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### **THE IDEAL PARENTING IN OLD RUSSIAN DIDACTIC COLLECTIONS**

*SUMMARY.* The article studies parenting as the philosophical-historical phenomenon in the Russian pedagogic ideas of Ancient Russia. The main concepts of parenting are determined on the material of ancient Russian pedagogic works. The fundamental dominants of this concept were the recognition of the family unity in serving to God and the belief in almighty power of up-bringing. This resulted in the requirement to obey parents, and as for parents — to remember their greatest responsibility for the result of up-bringing. The main method of up-bringing was the fear of God; it meant the remembrance of the Day of the Last Judgment, awareness of their sinfulness and the desire to acquire the virtues helping the soul to get salvation. In this case physical punishment was considered as a necessary educational method, making disobedient children not only to obey the will, but to improve their souls with the help of a bodily pain. Thus, it warned them from the further evil and gave the righteous path. Primarily analysis of ideas contributing to the conclusion about philosophical-pedagogical ideals of the understanding the children up-bringing concept in the family is proposed.

*KEY WORDS.* Up-bringing, the ideal parenting, pedagogical collections.

The Old-Russian period is a unique phenomenon in Russia's culture. It is exactly at this time the spiritual and moral guides in the national worldview, which produced a significant impact on the whole historical way of development of our country, were established. Therefore, nowadays scientists refer to the Old-Russian culture as the primary source for perceiving the basic ideas of the national objective reality.

Teaching and moralizing book collections reveal much about the Ancient Russian culture— samples of the didactic literature of that time period shaping a human educational ideal. The following book collections are usually referred to “Izborniki Sviatoslava”, “Pandekty”, “Parenosisy”, “Pateriki”, “Zlatostrui”, “Zlatousty”, “Pchely”, “Mudrost' Menandra”, “Margarity”, “Azbukovniki”, “Zlatye Tsepi”, “Izmaragdy”, “Tsvetniki”, “Domostroï”.

According to N.L. Pushkareva, these collections, descending from Old Testament and antique philosophy, were quite popular in Old Russia in XI-XVII centuries (pedagogic literature came in second after liturgical). All of them are united by such features as theocentrism, handwritten existence and distribution, traditionalism, ceremonialism, abstract-generalizing nature of moral teachings, and anonymity. At that, even those of them which had been translated were necessarily supplemented

with original Russian material reflecting the mindsets of the compiler and the ordering parties [1].

There is no doubt that Old-Russian didactic book collections contain an understanding of ideal parenting relating this ideal to the general character of the epoch. Thus, the aim of our research is to study several Old-Russian didactic book collections (“Pchela”, “Zlatoust”, “Izmaragd”, and “Domostroi”) and define the pedagogical ideal of parenting and compare this ideal to the Christian views of man.

It is necessary to remark that the didactic book collections under study were especially popular in Old Russia. V.P. Adrianova-Peretc supposes that the well-known Russian collection “Pchela”, which consists of the quotes from the Bible, apostolic fathers and antique authors, were widely distributed in our country in XII-XIII centuries [2; 382]. The collection “Izmaragd” (gr. *smáragdos* – emerald), according to B.M. Pudalov, appeared in Russian written literature by XIV century and became very popular and wide-spread in handwritten tradition [3; 3]. “Zlatousty” also enjoyed a great reputation. According to O.V. Tvorogov and T. V. Chertoritskaya they were the didactic writings collections devoted to certain dates. They were named due to the fact that the majority of the words used in them were signed under the name of Ioann Zlatoust (John Chrysostom). These collections acquired special popularity in XVI-XVII centuries [2]. V.P. Adrianova-Peretc believes that these pedagogical book collections served as a foundation for “Domostroi” [4; 6] which dates back to the end of XV – beg. XVI centuries, which in turn coincides with the period of the Muscovy (Moscovia) State foundation. The most known is the “Domostroi” edition by Ivan the Terrible’s companion priest Silvester who concluded his edition with a message to his son Anthemius.

The theme of remembrance of death, fear of God, Last Judgment as payment for sin, and an obligation to punctiliously follow the rituals is recurrent in these book collections. Therefore coping with one’s own sinfulness, faithful service to God and Tsar as well as righteous housekeeping are viewed as the way of salvation. As N. I. Kostomarov considers, in XVI-XVII Russians built their domestic lifestyle in accordance with the liturgical order and thus made it monk-like [5; 93].

“Pchela”, “Zlatoust”, “Izmaragd” and “Domostroi” envisage all the features of this lifestyle. Using Old Testament style, they underline the greatest responsibility of the parents before God and people for the proper upbringing of their children which is understood as upbringing in the fear of God, teaching and punishing children, keeping purity of their mind and body and sin resistance. Purity and chastity of children is compared to the soul purity and chastity of their parents; so the parents are accountable before God for every sin of their children at the Last Judgment: “God shall give you children, love them and take good care of them, save them with fear, teaching and punishing, and after good judgment punish them corporally. Punish children in childhood – and this shall give you peace in your senior years. And care and keep physical purity and keep away from any sin like the apple of your eye and like your own soul – that is what parents must do. If children sin, due to father’s or mother’s negligence, for that the parents shall give answer on the Day of Last Judgment.” (“Domostroi”) [6]. This being said “godfearing” parents raising “well-

reasoning” children shall be saved by Lord and blessed: “...Such children with their parents will be pardoned by God and favored by the priests and praised by good people. And if from such parents their child is taken by God after repenting and receiving the last sacrament thus the parents give virgin sacrifice to God and their children shall enter the seat of God and will dare ask mercy and absolution of sin from God.” (“Domostroi”) [6].

Judging from these facts, we can suppose that children are viewed in these texts as part of their parents, part of their physical and mental nature; in fact this is an idea of unity of the Christian family and synodic character of upbringing in its maximum. That is why upbringing is tough; sinfulness of children is viewed as a shortcoming that is to be eradicated. Therefore, the theme of obedience of children to their parents is one of the main educational commandments in the “Domostroi” and “Izmaragd” as well as “Russkaia Pchela” in XIV century. It becomes obvious when we compare these texts (table 1).

*Table 1***Didactic Collections on Obedience of Children to Parents**

«Domostroi»	“Children, listen to the commandments of God: love your father and your mother and obey in everything according to the commandments. Honor them in their senior years, honor their infirmities and take any grief of theirs on your own shoulders and this will do you good and give you many years to live. And people will glorify you and you home will be blessed forever and you will have sons of sons and will live till great age in happiness and prosperity.” [6].
«Russkaia Pchela» XV c.	“With all your heart glorify your father and do not forget your mother. Remember she gave you birth and you shall pay tribute to your parents as they did to you”. [7; 106].
«Izmaragd»	“Listen, brothers and sisters, to the commandments of God. This is the first commandment: love your father and mother. Those who will honor and obey their parents will wash from sin and be praised by God. As befits children, honor your parents more than your soul.” [7; 106].

It presents a clear reminiscence of the Old Testament texts, namely “Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach”. According to this book, the Russian texts suggest the following understanding of parenting: one shall “love them (one’s own children) and care about them, but also save through fear, punishing and teaching, and beat after blaming” (“Domostroi”). In the “Book of Sirach” unworthy children are scorned in every possible way and in “Izmaragd” irreverence to one’s parents is seen as the greatest deadly sin: “If someone says bad things about one’s parents, they fall from grace in the eyes of God. And are cursed by God and people. If someone should beat the father or mother, they will be expelled from church and will die an awful death. As is written the father’s curse will exhaust and the mother’s curse will eradicate. The son who does not obey his father shall die”. [8; 76-77]. The same is in the book “Pchela”. For instance, the following is noted there: “Obedience is more important

than fast and hermitage. Since even Jesus Christ was obedient till his death. So the way you are going to treat your parents, your children will treat you". [9; 92]. On behalf of Socrates "Pchela" quotes: "So the way you are going to treat your parents, your children will treat you" [4; 24]. A famous Russian educator P.F. Kapterev, analyzing these texts, points out that the Russian instructive book collections completely follow the Old Testament tradition where serving to one's parents is compared to serving to God and insulting one's parents means insulting God [10].

• "Stoglav", another written work of that epoch, presents the similar ideas on mandatory reverence of one's parents: children must obey their parents in everything; those who honor their parents will be purged of sins, praised by God and will live for many years on the Earth; those who scorn their parents are sinful before God, cursed by people and will die of death (ch. 36 "On punishment of one's own children") [10].

It is not surprising that one of the topics of "Pchela", "Zlatoust", "Izmaragd" and to a bigger extent "Domostroï" is advice to parents on corporal punishment of their children, which helps turn their children into worthy people who, in the future, will not disgrace their parents with their behavior. The quotes from these texts are included into table 2.

Table 2

**Pedagogical book collections on children's punishment in the family**

«Domostroï»	«Izmaragd»	«Zlatoust»
<p>"Punish your son in childhood and he will give you peace in your senior years and will give beauty to your soul. And do not pity your child beating him, he will not die but will be healthier; if you beat his body, his soul will be healed. If you have a daughter, you can get cross with her but do not punish her corporally, and then you will save your face. If you love your son, beat him and then you will be glad in the future" [6].</p>	<p>"If your children do not obey you, do not pity them, as God wisely said, 6 or 12 times strike them. If their fault is big, strike 20 times both. They will fear God and will give up doing bad things. The one beaten with a stick will not die, but his soul will be saved". [7; 107].</p>	<p>"It is said: the one punishing his son – loves him; the one not punishing his son – hates him. Punish your son in childhood and he will give you peace in your senior years and will give beauty to your soul. And do not pity your child beating him, he will not die from stick but will be healthier; if you beat his body, his soul will be saved". [9; 99-100].</p>

These texts make it obvious that parental punishment is viewed according to the Old Testament as teaching children God's will, ways of salvation and overcoming one's sinful nature. Hence, strictness of punishment is understood as assisting a child's soul, as physical pain suppresses soul's vices.

In this respect, the chapter "On raising children" inserted into one of the "Zlatousts" of XVI century is of special importance to us. The authorship of the text is ascribed to John Chrysostom. In this chapter John invites parents to patronize their children and take all care of their souls' salvation. He advises them to think not of the earthly well-being and wealth for their children, but strive for their moral wealth: "Iako da ostaviat deti bogaty srebrom I zlatom, no da blagoverny I liubomudry I dobrodetelny" [9; 103].

Herewith, John Chrysostom insists on punishment of disobedient children supposing that should such children be left without the parents' reprimand and rod, they will grow up and become criminals who shall end up being condemned and executed. In this way they shall ruin their own life and dishonor their parents. Moreover, the saint underlines that the parents who neglect teaching and punishing their children are worse than killers as the former kill the body and the latter kill their child's soul inflicting on it the eternity of Hell's torments. Therefore, negligence of one's own children is the greatest of all sins according to John Chrysostom.

Analyzing this text N. A. Lavrovskiy observes that John Chrysostom directly expresses the idea that evil is not inborn, but it is a consequence of poor upbringing. Therefore, he strongly believes in the omnipotence of parenting. "According to John Chrysostom parents can do everything for their children: children's future depends on them, evil or good nature of children's souls depends on the parents'. Parents can prepare either eternal blessedness or hell's torments for their children's future. The aim of parenting is moral virtue or Fear of God as John Chrysostom puts it" [9; 104], the scientist writes. As for the means of parenting, N. A. Lavrovskiy continues, all of them are based on fear and can be reduced to the instruction not to spare rod and frequent wounds [9; 104]. This being said, the scientist remarks a certain contradiction of these means and John Chrysostom's pedagogical conception. While the latter is often called a supporter of the idea of Christian love and submissiveness. This ambivalence of parenting approaches is explained by N.A. Lavrovskiy by the duality of the sources the saint draws on, that is the Old Testament and Gospel [9; 105]. According to the scholar, John Chrysostom is probably afraid that negligence in parenting can harm children more in the future.

These instructive book collections specifically underline the significance of the father as the instructor and sometimes even downgrade the role of the mother. It might be connected with the strong patriarchal bias in parenting and increased responsibility of the father for the children's upbringing. For example, the "Domostroi" proclaims the idea of a disobedient wife being punished by the husband: "The husband should teach the wife with love and sensible punishment" [6]. Thus, patriarchal traditions lead to the unconditioned domination of the husband-father over the wife-mother and children.

The description of the model of such a family can be found in historical literature. V. O. Kliuchevskiy calls the Muscovy period family a "domestic tsardom" headed by the father-tsar. The father had to preserve both bodily and mental purity of the household members, protect them from everything, take good care of them as of parts of his spiritual being as he was connected with them through the same religious belief and obliged to lead to God not only himself but many [11]. Herewith, the scientist suggests his own idea of punishment so popular in the parenting pedagogy of that historical period. In particular he points out that pedagogy of those times liked and relied a lot on this teaching means overestimating its effect as "the eradicator of evil and the planter of virtues". Hence, V. O. Kliuchevskiy calls to remember that we deal with a plan and not practice of domestic upbringing and one cannot judge about the strictness of pedagogy or cruelty of the authors of the plan by the cruel pedagogic

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plan. Moreover, the scientist observes that parents were required to love their children and punish them lovingly only for wrongdoings. It is known that the loving hand beats not severely and in any case hurts the beater more than the one being beaten. This circumstance lets V. O. Kliuchevskiy name role modeling as a more effective and widespread means of parenting [11].

One of the variants of “Pchela” mentions this very model of Christian life of the parents as an effective way of parenting: “Teaching, teach by example and not word, even the one who is wise in his word but has imperfect deeds is limp and the one who talks of kindness but has a changeable soul is an enemy. That is right who little talks of virtues but does good and proves his faith with his life”. [9; 49].

It is worthy to note that the didactic book collections offer an ideal child’s personality close to the one described in the Old Testament. For instance in the famous “Domostroi” the following ideal traits which the father wishes to instill in his child are given: fear of God, righteousness, belief in the protective power of church, discipline, good behavior, obedience and loyalty to the spiritual father, tsar and heads, honor of parents, charity, resistance to sinful passions, honesty, care of one’s own and household members’ soul salvation, and knowledge of God’s word [6].

It can be concluded that this ideal is the closest to the Old Testament understanding of man who, according to P. F. Kapterev, is founded on strict patriarchy and an element of fear not love [10]. This Old Testament-like type of parenting was, in accordance with the Russian scientists (D. N. Dubakina, P. F. Kapterev, and A. N. Pozdniakov), more popular in Old Russia than the New Testament-like type based on mercy and love towards children [10]; [12]; [13].

Thereof, N. A. Lavrovskiy’s opinion can be agreed with, that gospel definitions of parenting and similar ideas regarding parenting of the Church Fathers slowly penetrated into domestic life; however Biblical (Old Testament-like – author’s remark) ideas were closer to the Old Russian parenting practice and so were actively collected and included in traditional book collections and read by conventionally-minded heads of households. It takes centuries to develop moral values and it would have been strange to imagine an Old-Russian family suddenly turning from a patriarchal and harsh one into one built according to the Gospel model [9; 106].

In conclusion we can say that the ideal of parenting expressed in the Ancient Russian pedagogical book collections was based on the Old Testament approach (though made it possible to accept the New Testament understanding of the meaning of parenting).

The dominants of this ideal were the necessity of the family unity in its service to God and belief in the omnipotence of parenting. This implied the requirement for the children to obey the will of the parents (knowing the righteous path of life and leading the children towards it) and the requirement for the parents to remember their greatest responsibility for the results of their upbringing. The main method of education was fear of God implying constant thinking of the Last Judgment, one’s own sinfulness and desire to acquire the virtues to save one’s soul. Corporal punishment was considered a necessary teaching measure not only promoting obedience of the

undisciplined children but also purifying their souls through physical pain, keeping them away from further evil and returning them to the saintly way of living.

However, the constant fear in parenting and other fields of life, severe punishment of offenders (not only children but also criminals), formalism in following the rituals and righteous path as well as perception of oneself as a chosen people and isolationism led the Russian state in the late XVII century to a real crisis which culminated in a split both within the church and the whole society. This process was accompanied by an expectation of Apocalypse and Antichrist's arrival.

All that paved the way for the coming of the reforming tsar Peter the Great who chose a western way of development for Russia and offered completely different ideas of parenting.

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