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Prehistory of a »Historical-Critical Epoch« in the Russian Bible Studies: Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy

Abstract: The article is devoted to one of the brightest personalities in the history of the Russian theology – Archpriest Gerasim Petrovich Pavskiy, a graduate and Professor of Saint Petersburg Theological Academy, a famous philologist and Biblist. The author of this article focuses on revealing research principles of Archpriest Gerasim. The scientific activities of archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy is considered, on the one hand, in the Church and theological-educational context of his time, and, on the other, in the perspective of further development of the Russian theology. A special attention is given to the relations between Archpriest Gerasim and later Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov), his teacher at the Academy. The author of this article makes a conclusion that Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy was a characteristic fruit of a new theological-educational conception implemented in Russia at the beginning of the 20th century, with its pros and cons. Realizing an appeal for creative development of theology, Archpriest Gerasim was rather ahead of his time and his contemporaries for almost a century. However, having stepped so quickly and so far, he made the same mistakes that the Russian theologians did further throughout several decades, introducing a historical method in their studies, making mistakes, correcting themselves and their scientific approaches. To evaluate Pavskiy's theological methods, the author of the article introduces the notion of »sacral historicism«. In the author's opinion, insensitiveness to this method lead Archpriest Gerasim to some paradoxical results.

Key words: archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy, higher theological school, historical method, Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov), Russian theological tradition

Povzetek: **Predzgodovina »zgodovinskokritičnega obdobja« v ruskem preučevanju Svetega pisma: nadduhovnik Gerasim Pavski**

Članek se posveča eni najbistrejših osebnosti v zgodovini ruske teologije, nadduhovniku Gerasimu Pavskemu, diplomantu in profesorju Sanktpeterburške teološke akademije, znanemu teologu in biblicistu. Avtorica tega članka se osredotoča na prikaz raziskovalnih načel nadduhovnika Gerasima. Njegova znanstvena dejavnost je po eni strani obravnavana v cerkvenem in teološko-pedagoškem kontekstu takratnega časa, na drugi pa z vidika nadaljnjega razvoja ruske teologije. Posebna pozornost je namenjena odnosu med nadduhovnikom

Gerasimom in kasnejšim metropolitom Filaretom (Drozdovom), njegovim učiteljem na akademiji. Avtorica zaključuje, da Gerasim Pavski predstavlja značilen sad nove teološko-pedagoške koncepcije, ki se je uveljavila v Rusiji na začetku 20. stoletja, z vsemi svojimi prednostmi in slabostmi. Pozivajoč k ustvarjalnemu razvoju teologije, je bil nadduhovnik Gerasim skoraj stoletje pred svojim časom. Ker pa je segel tako hitro in tako daleč, je naredil napake, kakršne so v naslednjih desetletjih delali ruski teologi, ki so v svoje preučevanje vključevali zgodovinskokritično metodo, pri čemer so se motili, popravljali sebe in svoje znanstvene pristope. Pri vrednotenju teoloških metod Pavskega avtorica uvaja pojem »svetega historizma«. Po avtoričinem mnenju je nekritičnost do te metode nadduhovnika Pavskega vodila k nekaterim paradoksalnim rezultatom.

Ključne besede: nadduhovnik Gerasim Pavski, višja teološka šola, zgodovinska metoda, metropolit Filaret (Drozdov), ruska teološka tradicija

1. Introduction

This article is devoted to Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy, both a famous and a mysterious personality. On the one hand, Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy is often mentioned by historians of theology with respect to his translation of the Holy Scripture of the Old Testament in Russian, which has become a special stage in the history of the Biblical translation (Florovskiy 2009, 249–253; Astafiev 1892; Batalden 1988, 486–498; Chistovich 1872, 5; 6; 1899, 133–207; Tikhomirov 2008).

On the other hand, theological ideas of Archpriest Gerasim are evaluated quite ambiguously and were not properly included in common history of the Russian theology. Certainly, it is impossible to settle such a tremendous task within a framework of one article; therefore, the article focuses on the issue of a historical method as it was understood and applied by Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy.

»Historicism« of Archpriest Gerasim led to severe collisions: both Father Gerasim and his works were often subjected to criticism, even to a »cellular test of the sincerity of repentance« (Barsov 1880, 220), and his approach to a holy text was called »false, not fitting the dignity of the Holy Scripture« (Drozdov 1885, III: 54–55). The translation of the books from the Old Testament made by Father Gerasim and distributed throughout all the theological schools was forcedly withdrawn (68–69). However, the next generations of scientists highly appreciated Pavskiy's methods in the Bible studies and their results.

Thus, Ivan Troitskiy, Professor of Hebrew and Biblical archeology of the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy and one of Pavskiy's successors, spoke of his predecessors as a »focus«, »which involves the traits of a scientific direction« of the capital Academy (1887, 732). Archpriest Alexander Men called Archpriest Gerasim »a founder of the tradition of the Russian Biblical-historical school« (1987, 277), which enhances an interest to his methodology. So, what is the riddle of Gerasim Pavskiy? Was he ahead of his time in his Biblical-historical studies and

unaccepted by his contemporaries due to this breakthrough? Or had Pavskiy's »historicism« its specifics inadmissible in theology?

Archpriest Gerasim received praises as a scientist, a priest, and a human many times. Vissarion G. Belinskiy wrote that Pavskiy »alone worth the entire Academy« (this refers to the Academy of Sciences) (1955, 231). A Priest Sergei V. Protopopov, one of the biographers of Archpriest Gerasim, argued that »the name of Archpriest Gerasim Petrovich Pavskiy belongs to the names that never die in the offsprings and whose good memory is passed from a generation to a generation« (1876, 4). Nikolai I. Barsov, another biographer and a professor of the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy, insisted that Archpriest Gerasim is »one of the fairest personalities of our latest history, one of the most remarkable public persons of the first half of this century«, »an innovator in theology« (1880, 111–112).

Alexei S. Rodoskiy, a historian of the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy, considered Archpriest Gerasim the most outstanding graduate of this Academy: a great power in literature and science, an excellent theologian, a famous philologist, an outstanding patriot with great qualities of truth and honor (1887, 343–349; 1907). Many high and kind words are spoken of a priestly service and public activities of Archpriest Gerasim. Therefore, his name does not need for rehabilitation and we can allow ourselves being critical towards his works and methods.

This article consists of two parts: historical and analytical. The first part reveals key moments of Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy's life including the famous »case over translation«. They are well known but still need attention and prioritizing. The second part reveals theological principles of Archpriest Gerasim: a famous researcher of the Bible left a few works of his own; therefore, we have to reveal his views on the Holy Scripture and methods of its study by translations and separate notes.

2. Case-studies

2.1 Development of Archpriest Gerasim as a scholar

The first stage of the life of Archpriest Gerasim was habitual for a young man from a clerical order, but there was one peculiarity: the years of his study coincided with the period of radical transformations in the area of theological education, which had to influence somehow the scientific establishment of the students of those years. After graduating from the Alexander Nevski Seminary in 1809, he was sent to the new Saint Petersburg Theological Academy opened according to the new rules that had radically changed the higher theological school system in Russia (Kancelyariya Ego imperatorskago velichestva 1830). We should identify the main principles of this concept related to the method of theological cognition. The first principle is understanding of the Holy Scripture as the only source of theology; its reading and interpreting preceded the dogmatic theology in the

school course. Students were oriented on an independent work with the original texts of the Holy Scripture; therefore, the increased attention to the languages of the Scripture – Greek and Hebrew – was an important element of education. (Drozdov 1885, I: 125–126) The second principle is development of independent thinking in students and »their own efforts and activity of mind«, stimulating students »to explain the truths that they have found« (Russkiy gosudarstvenniy istoricheskiy arkhiv, f. 802, op. 16, unit 1, sh. 46–47).

This transformation of theological schools was an ambitious experiment, which implied risk and unexpected results; therefore, the first course of the capital Academy – »touchstone« of a new reform – became a special »group of risk«. Further, recollecting student years, Archpriest Gerasim revered Prelate Filaret, professor of theology and the Holy Scripture, and Johann Fessler, professor of Hebrew, philosophy and Church antiquities as the best professors that had an influence on him. (Barsov 1880, 118) Such union of two names – a famous holy hierarch, a »corner stone« of the Russian theology, and a reformatory of the German masonry, a Capuchin monk, who became a Lutheran (Barton 1969; Chistovich 1894, 48–52; Gorbachev 2012, 217–224; Popov 1879) cannot but surprise. However, the very invitation of Fessler in 1809 in the Orthodox Theological Academy was a bright feature of this experiment. In spring 1809, Fessler was accused of rationalism, pantheism, idealism, mysticism, and even atheism (for a statement that Jesus Christ was not more than the greatest philosopher) on the ground of the represented lecture notes and withdrawn from the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy (Chistovich 1857, 193–198; Gorskiy 1885, 91–92; Sankt Peterburgskiy centralny gosudarstvenniy istoricheskiy arkhiv, f. 227, op. 1, unit 1085, sh. 1–2). However, he managed to arouse the interest in Hebrew in Pavskiy.

They hardly remember Johann Fessler's successor in philosophy and Hebrew Johann Von Horn, Doctor of theology and philosophy, ex professor of the Gettignens University, who taught these subjects from 1810 to 1814. Indeed, we should pay attention to some theses of these professors. Thus, J. Horn was sure that »philological explanation of the Old Testament will always remain a basis for explaining the New Testament, and both of them will be a basis for scientific processing of the dogmatic and morality«, and if some theologians rely on other things, this »comes from a poor knowledge of the Hebrew language«. (Chistovich 1857, 216) The method of teaching of this tutor is also important: he explained the Old Testament grammatically and philologically, basing on comparative linguistics, and historically, with a maximal account for the context and its reflection in the holy books themselves. He paid special attention to the comparison of old translations of the Scripture – Arabic, Syrian, Chaldean, Septuaginta, Vulgata. Besides, he explained to students how we can judge of frequent deviation of a Greek translation from the basic Hebrew text. (Sankt Peterburgskiy centralny gosudarstvenniy istoricheskiy arkhiv, 227, op. 1, unit 1149, sh. 3–5)

Gerasim Pavskiy brilliantly graduated from the Academy and presented a serious graduation thesis (1814): »A survey of the book of Psalms: archeological, philological and hermeneutical research«. It was published immediately as an

independent monograph, being an evidence of scientific achievements of the graduates of a new Higher Theological School. This composition was written and published in Russian, though the theology in Russia at the beginning of the 19th century was taught in Latin. This can be treated as the example of Prelate Filaret (Drozdov) who gave lectures on the Holy Scripture in Russian. Archpriest Gerasim himself noticed in the following years that he »was the first to give right information that it was not written only by David, but by various epochs of the Hebrew people and by different persons« even then. (Barsov 1880, 128) Earlier mentioned Ivan G. Troitskiy, professor of the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy, considered this critical conclusion one of the main achievements of the Russian Bible studies of the first half of the 19th century (1887, 741).

Certainly, the conclusion marked is not the main advantage of Pavskiy's thesis; however, it reveals a characteristic critical approach to the origins of Biblical texts and much research courage for the Russian theology of the beginning of the 19th century. However, it was indeed a realization of a new theological-scientific concept as understood by Pavskiy: the immersion into the original text of the Scripture and independent explanation of the open truths. The exegetic part of the master study was also marked by a historical-analytical approach: the author thoroughly reconstructed a historical context; however, the accent was put on the main, messianic meaning of the Psalms. Thus, the main goal of all the scientific studies was to reveal a theological content of the Psalter, though basing on archaeological and philological analysis.

After graduating from the Academy, Gerasim Pavskiy continued working there as a professor, though not of theology, as would be proper for the best graduate, but of Hebrew (Rodosskiy 1907). In his autobiography, Pavskiy made no secret of his offence with the rector – Archimandrite Filaret (Drozdov): »Instead of appointing me at the theological chair, to which I was more talented than the others, they gave me Hebrew.« (Barsov 1880, 120) However, we should also pay attention to other words of the Hebraist:

»God made this subject the most pleasant activity for me. In theology, I have to display hypocrisy, to dissemble, to pretend and here – to tell the truth and only sometimes to keep silent not to insult the cunning.« (121)

For Pavskiy, Hebrew was not an independent value, but an opportunity to understand the Holy Scripture adequately: »It was not the language, but the Holy Scripture, pure, not distorted by interpretations that was dear to me. /... / Adequate understanding of Hebrew leads to the understanding of theology.« (128) Let us remark that this position of a young professor has much in common with the above-mentioned words of his second hebraist teacher Johann Horn. For educative purposes, Pavskiy compiled a grammar and a reader of Hebrew with a selection of Biblical texts, which were the most significant from a theological viewpoint, and a Hebrew-Russian dictionary (Otdelenie rukopisei, f. 573. op. 1, unit A I/118; unit A I/120)

Gerasim Pavskiy also fulfilled the main destination of the graduates of a Theological Academy – serving to the Church mostly as a priest. A year after graduating from the Academy, he legally wed, was ordained a priest and served in Saint Petersburg churches – the Kazan Cathedral, then the Andreevsky Cathedral, the church of the Tavrichesky Palace and the Grand Cathedral of the Winter Palace – during all his life. Archpriest Gerasim's ministry and his theological qualities attracted many people to him, since he »inspired confidence to people by his character and life and executed the best, one can say, the ideal sides of a human life« (Rodoskiy 1907, 344). Pavskiy's talents conditioned his election at other highest servings as well: in 1819, at the opening of the Saint Petersburg university, it was Archpriest Gerasim who was invited at the Chair of theology.

Human and pastoral virtues combined with deep knowledge enabled Archpriest Gerasim to be chosen as a professor of Religious Instruction for the heir of the tsar throne Alexander Nikolaevich, a future emperor Alexander II, in 1826. The Emperor Nikolai I chose Father Gerasim as the religious tutor (*zakonouchitel*) for his son. A poet Vasily Zhukovsky promoted this choice. He saw the ideal of an enlightened pastor in Pavskiy who was able, on the one hand, to teach a future Russian emperor the bases of Orthodoxy and Church history and, on the other hand, to strengthen a life spirit of Christian faith in his soul.

It is worthy of note that Archpriest Gerasim became the religious tutor of the heir in the year when the Russian Bible Society was closed, though the main opponents of the society – Serafim (Glagolevsky), Metropolitan of Saint Petersburg, and Archimandrite Fotiy (Spasskiy), were severe critics of both Pavskiy and his translations. Thus, Archimandrite Fotiy wrote:

»Priest Gerasim Pavskiy, deprived of grace and truth, was entrusted to translate from Hebrew. He was allowed to translate directly from the Hebrew Psalter and not from the Greek Psalter of 70 translators. /... / All are guilty in the admission of an outrageous translation and, above all, as a scientist, the first actor, Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov), he deserves no excuse before God and the Holy Church.« (Spasskiy 1894, 224)

A contribution of Father Gerasim Pavskiy to the translation of the Holy Scripture into Russian should be admitted a special merit. Under the Russian Bible Society aegis in 1817–1824, he translated the Gospel of Matthew and the Psalter, and actively participated in the translation of the other books of the Old Testament. When the Russian Bible Society translation and publication programs were curtailed in 1824, Archpriest Gerasim continued this task independently and nearly completed the translation of the Old Testament.

It seems like Archpriest Gerasim succeeded in giving his students love for the Holy Scripture, desire to study it and translate, what is more, from Hebrew. Among direct Pavskiy's students, the most famous are Reverent Macarii (Glukharev), who graduated from the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy in 1817, and Archpriest Stephan Sabinin, who graduated in 1821 and later served under the Russian em-

bassy churches in Europe throughout his life. (Veretennikov 2004) The first one translated all the books of the Old Testament from Hebrew (the translations were published in 1860–1868 in the journal *Pravoslavnoe Obozrenie* and as separate books); the latter made his own translation of the books of Job and Isaiah being a student of the Academy (Otdelenie rukopisei, f. 573. op. 1, unit A I/127).

Archpriest Gerasim left the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy in 1835, however, at the beginning of the 1840s, his previous activities aroused new problems, which became a notable »case of Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy«. After the withdrawal of Archpriest Gerasim, his aligned translations of the books of the Old Testament were lithographed, and these texts quickly spread throughout Russia. This popularity was another confirmation of the need for the Russian Bible, for which both Filaret (Drozdov) and his student Gerasim Pavskiy advocated for. However, the case turned into a conflict for the latter one. »The case of Pavskiy« was thoroughly considered by previous researchers (Batalden 1988, 487–491), therefore we only underline the points that are important for this article. In 1841, three metropolitans – of Saint Petersburg, Moscow, and Kiev – received an anonymous note about a »malicious translation«. An investigation has been initiated, the texts of the translation were withdrawn, Archpriest Gerasim himself was called to give an explanation. Since he was not guilty in lithographing and distributing the translation, the case ended in mere suggestion. During the interrogation, Archpriest Gerasim uttered some arguments and explanations of his method. The most important of them will be given in the second part of the article. However, with respect to this story, there emerged a general question of the prohibition of the Holy Scripture into Russian, and the name of Archpriest Gerasim became significant again.

The prohibition was supported by the capital Metropolitan Serafim who was on his last legs and Nikolai A. Protasov, an ober-procurator of the Holy Synod, for whom »the case of Pavskiy« was a touchstone of his ober-procurator activities (1839–1855). They both were afraid of a free dealing with the text of the Holy Scripture in both translation and understanding, which conditioned two »protective« suggestions: 1) to canonize a single Slavonic text of the Bible for the entire Russian Church and for all times; 2) to prohibit the laypeople to read the Scripture independently, outside a temple. (Drozdov 1885, III: 57–58)

This was firmly opposed by Prelate Filaret (Drozdov), to whom Pavskiy's story gave a reason to formulate his concept of the Church's attitude to the Scripture. First, the Holy Scripture is not only given to the clergy, but to the entire Church; second, the Universal Church never prohibited to interpret the Holy Scripture but always encouraged to do it; at last, »prohibiting means« are not reliable when »curiosity that becomes more and more widespread every day rushes right and left, and thus strives for illegal ways with more efforts« (55). Prelate Filaret assumed that only the compilation of »a right and convenient tutorial to understand the Holy Scripture« could save the situation. This tutorial should be based on: 1) a text of *Septuaginta*; 2) »the Hebrew truth«, i.e. the Hebrew text, where needed; 3) self-interpretation of the Holy Scripture of the Old Testament in the New Testament; 4) interpretation of the Fathers (54–55).

In spite of all these problems, Pavskiy had many regalia. He became a Doctor of theology early, in 1821, for his works on the translation of the Holy Scripture within a framework of the Russian Bible Society. At the dusk of his life days, he was honored with the title of the Academic of the Imperial Academy of Sciences for his 4-volume work *Filologicheskie nablyudeniya nad sostavom russkogo yazyka* (Philological Observations for the Composition of the Russian language) – the result of his many-year solitary »rest« after retiring from all the positions.

2.2 Scientific principles of Archpriest Gerasim Pavskii

We cannot analyze the research methods of Archpriest Gerasim without juxtaposing them with the theological views of his teacher at the Academy – Prelate Filaret (Drozdov). Researchers often referred to the issue of their relations, but usually saw a conflict in the opposition of hierarchy guarding Church godliness and an intelligent theologian-researcher (Batalden 1988, 487). First, it seems that a prelate Filaret and Archpriest Gerasim have much in common: both of them loved the Holy Scripture and considered the Word of God the main source and criterion of the theological knowledge; besides, they were active participants of the translation of the Bible into Russian. Both of them were no stranger to a historical approach to the Scripture.

Researchers marked a special »historical Biblicism« of Prelate Filaret, cutting both a churchless-mystical view making the Scripture an allegory and a »moralist-abstract approach replacing the Divine Revelation by the human logics« (Batalden 1988, 492; Florovskiy 2009, 216–225). Indeed, how did Archpriest Gerasim understand »historicism« in theology? »Historical view on religion should precede any other view« and therefore the study of theology should begin with the Holy History: »both moral and dogmatic study was created and established on the basis of history«, since historical events preceded the formulations of dogmatic and moral norms of the Church, and the first conditioned the necessity of the latter (Barsov 1880, 280).

Therefore, Archpriest Gerasim thought it necessary to consider Church dogmas in the perspective of their historical establishment and laid this principle in the basis of his theological works. Thus, he referred the formation of the Church doctrine of the Holy Trinity to the 2nd and 3rd centuries, when »it became a subjects of disputes« and this dogma »enters both a system of doctrine and history; since history is a narration of events« (281).

Certainly, Pavskiy looked for the original, »historical« meaning of the text in the Holy Scripture too. Since »Holy writers wrote for those who lived with them, and therefore wrote in accordance with notions, moral and habits of their contemporaries«, each holy text should be placed in corresponding historical conditions and problems. Archpriest Gerasim set himself a task »to represent a Biblical doctrine« when »there was no Church notion of this or that book, and neither St. Athanasius nor anyone of the Holy Fathers said his judgement about it«. (288) He relied on the primary – historical and philological – analysis of a text and revealed its

»pure« meaning, and this – historical – approach seemed to oppose an old scholastic system, against which the Russian »academics« of the 19th century desperately struggled.

However, Prelate Filaret who resisted »scholasticism« with the same firmness and not a stranger to a historical method in theology (Drozдов 1901) was very harsh in evaluating Archpriest Gerasim's translation of the books of the Old Testament: »false, non-corresponding to the dignity of the Holy Scripture and a harmful notion of the prophecies and some books of the Old Testament« with »notes going far from the true understanding of the God's Word and interpretation of the Holy Fathers« (1885, III: 54–55).

Answering to the commission created for »obtaining explanations from Archpriest G. Pavskiy« (Chistovich 1899, 152–153), the latter confessed in his absolute loyalty to all the dogmas of the Orthodox Church and admission of the inspiration of the Holy Scripture; however, he did state the main principles of his translation:

1. »Historicism« of the Biblical text. The texts of the Old Testament should be interpreted from themselves, not from the materialization of their prophecies in the New Testament, and, all the more, their patristic interpretation. Historical understanding of the very books of the Old Testament required thorough historical identification of various fragments and their arrangement in the corresponding order, which stimulated Archpriest Gerasim to violate a habitual canonical order and rearrange the entire books, chapters, and verses from one place into another. (Chistovich 1899, 168)

2. Philological specifics of the translation. In both the translation and comments, Archpriest Gerasim followed solely a method corresponding to his subject and led students to »possibly clear understanding of the Bible through various philological reasoning«. A theological interpretation of the messianic places of the Old Testament referred to another subject of the academic knowledge – dogmatics. (158; 166)

3. Archpriest Pavskiy's translation was especially devoted to a scientific academic circle competent in the full complex of theological sciences (including hermeneutics and dogmatics). This translation did not give »complete knowledge of God's Word«; therefore, Archpriest Gerasim did not think it fitted the »nation-wide application«. (168)

4. A right for personal opinions, including opinions related to the study of the Holy Scripture. They do not violate the unity of the Church fastened by the unity of dogmas and should not violate the unity of souls and Christian love. (165)

We note that Archpriest Gerasim's students always thanked him for the love for the Word of God enlightened in their hearts, though not always agreed with the teacher in his approaches to the Holy Scripture. Thus, one of his closest students at the Academy was the above-mentioned Archpriest Stephan Sabinin who not only studied Hebrew under Pavskiy's supervision but, moreover, represented the translation of the Book of Iob within a framework of these classes based on

Archpriest Gerasim's interpretation. In his master's thesis »In what sense should we understand the Book Song of Songs and what does it contain?«, Sabinin went on the studies of his teacher and applied the synthesis of hermeneutic, historical, archeological, philological and critical commentaries. (Rodoskiy 1887, 748) As in Pavskiy's case, the master thesis was acknowledged the best thesis in the course and immediately published in newly established journal *Khristianskoe Chteniye* (Sabinin 1821, 3).

Later, already being a priest at the Russian diplomatic mission in Copenhagen, and then at Maria Pavlovna's court chapel in Weimar, Archpriest Stephan went on studying the Old Testament and sending new articles on the explanation of Old Testament prophecies to his Academy (Sabinin 1829a, 33; 1829b, 35; 1829c, 36; 1830a, 39; 1830b, 40; 1831a, 41; 1831b, 41; 1831c, 42; 1832a, 47; 1832b, 46; 1832, 48; 1833, I; 1839a, I; 1839b, III; 1840, III). These explanations were characterized by a historical approach, which was sometimes purposefully mentioned in the titles of the articles – »Istoricheskiy Vzglyad na Vetkhozavetnye Prorochestva o Ninevii« (1832b, 47), »Istoricheskoe Rassmotrenie Vetkhozavetnykh Prorochestv o Tire« (1833, I) – probably, hinting at the method of his favorite teacher who had once inspired »a desire to study the Old Testament« in him (a letter of Archpriest S. Sabinin to Archpriest G. Pavskii (Protopopov 1876, 25)).

Archpriest Stephan also followed Archpriest Gerasim in the translations of the Old Testament into Russian. He began to study it as soon as he received »freedom to have his time /... / according to his will« (24). The correspondence shows that Archpriest Gerasim read and commented Archpriest Stephan's translation at his request (Rodoskiy 1887, 749). However, the preserved part of Sabinin's translation of the Isaiah's book witnesses that the resemblance with Pavskiy's approach is only in love for the Old Testament Hebrew text, sensitivity to a word and a desire to contribute to the understanding of the depth of Old Testament prophecies by an all-round commentary (Otdelenie rukopisei, f. 573. op. 1, unit A I/127). The author of the translation actually insists on the necessity to translate from the Hebrew Masoretic text and notices inaccuracies in the translation of the Seventy (unit A I/127, 5–6). However, he has no traces of Archpriest Gerasim's radicalism in preparing the Biblical text, attempts to impair its habitual canonized order and, at last (and the most important) understands »historicism« as a refusal to interpret the Old Testament through the New Testament, and the New Testament – through a patristic Church exegesis (Sukhova 2014).

On the contrary, archpriest Stephan very persistently places the Old Testament epigraphs before the chapters of the Old Testament book (Otdelenie rukopisei, f. 573. op. 1, unit A I/127, 1) and »sharpens« every prophecy on its fulfillment *in Christo*. He says about Isaiah the Prophet with bitterness that »nowadays, only a few of these prophecies are left to the Prophet, and the greatest part is completely taken from him« and that »none of the prophets was so tortured by the saw of the highest criticism as Isaiah the Prophet was«, for »the wisdom of this world is terrestrial wisdom, since it is mostly aimed at what is the most didactic and Divine in our prophet« (unit A I/127, 4–5).

The historicism of Archpriest Stephan is only in the fact that he pays attention to the history of the Hebrew kings contemporary to Isaiah the Prophet before interpreting the prophecies themselves and adds »some traits from the history of external peoples« to it (unit A I/127, 7). Thus, Archpriest Stephan Sabinin can be called one of the first Russian Bible-apologets to defend true authorship of Isaiah's prophecies.

3. Conclusions

At the second half of the 19th century, a historical approach occupied a dominating position in scientific theology and introduced the keynote of Bible studies as well. Thus, the methodic intuitions of Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy were somehow confirmed and he became a pioneer of applying historical-critical method in the domestic school. His contemporaries and successors saw his main scientific merit in it,

»in his scientific activity, G. P. traced the ways for an academic science to be knowledge solid in its foundations and fruitful in its conclusions, he laid solid foundation for a historical-philological method in his explanations« (Troitskiy 1887, 745).

However, our analysis enables to make more weighed conclusions.

1. Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy was an expected fruit of an impulse given by a theological-education reform of the beginning of the 19th century: a persistent appeal to creative independence of theological studies, »a breakthrough in Bible studies«, active involvement of the students of theological academies in the contradictory field of unproven methods, a striving to master the latest achievements of the Western theology within a short time. The contradictory traits conditioned by this combination were also typical for many Pavskiy's course mates; however, the brilliance and talent of the personality of Archpriest Gerasim led to special manifestation of these traits in his works.

2. The reflection of theological aspirations of Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy and the issues of his epoch in his views and activities was often witnessed by his inextricable connection with the translation of the Holy Scripture into Russian. The criticism of the translation was reflected at the destiny of Archpriest Gerasim, and particular drawbacks of his personal translation caused a desire to prohibit the Russian Bible as a fact.

3. Worth to notice is the influence of humanism in the ideas and methods of Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy. Its main ideas, including those related to the Holy Scripture, were inherited by the Reformation: a pursuit of »purifying« theological knowledge through cognizing the original meaning of the Scripture (*ad fontes*); much attention to philology, ancient languages and history, opening a way to original texts, the elaboration of the methods of criticizing a text.

4. We can agree that Archpriest Gerasim Pavskiy was ahead of his time for a half of century or more in his scientific activities: in 1860s, historical methods will become commonly used and at the beginning of the 20th century, the Russian theological schools will be persistently called for a historical-philological analysis of the Holy Scripture. However, a historical approach needed a very sensitive Church-theological scholar continuity, whose weakening led to distortions and mistakes. Archpriest Gerasim stepped through the decades and made mistakes, with which Russian theologians faced further throughout the decades. He was introducing a historical method by coming to impass, correcting himself and his scientific approaches. The concentration of these mistakes (inevitable at the initial stage) in the works of Archpriest Gerasim led to the above-mentioned collisions.

5. However, there was some specifics in Archpriest Gerasim's understanding of a historical method, »historicism«, and the time itself that distinguished him, first of all, from his teacher – Prelate Filaret. For Archpriest Gerasim, the Holy History given in the Bible was subjected to common laws of a terrestrial time and a historical process. Therefore, to treat the Old Testament in terms of the New Testament, and the New Testament in the terms of Holy Fathers was for him a violation of the principle of »historicism«. As for Prelate Filaret, he treated the Holy Scripture as a story of salvation, whose key moments were incarnation of God and Resurrection. Therefore, for him, to consider the Holy History without accounting for this would be a violation of the principle of »sacral historicism«. Probably, Archpriest Gerasim lacked this intuition of »sacral historicism« in his studies.

6. Moreover, it is »sacral historicism« toward the Holy Scripture – the Word of God – that is a true historical impartiality; it does not allow us to treat the Old Testament as a closed and self-sufficient historical phenomenon in the epoch of the New Testament. The epoch of the letter was realized in the epoch of grace, when Christ fulfilled the Law, i.e. interpreted the Old Testament; therefore, it is not possible anymore to understand the latter properly outside this. In the epoch of complete Divine Revelation, an attempt to return to the »unknown God« is a »movement back«, i.e. it violates true historicity.

7. We can agree with Archpriest Gerasim in the pursuit of cognizing the thought of holy texts »in the entire purity« as fully as possible without outshining it with our human vision. Therefore, all the competent efforts in restoring the original appearance of these texts and studying them in philological and historical respect are of use. However, the holy books, the Word of God, can be truly understood only by a »theological mean«. These texts received the evidence of holiness by the authority of the Church; therefore, it is the Church where the Word of God abides that keeps a key to true understanding of these texts.

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