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To whom does the writer V. Rozanov owe his reputation of an outstanding religious thinker?

Abstract. In 1900–1914, Rozanov’s popularity in Russia was extraordinary due to his books and articles concerning the questions of the Russian Orthodox Church’s renovation, he received an enormous amount of letters from his contemporaries, including young clerics and monks yearning for answers to their religious and moral questions or for his comments on their spiritual works. But the preoccupation with religious reformism led him to confrontation with the Church, and in this confrontation he had had an ally and an advisor in the person of Alexandre Ustyinsky, whose letters and notes the former used in his journalism. The study was based on unpublished letters of writer Vasilii Rozanov and orthodox priest Ust’insky, the letters are from two archival collections in Moscow (RGALI and literary manuscripts department of the Russian Public Library). The article provides the findings of the research on unpublished archival correspondence between V. Rozanov and the Russian Orthodox Church archpriest A. Ustyinsky as to whether the writer indeed was an original religious thinker among ‘neo-Christians’. The examination of unpublished correspondence between V. Rozanov and Novgorod archpriest Alexander Ustyinsky has shown that Rozanov was not independent in his judgments with regards to a range of religious problems which his contemporaries connected to the reformation of the Russian Church, and in this sense the writer’s oeuvre is only yet to be studied.

Keywords: Ustyinsky, Rozanov, religious reformism, neo-Christianity, Orthodox Church, ‘flesh and spirit’, letters, confrontation with Church, movement of ‘modernism, historic Christianity.

Between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, against the background of the country’s socio-political modernization in Russia, there clearly emerged a tendency of ecclesiastical structures’ and traditional religious outlook’s renovation. In many respects it resembled the religious reformist movement of ‘modernism’ in Roman Catholicism and was based upon several religious movements that had their own ideologies, doctrines or ‘programs.’ At the beginning of the 20th century, various religious-philosophical circles began to appear in Saint Petersburg, Moscow, and later in Kyiv and principal towns of province. These were formed by the people of ‘new religious consciousness’, and in most cases they were searching for ways of Russia’s spiritual renovation. Some of the circles grew into recognized religious-philosophical societies with their own publishing houses and journals, others dwindled to associations of ‘social Christianity’ or communities that were practicing ‘free Christianity’¹

and religious reformism (‘new religious consciousness’ – hereafter – ‘NRC’).

Religious reformism was taking shape of a movement since 1900, although its intellectual underpinnings were prepared by its leading ideologists during the last decade of the 19 century, and its theological basis was drawn from the religious philosophy of ecclesiastical and secular thinkers of the mid- and late 1800s. Its contemporaries did not immediately clarify this movement’s goals for themselves. The movement comprised a reformist doctrine and initially was aimed at renovating the Russian Church. This is why, in addition to their ideologemes, the movement’s participants stood for liberty of conscience and were calling to the quickest convocation of the All-Russian Synod, and included various kinds of *canonical* ecclesiastical reforms into their demands, which attracted clergy. The movement encompassed writers and philosophers, clergy and ecclesiastical intellectuals. A. Kartashev, V. Svetsitsky; philosophers N. Berdyaev, S. Bulgakov, V.

¹ see VORONTSOVA, IRINA (2013) ‘Свободное христианство еп. Михаила (Семенова) и “социальные” программы 1905–

1915 гг. (Bishop Mikhail (Semenov)’s Free Christianity and the “Social” Programs of 1905–1915); Humanities in Siberia 2, 52–56.

Eern; priests K. Aggeev, G. Petrov, I. Filevsky, P. Raevsky; professor archpriest S. Sollertinsky, who supported the NRC in different years and for different duration of time, saw themselves within the Orthodox Church but admitted apocryphal innovations; the founders and ideologists of the NRC – D. Merezhkovsky, D. Filosofov, Z. Gippius, later N. Minsky² and A. Meyer – considered it necessary to bring into the ecclesiastical dogma new ('neo-Christian') doctrines and to substitute a new ecclesiasticism for the Orthodox one. By 1908, it was determined that the NRC was characterized by the features³ that are traditionally peculiar to religious modernism of the Early modern period: critical attitude towards *regulatory, dogmatic, liturgical, social* aspects of ecclesiastical life, the aim was to modernize the said spheres, the task was to achieve harmony between ecclesiastical Christianity and modern scientific and philosophical outlook, to reconcile the former with *the process of democratization* in society. The NRC introduced the notions of 'historic Christianity' and 'historic Church' as something that in their understanding was not consistent with early Christianity and the true idea of Church. Thus, from their point of view, the historic Church was not consistent with the 'idea of Church' because it disconnected itself from every aspect of the life of human society.

Contemporaries called the NRC 'new Christianity' and 'neo-Christianity', researchers – Russian Christian modernism.⁴ The theorists of 'neo-Christianity' submitted the theses of their doctrine for discussion with the Russian Church at the Saint-Petersburg religious-philosophical society (1901–1903) (hereafter – 'SPRPS'), but could not come to an understanding with the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Russian Church did not agree with NRC's denial of the spiritual value of asceticism.

The writer Vasily Rozanov, who began his rapidly progressing career of a journalist during the last years of the 19th century and quickly acquired reputation of an expert in religious questions, was among the theorists of 'neo-Christianity'. Many books based on fundamental studies⁵ have been written about V. Rozanov, some of them are concerned with gender issues that he dealt with⁶. However, no works that would raise the central problem of the present article are known to me. V. Fateev was the one who, in a traditional manner, has scrutinized Rozanov as a religious thinker to the greatest extent.

The contribution that Rozanov has made to 'neo-Christianity' is the elaboration of the question of historical Christianity's attitude towards gender and wedlock. Rozanov claimed that Christian wedlock was not sacred whereas it was inherently 'sacred' because already in the book of Genesis it was commanded by God. Similarly to how Roman Catholic modernism (1890–1910) included overcoming the gap between the Church and modern culture into the circle of its tasks and acknowledged God's immanence to man, the doctrine of Russian 'neo-Christianity' acknowledged an acute necessity of churching culture as well as entire (creative, physiological) human life. Both due to immanence and according to Chalcedon's dogma concerning the union of two natures – god and human – in Christ. Thereby, gender and marriage, according to NRC and Rozanov, must have been revised by ecclesiastical consciousness and theology and included into the circle of sacred notions and sanctified in their sensual and psychological manifestations.

This thesis was elaborated on by Rozanov before the organization of SPRPS and in close collaboration

² MINSKY, NIKOLAI (1905) Религия будущего: Философские разговоры (The Religion of Future: Philosophical Conversations) (Saint Petersburg).

³ see VORONTSOVA, IRINA (2010) 'Основополагающие черты христианского модернизма (конец XIX – начало XX веков) (The Fundamental Features of Christian Modernism (late 19th–early 20th centuries)); Questions of Philosophy 10, 51–61.

⁴ GAYDENKO, PIAMA (1997) 'Об авторе и его герое (On the Author and his Hero); Владимир Соловьев: Жизнь и творческая эволюция (Vladimir Solovyov: His Life and Development), (ed.) S.M. Solovyov (Moscow)
GAYDENKO, PIAMA (2001) Владимир Соловьев и философия Серебряного века (Vladimir Solovyov and the Philosophy of the Silver Age) (Moscow).
OSTANINA, OLGA (1991) Обновленчество и реформаторство в Русской Православной Церкви в начале XX в.: Автореферат (Renovationism and reformation in the Russian Orthodox Church in the early 20th century: The Abstract) (Leningrad)

⁵ GOLLERBACH, ERICH (1922) В. Розанов: Жизнь и творчество (V. Rozanov: Life and Works) (Petrograd); NIKOLYUKIN, ALEXANDER (1991) Писатель нетрадиционного мышления (The Writer of Original Thinking) (Moscow); ROZANOV, VASILY (2000) 'Исследования и материалы (Studies and Materials)', The Journal of Literary Criticism 13–14; FATEEV, VALERY, (1995) В.В. Розанов: Pro et contra (Личность и творчество Василия Розанова в оценке русских мыслителей и исследователей) (V.V. Rozanov: Pro et Contra (The personality and Works of Vasily Rozanov as Seen by Russian Thinkers and Researchers)). (Saint Petersburg)

⁶ FATEEV, VALERY (2000) С русской бездной в душе: Жизнеописание Василия Розанова (With Russian Abyss in Soul: The Biography of Vasily Rozanov) (Saint Petersburg, Kostroma); BOLDYREV, NIKOLAI (2003) Семья Озириса или Василий Розанов как последний ветхозаветный пророк (The Seed of Osiris, or Vasily Rozanov as the Last Old Testament Prophet) (Chelyabinsk)
Rozanov has described himself best of all. see SUKACH, VICTOR (2002) Уединенное (The Solitary) (Moscow); SUKACH, VICTOR (2004). Смертное (The Mortal) (Moscow).

with the cleric A. Ustyinsky.⁷ However, Rozanov elaborated not only on gender problems, but also on the questions pertaining to church renovation, such as: whether Russian Church needs a patriarch, establishing second marriage for clergy, married episcopate. To a large extent, he owes his articles on church-related issues to his collaboration with Saint Petersburg Theological Academy professor N. Glubokovsky.⁸ And that is why he became enormously popular among your clerics.

The topic that Rozanov elaborated upon had a big significance in NRC. It was a part of the 'neo-Christianity' ideologist D. Merezhkovsky's 'teaching' concerning 'sacred flesh'. From the standpoint of D. Merezhkovsky, gender was as sacral as it was for V. Rozanov. Merezhkovsky realized that Rozanov was 'defending only the sanctity of *wedlock* in contrast to the ascetic inclination of historical Christianity' and fighting for 'utterly relative reforms in *wedlock* as a social phenomenon', which for the NRC was not quite significant and of even secondary importance, but the emphasis that Rozanov made on *sensual love* was important for acknowledging the 'sanctity' of flesh – the main metaphysical teaching of the doctrine. And, despite the fact that Rozanov's love-hate towards Russian Church (Rozanov wrote articles both in defense of ecclesiastical Orthodoxy and criticizing the Church) was poorly compatible with Merezhkovsky's line and frequent arguments on petty public affairs between the two, Merezhkovsky's adherents supported the former in various ways and the issues he raised.

Rozanov's popularity as a religious thinker begins to grow after his acquaintance and convergence (1898–1899) with archpriest A. Ustyinsky, the follower of archimandrite Feodor (Bukharev)⁹ who in the 19th century raised the question of necessity of ecclesiastical conscious-

ness modernization.¹⁰ Upon familiarizing himself with 'new religious consciousness', A. Ustyinsky became the first ecclesiastical reformist and priest who accepted the metaphysics of the NRC.¹¹ For all his life, he subscribed to radical views towards ecclesiastical renovation and, in spite of the fact that the Russian Church condemned them in 1902–1903,¹² continued to publish his reformist articles right up till the February Revolution of 1917. In 1921, being already an aged man, he greeted the act of apocryphal ordination of married archpriest Vasily Lipkovsky to Kiev archbishop of the independent Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church committed in order to separate from the Russian Church¹³. Ustyinsky did not live only a few months long enough to witness the Bolsheviks' official establishment of the Renovationist Church (1922) that, during the first years of its formation, implemented a number of reforms, the ideology of which was laid by 'neo-Christianity' and justified by those including Ustyinsky.

Possessing a good literary style, A. Ustyinsky wrote letters to editorial offices of central newspapers and journals where they were published as articles. In 1898, he exchanged letters with Rozanov and for long years to come became his advisor,¹⁴ mentor,¹⁵ and assis-

¹⁰ VORONTSOVA, IRINA (2013) 'Синтез науки и религии, опыта и веры в богословии архимандрита Феодора (Бухарева) Религиозные концепции архимандрита Феодора (Бухарева) и "неохристианская" доктрина в I-е десятилетие XX века (Synthesis of science and religion, experience and belief in the theology of Archpriest Feodor (Bukharev))', Questions of Philosophy 2013, 68–77.

¹¹ see VORONTSOVA, IRINA (2011) 'Протоиерей Александр Устыинский и "неохристианство". Путь от реформаторства к расколу: На материале переписки с В.В. Розановым 1907–1919 гг. (Archpriest Alexander Ustyinsky and the "neo-Christianity." The Way from "Reformation" towards Schism: Based on the Correspondence with V.V. Rozanov in 1907–1919)', Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University of Humanities Herald (II) 5(42), 66–74.

¹² USTYINSKY, ALEXANDER (1902) 'Объяснительная записка в [Консисторию], о его переписке с В. В. Розановым о христианском браке (The Explanatory Note to [Consistory] Concerning His Correspondence with V. V. Rozanov about Christian Wedlock)', Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (hereafter "RGALI"), Fund 2176, Collection 1, Folder 5, 1–4.

¹³ A. Ustyinsky sent a greeting letter that was published in a Kiev newspaper.

¹⁴ 'I am sending... for your consideration the correction of my article "The Two Versions of Understanding Christianity": last year, The New Time intended to publish it, but please tell me whether you think I should publish it in another journal, in other words, whether it is necessary at all'. RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 1, P. 23. Hereafter: all underlines have been made by the authors of the letters which I quote by autographs.

¹⁵ 'I read... your reflections on *wedlock* according to the Old Testament and the Apostolic and councilor teaching... and I was

⁷ Alexander Petrovich Ustyinsky (1854–1922) graduated from Saint Petersburg Theological Academy with a degree of candidate in theology, was a priest at Dimitrovskaya Church in Staraya Russa, then archpriest and the senior priest at the Church of the Nativity of the Theotokos, the female monastery of the Tithes in Novgorod.

⁸ see the correspondence between V. Rozanov and N. Glubokovsky published in VORONTSOVA, IRINA (2008) Религиозно-философская мысль начала XX века (Religious-Philosophical Thought of the Early 20th Century) (Moscow: Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University of Humanities).

⁹ see about his significance for "neo-Christianity": VORONTSOVA, IRINA (2013) 'Архимандрит Феодор (А.М. Бухарев) и проблема "плоти и духа" в "неохристианстве": На материале писем к диакону А.А. Лебедеву (Archpriest Feodor (Bukharev) and the Problem of "Flesh and Spirit" in "neo-Christianity": Based on the Letters to Deacon A.A. Lebedev)', Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University of Humanities Herald 2(II), 7–21.

tant¹⁶ in religious rendition¹⁷ of Rozanov's topics within the context of 'new religious consciousness'; D. Merzhkovsky, the main theorist of the 'religion flesh and spirit', also consulted with him on particular questions concerning his movement; the young clergy¹⁸ would be guided by him afterwards.

Rozanov, who at first (1898) treated the letters written by an unfamiliar priest with indifferent courtesy,¹⁹ but noticed his interest in wedlock,²⁰ and began sending him his articles²¹ and notifying about his publications, which archpriest Alexander scrutinized. During the following three years, Rozanov was regularly sending him his 'feuilletons' and books, and the priest commented on their literary, ecclesiastical, and social significance.²² Archpriest A. Ustyinsky invariably

read all Rozanov's article reviews and books and always disagreed with negative appraisal of the writer's work in press²³, invigorated him when any article that denounced Rozanov came out.

In archpriest A. Ustyinsky's face, the writer also received long-awaited approval of his public speeches concerning Christianity's neglect towards gender and wedlock²⁴ from a Russian Church's clergyman. He offered to Ustyinsky a 'publication of letters from a clergyman to Rozanov's project, which the archpriest supported. And archpriest Alexander's letters, after being edited by Rozanov, began to regularly appear in press forming public opinion on the question of Christian wedlock. (It was Rozanov's way to use or publish in his journalist interests private opinions of an ecclesiastical figure that got in touch with him²⁵). The associates agreed to put the 'A. U-sky'²⁶ (sometimes 'a Russian priest') signature under archpriest's articles. For a long time, Ustyinsky managed to remain unknown and his letters were not condemned by the Russian Church.

In his 1898–1899 letters, A. Ustyinsky helped the writer to analyze 'the essence of marital relationships from dogmatic²⁷ or theological standpoint... to touch upon modern ecclesiastical attitude towards this subject',²⁸ intended to send Rozanov his essays and theses concerning the topics: 'the notion of "legitimate marriage"²⁹ and "Christian divorce."³⁰ When Rozanov was accused of pornography, A. Ustyinsky supported the writer³¹ and referred to the acknowledged ecclesi-

truly delighted by the flow of your thought. I would definitely publish everything in due time, if God blesses, the second volume of Religion and culture...' RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 1, P. 27.

¹⁶ 'If you already saw № 52 of The R[ussian] La[bor], you should know that we cannot go on with our [topic] of wedlock. But I am asking you to continue... working... on this issue... Please do work on it... and send to me...' RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 1, P. 16. 'The clarity of your thought, your calmness and the self-command of your tone amaze me. It is such a help in the question of wedlock that, believing that "a hair will not fall without God's will," I am really convinced that ours is a fatal, fateful, "messenger's" meeting.' RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 1, P. 42.

¹⁷ 'I am very pleased by your readiness to write me about wedlock from dogmatic point of view.' RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 1, P. 11.

¹⁸ In 1922, priests P. Raevsky and I. Filevsky converted to the renovationist Church.

¹⁹ RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 315, P. 1–4.

²⁰ Dear Father Archpriest!

I am sending to you what seems to me not quite a good article on wedlock from The Exchange Bulletin. I was glad to receive your letter, i.e., to see that with my long silence I have not exposed you... to any trouble and that you still remember me. How important to me would it be to know, at least in 5 lines, what there is special about Bukharev's views, as far as I can guess from your own words, on wedlock... It would also be of great help to receive guidance on something fundamental in the Russian ecclesiastical literature concerning wedlock. RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 1, Pp. 7f. Received by A. Ustyinsky on May 8, 1898.

²¹ 'Dear Alexander Petrovich, please be so kind as to sending me my feuilletons "Seed and Life" and "Nominalism and Christianity" back.' RGALI, Fund 419, Folder 315, P. 12. Received by A. Ustyinsky on 8 November 1898.

²² 'With heartfelt gratitude I am returning to you the two feuilletons of yours. I have read both of them. Everything is wonderful about the first one... In the second one, you touch upon a very painful aspect of our everyday life, and the things you are saying should be said more frequently and much louder.' NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 1. 4 November 1898/

²³ With indignation have I read the review on your book The Dusk of Enlightenment...' NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 2, P. 17. 19 May 1899/

²⁴ ROZANOV, VASILY (1901) 'Брак и христианство: Моя переписка с православным священником (Wedlock and Christianity: My Correspondence with an Orthodox Priest)'; The Russian Labor 47, 21–22; 48, 20–22; 49, 20–21; 50–51, 30–34; 52, 18–22.

²⁵ Without obtaining metropolitan's permission, V. Rozanov published his private correspondence with Antony Vadkovsky, the metropolitan of Saint Petersburg, in The New Time.

²⁶ 'Do not reveal my surname. What is the need of knowing it?' NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 2, P. 5–6.

²⁷ Rozanov's letter to Ustyinsky of 9 February 1900, in which the former informs about some religious discoveries that he made to himself, is indicative in this regard.

²⁸ NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 1, P. 1. 28 October 1898.

²⁹ NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 1, P. 1.

³⁰ NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 2, P. 32–33. 30 October 1899.

³¹ NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 2, P. 1–2, 5–6.

astical authorities – professors I. Yanyshév³² and A. Gusev.³³ Later he began to expound *his own* opinion (which mostly was not canonical) that *elaborated* on the topic in Rozanov's vein. He sometimes would send the writer a synopsis of his letters-articles as though collating himself with the journalist's opinion. If articles were not published, Ustyinsky would offer Rozanov to use the material at his discretion, and after some time, the same topics would appear in the writer's close retelling. Archival correspondence shows that often Rozanov would simply eliminate greetings at the beginning of a letter, insert his own introduction, and the letter would be sent to the printer's (some letters of Ustyinsky have signs of printer's ink on them). Rozanov settled A. Ustyinsky's notes (for instance, this happened with the letter published in *The Russian Labor* (*Русский труд*) in 1899),³⁴ who was actively published in 1899–1900³⁵ and even hoped, as it seems, to have a journalist career of his own. In one of his letters, he informs about withholding of sending promised essays on wedlock to Rozanov as he had an intention of writing a note in defense of V. Solovyev and asked to bring it to *The Russian Labor* or *The Petersburg Bulletin* (*Петербургские ведомости*), which Rozanov willingly did and interceded for fee³⁶. On January 29, 1899, Ustyinsky sent through V. Rozanov an 'open' letter to the publisher of *The Citizen* (*Гражданин*) S. Sharapov,³⁷ in which he

contested the comments that Sharapov had made on Rozanov's and Ustyinsky's publications. The archpriest behaved like an experienced strategist by considering Rozanov's ideas 'common': 'As for the letter to Sh[arapo]v, I doubt whether it will be useful for our cause? That is, the continuation of our ideas.'³⁸ In fact, we urgently need his comment . . . His lines are going to play their necessary role in a half a year or in a year'.³⁹

The collaboration between the writer and the priest stretched for one and a half decades. It is probably under A. Ustyinsky's influence that Rozanov has formed an extremely negative attitude towards Paul the Apostle⁴⁰, which Rozanov's another correspondent N. Glubokovsky tried to shake. Ustyinsky suggested looking at the question outside the ecclesiastical tradition refuting Paul the Apostle:

According to Paul, we serve the law of sin via our flesh. It may be so, as virgins surmise it. But we, brachniki,⁴¹ have the full right to suspect Paul's teaching of falsehood or, at least, of being one-sided. To appeal against it and acknowledge that with our flesh we serve God' Law as well...⁴²

Here Ustyinsky also expressed his support of the main conception of 'neo-Christianity' which stated that during the Incarnation consecration of 'flesh' occurred (that is why, according to the NRC, its manifestations – culture, creative work, sensuality, gender – are subject to sacralization; correspondingly, Bysantism, monastic asceticism, hierarchical structure of historical Church, were declared inimical).

In 1901, V. Rozanov's book,⁴³ which contained Ustyinsky's letters, was published, but the former was still promoting his associate.⁴⁴ Ustyinsky's separate letters written in 1899–1901 became a part of the collection of articles concerning wedlock in Christianity.⁴⁵ With

it in [Russian] Labor, would any other editorial office accept it for publication?' NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 2, P. 4.

³⁸ Italics mine. – I.V.

³⁹ RGALI, Fund 419, Folder 315, P. 20–21. Italics mine. – I.V.

⁴⁰ 'You wrote to me that you did not like Paul the Apostle'. NIOR RGB. Fund 249. M. 4198, Folder 7, P. 40 (1910)

⁴¹ Married; married clergy.

⁴² NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 1, P. 17–20. Underlined by Rozanov.

⁴³ ROZANOV, VASILY (1901) *В мире неясного и нерешенного* (In the World of Obscure and Unsolved) (Saint Petersburg).

⁴⁴ USTYINSKY, ALEXANDER (1901) 'О "незаконнорожденных": Письмо в редакцию (On "Illegitimate Children:" Letter to the Editor)', *The New Time* 9238, 4.

⁴⁵ SHARAPOV, SEGEI (1901) *Сущность брака* (The Essence of Wedlock) (Saint Petersburg), 115–125.

³² The rector of Saint Petersburg Theological Academy (1866–1883), the dean of the Grand Church of the Winter Palace and the Cathedral of the Annunciation in the Moscow Kremlin, the chief of court clergy.

³³ 'In your letter you wrote, "In fact, everyone assumes that Christ put virginity above marriage, which he considered a weakness given to the feeble ones." ... Among our theologians, there are two authoritative giants who do think differently. I am referring to proto-presbyter Yanyshév, my former rector and professor, and Professor A.F. Gusev. ... Professor Gusev has expressed his opinion on the subject matter that we are preoccupied with in Christian Readings published in 1843 ... Evangelical Advices he later developed the same outlook in his other articles ... scattered in *The Orthodox Review*. Having two such influential authority figures behind yourself, you can act in a more confident fashion'. NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 2, P. 19.

³⁴ USTYINSKY, ALEXANDER (1899) 'О В. В. Розанове и его религии брака (On V. V. Rozanov and His Religion of Wedlock)', *The Russian Labor* 24, 11–14.

³⁵ 'I have a burning desire to continue writing letters to you. But please do bear with me. With his note, Sharapov made me digress'. NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 2, P. 4.

³⁶ RGALI, Fund 419, Folder 315, P. 20.

³⁷ 'I am sending you the letter to Mr. Sharapov. I pondered over sending it to him directly, but he might easily throw it into a fire, and that would be the end of it. <...> In case he refuses to publish

the beginning of SPRPS' work, 'neo-Christians' enlisted Ustyinsky: Rozanov wrote⁴⁶, 'You are a welcome guest'. Ustyinsky rarely had an opportunity to leave Novgorod, but he stayed well informed about what was happening at the Meetings thanks to Rozanov's letters and he read reports in the supplement to *The New Way* (*Новый путь*), the journal of 'neo-Christianity'. In February 1902, Rozanov intended (following Merezhkovsky's recommendation) to deliver A. Ustyinsky's letter on relationships between N. Gogol and his spiritual mentor father Matthew⁴⁷ as a speech in SPRPS. Shorthand records did not preserve this event, but Ustyinsky became recognized among 'neo-Christians' as one of them (Rozanov wrote, 'Pertzov was allowed to run *The New Way*⁴⁸ journal, it is going to be issued since January; you can send here any materials you deem relevant. Pertzov, Merezhkovsky, and Rozanov⁴⁹ are your friends – admirers, if you will. I was even asked to publish any private letters of yours that I possess').⁵⁰

In 1901, the 'neo-Christian' notions 'lifeless Byzantism', 'veritable Christianity', 'genuine confession of the Trinity', the doctrine of the Holy Spirit's hypostasis and epoch, the 'sanctity' of gender and wedlock became the departing points for archpriest Alexander's argumentation,⁵¹ and Nietzsche's philosophy became the basis for the article on hypostatic dignity of the Holy Spirit 'concealed' by historic Christianity. By that time, Rozanov was already intensely resorting to archpriest's assistance, impudently utilizing big excerpts from his letters and notes: the archpriest sent the necessary references to the Scripture, formulated conclusions, argued, advised and guided,⁵² adduced

documents from ecclesiastical history and law. Rozanov was using materials accumulated by him without mentioning the 'original source'.⁵³ Ustyinsky did not mind this borrowing, and in his correspondence we can frequently encounter the following remark and its various alterations: 'It is inconvenient to publish these letters in their present state. Perhaps you could convert them into a specific article'.⁵⁴

After becoming, like 'neo-Christians', an opponent of 'Byzantism',⁵⁵ A. Ustyinsky put forward his own conception concerning the two forms of religious consciousness in Russia – the old one of Moscow and the incipient one of Saint Petersburg. Several times he wrote to Rozanov that 'the vision of the modern Church is identified with Byzantine-Moscow style. It is obvious that Saint Petersburg's style, of which, along with several ... other people⁵⁶ you are the founder, is necessary or has to enter the stage'.⁵⁷ He called 'neo-Christians' new (social) understanding of The Holy Trinity, 'Trinitas' (or Triune Christianity) the merit of Saint Petersburg and those who prophesized there, i.e., Rozanov,

the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, John 16:13], that you indicated in the image and likeness of the Holy Trinity, please do emphasize in the most possible prominent and impressive way and place them into the foundation of your metaphysics. Such a foundation directly based on the H[oly] Trinity is, without a doubt, going to be steadfast and indestructible. ... We will further apply these three categories to the establishment of the idea of Triune, coessential, equally fair Christianity [consisting of] Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Protestantism... Calvinism, Anglicanism etc.) that must adhere to "the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3), while fully acknowledging mutual disagreements and preserving their own denomination peculiarities.' NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 2, P. 45–47. Underlined by Ustyinsky.

⁴⁶ RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 315, P. 77f.

⁴⁷ 'I have read your letter, dear Alexander Petrovich, to Merezhkovsky, and he, in turn, has suggested reading it in the circle... "Here is someone who understands the nature of the difference between Gogol and Father Mathew and the latter's solidity of stubbornness and victory," he told me.' RGALI, Fund 419, Folder 315, P. 81. Underlined by Roznov.

⁴⁸ Underlined with a red pencil.

⁴⁹ Underlined with a red pencil.

⁵⁰ RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 1, P. 92.

⁵¹ NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 1, P. 15–16.

⁵² Archpriest Ustyinsky wrote, 'The three categories of existence that you have indicated (force, will, desire (Δύναμη, Θέλημα, βούληση), reason (Αιτιολογία): logos, law, norms, rules, order) and sense, [love, benevolence (the Spirit of the Father (Matthew 10:20) testifies to the Son: This is my beloved Son...), joy (the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans, Romans 8:26), consolation (but when the Helper comes), (where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom, 2 Corinthians 3:17), clairvoyance, foresight, prophecy (when

⁵³ 'Here is the thing, Alexander Petrovich: provided that you have time and energy, please make me a sketch of what we... were discussing about the Holy Trinity with regards to Peter and Sophia-Wisdom and their portrayals. The Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius existed before Peter, didn't it? I would like to make it clear just in case, in order to have the material close at hand.' RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 1, P. 73–74. Underlined by Roznov.

⁵⁴ NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209. Folder 6, P. 6.

⁵⁵ 'Byzantium has only given a bone framework or a skeleton for the organism of the Church's body. It is not an accident that the holy fathers are called the pillars of the Church. Yes, they are pillars indeed, solid like bones, but as much withered and lifeless as the latter. It is obvious, however, that, aside from a bone skeleton, a full-fledged organism also requires muscles, a circulatory system, a nervous system etc. There is nothing of it that Byzantium is able to provide.' NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 2, P. 45–47.

⁵⁶ Evidently, Merezhkovsky, Filosofov, Minsky.

⁵⁷ NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 1, P. 16.

Merezhkovsky.⁵⁸ A. Ustyinsky was familiar with the Merezhkovsky couple in person⁵⁹, he attempted to help D. Merezhkovsky with religious design of his 'dogma' concerning 'flesh and spirit' in Christianity⁶⁰ and spoke well of him as a theoretician: 'I am certain that whatever Merezhkovsky writes, it will be good, deep and profound'⁶¹.

The question of whether archpriest A. Ustyinsky attended religio-philosophical meetings, it appears, can be answered affirmatively. As far as he could, A. Ustyinsky visited the meetings and was acquainted with M. Novoselov, V. Ternavtsev⁶², P. Pertsov⁶³; when he did not have an opportunity to leave Novgorod, he carefully read messages⁶⁴ about the meetings' topics in the articles published in *The New Time* (*Новый время*) and reports published in *The New Way*. S. Polovinkin⁶⁵, a long-standing researcher of Merezhkovsky's works, writes about A. Ustyinsky's presence at the general conversations between 'neo-Christians' and representatives of clergy and ecclesiastical intelligentsia.

When the name of priest Ustyinsky, the author of scandalous letters, became known to ecclesiastical community, the archpriest was under the threat of punishment and exile to a remote monastery. 'Neo-Christians' (Merezhkovsky⁶⁶, Rozanov) made

several attempts to defend their associate through the participants of Saint Petersburg religio-philosophical society – bishop Antonin (Granovsky) and vicar metropolitan of Saint Petersburg Antony (Vadkovsky). Of course, both archbishop of Novgorod Gury, under whose command Ustyinsky served, and Antony, the metropolitan of Saint Petersburg, were shown not Ustyinsky's letters that steered the indignation of the Orthodox community, but his written explanation. Menshikov's feuilleton addressed to Ustyinsky was published in the newspaper *The New Time* (*Новое время*); the story reached the Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod K. Pobedonostsev and Emperor Nicholas II⁶⁷. Nevertheless, owing to the efforts of metropolitan of Saint Petersburg Antony (Vadkovsky), who became acquainted with 'neo-Christians' during his chairmanship in SPRPS, the punishment that the ecclesiastical court threatened A. Ustyinsky with because of his articles was minimized. V. Rozanov wrote to the fallen into disgrace cleric, retelling his meeting with the member of higher orders of clergy: 'As it turns out, the

⁵⁸ 'To expose the world to triune Christianity is the task of Saint Petersburg, our Russian Zion... This last circumstance – such an enviable advantage of Saint Petersburg that the three old notorious Romes (Rome, Byzantium, Moscow) lack altogether'. NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 2, P. 47.

⁵⁹ NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209. Folder 5. Letters from 1902. P. 29; P. 39.

⁶⁰ A couple of words to Dmitry Sergeevich concerning his Spirit and flesh. These two notions in Christianity, it seems to me, most conveniently and correctly clarify each other from the notion of Faces (hypostasis, – I.V.) of Father and Son, or from the idea of native land or parenthood, or the idea of sonhood, virginity'. NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 5, P. 42.

⁶¹ Ibid. Folder 5, P. 57.

⁶² See: letter from August 27, 1901. NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 4, P. 21 (reverse side from August 28, 1901).

⁶³ Ibid. Folder 5, P. 63.

⁶⁴ Ibid. P. 61.

⁶⁵ In his article entitled From the Conversations and Literature on Religious Topics he described a conversation in which participated the following: V. Rozanov, M. Novoselov, V. Skvortsov, V. Ternavtsev, priests Ivan Albov and Alexander Ustyinsky. See: POLOVINKIN, SERGEY (2001) 'На изломе веков: Религиозно-философские собрания в Санкт-Петербурге в 1901–1903 гг. (At the Junction Between Centuries: Religio-Philosophical Meetings in Saint Petersburg in 1901–1903)', Russia XXI 6, 120.

⁶⁶ 'The day before yesterday, D. Merezhkovsky went to Lavra (it is amazing how much he loves you) to intercede Antonin and

Sergey (the Academy's rector) for you and fell into the hatch at the Rectors': he stepped on the glass that covered the cellar, fell down, and cut and bruised himself through and through, poor thing; they took him back home in a carriage'. RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 315, Folder 1, Pp. 20–204.

⁶⁷ 'My dear ad darling Alex. Petrovich!

A misfortune befell us. My wife yesterday came to the editorial office and told me that when Antonin visited her, he told her that somebody... let the sovereign read Menshikov's feuilleton. The sovereign right now is obviously in a special mood, of which wicked people tried to take advantage. As you remember, the metropolitan of Moscow who is almost Antony's rival, told him when they met that "our days are the evil days, and there are people who try to shake the altars in the hope to thus shake the thrones"... And the sovereign fasts. And on his serious, devout, pensive mood fell this malicious whole picture (here and further emphasized by Rozanov, – I.V.) of Menshikov, which he interpreted as the truth. Who else, other than an avid writer, is to know writers; and he will never condemn without cause his fellows. I must say that after having read "The Diary" of Meshersky with cruel words about you, I became so depressed, crushed, that I wrote him a begging (literally) letter that characterized you as a quiet, humble, shy and ascetic (this I overheard about you) priest and begged him to correct the mistake into which he apparently fell believing to Menshikov's vile feuilleton. But these people are merciless. And so is our time. <...> The sovereign became infuriated and send an order to Saint Petersburg to "punish that priest..." Therefore, against the good opinion of all pastors about you, there rebelled force that all the pastors dread'. RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 315, Folder 1, Pp. 205–206. In fact, Emperor Nicholas II did not give such an order, he merely inquired of the Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod as to what the Synod was going to do with "that priest", – I.V.

metropolitan has personally shown concern for you and said to Antonin,⁶⁸ his vicar... "I do not find anything wrong in Ustyinsky's thoughts..."⁶⁹ You should write to Right Reverend Gury⁷⁰ and mention that I also ask him to spare and not harm Ustyinsky in any possible way".⁷¹ The question about prosecuting Ustyinsky was 'swept under the rug.' Upon serving time of penitence in Khutyn Monastery he continued working with Rozanov and 'neo-Christians'. In 1906, Rozanov once again published archpriest Ustyinsky's article (letter) *The Duality of Life* in his book *Near the Church Walls* (*Около церковных стен*). In 1905, Ustyinsky was referred to by some 'P.V.' in *The Petersburg Bulletin*⁷², and from 1906, owing to the collaboration between V. Rozanov and A. Ustyinsky, ecclesiastical newspapers began publishing articles that discussed the topic of 'necessity of second marriage' with regards to widowed clergy and clergy with many children. A series of such polemic articles were published in 1907 by *The Ecclesiastical Bulletin*. Thoughts concerning gender and wedlock in historic Christianity which, at Ustyinsky's suggestion, were expressed in public press, began to be discussed by the Russian community, and Rozanov himself acquired the reputation of 'religious thinker' and expert in the field of church canons and even the Holy Script, which in fact he was not (this was many times proven by *The Ecclesiastical Bulletin* that criticized him).

One can get an idea of how Rozanov's reputation as a religious thinker grew by reading the letters stored at the manuscript archive of the Russian State Library, in the 'Monks' letters' section.⁷³ Monks' letters in the

best way possible outline the circle of communication and the degree of the writer's influence on his contemporaries. Indicative are the letters written by Mother Superior Nina, bishop Nikon (Rozhdensstvensky) as well as monk Serapion and the Alexander Nevsky Lavra archimandrite Basil (Luzin), archimandrite Veniamin (Fedchenkov), celibate priest Paul – archimandrite of The Society 'The First Russian School of Sobriety' at the Coastal Monastery of St. Sergius, etc. They demonstrate both the growth of the writer's authority in the ecclesiastical circles and the love with which the Russian Church was attempting to conceal attacks' on it and abuse from one of its sons. From one letter to another, exhorting the writer for his enmity against Christ,⁷⁴ representatives of clergy continued to love the literary talent in him. Almost of all his correspondents sent their religious works asking to provide comments to Rozanov as a popular author who writes about ecclesiastical and religious issues⁷⁵. It is indicative that many priests and cenobites wrote their letters to V. Rozanov by themselves simply finding his address in an address book after reading one of his books or articles⁷⁶. And only after 1914, (after the writer publicly delivered his articles inspired by 'The Beilis Case') did the torrent of letters decrease.

After Rozanov's expulsion from Saint Petersburg religious-philosophical society in 1914, archpriest A.P. Ustyinsky for some time supported the writer by decisively denouncing everything that the press wrote about Rozanov ('I have read your letter reprinted from *The New Time* in *The Bell* (*Колокол*)

In its historical chronology, the correspondence can be found: VORONTSOVA, IRINA (2008) *Религиозно-философская мысль начала XX века* (Religious-Philosophical Thought of the Early 20th Century) (Moscow: Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University of Humanities).

⁶⁸ Bishop Antonin (Granovsky), in 1922 – one of the leaders of the renovationist Church.

⁶⁹ The discussion pertained to Ustyinsky's attitude towards wedlock in Christianity.

⁷⁰ Archbishop of Novgorod and Staraya Russa Gury (Okhotin).

⁷¹ RGALI, Fund 419 Collection 1, Folder 315, P. 198. Underlined by Roznov.

⁷² See: V., P. (1905) 'Русская интеллигенция и духовенство (Russian Intelligentsia and Clergy)', *The Petersburg Bulletin* 126, 1.

⁷³ The monks' letters to Rozanov (beginning with the late 19th century) are published in: VORONTSOVA, IRINA (2006) 'Завтра помяну Вас у престола Божия...' ("Tomorrow I Will Pray Our Lord for You at the Altar of God..."), *Our Contemporary* 4, 230–239, and the materials of The Annual Theological Conference of Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University (VORONTSOVA, IRINA (2005) 'The Monks' Letters to Rozanov', 417–424, *Papers from the Annual Theological Conference of Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University* (2004). Moscow).

⁷⁴ Rozanov was secretly married without being divorced from his first wife; his children were considered illegitimate, and this had a negative effect on Rozanov's attitude to Christianity and the Church.

⁷⁵ For instance, a letter from 1911. 'Dear Vasily Vasilievich! I am a former priest, voluntarily defrocked due to loss of faith. You do not know me, but I am sending to you a just recently published book *Former Theologian. On whether Religious Morality is Necessary*, because, at it appears to me, you are interested by the question of whether certain religious elements are necessary for morality; I have even relied upon your two opinions, which you will find in the book...' NIOR RGB, Fund 249, M. 4214, Folder 6, P. 15. (Published by me in the monograph called *Religio-Philosophical Thought at the Beginning of the 20th century* ("Религиозно-философская мысль в начале XX века"). М.: PSTGU, 2008. – I.V.)

⁷⁶ NIOR RGB, Fund 249, M. 4214, Folder 16, Pp. 77–78. (The letter by monk Serapion).

concerning the Bailis case. I have also read the refutation to it in *The Speech*. I entirely share your point of view on this matter⁷⁷), but due to the demarcation between Rozanov and Merezhkovsky previously mutual topics for correspondence exhausted. For some period of time, their ways separated, but Rozanov was still sending Ustyinsky books for review.⁷⁸ Before 1916, Ustyinsky's name did not appear in press. In 1916, A. Ustyinsky published an article *Christianity and Culture* and a lyrical poem in the collection *Young Russia (Молодая Русь)*⁷⁹. The article was a 'cast' of his published letters to V. Rozanov written at the beginning of the century and told nothing new about the worldview of the archpriest who was approaching his 60-years anniversary. During 1918–1919, the years of starvation, the writer again fastened his eyes on Novgorod: Rozanov decided to move closer to priest A. Ustyinsky⁸⁰: he was seeking for emotional comforting, spiritual and material support. After the October revolution of 1917, the writer and his family moved to Sergiyev Posad, but A. Ustyinsky continued supporting him materially and by other means – from time to time sending Rozanov parcels or money earned by his children,⁸¹ Rozanov sent him the books of his *Apocalypse*.⁸²

After the February Revolution of 1917, A. Ustyinsky published his reformist "Theses" (was written

in 1902) as a separate brochure and sent them to Rozanov.⁸³ A. Ustyinsky was being published until 1919, the year when V. Rozanov passed away; the latter recommended⁸⁴ to publish archpriest's prepared articles in the student journal *The Torrents of Spring (Вешние воды)*.

Constantly being published, during more than 15 years, Rozanov wrote on the questions of religious reformism and ecclesiastical renovation; he gained renown and the influence over minds of which he dreamt and in the inevitability of which he was certain.⁸⁵ Hundreds of his feuilletons, reviews, polemical notes, articles, literary reviews were published in *The New Time* alone; from the pages of a conservative newspaper, the reader could perceive the issues of metaphysics, Christian wedlock, clergy's life and state of ecclesiastical opinions. Much of what Rozanov, at archpriest Ustyinsky's suggestion, made public became a part of the renovationist Church.

The examination of unpublished correspondence between V. Rozanov and Novgorod archpriest Alexander Ustyinsky has shown that Rozanov was not independent in his judgments with regards to a range of religious problems which his contemporaries connected to the reformation of the Russian Church, and in this sense the writer's oeuvre is only yet to be studied.

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⁷⁷ RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 673, P. 9.

⁷⁸ RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 673, P. 19.

⁷⁹ Ustyinsky, A. (1916) 'Христианство и культура (Christianity and Culture)', *Young Russia*, 173–176.

⁸⁰ RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 1, P. 190.

⁸¹ The priest wrote on 26 May 1918, 'Along with these things, I am sending you 40 rubles. I have nothing edible to send. But your eggs are cheaper than those in Novgorod, so buy yourself some eggs'. RGALI, Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 673, P. 32.

⁸² Dear Vasily Vasilevich!

It has been a long time since I received a postcard from you, but I have not yet received the issue 6–7 of "Apocalypse". If it has been published, please do send it to me. On behalf of children I am sending you 70 rubles, to support the publication and for domestic needs. I am very happy that father Pavel Florensky has decided to write Bukharev's biography. In his experienced hands, it will turn out wonderfully. Be God's grace always with you. Yours faithfully, Archpriest Al. Ustyinsky. RGALI Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 673, P. 29.

⁸³ The edition has not been found. I have published it based on the documents: NIOR RGB, Fund 249. M. 4209, Folder 5, P. 45–46. see VORONTSOVA, IRINA (2010) 'Разработка тезисов "неохристианской" доктрины в переписке В. В. Розанова и протоиерея А. П. Устьинского (1898–1901) (The Development of the "Neo-Christian" Doctrine in the Correspondence between V.V. Rozanov and Archpriest A. Ustyinsky (1898–1901))'; Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University of Humanities Herald (II) 2(35), 7–21.

⁸⁴ 'You have recommended me as a contributor to *The Torrents of Spring*', RGALI Fund 419, Collection 1, Folder 673, Pp. 13, 20.

⁸⁵ In his letter to V. Solovyov in 1891, he wrote, 'Something tells me that God is going to help me, and I believe that I will be exerting very powerful influence over people's souls; for some reason I have such a feeling.' ROZANOV, VASILY (2001) *Апокалипсис нашего времени (Apocalypse of Our Times)* (Saint Petersburg), 301.

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