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JUGGLING WITH THREE HANDS: ARCHBISHOP AFANASII OF Kholmogory AND THE LAW¹

Abbot Afanasii, head of a small Siberian monastery, went to Moscow in the 1670s seeking alms and found a home in the capital's intellectual circles, where he participated in the lively debates of the post-Nikon reform era. In 1682 he was appointed Archbishop of Kholmogory and Vaga, a vast new northern eparchy, where he served until his death in 1702. He was charged with the spiritual care of his flock and establishing the new church order, with handling administrative responsibilities (which increased heavily as Peter co-opted his services after entering the Great Northern War), and with uncovering and rooting out the evil of Old Belief while also protecting the Orthodox from the dangers of contact with foreigners as trade through Arkhangel'sk expanded. Afanasii thus had to juggle a shifting mix of legal and moral obligations, both ecclesiastical and civil. In the process he proved himself to be a new man for a new age.

Keywords: Archbishop Afanasii of Kholmogory, Peter the Great, church reform, Old Belief, Arkhangel'sk trade

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In 1682 Afanasii (Liubimov) was appointed archbishop of the new eparchy of Kholmogory and Vaga, a vast thinly populated territory in the Russian North stretching east from the Swedish/Finnish border to Siberia, and south from the Arctic Ocean to the Vologda eparchy. As chief administrator in charge of organizing a new ecclesiastical province as well as spiritual father to his flock, he himself was subject to three sets of rules, regulations and codes of behavior that he was expected to enforce in his eparchy. The first, Divine Law, should have governed the lives of all Muscovite Christians, but its very nature was passionately contested after the mid-seventeenth century. The reform program introduced by Nikon (patriarch 1652–1666), intended to bring Russian church practice into conformity with Orthodoxy outside Muscovy, had ignited a fire storm that degenerated into a violent schism between the official church and Nikon’s opponents, the Old Believers, who comprised a significant segment of the population in the North. The second and third bodies of law issued from Afanasii’s earthly superiors, the church hierarchy headed by the patriarch and the secular state under the tsar. The church regarded Afanasii as the long arm of its law in the North, responsible for the spiritual enlightenment of his flock while enforcing Orthodoxy in all its aspects throughout his eparchy. The royal government also increasingly co-opted his services, with demands rising sharply after the young Tsar Peter assumed personal control and began preparations for the Great Northern War (1700–1725), his long struggle against Sweden. Afanasii thus had to juggle a shifting mix of obligations to his superiors while simultaneously pursuing his own vision of establishing a solid administrative structure for the new eparchy, introducing church architecture and services modeled on those of the capital, and strengthening the moral fiber of the community.

Balancing all these responsibilities required constant effort and multi-tasking. A fitting emblem for Afanasii’s situation, the icon of the Three-Handed Mother of God (*Troeruchitsa*), symbolized the possibility of Divine support and assistance, especially in its Muscovite version where the third arm was generally portrayed not as a steel votive offering but as a natural replication of the other two. This was one of the new images, along with that of the Iveron icon of the Mother of God, that Nikon had introduced to Muscovy and that Afanasii in turn brought to the Russian North, where the *Troeruchitsa* graced his new Cathedral of the Transfiguration.²

2 On the history of the icon, see НАДЕЖДА ДМИТРИЕВА, «Икона Божией Матери ‘Троеручица’,» 25 Июля 2005, <https://pravoslavie.ru/1901.html> (Accessed December 16, 2021); «История и значение иконы Богоматери Троеручица, в чем помогает и куда ве-

When the new eparchy was established in 1682, the patriarch chose as archbishop a man who had spent a surprisingly short time in Moscow. After arriving in the capital Afanasii had risen rapidly in the central church hierarchy. Born to a military family in Tiumen' in 1641, he had studied at the Kremlin Chudov Monastery in the 1660s before taking religious vows and returning to Siberia, where he served in the Tobol'sk bishop's household and as abbot of the Dalmatov Monastery before his transfer to Moscow in the late 1670s. Afanasii was much better educated than most Muscovite hierarchs,³ and in the capital his abilities evidently were recognized quickly. He served as the patriarch's household priest, learned Greek at the Printing Office (Pechatnyi Dvor), and was entrusted with supervision and control over editing works of the church fathers translated from Greek into Slavic.⁴ There is some evidence that Patriarch Ioakim thought about appointing him head of the Greek-Slavonic Academy. Within church circles he supported Greek traditions rather than the "Latinisms" associated with Orthodox thinkers from Ukraine. His duties made him familiar with patriarchal routine and with the church ritual order then in use in Moscow, above all in the Kremlin churches, and offered an introduction to members of the secular elite.⁵

шать образ,» <https://pravoslavy.ru/ikony/troeruchitsa> (Accessed December 16, 2021). A copy from Mount Athos arrived at Nikon's New Jerusalem Monastery in 1661 and was widely copied thereafter; see Г. М. ЗЕЛЕНСКАЯ, «Икона Божией Матери 'Троеручица' из Воскресенского Ново-Иерусалимского монастыря», 10 Июля 2017 г., <http://www.n-jerusalem.ru/essays/text/360381.html> (Accessed November 28, 2021). The late 17th-century *Troeruchitsa* from the Kholmogory Transfiguration Cathedral is now in the collection of the Kolomenskoe Museum in Moscow: «Коломенское. 100 шедевров русского искусства,» Новый манеж, 8 Июня—17 Июля 2022, <https://www.mgomz.ru/ru/exhibition/kolomenskoe-100-shedevrom-russkogo-iskusstva> (Accessed March 24, 2023). For photos of the icon, see <https://bogachkova1957.livejournal.com/95610.html?https://glukovarenik.livejournal.com/3229074.html?ysclid=lfmpn5jx3n611416320>. The image in the frontispiece of this volume is a *Troeruchitsa* (c. 1840), courtesy of the Museum of Russian Icons, Clinton, MA (USA), Inventory No. R2005.26.

- 3 As Georg Michels has noted, his "amazing erudition and its origins have not yet been explored"; GEORG MICHELS, "Rescuing the Orthodox: The Church Policies of Archbishop Afanasii of Kholmogory, 1682–1702," in *Of Religion and Empire: Missions, Conversion, and Tolerance in Tsarist Russia*, ed. ROBERT T. GERACI, MICHAEL KHODARKOVSKY (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 19–37, here 21 note 7.
- 4 See В. ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, *Афанасий, Архиепископ Холмогорский* (Сп. Петербург, 1908), and В. Н. Булатов, *Муж слова и разума: Афанасий—первый архиепископ Холмогорский и Важский* (Архангельск: Поморский государственный университет имени М. В. Ломоносов, 2002).
- 5 MICHELS, "Rescuing the Orthodox", 20-21; Булатов, *Муж слова*, 146; ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, *Афанасий*, 471–74; Т. Г. ФРУМЕНКОВА, «Афанасий Холмогорский и иноземцы», в *Русский север и западная европа*, ed. Ю. Н. БЕСПЯТЫХ (Сп. Петербург: Русско-Балтийский информационный центр БЛИТС, 1999), 134–77, here 149.

By training and experience, Afanasii was representative of the “new bishops” appointed in the late 17th century. As Brüning described them, these men were unusually erudite, “more radical in their will to reform,” and more ready to use force to wipe out heresy and bring their previously recalcitrant flock to heel, while simultaneously strengthening church authority over priests and the lower clergy.⁶ Smolitsch similarly terms them “learned monks,” with formal training at academies and limited experience of monastic life, who began their ecclesiastical careers with an unusual familiarity with literature and canon law but little exposure to pastoral duties.⁷

While Afanasii met all of these criteria, the most important element in his selection as head of the new Kholmogory eparchy was probably his image as a leading warrior against the church’s gravest threat, the Old Believer heresy. While the Church Council of 1666-67 had deposed Nikon as patriarch, it had endorsed his reform program. Rebellion against the changes in dogma and ritual raged, especially in the Russian North, where the uprising at the Solovetskii Monastery had been put down by troops only in 1676 and Archpriest Avvakum, spiritual leader of the anti-Nikonian movement, was burned at the stake in April 1682, shortly after Afanasii’s appointment on March 9. There are some indications that the new bishop had himself been a follower of the Old Belief in his youth; if so, he was familiar with the enemy, and he had fought the schismatics while serving in Siberia. He took part in a public debate at the Kremlin on 5 July 1682 with the Old Believer intellectual Nikita Dobrynin, according to legend handling himself so well that his enraged opponent tore out part of Afanasii’s beard (contemporary portraits depict him beardless),⁸ and he subsequently wrote a treatise, the *Spiritual Exhortation (Uvet dukhovnyi)*, which became the “single most important weapon against Old Belief during the remainder of

6 ALFONS BRÜNING, “Social Discipline among the Russian Orthodox Parish Clergy (17th–18th Century)”, *Cahiers du monde russe* 58, no. 3 (2017): 303–40, here 321.

7 IGOR SMOLITSCH, *Geschichte der Russischen Kirche 1700–1917* (Leiden: Brill, 1964), 392–98.

8 It was painted in Moscow in 1697 by Semen Dement’ev syn Narykov. When Afanasii died, the portrait was placed over his sarcophagus in the Kholmogory Transfiguration Cathedral, and one of his servitors, Ivan Vasiliev syn Pogorel’skii, made a copy that hung in the archbishop’s court; A. A. ТИТОВ, *Летопись Двинская* (Москва, 1889), 105; ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, *Афанасий*, 515. The attribution of the two copies now in the Arkhangelsk museum remains a matter of debate; see М. И. Мильчик, *Город Холмогор был многолюден и знаменит...Очерк градостроительной и архитектурной истории* (Ст. Петербург: Лики России, 2013), Приложение I: «О портретах Афанасия», 100–17.

the seventeenth century.”⁹ 1200 copies were printed and distributed with a recommendation that priests use it in their sermons.¹⁰

With regard to Divine Law, Afanasii shared the beliefs of his Greek-leaning superiors and supported the Nikonian program of ecclesiastical reform and enlightenment. The first and most urgent task awaiting him, however, was dealing with the opposition of the Old Believers. He advocated eliminating the heresy root and branch and set about doing so immediately upon his arrival in Kholmogory in October. Many followers of Avvakum and supporters of the Solovki rebellion had taken refuge in the vast Northern forests, where they sought to attract the local Orthodox population to their side. Consequently, the new eparchy probably had the largest number of sectarians in Muscovy. Afanasii distributed copies of his *Spiritual Exhortation* and other materials for priests to use in their sermons, but also required them to report Old Believers and parishioners who did not attend church or refused communion. He simultaneously relied on military forces to gather testimony and ferret out heretics, who were brought in chains to Kholmogory, where they were given an opportunity to recant. If they did, Afanasii forced the local population to stand surety for their good behavior. If the imprisoned Old Believers did not recant, they were burned at the stake.¹¹ The official church called for elimination of the heresy, so the archbishop took harsh measures where he had no choice. The fight against Old Belief was a major focus of his administration from the beginning and continued to demand his attention thereafter.

Afanasii's counter to heresy was establishing a strong core of proper Orthodox belief and behavior in his eparchy. One aspect of this program emphasized creating a proper setting for services. Afanasii was determined as far as possible to recreate the high level of Moscow church life, building and adorning churches, providing books, raising performance standards for church music and services. Inspired by the visible expressions of church authority that he had appreciated in Moscow, the new archbishop initiated an ambitious ecclesiastical building program almost

9 MICHELS, “Rescuing the Orthodox,” 21. Afanasii's *Uvet* was published in September 1682; on the arguments see Н. С. Гурьянова, «Власть и ‘канон священных текстов,’ оформленный противниками церковной реформ», *Вестник Новосибирского Государственного Университета*, Серия: История, филология 19, no. 8 (2020): 35–44.

10 В. Михайлов, «Памяти верного сподвизника Петра I на Поморском Севере/К 380-летию со дня рождения первого архиепископа Холмогорского и Важского Афанасия (Любимов-Творогова) 1641–17.09.1702», <https://msk.kprf.ru/2021/09/17/168426/> (Сентябрь 2021) (Accessed November 12, 2021).

11 MICHELS, “Rescuing the Orthodox,” 27–30.

immediately upon his arrival in the North. His growing complex of buildings, especially the archbishop's court area in Kholmogory, symbolically projected Orthodox institutional power. With the Kremlin Dormition as his ideal, he built a new five-domed masonry Cathedral of the Transfiguration (1685-1691), commissioning artisans from Moscow. In February 1695 Patriarch Adrian gave the church an icon of the Mother of God "with many holy wonder-working relics" which had belonged to Patriarch Ioakim's treasurer Paisii Siiskii. Paisii had left it to the Siiskii Monastery, but Adrian decided to give it to the Kholmogorskii cathedral because he supported Afanasii's effort to make the cathedral a model for the entire region.¹² The cathedral complex quickly expanded to fit the status of the "first metropolitan of the North," including a masonry bell tower, archbishop's chambers, sacristy, and gate church, along with an icon-painting atelier and a workshop for copying manuscripts.¹³

The building program extended to other centers of the diocese: the Holy Trinity church in Ukhtostrov (1682-90) and the later Cathedral of the Annunciation in Shenskursk, according to a charter of 1696-98 built under Afanasii's personal supervision. Their construction, a high tent roof superstructure on crossed barrel vaults (*bochki*) became typical for wooden ecclesiastical architecture in the region, a distinct "Pinega-Mezen' school" that probably came from Afanasii's projects. The unification of church architecture "according to the rules" expressed official church

principles in stone and wood, a counter to the Old Belief.¹⁴ Afanasii decreed how churches were to be constructed, with the cross on the main dome modeled after that on the Annunciation cathedral in Moscow, prescribed how interiors should be adorned, and ordered that side-chapels should have their own entrances from the outside gallery ("*iz paperti*").¹⁵

12 Булатов, *Муж слова*, 160.

13 АЛЕКСАНДР ГОЛУБЦОВ, *Чиновники Холмогорскаго Преображенскаго собора* (Москва, 1903), XI, XIV-XVIII, XXIV; Т. М. КОЛЬЦОВА, *Искусство Холмогор XVI-XVIII веков* (Москва: Северный паломник, 2009), 17-22. On the Kholmogory architectural ensemble, see WILLIAM C. BRUMFIELD, "Kholmogory: Russia's first window to the West," *Russia Beyond the Headlines*, March 7, 2014, http://rbth.com/travel/2014/03/07kholmogory_russias_first_window-to_the-west_34899/html (Accessed December 29, 2021).

14 EUGENE KHOĐAKOVSKY, "Art and Power: The Northern Russian Eparchies in the Late-Seventeenth Century", in *The Protracted Reformation in the North* [= *The Protracted Reformation in Northern Norway 3*], ed. SIGRUN HØGTVEIT BERG, ROGNALD HEISELDAL BERGESEN, ROALD ERNST KRISTIANSEN (Boston: DeGruyter, 2020), 107-37, here 121; КОЛЬЦОВА, *Искусство*, 20.

15 ГОЛУБЦОВ, *Чиновники*, XIV-XV.

The archbishop also took measures to close down alternative sites of worship. Peasants had built unofficial chapels (*chasovni*) for protection against dangers (disease, animal epidemics, crop-threatening weather, military attacks) that simultaneously served as places of family worship, with “treasuries” to support them (a 1692 document details over 430 such shrines). To redirect his flock’s devotions Afanasii put these chapels under the control of the nearest parish, confiscating the chapel funds to support the construction of new churches.¹⁶

To help build community the archbishop encouraged veneration of the miracle-working Iverskaia icon of the Mother of God, an image introduced to Muscovy when Nikon ordered an exact copy from Mount Athos in 1648. Celebration of the icon became a major annual festival in Arkhangel’sk and that copy visited Kholmogory for services and processions. After being cleaned and given a new silver gilt decorative icon cover, the Iverskaia icon from the Krasnogorskii Monastery was honored in Kholmogory at the Transfiguration cathedral with a public prayer service, on petition of the town elders and “all the people.” Whenever it visited Kholmogory, the Krasnogorskii icon was carried in procession around the town.¹⁷

In dealing with the spiritual life of his eparchy Afanasii concentrated on building a closer relationship with local Orthodox Christians, basing his approach on the ideas dominant in his intellectual circles in Moscow.¹⁸ Until the creation of the new eparchy the Northern lands had fallen formally under the jurisdiction of distant church hierarchs in Novgorod and Moscow, and had very few parishes, often without priests. To implement church law and jurisdiction, he introduced a program of reform and religious enlightenment focused on establishing an orderly ecclesiastical administration and educating his congregation. The new bishop energetically introduced changes in accord with the official reform program. He hired a staff of administrators to handle the establishment of parishes, the conduct of church courts, the introduction of the corrected church books (which had to be purchased from his treasury), inspection of icons

16 MICHELS, “Rescuing the Orthodox”, 32, and GEORG MICHELS, “Ruling Without Mercy: Seventeenth-Century Bishops and Their Officials”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 4, no. 3 (2003): 515–42, here 539, note 72.

17 ГОЛУБЦОВ, *Чиновники*, 206, 251; ТИТОВ, *Летопись*, 98, 106, 107, 112.

18 On proposals for making the church a positive force in Muscovite society, see CATHY J. POTTER, “The Russian Church and the Politics of Reform in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century”, PhD dissertation, Yale University (1993), and PAUL BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion and Society in Russia: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 150–75.

to ensure the proper portrayal of Orthodox images, the building of new churches (often designed by the bishop, with personal supervision of construction), and the collection of dues and fees. In contrast to some other church leaders, Afanasii did his best to ensure honest behavior on the part of his staff and periodically fired the gravest offenders.¹⁹

Some features of his religious revival reinforced the authority of the new bishop and the church hierarchy. Afanasii ordered that prayers be said for the bishop and patriarch and sent regular circulars to parish priests.²⁰ Upon his arrival he examined many priests already in office to check on their qualifications, and some had to come to his residence for additional instructional sessions. In 1699 he sent several younger clerics to Moscow for further education.²¹ He reformed parish structure, insisting that all candidates for positions as priests had to be approved by the archbishop. To ensure a supply of candidates, all priests had to register their sons or close relatives, so that peasant elders could not elect untrained peasant priests. By the end of the seventeenth century every priest in the eparchy had to pass two exams to receive official ordination, demonstrating ability to read and write and showing familiarity with the new liturgy.²²

Moral standards also were enforced. Monasteries often served as correctional institutions for clergy whose behavior did not meet proper standards. In 1687, for example, Archbishop Afanasii sent Stefan, a cathedral priest from Arkhangel'sk, to the Nikolaevskii Korel'skii Monastery on account of his limitless drinking. In another case Elesei, a former district priest, accused of adultery, murder, and other great offenses, was tonsured and sent to the Siiskii Monastery in fetters to repent for the rest of his life while working in the kitchen and bakery.²³ While monasteries served as correctional institutions, Afanasii found the monks resistant to his supervisory authority. He hoped to bring monastic life as well as parish

19 See ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, *Afanasii*, 9, 402-7, 417, 419, 446; MICHELS, "Rescuing the Orthodox", 22.

20 See, for example, his encyclicals of 1696 (*Странник*, Октябрь 1866, 23-42) and 1697 (*Архангельские епархиальные ведомости* 18, 1900, 484-85) and his pastoral letter (ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, *Афанасий*, 131-41).

21 В. ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, «Северорусское приходское духовенство в конце XVII в.», *Христианское чтение* (1906): no. 7, 79-98, no. 8, 285-301, no. 9, 425-41, here 81, 285, and В. ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, «Пастырская деятельность преосвященного Афанасия, архиепископа Холмогорского», *Христианское чтение*, no. 10 (1902): 467-89; BRÜNING, "Social Discipline", 325-26.

22 ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, *Афанасий*, 142-49, 202-04, 209-11, 329-30; MICHELS, "Rescuing the Orthodox", 35, and GEORG B. MICHELS, *At War with the Church: Religious Dissent in Seventeenth-Century Russia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 169-70.

23 ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, «Северорусское приходское духовенство», 83-84.

life under central control, but the stubborn persistence of opposition from old independent houses such as Solovki and Antoniev-Siiskii resulted in twenty years of stalemate.²⁴

In tandem with providing approved places of worship and educated clergy, Afanasii instituted measures to try to bring the lives of his eparchy residents into conformity with Orthodox prescriptions. Every Christian was to attend services, participate in confession and communion, and refrain from offenses against morality. Marriage ceremonies required officiating priests and the listing of names in marriage registers. Church courts investigated sex crimes. Violations of proper behavior led to fines.²⁵ The archbishop saw women as being particularly likely to fall prey to the schism because of female “moral weakness,” so took a hard line in punishing their offenses. In December 1683 he directed his church court to sentence girls and widows who gave birth to illegitimate children to a beating without mercy. After being fined over two rubles, they were to be sent to convents for five to six weeks. But he also saw that dire economic circumstances could play a role in drawing women into relationships with Old Believers. In 1687 he founded the Kholmogory Dormition convent, a usual means of providing refuge for women while bringing them into an orderly Christian life. But he also set up a poor relief program for widows and wandering nuns.²⁶

Afanasii did his best to protect his flock from being swayed by non-Orthodox influences, particularly those who worked for Western merchants and traders living in Kholmogory and Arkhangel’sk. Foreigners who came to Arkhangel’sk for the summer shipping season and annual fair offered employment to thousands of Russians. Afanasii worried about the dangers of too close contact between his parishioners and the foreign community, and in his report to the tsar of 28 February 1686 he noted that Russians were living in the households of foreign families, where they shared food from the same dishes and served as wet nurses for non-Russian children. These Russians did not observe the Orthodox fasts or attend services, often going to the foreigners’ churches to listen to the singing, and they were attracted to foreign habits, such as smoking tobacco. Meanwhile, foreigners ridiculed

24 GEORG B. MICHELS, “The Monastic Reforms of Archbishop Afanasii of Kholmogory (1682–1702)”, *Die Geschichte Russlands im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert aus der Perspektive seiner Regionen* [=Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte, Bd. 63], ed. ANDREAS KAPPELER (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2004), 220–35, here 233–34.

25 MICHELS, “Rescuing the Orthodox”, 31.

26 MICHELS, “Ruling Without Mercy”, 537, and “Rescuing the Orthodox”, 34; ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, *Афанасий*, 80, note 41, 131–35.

Russian services and icons, which were not kept in the proper places in foreigners' homes. He secured a royal decree to back up his regulation that Russian employees could work only for foreigners who did not disparage the church, and that they be given separate quarters within foreigners' compounds, with access to the street so that clergy could attend directly to their spiritual needs. At the same time the archbishop welcomed foreigners desiring conversion to the Orthodox community, generally sending them on to monasteries for further instruction and then to Moscow, although he did hire a couple of new converts to serve among his *deti boiarskie*.²⁷ On the whole Afanasii did his best to ensure that the Orthodox population of his eparchy lived as observant Christians, and encouraged the voluntary conversion of Lapps and other native peoples. These became a threat to church authority only when in contact with Old Believers.²⁸

A third area of legal administration, arising from increasing interaction with the state, made growing demands on the archbishop's time and energy. After being assigned to Kholmogory Afanasii had remained in close personal contact with Moscow church and court circles. In addition to maintaining a substantial correspondence, he paid lengthy visits to the capital on four occasions (February 1684-February 1685, December 1688-February 1690, December 1692-July 1693, and January 1697-March 1698). During the minority of the co-tsars Ivan and Peter and Sophia's regency, Afanasii evidently managed to remain on cordial terms with all parties despite the political twists and turns of dynastic politics. His contacts with Peter subsequently became more frequent as the sovereign's changing political and military interests shifted his attention to the North. As noted above, Afanasii was an excellent administrator, a leader in combatting the Old Believer heresy in the Russian North, a preacher determined to protect his Orthodox flock from foreign contamination, an author and educator, and a linguist. While he regarded foreigners as heretics, he personally did not avoid contact with them and was open to cordial relationships, receptive to the exchange of ideas in areas apart from religion, and interested in learning anything that might be useful, ranging from art and architecture to scientific discoveries. He studied construction techniques, furniture, and was fascinated with books, maps, clocks and optics. He set up his

27 ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, *Афанасий*, 100–15, and «О борьбе Афанасия, архиеп. Холмогорского, с иностранным влиянием в приделах своей епархии и деятельности его по обращению иноверцев в православие», *Архангельские епархиальные ведомости* (1901): no. 1, 19–22, and no. 2, 53–61.

28 MICHELS, "Rescuing the Orthodox", 23–24.

telescope in the bell tower of the Kholmogory cathedral, thus establishing the first observatory in the Russian North. The archbishop also made use of foreigners' specialized knowledge and skills to provide information useful to his flock. For example, in 1696 he worked with an employee of the Apothecary Chancellery, apparently of Polish origin, Daniel Gurshin, to compile the *Extract from Doctors' Knowledge* (*Reestr iz dokhtorskikh nauk*). This collection included Western, Russian, secular and Orthodox monastic medical practices, describing symptoms and giving recipes and instructions for medicines intended for use by Muscovites seeking to treat themselves or others. As Clare Griffin has noted, there was repeated emphasis in such compilations that the material was "appropriate knowledge," that the texts were legitimate and not "illicit and subversive," thus potentially falling into the category of books of black magic (*chernoknizhestvo*). Its dedication to Fedor Matveevich Apraksin, then military governor of the Dvina region, reflects an emerging effort to make such knowledge available to the wider literate population of Muscovy.²⁹

Ideally suited to become "Peter's man in the North," Afanasii found that his increasingly close contact with the tsar expanded his horizons in unexpected ways while simultaneously giving him new responsibility for carrying out state decrees. When Peter visited the Dvina in the summers of 1693 and 1694 the tsar and archbishop appeared together in Kholmogory and Arkhangel'sk, had long discussions, and Afanasii even accompanied Peter on his yacht when the tsar visited the Solovetskii Monastery.³⁰ Fortunately for the archbishop's growing range of interests and duties, Peter had decreed the establishment of the Arkhangel'sk postal service in 1693, entrusting the job to Andrei Vinius.³¹ During Peter's Azov campaign Afanasii spent much time and effort gathering news, and F. A. Apraksin, the Arkhan-

29 RACHEL KOROLOFF, "Juniper: From Medicine to Poison and Back Again", *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 19, no. 4 (2018): 697–716, here 710–11; CLARE GRIFFIN, "In Search of an Audience: Popular Pharmacies and the Limits of Literate Medicine in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century Russia", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 89, no. 4 (2015): 705–32.

30 *Полное собрание русских летописей* 33 (Ленинград: Наука, 1977), 163; ТИТОВ, *Летопись*, 69, 77–80; БУЛАТОВ, *Муж слова*, 60–69, 147; *О высочайших пришествиях великаго государя, царя и великаго князя Петра Алексеевича, всея Великия и Малыя и Белья России самодержца, из царствующаго града Москвы на Двину, к Архангельскому городу, троекратно бывших; о нахождении шведских неприятельских кораблей, на ту же Двину, к Архангельскому городу; о зачатию Новодвинской крепости и о освящении новаго храма в сей крепости* (Москва, 1783), 16, 18–24, 28–29, 33–34, 42–53; ГОЛУБЦОВ, *Чиновники*, 250.

31 А. Н. ВИГЕЛЕВ, *История отечественной почты* (Москва: Радио и связь, 1990), 148.

gel'sk voevoda, himself rode to Kholmogory as soon as word of Peter's victory arrived.³² The Great Northern War drew Afanasii into personal participation in state affairs. In 1701 Peter directed his decree on building a new fort, Nova Dvinka, at the mouth of the Dvina to both the archbishop and the Arkhangel'sk voevoda. Afanasii sent his best masons to the site, and the eparchy provided building materials, including thousands of bricks. The archbishop requested a copy of the building plans while suggesting improvements in the proposed construction of a well, and he recommended connecting the water supply to the river in case of a siege. Afanasii also handled negotiations with foreign merchants in Arkhangel'sk, asking them not to join the Swedes. The enemy was defeated on 25 June, and Peter awarded the archbishop three Swedish cannons and a flag in gratitude.³³

On Peter's third visit to the North, in 1702, Afanasii accompanied the tsar as the troops moved to Nova Dvinka for the start of one of Peter's most ambitious undertakings, hauling ships more than 260 km overland along the "Sovereign's Road" (*Osudareva doroga*) from the White Sea coast to Lake Onega. The archbishop's major contribution lay in advance planning. In 1700 he had compiled *Three Roads to Sweden* (*Opisanie trekh putei*), a description of existing and proposed routes through Karelia to Swedish possessions. The archbishop was familiar with the old routes used by local residents and pilgrims going to Solovki and gathered practical information from Russian traders. He consulted the copy of the *Kniga Bol'shogo Chertezha* in his personal library for data on distances between settled points, pogosts, and the position of rivers and lakes. Peter began his track farther west along the coast, but the southern half of his road followed Afanasii's first route, which he had correctly evaluated in terms of practicality, anticipating a military need for rapid transit. Peter's forces moved swiftly, leaving the White Sea coast on 17 August and reaching Lake Ladoga on 26 August, then proceeding west, resulting in the fall of the Swedish fortress at Noteburg (Oreshek) on 12 October 1702 and Russia's consequent breakthrough to the Baltic.³⁴

32 И. П. Козловский, *Первые почты и первые почтмейстры в Московском Государстве* (Варшава, 1913), 420–29; Булатов, *Муж слова*, 70–72.

33 А. А. Куратов (Ред.), *Архангельский север в документах истории (с древнейших времен до 1917 года)* (Архангельск: Государственный архив Архангельской области, 2004), 116–18 (№ 60), and 122–23 (№ 63); *О высочайших путешествиях*, 54–88; И. М. Гостев, Р. А. Давыдов, *Русский Север в войнах XVI–XIX веков* (Архангельск: Фонд развития Соловетского архипелага, 2014), 51–70.

34 М. Ю. Данков, «Архиепископ Афанасий—автор проекта 'Осударевой дороги'», в *Европейский север России* (Архангельск: Архангельский центр Русского географического общества, 2014), 10–11.

In January 1702 Afanasii made another topographical contribution to the state's knowledge, sending to F. A. Golovin in Moscow a drawing Peter had requested of the Northern Dvina "from eight versts above the town of Arkhangel'sk . . . to the mouths of the Dvina at the sea," including all the channels, islands, and sands, as close to size as possible. His charting of the river from Arkhangel'sk to the White Sea had great practical importance, as shown by the desperate Swedish search in Baltic ports in 1701 for sailors with knowledge of the area who might serve as pilots for their attack squadron.³⁵

Peter's visits marked the first time that a tsar personally came to the Russian North. From one point of view the appearances of the tsar and archbishop traveling together around the White Sea and Northern Dvina forests visually "represent for the last time the symphonic ideas in late-medieval Russian history."³⁶ But the ideal of "symphony and parallelism" as a definition of the relationship between patriarch and tsar, church and state, was even more illusory in early modern Muscovy than it had been earlier. The balance was shifting—and behind the proclaimed public vision of each sphere completing the other lurked the specter of Patriarch Nikon.

After the mid-seventeenth century the question of jurisdictional divisions between church and state became increasingly thorny. Before the adoption of the 1649 *Ulozhenie* church people and church institutions were subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction in legal matters. Chapter 12 of the new code retained that rule only for parts of the church directly under the Patriarch, a change that Richard Hellie saw as a bad sign for the future, since the state was defining the Patriarch's judicial realm. The code also provided for state relief if the Patriarch's justice was corrupted and declared that the church would not be permitted to buy or take on mortgage any more land. Hellie argues that the state's specifying dishonor payments for various churchmen was part of the same process of state regulation and interference in the church's internal affairs. Nikon saw regulating dishonor

ческого общества РАН, 1999), 242–47; П. А. Кротов, *Осударева дорога 1702* (Ст. Петербург: Историческая иллюстрация, 2011); on Afanasii's «Описание трех путей из России в Швецию», see Т. В. Панич, *Литературное творчество Афанасия Холмогорского* (Новосибирск: Сибирский хронограф, 1996), 93–120, 173–90.

35 ВЕРЮЖСКИЙ, *Афанасий*, 677; Булатов, *Муж слова*, 178–79; FYODOR A. SHIBANOV, *Studies in the History of Russian Cartography: Part 1, From the History of Russian Cartography in the 16th and 17th Centuries* [Monograph No. 14/1975, Supplement No. 2 to *Canadian Cartographer*, 12], trans. L. H. MORGAN (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 28–29; *O высочайших путешествиях*, 59–60.

36 КНОДАКОВСКИЙ, "Art and Power," 123.

payments from clergy to laymen as “a law of the devil, of antichrist himself.”³⁷

The church council that deposed Nikon was opposed to laymen being allowed to judge church people and also to the establishment of the Monastery Chancellery, which began as an informal sub-section of the Great Court Chancellery but became a separate office with civil and criminal court jurisdiction in 1650. Nikon was condemned on 17 June 1667; a month later the tsar reduced the Monastery Chancellery’s jurisdiction to managing church estates, and the office was closed on 19 December 1677.³⁸ Apparently Tsar Fedor’s advisors found the church establishment sufficiently obedient and wanted to placate the ecclesiastical authorities.³⁹

The views of Ioakim (patriarch 1674–1690), who appointed Afanasii to his eparchy, and his successor Adrian (patriarch 1690–1700) reflect the intellectual atmosphere in which Afanasii worked while he was in Moscow. Ioakim had participated in the council that deposed Nikon, but continued Nikon’s campaign against the Old Believers and defense of church authorities against state encroachments. His testament warned the tsar of the dangers that would arise from allowing contact between Orthodox and non-Orthodox. Peter’s response is evident in a change in the oaths recited and signed during the installation service for bishops: in 1691 a clause prohibiting dealings with foreigners and marriages between Orthodox and non-Orthodox was removed, a change Zhivov considered “one of Peter’s first substantial actions in the area of cultural politics”⁴⁰

Adrian supported church tradition, tried to eliminate Latinizations in confession, opposed the adoption of Western dress, and frequently found himself in a tense relationship with Peter. As archimandrite of the Kremlin Chudov Monastery he had maintained strict discipline, and later as met-

37 RICHARD HELLIE, “The Church and the Law in Late Muscovy: Chapters 12 and 13 of the *Ulozhenie* of 1649”, *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 25, nos. 1–4 (1991): 179–99, here 179–81.

38 *Полное собрание законов Российской империи* 2: 1676–1688 (Ст. Петербург, 1830), 109 (no. 699).

39 HELLIE, “Church and the Law”, 189–90; B. A. USPENSKII, V. M. ZHIVOV, “Tsar and God: Semiotic Aspects of the Sacralization of the Monarch in Russia”, in *“Tsar and God”: and Other Essays in Russian Cultural Semiotics* (Boston: Academic Studies Press (2012), 1–112, here 84, note 66. After being abolished in 1677 the Monastery Chancellery merged with Chancellery of the Great Court but was recreated after Patriarch Adrian’s death in 1700 to take control of all church and monastery affairs.

40 V. M. ZHIVOV, “Cultural Reforms in Peter I’s System of Transformations”, in *“Tsar and God”: and Other Essays in Russian Cultural Semiotics* (Boston: Academic Studies Press (2012), 191–238, here 219–20, note 13.

ropolitan of Kazan' and Sviiazhs'k wrote a tract against the Old Believers. He managed church affairs during Ioakim's last illness and became patriarch on 24 August 1690. Although suffering from paralysis in his last years, Adrian continued to support traditional church law in the face of royal opposition. He refused Peter's request in 1698 that his first wife be forcibly tonsured and issued an *Encyclical to All Orthodox on the Non-Shaving of Beards and Whiskers*, which did not sit well with the scissors-wielding ruler. Following ancient church tradition, he petitioned the tsar in 1698–1699, asking for mercy for the rebellious *strel'tsy*. Peter proceeded with their execution, and Adrian retired to what had formerly been his summer residence at the Nikolo-Perervinskii Monastery.⁴¹ In governing the church Adrian was noted for willingness to forgive, mild penalties, and support for collective decision-making. At the end of 1697 he issued regulations touching many sides of diocese life: how clergy and laity were to conduct themselves, resolution of disputes, issues to be reserved for the Patriarch, rules for church services, moral behavior, timely collection of dues, the spheres of competence of eparchy and patriarchal courts, and protection of church courts from secular interference. Additional articles in 1700 aimed at defending church law, property, and rights.⁴²

Drawing upon this matrix of law and tradition, Afanasii carried through what amounted to a spiritual enlightenment in his eparchy. He was able to assert his authority as archbishop while bringing his flock into a closer relationship with the centralized church. At the same time, he made major contributions to the emerging Russian Empire, balancing his duties to his ecclesiastical superior with his obligations as “Peter’s man in the North.” He was remarkably successful in keeping all three balls in the air over an extended period. Given his qualifications and achievements, it is not surprising that some have suggested that Peter gave serious consideration to making Afanasii patriarch.⁴³ Clearly Patriarch Adrian had that in mind

41 NICHOLAS DENYSENKO, “A Liturgical Theology of Primacy in Orthodoxy”, in *Primacy in the Church: The Office of Primate and the Authority of Councils 1*, ed. JOHN CHRYSYSSAVGIS (Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2016), 195–215, here 198–99; «Адриан», *Православная Энциклопедия I* (Москва: Церковно-научный центр «Православная Энциклопедия», 2000), 312–313; LEV BERNIKOV, “Peter’s War on Facial Hair”, *Russian Life* 65, no. 1 (2022): 17–21.

42 *On the Наказ старостам поповским и благочинным строителям and Статьи о святительских судах* see «Адриан», 312–13; Г. А. СКВОРЦОВ, *Патриарх Адриан, его жизнь и труды в связи с состоянием Русской церкви в последнее десятилетие XVII века* (Казань, 1913), Chapter 5.

43 MICHELS, “Rescuing the Orthodox”, 20.

as his illness made it impossible for him to handle many of his duties. In July 1699 Adrian wrote to boyar T. N. Streshnev, who was close to the tsar, about his wish to appoint Afanasii as Metropolitan of Krutitsa so that he could help the patriarch in larger matters of church administration, in particular supervising the printing office (*Pechatnyi dvor*) and schools. By tradition the Krutitskii metropolitan was the patriarch's assistant in matters of over-all church regulations. Instead, Peter arranged that the honor be given to the elderly metropolitan of Nizhnii Novgorod Trifillii (Inikhov).⁴⁴ Thus Peter retained the services of his able and energetic assistant in the North while neatly sidestepping an appointment that could have led to another church-state confrontation. In his *Spiritual Exhortation* Afanasii clearly differentiated between the status of bishops and tsars: "all bishops [who] assume the image of Christ, all pious tsars [who] adorn thrones with their justice."⁴⁵ His phraseology encapsulated the symbolism of the traditional Muscovite Palm Sunday ritual, when, re-enacting secular humility before divine power, the tsar led the patriarch, riding on a donkey, across Red Square to "Jerusalem." From 1697 the ceremony was no more.⁴⁶ One Nikon—or one Becket—per century is sufficient.

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44 «Адриан», 312–13; Н. Г. Устрялов, *История царствования Петра Великого* Т. 3 (Ст. Петербург, 1858), приложение 7, no. 37, 500–501.

45 USPENSKII and ZHIVOV, "Tsar and God", 99 note 241.

46 USPENSKII and ZHIVOV, "Tsar and God," 54; ZHIVOV, "Cultural Reforms," 195–96; on the ritual, see MICHAEL S. FLIER, "Breaking the Code: The Image of the Tsar in the Muscovite Palm Sunday Ritual," in *Medieval Russian Culture 2*, ed. MICHAEL S. FLIER and DANIEL ROWLAND (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1994), 213–240.

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