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HISTORY OF RELATIONS OF MASONRY AND RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE LATE EIGHTEENTH - EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES

Abstract. *The purpose of this study is an impartial in-depth analysis of the relations between freemasons and the Russian Orthodox Church from the late 18 to the early 20 century. The research methodology is based on the principles of historicism, comprehensiveness and interdisciplinarity. The author uses a wide range of general scientific (analysis and synthesis, generalization) and specially-historical (critical analysis of sources, retrospective, historical-genetic, problem-chronological) methods. The scientific novelty. The paper is the first attempt to study the relations of Masonry and the Russian Orthodox Church in the late 18 – early 20 centuries. Only some of the aspects of this issue have been reflected in the academic literature. The authors introduces archival documents and fundamental works. Conclusions. The authors concludes that there were difficult relationships between Catholic Church and the Masons. The conflict arose, however, not on the basis of Masonic atheism, because Freemasonry considered religion as an important element of the ideological influence on the peoples, while not giving preference to any doctrine, arguing that all religions are equal, equally transient and imperfect. However, despite the serious differences in the ideologies, in the late 18 – early 19 centuries the Catholic Church and Polish Freemasonry went for a rapprochement for political reasons – to fight for the independence of the Commonwealth. The conflict between the Masons and the Orthodox clergy did not reach such a degree of acuteness that it had in Western European countries between the Catholic Church and the Masonic organization. To a large extent, this was the result of a more tolerant attitude of Orthodoxy to dissidence and the complete administrative dependence of this denomination on the state. Even during the reign of Catherine II, Paul I and especially Alexander I, high-ranking officials belonged to the Masonic organization. The indulgent attitude of the tsarist government to “Royal Art” ceased when it appeared that this organization was involved in political conspiracies against autocracy and national liberation movements. But, despite the strict measures taken by the imperial authorities against the Masonic organization, the lodges continued to exist, but they functioned more secretly. Freemasonry in the 18–19 centuries did not play a leading role in the public-political life of the Russian Empire, including the Right Bank Ukraine but it significantly influenced it. “Royal Art” apparently prepared society for the acceptance of constitutional and republican ideas, the abolition of serfdom and significantly affected the ideological growth of future generations of both the Russian and Ukrainian intelligentsia. In the early 20 century freemasons in Ukraine were much more active*

in political respect than in Russia. It is no coincidence that the Ukrainian freemasons put forward the idea to leave the former mystical nonsense and fully concentrate their efforts on the political struggle. Although political Freemasonry destroyed autocracy, it could not overcome its fractional disunity and eventually yielded to more organized and politically far-sighted Bolsheviks.

Keywords: *Masonry, Russian Orthodox Church, clergy, freemasons, Russian autocracy.*

The awakening of the interest to the Masonic movement after the collapse of the USSR was not accidental, since it was reborn in the post-Soviet counties and quickly gained strength and significance. Only in the largest cities of the Russian Federation (Moscow, St. Petersburg, etc.) in the early 1990's under the auspices of the Great United Lodge of England and Scotland, the Great Orient of France and the Grand National Lodge of France more than a dozen lodges were founded and coordinated by Great National Lodge of Russia. In 1993, the revival of Masonic lodges also began in Ukraine. The following lodges began to function: "Three Columns" – in Kyiv, "Phoenix of Ukraine" – in Kharkiv, "Kameniar" and "Light" – in Lviv, "Golden Acacia" – in Odesa and "Imhotep to the flaming star" – in Ivano-Frankivsk. In the early 2000s, a true "Masonic scandal" broke out in Ukraine. In February 2003, a member of the faction of the Yuliia Tymoshenko Bloc, L.Lukianenko, appealed to V.Lytvyn, the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, to inform the Ukrainian parliament about the affiliation of some people's deputies to the Masonic organizations. He said that freemasons include, in particular, the head of the State Tax Administration Yu.Kravchenko, the first vice-premier M.Azarov, the former Ukrainian President L.Kravchuk, the wife of President L.Kuchma, the Minister of Defense V.Shkidchenko, the head of the Security Service of Ukraine V.Radchenko, Prosecutor-General S.Piskun and many others. The leader of the Socialist Party of Ukraine, O.Moroz, also said that the factions of the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the Yu.Tymoshenko Bloc prepared a political statement that about 300 senior statesmen were members of the Masonic lodge – the Order of St. Stanislaus (it is the successor of the Order, founded in 1765 by the King of Rzecz Pospolita – Stanisław II Augustus Poniatowski). Also, O.Moroz demonstrated to the journalists photos depicting the initiation of some representatives of the Ukrainian authorities into this Order (Tabachnyk, Piskun, Tulub, Rybak, Azarov, etc.). At the same time, on the site of the Order of St. Stanislaus, a photograph was posted where Prio P.Vialov initiate into the "priests" of this Order the former head of the secretariat of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the secretary of this church – Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan), Archpriest of the UOCh V.Kosovskyi. It was V.Kosovskyi who "consecrated Masonic Games" in his parish church – St. Ilinskyi Temple in Kyiv on Podil (here L.Kuchma, Ya.Tabachnyk, M.Azarov, R.Bohatyriova, V.Dovzhenko and many other became the members of the Order). Another place of the "Masonic Games" at that time was St. Andrii's Church in Kyiv. On the 17th of October 2003 the members of the Ukrainian patriotic club "Nationalist" sent a letter to Verkhovna Rada asking to demolish a monument to Prince Volodymyr, which stands on the bank of the

Dnipro River in Kyiv. They categorically did not like the Masonic attribute on its pedestal. The monument appeared 150 years ago thanks to the financial assistance of Mason Novikov. The creators of the monument, sculptors V. Demut-Malinovsky and P. Clodt also shared Masonic ideas.

As we see, Masonry has an influence on the socio-political life of independent Ukraine. The church itself also never stood apart from socio-political processes. In our opinion, it would be interesting to follow the evolution of the relations of freemasons with the Russian Orthodox Church during the 19 – early 20 centuries.

Freemasonry originated in Western Europe. Its main task was to create a universal, supranational fraternity, and theoretically it neglected the specificity of national development, frankly gravitating towards universalism. However, in practice, “Royal Art” has repeatedly shown its elasticity, adapting to changes in the social life of individual countries and in general in the world. Thus, the Masonic rule required from the “brothers” not to deal with politics, because political passions only sow discord between people, and freemasons should live in peace and harmony. But, in fact, not only individual members of the Masonic organization, but also whole lodges took part in political life. Charitable activities and self-improvement were only for show. Masonry conducted the same flexible policy concerning national liberation movements¹.

There were difficult relationships between Catholic Church and the Masons. The conflict arose, however, not on the basis of Masonic atheism, because Freemasonry considered religion as an important element of the ideological influence on the masses, while not giving preference to any doctrine, arguing that all religions are equal, equally transient and imperfect. This attitude to religions is explained by the fact that the main task of “Royal Art” was moral, intellectual and physical improvement of humanity. The realization of this super-task was possible through the unification of all religious teachings and the destruction of national powers, replacing them with one single religion and one large republic, where all the peoples – one family². The church saw the religious indifference and the danger of “Royal Art” in these principles. It considered the Masons as deadly enemies, the “satanic creation”, and repeatedly declared an anathema to this organization. Thus, since 1738, there were 14 papal encyclical with calls for the separation of freemasons from the Catholic Church. The papal bull “Ecclesiam a Jesu Christo” (1821) declared anathema to all secret societies, especially the Masonic lodges³.

However, despite the serious differences in the ideologies, in the late 18 – early 19 centuries the Catholic Church and Polish Freemasonry went for a rapprochement for political reasons – to fight for the independence of the Commonwealth. During this historical period, the Polish elite relied heavily on the Masonic organization, guided solely by patriotic aspirations to revive Great Poland. The top of the Catholic Church, feeling the inevitability of secularization and imposing on it the same administrative control of imperial power, under

¹ Массонство в его прошлом и настоящем: В 2 ч. – Ч.1. – Москва, 1991. – С.22.

² Там же. – С.18–19.

³ Морамарко М. Массонство в прошлом и настоящем. – Москва, 1989. – С.236–237.

which the Russian Orthodox Church had long been existed, did not remain aside from the Polish national liberation struggle. For Polish secret societies, the support of the Catholic Church was a significant factor on the eve of the uprising against Russia, which they persistently prepared, since Catholicism had a powerful ideological influence on a significant part of the population of the Right-bank Ukraine. Polish secret societies on the Right-bank Ukraine and Masonic lodges, as well as local Catholic clergy directed their efforts to this goal. As the archival documents prove, they continued their activities in the mid-19 and early 20 centuries, seeking to overthrow the Russian monarchy. However, participation in these processes of the Catholic clergy was considerably more modest than in the early 19 century.

The conflict between the Masons and the Orthodox clergy did not reach such a degree of acuteness that it had in Western European countries between the Catholic Church and the Masonic organization⁴. To a large extent, this was the result of a more tolerant attitude of Orthodoxy to dissidence and the complete administrative dependence of this denomination on the state. Even during the reign of Catherine II, Paul I and especially Alexander I, high-ranking officials: Count P.Stroganov (the lodge of the Great Orient of France), Count M.Novosiltsev (the lodge "United friends"), A.Balashov (the lodges "United friends" and "Palestine"), Count V.Kochubey ("Minerva" lodge) and others belonged to the Masonic organization. There were especially many freemasons in the ministries of internal affairs and justice. The minister of spiritual affairs A.Golitsyn also belonged to them⁵. Consequently, the Masons could directly influence the ecclesiastical top, which was under the control of government structures. The Orthodox Church in Ukraine, as in the entire empire, was deeply dependent on the state. Archbishop Savva Tverskoy correctly noted that the history of this denomination in the 19 century should be written after the chief prosecutors. The chief-prosecutor chaired the church as his department, and treated the Synod as his own advisory body. He had much greater power over the church than the patriarch, who was only the executive power of the bishops' council. If he did not agree with the decision of the Synod, the protocol of the latter was destroyed and the new one was written⁶.

Comparatively tolerant attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Masonic organization is evidenced by the "dissertation" (graduation) works of the students of the Kyiv Theological Academy. So, in the dissertation "Russian Freemasonry and the Church" KTA listener P.Melikin wrote: "Masonry spiritualized Russian religious life; it brought a new element in the spiritual and educational affairs, formed a new generation of shepherds of Russian church and awakened Russian theological thought"⁷. As we can see, the author of this

⁴ Бакунина Т.А. Знаменитые русские масоны. – Москва, 1991. – С.96.

⁵ Платонов О. Масонский заговор в России (1731–1995 гг.) // Наш современник. – 1995. – №4. – С.112–113.

⁶ Власовський І. Нарис історії УПЦ: У 4 т. – Т.3. – К., 1998. – С.251.

⁷ Інститут рукопису Національної бібліотеки України ім. В.Вернадського (далі – ІР НБУВ). – Ф.304. – Дис.№572 (Меликин П. Русское масонство XVIII в. в отношении к церкви. 1873). – Арк.131.

“dissertation” was far from condemning the Masonic ideology and activity. On the contrary, he believed that Freemasonry brought some freshness in Russian religious life: participation of the society in the affairs of the church and the attempt to converge Western-Christianity with the Orthodox Church without the destruction of its dogmas and ceremonies⁸.

In another dissertation “The Legislation of Empress Catherine II concerning the Church and the Clergy”, the student of the Kyiv Theological Academy, G.Istomin, wrote: “Taking into consideration the task of Freemasonry, one could hope that the clergy would be on its side, in order to counteract the expansion of anti-Christian ideas. But such a union of the clergy with Freemasonry could continue only as long as Freemasonry stood on a moral ground”⁹. As we see, this author also considered that cooperation between the “Royal Art” and the Orthodox Church could be possible, provided that it would not become destructive.

Kyiv Theological Academy was the highest spiritual educational institution, and if such views were expressed there, it directly testified to the non-conflict in relations between Orthodoxy and the Masonic organization.

Not only the students of the Kyiv Theological Academy wrote about the intentions “to reform the Russian clergy with the help of Freemasonry”, but also Russian authorities expressed the same intention in the early XIX century. Thus, the Countess M.Speransky, since 1808 the nearest adviser to Emperor Alexander I, and the author of several projects of state reforms of liberal direction (by the way, he was the son of a priest and pupil of the theological seminary), proposed to establish a special Masonic lodging and to oblige the most “capable” clergy to take part in its activities. The ritual for it was developed by the director of the “Polar Star” lodge – Fessler – and discussed at the meeting of this Masonic lodging in 1810. However, the newly established Masonic lodge in the Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius did not last long. It was proclaimed “heretical” and soon closed¹⁰.

At the beginning of the 19 century in the Russian Empire, besides the secret Masonic lodges, the so-called legal Masonic organizations “Philadelphia Church” and “Bible Society” began to work. “Bible Society”, from 1814 – “Russian Bible Society” was founded according to English models in 1812 in St. Petersburg (till 1821 it completed 129 publications of the full text of the Bible and its individual parts in 29 languages)¹¹. In Russia there were 289 departments of this society, headed by Masons¹². In the dissertation “Count de Mestre in Russia” a student of the Kyiv Theological Academy, Ya.Hadzynskyi, wrote that the Masonic and Mystic Minister, the Minister of Religious Affairs and People’s Education, Prince A.Golitsyn became a president of the Bible Society, and his secretaries were the director of the department of spiritual affairs Mason O.Turgenev and the

⁸ Там само.

⁹ Там само. – Дис.№317 (Истомин Г. Законодательство императрицы Екатерины II относительно церкви и духовенства. 1867). – Арк.111.

¹⁰ Бакунина Т.А. Знаменитые русские масоны. – С.74–75.

¹¹ Русское православие: веки истории. – Москва, 1989. – С.320.

¹² Платонов О. Терновый венец России: История масонства 1731–1995. – Москва, 1995. – С.75.

director of the Department of Public Education V.Popov¹³. By the way, V.Popov, presumably, was a member of the whip sect¹⁴. Some “Orthodox Bishops” took part in the “Bible Society”, in particular, Metropolitan Michael – a pupil of the “Friendly Society”. Metropolitan Plato was very benevolent towards “Martynists”, but had suspicion to their “community”¹⁵. According to Ya.Hadzynskyi, in Poland the “Bible Society” was headed by Prince A.Czartoryski, and a large part of the Catholic bishops and prelates were his vice-presidents. Pope Pius VII opposed the “Bible Society” and wrote about it to Sisterjtsevich. He insisted that such a society was dangerous for the Christian religion, since all Bible societies seek to destroy Christianity: “This is a plague that needs to be eradicated by any means.” Jesuits and Earl De Maistre began a war with Masonic associations in the Russian Empire¹⁶. However, De Maistre, like the Jesuits, was expelled from Russia in 1820 after the issuance of the imperial decree “On the dispatch of Jesuits beyond the boundaries of the empire”¹⁷.

The “British Bible Society” saw the main tasks of its activities in the publication and distribution of the Bible, without any explanation and notes, and the elimination of dogmatic differences between different religions, because the most important principle of the functioning of the society was the approval of the idea of the widest tolerance. The main task of “Russian Bible Society” was to spread the Holy Scriptures among the peoples who lived in the Russian Empire by publishing in various languages the books of the Old and New Testaments¹⁸.

At the beginning of the company’s activities, the members of its main committee were almost exclusively secular individuals. Thus, the president of the society was the Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Education Prince A.Golitsyn, the vice-presidents – Count V.Kochubey and Razumovsky, the Chief Steward of the household – R.Kosheleva, the secretaries – the director of the department of spiritual affairs – mason O.Turgenev and the director of the Department of Public Education – V.Popova¹⁹. Later, the well-known Mason and the mystic O.Labzin, the publisher of the Zion Gazette, entered the board of directors of the Russian Bible Society²⁰.

Only in 1814, 9 new vice-presidents of the Society were elected from the clergy of various Christian denominations. Among them were Orthodox hierarchs – Ambrose (Podobedov), Metropolitan of Novgorod Mikhail (Desnitsky), Archbishop of Chernihiv Seraphim (Glagolevsky), Archbishop of Tver, later – Metropolitan of Moscow, and later – of St. Petersburg, Catholic Metropolitan S.Siestrzeńcewicz, Uniate Metropolitan J.Buľhak, Archbishop of Russian Armenians Ioannes and others. The list of directors of the Main Committee of the Society also included

¹³ IP НБУВ. – Ф.304. – Дис.№401 (*Гадзинский Я.* Граф де Местр в России. 1865). – Арк.31 зв.

¹⁴ *Башилов Б.* История русского масонства // Наш современник. – 1995. – №7/8. – С.125.

¹⁵ IP НБУВ. – Ф.304. – Дис.№572. – Арк.132.

¹⁶ Там само. – Дис.№401. – Арк.36.

¹⁷ Там само. – С.78.

¹⁸ *Жмакин В., протоиерей.* Обличитель масонства: Жизнеописание святителя Иннокентия Пензенского. – Москва, 2006. – С.23–24.

¹⁹ IP НБУВ. – Ф.304. – Дис.№401. – Арк.31 зв.

²⁰ *Башилов Б.* История русского масонства. – С.126.

representatives of the clergy: the Orthodox – Archimandrite Filaret (Drozdov), the rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Archpriest Muzovsky and other confessions – Catholic, Armenian, Lutheran, Greek Catholic²¹.

Despite the fact that members of the “Russian Bible Society” were representatives of the clergy of different denominations, it was headed by Russian high-ranking officials belonging to the Masonic organization, which means that freemasons could directly influence the activities of this society. They contributed to its prosperity, both official and informal, because their appeals to help the company were perceived by subordinates as the instructions of the authorities, and their letters were considered official circulars. Due to such intercession, only a few years after the establishment of the company, its branches appeared in many provincial and county cities.

In 1815, on the recommendation of A. Golitsyn, Emperor Alexander I issued a directive to the Synod on the need for the translation of the Holy Scriptures in Russian, in which he emphasized: “It must be possible for the Russians to read the word of God in their native, Russian language”. The translation of the Bible into Russian and other languages of peoples residing within the Russian Empire was closely linked with the activities of the Russian Bible Society. The imperial order was implemented by the theologians of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy under the direction of its rector Archimandrite Filaret (Drozdov). In 1818 the Four Gospels were printed in the Russian language, in 1820 the entire edition of the New Testament was published in Russian translation, in 1822 – the translation of the Psalter was made. To accelerate the process of translation of all biblical books into Russian, this work was divided between scholars-theologians of the Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kyiv Theological Academies. The head of this mission was Archimandrite Filaret. The translators used Hebrew texts, but also Greek, French and German translations of the Bible. In 1825, 8 Biblical books were published: Pentateuch, Joshua, Judge and Ruth, which were included in the first Bible volume²². During the period from 1814 to 1823, the New Testament was translated into Persian, Tatar, Chuvash, Mordvin, Kalmyk, and other languages of the peoples of the Russian Empire²³.

Most contemporaries positively assessed the activities of the “Russian Bible Society” in translating the Bible into different languages, although there were those who mercilessly criticized it. So, for example, O. Shishkov, who became Minister of Public Education after the dismissal of Prince A. Golitsyn from this post, wrote: “The Biblical community hastily and mischievously translated the New Testament. And this is not surprising, because its translation, once carried out by the saints Cyril and Methodius, is now done by several academy students in no time. Most members of the Bible Society laughed while reading the Mordvinian and Chuvash Gospels. Would not it be easier to teach these savages Slavic literacy, if the Bible Society had no other dirty intentions?”²⁴.

²¹ Жмакин В., протоиерей. Обличитель масонства... – С.25.

²² Там же. – С.27.

²³ Карташев А.В. История русской церкви. – Москва, 2005. – С.882.

²⁴ IP НБУВ. – Ф.61. – Спр.1628. – Арк.3, 4–4 зв.

The high Christian goals of the Russian Bible Society were quickly eroded by the fanatical enthusiasm of his leadership to mysticism and pietism. The Orthodox clergy, which supported the idea of the creation of this society and even contributed to its functioning, began to criticize its activities. The rejection of the “Russian Bible Society” by the Orthodox clergy was due to a modest position of the representatives of the Orthodox Church in it (the hierarchs of this denomination complained of an equalization of the Orthodox Church with other, even non-Christian, religion, what reduced its status of “dominant” in the state). Also, prince A.Golitsyn became the most important source of dissatisfaction and annoyance among the clergy because of his passion for mysticism. As O.Shishkov wrote in his memoirs: “Is it not ridiculous to contemplate in our Bible societies our metropolitans and bishops who sit, contrary to the apostolic guidance, together with the Lutherans, Catholics and Quaker? With gray heads in their cassock they sit with the laity of all nations, and a man in a coat tells them the Word of God. Where is the decency? Where is the church?”²⁵.

Not only the Orthodox clergy were disappointed with the activities of the “Russian Bible Society”, the emperor Alexander I himself began to treat it cooler. At his direction, in 1824 the company was headed by Metropolitan Seraphim, who replaced A.Golitsyn. It was Seraphim who appealed to the emperor to eliminate the “Russian Bible Society”. He wrote to Alexander I: “In the hidden intentions and actions of the society there is a violation of the sacred duties of the church: to be obedient and loyal to the emperor”²⁶. Although this request was not implemented, some branches of the society began to close all over the country. When the new Russian emperor became Nicholas I, the Kyiv Metropolitan Yevgeny (Bolkhovitinov) spoke about the liquidation of the society. Nicholas I acted more resolutely and consistently than his predecessor. On the 12 of April, 1826, “Russian Bible Society” was closed according to the imperial decree²⁷. Since then, the persecution began for everything that was connected with its activity: the translation and distribution of translated copies of the Holy Scripture had been suspended, it was ordered to remove from the libraries all the books of religious and moral content issued without spiritual censorship. To accomplish this task a temporary committee was set up at the St. Petersburg Spiritual Academy. It consisted of 12 clerics led by the rector of this educational institution. The property of the Russian Bible Society, estimated at almost 2 million rubles, was handed over to the Synod²⁸.

In such a way the history of the existence of the “Russian Bible Society” ended. Its activities were ambiguous. Thus, at the beginning of its functioning, it intended to reform Orthodoxy, made much for the publication of the Holy Scripture in national languages and its dissemination. As it turned out later, under the influence of its supreme leadership belonging to the Masonic organization, it spread mystical works and wanted to replace Orthodoxy with

²⁵ Жмакин В., протоиерей. Обличитель масонства... – С.30.

²⁶ Карташев А.В. История русской церкви. – С.882.

²⁷ Там же. – С.882–883.

²⁸ IP НБУВ. – Ф.304. – Дис.№572. – Арк.133 зв.

a surrogate that combined mysticism and cosmopolitanism. One can not but agree with the opinion of P.Znamensky²⁹ that as a result of the proliferation of mysticism through the influential figures of the “Bible Society” in the Russian Empire, not only the western sects activated their activities, but also the number of supporters of local sects began to increase – the sect of dukhobors, whips and skopets.

It is worth noting that all the protests against Bible societies were rare, since in the beginning of the 19 century the religious propaganda of other denominations and sects entered the official state policy of the Russian Empire. Mason A.Golitsyn, head of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education, also served as the main censor³⁰. His ministry paid much attention to the dissemination of numerous mystical works, which were published in large numbers and sent to all educational institutions, distributed in eparchies and provinces, some of them were reissued two or three times in a short period. Already mentioned above *Zion Gazette* was among them. Bishops, archimandrites a number of ordinary priests, all the seminaries and theological academies were subscribed to it (only the St. Petersburg Academy ordered 11 copies)³¹. This Masonic periodical was extremely popular among the Ukrainian public. In particular, Ukrainian spiritual educational institutions, for example, the Poltava Seminary and its rector Archimandrite Cyril subscribed to it.³²

The students of religious academies and separate representatives of the Orthodox clergy were under the influence of mystical sentiment. Thus, in particular, Archimandrite Photius reported that some students of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy were in captivity of a dangerous interest to mystical works. The catechist of the second cadet corps celibate priest Iov was so permeated with the mystical “insights” that in the church he cut the icons of the Savior and the Mother of God³³.

In general, according to incomplete data of O.Platonov, 24 Orthodox priests and 29 clerics of other religions (mostly Lutheran) were members of the Masonic lodges in the Russian Empire at the end of the 18 – the first quarter of the 19 century³⁴.

T.Bakunina gives a list of Orthodox pastors – participants of the Masonic lodges. There were representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox clergy among them, in particular, Levitsky Theodosius Nesterovich – priest of the Holy Nicholas Church of Balts of the Podolsk province (in 1824, because of his speech pronounced in Masonic traditions, with attacks against Orthodoxy, he was sent to the Konevsky Monastery), F.Lisevych – a Podillia priest (fond of mysticism), Theophilus – the hieromonk, catechist of the Second Cadet Corps, and later – a Lyceum in Odesa (he headed various monasteries; died in the Fedorivskiy

²⁹ *Знаменский П.В. История русской церкви. – Москва, 2002. – С.14.*

³⁰ *Платонов О. Терновый венец России... – С.75.*

³¹ *Башилов Б. История русского масонства. – С.126.*

³² *Крижановська О.О. Таємні організації в Україні. – К., 1998. – С.52.*

³³ *Сладкопевцев П. Материалы по истории мистицизма и масонства в России // Духовная беседа. – 1865. – №10.*

³⁴ *Платонов О. Масонский заговор в России (1731–1995 гг.). – С.118.*

Monastery, had close relations with A.Golitsyn, the speaker in “The Dying Sphinx” lodge till 1818)³⁵.

According to T.Bakunina, apart from the named clerics, whose participation in the Masonic lodges was documented, there were still many priests, whose direct connection with Masonic lodges can not be considered a proven fact, but whose views were close to the Masonic ideology. O.Borovik from the Right Bank was such a servants of the cult (from 1814 – Bishop Vologda and Ustyug, from 1827 – Archbishop of Katerynoslav, Kherson and Tavriia)³⁶. The rector of the Kyiv Theological Academy, Archimandrite of the Bratsk Monastery Smaragd was also suspected in connection with the Masonic organization³⁷.

Despite the existence of these lists, due to the lack of sources (the Masons themselves did not advertise their own affiliation with the organization, the church in general did not keep alive these facts), it is not even possible to roughly determine the number of clergymen – the participants of the Masonic lodges.

After exposing a number of Polish secret societies in the early 20-ies of the 19 century – Masonic or connected with it – and establishing their cooperation with the Decembrists, the tsarist government established itself in the intention to put an end to the Masonic movement in the state. As noted above, in 1826, Nicholas I confirmed the validity of the “highest” decree of 1822 on the prohibition of all secret societies and circles, primarily Masonic³⁸. In the same year, according to the imperial decree, chief prosecutor Prince P.Meshchersky issued a decree on the taking written document from the spiritual consistory, spiritual rulings and officials about their ineligibility for Masonic lodges. In his letter to Metropolitan Yevgeny (Bolkhovitinov), he wrote: “I beg Your Eminence for the capture of written documents from all the officials who are in service in the consistory, spiritual reigns, as well as in the higher and lower spiritual schools, that they will not belong to any secret societies, under whatever name they existed, and deliver these papers personally to me”³⁹. On July 5, 1826 the chief prosecutor sent a similar circular to Archimandrite Varlaam, the rector of the Kyiv Theological Academy⁴⁰. During 1827 spiritual consistory forced priests to give special paper in which they would commit themselves not to participate in any secret societies. In particular, it was said in the text of such a paper: “I, the undersigned, affirm that I never belonged to any secret societies, either in the Russian Empire or abroad, and know about their existence only from the rumor. I will not belong to any secret societies, whatever names they have; otherwise I impose myself on a severe punishment as a state offender”⁴¹. These government

³⁵ *Бакунина Т.А.* Знаменитые русские масоны. – С.116.

³⁶ Там же. – С.117.

³⁷ Державний архів Київської обл. (далі – ДАКО). – Ф.3. – Оп.1. – Спр.173.

³⁸ *Панков А.А.* Упадок православного прихода (XVIII–XIX ст.). Историческая справка. – Москва, 1899. – С.161.

³⁹ Центральний державний історичний архів України, м. Київ (далі – ЦДАК України). – Ф.127. – Оп.379. – Спр.99. – Арк.1.

⁴⁰ ІР НБУВ. – Ф.160. – Спр.1303. – 3 арк.

⁴¹ Державний архів Волинської обл. – Ф.382. – Оп.2. – Спр.427. – Арк.3.

orders most likely indicate that the government not only reinsured, but was informed about the participation of clergy in the work of secret societies.

However, government measures against the participation of church representatives in the work of secret organizations did not achieve their goal. This is evidenced by the fact that on August 13, 1823, almost a year after the issuance of the royal decree of 1822, the Minister of Internal Affairs ordered the Kyiv governor to identify the Masonic lodges in Kyiv, which, ignoring the ban, continued to operate secretly. He ordered to conduct an appropriate investigation and to close the detected lodges. The Minister threatened tough measures with those local authorities which would not eliminate existing secret societies⁴². Anyway Masonic organizations continued to operate in the empire. It is witnessed by the new tsarist measures against them. Thus, on June 3, 1837, the police were given widespread rights in the fight against Masonic and other opposition organizations. In a special decree it was said: "The police not only have the right, but they are obliged to put an end to all secret, illegal gatherings, unions or fraternities, Masonic lodges, etc."⁴³. In 1849 officials, priests, and teachers again gave written documents that they did not belong and would not belong to secret organizations⁴⁴. However, despite the government's warnings and prohibition, as well as direct repression, Masonic lodges did not stop their activities and continued to work, but they did it even more conspicuously. Countess M. Tolstaya recalled that "after the closure of all lodges, all the rites disappeared, but the gatherings of brothers continued in the form of conversations quite often and the admission of new members secretly continued"⁴⁵.

Most likely, police kept silent about the involvement of the clergy in the activities of the Masonic organization. This is evidenced by the following case. On July 3, 1830 the investigator of the Chyhyryn lower court reported to the Volyn governor that in the village of Boltyska, a rural dean Bakanovsky's notebook was found during the search, where Masonic rites were described. This report, together with the notebook, was sent to the head of Masonic secret police A. Benckendorff⁴⁶. Police did not give a move to this case. The resolution noted that there were no Masonic books found, so the fact of the confiscation of the above-mentioned notebook was hidden⁴⁷. At the same time, Benckendorff issued an order to get another written documents from gentry, clergy and other groups of the population that they did not belong to secret societies⁴⁸.

The imperial government strongly condemned the political Freemasonry of the Decembrists. The involvement of the regimental priest Dany Keizer in the uprising of the Chernihiv Infantry Regiment especially disturbed Nicholas I. Regimental priests Dmitry Kraskiv and Ivan Akhstestin gave evidence that on

⁴² ДАКО. – Ф.2. – Оп.145. – Спр.320. – Арк.2–2 зв.

⁴³ Палков А.А. Упадок православного прихода (XVIII–XIX ст.). – С.161–162.

⁴⁴ ДАКО. – Ф.2. – Оп.154. – Спр.126. – Арк.2.

⁴⁵ Крижановська О.О. Таємні організації в Україні. – С.30.

⁴⁶ ЦДІАК України. – Ф.533. – Оп.2. – Спр.633. – Арк.1–1 зв.; Масонство в его прошлом и настоящем. – Ч.1. – С.242.

⁴⁷ ЦДІАК України. – Ф.533. – Оп.2. – Спр.633. – Арк.2 зв.

⁴⁸ Там само. – Арк.5–5 зв.

December 31, 1825 in Vasylykiv Keyser read a catechism composed by rebels, saying that “there should not be kings of the Earth and they are commemorated in the churches only in order to deceive people”. They assured that Kaiser received 200 rubles from the leader of the uprising S.Muravyov-Apostol. The clergyman himself argued that when he was carrying out the liturgy, “he was in such an unusual state that he did not remember what document was forced to repeat after the officers who were standing next to him”. In this situation it was not so important whose testimony was more truthful. The main thing was that the emperor was convinced that “rebellious spirit” could take over even the privileged part of the clergy, who was in the civil service. After all, even if among such pastors there were oppositionists, then the lower clergy could be easily filled with anti-government sentiment. Keizer was deprived of his dignity and sent to the Kyiv Provincial Government for the transfer to a military court⁴⁹.

The Decembrists-Masons saw the future of the Russian state without Orthodoxy. Thus, Decembrist Ulybashev clearly described in his literary utopia the life in Russia after realization of conspirators’ plans. In St. Petersburg, a triumphal arch will stand on the site of the St. Alexander Nevsky Lavra. In a magnificent temple that will overshadow the “majestic monuments of the Roman power’ there will be a special liturgy: here, in front of the marble altar, where the eternal fire burns, “they will pray to the Architect of the Universe” that is, the Masonic God. Orthodox Christianity will vanish, only “a few old people will profess the former religion, but most people will live anew, differently”⁵⁰.

So, as we see, the indulgent attitude of the tsarist government to “Royal Art” ceased when it appeared that this organization was involved in political conspiracies against autocracy and national liberation movements. But, despite the strict measures taken by the imperial authorities against the Masonic organization, the lodges continued to exist, but they functioned more secretly.

Freemasonry in the 18–19 centuries did not play a leading role in the public-political life of the Russian Empire, including the Right-bank Ukraine but it significantly influenced it. “Royal Art” apparently prepared society for the acceptance of constitutional and republican ideas, the abolition of serfdom and significantly affected the ideological growth of future generations of both the Russian and Ukrainian intelligentsia.

The data on the activities of the Masonic lodges in the second half of the 19 century were extremely mumble, therefore, it might give the impression that before the revolution of 1905–1907 the Masonic organization ceased its activities in the Russian state. However, this is not entirely true. At that time the “Royal Art” worked, but it was very conspiring. Favorable conditions for the activation of Freemasonry appeared after the publication of the royal manifesto on October 17, 1905, which proclaimed civil liberties and general amnesty. Many emigrants returned to the empire, freemasons who gathered around the Parisian Russian Higher School of Social Sciences were among them. They were determined to

⁴⁹ Русское православие: веки истории. – С.326.

⁵⁰ Нечкина М.В. Декабристы. – Москва, 1975. – С.33–34.

revive the Masonic organization in the state. At this time, local Masons, as well as whole lodges awoke and become ready to be active in public-political life⁵¹.

Such a process encompassed not only Russia but also Ukraine, including the South-West region. This is eloquently illustrated by numerous orders, Circulars of the Police Department directed to local subordinates, also reports of police officers to their superiors on the activities of the Masonic organization, its membership, the goals and tasks that it put before its members⁵². The Orthodox clergy associated even the organization of several public seminars by Protestants in Russia during this period with the rebirth of them under the influence and according to the model of Freemasonry⁵³.

Before the emergence of the political “Freemasonry of Kerensky” or “Duma Freemasonry”, “Royal Art” in the Russian Empire in general was developing along the lines of the French Masonic tradition. In 1909, the Masonic leadership was forced to dismantle the lodges, with the aim of “eliminating those dear brothers whose talks had been detected”. As a result of this campaign, reformed in 1909, the Masonic organization became even more secretive. Soon on its basis the aforementioned political Freemasonry arose in Russia⁵⁴.

In the early 20 century freemasons in Ukraine were much more active in political respect than in Russia. It is no coincidence that the Ukrainian freemasons put forward the idea to leave the former mystical nonsense and fully concentrate their efforts on the political struggle. A.Avrehk⁵⁵ and S.Melgunov⁵⁶ expressed the opinion that exactly Kyiv’s “workshops” proposed the creation of a qualitatively new Masonic organization – a political one.

Researchers have not established the exact date of the appearance of this organization. S.Melgunov⁵⁷ stated it was in 1915, but A.Kerensky recalled that he had joined it in 1912, “immediately after being elected to the fourth Duma”. V.Startsev and A.Serkov believed that the new Freemasonry actually appeared even in 1910⁵⁸. In 1912, the first convention of the Masonic lodges took place in Moscow, where the governing body of the organization – Supreme Council – was elected and the Russian Grand Orient was proclaimed. Participants of the convention called the newly formed Masonic organization “The Great Orient of peoples of Russia”⁵⁹.

Effectively using personal ties, the “Masons of Kerensky” began to hold senior positions in the country’s most important state, political and public institutions.

⁵¹ Крижановська О.О. Таємні організації в Україні. – С.30–31.

⁵² ЦДІАК України. – Ф.385. – Оп.1. – Спр.2793 (1 ч.). – 138 арк.; Ф.274. – Оп.4. – Спр.356. – 176 арк.

⁵³ Надтока Г.М. Православна церква в Україні 1900–1917 рр.: соціально-релігійний аспект. – К., 1998. – С.109.

⁵⁴ Крижановська О.О. Таємні організації в Україні. – С.33.

⁵⁵ Аврех А.Я. Масоны и революция. – Москва, 1990. – С.193.

⁵⁶ Мельгунов С.И. На пути к дворцовому перевороту: Заговоры перед революцией 1917 г. – Париж, 1931. – С.185.

⁵⁷ Там же. – С.185–186.

⁵⁸ Старцев В.И. Российские масоны XX в. // Вопросы истории. – 1989. – №6. – С.39; Серков А.И. История русского масонства: 1845–1945. – Санкт-Петербург, 1997. – С.107.

⁵⁹ Крижановська О.О. Таємні організації в Україні. – С.33.

On this occasion M.Hrushevskyi recalled: “The Masonic organization has worked extensively, it has carried out its long-established tactical plan for all sorts of political opportunities to use its ties and to lead its people to influential positions. The Masonic organization obviously influenced the process of replacing of higher political positions”⁶⁰. More than 40 representatives of the “Royal Art” were in the State Duma. Its deputy head was cadet M.Nekrasov – Secretary of the Supreme Council of the All-Masonic organization. There were also Freemasons in the State Council (A.Guchkov, M.Kovalevsky, Baron Meller-Zakomelsky, generals Gurko and Polivanov). The Masonic organization consisted of 8 royal ministers (Minister of War – Polivanov, Minister of Agriculture – Naumov, finance ministers – Kutler and Bark, Ministers of Internal Affairs – Dzhunkovsky and Urusov, Minister of Commerce and Industry – Fedorov). The great princes Nikolai Mikhailovich, Alexander Mikhailovich and Nikolai Nikolayevich, the head of the office of the king’s court general Mosolov were Masons. The Grand Duke Dmitry Pavlovich also cooperated with the Masons⁶¹.

In his monograph “Masons as Enemies of the Christian Church and the State”, published in 1913, the priest P.Dernov eloquently describes the process of promoting the Masons to the Olympus of power: “acting secretly, the Masons stubbornly pursued their goal – the destruction of the Russian monarchy and its sacred foundation – the church. And the time will come when we will see the bloody hands of Freemasonry in the development of nihilism and godlessness in Russia in the 60’s and 70’s of the 19 century, in numerous attempts on King Alexander’s II life. How will the Masons gain a victory over us? By disbelief! All kinds of debauchery must spill over Russia in a wide wave and overtake all classes of society, all layers. Their main focus is on the struggle with Christianity and especially with Orthodoxy. Gold and print media will help them in this. There are enough people for this propaganda among the Jews, but they still need to use the services of the blind and stupid Russians”. The author saw the following in the actions of an “experienced director” – a masonry: the organization of the simultaneous outbreak of an open revolution in all outskirts of the Russian Empire, the proliferation of millions of anti-monarchical proclamations, the organization of strikes of workers and students, street demonstrations with red banners and slogans “Down with autocracy!”, the destruction of royal portraits and so on. P.Dernov asserted that Freemasonry operated in the country secretly, covering by educational societies, societies of peace, etc. Thus, in particular, in his opinion, the “Mir Society” was an openly Masonic organization, many of whose members were members of the State Duma and the State Council⁶².

The priest’s opinion can be confirmed by the order of the police department to the heads of provincial departments, the department of public safety and officers of a separate corps of gendarmes from 1914. It was said in it that, unable to act legally in Russia because of the decrees of August 1, 1822 and April 21,

⁶⁰ Грушевський М.С. Спомини // Київ. – 1989. – №9. – С.133.

⁶¹ Платонов О. Терновый венец России... – С.220–221.

⁶² Дернов П., свящ. Масоны, как враги христианской церкви и государства. – Санкт-Петербург, 1913. – С.48–50.

1826, Freemasonry nevertheless persistently and stubbornly spread across the empire under the banner of various societies: scientific and philosophical, occult and others. Such organizations were sometimes headed by those who accepted the Masonic dedication abroad. They hypocritically expose themselves as supporters of the tsarist government, but at the same time inoculate members of these societies with Masonic ideas. Among them was “Mir Society” which was a branch of an international company with a similar name. It promoted the idea of anti-militarism. In addition to the above-mentioned society, there were so-called “theosophical, evangelical, Christian associations, also occult and spirited societies which under the guise of seeking the truth, imposed heresies, disbelievers, and struggle against the Christian church”. Anthroposophical societies and philomystic circles propagated ideas of freedom, equality and fraternity of peoples. Thus, without being directly Masonic, the aforementioned organizations carried out individual points of the general Masonic program. This became possible due to the highly approved temporary rules according to which such associations had the right to form and distribute their departments in other cities with the permission of local provincial authorities since March 4, 1906. They used this opportunity, masking their harmful activities, freely distributing Masonic ideas among their followers. The Police Department asked the heads of provincial departments and officers of a separate gendarmerie corps to pay special attention to the existence of such organizations, to get information about their members and secret activities, and to inform the police department about the results of their work⁶³.

The strength and weakness of the Masonic movement in Ukraine were most pronounced during 1916–1919. The “Royal Art of Ukraine” took an active part in the overthrow of autocracy in the Russian Empire. It carried out anti-government propaganda in the mass media, collected funds for the coup, which was planned on the beginning of spring 1917, but was outrun by the February revolution. After the revolution, freemasons took key positions in local authorities and even in the Central Rada⁶⁴. Although political Freemasonry destroyed autocracy, it could not overcome its fractional disunity and eventually yielded to more organized and politically far-sighted Bolsheviks.

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⁶³ ЦДІАК України. – Ф.385. – Оп.1. – Спр.2793 (1 ч.). – Арк.100–101.

⁶⁴ Крижановська О.О. Таємні організації в Україні. – С.106–107.

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ЕВОЛЮЦІЯ ВЗАЄМИН МАСОНСТВА З РОСІЙСЬКОЮ ПРАВОСЛАВНОЮ ЦЕРКВОЮ НАПРИКІНЦІ XVIII – НА ПОЧАТКУ XX ст.

Анотація. *Мета статті* – неупереджений глибокий аналіз взаємин «вільних каменярів» із Російською православною церквою наприкінці XVIII – на початку XX ст. **Методологія дослідження** базується на принципах історизму,

усебічності та міждисциплінарності. Авторка використовує низку загальнонаукових (аналізу та синтезу, узагальнення) і спеціально-історичних (критичного аналізу джерел, ретроспективний, історико-генетичний, проблемно-хронологічний) методів. **Наукова новизна.** Стаття становить собою першу спробу дослідження відносин масонів та Російської православної церкви наприкінці XVIII – на початку XX ст. Лише окремі аспекти теми знайшли відображення в науковій літературі. Автори опрацювали й залучили архівні документи та матеріали, а також наукові розвідки та монографії. **Висновки.** Робиться висновок, що з католицькою церквою в масонів відразу склалися непрості стосунки. Конфлікт виник, однак, не на ґрунті масонського «атеїзму», адже масонство вважало релігію важливим елементом ідеологічного впливу на народ, при цьому не надаючи переваги жодному віровченню, стверджуючи, що всі релігії рівні між собою, однаково минуці й недосконалі. Однак, незважаючи на серйозні розбіжності у ідеології, католицька церква та польське масонство наприкінці XVIII – на початку XIX ст. все ж пішли на зближення з політичних міркувань – для виборювання незалежності Речі Посполитої. Конфлікт між масонами і православним кліром не досяг такої гостроти, якої він набув у країнах Західної Європи між католицькою церквою й масонською організацією. Значною мірою це було наслідком толерантнішого ставлення православ'я до інакодумства та цілковитої адміністративної залежності цієї конфесії від держави. Ще за Катерини II і Павла I та, особливо, за часів правління Олександра I високопосадові особи належали до масонської організації. Поблажливе ставлення уряду до «королівського мистецтва» припинилося, коли стало відомо про причетність цієї організації до політичних змов проти самодержавства та до національно-визвольних рухів. Але, незважаючи на вжиті імперськими властями суворі заходи проти масонської організації, ложі продовжували існувати, проте функціонували ще більш утаємничено. Варто зазначити, що якщо масонство у XVIII–XIX ст. й не відіграло провідної ролі у громадсько-політичному житті Російської імперії, у тому числі Правобережної України, то воно істотно впливало на нього. «Королівське мистецтво» вочевидь підготувало суспільство до сприйняття конституційних і республіканських ідей, до скасування кріпосного права й відчутно позначилося на ідеологічному зростанні майбутніх поколінь російської та української інтелігенції. Політична активність «вільних каменярів» України на початку XX ст. була явно вищою, аніж у тодішній Росії. Не випадково саме українські масони висунули ідею полишити містичні практики та цілковито сконцентрувати свої зусилля на політичній боротьбі. Хоча «політичне масонство» знищило самодержавство, проте не змогло здолати свою фракційну роз'єднаність і зрештою поступилося владними повноваженнями більш організованам та політично далекоглядним більшовикам.

Ключові слова: масонство, Російська православна церква, духівництво, «вільні каменяри», російське самодержавство.