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## Zemstvo Tradition as a Particularly Valuable Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Russian North

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**Abstract.** The article presents the scientific results obtained during the study of the zemstvo self-government tradition in the Russian North. This tradition is considered as a particularly valuable intangible cultural heritage. Its image-symbolical vocabulary (thesaurus) could be used in development of a regional strategy and local projects for the spatial development of the northern macroregion. The idea-concept of “zemstvo” (“mir”) holds a unique position within the conceptual sphere of the Russian North’ geocultural space. It is an ideal, canonical form of religious and sociocultural land management of Pomorye, which appears as reserved island-archipelago covered by web of autonomous, autocratical communities. The natural and cultural landscape of the Northern Russian mir is replete with “conciliar” and “sophian” semantics and symbolics of development, specialness, selfness, freedom, unitotality, triality, rhythmicity, gracefulness, wisdom. The cultural and semiotic mechanisms of the Slavic-Russian development of the lands and waters of the midnight Edge of the World are studied. Sacred geography and geosophy of “verhovskiy” and “nizovskiy” colonization streams of the North and the Arctic regions are revealed. Special attention is paid to the presentation of the experience and practices of preserving and adapting the sacred heritage associated with land management and consecration of territories and water areas of Pomorye (Kenezerskiy National Park, Naryan-Mar and Mezen Diocese, the project “Common Cause. Revival of Wooden Temples of the North”).

**Keywords:** *zemstvo, mir, conciliarity, Sophia the Wisdom of God, triality, spatial development, Russian North, Arctic, Pomorye*

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In the Year of the cultural heritage of the peoples of Russia, it seems extremely necessary and urgent to turn to those fundamental ideas, values and symbols that have determined the peculiarity, identity of the traditional order and way of the Russian North, which turned it into a protected territory of meanings and an integral ensemble-monument of the national and world culture, saturated with powerful pro-educational, eidetic energy, staying now “in a removed form”, “under wraps”, but when it is actualized (released), it can become an ideological source and a fig-

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urative-symbolic resource for projects for the spatial development of the northern and Arctic territories. According to the well-known Russian architect, academician A.V. Bokov, the strategy of spatial development “is determined by values and goals, categories that are more general, stable, fundamental and high, belonging not so much to the realm of everyday and material things, but to what is usually associated with the spiritual culture and mentality of society. <...> The goals and values that the economic strategy, the development of the military-industrial complex, and the strategy of spatial development are explicitly or implicitly obey arise and form within culture, acquiring the outlines of an ‘ideology’” [1, Bokov A.V., pp. 16–17].

In the hierarchy of the ideosphere and concept sphere of the Russian North, in its sacred geocultural thesaurus, a particularly significant place is occupied by the idea-concept of “zemstvo” or “mir”, which goes back to the Slavic-Russian communal-veche, “cathedral” tradition of “Zemle(mir)arranging” as a particularly valuable, unique intangible heritage, the creative assimilation and acceptance of which is of paramount importance for the development of the ideology and philosophy of modern regional and local “cultural scripts” (scenarios) of the spatial development of the Northern macro-region.

The core geocultural constant, the structural paradigm of the natural and cultural landscape of Northern Rus’ is the image of the Cathedral, which in its natural (geomorphological) form acts as the primary symbol of the “Island-Archipelago” as a united and diverse collection of lands, waters and inhabitants of the Russian World.

The idea-principle of catholicity shaped and structured the geocultural space of the Russian North, was the cornerstone laid in the socio-cultural foundation of the land management of the northern territory, its religious principles, which gave rise to the institutions, meanings and values of the traditional zemstvo “autocratic” people’s rule, which determined the identity style and way of life of Pomor cities, counties and volosts, and which can serve as an ideational design paradigm for the modern arrangement of local self-government. The eidos of the “folk community” in Pomorie had the highest generative potential and sacred authority, which allowed, despite Petrine regulations, regimentations and restrictions, to preserve the very spirit of the zemstvo tradition, its semantic and vital coordinates until the era of troubled times and palace coups of the 20th century.

As early as the beginning of the last century, researchers of the church life of the Arkhangelsk Eparchy noted that “the ideal of the Old Russian parish as a community institution continues to live in the minds of common people, often expressed in facts that contradict existing church and civil institutions” [2, Sel'skiy svyashchennik, p. 19]. The famous Russian historiographer and phenomenologist of Russian law and zemstvo church in the North of Russia S.V. Yushkov concluded that “the autonomy of a secular parish corresponded to the secular worldview brought up on zemstvo self-government and was a kind of ideal of parish life, according to northern secular people” [3, p. 8]. In modern Russian historiography, based on the data of extensive comparative historical research, typological convergences have been established between the structures and insti-

tutions of the “communal-veche” system of city-states (lands, volosts) of Ancient Russia and the socio-political organization of ancient Greek polities [4, Dvornichenko A.Yu.]. Such a comparison of the veche (zemstvo) tradition of the northern and arctic lands and the limits of the House of Saint Sophia with the urban civil community of ancient Greece allows us to update the status of traditional zemstvo self-government in the Russian North as an ideal form of religious and socio-cultural location and development. According to the well-known researcher of the ancient Greek polity I.E. Surikov, “there is nothing “unfinished” in polis. It is like a work of art, strikingly sophisticated, a system so elaborated and sharpened in every detail that nothing could be added or subtracted. The polis is a kind of magnificent integrity, a social and spiritual “cosmos”. We firmly believe that this is, in general, the most perfect type of society ever seen in world history. It facilitated the development of the individual and the collective to the greatest extent” [5, p. 42].

Such a high assessment of the socio-political organization of the polis is quite applicable to the cathedral structure of the North Russian mirs (zemstvos), which were created according to the precepts of Measure and Beauty, a sophisticated work of Northern Russian socio-cultural creativity (“art”). This creativity was based on the powerful foundation of the living northern sacred tradition, the structural paradigm of which (the symbol of “All-Unity”) generated new geocultural texts (works). In accordance with the timeless logic of the myth of the eternal return and the technology of traditional fine art, these works were skillful “translations” (copies) of eternal measures, canons, samples (“originals”). The conservative, “freezing” options of zemstvo self-government in the Russian North, which preserved and multiplied the religious and cultural heritage of the metropolis — Lord Velikiy Novgorod, have been repeatedly noted by researchers of the church antiquity of Pomorie: “Not only the main features of parish life, but all original features of ancient church and culture of Novgorod and its domains were closed by conservative order of zemstvo’s self-government from outside influences” [3, Yushkov S.V., p. 3].

The long-term preservation and productivity of the “letter and spirit” of the zemstvo tradition in Pomorie after the reforms of Patriarch Nikon that shook the foundations of Ancient Russia and the centralization of the church-parish and administrative-territorial structure of Russia in the reign of Peter I was due to its symbiosis with the cathedral system of the Old Believer communities: “The development and rooting of split in the northern territory can be fully explained only if we take into account the existing organization of the parish, namely, the “autonomy” of religious communities, bordering on arbitrariness” [3, Yushkov S.V., p. 3]. To all the renewals, challenges and questions of the “rebellious century”, “Pomor answers” appeared, which made it possible to preserve in the North the unique sacred cosmos of the old faith as the spiritual support of the Zemskiy Sobor — mir. Such a long preservation of the traditional folk philosophy of unity, life and death “in mir”, “common cause” (“with all mir”) indicates that the concept of mir (zemstvo) belongs to the eternal ideas-constants of Russian worldview, its sacred nucleus. It is no coincidence, therefore, that in the Dictionary of Russian culture by Yu.S. Stepanov, the concept of “peace”, associated with the concepts of “Friends–Aliens”, “Place (space)”, “Ourselves, our people”, “Law,

legality”, “Morals, ethics” [6, p. 86–126], occupies the first place in the list of dictionary entries and in the hierarchy of cultural constants. In the studies of the “New-Moscow school of linguoculturological (conceptual) analysis”, the key concept “peace” is associated with the ideas and images of “harmony”, “calm”, “comfort”, “structure”, “arrangement”, “humility”, “reconciliation” [7, Shmelev A.D.]. In the fundamental works of the classic of Russian historiography M.M. Bogoslovskiy, devoted to the study of history, historical geography and “anatomy, physiology and pathology” of zemstvo self-government in the Russian North (Pomorie) in the 17th century, the concept of “mir” is seen as “a social union bound by the interests of the common good” [8, p. 192]. The Northern Russian world is presented in the image of a self-sufficient, independent, original, autocratic microcosm-society, possessing the highest sacred authority in the perception of the laity: “It was the duty of the laity to be humble in mir, to live in mir “conscientiously” and not to perform any actions that affect common interests “unknown to mir”” [8, Bogoslovskiy M., p. 193].

Undoubtedly, M.M. Bogoslovskiy’s use of the ideologemes of “common good” and “common interests”, which, according to the historiographer, lie in the axiological foundations of the mir, is a modernization and desecralization of sacred principles of conciliar personalism of the northern land-organization. The mir as a spiritual integrity, as a conciliar entity, precedes the multitude of its individual members, the laity, gathered together, “according to Khomyakov, not by the commonality of interests, but by the spiritual and moral bond, the bond of shared love” [9, Khoruzhiy S.S.].

The mir was the guardian and interpreter of the sacred texts of the local tradition, law and moral law, the mirror of conscience, the guardian of memory, the guardian of the measure and beauty of the Zemstvo Domostroy, which was created in the process of the Slavic-Russian (Novgorod) colonization of the northern and Arctic territories of Pomorie in the image and likeness of the sacred land management of the Lord of Velikiy Novgorod — the House of Saint Sophia. Exploring the origin and inner meaning of the ancient Greek word “σοφία”, the outstanding Russian linguist V.N. Toporov noted that “this word and the concept of mythologeme behind it” are “among the key and fundamental in European and Middle Eastern spiritual culture over the past three millennia” [10, p. 148]. The etymological analysis of the initial semantic motivation of the word “Sophia” allowed V.N. Toporov to reveal its duality, which focuses, on the one hand, “on the concept of isolation, separation, selfhood (the principle of individualization) and, on the other hand, indicates inclusion in a certain community (the process of generalization). Both of these circles of meanings, as well as both of these processes, are closely connected with the more special idea of assimilation, transformation of non-own into own. The first semantic circle is associated with words denoting “singularity”, “separation”, “singling out”. The second circle is formed by “sobor” vocabulary (“assembly”, “rural community”, “house”, “freedom-sloboda”) [10, Toporov V.N., pp. 160–161].

The “semantic ambivalence of σοφία (or rather, the ordered alternation of meanings)”, revealed by V.N. Toporov [10, p. 167], determined, in our opinion, the duality, more precisely, the

dual unity of the image of St. Sophia as a symbol and icon of the Slavic-Russian colonial (eschatological) exodus to the countries of the mystical Northeast and the structural paradigm of the organization (creation) of the new mir, which gave rise, on the one hand, to the courageous pathos of the heroic myth and the ritual of development, isolation, separation, cutting the water-forest chaos of the “Finnish Rus’” (A. Blok), and on the other hand, the feminine cosmogonic symbolism of the gathering of world- and house-building. The semantic “ambiguity” of the lexeme and mythologeme “Sophia” resonates with two theological and hierotopical traditions of perception of the Church in the Russian lands: “The first one felt the Church to a greater extent as the Body of Christ and, in the act of creating the temple by Wisdom, accentuated the image of Wisdom-Christ. The second one perceived the Church as the Mother of God, the womb that contained Christ, protection, fence; in the verse “Wisdom builds a house for itself”, this tradition focused on the image of the House of the Mother of God. The first, Novgorodian, created a deep cult of the church of St. Sofia. The second, dating back to ancient Kiev and developing in the North-Eastern and then Moscow Rus’, revered primarily the churches of Mother of God” [11, Plyukhanov M.B., p. 503].

The sacred geography of Sophia and Mother of God (Uspenskiy) churches is correlated with the colonial (exploratory) geography of Upper and Lower Rus’, the sacred centers of which were the initial locuses (metropolises) of two ways (“Verkhovskaya”-Novgorod and “Nizovskaya”-Rostov) of colonization of Pomorie, developing under the guiding icons-images of Saint Sophia of the Wisdom of God and the Assumption of the Holy Mother of God.

One of the pioneers of the sacred geography of the holy kingdom of the Northern Thebaid was the famous Russian ethnographer and chronicler S.V. Maksimov, who not only created a hierotopic map of the island monasteries of northern Rus’, but also recreated the symbolic paths and crossroads of the Russian development of the land-water expanses of the North and the Arctic, outlining the eschatological path-exodus of the spatial icon of the church of St. Sophia from Tsargrad to the first capital of Siberia — Tobolsk, where “the church of St. Sophia is preserved as a clear evidence of the direct connection and dependence of colonization by distant acceptance from the Byzantine through Kiev and Polotsk and on the closest and native through Vologda and Solikamsk Sophia from Novgorod, which, according to ancient prophetic folk proverb, is only “where St. Sophia is”” [12, Maksimov S.V., p. 289]. The symbols of St. Sophia penetrated also the sacred space of the capital of the Russian North — Arkhangelsk, the oldest temple of which, according to S.V. Maksimov, was the Preobrazhenskiy Cathedral: “According to the custom of all Novgorod settlers, which has no exception anywhere, and in contrast to the oncoming colonization that went along the Oka and its tributaries with the temples of the “Prechistaya”, the first Russian church of the new city is dedicated to the Spas (Preobrazhenie), also with the inevitable and obligatory for the entire Russian north side-chapel of Nikola” [12, p. 304]. The image of Novgorod Sophia relates the “Spaso-Preobrazhenskiy” Arkhangelsk with “Uspenskiy” Vologda, the main temple of which was the Sophia Uspenskiy Cathedral, “her Spas (Spas because the temples

called Sophia were dedicated to Hypostatic Wisdom, that is, to the Second Person of the Holy Trinity) [12, p. 286].

In the sacral space of Upper and Lower Rus', the Sophia and Uspenskiy cathedrals in their feminine (Virgin) incarnation were "complemented" with churches in the name of the Archangel Michael and the Great Martyr George the Victorious with their male symbolism of a military feat, guiding and serpent fighting, in which typological convergences with cosmogonic (land-planning) motifs and patterns of the "main myth" about the struggle of the Thunderer with his enemy (Serpent), from whose cut sacrificial body the new world is deployed (gathered). "The temples themselves, especially Sophia, being a reproduction of Byzantine models, preserved the complex theological and symbolic meaning of the ideas and images of Wisdom and serpent-worship as the two principles by which the Christian world is arranged and protected" [13, Plyukhanov M.B., p. 228].

Verkhovskaya colonization created a hierotopic symphony of the Sophia Cathedral of the Spaso-Preobrazheniya and the monastery church of the Archangel Michael in the capital of the northern Pomorie — Arkhangelsk, saturating and enlightening the geocultural space of the North and the Arctic with the transfiguration symbolism of the Light of Tabor and the eschatological duel of the Archistrategos of heavenly forces with the serpent-dragon on the edge time and space. Nizovskaya developmental flow coming from Rostov Velikiy was marked by the erection of a symbolic ensemble of the Cathedral Uspenskaya Church and the Mikhailo-Arkhangelskiy Monastery in Velikiy Ustyug, the capital of southern Pomorie, which became the inheritance of the Blessed Virgin Mary. "Hence, the tradition to dedicate to various regions of Rus' or the Orthodox world the images of the Most Pure Virgin Mary, which in the Russian tradition are called by the name of the area — Tikhvinskaya, Kazanskaya, Smolenskaya, Feodorovskaya, Iverskaya, Vladimirskaya, etc. The space of the world is arranged by these sacred images, which create the non-material from the material space, the heavenly earth from the ordinary landscape. This is not just a manifestation of the feminine in a Christian context, it is a transformation, transubstantiation of the earthly, bodily into the heavenly and sacred, into the structure of Holy Rus'" [14, Dugin A.G., p. 384].

The metaphysics of the cathedral system of zemstvo self-government in the Russian North is revealed in the image of the Trinity as a key concept-term of Orthodox triadology (trinitarian theology) and Russian religious-philosophical thought, in the speculations and contemplations of which the number "three" and the paradigm of trinity were affirmed as "the most common characteristic of existence" [15, Florensky P., p. 596]. V.N. Toporov, who developed the traditions of Russian historiosophy and Orthodox hagiology, revealed the trinitarian structure of the ideational geospherical code of the "Russian Mir", embodied in the basic categories and ideas-concepts that became "peculiar ideological signs" of Russian life (holiness and priesthood, kingdom, zemstvo-mir) [16, Toporov V.N., p. 440]. Considering the relationship of the three fundamental ideas-concepts of the Russian picture of the world, V.N. Toporov notes that "among them, it is worth highlighting: 1) the connection of holiness, kingdom and zemstvo with the three-functional scheme investigated by Dumézil; 2) the dominant position of holiness in this scheme; 3) the im-

possibility of limiting the sacred only by holiness *sensu stricto*, its presence both in kingdom and in zemstvo; 4) the “sacred” character of this entire three-part cosmos of Russian life — holiness, kingdom, zemstvo” [17, Toporov V.N., p. 189].

The Northern Russian zemstvo as a small mir (microcosm), like a big mir — the sacred macrocosm of Russian life — embodied in its organization the cathedral prototype of the Trinity and arranged itself according to the laws of the Divine House-building and the mir Sophian aesthetics of the earthly Domostroy, based on the secret geopoetic and hierotopical commandment “as Measure and Beauty will say”. The ternary structure and symbolism of the northern mir, depicted in the elegant trinitarian formula of S.V. Yushkov (“Mir is one, but trinity in its manifestations”) [3, Yushkov S.V., p. 10], are manifested in its three aspects-hypostases (church parish, volost, community), which are displayed both in the architectural and landscape composition of the three-part temple ensemble of pogost and in the triad of concentric functional-semantic spheres, varying in the degree and quality of their sacredness. In the first circle, outlining the force field of the center of the mir, there are symbolic places and objects (pogost, church, chapel, cross) that have the highest degree of sacredness. The second circle is formed by a “near-church” (mirskoy) space, including a church meal (a place for mir congresses, feasts, brotherhoods, storerooms of the mir archive, treasury, beer cauldron, chamber of weights and measures), porch, parvis (a place for beggars, audients and penitents) and the market (fair) square — a kind of northern Russian zemstvo “agora”. In the third circle, that is the economic and commercial periphery of the sacred cosmos of the northern mir, there are both purely technological objects and spaces with a low semi-otic status (household yards, barns, mills, fields, trade routes and lands), as well as loci endowed with a powerful negative (“impure”) semantics of the sacred center of the “pagan” anti-mir, where the lame gods of underground fire reside — the blacksmiths of archaic mythology (banya, barns, smithy), which in the geopoetics of the Slavic Russian myth and ritual is opposed to the topos of the Orthodox temple (church) and allows to hypothetically see typological similarities between the binary semantic opposition of the Christian and “pagan” centers of the northern mir and the bipolar organization of the sacral space of the ancient Greek polis, in the genesis of which an important role was played by “the foundation of large sanctuaries on the borders of the polis horus, on the very “periphery”. Such a sanctuary <...> served as a sacred “development” of a remote space, invisible connections were established between it and the shrines of the city, a kind of “force field” arose, sacralizing the entire territory of the polis” [18, Surikov I.E., p. 184].

The founding of new mirs (zemstvos) on the lands of the alien, foreign and heterodox North was included in the plot of the developmental transitional rite, which involved the transfer of central sacred attributes and values (images, paradigms) of the metropolis (“old” Novgorod) to a new place, which turned to “new” (“old”) Novgorod with its veche “semisobornyy” way of life, which echoes the domestication ritual of the Great Greek colonization, in the plot of which the sacred temple fire of the metropolis was transferred (transported) to the withdrawn colony and lit again in the sanctuary and domestic fires of the goddess Hestia, whose sacred name merged into

one “mastering” semantics of “one’s own” (“hostess”) and “alien” (“guest”). In the Slavic-Russian tradition, the transitional rite of assimilation of an “alien” new space (house, pogost, settlement) and its transformation into one’s native space of the “old” place of residence was accompanied by the transfer of sacred images (icons) and any attributes associated with a hearth-oven of the old place.

The creation of a new mir begins with the cosmogonic act of erection of a cross in its God-chosen sacred center, building of a chapel or temple, which, according to the ideas of the laity, becomes a monastery, the home of that saint, in whose name the “zemstvo” church was consecrated. In traditional northern Russian folk religiosity, a saint placed in a church becomes, in modern terms, a “legal entity”, the proprietor of a church building and land, acquires the status of own, mir, zemskoy god, with whom the laity enter into contractual relations, making a number of agreements with him: “In the perception of the people of that time, the owner of the property, the subject of the right to it was not the parish, but the church itself, in which the saint whose name was given to the church was personified and identified with a vivid imagination that is now incomprehensible to us” [19, Bogoslovskiy M., p. 36]. Ideas about the real presence of God in the mir church were reflected in the form of peasants’ series of letters and acts, where not the church itself, but the name of the saint is indicated as a legal entity. The idea of the presence of God in certain sacral buildings or objects was also reflected in the popular denomination of icons as “gods” [20, Uspenskiy B.A., p. 118]. Therefore, zemstvo in the Russian North not only built temples-houses for their gods, but also had their own “icon gods”. The great Russian writer N. S. Leskov perfectly expressed the notion of zemstvo god, being in the mir and participating in its earthly conciliar work. In his hagiography and storytelling about the Orthodox development and education of the lands and peoples of the northern “Edge of the World”, he expressed the key idea (image) of the Russian folk (“naïve”) theology: “I love more than any or all ideas about the Divine our Russian God, who creates a Place by himself “in his bosom”” [21, Leskov N.S., p. 417].

In Rus', foreigners and non-Russians called St. Nicholas the “Russian God”, the patron saint of sailors and explorers, whose North Sea development path is marked in the sacred navigation of the Icy Sea-Ocean by a guiding series of St. Nicholas temples of Pomorie (“From Kholmogor to Kola — thirty-three Nicholas”).

The zemstvo mirs had not only their own god, but also their own priest-popes, elected and invited by the mir gathering to the parish to serve God and the mir. An outstanding Russian writer, philosopher, theologian, researcher of folk religiosity and church antiquity of Holy Rus' S.N. Durylin undertook a number of academic expeditions and spiritual journeys to the Russian North, where, according to his “mythical” opinion, “a quiet angel flew over the earth and waters — and the evil mir disturbance subsided once and for all”. He vividly described in his diary the soulful povetry of the service of local, native, zemskiy priests: “And what priests are here! The whole Russia should have such people: he is a plowman, he is a mower, he is a catcher, he is a rower, he is “theirs” — not only to peasant, but also to his cattle, his lake, his brightly colored northern field, and even to

the century-old village church, full of ancient icons, with the creaking heavy door, with the Saint Nicholas of Mozhaisk, all-round defender — he is one of his own” [22, Ageeva E.A., p. 8].

Their zemstvo god, their zemstvo priest and their own zemstvo church built an invisible spiritual stronghold of the mir, were sacred guards of cathedral doorstep, protecting the zemstvo unity in the “troubled times” of natural and social upheavals and disturbances (epidemics, epizootics, crop failures, famines, fires, wars, etc.). To overcome these difficulties the construction of the “everyday” temple (chapel or church) was performed with a strictly regulated hierotopical program, establishing the time-frame of the ritual (one day), the participants (all mir), and the strict observance of all the stages and details of the technological cycle [23].

The tradition of “everyday” temple building is rooted in the northern Russian zemstvo hierotopical creativity (“the art of the fine craftsmen” by Boris Shergin) and constitutes an original branch of “speculation in wood”, which transformed the Russian North into a reserved integral “Spaso-ordinary” wooden temple ensemble that collects and preserves the unity of the Russian Mir.

The mythopoetic legends about the construction ceremonies of the “Spaso-ordinary” temples depict the cathedral “vsegradskiy”, “vsemirskiy”, “universal” nature of the church-building rites in the Russian North, the sociocultural and religious space of which was arranged on the powerful foundation of people's self-government (zemstvo–mir), capable of instant mobilization, to the maximum concentration of their spiritual, mental and bodily forces to collect the disintegrated cosmic unity.

The metaphysics of “everyday” church building occupied an important place in church and archaeological research and the theological and philosophical heritage of the Russian thinker-cosmist N.F. Fedorov. Temple hierotopy and symbolism embodied the key ideas and philosophies of his cosmic vision of the “Common Cause”, built according to the commandments of St. Sergius of Radonezh, the builder of “the temple of the undivided, inseparable Trinity, as a model of unity and life-giving consent” [24, Fedorov N.F., p. 17].

The construction of “everyday” church by the whole mir within one day marked the resurrection (gathering) from the oblivion of troubled times of the integral cathedral body of the small and large Mir, turned folk (“naïve”) theology to comprehend the wisdom and Sophiat beauty of the “Common Word” (consensus) and “Common Cause” (collaboration), which has become the key concept (symbol) of the project “Common Cause. Revival of Wooden Churches of the North”, initiated by the Charity Foundation for the Revival of Churches of the Fatherland and supported by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus’. The project, aimed at preserving and restoring the wooden churches of the Russian North, revives not only the material object signs of sacred architecture, but also the spirit of the northern zemstvo tradition, bringing together all the voluntary restorers of churches, which becomes the assembly point of their “renewed”, transformed

mir-zemstvo, which created in Pomorie, according to one of the ideological founding fathers of the Common Cause movement, Archpriest Dmitriy Smirnov, “a wonderful wooden civilization”<sup>1</sup>.

It is not by accident that the idea of the project of the voluntary movement “Common Cause” originated with its leader — the abbot of the Moscow church of St. Seraphim Sarovskiy, Archpriest Andrey Yakovlev, when he was in the Pomor village of Vorzogory, founded in the 16th century, on the beautiful “mountainous” coast of the Onega Bay of the White Sea, after his meeting with a local old-timer, who for many years had been alone in maintaining the crumbling wooden church-temple ensemble, the former sacred centre of the Vorzogorskaya volost. From here, from the Onega Pomorie, a broad volunteer movement of the “Common Cause” started, which included in its programs the temple heritage of the “wooden civilization” of the Russian North. On August 21, 2019, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill visited Vorzogory. He “highly appreciated the work of volunteers in restoring the wooden churches of the Russian North, noting that the temple is the center of spiritual life”<sup>2</sup>. Devotional activity for the Orthodox development (consecration) of the Arctic territories and water areas of the Northern macro-region within the framework of the patriarchal project “Russian Arctic” is carried out in the Naryan-Mar and Mezen diocese, headed by Vladyka Iakov, who, with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, consecrated the northernmost church in the name of St. Nicholas on Alexandra Island of the Franz Josef Land archipelago, the North Pole of the Earth and the Northern Sea Route. Patriarchal eight-meter worship crosses were erected on the islands of the Novaya Zemlya archipelago, and the Patriarchal Island appeared on the sacred map of the Arctic.

According to Vladyka Iakov, who is unofficially called the “Lord of the Arctic”, “the Bishop of the entire Arctic and Antarctic” (Vladyka consecrated the first Orthodox church in Antarctica), “it is important to understand that the Church, our diocese, occupies a special place in justification and implementation of the state strategy for development of the Russian Arctic. Ivan III did not send a “great army” to the Polar region by chance — he was building the Northern Thebaid on the foundations laid by the disciples and successors of St. Sergius. In the opening address of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, who visited our diocese this year, one hears the spiritual dominance of the Russian presence here, in the north, which reaches from the depths of time”<sup>3</sup>.

The entire ideosphere and conceptosphere of the geocultural space of the Russian North, its sacred thesaurus are deployed in the cathedral natural and cultural ensemble of the Kenozernyy National Park, which preserves and develops the centuries-old mirostructural tradition of

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<sup>1</sup> 25 marta proshla V nauchno-prakticheskaya konferentsiya po problemam sokhraneniya i restavratsii pamyatnikov derevyannogo zodchestva «Vozrozhdenie derevyannykh khramov Russkogo Severa» [On March 25, the 5th Scientific and practical conference on the problems of preservation and restoration of monuments of wooden architecture "Revival of wooden temples in the Russian North" was held]. URL: <https://bogoslav.ru/event/4880870> (accessed 05 July 2022).

<sup>2</sup> Svyateyshiy Patriarkh Kirill osmotrel derevyannye khramy v derevnyakh Vorzogory i Podporozh'e Arkhangel'-skoy oblasti [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill toured wooden churches in the villages of Vorzogory and Podporozhye in the Arkhangel'sk Oblast]. URL: <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5488611.html> (accessed 05 July 2022).

<sup>3</sup> Kak na karte Arktiki poyavilsya Patriarshiy ostrov [How Patriarch's Island appeared on the map of the Arctic]. URL: <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5374538.html> (accessed 05 July 2022).

northern societies. Kenozerye is a recognized creative methodological school and a reserve paradigm of preserving and enhancing the traditional experience of local (zemstvo) self-government as a key land management ideologeme and axiologeme of the strategy for the spatial development of small historical towns and rural areas of the Northern macroregion, based on the sacred intangible cultural heritage of the Russian North (Pomorje).

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