

**“YOUTH AND ORTHODOX” WITHIN THE CONTEXT  
OF TRADITIONAL CULTURE VALUES FORMATION  
(on the base of social research “Attitude of Rostov Region youth  
to Russian Orthodox Church and the believers  
in the context of the support of traditional culture values”)**

*E.E. Nesmeyanov, T.S. Olenich, S.A. Plotnikov*

*Don State Technical University. Rostov-on-Don, Russia*  
[science-almanac@mail.ru](mailto:science-almanac@mail.ru)

It has been considered peculiarities of traditional values formation of the youth within the context of their confessional identity to the Orthodox church. Within the research it has been known that ROC today is the core of spiritual life of society influencing the Russian image, its traditions and lifestyle. Russian Orthodox Church is authoritative in society, takes a high position in social life, and Orthodoxy is the core of spiritual life in Russia. In the result of the social research it was proved that in South Russia (North Caucasus) Orthodox believers become the dominating social group in advancing positive spiritual values.

Key words: Orthodox, youth, culture, traditional values, upbringing.

**Relevance.** Orthodoxy is the traditional denomination for the Russian society. This religious system has an impact on many spheres of life of the Russian society, but a special place in the context of the formation of confessional self-determination takes the youth field. As the largest in number and their influence on the life of Russian society among the traditional religions in Russia, the Russian Orthodox Church shows concern about the spiritual situation of modern Russian youth, vagueness and instability of its moral and values. Maintaining the moral ideals and moral education are priorities to be declared, for example, in the text of "Basic Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church". Without claiming to be the main institution of moral education, the Church reserves the right to carry the word of God and expect from the state of freedom in the exercise of this right. At the same time, the processes of globalization and Euro-Atlantic integration, accompanied by the preaching of ecumenism destroy the Orthodox tradition and its inherent culture and morality.

**Objective of the study.** The article is devoted to the study of the influence of Orthodoxy on the formation of modern culture and values education. The article presents the results of a sociological survey conducted by Don State Technical University, entitled "The attitude of young people of the Rostov region to the Russian Orthodox Church and believers in the context of their support for traditional cultural values". Rostov region have carried out this project in charge of the department "Culture and Orthodox theology" and "Philosophy and World Religions" DSTU, chair "Orthodox culture and theology" DSTU branch in the city of Shakhty. The study involved more than 1 000 students of the leading universities of the region.

The survey polled respondents aged 18 to 35. For quantitative characteristics in the study used a survey method that is carried out by a formalized form. The purpose of this opinion poll was to identify and describe the attitude of young people to the Rostov region of the Russian Orthodox Church.

This study is the geographical coverage of the territory of the Rostov region. Don region is the area of the rich indigenous culture and spiritual traditions, some researchers call it – Cossack region. In fact we can say that the Orthodox faith, Cossack freemen and sovereign's ministry were (and largely remain) the basis of self-identification of Russian Cossacks. Orthodox largely been and remains the most widespread religion in the Rostov region.

Hypothesis of the sociologic study are the following:

1. The Church seeks to engage in moral education, together with the secular institutions of

education and culture. The role of moral education in our country is difficult to overestimate. Interesting in this context is the idea of Paul Florensky that "the individual is the focus of religious cult ... From this core identity of the cult is generated by the whole of human culture". Moral education contributes to the level of civic consciousness and the development of society. In this regard, the Russian Orthodox Church and Orthodoxy is once again becoming the core of the spiritual life of society, affecting the image of Russia, its traditions and way of life, opposed to religious conflicts.

2. The Russian Orthodox believers have become the dominant social group, while this group is real, not nominal, and can stand up for their values.

3. Once artificially interrupted by political pressure from the tradition of the Russian Orthodox Church in the affairs of society and the state is now restored. Russian Orthodox Church in the eyes of young Russians has become a respected social institution. Recirculation process is largely due to changes in the system of moral guidelines of Russians and appeal to traditional values of Russian society postmodern Western culture, the priority of wealth begin to be rejected by a significant part of the current young generation. As rightly commented on the thesis of our hypothesis director Nikita Mikhalkov: "To become a truly modern nation, Russia should seek a source of inspiration not in the West, but in its own past .. ("Manifesto of enlightened conservatism", published by the Russian film director, winner of the award "Oscar" and actor Nikita Mikhalkov October 26, 2010).

Scientific novelty of sociological research is to study the formulation of new problems – the simultaneous study of the cultural, ethnic and religious identity of the youth of the Rostov region in the context of globalization and its relation to the Russian Orthodox Church in its opposition aspect of postmodern culture.

**Materials and methods.** To achieve the objectives of the study it requires the use of combined research methods. For quantitative characteristics of the study of the situation in the study it is used a mass survey method, which is planned to be carried out by a questionnaire. Mass questionnaire is a method of obtaining primary sociological information, based on oral or written request to the target population of people with questions, the content of which is the issue of research on the empirical level.

Information obtained during the survey reflects the social reality in the form in which it is refracted in the minds of respondents. Mass survey method makes it possible to obtain information about the relation of people to any event, register the actual behavior of the respondents consider the nature of their relationship to some events of the future and the present. The methodology of this phase of the study is based on statistical models and sampling method. This allows you to not just get opinions and suggestions, and to find out the exact numerical values of the studied parameters. Sampling method used to form the aggregate sample, suggests that the results of the quantitative study were statistically significant, they can be applied to a wide general population of Russians.

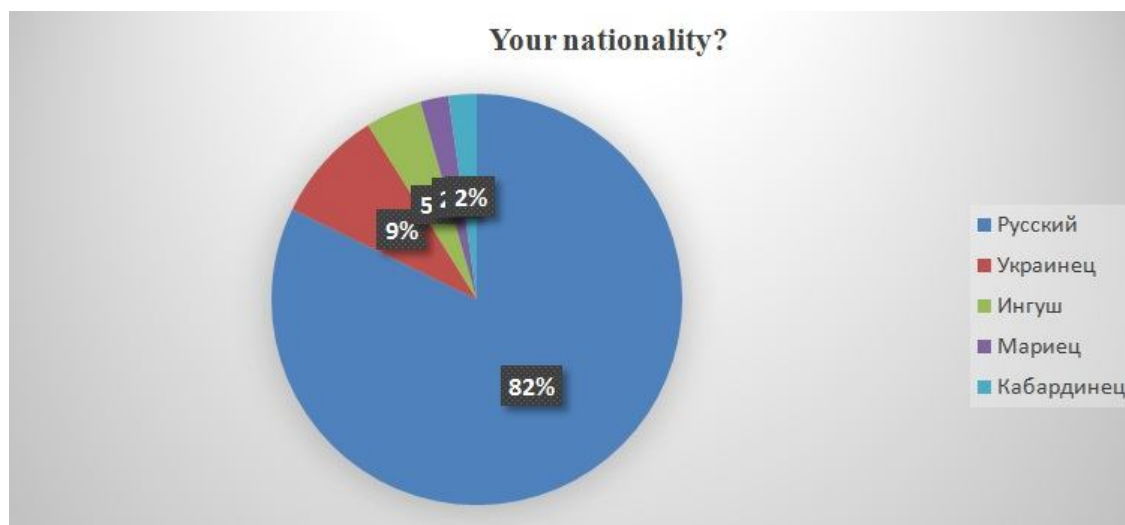
The tasks of the sociological research includes:

1. Describe the characteristics and provide an analysis of young people's attitudes to the Russian Orthodox Church in the context of its support of traditional values;
2. To identify the level of religiosity of the Orthodox youth;
3. Describe the attitude of Russian youth to the interaction of the Russian Orthodox Church with other social institutions - institution of marriage and family, education, describe the attitude of Russian youth to the preaching mission and objectives of the Russian Orthodox Church;
4. Evaluation of the Russian youth to identify the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in the country.
5. Disclose the attitude of Russian youth to the public statements of representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church with the media;
6. Reveal the attitude of Russian youth to the opening of the Russian Orthodox Church new churches, Sunday schools;
7. To consider the individual experience of the Russian youth in cooperation with the Russian Orthodox Church;

8. Disclose the opinion of young people about the priorities of the Russian Orthodox Church and to assess the need for the participation of young people in the Russian Orthodox Church in their lives.

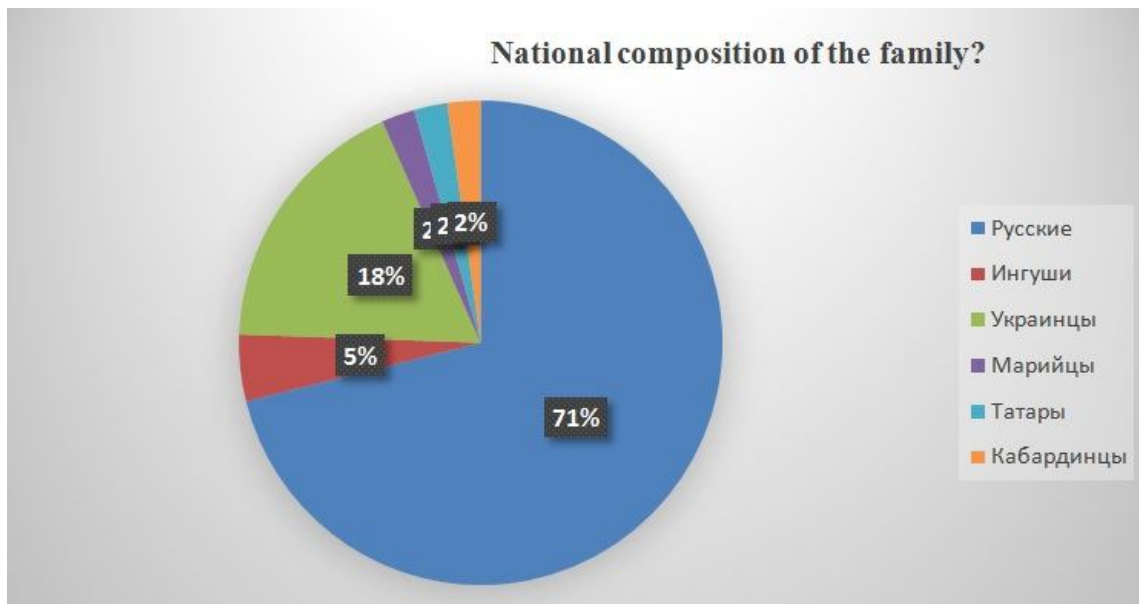
The next conceptual-categorical apparatus was used during the sociological research. Youth is a socio-demographic group, is experiencing a period of formation of a social maturity, entering the world of adults, adaptation and the future of its renewal. The boundaries of the group is usually associated with the age of 15-35 years. But there are studies in which the authors point out the boundaries in 14-40 years.

Youth is a mobile social group, it reacts to the slightest changes in the life of society, it can as to reject the traditions of society, and to give impetus to their development. The study of the relationship of modern youth of the Rostov region to Orthodox tradition, in the context of the changes taking place in Russian society, to determine some of the trends and prospects for the overall direction of social development perspective. Religious youth is the degree of familiarizing young people to religious values and systems. Some form or degree of religious consciousness, experience and behavior of young people. Cultural identity - an individual belonging to any culture or cultural group forming value attitude of man to himself, other people, society and the world as a whole. The loss of identity is possible due to the rapid changes in social and cultural environment that a person does not have time to realize. In this case, the identity crisis can take a mass character, giving rise to the "lost generation". To test the hypothesis there were interviewed 1,000 respondents in the matter of national identity and religion, in Rostov-on-Don, Azov, Shakhty, which allowed more widely distribute the study characteristics, and the general population.



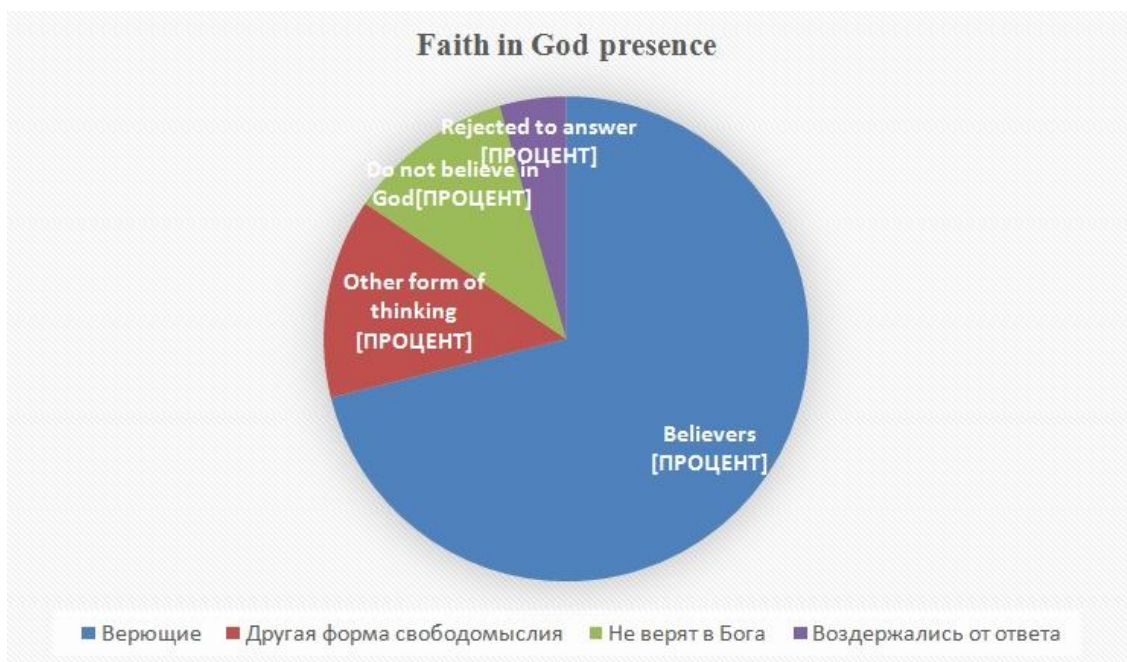
*Diagram 1.*

Among respondents 82% Russian, 9% Ukrainian, 5% Ingush, 2% Mariyts and 2% Kabardinians.



*Diagram 2.*

National composition of families is various as well. 71% – Russian, 18% – Ukrainian, 5% – Ingush, by 2% Mariyts, Tatars and Kabardinians.



*Diagram 3.*

All respondents – 80% of young people call themselves Orthodox and Christians. 9% identified themselves as Muslims and to other faiths or freethinking ranked 11% of young people.

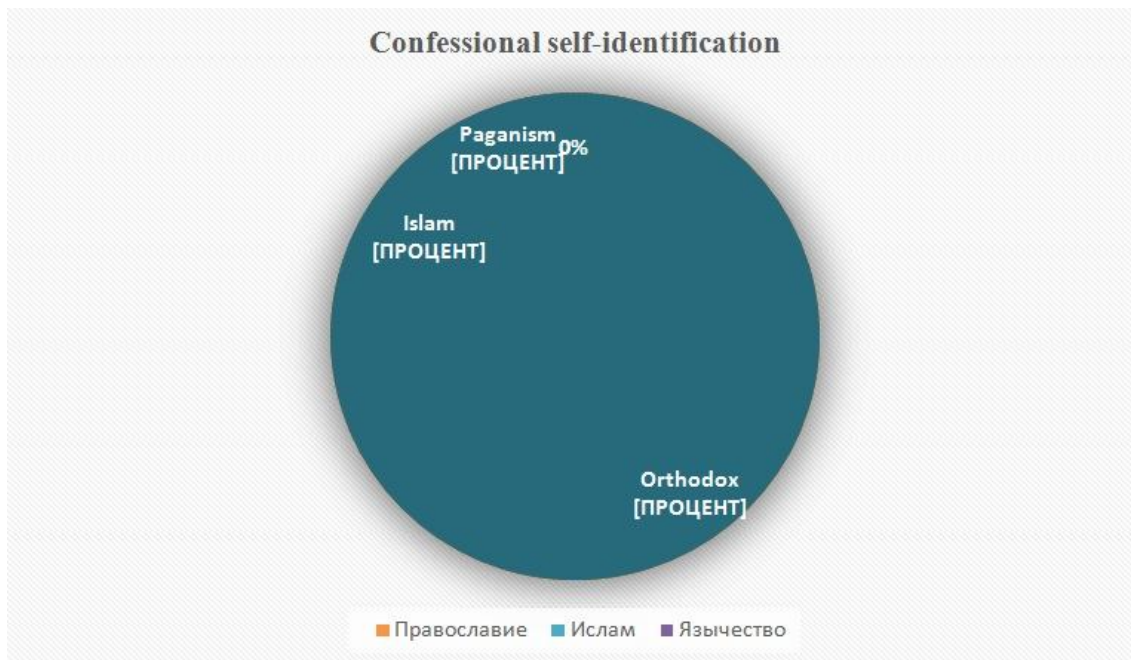
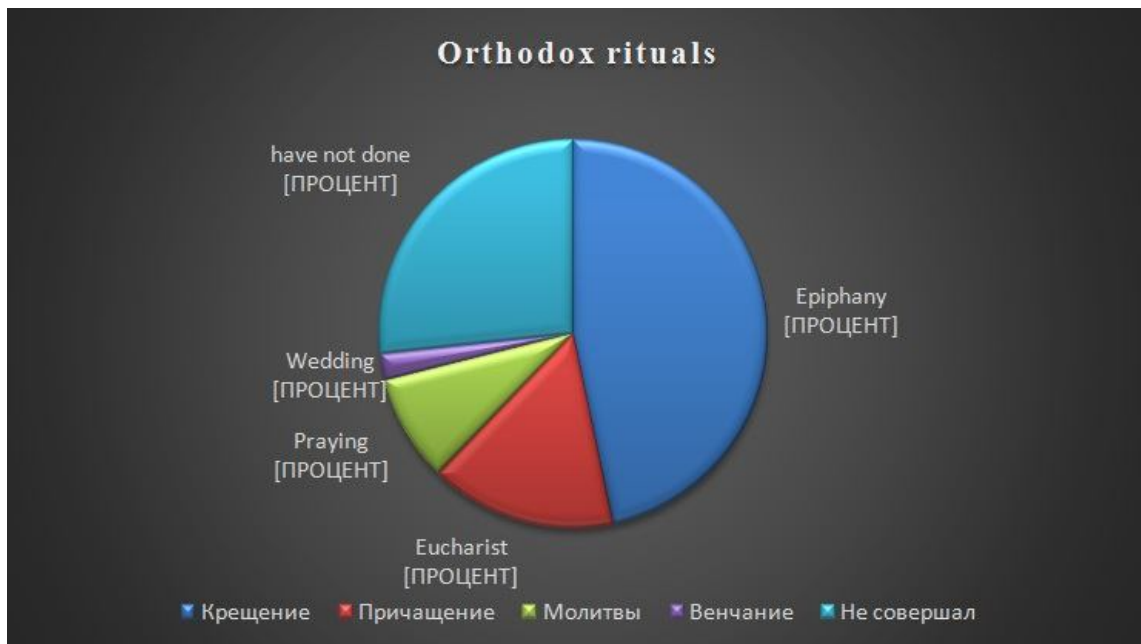


Diagram 4.



Diagram 5.

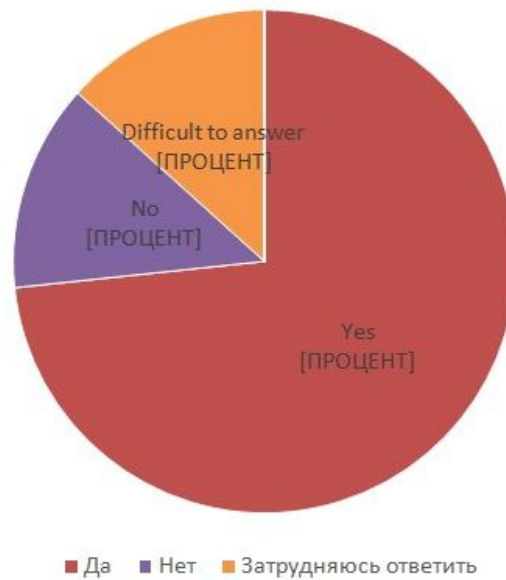
Over 90% of respondents celebrate Orthodox festivals, and only 5% do not.



*Diagram 6.*

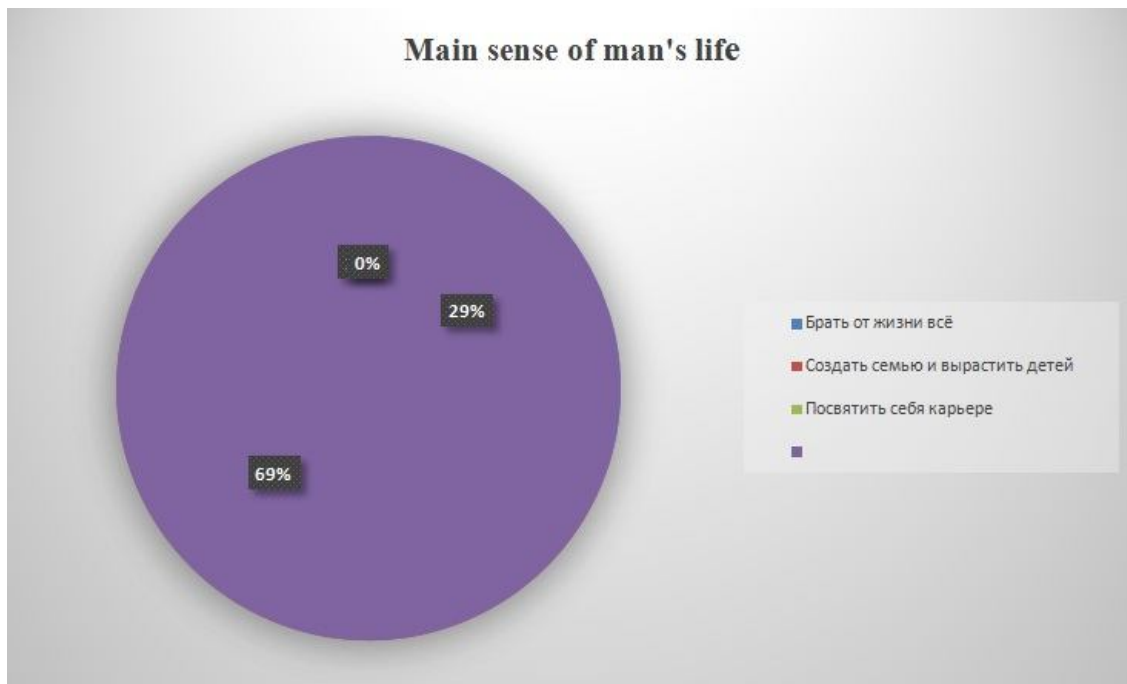
73% of respondents made the Orthodox rites in their lives. Only 27% did not.

### Is Orthodoxy nationally governmental tradition in Russia?



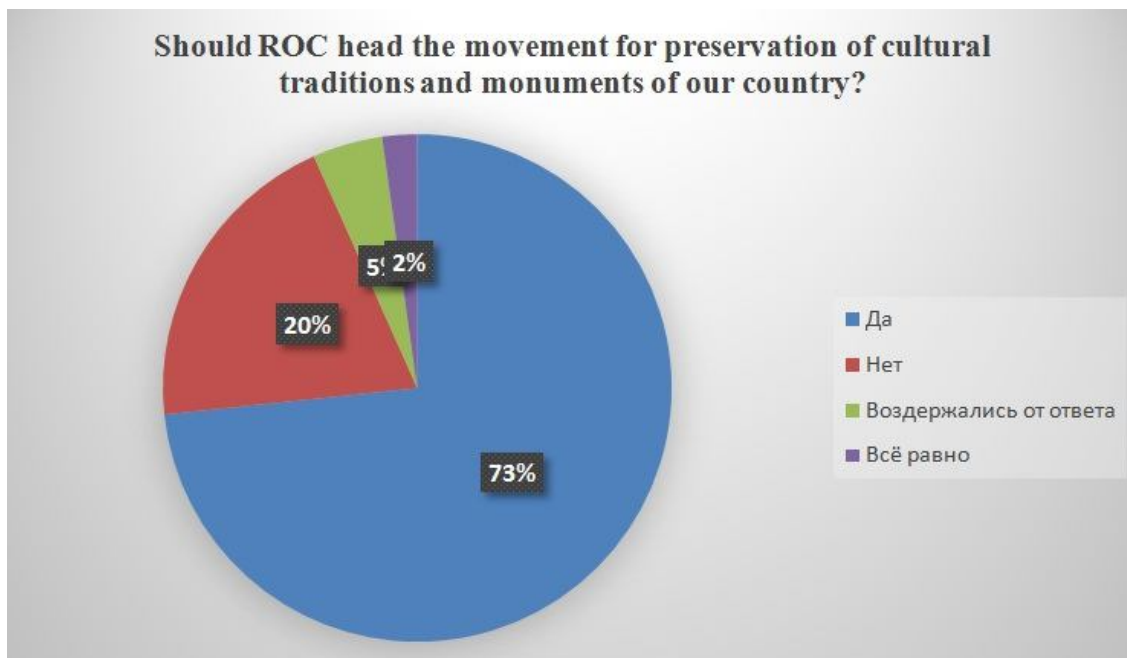
*Diagram 7.*

More than 70% of all young people believe that Orthodoxy is the nation-state Russian tradition.



*Diagram 8.*

The main meaning of human life, the vast majority of young people surveyed 69%, sees in creating a family and raising children. Just 29% believe that it is important to "take everything from life", and 2% want to devote the life to the career. The principle is "to take everything from life" includes the family, so it can be stated that more than 69% of respondents see the meaning of life in a family.



*Diagram 9.*

Taking care by the Russian Orthodox Church on the protection of monuments of history and culture is a direct function of the Church.



### Do you agree that Orthodox is the core of Russian culture?

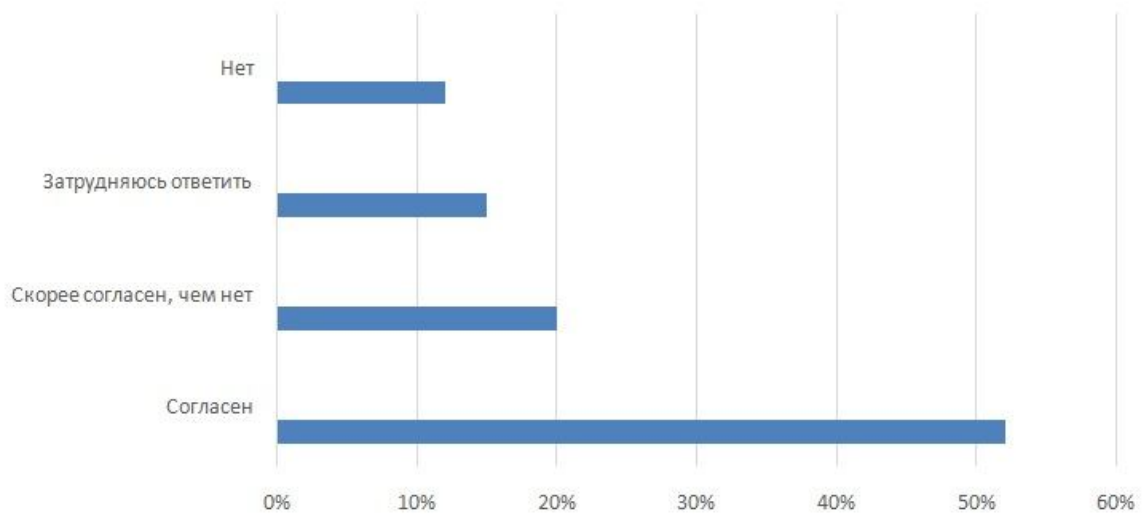


Diagram 10.

More than 70% of respondents believe Orthodoxy the basis of Russian culture, 15% of young people have not been able to give an answer to this question, and only 11% disagree with this opinion.

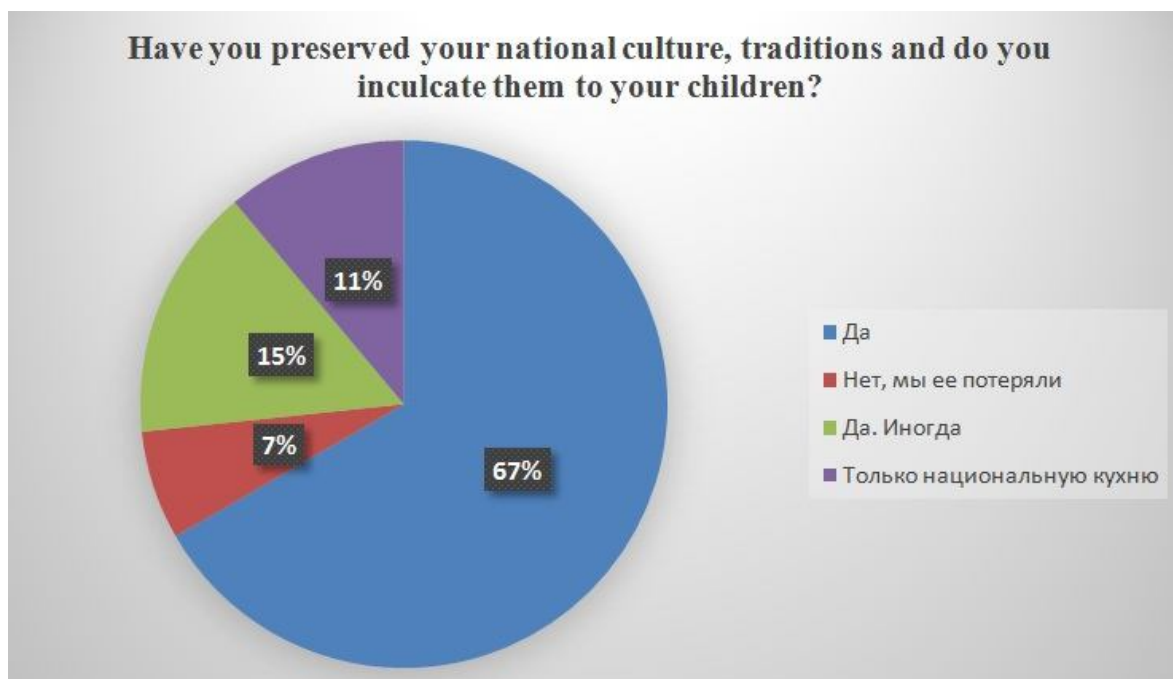


Diagram 11.



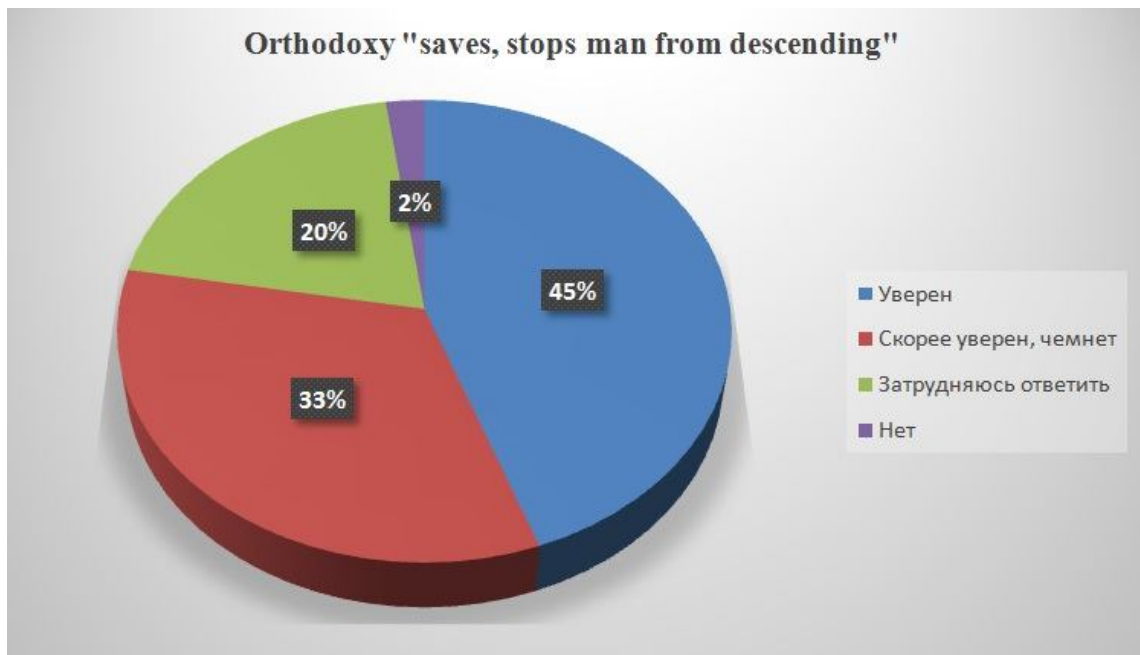


Diagram 12.

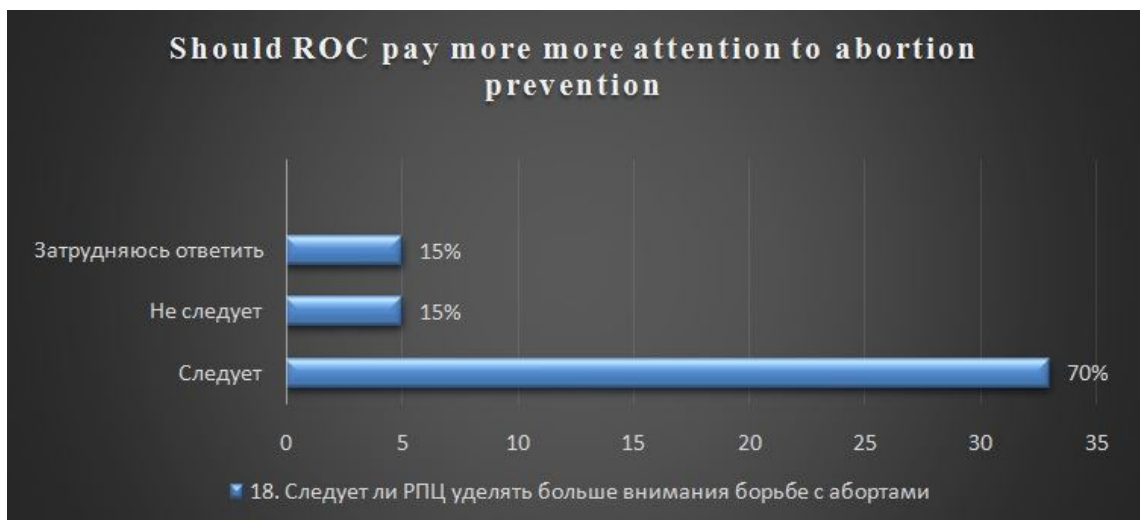


Diagram 13.

70% of respondents believe that the Russian Orthodox Church should pay more attention to the struggle against the negative effects of Western culture of postmodernism: abortion, gay marriage, drug addiction.

The study also showed the presence of young people's needs in a more profound study of the fundamentals of Orthodox culture, including in the school and university programs. For example, more than 65% of respondents believe that the Russian Orthodox Church should seek to increase the number of Sundays and parochial schools. 56% of respondents consider it necessary to study the fundamentals of Orthodox culture in schools.

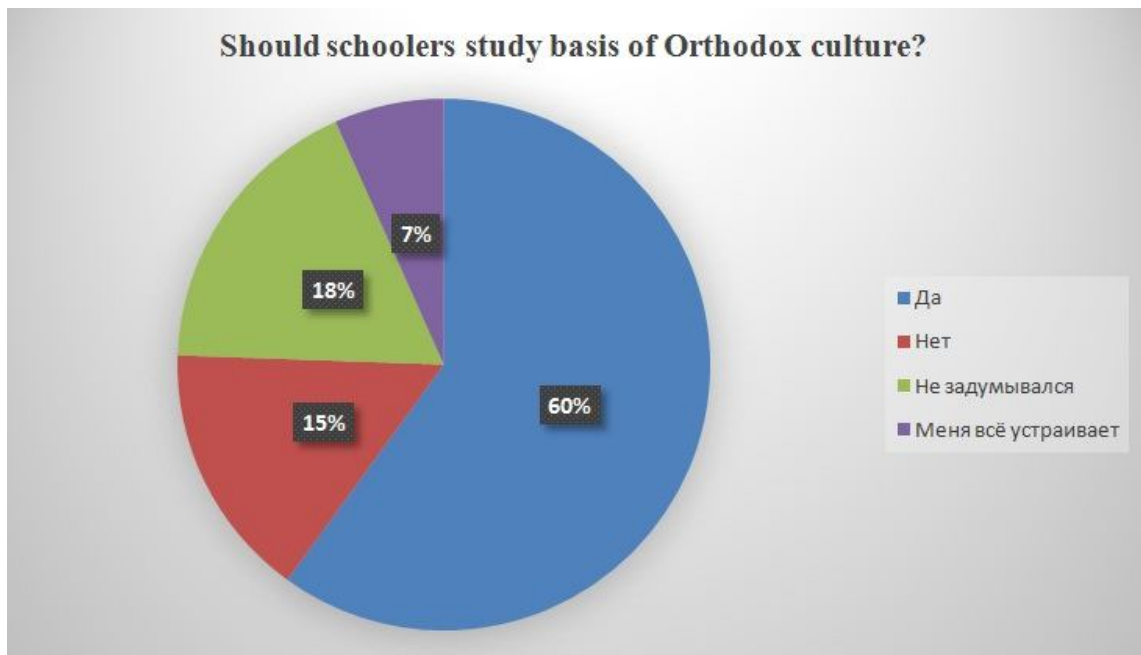


Diagram 14.

Further development of the project is realized in participation in international grant competitions, including the "Orthodox Initiative", as well as the expansion of the geography of the project and participation of other local Orthodox Churches.

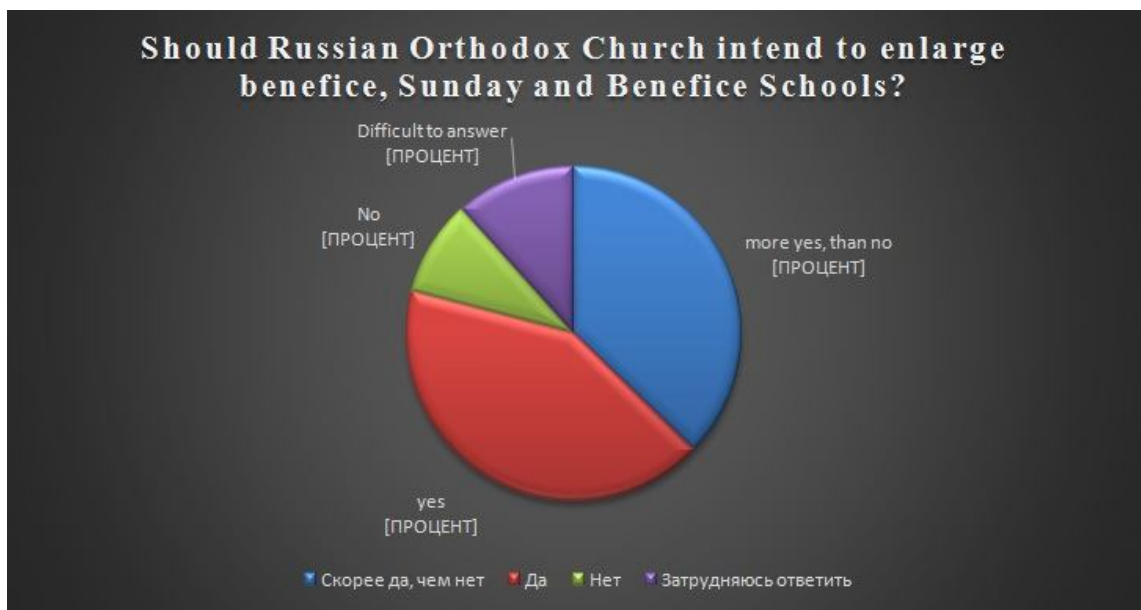


Diagram 15.

The need for increasing the number of young people in the parish and Sunday schools as a whole has not been sufficiently formed (wide stratum of young people, 39.1%, has not formed an opinion on the matter). One in three young people in Russia (38.2%) believes that the Russian Orthodox Church should pay attention to the issue of increasing the number of Sundays and parochial schools. Analysis of charts shows that the majority of young people of the city of Rostov-on-Don and the Rostov region believes that the Russian Orthodox Church is the authoritative in society, occupies a high position in the social life, and Orthodoxy is the spiritual core of the Russian youth of

life [3, p. 145-160].

In the course of sociological research hypotheses were confirmed:

1. In the Rostov Region community supports the efforts of the Russian Orthodox Church to engage in moral education, together with the secular institutions of education and culture. The role of the Russian Orthodox Church in moral education in our country is evaluated highly.

2. In South of Russia (North Caucasus), Orthodox believers have become the dominant social group in promoting the positive spiritual values, while this group is real, rather than nominal, and can stand up for their values.

3. Once in the Soviet Union artificially interrupted tradition of the Russian Orthodox Church in the affairs of society and the state has been restored today.

Familiarizing youth to the cultural heritage of its people is also a very popular among young people (70% support this type of activity), activity of the Russian Orthodox Church. In addition to the need for cultural education, 70% of young people there is a need for a moral assessment of the phenomena of modern life, has publicly expressed by the Russian Orthodox Church faces, and maintaining a high level of morality in society is one of the main functions of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the education of spiritual and moral values in the family also found support among young people: the majority (65%) believe that the Church is to pay attention to this issue, while 56% of respondents consider it necessary to the education of children and youth in the Orthodox tradition in secular educational institutions. This result leads to the conclusion that "Russian Orthodox Church should actively pursue spiritual guidance of youth life" through the preservation and promotion of traditional values.

Thus, the most urgent problem of the whole society is the problem of absolute values, and above all in a secular pedagogy. Why is the core of any culture is faith? Because first of all faith and doctrine are known and approved by the absolute values, without which megaculture – people of culture – form and can not be held, the more rise to the level of civilization.

As follows from the study by Lossky [1], it is carried out on the solid foundations of Orthodoxy, the purpose of man, perceived or not perceived, is the absolute fullness of being, that is, deification, the implementation of which is possible only on the road all overcomes the love of God as the original Absolute goodness and love for all the created creatures as a potentially good comprehensive. Such love leads to a free submission to God and the free catholic unanimity among all creatures in God's Kingdom, which is followed by God, and what is the Christian ideal [6, p. 24].

However, for a person striving for the absolute fullness of being often associated with love to more than to God and other people. Therefore, to overcome selfishness man enters upon the path of evolution, the essence of which is the gradual learning and education of at least part of sanctity and admission of the Kingdom of God, as was pointed out, through free choice and free the creative acts. It is a normal evolution, normal in the sense that it adheres to the rules arising from problems of increasing in relative good up to the realization of the absolute values, which should be defined as a target behavior, and until honoring deification and entry into the kingdom of God [4].

The penetration of the absolute values in our conscious activity (recognition in word and deed that "in fact there is a God and the kingdom of God as absolutely worthy and justified being") [4], the implementation of a higher ideal (free subordination of love to God and the free and in love the unanimous congregational activities of all these God) [4] going to follow the rules, "defining the behavior that leads to the Kingdom" [6], to the earth's fate, in which "every step of the normal evolution of a liberation from any party egoistic isolation in itself, an extension worker of life by mastering any group of strangers or even supra-personal interests in their lives as if they were its own interests ..., development of skills needed to climb to the comprehensive life ..." [1].

Obviously, Lossky does not use the word "standard" (evolution), that could be seen in two meanings: the meaning of normativity, that is the existence of laws (laws conscious) algorithm, principles, norms, rules, and a sense of normality, then there correctness, truthfulness, do not dodge in a lie, and a direct follow up to her as the ideal and the real possibility to achieve the goal of deifi-

cation. Recall one of the main, if not the main, the commandment of Christ: "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33).

Anyone who recognizes the absolute values, recognizes and purpose of God, who, being the Spirit, the whole structure of the world and every event it encourages us to develop spirituality, raising us to be reunited with the kingdom of God. Actually, based on this recognition and freely accepting God's purpose and freely submitting to Him, we enter the path of normal evolution, a genuine culture, including and especially the way of educating ourselves and help in educating others as children of God.

It is appropriate to recall the well-known evangelical image of two houses: one built on sand, the other built on the rock, the first of which was destroyed in the storm, and the second resist (Matthew 7: 24-27.). This quite corresponds to two worldviews, one of which comes from God's recognition as the most fortunate, the truth itself, the beauty, most moral good, life itself and source of life, the other does not come from the recognition of the absolute values and from the recognition as an absolute value in fact, some kind of a relative or relativistic acceptance of all values and as soon as the relative lack of any kind was the absolute values.

"The art of living is such a complication of interests and in such a deepening of the organic nature of her that funds are no longer just a means and at least some the side of his contain as an end in itself, or at least thoroughly permeated and tempting covered by an end in itself, for which they carried out "[1, p. 72-73]. So there is a normal evolution, or, and this is followed by the word commonly used by the Church in the philosophy of the text, the transformation [1, p. 75]. Thus, if we talk about the pedagogical component of normal evolution, we will be on the move for God and God's kingdom of the process of human transformation, as opposed to the process antitransformation that taking massive nature, leads to self-destruction of all civilization and culture.

The benefits of such an operation carried out on human values are very relative for scientific purposes, and it does not and can not be the case when the "universal" values are used as a substitution for a new absolute values. Pedagogy pull on this path, such as artificial as similar to him in the guise of "Communist culture," but a living culture resists (our civilization resists!), and this is one of the main features of the modern struggle is not just for the authenticity of culture, and for the survival of humanity.

### *References*

1. *Lossky N.* Value and being of God and the kingdom of God as the basis of values. Paris 1931 // <http://mexalib.com/view/41637>
2. *Nesmeyanov E.E.* The problem of teaching religion and spiritual and moral culture in the multi-confessional region // *The Humanities and socio-economic sciences.* 2010. No 3.
3. *Nesmeyanov E.E., Matyass T.P.* "Civilization of the young": the idea and reality // *Humanities and Social Sciences.* 2013. No 6.
4. His Holiness spoke at the hearing ARNS Conciliar "The basic spiritual and moral values – the basis of the unity of society, Church and State" // *Pravoslavie.Ru / Internet magazine.* 2 November 2007 // <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/jurnal/24687.htm>.
5. *Finko M.V.* The problem of interpersonal and spiritual crisis: cultural analysis // *Proceedings of the higher educational institutions. North-Caucasian region. Series: Social Sciences.* 2005. No 3.
6. *Shevchenko L.* Orthodox culture and the world of values of the modern schoolboy // *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate.* 2003. No 5.
7. *Yablokov I.N.* Religion and ethnos // *Science almanac of Black Sea region countries.* 2015. No 1. <http://science-almanac.ru>

## Литература

1. Лосский Н. Ценность и бытие: Бог и Царство Божие как основа ценностей. Париж, 1931//<http://mexalib.com/view/41637>.
2. Несмеянов Е.Е. Проблема преподавания религиоведения и духовно-нравственной культуры в поликонфессиональном регионе // Гуманитарные и социально-экономические науки. 2010. № 3.
3. Несмеянов Е.Е., Матяш Т.П. «Цивилизация молодых»: идея и реальность // Гуманитарные и социальные науки. 2013. № 6.
4. Святейший Патриарх Алексий выступил на Соборных слушаниях ВРНС «Базисные духовно-нравственные ценности – основа единства общества, церкви и государства» // Православие.Ru / Интернет-журнал. 2 ноября 2007 // <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/jurnal/24687.htm>.
5. Финько М.В. Проблема межличностного общения и духовный кризис: культурологический анализ // Известия высших учебных заведений. Северо-Кавказский регион. Серия: Общественные науки. 2005. № 3.
6. Шевченко Л. Православная культура и мир ценностей современного школьника // Журнал Московской Патриархии. 2003. № 5.
7. Yablokov I.N. Religion and ethnos // Научный альманах стран Причерноморья. 2015. № 1. <http://science-almanac.ru>

---

*January, 19, 2016*