



Modern Russian Priestly Caste Through
The Prism Of The Religious Concept By
K. G. Dawson

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Abstract

One of the worldview phenomena of modern Russia,
which has a history that goes back to the Soviet past, is

the phenomenon of Slavic paganism. Despite significant changes that affected both the religious basis of the “Neo-Paganism” itself and organizational forms of the latter (the attempt to move from a community, a union of communities as primary units of association, to pagan confederations), the role of leaders of the reviewed community remains unchanged. This article reviews key components of the image of modern pagan didascalos through the prism of religious concepts of the English philosopher K. G. Dawson. As an illustrative example, personalities of pagan ideologists of the first and second waves were chosen, such as: A. A. Dobrovolskiy (Dobroslav) and N. N. Speranskiy (Velimir), whose practical activities fully reflect nuances of the religious concept by K. G. Dawson. The analysis carried out made it possible to single out the following components of the “portrait” of the modern Magus.

Key Words: Modern Slavic paganism, priesthood, archetype, leader, community, sacralization, ideology. Religion is the key to history. We can’t understand the inner form of society until we understand its religion. We won’t be able to understand its cultural achievements until we understand religious beliefs standing behind them. (K. G. Dawson)

1 Introduction

The phenomenon of modern Russian paganism has been an object of scientific reflection for several decades. The analysis includes the source base of the movement, elements of festive ritual complex, the history of individual “Neo-pagan” associations. At the same time, there are no special works that reveal features of the most important element of paganism of the 21st century in the domestic research environment today – the institution of clergy responsible both for formation, development, and for the whole complex of functional filling of a given social and cultural-political phenomenon. Besides, the question about historical legitimacy of the new priest-Magus community, about the very possibility of considering this “class” of the pagan world as an actual religious group, remains open.

In connection to this, it is very interesting to cover the latter of modern pagan spiritual class through the prism of fundamental religious hypothesis by Christopher Henry Dawson, the largest

English historian, philosopher and culturologist (1889-1970). As objects of the experimental site, the one used narratives, interview materials of pagan ideologists of the last quarter of XX beginning of the XXI centuries A. A. Dobrovolskiy (Dobroslav) and N. N. Speranskiy (Velimir). The choice of these persons is due to following reasons: Firstly, according to studies conducted, Dobrovolskiy (1938-2013) should be considered the first pagan of Soviet Russia who developed an original ideology, mythology and a festive ritual complex (Shizhenskiy, 2014). Secondly, Speranskiy today is one of the few leaders from the pagan camp who managed to syncretize the whole range of problem fields into a single worldview. Thirdly, the reviewed diaspora leaders (Shizhenskiy, 2009) possess the necessary "pagan rank" and the most powerful base of published texts. In the work by K. G. Dawson's "Religion and Culture" the issue of ministers of religion occupies a central place being one of the two elements that form religion as such: "Since all historical religions from the lowest ones to the highest converge on two points: First, on the belief in existence of divine or supernatural forces ... and secondly, on association of these forces with individuals, things, places or ceremonies that act as channels of communication or ways of access between human and divine worlds" (Dawson, 2000). The subject of sacred objects, places of power and ceremonial as necessary elements of theogamy, will be considered below according to Dawson's terminology. First of all, one should address the bearers of the sacred tradition according to the concept of the English scientist. Using historical retrospection, K.G. Dawson records the existence of an institution of spiritual leaders, both among representatives of the primitive and bearers of modern great cultures (Dawson, 2000). Accordingly, the priesthood as applied to modern version of Slavic paganism, is the chronologically stagnant priest-Magus class. Priesthood is a priori one of strata of society, "a religion embodied in a permanent institution" (Dawson, 2000). A peculiar appeal of the historian to research specific forms of this class in each individual culture should be noted here. Moreover, the conducted research should precede the process of understanding the essence of the considered social institution.

Recognizing differences inherent to numerous systems of "spiritual orders", the philosopher deduces unique original archetypes peculiar to all cultures. To the three archetypic types by K.G. Daw-

son, the following attributes: The Priest (is being brought up and singled out of society for performance of rituals and ceremonies forming the essential connection between society and gods); King or legislator (personal representatives or incarnations of divine authority); Prophet or seer (the herald of the divine will, interpreter of dreams and prophecies). The author emphasizes that the considered categories do not exclude each other as each of them can combine several functions. The typology proposed by the English specialist finds fertile ground on the native Neo-Pagan material. It should be noted that both Dobrovolskiy and Speranskiy, acting as representatives of the first two generations pioneers in construction of modern polytheistic worldview, are forced, first of all by virtue of "pioneering", to combine "posts" of a priest, a leader (legislator) and a prophet. At the same time, works of Pagan ideologists are the eclectic conglomerate of utopias, from ecological ones to political projects; they reflect views of modern wise men on the ideal world, including the role of their "colleagues" in the Pagan Terra Incognita. The emerging autopoiesis makes it possible to consider Pagan sources of both primary and secondary origin comprehensively.

In Dobrovolskiy's variation, a Dawson's priest performs rituals of naming and debaptistry. Holds an annual holiday of Kupala which is fundamental for modern Pagan proselytes. Finally, is one of the first to develop and use sacred texts: Prayer-appeals, spells, charms and confessions. The issue "Dobroslav the Legislator" is manifested in the period from 1990 to 1995 when the Pagan speaks with educating lectures. Taking the ideology of the Vasenev hermit as the basis, admirers of Dobrovolsky's works create the Yarila's Arrows nature protection society. The culmination of legislative and administrative function of Dobroslav is his recognition as a leader of the Russian liberation movement (The ROD Movement) at the unifying Veche of communities on June 22nd, 1997:"The main work of Dobroslav in the field of the ROD is educational and agitational activity realized through spreading of appeals (it is in them the signature appears for the first time: "Dobroslav, the elder of the ROD"), correspondence with fellow-minded people and publication of books" (Shizhenskiy, 2014).

The third archetype the seer is most fully revealed on the material of Dobrovolsky's apocalyptic research devoted to the future of mankind. In Dobroslav's arguments on causes of sunset

of mankind, it is possible to single out a clearly marked axis of evil, the cornerstone of which is mono-religiosity. The centuries-old domination of monotheism, according to the Elder of the ROD, led humanity to a comprehensive crisis reflecting spiritual state of society (Dobroslav, 2004b). One of the main nags of the apocalypse of modern religiosity Dobroslav calls proclamation of man the crown of creation, the highest, God-chosen race dominating nature (Dobroslav, 2005). These were Abrahamic religions that led the cohort of evil from capitalism and its derivatives the market economy and consumption race. In the same row the pagan leader also introduces the unacceptable technocratic way of human development (Dobroslav, 2004d). As a result of society's wrong choice of its worldview, Dobroslav considers spiritual degradation of homo sapiens and ecological crisis of the present time. According to Dobroslav, as a result of earthly purification, "in the blood and tears of labor pains" (Dobroslav, 2007), a new-formation man with new thinking and new worldview will appear. The basis of the worldview of people of the near future in the idealized post-apocalyptic world of Vasyenyov hermit will be an old, primitive experience combined with triumphant "nature loving", so Dobroslav(2004) wrote: "Returning to understanding of the World by our Ancestors, this understanding can not be completely, literally and mechanically transferred into our time. You can not take the old, sunset Paganism one to one and recreate it again... It is necessary to take only the approach, the principle and basic conviction from the Ancients to pick up by modern ecologists: THE NATURE IS WISE AND ALWAYS RIGHT, it is necessary to return the most important the attitude to the Nature as THE INTEGRITY WITH HUMAN AND A WISE GENESIS".

Dawson's thesis about acceptability of combining the functional of religious archetypes is also traced on the material of second-order sources works of Dobrovolskiy. In the last ones priests (Magi) act as intermediaries between worlds, and as "kings", dictate the will to society and leading the way. The image of the ancient enchanter is surrounded by an aura of mystery and certain holiness. Highlighting the Magi from the possible hierarchy of ministers and guardians of the pagan cult. In A. A. Dobrovolskiy's letter to R. V. Shizhenskiy from 06.12.2007 were mentioned: "Priests are just officials of the cult, sacrifice managers and all the gods' stuff. And the

Magi are a qualitatively different notion. During Christianization of Rus, the Magi were already a relic of the community-Veches system, enchanter hermits and witches”, the author tends to Nietzschean ideas, hyperbolizing the Magi to the level of a superman. The sphere of activity of the latter is comprehensive. Magi Dobroslav are responsible for birth of a new healthy generation (through organization of wedding ceremonies in right places of power). It is they who own the prerogative of storing and transferring sacred tales (with adoption of Christianity this function will pass to fathers of families) (Dobroslav, 2004c), they are also responsible for education of the Slavic ethnos (Dobroslav, 2004d). Fundamentally important is the fact that the Magi, in addition to traditional religious and everyday functioning, are endowed with the function of socio-political institutionalization by Dobrovolskiy too. In hermit’s works, Slavic “pagan mentors” are spiritual leaders of the nation, chief leaders of Veches meetings. With adoption of the new faith they are the first wrestlers, initiators of popular uprisings. Dobroslav notes that the Magi alongside with elders, fathers of families, are representatives of religious nobility whose status and position in the society have blocked all claims to leadership from secular persons. No less significant is the fact that the constructed theocracy by Dobrovolskiy is belligerent. The Magus is not only a warrior, but also a fighter who carries, and, if necessary, defends and implants the “Militant Good Will.”

In its turn, the typology of Dawson in Speranskiy’s interpretation also makes it possible to discover the three sought archetypes. Mediation between society and gods is carried out by Velimir both through the organization and holding of festive ritual events, and through mass production (according to Speranskiy “sacred action”) of idols (shareses) and pillar records: The typical symbol noting the place of gods’ presence, is the Record pillar. It is a column of phallic outlines, on four sides of which symbols of Pagan faith are depicted. When installed, it is oriented around the world, at sunrise and sunset (Speranskiy & Yermakov, 2009). According to the Magus’s opinion, during the work a craftsman can communicate only with a representative of his craft shop, he should not swear, remember grievances, “his latent soul work should be pure” (Speranskiy & Yermakov, 2009). To the field of individual mystical practice refers a certain attitude of the worker throughout the entire

creation: "...the craftsman should mentally maintain his connection with the deity to whom he is going to sculpt an idol within few days. In this case communication means an inner dialog with him as well as attention to one's behavior, thoughts, readiness to work and ability to store and clarify the future image inside yourself... Going into a state where the craftsman discovers not a hewn log, but the incarnation of a god at his hands, may be very fast. Five-ten seconds before everything seemed to be regular, and suddenly... the craftsman is not alone, he is being looked upon by a sculpted image. Being not just looked upon, but talked to. The craftsman feels that. His thoughts change. Sometimes a hand starts shaking, mind drifts, breath is out..." (Speranskiy & Yermakov, 2009). If the one does not take idols made by Speranskiy before entering Pagan religion into account, then, according to the respondent's reminiscences, the total number of author's shareses and records of the modern Magus-carver now exceeds thirty sculptures. The Slavic pantheon in the wooden sculpture of the spiritual leader "Carols of Vyatichi" is represented by the images of goddesses of Lada and Mokosha, the gods Svyatovit, Yarila, Dazhdbog, Veles, Chernobog. Besides, the central place in the priestly image of Velimir is occupied by religious ecstasy, terminologically characterized in the pagan environment of the 21st century as "zeal". One of desired results of immersion into altered consciousness is the direct communication of proselytes with divine essences: "As if water running, flowing down from fingers to the ground and making cooling hands easy to tremble. This "water" gradually weakens me, weakens the connection with this world; it cites to movement and slumber simultaneously. It is time. I am putting on a mask. I knock, roar, summon everyone. I do not begrudge the tambourine... I feel myself like a rocket during start ... We are neither on the ground, nor over trees. Somewhere in the middle. I see my essences. It is totally dark in here. Now they are in completeness of vision. I call everyone and ask about health... We need to enter the Nav. To see ancestors. To send greetings and ask about mysteries of Genesis... We are rising over the shrine easily already..." (Velimir, 2012b).

The second archetype is realized by Speranskiy through his own periodical "The Newspaper of Ethnic Revival "The Tree of Life" (published since 2003), the management of the Pagan group "Carol of the Vyatichi" since 1998 as well as in public speeches (since 1992)

and work on program documents of Pagans, in particular, over the "Russian Pagan manifesto" (Shizhenskiy, 2015b) etc.

Consideration of prophetic (visionary) component of the worldview of Velimir deserves separate attention. One of particular (step-by-step) manifestations of Pagan mentality of the group headed by a Magus is reflected in the sign fixation of all possible signs, events, superstitions, omens and miracles. Based on these texts containing a description of such phenomena, Pagan signs carry out several functions. To these directly relates the mythological (myth-creating) function - omens are the visible will of a deity, they personify the actual presence of higher powers in the rite. Realization of religious and practical function consists of choosing a place for creation of a religious facility (shrine): "For a rite a place is chosen that can subsequently become permanent. If we perceive the good from rites held in the new place, then a shrine appears on this place with time" (Velimir, 2012c), appearance of additional impetus in development a general mood for ritual action, "immersing" into myth, removing uncomfortable obstacles of psychological and spiritual order among neophytes, creating new Pagan collection of sacred miracles - Speranskiy emphasizes the importance of oral and written transmission of everything unusual to youth, associated with existing and active shrine complexes (Velimir, 2013), perhaps with the aim of affirming and confirming the truth of worldview choice. Another group of Pagan signs is associated with community members of the "Carol of the Vyatichi" with the appearance of live creatures on the territory of the shrine: birds, animals. In "The Tale of Idols" Velimir addresses to historiography of the question, tries to find recommendations in relation to "guests" in sacred places. Despite the failure in source search, the Pagan ideologue makes the following verdict: "In our time, presence of birds at shrines is considered a natural phenomenon. Birds are not prevented from feeding from altars of gods..." (Velimir, 2013). As positive omens act randomly detected objects. As Speranskiy writes, during preparation of the shrine, unusual objects found in the selected territory are being automatically included into sacred space. During construction of the shrine in Bitsevsky Park (September 1999), a skull of a dog became a find of this kind (Velimir, 2006). The "house of a deity" is placed into field of Pagan signs in a natural way - as its man-made image. Narratives of Velimir, Magus's companions, con-

firm absence of chronological limitations in manifestation of "idol omens." Neither are they connected to any clearly fixed stages of "life" of the established idol. A miracle can accompany the very moment of hoisting the symbol of a deity and consist of assistance sideways higher power to the process itself. It is also fixed during destruction of Pagan shrines manifesting itself in protecting of an idol (or its part) from effects of fire (Velimir, 2010; Anonym, 2004; 2012).

In many respects Dobrovolskiy's ideas of Speranskiy's "prophetic" views of the future and the place occupied by the Magi estate in the constructed Pagan utopia are identical to Dobrovolskiy's ideas. In accordance with texts of secondary sources works of a modern Magus the future is shown exclusively in the format of negative eschatology. Incoming changes will be caused by a number of disasters: ecologic, civilizational, national and racial ones. The natural cataclysm: "The ocean will come out of its shores. Droughts will dry tropical vegetation out; permafrost in Siberia will be poured as a great sea. Storms and tornadoes will be as frequent as rains today" (Velimir, 2012b), will provoke development of resource deficit, primarily oil deficit, and, according to one of scenarios from "Carol of the Vyatichi", will lead modern state formations, and after them civilization as a whole, to expected collapse. Persuasion in the end of this world is fixed in texts of "Carol of the Vyatichi" almost from the moment of formation of the community (Vasiliev, Potapov & Speranskiy, 1999). The place of existing administrative institutes will be occupied by local authorities new feudal lords who collect a natural rent from demoralized population (Velimir, 2008). Accordingly, at the head of estate of the Pagan clergy of modern times Velimir puts the Magi the strongest of the priesthood, who, according to his ideas, have a number of specific features. First, in accordance to narrative data by the author and his associates, this institution is characterized by features of sacralization and mythologization. The Magi possess elements of shamanic technique (traveling between worlds), pray to god Veles and are revered by ordinary people on a par with gods (Velimir, 2008). Secondly, Speranskiy supplements religious superiority of the Magi in preserving and multiplying experience and knowledge by national (ethnic) orientation of the higher Pagan clergy. In addition, the Magi are independent from official state management

regimes of the former Rus and modern Russia. Being in the opposition for more than a thousand years, they themselves can have tangible economic and political power and even claim the title of People's Leader according to Velimir's texts. Pagan way of life according to rules of Magus Leaderism presupposes adherence to principles of structured group (pack) with active participation of rank-and-file members at authority of a leader – a direct example for the rest, according to Velimir. At the same time, the political role of the Magi in the Pagan state system of the future is considered by N. N. Speranskiy in a slightly different way. Representing the "next" Russia as an independent socialist state with a duumvirate in the form of people's congregation and monarchy, the Neo-Pagan leader empowers the monarch with a priestly functional. The Magi in this system must represent a separate humanitarian institution that is not directly connected with authorities (Velimir, 2012a). Note that spiritual election of priests and the Magi allows them to position themselves not only as political leaders of the nation, but also as its teachers. Thus, from the point of view of the leader's collective "Carol of the Vyatichi", the Pagan religious class is responsible for determining the measure of immersion of a person in civilization. To this personal opinion of Velimir (2009b) on accumulation of cultural values of the Pagan tradition through comprehension and practical realization of mystical experience of the the Magi estate by "ordinary nativists" should be added. In the predictable future, the Pagan elite is also positioned as a universal messiah designed to form spirituality of next generations: "Apparently, we are called upon to formulate spirituality of the future civilization, the essence of which is in a partial return to traditional society and balance between traditional society and the state" (Mezgir, Velimir & Peresvet, 2008).

Minor differences in "percentage" of importance of Dobroslav's and Velimir's priest and the king find an explanation in diasporal Pagan recognition of considered leaders and specialization of the latter. If Dobrovol'skiy acted as the recognized leader in many cases "Russian Pagan 1" standing at origins of the movement and, as a result, largely shaping it as a definitely organized system, Speranskiy in religious and political career confined himself to spiritual leadership of a particular community and now transferred into the category of Pagans-Individuals which is very common in the Neo-Pagan

environment. For example, according to poll conducted among Pagans gathered to celebrate Kupala festival in 2015, the majority of polytheists 321 person out of 429 (74.5%) do not belong to the structure of the community.

Correspondingly, merely 61 respondent (14.2%) belong to one organization or another (Shizhenskiy & Tiutina, 2016). However, categories of priest and prophet are much more complete in the worldview basis of Velimir. The latter, in particular, may indicate a transformation, a certain kind of upgrade of Paganism committed by leaders of the second wave. One way or another, having developed and adopted symbolism, structure, source base, elements, etc. the nativist generation of Velimir focused its attention on “internal Paganism”: effective system of ceremonial and celebratory practices.

Thus, the concept of the original sacral archetypes of Dawson (priest, king, prophet) is reflected in biographies of first representatives of the leader stratum of modern Russian Paganism. In addition, archaic bearers of religious knowledge are present in utopias of Dobrovolskiy and Speranskiy finding an idealized status in texts not acquired by their creators in real life. In both cases, there is a functional syncretism of new priests-tsars-prophets in sources of the first and the second order.

Detailing the “portrait” of religious classes, K. G. Dawson (2000) identifies the following elements under control of the priesthood: Maintaining relations between society and divine forces; Community education; scholarship; Preservation of sacral tradition. The latter includes sacred literature, philosophy, code of ritual and ceremonies. The Pagan basis of the considered ideologists certainly includes all of the categories mentioned above excluding safety. Not only researchers of modern polytheism, but also bearers of this worldview recognize the novelty of Paganism of the XX-XXI centuries (Dobroslav, 2004). It should be noted that Dobrovolskiy and his surrounding tried to realize the idea of creating a pagan community practically trying to distance themselves from the dominant framework of urban civilization as much as possible. Accordingly, despite projections of closed Pagan monasteries, the group of Speranskiy chooses and actively develops (it is confirmed, among other things, by certain “pedantry” in annual celebrations in honor of calendar “holies” holidays), namely, the variation of urban pagan-

ism, from the time of its creation. Urban Russian Paganism is an organizational dominant and is currently (Shizhenskiy, 2015a).

In the section “Prophets and Prediction,” the English thinker deduces two more important components related to priestly image. The first of these is the interdependence of the order of clergy and religious tradition: “In all these respects, the clergy class forms a sacred tradition that links the entire culture together and imposes its own characteristic imprint on it, and, in its turn, is formed by this tradition” (Dawson, 2000). With regard to pioneers of modern domestic Paganism, the principle “When you peer into the abyss for a long time, the abyss begins to peer at you” manifests itself in the degree of reflection of ideas of Dobroslav’s “arch-Pagan” in the work and life position of Velimir. The latter visits the Kupala holiday of Dobrovol’skiy, takes a pagan name from him. The neophyte himself explains the choice of a candidate for conducting one of the most important acts of modern Paganism by respectable age of Dobrovol’skiy (55) and his unwillingness to be an impostor: “Dobroslav called everybody united into a single Circle with it, and I used this to be called Velimir. After that, after many years it became clear to me that there are “impostors” as well as called ones. And those called ones have some invisible support in the soul which impostors do not have, regardless of their “greatness” or contribution to the native faith” (Shizhenskiy, 2015b). “My attitude towards Dobroslav is complicated... And yet I asked him to call me. Simply there was no aged person to do this. I just did not want to be an impostor, what Selidor, Veleslav, Vseslav the Wizard, the deceased grandfather Ostromysl, etc. are today” (On-line correspondence with N. N. Speranskiy from December 23rd. 2010). The diary of Velimir preserved the description of the rite which includes the following elements: Purification, initiation, acceptance into the clan and calling by name. (Velimir, 2006b). On features of this ritual as a religious construct of Pagan leaders of XX-XXI centuries see work R. V. Shizhenskiy (2008).

In general, Speranskiy’s attitude to the elder of the national “nature-loving religion” can be assessed as twofold one. The positive in the Dobroslav case, Velimir considers the propagated cult of plants, “sublime contemplation”, the idea of Paganism as “the natural spirituality of the Russian people”: “On one hand, Dobroslav is creator of the Aroma Yoga.” The creator of the yoga of aromas

when a person is invited to bring himself closer to the intimate world of plants, their smells and life. As a result, reverence for plants will appear which will lead a person to perfection" (Anonym, 2008; Velimir, 2009c). A considerable importance for the Magus of "Carol of the Vyatichi" has a reclusive experience of Dobroslav, the rejection of materialistic and consuming life in the capital (On-line correspondence with N. N. Speranskiy from December 23rd. 2010). Velimir notes the contribution of a pagan elder to the cause of improval of modern youth (On-line correspondence with N. N. Speranskiy from December 23rd. 2010). Certainly, Speranskiy's complex attitude to Dobrovolskiy is underlined by the presence of yet another side of the Dobroslav's worldview base, which, according to Velimir, is the main one. Emphasizing that the "first face" of the Vasyenyov recluse, the "nature loving side", is not a mask, but a part of his essence, the ideologist of "Carol of the Vyatichi" goes on to criticize the reverse of the concept of the founder of the ROD. Velimir (2006a) attributes the idea of a national socialist revolution coupled with the break-up of everything that exists and the subsequent establishment of a racial dictatorship to the unacceptable part of the concept of Dobroslav. As unacceptable does the Magus regard the attitude of Dobrovolskiy to a man as an individual: "...our paganism has not yet shown any interest in the personality of a common Russian person. The apostle of Pagan socialism, i.e. Paganism ignoring the personality, was Dobroslav". Of course, Kirov recluse cant be considered neither an ally nor a teacher of Velimir. However, the 1993 Kupal naming, and correspondence continuing until 2008, and visit of Dobrovolskiy's Moscow lectures by to Speranskiy in early 2000s: "There was a case. Ten years ago Dobroslav arrived to K. Vasilyev's museum to lecture...I squeezed through the people and hung into the hall from the railing so that I could see him. He suddenly spotted me with his eyes, then almost jabbed a finger at me, and suddenly started speaking confidently and strongly. So, my presence removed the mass rejection that looked at him from all sides through the eyes of Moscow muslin ladies and rotten intellectuals. He needed merely one HIS man TO TALK FOR and to be understood and to share common ideas" (On-line correspondence with N. N. Speranskiy from December 23rd 2010), and finally, the very fact of dual attitude towards the Vyatkan pagan ideologue's worldview allow us to speak about a certain degree of influence

of Dobroslav's ideological complex onto Paganism of Velimir. Besides, Speranskiy uses Dobroslav's slogan "Nature. Motherland. Folk" spotted in the very first published work of Kirov pantheist "Yarila's Arrows": Compare: "The Folk. The Motherland. The Nature. They are united and have one root the ancient Pagan Gene" (Dobrovolskiy, 1989) "That's why Russian Pagans put three words together: The Nature. The Motherland. The Folk. These words appear to be single-stem in Russian, they are based on one common root - the name of the deity: the Rod (Velimir, 2006c). Accordingly, the first generation of Paganism of the XX century in the person of Dobrovolskiy forms the existing tradition of "paganism of Speranskiy". At the same time, the arisen "ladder" continues to function at present time. For example, virtually all Slavic pagan communities in Russia actively use tambourine, a tool introduced into practical paganism of organizations of central Russia by Velimir: As if I started working first with a tambourine on Lugovoi in 1998. Leather for tambourine I bought at the market in Izmailovo at the stand of musical instruments. And the hoop I twisted from plywood. Leather I wet, pulled on and nailed... This was my primacy in using a tambourine in rites, I was later told by Veleslav [I. G. Cherkasov, the Magus of the "Rod-admiration" community] (On-line correspondence with N. N. Speranskiy from August 18th, 2016).

The second component directly related to the priesthood is formulated by Dawson (2000) as follows: "... in each culture this class defines and canonizes human patterns that are considered by this culture as spiritual norms or ideals of moral superiority". The theme of "Pagan saints" arises in the national paganism from the moment of its appearance simultaneously with the ideology of the past/future "golden age" and dominant conspiracy concept. Let us note that a whole pleiad of antiheroes acting as natural antagonists of "Pagan saints" should be considered as a direct product of Neo-Pagan conspiracy theory. Heroic images as an integral part of the Neo-Pagan mythologeme of forming worldview are vividly represented on pages of Dobroslav's author's works. Dwelling on personalities of Russian history singled out by the Dobrovolskiy, first of all, it is necessary to note the Kiev prince, Sviatoslav Igorevich. Following most of ideological leaders of domestic version of the movement, Dobroslav notes the unique exclusivity of Svi-

atoslav's era, and even considers Rus the "Pagan State" during the reign of his son Igor. Murder of Sviatoslav is depicted not as a political move of leaders of the Byzantine Empire who were afraid of growing power of the neighbor, but as a reaction of a Christian power being unable to subordinate the free people by force of arms and forced to destroy the chief defender of Pagan belief for the sake of Russia's enslavement. In addition to separate individuals, narratives of A. A. Dobrovolskiy contain a whole list of tribes, social groups that, in his opinion, played a significant role in Russian Pagan history. One of central places in this list, of course, is the Baltic tribe of Ruyann inhabiting the island of Ruyan (modern Ruegen) in Middle Ages. "... In 1168, the Danish King Waldemar I, being histed by Bishop Absalon, stormed the fortress and burnt it down altogether with the Shrine. The last defenders of the temple burnt alive in flames. BUT ASHES FROM THIS COUNTRY KNAP IN OUR HEARTS EVEN TODAY! (Dobroslav, 2006). The problem of historical fate of Ruyans, their main religious center the temple city of Arcona has been central to modern Russian Pagan movement for several years already. So participants of the Bitsev appeal (Bitsev appeal was accepted on 17.03.2002 by relatives who gathered at Chertanov Shrine complex in Moscow. The main goal of the "Appeal" is unification and cooperation of Pagan communities of Russia and abroad) accepted the date of the fall of the city of Arcona as the basis of its calendar. In the category of heroic tribes fall East Slavic tribes of Vyatichi and Baltic Lutichi (Wilts). Following the tribes attempting to confront Christianity openly by force of arms, hidden fighters with a foreign religion stand out onto historical arena: Buffoons, followers of heretical movements, rebellious people of the XVII century and even Cossacks. Undoubtedly, the main idea uniting the mentioned Slavic tribes should be recognized as the degree of their resistance against impending Christianization, the degree of sacrifice in the name of preserving the former world order.

In its turn, Velimir, finding heroes in the historical past by analogy (shamans, Strigolniks, jumpers, Khlysts), and highlights modern representatives of heroic worth imitating. As an example of life of society in accordance with the traditional communal rule, the Pagan author gives the experience of Russian northern marginal territories living in a certain isolation from state power. To pluses

of autonomous existence of northerners, Speranskiy, except for life “according to tradition,” includes: The Veche way of government, involving consideration of cases at communal gathering, with virtually no control sideways authorities: “popes, police and officials” (Velimir, 2009b). The stoking form of self-government, originally the property of ancestral archaic system, extolled by the Magus, according to Velimir, finds its continuation in moral ideas of socialism. With collapse of the communist regime which misunderstood the essence of social justice, the “correct socialism” has been preserved in ideological programs of Russian Neo-Pagans. Particularly it should a priori be emphasized that paganism presented by the community leader as a worldview of people, the original and the only true, turns out to be in “eternal alias” with the Veche institute, chronologically moving from one historical epoch to another.

In the chapter “Elements of Religion: God and the Supernatural” (Dawson, 2000), analyzing the category of the transcendent, Dawson comes to conclusion that there is a close relationship between religion and the other world, inaccessible to knowledge through traditional experience. According to philosopher’s opinion, transcendence is characteristic for all religious communities, from primitive groups to associations of mystics. It is the transcendent that Dawson considers the “blue blood of religion” “the residual element of a genuine religious experiment”. Individuals with impersonal power become religious leaders, intellectual teachers of the community. Examples of entering into the concept of revelation (the primary source of religious truth, preceding, according to the author’s hypothesis, the intuition and reason), communication with higher forces in the work of the English researcher are: Mime (dance), trance, fasting, music and chanting. Religious concepts of Dobrovolskiy and Speranskiy represent a vivid example illustrating the Pagan transcendence in action. By analogy with historical “manitu”, “yok”, “vakonda”, first pagans of modern Russia give a certain term for practiced wordly experience. In narratives of polytheists, the transcendental is denoted as “the Darna” and “the Power.”

“The Darna” is a set of fundamental provisions of Pagan philosophy by N. N. Speranskiy recorded in most of the author’s works over the last fourteen years: The first mention of the term (excepting diary entries) is found in the brochure of year 1998 “In-

ternational relations of the community “Vyatichi”, the latter in the work “The Moral Book” (Speranskiy, 1998) and representing therefore a certain worldview invariant of Velimir (2012c). The very term “The Darna” (harmony) is borrowed by Velimir from the Lithuanian tradition. In the work “Harmony and Morality” Jonas Trinkunas (2011) is the leader of Lithuanian Pagans, the developer of this term associates the following conceptual series with the Darna: “To do, to work, to harvest, to walk together, consent (harmony), morality”. At the same time, “The Darn in Russian” significantly exceeds the “limit” of the original Lithuanian version of harmony. The population is able to join the Darna as a constant, timeless state through a set of actions characterized by the Magus as the concept of asceticism. The goal of Pagan spiritual practice is the disclosure of participation of man to nature (the feeling of nature from the inside) (Velimir, 2009b). The content of the proper temporary return of a person to the natural habitat (in accordance to the text of Velimir’s “The Darna” brochure) is based on the inner mystical stage which includes: 1. finding a place to set up a camp suitable for establishing contact with spirits (the homeland of ancestors, the neighborhood of the native village, a place spiritually close); 2-step realization of three levels of Pagan asceticism: a) individual “work with flames of a fireplace”. The rite contains: A direct set of sacrifice actions and a prayer tradition in the form of petitions, praises. The acquisition of the Darna in the familiar world becomes possible through mental attitude to the state of rest experienced during burning of a fire; b) individual “work with the night forest”. The rite includes; Acquisition of natural fear and self-relieving from it. Achievement of the internal mood through the auditory analyzer and respiratory techniques. The prayer tradition is a petition addressed to goddess Lada; c) individual “work with the natural water environment”. The rite includes: Immersion into night pond, the primitive fear of joining the “otherworldly nothing”. In addition to individual practices, Speranskiy’s penance also presupposes the work of obtaining the Darna in the group. The desired state is achieved through glorification of gods, walking or dancing around the fire, clapping hands, singing songs: “In general, it is necessary to behave so that, without losing the ritual state, your imagination were brought to the inner vision of images and the free birth of words... Participants merge each with their upper divinity

and form a single entity in a chain that connects this world with the world of gods. This creates a feeling of inner light and heat. The deity that appears in this case over a person, corresponds to its inner essence. Therefore, it is important that characters of participants and their dignity correspond to the chosen image of a god... For participation in such a mystery, participants are required to spend at least three days in the forest, without contact with their homes and human world. Afterward, you need to spend at least one more night in the forest" (Velimir, 2009b).

Accordingly, the definition denoting the transcendent in Dobroslav's paganism was called "power." In the work "Nature's Fancies and unreasonable homo sapiens", the ideologist declares the absence of both spiritual and material principles: "Generally speaking, there is neither spirit nor matter in nature as such these both concepts are distorted by idealists and materialists and there is only one fundamental SUBSTANCE - A FORCE that manifests itself either in the form of matter, or then in the form of spirit, and possesses all the properties attributed to matter and spirit". Among "spiritual beings" A. A. Dobrovolskiy singles out the divine, semi-divine, demonic, etheric and astral ones (Dobroslav, 2003a). Absolutizing the power, putting it above the categories considered, Dobrovolskiy focuses on the inhuman, alien origin of this substance ascending to nature the main peace-keeping source of a Pagan leader. To manifestation of force in the new-mythological foreshortening lines of Dobroslav's works can be attributed in which we are talking about identification of force with spirits, with the image of Rod so popular in modern Slavic paganism. The way of comprehension of world spiritual forces by man is known to Kirov admirer of nature too. As the only way to know the "Slavic manitu", Dobroslav (2004a) recognizes perception by heart, more widely by subconsciousness. In parallel with fasting, hymns and other elements that contribute to entry of individual into the world of the unconscious allocated by Speranskiy, Dobrovolskiy attaches special importance to the practice of dancing. The cyclical, spiral, round-shaped, circular development of life path of mankind, in a wider sense the universe, is the ideal of Dobrovolskiy's historical development reflected in creations of nature, personifying the circular movement of the sun, the protective magic circle. As the Elder of the ROD points out that by means of reel ritual a person directly

communicated with “Native Fair Forces” (Dobroslav, 2003b). The data from books of a pagan ideologist allow us to distinguish three necessary conditions that facilitate such communication: 1. The Posolon reel rotation (from left to right); 2. Presence of several reel rings: “At the present time the reel dance can not be properly composed. There must be three circles: the first one is being formed of Virgos, the second one of matrons, the third one of other ones. Circles rotate in different directions”; 3. Corresponding internal mood of participants (psychoenergetic chain). The expected outcome of the reel mystery was to be the entry of “kolo” participants into a state of ecstasy, of “obsession by spirits” (Dobroslav, 2003b).

The definitions mentioned above (“Power”, “Darna”) serve for ideological concepts of A. A. Dobrovolskiy and N. N. Speranskiy as a kind of bridge to pagan ethics. Here we approach another primary element of religious and cultural concept of Dawson (2000) the divine law (cosmic order): “The social way of life is based on the religious law of life, and this law, in its turn, depends on inhuman forces that can’t be known in any way, but which remain essentially mysterious because they are superhuman and supernatural”. Like followers of the English researcher of Taoism and Confucianism, pagan ideologists of modern Russia developed their concept of “mandate of Heaven”.

So, Dobrovolskiy introduces a special term “THE FAIR MORAL RULE”, which means service for good: “The highest Ideal available to us is, in essence, nothing more than selfless service for Good. The Performer of Good receives the meaningfulness and joy of being as it were in reward. Thus, THE MORAL LAW OF NATURE IS FULFILLED”. The story of emergence of the “law” Dobroslav places into the “Golden Age of Humanity” extolled by him the era of the primitive communal system. A pagan mystic also finds the prototype of the main universal regulator moral commandments (the law of the jungle) of the animal world: “It is moral what serves the prosperity of Rod; Immoral is that what is fatal to him”. The natural development of the sent message is the thesis about the elemental, natural, irreligious origin of the moral and the initial fusion of morality and culture in a classless society. In the matter of proving of pre-human origin of moral categories (justice, altruism), Dobroslav resorts not so much to his own experience, as more he refers to the evidence base of teachers of the past, the work of ab-

bot Morelli, the representative of a French utopian communism of 18th-century "Code de la nature" (Code of Nature, or True Spirit of its laws) and the book by the theorist of anarchism, historian of the XIX-XX centuries, Prince P. A. Kropotkin, "Mutual assistance as a factor of evolution". What is the basis of the moral law from the point of view of a pagan ideologue? Based on his own sensory experience, Dobroslav declares: "Genuine morality is condolence and possible help to disenfranchised beings. This is what brings the feeling of self-worth. It does not require neither special talent, nor exceptional intelligence. A person becomes more sensitive and sympathetic. HE BECOMES BETTER". Thus, the basis of the "righteous law" of the Vyatkan pagan is the idea of compassion for all living things and the code of service for good.

In its turn, the bank of categories of "pagan correctness" by Speranskiy becomes the so-called "The Moral Law of the Rod." The teacher from alternative religiosity himself finds sources of the law in mythology of Slavs and the practice of legal relations that goes back to historical timelessness, the era of prehistory. As a source in the first case, Magus uses the myth of "Creation" reconstructed by the "Carol of the Vyatichi" based on works by A. N. Afanasyeva, N. M. Galkovsky, D. M. Dudko, a fragment of the text of the TBY (Tale of Bygone Years), apocryphal legends and anonymous ethnographic material collected in northern Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. In the second one, the author deduces the emergence of a moral law from the life practice of mankind based on the method of trial and error: "The whole experience of life of mankind shows that we have to grope for the future trying and refining our actions every time... And in the same way, trying and clarifying their actions, people came to conclusion that the universe has approved the moral law, the adherence to which at all times is being learned by folk tradition and Pagan faith" (Veligor, 2009a). If the chronology of emergence of the moral law is lost in mythologemes of the constructed cosmogony myth, the end of the action of orders of the Rod has a historical certainty. Speranskiy connects the time of deviation from the law with the era of Brezhnev's stagnation, the time of "Soviet relaxation". In this paper, the pagan leader gives two more examples of world evil. One of them, realized, but unsuccessfully, is German fascism. The second, which turned out to be more successful, is the transformation of Christianity into

a state religion (Velimir, Veleslav&Vlasov, 2007). As a historical translator, a fixed transmitter of knowledge allowing to preserve the principles of Rod's law, Velimir calls Russian folk fairy tales. From classical works, Speranskiy subjects the novel "Master and Margarita" by M. A. Bulgakov to separate analysis illustrating the effect of the law. Exposing texts of his own transcription, the pagan teacher formulates main provisions of pagan moral legislation. Corresponding to this, a man must: 1. respect spirits of nature; 2. to have a high level of moral principles; 3. to have an innate sense of tact; 4. follow ethics in behavior; 5. self-limiting; 6. be prepared to endure hardships for the sake of friends and high principles; 7. to be able to preserve dignity and tradition in cruel conditions; 8. to be able to work; 9. respect the elders; 10. to be honest; 11. understand that power is not a visual attribute of good; 12. to realize that earthly life is equivalent to life in Irium (the Pagan paradise); 13. recognize the prevalence of spiritual values over material values.

Summing up the consideration of peculiarities of worldview of Russian Pagan ideologists of first and second waves, from the conceptual point of view of K.G. Dawson, we should highlight key discourses that form the "New Magi Paganism from inside". First of all, modern spiritual leaders of the revived polytheism, consciously or not, but are compelled to syncretize three original religious archetypes in their person a priest, a king (a legislator), a prophet (a seer). Accordingly, under their "jurisdiction" comes the leadership of communities, the administration of rituals (name-calling, debaptistry, etc.), organization of educational lectures and festivals (Kupala, celebration of the annual circle in general), introduction of sacred texts and symbols into practice, creation of images of the pantheon; finally, development of apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic projections. In addition, it is the emerging priestly-Magus estate, being in fact an illustration, an illustrative example of today's Paganism, constructing its future, assigning itself the role in the post-eschatological world of the leader of theocratic society.

The peculiarity of new pagan prophets should be recognized not only as formation of the sacred tradition expressed particularly in the appearance of the cult of "pagan saints," but also in the caste translation of this tradition, the transfer of ideological baggage to receivers the pagan "guild partnership". The manifestations of the "Magus minimum", the set of the pagan leader of the future,

leading the society to prosperity, include the opportunity to look into, to enter the other world through transcendental (the Darna, the power) and realization of the divine law.

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