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**THE TRANSFORMATION OF RELIGIONS AND CHURCHES INFLUENCE  
ON THE SOCIAL LIFE OF UKRAINIAN PEASANTRY  
IN THE XIX<sup>th</sup> - EARLY XX<sup>th</sup> CENTURY**

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**ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЯ ВПЛИВУ РЕЛІГІЇ ТА ЦЕРКВИ  
НА СОЦІАЛЬНЕ ЖИТТЯ УКРАЇНСЬКОГО СЕЛЯНСТВА  
У XIX – ПОЧ. XX СТ.**

**Короткова О.О.**

*Some aspects of the religious consciousness transformation of the Ukrainian peasantry in the conditions of agrarian reform in the middle of the XIX - early. XX th .; factors of social relations changing between clergy and peasantry, modernization of peasant religious outlook as a consequence of capitalization and individualization of the peasant economy and the territories of Ukraine have been analyzed by author.*

**Key words:** agrarian, religious consciousness, clergy, church, reform, worldview, capitalization, economy.

**Introduction.** In the post-reform period of the XIX - beg. XX century the large-scale transformations of ideological positions are observed in the Ukrainian countryside, patriarchal traditions weakening, and intensive displacement of many outdated elements from family life. A special place in these processes takes the relationship between peasantry and clergy and the church as a whole. Trends in the modernization of society in some way changed peasant religious consciousness irreversibly.

**Formulation of the problem.** In the conditions of agrarian reform, capitalization of the economy and modernization of society of the XIX - beg. XX century there was a series of contradictions between the peasantry and the established religious principles of the coexistence of the village and the church. The clergy were already in a position to meet the social and cultural needs of a modernized society. The clergy authority constantly falls among the peasantry, the peasant's ideological and value priorities, his religiousness are transformed. The inevitable consequences of society's reform have had a significant impact on the particularities of the clergy itself, its behavioral and functional principles.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The question of the clergy and peasantry transformation relations has become the subject of a study by a number

of domestic and foreign scholars. Russian researcher Alexander Skutnev thoroughly investigated behavioral changes in the position of the clergy in the territory of the Russian Empire. A significant contribution to the study of relations between the Orthodox Church and Ukraine peasantry was made by Mesha V.G. Boykov O.Y. and Dodonova G.V. investigated the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in the life of the bourgeoisie and peasantry of southern Ukraine in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's. Known researcher of Ukrainian everyday life Prsyazhnyuk Y.P. also paid attention to this problem.

**The purpose of the article.** To study the peculiarities of the relations transformation between peasantry and clergy in the context of society reform in the nineteenth – the beginning of the twentieth century.

**Research results.** Many ethical and legal customary norms of behavior have developed in the process of centuries-old experience of the village community life in Ukraine,. In personal actions, public communication, every person should always remember God, regardless of whether he was deeply believers, or even rarely went to church. The truth "without God - not to the threshold" has not been doubted. Visiting the church was considered a religious and moral duty of every Christian. Representatives of the clergy followed this zealously. However, they themselves determined that the people did not go to church as much as "under the church" to talk, praise the new one, hear the latest news. For large religious holidays (Easter, Christmas, Baptism, Temple, etc.) in the church and near it (at the cemetery) there were general ritual ceremonies, massive folk entertainment. The attitude towards the ministers of worship, in particular to the rural priests, was ambiguous, it happened - and critical. The priest should have credibility of the community not only by knowing the laws, but also by his behavior.

The priests' revenues were largely controlled by the church council headed by the old man. It could have its opinion on the division of church income between the priest and the needs of the church community (repair of the church, purchase of requisites), in relation to the amount paid by the peasants wedding ceremonies, christening, funerals, sanctifying places, confessions, etc. Sometimes, the headmaster, community and priest did not reach agreement on this issue. If the church community was supported by the village community, it came to complaints or deputation to the bishop. The community usually won, and the priest had to leave the parish. The analysis of sources proves that during the period of the reform peculiar relations have developed between the peasantry and the church. The withdrawal of peasants to the hamlet could not but affect these relations in the early twentieth century.

During the XIX th century economic relations between peasants and the clergy were quite complicated. According to the "Provisions clause of the Orthodox rural clergy ..." (July 20, 1842), the peasants of the Right Bank had to process the tithing penny of priest for free, and for the additional payment to process the rest of the church land. In addition, they performed a "construction" duty, that is, they built houses and household buildings for clergy [1, p. 174].

The peasants were forced to carry out labor land conscription on the treatment of church holdings not in the crew of the bastard, and on free days. The "Regulations" of 1842 significantly aggravated the relationship between the peasantry and the clergy, which was manifested in widespread practice of refusing to perform duties, cases of arson of priests' estates, and others like that.

The mood of dissatisfaction with the Church among the Ukrainian peasants was particularly evident during the "inventory reform" of 1847-1848, when lordly economies along with the supporters traveled through the villages and expelled the serfs to "the barter to the priest," and with those who eschewed, cruelly dealt with the lord yard [2, p. 228].

The clergy of the Ukrainian dioceses of the Orthodox Church sought ways for modernization of the church and the relationship between the shepherds and the people, the implantation of the principles of Orthodox morality to the contemporary society. Low living standards of the Ukrainian peasantry at the beginning of the XX th century were due to the state of distribution of land ownership in society and other factors of an objective nature, also to the ignorance of their elementary rights and opportunities, their inability to implement them. Under these conditions, the clergy considered it advisable not to remain indifferent to the poverty and helplessness of the people [3, p. 725-726].

However, going to farm, the peasants did not have free time and opportunities to visit the churches. The clergy complained that the reforms led to a decrease in the number of parishioners, although it was compelled to admit that the donations to the church from cuttings peasants and farmers increased. Provincial authorities

monitored the peasant's visits to the church, especially schoolchildren and rural teachers. For example, the office of the Ekaterinoslav governor in 1916 issued a circular on the mandatory attendance of the church by teachers and students [4]. And the archpriest of the St. George's Church of Slavyanoserbsky County even sent a special letter to all the heads of church schools about "the unintentional and seductive behavior of teachers and students, rarely visiting of the church and omit the posts" [5].

Village reforming has increased the interest of ordinary landowner in the scientific approaches to land treatment, the use of advanced technologies. This, in turn, has increased the demand for book products of agricultural subjects. The vast majority of readers from the lower classes in villages and cities in their cultural experiences and everyday lives remained alien to the intellectual circles and the intellectual world of contemporary art. However, the printed word played an important role in the formation of peasant world perception. Researchers of the Russian ethnographic society, studying the range of peasant reading interests, noted their growing interest in spiritual and agricultural literature. The clergy tried to contribute in every way to the dissemination of such literature, but the most attention was paid to the religious publications in order to preserve the influence on the peasant's mind.

A rather controversial attitude of the peasantry was observed in relation to the Orthodox Church. When the peasant went to the church (especially the wealthy), then not only his deep faith in God, but also certain ambitious moments appeared.

God-fearing, revered (because of wealthy) people in the village could be elected as a stranger, and this is already small, but power, self-interest, a way to accumulate even more capital - both material wealth and prestige [6, p.50]. The new owner-individualist used church attendance to recognize the surrounding social status: on this occasion, the family was wearing the best clothes, used the family "transport", trying to provoke the envy of neighbors and the community [7, p. 356].

The Russian Orthodox clergy also acquired a series of irreversible changes through an attempt to be closer to the people and trying not to lose the remnants of popular trust. In the second half of the XIX th century it gradually lost its peculiarities, becoming a regular professional group. Its mentality changed afterwards. Each spiritual person should have specific features that would distinguish it from other people and make a representative of their social community. But sometimes the expected behavior of the clergyman sharply contrasted with his actual behavior.

In the second half of the XIX century the most common disorder among the parish clergy, as in the earlier period, was drunkenness. His constant companion was unfit behavior.

Often, parishioners themselves and folk traditions provoked priests to drunkenness. For example, during the feast days the clergy carried out prayers in the houses of parishioners. Peasants prepared for visit of guests

thoroughly: they bought wine, cooked beer and braga, cooked meals. Bypassing almost every house a priest and his companions served a glass [8, p. 72].

Such behavior did not contribute to strengthening the authority of priests in the countryside. On the contrary, it contributed to disobedience and, even to the public harassment of priests. And this, despite the fact that the clergy should contribute to the fight against popular drinking. Not all the bearers of the clergy were the only front in this process. Positive examples of participation in the movement for abstinent relates primarily to enlightened, consecutively and morally and professionally representatives of the rural clergy. In part of the bearers of the clergy, the struggle against drunkenness did not cause much enthusiasm, and sometimes it was exposed to an

The leadership of the diocese reacted very sluggishly to the numerous complaints of peasants regarding the non-canonical behavior of the clergy. More often the blame for the non-canonical behavior of the priest was laid on the peasants, or by explaining it "especially the peacefulness of the peasant to the cleric". "Comprehensive love and closeness of the confessor to the flock, the diligence of the peasant to cook with bread and salt, reverence for a religious rite ... under the influence of the living joy of communion with God ... is sometimes given without any care to idle permission to gross obscenity and self-forgetting" - this is how the diocese explained the behavior of priests -people, trying to condescend ably justify them [10, p. 157].

**Conclusion.** During the studied period, the spiritual culture of the peasantry was undergoing evolutionary changes under the influence of changed conditions and rules of life in the village. Traditional standards of thought, behavior, human relations lost their peasants' unconditional, absolute, uncontroversial, on the contrary, the authority of secular, bourgeois standards was raised, and the latter became gradually becoming standard, to a greater extent in those areas that were in the zone of intensive industrialization and urbanization. Gradually, step by step, a new secular, bourgeois culture came in place of a traditional one and with it a new mentality. Transformation began with the use of individual things, which led to significant changes in material culture. This followed changes in the home and social life, then the world was touched, and, finally, the mentality changed.

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**Короткова О.О. Трансформація впливу релігії та церкви на соціальну життя українського селянства в XIX – нач. XX ст.**

*Автором проаналізовано деякі аспекти трансформації релігійної свідомості українського селянства в умовах аграрного реформування середини XIX – поч. XXст.; фактори змін соціальних відносин між духовництвом і селянством, модернізації селянського релігійного світогляду як наслідок капіталізації та індивідуалізації селянського господарства та теренах України.*

**Ключевые слова:** аграрний, релігійна свідомість, духовництво, церква, реформа, світогляд, капіталізація, господарство.

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