

ORTHODOX MISSIONARIES IN CHINA

ARCHIMANDRITE PETER (KAMENSKY)
THE FIRST RUSSIAN SINOLOGIST

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China Orthodox Press

香港

2017





«For the learned missionaries Beijing
is a great school, Heaven; but for the
philistine it's a torturous prison»

Archimandrite Peter (Kamensky)

ARCHIMANDRITE PETER (KAMENSKY) — THE FIRST RUSSIAN SINOLOGIST

The readers who have interest in the history of the Church in China are more familiar with the names of those among its outstanding personalities who made a significant contribution to the development of Chinese studies or to Russian-Chinese relations. Worthy of special mention are the legendary heads of the Beijing Mission — Archimandrite Hyacinth (Bichurin) and Archimandrite Palladius (Kafarov). One of the reasons for such popularity is the long-term interest in the secular activities of the Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission in China that overshadowed its missionary work. Due to a number of external circumstances, this work was difficult or restricted mostly for political reasons.

Unfortunately, the allegiance of the Church to the state in the Russian Empire led to a sort of allegiance of the church missionary activities to the policy of the state. The Beijing Mission itself was at the same

time an institution of the Qing Empire under the control of the Chinese government. Under the mature system of the religious institutions, isolation of China from the rest of the world, and the tradition of Chinese governmental control over the religious life of its nationals, this circumstance had not provided fertile ground for the development of the Mission's activities in its first century and a half. Many Orthodox missionaries, being found themselves in China, reconciled the reality and turned their minds to scientific activities. Or, what is worse, being bored with their stay in a strange land, seeing no point in their work, they made time pass waiting for their return home (sometimes in the vain hope — many Russian missionaries found their last resting place in Beijing at the Orthodox cemetery at the back of the Andingmen gate of the capital).

According to a well-known sinologist P.E. Skachkov, *«The XIX century marked the beginning of a second stage in the Chinese studies in Russia. It was Pavel Ivanovich Kamensky (1765-1845) who laid its foundation.»*

Archimandrite Peter (Kamensky), however, did not himself consider his outstanding works the essence of his service. Mainly in disregard to the mature customs and circumstances, he considered the main goal of the Beijing Mission and its missionaries to promote Christianity in China, taking all the rest of the Mission's activities as the repertoire of resources serving to achieve the goal.

«P.I. Kamensky, constitutionally, was quite the opposite of H. Bichurin: quiet by nature and, in the second half of his life, profoundly religious, he was responsible and honest; he was exclusively industrious and left behind many manuscripts which, if they were published in due time, could honour Russian Chinese studies», P.E. Skachkov wrote about Fr Peter later.

An exceptionally valuable full portrait of Archimandrite Peter (Kamensky) was made by a domestic historian V.G. Datsyshen co-authored by A.B. Chegodaev in the book «Archimandrite Peter (Kamensky)» published in 2013 by the Hong Kong Brotherhood in the name of Saints Apostles Peter and Paul. The following notes, representing Archimandrite Peter as an Orthodox missionary, are the summary of this remarkable book.

Pavel Kamensky belonged to the clergy by birth. He was born in 1765 to the priest's family of the Nizhny Novgorod Governorate. He received his education at Nizhny Novgorod Ecclesiastical Seminary, graduated in 1787, having a special interest in Ancient Greek and Latin. Probably this very interest in studying Ancient Greek and Latin was the personal trait that led to his profound ability of understanding foreign cultures. It's noteworthy that, being still a seminary student, Pavel Kamensky took part in the compilation of «Russian-Tartar-Chuvash-Cheremiss dictionary in 1,000 sheets» in 1785.

After the graduation from the seminary he began a pedagogical career, working as a teacher in Balakhna District vocational school. In 1791 he entered the Emperor's Moscow University where he studied logics, mathematics, universal history and absolute law. One year on he was appointed a pro-proctor of Saint Petersburg Orphanage. According to the order of the Holy Governing Synod the guardian council of the Orphanage appointed him to take part in the Eighth Russian Orthodox Mission of Archimandrite Sophronius (Gribovsky) as a student of Chinese and Manchurian languages in February, 1793.

FROM THE HISTORY OF RUSSIAN ECCLESIASTICAL MISSION IN CHINA

The history of Orthodoxy in China during the reign of Manchurian Qing Dynasty originates from Albazin Cossacks captured by the Chinese at the time of the siege of Albazin fortress in 1685, and also from the deserters who were located in the Russian settlement in the northeast of Beijing. At that time China was a densely-populated, understudied and isolated country. Exploring Eastern Siberia, Russia could not stay on the sidelines of establishing connections with neighbouring China.

The edict of Peter the Great on June 18, 1700 raised the issue of the establishment of the mission in Beijing. The edict provided for the necessity for the organisation of such a mission; also the necessity for studying by Russian citizens the languages, customs, and culture of China was indicated in it. At the same time China also considered it important to establish connections with such a country as Russia.

«In the eyes of the Chinese [Imperial] Court all of Europe seems hardly equal to the only power of our fatherland», — Archimandrite Peter (Kamensky).

The Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in China was established in 1713 by the decision of the Chinese Emperor Kangxi as the answer to the initiative of the Emperor of Russia Peter the Great. In 1715, at the suggestion of Metropolitan Theophilus of Tobolsk, the first Russian Ecclesiastical Mission led by Archimandrite Hilarion (Lezhaysky) was sent to Beijing. This Ecclesiastical Mission became the centre of Chinese studies; it was the only point of contact between the countries. The original goals of the Mission were, besides the pastoral care for the Orthodox Christians in Beijing, scientific activities and the exercise of diplomatic functions. The Mission was a unique institution which not only represented the Russian Orthodox Church in Beijing but provided communication between the governments of Russia and China. The Mission also played a crucial role in the formation of Russian-Chinese relations, being the centre of both Chinese studies and the training of the first Russian sinologists. The activities of Russian missionaries were brought to the level of the policy of the state, and it was under special control of both Russia and China.

Despite his independent decision to set off to faraway and unfamiliar China, his brilliant education, his interest and gift for languages, Pavel Kamensky was sure out of this decision. Still on his way to China, in June 1794, whilst in Irkutsk he presented the head of the Mission a petition for his resignation «because

of his inability to study Manchurian and Chinese.» The Synod found no ground to refuse him but the Collegium of Exterior demanded the refund of the sum of one hundred roubles paid him in advance, which student Kamensky could not return. This providential circumstance was decisive to his fate, and influenced the further history of the Orthodox Church in China where Archimandrite Peter (Kamensky) would spend about a quarter century off and on.

The Eighth Beijing Mission reached Beijing on the 27th of November, 1794. After the successful change-of-command, the missionaries further faced multiple difficulties, which made the Mission stay in Beijing for 13.5 years instead of the appointed 8; the Mission produced less evangelical and scientific results. It was caused by the lack of continuity in the Mission's activities, primarily because of the fact that written Chinese and Manchurian had not become available means of communication. Due to this, each new Mission staff had to begin their studies of the country and its language practically ab initio. There were some other problems: the enrolment of the members of the Mission was still random; the motivation of Russian missionaries who decided to go to Beijing often was not clear even for themselves. Special problems for missionaries were substandard living conditions. Through them all three hieromonks and one of the students of the Eight Mission died in Beijing.

The head of the Eight Beijing Mission Archimandrite Sophronius (Gribovsky) refused to study Manchurian and Chinese but required his subordinates to do so. But there were no proper conditions to study languages: the head of the Mission reported to St Petersburg that in Beijing there were no training aids, and the tutors sent by Chinese government worked badly. In 1796 the Mission had to hire a private teacher paying him from its own funds; the only textbooks were Latin-Chinese grammar books and the dictionaries compiled by Catholic missionaries.

By 1804, according to reports of Archimandrite Sophronius, students Lipovtsov, Novosyolov and Kamensky «did well enough out of learning Manchurian... What for their Chinese... — they are rather good in reading, writing, speaking, and translation too.» Immediately after Pavel Kamensky acquired Chinese, he was engaged by Chinese authorities in translation from Latin. During the persecution against Catholics in 1805, the only link between western missionaries and Europe was the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission which sent the letters of Catholic missionaries to Europe. Since 1795 student Kamensky began collecting the library of the Ecclesiastical Mission. At first the majority of books were theological works and dictionaries brought from Petersburg; later the translations of the members of the Mission had been added. Kamensky also found a diary of hieromonk Theodosius (Smorzhevsky), who lived

in Beijing in 1745-1755. At the same time the library was completed with a wealth of sinological books of great worth, issued by Jesuits since the end of the XVI century.

In Beijing Kamensky also translated diplomatic documents, not only dated from the XVIII — beginning of the XIX centuries but from the time Nikolai Spathari lived in China. He was interested in Chinese medicine: he was the first Russian author who left behind essays on traditional Chinese medicine. Pavel Kamensky compiled a Russian-Chinese medical dictionary (with the volume of 600 sheets), translated scientific works on pharmacology, dietetics, pulse theory etc.

In Europe the XVIII century was marked by the vogue of everything Chinese, in large part formed by French Jesuit missionaries. However, their works showed China as a fabulous, visionary world that partly reminded the town of Kitezh — a messianic town veiled from the eyes of those who aren't enlightened by the light of faith and purity. Russia, closely connected with Europe, was not immune to such a vogue too (Catherine the Great, for example, was in correspondence with Voltaire about Confucius).

In the literature and magazines of the epoch of Catherine, the structure of the world, life and morals of other nations was popularly explained. The noblemen of the higher orders of Moscow and St Petersburg with European education, obsessed

with philosophical meditations, had an opportunity to join educators' intellectual disputes. Foreign and Russian publications on Chinese philosophy were added to their libraries. Russian translators, according to the views of that time, adapted the ideas of Confucius to the consciousness of the time and hot issues of politics and morality. Russian sentimentalist authors, for example, credited Confucius with strong language from the vocabulary of a Russian nobleman who survived Pugachev's Rebellion, which was quite alien to a Chinese wiseman; violators of the law were called «robbers» and «cutthroats», and the «ruck» who «riot against the sovereigns.»

The ancient doctrine of Confucianism was understood as cursorily as Chinese art was delicately adapted for the enjoyment of the aristocracy. Amusing bucolic scenes and grotesque ornaments à la chinoise made by European artists were as far from real China as Confucius' quotes translated by Russian sentimentalists were far from the original ones. Bizarre rococo fantasies materialised in theatrical performances and masquerades, bamboo bridges and tea-houses, pavilions and towers that decorated English, French, Polish and Russian palace gardens were only the extravagant invention of these very Europeans. This artistic world, surprisingly combining the antique with Chinese, and rocaille with classics, became ingrained in Russian culture of the second half of the XVIII — the beginning of the XIX centuries.

It is possible that this very passion for anything Chinese experienced by enlightened Europe and Russia (it affected even A. S. Pushkin!) made Pavel Kamensky decide to set off for Beijing.

A large part of Pavel Kamensky's work when he was a student of the Mission in Beijing was the reviewing of Catholic missionaries' notes about China. Yet not being a priest, he was familiar with their activities, giving them objective and sometimes unflattering estimations. In one of his notes he wrote about a French missionary Amiot, «*Chinese notes of Jesuit Amiot are a body without a soul. Though he was a repertory of learning, these works really are not only good for nothing but also harmful. He... explained nothing. Moreover, he absolutely dishonestly tried to complicate the things that had been explained before. Hiding behind Chinese names he wrote such bogus stories that were unheard of in China despite its dateless antiquity. The senseless contradictions that you can see in every line can prove my words.*»

Acquaintances with real China, its philosophy, culture, and state structure, religious and everyday life gave Pavel Kamensky an opportunity to keep a sensible view on China for life. This view was far from the romanticisation of China's image and mythologisation of its spiritual traditions, but at the same time far from an ignorant neglect of Chinese culture.

On the 10th of January, 1808 the Ninth Ecclesiastical Mission led by Archimandrite Hyacinth (Bichurin) came to Beijing.

From eleven members of the Eighth Mission only 5 survived, including 3 students-translators. In May they left the capital of China and arrived in Kyakhta in August. At the border they had a Chinese language proficiency examination (students had to keep up conversation with merchants and Border Service officers) which they passed. On those grounds Pavel Kamensky was accepted for employment in the Asian Department of the Collegium of Exterior in April, 1809.

In St Petersburg Kamensky was successful to catch the eye of the minister N. P. Roumyantsev. However, contacts with China weren't a prime objective of the Collegium, there wasn't a lot of work; Kamensky even wanted to be transferred to the Department of State Property. Since the foundation of the Petersburg Ecclesiastical Academy, there he began to teach a course of modern history of China; as a result of this the graduates had the preference to hold a position in the Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing.

In 1816 according to the edict signed by the Tsar he was appointed the member of the guardian council of the Imperial Philanthropic Society as the curator of Galley Village. He was elected the director of the Committee of the Russian Biblical Society in 1818.

Having spare time, in St Petersburg P.I. Kamensky was actively involved in translation works. Official documents' translations were commonly made from Manchurian, more rarely from

Chinese; up to 50 of his translation works survived to this day, 10 of them have the volume of 100 and more sheets. In Petersburg for the first time he began to analyse Chinese classical texts.

In 1817 Emperor Alexander I sanctioned the publication of «Chinese-Mongolian-Manchurian-Russian-Latin Lexicon» compiled by Kamensky, in the lithography of the Asian Department. The volume of the dictionary was designated at 1,200 pages, number of copies — at 1,000, issue date — 1823.

Pavel Schilling took it upon himself to cover the main expenses and to organise technical execution of the reproductions of oriental scripts; the foremost sinologists of Europe wrote the reviews. However, the dictionary attracted a good deal of criticism from contemporaries: the principle of its structure was not an alphabetical order familiar to Europeans but a traditional Chinese key order (the dictionary was divided into thematic parts). It made the use of the dictionary difficult for those who had poor knowledge of the language, and for students. The manuscript was lost; at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences you can find only a copy of the first printed sample page of the dictionary. Unfortunately, its publication was difficult because of huge expenses; for this reason the publication had not been completed.

After returning from Beijing Pavel Kamensky spent much time and put a lot of work to make sense of the experience of the

Ecclesiastical Mission's activities. He brought out some guidelines for their reformation. He also asseverated that the Ministry of Exterior didn't know the real problems faced by the Mission, including its financial situation. Even in 1811 he proposed to integrate into the Mission competent experts in natural sciences, and to revise completely the requirements for the missionaries who would work in China. In 1815 he sent two «Notes» on the rationalisation of the talent acquisition for future Beijing Missions. One of the «Notes» was sent to the Governor of Siberia I. Pestel, the other to the Chief Procurator of the Synod Alexander Golitsyn. One of the most important proposals of Kamensky was the specialisation of the members of the Mission, who should have precisely specified their field of research since before their arrival in China.

The awareness of the importance of the Chinese vector in the activities of the Ministry of Exterior led to Kamensky's election Corresponding Fellow of Russian Academy of Sciences. Even since 1818 he classified the collection of Japanese and Chinese books transferred from the Academic library to the Asiatic Museum.

In appreciation of Pavel Kamensky's academic merits he was elected the member of the Free Economic Society, the Free Society of Lovers of Literature, Science, and the Arts, Parisian Asiatic Society, and Copenhagen Society of the Antiquaries of the North.

In 1814 the Governor of Irkutsk Nikolai Treskin reported to the government of the necessity to replace the staff of the Beijing Mission, and to reform completely the legal basis of its activities. He wrote that the appointment of a monk to be the head of the Mission was quite dangerous; it's too difficult to find an archimandrite having economical and social intelligence natural to a secular person. It was P.I. Kamensky who made a draft instruction that became the basis of the activities of the Russian Orthodox Mission in China. The most important of its paragraphs were the care for the preservation and growth of the Orthodox flock in China, the proper management of academic studies, and collection of scientific materials, in which Russian government and society were interested, by each and all members of the Mission, and also «*the maintaining perfect order in the Mission that is so respected in China*» to «*attain the goodwill of the superiors and the authorised representatives of the Chinese government.*»

As a result of that, in 1818 P.I. Kamensky was commissioned to completely reform the activities of the Mission; it was the first time when a professional sinologist was given such work. However, the prospect of going to Beijing to spend ten more years there didn't attract Kamensky; he wrote to the Secretary for Exterior Nesselrode about his intention to resign from the office of the head of the Beijing Mission, «*Service conditions in Beijing to compare with the same in the inmost recesses of the homeland*

are like permanent and irrevocable suffering against the life given up to pleasure. It's against human nature to choose the worst. That's why I refuse to go there.»

Now it's hard to explain real reasons of P. I. Kamensky's attempt to resign from such a high position; the circumstances, that made him to change his mind at last, are unknown for us too. On the 6th of May, 1819 he was made a monk in the Alexander Nevski Monastery, with the name Peter. On the 12th of May he became a hierodeacon, and on the 26th of May he was ordained hieromonk. At last, on the 30th of May he was consecrated archimandrite. On the 29th of November, 1819 he was awarded the order of Saint Anna of the second class and a pectoral cross with diamonds. Before his departure to China, Archimandrite Peter was invited to an audience with the Emperor. The Highest instruction consolidated by the Imperial Court, signed in Tsarskoye Selo on the 27th of July, 1818 addressed to him said, *«The government, appointing you the head of the Ecclesiastical Mission that will be sent to Beijing, wants you to accept this office as a token of trust and respect for your pure Christian virtues, strong morals, and the competency to educate. With great hope the government expects that you will live up to its choice; that you will keep the maintenance of the honour of being Russian carrying yourself with gentleness and prudence, showing the example of a moral life*

and a scrupulous supervision over all the members of the new Mission subordinated to you.»

These 10 years in St Petersburg became the important and fruitful period in the life of Archimandrite Peter (Kamensky). Here he gained the experience of governmental service, won worldwide recognition as a number one Russian and European sinologist, and prepared himself to take the gown. During this time at the suggestion of P.I. Kamensky the Beijing Mission was given a task to prepare for the major breakthrough in the system of Russian-Chinese relations. To solve the problem P.I. Kamensky, a Corresponding Fellow of St Petersburg Academy of Sciences, took the gown and led the Tenth Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing.

The choice of the government was successful in the extreme. Archimandrite Peter turned out to be the man who could revitalise and reinstate the activities of Russian Orthodox Mission in China on a brand new plane. If the first 20 years of the XIX century in domestic sinology is called Bichurin's period, then, beginning from 1821 up to and including 1917, the period of the Mission's activities is called «Kamensky's» because these activities were cherished with his efforts and care. In that context it's reasonable to quote the words of a famous Russian sinologist of the XIX century K.A. Skachkov, who wrote of Archimandrite Peter, «During the 20 years of his stay in Beijing he and his as-

sistants hadn't given up being concerned about inspiring the great truths of faith to those who fell away from the Orthodoxy; by the means of his gentleness, benevolence, good examples, zealous religious rite and fulfilment of occasional services he brought to the Church the majority of the Albazinians who lived in Beijing, whose families wallowed in idol worship for more than a century.»

ALBAZINIANS IN CHINA

On the 1st of 1685 Albazin fortress was stormed by a large Chinese army (by various estimates from 5 to 10 thousand soldiers). After the surrender of the fortress on the 26th of June a part of Cossacks (45-50) with their families were resettled to Beijing. Emperor Kangxi bestowed respect to the people who fought heroically against superior numbers of Manchurians and took a wise decision that it's better to enrol such self-willed men into his service and to settle them nearby than to be at permanent war with them. Albazinians were enrolled into the Chinese Imperial Guard in Beijing where the Albazinian company was formed within elite combat troops «Unit of the yellow-stripe standard». This unit was considered the most privileged. It was reinforced with the best and the most faithful Manchurian young soldiers and Russians. There were no Chinese soldiers. Only 12 men from the captured Cossacks didn't wish to be Chinese guardsmen and decided to return to Russia. The whole number of Cossacks who changed sides was not less than 100. The Chinese called them «lo cha». These were the people that were least loyal to the Russian Tsar. The Emperor highly estimated

the Cossacks; they had the best service conditions. They got very good salaries, they were presented with money, plots of land (for use in perpetuity), and houses. Initially only Russians were in command of a Russian company. This and the very formation of the company were just propaganda manoeuvres. After the signing of the Nerchinsk Treaty between Russia and China in 1689 the political significance of the company began to decrease, and afterwards it became a regular guards unit under command of the one of the princes of the Manchurian dynasty.

The names of the captured were listed by the military governor Tolbuzin in his report on the defence of Albazin, but this archive document, found at the beginning of 2000 has not been published yet. According to the legends cherished by the descendants of Albazinians till the present time, these were the families of Yakovlevs, Dubinins, Romanovs, Khabarovs and Kholostovs. Now their Chinese surnames sound correspondingly Yao (姚), Du (杜), Lo (罗), He (何), and He (贺).

For the celebrating of Orthodox divine services the Emperor delivered Albazinians and their priest Maxim Leontyev the possession of the Lamaist temple that was situated nearby their settlement. Leaving Albazin, Cossacks took along with them a part of churchware and icons including their favourite sacred object — the icon of St Nicolas the Wonderworker («Nikola from Mozhaïsk»).

Not having enough women Cossacks began to intermarry with Manchurians. Having been influenced by them, Albazinians, generation by generation, had lost their Orthodox Christian faith, mixing it with Manchurian idol worship. They were depressed because the Russian Tsar gave them up, so even the priest ordered to go to Beijing could not stop further sinicisation of Albazinians. In the third generation in the XVIII century Russians witnessed that Albazinians' Russian traits had almost disappeared.

Only at home they kept some small icons and baptismal crosses that remained from their heroic ancestors, often as fetishes.

The new Mission was manned according to the requirements, personally set by Archimandrite Peter. He wrote, «*The approaches to choose people for missions going to China and Europe are to be quite opposite....The best missionary to be sent to China would have no regrets if he would be sent to Europe. But the best missionary to be sent to Europe is good for nothing in China.*»

All the clerical and secular members of the Mission had higher education attainment and were chosen from the academics of St Petersburg; every candidate was asked a «certificate of goodness and skills.» In that number there were hieromonks Veniamin (Morachevich) and Daniel (Sivillov), doctor O. P. Woi-cehowski etc. They left St Petersburg on the 28th of December, 1819. Some of them first went to say goodbye to their relatives.

All of them were met in Irkutsk by the Governor General of Siberia M.M. Speransky. On the 31st of August, 1820 the Mission crossed the border of the Russian Empire, and arrived in Beijing on the 1st of December of the same year.

From the first steps of the activities of Archimandrite Peter in Beijing the Mission faced the problem of the interrelations between old and new mission staffs. It was connected with the handover of responsibilities. This collaborative work lasted for about 5 months, at that Archimandrite Peter was very depressed by the squalor of the economy of the monastery and the failure of sermon. The hand-over was perfectly correct; Fr Hyacinth and Fr Peter weren't in open conflict with one another. However, Archimandrite Peter was quite rough on Fr Hyacinth for the dereliction of his missionary duty.

It would suffice to mention that only 23 people were baptised during all 15 years of the activities of the Ninth Mission. Kamen-sky taxed Archimandrite Hyacinth (Bichurin) with this failure. He wrote, «Archimandrite Hyacinth is a man of sharp intelligence, really good at almost everything, but shameless, and of no scruples and noble intentions. For him faith, fatherland, blood, duty to his neighbours, life and death — just hollow words; only oblectation is the main thing for him.»

The authorities of China, Irkutsk Governor General I. B. Pestel, and his direct superiors estimated him the same way.

The result of his activities is well-known: those who were found responsible were disciplined; Fr Hyacinth was sent to Valaam as an ordinary monk that caused his deadly enmity with his «offender». The controversy between them later developed into bitter and fierce life-time polemics.

Later, Russian researcher E.I. Kychanov wrote about the results of this conflict, «*Being a contemporary of N.Y. Bichurin, he [Archimandrite Peter] returned from China to Russia when Bichurin had already entered with triumph not only Russian science but world sinology. Bichurin to a certain extent eclipsed Kamensky as well as two other of his contemporaries — S.V. Lipovtsov and Z.F. Leontyevsky...*» This was the cause of longstanding oblivion of the name of Archimandrite Peter in Russia.

In Beijing, fulfilling the office of the head of the Mission, Fr Peter immediately began to regenerate the economy hit by his predecessor. He bought again or paid off the mortgage of church land, houses and other things sold or mortgaged by Fr Hyacinth. The report dated from 1826 says that finishing works had been still carried out at the Sretensky Monastery; there was a need to extend the premises for the increased Mission staff. Special focus was on the extension of the library which Fr Peter organised being a student within the Eighth Mission. The library has a missionary scope; more than half of books in it were ecclesias-

tical — missionary activities became the priority for Archimandrite Peter.

To facilitate such activities the Synod, upon a petition of the head of the Mission, gave its blessing for some changes in the order of divine service.

Thus the members of the Mission Council Archimandrite Peter, hieromonks Veniamin and Daniel, and collegiate assessor I. P. Woicechowski wrote to the Synod, «*Within the four-year stay of the Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing we faced the emergency, caused by the difference between domestic and Chinese climate and customs, to depart from some ceremonies and rules of our Holy Church both as for newly converted sons of God and the members of the Mission, in particular:*

1. *The foreigner in China is rare and weird. So, if he wears his clothes he would fix the attention of crowd and be the example of a barbarian. Therefore... we found it necessary, for the avoidance of such difficulties, to trim our hair and beards, and wear Chinese clothes going outdoors.*
2. *[Albazinians refuse to undress during the baptism] In order not to impede evangelisation we considered necessary to administer this sacrament by pouring holy water only on the head of the baptised.*
3. *The unstable climate of northern parts of China; the characteristics of plants and water different to domes-*

tic ones were very important causes of weakening of the health of almost all the members of the Mission. Moreover, the lack of Lenten fare such as fish, mushrooms, dried vegetables, kvass etc. which we eat when fasting make it quite punishing. Therefore it was not less necessary to allow eating butter and milk during all the fasts except during the Lent.»

The translation of the Divine Liturgy into Chinese was done. As a result, regular services began to be celebrated in Chinese in two churches of the Mission at a time. It was a great success: in the October of 1825 the school for the Albazinian children was established (14 or 15 children in all); they studied the Law of the Lord, Russian and Old Church Slavonic, and liturgical singing. A total of 53 descendants of Albazinians had a chance to be returned to Orthodoxy — for the first time ever Fr Peter began to manage a list of their names.

The difficulties of missionary activities made Fr Peter raise before the Synod a question of sending to Beijing a bishop to found the Chinese Orthodox Church.

One of the Russian scholars of Fr Peter's heritage, O. V. Shat-
alov, wrote in his article named «Archimandrite Peter (Kamen-
sky) and the Tenth Russian Orthodox Mission in Beijing» about
his missionary work, «*His close familiarity with the mistakes
and failures of the preceding Missions gave him an opportunity*

to make important changes in the very principle of the organisation of Russian Orthodox missions. The formation of the Mission Council consisting of three members (an archimandrite and two hieromonks) was one of such successful novations. Then only the Council could confirm the plans of academic studies and current duties of every member of the Mission without any exception; it held responsibility for financial and economical operations, decided how to award the distinguished and how to discipline those who were at fault, maintained records and correspondence, worked out general policy in relations with Qing officials and local population, and much more.

The role of the archimandrite himself was defined as ‘the senior priest’; in avoidance of any misconception he was denoted so in all the Chinese official documents. However, his very authority and knowledge of all the circumstances of life in China had made him the actual head of the Mission.

The most careful attention in the activities of the Tenth Russian Orthodox Mission was paid to the evangelical preaching among the newly baptised Albazinians. Their total number in 1831 was 94 people. Archimandrite Peter wrote about this aspect of his activities, ‘Now the grace of God brightened them anew. Encrusted in their paganism, these dead, thanks to the devotion of great Russian sovereigns, are warmed inside the Holy Church again. Now, among their dwellings, in the place

of the desolate ruins the house of God is erected again, provided with the churchware that doesn't show poverty but wealth, witnessing the devotion of our great Tsars. Now not only the heavenly-minded are settled among them but the talented who could explain in Chinese language, that is familiar to them, how to be a Christian. ' The power of the word of God and the sermons of Archimandrite Peter attracted to our Church several Manchurian officials, who held the loving memory of their priest. Besides, Fr Peter himself prayed for them and cared of them even after he returned home.»

Archimandrite Peter (Kamensky) wrote in his report to the Holy Synod dated from the 2nd of February, 1823, «*Our Mission continues in the most prosperous condition; each and every one of us tirelessly practice their preassigned activities. All desolate constructions have been repaired. The Dormition Monastery is renovated on the inside and reinforced on the outside; a school for the Albazians returning back from their idolism is opened nearby, and two of the houses sold by the previous archimandrite were bought in. Taking into account the educated clerics' enthusiastic studies of Chinese, we hope that, by the grace of God, the necessary parts of the Liturgy will be translated into Chinese; otherwise all this going to the church by Albazinians will be ineffective. The Divine service is celebrated in both churches, and Albazinians have drawn very close to us; we expect the revival*

of their faith. In course of time the children who go to our school could become teachers even better than their fathers. Now, due to their hardened depravity, we need much patience. For clergy it's necessary to have knowledge of Chinese.»

The activity of the Tenth Mission turned out to be the best planned in contrast with the previous. It was ended in due time. During 10 years of the Mission none of the members died, and nobody was sent back ahead of time. Hegumen Veniamin (Morachevich) continued his service; he became a father superior of a new Mission. Other members of the Eleventh Mission arrived in Beijing in November, 1830. It was escorted by the future professor of Kazan University Osip Mikhailovich Kovalevsky as a secretary. The handover lasted 7 months; only on the 6th of July, 1831 Fr Peter and his colleagues left Beijing. On the 3rd of September they arrived in Kyakhta. Fr Hyacinth (Bichurin) was in Kyakhta at the time — he had been opening a Chinese language school. Archimandrite Peter examined its first students and left there a student of his Mission Kondrat Krymsky to teach Chinese.

After returning to St Petersburg, on the 3rd of May, 1832 Fr Peter was merited the Order of St Anna of the 1st class and the pension of 2,000 roubles in silver; all the members of the Mission were awarded, and got a pension. The government even paid them a sum of money to buy European clothes. Nevertheless, some of the officials and Fr Hyacinth in person

criticised the attainment level of the Ninth Mission in Chinese and Mongolian.

In Russia Archimandrite Peter was engaged in the translation of a Confucian literary monument The Analects (論語), and also began to methodise and catalogue his library and collections. He brought to St Petersburg full Chinese Geography, Collection of Laws in 41 volumes and 3 boxes of Chinese government gazettes. He hadn't forgotten to bring paints and Chinese ink for the Academy of Fine Arts. He donated the library of the Asian Department 100 volumes of books (42 titles), 33 volumes to the Public Library, and 14 volumes to the library of the School of theology. The Kangxi Dictionary (康熙字典) in 6 volumes was donated to Moscow University.

Fr Peter (Kamensky) received a proposal of appointment to the cathedra in Astrakhan, but he immediately refused it and retired to the remote St Monsatery of Theodorovskaya Icon of our Lady of Gorodets nearby his native shore. The rector of the monastery was Fr Peter's first teacher hieromonk Ambrosius, his secular name was Alexei Stepanovich Dyachkov.

The edict on his retirement to St Monsatery of Theodorovskaya Icon of our Lady was issued on the 18th of March, 1833; before his resignation he had the honour of the Emperor's audience. After he had got things done in St Petersburg and Moscow, in August, 1833 Fr Peter arrived in Gorodets.

He spent his last years caring of the renovation of St Monsatery of Theodorovskaya Icon of our Lady. For this he spent a significant part of his pension and possessions. Due to the fact that the monastery remained in disorder, Fr Peter presented a petition to the Synod for a subsidy to repair it. Before the amount was credited he had already spent 5,000 roubles from his personal savings. He even sold the diamond ring presented to him by the Emperor. All money was spent on the renovation of the ramshackle buildings of the monastery.

Practically all his spare time he dedicated to reading; Chinese classic texts were his favourites. To his «Gorodets» period his Confucian studies are related. In them appeared both deep knowledge of the subject itself, based on the familiarity with sources and his critical view on the subjective and the superficial judgments of European sinologists of the XIX century.

During his last years Fr Peter (Kamensky) didn't pass by the development of Chinese studies in Russia. It's him who could be justly called the patriarch of Russian academic sinology — the first department of Chinese philology in Russia was established by the disciples of Archimandrite Peter (Kamensky).

You can find some information about the activities of Fr Peter from his correspondence with O. M. Kovalevsky

and Archimandrite Veniamin (Morachevic), his successor in Beijing. Fr Peter was in correspondence with Orthodox Chinese. But with the course of time he wrote less and less about China. Also noteworthy are these words of him, *«Oh, China! You carried away so much of my priceless time! I spent 27 years only dealing with your mechanical tasks, but I'm comforted with it because I lost this time fulfilling my office. If not, I could not bemoan it with any tears. These Chinese activities, day and night, don't only let your knowledge be accumulated but deprive of it through their permanence.»*

Archimandrite Peter who became the first Russian sinologist, whose experience was found on the research of real, not mythologised China, have a right to say these words. In them there is intellectually deep truth: Chinese studies require painstaking work, connected with comprehension of both Chinese language and classic Chinese culture, which were understood by Fr Peter perfectly. Fr Peter departed at midnight on the 17th of May, 1845 in his eightieth year. St Monsatery of Theodorovskaya Icon of our Lady in Gorodets became the place of his repose.