

ANNA VIKTOROVNA TONKOVIDOVA

PAVEL EVGENYEVICH BOYKO

S. N. BULGAKOV AND P. FLORENSKY:

DIALECTICS OF SOBORNOST

**Anna Viktorovna Tonkovidova**

Kuban State University of Physical Education, Sports and Tourism, Department of Philosophy, Cultural Studies and Social Communications, Krasnodar Region, Russia

**E-mail:** tonkovidova@mail.ru

**Pavel Evgenyevich Boyko**

Kuban State University, Department of Philosophy, Krasnodar Region, Russia

**E-mail:** pboyko@mail.ru

**Abstract:** The subject of the article is the concept of sobornost, considered on the example of the works of P. Florensky and S.N. Bulgakov, in whose teachings, based on the dialectical approach, we define three levels of disclosure of the category of sobornost and the types of sociality corresponding to them. At the level of its being, sobornost is one, identical with itself in church sociality. At the level of essence, which corresponds to duality, difference, there is a transition to the opposite state, through mediation in secular sociality. However, the duality of sobornost is not substantial, acting as a necessary moment of dialectical development; it leads to the combination of the universal and the particular at the level of the concept, as the most concrete form of sobornost of church-secular sociality. Sobornost is actualized in the forms of state organization from feocracy to anarchy, types of individuals from the religious, spiritual personality of church sociality, the collective, sinful personality of secular sociality to the personality of sobornost of church-secular sociality. We can conclude that the principle of sobornost is reflected in social reality, and the unity of sobornost in society is present and actualized in different forms of its dialectical development.

**Key words:** P. Florensky, S.N. Bulgakov, sobornost, dialectics, being, essence, concept.

## **1. Introduction**

The category of sobornost is currently relevant for consideration presence of universally valid ideals. Sobornost, as a concept that has arisen in Russian philosophy, in our opinion, can become exactly the ideal that is possible for practical implementation and is already being, due to the fact that the social, economic, and political organization of our society presupposes the realized in modern society along with the sobornym criterion of the “truth” of certain transformations in various spheres of social life.

We will consider the dialectical disclosure of sobornost on the basis of the teachings of S.N. Bulgakov and P. Florensky. In turn, the dialectical foundations of the category of sobornost were studied by V.K. Kireev, as well as P.V. Khondzinsky and A.I. Kyrlezhev (Kireev 2008; Khondzinsky, Kyrlezhev 2019). At the same time, a comparative characteristic of the views of thinkers has already been carried out by S.N. Astapov, who studied the philosophical concepts of thinkers from the perspective of negative dialectics (Astapov S.N. 2009, 2010, 38-56). Dialectical foundations in Bulgakov’s doctrine are designated by O.V. Senina, B. Gallaher (Senina 2011, 40-43, Gallaher 2016, 95-134). From the perspective of the dialectic of the dispute about Sophia, he studied in comparison the philosophical views of thinkers F.I. Girenok (Girenok 2013, 103-112). In the texts of P. Florensky, antinomianism in the disclosure of the philosophical concept was noted by D. Goryachev, S.B. Egorova (Goryachev 2019, 38-58; Egorova 2009, 197-202). The dialectics of theocracy and sobornost of P. Florensky’s works were studied by N.B. Shevelyova (Shevelyova 2013, 145-149). Thus, we can conclude that several authors have already put forward the idea that dialectics can be used as a method for considering sobornost, including and based on the works of S.N. Bulgakov and P. Florensky.

However, from our point of view, with all the depth of the research carried out on the works of these philosophers, at present, there are still unresolved issues related to their approach to the topic of sobornost. The first question that we can single out is related to the method on the basis of which sobornost can be considered; the second is the question of determining the levels of dialectical disclosure of sobornost, the third question is a question related to the understanding of sociality and personality in their dialectical formation.

To begin with, dialectics, applicable in my opinion to the consideration of sobornost, in the concept of S.N. Bulgakov, is understood as the self-disclosure of a concept, the being of a concept that exists in motion, that is, through contradictions (Bulgakov 2008, 129, 130): “The truths of Christianity are revealed dialectically” in the history of mankind (Bulgakov 2008, 188). Florensky writes that in one historical layer, there

can be two church socialities with “church history” and a secular one. Dialectically opposed, sobornost and pseudo- sobornost are revealed, which corresponds to “pseudo-religious consciousness” and the loss of freedom, replacing it with “sin” (Florensky 1990, 133). P. Florensky writes that the meaning of dialectics is in integrity, in the absence of separateness, each part of the dialectical deployment is considered as a “living layer”. Dialectics - “growing thought”, living and free thought, is dialectical. Each new comprehension serves as a new definition in the dialectic of sobornost.

And only a concrete thought that defines sobornost at the level of a concept can be a dialectical thought. At the heart of dialectics, according to Florensky, “I am concrete,” denoted, in our opinion, at the level of a concept, in church-secular sociality (Florensky 138). P. Florensky compares a religiously ordered life, understood as a “coherent whole,” with a variety of functions, with dialectics, in which diversity also leads to unity (Florensky 1996, 142). Florensky considers the development of society on the basis of dialectical principles, highlighting the concept of “duty” as a principle of development, considering it as “a condition for the interaction of separate parts of a set” (Florensky 1994, 196).

Finding dialectical foundations in the works of philosophers presupposes the determination of the levels of dialectical disclosure of sobornost, the dialectical triad. Based on the texts of S.N. Bulgakov and P. Florensky, we have identified three types of socialities that correspond to three levels of dialectical development of sobornost. Church sociality, where a vital, existential life of sobornost, the direct connection of people with God and with each other - the level of being sobornost, a single, identical with itself secular sociality, which is immanently characterized by the separation of personality and society, spirit and its being, which is sobornost, the level of sobornost as an essence, church-secular sociality, overcoming the division of empirical being, - the level of sobornost as a concept. The human personality arises in every type of sociality, under the influence of a religious factor, which S.N. Bulgakov is defined as central to the socialization of the individual (Bulgakov 2017.96). This process can be compared to the establishment of the sacralization of identity (Oppong 2013, 12).

## **2. Sobornost as Being**

Sobornost as being is "eternal deification", and sobornost as an entity that denies sobornost is "eternal destruction" (Florensky 1990, 65). Sobornost as being in the philosophy of P. Florensky is manifested through the vision of dogma, the denial of its rationality. The purpose of recognizing a dogma is its given. The introduction to the Truth of the dogma of the Church, according to Florensky, occurs in two stages:

symbolically and directly. S.N. Bulgakov believed that sobornost was actualized in early Christianity through dogmas, as experienced truths. S.N. Bulgakov writes that the knowledge of religious transcendence presupposes a "religious path" that is different from rational knowledge (Bulgakov 2017, 43). This path presupposes "miracle, grace, freedom" coming from God (Bulgakov 2017, 45). It should be noted that the issue of the religious path of cognition in Russian philosophical thought is explored in their work by V.N. Belov, M.L. Ivleva, S.A. Nizhnikov, who note in it "concepts of integral knowledge, unitotality, conciliarity." (Belov, Ivleva, Nizhnikov 2019, 23).

The concept of sobornost is transferred from the abstract sphere to the sphere of living life, the definition of sobornost at the level of its being. In church sociality, communion with God takes place directly. The Christian takes everything from the world with "raw materials," sobornost is based on the immediate. (Florensky 1996, 550).

Sobornost as being is inherent in the "living faith" designated by P. Florensky. The epistemological aspect of sobornost is manifested in an intuitive introduction to the transcendental (Florensky 1990, 65). A person comes to "living faith" through which a situation of sobornoye unity with God is possible through "ultimate despair". Truth acts as reason, goodness, strength, life, happiness, entails the rejection of any doubt about its truth through the rejection of "self-assertion", a way out of "self-isolation" (Florensky 1990, 68).

At the level of sobornost, we define as being, there is the "spiritual personality", "consolidated personality", "open personality" described by Florensky, with this type of social identity, in our opinion, as a "self-sacrificing", which develops in the process of social identification of "self-sacrifice" (Florensky 1990, 72, 177, 181, 271). S.N. Bulgakov defines a "religious personality" in church sociality as a type of personality (Bulgakov 2008, 342). A "religious personality" is created in the process of "wandering" (Bulgakov 2008, 189). Sobornoye unity with God, man puts in his place God, "unknown but loved" (Florensky 1990, 68). Florensky denotes the term "self-sacrificing", the path of personal experiential coming to God, comprehension of God, achievement, in our opinion, of conciliar truth (Florensky 1990, 72).

To achieve sobornost in the course of "self-sacrifice", in our opinion, is characteristic of Florensky defined as "cooperation", love through which God is directly revealed (Florensky 1990, 75). According to S.N. Bulgakov, a kind of revolution was the appearance in the church sociality of a person who was characterized by Christian individualism (Bulgakov S. N., 327). P. Florensky, referring to the issue of personality, distinguishes two concepts: a person and a thing (Florensky 1990, 78). It is only possible to define things; to define personality, according to Florensky, is not possible, since it is transcendental to every concept, its source is the world of the transcendent. According to Florensky, one can only give a person a

symbol (Florensky 1990, 83). The content of this personality symbol may not be rational but only experienced at the level of the existential meaning of sobornost. "God-assimilation" of personality is beauty (Florensky 1990, 84). Florensky finds another concept that characterizes personality at the level of sobornost as being - this is "self-gathering" (Florensky 1990, 86).

However, one should also note the words of Florensky, that this "self-gathering" in the love of the Church presupposes "separation", alienation from the world alien to the Church. Church sociality in Florensky, as well as in S.N. Bulgakova, is directed into the world of the transcendent, fencing off from everything immanent. The dividing line between the immanent and the transcendent is clearly defined. There is a personal appeal to God through the personal intuitive, direct act of coming to the Divine, the Trinity, the achievement of unity. For this level of sobornost as being, Florensky is characterized by over-temporality and over-space, going out into eternity, striving for eternity (Florensky 1990, 93). S.N. Bulgakov, here you can find "detachment, alienation" from the world, an attempt in a certain historical epoch to create an ahistorical social reality, or antihistoricism (Bulgakov 2008, 400; 5, 236). For Florensky, sobornost is taken out of the immanent world, the transition to the "one-being" of those who love in God (Florensky 1990, 93). S.N. Bulgakov is an exit into Divine Nothing (Bulgakov 2017, 264).

Florensky's "self-sacrificing" draws strength from the origins of early Christianity, striving into the world of the transcendent, without plunging into everyday life, everyday work, boredom, and melancholy characteristic of everyday life (Florensky 1990, 111). Misunderstanding and ignorance of their heavenly nature by most people leads to the fact that they are immersed in history, everyday life. "Wandering" by S.N. Bulgakov assumes ahistoricism, temporality, instability, lack of historical perspective, negative attitude towards the material world, opposition, struggle with it, arising from the depths of religious experiences (Bulgakov 2008, 267). Florensky writes that while history is going on, only moments of illumination by the Spirit are possible, and complete "spirituality" would mean the end of history (Florensky 1990, 112).

The "self-sacrificing" Florensky is identified with the "monk" who leaves the worldly life, in the reality immanent to him, he sees the signs and symbols of God, he can pass into the world of the transcendental (Florensky 1990, 275). Detachment from the mundane, social, overtime is one of the main characteristics of this type of sociality, personality, identity (Florensky 1990, 281). In Florensky we find the idea of "being chosen" when he says that only for selected individuals is illumination of the spirit possible. At these moments, there is a rise above temporality, a transition into eternity, the end of history, which leads sobornost with God (Florensky 1990, 112).

Only a select few, or "self-sacrificing" have access to the possibility of avoiding mortality in the eternity of divine total-unity, conciliarity (Florensky 1990, 112). A self-sacrificing is characterized by an "incorruptible body", an "incorruptible mind" (Florensky 1990, 274). In the texts of S.N. Bulgakov, we find the definition of monoideism, which defines "being chosen", the supra-community of the sphere of church sociality (Bulgakov 2008, 286). "Chosenness" appears, according to S.N. Bulgakov, in early Christianity, the ascetic theocracy of the Middle Ages, Protestantism (Bulgakov 2008, 193, 220, 222).

The state of sobornost, or, as Florensky calls it, the future kingdom, personally and socially will be possible when the Trinity is cognized (Florensky 1990, 128). Only in religious experience, according to Florensky, is it possible to overcome the division of the world and the possibility of personal communion with God, sobornost of truth (Florensky 1990, 162). For sobornost in the form of being, the definitions of self-determination "I live", "I do", "I speak" are characteristic (Florensky 1990, 174,175). Sobriety and cheerfulness are characteristic (Florensky 1990, 175). For the "self-sacrificing", "whole-ingenuity" is characteristic, "health-wisdom" is the organic unity of the wholeness of the individual (Florensky 1990, 180). Sincerity, openness, immediacy, bashfulness (Florensky 1990, 181). Chastity leads to "bliss", justification, peace, immortality (Florensky 1990, 180,191). "Self-sacrificing" realizes his life "according to the law", thereby realizing beauty, goodness and truth. The empirical nature of a person is determined in a system of thoughts, feelings, desires, actions, must be woven from faith, hope, and love (Florensky 1990, 224,229). Florensky characterizes the "self-sacrificing", which consists in the fact that "there is no lust in his sensation", in the knowledge of the ascetic "there is no pride" (Florensky 1990, 274). The "self-sacrificing", according to Florensky, overcomes "unbridledness" in the material and intellectual world. The existential nature of conciliar unity is manifested in church sociality in the vision of the world "natural", "full of concrete life" (Florensky 1990, 295).

The superiority of man over animals lies in his ability to comprehend and perceive the integrity and sobornost of the universe created by God (Florensky 1990, 281). The self-sacrificing, separating himself from the worldly, hopes for salvation and renewal for the "creature", he has a feeling of free responsibility for the "heroes", combined with a feeling of complete powerlessness associated with the fact that it is impossible to overcome the free "sin" of the heroes, thereby belittling their free choice (Florensky 1990, 281).

A self-sacrificing is not characterized by irritation and nervousness. There is "holy anger" in him in relation to the "perversion of nature." Loving people, he does not like the "created" of secular sociality (Florensky 1990, 296). Self-sacrifice, according to Florensky's texts, can be seen only in experience, through experience, external definitions will be superficial (Florensky 1990, 291). Florensky draws a comparison between

Jewish "self-sacrifice" and Christian "self-sacrifice", concluding that there is a fundamental difference between them (Florensky 1990, 291). Jewish self-sacrifice: flight from the world in order to hide from the world, sad, despair, based on the news of evil that reigns over the world, gives superiority, comes from man, "abhors the creature", achieves magical powers over it, since man not free in self-determination.

Christian "self-sacrifice": a trick, leaving the world in order to become pure and conquer, it is joyful, based on the good news of victory over the evil of the world, gives holiness, comes from God, "in love with creation", hates "sin".

The "self-sacrificing" does not directly affect the "creature"; in the ascetic, Florensky emphasizes the feeling of "falling in love" with the creature (Florensky 1990, 297). "Creation" itself must, in accordance with the transcendental foundations of sobornost, overcome its sinfulness, freely self-determine in relation to the Creator. S. N. Bulgakov writes that through self-sacrificing, considered as the goal of activity, breaking away from the world, one can only see its beauty (Bulgakov 2008, 300). According to P. Florensky, the essence of asceticism in "self-sacrificing" is the idea of "deification", the idea of a "holy body" and "holy spirit" (Florensky 1990, 292). Respect for the institution of marriage (Florensky 1990, 295).

Florensky notes the importance of labor, labor identification (Florensky 1990, 292). Asceticism manifests itself in the perception of the "beauty of the creature" (Florensky 1990, 310). Florensky viewed asceticism as a continuation of charisma. The ascetic feat of the "ascetic" is crowned by the ascetic feat of all "ecclesiastical humanity." The goal of the feat is to achieve "incorruption" and the deification of the flesh through the acquisition of the spirit (Florensky 1990, 310). The "self-sacrificing" is meek, gentle, and pure; this state is achieved through repentance. (Florensky 1990, 342). Salvation is achieved in consubstantiation with the church (Florensky 1990, 343). According to P. Florensky, life itself weeds out the faithful and the unfaithful, determines the churchliness of a person; we can attribute this to church sociality and sobornost at the level of being (Florensky 1996, 138).

### **3. Sobornost as an Essence**

Sobornost, or actual unity based on an anarchic principle, can be imaginary, spontaneous, "statistical", law-governed; Florensky defines it as divine or anthropocratic (Florensky 1994, 198). The rejection of norms, the search for the natural harmony of organisms leads to the degradation of society, which arises due to the fact that its life is built on the basis of external laws (Florensky 1994, 198). Florensky writes that "self-destruction" is the result of the anarchic self-affirmation of society. The

individual, as a part of such a society, strives to become everything, but in the end, the part is absorbed by the whole (Florensky 1994, 199). The anarchic system is based on the principle of selfishness and rejection of the norm (Florensky 1994, 199). With S.N.Bulgakov, sobornost, which manifests itself as an essence, is actualized in the "pagan theocracy", the new era of "humanistic theocracy" with the religion of democratic humanism, "external mechanical socialism", capitalism (Bulgakov 2017, 629,634; Bulgakov 1991, 35). S.N. Bulgakov's personality is reduced to the "impersonal reflexes of economic relations" of the "collective personality" (Bulgakov 2008, 209, 338).

Florensky defines two types of "displacement of the center of human existence", the fragmentation of the personality and calls them mysticism of the head, when the personality loses its integrity, sobornost due to the "proud mind" and the mysticism of the womb, "overdevelopment of organic life" in secular sociality in the form of sobornost as an essence (Florensky 1990, 274). Thus, Florensky can distinguish two characteristics of the anti-conciliar, or, designated by us, "collective personality" at the level of secular sociality "self-assertion", "self-isolation", a sinful "self" that puts a person in the place of God (Florensky 1990, 68). S.N. Bulgakov defines "non-religious individualism" (Bulgakov 2008, 327).

Florensky's secular sociality is characterized by such a state of personality as "lack of spirituality", "self-seduction". "Spirituality" is replaced by subjective spiritual creativity, according to Florensky (1990, 133). The personality, at the level of collegiality, as an entity in secular sociality, develops "frenzy, enthusiasm, dreaminess, exaltation." In Bulgakov's texts, we can find such characteristics of the "collective personality" as "maximalism and messianism", "pride", instability, indiscipline, and inability to work (Bulgakov 2011, 286,287,301). The formation of the personality is carried out through the perception of the religion of mankind, on the basis of political "monoideism" (Bulgakov 2011, 272 285).

For the secular sociality we have identified, according to Florensky, the concept of a thing, "thingness" is characteristic, and the category "person" is brought to "thingness" at the level of sobornost, that is, it is "reified", understood abstractly (Florensky 1990, 78 ). The level of "thingness" is characterized by "lust", and the level of "face" is characterized by "love" (Florensky 1990, 78). The identity of things is possible through the identity of "concepts." The "materiality" of a person, in our opinion, is characteristic of the level of secular sociality and sobornost as an entity characterized by "self-equality", in a set of its own characteristics, subordination to the law of identity (Florensky1990, 80). Bulgakov writes that the personality is lost against the background of the public in the secular sociality we distinguish (Bulgakov 2011, 296). For secular sociality, in my opinion, is characteristic, defined by Florensky, "carnal philosophy", rational "sinful personality", "loose personality",



"secretive personality", "high personality" with the type of social identity "hero" - secular sociality (Florensky 1990, 80,177,181,232). At the core is "sin". Secular sociality presupposes deviation from the law, evil, lies, disgrace. Sin is in the unwillingness to go beyond the limits of one's I, to another, to God, the main sin is in the self-persistence of selfhood" (Florensky 1990, 177). The denial of sobornost occurs through sin. Individuals at the level of secular sociality in denying God are characterized by a state of "depravity", "duality", which is the cause of "non-happiness" (Florensky 1990, 180, 184, 188). Sobornost at the level of essence is characterized by "sin, vanity, torment, death" (Florensky 1990, 191). Sins impede the free activity of man, I close him off from God (Florensky 1990, 176). Shamelessness and cynicism accompany a "sinful person" who denies sobornost (Florensky 1990, 181). Spiritual detachment, egoism, personality is revealed as a "self-persistent" being (Florensky 1990, 93,161). Similar characteristics are given to personality at this level by S.N. Bulgakov - adventurism, revolutionism, exaltation (Bulgakov 2011, 290).

The "self-affirmation" of a person who is trying to become "God" is the reason for his disintegration, the impoverishment of his inner life. Love, considered by Florensky ontologically, makes personal unity possible (Florensky 1990, 173). But the desire of a person to live without God, to settle apart from God, to self-determine against God leads to disintegration, fragmentation of society and personality, madness, loss of love (Florensky 1990, 173). Florensky calls the moment of the disintegration of sobornost in the individual, the loss of the ability for creativity and free choice, the emergence of a situation when the human person falls under the power of his own states (Florensky 1990, 174). This state is characterized by confusion and loss, confusion of spirit and unrepentance, non-observance of oneself, drowsiness, drunkenness, weakening of self-collected spirit, according to Florensky. For sobornost, in the form of a contradictory essence, the definitions "it is done with me", "it happens to me", "words are spoken" are characteristic (Florensky 1990, 174,175). This kind of thinking is defined in secular sociality (Florensky 1990, 87).

The personality is characterized by "disarray", the loss of the reality of the creative I, the loss of freedom (Florensky 1990, 175). Cynicism is characteristic of this type of sociality; the entire social reality is perceived as an object for proud reconstruction (Florensky 1990, 293). Eudaimonism is characteristic. The institution of marriage is denied (Florensky 1990, 294). In secular sociality, a "sinful person" separates himself from the world, neglects it, neglects work, which, from the point of view of Florensky, is important for coming to God (Florensky 1990, 292). In sobornost at the level of essence, secular sociality denies the natural world, "the world of concrete life," as Florensky writes, "in essence, his self-asserting self, and abhorrent all "natural", living things (Florensky

1990, 295). There is a denial of life and the creation of an artificial world, mechanical, its own world, artificial state, revolutionary statehood, artificial religion (Florensky 1990, 296): "Humanity cannot but be fragmented if it is not guided by higher principles," which itself has built a wall between itself and higher principles (Florensky 1996, 547). In secular sociality, Florensky identifies two forms of rejection of God: "acute spiritual infection" and "chronic infection", leading to the identification of religion and morality (Florensky 1996, 547). Morality, in this case, is just external, random determinants that govern behavior in society (Florensky 1996, 547,548). A contradiction arises at the level of conciliarity as an essence, or a complete rejection of "Christian morality", or a rejection of anti-Christian culture (Florensky 1996, 548). The recognition of sinfulness in secular sociality as a natural and correct state of a person is the main contradiction (Florensky 1996, 548).

For secular sociality, God is a "hypothesis" that loses its relevance and significance as culture develops. Man self-deifies (Florensky 1996, 548). Secular sociality is characterized by "rational faith", which is associated with human egoism, which wants to subjugate God (Florensky 1990, 64). In this situation, the "self" of the person who sets the laws comes to the fore, beyond the Divine will (Florensky 1990, 65). A person embraced by "rational faith" is burdened with pride, a desire to replace God with himself, to take his place. Florensky defines it as "imposture" and "self-will", which ultimately leads to the "disintegration" of the personality in "self-affirmation", "self-destruction" (Florensky 1990, 65).

The religious world in secular sociality is fragmented due to the fact that there is no knowledge of religion (Florensky 1996, 543). "Belief in everyday life is higher than the requirements of spiritual life," belief in ethnic properties prevails (Florensky 1996, 544). The conviction that the people can avoid "spiritual deeds" in approaching God is established in secular sociality, in our opinion, "familiarity" with God, a false, according to Florensky, identification of ethnicity and churchliness (Florensky 1996, 544). Here Florensky also builds a chain that is characteristic of secular sociality: the church is supplanted by the ethnic, and the ethnic - by the sinful (Florensky 1996, 546). Thus, highlighting ethnic Christianity in secular sociality, Florensky notes that along with it, there is "universal churchness", in our opinion, which makes it possible through dialectical contradiction to come to church-secular sociality.

Florensky notes that the world of secular sociality, or defined sobornost at the level of essence, is only a present state, an opportunity for realizing sobornost in the form of a concept in church-secular sociality, based, according to Florensky's texts, on three basic principles: Christian religion, Christian culture, consecrated nature (Florensky 1996, 550).

#### **4. Sobornost as a Concept**

Church-secular sociality, we can understand, proceeding from the words of S.N. Bulgakov, as a "synthesis" of existing church and secular socialities (Bulgakov 2008, 207). An ideal civilization is a synthesis of a state of "full maturity", where "church-humanity, church-culture, church-community" unfold (Bulgakov 2008, 207; Bulgakov 2011, 477, 478). Church-secular sociality, in our opinion, presupposes the revival of the individual through the Christian feat of "self-sacrificing" with the assistance of transcendental forces, which, in turn, overcome transcendence in relation to the human "sobornaya personality" overcoming the immanence of the world (Bulgakov 2008, 417). A person, dialectically overcoming the state of sobornost, as an entity that is actualized, including in the religion of man-godhood of secular sociality, denies a man-god in himself and gets the opportunity to realize through himself a "deified creature", "God by grace" (Bulgakov 2008, 417). The concept of sobornost of personality, which, in my opinion, plays a central role in Bulgakov's philosophy, was analyzed in the works of R. Zwahlen, and was defined as "Trinitarian" (Zwahlen 2011, 53-60). By R. Zwahlen, "Bulgakov preferred to focus on developing attractive Christian models of personality, society" (Zwahlen 2012, 173).

According to K. Breckner, in Bulgakov's system, it is the personality that determines the boundaries of the perception of sociality (Breckner 2011, 43-53), and the public, sobornost are the essential characteristics of Christianity (Breckner 2006, 171-197). In church-secular sociality, pessimism is defeated by religious faith, sobornost in the form of a concept is actualized and determined through human activity. S.N. Bulgakov writes that human activity, cultural, economic, state, is based on a creative impulse, but their regulator should be "religious conscience" (Bulgakov 1991, 219). In church-secular sociality, humanity, according to S.N. Bulgakov, must be realized through the application of one's own forces, through immersion in the historical process, the heroic feat of freedom from temptation, overcoming the antinomy of time and temporality. The Christian faith becomes the goal in this historical process, the goal of which is transcendental, the future foundation of the universal transformation (Bulgakov 2008, 438). Regardless of its content, this process will be designated as progress since it acts as a road to a higher and absolute goal. (Bulgakov 2008, 438). In church-secular sociality, the extra historical nature of church sociality is overcome. Participation in the historical process becomes an obligatory, unquestioning task of the "sobornaya personality," realizing sobornost, which is defined as a concept through its historically colored, transformative activity filled with deep meaning, even meanings (Bulgakov 2008, 439).

The criterion, a certain measure of the implementation of activity in the church-secular sociality is sobornost, defined as a concept. The situation of "life", which acts as the goal of activity, presupposes a transcendental foundation - God (Bulgakov 2009 47, 76). The category of death is overcome through the concept of "non-life" (Bulgakov 2009, 76). Activity relies on the vital actualization of the Divine, transcendent through a person, whose organism is seen as an organ of the Universe, sometimes active, sometimes dying, which entails humanization of nature, the integrity of the Universe, "communism of the living and inanimate" - the cosmological basis of sobornost (Bulgakov 2009, 80, 115). It presupposes that sobornost is understood as an organic and divine unity of the world (Bulgakov 2009, 172). Individuality is seen as the center of love, not separateness (Bulgakov 2009, 171).

The basis of the selfhood of the individual I, lies in the fact that while maintaining a qualitative determination, there is a rejection of the self, defining oneself as a part of the "Divine Sophia, ideal humanity" (Bulgakov 2009, 261). Action is defined as moral, provided that the state of sobornost is achieved. Sobornost, according to S.N. Bulgakov, is associated with the unity of sobornost of society, which can be viewed as the actualization of sobornost through value-social-historical activity (Bulgakov 1993, 121). A value-oriented person cannot be identified with a social group. Sobornost can be manifested, lived with the preservation of this state in the heart (Bulgakov 1998, 234).

According to Florensky, in church-secular sociality at the level of sobornost as a concept, the contradictions of secular sociality in the sobornost of the Church are removed, where each of the individual believers, parishes, begins to realize their limitations, and in overcoming this limitation, conciliarity, catholicity is formed (Florensky 1996, 555). Understanding of religious life as a manifestation of forms of religious life leads to sobornost through "changing the way of thinking" and deliberation, overcoming delusions (Florensky 1996, 556).

In church-secular sociality, mediation is necessarily assumed in the form of the concept of sobornost in philosophy, art, economics, and other types of reformatory activity. Church-secular sociality is characterized by "transformative" activity along the path to catholic unity, to life "in truth and love", with comprehension of conciliar truth in a "full-blooded living environment" (Florensky 1996, 550). Florensky writes that the conciliar life of the Ecumenical Church cannot be equated with the life of its individual members or individual Churches. "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts" (Florensky 1996, 554). In church-secular sociality in sobornost at the level of the concept, all areas of life: art, philosophy, science, politics, economics, do not act as independent entities but are built in the "image of Christ" (Florensky 1996, 550). According to Florensky, Christianity cannot be passive in relation to the world, which is inherent in church sociality (Florensky 1996, 550). In the ecclesiastical

sociality we have identified, differences in confessions will, according to Florensky, lead not to enmity but to solidarity of the Christian world, conciliar unity (Florensky 1996, 554). The very term "catholic", conciliar, according to Florensky, indicates "intensity and quality", removes, in our opinion, at the level of sobornost as a concept, the "extensive and quantitative" nature of the reverse side of sobornost, which S.N. Bulgakov calls "herd", secular sociality.

The goal of the activity is to establish an actual unity, which can be based on two opposite but not contradictory principles: anarchic and hierarchical. Anarchic and hierarchical principles can be inherent in both ecclesiastical and secular socialities. On their basis, such forms of social order as anarchy and theocracy (or God-rule) may arise, not contradictory forms, but opposite ones (Florensky 1994, 198). Hierarchic forms and anarchic forms, according to Florensky, are different forms of essence, which we consider as sobornost. The establishment of feocracy is hindered by the existence of evil, defined by Florensky as "disinterested evil", respectively, the establishment of complete anarchy - the existence of good. The progress of good goes hand in hand with the progress of evil; there are contradictions in society, highlighted by Florensky: meekness - cruelty, altruism - egoism, good - evil (Florensky 1994, 200).

Florensky defines three forms of the hierarchical structure of society as steps on the path to theocracy. This is the Roman Republic, which was based on the principle of external, coercive law, a legal principle, which, according to Florensky, negatively determines the activities of the elements of society, we can attribute it to secular sociality and conciliarity at the level of essence (Florensky 1994, 197). Catholic unity, which is based on the principle of authority and internal law, which positively, according to Florensky's thoughts, determined the activity of the elements of society and "spiritual Christianity", which is based on the principle of mystical, divine, which unconditionally determines the activity of the elements of society, i.e., unconditional principle defined by us as church sociality and sobornost at the level of being (Florensky 1994, 198).

Florensky writes that at the level of sobornost as a concept, the hierarchical principle is based on the fact that everyone acts on the basis of a norm, which is recognized as unconditional truth and good, the goal becomes the possibility of establishing God-rule, or theocracy (Florensky 1994, 198). Such a unity is valid; it does not restrict the freedom of the elements associated with actions that are carried out according to moral laws. On the basis of the hierarchical principle of "feocratism", all life is determined from within, obeying, according to Florensky, the universal Truth, and the whole consists in complete, natural unity. Unity, according to Florensky, is the reason that determines consciousness, determines truth and ideal (Florensky 1994, 198). Theocracy, which, in our opinion, is characteristic of church-secular sociality, proceeds from the unconditional principle of moral action, is built hierarchically in relation to the absolute,

God, proceeding from transcendental foundations. Each person, in this case, must voluntarily preserve a certain social law, which is understood as some kind of absolute unconditional good. From the subordination of each to this unconditional law follows a social hierarchy, in which each occupies the place he is supposed to be and cannot be replaced in this place by anyone else. There is a law, an absolute Truth, equal to God, the adherence to which is absolutely voluntary on the part of every person. The transcendental foundation of law and hierarchy in society presupposes absolute freedom in obeying the Truth. As a result, a "universal society", a "universal society" is formed (Florensky 1994, 199). Theocracy is possible with the unconditional voluntary action of all members of society, if at least one is forced to act according to the law of Truth, then theocracy loses its existential status (Florensky 1994, 200).

## **5. Conclusions**

In our opinion, in the texts of P. Florensky and S.N. Bulgakov, three levels of dialectical disclosure of the category of sobornost can be defined: sobornost in the form of being in church sociality, sobornost in the form of the essence of secular sociality, and the possible state of sobornost as a concept of church-secular sociality. For sobornost in the form of a concept, hierarchicality is characteristic, making the achievement of the situation of sobornost outside of history, or supra-historical, Christian individualism, direct communication with God, the idea of being chosen, minimizing free action, the formation of a special type of "religious" in the process of "wandering", according to S. Bulgakov, or "spiritual", "consolidated", "open" personality, formed in the process of "asceticism", according to P. Florensky. It should be noted that "self-sacrificing" was considered by S.N. Bulgakov at the level of sobornost as a concept in church-secular sociality. P. Florensky reveals "self-sacrificing" at the level of sobornost as being, in church sociality. It is based on "feat" (Florensky 1990, 292).

Sobornost in the form of essence is sobornost that denies its existential position, revealing itself in the form of secular sociality with such definitions as anarchism, immanence, and relativity of moral principles, denial and hostility towards religion, lack of freedom, with the emerging "sinful", "secretive", "Loose", "collective" personality, which is defined in the works of S.N.Bulgakov and P.Florensky, in which "heroism" and "materiality", non-religious individualism, humanity, selfishness, hedonism, the absence of the concept of sin come to the fore, external maximalism of ends and means, missianism and exclusivity. Sobornost, in the form of a concept, develops in dialectical formation through the transition of sobornost to a new qualitative level of its development in

church-secular sociality. This form of sobornost is characterized by the principle of hierarchism, on the basis of which the theocracy is formed, according to P. Florensky, the freedom of action of a free individual in Bulgakov's "self-sacrificing" in the historical perspective, with divine-human guidelines for action, the main value is sobornost, with transcendental foundations of morality, originating in God.

## References:

Astapov, Sergej Nikolaevich. 2009. "Antinomy in the Negative Dialectic of P. A. Florensky, S. N. Bulgakov, S. L. Frank." *Scientific Thought of the Caucasus* 57, no.1: 54-58. <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/antinomiya-v-otritsatelnoy-dialektike-p-a-florenskogo-s-n-bulgakova-s-l-franka>.

Astapov, Sergej Nikolaevich. 2010. "The Main Problems of the Philosophy of Religion in the Antinomic Discourse of P.A. Florensky, S.N. Bulgakov, S.L. Frank, A.F. Loseva." *Economic and Humanitarian Studies of Regions*, no. 2: 38-56.

Belov, Vladimir Nikolaevich, Ivleva, Marina Levenbertovna, Nizhnikov, Sergei Anatolyevich. 2019. "The Possibility of Christian Philosophy." *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 52, vol. 18 (Spring):17-30. <https://jsri.ro/ojs/index.php/jsri/article/view/1036>.

Breckner, Katharina. 2011. "Universalism as a Departmental Reason for Christian Ethics. A Cursory Outlook on Concepts that Allow Particularism Using the Example of Solov'ev, Bulgakov, Berdjaev and Frank." In *The normative image of man in Russian philosophy*, edited by Alexander Haard, Nikolaj Plotnikov, 43-53. Berlin: LIT Verlag Dr. W. Hopf. <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=VCSi03uVHvkC&hl=ru&pg=GBS.PA43>.

Breckner, Katharina. 2006. "Russian Philosophers on Continuous Creation as the Basis for Social Change." *Studies in East European Thought* 58, no. 4 (December): 271-297. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11212-006-9007-2>.

Bulgakov, Sergey Nikolaevich. 2008. *Two Cities: Research on the Nature of Social Ideals*. Moscow: Astrel.

Bulgakov, Sergey Nikolaevich. 2011. *Orthodoxy. Essays on the teachings of the Orthodox Church*. Minsk: Publishing House of the Belarusian Exarchate.

Bulgakov, Sergey. 2017. *The Light of the Evening: Contemplation and Speculation*. Moscow: Azbuka, Azbuka-Attikus.

Bulgakov, Sergey Nikolaevich. 1991. *Christian Socialism: Disputes about the Fates of Russia*. Novosibirsk: Science. Siberian branch.

Bulgakov, Sergey Nikolaevich. 2009. *Economy Philosophy*. Moscow: Institute of Russian Civilization Publ.

Bulgakov, Sergey Nikolaevich. 1998. "From Memory Hearts: Prague (1923-1934)." In *Research on the History of Russian Thought: Yearbook*. 112-256.

Bulgakov, Sergey Nikolaevich. 1993. "Christian Sociology." *Sociological Research*, no. 10: 120-149.

Bulgakov, Sergey Nikolaevich. 1990. "Christianity and Socialism." *Sociological Studies*, no. 4: 111-131.

Egorova, Svetlana Borisovna. 2009. "Antinomism of P. Florensky and Modern Interpretations of Antinomism." *Bulletin of the Volga Region Academy of Public Administration* 18, no. 1: 197-202.

Florensky, Pavel Alexandrovich. 1994. *Works in 4 volumes. Vol. 1*. Moscow: Thought.

Florensky, Pavel Alexandrovich. 1996. *Works in 4 volumes. Vol. 2*. Moscow: Thought.

Florensky, Pavel Alexandrovich. 1990. *Pillar and statement of truth*. Moscow: Thought.

Gallagher, Brandon. 2016. "A Supertemporal Continuum': Christocentric Trinity and the Dialectical Reenvisioning of Divine Freedom in Bulgakov and Barth." In *Correlating Sobornost: Conversations between Karl Barth and the Russian Orthodox Tradition* edited by Ashley John Moyse, Scott A. Kirkland, John C. McDowell. 95-134. Minneapolis: 1517 Media. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt17mcrxw>.

Girenok, Fyodor Ivanovich. 2013. "Dispute about Sofia: S. Bulgakov and P. Florensky" *Economy Philosophy* 87, no. 3 (May, June): 103-112.

Goryachev, Daniel A. 2019. "Priest Pavel Florensky on Antinomies." *Theological Questions*, vol. 2. no. 2: 38-58. 8. doi: 10.31802/2658-7491-2019-2-2-38-58.

Khondzinsky, Pavel Vladimirovich, Kyrlezhev, Alexander Ivanovich. 2019. "Sobornost' in the Russian theological tradition." *Issues of Theology*, vol. 1. no. 3: 427-440. <http://doi.org/10.21638/spbu28.2019.307>  
<https://dspace.spbu.ru/bitstream/11701/16555/1/427-440.pdf>

Kireev, Vladimir Konstantinovich. 2008. "The Dialectic of Sobornost." *Proceedings of Voronezh State University. Series: Linguistics and intercultural communication*, no. 3: 245-249. <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/dialektika-sobornosti>

Oppong, Harrison. 2013. "Religion and Identity". *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, vol. 3 no. 6 (June): 10-16.  
[https://aijcrnet.com/journals/Vol\\_3\\_No\\_6\\_June\\_2013/2.pdf](https://aijcrnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_6_June_2013/2.pdf).

Senina, Olga Valentinovna 2011. "S.N. Bulgakov's Spiritual Searches and Their Reflection in His Philosophical System." *Izvestiya of Saratov University. New Series. Series: Philosophy. Psychology. Pedagogy* 11, no. 1: 40-43.  
<https://php.sgu.ru/ru/articles/duhovnye-iskaniya-sn-bulgakova-i-ih-otrazhenie-v-ego-filosofskoy-sisteme>.

Shevelyova, N.B. 2013. "The Views of P.A. Florensky on Theocracy and Sobornost". In *The Collection: Russian Political Process in the Regional Dimension: History, Theory, Practice Collection of Materials of the All-Russian Scientific-Practical Conference*, 145-149.

Zwahlen, Regula. 2012. "Sergej Bulgakov's Concept of Human Dignity." In *Orthodox Christianity and Human Rights. Eastern Christian Studies* 13, edited by Alfons Brüning, Evert van der Zweerde (Hgs.). 169-186.



Zwahlen, Regula. 2011. "Die Trinitarische Konzeption der Person bei Nikolaj Berdjaev und Sergej Bulgakov". In *The normative image of man in Russian philosophy*, edited by Alexander Haard, Nikolaj Plotnikov, 53-60. Berlin: LIT Verlag Dr. W. Hopf.