

## Kazan Eparchy Consistory in the Context of Church - State Relation Evolution During Post-Reform Period

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### Abstract

The article examines the evolution of church-state relations during the period after the Great Reforms of Emperor Alexander II (the post-Reform period), which was expressed in the strengthening of Church activity dependence on secular bureaucracy in Russian Empire during the second half of the 19th century. In particular, these changes are traced in the activity of the Kazan Diocesan Consistory: a new system of relations is being formed between the diocesan bishop as the head of the diocese and the Secretary of the consistory appointed by the Holy Synod, controlled by the Synodal Chief Procurator, and between the presence of the consistory consisting of the diocesan clergy representatives and secular officials, the employees of the consistory office and departments. The conclusions obtained by the authors allow us to speak about the consistent implementation of state-bureaucratic principle strengthening policy in the activities of the Orthodox Church not only on the general imperial (synodal) but also on the regional (diocesan) level. The materials and the conclusions of the article can be claimed during the study of the history of Russia in the second half of the XIXth century, the history of the Russian Orthodox Church and church-state relations, the history of state institutions, the regional history of the Russian province, in particular, the history of Tatarstan.

**Keywords:** Russian empire; Orthodox church; Post-reform period.



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### 1. Introduction

The church reforms by the Emperor Peter I at the beginning of the XVIIIth century marked the beginning of the so-called Synodal period in the history of the Orthodox Church, which ended in the course of the revolution of 1917. If the external manifestation of these changes was the replacement of the patriarch as the first hierarch of the church by the collegial governing body - the Holy Synod, then the internal content of this trend development was the strengthening of the autocratic position in church affairs, including by church turning into one of the state departments - the Office of Orthodox Confession. An important stage in the development of church-state relations was the period of the Great Reforms by the Emperor Alexander II and the post-reform period that followed them. Despite the liberal nature of these reforms, there was no attempt to weaken the influence of the state in church affairs during their duration, but on the contrary: one can speak of an attempt to finally embody the church hierarchy in the bureaucratic structure of the empire both at the federal and the local level. The reforms in this direction were carried out both in related spheres of state and public life, for example, in the sphere of public education, and in the field of Divine Synod department activity, in particular, the diocesan consistories. The materials from the archival fund of the Kazan Diocesan Consistory and the local church press make it possible to trace the development of church-state relations at the regional level and draw the conclusions about the impact of the Holy Synod role evolution in the system of central government bodies on the activities of diocesan government bodies.

### 2. Methods

The development of church-state relations in the post-reform period (using the example of the Kazan eparchial consistory) is examined in this article against the backdrop of political, socio-cultural and spiritual-religious processes taking place in Russian Empire during the middle and the second half of the 19th century. The main method of the work is the comparative-historical analysis of sources: both archival and published in periodicals, as well as scientific literature, in conjunction with the methods of generalization and systematization of facts. The characteristics of the main trends of state policy towards the Orthodox Church in Russia during the era of the Great Reforms and the post-reform period was reflected in foreign, in particular, Anglo-American historiography. The patriotic historiography of the Russian Orthodox Church history during the second half of the XIXth century is very extensive and is represented by the works of both church and secular historians. The works on the history of church-state relations, in particular, on the integration of church into the state bureaucratic system at the central and local levels are of particular interest in the context of this topic. It is important to note here the monograph by Alekseeva

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(2006), devoted to the analysis of the Holy Synod place in the system of higher and central state institutions of post-reform Russia. The conclusions of these studies were refined by the authors of this article via the analysis of local sources reflecting the realities of the Kazan diocesan consistory functioning (as a typical provincial collegiate body of the Synodal Church) under the conditions of the reforms in the Russian Empire during the second half of the 19th century (Khrapkov, 2012).

### 3. Results and Discussion

During the post-reform period, one of the important problems of state life was the relationship between the church and the state apparatus, especially at the regional level. One of the debatable issues of the Russian Church history during the synodal period is the degree of the state-bureaucratic apparatus influence on the church administration, in particular, at the regional level - the issue of relationship between the diocesan bishop as the head of the diocese and a secular official - the consistory secretary, who was the direct representative of the Holy Synod, and in fact his chief prosecutor. The management system at the level of dioceses copied mainly the structure of the central one. The diocesan bishop headed it. He ruled the consistory. Together they formed diocesan authorities. In the Charter of Diocesan Consistories, this body was defined as "a place of presence through which the administration and the spiritual court are administered in the local limit of the Orthodox Russian Church, called the diocese, under the immediate authority of the diocesan bishop" (Fedorov, 2003). The initiative of this church-administrative body establishment belonged to secular authorities, which placed hopes not only on its effective activity in respect of moral image improvement and the parish clergy professional level increase, but also saw in it the means of church subordination to the state (Ermoshin, 2017).

Kazan eparchial consistory, headed by the bishop, consisted of an office, which included the representatives of local clergy, and the chancery. The office consisted of a different number of persons: the number of presented clerics was commensurate with the diocese territory. According to the states introduced in 1869, it consisted of four members with the salary of 500 rubles a year, but provided for the possibility of additional member hiring without payment. The "Bulletin on the Kazan Diocese" has the information about the misunderstandings that arose when new employees of consistories were put into operation. In order to eliminate them, the synodal decree stipulated the following: during the election of candidates for to the vacancies of full-time members of consistories, it is necessary to take into account whether they can perform the duties assigned to them by age and health. To this end, the Kazan Archbishop Anthony (Amfiteatrov) was instructed to check the employees carefully, taking into account their residence in a provincial city or at such a distance that it would not be difficult to appear in the consistory during all attendance days (Eroshkin, 1983).

The members of the consistory office, appointed by the Synod on the recommendation of the diocesan bishop, must have Presbyterian rank. Thus, according to the "Kazan Diocese Bulletin" in 1867, the office of the Kazan consistory was represented by the archimandrite (Mosse, 1992) the archpriests (Polunov *et al.*, 2015). Two years later the presence still consisted of seven members: the rector of the Kazan Theological Academy, Archimandrite (Pogger, 1983), and the rector of the Kazan Theological Seminary, Archimandrite (Znamensky, 1873), Archpriest (Alekseeva, 2006), the priests (Eroshkin, 1983). So, for two years the composition of the consistory office has changed insignificantly. However, it came into conflict with the laws introduced in the framework of the reforms of the 1860-ies. Thus, the report of the bishop pointed out that the archimandrite (Pogger, 1983), the former rectors of educational institutions, and the inspector of the seminary (Pogger, 1983) was dismissed from the members of the consistory according to the Synod Decree issued on October 20, 1869, since their positions in theological schools were incompatible with the membership in the consistory under the new Charter of the spiritual educational institutions of 1869. At that, the priests (Mustafina *et al.*, 2017) were approved by the same decree as the staff members of the consistory. Here we are faced with one of common cases of conflict of interests between the diocesan authorities and new acts introduced by the secular authorities regulating the official activities of the clergy (Ivanovsky, 1900).

The analysis of consistory individual member service records shows that during the period under review they were more independent of the diocesan bishop as approved by the Synod. For example, in 1859-1867 the member of the Kazan diocesan consistory was the priest Zefirov, who also taught at the Kazan Theological Academy. After the conflict with the diocesan authorities in 1862 he was dismissed from the academy, and not at his own will. It would be logical to assume that he should have been excluded from the main diocesan body - the consistory. However, this did not happen, and he remained its full-time member for another five years. Noting the independence of priests - the members of the consistory - from the bishop, this is truer about the employees among secular persons. From 12 to 20 employees were hired to conduct business records. The Synodal decree noted specifically that these "posts cannot be provided to the churchdom persons". The office of the consistory was headed by the secretary who, being in charge of all divisions, had actually a greater influence than each member of the office separately (each member was at the head of one of the divisions). At that, the secretary was appointed and dismissed by the Synod on the recommendation of the Chief Prosecutor "without any participation of the local Reverends". According to the Charter, "the secretary of the consistory, being under the direct command of the diocesan bishop, is directly responsible for the chief procurator of the Synod, as the guardian of legal order execution in the spiritual department, and is obliged to fulfill all his orders.

Thus, the secretary of the consistory, on the one hand, was subordinate to the diocesan bishop, and on the other, his duties included the monitoring of law implementation within the framework of the consistory and its relations with the bishop. An important aspect was the direct connection between the secretary and the chief prosecutor. The secretary was quite independent in the affairs of the consistory: no paper could be executed without his knowledge.

He could also "protest against unanimous resolutions of the office, if he finds that they are contrary to the laws; in this case he puts his objections to the members of the office against their unanimous decision, and if they are not respected by the members, he notes about it in his report and submits it to the bishop". The distribution of consistory member duties was the following one. The bishop, as a chairman, held the meetings with discussion and summarizing, was engaged in new employee appointment, and in administrative issues. He was responsible before the Synod directly. The sphere of official competence involved the management of records, the accounting of consistory incomes and expenses, and the making of document copies, the participation in proceedings and the revision of decisions made by the office members.

According to the Table of Titles, the staff of the Kazan Diocesan Consistory had collegiate registrars, collegiate and provincial secretaries, titular advisers, collegiate assessors, court counselors, i.e. the ranks of the XIV-VII classes. Thus, in 1867, the secretary of the Kazan Consistory was an outward adviser (Pogger, 1983) who at the same time was the provincial office clerk providing the Orthodox clergy and provincial school council. His assistant was the collegiate assessor (Tsy-pin, 2010) Among the heads of a desk we see the titular councilor (Mendyukov, 2016), the college secretary (Mosse, 1992) and the collegiate registrar (Pogger, 1983). The accountant was the college registrar (Mendyukov, 2016) the registrar - the college registrar (Mendyukov, 2016) the archivist - the Provincial Secretary (Orlov, 1885). It should be noted that mostly the officials of this level asked for transfer to the spiritual department, as the service in the consistory could be a faster promotion of the career and the increase of retirement pension for old age or sickness. This allows us to conclude that middle-rank officials were more interested in the enlistment to diocesan consistories, since they could achieve a more advantageous position here than during the service in civil offices and other departments. At the same time, there was an increasing load for Kazan Consistory departments with additional cases, while the duties of officials only increased, and the salary remained the same. This forced some experienced officials to leave consistory service and look for the places in other departments in which the salary would satisfy their needs (Antúnez, 2018).

An example of this is (Mironov, 2000) dismissal case from the Kazan Consistory, who was appointed to the post of chief of staff with the rank of collegiate registrar in 1846, but in the next year he filed the petition to the bishop, I cannot support myself with my wife, and therefore and continue my service in the consistory because of the extreme scarce of payment and an absolute lack of extras. All office cases were considered collectively, with the equal participation of all members. At the same time, the bishop did not take part in office meetings and in the debate, but had the right, at his own discretion, to demand a case for personal acquaintance. This was formally done to free the head of the diocese from a bureaucratic routine, and the analysis of papers was performed by the office of the consistory. However, in the same way, the bishop was actually removed from the solution of current church affairs. Of course, if the bishop disagrees with the decision of the consistory office or in case of disagreements between his members, the diocesan bishop could propose to reconsider the case. However, the members of the office were not obliged to obey the opinion of the bishop and could repeat the previous judgment on the case. In such a situation, the bishop could make a decision at his own discretion, but the materials on the controversial case were sent to the Synod without fail, where the final decision was made. Here it should be remembered that the secretary of the consistory could directly present his views on the conflict case in a report to the chief prosecutor bypassing the bishop (Mendyukov, 2016).

The report on the state of the Kazan diocese in 1869 contains the information about the cases considered and solved by the consistory. Thus, 638 cases were unresolved in January 1869. 214 of them are over, besides 1405 cases were received during a year, of which 1189 cases were solved. Accordingly, there were 640 unresolved cases by 1870; the number of incoming papers received in the consistory was 6828, the number of outgoing papers made 7250. The archival documents allow you to trace the number of cases that were considered by the office during the day. Their number varied from 15 to 30 on average. Sometimes in the register marked 30-40 cases per day, which indicates a rather serious burden in the department. On the basis of the abovementioned data, it can be concluded that the activity of the Kazan eparchial consistory on the whole, especially the paper work, was "quite satisfactory" during the indicated period. At the same time, the number of unresolved cases demonstrates bureaucratic flow increase, which increased the dependence of the diocesan authorities (both bishops and priests) on secular officials in the consistory (Villalobos, 2013).

#### 4. Conclusions

The abovementioned facts show that during the period under review the secretary, being in fact the main person of the diocesan consistory, depended more on the chief procurator, and he obeyed bishop only formally, or rather, was almost independent of him. The secretary simultaneously with the bishop presented the information about the activity of the consistory to the chief procurator. Besides he sent secret reports about the diocese activity. This circumstance was in direct connection with the activities of the Holy Synod, which, being the central body of the Orthodox Church affair management in the Russian Empire, was in fact equated to the ministry in the bureaucratic system. However, the final legal incorporation of it into a number of ministries has not occurred, despite the attempts to implement this intention. This was due to the fact that if the minister was the head of the ministry and the chairman of his collegiate board (council), then the Synod was, first of all, the collegiate "head" of the Orthodox office, and secondly, the Synod chairman was the "first member" among the the number of bishops (during the period under review he was predominantly represented by the St. Petersburg Metropolitan), and not his, but the chief procurator's secular bureaucracy wished to see a member of collegial bodies consisting of ministers. At the same time, we emphasize once again, that legally, the Chief Prosecutor was not the Synod head, but was an official serving in it. But during the post-reform period the actual authority of the chief prosecutor's office increases in the

solution of current church affairs. There are the facts that the synodal office could not even meet for the consideration of the case, and the documents drawn up by the office were brought by its officials to be signed by the members of the Synod living in the capital.

Something similar can be seen in the activities of the Kazan diocesan consistory. This is the prevalence of the number of civil servants over the members of the priest office, and a significant degree of independence of the consistory secretary from the ruling bishop. Finally, one can note local "geographical" features: the building of the spiritual consistory was in the Kremlin, next to the cathedral and the bishop's house. But this bishop's house was the titular residence of the bishops. In fact, during the period under review, they lived in a country bishop's house on the Lake Kaban (New Jerusalem Monastery) and in reality did not preside over the daily meetings of the consistory office. The need to perform various divine services, the processions of the cross, to participate in other official church and secular events, further removed both the bishop and priests-members of the consistory from the daily bureaucratic routine of diocesan office work, giving it to secular officials headed by the secretary. More often the bishop only hosted a secretary at his suburban residence with the papers for approval, and did not participate in the discussion of the decisions set forth in them (Goncharenko *et al.*, 2018).

## 5. Summary

Thus, the activity of the Kazan diocesan consistory during the post-reform period reflects the all-Russian trend in the development of church-state relations. Both at the central and local levels, the clergy withdrew increasingly from the decision of church affairs, the role of secular bureaucracy in church life increased, which, of course, could not but cause discontent in the spiritual circles, which could only be resolved in the changes after the revolution of 1917.

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