**Knorre Boris, National Research University – Higher School of Economics, Moscow.** [**borisknorre@gmail.com**](mailto:borisknorre@gmail.com) **tel.:+7 915 298 82 78**

**Gender roles in the organization of social space and communicative culture of Russian Orthodox Church**

In the research literature describing distribution of gender roles in the Church life in pre-revolutionary Russia it is noted the big role of women and female Orthodox communities in the organization of the Church social initiatives, in particular, concerning diaconal social work (*Kenworthy,S. (2008).* To Save the World or to Renounce It: Modes of Moral Action in Russian Orthodoxy; *Meehan-Waters,B. (1990).* From contemplative practice to charitable activity: Russian Women`s Religious Communities and the Development of Charitable Work; *Belyakova,E., Belyakova,N., Emchenko,E.* (2011). Woman in Orthodoxy: canon law and the Russian practice). At the same time it has been noted that men in Orthodoxy tended to focus on contemplative prayer or liturgical worship, whereas religiously-pious women were more oriented towards service for people in need. Is it fair to speak about similar situation today? Speaking on the Church social space, the author offers to focus not only on the parish environment, but also on the sphere of social activities of Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) and to scrutinize how within this sphere gender roles are distributed. It is about the Church-affiliated organizations pursuing charitable, cultural, educational, scientific, educational purposes peculiar to NGO.

In the second part of the paper the attention will be paid to a role of a gender factor in functioning of today's Church ethos, in determination of communicative culture of contemporary Russian Orthodoxy. It is necessary to recognize that in the context of strengthening of neo-conservative trend in the Church ethos the certain models of masculinities became determining, that was expressed, in particular, in strengthening vertically hierarchical principles of subordination in the Church management and in the Church social milieu. Also the author assumes that the indicator of strengthening masculine strategy in the Russian Orthodoxy is the militarization process, increase of specific weight in church society of the military oriented subculture and highlighting military and guarding images in ecclesiastical didactic literature, sermons of priests, in the Church-public discourse. A special case of a masculinity is implication into the Church discourse the brutal narratives, connected with the heroic symbolic. It is a hypothesis of the author that the priority for a male gender role is a creation of mythological and ideological pictures whereas women are more involved in the social work of the Church and in welfare programs of ROC.

On the course of the analysis of similar distribution of gender roles the main ethical and behavioral categories of Church culture will be scrutinized: "category of guilt", "sin", "humility", "obedience", "benediction". It will be also analyzed, how the gender is reflected in the embodiment the disciplinary practices based on these categories, in the organization of a labor activity, interactions of Church actors.

The paper is based on the empirical data obtained within the fieldwork and the official Church statistics on the social ministering (service) and social work of Russian Orthodox Church.