

The Russian Ecclesiastical Missions (1715-1864) to Peking and their Influence on China Studies in Russia

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Abstract

The aim of the essay is to find out how the Russian Orthodox Church as a religious institution influenced the birth and evolution of China Studies and helped to create a Sinology as a national academic discipline in Russia. The brief analyses of the history of the 14 Ecclesiastical Missions in China helps to figure out what kind of impetus this religious institution gave to Academic Sinology and how it helped to create a university Sinology as a national sinological school.

Keywords: *Russian Orthodox Church, Ecclesiastical Mission, China Studies, Sinology*

1. Introduction

In this essay, I attempt to illustrate how the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) laid the foundations of Russia's interest in learning about China and contributed to the founding of Russian academic sinology.

Inasmuch as there is a paucity of secondary material on this topic, there is hardly a treasure-trove of archival material directly linked to the same, either. Primary and secondary material aside, a researcher could have potentially also relied upon conversations with the clergy at the ROC. However, in the ROC, there are currently only two priests – Petr Ivanov and Dimitriy Pozdyaev – who know some Mandarin and have written relevant academic essays; their publications (Ivanov, 2005; Dionosiy, 2016) however are not secular. There is also a literature that helps to understand views of religious people on Christianity and China, the role of religion and Christianity in people's life especially in view of the China connection to compare it to secular views

and Chinese literature on the subject (Samoilov, 2016; Lomanov, 2010; Xiao Yuchun, 2009; Li Weili, 2007; Yan Guochen, 2007; Yue Feng, 2005) thus enabling us to have more clear picture as a whole.

This is the reason why I have ultimately had to rely mostly on secondary material. But I have also consulted some archival materials (AVPRI) as well as the *Russko-kitaiskiye otnosheniya* (RKO, 1995ab, 2006, 1969, 1972, 1990, 1978) alongside some other diplomatic documents from that period. Particularly interesting is a rare illustrative edition reviving the distant past and including photocopies of the texts and drawings including done by the members of the mission (Russia and China, 2019). Additionally, I have earlier consulted the archives of the London Missionary Society (LMS, 1795-1940): Documents preserved there have allowed me to keep in mind the lives and deeds of Russian and British missionaries in China.

I would discuss the ROC's first 15 missions to China and highlight how these missions began to develop a Russian knowledge base regarding China that eventually became the foundation for Russian sinology in the proper. What underlies this essay is my believe that when state agencies fail to be proactive in learning about another country then other types of institutions step in to address that gap for pragmatic or specialized reasons of their own. I suggest that the ROC's intellectual investments in China via its ecclesiastical missions there point up its role as precisely such a non-state institution. To the extent that the ROC's missions to China were considerably successful in acquiring knowledge about it, reporting their educational activities naturally pushed me into scoping out sinology as a field of knowledge in its early stages of appearance and evolution in Russia.

Based on my personal research experience as well as my discussions with different generations of Sinologists, I have previously formulated a set of criteria for what constitutes sinology and who could be considered a sinologist (Voskressenski, 2018: 115). Echoing those criteria, this essay suggests that through 1715-1864, what the ROC's missions managed to develop in China was a distinctive Russian body of professionals specializing in various facets of China. These professionals were sinologists – as we might call such people today: 1) They came to have a history of personal research investments into China, and they devoted themselves to expanding those investments into a field of study; 2) They learnt not only one or more languages of China, but they also studied other aspects of that country – and even received some education in them during their stays at the mission; 3) They not only studied but also worked in China; 4) They contributed to developing the pursuit of knowledge about Chinese matters into a distinctive and integrated field of inquiry; 5) They put out peer-reviewed research publications based upon a first-hand knowledge of China.

2. Russia's Early Contact with China: The First Phase (1608-1727)

One might suggest two key phases to the evolution of Russia's early contact with China. The first of these two phases lasted through 1608-1727, and was characterized by Russian attempts at exploring China and establishing a sustained contact with it; these attempts would lead up to the onset of the ROC's ecclesiastical missions to China. The second phase unfolded through 1727-1805; through this phase, the ROC would lay the foundations of Russian sinology through tours to China under its Ecclesiastical Mission (RKO, 1995ab, 2006, 1969, 1972, 1990, 1978).

The *first phase* was the time when Russia and China were coming closer to each other geographically – and when Russia would establish its earliest contact with the Ming dynasty in China and attempted to generate its first geographical and political descriptions of China (Miasnikov, 1985). Let me outline below those developments:

1. On 1696, Peter the Great flags off the first Russian “caravans” to China. The Russian caravans were the earliest self-sustaining and professionally organized expeditions to other countries. They were manned by officially designated people (*gosudarevy lyudy*) who were appointed by the state authorities (and sometimes by the Emperor himself). Some of these people were essentially unranked ambassadors. In some cases, Russians would join these caravans midway; in some other cases, Russians already present in the land of a caravan's arrival would join it there for their own commercial, religious, or reconnaissance objectives. In the context of Russian history, the word *caravan* is typically used in reference to a journey to some “oriental” country (Dmitryshyn, 1985; Miasnikov, 1985).
2. In 1692, Eberhard Izbrand Ides (1657-1708) – a Dane on the Russian service – and his secretary, Adam Brand, were sent by Peter the Great as envoys to China with one of these early caravans.

The caravan that took these two to China would turn out to be way more important than the previous ones because these two men were able to meet Emperor Kangxi. We do have access to Ides' personal memoirs about his voyage to China. First published in Amsterdam in 1704 – and later in Britain (1706), Germany (1707) and France (1718) – Ides' memoirs comprised an important step in Russian as well as European diplomats' acquisition of knowledge about China though in Russia the results were broadly known only after 1789 (Skachkov, 1977: 30).

Through 1715-1717, 1719, 1720-1722, 1725, Lorenz Lange – a Swede – served as Russia's state envoy to China on the orders of Peter the Great and also visited China many times in different capacities (RKO, 1990: 88,

103, 231, 257, 273, 282, 318, 322, 331, 342, 343; RKO, 2006: 47, 104, 108, 249). Known in Russia as Lavrentiy, Lange was a Swedish cornet who had been imprisoned by Russia in 1709 at the Battle of Poltava. Before being sent to China as an envoy for Russia, Lange had had a brief career in the Russian service. After his stint in China as an envoy, Lange was appointed the vice governor of Irkutsk, which allowed him to play an important role in promoting Russia-China trade. In 1719, Peter the Great sent another Russian envoy – General Lev Vasilyevich Izmailov (1685-1738) – to China with the objective of having him meet Emperor Kanxi (Skachkov, 1977; Dmitryshyn, 1985; Miasnikov, 1985).

Both Lange and Izmailov managed to access – and map – hitherto unknown routes to China; they also brought to Russia its first collection of Mandarin and Manchu books. Later, Lange donated to the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) these books and they became an important source of knowledge for future Russian sinologists. Lange also procured Russian books from the RAS to be delivered to the authorities in China – and these were the first Russian books that China would see. These Russian books became an important source of knowledge in China about Russia. Finally, Lange was the first on the Russian service to connect Russian diplomats with Western religious missions in China (Skachkov, 1977: 30-34, 37-41). There is no concrete evidence for it in the archives, but it is possible to mention that his communications prompted Russia to use the ROC's missions to China as a way to learn about that country.

3. As early as in 1683 Russian priests (Maxim Leontiev) and 1695 (Lavrentiy Ivanov) paid their first visits to China and even opened churches; thereafter, in 1715, the ROC decided to set up an ecclesiastical mission there.

While there is no archival information about how this decision was taken, we do know (Skachkov, 1977) that the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had provided private teachers to Russian students to prepare them for the mission to China. This gives us a clue that the foreign ministry had played an important role in helping the ROC to prepare missionaries linguistically for their imminent activities in China – and we could assume that this assistance had followed a meeting of high-ranking Russian diplomats, state figures, and the clergy.

The *second phase* in Russia-China relations – which is the more important phase for this essay – comprised the years 1727-1805. During this phase, Russia begins to intensify its economic and political ties with China's Qing empire (Chen, 1966). However, through all these years, the ROC's mission in Peking was the only Russian institution in China – and it had started to develop an understanding of its host country through research.

3. The Russian Orthodox Church in China: The First Five Missions (1715-1771)

After the Tsardom of Russia surrendered Albazin to the Qing dynasty in 1686, the residents of Albazin brought an old Russian priest to Peking (Samoilov, 2016: 32). This priest as well as the people of Albazin were now captives of the Manchu emperor. The priest, however, was very old and unable to perform his priestly duties. Russians in China wrote a letter because of this to a Russian Tsar (RKO, 1978: 50) and Grigoriy Oskolkov, who had arrived in Peking at the time as the head of a Russian commercial caravan, wrote a letter to Lifanyuan (the highest Qing institution authorized to deal with subordinate territories) requesting permission to bring Russian orthodox priests into China. The Kangxi emperor granted Oskolkov his request on the condition that the priests be accompanied by a medical doctor. Eventually, along with a returning Chinese diplomatic mission led by Tulishen, the ROC sent several Russian priests under the command of *archimandrite* Illarion Lezhaiskiy.

These Russian priests were well accommodated by the Chinese authorities: on the mandarin ranking system, archimandrite Lezhaisky was placed at Level 5; his deputy Filimon was placed at Level 7; and all the other priests were ranked on a par with Manchu soldiers. Given state lodgings near the Russian church building in Peking, all these priests were also sanctioned a considerable daily allowance by the Chinese authorities (Skachkov, 1977: 36-37). All in all, the Russian priests were de facto employees of the Manchu empire – and they enjoyed a status on a par with other imperial employees. This arrangement would continue until 1858, when the Treaty of Tientsin (June 1858) would stipulate that the financial burden of the ROC's missions in China be borne by the Russian Empire (Samoilov, 2016: 33).

The first Russian ecclesiastical mission to China initially had no official agenda, nor unofficial drive to learn Mandarin or any other languages of China even though some of the mission's members would live in China for over 20 years and would even die in Peking. Against this backdrop, though, one member – Osip (Yosef) Diakonov – learnt Manchu and Mandarin; he also began teaching Russian in a Language School at the Palace Chancellery (Neige Eluosi Wenguan), a Qing educational institution that had been established by the State Chancellery in Peking in 1708 (Lapin, 2019; another date – 1725, mentioned by Skachkov 1977: 37).

We don't have any documented explanation for why Diakonov would decide to learn these Chinese languages. However, it is safe to speculate that long-term Russian residents of Peking had to have felt the social need to learn Mandarin, and – for that matter – Manchu. The Chinese, on the other hand, may have felt compelled by diplomatic and commercial reasons to learn Russian, given that the contact between the Qing and the Russian empires had been gaining in regularity. Inasmuch both the Russians and the Chinese would

have hitherto had to depend, for their mutual communication, on frequently imprecise and unreliable intermediaries – uneducated members of liminal communities belonging to the Russian-Chinese borderlands – they would have together aspired to build a proper cross-linguistic capacity for themselves on a permanent basis.

However, the mission's own continuity in China was not as yet a settled issue. This had to do with the fact that the Manchu authorities had been imperially mandated to forbid foreign caravans from visiting the Qing China on a regular basis. However, once the Treaty of Kyakhta (1727) came into effect (RKDPA, 2004: 41-47), Russia's commercial caravans got the right to visit China every three years – and the Russian citizens were permitted to lodge as well as to have their own church in Peking. Also, following the enforcement of the Treaty of Kyakhta (RKDPA, 2004: 46), two new Russian priests joined the ROC's mission in Peking; these additions took the total number of Russian priests in Peking to three.

The Treaty of Kyakhta broadened the scope of commercial and humanitarian interactions between Russia and China; it also led to an uptick in the young Russians' interest in learning Mandarin and Manchu. The Russian government, on its part, was also interested in deepening its contact with China; it thus decided to attach four young people to the ROC's ecclesiastical mission to China (RKDPA, 2004: 46). Expected to learn China's languages, these youngsters were given the formal status of students (*uchenik*); they were also accorded the right to return to Russia following completion of their education in China (Xiao Yuchun, 2009). This right had been stipulated in a Russia-China agreement that had accompanied the Treaty of Kyakhta (Skachkov, 1977) and later stipulated more precisely by the Treaty of Tientsin (RKO, 2004: 67). Previously, Russian visits to China were governed entirely by the Manchu-Chinese authorities. It appears that this stipulation had been put in place in view of a rising discontent among Russians wishing to travel to China and also by a relatively higher rate of deaths (the mortality rate for the first five missions was approximately 39 per cent: of 56 people sent to China 22 died there).¹

The second mission to China had seven members: the head; three priests; and three students who had previously studied Mongolian at the Voznesenski monastery near Irkutsk. The head of this second mission had previously led the Voznesenski monastery while also directing the Irkutsk School of Mongolian Studies (Kuzmin, Sokhodolov, Manzhigeev 2015: 235-38). It appears that the ROC had decided to appoint a ranking religious leader (a monastery head) as the main authority for its second ecclesiastical mission to China; it further appears that it had prioritized in such a candidate's qualifications a better understanding of the local conditions – given that Irkutsk is half way to China.

Now, while this newly appointed head of the second mission knew the local conditions relatively better than other potential candidates for this position, his prior experience as an academic director was that of a school that focused on Mongol. What this suggests is that linguistic priorities had been undergoing a change through the years along with the changes in the Russian understanding of its borderlands and beyond. So, while the initial Russian focus regarding foreign-language acquisition was on Mongol, it had subsequently shifted to Mongol, Manchu, and Mandarin; much later, it would end up shrinking, to some extent anyway, to Mandarin and Manchu.

Out of these seven members of the second mission, only two had succeeded in learning Mongol, Manchu, and/or Mandarin. Apparently noticing this low success rate in its members' attempts at learning the languages of China, the Peking-based mission head sent a dictionary of Mandarin to Saint Petersburg in 1734 for the purpose of getting it translated into Russian.

The underlying idea behind this dictionary's aspired translation into Russian was presumably that the eventual bilingual product would help linguistically prepare members of future missions to China ahead of their long stays in that country. Nevertheless, within two years, this dictionary was sent back from Saint Petersburg with the order to translate it – neither Saint Petersburg nor Moscow had anybody to translate Mandarin into Russian; the situation was not any different at Irkutsk, whose foreign-language expertise was limited to Mongol. Against the above backdrop of an unavailability of relevant experts, all attempts made inside Russia to translate the Mandarin dictionary into Russian failed – and there is no evidence that such efforts succeeded in Peking, either, after its return to the mission there (though there is an indirect mention of its second trip to Moscow) (Skachkov 1977: 40).

As time went by, the ROC got better organized and this organizational improvement may have made it possible for somebody like Illarion Rossokhin to come to Peking. One of the two outstanding Russian students at Peking, Rossokhin was a member of the second mission. His command of Mandarin and Manchu so impressed the Lifan Yuan – the Qing dynasty's government bureau dedicated to the affairs of the borderlands of Inner Asia – that, in 1735, they sought the permission of Lorenz (Lavrentiy) Lange, the Russian official in China, to appoint him as an interpreter.

Taking a deep personal interest in Chinese languages and cultures, Rossokhin also started to teach Russian to the Chinese officials. He also bought the first original map of the Qing China, and sent it to Russia; compiled the first textbook of Mandarin; and was the first to translate Chinese books on Chinese history and culture into Russian. After finishing his education with the mission in Peking, Rossokhin returned to Saint Petersburg, and joined the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) (Skachkov, 1977: 39-53, 60-64, 301-306).

At that academy, Rossokhin established the first school of Chinese and Manchu languages in circa 1741; this school remained operational for 10 years – lasting through 1741-1751. The Russian authorities, however, never sent any of its students to China for further education – either in religion or otherwise – mostly because they had all failed to find employment domestically within the streams in which they had been trained. As for Rossokhin, he translated many books of China into Russian; however, none of his translations was published while he was still alive.

Despite the above apparent failures, Rossokhin should be considered the first professional Russian sinologist (Skachkov 1977, archival addendum: 389-395).² Here it seems pertinent to mention that the RAS' first sinologist – Theophilus (Gottlieb) Siegfried Bayer (1694-1738) – was a German national who knew no language of China, where he also never visited. He did, however, own a collection of Oriental – including Chinese – manuscripts that had been bequeathed to one of his relatives. Never donated to the RAS – whose full membership Bayer enjoyed – this collection ultimately ended up in the library of the University of Glasgow. Referred to as the Bayer Collection, all that material is currently preserved at that university's Hunterian Library (Weston, 2018).

Bayer was a brilliant scholar; however, his lack of knowledge of China's languages restricted him to compiling and publishing only French and English writings on China (*Museum Sinicum*). Meanwhile, a fellow German – a historian named Gerhard Friedrich Müller (whose Russian name was Fedor Ivanovich Miller) – found Rossokhin's largely forgotten or lost Russian translations of Chinese works and used some of them for his own academic presentations. Müller (1705-1783) was the Secretary of the RAS; apart from Rossokhin's Russian translations of Chinese works, he also copied in Siberia's archives many other original Russian documents that have since been lost.

The long and short of the above is that the earliest trained Russian experts on Chinese matters were either ignored or improperly used by Russia's official research establishment. These experts excelled in Mandarin and Manchu; were able to use primary sources in these languages; used to translate between these languages and Russian; taught these languages to fellow Russians with the objective of preparing the future generations of Russian experts on China; and were even informally consulted by the Russian Collegium for Foreign Affairs (now Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs). However, these experts failed to get institutional support from their own country's research establishment – and remained unknown to the German experts that led the establishment's sinological branch. As a result, these experts' Russian students also failed to find employment within sinology; these students were thus lost to (academic) oblivion.

In 1742, Russia sent Mikhail Shokurov to China to notify its authorities of the new Russian *tsaritsa*, Elizaveta Petrovna. Shokurov brought along

with him the following three students to attach them to the ROC's 3rd ecclesiastical mission: Alexey Leontief, Andrei Kanaev, and Nikita Chekanov. The 4th mission brought with it just one student – Efim Sakhnovski; but the 5th mission had no students at all. Only one of the above four students got the chance to study Mandarin; all of them, however, had to return to Russia somewhat abruptly later because a dispute had erupted between the Russian and the Chinese authorities regarding the mission's education agenda. The Chinese authorities had begun to insist that the operational permission for the mission had included no provisions for Russian students to study in China.

By this time, the mission's prior students had already put together a Russian-Mandarin dictionary. However, it is thus difficult to assess the quality of sinological training that these students had happened to receive at the mission – or to assess the levels of their personal or collective gains through that training.

After Rossokhin, it was Leontief who was the most talented of the Peking-trained, mission-led Russian students of sinology: he was one of the second generation of mission-led students. Thanks to its rising popularity in Europe, the chinoiserie style had been gaining traction in Russia and the Russian nobility had begun to collect Chinese artifacts rather proudly. This uptick in the domestic Russian interest in Chinese products and stylistic imprints had been spurring an interest in information about China – and thus in sinology itself. Leontief – who excelled in Mandarin as well as Manchu – decided to complete Rossokhin's unfinished Russian translation of a Manchu text in Manchu history: Rossokhin had met his death before being able to finish it.

For completing this translation, Leontief and Rossokhin's widow ended up winning an award from the RAS: this was the first award that the RAS had ever bestowed on a sinological work put out by any of the mission's alumni. Nevertheless, these two individuals failed to publish their awarded translation immediately; indeed, the translation was published as many as 23 years after its completion (Skachkov 1977: 67) because none of the non-Russian personnel holding any academic position at the time in Russia had so much as visited China, leave aside learnt any language of China. However, one may thus retrospectively suggest that, during this time, Russia was witnessing the emergence of its own, national school of sinology.

In 1763, the Russian government sanctioned Leontief the permission to open his school dedicated to teaching Chinese languages. The school (students taken from an Academy of Slavic-Greek-Latin languages and also from *seminarii* of Peterburgskaya, Novgorodskaya and Moskovskaya *gubernii*) firstly started out that very year on the strength of some transfer students – with some prior training in the so-called “oriental” languages – from other religious schools. During this time, Leontief also got appointed to the Russian

Foreign Ministry as an interpreter-cum-translator – an appointment that helped him advance the interests of the school he had established. Leontief ended up being the first Russian whose sinological works in Russian were translated into German and French – a turn of events that attests to the quality of his sinological publications.

All in all, the first five missions laid the foundations for Russian sinology, and produced two extraordinary sinologists: Rossokhin and Leontief. Belonging to consecutive generations of the mission's trainees in Peking, these two men were sinologists in the proper inasmuch as their profiles exhibited a set of common traits that I have previously identified in this essay.

Toward the end of the fifth mission to China, the Manchu-Chinese government terminated their long-standing consideration of the mission's students as their own paid subordinates; later on, in 1858, the Treaty of Tientsin, mandated that the Russian government pay for the upkeep of these missions in China (RKO, 2004: 67). It is over the course of these first five mission that:

- the first Russian-Mandarin dictionary was compiled (even though it eventually got lost)
- the first well-regarded compendium of Russian translations of Manchu history and creative writing was put together
- the first-ever RAS grant was awarded to facilitate translations from China's languages into Russian
- the first Russian sinological writings were translated into German and French, thereby confirming their originality and quality from the viewpoint of the European sinological establishment
- the number of Russian students of sinology was gradually increased, but without ensuring any generational continuity to the training of Russian sinologists in China – given that the 5th mission was cut short by the Manchu authorities. Indeed, all the members of the 4th and the 5th missions were together forced to return to Russia.³

4. The Next Four Missions: From Language Studies to Professional Sinological Research on Contemporary China (1771-1821)

Like the 4th and the 5th missions which have only 9 people, the 6th mission to China had ten people – which made it one-third smaller than the first and the third missions; however, it had a greater number of students than any one of the previous missions except the second of which three students died in Peking never returning to Moscow. Arriving in China in 1771, this mission had four students – Fedor Barsheev, Alexey Parishev, Alexey Agafonov, and Yakow Korin – and it lasted until 1781. Perhaps because of the abrupt

cancellation and unceremonious exit of the 5th mission – and the concomitant return of its students along with those that had stayed over from the 4th one – the students of this 6th mission began to pay attention to the politics of China. For the first time in history of these missions, their Russian students – financially supported this time around by the head of the mission – were not only learning the languages of China but also maintaining a reflective journal on its political events. We cannot trace it, but its mentions indicate that its purpose was to prepare Russian students for a political grasp of China. This journal was thus an important step toward the evolving articulation of Russian sinology.

The students of the 6th mission were keen to compile and send to Russia the first more or less professional Mandarin-Russian dictionary – apparently for the benefit of their future counterparts. These students were also the first batch among all the batches from the previous missions to return to Russia voluntarily. The 6th mission's batch of students was also the first one to get professional appointments upon their return to Russia as translators of China's languages. In other words, it took 66 years of the ROC's ecclesiastical missions to China to prepare four professional, fully employable Russian sinologists – each with a decade's worth of living and educational experiences in China.

Lasting 13 years, the 7th mission arrived in China in 1781. This mission had four students – Yegor Salertovskiy, Anton Vladikin, Ivan Filonov, and Alexey Popov. Out of these four, only Vladikin made it back to Russia; the other three died in China sometime between 1730 and 1806. Of all the ROC's sinology students through the first 71 years of its missions in Peking, Vladikin was the first to land a professional appointment within the field upon his return to Russia: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs hired him as a translator of Mandarin into Russian.

Excepting the Russian translations of two articles from Manchu, a translation of *Yuan Shi* (or the History of Yuan Dynasty), and some other hitherto untraceable Russian translations, Vladikin has left behind no other scholarly sinological publications of his own. However, he also compiled five Manchu vocabularies and several wordlists of Manchu and Mandarin (Skachkov 1977, addendum 4: 398-399). But just like Rossokhin and Leontief, Vladikin campaigned for establishing a language school – albeit in Saint Petersburg rather than Moscow – to teach students Mandarin for further studies in China. Being an employee of the Foreign Ministry, he was able to persuade the ministry officials to support his effort – and the school that he had hoped for was opened.

Vladikin's school, however, remained operational only until 1801. His school was nevertheless the first successful professional school in Russia dedicated to teaching Mandarin insofar as its graduates would have generally

mastered 1000 hieroglyphs: a level of achievement that would have set them on a par with their contemporary European counterparts. And yet, only one of Vladikin's school's graduates was sent to study Mandarin in China – with the 9th ecclesiastical mission.

Arriving in China in 1794 – and staying there until 1807 – the 8th mission had 12 members altogether, of which the following five were students: Pavel Kamenskiy, Karp Krugopolov, Stepan Lipovtsov, Ivan Malishev, and Vasilii Novoselov. The second mission was the only other missions that had 5 students. Also, all these missions had around 2 to 5 junior priests (*prichetniki*) responsible for singing psalms in the church; this mission also had 2 such priests: Kozma Kaganski and Vassilii Bogorodski. However, what was unusual about these types of priests this time around was that they were also mandated to learn Mandarin.

In fact, the mission head – Safroniy Gribovskiy – had gone much further than the above mandate concerning language learning. In a note to the ROC authorities, Gribovskiy insisted that the knowledge of Mandarin was critical to proselytizing in China effectively; he also repeatedly floated the idea of establishing a centre in Irkutsk to help prepare local students for advanced training in Mandarin in China. Even though the mission used the instructional services of Chinese personnel that had been provided by Lifanyuan, Gribovskiy hired additional language instructors privately for the benefit of the students; he also started putting together a library for the mission.

Last but not least, in these missions' 79 years of existence, Gribovskiy ended up being the first head to write essays on – and summarize other members' writings about – China.⁴ Some of these essays were later published in Russia's scientific journals (Skachkov, 1977). To have a head who would invest himself in researching and writing about China encouraged other members of the mission to take an interest in sinology. At any rate, from Gribovskiy's tenure at the mission onward the ROC authorities began to informally favour the idea that mission heads engage in sinology.

All of the ROC's Peking-based missions had a high mortality rate. Through 1717-1806, these missions lost 33 members – four of whom being heads (which means that 50 percent of all the missions' total number of leaders perished in Peking). Ten of these 33 members that died in Peking were students (out of a total of 26 students that lived in Peking during these years).⁵ Many other students passed away quickly (within a year) after their return to Russia. As it happens, only one of these 26 students from these years ever got a government job.

However, students of the prior ROC missions to China had established private schools to teach Mandarin and Manchu; lacking the state's support, these schools would remain short-lived. Only Vladikin was able to persuade the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to fund a language school to prepare Russian

students for further sinological training in China; but this school also had to be shut in 1801.

By the end of the 8th mission (1807), the ROC campus in Peking had its own library of Mandarin and Manchu books; a set of Mandarin-Russian dictionaries that had been compiled by former students; and a written journal of important political events in China intended to enable the students to follow and analyze political developments in the country. So, despite their religious nature, the ROC's missions to China had been able to create, sustain, and develop a full-fledged educational section as part of their self-maintenance; as a way to prepare future Russian sinologists for any subsequent missions; and a way to build mission's research and pedagogical capabilities.

5. The Next Seven Missions: Creation of Professional Sinology

Under the leadership of Iakinf Bichurin, the 9th mission arrived in Peking in 1807 and stayed there until 1821 plus one year of return which explains differences in dates (see, for example, Skachkov, 1977: 360 and Andreev, Baskhanov & Yusupova, 2018). Among all the previous mission heads, Bichurin was the second one to have a personal interest in China as well as in research and pedagogy generally. Bichurin's personal devotion to sinology as a mission head became crucial not only for the religious success of the mission itself but also for the growth of sinology within it. The following four students were attached to this mission: Markel Lavrovskiy; Lev Zimailov; Mikhail Sipakov; and Efgraf Gromov. Given that one of these four – Sipakov – had previously been trained by Leontief, this mission marked the start of a trend whereby these missions had begun to receive students with some prior sinological training from the previous missions' students.

Bichurin put together the first authoritative Mandarin-Russian dictionary.⁶ He also read all the books in Latin and French that he could find in the libraries of Western missionaries in China, and translated the *Sishu*, the *Dai-qing yi tongzhi*, and the *Zizhi Tongjian Gangmu*. Using the services of a Lama he had hired as a teacher and translator, Bichurin also translated several Tibetan books, and abstracted many Mongolian ones. While being very critical of all the previous missions' academic outputs and educational framework, he successfully broadened the scope for the future of sinology in Russia by introducing Tibetan and Mongolian sources into it. Moreover, he sent a report to the Russian government stressing the need for a complex understanding of China – and thus for encouraging research and teaching in the history, geography, medicine, botany, and creative writing of China.

Bichurin lived in China for 16 years; when he returned to Russia, he brought along 12 boxes of Chinese books with him. After his return to Russia, he translated many Chinese historical books into Russian; he also wrote the

first Chinese grammar (first part in 1831 and the second in 1836 (Skachkov 1977: 112)), and authored many books on Chinese themes as well as on Tibet (Skachkov 1977: 99-108). After teaching Mandarin to many students of the mission, he taught it to many others at his Kyakhta language school: the first school to prepare Mandarin-Russian translators for the booming Russian-Chinese commerce.

Bichurin was indeed an extraordinary figure for Russian sinology – for some other reasons as well. He had an extraordinary personal life (which included conflicts with the ROC); he also had deep connections with the Russian intelligentsia – poets, painters, writers, etc. He was a corresponding member of the RAS – the highest research institution in Russia, and a foreign honorary member of the Asiatic society. Because of all this, sinology ended up securing a special place for itself in the Russian humanistic disciplines during his lifetime.

Under the leadership of Petr Kamenskiy, the 10th mission arrived in Peking in 1821 and stayed there until 1830. As somebody who had been a student of the 3rd mission through 1736-1743, Kamenski was the first former student of a ROC mission to China to return as another mission's head; he thus knew first-hand what all it takes to live and study in China as a mission student. As a former student, he was also personally interested in China – and determined to extend the mission's goals. Given that his father had also being a priest, Kamenski had some influence over ROC institutions – a situational fact that was helpful to him in developing this mission.

After completing his education with the 3rd mission, Kamenski had previously returned to Russia – and worked there as a Mandarin-Russian translator before being appointed as a diplomat within the *Aziatskii Departament* (Asian Department) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In order to go to China as the head of the 10th mission, he had to become a Russian orthodox priest – and to do that, he had to sacrifice his secular life. Kamenski's career chart is thus the reverse of what Bichurin had aspired for in his own case (even though each of them lived in China for 16 years): Bichurin had started out as a priest – and he later unsuccessfully sought the Russian state's and religious authorities' permissions to leave the church institutions for a secular life. Kamenskiy translated into Russian the *Zizhi Tongjian Gangmu* (from Chinese) and the *Yuán Shǐ* (from Manchu) – and compiled a Mandarin-Mongol-Manchu-Russian-Latin dictionary. His works were reviewed by French sinologists; and he was the first alumnus of the ROC's missions to China to be made a corresponding member of the RAS (Skachkov, 1977; Li Weili, 2007).

The 10th mission was the first to have been given official instructions before it set sail for China. These instructions were a catalogue of agreements between the mission's sender – the ROC – and its members (including its students) specifying the educational and research goals for the mission. The

instructions mandated the mission to collect China's books, and to cross-translate Mandarin and Russian dictionaries; they also mandated that the mission's head learn Mandarin or Manchu; priests learn Mandarin and translate Russian religious books into it; students not only learn the native languages but also study other sinological topics such as Chinese but as well medicine, natural philosophy, history, geography, statistics, and creative literature.

The 10th mission was the first to have a medical doctor (Osip Voitsekhovskiy), sent to explore Chinese medicine; every mission hereafter had a medical doctor – both as a mission's healthcare provider and as a researcher of Chinese medicine. This mission had three students: Kondrat Krimskiy, Zakhar Leontievskiy, and Vassiliy Abramov; however, eight out of its total of nine members learnt Mandarin and Manchu – which they used in their research. When returning to Russia, the mission brought a collection of books that were distributed across the libraries in Irkutsk, Moscow, and Saint Petersburg. Two of this mission's alumni – Lipovtsev and Leontievskiy – made considerable contributions to sinology via their translations and pedagogy (Skachkov, 1977, addendum 4: 406-407, 419-420).

Headed by Veniamin Morachevich – who had been a member (*ieromonakh* – hieromonk) of the 10th mission – the 11th mission stayed in China until 1840. Given his prior experience, Morachevich knew the ins and outs of these ROC missions; moreover, since he was one of the monks who had studied Mandarin with the 10th mission, he knew the language. By this time, the ROC had enough people from its own religious ranks who had been trained in Mandarin via its previous missions to China; so, it had begun to send them as these mission heads. This 11th mission included a botanist, an astronomer, and a specialist in the Mongol language; this suggests that these predominantly religious missions had begun to deepen as well as widen their educational and research capacities in sinology.

The most important achievements of the 11th mission was: enhanced research into and teaching of Mandarin, and cultivation of sinology as a multidisciplinary field of inquiry (which now included humanistic topics, astronomy, and botany – aside from the conventional linguistic fields). This was the only mission whose *pristav* (acting head) was a military officer (Colonel Mikhail Ladizhenskiy). An important reason a military officer had been sent as this mission's acting head was that trouble had been brewing in the Qing China as it was approaching the period of the Opium Wars with the Western powers.⁷

Largely overlapping with the first Opium War (1839-42), the 12th mission arrived in China in 1840, and stayed there until 1849. This mission had set for itself a new practical objective – on top of all the others that the previous missions had conventionally retained: to collect political and economic information about China's internal situation. To ensure that this new objective

is duly met, the ROC had appointed Nikolai Lubimov as the mission's *pristav*, i.e., its acting head and principal. Lubimov was a former vice director of the Asian Department of Foreign Ministry who had resigned to go to China.

Notably, the Asiatic Department of Foreign Ministry had privately hired teachers to train in Mandarin all the would-be members of this 12th mission; as a result, the entire mission knew a level of Mandarin before its arrival in China. Little surprise then, that many members of this mission went on to become prominent Sinologists:

- 1) Vassiliy Vassiliev, a secular student of this mission, went on to become the first prominent Russian specialist in Chinese Buddhism; he would also become the second-ever former members of these missions to be given the membership of the RAS and the first to be given a full membership.
- 2) Petr Kafarov (Palladiy) ended up heading the 13th and the 15th missions; he also authored a Chinese-Russian dictionary that is used even today. In fact, his dictionary served as the basis for the Great Chinese-Russian Dictionary (1952 edition – 65K words, 1955 – 70K words, 1983-1984 – 250K words, 4 volumes with a contemporary Internet edition – BKRS and wiki 大 BKRS), compiled by professor Ilya M. Oshanin who received in 1986 the state award in sinology for lifelong achievements of which this dictionary was but an important part.
- 3) A. Tatarinov – a medical doctor who researched Chinese traditional medicine – went on to publish the first professional articles in Russian on Chinese medicine. He was also appointed by the Russian Foreign Ministry as a Consul General at its consulate in Chuguchak, China.
- 4) V. Gorskiy went on to publish several articles on early Manchu rulers in China that Russian historians cite even today; he also compiled in Russian the first and the only biography of Wu Sangui.
- 5) Kandrat Illich Karsavin (or Kondratiy Ilyich Korsalin), who had gone with the mission as a creative painter, made more than a hundred portraits of the Chinese administrative elite. As a representative sample of paintings from this historical period, one of his paintings is currently on display at the *Russkiy Muzei* (the Russian Museum) in Saint Petersburg.

Aside from Tatarinov, Ivan Zakharov and Ivan Goshkevich were also appointed as Consul Generals; these latter two men were posted to the Russian consulates in China's Hakodate and Kuldja, respectively.

All in all, the 12th mission was extraordinarily successful as a religious enterprise in preparing future Russian sinologists; it ushered Russian sinology into its truly professional phase. Along the way, however, the need to create secular institutions of higher learning dedicated to sinology was becoming clearer by the day to the Russian authorities.

Headed by Petr Ivanovic Kafarov (Palladiy) – who had gained post-mission professional experience in sinology since returning to Russia – the 13th mission arrived in China in 1850 and stayed there until 1858. This mission's tenure in China was cut short to 6 years (and, of course, the trip up to China was an additional year as was the trip back to Russia). The mission had four students; three priests of different ranks, who were also required to study Chinese; a medical doctor; and a painter. The students were Nikolai Nechaev, Nikolai Uspenskiy, Konstantin (Constantine) Skachkov, and Mikhail Khrapovitskiy; the priests were Petr Tsvetkov, Yelysei Ivanov, and Mikhail Ovodov; the medical doctor was Basilevskiy; and the painter was Chmutov. The mission had Kovalevski as its acting principal (*pristav*), who was also tasked with resolving any diplomatic disputes. (In his later years, he would sign a commercial treaty with China as part of his diplomatic duties.) All members of this mission had received some preparatory training in both written and oral Mandarin prior to their arrival in China.

There is one curious detail about this 13th mission. To allow him to pursue his research in astronomy, this mission constructed an astronomy laboratory for one of its members – Konstantin Skachkov, a trained astronomer. Skachkov's articles on astronomy were subsequently published in Britain; he also assembled an extensive library of Chinese books – which is now part of the State Library in Moscow. He was later appointed by the Russian Foreign Ministry as a Consul in Chuguchak, one of Russian diplomatic outposts in China.

The 14th and the 15th missions together mark the end of the practice whereby sinological training to Russians was imparted within the framework of a religious institution. While the ROC's priests and monks would continue to study China's languages even after the 15th mission – to help them translate religious texts from Russian into Mandarin, and also to proselytize in China – sinological education itself would hereafter find its permanent home in Russia's secular institutions. Indeed, the 14th mission (1858-1864) – comprising four priests, four students, a medical doctor, and a painter – would be the last one to include students of China's languages.

Three of the 14th mission's students (A. Popov, K. Pavlinov, and D. Peschurov) would eventually join Russia's foreign service – each as a diplomat, a translator, and/or as an advisor (*dragoman*). As for the 15th mission, its head – Kafarov – organized several research expeditions inside China, and published extensively on sinological topics. One of his most prominent theological publications was an exploration of the roots of Christianity in China.

The 15th mission had only one student of sinology: Pavel Popov. After graduating from the Kursk Seminary, he had been through a five-year training program in Mandarin at the Saint Petersburg University (SPU). Popov, in

other words, had prepared himself well for his sinological stint with the 15th mission in China; after his mission experience, he would work as an official translator (*dragoman*) at the Russian diplomatic mission to China. All in all, Popov would successfully integrate his sinological research into his diplomatic career.

Appointed in 1886 as a Consul General in Peking, Popov later became a RAS corresponding member (1890): the third of the mission's former students to become a RAS member. Apart from publishing Kafarov's dictionary, translating several Mandarin texts into Russian, and authoring sinological works, Popov also compiled a very good Chinese-Russian dictionary of his own that was also used many years after as a basis for Oshanin's dictionary. For all that, despite lacking any academic degree, he was appointed by the SPU in 1902 as its Chinese unit's (*kafedra kitaiskoi slovesnosti*) acting chair at its School of Oriental languages. In this capacity, Popov taught Mandarin until his death; through this long experience, he also enjoyed the friendly company of Dmitry Peschurov: his fellow trainee in sinology from the mission years in China.

From 1907 onward, the mission started to publish a religious journal called *Chinese Evangelist (Kitaiskii Blagovestnik)* – which disseminated information about Russian religious life to the Chinese, and about ROC's activities in China to the Russians back home. In 1861, Russia's Foreign Ministry had established a formal embassy in China (*Rossiiskaya diplomaticheskaya missiya*) equipped to provide all the necessary diplomatic and consular services, however, only when Russian universities had started to establish formal professorships and chairs in sinology – thereby putting in place secular alternatives for research as well as practical training in the field, intended to prepare Russian citizens and others for positions in the academia, Foreign Ministry, or the General Staff of the Russian Army, the mission started to play lesser and lesser role in training people in Chinese Studies. Under these circumstances, the 14th and the 15th ecclesiastical missions together marked the end of the specific component of sinological training. Without that sinological component, the ROC would continue its religious activities in China until 1956 – by when the communist policies of the Soviet Union as well as China had begun to severely discourage or ban all religious activities, which were considered to be alien (and even antithetical) to their new ideological framework.

6. Academic Institutionalization of Sinology in Russia

The first university chair in Mandarin was established in Kazan in 1837. Preceding that development, at least six proposals had been made concerning academic institutionalization of sinology in Russia.

The first of these proposals, dating 1733, was made by an RAS member, Georg-Yakob Kerr. Stressing the need to establish a secular Asiatic Academy equipped to teach Oriental languages, this proposal included a focus on Manchu and Mandarin. Then, in 1802, the Collegium of Foreign Affairs – the predecessor of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – also proposed setting up a centre to train Russians in Mandarin and Manchu. A similar proposal came up again in 1810 – from Sergei Uvarov, who would eventually become Russia’s education minister. A fourth proposal of some relevance to our topic was floated in 1823: It was about setting up an educational unit within the Collegium of Foreign Affairs except that it made no mention of training in Mandarin or Manchu, *per se*.

Then, in 1829, Osip Ivanovich Senkovskiy proposed to host a unit on Oriental languages at the SPU, where he taught Arabic. The core of his proposal was to put together an instructional staff jointly comprising European professors and two mission graduates – Iakinf Bichurin and Stepan Lipovtsev. In this arrangement, the European professors were supposed to teach topics in sinology while Bichurin and Lipovtsev were supposed to teach Manchu and Mandarin. Integral to Senkovskiy’s proposal was the requirement for foreign professors working in Russia. The last of all these unimplemented proposals was made in 1832 – to the Russian State Council – by a count Leven. This proposal advocated establishing a unit within the SPU to teach Oriental languages. However, the first chair in Mandarin was established in Kazan at the Imperial Kazan University (IKU) in 1837. With the establishment of this chair, Russia took its first step up from a private, unofficial, or quasi-official system of instruction on any aspect of sinology to a government-sanctioned conventional university.

This first university chair in sinology was graced by Dmitriy (Daniil was his monk name) Petrovich Sivillov (1798-1871), who was a monk in the ROC’s 10th mission to China. Sivillov had learned his Mandarin as part of this mission; and upon his return to Russia, he had compiled several Mandarin-Russian dictionaries, and translated from Mandarin into Russian historical, philosophical, and religious works. In 1840, Sivillov prepared the first “Reader in Chinese,” which was reviewed by Bichurin. After an early course on Mandarin, Sivillov prepared and offered another course on Chinese history; he also wrote and published a textbook *General Chinese History* and some articles on Chinese history (Skachkov, 1977, addendum 4: 417-419).

After Sivillov, the next person to be appointed to the sinology chair at IKU was also a former mission student and doctor, Osip Pavlovich Voitsekhovskiy. In his classes on Mandarin, Voitsekhovskiy retained the usage of the publications and other material of Sivillov’s and Bichurin’s and also developed and offered a course on Manchu history. Additionally, he compiled several readers of Chinese literary texts as well as a Manchu-

Mandarin-Russian dictionary. In the meantime, along with Sosnitski – another former mission student – Sivillov continued to teach (without a remuneration) Mandarin at IKU's newly established gymnasium for young people.

In 1850, Vassilyi Vassiliev, a former student of Mongolian at IKU, returned to his alma mater – and was appointed the first acting extraordinary professor of Mandarin and Manchu there (in Russian: *ispolniayuschii obyazannosti ekstraordinarnogo professora po kafedre kitaiskoi i man'chzhurskoi slovesnosti*). Vassiliev had been part of the 12th mission to China after his graduation from IKU with MA degree equivalent – *magistr vostochnoi slovesnosti*.

Lasting 18 years, IKU's Oriental school was closed in 1855, and transferred – with all its faculty, students, library, and numismatic collection – to Saint Petersburg. All in all, an Oriental section of the SPU was transformed into the Oriental school (*Vostochniy fakultet*) that remains in operation even today.

After being transferred from Kazan to Saint Petersburg, Vassiliev was appointed to a chair in Oriental languages at the SPU. For twelve years he was the only person there who taught Mandarin and Manchu across the four levels of education in these languages. Alongside, he not only developed courses in history, philosophy, geography, literature of China and Manchuria and published readers on literature, history, geography of China, translated several Chinese historical compendia into Russian, but also prepared his magnum opus on Chinese Buddhism. Additionally, he compiled several readers in Chinese literature and history.

At the SPU, Vassiliev prepared his student Ladukhin for a teaching position at the Oriental school. On his part, Ladukhin successfully petitioned the ROC to allow him to join the 13th mission as a secular student of Mandarin. Unfortunately, however, he drowned in a fast and cold Siberian river while on his way to China. Vassiliev then had to hire Skachkov – another mission graduate; and when Skachkov moved on to the position of Consul General in Tientsin, Vassiliev hired another mission graduate Dmitry Peschurov as a professor of Mandarin. Later on, Vassiliev appointed yet another mission graduate – Zakharov – to teach Manchu. Notably, Peschurov taught for 36 years – and one of his students, Vassylyi Alexeev, rose to become the first Soviet member of the Academy of Sciences in sinology and a doyen of the Russian/Soviet sinology. All five of these faculty members put out various sinological publications reflecting their specific interests in this multidisciplinary field.

Before his death in 1900, Vassiliev added to his own list of accomplishments. In 1873, for instance, he published another important work, *Religion in the Orient: Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism*. Apart from training other future sinologists – such as Petr Popov (also a mission graduate) – Vassiliev

contributed to the preparation of students that would become scientific experts on Asian countries and cultures other than China. Included among these latter would-be experts (who had been taught by Vassiliev) and their regions of expertise were the following: A. Pozdneev (Mongolia), V. Kotvich (Manchuria), I. Minaev (India), and D. Pozdneev (Japan). Further down the line, the academic lineage of Vassiliev would be reflected in the future sinological centres of Vladivostok, Moscow, and Chita. Moreover, Vassiliev also prepared no less than thirty students for non-academic sinological careers mostly at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁸

7. Conclusion

The ROC sent fifteen ecclesiastical missions to Peking that included trainees in Manchu, Mandarin, and Tibetan languages. All in all, these missions put in place the philological foundations for what we might rightly refer to as the Russian school of sinology – whose impact went far beyond the ROC's central objective of religious proselytization.

The missions developed a full linguistic-cum-literary component whereby Chinese classics in creative writing saw their earliest translations into Russian; and historical works in Russian saw their first translations into Mandarin. For 120 years, these missions trained Russians in translating and interpreting the spoken dialects of China; they thus established Russia's own methodology for teaching these dialects as well as Mandarin, Manchu, and Tibetan. Altogether, these missions nurtured 60 students and medical doctors, and 100 priests. The scope (including geographic) of the priests' activities, including the missionary one, may be a theme for further research of a comparative nature if taken into consideration Western missionary activities in China.

These missions to Peking included medical doctors, painters, and even an astronomer. Broadening the scope of research pertaining to China, these inclusions helped develop sinology into an authentic, integrated field of inquiry in Russia. Inasmuch as these missions produced translations between the languages of China and Russian, they birthed what we might legitimately refer to as the Russian school of sinological translations. The missions also put out Russia's earliest systematic research (in Russian) into Chinese history, agriculture, geography, law, ethnology as well as geopolitical and diplomatic relations between China and Russia.

Ergo, as the Asiatic Department (*Asiatskii Departament*) of the Russian Foreign Ministry started to publish – after the 13th mission – the four hefty volumes of the *Proceedings of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in China*, it included in these volumes many contributions from the graduates of all previous missions. The first two volumes of these proceedings were also translated into German – and an English translation of these proceedings

had also been initiated, but it never took shape as a publication. Until 1917, these proceedings were the only professional periodical publication on China in Russia – and they helped a wider contemporary Russian readership learn about China.

Missions also collected textual and other material on China that ultimately served as the foundations for specialized collections on China across several Russian libraries – prominently including the RAS library in Saint Petersburg; the public libraries of Saint Petersburg and Irkutsk; and the library of the Asiatic Department of Foreign Ministry. Former students of these missions also laid the foundations of academic sinology across several public universities of Russia – including the IKU, the SPU, and the Imperial Moscow University.⁹ However, these missions produced pioneering Russian specialists not only in Mandarin but also in Manchu language and history; indeed, graduates of these were also the first in Russia to translate Tangut texts into Russian. Moreover, students from the latter years of these missions also wrote about China for the Russian public and youth, thereby spreading awareness about China across Russia.

After the 15th mission, it is the 18th mission (1896-1931), the longest due to historical transformations in Russia, that would include students of sinology. This 18th mission included the following three sinological students: I.P. Vrublevskiy, Vassylyi Mikhailovich Alexeev, and Alexei Ivanovitch Ivanov. No information within the academic literature could be found at the moment regarding Vrublevskiy's life. As for Alexeev, he became the most prominent sinologist of the early Soviet period ensuring an intellectual continuity in this field of studies through uneasy periods of the Russian history; he also became a full member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. His last book – which was left unpublished before he passed away – was published only in the 2000s by one of his last post-graduate students (Alexeev, 2010).¹⁰ Notably, in 2016, Alexeev's great-nephew established the Institute for Classical Oriental Studies (ICOS) – thereby restoring classical Chinese studies at the Higher School of Economics (HSE) in Moscow.

As for Alexei Ivanov, he is less known in Russia than Alexeev. However, he was no less talented a sinologist than Alexeev. Ivanov graduated in Chinese studies from the SPU; was sent as a student with the 18th mission to China – where he studied for two years. After his return to Russia, he taught Mandarin and Manchu at the SPU – where he also obtained a doctoral degree in Chinese studies in 1913 – and made several trips to Britain, France, and Germany to polish his sinological education. The first Russian to study the Tangut and Chinese books found by the Russian traveler Petr Kozlov in the dead city of Khara-Khoto through 1907-1909, Ivanov became the director of the Practical Academy of Oriental Studies in 1917. This institute served as the de facto alternative to the state universities. In 1922, Ivanov was employed

as an interpreter in the Soviet Embassy at Peking; but on August 26, 1937, he was unlawfully arrested – and then executed on October 8, 1937. Deemed innocent in 1958, he was fully rehabilitated posthumously (*Men and Destiny*, 2003: 177-178) as many others in Oriental/Asian Studies at that period of the Soviet history.

In a nutshell, the ROC's ecclesiastical missions to China overcame all sorts of historical challenges as it laid the foundations of Russian sinology. Indeed, the sinological investments of the ROC bequeathed to Russia the core of its disciplinary leadership that would survive all the way up to the mid-1900s. This specific strand of the ROC's intellectual tradition has taken many turns in response to the historical transformations of which it was but a part; however, the effects of its legacy are here to stay so long as Russia retains sinology in its academic curriculum.

Notes

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1. Calculations based on (Skachkov, 1977, addendum 2: 358-361).
 2. Calculations of books and materials translated are based on “Handwritten Heritage of the Russian Sinologists” (Skachkov, 1977, addendum 4: 388-458).
 3. Calculations based on (Skachkov, 1977, addendum 2: 358-361) and “Handwritten Heritage of the Russian Sinologists” (Skachkov, 1977, addendum 4: 388-458).
 4. According to Skachkov, 1977 but no other mentioning in the literature even in: Skachkov, 1977, addendum 4: 388-458.
 5. Calculations based on (Skachkov, 1977, addendum 2: 358-361).
 6. Reproduction see in: *Rossiya-Kitai*, 2018: 26.
 7. Differences between Russian and Western understanding of China's developments (though at a later stage) are reflected in archival materials. See, for example, AVPRI: Fond Kitaiskii Stol, 1891, Delo 109, pp. 228-229; AVPRI: Fond SPb. Glavnii Archiv 1-1, 1879, Delo 189, p. 115.
 8. Details on university sinology can be obtained in Chapters 4,5,6 (Skachkov, 1977) among other literature.
 9. Kazan Federal University, Saint-Petersburg State University, Moscow State University.
 10. All updated information on V.M. Alexeev can be obtained from this last book of him (Alexeev, 2010).

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