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VERBALIZATION OF THE CONCEPT WOMAN IN THE RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH ORTHODOX DISCOURSE

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Abstract

In linguistic studies of recent years, an important place is occupied by issues related to the construction of the human image in the language consciousness and the modeling of gender identity using language. The choice of religious discourse for conceptual analysis is due to the fact that the categories of Russia – Woman – Church are often thought of in associative dependencies. The article is devoted to the comparative analysis of verbalization of the concept WOMAN in the Russian and English Orthodox discourse. A great place in the research is given to the translation analysis of the representatives of the concept WOMAN in the studied languages, presented in popular scientific articles of the modern media space. The paper presents a comparison of stylistic means and describes in detail the lexical, grammatical and syntactic markers for creating the image of women in the Russian and English Orthodox discourse of the modern media space. The semantic content of the concept under study is largely determined by religious moral and ethical knowledge, beliefs and attitude of society to Orthodox people, which is realized in the speech practice of Russian and English speakers. The perspective of our work is aimed at studying the extent to which the awareness of the appointment of a woman, her mission from the point of view of Orthodoxy is displayed in the English linguistic view of the world in comparison with Russian, by what means it is achieved, how complete and how this concept is represented in the English Orthodox discourse.

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1. Introduction

Over the past decade, many foreign and national academic works in the field of gender studies have been written (Wynarczyk & Ranga, 2017; Serova, 2017; Celis & Childs, 2014). During the development of theoretical foundations and practical implementation of the gender category, scientists agree on gender inequality and gender asymmetry in various aspects of gender analysis (Barchunova, 2002). As a result of our own research, we were able to determine the asymmetry in the ratio of studying the lexical explication of the image of a man and the lexical representation of the image of a woman (Korobeynikova, 2008). However, the role of women in the history of the origin, formation and existence of mankind still worried the minds of philosophers, writers, religious figures, ascetics, because the position of women was a kind of indicator of the state of society in any era (Kharlamov, 1880; Bezobrazov, 1895).

The activation of the Church's activity in the modern world marks the renewal and growth of interest in religion (Anfinogentova, 1993). As speakers of Russian culture and language, we are aware of the fact that it is time to define the place and role of women in modern society through the analysis of religious discourse (Baimuratova, 2017).

2. Problem Statement

This scientific work is associated with the study of the ideas of the Orthodox woman reflected in the language practice of the bearers of religious traditions. The relevance of such research in the world scientific community is mainly determined by the growing interest in Church traditions in general and Orthodox traditions in particular (Karras et al., 2019). The reason for what is happening, in our opinion, lies in the need for productive human interaction within the framework of the confession of universal values. Even very critical people will not deny "people's craving for a normal life, based on the rules developed by mankind for several millennia of its existence" (Anfinogentova, 1993, p. 3), reached the modern generation through the Bible, the Quran or the Torah (Baltabayeva, 2016; Perelmutter, 2018; Ben-Menachem & Livnat, 2018; Balashova, 2016).

In addition, Russia is highly interested in unhurried and effective intercultural and interfaith dialogue. In the modern world, under the influence of socio-economic, political and cultural factors, the strengthening of the positions of Russian culture and language on the planet acquires a special sharpness of sound. Every year in the world the issues of popularization of Russian culture and Russian as a foreign language are devoted to the activities of various genre formats. In this regard, there is an increasing need for a more in-depth study of the issues of adequate translation from Russian into English and vice versa (Zykova, 2016).

Analyzing any modern discourse one inevitably faces the problem of information technologies (Telesheva & Denisova, 2015). Their rapid development contributes to the active replenishment, including a cluster of religious texts of Orthodox subjects – the texts of Scripture and patristic books as the basis of religion – religious media texts, Christian sermons and lectures of theologians, scientists, theologians and priests. As a result of this phenomenon, there is a need for a more active and in-depth study of religious discourse in the context of translation not only of canonical texts.

Narrowing the range of problems, we will focus on the little-studied aspect of the problem of the status of the woman in modern society that is the question of the importance, place and role of women in Orthodoxy. On the one hand, this is due to the surge of interest in gender studies in linguistics associated with the intensive development in Western European countries of the powerful remonstrative, to varying degrees ideologically biased feminist discourse, including the emergence of the trend of language reform, which aims to combat discrimination against women on the basis of the movement for political correctness in the language (Serova, 2017; David & Guerrina, 2013). On the other hand, it is impossible to fully imagine the social evolution of the traditional Orthodox culture of the Russian people without a comprehensive analysis of the wide range of life and activities of Orthodox women (Kolesnikova, 2007).

The research material was the texts of articles and sermons posted on the official Russian and English websites of the Russian Orthodox Church: orthochristian.com (Orthodox Christianity); orthodoxengland.org.uk (Orthodox England), souroz.org (Diocese of Souroz), oca.org (Orthodox Church of America).

3. Research Questions

Throughout the history of Christianity, the question of the role of women in the Church has been raised constantly, but in the twenty-first century it reveals the problem of gender relations in the family, society and the Church. As bearers of Russian culture, we are aware of how the concept WOMAN is filled and presented in the Russian-speaking Orthodox discourse. However, if we talk about the reflection in the language of the concept of another culture, it is worth noting that there is always a problem. At present, Orthodox traditions are of great interest in English-speaking countries, which leads to a more extensive interfaith dialogue. Therefore, in this work we have set the following tasks:

- to determine the content of the concepts of religious discourse, Orthodox discourse in linguistics;
- to define verbalizers of the concept WOMAN in texts of various genre forms within the framework of religious discourse with the semantic component "Orthodoxy" on Russian and English specialized sites;
- to identify the expected specificity of the concept WOMAN filling, comparing their content;
- comparing the representatives of the concept WOMAN in Russian and English, to describe the lexical and grammatical, syntactic, stylistic means of explication of the image of a woman;
- to consider the peculiarities of translating the vocabulary of the Russian Orthodox Church into English, defining the dominant methods of translating the religious vocabulary expressed by the category of the name.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the lexical representation of the concept WOMAN in the Russian and English Orthodox discourse and to identify the actualization of its meanings.

5. Research Methods

In this work the complex approach to the solution of objectives including various methods and receptions of linguistic research is carried out. The main method is descriptive, using methods of observation, systematization and generalization of the analyzed material. In the analysis of the verbalizers of the concept WOMAN in the Russian-speaking and English-speaking Orthodox discourse, we used a set of methods and research techniques developed in the analysis of the written text on this subject: methods of component analysis based on dictionary definitions, contextual, semantic and stylistic, as well as cultural analysis.

To solve the research questions, the paper studies and generalizes national and foreign practice, uses conceptual analysis, the method of indirect observation as a kind of comparative method, with which it is possible to determine the presence of the Orthodox component.

6. Findings

Religious discourse is the subject of treatment and study of several scientific disciplines, in particular in linguistics, it is a sign system, very voluminous in its content, it is "generally accepted in the religious sphere type of speech behavior of the subject, due to the religious consciousness of man under the influence of religious faith, a stable system of values, duality, originally inherent in the nature of the Church institution and texts, directly fixing the two directions of communication: from God – to people and from people-to God" (Baimuratova, 2014, p. 57). In turn, the Orthodox discourse is one of the subtypes of religious discourse, which can be divided depending on the religion under study (Christian with its Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant discourses), Muslim, Buddhist discourse; biblical discourse with its further division on the Old Testament discourse, the New Testament discourse; patristic discourse, etc.).

The functioning in the field of Orthodox discourse, as one of the last turns of the development of the concept WOMAN, which is fixed by us in the English versions of Orthodox online publications, allows us to talk about the appearance of the nominative lexeme of secondary derivative meaning, on a par with the already existing in modern English, where the lexical semantics of the word *woman* carries echoes of its primary meaning "belonging to a man" (Online Etymology Dictionary: Origin, history and meaning of English words, n.d.): *That is why the Lord did not created them alike – precisely so that would complete each other. They are no longer man and woman, but two in one. God took a rib from Adam's side and when Adam saw Eve he said, "This is a bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman"*.

The analysis of the representatives of the concept WOMAN and the actualization of their meanings will be presented by gradation: from the linguistic comparison of the Virgin's verbalizers we will move on to the analysis of the nominative lexemes of women saints in both languages and complete the nominative lexemes of secular women.

The study of the nominative field of ideas about the Mother of God in the secondary religious texts of the Russian Orthodox discourse shows the presence of many lexemes and superlative units representing Her essential characteristics and spiritual perfection. The linguistic analysis shows that the

nominate field of the concept WOMAN includes different variants of the use of the Theotokos's lexemes in the English language, among them: *Mother of God, Theotokos; Christ-Bearer, Christotokos; Virgin Mary, the Blessed Virgin, the Holy Virgin; Madonna; Our Lady; Mary, St. Mary.*

All these variants refer to the mother of Jesus Christ, but each of them semanticizes a specific aspect of the values associated with the features of religious conceptualization in the Christian denominations. At the same time, the semantics of the Orthodox notion of the linguistic unit of Russian *Богородица / Богородица* is not fully transmitted, which indicates the inevitability of semantic losses in the transmission of the Orthodox phenomenon in the process of intercultural communication. Thus, the superlative nominations *Virgin Mary, the Blessed Virgin, the Holy Virgin* semanticizes the meaning of the Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Let us clarify that the fact of the Immaculate Conception is not rejected by Orthodoxy, but "the theological idea of Catholicism about the innocence of the Virgin Mary to the First Sin at the time of the descent of the Holy Spirit is not supported. This initially separates Her from the rest of the human race and makes Her figure special" (Dudchenko, 2010, p. 84). According to the definitions in Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (2005), the use of variants *Our Lady* and *Madonna* in the meaning of *the Virgin Mary* also belongs to the traditions of the Catholic Church and does not correspond to the tradition of Orthodoxy. The lack of the status of the mother of Christ in the Theotokos and Her representation as an outstanding personality and Christian example to follow in the Protestant worldview leads to the functioning of modest variants of *Mary* or *St. Mary*. There is no exact transmission of characteristics of the Orthodox conceptualization in the variant *Christokos* and *Christ-bearer*, which are an echo of the fierce debates within the Church and which are called *Mary Christokos*, i.e. giving birth to Christ, that indicates the human hypostasis of Christ, when the lexeme the Theotokos emphasizes the divine nature of the Savior. Thus, it can be argued that among the English lexemes only variants of the *Theotokos* (who gave birth to God), borrowed from the Greek language, *the Blessed Theotokos (the Blessed Virgin)* correspond to the dogmatic foundations of the conceptualization of the Orthodox phenomenon, which was recorded by us in the analyzed texts: *The Virgin Mary, or Theotokos, is highly revered by the Orthodox, as are numerous female saints whose stories are depicted in icons, church teachings and hymns; So why did the Church honour the Mother of God?* Thus, we generalize the study of translation techniques of nominees of *Богородица/Theotokos* in the Russian language and their translations, functioning in the English-speaking Orthodox Internet space in Table 01.

Table 01. Translation techniques of the lexemes verbalizing the Theotokos

Russian Lexeme	English Translation	Translation technique
Богородица	Mother of God	Lexical calque
Богородица	Bogomater	Transliterated borrowing
Богородица	Theotokos	Borrowing
Христородица	Christ-Bearer, Christotokos Christokos	Equivalent
Святая Дева, Приснодева, Пречистая Дева	The Holy Virgin The Blessed Virgin Virgin Mary	Analogue
Дева Мария, Владычица Небесная, Царица Небесная	Our Lady	Analogue

Божья Матерь	Madonna	Borrowing
Богоматерь	St. Mary	Analogue
Богоматерь	Mary	Analogue

As one can see, most of the translations of the verbalizers of the lexeme *Theotokos* are analogues, all refer to the mother of Jesus Christ, but semantically each of them reflects a certain aspect of the meaning associated with the peculiarities of religious conceptualization in Christian denominations.

The following group of representatives of the concept WOMAN, containing the Orthodox component, actualizes the meaning of *female saint*, the consequence of which is the functioning in the nominative field of the concept of a large number of proper names (for example, *Eve, Saint Mary of Egypt, St Mary Magdalene, St Maria of Paris, the famous Amma in the desert, the Byzantine empresses*): *Why did the Church honour St Catherine, St Barbara, St Genevieve, St Audrey, St Hilda, St Edith and a host of other woman-saints, if they had no souls?*; *The commemoration day of St. Mary Magdalene brings to mind in general the role of women in the Orthodox Church.*

This group of meanings of the lexeme *woman* is characterized by a variety of compatibility, which is represented by the following expressions: *women saints, righteous women, holy women, equal-to the-apostles, the Holy Mothers of Orthodoxy*, for example: *There are multitudes of righteous women, known and unknown in our Church, which is often misleadingly characterized as “male-dominated”. Orthodoxy has a long history of women as equal-to-the-apostles, serving alongside men as missionaries, priest’s wives, and nuns.*

Let us denote translation techniques of the lexemes we found from the list of the rank of saints with the same "woman" in the table 2.

Table 02. Translation techniques of the lexemes of the rank "woman saint"

Russian lexeme	English translation	Translation technique
Равноапостольная	Equal-to-the-apostles	Equivalent
Великомученица	Great martyress	Equivalent
Великомученица	Martyr	Analogue
Мученица	Martyress, Female martyr	Equivalent Analogue
Исповедница	Confessor	Analogue
Преподобная	Venerable, Saint, Holy;	Analogue Analogue Analogue
Преподобномученица Праведная	Righteous martyr, martyr, Saint;	Analogue Analogue Analogue
Блаженная	Fool-for-christ's-sake	Analogue

It is obvious that among the translation techniques of this group translation with the help of analogue is also dominated, only a small proportion is given to translation with the help of equivalents. Here are examples of the functioning of these lexemes in the text: *There are multitudes of righteous women, known and unknown in our Church, which is often misleadingly characterized as “male-dominated”.*

Orthodoxy has a long history of women as equal-to-the-apostles, serving alongside men as missionaries, priest's wives, and nuns.

Analysis of the authentic texts of the Orthodox subjects in the Internet space has led to the isolation of one meaning of the lexeme *woman* – it is "Orthodox woman", that allows to speak about the functioning of the third group (considered Orthodox component allows us to leave behind the framework of the study the size of the lexeme by meaning "a woman with a religion that differs from the Orthodox"). In this case, when transmitting the Russian combination of "православная женщина" in English, an analogue is used – "Orthodox woman": *It is more common for Orthodox women in non-Western settings to cover their heads.*

An interesting fact is that the Russian public raises the question of the formation of an adequate image of an Orthodox woman (girl): conservative, based on the eternal values preached by Orthodoxy, while she should fit into modern realities. In this connection, in contrast to the popular female media images "Cosmo girl" and "Vogue woman" there is a nomination – "ortho-woman". As one can see, in the formation of a complex noun appeared truncated part of *Orthodox* - *ortho* -, which in another context may also mean the medical term "ortho".

In this group, we can distinguish the following two subgroups: the nomination of women involved in the Church, and the laity. Among the first subgroup the following lexemes of the nominative field of the concept WOMAN prevail: *nuns, missionary woman, priest's wife, the wife of a priest, a matushka*. For example, *Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh provides an impression of what Mother Maria was like in those days: "She was a very unusual nun in her behaviour and her manners.*

In the transmission of Orthodox vocabulary in English the problem of terminological variability often arises, that is quite rightly because there is the possibility of Orthodox notion transmission into Russian via transliteration and descriptive form. In our case, equivalents to *матушка* (the wife of a priest) represent by a transliteration variant *matushka*, and descriptive forms *priest's wife, the wife of a priest: The question was asked about what kind of person a priest's wife should be. I answered that a matushka (the wife of a priest) should first of all be a pious Orthodox Christian...* Herewith, the lexeme *matushka* has been adapted by the English language and nowadays it is changed according to the grammatical rules (for example, it forms the plural according to the general rule), but it is entered in the text necessarily with an explanation: *Matushkas, or priests' wives, can be required to wear head coverings in the presence of a bishop.*

In the category of "laity" lexical representation of the concept WOMAN can be connotatively positive as well as connotatively negative depending on the behavior of women. On the one hand, it can be – a pious, righteous, God-fearing, virtuous Christian (=Orthodox) woman: *a pious Orthodox Christian*; on the other – it can be a sinful woman: *fallen men and women*

Let us present the results of the analysis of lexical, grammatical and stylistic markers of the representatives of the concept WOMAN. In the associative-semantic field of the concept ПРАВОСЛАВНАЯ ЖЕНЩИНА (in English, ORTHODOX WOMAN) there are both nominative lexemes of woman's social roles and lexemes expressing her personal characteristics. In the course of the analysis, the following lexemes denoting the social role of women in the Russian and English languages

were recorded: *незамужняя женщина, девушка / maid (10%), жена / wife (43%), мать / mother (37%), дочь / daughter (4%), вдова / widow (2%), тёща, свекровь / mother-in-law (4%)*.

Two social roles have the biggest nominative density, where the lexeme *wife* is at first place, then the lexeme *mother* stands. It can be assumed that the dominant intention of Orthodox discourse is the intention of exhortation, non-aggressive persuasion, which naturally affects the choice of a certain number of lexemes and the actualization of important for Orthodoxy meaning in them. One of these exhortations is the exhortation about the purpose of a woman, about her inherent heritage and advantage – to be a wife and mother. Let us consider these two social roles from the position of the presence in them of lexical, grammatical and stylistic markers with the Orthodox component of the representatives of the concept WOMAN.

First of all, a woman is "Adam's rib", "Eve's daughter", "exemplary wife", "meek dove"; in English this semantic meaning is transmitted by the following language units *woman = «wife», «helpmate», «Church»; «not husband's slave»: After all, a woman has her own special sign, and you have to learn it, learn how to listen to and understand your wife.*

The personal characteristics of a woman are determined either by her social role or attributed to her only by virtue of her biological sex. So, a woman in the role of wife receives a positive assessment in the articles, if she is faithful to her husband and gentle temper; smart, beautiful and talented; thrifty and economic, most of the time she is at home waiting for her husband. In persuasive intonations of journalistic articles the following lexical markers are traced – *love, chastity, purity of soul, integrity of thoughts, self-restraint, morality* and others: *And husbands must love their wives as Christ loves His Church.*

Among the markers we found imperatives *must, would, have to, should* prescribing/recommending how to behave: *Thus, two unite into one and learn this great mystery: so that the wife would support her husband, and the husband his wife. Just as the brain takes care for the body, so the husband must take care of the wife, so that she would not be alone.*

The peculiarity of the journalistic style of online Orthodox publications is the presence of questions to which the author gives compelling answers by himself: *Do you love your body, take care of it, give it rest, watch after it and groom it? In the same way you should, as the apostle Paul says, love and protect your wife, take care of her and serve her – for she is not something alien to you, she is your own body, and you yourself.* Or the answer is absent, but thus the author makes an "internal dialogue" with the reader: *Do we, as Orthodox, finally, deny the ministry to women? No! Nor do we guarantee it to men.*

Who dares to assign greater grace to St. John Chrysostom (a patriarch) than to St. Stephen the First Deacon and Martyr? Where does one find a sober Father speaking in such terms? Woe to us Orthodox if we forget that even in the priesthood, in a subtle way, the spiritual role of the female and male made one in Christ triumphs.

The use of interjections and introductory words and sentences are also aimed at reflecting subjective evaluation: *It is this spirituality, alas, that is absent in the discussion of the role of women in the Orthodox Church today.*

Moreover, in a certain sense we fail to understand that the worldly role of women in the Orthodox Church, as evidenced by the Byzantine empresses who stand as saints in the Holy Church, is not dogmatized and fixed.

Our goals together, as Orthodox men and women, are to make society, as much as possible, an image of the divine.

References to authoritative opinion are stylistic markers:

When the New Testament says that the wife must submit to her husband it does not mean that the wife should become the husband's slave.

We have the impression that in a successful marriage, each member of the couple should be striving to help the other, 'competing to be kind', to paraphrase the Apostle.

In a more specific sense, St. Paul argues for the proper ordering of the Church in his statements regarding women.

Reasoned markers are introductory words indicating the order of thoughts: *On the one hand, the fallen "nature" of the woman is assigned to her by the would-be traditionalist as the character of her entire being, forgetting the divine image of the female. On the other hand, the feminist position overemphasizes the divine image of the female, thereby wishing to free its proponents of the necessity of conquering human "nature" – a task, as we have repeatedly stated, that belongs to man and woman alike.*

Let us turn to the second associative-semantic group of the concept WOMAN representing the semantic component "woman as a mother". In the texts of sermons we recorded the following adverbial combinations with the lexeme *mother*: *Wondrous Mother, beloved Mother*, these epithets are evaluative means of expressing the subjective position of the speaker.

It is obvious that one of the most important social roles of women in society is the role of the mother who has extremely positive characteristics, including wisdom and self-sacrifice:

I dislike the word 'husband'. It actually means 'housebound'; not a good image. Whatever happened to 'fathers'? However, there is a word which is even uglier than 'husband': it is 'housewife'. No wife should be married to her house. If she feels that way, then she should take stock of her situation and think again. I always refer to such ladies not as housewives (I find that insulting), but as 'homemakers'. But there is an even nobler word for them: 'mothers'.

Further, we can say that woman = mother; child-bearer; not baby-producing machine: *Women always act differently from men. God Himself made it that way because a woman is a mother. If, then, the Church exalts the woman as child-bearer, it is to lift her nature, to emphasize her unique social role.*

A woman is not a baby-producing machine that is then put on the shelf while you admire the children she brought into the world.

Lexical markers of "femininity" here are the emotionally colored words of a woman-mother who cares about the health of her child (*sweet, amazing, perfect, delicacy, baby*), as well as forms of the degree of comparison (*the softest, especially strong*). It is also noteworthy that emotive vocabulary in texts of this kind is often used for the nomination of children.

Religious discourse expanded the sphere of its functioning at the expense of media space. We compared the representatives of the concept WOMAN with the component *Orthodox* in Russian and English-language discourses from online Orthodox publications. The associative-semantic field of the

concept is designated, its verbalizers are revealed, difficulties and ways of their decision at translation of Orthodox lexicon into English are indicated. Stylistic, lexical and grammatical markers of creating the image of an Orthodox woman in popular scientific articles of the Internet space are defined. It is determined that the content of the concept WOMAN has changed in the course of extensive interfaith dialogue and expanded due to the actualization of the meaning of lexical representatives with the Orthodox component.

7. Conclusion

By religious discourse – one of the oldest and most important types of institutional communication – we understand communication, the main intention of which is to introduce a person to faith and / or maintain faith in a person. Orthodox discourse is a subtype of Christian religious discourse.

We believe that it is extremely important for intercultural dialogue to start a conversation with unifying moments, as this increases the effectiveness of speech interaction. In different confessions, the image of a religious woman is constructed on the basis of universal values, so it contains common features. So maybe for the greater good we should start talking about women more often?

The study of the lexical explication of the image of the Orthodox woman is very important in the interdisciplinary aspect, as in the minds of native and non-native speakers of the Russian language and culture the images of a woman, Russia/ Rus/ Homeland and the Church are closely interrelated: the image of the Orthodox woman is more clearly drawn through the image of both the Church and Russia.

Modern texts of Orthodox sites combine features of spiritual (Church-theological) eloquence with features of journalistic style, defining thus the leading role behind language function of influence. At the language level, this is, in particular, implemented through the use of stylistically coloured vocabulary (45%), emotionally coloured (35 %) and stylistically neutral (20 %).

The main methods of translation of representatives of the concept WOMAN are the translation with the help of analogues, equivalents and borrowing, including transliterated one. Translation using analogues is not the most accurate because of the possible substitution of the concept of Catholic meaning.

The concept WOMAN in the Orthodox discourse can be presented by verbalizers of three lexical and semantic groups: 1 representatives of the Virgin as an image of an ideal Orthodox woman, 2 lexemes-representatives of women saints, 3 lexemes denoting secular Orthodox women. The absolute majority are nouns with the actualization of the two main purposes of women in Orthodoxy – mother and wife.

The analysis of stylistic, lexical and grammatical markers of the image of the Orthodox woman in the Russian and English languages makes it possible to determine the macrointention of exhortation, presented by means of evaluative means, expressing the subjective point of view of the speaker – epithets, adverbs, the use of introductory words and sentences; references to an authoritative source. In comparison of the concepts filling we have revealed that the social roles of women in the Russian-speaking Orthodox discourse are more diverse than the social roles of women reflected in the English-speaking Orthodox discourse.

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