iosif because they had exhorted the people to surrender to the tsar's forces. Threatened with the same fate, the town clergy signed the rebels' manifesto, but later, under interrogation in Moscow, the five cathedral clergy who signed the manifesto denied being rebels and avowed they had signed unwillingly, 'fearing death'.¹⁵¹ There is no evidence to doubt the Astrakhan clergymen. Dependent upon the Crown for their bread and butter, they stood to gain nothing from supporting the Cossacks' cause.

Cathedral clergy did not face the pressure to conform to the wishes of the people that parish clergy faced, because they were not dependent on parishioners. Their respected position in society was due to the sovereign's favour, their prosperity derived from his munificence, therefore their fealty to him was whole-hearted. The tsar protected the priests from temporal enemies, the priests protected the tsar from spiritual dangers, forming a link between cathedral and Crown which resembled the Byzantine-inherited notion of a symphony between Church and State.¹⁵² However, the symphony was never an equal partnership. Throughout the century clergymen had been made painfully aware of the fact that their stipends, grants and charters were not a guaranteed salary nor an inalienable possession, but a grant, the gift of the sovereign, which he could give or withhold at pleasure. Whilst one tsar might grant land or privileges, the next one could just as easily take it back. Kazan Archpriest Deonisii and his staff had a difficult

¹⁵⁰ AMG 3 no.587.

¹⁵¹ AI 4 nos.202,226.

¹⁵² The Byzantine doctrine of a symphony between church and state, propounded in Emperor Justinian I's Sixth Novel (6th century) and Epanogoge (9th century), was inherited by Russia with the acceptance of Christianity: G.Vernadsky, *The Tsardom of Muscovy*, Pt.2, pp.560-1; D.Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth* (Crestwood, 1971) p.413; S.Hackel, 'Questions of Church and State in 'Holy Russia'', *Eastern Churches Review*, III, Spring 1970, pp.7-10.

task reclaiming fishing rights that had been granted by Ivan IV and later rescinded by Tsar Mikhail, and other provincial cathedrals had similar problems.¹⁵³ Even the palace clergy could not be certain of their income: payments could be abolished without warning,¹⁵⁴ while in times of war Muscovite rulers regularly helped themselves to Church resources.¹⁵⁵ As observed above,¹⁵⁶ State protection for cathedral clergy depended on the whims of the monarch: a fall from royal favour resulted in disgrace, exile, or even execution.¹⁵⁷ But as the century drew to a close, darker clouds loomed on the horizon for Russian cathedrals. In 1694 archpriest Feodor Mikhailov of Totma protested that he and his staff had not been paid their stipend by local officials, but the officials replied that the government had sent an order forbidding them from paying the archpriest and clergy.¹⁵⁸ This was an early foreshadowing of Peter the Great's measures to divert State funds to support his military ventures.¹⁵⁹ By 1698 the majority of stipends, privileges and immunity charters issued to cathedral clergy had been curtailed or abolished.¹⁶⁰

Tsar Peter's financial cut-backs were more radical than those of his predecessors, thus hit clergymen harder. Moreover, he deeply upset Muscovite clerics by refusing to allow the election of a new patriarch after the death of Adrian in 1700.¹⁶¹ Unlike former

¹⁵³ *RIB* 35 no.337 p.637 (1624); *DAI* 6 no.65, 5 no.65; *RIB* 35 no.337; *DAV* nos.98,133.

¹⁵⁴ Archpriest Maksim did not receive his bonus for hearing the tsar's confessions in 1630 or 1631, and palace priests received no cloth grants at all during the years 1654-58. Festival grants were completely revoked by Tsar Fedor in 1679: *MTS* 2 pp.141,149-150.

¹⁵⁵ *RIB* 35 pp.153,155,157,159,164,172,236,242,437-39,982; *AI* 3 no.280, 2 no.323; *DAI* 4 no.14, 8 no.40.

¹⁵⁶ See pages 148,150 above.

¹⁵⁷ The cathedral clergy who joined the schism were disgraced, imprisoned, exiled, or executed: Subbotin, *Dokumenty iz istorii raskola*, 1, and Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.32-116.

¹⁵⁸ *RIB* 12 no.244 Ust.

¹⁵⁹ Hughes, *Peter the Great*, pp.135-136,336.

¹⁶⁰ *PSZ* 3 nos.1664,1711.

¹⁶¹ In 1721 Peter replaced the Patriarchate with a Synod, thereby emasculating Church autonomy: Cracraft, *Church Reforms*, pp.219-261, and *Spiritual Regulation*, pp.8-12.

Romanov tsars, Peter preferred to borrow imagery from the West to glorify himself as a secular ruler rather than as a pious Orthodox tsar.¹⁶² He still utilised clerical support to bolster his authority, but relied chiefly on his imported Ukrainian priest-scholars such as Feofan Prokopovich, who were familiar with Western Baroque imagery and were willing to co-operate with Peter's plans to firmly subordinate the Church to the State.¹⁶³ With the creation of new cathedrals in St.Petersburg with new staff, the status and influence of the Moscow cathedral clergy declined, as did their perks. This deterioration in their position can be perceived through the remarks of foreign visitors: in the 1650s Moscow priests were described as 'personages of very great dignity',¹⁶⁴ but by the end of the century a visitor was writing 'now their dignity has grown so vile that they are seldom, or at least only like laymen, admitted to table'.¹⁶⁵ When the full effect of Peter's reforms began to be felt, it did much to undermine the relationship of cathedral staff with their monarch. Although the vast majority remained loyal to the Crown (in deed if not in thought), their implicit trust in the tsar's protection was undermined. Consequently, Peter executed unprecedented numbers of priests for suspected participation in rebellion between 1699 and 1719, and for the first time a cathedral archpriest was amongst them.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, pp.39-40; J.Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, (London, 1966) p.149; N.Kaliazina and G.Komelova, *Russkoe iskustvo Petrovskoi epokhi* (Leningrad, 1990).

¹⁶³ Hughes, *Peter the Great*, pp.203-247; Cracraft, *Church Reform*, pp.1-62. Feofan Prokopovich's sermons and works were directed towards glorifying Peter and the Petrine State. Several have been published in: *For God and For Peter the Great: the Works of Thomas Consett, 1723-1729*, ed. by J.Cracraft, (New York, 1982); *Russian Intellectual History: An Anthology*, ed. by M.Raëff, (New York, 1966); *The Russian Catechism*. transl. by J.T.Philipps (London, 1723); *The Spiritual Regulations of Peter the Great*. transl. by A.Muller (Seattle, 1972).

¹⁶⁴ Paul of Aleppo, p.352.

¹⁶⁵ Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary*, 2 pp.162-3.

¹⁶⁶ Archpriest Iakov Ignat'ev of St.Saviour's in the Kremlin, confessor to Tsarevich Aleksei Petrovich, was executed for complicity in the Aleksis affair in 1718: *MTS* 2 p.133. On clerical support for the revolts of 1698,1705, 1708 and 1718, see Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary*, 1 pp.90,176-216; *PSZ* 3 no.1648, 6 no.4012; M.Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People*, (NY.1961), p.27; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.41,241; Avrich, *Russian Rebels*, pp.145,159; *The Tryal of the Czarewitz Alexis Petrowitz* (London,1725) pp.74-75,92.

Chapter Six

Extra-parochial ministries

'Allow him, great Sovereign, to be with us, your slaves, in the Don army as before, and to serve at your place of prayer and our church of the Resurrection and chapels, and to pray for your Majesty's health...'

Petition of Don Cossacks for appointment of priest Maksim, 1653¹

Whilst the majority of married priests served in parishes and cathedrals during the seventeenth century, a significant minority served as missionaries or itinerants, or as chaplains in Muscovy's almshouses, hospitals, prisons, regiments, embassies, and religious houses. Some of these clergymen held a regular benefice as well as a chaplaincy, but most did not have a permanent parish job in the usual sense, hence all are here designated by the all-embracing term 'extra-parochial' clergy. Although extra-parochial clergymen represented a relatively small percentage of the total in white clerical orders, they played an important role in society. Their combined service touched all ranks of people and was a valued component in the infrastructure of the Muscovite State. Strangely, their work has been almost entirely neglected by historical scholarship, leaving a hiatus that demands rectification, -- a task I attempt here.² Even primary sources tell us so few details about chaplains that some aspects of their lives are mere conjecture, and it is impossible to attempt statistics, but sufficient material can be gleaned from seventeenth-century sources, particularly chancellery, military and church records, to broadly describe these jobs and illustrate their significance.

¹ *RIB* 29 p.700-01.

² Almost no secondary work refers to the clergymen who served in 17th-century Muscovite almshouses, prisons, hospitals, armed forces, embassies, monasteries or convents. J.Keep's military history, *Soldiers of the Tsar: Army and Society in Russia 1462-1874*, (Oxford,1985), makes no mention of army chaplains, nor are almshouse or hospital chaplains mentioned by A.Lindenmeyr in *Poverty is not a Vice: Society and the State in Imperial Russia*, (New Jersey,1996) or in other works on Muscovite charity. Igor Smolich likewise overlooks the role of white priests in monasteries in *Russisches Mönchtum*, (Wurzburg,1953). Itinerant clergy receive some attention by Znamenskii, *PDR* nos.21-22 (1866-67), and by Georg Michels, 'Myths and Realities' (1991).

Prison, hospital and almshouse chaplains

As noted in the previous chapter, the white clergy were largely responsible for Muscovite charity and poor relief, but from about the middle of the seventeenth century their obligations increasingly extended beyond the parish with the appearance of episcopal almshouses, which were established in most sizeable towns. These new poorhouses were generally larger than parish counterparts, and each was assigned a chaplain (*bogadel'noi izby pop*).³ At least four Moscow poorhouses had chaplains in 1669, located at Nativity church, St.Evdokim's church, Borovitsk bridge, and Boyar Boris Ivanovich Morozov's court,⁴ and by 1678 there were several government-funded institutions housing 412 poor people, until Tsar Fedor ordered them to be handed over to patriarchal administration.⁵ Some almshouse chaplains divided their time between their chaplaincy and parish duties, whilst others served full-time.⁶ One of the very few provincial chaplains to be named in Church records is Vasilei Gavrilov of Ustiug, who town elders tried to have dismissed in 1696. He had applied for the almshouse job after hearing that the former chaplain had transferred to a parish church and, to the annoyance of the elders, was appointed by Archbishop Aleksandr without their approval. Subsequently they complained to the prelate that Vasilei was always drunk 'and does not go to the almshouse or take care of it'. Despite accusations by townsmen and clergymen against Vasilei, the episcopal judge ruled that he was to remain as almshouse chaplain. The bishop was reluctant to dismiss a man he had personally

³ *RIB* 23 pp.1098,1252; I.E.Zabelin, ed., *Materialy dlia istorii, arkheologii i statistiki moskovskikh tserkvei*, (M.1884) p.1086 (hereafter *Materialy*); D.Sviatoslavskii, 'Letopis' moskovskoi georgievskoi tserkvi', *ChOISR* 1875 bk.1 p.123 (1676). Episcopal almshouses in Vologda and Ustiug are mentioned in *RIB* 12 no.261 Ust.(1696), *OSS* Pt.12 p.82 no.95 (1682), and *Vologodskie eparkhial'nye vedomosti*, (Aug.1890) no.16 p.235.

⁴ *RIB* 23 pp.1098,1252. By 1721 there were 93 almshouses in Russia: Cracraft, *Church Reform*, pp.90-97.

⁵ Zabelin, *Materialy*, p.1086; *LZAK* 14 p.47 (1678-83), p.99-101 (1691). Very little research has been published on poor relief in Muscovy, apart from I.M.Snegirev, *Moskovskie nishchie v XVII veke*, (Moscow 1852); 'Pechalovanie dukhovenstva za opal'nykh', *ChOISR* 1876 Bk.1 pp.216-261.

⁶ *MTS* 4 pp.110-11; V.Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, p.91.

appointed, and was probably aware that episcopal appointees were sometimes subject to fabricated charges by laymen who wanted to appoint their own candidate.⁷

The details of Vasilei's case offer us a rare glimpse into the duties of an almshouse priest, which revolved around conducting religious services, administering the sacraments of confession, communion, and holy unction, saying prayers and performing Christian burials.⁸ It can be assumed that the duties of hospital and prison chaplains were similar. White priests were attached to several Moscow hospitals, among them the Patriarchal hospital (*bol'nitsa*), St.Peter's strel'tsy infirmary, and Nativity and Zenovoi infirmaries,⁹ and they served at various gaols in the capital, including the High Security Prison (*pokaiannaia izba*) the Remand Prison (*kolodnitskaia polata*), and the prison at the Chancellery of Criminal Affairs (*razboinyi prikaz*).¹⁰ Vologda prison chaplains evidently shared their time between parish jobs and prisons, where they conducted services of matins, hours and vespers, but few details have survived concerning chaplains who served in other provincial prisons or hospitals.¹¹ Church Council decrees of 1667 and 1697 ruled that prison chaplains must hear confessions, administer holy communion to convicted criminals who made sincere repentance, and bury repentant criminals in a paupers' cemetery after their execution,¹² but in practice, priests had to do as their prelate dictated. Kholmogory priests were forbidden from giving holy communion to condemned murderers and robbers, even just before

⁷ *RIB* 12 no.261 Ust.(1696). For similar accusations against an episcopal appointee see Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, no.77.

⁸ *RIB* 12 no.261 Ust.(1696).

⁹ *RIB* 23 pp.604,672,1097-8,1329; Zabelin, *Materialy*, pp.1084-5. J.Alexander discusses the development of medicine in early 18th-century Russia but omits mention of hospital chaplains: 'Medical developments in Petrine Russia', *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 8 (1974) pp.198-222

¹⁰ Prison and hospital priests appear in Privy Chancellery records for 1650-65 and scattered references elsewhere: eg. *RIB* 23 pp.672,1098,1329; Zabelin, *Materialy*, p.1084); *ChOISR* 1905 Bk.4 v.215 Smes', no.11 (1651).

¹¹ *Vologodskie eparkhial'nye vedomosti*, (1864) no.2 Pribavleniia pp.136-38.

¹² *DAI* 5 no.102 p.508; *PSZ* 3 no.1612 art.23. Poor persons, criminals and suicides were buried in the Shuia paupers' cemetery which, judging from its name (*ubogyi dom*), was attached to the local poorhouse: Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, pp.85-88.

execution, although the bishop allowed them to hear confessions if the penitent was sincere.¹³

Clergy serving at the Patriarchal hospital received a salary of six roubles per annum in the 1650s, presumably paid by the Patriarchal office, which was an income similar to that of a parish priest.¹⁴ A perusal of Privy Chancellery records from the mid-seventeenth century reveals that prison chaplains received a limited amount of State funding,¹⁵ but some evidently relied on income from part-time parish jobs as well.¹⁶ However, the main source of income for both prisoners and their priests appears to have been alms and voluntary donations, which Muscovites were particularly generous at giving during religious festivals and in commemoration of deceased relatives.¹⁷ In 1669, for instance, many chaplains and inmates of prisons and hospitals benefited from Tsar Aleksei's alms for commemoration of deceased Tsaritsa Maria.¹⁸ One poltina (half a rouble) appears to have been the usual gift bestowed by the Crown for a chaplain's private use, sometimes more,¹⁹ but the priest was also given alms designated for patients or prisoners, with the expectation that he would distribute the gifts on behalf of the donor.²⁰ Chaplains in the capital were well-placed to benefit from the Sovereign's largesse, but on the whole, the scanty evidence we have suggests that charitable institutions were not very well funded. Liturgical requisites at one Moscow gaol were in such bad repair in 1651 that inmates had to petition Tsar Aleksei to ask for replacements. 'There are old and dilapidated vestments', they wrote, 'but no priest can wear them, they are all tattered and falling to pieces'. Aleksei granted new clerical

¹³ Veriuzhskii, pp.136-7.

¹⁴ Zabelin, *Materialy*, p.1084 (1653 and 1657).

¹⁵ *RIB* 23 pp.1231,1255,1307-8,1374.

¹⁶ *RIB* 23, pp.672,1329. One of Tsar Aleksei's handouts in 1665 was to prisoners in the Remand prison, 'and to the priest who is in the church next door.'

¹⁷ The Russian tradition of giving alms to prisoners and beggars is described by A.Lindenmeyr in *Poverty is not a Vice*, pp.19-23.

¹⁸ *RIB* 23, pp.11-12,17,34,40,996,1028-60,1093,1252,1507.

¹⁹ *RIB* 23 pp.672,1097-8,1252,1329.

²⁰ Zabelin, *Materialy*, p.1085; *RIB* 23 pp.842,827,966,981,982,1347,1366.

robes, but refused their request for church lectionaries (*prologi*).²¹ One of the most successful clerics to extract donations out of Tsar Aleksei was priest Nikita Vasil'evich of Nativity cathedral, who ranks among Moscow's most outstanding philanthropists of the seventeenth century.²² At his own residence Nikita maintained a hospital, an infirmary, a refuge for twenty-one poor widows, and an almshouse in which up to a hundred and thirty paupers and wounded soldiers lived.²³ These hospices were partly funded by Nikita's own personal wealth,²⁴ but he was adroit at using his influence at court to secure royal grants and gifts amounting to over 2000 roubles in cash between 1663 and 1670 'for the wounded and paupers who gather to his courtyard', as one entry in the registers of the Privy Chancellery reads.²⁵ In addition, Nikita interceded for convicted criminals, received for burial the bodies of executed convicts who had no relatives,²⁶ and was entrusted with the purchase and distribution of the tsar's grain allocation to inmates of Moscow prisons between 1669 and 1675.²⁷

Secular priests in convents and monasteries

Some of the hospices that white priests ministered in were attached to religious houses.²⁸ In Vologda, for instance, Archbishop Simon founded an almshouse for old and disabled women at Gornyi Dormition convent, and many monasteries were built specifically as retirement homes.²⁹ In Muscovite convents the white clergy's pastoral

²¹ *ChOIDR* 1905 Bk.4 v.215 Smes' no.11 (1651).

²² Royal confessors and boyars also distributed the Tsar's alms, but none appear to have had the personal involvement in humanitarian schemes like Nikita.

²³ *RIB* pp.582,585,587,1005,1098,1252,1300.

²⁴ Nikita's income was considerable, according to Privy Chancellery records: *RIB* 23 pp.240,604,672,1005,1098,1252,1300.

²⁵ *MTS* 2, p.110-11; *RIB* 23 pp.240,415,429,486,503,572,582,585,587,604,612,613,672,674-5,1005,1098,1231, 1252,1255,1300.

²⁶ *MTS* 2 p.110-11; *AMG* 3 no.606 (1662/3).

²⁷ *RIB* 23 p.1231,1255,1307-8,1374.

²⁸ For the purposes of this dissertation, 'monastery' refers to a religious house for men, and 'convent' refers to a nunnery for women.

²⁹ *Vologodskie eparkhial'nye vedomosti*, no.16 (1890) p.235; *RIB* 26 p.436-441, no.2; *RIB* 29 p.713-718 nos.16,17 (1653), p.813 no.1 (1621); *RIB* 34 pp.205-7 no.1 (1656); *RIB* 14 no.206 (Khol); Iushkov, *Ocherki*, pp.49,92; *RIB* 23 p.1276. In common with monasteries of medieval Europe, Muscovite religious houses often had hospital rooms,

responsibilities extended beyond the charity sector, however, for the Moscow Church Councils of 1503 and 1551 ruled that church services in nunneries were to be conducted by married priests, not by hieromonks.³⁰ Parish or itinerant clergy served the smallest and poorest convents,³¹ but a great many convents had their own resident white clergymen. Sometimes the clerical staff was considerable: St. Nicholas Alatyr convent had several priests, a deacon and eight d'iachki for the fifty-two sisters, and even minor convents like St. Nicholas in Liven had two priests and a d'iachok.³² As well as conducting religious services, convent priests and deacons wrote up petitions for the nuns, signed documents on their behalf, and supported their interests.³³ A good relationship between clergy and abbess could have mutual benefits. When the clergy at Resurrection convent in Novgorod were facing financial hardship in May 1651, abbess Pelagia wrote to Metropolitan Nikon asking for them to be granted an exemption from episcopal dues, and there are several other recorded instances of abbesses saving their convent clergy from destitution or dismissal by a timely letter to the prelate.³⁴ Like other white clerical positions, convent livings were frequently inherited by sons of former convent priests if they could secure the goodwill of the abbess.³⁵ A nunnery was a very respectable option for an aspiring clergyman with good references, -- at least two archimandrites of Nizhnii Novgorod Annunciation monastery began their careers as secular deacons in convents,³⁶ -- but it was not necessarily a harmonious

and we occasionally read of sick white priests tended there: eg. *RIB* 37 p.236 (1600).

³⁰ Kollman, 'The Moscow Stoglav', p.401-2. The Stoglav Council ruled that secular priests were not to hear nuns' confessions, hence we find hieromonks occasionally mentioned as nuns' confessors, eg. *AIuB* 2 no.133. Kollman suggests that nuns may have also confessed to their abbess, but I have found no mention of this practice in 17th-century documents.

³¹ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.85; Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, p.50,138; G.Michels, 'Muscovite elite women and Old Belief', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies: Essays presented to Edward L. Keenan*, (Cambridge, Mass.1995) 19 p.438.

³² *AIuB* 3 no.340 xxiii ; *SKE* p.143.

³³ *LZAK* 14 p.95; *AIuB* 1 no.74; *AAE* 4 no.52; *PNG* pp.228,229.

³⁴ *LZAK* 14 p.20,67-8; *RIB* 12 no.148 Ust.

³⁵ *OSS* Pt.7 p.81-2; *SKE* p.75 no.11, p.80 no.2, p.143.

³⁶ *PNG* pp.228,229.

environment, for there appear to have been no shortage of disputes between nuns, sometimes involving priests.³⁷ Less frequent were quarrels between the clergy and the abbess, but one arose in Mtsensk town in the late 1670s when an ambitious abbess attempted to evict the three convent priests and expropriate their land, claiming that their houses were too close to the nuns' cells. These priests had deeds to their land but had bought or built their own houses, like so many of their parish and cathedral brethren.³⁸ Their houses were located inside the convent precincts, just a few metres from the nuns' cells, but convent clergy did not always live this close. Clergy of Liven convent lived some distance from the nuns, in another suburb, where they farmed twenty-eight chetverti (36.4 acres) of convent land allotted for their maintenance.³⁹

Seventeenth-century sources inform us that white priests could, and commonly did, serve in men's religious houses as well as in nunneries. Their presence in monasteries has rarely been recognised by scholars of Church history, and even Igor Smolitch in his unsurpassed *Russisches Mönchtum* incorrectly claimed that 'divine service was conducted in monasteries only by hieromonks and hierodeacons; white priests served only in women's convents'.⁴⁰ On the contrary, Moscow Church Councils did permit white clergy to say mass in monasteries if they had a permit,⁴¹ as a result of which married priests were employed permanently alongside monastic clergy in an inordinate number of hermitages and monasteries throughout the realm.⁴² It was quite within the

³⁷ LZAK 14 p.95; G.Michels, 'Muscovite elite women and Old Belief', p.438.

³⁸ SKE p.17.

³⁹ SKE p.143.

⁴⁰ I.Smolich, *Russkoe monashestvo 988-1917*, trans. by V.Tsy-pin (M.1997) p.167.

⁴¹ Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', pp.401-02.

⁴² Among surviving records from the 17th century, we find mention of white priests serving in the monasteries of St.Nikita's Belozersk (*RIB* 32 no.327), St.Stephen's Kidetosk (*RIB* 2 no.192), Dormition Khol'msk (*AAE* 4 no.54), Solovetskii (*DAI* 5 no.67), Dormition Zhukov (*AIuB* 2 nos. 253,148 xviii), Viazhishchevsk, Novgorod (*LZAK* 14 p.82-83), Transfiguration on the Tagila, Verkhotur'e (Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.35-36), Dormition Voronezh (Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.35), Galileisk, White Lake (*RIB* 5 no.391), Saviour Volomsk, St.Afonasii Sysol'sk, and St.Aleksei Tolshemsk, Ustiug eparchy (*RIB* 12 nos.248,255,273), in addition to monasteries in Moscow eparchy (RGADA f.1443 op.2 d.23, *SKE* pp.74-5, 81,138,204) and Vologda

bounds of custom and canon law for patrons like d'iak Mikifor Shipulin to install two priests, one monastic and the other married, in his newly-founded monastery in Khol'msk uezd in 1638.⁴³ The chief limitation on white priests was that Church law did not allow them to actually live inside the monastery they served at,⁴⁴ although this rule seems to have been disregarded in some regions, for we find that a white priest and deacon lived in huts at Transfiguration monastery on the river Tagila in Western Siberia, according to tax books for 1624,⁴⁵ and later in the century several white clergymen were reported to their bishops for living at monasteries without permits.⁴⁶ Some monasteries did not employ a full-time white priest but welcomed local parish priests in to take occasional services, especially if there were no resident black priests.⁴⁷

Why did monasteries employ white priests and deacons? Primarily, their function was to serve the spiritual needs of the lay populace who worshipped at the monastery church, amongst whom were monastery servants and dependants, inmates of monastic hospices, lay residents (*vkladchiki*), some of whom could be widows, and peasants and artisans who lived on monastery lands.⁴⁸ Monastery white priests also cared for the spiritual needs of nearby parish churches that were temporarily without their own priest.⁴⁹ Additionally, secular clergy were of use to their monasteries for scribal duties such as writing and signing documents on behalf of illiterate monks.⁵⁰ White priests appear to have been relatively well-paid by the monastery and laity. Priest Averkii of Kosina monastery, for instance, ate meals at the refectory with the monks, in addition

eparchy (*OSS* Pt.7 pp.70,115, Pt.8 pp.34,63, Pt.11 p.197, Pt.12 p.133).

⁴³ *AAE* 4 no.54 (1651).

⁴⁴ Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', pp.401-02.

⁴⁵ Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.35-36.

⁴⁶ *LZAK* 14 p.89; *OSS* Pt.12 p.133 no.352.

⁴⁷ *ChOidr* 202 1902 Bk.3 Smes', no.1 pp.22,24; *LZAK* 14 p.98; *SKE* pp.29-30.

⁴⁸ *Vkladchiki* sometimes outnumbered monks: Veriuzhskii, pp.260,300.

⁴⁹ *SKE* p.74; Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.35.

⁵⁰ *OSS* Pt.11, p.197 no.183, Pt.7 p.115; *LZAK* 14 p.82-82; *SKE* p.204; *AIuB* 2 nos.148 xviii, 253.

to being paid in rye and oats from monastery supplies and an annual stipend from parishioners.⁵¹ Priest Vasilei of Voronezh was paid a grant by a local monastery in which he served, in addition to collecting revenue from sixty parish houses.⁵² On top of these sources of income, clergy always received bonus payments at festivals, usually in the form of edibles such as fish or bread.⁵³

Latent hostility between secular and monastic clergy could be explosive when black and white priests worked side by side in monasteries.⁵⁴ Monastery white priests represented the interests of laymen who served the monks, a role which sometimes brought them into conflict with the interests of the monks themselves. In 1689 priest Tit of Viazhishchevsk monastery in Novgorod eparchy found himself caught in a dispute after he signed a petition on behalf of three servants who accused treasurer-hierodeacon Gennadii of beating and torturing innocent peasants. Gennadii denied the charges, asserting that the servants had fabricated the story, and soon this disagreement had blown up into a full-scale battle between clergy and laity, with the archimandrite and monks on one side, and priest Tit and monastery servants on the other.⁵⁵ Even more common were disputes between black and white priests over distribution of monastic resources and submission to authority.⁵⁶ Typical is a quarrel that erupted at St. Demetrius hermitage on the Iug river in 1692, in which a hieromonk claimed that the white priest, Semeon, was keeping all the revenue from requiem masses and festival offerings brought by villagers, but Semeon insisted that he shared all income except the festival offerings, of which he took home only the amount agreed with the prior by casting lots.⁵⁷ Problems like this stemmed from the fact that the white priest was paid

⁵¹ LZAK 14 p.98. The grain allowance was 10 chet. of rye and 10 chet. oats.

⁵² Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.35.

⁵³ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.87 l.15; OSS Pt.8 p.63 no.106.

⁵⁴ Examples of quarrels between black and white clergy can be found in *SKE* p.172 no.15; *AI* 4 232 p.502; *RIB* 2 no.212. See also chapter five, pp.150-51.

⁵⁵ LZAK 14 pp.82-83. The resolution of this case is not known,

⁵⁶ *SIB* 109 no.20; RGADA f.1443 op.2 d.23, f.1433 op.1 d.2; LZAK 14 p.98.

⁵⁷ OSS Pt.8 p.63 no.106.

from monastery funds, but his responsibilities towards the lay populace outside the cloister gave him opportunities for additional income that were unavailable to his tonsured colleagues, who reacted with resentment, envy and mistrust. The problem was aggravated by the fact that hieromonks officially ranked higher than white priests, a distinction that was resented by the married clergy.⁵⁸ Their resentment was frequently interpreted as insubordination by the monastic clergy, as can be seen from an example from Ustiug archives. Within a month of his appointment as prior of Sysolskii hermitage in 1695, hieromonk Ioann had clashed with the hermitage white priest Fedor Artemonov. Ioann claimed that Fedor was self-willed and disobedient, but Fedor had been in sole charge of the hermitage before Ioann's arrival and was disgruntled by the newcomer's intrusion. So were the laity, who tried to have the hieromonk dismissed because he had presented a fraudulent petition in order to get the job. Despite this illegality, the black priest had the support of the archbishop and won his case.⁵⁹ Indeed, prelates almost invariably supported monastic priests in these disputes.⁶⁰

Army and embassy chaplains

If the relative peace of the cloister was shattered by disharmony between black and white clergy, it is perhaps not surprising that there was even greater conflict between clergy and laity employed on government service. Both married and monastic clergymen regularly accompanied the tsar's armies and ambassadors in the seventeenth century,⁶¹ and occasionally merchants took a priest with them as well. Priest Vasilei Aleksandrov accompanied a caravan of merchants in 1698-9 to China, his main role being to provide the Orthodox Russians with their own religious rites.⁶² Very little is

⁵⁸ In a quarrel over precedence between cathedral and monastic priests in Novgorod, Metropolitan Ioakim ruled that monks rank higher than married priests: *AI* 4 no.232 p.502 (1673).

⁵⁹ *RIB* 12 no.255 Ust.

⁶⁰ *SKE* p.172 no.15 (1699); *AI* 4 no.232 p.502 (1673); *RIB* 2 no.212 (1641).

⁶¹ It is impossible to attempt statistics with so few sources, but I have found more cases of married army chaplains than monks. Monastic chaplains are mentioned in *AMG* 1 no.394; *OpMAMlu* no.790; *RIB* 29 p.554-61 no.3.

⁶² E.Widmer, *The Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Peking*, pp.31-2 (henceforth

known about embassy chaplains, but fleeting mentions in extant records indicate their presence on diplomatic staff.⁶³ White priests could themselves be appointed as ambassadors on missions of a religious nature. Among documents in the Moscow archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is preserved an account of priest Pavel Zakharev's journey to the kingdom of Dardia, near Turkey, as one of two ambassadors appointed in April 1639 to investigate the Dadian king's request for an alliance with Moscow. The other ambassador, Fedot Elchin, was a government official commissioned to undertake political negotiations, while Pavel's instructions were 'to examine their religion and ascertain thoroughly whether their faith is directly from the true Greek law'. Politically, the mission was not a success: no treaty was concluded. However, priest Pavel diligently carried out his commission, writing a detailed report on the Dadian faith and full description of churches, monasteries and episcopal administration that significantly contributed to Muscovite knowledge of this strategic region.⁶⁴

Pavel's experience highlights not only the political uses to which the government put white priests, but the perennial conflict between secular and religious authorities, so common outside the capital in seventeenth-century Russia. The entire Dadian mission was beset by problems caused by rivalry between the two ambassadors. They clashed over the same basic issue that archpriests and governors clashed over in the provinces: the refusal of lay officials to heed ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Elchin insisted that he was in charge; Pavel maintained that he had equal rank. Pavel denounced Elchin for various illegalities; Elchin retaliated with 'terrible threats', and used his influence to leave Pavel stranded without transport on the way home.⁶⁵ The government had provided Pavel and his colleagues with supplies, letters of safe-conduct, and a guard of three strel'tsy,

Ecclesiastical Mission).

⁶³ Russian chaplains in diplomatic service are mentioned by Olearius, *Travels*, p.267; *AMG* 2 no.935; 'Posol'stvo', p.275.

⁶⁴ 'Posol'stvo', pp.260-340.

⁶⁵ 'Posol'stvo', pp.301-310, 336.

but the priest's journey was made difficult by the obstruction of local governors, and his lack of money for the return journey suggests that he had not been well-paid, unlike non-clerical State ambassadors.⁶⁶ Pavel's problems were not unique: clergy on diplomatic service in Vilna had their share of problems with authoritarian laymen, it seems,⁶⁷ and similar conflicts faced army chaplains in their dealings with uncouth military men. Few have left memoirs, but Avvakum's account of his years with Pashkov's regiment in Siberia makes clear the struggle between the priest and the commander, again with the same formula: priest refuses to submit to the governor, and denounces his brutality and corruption; governor reacts with further violence.⁶⁸ In every case, these clergy-laity battles reveal the crudity and brutality of the Muscovite élite who governed the provinces, torturing and punishing victims at will.⁶⁹ Even those chosen to represent their country on diplomatic embassies had no sense of polite behaviour, judging from priest Pavel's accusations that Ambassador Elchin had thrown eggs at a Dadian bishop during an argument over dinner.⁷⁰

There were two kinds of army chaplain in Muscovy: temporary chaplains who accompanied the regiments on a particular campaign, such as to the Polish wars or to quell the Razin rising,⁷¹ and permanent chaplains contracted to a specific military

⁶⁶ Pavel's salary does not appear to have matched the 110 roubles paid to d'iak Aleksei Vitovtov, ambassador to England, in 1612-13: *England and the North: The Russian Embassy of 1613-1614*, ed. by M.Jansson, P.Bushkovitch and N.Rogozhin, (Philadelphia, 1994) p.139.

⁶⁷ *AMG* 2 no.935.

⁶⁸ *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.146-161.

⁶⁹ The brutality of Siberian governors was denounced by priests and bishops throughout the century: Butskinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.86-239; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.148-150,158.

⁷⁰ *Posol'stvo*, pp.304-10. Elchin's rough manners were not unlike the crude behaviour of Russian noblemen during their stay in England on Peter I's Grand Embassy in 1697-98: *Britain and Russia in the Age of Peter the Great: Historical Documents*, ed. by S.Dixon et.al., (London, 1998) p.15, no.18 (1698); I.Grey, 'Peter the Great in England', *History Today*, 6, 1956, p.229.

⁷¹ *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, no.291; *AI* 4 no.202, p.397 XXXIII; *DAI* 6 no.12 p.57 ii,iii,v pp.28-29,59.

community, usually a strel'tsy quarter or Cossack settlement.⁷² Permanent chaplaincies were inheritable by clergy sons, like ordinary parish benefices.⁷³ It is evident from lay petitions that most regiments wanted a priest at hand to administer the last rites for the dying and perform Christian burial for the dead,⁷⁴ but the main impetus behind the appointment of army chaplains appears to have come from the State. Indeed, supplication of the Divine played no small part in Muscovite military strategy.⁷⁵ Before any campaign the government ordered prayers to be said in every church and governors were ordered to ensure that all soldiers confessed to a priest and received communion during Holy Week.⁷⁶ The chaplain's role in placating the Almighty and raising morale was evidently considered of sufficient significance to warrant a considerable budget from the royal treasury to pay clergy salaries and provide vestments, service books and all the necessary religious requisites for the proper performance of their sacred duties.⁷⁷ In addition to the usual religious services expected of a priest, army chaplains held responsibility for administering the oath of allegiance when foreigners made submission to the tsar,⁷⁸ but no detailed lists of chaplains' obligations and privileges appear to have been produced during the Muscovite period like those issued the following century by Peter the Great.⁷⁹

⁷² *OpMAMTu* 16 nos. 655,762 (1671,1678); *SKE* pp.256,268; 'Tserkov' Il'inskago prikhoda,' *ChOidr* 1897 bk.1 p.14; Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.149,173,188; Widmer, *Ecclesiastical Mission*, pp.2-3,35. Strel'tsy settlements and 'new model' regiments are discussed in Avrich, *Russian Rebels*, pp.81-82 and Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar*, pp.62-65,80-90, but neither mention army chaplains.

⁷³ *SKE* p.141.

⁷⁴ *AMG* 2 no.905; *RIB* 29 pp.554-61, 700-701; *SKE* pp.141,230-274; Lantzeff, *Siberia*, p.177.

⁷⁵ *DAI* 6 no.12 p.59, II; *AI* 5 no.245; *AAE* 4 no.334; *AAE* 4 no.314; *DGGP* no.xxxvi.

⁷⁶ Smirnov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, p.203; *AI* 4 no.115 p.160; *DAI* 6 no.12 p.59 II; *DRV* Pt.11 v p.168-70.

⁷⁷ *OpMAMTu* no.722 iii (1674-81), no.790 (1679); *DAI* 6 no.12 p.57 ii,iii,v, p.59; *RIB* 23 pp.1651-53,1659-62; *RIB* 29 p.473-75 nos.26-29, p.486 no.39; Ogloblin, *Obozrenie stolb'tsov i knigi sibirskogo prikaza*, XXI 52; Lantzeff, *Siberia*, p.177.

⁷⁸ *AMG* 2 no.935 (1656).

⁷⁹ Peter the Great's Military Statute (1716) and Naval Statute (1720) include duties of chaplains: Hughes, *Peter the Great*, p.349.

Although occasionally military chaplains were paid from the patriarchal office,⁸⁰ the sources suggest that in most cases they were paid by the State Treasury. Salaries were generally in cash and kind, and appear to have been similar to the figure paid to soldiers and cavalymen. A priest stationed with the tsar's forces at Minsk in 1656, for example, received an annual cash payment of ten roubles; soldiers during the same period were paid between seven and eleven roubles.⁸¹ In addition, chaplains could receive rations of grain and oil.⁸² Clergy appointed for long-term service to Siberia and the Don appear to have had more generous terms. When the government needed clergymen to go to Siberia in 1635 to minister to an almost exclusively military congregation, volunteers were offered the substantial sum of thirty roubles per annum for each black or white priest, compared to the five to ten roubles an ordinary parish priest might receive.⁸³ Don army chaplains received remuneration from both the State and their Cossack parishioners, and those temporarily recalled to Moscow for the collection of church equipment or other business were paid a generous grant of cloth and cash (seven roubles in 1639, fifteen roubles in 1662), with a daily allowance for food and lodging.⁸⁴ All army chaplains were eligible to apply for a travel grant, usually amounting to twenty roubles for each priest and fifteen roubles for each deacon who was sent to the Don in the years 1648-1653, in addition to a daily living allowance, supplies of buckwheat, oats, ham and wine, and horses with carts or sledges.⁸⁵ To prevent newly-appointed chaplains collecting their travel grant and then absconding,

⁸⁰ *OpMAMTu* 16 no.681 (1673).

⁸¹ *AMG* 2 no.865 (1656). Soldiers in the tsars' 'new-model' army were paid 7-11 roubles, whereas strel'tsy were paid 2-3 roubles: Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar*, pp.64-5,84. For parish salaries, see chapter three.

⁸² *AMG* 1 no.394 (1632).

⁸³ Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, p.187; Ogloblin, *Obozrenie stolb'tsov i knigi sibirskogo prikaza*, XXI 51, 1.81,94; Lantzeff, *Siberia*, p.181. Priests on Crown land in endowed churches in Moscow eparchy might receive a stipend of about 6-10 roubles in 1674: *RIB* 23 p.230.

⁸⁴ *RIB* 29 pp.705-800 lvii; *RIB* 34 p.994 no.25, p.1021 no.5, p.1024 no.8, p.1026, no.9 (1662).

⁸⁵ *RIB* 29 p.488 no.41, p.490 no.44 (1650), pp.653-54 no.2, p.865. no.2 (1654); *RIB* 24 p.192-3 no.20-21 (1641).

the Chancellery of Foreign Affairs issued a memo in 1653 requiring each cleric to provide guarantors.⁸⁶

Like regular troops, army chaplains experienced delays and arrears in receiving their salaries and travel grants.⁸⁷ It was necessary to apply in writing to the appropriate State chancellery for these grants,⁸⁸ and even when promised, they were not always delivered. Three clergymen appointed to the Don army in 1650 were promised a travel allowance of fifty roubles each, but subsequently were given less than half that amount.⁸⁹ When deacon Ivan was appointed in 1658 he received neither travel grant nor provisions for his forthcoming journey, but when he petitioned the government for financial assistance he was granted only one rouble, -- a paltry sum that was not enough to get the deacon and his family to distant Cherkassk. Presumably he found a job elsewhere, for he did not go with Cossacks to the Don in June as planned, and no more is heard of him in Don army documents.⁹⁰ Even twenty roubles could not guarantee safe passage for such a journey, as priest Iakov Sidorov discovered after he had signed up to take church supplies to the Cossacks in Azov in 1641. He received his travel grant in Moscow but was left stranded when his armed escort abandoned him at Voronezh, and he finally returned to Moscow destitute.⁹¹ Financial problems beset chaplains in other regiments too. Priest Ivan of St.Nicholas, serving with the forces in Minsk in 1656, complained that he could barely afford to buy food at the inflated front-line prices and was given no transport allowance. He received no offerings from his flock to supplement his salary, he wrote, because most of the soldiers in his regiment were not Orthodox Christians: 'all are Tatars or Mordvins, I don't know any Russians,

⁸⁶ *RIB* 29 pp.608-09 no.60 (1653).

⁸⁷ *RIB* 29 pp.651-3 nos.1,2, p.655 nos.3,4, pp.596-97 no.48 (1653), p.863 (1654), pp.705-800 lvii 1-5 (1653). Soldiers evidently had similar problems with salary delays, according to Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar*, p.62.

⁸⁸ Chaplains were usually paid by the Chancellery of Foreign Affairs or Privy Chancellery.

⁸⁹ *RIB* 29 pp.653-4 no.2, pp.484-5 no.38.

⁹⁰ *RIB* 34 p.323-325 nos.7,9.

⁹¹ *RIB* 29 pp.653-4 no.2, p.472; *RIB* 24 p.192 no.20, p.196-7 no.28, p.206,393 no.1.

and there is no way for me to maintain myself. The authorities acknowledged Ivan's predicament and granted him additional rye grain, but he was not permitted to return to Moscow.⁹²

It was not easy for priest Ivan or his colleagues to obtain a release from their regiments during wartime due to the chronic shortage of military chaplains, which, given the uncertain remuneration package and the dangers of the job, was not surprising.⁹³ Priests were frequently conscripted from parishes, probably unwillingly in most cases and, like soldiers, they sometimes deserted.⁹⁴ The rigours of army life proved too much for priest Terentii Patrikeev, who had been ordered to serve in the regiment of Colonel Iurii Zakas at Kovno in 1655 but fled the following year, leaving the military governor to complain to Tsar Aleksei that 'there is no one present at the death of your Majesty's soldiers...and there is no one to administer the oath of allegiance'.⁹⁵ Severe military discipline was both cause and effect of those who fled: during the Polish wars priest Ivan Larionov was lashed with the knout, the usual punishment for army deserters.⁹⁶ However, not all priests were coerced into the regiments. A number joined up voluntarily, particularly for permanent postings. Most, if not all, the army chaplains mentioned in Don army records between 1639 and 1663 were recruited from the ranks of unemployed priests who came to Moscow to find work.⁹⁷ Some were from the capital, others were from distant provincial towns.⁹⁸

⁹² *AMG* 2 no.865 (1656).

⁹³ The shortage of army chaplains (examples of which are in *AMG* 2 nos.865, 905; *SKE* p.43) was not unique to Russia: in 17th-century England they were likewise in short supply: A.Laurence, 'Parliamentary Army Chaplains', *Princes and Paupers*, p.154.

⁹⁴ *SKE* p.43; *AMG* 2 no.865.

⁹⁵ *AMG* 2 no.935.

⁹⁶ *LZAK* 14 p.99. In some regiments there was a 10% desertion rate in 1659-1660: Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar*, p.83.

⁹⁷ *RIB* 29 pp.484-5 n.38 (1650).

⁹⁸ *RIB* 29 p.866-7, nos.3,4, p.471 no.24, p.472 no.25, p.484-5 no.38, pp.554-61 no.3, pp.700-701; *RIB* 24 p.393 no.1, p.192 no.20.

Regimental chaplaincies could result in long separations for families. Priest Kiril of Kozel'sk was away from his family for several years whilst on service during the Polish wars, and was not permitted to return until his regiment came back to Moscow in June 1662, despite having received news in the meantime that his wife had died and their young children were left without care.⁹⁹ On the other hand, married clergy appointed to permanent military settlements were expected to take their families, but some wives refused to go.¹⁰⁰ Cherkassk, the Don Cossack capital, was not a popular location for clergy families: the journey there was long and difficult, the Don region itself was populated by rough Cossacks and non-Russian peoples, and the climate was insalubrious. More is known about army chaplains and their families who were sent to the Don than any other region, although their situation was probably paralleled in Siberia and other frontier locations. Clerical appointments to the Don army were meant to be for life, but there was a high turn-over as priests died, fled or retired.¹⁰¹ In 1650 priests Ivan and Fedot and deacon Iurii travelled from Moscow to Cherkassk with their wives and children to take up appointment as military chaplains, but after barely a year in their posting two of the clergymen had become sick and died, and the third had obtained permission to return to Moscow due to ill-health. Their widows returned to Moscow with him.¹⁰² A year later, Tambov priest Maksim was sent from Moscow with his wife and children to replace the deceased chaplains, but within a few months Maksim's wife had died. As a widower, Maksim needed, and was granted, special permission by Patriarch Nikon to be tonsured and continue serving at Cherkassk.¹⁰³ It was against the rules of the Church Councils for a monastic priest to serve as an ordinary parish priest, but as an army chaplain it was acceptable, and even desirable

⁹⁹ *SKE* p.43 (1662).

¹⁰⁰ *RIB* 29 pp.554-61 no.3, p.867 no.5; *RIB* 34 pp.149-151.

¹⁰¹ At least twelve priests and deacons were appointed to the Don army between 1648 and 1663: *RIB* 29 p.40 no.4, p.488 no.41, pp.705-800 lvii, p.966 no.10; *RIB* 34 p.994 no.25.

¹⁰² *RIB* 29 p.554-61 no.3, p.557 no.3, pp.865,961, pp.549-50 no.1.

¹⁰³ *RIB* 29 p.689 no.1; p.700-1, pp.705-800 lvii 1-5.

due to the shortage of willing candidates.¹⁰⁴ Maksim was evidently satisfied with his posting on the Don: he may have seen this as way of staying with his motherless children, but may also have experienced some earlier difficulty in finding a job in his native Tambov, whereas in Cherkassk he received a government stipend and grants as well as income from his Cossack parishioners.¹⁰⁵

Generous financial incentives attracted jobless clerics to sign up for frontier chaplaincies, but these posts also tended to draw the drop-outs and undesirables of the clerical estate who could find no other jobs, and could carry on as they pleased far from the capital. For this reason volunteers were vetted by both Church and State. When new chaplains were needed for Cherkassk in 1650, for example, the Patriarchal office short-listed applicants and sent them to the Chancellery of Foreign Affairs, where the final choice was made.¹⁰⁶ Even so, priests who had been dismissed or defrocked were still able to join regiments, either because officials failed to verify their papers or allowed them in for a bribe, and there were few competitors for army jobs. Despite the fact that priest Denis of Spasskoe village had been sacked by parishioners and put under interdiction by the Metropolitan of Moscow for a misdemeanour, he was still able to obtain a posting as a military chaplain in the 1680s.¹⁰⁷ The government aggravated the problem of unsuitable army chaplains by assigning known trouble-makers to regiments in far-flung corners of the tsardom. Avvakum is one such example. For refusing to accept the Nikonian reforms he was exiled to Siberia, where he spent several years attached to the regiment of Afanasii Pashkov, spreading his ideology and gaining adherents for the Schism to the detriment of both Church and

¹⁰⁴ Another monastic priest was appointed to the Don army in 1653, along with three married clergymen: *RIB* 29 pp.651-5, pp.596-97 no.48, pp.597-8 no.50, pp.608-9 no.60. Only on rare occasions was a monastic priest given permission to serve in a parish, but several were allowed to serve in Siberian parishes due to chronic shortages of white priests: eg. G.Müller, *Istoriia Sibiri*, (M.1937) 2 pp.155-56 (1600).

¹⁰⁵ *RIB* 29 pp.705-800 lvii 1-5 (1653).

¹⁰⁶ *RIB* 29 pp.471-2 nos.24-25.

¹⁰⁷ *SKE* p.156. See also *AI* 4 no.202 p.397, 401,407 xlii,lv.

State.¹⁰⁸ The likelihood of clerical vagabonds and dissenters serving as army chaplains was greater when the soldiers themselves chose their priest. Cossacks contracted priest Iakov Sidorov to take religious requisites to their outpost on the southern border, but he bungled his mission, causing damage and loss to the sacred elements in his care, and it later transpired that he had applied for the commission after having failed to return to his post in Siberia under suspicious circumstances.¹⁰⁹ Apart from the government-appointed staff of Cherkassk cathedral, virtually no settlement on the Don River had a church; instead they had unconsecrated chapels (*chasovni*) to which the Cossacks appointed their preferred candidate as priest. Clerics of questionable legality served in these unsanctioned places of worship in the early 1650s,¹¹⁰ and by the 1680s chapels had become hotbeds of dissent. Notorious among Don army priests was Samoil Larionov, who was beheaded on 10 May 1688 for heresy and treason.¹¹¹ By the turn of the century the government was alarmed to find dissenters and defrocked clerics in the very heart of the army, serving in regiments of boyars and governors.¹¹² The problem continued well into the eighteenth century, as a result of which the Church tightened its control over the appointment and discipline of army chaplains, and the State prohibited priests from attaching themselves of their own accord to regiments.¹¹³

Itinerant and unemployed clergy

Unemployed clergymen who became army chaplains represent only a small fraction of the total number of number of clerics in seventeenth-century Muscovy who had no benefice or permanent clerical job. The sources refer to unemployed clergymen as 'placeless' (*bezmestnyi*),¹¹⁴ and to those on temporary contracts as 'cross-roads'

¹⁰⁸ *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.146-161.

¹⁰⁹ *RIB* 24 p.393 no.1, p.192 no.20.

¹¹⁰ *RIB* 29, 554-61 no.3.

¹¹¹ *DAI* 12 no.183; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.453-57.

¹¹² Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, Prilozhenie no.84.

¹¹³ Cracraft, *Church Reform*, p.245.

¹¹⁴ *LZAK* 14 p.17,36; *DAI* 11 no.94.

(*krestovoi*) priests.¹¹⁵ Some clerics became unemployed when they were widowed,¹¹⁶ others were sacked by parishioners or dismissed by their bishop.¹¹⁷ The majority, it seems, lost their jobs due to financial pressures. When fire destroyed a church, or when parishioners moved away due to famine, military call-up, unemployment, or a dispute with their clergy, the priest was left with no means of support.¹¹⁸ In other cases clergymen fled because they were unable to pay episcopal dues.¹¹⁹ Many chose to leave or were forced out because the parish had too many clergy to support.¹²⁰ In rare cases lax bishops created jobless clerics by ordaining candidates without ensuring they had a church to serve in.¹²¹

At the beginning of the century unemployed priests and deacons waited to be hired at Frolovsk bridge in Moscow, where, according to a report by patriarchal official Ivan Chortov in 1604, 'the disorder they cause is great, they argue amongst themselves...and wrestle and fist-fight'.¹²² Consequently, Patriarch Iov ordered unemployed clerics to stand circumspectly at the priest-supervisors' office (*popovskaia izba*) near Red Square, where they were to present their ordination certificates for inspection and, if their papers were in order, they were issued with a work permit for a small fee.¹²³

¹¹⁵ *RIB* 29 pp.471-72, nos.24-25; *DAI* 12 no.17. A different kind of *krestovoi* priest was a monastic priest who served at the palace of the tsar, patriarch or bishop (*Krestovoi palata*), but these clerics held a prestigious permanent post, quite unlike the itinerants mentioned here: *DRV* Pt.10 p.157; *AI* 4 no.259; *ChOidr* 1911 Bk.3 p.9; *Letopis' Dvinskaia*, p.43.

¹¹⁶ *RIB* 24 pp.997-1000, 1030-42. On widowers, see chapter seven.

¹¹⁷ *RIB* 14 nos.102,142 *Khol.*; *SKE* pp.46,107,125,138; *OSS* Pt.8 p.128 no.165; *AIuB* no.326; *DAI* 8 no.50, 5 no.102, 10 no.108, 12 no.17; *PSZ* 1 nos.369,412; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.50-53.

¹¹⁸ *RIB* 12 no.28; *OSS* Pt.1 p.15 no.113; *SKE* pp.45-46,57,256,268; *PDR* 22 pp.65-66.

¹¹⁹ *SKE* p.257; Prilezhaev, *Novgorod-sofiiskaia kazna*, pp.74-76.

¹²⁰ *SKE* pp.43,44,49,52,67,70,71,90,95,96,100-1,109,134,135,186; *ChOidr* 1887 Bk.1 *Smes'*, p.142 no.vi; *AIuB* 3 no.370 ii.

¹²¹ *SKE* p.45-6, no.5; cf. *RIB* 6 nos.131,133; *PDR* 21 pp.136-7, 22 (1867) pp.490-99; *AIu* 385 no.389 ii; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.443-47.

¹²² *AAE* 1 no.360; *AAE* 2 no.223.

¹²³ The work permit fee cost one den'ga. *AAE* 2 no.223; *PDR* 22 pp.200, 493-94; Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', p.236. On the priest-supervisor's office, see chapter nine

Despite Church rules forbidding provincial priests from coming to Moscow for work, unemployed clergy continued to stream into the capital from all over Russia.¹²⁴ Some of these priests were leaving their own churches without divine services in order to conduct services at other churches in the capital, where they were hired by priests who did not want to work there themselves, possibly because they held two benefices. Likewise, priests who held chaplaincies or were occupied in more lucrative by-employments may have been employing these itinerant clergy. Such malpractice, reminiscent of the absenteeism and pluralism that plagued the English Church at this time,¹²⁵ was sternly prohibited by Patriarch Iov, but without success, for clergymen continued to abandon their provincial livings for better pay and more choice in the capital. Priest Mitrofan of Vologda, for instance, resigned from his convent post without notice and went to Moscow to serve as an itinerant (*u krestov*), to the disgust of the nuns.¹²⁶ This exodus was fuelled by the fact that there was a high demand for the services of itinerant priests in Moscow in the homes of magnates and even in the royal palace, where they were employed to conduct private services and say prayers.¹²⁷ 'They pay their priests an annually-agreed salary (*zhalovan'e*),' Grigorii Kotoshikhin wrote in the 1660s, 'and married clergy are given a lodging allowance (*korm*) and food and drink each month, whereas widowed clergy eat with the boyar together at table'.¹²⁸ Some boyars' clergy could afford to buy their own houses,¹²⁹ but

of this thesis.

¹²⁴ *AAE* 1 no.360, 2 no.223; *RIB* 29 pp.484-5 no.38.

¹²⁵ *AAE* 2 no.223. On absenteeism in the English Church, see A.Tindal Hart, *Clergy and Society*, (London, 1968), and P.Heath, *The English Parish Clergy*, (London, 1969).

¹²⁶ *OSS* Pt.1 p.25 no.124 (1679).

¹²⁷ *RIB* 29 p.471 no.24; *RIB* 14 no.156; *SKE* p.151; S.Belokurov, *ChOISR* 1887 Bk.2 p.275; *AIuB* no.328; *DAI* 5 no.102; *AI* 5 no.75 (1681); Olearius, *Travels*, p.262. Privy Chancellery records indicate that temporary priests were employed to serve in the Kremlin churches: *RIB* 23 pp.343,358-9,664,1665,1059,1060,1123.

¹²⁸ Grigorij Kotosixin, *O Rossii v carstvovanie Alekseja Mixajlovica*, ch.13 p.159; *PDR* 22 p.496. It seems that during the first half of the century priests could conduct divine liturgy in boyars' homes, but from mid-century the Church limited them to saying prayers only: Kotosixin, *O Rossii*, p.159; *ChOISR* 1909 Bk.3 Smes', no.5 p.17; *DAI* 5 no.102 p.465.

¹²⁹ *LZAK* 14 p.17 (1644), p.36 (1668); 'Ob'ezzhie golovy i politseiskii dela v Moskve

most seem to have used their lodging allowance to rent rooms from Moscow parish priests. In 1665, for instance, a priest who worked for stol'nik Plemianikov was renting a hut from a clergy widow and sharing this small abode with his own wife and a cavalryman's wife. Stol'nik Pushkin's priest was renting a hut from priest Sergei of St. Demetrius' Church, and sharing it with an itinerant tailor.¹³⁰ Such cramped quarters suggest that boyars' clergy were not necessarily as well-paid as provincial priests may have hoped, nor were they always treated with respect. Long before Patriarch Nikon's rise to power he worked as a white priest in the house of a Moscow boyar, where he found himself in the demeaning position of being treated little better than a servant and, his vita tells us, 'he endured much affliction'.¹³¹

Throughout Russia itinerant priests found a constant source of employment writing and signing documents for illiterate clients,¹³² or serving in parish churches on temporary contracts for a specified time. They were hired by parishioners until a permanent priest could be appointed, and by widowed priests who were waiting to be issued with episcopal permits, and they were sometimes hired by clergy widows whose sons were not yet old enough to be ordained to their deceased fathers' places.¹³³ One parish in Dmitrov uezd complained to the prelate that the local landowner, having expelled the parish staff and appropriated church land, was occasionally sending them a hired priest who refused to visit anyone who would not pay his high fees.¹³⁴ Peasants themselves frequently contracted itinerants to take services in unconsecrated chapels (*chasovni*) or to say prayers for individual families, particularly in remote regions of Siberia, the far

v kontse XVII v,' *ChOidr* 1894 Pt.3 p.33.

¹³⁰ *ChOidr* 213 1905 Smes,' p.60-1; 'Ob'ezzhie golovy i politseiskii', p.3 (1695).

¹³¹ 'Ob odnom iz spisok zhitia patriarkha Nikona,' *ChOidr* 1909 Bk.3 Smes', no.5 p.17.

¹³² Temporary priests were employed by Don army recruits to write up their contracts: *RIB* 24 pp.997-1000,1007,1019,1025-1042 (1646).

¹³³ *SKE*, pp.59,100-01,185; *OSS* Pt.11 p.191 no.172 (1672), Pt.3 p.55 (1689); *RIB* 5 no.150 (1662); *DAI* 11 no.94 (1684). On clerical widowers and widows, see chapters seven and eight.

¹³⁴ St.Elijah's, Katysho: Kholmogorov, *Istoricheskii materialy*, *ChOidr* 1911 Bk.3, pp.154-190.

North and the Don, where the closest parish church could be far away and roads impassable for much of the year.¹³⁵ An episcopal survey in Northern Russia in 1692 revealed that each parish church in Vazhsk uezd had several chapels located within its parish boundaries, to serve the needs of far-flung hamlets.¹³⁶ These chapels kept the faith alive in isolated villages, but could be refuges for schismatics, and were sometimes the cause of disputes with clergy of the nearest parish church over who had right to collect income from local inhabitants.¹³⁷

Itinerant priests were always a source of grave concern to prelates because they were outside the control of the established church. They could be guilty of spiritual or moral crimes that invalidated them from administering the holy sacraments, and were undermining Church discipline and authority by indulging their clients' sins or heresies and conducting illegal marriages.¹³⁸ Fugitive priest Andronik, for example, was exiled from Moscow to Dauria and later fled to the Lena river where, his bishop complained in 1689, 'without our permission he serves as a priest and serves at unconsecrated chapels and conducts marriages and says prayers for new mothers'.¹³⁹ To avoid paying episcopal fees, some Siberian priests voluntarily resigned their benefices and became itinerants, causing Siberian Metropolitan Pavel to write in vexation to his deputy: 'And priests of those places abandon the churches of God and live at unconsecrated chapels without permission; and because of that the churches stand without services and our episcopal tithe and dues are lost'.¹⁴⁰ Prelates perceived unemployed clergy as both a menace and an embarrassment to the established Church. Forced into a dependant role by their uncertain financial predicament, they had to rely on the generosity of friends or

¹³⁵ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, nos.9, 22; *RIB* 29 pp.554-61 n.3; *AI* 4 no.202; Iushkov, *Ocherki*, p.63-4.

¹³⁶ Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 p.48; *RIB* 25 nos.407,423,432,685.

¹³⁷ *RIB* 12 no.275 Ust.(1697); Iushkov, *Ocherki*, p.64.

¹³⁸ *DAI* 5 no.102 pp.460,490,493.

¹³⁹ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, no.19 (1689).

¹⁴⁰ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, no.9.

relatives.¹⁴¹ A considerable number borrowed money, some of whom ended up in court for debt.¹⁴² When all else failed, jobless clerics resorted to begging from house to house.¹⁴³ By the late seventeenth century the number of clerical beggars had reached sufficiently troublesome proportions to warrant the following ukaz, issued by Tsar Peter on 14 March 1694:

'If any unemployed monk or nun or unemployed priest or deacon in the Kremlin, in Kitai, or Zemliani gorod, or any other vagrant, disgracefully and fraudulently ties up hand or foot or covers an eye and squints as if blind and lame, feigning craftily to beg alms for Christ's sake, and upon examination are found to be healthy, those monks, nuns, priests or deacons are to be arrested and taken to the Strel'tsy prikaz, and from the Strel'tsy Prikaz send them to the Patriarchal prikaz, so that from now on monks and nuns and unemployed priests and deacons will not wander around the streets nor frequent the taverns'.

First-time offenders were to be returned from whence they had come, but if caught again, the tsar decreed, 'punish them severely by beating with knout and exile to remote Siberian towns'.¹⁴⁴ Peter I eventually cleared Moscow's streets of a large proportion of vagrant clerics by limiting the numbers of clergy sons who could be ordained and conscripting excess persons into State service.¹⁴⁵

Clergymen without regular employment, and those who served in private homes or unconsecrated chapels, played a crucial role in fanning the flames of Old Belief amongst both the Muscovite elite and the rural masses during the seventeenth century. Their influence in this respect has been ably demonstrated by Georg Michels,¹⁴⁶ and my findings agree with Michels' theory that relatively few priests in regular parish employment left the official Orthodox fold, whereas considerably more unemployed and itinerant priests became schismatics.¹⁴⁷ In an attempt to stem the tide of dissent

¹⁴¹ *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.139,141-2; Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, 2 p.46.

¹⁴² *LZAK* 14 p.75,77, 98,109.

¹⁴³ *RIB* 24 p.393 no.1; *OSS* Pt.12 p.55; *RIB* 12 no.105 Ust.; *SKE* p.128.

¹⁴⁴ *PSZ* 3 no.1489; Znamenskii, *Rukovodstvo k russkoi tserkovnoi istorii*, p.230.

¹⁴⁵ Cracraft, *Church Reform*, pp.97-100.

¹⁴⁶ Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.451

¹⁴⁷ As G.Michels points out, clerical opposition sometimes only began after a priest was rejected by the official church, or in response to the needs of prospective clients: 'Myths and Realities', pp.443-470.

and bring itinerants under closer control, prelates issued orders to their agents to interrogate hired priests and diligently inspect their charters,¹⁴⁸ and parish priests were threatened with punishment if they gave refuge to any illegal itinerant in their parish.¹⁴⁹ Concern was expressed by the 1666-67 the Moscow Church Council that boyars were harbouring schismatic priests, and that itinerant priests were obliging schismatic employers by using the old rites and books.¹⁵⁰ To flush out such malcontents, the Council ruled that an episcopal permit had to be obtained before any person could employ a private priest, and in 1681 tightened restrictions further by limiting the right to employ private priests to top-ranking magnates who had special permission from the Patriarch or prelate.¹⁵¹ Despite threats of excommunication, priests without permits were still being employed in the homes of lower-ranking individuals at the end of the century,¹⁵² until in 1721 Peter the Great finally put an end to private chapels for everyone except the royal family.¹⁵³

Missionaries

The final category of clergy deserving mention in this chapter is the missionary-priest, whose ministry, though not strictly non-parochial, differed from that of a regular parish priest. Traditionally, the missionary efforts of the Russian Orthodox Church had been spearheaded by monks, and the seventeenth century was no exception.¹⁵⁴ However,

¹⁴⁸ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, no.9; *PDR* 22 p.495; *AAE* 4 no.151; *AAE* 5 no.244; *DAI* 5 no.102 p.465.

¹⁴⁹ *DAI* 5 no.102 pp.465-6; *PDR* 22 p.497.

¹⁵⁰ *DAI* 5 no.102 pp.475,460,493; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.451.

¹⁵¹ *AI* 5 no.75 pp.113-4 (1681); *DAI* 5 no.102, p.465.

¹⁵² A Kazan judge maintained unapproved private priests in the 1690s: *SKE* p.151 (1694), as did the governor of Ustiug in 1682: *RIB* 14 no.56. In contrast, patriarchal approval was given in 1691 for stol'nik Prince Ivan Petrovich Gagarin to employ widowed priest Aleksei Andreev to conduct divine service in his house: Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, no.34.

¹⁵³ Cracraft, *Church Reform*, p.215.

¹⁵⁴ Works published on Russian Missions include E.Smirnoff, *Russian Orthodox Missions* (1903); S.Bolshakoff, *The Foreign Missions of the Russian Orthodox Church* (1943); G.Florovsky, 'Russian Missions: an historical sketch', in *The Christian East*, XIV n.1 (1933); G.Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind*, Vol.2 (1950); Y.Slezkine, 'Savage Christians or unorthodox Russians: the missionary dilemma in Siberia',

since the baptism of Rus', white priests had been crucial to the process of consolidating the faith of newly-converted peoples. When the Church wanted to appoint clergymen to head up a new evangelising effort in Dauria in eastern Siberia in 1681, it was hegumen Feodosii and hieromonk Makarii who were appointed,¹⁵⁵ yet without the help of a network of white priests the monks had little hope of following the Patriarch's instructions to convert all the Daurians and then make sure they go to church and confession.¹⁵⁶ Neither is it likely that Metropolitan Misail of Riazan could have baptised over four thousand Tatars and Mordvins in 1654 without the assistance of the white clergy.¹⁵⁷ Occasionally married clergymen rather than monks were in the vanguard of missionary work. On 25 April 1681 Tsar Fedor ordered white priests Aleksei and Fedka to ride to Lapp pogosts in Kolskoi uezd 'to summon the natives and pagans to our pious Orthodox Christian faith',¹⁵⁸ and when Swedes were permitted to come to Novgorod to learn Russian in 1629 the State expected ordinary parish clerics to convert the language students to Orthodoxy.¹⁵⁹

It is notable in the above examples that the State took as much interest in missionary endeavours as the Church, recognising that conversion of non-Russians to Orthodoxy secured their political fealty. For similar political reasons, the government took equal interest in keeping alive the Orthodox faith among Russian communities abroad, a task in which white clergy were of particular importance. From 1613 to the close of the century, the Muscovite government and Church were sending ordained clergymen and church requisites to Russian lands under Polish and Swedish rule, to counter propaganda and persecution by Catholic or Lutheran overlords.¹⁶⁰ And to ensure that

Between Heaven and Hell (1993); Primary sources on baptism of new converts include *AAE* 4 no.332; *DAI* 3 no.35; *DAI* 8 no.89.

¹⁵⁵ *DAI* 8 no.91 p.314-6, i,ii,iii.

¹⁵⁶ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, nos.8,9.

¹⁵⁷ Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.30; Paul of Aleppo, pp.57-58,372.

¹⁵⁸ *ChOIDR* 1887, Bk.1 Smes', p.152 viii.

¹⁵⁹ *AAE* 3 no.184.

¹⁶⁰ *AAE* 3 nos.107,108,127,128,327,328; *AI* 5 no.142; *PSZ* 2 no.1076 p.619.

Karelians were holding to the faith and not marrying non-Orthodox spouses, the Patriarch instructed Metropolitan Kornilli of Novgorod in 1689 'to choose from your eparchy a decorous experienced priest of good character, who knows the local Karelian language, to send him to those towns to supervise the churches'.¹⁶¹

The significance of married missionary-priests in the foreign policies of both Church and State is well-illustrated by the case of priest Maksim Leont'ev, who involuntarily became Russia's first missionary to China. Maksim was an army chaplain serving in Albazin when he and his regiment were taken captive by the Manchurians in 1683 and forced to reside in Beijing by the K'ang-hsi Emperor. In captivity he continued his priestly duties, having obtained a building to use as a chapel, and by 1685 had over a hundred Russian prisoners, defectors and the occasional merchant in his congregation. When news of the chapel's existence reached Tobol'sk in 1693, Metropolitan Ignatii viewed it as a base from which to evangelise the Chinese. 'Your captivity is not without benefit to Chinese citizens, for it is up to you to open the light of Christ's Orthodox faith to them', he wrote to Maksim. Ignatei sent church requisites to Beijing, granted priest Maksim a permit to serve there till the end of his life, and invited him to send his son to be ordained at Tobol'sk.¹⁶² As it was, the Chinese would not allow either Maksim or his son to return to Tobol'sk, and there was no resident priest in China other than Maksim until 1716,¹⁶³ but the Metropolitan's comments express his great excitement at this chance to expand the boundaries of the faith, and with it his own jurisdiction, into China. Likewise, when news of the chapel reached Tsar Peter in 1698, there was much interest in court circles. In Western Europe it was perceived as a political triumph for Russia, for there had been some competition to establish a mission in China.¹⁶⁴ 'I congratulate you on the recently-gained triumph over the unbelieving

¹⁶¹ *AI* 5 no.188 p.325.

¹⁶² Melety, *Drevniiia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, no.59 (1695); *AI* 5 no.243 p.445 (1695).

¹⁶³ Ordination could only be conferred by a bishop.

¹⁶⁴ The European Protestants were especially eager to establish a mission in China, not least because the Jesuits already had a presence there. Peter the Great was more cautious: his hopes for the conversion of the Chinese were mingled with fears of

enemy,' wrote the Burgomaster of Amsterdam to Tsar Peter in May 1698.¹⁶⁵ In reality, Maksim could barely keep his Russian flock of irreligious Cossacks within the Orthodox fold, and made no impact on the Chinese.¹⁶⁶ Nonetheless, this solitary priest must be credited with maintaining a Russian Orthodox presence in China, thereby keeping alive a flicker of faith among his countrymen against all odds. In later centuries the Russian Church, which by the late nineteenth century had produced 700 Orthodox Chinese, officially dated its missionary efforts in China back to the time of priest Maksim.¹⁶⁷ Of more interest to the government was the diplomatic potential of Maksim's chapel and the mission it gave birth to, which proved to be, in the words of Eric Widmer, 'an essential component for the working of the Sino-Russian treaty system'.¹⁶⁸

The extra-parochial ministries described above illuminate the extent to which the Muscovite State and society relied on the white clergy for services reaching beyond the scope of parishes and cathedrals. Military and embassy chaplains and missionaries were perceived by the tsars as an important factor in the preservation and extension of the State, expanding Muscovy's influence, even its frontiers, and serving as a Russian foot in foreign doors. Chaplains who served in prisons, almshouses and hospitals performed a vital function in the charity sector, convent priests fulfilled an indispensable role in the religious life of Russian Orthodox nunneries, and secular priests in monasteries provided pastoral care for the laity on monastery lands. Even itinerants, viewed as potentially dangerous drop-outs by the Church, were valued by the laity. They were hired by peasants, priests and princes, and formed a recruitment pool from which

offending the Jesuits: Cracraft, *Church Reform*, pp.66-67.

¹⁶⁵ Widmer, *Ecclesiastical Mission*, p.27.

¹⁶⁶ Widmer, *Ecclesiastical Mission*, pp.2-3,15,23-25.

¹⁶⁷ E.Smironoff, *Russian Orthodox Missions*, pp.75-76.

¹⁶⁸ Widmer, *Ecclesiastical Mission*, pp.169,179. The history of Russian mission in China is also discussed by K.Latourette, *A History of Christian Mission in China* (London,1929); Adoratskii, 'Pravoslavnaia missiia v Kitae za 200 let eia sushchestvovaniia', in *Pravoslavnyi Sobesednik* (Feb-Nov.1887); A.Parry, *Russian (Greek Orthodox) Missionaries in China*, Unpubl.PhD thesis (Chicago,1938).

regiments and parishes drew their clergy. In the eighteenth century Peter the Great reduced the number of itinerants, but continued to rely heavily on the white clergy as chaplains for his army, navy, hospitals and orphanages, and he funded all his welfare programmes from ecclesiastical sources.¹⁶⁹ Though rarely acknowledged by the Church hierarchy or noticed by history, extra-parochial clergy fulfilled a fundamental role in Russian religion. Without them, contemporaries feared, 'many poor people suffer at their hour of death, they die without confession and perish without repentance.'¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ Cracraft, *Church Reform*, pp.90-97; Hughes, *Peter the Great*, p.349; *PSZ* 5 no.2856.

¹⁷⁰ *RIB* 12 no.261 Ust.(1696): Petition from Ustiug townsmen for new almshouse chaplain.

Chapter Seven

Widowed Clergy

'If a priest's wife dies, he shall enter a monastery and retain his clerical rank. If he remains in weakness and love of worldly pleasures, he shall not perform the liturgy.'

Metropolitan Petr of Moscow (1308-1326)¹

From early in its history the Russian Church, like other Slavic Orthodox Churches, viewed widowed clergy with suspicion. A widowed priest (*vdovoi pop*) was strictly forbidden to remarry, as were deacons and sub-deacons, but they could not be trusted to withstand sexual temptation if allowed to remain in their parishes without a wife, and at the very least were vulnerable to slander.² In the early fourteenth century Metropolitan Petr of Moscow ruled that clerics in major orders were to be suspended from office upon the death of their spouse, and either tonsured or demoted to minor orders. If they wished to remarry they had to renounce their orders altogether.³ These injunctions were upheld by the Moscow Church Councils of 1503 and 1551, but a major change came when the 1666-67 Church Council revoked the former prohibitions against widowed clergy on the grounds that they were not based on canon law, and decreed that priests and deacons should be allowed to retain their benefices after the loss of their wives, under certain conditions.⁴ Although the Council resolutions have often been quoted by scholars of Russian Church history, scant attention has been paid to the effect they had upon the lower clergy nor the extent to which the 1667 reforms succeeded. Little is known about widowed clergy, nor the choices they made, nor the

¹ *RIB* 6 no.161.

² Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council', *RH* 7 p.72; Levin, *Sex and Society*, p.264-5.

³ *RIB* 6 no.161.

⁴ On the Synods see P.Zuzek, *Kormchaja Kniga*, (Rome,1964) p.152; Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council', *RH* 7 p.70; *PSZ* 1 no.412 p.705 (1666-67). Metropolitan Fotii (1408-31) was particularly vociferous against remarriage of clergy: 'Gramota mitropolita Fotiia v Pskov,' *RIB* 6 no.434-435. For a short time in the early sixteenth century, Metropolitan Simon allowed twice-married priests to retain their benefices, but later Councils forbade this practice. Early Church canons did not allow remarriage, but did not demand that widowers retire to a monastery: Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council', *RH* 7 p.71; Levin, *Sex and Society*, pp.264-65.

impact they had on the Church or their local communities. Widowers were a force to be reckoned with within the Muscovite Church: they represented a large sector of the total white clergy, possibly as much as forty percent,⁵ and documents relating to them comprise up to a third of the content of seventeenth-century diocesan archives,⁶ hence we cannot afford to overlook them.

Remarriage

The right of a secular priest to resign his orders was considered by the Church to be a liberty rather than a restriction, for the monastic clergy were never free to renounce their vows of celibacy.⁷ Further liberties were granted in 1666-67 when the Moscow Synod decreed that if a young priest or deacon was widowed and remarried 'because of weakness', he was permitted to read and chant in church, 'and other fitting work, and be maintained by the holy church, and not be despised or returned to common rank'.⁸ How often did clergymen choose the option of remarriage? Adam Olearius and Johannes Korb were of the opinion that clerical remarriage was a frequent occurrence,⁹ but this view is not supported by any other evidence. I have found only two cases of clergymen in major orders taking a second wife, one of whom married prior to 1659 and left the clerical rank to become a tax-payer in the artisan quarter, the other married

⁵ The proportion of Muscovite clergy who were widowers may have been similar to the 19th-century situation, when an erudite cleric estimated that forty percent of young priests were widowers during his time in office. The figure would have been no less two centuries earlier: G. Freeze, 'Revolt from Below', *Russian Orthodoxy Under the Old Regime*, ed. by R. Nicholas and T. Stavrou, (Minnesota, 1978) p.113.

⁶ Of the 206 extant episcopal records relating directly to the white clergy from Moscow eparchy 1662-1699, 32% concern widowed priests: *SKE* pp42-187. Of the 600 records from Vologda eparchy in the Suvorov collection that relate to parish priests during the seventeenth century (excluding documents dealing with episcopal fees and instructions), 10.5% relate to widowed priests: *OSS* Pts 1-13.

⁷ *RIB* 6 nos.6,161; Giles Fletcher, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, pp.85-87.

⁸ *PSZ* 1 no.412 p.705.

⁹ Olearius, *Travels*, p.268; Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary*, 2 p.180-181. Herberstein noted that widowed clergy could resign orders and remarry, but did not comment on how often this occurred: *Description of Moscow and Miscovy 1557*, p.89.

a clergy widow in 1688.¹⁰ Several widowers who vacated their parishes to unknown destinations appear in Church records, but it is more likely that they retired to the cloister than remarried.¹¹ Admittedly, it is highly likely that clerics who resigned their orders simply did not come to the notice of the authorities thereafter, hence do not appear in our records. On the other hand, an episcopal permit was needed for those who wished to take advantage of the 1666-67 reforms that allowed twice-married priests to serve in minor orders, yet not one single case of a priest applying for such a permit has come to light. In Vologda records, for instance, there are scores of requests from widowers for *patrakhil'naia* permits to serve as celibate parish priests, but no request from a priest or deacon for permission to remarry. In Moscow eparchy the story is the same: numerous petitions for *patrakhil'naia* permits, and none for remarriage. In contrast, d'iachki occasionally remarried. Of the six cases I have located of twice-married d'iachki, two were priests' sons who were thereby disqualified from succeeding to their fathers positions, two were dismissed by their bishop for having failed to obtain episcopal permission *before* marrying a second time, and two were allowed to remarry and continue serving in minor orders, but were debarred from entering the sanctuary.¹²

The relative paucity of seventeenth-century records precludes reliable statistics, but the above evidence suggests that clerical remarriage was not a common occurrence, even after 1667. It was a step clergymen were probably reluctant to take because of the social stigma it incurred. Foreigners commented that any Russian priest who married a second time was referred to as an ex-priest (*raspop*), which was the same word used for a defrocked priest,¹³ and in seventeenth-century documents we find the epithet

¹⁰ Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, Pt.2 pp.3,12-15; *MTS* 2 p.214.

¹¹ *OSS* Pt.11 p.192 no.174, Pt.11 p.202 no.190; *RIB* 12 no.252 Ust.; *SKE* p.95,163.

¹² Disqualified d'iachki: *SKE* p.93 no.5 (1685), p.110 no.5 (1694); *OSS* Pt.11 p.48 no.37 (1653), Pt.7 pp.54-6 (1682). D'iachki given permits: *OSS* Pt.5 p.60 no.118 (1688), Pt.8 p.115 no.157 (1699-1700).

¹³ Fletcher, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, pp.86-87; Rushchinskii, *Religioznyi byt*, p.116; Defrocked priests: *RIB* 14 no.142; *DAI* 5 no.102, *DAI* 8 no.50; *PSZ* 1 no.369.

'twice-married' used as a term of abuse, intended and received as a grave insult to a clergyman.¹⁴ Second marriages were frowned upon by the Church even for laymen, albeit permitted as an indulgence to human weakness, and a priest who remarried was liable to a penance of between three and thirty-seven years.¹⁵ Most bishops preferred to see their widowed clergy tonsured in monasteries, as we shall see below. A further impediment to resigning orders was the fact that widowed clergymen who attempted to find employment outside the Church faced job discrimination. Lobbying by chancellery (*prikazy*) staff, who wanted to protect jobs for their own sons,¹⁶ resulted in the following royal decree of 8 February 1665: 'it has come to the tsar's notice that ex-priests and ex-deacons are working in chancelleries and in provincial offices as clerks and as other office workers. His Majesty orders that all ex-priests and ex-deacons who are now working in Moscow as chancellery clerks in all State matters are to be dismissed, and henceforward they and others like them may not be employed in any chancellery in Moscow or in the provinces'.¹⁷ Church rules allowed ex-clergymen to enter the civil service, but not the army,¹⁸ yet the difficulty of finding a job probably encouraged widowed clerics to remain in holy orders. It may be that some widowers were remarrying secretly and bribing episcopal officials into silence, as evidently happened in the sixteenth century, although I have found no mention of such goings-on in seventeenth-century records.¹⁹

¹⁴ *OSS* Pt.9 p.123 no.101/2; *LZAK* 5 Pt.1 p.30; *DAI* 12 no.17 p.182-3. According to Eve Levin, clerical remarriage was viewed unfavourably in Orthodox Slav lands, and remarried priests were depicted among the damned in Serbian epic poetry and apocryphal writing: Levin, *Sex and Society*, pp.267-68.

¹⁵ *PSZ* 1 no.412 p.705; *RIB* 6 no.161; S.Smirnov, 'Materialy dlia istorii drevnerusskoi pokaiannoi distsipliny', *ChOIDR* 1912 Bk.3 p.136; Levin, *Sex and Society*, pp.267-68.

¹⁶ Plavsic, 'Seventeenth-century Chanceries', p.28.

¹⁷ *PSZ* 1 no.369 p.607.

¹⁸ *DAI* 5 no.102.

¹⁹ Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council', *RH* 7 p.71; Fletcher, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, p.87.

Widowed Clergy in the Parish: pre-1667

Judging from extant sources, a greater number of widowers chose to stay in their parishes than to resign. Prior to 1667, a priest was theoretically debarred from celebrating the liturgy, hearing confessions, baptising, marrying, burying, or retaining authority in church after the death of his spouse,²⁰ yet in practice widowers could continue serving as priests if they had an episcopal permit, called a *patrakhil'naia gramota*, which granted the right to perform limited duties at a specific church. Most of these permits had to be renewed annually and excluded the priest from saying divine liturgy, although he could administer the other sacraments.²¹ Sometimes a permit gave license for all sacerdotal duties including mass for a limited period, like the six-month permit issued to widowed priest Ivan Terent'ev on 11 September 1657 'until the peasants have elected another priest to that church'.²² There were also a variety of non-sacerdotal positions within the Church that were open to widowed priests. They found employment conducting non-Eucharistic religious services in private chapels for Muscovite boyars and for embassy staff;²³ they served in secretarial and administrative roles on the staffs of bishops as episcopal envoys and priest-supervisors, or worked in monasteries as book-copiers and clerks.²⁴ One of the twenty-four type-setters (*naborshchiki*) working in the Moscow printing office in 1649 was widowed deacon Fedor Semenov,²⁵ while priest Ioann Miliutin, a widower with young children, found employment at Trinity-St.Sergius monastery as a scribe during the years 1646-54.²⁶ The opportunities available for a well-connected cleric can be seen in the illustrious career of widowed priest Evdokim. Until the early 1620s he had served at the

²⁰ Kollman 'The Stoglav Council', *RH* 7 p.72.

²¹ *RIB* 35 no.306 p.532 (1621); *Aiu* no.391; *SKE* 1902 Bk.4 p.43 (1662); *RIB* 14 no.157 Khol.(1645-1667); *ChOidr* 1894 Bk.3 p.66 (1622).

²² *RIB* 5 no.92; Paul of Aleppo, pp.329, 356.

²³ *DAI* 5 no.102; Olearius, *Travels*, p.267; Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, no.34.

²⁴ *RIB* 2 no.190 (1614); *RIB* 35 no.435 (1634); *AI* 4 no.191 p.362 (1661); *VKS*, *Prilozhenie*, p.177-78; Dokuchaev-Barskov, p.25 (1649); *OSS* Pt.8 p.29 (1665), Pt.11 p.107 no.92 (1665).

²⁵ 'Moskovskii pechatnyi dvor v 1649', *ChOidr* 1887 Bk.4, Smes'.

²⁶ 'Khristorozhdestvenskaia tserkov', pp.30-33.

Peremyshl' cathedral, but after the death of his wife he worked in Moscow for boyar Mezetskii and later for Prince Khovanskii. He participated in a Russian embassy abroad with ambassador Pleshchev, and in 1639 was appointed by the tsar to undertake an important diplomatic mission.²⁷ Evdokim spent a short time in Trinity monastery in Astrakhan, probably as a non-tonsured resident (*vkładchik*), which was not uncommon for widowers who did not want to become monks.²⁸ Needless to say, few widowed clergymen had as interesting a career as Evdokim. Instead, the majority who elected to remain in their parishes prior to 1667 were demoted to minor orders.²⁹ Demotion must have been a preferable option to tonsure for clerics with families to care for, since as *d'iachki* they were normally allowed to retain a reduced portion of the church revenue for their support,³⁰ but even so, the reduced income was hard to bear, and frequently resulted in disputes between clergy, or poverty and debt.³¹ It is probable that the financial deprivation suffered by widowers eventually drove many into monasteries. Others simply continued to administer the sacraments in their parishes without a permit until caught by episcopal officials, or they served in roles of dubious legality as itinerant priests.³² In these unsupervised capacities widowers were of considerable concern to the Church hierarchy, particularly from the 1660s when a growing number of dissenters sought the services of priests who would serve with the old books and old rituals.³³

²⁷ 'Posol'stvo', pp.262-275.

²⁸ Non-tonsured widowed clergy living in monasteries are mentioned in: *RIB* 12 no.187, 14 nos.8,23,44 Ust.; Iushkov, *Ocherki*, pp.95-97; 'Khristorozhdestvenskaia tserkov', pp.30-33; *SKE* p.151; Barsov, 'Olonetskii monastyr' Klimentsy', *ChO IDR* 1870 Bk.4 p.16; *Opisanie rukopisei i knig, sobrannykh dlia imperatorskoi akademii nauk v Olonetskom krae*, ed.V.I.Sreznevskii (Spb. 1913), p.424.

²⁹ Titov, 'Tserkovnyia zemli v Rostovskom uezde,' *ChO IDR* 1896 Bk.2 pp.16,19; *ChO IDR* 220 1907 Bk.1 Smes', no.1 p.14; *RIB* 14 no.135 Khol.; *AIuB* 2 no.143; Herberstein, *Notes Upon Russia*, p.56; *OSS* Pt.13 p.60, Pt.1 p.2 143/6, Pt.7 p.60; *DAI* 2 no.70; *RIB* 24 pp.997-1000 ff.

³⁰ As *d'iachok*, a widower would normally have one-third or one-quarter of the church revenue: *OSS* P.7 p.68, Pt.9 p.69; Herberstein, *Notes Upon Russia*, p.56.

³¹ *AIu* no.249; *RIB* 14 no.135,318 Khol.; *RIB* 12 no.42 Ust.; *LZAK* 27 no.560; *OSS* Pt.11, p.9 no.5.

³² *AI* 4 no.151 p.296; *OSS* Pt.9 p.2 no.3; *DAI* 5 no.102. It was possible for military chaplains to be widowed for several years without anyone knowing, as seems to be the case with deacon Petr of Cherkassk: *RIB* 34 pp.149-151 (1656).

³³ *DAI* 5 no.102.

Widowed Clerics in the Parish: post-1667

When the Church hierarchy ruled in 1667 that chaste widowers could remain as parish priests, the response from the white clergy was enthusiastic.³⁴ Parishes, too, responded positively: diocesan records contain as many requests from the laity asking for *patrakhil'naia* permits for their clergy, as from the priests themselves.³⁵ Very often parishes asked the prelate to grant a permit on account of the priest's motherless children.³⁶ Indeed, for clergymen with young families, the 1667 ruling was no less than revolutionary. Its impact on the lives of thousands of dependants in clergy families can be glimpsed from the many applications that subsequently streamed into episcopal offices from widowers asking for permits to continue serving in their former capacities on the grounds of family responsibilities, -- 'for the sake of my small children', 'so that my children will not starve', 'until my daughter is married' 'because there is no-one to feed and care for them and give them in marriage'.³⁷ The entire extended family stood to benefit from the reforms, for it was not unusual for a clergyman to be supporting widowed and orphaned relatives as well as his own children,³⁸ and bishops were often sympathetic towards priests with dependants.³⁹ Priest Nikifor of Piatinitso village in Viazma district, left with seven children to care for when his wife died in 1673, was allowed to continue renewing his *patrakhil'naia* for over five years.⁴⁰

³⁴ *PSZ* 1 no.412. There are numerous petitions for *patrakhil'naia* permits from widowed priests and deacons in diocesan records: *OSS* Pts 1-13, *SKE* pp.42-187; *LZAK* 27 nos.869, 870, 872,870, 873-4; *RIB* 12 no.181 *Ust.*; *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.33-145.

³⁵ For example, *LZAK* 27 nos.624,846, 861,864, 865, 868, 870, 878, 881, 882, 885, 887; *OSS* Pt.11 pp.196,197,200-02.

³⁶ eg. *RIB* 12 no.181 *Ust.*; *OSS* Pt.11 pp.191,201,202.

³⁷ *SKE* pp.43, 76,77,87,90,111,123,175-185; *OSS* Pt.3 p.55, Pt.5 p.29,62, Pt.7 p.144, Pt.10 p.177-78, Pt.11 pp.191,200-2.

³⁸ *OSS* Pt.11 p.191 no.172.

³⁹ Prelates were often sympathetic to the needs of clergy families: see chapter eight. For examples of *patrakhil'naia* permits granted to widowers with dependants see *SKE* pp.48-50,76,77,87,90,111,123.

⁴⁰ *SKE* p.175 no.2.

Despite the high hopes the 1667 reforms had given the white clergy, in reality widowhood still made a clergyman's position precarious, for the new rules did not automatically guarantee him the right to keep his old job. A *patrakhil'naia* permit could be given or withheld at the prelate's discretion, and if granted it had to be renewed each year.⁴¹ Few bishops allowed widowers to renew it more than five times, at most.⁴² Hierarchs differed in their policies toward widowers, depending on the personality of the prelate and the service record of the priest. With a clean record, a priest could hope to have his permit renewed to serve in the parish for several years, but if he had a son old enough to succeed him or a blemished service record, he was likely to be ordered into a monastery without delay.⁴³ Disregarding a desperate plea in 1697 by priest Konstantin of Volovo village to remain in the parish 'until my children have grown up, and so that they will not wander from house to house and starve, and so that I can teach them to read and write', the Moscow Metropolitan ordered him to be tonsured immediately in Liutikov monastery, almost certainly because he had served as a judge's private priest without an episcopal permit for the past two years.⁴⁴

The *patrakhil'naia* gave bishops great leverage over their clergy, allowing prelates opportunity to test them, monitor their activities, and weed out trouble-makers. Applicants for *patrakhil'naia* permits had to undergo an examination not unlike that for ordination. Bringing his petition to the episcopal palace, a widower was interrogated about when he was ordained, by whom, how long he had been widowed, how many clergy served at his parish, and whether he had a suitable relative who could be ordained in his place. He had to enumerate precisely who lived in his house and affirm

⁴¹ *LZAK* 14 pp.80,89,113; see also Vologda and Moscow diocesan records cited in this chapter.

⁴² The longest-held *patrakhil'naia* I have come across was issued to a priest from Vorotynskii uezd in Moscow eparchy, who was widowed in 1671 and had his permit renewed until 1681, when the metropolitan ordered him tonsured into a monastery. Two years later he was given permission to serve as a black priest: *SKE* p.78 no.4.

⁴³ *SKE* p.147-8 (1697), 175 (1678), and see below.

⁴⁴ *SKE* p.151 (1697).

that no 'scandalous person' was cohabiting with him.⁴⁵ Church rules prohibited him from keeping any woman in his house other than his mother, sister, aunt or daughter, and required that he refrain from drunkenness and not engage in trade, on pain of being defrocked. He was not allowed to say mass after the expiry of the *patrakhil'naia* without episcopal permission.⁴⁶ Parishioners, like bishops, usually preferred their priest to be chaste, not a drunkard, and diligent in administering the sacraments, hence supporting letters from the parish were considered an important testimonial to a priest's moral character and liturgical standards, albeit that they were not necessarily an accurate test of the cleric's Orthodoxy.⁴⁷ The ultimate test was confession. Before a hieromonk, who represented God himself, the widower was questioned about his intimate sins and exhorted to confess, just as he had been as an ordinand.⁴⁸ Those who passed the test received their *patrakhil'naia* permit,⁴⁹ but each time a cleric applied for a renewal, he had pay a fee to go through the entire ordeal again. The cost of the permit, the expense of travelling to the episcopal palace from a rural parish, and the bureaucratic delays whilst there, were obstacles which discouraged some from applying at all.⁵⁰

The new rulings on widowers did not always bring improvements to the lot of the white clergy. A study of the sources reveals that widowed priests and deacons were frequently beset by the same kind of economic and social problems as widowers had suffered prior to 1667. As a result of competition with other clergy, many widowers faced unemployment and poverty.⁵¹ To regions where priests were scarce, such as Siberia and the Don, the reforms may have brought relief, but in the greater part of

⁴⁵ *PSZ* 1 no.412 p.709; *SKE* pp.46-48,48-50,76,77,87,90,111,123,175-185.

⁴⁶ *PSZ* 1 no.412 p.709; *RIB* 35 no.306 p.532 no.306; *DAI* 11 no.83; *AIu* no.391 II.

⁴⁷ *OSS* Pt.7 p.73, Pt.12 p.82 no.96, Pt.12 p.147 no.155, Pt.9 p.94 no.77; *RIB* 12 no.181 Ust.

⁴⁸ *SKE* p.46,48-50,76,77,87,90,111,123. On confessional questions for ordinands, see *RIB* 6 no.6 p.91 and *Almazov*, 65, Pt.2b, p.2.

⁴⁹ *SKE* pp.48-50 (1679).

⁵⁰ *SKE* pp.46-48, 97,123.

⁵¹ *OSS* Pt.5 p.22 no.38, Pt.10 p.77 no.58, Pt.10 p.160 no.146.

Russia there was no shortage, and in many areas there was already a surplus of clerics. By allowing a large number of widowed clergy to remain serving as parish priests, many of whom would previously have resigned or retired to a monastery, the new ruling aggravated pre-existing tensions among clergy over the division of church land and income. Consequently, disputes and court cases between clergymen escalated dramatically in the last third of the century, and widowers were frequently forced out.⁵² Even among family members there was resentment when widowers blocked their promotion, as in the case of widowed priest Feodor of Belozersk uezd, who in 1699 was squeezed out by his impatient son-in-law, priest Andrei.⁵³ Widowed priests themselves sometimes resented the reform that permitted minor clerics to remarry, whilst they had to stay celibate. One widowed priest dismissed his d'iachok, who was his own brother, because he was angry that the d'iachok had been allowed to remarry.⁵⁴

If the lower clergy had their disappointments, the hierarchy also had belated doubts about the wisdom of the reforms. The 1666-67 Church Council had been optimistic, confidently asserting that it was right to abolish compulsory retirement for all widowers: 'now, by God's grace, among the Russian people there are found [widowed] priests and deacons who have understanding of Holy Scripture, who continue to lead a chaste and upright life.'⁵⁵ But by November 1681, Patriarch Ioakim acknowledged that widowers were proving to be unsatisfactory priests:

'All widowed priests live incorrectly. Some drink to excessive drunkenness. Others keep disgraceful people in their homes [...] and others live at the courts of various ranks of people and they serve in chapels, and from these priests there arises a great deal of disorder, and abuse and dishonour against the clerical rank'.⁵⁶ [...] 'Widowed

⁵² RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.25, 1680; *OSS* Pt.12 pp.114,124, Pt.9 p.146 no.126, Pt.9 p.124 no.102, Pt.9 p.120 no.100, Pt.9, p.150, no.129, Pt.7 p.60; *SKE*, p.148; *VKS*, *Prilozhenie*, 177-178.

⁵³ *OSS* Pt.7 p.123 (1699).

⁵⁴ *OSS* Pt.5 p.60 no.118 (1688).

⁵⁵ *DAI* 5 no.102 p.493.

⁵⁶ Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.338; RGADA f 153 dd.59,61.

priests who fearlessly continue to work as they did before without episcopal blessing and without a permit, serving in the home of any rank of person, are to be sent under strong guard to a monastery and put to work for such disorderliness'.⁵⁷

How valid were the Church's reservations concerning widowers? Of the many hundreds who were granted *patrakhil'naia* permits in the last third of the seventeenth century, most were satisfactory clergymen, as we can tell from the testimonials of their parishioners and from the willingness of bishops to renew permits. On the other hand, a considerable number of widowed clergy were charged with drunkenness, disorderliness, dissension, illegal dealings and general debauchery, although these vices were not uncommon in seventeenth-century Russian society.⁵⁸ Many widowers who were refused a *patrakhil'naia* permit, or failed to apply for one because of the cost, carried on administering the sacraments regardless in parishes and private homes throughout Russia. Some were caught when episcopal officials came through to inspect permits, others were denounced by rival clergymen or parishioners.⁵⁹ Widowed priest Kondratei of Netrubezho, for instance, was ordered into a monastery but secretly remained in the parish, doing services for parishioners. He was eventually denounced by his colleague, priest Iosif, who resented having to share the parish income with him.⁶⁰ Widowers like Kondratei, who were refused a permit and resisted tonsure, became the drop-outs of the clerical estate: unemployed, itinerant, defying authority. No small number ended up as supporters of the Schism because they could not find work within the mainstream of Orthodoxy.⁶¹

⁵⁷ *AI* 5 no.75 p.114 art. 3. On the 1681-82 council see G.Vorobiev, *O moskovskom sobore 1681-1682* (Spb.1885), and N.N.Vinogradskii, *Tserkovnyi sobor v Moskve 1682 g.* (Smolensk, 1899).

⁵⁸ Examples of widowers charged with drunkenness, disorder, or illegal dealings: *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 d.19; *DAI* 7 no.67; *RIB* 14 no.35 Ust.; *RIB* 14 no.135 Khol.; *SKE* p.160; *OSS* Pt.3 p.18, Pt.8 p.63 no.106, Pt.8 p.15, Pt.9 p.2 no.3, Pt.10 p.49, Pt.13 p.10 no.13, Pt.13 p.60; Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, no.49; *MTS* 2 p.214; 'Russian private Law XIV-XVII Centuries', transl. Dewey and Kleimola, no.14; *LZAK* 27 no.492.

⁵⁹ *DAI* 5 no.67 p.339; *AI* 5 no.244 p.451; *OSS* Pt.5 p.22 no.38, Pt.10 p.77 no.58, Pt.10 p.160 no.146; *SKE* pp.147,281.

⁶⁰ *SKE* p.147-8 (1697). A similar case in Vologda is *LZAK* 27 no.560.

⁶¹ *SKE* p.151; *DAI* 12 no.17; *DAI* 5 no.10 p.465; Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia*

A major concern of the Church hierarchy was that if widowed clergy remained in their parishes they would be tempted to immorality or prey to slander. Although at least one parish priest disputed this idea at the beginning of the sixteenth century,⁶² the Moscow Church Council of 1503 judged that it had the right to forcibly retire widowed clergy because so many proved to be unchaste.⁶³ The sinners who were caught, like archpriest Andrei Postnikov of the Kremlin Dormition cathedral, who kept a concubine after his wife's death until convicted on 14 March 1676, seemed to justify this ruling.⁶⁴ A case from Kholmogory at the end of the century illustrates the ease with which a provincial widower could carry on a long-term affair without detection, protected by his family and community. Widowed priest Vasilei Evdokim of Archangel'sk built an extension onto his house to accommodate his son, his daughter-in-law and her mother, Ovdot'itsa, who was Vasilei's lover. The liaison was only exposed when a visiting cleric stayed with the family and reported his suspicions to a relative. Since the kinsman was a hegumen, the matter soon reached the ears of Archbishop Afanasii, as a result of which Vasilei was defrocked and sent to Solovetskii monastery to end his days. His relationship with Ovdot'itsa had been known to parishioners and clergy in the locality for some time, yet no action was taken against him until an outsider reported the matter.⁶⁵

Cases like this confirmed prelate's suspicions against widowed clergymen, but in reality the data we have shows that they were far more likely to be guilty of drunkenness or

gramoty, no.22; RGADA f.210 Mosk.stol. d.641. On widowers who became dissenters see Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.443-46.

⁶² Widowed priest Grigorii Skripitsa complained that the forcible retirement of widowers was unjust and uncanonical: 'Napisanie', *ChOIDR* 1847/8 Bk 6 Pt 4 pp.45-54.

⁶³ Kollman, 'The Stoglav Council', *RH* 7 p.72.

⁶⁴ *MTS* 2 p.108

⁶⁵ *RIB* 14 no.205 Khol. Presumably Vasilei was well-liked in the parish, or he would have been denounced sooner by locals.

brawling than fornication.⁶⁶ It is likely, moreover, that some of the accusations of immorality lodged against widowers were fabricated, for they appear to have been subject to unfair discrimination from the Church and from society. Whilst the incomplete nature of seventeenth-century records precludes any conclusive proof, surviving records suggest that prelates were more likely to convict widowers who were accused of illicit sexual relationships than married clergy accused of the same type of crime. Among documents dating from 1600 to 1699, I have found nine confirmed cases in which widowed clergy were accused of sexual immorality, at least two-thirds of whom were found guilty (the outcome of three cases is unknown).⁶⁷ In contrast, no confirmed convictions of clergy with living wives have come to light for this period, although at least a dozen accusations of incontinence were lodged during this period.⁶⁸ Bishops' mistrust of widowed clergy prompted them to react with inordinate haste to accusations against them. When a young Ustiug woman lodged a charge of attempted rape on 22 July 1698 against her father-in-law, widowed priest Ivan Andreev Shergin, her accusations were immediately investigated by episcopal officers, and her attacker was convicted and incarcerated in Trinity Telegov monastery by the end of that same month, -- an unusually prompt resolution for the episcopal courts.⁶⁹ In 1695 the archbishop of Vologda imprisoned a rural widowed priest for adultery, despite the fact that the charges appear to have been trumped up. In this case, the d'iachok who

⁶⁶ On clerical crime, see footnote 56 above and chapters three and four.

⁶⁷ *MTS* 2 p.108 (1676); *RIB* 14 no.206 Khol.(1699), no.79 Ust.(1698); *OSS* Pt.5 p.22 no.38 (1672), Pt.3 p.35 no.48 (1677), Pt.7 p.119-121 no.4 (1698-9), Pt.8 p.108-9 no.154 (1699), Pt.9 p.146 no.126 (1695); *SIB*, 109 no.17 (1684).

⁶⁸ The following accusations of rape or adultery were lodged against married clergy, but the defendants were either acquitted or the outcome unknown: *RIB* 12 no.245 Ust.; *OSS* Pt.8 p.41, Pt.8 p.65, Pt.10 p.74, Pt.12 pp.65,95, Pt.12 p.55; *SIB* 109 no.1; *RGADA* f.1433 op.1 d.45. The only case I have found of a confirmed conviction of a married priest for fornication was in 1701: *OSS* Pt.8 no.128.

⁶⁹ *RIB* 14 no.79 Ust. Incest was judged by the episcopal courts, but I have found very few cases of women accusing their fathers-in-law of sexual harassment in 17th-century Church records, although harassment may be the cause for daughters-in-law running away (Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, nos.81,83; cf. *OSS* Pt.3 p.45, *RIB* 25 no.174). More complaints of *snokhachestvo* appear in the 19th century: B.Farnsworth, 'The litigious daughter-in-law', *Russian Peasant Women*, p.98.

accused him had previously been evicted by the priest for misconduct and stood to gain substantially from the priest's removal, for, being his brother-in-law, he was next in line to inherit the benefice.⁷⁰ Widowers were easy prey for malicious parishioners, too, who exploited the hierarchy's mistrust. After an unmarried girl in northern Russia became pregnant, her father immediately petitioned the archbishop to blame d'iachok Ivan Danilov, taking pains to point out that the accused was a widower. Although Ivan's supporters wrote to the prelate to inform him that the charges were fraudulent, a warrant was issued for Ivan's arrest.⁷¹ In a similar case in Sutskaa stan in 1677, a nun who gave birth to a child was tied to a sledge and beaten with a lash by landowners and peasants until she named widowed priest Kondratii Feodosiev as the father, -- at their instigation, he claimed.⁷²

Reports of immoral and unorthodox widowers among the white clergy convinced prelates that the monastery was the best place for a wifeless cleric. Archbishop Stefan of Suzdal forced all widowed clergymen in his eparchy to retire to monasteries during the 1650s and 1660s, without exception.⁷³ Stefan's policy was exceptionally severe, but not entirely unique, for bishops elsewhere in Russia frequently exercised their discretionary powers to order widowers into monasteries.⁷⁴ In response to concerns over bad behaviour by widowed clergy, the 1681-82 Moscow Church Council recommended that widowers be allowed only one year in the parish before being tonsured in a monastery,⁷⁵ and numerous documents show that these recommendations were readily followed by bishops during the last two decades of the seventeenth century. Large numbers of widowed priests were retired to monasteries 'by ukaz of his

⁷⁰ *OSS* p.146 no.126. Unfortunately the outcome is unknown.

⁷¹ *OSS* Pt.8 p.108-9 no.154 (1699).

⁷² *OSS* Pt.3 p.35 no.48.

⁷³ Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, Pt.2 pp.46-9.

⁷⁴ *OSS* Pt.11 p.194 no.178, Pt.7 p.38 no.34; *DAI* 2 no.70; RGADA f.1441 op.5 d.90, op.6 d.6,7,29; *LZAK* 27 nos.875,883; Barsov, 'Sudnye protsessy', *ChOIDR* 1882 Bk.3 no.5 (1684).

⁷⁵ Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.338; RGADA f.153 d.59,61.

holiness the Metropolitan'.⁷⁶ Priests who were allowed to remain in their parishes with *patrakhil'naia* permits were subject to stricter limitations.⁷⁷ When a widowed priest in Moscow eparchy appealed in 1697 for a sixth renewal on the grounds of family responsibilities, for instance, the metropolitan allowed him to say the divine liturgy only on the feast of the Annunciation, Palm Sunday, Great Thursday, and Easter, which limited him to a period of no more than two months.⁷⁸ If a clergyman failed to apply for a permit immediately after the death of his wife, he had to account for the delay,⁷⁹ and if he had a son, brother or nephew eligible to be ordained to his place, a widower was less likely to have his permit renewed by his bishop.⁸⁰ Priest Evstafii of Oslopovo village petitioned the Metropolitan in 1693 to ordain his son, but the prelate replied: 'when the *d'iachok's* father priest Evstafii is tonsured as a monk, at that time the *d'iachok* will be ordained a priest.'⁸¹ Knowing their time in the parish could be short, widowers petitioned for their sons or other relatives to be ordained in order to safeguard the benefice for the family.⁸² Recognising the inevitable, one Moscow priest appealed in 1697 for a renewal of his *patrakhil'naia* 'until my daughter is married, and after that I will enter a monastery'.⁸³ Others asked for permission to be tonsured in a particular monastery of their own choice, rather than await the time when they would be ordered into a less favoured one.⁸⁴

⁷⁶ *DAI* 12 no.17 pp.182-3; *SKE* pp.49,58-60,73,78,82,84,94,141, 142,147, 150,151,160,166; *OSS* Pt.5 p.64 no.123, Pt.7 p.97, Pt.9 p.88-89 no.69; *RIB* 25 no.370; *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 dd.5,121,25. Dokuchaev-Barskov, p.18.

⁷⁷ *SKE* p.151; *RIB* 12 no.224 Ust.; *Aiub* 1 no.7 III; *OSS* Pt.7 pp.60-63.

⁷⁸ *SKE* p.90 (1697).

⁷⁹ *SKE* p.46 no.7 (1687), p.97 no.12 (1691), p.123 (1691), p.148 (1697).

⁸⁰ *SKE* p.147-8. Even before 1682, bishops preferred to ordain a relative rather than grant a *patrakhil'naia* permit: *OSS* Pt.7 p.38 no.34, Pt.10 p.183 no.186, Pt.11 p.191 no.172, Pt.11 p.194 no.178.

⁸¹ *SKE* p.90 (1693).

⁸² *OSS* Pt.3 pp.55,89, Pt.8 p.51; *SKE* p.90,128,144-45.

⁸³ *SKE* p.90

⁸⁴ *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 d.20; *OSS* Pt.4 p.56 no.551.

Widowed clergy in the monastery

Under the circumstances it is not surprising to find that the number of widowed clergymen who eventually took the tonsure surpassed the number of those who remained 'in the world' consistently throughout the seventeenth century, according to the evidence of ordination registers and diocesan archives.⁸⁵ As it happened, widowed clergymen often did very well for themselves in monastic life, rising to sacerdotal or skima-monk rank.⁸⁶ Having been tonsured, a widowed priest became an ordinary monk and thus could not serve in a sacerdotal capacity, but if he received a good reference from his confessor after serving a noviciate under a superior (*pod pastvoiu*), he could be promoted from monk to monastic priest (*ieromonakh*).⁸⁷ In similar manner, a widowed deacon could rise to the rank of hierodeacon. Promotion to the rank of hieromonk or hierodeacon needed the permission of the prelate and took place in a ceremony not unlike ordination, after which the priest was issued with a permit called an *inocheskaia gramota*.⁸⁸ Like other permits, the *inocheskaia* had to be shown to episcopal inspectors when they made their periodic inspections.⁸⁹ Monastic priests

⁸⁵ Church records cited in this thesis indicate that the majority of widowed clergymen retired to monasteries. A newly-tonsured person always received a new 'angelic' name which almost invariably began with the same letter of the alphabet as the previous name they had 'in the world': *RIB* 35 no.304; *RIB* 32 nos.310,338; *RIB* 14 no.108 Khol.; *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.131,177,180,190, 191,224,225,284-357. In some cases, white clergy took the tonsure on their deathbed, which was not uncommon even for non-clerical ranks, especially during the plague of 1654: *DAI* 3 no.119 xxviii.

⁸⁶ Widowed clergy promoted to the rank of hieromonk and prior are mentioned in numerous sources, including *SKE*, pp.76-78; 'Khristorozhdestvenskaia tserkov', pp.29-32; *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.1-925; *RIB* 35 no.304, p.529; *RIB* 32 no.310,338; *RIB* 14 no.108 Khol.; *OSS* Pt.10 p.90-97, and many other references in *RIB* Vols.12, 14, 25, *LZAK* Vols.14 and 27, *OSS* pts 1-13. Widowed clerics who progressed to the highly-respected skima rank after thirty years of being a monk are mentioned in *LZAK* 14 p.94 and *OSS* Pt.8 p.15. In the first half of the 17th century widowers could be tonsured at home: Subbotin, *Dokumenty*, 1 p.457; *OSS* Pt.2 p.7 no.210; *DAI* 2 no.70.

⁸⁷ *RIB* 35 nos.304 p.529; *RIB* 32 no.310 p.604; *SKE* p.78 no.4; Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, Prilozhenie no.71; *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, nos.253-279.

⁸⁸ This permit was sometimes called a *blagoslovennaia sviashcheno-inocheskaia gramota*. An *inocheskaia* was the permit to serve as monastic priest and the *blagoslovennaia* permitted the hieromonk to serve in other eparchies.

⁸⁹ *RIB* 32 no.310 p.604; *AI* 5 no.244 p.450 (1695).

were prohibited from serving in parishes, convents or any community in which they would come in contact with women, although occasionally we find exceptions to this rule.⁹⁰ In his memoirs, Paul of Aleppo wrote that a widowed priest had to spend many years as an ordinary monk 'until his thoughts were entirely estranged from worldly things', before receiving permission to serve as a monastic priest, but Patriarch Nikon allowed widowers to say mass in monasteries after a shorter time than previously.⁹¹ Nikon's reform was probably introduced after the plague of 1654 had caused a severe shortage of priests.⁹² Even so, not all pre-Nikonian noviciates lasted 'many years'. Inocheskaia permits dating from the first half of the century which include the dates of ordination to the white and black orders suggest that the length of time a widower had to spend in a monastery before being accepted as a black priest was of no great duration, sometimes only a year or so.⁹³ Permits from later in the century, which give more specific dates, have revealed no noviciate lasting longer than three years, most less than a year.⁹⁴ The previous liturgical experience of widowed clergy was valued in the monastery. When monastic superiors petitioned their prelate for a widowed priest to be granted permission to serve as hieromonk, they always referred to his parish service as an asset, and diocesan records contain more inocheskaia permits issued to tonsured widowed clerics than to monks who were not formerly white priests.⁹⁵ By

⁹⁰ Episcopal permits issued to hieromonks state that they may serve in monasteries, but not in parishes: *RIB* 32 nos.310,338; *RIB* 35 no.304. Council rulings of 1551, 1667 and 1682 likewise forbade hieromonks from serving in parishes: Kollman, 'The Moscow Stoglav', p.401; *PSZ* 1 no.412; *DAI* 5 no.102; *AI* 5 no.75 pp.108-116; *AI* 5 no.244 p.450.

⁹¹ Paul of Aleppo, p.329.

⁹² On the effects of the plague, see *DAI* 3 no.119, *DAI* 4 no.29 and chapter two.

⁹³ Deacon Andrei of Vologda was ordained in 1603-4, widowed and tonsured at Kirillov monastery in 1616-7, and given his inocheskaia in 1617: *RIB* 35 no.275 p.445. Other permits from first half of the 17th century can be found in *RIB* 35 no.18 (1601), no.38 (1605), no.57 (1606), no.87 (1609); Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, prilozhenie no.71 (1642).

⁹⁴ *SKE* p.74 no.9 (1694), p.78 no.4 (1683); *Aiu* no.389 VII (1675); *OSS* Pt.9 p.89 no.69 (1682), Pt.11 p.194 no.177 (1672).

⁹⁵ *SKE* p.74; *OSS* Pt.1 p.32 no.26, Pt.5 p.38; *RIB* 32 nos.310,338; *RIB* 35 no.304. In contrast to applications for ordination to the white priesthood, petitions for monastic orders rarely mention the social origins of ordinands, unless they were formerly white priests. Interrogations in 1674 reveal that Solovetskii hieromonks from non-clerical

giving preference to widowed priests and by allowing them a 'fast-track' noviciate, Church policy actively encouraged widowers to take the tonsure.

Indeed, for many widowed clerics, tonsure was a good career move. The highest rank attainable within the white priesthood was that of archpriest, but within the monastic orders there were opportunities for more exalted promotion. As hieromonks, widowers occupied a respected position in monastery life and were well-placed to be elected to the posts of cellarer or treasurer, where they could wield considerable authority over residents of the monastery and its lands.⁹⁶ An inordinate number of widowed white priests rose in the monastic ranks to become founders and priors of hermitages and monasteries, including two archimandrites of Annunciation Nizhnii Novgorod and one of Iur'ev Novgorod.⁹⁷ Through a monastic career, a widower had access to the highest seats of ecclesiastical authority, from whence he could exert considerable influence on the Russian Church, and through it, the nation. Three Father Superiors of Trinity-St.Sergius, one of Russia's greatest and richest monasteries, began their careers in the white clerical ranks,⁹⁸ one of whom was Dionisii, formerly priest David of Rzhev village until widowed. Dionisii (1570-1633) played a major role in defending the monastery and its thousands of inmates during a siege by the Poles, and, as close

backgrounds included sons of artisans, clerks, strel'tsy and peasants: *AI* 4 no.248.

⁹⁶ On the responsibilities of hieromonks, cellarers and monastic superiors see *OSS* Pt.6; *AAE* 4 nos.162,163,164,311; *AI* 5 nos.65,191,213; *DAI* 1 nos.135,180,181,183, 209,211,212; *DAI* 2 no.64; *AIuB* 3 no.274. For further reading on monasticism see I.Smolitsch, *Russisches Mönchtum 988-1917*, (Amsterdam, 1978); P.Stroev, *Spiski ierakhov i nastoiatelei monastyrei rossiiskiiia tserkvi*, (Spb.1877); V.Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko-topograficheskago izsledovaniia o pravoslavnykh monastyriakh v Rossiiskoi Imperii*, 3 Vols. (Spb.1890-97); L.Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri Rossiiskoi Imperii*, (Spb.1910); *Monastyri v zhizni Rossii*, (Kaluga, 1997).

⁹⁷ *PNG*, pp.228-29; *AI* 4 no.202 p.432-3; Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, no.49 (1694); Dewey and Kleimola, eds. *Russian Private Law*, no.14; *RIB* 5 no.309; *RIB* 14 no.108 Khol.; *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, no.23; Subbotin, *Dokumenty* 1 p.457-8; *SKE* p.150. One of many widowed priests to establish a monastery was hieromonk Iona of Vologda, who founded Dedov hermitage in 1670: *Vologodskie eparkhial'nyiia vedomosti* (1864) no.3, pribavleniia p.107.

⁹⁸ Superiors of Trinity-St.Sergius who were formerly white priests: Fedor of Podsosen'ia village (d.1674), Vasilei Antip'ev of Moscow (widowed in 1700), David of Rzhev village (1570-1633): 'Khristorozhdestvenskaia tserkov', p.29; *MTS* 2 p.119.

advisor to Patriarch Germogen, he was a key figure in upholding national morale during Russia's Time of Troubles.⁹⁹ Widowers who reached the bishropic were able to exert their influence on national affairs too. Archbishop Feodosii of Astrakhan (consecrated in 1602), Archbishop Moisei of Riazan (1638-1651), and Metropolitan Pavel II of Sarskii and Podonskii (1664-1676) were all married priests before widowhood led to their consecration as prelates,¹⁰⁰ and in 1652 a widowed priest was offered the highest position in the Church. Hieromonk Antonii, formerly parish priest Ananii of Nizhnii Novgorod until his wife's death in 1636-37, was offered the Patriarchal dignity, but refused on account of his advanced years.¹⁰¹ The man who did become patriarch, Nikon, was also a former white priest who found that the only route to the top was via the tonsure.¹⁰²

Entry into monastic orders was not free: priests had to pay a donation to a monastery to be tonsured, just like other monks. The usual donation was between five and ten roubles, although often clergymen donated books, icons, plate, livestock, or grain instead. One poor widowed priest in 1693 could only afford to donate hay worth three

⁹⁹ G.Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology*, Pt.1, transl. by R.L.Nichols (Belmont, 1979) p.311. Patriarch Germogen and clerics like Dionisii were crucial to the defence of Muscovy during the period of foreign invasion and internal strife known as Time of Troubles, which lasted from 1598 to 1613 (to 1619 in some regions).

¹⁰⁰ After widowhood, Feodosii was tonsured and made hegumen of Tol'gsk monastery in Rostov eparchy, before being appointed hegumen of Astrakhan Trinity monastery, and later consecrated bishop: Stroev, *Spiski ierarkhov i nastoiatelei monastyrei*, pp.309,415. Archbishop Moisei was formerly archpriest of Moscow Annunciation cathedral, later tonsured in Trinity-Sergius lavra, before his consecration to the bishropic. Pavel II was formerly archpriest Petr of the Church of Purification, 1648-62. He was tonsured in Moscow New Saviour monastery, appointed archimandrite of Chudov from 1659-64, and consecrated Metropolitan on August 22, 1664: 'Saraiskaia i krutitskaia eparkhii', *ChOidr* 1896 Bk.3 p.84.

¹⁰¹ After his wife's death in 1636-37, Ananii had been tonsured in Iungenskii Kozmodemianskii monastery. His son, Metropolitan Ilarion of Suzdal, was also a widower: Arkhimandrit Apollos, *Nachertaniia zhitiia i seianii Nikona, patriarkha Moskovskogo i vseia Rossii* (M.1859) pp.32-34; Potter, 'The Russian Church,' pp.48-49; *Zhitie preosviashchenneshogo Ilariona mitropolita Suzdal'skogo, byvshego Florishchevoi pustyni pervogo stroitelia* (Kazan 1868); N.Kostomarov, *Russkaia istoriia v zhizneopisaniakh eia glavneishikh deiatelei*, (Spb.1886) Vol.2 p.165.

¹⁰² On Nikon, see chapter eight; also Potter, 'The Russian Church', pp.31,53-54.

roubles.¹⁰³ The registers of the Nizhnii Novgorod Pecherskii monastery reveal that priests frequently made donations to a monastery whilst their wives were yet living, or when widowed but still serving in their parish with a *patrakhil'naia* permit, as a sort of pension plan for their eventual tonsure.¹⁰⁴ A wealthy priest like Evfimii Perfirev of Nizhnii Novgorod, who made donations worth over 117 roubles to Pecherskii monastery between 1682 and 1685, was assured of a comfortable retirement according to the monastery registers: 'and for that donation, if God directs him to enter the monastery he will be received, and the archimandrite and cellarer and treasurer and brothers will give him a private cell with living rooms (*pokoiami*), and a double share of monastery food and drink, as much as for two brothers, but his cell-servant (*keleinik*) will get a single portion of food and drink as for one brother...And if he needs to go to town by ukaz of his holiness Metropolitan Filaret of Nizhnii Novgorod and Alaty, or for his cell needs, he is to be given a horse and servant'.¹⁰⁵ By 1689 Evfimii was tonsured, and eventually became archimandrite Epifanii of Pecherskii.

The tonsure did not necessarily mean retirement for widowers. Those who became monastic superiors were able to use their heightened rank and connections to help their sons' careers in the church.¹⁰⁶ Hegumen Iosif of St.Sergius monastery in Liven, formerly an archpriest until widowed, wrote to Metropolitan Tikhon in 1697 asking for the appointment of one of his relatives to the most prestigious clerical position in the

¹⁰³ A.A.Titov, 'Vkladnaia kniga Nizhegorodskago Pecherskago monastyria', *ChOidr* 1898 Bk.1 pp.6-66. Similar examples are in *RIB* 14 no.44 Ust.; *RIB* 37, Boldina Dorogobyzhskii Monastery 1605-7, pp.244-45,260; *OSS* Pt.8 p.29; *AIuB* 2 no.142 p.273.

¹⁰⁴ In such cases the entry usually reads 'and for his donation, he will be tonsured when God so leads him': 'Vkladnaia kniga', *ChOidr* 1898 Bk.1 pp.19, 24,29, 37,42.

¹⁰⁵ 'Vkladnaia kniga', *ChOidr* 1898 Bk.1 pp.59-61. This written agreement with Evfimii was contrary to the decrees of the 1681-82 Church Council, which forbade monastic superiors and guests from having special food in monasteries. However, most Russian monasteries were noncommunal (idiorhythmic) rather than communal (cenobitic), hence the inmates fended for themselves and lived in cells which were considered their own property: see B.Mehan, *Holy Women of Russia*, (Crestwood, 1997) p.10.
(Mehan)

¹⁰⁶ *RIB* 5 no.309; *RIB* 2 no.211; *Dukhovenstvo moskovskoi eparkhii*, no.23.

town.¹⁰⁷ There are cases of widowers ruthlessly promoting family interests, like hieromonk Mardarii of Kichmensk, who took advantage of his good standing with the bishop to have a son appointed to a church position, riding roughshod over the wishes of parishioners to do so.¹⁰⁸ Even worse was widowed priest Kornilii, who, with the help of relatives and friends, was able to occupy the vacant post of hegumen of Chernogorskii monastery in Novgorod eparchy against the wishes of the monks, following which he subdued opposition and rewarded his abettors from monastery funds.¹⁰⁹ The success of widowed clerics who had influential patrons is most clearly illustrated in the careers of Moscow cathedral priests. They had the connections and resources to be able to pay large donations to retire to the best monasteries in Russia. Archpriest Nikita Vasilevich of Annunciation (1635-45) paid the huge sum of a hundred roubles to be tonsured at Trinity-Sergius monastery.¹¹⁰ Others could retire to the monasteries they had built and endowed during their active service at the Kremlin.¹¹¹ After taking the tonsure, Archpriest Aleksandr Alekseev of Saviour cathedral (1645-75) appears to have continued a comfortable existence running his extensive commercial enterprises from Trinity Torzhok monastery, which he had earlier founded with profits from his business.¹¹² Meteoric promotion was possible for ambitious widowed archpriests who had been confessors and advisers to the tsar and his family. Archpriest Maksim of Annunciation cathedral was tonsured in 1635 and consecrated as archbishop only three years later,¹¹³ and Archpriest Petr of Purification

¹⁰⁷ *SKE* p.150.

¹⁰⁸ *RIB* 14 no.77 Ust.(1696).

¹⁰⁹ Dewey and Kleimola, eds. *Russian Private Law*, no.14 (1676); see also Iushkov, *Ocherki*, pp.95-97.

¹¹⁰ *MTS* 2 p.99,221. Also tonsured at Trinity-St.Sergius were archpriests Nikita Vasilevich II and Ivan Lazarev. Archpriest Merkurii Gavrilovich (1685-92) was tonsured as well, but possibly elsewhere. *RIB* 14 no.44; *RIB* 37, Boldina Dorogobyzhskii Monastery 1605-7, pp.245,260; *OSS* Pt.8 p.29.

¹¹¹ Stefan Vonifat'ev founded Marchukovskaia Zosima-Savvatii hermitage in 1653, but died in Iverskii monastery on 11 November 1656: Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, p.33. Stroev, *Spiski ierdkhov i nastoiatelei monastyrei*, p.247; *RIB* 21 p.826.

¹¹² *MTS* 2 p.221; *LZAK* 14 p.37,39,47,52.

¹¹³ Maksim was archpriest from 1618-34; as Archbishop Moisei, he occupied the See

cathedral was tonsured in 1662, promoted to the rank of archimandrite soon afterwards, and consecrated as Metropolitan just four years after being tonsured.¹¹⁴ Vasilei Antip'ev served as priest at the Kremlin Nativity Church from 1693 to 1700, during which he became confessor to Tsarevna Natalia and other members of the royal family. The contacts he made served him well after he was widowed: soon after his tonsure in 1700, he was appointed hegumen of Boris-Gleb monastery in Pereslavl', and later became superior of Trinity-Sergius lavra, ending his days in glory as confessor to Empress Anna and a member of Synod.¹¹⁵

In contrast to the heights reached by Kremlin cathedral widowers, non-tonsured clergymen who chose to stay in their parishes after the death of their wives suffered discrimination, or disgrace if they resigned and remarried. The 1667 Church Council reforms brought high hopes and deep disappointments for the white clergy. Many secular priests were permitted to remain with their families and continue full sacerdotal duties in their churches far longer than they could have previously, but overall, the average widowed cleric who remained in the parish faced hardships and uncertainties. He was dependent on the good-will of his bishop for each annual permit, he was prey to malicious gossip in the parish, and was confronted by antagonism from colleagues. The reforms did little to relieve widowed priests of the suspicions they faced from the Church hierarchy, while significantly compounding the problem of competition over clerical jobs and resources. No satisfactory solution was found for widowers in the parish, thus their plight remained a problem for the Church into the nineteenth century.¹¹⁶ To the very end of the seventeenth century and beyond, the tonsure

of Riazan from January 1638 to 15 February 1651: *MTS* 2 p.98-99.

¹¹⁴ *MTS* 2 p.123; 'Sarskaia i krutitskaia eparkhii', *ChOISR* 1896 Bk.3 p.84.

¹¹⁵ *MTS* 2 p.119.

¹¹⁶ The stigma of being labelled a 'widowed priest' continued well beyond the Muscovite era (*Materialy dlia istorii Vladimirskoi eparkhii*, p.206). The widowed clergy's prospects do not appear to have significantly improved in the following centuries: G.Freeze, 'Revolt from Below', *Orthodoxy Under the Old Regime*, ed. by R.Nicholas and T.Stavrou, p.205.

represented the best career move for widowed clergymen. Church policy actively encouraged them to enter monasteries, and those who did so faced opportunities for privilege and promotion, instead of degradation and demotion. As hieromonks and hegumens, widowed clergy filled responsible jobs in their monasteries; as archimandrites and bishops they governed lands, judged multitudes, and influenced national affairs. One can only agree with the Arkhangel'sk monastic clerics who concluded, when discussing the prospects of a widowed priest, that 'it would not be bad if he were tonsured as a monk'.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ *RIB* 14 no.206 Khol.(1699).

Chapter Eight

The Clergy Family

'A wife is a substantial requisite for the exercise of the priesthood at present in the Russian Church'.

Johannes Korb, 17th century¹

The wife of an ordained clergyman held a mute but pivotal role in the Russian Church: all candidates for the white clerical orders had to find a wife before they could be ordained. A complete study on the clergy must therefore take into account their families, yet very little has been written about the wives of priests or the role they played in their communities. The subject has been ignored by virtually all historians of Church history, despite the fact that references to priests' and deacons' wives, who were called the *popad'ia* and *d'iakonitsa* respectively, appear frequently in ecclesiastical records.² Most of our information on church families comes from the relatively extensive diocesan records of the Moscow and Vologda eparchies, with scattered mentions from Ustiug, Kholmogory, Novgorod, Riazan, and other regions. Unfortunately insufficient data survives from Siberia to illuminate the lives of clergy women on the frontiers, but enough is known from older settlements of Russia to reconstruct a picture of the lives of women and children in a seventeenth-century clerical family and examine their place in Muscovite society.

Clergy Marriage

Just as Orthodox canon law defined who was eligible to be a priest, deacon or d'iachok, so too the canons defined who could be a clergyman's wife.³ A clergy wife had to be of impeccably pure morals.⁴ She had to be a virgin at marriage, never betrothed or married before, nor even to have slept with her own husband before

¹ Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary of Legation*, 2 p.180.

² *Slovar' Russkogo Iazyka XI-XVII vv*, 17 p.77.

³ *RIB* 6 nos.17,29,30,33,34,4041,43,48.

⁴ *RIB* 6 no.90-91; Eve Levin, *Sex and Society*, p.256.

marriage.⁵ 'No priest or deacon, nor any rank of clergy may take in marriage a widow, a divorcee, an immoral woman, or slavewoman, or a woman with a bad reputation, or a twice-married woman or a concubine, and any priest who falls in sin or adultery is to be excommunicated from the church,' Patriarch Ioasaf was told by Constantinople in the 1640s.⁶ Moscow Church Councils debarred from ordination any man whose wife had committed adultery against him,⁷ but in practice it was very hard for a prelate to check the credentials of all ordinands in his eparchy, let alone their wives. Although one seventeenth-century Russian ecclesiastical text required bishops to interrogate both the prospective clergyman and his wife before ordination, this appears to have been a dead letter.⁸ Instead, bishops relied largely on the written testimony that a candidate brought from his confessor and sponsors to verify the suitability of the candidate and spouse.

The prospective bride of a clergyman was not allowed to be related to him by blood, marriage or adoption to the eighth degree, in accordance with the strict Church laws that applied to all Orthodox Slavs.⁹ These rules limited a young man's choice of marriage partner, and one Belozersk priest's son found himself in serious trouble after he was reported to the prelate for marrying a girl who was the sister-in-law of his cousin.¹⁰ Orthodox law also forbade the marriage of a man and woman who were godparents of the same children, for this spiritual bond (*kumovstvo*) was equated with blood kinship. When a priest and his wife in Iarokursk stan were denounced for both standing as godparents at the baptism of three children, they fled without trace rather

⁵ Levin, *Sex and Society*, pp.260-264; S.Smirnov, 'Materialy dlia istorii drevnerusskoi pokaiannoi distsipliny', *ChOISR* 1912 Bk.3, p.86.

⁶ Metropolitan Makarii, *Istoriia Russkoi tserkvi*, XI p.173; Canon XVIII of the 85 Canons, *The Rudder*, p.30.

⁷ *PSZ* 1 no.412, citing rule 50 of the Neo-Caesarian council, 315 AD.

⁸ Levin, *Sex and Society*, p.257. I found no mention in episcopal records of ordinand's wives being tested.

⁹ *The Rudder*, p.30; Levin, *Sex and Society*, p.137.

¹⁰ *OSS* Pt.7 p.67.

than face the episcopal court.¹¹ It is not known whether they were eventually caught, but if so the priest would most probably have been defrocked and the couple would have been forcibly divorced, for they had become related through *kumovstvo*.¹² The Church was strict in enforcing compliance with its marriage laws but attempted to prevent unhappy consequences by restricting the number of godparents allowed at each baptism and by insisting that priests examine marriage candidates carefully, 'so that there may be no just impediment to marital union'.¹³ Few clergymen flouted Church rules on consanguinity in their own marriages, but a considerable number were willing to overlook canon law by performing illegal marriages for parishioners, in some cases due to pressure from bribes or threats.¹⁴

There was general agreement among foreign visitors to Muscovy that Russian priests (whom westerners called 'Popes') looked after their wives well.¹⁵ A Polish diplomat, writing in 1678, noted that when a priest and wife walk out, the wife is always in fine attire and her husband always grants her wishes,¹⁶ and a century earlier Giles Fletcher had noted that clergymen 'make much of their wives'.¹⁷ Samuel Collins summed up the situation aptly when he commented that 'the Pope's priesthood is wrapped up in his Wife's Smock; for when she dies he must officiate no longer, which makes them indulge their wives more than ordinary for their Office sake'.¹⁸ No memoirs have been left by seventeenth-century women for us to know their personal views, but there is

¹¹ *RIB* 12 no.7 Ust.

¹² When two cousins were found to have married in Vologda, the episcopal court ruled that they were to be divorced, and the children from the marriage were handed over to the father. In another Vologda case, the episcopal court refused permission for a *prosfirinitsa* to marry a man to whom she was related by spiritual link: *OSS* Pt.5 p.77 no.156 (1697), Pt.13 p.46 no.53 (1650), Pt.7 p.31 no.25 (1667).

¹³ *OSS* Pt.8, p.34, Pt.12 p.21 no.17, Pt.11 p.168-73; Dokuchaev-Barskov, pp.21-22.

¹⁴ Cases of priests performing illegal marriages can be found in *OSS* Pt.2 p.46, Pt.3 pp.33,60, Pt.5 pp.25,68, Pt.7 pp.67,103,106, Pt.8 p.137, Pt.9 pp.2,63, Pt.11 p.126; Pt.13 p.17.

¹⁵ Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary*, 2 p.180.

¹⁶ Rushchinskii, *Religiozni byt*, pp.116-7.

¹⁷ Giles Fletcher, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, p.87.

¹⁸ Samuel Collins, *The Present State of Russia*, p.5.

evidence that some clergy families enjoyed domestic harmony.¹⁹ One Moscow priest endorsed a practical working relationship between husband and wife, like senior and junior members of a business partnership: 'Every day in the morning, when they have said their prayers, and again in the morning after rising at the bell and attending morning service, the husband and wife should discuss how to assign work to their household.'²⁰ The *vitae* of Archpriest Avvakum and Ivan Neronov depict a successful relationship between husband and wife. These accounts were written to edify; jarring notes of conflict were eliminated, but there is no reason to doubt the details relating to their marriages. Anastasia Markovna features so prominently throughout Avvakum's autobiography that it is clear that she was very important to him. He consults her in major family decisions, she defers to his judgement, and although he admits hitting her on one occasion after a bad day, he apologises to her and does penance afterwards.²¹ Evdokia and Ivan Neronov also had a happy union. They were married in the 1620s and after he was ordained priest they worked together as a team to help the poor and homeless in Nizhnii Novgorod.²² There were inevitably unhappy marriages as well. During an argument with his father-in-law, priest Iakov of Tobol'sk boasted that he would beat his wife to death in 1623,²³ and we know of at least two clergy wives who ran away from their husbands, but documented cases of this kind are very rare.²⁴ Far more common, presumably, were the unrecorded griefs of women married to clergymen who brought the family to destitution through drink or debt, like priest Ivan Kirillov of Ukhtiuzhsk volost, whose livestock and property were confiscated for non-payment of debts in 1697.²⁵ No small number of wives and children accompanied

¹⁹ *The Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.135-181; *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, pp.243-305.

²⁰ Priest Silvestr of Annunciation cathedral wrote sections of the *Domostroi* in the 16th century, copies of which were owned by several 17th-century white priests: *The Domostroi*, pp.45-6,158.

²¹ *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, pp.154,161-2,179.

²² *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, pp.250, 252.

²³ Pokrovskii, *Tobol'skii arkhiereiskii dom*, Pt.4 p.206 no.80.

²⁴ *OSS* Pt.3 p.45 no.66 (1684); *RIB* 25 no.174 p.226 (1640).

²⁵ *OSS* Pt.8 p.103 no.148. Similarly, *RIB* 12 no.287 Ust.

disgraced or defrocked clergymen into exile. For taking part in the 1662 Moscow rising priest Mark of Uglich was exiled to Siberia for life with his wife and children,²⁶ while even more clergy families were exiled or fled as a result of the Schism. Anastasia, Domna, Kaptelina, and Oksiutka are just a few of the wives who, with their small children, followed their menfolk into captivity in distant Baikal, Mezen, Pustozersk and Nerchinsk respectively.²⁷ Even so, I found no petitions to the prelate against cruel husbands in holy orders apart from the Tobol'sk priest cited above, whereas complaints against laymen who beat their wives are plentiful.²⁸ Similarly, there are no cases of clergymen murdering their spouses, or *vice versa*, although conjugal murders were not rare amongst the laity.²⁹

Canon law penetrated the family life of Russians to a greater degree than experienced by the English clergy of the same period. Sexual intercourse was forbidden on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, fasts and festivals, and in addition clergy couples had to abstain on any days preceding celebration of the liturgy.³⁰ A clergyman had to bathe after conjugal relations with his wife, and was not even allowed to share a bed with her during the forty days of Lent and others fasts.³¹ 'No-one, priest or laymen, may copulate with his wife during a fast', wrote Olearius, 'on pain of fines, but

²⁶ *Vosstanie 1662 g. v Moskve*, nos.250-55. It was the usual policy of the Muscovite government to send wives and children with men exiled to Siberia: eg. S.A.Belokurov, *Iz dukhovnoi zhizni moskovskago obshchestva XVII v.* pp.39-43.

²⁷ Subbotin, *Dokumenty*, 1 pp.367-70,435-36; *AluB* 3 no.326; *RIB* 23 pp.244,1232.

²⁸ Cases of wife-beating by laymen: *RIB* 2 nos. 206, 237; *LZAK* 27 nos.564, 579, 668; *OSS* Pt.7 pp.85,159, Pt.9 pp.1,95, Pt.11 p.31; RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.62; N.Pushkareva, *Women in Russian History*, transl. and ed. E.Levin (NY.1997) p.102; Levin, *Sex and Society*, pp.237-43. Female relatives of clergy who were married to peasants or townsmen occasionally suffered cruelty: eg. *OSS* Pt.9 p.95 no.79, Pt.11 p.143 no.134.

²⁹ Non-clerical conjugal murders are mentioned in *AMG* 1 no.49.(1614); *PSZ* 1 no.355; 'Pechalovanie dukhovenstva za opal'nykh', *ChOidr* 1876 Bk.1 p.261; Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary*, 1 pp.214-15.

³⁰ Smirnov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, p.241, Prilozhenie p.43, nos.10-11; *Domostroi*, p.111; Levin, *Sex and Society*, p.250; *RIB* 6 nos.31,45; Smirnov, 'Materialy', *ChOidr* 1912 Bk.3 p.137; Olearius, *Travels*, pp.250-1,298.

³¹ Levin, *Sex and Society*, pp.150-1; Smirnov, *Materialy*, pp.94,103,106,137; Almazov, 65 pp.181,184-5.

neither men nor wives give one another away.³² Nonetheless, the sacrament of confession could catch sinners out. Specific questions for priests in the penitentiaries asked: 'Were you with your wife on Saturday or Sunday or holy day or in Lent at Holy Week?' and 'Having been with your wife, did you not serve liturgy unwashed in an unclean garment?'³³ Confession was taken very seriously by Orthodox Russians: fear of divine fury may have outweighed fear of episcopal wrath in the mind of the average cleric, who risked hefty fines or dismissal for a breach of the rules.³⁴

A priest was not permitted to say the usual purification prayers over his own wife after childbirth unless no other priest could be found.³⁵ Neither could he confess his wife or give her communion unless she was in danger of dying, but if she recovered, they were required to divorce.³⁶ The reasoning behind this ruling was that by hearing his wife's confession and administering communion, a priest would become the spiritual father of his wife, and she would become his spiritual daughter, thereby making the marriage incestuous under Orthodox law.³⁷ These laws appear to have been observed with diligence, even after the 1666-67 Church Council relaxed the rules somewhat. If a priest's wife fell ill, her husband would usually summon a colleague to say the last rites,³⁸ but in one recorded case in 1688 a Don priest said the last rites for his own wife, who later recovered. By hearing her confession, the priest had invalidated their marriage and was accused by a colleague of being in an illegal union.³⁹

³² Olearius, *Travels*, pp.172, 271.

³³ Almazov, 65 Pt.2B p.184.

³⁴ In theory, the Orthodox Church was very positive about conjugal relations within marriage. Canon 51 of the 85 Canons forbade anyone to despise a married priest or refuse to take communion from him: *The Rudder*, p.91.

³⁵ Herberstein, *Notes Upon Russia*, pp.70-2; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.160.

³⁶ S.Smironov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, pp.35-6.

³⁷ *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.160. These rules still concerned clergymen in the late 19th century: *Tobol'skie eparkhialnyia vedomosti*, 1882, no.1-24 p.378.

³⁸ *PDR* 22 p.320.

³⁹ *DAI* 12 no.17.

Orthodox Canons made provision for marital breakdown by dictating that a priest's wife was allowed to divorce an unfaithful husband, but if he repented and returned to her, she was to remain with him.⁴⁰ Divorce was rarely sought by clergy wives who, in common with most Muscovite women of this period, needed the material security of marriage,⁴¹ and neither was it in the interests of a priest to stray from his wife, because if found guilty he was liable to be defrocked or sent to a monastery for correction.⁴² The sacrament of confession and fear of detection played a part in keeping married clergymen faithful to their marital vows. Priests, who had to face such questions in confession as 'did you seduce a maiden or a widow' and 'did you think sinfully about a spiritual daughter?' were more likely than laymen to regulate their lives by self-assessment and penance.⁴³ When Avvakum had sinful thoughts about a young woman, he held his hand in the flame of three candles 'until the lust was extinguished',⁴⁴ and priest Samoil of Cherkask imposed on himself a penance of three days in church praying with 2000 prostrations after committing a sin.⁴⁵ In these circumstances, it is no wonder that few married priests were convicted of adultery by episcopal courts, although several were acquitted of slanderous charges.⁴⁶

A priest could divorce his wife if she was caught in the act of adultery, but not if he only suspected her infidelity. Once divorced, he was required to give up his living and enter a monastery.⁴⁷ A perusal of thousands of Church records has revealed only three cases of clergy wives accused of adultery: one was a false charge against a priest's wife

⁴⁰ 'Nomokanon Ioanna Postnika', *ChO IDR* 1903 Bk.2 pp.52-54; Levin, *Sex and Society*, p.264.

⁴¹ Pushkareva, *Women in Russian History*, p.102.

⁴² Levin, *Sex and Society*, p.254-260. See chapter seven for a further discussion on cases of clerical sexual immorality.

⁴³ Almazov, 65 Pt.2B pp.182-83; *OSS* Pt.7 p.115 (1697) .

⁴⁴ *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.138.

⁴⁵ *DAI* 12 no.17 (1688).

⁴⁶ RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.45; *SIB* 109 no.1; *OSS* Pt.12 p.55, Pt.12 p.95 no.105, Pt.10 p.74 no.51. As noted in chapter seven, widowed priests were more likely to be found guilty of incontinence.

⁴⁷ 'Nomokanon Ioanna Postnika', *ChO IDR* 1903 Bk.2 pp.52-54; Levin, *Sex and Society*, pp.260-264.

that was settled out of court,⁴⁸ another was a conviction of a d'iachok's wife in the late 1650's, as a result of which she was tonsured and confined in a convent,⁴⁹ and the third was an accusation against a clergy widow, but the outcome is unknown.⁵⁰ One can only conclude that clergy wives were very faithful, or indiscretions were carefully concealed, for priests had as much to lose as their wives from an accusation. Church authorities were assiduous in investigating suspected cases of sexual misdemeanour by clergymen or their families, as can be seen from a court case between two priests' wives in Shepukhotsk volost. Efrositsa Luk'ianova complained to the bishop in 1699 that Evdokia Prokop'eva was spreading false rumours accusing her of having an affair with Evdokia's husband. Both women were married to priests who served at the same church and the charge appears to have been groundless, stemming merely from enmity between the two families. Efrositsa was aware of the serious consequences which could befall her family from the accusation, and therefore acted quickly to counter it by writing to inform the prelate that she had been wrongfully slandered and asking him to send an investigator to question all parishioners, 'except that priest's family and kin'. The archbishop's office immediately set in motion an inquiry, but the charges were withdrawn and the women settled out of court.⁵¹ Another priest's wife to suffer slander was Evdokia Neronova, whose husband Ivan was questioned about the moral conduct of his wife during his trial in 1666, in what appears to be an attempt to discredit the family and facilitate his removal.⁵² Daughters of clergymen were likewise liable to prompt episcopal attention if accused of sexual misconduct. In 1699 Grunka Titova, the daughter of a priest of Demerlino village, was accused of poisoning her husband (a priest's son) and living licentiously with 'many men', by whom she allegedly conceived illegitimate children. These charges appear to have been quite unsubstantiated, but the episcopal investigator was dispatched to bring her in for questioning.⁵³ Despite the fact

⁴⁸ *OSS* Pt.10 p.161 no.149.

⁴⁹ *RIB* 21 p.524.

⁵⁰ *SIB* 109 no.17.

⁵¹ *OSS* Pt.10 p.161 no.149.

⁵² Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.90.

⁵³ *OSS* Pt.8 p.112-115 no.156.

that these women were accused on very weak grounds, the charges were taken seriously by the Church.⁵⁴

In order to remain secure in their benefices most parish priests took care of their wives, but there were some who voluntarily rid themselves of their spouses with a view to advancing to higher ecclesiastical ranks through black monastic orders. The Church recognised the fact that there were ambitious clerics who might have their wives forcibly tonsured, and issued frequent prohibitions against such abuse, echoing the early Orthodox canons: 'no bishop,⁵⁵ priest or deacon shall put away his own wife under pretext of reverence. If he puts her away, let him be excommunicated.'⁵⁶ Even so, foreign visitors commented on the numerous convents in Muscovy, observing that most nuns were widows and even more were rejected wives.⁵⁷ Although I have found no record of priests' wives being tonsured against their wishes, there is evidence that some were persuaded to end the marriage, thereby freeing their husbands to follow a monastic career. Archimandrite Iosif of the New Saviour monastery had a living wife in 1644, from whom he had evidently separated by choice,⁵⁸ and Patriarch Nikon put away his wife in order to further his prospects for promotion. Nikon began his clerical career as a married parish priest, but after ten years he decided to enter a monastery and induced his wife to enter a convent, but when he later heard that she had decided to remarry instead, Nikon sent his kinsmen to dissuade her. We do not know what methods of persuasion were employed, but it was imperative to Nikon that she be stopped, since her remarriage would have debarred him from advancing on his monastic path to power.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Charges against clergymen were also promptly investigated.

⁵⁵ In the early centuries of Christendom, bishops of the Eastern Church were allowed to have wives.

⁵⁶ Canon 5 of the 85 canons: *The Rudder*, p.7.

⁵⁷ Rushchinskii, *Religioznyi byt*, p.124, citing Mayerburg and Tanner.

⁵⁸ *RIB* 2 no.211.

⁵⁹ 'Ob odnom iz spisok zhitia patriarkha Nikona', *ChOIDR* 1909 Bk.3 Smes', no.5 p.17; *Izvestie o rozhdenii i vospitanii i o zhitii sviateishego Nikona, patriarkha Moskovskago i vseia Rossii, napisannoe klirikom ego Ioannom Shusherinym*, pp.5-7.

Responsibilities of clergy wives

Parish responsibilities appear to have been minimal for wives of Muscovite priests. Women were not expected to attend church every week⁶⁰ and there was no liturgical role they could hold, for the office of deaconess had fallen into disuse in the Orthodox Church by the eleventh century and the office of *prosfirnitsa* was open only to widows.⁶¹ On the other hand, priests' wives were expected to set an example of godliness by observing the four major Orthodox fasts, by confessing and receiving holy communion at least once a year at Lent,⁶² and they are known to have undertaken pilgrimages and visited monasteries for confession or to pray for healing. The wife and children of priest Gerasim of Kargopol travelled to Khergozersk monastery during the 1630s to celebrate St. Makarii's day, and a clergy wife from another parish who came to pray for healing before St. Makarii's icon is listed in the miracle register.⁶³ Willingly or otherwise, clergy womenfolk had a role to play in providing for the female paupers, pilgrims, orphans and fugitives who came to their homes for help. Among those we know of are the wife of priest Nikifor of Moshka village near Riazan, who sheltered a destitute orphan girl from Galich in the 1670s for seven years,⁶⁴ and Evdokia, the wife of priest Ivan Neronov, who was deeply involved in charity work in Nizhnii Novgorod during the first half of the century. Her husband's biography records that she fed and sheltered numerous homeless persons, 'having maidens and women in her house apart,

Crull erroneously believed that a monk could be priested even if his wife remarried: *The Present and Ancient State of Russia*, (London, 1698) p.161.

⁶⁰ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.130; Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, p.190, no.156. Women were forbidden from entering a church during menstruation and for a long period after childbirth: Smirnov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, Ch.4, Prilozhenie, p.119; Smirnov, *Materialy*, p.119; *Domostroi*, p.86; Herberstein, *Notes Upon Russia*, p.94.

⁶¹ On the office of deaconess, see T.Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp.292-93. *Prosfirnitsy* are discussed below.

⁶² *RIB* 14 no.194 Khol.; Almazov, 65 Pt.2B p.246.

⁶³ 'Skazanie o chudesakh', *ChOidr* 1902 Bk.3 'Smes' no.1 pp.13,30. Other examples are in *DAI* 11 no.42; *OSS* Pt.8 p.137 no.171; Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, p.109.

⁶⁴ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, nos.181,186. Other cases are in *OSS* Pt.3 p.3 no.1, Pt.11 p.139 no.129, Pt.9 p.146 no.126; *RIB* 12 no.245 Ust., p.1150-1; *RIB* 38 pp.446,484,465; RGADA f.1433 op.1 dd.27,28.

and giving them food and clothes generously'.⁶⁵ A century earlier, the unnamed wife of priest Silvestr helped the poor in Novgorod and Moscow, where, her husband writes, she 'educated many poor abandoned maidens and widows, instructing them well. She taught them needlework and every domestic skill and having dowered them, arranged marriages for them'.⁶⁶ For the most part, however, the valuable work rendered by churchwomen among Russia's poor during the pre-Petrine era has largely passed unnoticed in history, despite the fact that their contribution was an intrinsic component of the welfare system upon which the Muscovite State relied.⁶⁷

Within their own families, clergy wives were indispensable. Like most Muscovite households, clergy families kept livestock and grew rye, turnips, cabbages, onions and other staples, even in urban parishes, and the tasks involved in the growing, buying, preparing and preserving of food occupied a large portion of a married woman's time.⁶⁸ Many clergy families had servants, some had slaves, and it was the duty of the mistress of the house to assign them work and food.⁶⁹ According to priest Silvestr's sixteenth-century rules, the ideal wife 'should fear God and know good manners, crafts, needlework, domestic management, and organisation. She should know how to bake, cook, manage her household, and perform all tasks appropriate to a woman'.⁷⁰ Some priests' wives supplemented the family income through minor commercial enterprises, like Ksenia of Luzhenskaia volost', who appears in Ustiug episcopal records in 1682 as a seller of seed.⁷¹ There is evidence that a priest's wife could buy and sell property in her own right in the sixteenth century, but to my knowledge no similar cases from the

⁶⁵ *Zhitie Grigoriia Neronova*, pp.259-60.

⁶⁶ Priest Silvestr served at Annunciation cathedral in Moscow from 1545 to 1556. *Domostroi*, pp.184-5.

⁶⁷ On the role of the parish church in providing charity see chapter four.

⁶⁸ References to the domestic economy of clergy families are found in diocesan records and in *RIB* 25 no.220; Guy Meige, *A relation of three embassies*, pp.49-50,73,89; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.155; 'Skazanie o chudesakh', *ChOIDR* 1902 Bk.3 Smes', no.1 p.25; *Domostroi*, p.138,139,156,157,161,175,196,199.

⁶⁹ On clerical ownership of servants and slaves see chapter three of this thesis.

⁷⁰ *Domostroi*, pp.181-2.

⁷¹ *RIB* 14 no.60 (Ust.).

seventeenth century have come to light.⁷² Very few Muscovite women received a formal education, but theoretically it is possible that some priests' wives who were from clergy families themselves had learned to read or write and could help their own children to learn. Nonetheless, I have found no examples of Muscovite clergy women who could sign their own names: extant petitions are always signed on their behalf by a male relative or confessor.⁷³ This apparently high incidence of female illiteracy is not surprising, considering the low literacy levels among the male Muscovite population, but contrasts sharply with the situation in seventeenth-century England, where many women from clergy families could read and write eloquently.⁷⁴

The typical Muscovite home included members of the extended family. Elder sons who inherited their fathers' livings very often divided their share of church land with brothers, uncles and nephews, as a result of which an assortment of relatives could be living together in the same family home.⁷⁵ As in other households of the time, it was usual for clergy sons and their brides to live in the paternal home, but clergy families differed from the norm by the frequency with which husbands of clergy daughters came

⁷² S.Levy cites an interesting 16th century case in which a priest's wife bought land in her own right from her brother, while her husband was still alive: 'Women and the Control of Property in Sixteenth-Century Muscovy,' *RH* 10 pp.205-07. On women's property rights in eighteenth-century Russia, see M.Lamarche Marrese, 'The Enigma of Married Women's Control of Property in Eighteenth-Century Russia', *The Russian Review* 58 July, 1999, pp.380-95.

⁷³ For a further discussion on literacy levels in Muscovy see chapter one. Women's education in pre-Petrine Russia is discussed by L.Hughes in *Sophia: Regent of Russia*, (New Haven, 1990) pp.32-35 and by S.MacNally, 'From Private Person to Public Prisoner: The Changing Place of Women in Medieval Russia', Unpubl.PhD thesis (State University of New York, 1976) p.150. A detailed study on Muscovite women has recently been published by Nada Boskovska, *Die russische Frau im 17. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, 1998), but I have not been able to locate a copy of this book to date.

⁷⁴ By the 18th century, women's signatures begin to appear in records, and some were even book-copyers: *Opisanie rukopisei i knig, sobrannykh dlia imperatorskoi akademii nauk v Olonetskom krae*. ed. V.I.Sreznevskii (Spb 1913), p.314. On literacy among Englishwomen, see P.Crawford, *Women and Religion in England 1500-1720* (London, 1993), and M.Prior, ed. *Women in English Society 1500-1800* (London, 1985).

⁷⁵ *SKE* pp.270-01; *OSS* Pt.8 p.77 no.122, Pt.9 p.82 no.60.

to live in the wife's parental home when a son-in-law was invited to work with his father-in-law.⁷⁶ This was a common practice when there were no sons in the family, but evidently could cause problems. Indeed, the most frequent family disputes to come to the notice of the episcopal courts were those between priests and their sons-in-law, usually over dowries and division of income. Typical is the quarrel that flared up in Komel'sk volost' in 1688 between d'iachok Ivan Kirilov and deacon Iakov. Iakov had promised to teach Ivan's children and help with parish secretarial work, and in return Ivan would give him his daughter in marriage, a dowry of clothes worth ten roubles, and would share his house and church income equally with Iakov. After several years the relationship went sour, and deacon Iakov accused his father-in-law of not paying what was promised, whilst Ivan accused his son-in-law of not fulfilling his teaching contract and trying to squeeze him out of his job. The greatest sufferer in this type of argument was the unfortunate woman who was daughter of one combatant and wife of the other.⁷⁷ Quarrels like these were just as common two centuries later, when one priest condemned the practice of inviting sons-in-law to live in the clergy home as 'an evil that should have been brought to the government's attention long ago'.⁷⁸ In addition to the problems that could arise between a clergy daughter's father and husband, there were potential tensions in the family home when the father died, for a son-in-law who inherited a priest's benefice also inherited family dependants. In 1698 a Belozersk priest petitioned against his widowed sister-in-law Matrena, whom he had 'inherited' when his father-in-law died a year previously. Matrena and her friend Ul'iana, who had moved in without his permission, secretly drank vodka and entertained strangers, he claimed, 'and they say all kinds of rude things to me and my wife and now

⁷⁶ OSS Pt.8 pp.38,51, Pt.10 pp.124,182, Pt.12 p.239. Occasionally sons-in-law were invited by peasant widows to live in their households in 19th-century Russia in order to protect the family's property, but this appears to have occurred less often than in clergy families: R.Bohac, 'Widows and the Russian serf community', *Russia's Women* ed. by B.Clements, B.Engel, and C.Worobec (Oxford, 1991) pp.102,106-7; B.Farnsworth, 'The litigious daughter-in-law', *Russian Peasant Women* (Oxford, 1992) p.96-97.

⁷⁷ OSS Pt.10 p.124. Other in-law disputes are in RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.8; OSS Pt.5 p.24 no.43, Pt.7 p.123, Pt.10 p.182 no.183; *SKE* p.108; *MTS* 2 p.215.

⁷⁸ Belliutsin, pp.111,115.

I've had to barricade myself in the entrance hall in great discomfort to avoid their attacks and insults.⁷⁹

How did Muscovite society perceive clergy families? In the late sixteenth century Giles Fletcher wrote that Russian priests' wives were 'accounted as the matrones, and of best reputation among the women of the parish,⁸⁰ and a century later Samuel Collins observed that their apparel was 'distinguished from others by a flap on each side of the breast'.⁸¹ Needless to say, Fletcher and Collins were describing the spouses of Moscow priests, rather than those in the provinces, and probably never actually met any clergy wives, in any case. Their opinions may have been accurate with regard to the wives of Kremlin cathedral priests, who mixed in the highest society and received rich gifts from the royal family.⁸² The wife of royal confessor Merkurii Gavrillov was accorded honour and given protection by the Metropolitan of Novgorod when she travelled to Moscow in 1684, and the burial of archpriest Andrei Postnikov's wife Iulian'ia in March 1670 was a high profile affair attended by Patriarch Ioakim and prelates of the Church.⁸³ It is hard to find evidence of such distinction for ordinary clergy families, though, who occasionally suffered outright disrespect. The wives, children, widows, sisters and mothers of clergymen serving at St.Nicholas church in the Kitai Gorod quarter of Moscow were publicly lashed in the streets for heating their ovens in 1675, according to a petition to the Crown from their menfolk.⁸⁴

In the provinces, there is even less evidence that clergy wives were treated any better than wives of the laity. On the contrary, prelates received numerous petitions from

⁷⁹ *OSS* Pt.10 pp.162-3 no.150.

⁸⁰ Fletcher, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, p.87.

⁸¹ Collins, *The Present State of Russia*, p.5. As far as I can tell, there are no contemporary illustrations of clergy wives to substantiate Collins' descriptions of their distinguished apparel.

⁸² *MTS* 2 pp.144-52.

⁸³ *RIB* 5 no.346; *MTS* 2 pp.104-5.

⁸⁴ *OpMAMTu* 16 no.674 iv.

offended priests whose wives had been treated disrespectfully by parishioners.⁸⁵ Among these complaints we find cases of clergy women suffering revenge attacks by parishioners who had a grudge against the parish priest. The wife of a priest of Arzamassk uezd was viciously beaten up by malicious parishioners in 1688,⁸⁶ and several years later popad'ia Marva Prokof'eva of Ustiug eparchy was assaulted and robbed at the instigation of a landowner because her husband had refused to conduct the marriage of the man's peasant without a permit.⁸⁷ Priests' children, too, could be victimised by their fathers' adversaries. A peasant in Shevdenitsk volost' in northern Russia threatened to murder the parish priest's children after quarrelling with their father,⁸⁸ and it was quite normal for a clergyman's creditor or plaintiff to instruct bailiffs to target the family. The Patrikeev family of Vologda, for example, specifically requested the archbishop in 1684 to send his officers to arrest two d'iachki, 'and 'if they are not at home, lord, then order them to arrest their wives instead."⁸⁹ In the Tomsk riot of 1648 priest Sidor's wife and daughter were assaulted by rebels who believed that Sidor had informed on them.⁹⁰ Wives and daughters were most at risk because a woman's honour was a relatively easy target, yet one which offered greatest offence. The entire family of priest Vasilei Iakovlev of Belozersk suffered public humiliation when an old nun deliberately knocked his wife's hat off her head after a Sunday service in 1689, for it was an action deemed a great insult by Muscovite society.⁹¹ Likewise

⁸⁵ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.130; *OSS* Pt.11 p.81 no.66, Pt.12 p.33 no.35; *ChOidr* 1883 Bk 1 *Smes'*, p.23; *OpMAMTu* 16 no.651 (169-171); *AIuB* 2 no.129 iv.

⁸⁶ *PDR* 22 p.320.

⁸⁷ *OSS* Pt.8 p.137 no.171.

⁸⁸ *RIB* 14:211 Khol.; *RIB* 25 nos.148, 220.

⁸⁹ *OSS* Pt.10 p.90-3. Other cases like this are *OSS* Pt.8 p.101 no.144, Pt.10 pp.86,158, Pt.11 p.125 no.113, Pt.13 p.63 no.75; *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 d.57 (1687). Clergy families were not unique in being targeted by bailiffs: in 1666 the government ordered that wives and children of conscripted Vologda bricklayers were to be imprisoned if their menfolk could not be found. *AI* 4 no.186.

⁹⁰ 'K istorii Tomskago bunta 1648 goda', *ChOidr* 1903 Bk.3 'Smes', v.206 p.30; *RIB* 25 no.220.

⁹¹ *OSS* Pt.3, p.54. no.92; On womens' honour, see McNally, 'From Public Person to Private Prisoner', p.111, and N.Shields Kollman, 'Women's Honour in Early Modern Russia', *Russia's Women*, p.62.

Gavriil Beliaev's abduction and rape of Ksenitsa, the daughter of deacon Ivan of Vasilevsk, on a winter evening in January 1682 was an offence aimed directly at her father, against whom he held a grudge.⁹²

If the families of village clerics were shown no special respect, this was to large measure a reflection of the lowly status afforded the lower clergy.⁹³ Moreover, the majority of priests married women who, like themselves, were of humble birth, daughters of clergymen, tradesmen, or peasants, although one Cherkask priest stated with pride that his wife was the granddaughter of a minor noble (*syn boyarskii*).⁹⁴ Some were former serfs or slaves.⁹⁵ Not surprisingly therefore, they could be imbued with the same rough country manners as their peasant parishioners. They were frequently involved in the sordid disputes and punch-ups that arose in Muscovite parishes, and a number of complaints were lodged against hard-drinking, swearing, fist-swinging clergy wives, like Luker'ia, the wife of priest Ierofei of Kubensk pogost in Vologda eparchy, who was charged with beating up and seriously injuring a visitor in 1690.⁹⁶ Such behaviour did little to enhance their prestige but, whilst such examples of clerical depravity are not rare, they must be balanced by the fact that the majority of clergy wives and children do not appear in the records, presumably because they lived quietly and diligently, without cause for complaint. One priest's daughter was even canonised by her community on account of her saintly life.⁹⁷ It may be that the typical clergy wife is portrayed in the popular seventeenth-century tale of Priest Sava, in which the priest's wife is prudent and conscientious, the archetypal 'Wise Wife'.⁹⁸

⁹² *OSS* Pt.5 p.49 no.91.

⁹³ See chapter four.

⁹⁴ *DAI* 12 no.17; *OSS* Pt.5 p.77 no.156; *SKE* pp.64,156; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.137.

⁹⁵ *PSZ* 1 no.412 pp.704-5.

⁹⁶ *OSS* Pt.8 p.58 no.92. Other cases involving clergy wives are RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.42,76; *OSS* Pt.4 pp.32,48, Pt.12 p.187; *RIB* 12 nos.219,287 Ust.

⁹⁷ St.Efrosina of Shuia, born during the first half of the 17th century, was the daughter of priest Grigorii of Kitovo: 'Nekanonizovannye sviatye goroda Shui', *ChOIDR* 1893 Bk.2 p.19.

⁹⁸ 'Skazanie o pope Save', *Russkaia demokraticheskaia satira XVII veka*, ed. by

Clerical Widows

Upon the death of her husband, a priest's wife assumed additional family responsibilities. She sometimes remained in possession of her deceased husband's clerical charters, registers and other church property,⁹⁹ and was obliged to provide for her family. Widows frequently took an active role in securing church jobs for their sons by obtaining lay support and petitioning the prelate.¹⁰⁰ In most cases her appeal was given the congregation's backing; numerous petitions from parishioners and patrons have survived in diocesan archives asking for the appointment of their deceased priest's son so that he can support his widowed mother and orphaned siblings.¹⁰¹ After the death of priest Trofim of Resurrection convent in 1687, for instance, his widow petitioned the prelate to ordain her son to his father's place, adding that the patron and nuns approved the appointment of Aleksei, 'so that he can provide for me'.¹⁰² When a deceased clergyman's sons were not old enough to be ordained, his widow sometimes came to an agreement with the parish to retain a portion of church land, and many parishes were willing to reserve the benefice for a minor son.¹⁰³ In 1639 the townspeople of Orel allowed widowed popad'ia Annitsa to own church land that had been in the possession of her husband,¹⁰⁴ and in 1636 Agripina Panfilova maintained

V.A. Adrianova-Perets, p.56. The priest's wife in this tale shows similar qualities to the 'Wise Wife' motif in other contemporary Russian tales.

⁹⁹ *RIB* 14 no.28 Ust; *SKE* pp.166-68; *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 d.57.

¹⁰⁰ *OSS* Pt.3 pp.56,90, Pt.5 p.64, Pt.8 p.77 no.122, Pt.9 p.60, Pt.10 p.48 no.26, Pt.12 p.160 no.169; *SKE* p.58.

¹⁰¹ For example, *OSS* Pt.3 p.56, Pt.5 p.64, Pt.8 p.77; *RIB* 12 nos.92,106,107,255; *RIB* 14 nos.65,157,174,206,255.

¹⁰² *OSS* Pt.7 pp.81-82.

¹⁰³ Examples of contracts are in *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 d.65 (1688); *SKE* p.197 no.5 (1683), p.202 no.5 (1684). Non-clerical Muscovite widows could have the use of their husband's land during their life-time or until remarriage, if stipulated in his will: see S.Levy, 'Women and the control of property in sixteenth-century Muscovy', *Russian History* 10 p.206. Peasant widows in 19th-century Russia could come to agreements with the village council (*mir*), whereby they were allotted a share of their deceased husband's property to maintain themselves and their children, or served as trustees for their small sons property: R.Bohac, 'Widows and the Russian serf community', *Russia's Women*, p.101; B.Farnsworth, 'The litigious daughter-in-law', *Russian Peasant Women*, pp.95-96.

¹⁰⁴ *AMG* 2 no.182 (1639).

rights after her husband's death to a charter granting judicial immunity to the Tolshemsk clergy. Agripina's possession of this charter appears to have been a guarantee that secured the living for her young sons.¹⁰⁵ Occasionally, however, parishes made their promises of the benefice and the use of church land conditional upon the widow hiring an itinerant priest until her son could be ordained. When widowed popad'ia Anna of Rubezhsk volost' defaulted on such an agreement by failing to hire a clergyman in 1672, the parish elected another man as priest, as a result of which Anna and her sons lost their rights to the church land and to the living.¹⁰⁶

It was not uncommon for a clergy widow to make a maintenance agreement directly with her husband's colleagues or successor, rather than with the parish. In a document dated 13 September 1628, the clergy of Ustiug Dormition Cathedral agreed to pay a pension to the widow of deceased Protodeacon Nestor, consisting of 'rye, oats, barley-corn, wheat, peas, flax, and hemp' from her deceased husband's holdings in three hamlets, as well as rye seed from cathedral supplies.¹⁰⁷ More common are contracts made with the new priest stipulating that the widow is to retain a share of church land with guaranteed security of tenure, recorded either in a written document or by verbal agreement witnessed by parishioners.¹⁰⁸ Many clergy widows appear to have lived quite comfortably on their pension or plot,¹⁰⁹ but a considerable number needed to supplement their income by taking in lodgers, or letting out huts in their yard. One widowed popad'ia was landlady to three civil servants, a cavalryman, an itinerant priest;

¹⁰⁵ *RIB* 14 no.28 ii Ust.(1634). Agripina's possession of the charter also suggests that this church may have been built by her husband or relative. When an itinerant priest borrowed the charter he had to give a written undertaking to return it to Agripina's sons.

¹⁰⁶ *OSS* Pt.11 p.186 no.165. An itinerant is also hired in *RIB* 14 no.28 ii Ust.(1634).

¹⁰⁷ *RIB* 12 no.33 Ust.

¹⁰⁸ *OSS* Pt.7 p.92, Pt.8 pp.56,99; *SKE* p.155.

¹⁰⁹ *SKE* pp.155,202; D.Sviatoslavskii, 'Letopis' moskovskoi georgievskoi tserkvi', *ChOIDR* 1875 Bk.1 p.7; K.P.Pobedonostsev, 'Istoriko-iuridicheskie akty,' *ChOIDR* 1886 Bk.4 p.280. Some clergy widows could afford to make generous donations in memory of their husbands : 'Khristorozhdestvenskaia tserkov' v Sergievskom posade', *ChOIDR* 1891 Bk.3 pp.14-15; A.A.Titov, 'Vkladnaia kniga Nizhegorodskago Pecherskago monastyrja', *ChOIDR* 1898 Bk.1 p.26.

and their wives; another let rooms to eight artisans and peasants -- some of whom had lived with her for ten years.¹¹⁰

Bishops were generally supportive of arrangements that provided for clergy widows. They approved widows' requests for the appointment of a son in the place of his deceased father, and when there were no sons prelates looked favourably upon appeals for the appointment of a kinsman or son-in-law to the benefice to provide for her.¹¹¹ When a widow petitioned Archbishop Gavril of Vologda for help in finding for her adult daughter a husband who could be ordained, 'so that I and my children will not be expelled from our home', the Archbishop ordered the local priest-supervisor to marry the girl to a literate d'iachok and hire a temporary priest until the son-in-law could be ordained.¹¹² If a non-relative was elected instead, a prelate sometimes required him to furnish proof that provision had been made for the dependants of his predecessor.¹¹³ Church hierarchs tried to help priests' widows and orphans in order to reduce the number of clergy families left destitute and begging,¹¹⁴ but also to limit the number of petitioners at their own door. In one case, the Vologda archbishop candidly admitted he had granted widowed popad'ia Uliania's request 'so that his holiness the archbishop will not be petitioned [again] by that widow'.¹¹⁵ As a result of episcopal solicitation for the families of deceased incumbents, a widowed relative could be a useful stake in the fierce competition for clergy jobs. When Senka Simeonov of Korbanskaia volost' promised to care for his late brother's widow and two children if given his job as

¹¹⁰ *ChOIDR* 1905 Bk.2 Smes', no.5 p.60.

¹¹¹ *OSS* Pt.5 p.24 no.43, Pt.7 p.123, Pt.8 p.146 no.181, Pt.10 p.124 no.98, Pt.11 p.76 no.60.

¹¹² *OSS* Pt.1 p.38 no.68. In 1748 Synod refused a requests such as this, and tried to discouraged claims by clergy heirs, but by 1761 formally recognised the Church's duty to provide for orphans and widows, and approved the hereditary claims of priests' daughters: Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, pp.191,193-4.

¹¹³ SPIRIAN f.117 op.1 d.855 (1670); *SKE* pp.44,65,81; *OSS* Pt.7 p.109 no.1, Pt.8 p.59 no.93. Widows of d'iachki were also able to claim church land after their husbands' demise: *OSS* Pt.8 p.99 no.138, Pt.10 p.185 no.192.

¹¹⁴ *SKE* pp.58,65,116.

¹¹⁵ *OSS* Pt.10 p.175 no.169.

d'iachok, the prelate ordered the currently-serving d'iachok to be dismissed, and appointed Senka on condition that he give half the d'iachok's income to the widow.¹¹⁶ Similarly, a Belozersk archpriest petitioned for his son to be appointed to the coveted position of cathedral deacon in 1695, 'so that the wife and daughter of the dead deacon will not wander from house to house begging their bread'.¹¹⁷ Although personal interest undoubtedly motivated some relatives to pose as champions of widows and orphans, there could be little personal gain for one young priest who transferred from his Moscow parish to Buturlino village in 1679 to replace his drowned brother, thereby taking on the burden of maintaining three widowed kinswomen and five orphans, as well as his own family.¹¹⁸

Not all widows were fortunate enough to have caring kin or parishes. Indeed, her position could be precarious, as numerous petitions from dispossessed clerical women show.¹¹⁹ Parishioners sometimes attempted to exclude any rights for their priest's family after his death by insisting that his contract of employment contain a clause like the following: 'and upon my death, my wife and children and relatives have no claim to that church...'¹²⁰ They could reject a widow's request for land or refuse to appoint her son.¹²¹ Even with a written contract promising maintenance, she could be threatened or driven out by the new priest when resources were scarce.¹²² Widows who wrote to their bishop asking for the ordination of a particular relative who had promised to care for her, could later find that same relative was as ready as a stranger to turn her out and lay claim to her land.¹²³ Neither could she always rely on episcopal help in times of need: Fetin'ia Vasileva of Sitki village was left destitute after her husband's death in

¹¹⁶ *OSS* Pt.2 p.45 no.404 (1663).

¹¹⁷ *OSS* Pt.3 p.65 no.118.

¹¹⁸ *SKE* p.179-80.

¹¹⁹ *RGADA* f.1433 op.1 dd.42,60; *SPIRIAN* f.117 op.1 d.855; *LZAK* 27 nos.657,510,584; *OSS* Pt.11 p.186 no.165.

¹²⁰ *PDR* 21 p.139; *OSS* Pt.11 p.189 no.169.

¹²¹ *OSS* Pt.3 p.62 no.110, Pt.11 p.206 no.194.

¹²² *OSS* Pt.3 p.57; *SKE* p.197 no.5, p.202 no.5.

¹²³ *OSS*, Pt.8, p.99, n.138, Pt.10, p.175, n.169, Pt.12, p.189, n.346.

1699, but her appeal to the archbishop for a temporary exemption from paying church tithe was peremptorily refused.¹²⁴ When support from the prelate was forthcoming, it did not invariably guarantee security. After priest Gurei of Belozero uезд died in the mid-1690s, Archbishop Gavril granted Gurei's widow Mar'intsa a share of church land and income and appointed her sons to minor orders at that church, but the new priest and parishioners refused to obey the prelate. Despite the archbishop's repeated rulings in the widow's favour and threats of interdiction and excommunication, the parish would not allow Mar'intsa and her children to remain at the church.¹²⁵

What other options were there for a widow without means? For those with young families, finding another husband could be financially advantageous. Church rules did not forbid them from marrying again,¹²⁶ but popular opinion may possibly have dictated against it, for there is evidence that remarriage by clerical widows was viewed with some disfavour in Slavic lands.¹²⁷ Be that as it may, few remarriages by clergy womenfolk came to the notice of the ecclesiastical courts, and those that did were not concerned with the marriage *per se*, but with other matters, thus one can conclude that remarriage was a viable option as long as other mores were not transgressed.¹²⁸ An interesting question is raised by Johannes Korb's comment at the end of the seventeenth century that Muscovite priests were permitted to marry the widow of a priest.¹²⁹ This theory is contradicted by the Orthodox canons which echo Mosaic law in stating that 'no one who has taken a widow or a divorced woman...as his wife, may be a bishop, or

¹²⁴ OSS Pt.3 p.76 no.146.

¹²⁵ OSS Pt.7 p.109 nos.1-9. For a similar case see SPIRIAN f.117 op.1 d.855. In some respects, the plight of dispossessed Muscovite clerical widows parallels that of peasant widows last century: R.Bohac, 'Widows and the Russian serf community', *Russia's Women*, p.102-03.

¹²⁶ Levin, *Sex and Society*, p.269, citing Metropolitan Fotii.

¹²⁷ Priests' widows are among the tormented described in the 'Tale of the Descent of the Virgin into Hell' that circulated in Muscovy: Levin, *Sex and Society*, p.269; Pushkareva, *Women in Russian History*, p.102.

¹²⁸ I have found only three instances of clerical remarriage: MTS 2 p.214; RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.73 (1692); OSS Pt.8 p.112-115.

¹²⁹ Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary*, 2 p.180-181.

a priest, or a deacon'.¹³⁰ However, in the Biblical era priests' widows were not equated with ordinary widows but with virgins, hence they were eligible to marry Israelite priests.¹³¹ Korb's statement is supported by the fact that we know of at least one priest who married a colleague's widow. A court case over inheritance rights in 1688 mentions that the plaintiff's mother was the widow of a Moscow priest who had married a widowed priest. It is quite feasible that other unions of this kind took place.¹³² Theoretically, in remote regions the inability of parish communities to support clergy widows may have encouraged this practice, as it did in the Faroe Islands in the eighteenth century, where it was mandatory for a new incumbent to marry his predecessor's widow.¹³³

A widow who chose not to remarry and was at least forty years old was eligible to serve as *prosfirnitsa*, which was the only official ecclesiastical position a woman could hold within the Russian Orthodox Church.¹³⁴ A *prosfirnitsa* baked the bread (*prosfora*) used for Holy Communion, a task that was considered so sacred that a *prosfirnitsa* was expected to be particularly devout, to live chastely, and to recite prayers whilst she prepared the *prosfora*.¹³⁵ It is perhaps not surprising that the widows of priests and deacons were favoured candidates for this position, as were the widowed mothers and aunts of clergymen. When the family connections of *prosfirnitsy* are mentioned in

¹³⁰ Canon XVIII of the 85 Canons, *The Rudder*, p.30; Metropolitan Makarii, *Istoriia Russkoi Tserkvi*, XI p.173. The rules for priestly marriage in the Orthodox Canons were to a large extent based on the levitical rules for Jewish priests: *The Bible*, Leviticus 21:13.

¹³¹ Ezekiel 44:20, *The Bible*.

¹³² *MTS* 2 p.214. Such marriages may have been arranged in order to provide financial support for the widow and possibly to secure the benefice for her second husband, or his relative.

¹³³ I am grateful to Vera Rich for this information on the Faroe Islands.

¹³⁴ A *prosfirnitsa* (sometimes spelt *prosvirnitsa* or *prosfirnia*) ranked as a minor cleric (*prichetniki*), on a similar level to a *ponomar*: *DAV* no.24; *OSS* Pt.7 p.96; Pt.11 p.74 no.58 iii. Clergy widows sometimes worked as *prosfirnitsy* for monasteries: *SIB* 109 nos.10,17 (1688-90).

¹³⁵ Day, *Liturgical Dictionary of Eastern Christianity*, p.242; Kollman, 'The Moscow Stoglav', p.335; *AI* 5 no.244. Some prelates required *prosfirnitsy* to be over 50 years old.

seventeenth-century documents, there is almost invariably a kinship link with the local clergy.¹³⁶ Churches and monasteries that employed prosfirnitsy provided a plot of parish land and an annual stipend paid by parishioners or patron in recognition of her important work.¹³⁷ This stipend was equal to that of a ponomar's pay in Vologda eparchy, and double the State stipend paid to Moscow ponomary in 1677, although prosfirnitsy may have been expected to purchase wheatflour for the prosfora from their salary.¹³⁸ Like the clergy, prosfirnitsy were called upon to assist in legal investigations when female victims of violence were involved,¹³⁹ and sometimes they appeared in court as plaintiffs or defendants themselves. Just as disputes arose between male clergy, so too quarrels occasionally arose between prosfirnitsy and priests, most commonly among those who were not related, and usually over financial matters. One widowed priest's wife who served as prosfirnitsa at a church in Murom uезд complained that the priest had failed to provide her with land for a kitchen garden as promised in her contract, then had unjustly demanded that she pay episcopal tithe, and assaulted her because she could not afford to.¹⁴⁰ A prosfirnitsa in Vologda diocese, Uliania, was reported to the bishop in 1681 for failing to deliver the prosfora to priest Mikei in time for the liturgy. Uliania was the kinswoman of a clergyman who served at the same church as priest Mikei, thus was inevitably caught up in the feud that raged between the two priests' families, but we do not know if Mikei's accusation was a malicious lie, or if Uliania had purposely caused him trouble.¹⁴¹

¹³⁶ Olearius, *Travels*, p.272; Kunkin, *Gorod Kashin*, no.20; *OSS* Pt.7 p.160, Pt.12 p.65 no.82; RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.42; *ChOIDR* 1903 Bk.3 Smes', no.13; *SIB* 109 nos.10,17; Kholmogorov, *Istoricheskie materialy*, Pt.3 pp.7-8. The employment of clergy widows as prosfirnitsy continued into the 20th century. Of the 24 prosfirnitsy recorded at the churches of SS.Flor and Lavrus at Miasnitskie gates and St.Aleksei of Moscow during the 18th-19th centuries, 18 were widows or relatives of clergymen. *MTS* 2 pp.33-4,38-9.

¹³⁷ *OSS*, Pt.8 p.81, Pt.11 p.167 no.142; *DAI* 9 no.107; *RIB* 12 no.119 Ust.

¹³⁸ *OSS* Pt.7 p.130; *DAI* 9 no.107.

¹³⁹ *OSS*, Pt.7 p.85 (1689).

¹⁴⁰ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.184 (1682).

¹⁴¹ *OSS* Pt.12 p.65 no.82.

Most Moscow churches employed a *prosfirnitsa*, but not all provincial parishes could afford to support one, hence there was probably considerable competition amongst clerical widows for these positions.¹⁴² Those who missed out or who preferred the contemplative life could take the veil, and episcopal records show that a considerable number did so.¹⁴³ It was common practice for a widow to be tonsured at home during the first half of the seventeenth century, but Church Councils of 1667 and 1682 forbade tonsure outside a monastery or convent, and attempted to bring into convents all the wandering nuns who were begging, as part of a wider move towards strengthening Orthodox control.¹⁴⁴ In order to enter a convent, a nun was expected to pay an endowment (*vklad*) of between five and ten roubles, or more for luxury accommodation, a requirement which debarred the very poorest clergy widows from entering religious orders.¹⁴⁵ Some convents provided an alternative for widows without means, allowing them to live as non-tonsured *vkladchiki* or work as servants, and a few men's monasteries in northern Russia allowed widows in under similar terms.¹⁴⁶ However, it seems likely that nuns and *vkladchiki* were not normally allowed to keep their children with them, a restriction which must have discouraged widows with young families from entering a religious house.¹⁴⁷ One widowed *popad'ia*, Varvaritsa, who moved into Spaso Nuromskii monastery in Vologda eparchy after her husband's death, came to an arrangement with the hegumen to be allowed to have her

¹⁴² In Moscow the majority of churches receiving State funding in 1677 could afford to employ *prosfirnitsy*: *DAI* 9 no.107.

¹⁴³ For example *OSS* Pt.2 p.7, Pt.6 p.66 no.433, Pt.8 p.65 no.107v; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.137.

¹⁴⁴ *SKE* p.132; Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, p.115; Potter, 'The Russian Church', pp.338-9.

¹⁴⁵ The usual fee appears to have been 5-10 roubles. The much higher sum of 40 R was paid by a peasant widow to enter St.Nicholas convent in Vologda eparchy in 1660: *LZAK* 27 no.502. See also M.Thomas, 'Muscovite Convents in the Seventeenth Century', *RH* 10 (1983) p.232.

¹⁴⁶ Veriuzhskii pp.260,300; Thomas, 'Muscovite Convents in the 17th century,' pp.230-242. Peter I abolished the custom of non-tonsured persons residing in monasteries and convents: Hughes, *Peter the Great* p.338.

¹⁴⁷ I have found no mention of children living with their mothers in any Muscovite convent. M.Thomas likewise found no record of children in her research on Suzdal Pokrovskii convent: 'Muscovite Convents in the Seventeenth Century', p.239 fn.53.

son with her, but when the hegumen died, the new prior would not let him stay there any longer.¹⁴⁸

Destitute clergy widows whose husbands had served in palace churches or cathedrals are known to have received alms from the tsar in response to their petitions,¹⁴⁹ but those with no other means may have turned to the sources of Church charity which they themselves provided when their husbands were alive.¹⁵⁰ There was a hospice for twenty-one widows at the Church of Nativity in Moscow in the 1660, and a great many parish churches throughout the land provided huts for poor or elderly widows.¹⁵¹ Even so, there were never enough places for every pauper, and clergy widows and orphans who found themselves without any provision at all had to beg their bread from house to house.¹⁵² Life was equally hard for the 'widows' of clergymen who were imprisoned. After deacon Maksim of Moscow was sent under guard to St.Savva monastery Zvenigorod in 1674, his wife petitioned the tsar for help because she and her children were starving; consequently she was given two roubles and a few sacks of grain from the Privy Chancellery.¹⁵³ Outside the capital, prospects were bleaker. Many clergymen who fell victim to the unjust wrath of Archbishop Stefan of Suzdal in the 1650s were defrocked and incarcerated in monastery prisons, leaving their families without support. So pitiable was their plight that one concerned contemporary protested to the Patriarch that 'their wives and children wander in the world and die of hunger'.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁸ *OSS* Pt.8 p.65 n.107v.

¹⁴⁹ *RIB* 23 p.1232; *MTS* 2 Prilozhenie, no.19.

¹⁵⁰ *RIB* 23 pp.1-12, 1098; *RIB* 12 no.261 (Ust.), 14 no.199 (Khol); *Vologdskie eparkhial'nyia vedomosti*, 1890 no.16 p.235; Kunkin, *Gorod Kashin*, no.20.

¹⁵¹ The provision of huts for poor widows at parish churches are mentioned in countless sources, among them *RIB* 23 p.587; *DAI* 6 no.90; *OSS* Pt.8 p.81; *MTS* 4 p.17; Kunkin, *Gorod Kashin*, no.20; Anpilogov, *Riazanskaia pistsovaia pripravochnaia kniga*, p.324; Kholmogorov, *Istoricheskie materialy*, Pts. 3-5; Storozhevii, *Materialy dlia istorii deloproizvodstva*, I-XIV.

¹⁵² *RIB* 12 no.105 Ust; *SKE* p.128.

¹⁵³ *RIB* 23 p.244.

¹⁵⁴ Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, 2 p.20, no.1076.

Few wives of Muscovite priests ever made fame or notoriety, few feature in Russian history books, yet the role they played was of significance to their families and communities. They supported their husbands, cared for their children and relatives, and provided shelter for lodgers, servants, and the homeless. Wives of archpriests and well-connected clergy enjoyed honour, prosperity and status, but for the spouses of the lower clergy life was hard, dependence on the parish was demeaning, poverty was grim, oppression was real. Nonetheless, a clergy wife could make a positive impact upon the next generation by teaching piety to her own children, who in their turn became clergymen and clergy wives. Through her charity work she could make an important contribution towards improving the prospects of the poorest elements of Muscovite society. Her very presence in the parish was a service to the Orthodox faithful, enabling her husband to serve as parish priest and provide spiritual and pastoral care for his community. It may be that the Church hierarchy, who were of the black monastic orders, saw wives as a hindrance to clerical advancement, but by endorsing the removal of widowed clergy to monasteries they unwittingly underlined the fact that a wife remained of tantamount importance to the career of a white clergyman. Even after the 1666-67 Church Council permitted widowers to retain their benefices if they held an episcopal permit, a living wife provided a priest with the best guarantee of job security. Many would have agreed with the words of one cleric: 'I cannot manage without a wife.'¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ *OSS* Pt.8 p.115 no.157: petition of d'iachok Iakushko Sergiev to Archbishop of Vologda.

Chapter Nine

Episcopal Supervision of Clergy

*'Order that a priest-supervisor is to be elected for our treasury collections and ecclesiastical affairs.'*¹

Instruction of Metropolitan Evfimii of Novgorod, 1695

The white clergy and their families were under the jurisdiction of their bishop, who ruled over his eparchy like a prince with almost limitless powers to tax, judge, and punish subordinates.² To supervise their clergy, prelates traditionally relied on a network of deputies appointed from the monastic and senior cathedral clergy or the laity. However, the seventeenth century was a time of significant change in the development of episcopal supervision, for prelates increasingly employed deputies from the lower clergy to supervise their peers. During the past century and a half, various claims have been put forward by scholars with regard to bishops' dealings with the white clergy. Imperial historians maintained that episcopal supervision was inefficient,³ Soviet scholars asserted that the wealth of bishops rested on the exploitation of parish clergy,⁴ whilst more recently it has been argued that the monastic élite debarred parish priests from Church governance, and that the policies of bishops bred discontent among the lower clergy.⁵ However, these claims are open to question because until now no in-depth research has focused on the white clergy's role in, nor subordination to, episcopal supervision in the seventeenth century. Our purpose here is to address this issue by considering the extent to which married clergymen were employed as

¹ *AI* 5 no.244.

² Clergymen were subject to the civil courts only in cases involving theft, treason, murder, and after 1682, heresy. *PSZ* 1 nos.442,505; *AAE* 4 nos.155,161; *Muscovite Law Code*, ed. and transl. by R.Hellie; R.Hellie, 'The Church and the Law in Late Muscovy,' *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 25, (1991), pp.179-199; *AI* 5 no.75 pp.108-18.

³ *PDR* 22 p.492.

⁴ N.M.Nikol'skii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, (M.1930) pp.171,174.

⁵ A.Preobrazhensky, ed. *The Russian Orthodox Church*, (M.1988) p.88.

supervisors and to assess the impact they had on the priesthood and the Church. I will also investigate the wider relationship of the white clergy with their bishops, in order to discover how the former fared under the rule of bishops and to assess the validity of previous judgements by historians.⁶

Development and extent of episcopal supervision

Archpriests and Archimandrites

Muscovite episcopal supervision has been described as weak and inefficient, and in comparison with later centuries this was probably true. Nonetheless, episcopal administration in the seventeenth century was perhaps not as 'grievously inadequate' as has been claimed.⁷ Prelates themselves visited few of the churches in their eparchies and they lacked trained professional staff, but they were able to extend their authority into almost every parish by the use of a network of supervisors and informers. At the top of the supervisory tree were the bishops' district administrators, who were usually archpriests, archimandrites or hegumens. They were invested with wide powers to tax, judge, and punish the clergy,⁸ as well as holding authority to judge and punish the laity in matters of a religious and moral nature that fell within episcopal jurisdiction, according to Muscovite law.⁹ Archpriests were commissioned by Church Councils of 1551, 1594 and 1601 to supervise the white clergy and report persistent offenders to the bishop for dismissal and excommunication.¹⁰ Their powers were formidable, as

⁶ This chapter primarily considers the white clergy. For further details on eparchial administration *per se*, see I.Pokrovskii, *Russkiiia Eparkhii v XVI-XIX vv, ikh otkrytie, sostav i predely*, Vol.1 (Kazan, 1897), and C.Potter, 'The Russian Church and the Politics of Reform in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century', Unpubl. PhD Thesis (Yale University, 1993).

⁷ Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.48; *PDR* 22, p.492.

⁸ *AI* 4 no.151; *DAV*, no.36 (1598); Barsov, 'Sudnye protsessy', *ChOIDR* 1882 Bk.3 no.10, pp.35-40 (1695).

⁹ Episcopal legal jurisdiction covered disputes between clergymen, or clergy and laity, disputes between parents and children, or wives and husbands, rape cases, marriage to kin, illegitimate births, and heresy. For further details see chapter 63 of the Stoglav Council rulings, which follows chapters 24-25 of the Church Statute of Vladimir: Kollman, 'The Moscow Stoglav', pp.476-7; *AAE* 4 no.155 (1667).

¹⁰ Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', p.358; *AAE* 1 no.360, 2 no.223.

Ivan Neronov discovered as a young priest during the 1640s. For inadvertently offending the Nizhniĭ Novgorod archpriest, Ivan was thrown in prison and held in fetters without trial.¹¹ Archpriests and archimandrites were responsible for collecting the prelate's fees, conducting investigations for the bishop, inspecting the ordination certificates and permits of all clergy under their jurisdiction, and sending transgressors to the episcopal court.¹² When Tsar Aleksei prohibited the distilling of vodka by clergy in 1660, it was archpriests who had the task of ensuring that all clergy were informed and complied.¹³ They were expected to ensure that all parish clergy attended the statutory religious processions carrying crosses and icons through the streets in their correct vestments on holy days; those who failed to attend or turned up in slovenly dress were fined.¹⁴ In Moscow eparchy during the last quarter of the century archimandrites and archpriests were responsible for overseeing elections of priest-supervisors and instructing newly-elected supervisors.¹⁵ Unfortunately for the lower clergy, unscrupulous archimandrites sometimes added their own illegal fee on top of the episcopal fees they collected, hence Kholmogory priests blamed the archimandrite of Krestnyi monastery rather than their prelate for the excessively high church tithe rate in 1690.¹⁶ Archpriests were more sympathetic towards their clergy, it seems. They were less likely to oppress their subordinates and in some towns actively protected them, perhaps because they were once humble parish priests themselves. Archpriests of Belozero were particularly adept at obstructing local governors' attempts to try clergymen in the civil courts, sometimes merely by consistently ignoring such requests,

¹¹ Subbotin. *Dokumenty iz istorii raskola*, 1 p.265.

¹² *OSS* Pt.3 p.12 no.18, Pt.10 pp.72,90, Pt.12 p.4 no.9; *DAI* 12 no.64; *RIB* 12 no.9,71,201,221 Ust.; *AAE* 4 no.323; Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui, Prilozhenie*, nos.86-88,92.

¹³ *AAE* 4 no.105, 4 no.118; *OSS* Pt.3 p.12 no.18.

¹⁴ *PNG*, pp.16-17.

¹⁵ *SKE* p.278-295.

¹⁶ *DAI* 12 no.64. The extortions and unjust judgements of archimandrites in their dealings with white clergy are also mentioned in *RIB* 14 no.203 Khol.; Zertsalo, 'O nepravdakh rechakh', pp.2-3; N.A.Solov'ev, 'Saraiskaia i krutitskaia eparkhiĭ', *ChOIDR* 1896 Bk 3 pp.107-113; *AAE* 4 no.331; *RGIA* f.834 op.5. d.53.

to the chagrin of the governor involved.¹⁷ As a result of Church reforms in 1675, the judicial role of archpriests significantly expanded, causing a severe strain on the cathedral clergy. Although many routine jobs could be delegated to assistants, archpriests themselves were personally involved in a great number of investigations and court cases. In 1677, for example, both archpriest Avraamii of Belozero and the hegumen of Ust-Sheksna monastery had to travel a long distance by horse and wagon to a remote village church to sort out a dispute.¹⁸

Desiatil'niki

Archpriests and monastic superiors did not have time to effectively supervise all the parish clergy, and therefore the major role in episcopal supervision prior to the seventeenth century was delegated to bishops' lay officers (*desiatil'niki*, *deti boiarskie* and *nedel'shchiki*),¹⁹ who were sent out to parishes to collect episcopal dues and undertake ecclesiastical investigations. Each *desiatil'nik* had a mandate over a particular tithe district (*desiatina*) of the eparchy, but by the middle of the sixteenth century so many complaints about the extortion and injustice of these lay officers had been received from the clergy, that hierarchs of the Church recognised the need for change. In 1551 the Stoglav Council admitted that priests and deacons had suffered 'deprivation and great loss at the hands of *desiatil'niki*',²⁰ and ruled that henceforth lay officers were to share the job of collecting episcopal taxes with priest-supervisors, who were to be elected by the clergy. *Desiatil'niki* were to retain responsibility for investigating and judging the lower clergy, but now there was always to be a priest-supervisor present whenever a clergyman was interrogated.²¹ However, the Stoglav Council ruling was

¹⁷ *OSS* Pt.10 p.72 no.49 (1675), Pt.10 p.90 no.74 (1684).

¹⁸ *OSS* Pt.9 p.69 no.45. Many other examples of archpriests' personal involvement in trials and court cases can be found in *RIB* vols.12 and 14, *OSS* pts.1-13, and *ChOIDR* 1887 Bk.1 Smes', no.6 p.142; *AAE* 4 no.312.

¹⁹ For the purposes of this study, they will be referred to as episcopal lay officers or agents, or *desiatil'niki*. Lay officers were appointed to high positions as district administrators, as well as to lower ranks as mere episcopal tax-collectors.

²⁰ Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', p.458.

²¹ V.Samuilov, 'Desiatil'niki i popovskie starosty', *Tserkovnye vedomosti*, 1900,

only partially and slowly implemented, and in the opening decades of the seventeenth century *desiatil'niki* were still collecting tithes and dues in most eparchies.²² As long as a *desiatil'nik* delivered the prelate's dues in full and on time, he was unlikely to be bothered by the episcopal office, -- a fact which gave him almost limitless opportunity for extortion, bribery and oppression.²³ 'And from their violence', a petitioner wrote in 1639, 'priests and all church clergy in the lands of the Saviour-Khutynskii monastery have left, and fourteen churches are left empty without services.'²⁴ A few churches and monasteries were fortunate enough to have charters exempting them from the collection of tithes by the bishop's lay officers,²⁵ yet even these charters were no guarantee against the demands of ruthless *desiatil'niki*.²⁶ Parish clergy whose churches were on monastery lands could sometimes rely on the defence of the monastery against corrupt officials, whereas clergy in remote rural parishes were virtually defenceless.²⁷

As a result of continued abuses by episcopal *desiatil'niki*, the Church Councils of 1666-67 and 1675 took steps to reduce their authority and recommended that episcopal fees be collected only by ordained men of either black or white clerical rank.²⁸ Whilst admitting that *desiatil'niki* caused 'great disorder, impositions on the clerical estate, abuse and losses, and took superfluous fees on top of defined ones', prelates were unwilling to abolish the judicial powers of their lay officers over the lower clergy altogether. Patriarch Ioakim's decree of 1675 reveals the ambiguity and contradictions inherent in Church supervisory policies: 'Lay judges shall not try the clergy in anything, nor supervise (*upravliaiut*) them in anything;[...] those people are not to be sent, but

(*pribavleniia*) 35, p.1393.

²² *AIuB* 2 no.230 iv (1606); *LZAK* 14 p.8 (1619); I.I.Shimko, *Patriarshii Kazennyi prikaz*, p.31; Samuilov, 'Desiatil'niki i popovskie starosty', p.1393; *OSS* Pt.10 p.158.

²³ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, nos.114, 116; *OSS* Pt.10 pp.124,149, Pt.12 p.124; *LZAK* 14 p.31; *AIuB* 2 no.230 iv; *ASP* no.1.

²⁴ E.M.Pritezhaev, *Novgorod-Sofiiskaia kazna*, p.88.

²⁵ *LZAK* 14 p.10,92; *AIuB* 1 no.31 XXV; *AAE* 4 no.42.

²⁶ *PDR* 22 p.309; *AAE* 2 no.14.

²⁷ *AAE* 2 no.14, 2 no.17; *AI* 4 no.24; *PDR* 22 pp.309-10; Pritezhaev, *Novgorod-Sofiiskaia kazna*, p.88.

²⁸ *PSZ* 3 no.412; *AAE* 4 no.161.

send them only to the disobedient and unsubmitive'.²⁹ This clause allowed prelates to continue employing secular servitors for many tasks, financial and judicial.³⁰ Even so, by the end of the seventeenth century the number of clergymen serving in supervisory capacities had increased and the tyranny of the *desiatil'niki* had been reduced in most eparchies.³¹

Priest-supervisor (popovskii starosta)

The lower clergy played a very minor role in episcopal supervision prior to the Romanov era, and it has been erroneously claimed by historians in the past that the Church hierarchy of the seventeenth century continued to exclude the lower clergy from participation in Church governance.³² However, although the monastic elite retained their monopoly on the highest echelons of Church power, parish priests were not entirely excluded. On the contrary, their participation significantly increased as prelates began to delegate more authority to supervisors who were elected or appointed from the white clergy. Priest-supervisors are mentioned in the Pskov Chronicle in 1343 and in charters issued by Moscow metropolitans during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries,³³ but their value in ecclesiastical administration was publicly recognised by a Church Council for the first time in 1551, when the hierarchy called for seven priest-supervisors to be chosen for Moscow, and 'as many as appropriate in each city' in the provinces. The Council ruling had limited impact, for although some priest-supervisors appear to have been employed in certain central districts in the second half

²⁹ *AAE* 4 no.204.

³⁰ *DAI* 7 no.18; *RIB* 12 no.23; *AIuB* 2 no.236.

³¹ *RIB* 12 no.92,145,147-151,159; GAVO f.496 op.1 d.35.

³² C.J.Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.221; Preobrazhensky, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, p.88; Nikol'skii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, pp.171,174.

³³ Samuilov, 'Desiatil'niki i popovskie starosty', p.1394. Charters that mention priest-supervisors were issued to churches and monasteries by metropolitans Iona (1452), Feodosii (1462), Filip (1465), Gerontii (1478), Simon (1496) and Makarii (1542).

of the sixteenth century,³⁴ the need for priest-supervisors in Moscow was brought up again by the Church Councils of 1594 and 1604.³⁵

The real rise to prominence of priest-supervisors appears to have begun some time after the turn of the century. By the late 1620s we find priest-supervisors well-established in Moscow and its countryside. In Radonezhskaia desiatina, for instance, data was collected by priest-supervisors from one hundred parish churches and recorded in income books of the Patriarchal treasury office for 1628,³⁶ and in the capital itself there was a network of priest-supervisors under the management of a chief supervisor by 1636.³⁷ In Novgorod diocese, the growth in the number of priest-supervisors differed from the pattern in Moscow. There was a small number of priest-supervisors in Novgorod in 1577, and their roll may have increased slightly under Metropolitan Makarii in the 1620s,³⁸ but Novgorod prelates continued to rely primarily upon their lay officials for the first three-quarters of the century. According to E.M.Pritezhaev's research last century on the Novgorod episcopal treasury, tithes were collected by a priest-supervisor in one tithe district in the eparchy in 1577, whilst in the other nine districts the tithe was collected by desiatil'niki. In 1654 the tithe was collected by seven priest-supervisors and fourteen desiatil'niki, but a decade later the number of ordained supervisors appears to have declined, for the 1664 tithe was collected by just one priest-supervisor and twelve laymen.³⁹ Only after 1673 was the supervision of clergy by ordained officers effected in almost all the diocese, due to Metropolitan Ioakim's reform prohibiting lay officers from collecting the tithe. Not only did Ioakim increase the number of priest-supervisors in Novgorod, but within two

³⁴ For example, in Rostov eparchy in 1561 and 1563: *RIB* 12 no.7,8.

³⁵ The Church Councils of 1594 and 1604 called for the appointment of eight priest-supervisors in Moscow, each with forty priests and four desiatiskii deacons under him. *AAE* 1 no.360; *AAE* 2 no.223.

³⁶ Kholmogorov, *Istoricheskie materialy*, Pt.5 p.3.

³⁷ *AAE* 3 no.264; Metropolitan Makarii, *Istoriia Russkoi Tserkvi*, XI p.84.

³⁸ *LZAK* 14 p.11 (1627-35); Iushkov, *Ocherki*, p.113.

³⁹ Pritezhaev, *Novgorod-Sofiiskaia kazna*, p.79.

years of his election as Patriarch in 1673 he had pushed through the Church Council ruling recommending the wider employment of priest-supervisors throughout Russia.⁴⁰ These measures were part of the Church hierarchy's overall strategy to protect Church people and property from the attacks of laymen, the brunt of which hit the white clergy hardest. In the light of increasing encroachment by laymen into domains that were formerly the preserve of the Church during the seventeenth century,⁴¹ the appointment of ordained officers was a step towards limiting such encroachment. Whilst upholding the honour of the priesthood may have been the prime motive for reducing dependence on lay supervisors, there were material advantages for the hierarchy too. A prosperous clergy freed from the extortion of *desiatil'niki* resulted in fewer complaints to deal with,⁴² as well as increased revenue for bishops, for the dishonesty of *desiatil'niki* caused losses to the prelate's coffers as well as to his clergy.⁴³ Above all, the employment of parish priests as priest-supervisors gave the prelate a wider net of agents to track down non-payers and deviants into the furthest corners of the eparchy.⁴⁴

*Area-supervisors (zakashchiki or zakazchiki)*⁴⁵

In addition to using priest-supervisors who were elected by the white clergy, bishops personally appointed members of the lower clergy as area-supervisors, with responsibility for collecting fees and overseeing the clergy. Each area-supervisor was issued with a charter from the prelate detailing the precise parishes he was responsible

⁴⁰ *AAE* 4 no.198, 4 no.204.

⁴¹ *AAE* 4 no.285; Znamenskii, *Rukovodstvo* p.243. See also chapter three, and below.

⁴² For example, Kholmogory tithe-collectors were told in 1689 that they must not over-charge priests 'so that his holiness the archbishop will receive no petitions about this in future': *RIB* 12 no.198 (Ust).

⁴³ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, no.15.

⁴⁴ Pokrovskii, *Russkie eparkhii*, 1 p.358-9. Shimko, *Patriarshii Kazennyi prikaz*, pp.145-7. Episcopal supervision barely penetrated northern parishes until after 1670.

⁴⁵ The word for deputy (*zakashchik*) had a dual meaning: it was also used to refer to archimandrites, hegumens and archpriests in charge of many priest-supervisors, but here we refer only to the lower clergy.

for, usually from ten to fourteen, within a designated region called a *zakaz*.⁴⁶ These area-supervisors are mentioned most frequently in records of the northern Russian eparchies, Novgorod, Vologda, Viatka, Kholmogorii and Ustiug, where they are found carrying out similar tasks to those of that priest-supervisors.⁴⁷ *Zakashchiki* are frequently mentioned alongside priest-supervisors,⁴⁸ and sometimes the terms *zakshchik* and *popovskii starosta* are used interchangeably within the same document.⁴⁹ However, there were differences between the two jobs. Area-supervisors were appointed, not elected, and one Belozersk priest's son appears to have inherited his deceased father's responsibilities as *zakashchik* when he succeeded to the benefice.⁵⁰ The area-supervisor held a slightly inferior position to a priest-supervisor, for although he collected certain episcopal fees, he generally did not collect the church tithe nor judge any legal cases.⁵¹ In Novgorod eparchy *zakashchiki* were supervised by the bishop's lay officials, who examined and verified their registers; in Vologda they were usually under the authority of an archimandrite or archpriest.⁵²

Another kind of clerical supervisor from the white priesthood whom one occasionally meets in Church records was the ecclesiastical affairs officer (*prikaznyi dukhovnykh del*). Little is known about this position, but its incumbents were almost certainly appointed rather than elected, and its duties appear to be similar to those of a priest-supervisor, with greater authority. The Sol' Vychegodsk ecclesiastical affairs officer,

⁴⁶ *OSS* Pt.12 p.18; *RIB* 12 no.26 (Khol.).

⁴⁷ *DAI* 5 no.18; *AI* 5 no.244; *DAI* 12 no.35; SPIRIAN f.117 op.1 d.315; *OSS* Pt.11 p.164 no.142, Pt.11 p.107 nos.92,93, Pt.11 p.164 no.142; Malovyi, *Materialy dlia istorii kazanskoi eparkhii*, p.39 no.15; *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.186. There are many other examples in *OSS* Pts 1-13 and *RIB* Vols.12,14.

⁴⁸ *OSS* Pt.11 p.164 no.142; *DAI* 5 no.18.

⁴⁹ *OSS* Pt.11 p.164 no.142; *DAI* 12 no.35; *RIB* 14 no.57.

⁵⁰ *OSS* Pt.1 p.44 no.5.

⁵¹ Prilezhaev, *Novgorod-Sofiiskaia kazna*, pp.81-83.

⁵² *OSS* Pt.11 p.107 nos.92 and 93, Pt.3 p.92; Prilezhaev, *Novgorod-Sofiiskaia kazna*, p.81-83; *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.186. Area-supervisors are mentioned five times as often as priest-supervisors in Vologda diocesan records. *Desiatil'niki* were also still employed in Vologda after 1675, in some areas collecting church tithe as late as 1698: *OSS* Pt.10 p.158.

cathedral priest Andrei Barshkov, was involved in the collection of episcopal dues and had authority over priest-supervisors and deputy-supervisors from 1688 to 1689, possibly longer, and was also a judge at the episcopal court.⁵³ The Voronezh ecclesiastical affairs officer in 1683 was priest Andrei of the Church of the Resurrection, who was still presiding at the Ecclesiastical office (*dukhovnyi prikaz*) in 1688, a considerably longer tenure of office than that of a priest-supervisor.⁵⁴

Deputy-supervisor (desiatskii)

Following the recommendations of Church Councils of 1551, 1594 and 1604,⁵⁵ deputy-supervisors were established over priests in towns and rural areas during the seventeenth century. They were elected by the white clergy as an assistant to the priest-supervisor, with charge over approximately ten parishes (a *desiatok*). The *desiatskii* could be either a deacon or a priest, the main proviso being that he was of good character, like other elected representatives: 'a good upright man, not a swindler nor a reveller'.⁵⁶ Deputy-supervisors assisted priest-supervisors to oversee the clergy and undertake investigations,⁵⁷ and disseminated episcopal orders to the clergy in their area.⁵⁸ The chain of command stretching from a prelate down to parish priests is amply illustrated by a decree of Archbishop Afonasii of Kolmogory dated 11 September 1696 ordering all priests to conduct services to celebrate the taking of Azov. Archpriests and priest-supervisors in Shenkursk were instructed to read aloud the decree in the cathedral and to send copies of this gramota to all deputy-supervisors, who had to send copies to all priests in their area.⁵⁹ In some cases this chain went further: *desiatskii* priest Aleksei Iakovlev of Vel'skii stan had to copy out the orders he received from the

⁵³ *RIB* 12 no.196, 12 no.198 Ust., 14 no.73 Khol. In 1689 priest Grigorei was a *razriad* ecclesiastical affairs officer in Ustiug: *RIB* 12 no.199 Ust.

⁵⁴ *DGPV* 1 xii, 2 lxxxv.

⁵⁵ Kollman, 'The Moscow Stoglav', pp.459, 464; *AAE* 1 no.360; *AAE* 2 no.223.

⁵⁶ *AIuB* 1 no.1.

⁵⁷ *OSS* Pt.13 p.43 no.50; *AAE* 4 no.184.

⁵⁸ *DAI* 8 no.102.

⁵⁹ *AAE* 4 no.314.

priest-supervisor and send them to other desiatskii priests, as well as to parish priests in his desiatok.⁶⁰

Duties of elected supervisors

A closer look at the duties of priest-supervisors reveals the extent of the bishops' authority, as well as the impact his supervisors had on the clergy and society. A newly-elected priest-supervisor reported to the archimandrite or archpriest, who gave him a charter from the bishop detailing all his duties.⁶¹ The first task list was issued by Metropolitan Makarii in 1551, followed by similar patriarchal and episcopal instructions issued during the next 150 years, culminating in Patriarch Adrian's instructions to priest-supervisors in 1698 and 1699.⁶² These instructions changed very little between 1551 and 1699, and consisted of two basic priorities: 'treasury collections and ecclesiastical affairs.'⁶³

Responsibility for 'treasury collections' required the supervisor to collect the church tithe, episcopal fees, and fines from the clergy, as well as certain fees and fines from the laity, in addition to travel expenses for the collector himself.⁶⁴ The supervisor had to track down tithe-dodgers and miscreants and force them to pay up.⁶⁵ He was given special registers for recording all payments, which were to be verified by the archpriest or archimandrite and by the priest-supervisor's successor when he handed over his duties, and had to deliver the payments and registers to the prelate either annually or bi-annually.⁶⁶ In many eparchies, especially during the second half of the seventeenth

⁶⁰ *AAE* 4 no.257.

⁶¹ *SKE* pp.295-300; *AI* 4 no.240.

⁶² *AAE* 1 no.231, 4 no.105, 4 no.188, 4 no.198; *AI* 5 no.244; Samuilov, 'Desiatil'niki i popovskie starosty', p.1394; *PSZ* 3 no.1612 p.414; *PSZ* 3 no.1694 p.641.

⁶³ *AI* 5 no.244.

⁶⁴ *AAE* 4 no.198. Episcopal dues are discussed in chapter three and below, and by Znamenskii, 'O sborakh s nizshego dukhovenstva russkago v kaznu eparkhial'nykh arkhieriev', *PS*, 1866 1 pp.37-55; E.M.Prilezhaev, *Novgorod-sofiiskago kazna*; Hellie, *The Economy and Material Culture of Russia*, chapter 22.

⁶⁵ *AI* 4 no.240

⁶⁶ Samuilov, 'Desiatil'niki i popovskie starosty', p.1396; *AAE* 4 no.198, 4 no.198; *AI* 4

century, priest-supervisors were required to assess the tithe rate payable by clergy of new churches, based on the estimated income that the parish clergy could be expected to receive.⁶⁷ In these cases, the supervisor, together with another episcopal officer, had to make an inventory of all houses in the parish being assessed, as well as church fields, meadows and other economic assets belonging to the new church, and take a signed statement from the incumbent priest, following which he could impose the appropriate tithe rate.⁶⁸

In addition to being episcopal tax-collectors, supervisors were the prelate's policemen. They had to carry out a vast range of episcopal tasks, all lumped under the term 'ecclesiastical affairs' (*dukhovnye dela*), and all of which were aimed at ensuring that the prelate's rules were obeyed and liturgical and moral standards were maintained. In lengthy instructions, hierarchs ordered their priest-supervisors to lead religious processions, to ensure that local clergy attended and wore the correct vestments, to order priests to conduct services at the correct time of day and not hire other clergymen to do their services.⁶⁹ Priest-supervisors had to send circulars informing all priests of special services and ensure that priests conducted services on those days.⁷⁰ They copied and distributed the prelate's instructions to the clergy in their region,⁷¹ and informed them when a parishioner was excommunicated so that no one took the sacraments to the sinner's house.⁷² They had to 'watch carefully' so that clergy conducted baptisms and weddings correctly and prayed for the royal family.⁷³ They inspected churches under their jurisdiction to ensure that communion bread was correctly baked, communion wine was pure and unadulterated, holy oil was covered

no.240 p.513-4, 5 no.244.

⁶⁷ Pokrovskii, *Russkie Eparkhii*, p.359.

⁶⁸ *AI* 4 no.240; *SKE* p.284; *Letopis' Dvinskaiia*, p.36; *RIB* 12 no.273 (Ust.).

⁶⁹ Gorskii and Nevostruev, *Opisanie slavianskikh rukopisei moskovskoi sinodal'noi biblioteki*, Bk.3, p.373; *AAE* 2 no.223; Dokuchaev-Barskov, p.15-16.

⁷⁰ *AAE* 1 no.360.

⁷¹ *DAI* 5 no.18, 8 no.102; *AAE* 4 no.167, 4 no.88.

⁷² *AAE* 4 no.249.

⁷³ *DAI* 5 no.102.

and kept in a clean place, fonts and furnishings were clean, icons in their correct place, 'and the sanctuary must be clean, always swept and washed, so that there is no dirt on the floor, and no dust or cobwebs on the walls.'⁷⁴ In order to maintain good moral standards in parishes, priest-supervisors interrogated d'iachki to ensure they were not twice-married, and prosfirnitsy to ascertain that they were the widow of only one husband. They reminded priests to teach parishioners proper piety, and instructed the clergy to behave in a seemly manner: 'do not get drunk and do not go to taverns to drink, and refrain from swearing, shameful talk and blasphemy,...do not keep any disgraceful person or concubine'.⁷⁵

Priest-supervisors had extensive legal duties. They were regularly called upon by their prelates to inventorise church or monastery property, when such property was involved in a legal dispute or was being transferred to the custodianship of a new superior.⁷⁶ They had to investigate accusations against clergymen, take surety bond, and send the parties to the episcopal court.⁷⁷ Supervisors were required to be present whenever a member of the clergy was interrogated or tried, according to rulings of the Church Councils,⁷⁸ and they served as investigators, witnesses and signatories in court cases between laymen who were being judged by the episcopal courts.⁷⁹ Although the Church Councils of 1667-67 and 1675 had ruled that judges should be 'archimandrites and other learned men', and not members of the lower clergy,⁸⁰ priest-supervisors are found judging certain cases by the last third of the seventeenth century.⁸¹ In the northern eparchies of Vologda and Viatka especially, they had wide legal powers to try

⁷⁴ *DAI* 5 no.102; *AI* 5 no.152 (1687).

⁷⁵ *DAI* 5 no.102; *AAE* 1 no.360, 2 no.223; *AI* 5 no.244.

⁷⁶ *DAI* 6 no.125; *Materialy dlia istorii Vladimirskoi eparkhii*, Pt.1 pp.38, 41; *RIB* 12 no.218 Ust.; *SKE* p.203 no.8; *OSS* Pt.1 p.1.

⁷⁷ *Materialy dlia istorii Vladimirskoi eparkhii*, Pt.1 p.38,151; *DAI* 11 no.77; *OSS* Pt.5 p.60 no.118.

⁷⁸ *AAE* 4 no.161; *PSZ* 1 no.442; Samuilov, 'Desiatil'niki i popovskie starosty', p.1393; Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.221; Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', pp.472,493-7.

⁷⁹ *OSS* Pt.11 p.76 (1659).

⁸⁰ Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.221.

⁸¹ *PSZ* 3 no.412; *AAE* 4 no.204; *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, nos.174,176,194.

priests accused of minor crimes and take fines from them if found guilty.⁸² Legal cases under the jurisdiction of Novgorod priest-supervisors were defined by a decree of 1695, in which are listed fees to be paid by a plaintiff, fees for witnessing a will, and fines payable by clergy for misconduct.⁸³ Priest-supervisors had the task of checking all the ordination certificates, transfer permits and widowers' permits of clergy within their jurisdiction,⁸⁴ and in Moscow and Novgorod they manned the supervisors' office (*popovskaia izba*, or *tiun*),⁸⁵ inspecting itinerants' certificates, issuing work-permits, collecting fees, and charging fines on those who failed to have the correct papers, in order 'to maintain good decorum in the church'.⁸⁶

The priest-supervisor's duties extended to investigating births, deaths and marriages amongst the laity and collecting fees and fines from them where appropriate. Soviet historians were scathing in their criticism of the Muscovite Church on account of the fees that the laity had to pay, viewing this as wholesale exploitation of the masses.⁸⁷ More recently, Richard Hellie has used examples of episcopal fees to prove that 'Muscovite churchmen' (presumably meaning the hierarchy) had 'a deep contempt and hatred for the average Muscovite'.⁸⁸ However, accusations of exploitation have been

⁸² *AluB* 3 no.370 v; *OSS* Pts 1-13.

⁸³ Pritezhaev, *Novgorod-Sofiiskaia kazna*, p.68

⁸⁴ *AI* 5 no.244; *SKE* pp.278-279; Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.170.

⁸⁵ In Moscow a supervisors' office (*popovskie izba*, or *tiun*) was established at St.Basil's cathedral at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Although there were initially problems with supervisors failing to turn up, the office was functioning well by the 1640s and 50s, but in 1667 a Church Council decreed that the office should be administered by a hegumen or archpriest designated by the tsar, rather than by priest-supervisors, and finally in 1693 Tsar Peter ordered this office to be merged with the Office of Ecclesiastical Affairs (*dukhovnyi prikaz*). In Novgorod, priest-supervisors were in charge of a supervisors' office prior to 1678, but by March 1687 the office was being run by a cathedral *kliuchar'*, assisted by priests. The *popovskaia izba* paralleled the civil *zemskaa izba* staffed by a *zemskii starosta*. *RIB* 12 no.244 Ust.; *AAE* 1 no.360; *AAE* 2 no.223; Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', pp.466-68; *RIB* 24 p.393; *RIB* 29 pp.471,472,484-5,554-61,700-701,866-67.

⁸⁶ *AAE* 2 no.223.

⁸⁷ Nikol'skii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, p.171-74; Preobrazhensky, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, pp.84-102.

⁸⁸ Hellie, *The Economy and Material Culture of Russia*, p.51

exaggerated, perhaps because historians have been led astray by hyperbole of Muscovites themselves, who frequently accused the clergy of extortion in order to divert attention from their own moral and religious failings.⁸⁹ For instance, when Archbishop Aleksandr of Ustiug reduced the powers of the laity in parish affairs because they had been appropriating church funds, the lay elders (*zemskie starosty*) responded by accusing the prelate and priest-supervisors of profiteering from fees, -- a charge which all the Ustiug clergy unanimously denied, avowing that their bishop had been unjustly slandered.⁹⁰ Bishops' fees were undeniably a lucrative source of income that funded a life-style deemed fitting for a Prince of the Church, but the fundamental purpose of the fees was (in theory) to enforce obedience to canon law.⁹¹ In order to ensure that these laws were followed, the Church sanctioned the imposition of fees and fines, but in many cases bishops waived fees in response to appeals.⁹² Whenever there was an accidental or sudden death, parish priests were not allowed to bury the deceased on consecrated ground until the local priest-supervisor had made extensive inquiries to ascertain the cause of death. Once he had established that the deceased was not a victim of murder, or a suicide, or a heretic, the supervisor issued a burial permit.⁹³ In these cases, the bishops' agents acted to uphold canon law, but they were also crime-prevention detectives: their inquiries exposed miscarriages of justice and ensured that murders were not passing off as natural deaths. When a man was found dead near Spaso-Kamenskii monastery in Vologda eparchy in July 1694, priest-supervisor Ierofei was sent to inspect the body and ensure there were no wounds on it,

⁸⁹ *RIB* 5 no.391; *DAI* 11 no.77; *AI* 5 no.223 p.378; *RIB* 5 no.391; *OSS* Pt.11 pp.164,177, Pt.11 no.210 n.200; *SKE*, p.64, no.8; *LZAK* 14 pp.91,105.

⁹⁰ *RIB* 12 no.259 (1696-1697); *RIB* 12 no.200 Ust.(1689).

⁹¹ Here we refer to official Church policy, but certain individual bishops or their unscrupulous agents may have been more interested in the money than the rules.

⁹² There are many cases in Vologda episcopal records (*OSS* Pts 1-13) in which burial fees were waived if the victim's relative petitioned the bishop.

⁹³ Investigations are recorded in *OSS* Pt.8 p.66 no.109, Pt.9 pp.36,141,144, Pt.10 p.3; *RGADA* f.1433 op.1 d.15; *RIB* 2 no.157; *AiuB* 2 no.230; *AI* 5 no.244 p.446-453.

Suicides and heretics were not buried in consecrated ground; instead they were buried outside the churchyard, sometimes in a pauper's cemetery: Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe Antitserkovnoe dvizhenie*, p.159, no.108; *OSS* Pt.7 p.116, Pt.8 p.92; V.Borisov, *Opisanie goroda Shui*, pp.85-88.

after which he questioned locals about the death, before giving permission for burial. Diocesan records contain many similar reports.⁹⁴ The purpose of a supervisor's investigations into illegitimate births was to punish 'fornicators', but inquiries frequently exposed cases of rape, incest and infanticide, and the episcopal fine was always taken from the father wherever possible to ensure that seducers and rapists were held accountable.⁹⁵ The supervisor also collected marriage fees and signed statements from parish priests detailing every marriage they had conducted, details of which were recorded in the episcopal register.⁹⁶ Prelates were anxious to ensure that the clergy did not pocket this lucrative income themselves,⁹⁷ but equally important was the hierarchy's concern to ensure that no illegal marriages were conducted, for the Russian Orthodox Church had strict rules forbidding fourth marriages and conjugal unions between persons closely related.⁹⁸ The Church's concerns were evidently warranted, for laity and clergy alike frequently attempted to avoid the rules, -- diocesan records are littered with cases of bigamy and other illegal unions.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ *OSS* Pt.8 p.73. Similar reports are in *OSS* Pt.7 pp.85,122, Pt.8 p.98; *DAI* 11 no.20; *PSZ* 3 no.1612 art.20. In rural parishes murders were easily concealed, if we can believe parishioners of Kumzersk volost' in Vologda eparchy, who in 1678 accused their priest of committing murder and attempted murder over several years: *OSS* Pt.1 p.23 no.48.

⁹⁵ *OSS* Pt.9 p.161, Pt.10 p.142, Pt.12 p.131, Pt.11 p.110 no.96. Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, nos.81,83,36,54,89; *RIB* 14 no.205 Khol.; E.Levin, 'Infanticide in pre-Petrine Russia', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 34, 1986, pp.215-224; RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.29 (1680); Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, nos.76,81. Article 26 Chapter 22 of the Ulozhenie of 1649 prescribed the death sentence for unmarried mothers who killed their infants: Hellie, *Muscovite Law Code*, 1 p.223.

⁹⁶ *SKE* p.278-9; *AI* 5 no.244; *LZAK* 14 pp.118,124; *OSS* Pt.9 p.161, Pt.10 p.142, Pt.12 p.131.

⁹⁷ Marriage fees were normally payable to the prelate, less often to cathedral clergy.

⁹⁸ *OSS* Pt.5 p.3, Pt.8 p.69, Pt.9 pp.44,65, Pt.10 p.59. For further discussion on Orthodox marital rules see E.Levin, *Sex and Society in the World of the Orthodox Slavs*, (Ithaca, 1989).

⁹⁹ For example, *RIB* 12 no.180 Ust; *OSS* Pt.2 p.46, Pt.3 pp.60,33, Pt.5 pp.25,68, Pt.7 pp.67,103,106, Pt.9 pp.2,63, Pt.10 p.105, Pt.11 p.126, Pt.13 p.46; Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, nos.36,37,54,89; *LZAK* 27 no.229; *LZAK* 14 p.91; *RIB* 35 no.368.

A major concern of hierarchs after 1666 was the spread of opposition to the Orthodox Church after the Nikonian reforms. In the forefront of the battle waged by the Church to extirpate dissent we find priest-supervisors, whose job it was to publish instructions concerning schismatics and to inform the prelate of any suspicious findings. To bring all clergy into line with the reforms, the Moscow Church Council of 1666-67 ordered archimandrites, hegumens, archpriests and priest-supervisors to ensure that the new rites were followed in all churches, to teach priests to use the new servicebooks and prayerbooks, and to check itinerant priest's certificates to ensure they had not been expelled from another church.¹⁰⁰ Numerous instructions to priest-supervisors in subsequent years repeated the above orders.¹⁰¹ Priest-supervisors were required to collect lists compiled by priests naming parishioners who failed to turn up at Lent for confession or holy communion, and forward them to the prelate.¹⁰² The need for low-level informers grew as Schism spread, and priest-supervisors like Vasilei Semenov of Kemsck Gorodok, who denounced many Old Believers, were invaluable to their bishop.¹⁰³

How effective were priest-supervisors?

Episcopal records prove that priest-supervisors, area-supervisors and deputy-supervisors undoubtedly contributed to an improvement in episcopal administration by diligently carrying out their duties. Their efficiency can be measured by the fact that they collected vast sums for episcopal treasuries, flushed out a great many illegalities, and amassed great quantities of data on churches and clergy, according to the evidence of diocesan archives. The Church hierarchy were evidently satisfied: they issued no public rebukes against priest-supervisors,¹⁰⁴ and rarely fined or dismissed them for

¹⁰⁰ *DAI* 5 no.102, Pribavlenie.

¹⁰¹ *DAI* 5 no.102, *DAI* 10 no.76, *DAI* 12 no.35; *AI* 5 no.152, *AI* 5 no.244.

¹⁰² *RGIA* f.834 op.2 dd.1849-1855; *RIB* 14 no.194 Khol.; *DAI* 12 no.35; *AAE* 4 no.188.

¹⁰³ *LZAK* 14 no.15 (1669).

¹⁰⁴ *AI* 5 no.244, *AI* 5 no.152, *AI* 4 no.240.

dereliction of duty.¹⁰⁵ Each successive Church Council between 1604 and 1699 endorsed the appointment of supervisors from the white clergy and recommended their wider employment, and most prelates appear to have gradually increased the number employed in their domain. Generally, the white clergy fared well under the supervision of their peers, it seems, albeit that priest-supervisors were not paragons of virtue. An episcopal investigation in 1688-89 revealed that Sol' Vychevodsk supervisors were taking bribes (*pochest'*) from parish priests, in contravention of Church rules,¹⁰⁶ and several similar charges against ordained episcopal agents appear in Church records, but on the whole, these complaints were few and petty compared to the numerous petitions against *desiatil'niki*.¹⁰⁷ The Church hierarchy had correctly reasoned that if the clergy elected their own representatives, they could have little cause for complaint.¹⁰⁸ They were free to elect a supervisor from any post within white holy orders, even widowed clergy.¹⁰⁹ The only constraint laid on them was that the elected man should be 'a good and experienced priest, whom the [episcopal] treasury office can trust,' as the Novgorod Metropolitan put it.¹¹⁰ The wider employment of priest-supervisors brought other advantages for the white clergy, too. Communication between parish priests and their episcopal centre appears to have improved,¹¹¹ and the lower clergy gained a spokesman in times of need. The prominent lead taken by clerical supervisors on behalf of their fellow clerics can be seen in petitions to Archbishop Afanasii of Kholmogory asking for famine relief in 1684, and to Tsars Ivan and Peter from Ustiug appealing against a new tax levied on church land in 1687.¹¹²

¹⁰⁵ Accusations of negligence or dismissed in Vologda eparchy: *OSS* Pt. 7, pp. 60-63, 109-110, Pt. 9 p. 150 no. 128, Pt. 11 pp. 164, 177. One case was acquitted.

¹⁰⁶ *RIB* 12 no. 196 Ust.; cf. *AI* 5 no. 244; *AI* 4 no. 240.

¹⁰⁷ Accusations - *RGADA* f. 1433 op. 1 d. 68; *RIB* 12 no. 26 Khol.; *RIB* 14 no. 23 Ust.; *RIB* 12 no. 211 Ust.; *RIB* 25 nos. 214, 215; *LZAK* 14 pp. 114, 141. Acquittals - *OSS* Pt. 5 p. 63 no. 122; *RIB* 12 nos. 196, 200 Ust.

¹⁰⁸ *LZAK* 14 p. 39; *AIuB* 2 no. 246 xx; *DGGP*, no. xxxvi; Dokuchaev-Barskov, p. 25.

¹⁰⁹ Numerous widowed clergy supervisors are mentioned in diocesan records, but a supervisor could not be in minor orders (a *d'iachok* or *ponomar'*).

¹¹⁰ *AI* 4 no. 240; *RIB* 12 no. 245 Ust.

¹¹¹ *LZAK* vol. 14 p. 11 (1627-35).

¹¹² *RIB* 12 no. 28 Khol., *RIB* 12 no. 145 Ust.

The relative paucity of complaints against priest-supervisors was largely due to the fact that abuse of power was limited by the temporary nature of an elected supervisor's job, -- fear of reprisals from colleagues restrained him from dishonesty. In addition, prelates instituted a system of mutual supervision that foreshadowed Peter the Great's administrative system.¹¹³ Bishops encouraged clergy to inform on dishonest or negligent priest-supervisors,¹¹⁴ and made supervisors from the lower clergy accountable to an archpriest, archimandrite or desiatil'nik, who was in turn responsible for ensuring that subordinates fulfilled their duties honestly.¹¹⁵ Newly-elected priest-supervisors had to carefully audit the books of the out-going supervisor, and they were ordered to thoroughly question parish priests about their predecessor's collections, in order to expose any illegality.¹¹⁶

Early in the century a supervisor's tenure in office could last for 'many years', according to contemporary documents,¹¹⁷ but later it was reduced to one year in Moscow province, and a maximum of three in other provinces.¹¹⁸ It is likely that the supervisors themselves preferred to serve as short a time as possible, because it was a burdensome task. The perks were few, the responsibilities were extensive, and the liabilities were great. On one hand, a priest-supervisor had to fulfil the high expectations of his bishop, on the other, his interference was resented by those under his authority when he arrived to investigate a matter or to collect money. Episcopal agents frequently encountered opposition and obstruction,¹¹⁹ and it was not uncommon for them to be threatened or

¹¹³ On Peter I's supervisory system see A. V. Muller, 'The Inquisitorial Network of Peter the Great', *Russia Under the Old Regime*, pp.142-43,147; Hughes, *Peter the Great*, p.111; Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.52.

¹¹⁴ *OSS* Pt.5 p.63 no.122; *SKE* p.257; *AI* 4 no.240; Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', pp.465,472.

¹¹⁵ Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', pp.465,472; *AAE* 1 no.360, 2 no.223; *AI* 5 no.244; *OSS* Pt.5 p.63 no.122; *SKE* p.257

¹¹⁶ *AAE* 4 no.249; *LZAK* 14, pp.12,141; *OSS* Pt.13 p.54 no.60; *DAI* 12 no.35; Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.37; *SKE* p.66 no.10.

¹¹⁷ For example, *RIB* 35 no.130 p.225 (1612).

¹¹⁸ *Materialy dlia istorii Vladimirskoi eparkhii*, Pt.1 p.17; Dokuchaev-Barskov, p.21.

¹¹⁹ *OSS* Pt.3 p.41 no.58, Pt.7 p.42,54-57, Pt.8, p.49, Pt.10 p.135 no.117; *SKE* p.60; *RIB* 2 no.190/4; *LZAK* 14 p.15.

assaulted.¹²⁰ Parish priests did not obey prelates' orders unless they were compelled to, and in remote areas opposition to episcopal supervision was so strong that episcopal deputies had to be accompanied by bailiffs.¹²¹ Priest supervisors who failed to report disobedient priests could be dismissed and excommunicated 'without any mercy',¹²² but when they did report irregularities, supervisors became vulnerable to revenge attacks by disgruntled colleagues. After denouncing a clergyman who had failed to disclose the number of marriages performed, priest-supervisor Afanasii Fedotov was himself accused of fabricated crimes by that same cleric,¹²³ and there are several recorded incidents of priest-supervisors being falsely accused by schismatics whom they had reported.¹²⁴ To add to their troubles, supervisors were convenient scapegoats for short-tempered prelates. Tula supervisors received the brunt of Bishop Iosif's tyranny in the mid-1670s: a patriarchal inquiry in 1675-76 revealed that he had confiscated one priest-supervisor's valuable horse and had brutally lashed several other supervisors in public, without just cause.¹²⁵

Supervisors had the unenviable burden of being personally responsible for delivering episcopal payments to the bishop. To reach the episcopal centre, rural priest-supervisors could face a long journey through bandit-infested countryside on bad roads, especially during the muddy months of spring and autumn. It is not surprising that one finds petitions pleading for a little extra time to await better weather.¹²⁶ Usually he could expect to be paid travel expenses or supplied with transport during his term of office, but this was not always the case.¹²⁷ If a priest-supervisor failed to

¹²⁰ *Pamiatniki delovoi pis'mennosti*, no.186; SPIRIAN f.117 op.1 d.650 (1665); RGADA f.1433 op.1 d.46 (1684/5).

¹²¹ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, no.16; *DAI* 8 no.26; *AI* 3 no.116; Müller, *Istoriia Sibiri*, 2 p.322; *RIB* 14 no.57 p.1027 Ust.

¹²² Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', p.358; *AAE* vol.1 no.360, 2 no.223; *DAI* 5 no.102, *Pribavlenie*; *OSS* Pt.12 p.21 no.17.

¹²³ *LZAK* 14,p.118 (1697).

¹²⁴ *OSS* Pt.11 pp.164,177; *RIB* 5 no.391 (1696).

¹²⁵ 'Iosif arkhiepiskop kolomenskii,' *ChOIDR* 238 (1911) Bk.3 p.51.

¹²⁶ *LZAK*14 pp.40,12 (1630).

¹²⁷ *OSS* Pt.12 p.18,21 (1675); Pokrovskii, *Russkie eparkhii*, 1 pp.358-9; *AAE* 4

deliver the money to the bishop's residence on time, he was fined one rouble.¹²⁸ If he failed to deliver the dues in full, he had to make up the short-fall.¹²⁹ Patriarch Adrian standardised the penalty, but in no way eased it, when he ruled that if there were any arrears, the supervisor would be liable for a double fine.¹³⁰ It is likely that such penalties were the reason why some supervisors fell into debt, and at least one, priest Efrem of Beleva, lost his house to a creditor in 1686.¹³¹

Priest-supervisors never entirely replaced *desiatil'niki*, who continued to serve in episcopal supervisory capacities until the early eighteenth century. It has been suggested by one historian that some prelates preferred to employ laymen because they did not entirely trust the parish clergy,¹³² a theory supported by Patriarch Adrian's decree in December 1697 prohibiting the election of priests from boyar lands and *pomest'e* estates as priest supervisors.¹³³ This ruling may have been issued because parish priests who served powerful masters could not always be trusted to act as impartial judges, but if this was so, then it is surprising that very few priest-supervisors were actually accused of partiality.¹³⁴ It is much more likely that *desiatil'niki* were still needed simply because there were not enough priests willing to be supervisors. There was evidently a shortage of candidates at elections, for by 1697 Patriarch Adrian was so concerned about the low turn-out that he made attendance at elections compulsory for all clergymen and set a fine for absentees.¹³⁵ It is probable that elections were unpopular due to the fact that the white clergy were held liable for supervisors they

no.257.

¹²⁸ *SKE* p.278; *RIB* 12 no.198 Ust. In Ustiug the fine for concealing payments was five roubles.

¹²⁹ Kollman, 'Moscow Stoglav', p.459.

¹³⁰ *PSZ* 3 no.1612 p.414 (1697), *PSZ* 3 no.1694 p.641 (1699); Samuilov, 'Desiatil'niki i popovskie starosty', p.1396.

¹³¹ *OSS* Pt.12 p.18; *RGADA* f.1443 op.2 d.13.

¹³² Znamenskii, *Rukovodstvo*, p.243.

¹³³ *PSZ* 3 no.1612 art.38.

¹³⁴ A rare accusation of partiality by a priest-supervisor is in *RIB* 25 no.214 (1657), although there are a few such accusations against ordinary priests who were called as witnesses in court cases in Vologda.

¹³⁵ *PSZ* 3 no.1612.

elected. At each election all priests and deacons had to sign a statement accepting responsibility should their candidate fail to deliver payment: 'if the metropolitan's collection suffers any deficit, loss, or damage from fire, that episcopal revenue will be charged in full to us priests and deacons and clergymen'.¹³⁶ Secondly, the financial and administrative tasks for which an episcopal supervisor was responsible were overwhelming, requiring more time than a priest's liturgical and pastoral obligations allowed. A supervisor could delegate some of his duties, yet the majority had to be carried out personally, and fear of punishment for failing to tend to the bishop's tasks must in many cases have led to the neglect of a priest-supervisor's own church. Archimandrite Makarii of Nizhnii Novgorod Pecherskii monastery complained in the early 1640s that archpriest Volodimir hardly ever came to church services because he was occupied with the prelate's administrative duties.¹³⁷ The same problem concerned parishioners of Erensk gorodok in 1692-3 after their assistant priest left, as we can see from their petition to the archbishop: 'And now by your ukaz, lord, the other priest at that church, priest Mikhail, has been elected as priest-supervisor for your holiness's affairs and is sent on your lordship's business to all Erensk uezd, and this church of God is now without services.'¹³⁸

Muscovite episcopal supervision was far-reaching. In fact, the large number of parish disputes that were investigated, and in some cases re-investigated, is impressive. When bishops received complaints that an episcopal agent had not been honest, they were often willing to comply with requests for an alternative investigator. In Tomoshk volost', for instance, parishioners were dissatisfied with the results produced by the bishop's lay officer in resolving a dispute over who should be priest in 1684. Their request for a second investigator resulted in the arrival of zakashchik priest Vasilei Dorofeev, who questioned each parishioner separately in front of the icons and Holy

¹³⁶ *SKE* pp.278,283; *AAE* 4 no.198; *AI* 5 no.452.

¹³⁷ *RIB* 2 no.212 p.959.

¹³⁸ *RIB* 12 no.231 Ust.

Gospel to establish fairly which candidate the majority wished to elect.¹³⁹ Nonetheless, episcopal supervision was not foolproof. A shortage of reliable supervisors prevented bishops from investigating every quarrel or report, especially in remote villages, and consequently prelates sometimes based their judgements solely on petitions from disputants, resulting in confusion and disorder.¹⁴⁰ In a few cases, clergy were dismissed and reinstated in response to conflicting appeals, as happened in Novgorod diocese in 1688. Upon receiving a complaint from villagers in distant Kargopol uezd against their d'iachok Varlam, Metropolitan Kornilii ordered him to be replaced, without adequate investigation. The church elders then petitioned the Metropolitan against the decision, claiming that the new d'iachok, Senka, had been appointed by his relatives without parish consent. Varlam and Senka were alternately dismissed and reinstated on the Metropolitan's order and the case dragged on for years, before it was finally resolved in Varlam's favour.¹⁴¹ Prelates were sometimes unable to enforce their decisions due to the lack of efficient professional supervisory staff at their disposal. The priest of a church in Sholsk volost' refused to obey Archbishop Simon's orders to share church land with his d'iachok in 1677, as did the priest of Slovinsk village in 1682, and a number of similar cases in which priests consistently ignored episcopal rulings can be found in Vologda diocesan records.¹⁴² Even more indicative of insufficiencies in episcopal administration is the fact that despite rigorous attempts by bishops to catch out clergy who did not pay tithes or fees, some defaulters managed to avoid paying for years.¹⁴³ To fill the gaps in their supervisory network, prelates were forced to depend on informers, who were evidently never in short-supply. Motivated by jealousy,

¹³⁹ *OSS* Pt.12 p.124.

¹⁴⁰ *OSS* Pt.3 pp.62-63 no.113, Pt.5 p.74 no.149, Pt.7 p.74, Pt.9 p.97 no.84, Pt.11 pp.164,177,210, Pt.12 pp.59,65; *SKE*, p.64 no.8, p.186 no.18.

¹⁴¹ *ChOidr* 1887, Bk.1, Smes', p.142 no.6.

¹⁴² *OSS* Pt.9 p.69 no.45, Pt.7 pp.54-56. Lack of manpower likewise made it impossible for bishops to detect every errant or schismatic priest. Examples of weak episcopal supervision are in *OSS* Pt.3 p.41 no.58, Pt.7 p.42,109, Pt.8, p.49, Pt.10 p.135 no.117; *SKE* p.60; *RIB* 2 no.190/4. , b

¹⁴³ *OSS* Pt.2 pp.7,16, Pt.3 p.47 no.74, Pt.3 p.81 no.163, Pt.9 p.158 no.132, Pt.11 p.206; Pokrovskii, *Russkie eparkhii*, 1 p.384.

rivalry, or small-mindedness, parishioners and rival clergymen could usually be relied on to eventually report parish priests who failed to conduct church services, or did not have episcopal permits, or lived in a scandalous manner.¹⁴⁴ He, priest Filip, drinks and revels without ceasing, and he fails to take services of divine liturgy on the Lord's festivals and royal angel days, and neglects the church of God', reads one such denunciation from a hostile parishioner.¹⁴⁵

Siberia

Episcopal supervision was even more problematic for prelates of Tobol'sk and Siberia. Vast distances made it difficult for bishops to collect their tithes or to impose Church discipline on the clergy and laity.¹⁴⁶ Archbishop Simeon complained in 1635 that when he sent bailiffs to arrest drunken priests, the extent of his eparchy was so great that it could take over a year for the culprits to reach Tobol'sk.¹⁴⁷ To make matters worse, there was a chronic shortage of clergy throughout the century, hence when Metropolitan Ignatii sent a bailiff to arrest priest Stefan Fomin of Iakutsk in 1689 the townspeople would not give him up, 'because in Iakutsk there is no white priest apart from this Stefan', they told him.¹⁴⁸ The paucity of clergy gave Siberian bishops a major problem in their search for officials, especially during the first half of the century.¹⁴⁹ By the 1680s the number of priests had increased sufficiently for bishops to co-opt them for episcopal supervision, yet prelates consistently showed a marked preference for monastic clergy. From the establishment of an episcopal presence in Selenga and

¹⁴⁴ Church records are brimming with denunciations, a small sample of which can be found in *SKE* pp.92,147-48,202; *LZAK* 14 p.122; *OSS* Pt.3 p.60 no.106, Pt.5 p.22 no.38, Pt.7 pp.67,102, Pt.9 p.2 no.3; *RGADA* f.1433 opis 1 d.12.

¹⁴⁵ *LZAK* 14 pp.91 (1690).

¹⁴⁶ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, nos.1,10,19,22,40,77,90,80; Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.187,292.

¹⁴⁷ Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, p.292.

¹⁴⁸ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty* no.22. On clerical shortages in Siberia, see *RIB* 2 no.48, p.74-6 no. 1600 p.75; Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.186-89; Pokrovskii, *Tobol'skii arkhieiereiskii dom*, Pt. 4 no.99; Müller, *Istoriia Sibiri*, 2 pp.265,476; *AluB* no.192 (1911).

¹⁴⁹ Even lay episcopal staff were in short supply, hence bishops had to rely on State officials for help: *DAI* 8 no.26; Müller, *Istoriia Sibiri*, 2 p.322.

Dauria in 1687 until the following century, hegumens and hieromonks were appointed to oversee the white clergy and collect the prelate's dues.¹⁵⁰ Archpriests were evidently entrusted with the same authority as *desiatil'niki* during this period,¹⁵¹ whereas the lower clergy are rarely mentioned in Siberian sources in a supervisory capacity.¹⁵² The first mention we have of a priest-supervisor is dated 1684,¹⁵³ and there were evidently a number of them in Ilim and Kirenga by 1698,¹⁵⁴ but the parish priests were never as prominent in episcopal supervision in Siberia as in other eparchies. The reason lies in the fact that throughout the seventeenth century and for much of the eighteenth, there were barely enough white priests to man the churches, let alone take on additional duties.¹⁵⁵ Not many clergymen wanted to move to Siberia from western eparchies, and there was very little natural increment, for, as one archbishop wrote, 'no one becomes a priest in Siberia, Sire, because the people are all exiles and few want to become priests'.¹⁵⁶ For this reason, prelates relied primarily on *desiatil'niki*.¹⁵⁷ The extortion of these corrupt episcopal officials provoked outrage among the populace and even caused losses to prelates; several were discharged for embezzling episcopal fees during the last two decades of the century.¹⁵⁸ Eventually the government took the unusual step of commanding the Metropolitan of Tobol'sk to use ordained clergy instead, because his *desiatil'niki* were 'causing great ruin to people in the towns and countryside'.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁰ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, nos.10,13,15,16,18,19,20,25,35,36,40,65, 77,80.

¹⁵¹ *DAI* 8 no.26; Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, no.15 (1688).

¹⁵² Most diocesan records were destroyed in fires that razed Tobol'sk during the seventeenth century, but surviving evidence suggests there were few priest-supervisors.

¹⁵³ *DAI* 11 no.94, *Primechanie*, no.22, p.290.

¹⁵⁴ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, no.65.

¹⁵⁵ Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.186-7; Müller, *Istoriia Sibiri*, 2 pp.155-56. There was still a shortage of priests throughout the eighteenth century: Zol'nikova, *Sibirskaia prikhodskaia obshchina*, p.148;

¹⁵⁶ Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, p.190.

¹⁵⁷ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, nos.22,29,53 ; Müller, *Istoriia Sibiri*, Vol.2.

¹⁵⁸ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, nos.15,65; Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, pp.298-89.

¹⁵⁹ Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyiia gramoty*, nos.22,29,30,46,47, 48,53; Lantzeff,

Episcopal discipline

Between a bishop and the white clergy, as between any ruler and the ruled, there was not always an easy relationship. Soviet historians invariably viewed the Church as exploitative, and those who considered the lower clergy at all generally took the view that episcopal relations with parish priests consisted only in the former collecting taxes from the latter.¹⁶⁰ To some extent this position is understandable, for a perusal of diocesan records leaves no doubt that financial considerations held a significant place in Muscovite episcopal administration. Eighteen percent of Vologda episcopal records relating to the seventeenth-century white clergy are concerned with the collection of episcopal dues, and details on monetary collections comprise a major proportion of all episcopal instructions to priest-supervisors.¹⁶¹ Clerical tax-dodgers who were detected by bishops' officers were fined and imprisoned, even if it meant leaving parish churches without services. Having been caught concealing marriage fees, priest Stefan of Bondokursk volost' was sent by his bishop to Trinity Gleden monastery, from whence he appealed for mercy: 'I sit shackled in stocks and have been charged a fine, and the Church of God has been left without services', he wrote in 1693.¹⁶² The clergy, for their part, appear to have taken every opportunity to avoid paying episcopal dues, a fact which convinced bishops that they had to use coercion and punishment.

Siberia in the Seventeenth Century, p.194-6; *PSZ* 3 no.1606; *DAI* 12 no.86; *AI* 5 no.273; *Tobol'skie eparkhial'nyia vedomosti*, 1883, pp.29-30; Ogloblin, *Obozrenie stolb'tsov i knigi Sibirskogo prikaza*, chapter 8.

¹⁶⁰ Nikol'skii, *Istoria russkoi tserkvi*, p.174; Preobrazhensky, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, pp.83-102.

¹⁶¹ Out of a total of 732 Vologda records relating to the white clergy in the seventeenth century, 132 concern episcopal fees: *OSS* Pts 1-5,7-13. Episcopal instructions are in *PSZ* 3 nos.1612,1694 and references cited above. Ustiug episcopal fees are listed in *RIB* 14 no.60 Ust.(1682).

¹⁶² *RIB* 12 no.235 Ust. Cases like this are in *OSS* Pt.8 p.103 no.148, Pt.10 p.185 no.192, Pt.12 p.121 no.250; *SKE* p.156 no.6; Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty*, no.32. Some bishops, like archbishops Kiprian of Novgorod and Iosif of Kolomna, were accused by their clergy of charging extortionate fees and fines.

However, clergy-bishop relations did not consist solely of monetary collections. The majority of Muscovite bishops were genuinely concerned to raise moral and liturgical standards in the churches, and with this goal in mind they took measures to instruct and discipline their clergy, contrary to the claims of some historians.¹⁶³ They sent out episcopal circulars to inform and warn clergymen what standards were expected,¹⁶⁴ and attempted to train their clergy by printing and distributing copies of John Chrysostom's manual *On the Priesthood*, or extracts therefrom, as well as liturgical books (*chinovniki*) and sermons, with orders to priest-supervisors to ensure that all parish priests complied with the rules.¹⁶⁵ Most prelates viewed severe discipline as the only way 'to maintain good decorum in the church',¹⁶⁶ hence it was not unusual for priests to be fined or lashed for improper conduct, such as public drunkenness and brawling, or placed under interdiction for conducting marriages that violated canon law.¹⁶⁷ A harsh beating on the legs (*pravezh*) was the standard punishment for clergy who failed to pay their episcopal taxes or private debts, sometimes followed by incarceration in an episcopal prison or monastery.¹⁶⁸ Monasteries traditionally served as correction centres for clergy guilty of a great variety of religious and moral crimes,

¹⁶³ Gregory Freeze seems to be in error in his statement (*The Russian Levites*, p.66) that bishops began to investigate and punish clergy for drunkenness and brawling in the eighteenth century 'for the first time'. Surviving diocesan sources provide ample proof that bishops were doing this in the 17th century.

¹⁶⁴ *RIB* 12 no.198 Ust.; *AAE* 1 no.231, *AAE* 3 no.264, *AAE* 4 nos.105,184,188,198; *PSZ* 3 nos.1612,1694; *AI* 4 no.62,151; *AI* 5 nos.122,152,186,203,244.

¹⁶⁵ *DAI* 12 no.35; *RIB* 14 no.201 Khol.; *AI* 1 no.109; *AI* 4 no.62; *AAE* 4 no.184, Makarii, *Istoriia Russkoi Tserkvi*, XI pp.98-100; *RIB* 2 no.128 (1622); Potter, 'The Russian Church', pp.357-361.

¹⁶⁶ *AAE* 2 no.223. N.Suvarov, *O Tserkovnikh Nakazaniakh: Opyt izsledovania po tserkovnomy pravy*. (Spb.1876).

¹⁶⁷ Priests placed under interdiction: *OSS* Pt.5 p.25, Pt.7 p.106-7 no.4, Pt.8 p.40, Pt.9 p.116 no.174. Other punishments: *RIB* 14 no.52 Ust., *RIB* 12 no.235 Ust.; *OSS* Pt.8 p.40, Pt.9 p.124-5 no.102, Pt.11, pp.129,177, Pt.13 p.46; *PNG* pp.16-17; *Vologodskie eparkhial'nyia vedomosti*, 1890, no.24, p.400; *RIB* 14 no.197 Khol.; *RGADA* f.196 d.867, f.1443 op.1 d.4, op.2 d.42, f.1433 op.1 d.3; *LZAK* 27 no.889; Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, 2 pp.6-7,46.

¹⁶⁸ *OSS* Pt.10 p.185 no.192, Pt.12 p.121 no.250. Hughes, *Peter the Great*, p.130; Nikol'skii, *Istoria russkoi tserkvi*, p.175; A.A.Titov, 'Iosif arkhiepiskop kolomenskii', *ChOidr* 238, 1911, Bk.3, p.43-48.

such as repeated failure to turn up for religious processions, drunkenness on duty, forgery, heresy, immorality, and so on, and the monastic prison regime was tough. The clerical convicts were usually shackled in foot irons or forced to do hard labour, and the length of sentence could range from several weeks to life.¹⁶⁹ For heresy or rebellion, clergymen could be exiled, defrocked, or handed over to the civil courts for capital punishment.¹⁷⁰ Episcopal discipline was very arbitrary, dependent upon the whims of the judge, but charges of sexual immorality were always regarded as serious, as noted above.¹⁷¹ A priest accused of rape or fornication could be placed under interdiction for months or even years whilst his case was being investigated, leaving him without means of support, even when the accusation was unsubstantiated. Priest Grigorei of Vologda eparchy was falsely accused of rape in 1670 by a nun who later fled, but because she never turned up for trial his name could not be cleared, hence he remained under interdiction for nine years. In 1679 he was reinstated after appealing to the archbishop for mercy, 'so that my children will not be sold into slavery'.¹⁷² The lack of standardised legal procedure and the almost limitless power bishops held over their clergy gave scope for excessive brutality by tyrants like Archbishop Stefan of Suzdal, Metropolitan Kiprian of Novgorod, Patriarch Nikon, and others.¹⁷³ Bishop Iosif of Kolomna's cruelty to his clergy was almost psychopathic: he beat them, starved them, immersed them in freezing water, and had one priest beaten to death for a minor offence.¹⁷⁴ The lower clergy had scant defence against episcopal injustice, but were

¹⁶⁹ *RIB* 8 no.11 XI; *RIB* 35 nos.367,396 p.714, *RIB* 14 no.79 Ust.; *RIB* 12 no.235 Ust.; *OSS* Pt.5 pp.29,42, Pt.11 p.146 no.137; *SKE* p.126 no.7; *RGADA* f.196 d.867.

¹⁷⁰ *OSS* Pt.8, p.128; S.A.Belokurov, *Iz dukhovnoi zhizni moskovskago obshchestva*, pp.43,71,74; *Life of Archpriest Avvakum*, p.143; Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, nos.19,22; *Vosstanie*, nos.250-53. After 1682 schismatics were tried by the civil courts: *AI* 5 no.75 pp.108-18; Barsov, 'Sudnye protsessy,' *ChOIDR* 1882 Bk 3 no.4.

¹⁷¹ See chapters seven and eight.

¹⁷² *OSS* Pt.12 p.55 no.65. Other cases of this kind are *SKE* p.107; *OSS* 12 p.39.

¹⁷³ Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, 2 pp.6-7,46-88; O nepravdakh rechakh,' pp.i,1-2; *RGADA* f.27 d.558 (1668); Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.171; Solov'ev, *Sochineniia*, VI p.201; *RIB* 12 no.267 Ust.; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.151-52,215,483.

¹⁷⁴ Titov, 'Iosif arkhiepiskop kolomenskii', *ChOIDR* 238, 1911, Bk.3, pp.20-37.

not entirely without means of appeal, as Nikol'skii has claimed.¹⁷⁵ In a few cases we read of cathedral clergy successfully appealing over their bishop to the patriarch or tsar for justice,¹⁷⁶ although this was not an easy route, for the Church hierarchy were generally reluctant to break ranks.¹⁷⁷ The lower clergy had to wait until the eighteenth century before they could freely denounce bad bishops to the Synod.¹⁷⁸

Muscovite prelates chastised unruly subordinates, yet they also showed mercy to their flock. Many an imprisoned or dismissed clergyman was restored to his parish after appealing for forgiveness.¹⁷⁹ Likewise, bishops frequently acquiesced when clergy petitioned for a reduction or deferment of their tithes payments on the grounds of mitigating circumstances. For instance, when parish priests in Totma pointed out to Archbishop Gelasii in 1682 that they had to pay State taxes because their houses were built on 'black' land, the prelate allowed them exemption from paying certain episcopal dues.¹⁸⁰ Prelates commonly showed compassion to the families of deceased or imprisoned clergymen by appointing priests' sons and grandsons,¹⁸¹ and by protecting the interests of clergy widows and orphans, as has been demonstrated in earlier

¹⁷⁵ Nikol'skii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, p.174.

¹⁷⁶ *OSS* Pt.8 p.10; *DAI* 6 no.137 p.408-410; *DAI* 9 no.1; *AAE* 3 nos.306,316;

Solov'ev, 'Saraiskaia i krutitskaia eparkhii', *ChOidr* 1896 Bk 3 pp.107-113.

Complaints by clergy of Suzdal and Kolomna eparchies against bishops Stefan and Iosif led to investigations by the Church hierarchy, resulting in reprimands or removal of the guilty prelate: Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, 2 pp.6-7,46-88; Titov, 'Iosif arkhiepiskop kolomenskii', *ChOidr* 238, 1911, Bk.3, p.61.

¹⁷⁷ When priest Nikita of Suzdal cathedral complained against archbishop Stefan, the latter unjustly sacked him. Although the archbishop was guilty of irregularities, the Church hierarchy closed ranks against Nikita and he was never reinstated. Rumiantsev, *Nikita Dobrynin*, Pt.2 pp.1-92; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', chapter 3; *ChOidr*, 1902 Bk.2 Smes', pp.34-35.

¹⁷⁸ Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, p.47

¹⁷⁹ Examples can be found in *RIB* 12 no.178 Ust.; *RIB* 14 no.197 Khol.(1687); *OSS* Pt.12 p.55 no.65; *SKE* p.46,107; *RGADA* f.1441 op.5 d.65, op.6 d.50; *RGADA* f.196 op.3 d.869 (1641); Michels, 'Myths and Realities', pp.220-224; *SIB* 109 no.9.

¹⁸⁰ *RIB* 14 no.64 Ust. Similar cases are in *OSS* Pt.1 p.15 no.113, Pt.4 p.57 no.539, Pt.7 p.82, Pt.10 p.75, Pt.12 p.171 no.356; *AAE* 1 nos.287,293; *LZAK* 14 pp.12,119; *RIB* 12 nos.28,32 Khol.

¹⁸¹ *OSS* Pt.5 pp.29,42; *SKE* p.100 nos.20-21; *RIB* 14 no.206 Khol., and chapter two.

chapters.¹⁸² During the 1680s Archbishop Gavril of Vologda invited the white clergy to his parties,¹⁸³ and on several occasions Archbishop Gelasii of Ustiug gave each priest and deacon in the town three litres of wine 'for universal joy'.¹⁸⁴

It is most probable, in fact, that the seventeenth-century clergy regarded their bishops not as a foe, but as a protector. And in truth, they needed a powerful defender against parishioners and government officials, -- a fact which Soviet scholars evidently failed to perceive.¹⁸⁵ Throughout the century the white clergy were oppressed, abused, dispossessed, and imprisoned by laymen, as we have seen previously.¹⁸⁶ Prelates themselves came under attack from lay incursions into Church domains, and thus became increasingly concerned to defend the honour of the priesthood and protect ecclesiastical interests at parish level. They did so by taking firmer measures to ensure that the parish clergy's land was not being eroded by rapacious laymen, by insisting that parishioners provided adequate maintenance for their priest,¹⁸⁷ by protecting the clergy against unfair dismissal by parishioners¹⁸⁸ or attack by outsiders,¹⁸⁹ by punishing people who abused their confessor,¹⁹⁰ and in some regions, by taking steps to increase the authority of the clergy in parish affairs.¹⁹¹ Moreover, bishops attempted to defend their clergy from the depredations of provincial governors who encroached on

¹⁸² See chapter eight.

¹⁸³ *Vologodskie eparkhial'nyia vedomosti*, Oct.1864, no.2, Pribavlenie p.51.

¹⁸⁴ *RIB* 14 no.57 Ust.(1682-1683).

¹⁸⁵ One of the main Soviet spokesmen on Church history, Nikol'skii, believed that the lower clergy's main defence requirements were against their own bishops, but he failed to appreciate (or admit) their need for protection against the laity: *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, pp.174.

¹⁸⁶ *RIB* 12 no.145 Ust.(1684) and see chapters three and four.

¹⁸⁷ See chapters one and three.

¹⁸⁸ *OSS* Pt.7 p.54-7,97-87, Pt.11 p.76 n.60; *RIB* 25 no.27; *RIB* 12 no.148; *LZAK* 14 p.67; Bogoslovskii, *Zemskoe Samoupravlenie*, 2 p.31.

¹⁸⁹ For example, priest-supervisor Semen Nikitin of Kizhskii pogost and his son were accused of assault by the Danish Commissar Andrew Butenat, but the case was never brought to court due to intervention by the Metropolitan: *LZAK* 14 p.66.

¹⁹⁰ Bishops punished parishioners and minor clerics who abused their priest: *AI* 4 no.205; *RIB* 12 no.223,243 Ust. *OSS* Pt.3 p.44 no.64, Pt.7 p.101, Pt. 9 p.118 no.97/3; *RIB* 5 no.292.

¹⁹¹ *RIB* 12 nos.200,259, and see chapter four.

episcopal jurisdiction by taxing, judging and punishing members of the clerical estate. From Ustiug in the north, Astrakhan in the south, Pskov in the west, and Riazan in the east, indeed from almost every eparchy, there is evidence that the lower clergy were caught in the middle of a power struggle between government and Church authorities.¹⁹² Ultimately, however, the authority of the bishops depended on the Crown. In European Russia, an appeal to the Sovereign usually brought State officials to heel, but in Siberia prelates were almost powerless to protect their flock because they relied on these same governors to provide bailiffs and officials, due to the shortage of episcopal staff and the wildness of the land.¹⁹³ Far from the restraining hand of the tsar, Archbishop Kiprian of Tobol'sk wrote in 1622, 'the priests and clergy in Siberia suffer many offences and oppression from governors and officials'.¹⁹⁴

Bishops could be harsh and oppressive masters themselves, but they were the parish priest's only defence against abusive and unjust laymen. It was in order to defend the lower clergy that Church Councils of the seventeenth century advocated the employment of supervisors from the ranks of the parish clergy. This policy, and the Church hierarchy's measures to defend ecclesiastical interests, benefited the ordinary parish priest as much as it helped the hierarchy, a fact which undermines Soviet claims that ecclesiastical policies caused the position of the lower clergy to deteriorate during the seventeenth century.¹⁹⁵ For the Church, the concept of employing elected priest-supervisors was successful in regions where they were in service: the prelate gained a wider net of episcopal agents and the parish clergy were freed from the depredations of *desiatil'niki*. However, there were too few clergy willing or able to take on such

¹⁹² *LZAK* 5 Pt.1-IV p.30; *OSS* Pt.7 pp.11,65, Pt.10 pp.72,90; *RIB* 5 no.214/ 4; *RIB* 12 no.270 Ust., *RIB* 2 nos.152,176/12; *AAE* 4 no.176; *PDR* 22 p.188; *DAI* 10 no.101; Michels, 'Myths and Realities', p.50, fn.64; *ChOISR* 1882, Bk.2, Smes', pp.14-15; *LZAK* 27 no.64; *AMG* 2 no.610.

¹⁹³ Müller, *Istoriia Sibiri*, 2 p.322; Melety, *Drevniia tserkovnyia gramoty*, nos.16,22,77,80; *DAI* 8 no.26.

¹⁹⁴ Butsinskii, *Zaselenie Sibiri*, p.189; Lantzeff, *Siberia*, p.195; *DAI* 2 no.101,3 no.5 p.278; Potter, 'The Russian Church', p.113.

¹⁹⁵ Preobrazhensky, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, p.88.

extensive supervisory duties, and parishes suffered when their priests were preoccupied with administrative tasks, hence bishops were forced to continue employing laymen and to rely on informers until Peter the Great's Church reforms the following century. In 1701 the Monastery Prikaz took over management of collections of church tithes and dues in all eparchies,¹⁹⁶ and after 1721 bishops lost their autonomy and became accountable to Synod, which itself was under the control of the Sovereign.¹⁹⁷ By the late 1760s the post of priest-supervisor had been phased out altogether, to be replaced by consistories and superintendents.¹⁹⁸ However, familiar problems still reared their heads long after priest-supervisors had vanished. Ordained consistory members had difficulty dividing their time between episcopal duties and their regular church jobs, and corrupt superintendents and lay episcopal staff continued extorting bribes from clergymen,¹⁹⁹ resulting in calls once again for supervisors to be 'chosen by the clergy themselves, and for a fixed term of office'.²⁰⁰ Episcopal supervision had entered a new phase, 'regularised' into greater efficiency that allowed the Church authorities to increase their control, but for the white clergy themselves, it seems, the new superintendents were little better than the old *desiatil'niki*.

¹⁹⁶ Pritezhaev, *Novgorod-Sofiiskaia kazna*, p.89.

¹⁹⁷ Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, pp.51-77; Cracraft, *Church Reform*, pp.165-261.

¹⁹⁸ Samuilov, 'Desiatil'niki i popovskie starosty', p.1396. In some eparchies, such as Vladimir, prelates continued to employ priest-supervisors until 1767, but they found it more convenient to appoint them, rather than have them elected.

¹⁹⁹ Freeze, *The Russian Levites*, pp.53-58.

²⁰⁰ Belliutsin, pp.157-58.

Conclusion

'For us parishioners, please consecrate as deacon and ordain as priest this d'iachok [...] so that the church of God will not be without services, and so that parishioners will not die without confession, and newly-delivered mothers will not lie without prayers for a long time, and children will not die without baptism.'

Petition to Metropolitan Evfimii of Moscow from parishioners of Liubuno village, 1693.¹

The work of the Russian Orthodox white clergy reached into every corner of the tsardom and every sphere of seventeenth-century Muscovite society. Not only were priests present in parish churches, cathedrals and chapels, they also ministered in hospitals, prisons, almshouses, and religious houses, they took the sacraments into homes, and processed with icons through the streets. They accompanied the tsar's regiments to war, they travelled with diplomats and merchants abroad, they were sent out by the government as missionaries, ambassadors and spies. These clergymen served their communities, their bishops, and their Sovereign, fulfilling a role that has often been overlooked by scholarship. Widowed priests too, left their mark on Russian history: an inordinate number rose in the monastic ranks to become hegumens, archimandrites and prelates, with authority over many people and influence in national affairs.

Certain myths and misconceptions about the Muscovite clergy can now be dispelled and uncertainties clarified. To begin with, the white clerical estate was assuming an hereditary nature far earlier than has usually been thought. From the beginning of the century, clergy sons were inheriting their father's livings in churches, cathedrals, and convents, and even chaplaincy posts could be passed down in the family, following a custom that was supported by society and only temporarily retarded by the Great Plague of 1654. The number of priests in parish churches did not multiply as outrageously as has been suggested, neither were Muscovite clergymen as universally

¹ *SKE* p.60 no.5.

ignorant as has been claimed. In Church governance and administration we find the white clergy were involved to a greater degree than has previously been acknowledged, and in the numerous monasteries and convents of Russia there were more white priests than has commonly been known. The 'modernisation' of the Russian Church and the transformation of the white clergy into civil servants, for which Peter the Great has been credited, began decades before the Reforming Tsar's reign. Although Peter's Church reform was more radical than those of previous governments and hit clergymen harder, many of his ideas followed closely the precedents set by seventeenth-century bishops, patriarchs and Sovereigns before him. His predecessors on the throne invariably viewed the clergy as a useful arm of the State and ruthlessly exploited them to bolster royal power. They obliged parish priests to carry out numerous administrative and policing duties, to be unpaid social workers, registrars and scribes.

Reforms undertaken by the Church hierarchy, though sometimes used to defend episcopal authority against encroachment by the laity, were frequently inspired from below and carried out for the benefit of ordinary clergymen. The election or appointment of supervisors from the lower clergy, the decision to allow widowed clergy to remain serving as parish priests, episcopal measures to raise moral and educational standards amongst the clergy, and Patriarch Ioakim's campaign to reorganise church land were all initiated in response to requests from the white clergy themselves. Some of these innovations met with disappointing results, such as the attempt to reclaim church land and ameliorate the position of widowed clergymen. Bishops never managed to eradicate alcoholism amongst the clergy, nor could they persuade the entire populace to accept the Nikonian revisions. There were also successes. Ordination procedure was improved and the updating of Russian liturgical practice set a standard that remains in use today, virtually unchanged. Least recognised by later generations, perhaps, is the contribution made by seventeenth-century episcopal reforms to the modernisation of clerical education. Though often accused by scholars of holding back progress in education, the Muscovite Church introduced

gradual improvements during the last third of the century that laid a firm foundation upon which later reformers built.

The seventeenth-century white clergy were more active in social welfare and less passive in the face of injustice than later historians have thought. In fact, it could be said that the married clergy ran the country's welfare system. In parishes across Russia, priests and their wives provided charity for paupers, orphans, widows and war refugees, and taught useful skills to the next generation. In the main towns chaplains cared for destitute residents of episcopal and State institutions. The lower clergy played a key role in helping oppressed members of society. At their own risk, a great many priests harboured fugitives, wrote up petitions, and joined their parishioners' protests to a greater degree than is usually acknowledged by scholars. In return, they received the loyalty of their flock. Numerous parishes supported the petitions of their wronged or widowed priests, and after their clergyman's death they provided land for his widow and orphans, and elected his son to the benefice.

The relationship between a priest and his parish was, however, undermined by his economic dependence upon them, a situation which subjected him to their contempt and manipulation. The unsatisfactory remuneration package for the parish clergy was a fatal flaw in the Russian Church that was never properly redressed. The State added to the lower clergy's burdens by laying heavy obligations and duties upon them and few, if any, rewards. In many cases they did not even enjoy the exemption from government taxes or civil jurisdiction that has usually been thought the common privilege of the clerical estate. The senior cathedral clergy, in contrast, were under the special protection of the Crown. They were invested with considerable authority by both the State and the Church, and were often well recompensed for their labours with honour and adequate remuneration. Yet despite the vast difference in status and salary between a Moscow archpriest and a rural d'iachok, they both carried out their work against a background of conflict and co-operation. White priests versus black, lower clergy

versus higher, but most consistently, clergy versus laity. Each needed the other, yet there was little love between them. All Muscovites wanted a church nearby, but did not necessarily go to the services. Each village wanted to have its own priest, but abused and underpaid him. In the provinces, the white clergy needed the protection of State officials, and State officials usually wanted the services of a priest, but in their links we see the perennial clash between ecclesiastical and secular authorities. Indeed the relationship between the clergy and laity at both provincial level and parish level was perhaps a microcosm of the wider struggle for supremacy between Church and State, that had its outworking in Patriarch Nikon's dethronement and ultimately ended in Peter the Great's suppression of the Patriarchate and firm subordination of the clerical estate.

Clearly, there was no real symphony between Church and State in seventeenth-century Muscovy, neither was 'Holy Russia' consistently pious. But the white clergy were an important component of Muscovite society. Though sometimes maligned and exploited, they were regarded by their communities as indispensable, for only a properly-ordained clergyman could administer the life-giving Holy Mysteries of the faith and perform the religious rites that were deemed necessary to placate the wrath of God. The priest's work was a 'heavenly ordinance': he was a mediator between the people and the Almighty, a guarantor of divine grace. As Russian settlers in newly-built Siberian towns recognised in 1600, 'they are in great need without a priest'.²

'The work of the priesthood is done on earth but it is ranked among heavenly ordinances'.

John Chrysostom, 4th century³

² In 1600 settlers of Tuimen and Turinsk petitioned Tsar Boris Gudonov for government assistance to build churches and find priests: *RIB* 2 no.47 (30 Jan.1600); Dmytryshyn, *Russia's Conquest of Siberia*, pp.40-41 (12 Oct.1600).

³ John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood*, (Crestwood, 1984) p.70; *AI* 1 no.109; *AI* 4 no.62; *AAE* 4 no.184, Makarii, *Istoriia Russkoi Tserkov*, XI pp.98-100.

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