

The Foolishness in the *Life* of the Archpriest Avvakum and the Problem of Innovation

“vo vsiakom khristianine sokroven est’ Khristos”¹

“Glagol bozhii vo ustekh moikh”²

Introduction

The Archpriest Avvakum gave his life defending Muscovite traditions and Church books against changes imposed by the “Nikonian” church leadership. Yet he defied convention when he wrote about his own personal experience within the hagiographical framework of a saint-martyr’s Life (*Zhitie*) and reconstituted this literary type in an unprecedented way.³ Although scholars have done rich investigations of the Avvakum’s innovations in language, style and literary type, few have investigated their relationship to his polemic with the Nikonians.⁴ Our hypothesis is that the innovations in Avvakum’s *Zhitie* [hereafter *Zh*] arose as part of a specific rhetorical strategy to defend the traditional understanding of Divine Wisdom against its reinterpretation from the viewpoint of scholastic humanism.

¹ Stefan Trofimovich, iurodivyi, in N.V. Ponyrko, “Avtor stikhov pokaiannykh iurodivyi Stefan, *Trudy otdela drevnerusskoi literatury*, [TODRL], 54 (2003): 229.

² The Archpriest Avvakum, Letter to his Family from Nikola-Ugreshkii Prison, May 1666 in *Zhitie protopopa Avvakuma...i drugie ego sochineniia*, ed. N.K. Gudziin (Moscow: GIKhL, 1960) [hereafter GIKhL], 218.

³ See J. Bortnes, *Visions of Glory* (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey, Humanities Press International, INC, 1988), 252-70. M. Pliukhanova, “Traditsionnost’ i unikal’nost socheninii protopopa Avvakuma v svete traditsii Tret’ego Rima,” ed. B. Gasparov and E. Raevsky Hughes, *Slavic Culture in the Middle Ages, Christianity and the Eastern Slavs* (Berkeley, U.of California Press, 1993), vol.1, 297-327, esp. 314-315

⁴ On the nature of literary type and the problem of categorizing Avvakum’s narrative see N.I. Gerasimova, *Poetika ‘Zhitiia’ Protopopa Avvakuma*, (St. Petersburg: St.-Peterburgskii gos. universitet, 1993), 65-67. On Avvakum’s transformation of the literary type of *Zhitie*, see also P. Hunt, “A Penitential Journey: The Life of the Archpriest Avvakum and Kenotic Tradition, in *The Church and the Religious Culture of Old Rus’, special issue of Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, ed. Norman Ingham, 25, nos. 1-4 (1991): 205-29.

The key to Avvakum's rhetorical strategy can be found in a passage from Joseph of Volotsk's polemical tract against the Judaizers, *The Enlightener (Prosvetitel')*.⁵ There Joseph defended the nature of Wisdom in an unacknowledged commentary on St. Paul's Foolishness of the Cross according to his First Epistle to the Corinthians. Paul wrote:

“Slovo bo krestnoe pogibaiushchym ubo *iurodstvo* est, a spasaemym nam sila bozhii est'...Pisano bo est: ‘pogubliu premudrost’ premudrykh, i razum razumnykh otvergu...’ Ponezhe bo v premudrosti bozhiei ne razume mir premudrostiui boga, blagoizvolil bo *buistvom* propovedi spasti *veruiushchikh*.... My zhe propoveduem khrista raspiata, iudesem ubo *soblazn'*, ellinom zhe *bezumie*, samem zhe zvannym...khrista, bozhiiu silu i bozhiiu premudrost'...no glagolem premudrost' bozhiiu v *tainu* sokrovennuui, iuzhe predustavi bog prezhde vek v slavu nashu...premudrost' bo mira sego buistvo u boga est', pisano bo est': zapinaiai premudrym v *kovarstve* ikh...” (1:18,19,21-24; 2:7; 3:19). [my italics, P. H.]⁶

⁵ See Iosif, Saint, hegumen, *Prosvetitel' ili oblichenie eresi Zhidovstvuiushchikh* (Kazan': tip. Imperatorskago universiteta, 1903), *gl.* 4, 146-48.

⁶ In this study all biblical citations will be from the Slavonic Ostrog Bible as reprinted in *Biblia pisaniia vetkago i novago zaveta*. (St. Petersburg: Sinodal'naia Tipografiia, 1891). Modern translations will be in the footnotes: “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.’..For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe...we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called...Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God...But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory...For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, ‘He catches the wise in their own craftiness.’” Paul used several terms to articulate a notion of foolishness, translated as “bezumie,” “iurodstvo” and “buistvo.” A.I. Klibanov noted that the Slavonic “buistvo” corresponds to the Greek “prostota” but has the connotations of “smelost’,” “khrabrost’,” “derzost’” and “bezumie.” See “Protopop Avvakum i Apostol Pavel,” *Staroobriadchestvo v Rossii (XVII-XVIII vv.)*, ed. E.M. Iukhimenko (Moscow: “Arkheograficheskii tsentre, 1994), 20-21. Avvakum introduced his teaching, “O vneshnei premudrosti” with this citation from 1Cor. 1:21. See *Pustozerskaia proza*, 104.

Joseph alluded to this passage to extol Wisdom's mysterious depth, accessible to faith alone, against the heretics' attempt to grasp it through inquiry and disputation: "Egda bo Bog chto tvorit', ili povelevaet chto tvoriti, primate verne, a ne ispytovati dr"zostne: ezhe bo ispytovati vinu, i istiazati pria i obraz vzyskovati, dusha razvrashchenny..i neveriem neduguiushchaa delo est."⁷ He urged his adversaries not to fall in the trap that Paul described when he wrote that Christ's crucifixion is a temptation (*soblazn'*) and a stumbling block to reason: "Sego radi ne podobaet o sikh..s"meisia, ili s"blazhniatisia, ili pretykatisia, no verovati tochiu bezmerno *puchine* bozhiia premudrosti." [My italics, P.H.]⁸ God has the freedom to do whatever he wills. He deliberately avoids being second-guessed by the worldly wise and acts in ways that make no sense from the point of view of human reason or morality. Instead He makes use of "craftiness" (*prekhyshchrenie, kovarstvo*) to catch the crafty in their own wiles (1Cor. 3:19).

Joseph documented the divine use of craftiness that kept the faithful from being caught in the serpent's seductions (*lest'*): "ne by iata byla lestiiu zmievoiu." When God could have done something openly (*iav'stveno*), Joseph emphasized, He invariably chose trickery and deception. Paul had shown Joseph the first and most important example, Christ's archetypal death on the cross that defeats hell and death: "glubinami mudrosti... tako blagoizvoli....i postradati i v ad sniti, i izvesti adama ot ada i sushchikh s nim. I tako bozhestvenoiu mudrostiiu *prekhytri* diavola." [my italics]⁹ Joseph then provided a list of Old and New Testament examples that included the trickery of the harlot Rahab at Jericho, and the scandalous behavior of prophets who ate animal waste, went naked and barefoot, or senselessly lay on their sides as Ezekiel did. Joseph implicitly understood all

⁷ All translations from the Russian are mine, P. H. "When God accomplishes something or commands that something be accomplished, take it on faith and don't arrogantly subject it to a test. Corrupted souls test out the reason and, arguing the contrary, tease out the meaning...and this is the work of those afflicted with unbelief."

⁸ "For this reason, it is not fitting to doubt this or be seduced or stumble, but to believe solely in the limitless depth of Divine Wisdom."

⁹ "in the depths of wisdom...[He] so willed...[that Christ] suffer and descend into hell and lead Adam and those with him out of hell. And in this way, through divine wisdom, He outsmarted (out-tricked) the devil."

of this “crafty” behavior in the same way as Paul, i.e. as providential realizations of the Foolishness of the Cross.

Avvakum did not openly acknowledge his debt to Joseph of Volotsk, but he provided evidence of this debt in *Zh*. He described himself embodying Wisdom and participating in the Foolishness of the Cross in the same way as the prophets in Joseph’s description.¹⁰ At the apotheosis of the narrative Avvakum made explicit the connection between the prophet and foolish craftiness: As he pronounced himself a fool-in-Christ before his Nikonian judges at the Council of 1666-67 he himself lay down on the ground like the Prophet Ezekiel.¹¹

Joseph’s defense of Wisdom informed the rhetorical strategy of *Zh* as a whole. Heeding Joseph’s frequent attestation that God was working in the same way now as ever, Avvakum used trickery to refute religious rationalism, unmask its Lie and confirm the prophetic and polemical nature of *Zh*.¹² Unlike Joseph himself, Avvakum embodied *prekhyshchrenie* and *kovarstvo* in *Zh*’s poetic structure, raising his defense of Wisdom to an experiential level. His defense of Wisdom attained an unprecedented sophistication

¹⁰ Avvakum also dramatized in his foolishness the operation of free will inherent in Divine Wisdom, and epitomized by Christ’s kenosis. See P. Hunt, “A Penitential Journey,” esp. 206, 217, 223-24.

¹¹ See A. N. Robinson, *Zhizneopisaniia Avvakuma i Epifaniia*, (Moscow: Izd. akademii nauk, 1963) [hereafter *Zhizneopisaniia*], 168. He described himself eating animal refuse during his journey with Pashkov in *Zhizneopisaniia*, 151. See also P. Hunt, “A Penitential Journey,” esp. 217. There I interpret the narrative as an expression of Pauline Foolishness in Christ by analogy to the kenosis of Christ. Avvakum also modeled his behavior on the trickery of the harlot Rahab. See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 158. His trickery involved throwing a blanket over a scoundrel so that he wouldn’t be found by Pashkov and put to death: “...spriatal ego...lga v te pory i skazyval: ‘Net evo u menia!’...my za odno vorovali—ot smerti chelovek ukhoronili, ishcha evo pokaianiia k bogu.” (I hid him...and lied at that time when I said: ‘He’s not with me!’...we behaved dishonestly for one reason—we buried a person away from death, seeking his repentance to God). The paradox, “ot smerti chelovek ukhoronili” (“we buried a person away from death”) played on the mystery of death defeating death. The scene exemplified Avvakum’s Foolishness of the Cross in the spirit of Joseph of Volotsk and St. Paul. See also D.S. Likhachev, A. M. Panchenko, “*Smekhovoi mir*” *drevnei Rusi*, (Leningrad: Nauka, 1976), 81-82, 149-50.

¹² On Avvakum’s conception of the Lie, see footnote 64. He openly accused the Nikonians of craftiness (*zlokhitrstvo*) in “O vneshnei premudrosti.” See *Pustozerskaia proza*, 106.

and self-consciousness because *Zh* took on the burden of “catching” the Nikonians in the “craftiness” involved in redefining the meaning of Wisdom.

The following analysis will show that the innovations in *Zh* derived from its function as a puzzle and a teaching parable about the Foolishness of the Cross.¹³ Avvakum created a unique kind of foolish text to manifest Wisdom’s hidden depths (*puchina*, *glubina* in Joseph’s terms). It set surface against depth, appearance against reality to offer both a testimony to and a test of faith as the highest form of knowledge of God. On the surface, Avvakum presented himself in a scandalously non-conventional way as both prophet and fool.¹⁴ He thus challenged his listeners and readers to understand this non-conventionality as rhetorical play. He invited them to accept his puzzling text as a teaching parable about the meaning and nature of faith when time was approaching its end, and the elect were facing the serpent’s final seductions and trials. Avvakum rewarded his readers/listeners for the faith that enabled them to accept *Zh* when he embedded in his narrative indicators of hidden depths of meaning, profound revelations that confirmed their mutual salvation.

Avvakum built up his puzzle from the archetypal foundation of the conventional Life of the martyr, the imitation of Christ’s Passion. An examination of Avvakum’s creative process shows that he embedded this Archetype for his self-representation in a rhetorical structure that signified the Foolishness of the Cross. He derived his hagiographical model from St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians and

¹³ On the puzzle and parable (*zagadki*, *pritchi*) as the keys to the fool’s behavior in Byzantino-Muscovite tradition, see “*Smekhovoi mir*,” 127-28.

¹⁴ On the fool as prophet, see Sv. Kobets, “The Paradigm of the Hebrew Prophet and the Russian Tradition of Iurodstvo,” *Canadian Slavonic Papers/Revue canadienne des slavistes*, 50, nos. 1–2, (March–June 2008): 17-32. On Avvakum as prophet, see N.S. Demkova, “Iz kommentarii k ‘Knige tolkovanii’ Avvakuma (Tema proroka v rannei staroobriadcheskoi publitsistke),” *Sochineniia Avvakuma i publitsisticheskaia literatura rannego staroobriadchestva* (St. Petersburg: Izd. Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta, 1998), 238-242; P. Hunt, “A Penitential Journey,” 204; “Justice in Avvakum’s Fifth Petition to Aleksei Mikhailovich” in *Slavic Cultures in the Middle Ages*, 276-97; “The Ritual Dynamics of Dissent in Avvakum’s ‘Fifth Petition’ to Tsar’ Aleksei Mikhailovich,” *Slavic and East European Journal*, 46, no. 3, (Spring, 2003): 483-510. A Russian translation will appear in *Germenevtika*, 14.

their rhetorical use of autobiographical narrative.¹⁵ On a thematic level, *Zh* interpreted the Pauline idea of foolery through the written and behavioral tradition of foolishness-in-Christ in the Byzantino-Slavic world.¹⁶ However on the structural and rhetorical level, Avvakum's direct debt to Paul's autobiographical narrative took him beyond the conventions associated with this tradition of holy foolery.¹⁷ In the concluding apologia, he recognized that he was going against conventional expectations, while still following a sacred model established by St. Paul : “”inoe bylo, kazhetsia, pro Zhitie-to mne i ne nadobno govorit’, da prochtokh Deiianiia apostol’skaia i Poslaniia pavlova—apostoli o sebe vozveshchali zhe, egda chto bog sodelaet v nikh...”¹⁸

¹⁵ On St. Paul's rhetoric see A. Bullmore, *St. Paul's Theology of Rhetorical Style: An Examination of 1Corinthians 2.1-5 in Light of Greco-Roman Rhetorical Culture* (San Francisco: International Scholars Publications, 1995). For the meaning of rhetoric, and on the roots of Paul's rhetoric in a synthesis of Greek and Old Testament practice that allows for the emergence of individual self-consciousness and a sense of authorship, see S.S. Averintsev, *Ritorika i istoki evropeiskoi literaturnoi traditsii* (Moscow: "Iazyki russkoi kul'tury," 1996), 13-76. See also his, "Istoki i razvitie rannekhristsianskoi literatury," *Istoriia vsemirnoi literatury* (Moscow: "Nauka," 1983), vol. 1, 513.

¹⁶ See A.I. Klivanov, "Iurodstvo kak fenomen russkoi srednevekovoi kul'tury," *Disput*, no.1, (1992): 46-63. For a historical perspective on the phenomenon, see S.A. Ivanov, *Blazhennye pokhaby: Kul'turnaia istoriia iurodstva* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskikh kul'tur, 2005), 231-331. On foolery's importance in Old Believer oppositional culture, on the holy fools surrounding and assisting Avvakum, and on Avvakum's foolishness at the Council of 1666-7 see P. Pascal, *Avvakum et les Debuts du Raskol* (Paris: Mouton & Co, 1963), 317-19, 332-37; D. Likhachev and A.M. Panchenko, "Smekhovoi mir," 148-66.

¹⁷ On St. Paul's importance for Avvakum, see N. Gerasimova, *Poetika*, 56-64 and A.I. Klivanov "Protopop Avvakum i Apostol Pavel," 12-43. The importance of the epistles to the Corinthians is evident in Avvakum's archive of notes during the period 1664-1667, when he was gathering materials for his debates with the Nikonians. See the draft of his epistle to Rtishchev, and notes, 56, 57, 59, 60, 67, 71-73, 78, 81, 91 in I.M. Kudriavtsev, "Sbornik XVII v. s podpisami protopopa Avvakuma i drugikh pustozerskikh uznikov," *Zapiski otdela rukopisei, GLB* (Moscow: "Kniga," 1972), 148-213, esp. 180-92. On the lives of holy fools in the 17th century and the official attitude towards them, see Ivanov, *Blazhennye pokhaby*, 295-316.

¹⁸ *Zhizneopisaniia*, 171. ("it might seem that it is not proper for me to be writing a saint's life (Zhitie) about myself, but I read the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul—the apostles spoke about themselves to make known what God accomplished through them...") On the relationship of genre evolution to sacred models, see S.A. Demchenkov, "Evoliutsiia zhanrov khristianskoi knizhnosti: Osnovnye puti zhanroobrazovaniia," *Sviatootechneskie traditsii v russkoi literature* (Omsk: Omskii gos.universitet), 42-48.

Avvakum wrote the first autobiographical Life of a holy fool-prophet in order to demonstrate the meaning of faith through the play with perception inherent to the Foolishness of the Cross.¹⁹ In the introduction, he invested this play with a deeper level of meaning by adding a theological layer to his primary Pauline self-representation.²⁰ This layer derived from the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite on Divine Wisdom, themselves commentaries on St. Paul.²¹ Avvakum thus made the higher theological agenda of his foolery self-conscious by his acknowledged debt to the two principal authorities on Divine Wisdom in Eastern Orthodox tradition.²²

Dionysius described Paul as the model of a true Christian, by which he meant an initiate into mystical Wisdom.²³ In *Zh*, Avvakum embodied Paul's Foolishness of the Cross in the mystical context provided by Dionysius. His goal was to show himself a true Christian and an exemplum for his readers/listeners in opposition to the Nikonians'

¹⁹ Here we will reserve the term "foolishness" for fool's play, and "foolery" for the paradigm of sanctity that made use of this play. On the previous existence of autobiographical narrative in Russian tradition, see S.A. Demchenkov, "K voprosu o Zhanrovoi prirode avtobiograficheskikh Zhitii v russkoi literature XVI-XVII vv.," *Sviatootecheskie traditsii v russkoi literature* (Omsk: OmGU, 2003), 21-27.

²⁰ On Avvakum's theological agenda and its impact on *Zh*, see P. Hunt, "The Autobiography of the Archpriest Avvakum: The Outer Limits of the Narrative Icon," Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, March 1979, available through University Microfilms International [hereafter, "The Outer Limits"]; "Samoopravdanie Protopopa Avvakuma," *TODRL*, 33, (1978): 182-97; "The Autobiography of the Archpriest Avvakum, Structure and Function," *Ricerche Slavistiche*, 23 (1975-76): 57-70, esp. 163-65 [hereafter "Structure and Function"]; "Zhitie Protopopa Avvakuma i ideologiia raskola," *Traditsionnaia dukhovnaia i material'naia kul'tura russkikh staroobriadcheskikh poselenii*, ed. N.N. Pokrovskii, R. Morris (Novosibirsk, "Nauka," 1992), 40-46; "The Theology in Avvakum's Life and his Polemic with the Nikonians," forthcoming in a *festschrift* for Daniel Rowland, ed. V. Kivelson.

²¹ See for example, Dionysius' exegesis of 1 Corinthians in "O premudrosti, o ume, o slove, o istinne, o vere," Chapter 7 of *O bozhestvennykh imenekh, Velikie Minei chet'i na 3 Oktiabria* (St. Petersburg: Tip. Imp. Akadmii nauk, 1870), *stolby* 542—57. Avvakum referred to this chapter in Kudriatsev, "Sbornik XVII v. ...," notes 102-5 and included these references in the introduction to *Zh*. See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 139. See also P. Hunt, "Ivan IV's Personal Mythology of Kingship," *Slavic Review*, 52, no. 4 (Winter, 1993): 788.

²² On the language of foolishness and Divine Wisdom, See P. Hunt, "Ivan IV's Personal Mythology of Kingship," 778-92.

²³ See "O premudrosti, o ume, o slove, o istinne, o vere," *O bozhestvennykh imenekh, stolb* 542.

claims that their mastery of the liberal arts, especially grammar, rhetoric and philosophy made them the only true Christian teachers.²⁴

Dionysius the Areopagite invested Paul's understanding of Wisdom with a mystical brilliance that embodied Wisdom's transcendence or depth. He envisioned it as Light expanding into volume.²⁵ Paul's Foolishness of the Cross played with the dimensions of this volume in order to model participation in the Light and the resulting knowledge. Its play with depth, height and surface involved a language of paradox, contrast, reversal and inversion. By embodying the integrity of these dimensions, Paul exemplified the consonance of inner vision/faith and external actions that distinguished the true Christian.

Dionysius the Areopagite offered an abstract language for the implicit spatial-cognitive model underlying Paul's Foolishness of the Cross.²⁶ He interpreted this model in terms of Neo-Platonic tradition about the One.²⁷ He envisioned Wisdom's volume as a circle in three dimensions. This sphere of Light embodied the creative action of the Word, the process of divine self-communication that brought the world into Being and continues to renew it. The hidden center was an outflowing depth of creative Light/Love/Wisdom that manifest the Divine Thought and its eternal Archetypes (Logoi). This Wisdom/Light penetrated the external surface of Being where it entered into the

²⁴ On the seven liberal arts in the culture of Avvakum's antagonists and especially Simeon Polotsky, see A.S. Eleonskaia, "Tema vospitaniia 'sovershennogo cheloveka' v uchitel'no-polemicheskikh sochineniiakh Simeona Polotskogo," *Russkaia publitsistika vtoroi poloviny XVII veka* (Moscow: "Nauka", 1978), 137-86. See also Averintsev, "Antichnaia ritorika i sud'by antichnogo ratsionalizma, *Ritorika i istoki*... 115-46.

²⁵ Paul had the same perception when he referred to love's "breadth and length," "depth" and "height" (Ephes. 3:18). See V.I. Lossky, "Traditions and Traditions," in L. Ouspensky and V.I. Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989), 15.

²⁶ This abstract language was the theological-spatial model for all expressions of the Word. V. Lossky implied its presence in iconography: "...in looking at an icon one discovers in it a 'logical' structure, a dogmatic content which has determined its composition." See "Traditions and Tradition," 22. I have described this "intellectual" or "'logical' structure" and its relationship to iconography in P. Hunt, "The Wisdom Iconography of Light in Byzantino-Slavic Tradition," due to appear in *Byzantinoslavica*, 67 (2009), forthcoming. For its relevance to Zh, see P. Hunt, "The Outer Limits," esp. 142-46.

²⁷ See P. Hunt, "The Wisdom iconography of Light."

experiential-material dimension and became knowable to humankind. The integrity of surface and center existed eternally (ontologically) in the mind of God and could be realized through the temporal experience of the saints.²⁸

The mystical teacher was implicitly a point on the surface of the sphere engaged in mental ascent, experiencing the “height” that signified his movement to the sphere’s interior; At the same time, he experienced an inner vision that signaled his openness to the divine “depth” flowing out from the sphere’s interior. Initiation into Divine Wisdom meant the knowledge deriving from participation in both directions of the sphere’s movement on the part of God and humankind, signifying depth and height respectively. Paul’s foolery was addressed to the “world” by which he meant those who failed to see the interrelationship of surface and depth, who lived in the darkness, deprived of eternal Being and disconnected from the Divine Archetypes and Thought. It was meant to shock the profane into awareness of this interrelationship and set them on the path to Wisdom and inner transfiguration with Light.

In the introduction to the latest, most theologically sophisticated version of *Zh*, Avvakum placed himself inside and the Nikonians outside a circle that alluded to Dionysius’ mystical sphere.²⁹ At the same time he added an instruction from Abba Dorotheus that interpreted the circle’s dynamics as the action of indwelling love and power (*liubov’*, *sila*) by analogy to Dionysius’ interpretation of indwelling Light. This additional layer of mystical symbolism supplemented Avvakum’s use of Christ’s Light as a central metaphor for his own Wisdom as a true teacher.³⁰ Avvakum saturated *Zh* with

²⁸ See P. Hunt, “The Wisdom Iconography of Light...”. On the semantic and structural modeling of the Word in Muscovite Wisdom theology, without reference to the sphere, see P. Hunt, “Ivan IV's Personal Mythology,” 778-79.

²⁹ See redaction V, created between 1674-5 in a facsimile version in Avvakum’s hand, in *Pustozerskii sbornik*, ed. N.S. Demkova, N.F. Droblenkova, L.I. Sazonova (Leningrad: “Nauka,” 1975), *listy* 1, 1ob., 2. I first explore the meaning of this hidden sphere for the structure of Avvakum’s *Zh* in “The Outer Limits.” See also, “Structure and Function,” esp. 162-65.

³⁰ In the introduction Avvakum presented Light as a Divine Name according to Dionysius the Areopagite, i.e. it expresses the communicated essence or Wisdom of God by analogy to Life, Being and Truth. When he described his confrontation with his own inner sin, and then with the Nikonians’ sin, metaphors of darkness and light pervaded the narrative and were associated with the presence or absence of vision: “Sami vidiat, chto duruiut ... *omrachil* d’iavol...vyprosila u boga *svetluiu* rosiu satona, da zhe ochervlenit iu kroviiu

the rhetoric of foolery to uncover his own and the Nikonians' respective relationship to this inner Light. This rhetoric implicitly placed himself inside and the Nikonians outside the hidden sphere of Wisdom, presented in the introduction.

Paul's paradigm of the Foolishness of the Cross showed Avvakum how to make the relationship between surface and depth in the sphere dialogic and oppositional. He interpreted this relationship as an interplay of darkness with light, appearance with reality to manifest Truth and Wisdom.³¹ This interplay was polemical. It exposed the Nikonians' external (*vneshnaia*) wisdom that placed them outside the sphere: Their repudiation of depth and transcendence, their refusal to see and participate in the Light, showed them reducing their lives and words to mere illusion, to surface vanity and appearance without ontological substance and power of renewal. It testified to the lack of Being, Light, Life and Truth that made their existence a Lie and doomed them to perdition.³² Avvakum's foolish rhetoric set the Nikonians' absence against his own fullness with Truth. His foolery thus functioned as a two-edged sword that separated Truth from Lie. Filled with the spirit of prophecy, it brought to light the hidden things of darkness (1 Cor. 4:5) and shared in the revelatory Light of time's end.³³

Avvakum's foolery was also a defense of the Spirit of tradition that had sanctified the Church books and the saints over time. His own ability to express depth through his surface nature modeled the presence of inner Light in the tradition as a whole and its inviolable nature.³⁴ Avvakum's foolery thus taught his audience how to recognize the

muchenicheskoiu...nam to liubo-Khrista radi, nashego *sveta*, postradat'! [my italics] ("They themselves see that they are acting like idiots...the devil covered them in *darkness*Satan asked God to give him *bright* Russia so as to redden it with the blood of martyrs...and we are glad to suffer for the sake of Christ our *light*.") See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 139, 143-44, 165. On color imagery in *Zh* and its relation to his inner journey from darkness to light, see P. Hunt, "A Penitential Journey," esp.208.

³¹ On this structure of oppositions to express Christ's power in *Zh*; on *Zh*'s dialogic interpretation of Avvakum's self-interrelationship as narrator and protagonist, as well as of his relationship with antagonists, see P. Hunt, "Structure and Function," 165-76. See also J. Bortnes, *Visions of Glory*, 262.

³² See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 139.

³³ On this two-edged sword and the fool's realization of the archetypes of eschatological judgment, see P. Hunt, "Ivan IV's Personal Mythology of Kingship," 788-92.

³⁴ On the relationship of holy foolery to the Spirit of tradition, see A.I. Klivanov, "Protopop Avakum i Apostol Pavel."

difference between the true and false book. *Zh* defended tradition by pitting its providential, anti-rational revelation of hidden mystery against the Nikonians' rationalistic adherence to surface "correctness."³⁵

To understand Avvakum's creative strategy, we will first elucidate Paul's paradigm of the Wisdom/Foolishness of the cross, and its rhetorical play with the categories surface and depth, Illusion and Truth. We will then describe how Avvakum constructed *Zh* to embody this Foolishness, and went beyond the conventions of the martyr's *Life* based on the Archetype of Christ's Passion to expose the Nikonians and teach his followers. The protagonist declared himself a fool-in-Christ in words from 1 Cor. 4:10 in the episode where he confronted his judges at the Council of 1666-67.³⁶ Our analysis will focus on this scene, and the way it communicates meaning. Our method will be to 1) compare Avvakum's treatment of his experience at the Council in the original "draft" redaction of his *Zh* of 1669 and in the "mature" redaction of 1673 that he sent out to his followers in the first Pustozersk sbornik;³⁷ and 2) compare the use of visions from

³⁵ Avvakum wrote: "Tak-to u eretikov-tekh u vsekh vymysl: verkhi u Pisaniia-tovo khvataiut, chto myshi ugly u knig-tekh ugryzaiut, a vnutr' lezhashchago pravedne ni malo; a inye i znaiut, da ukhishchreniem zaminaiut, i vsem khotiashchim spatsisia zapinaiut." ("All the heretics have the same approach: they grasp at the surface of the Scriptures, like mice gnawing at the corners of those books, but the truth that lies within interests them not at all; others know better but they use craftiness to flatten it out and keep it away from all the others who are seeking salvation.") See Klibanov, "Protopop Avvakum i Apostol Pavel," 36. A. Melnikov was the first to recognize that the opposition depth and surface was central to the Old Believer worldview: "Ne obriadoverie vystypaet u staroobriadtsa na pervoe i glavneishee mesto, a vnutrenniaia sushchnost' vneshniago deistviia," ("The belief in ritual is not the main and most important thing for an old ritualistic but rather the inner essence of external action.") "Samobytnost' Staroobriadchestva," *Russkaia Mysl*, (May, 1911), Sect. 2: 72-81, 80. Vladimir Lossky defined tradition in similar terms: "...it [tradition] does not impose on human consciousness by formal guarantees of the truths of faiths, but gives access to the discovery of their inner evidence. It is not the content of revelation, but the light that reveals it; it is not the word but the living breath which makes the word heard at the same time as the silence from which it came; it is not the Truth but a communication of the Spirit of Truth...in sum, the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church.... independent of all 'philosophy,' of all that lives by the 'tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ' (Col.2:8). See Vl. Lossky, "Traditions and Traditions," 15.

³⁶ *Zhizneopisaniia*, 167-168.

³⁷ For the 1669 draft redaction, circulated in the so-called Prianishnikov sbornik, see GIKhL, 305-345. For the first mature redaction "A" dating from mid-1673, circulated in

Avvakum's Fifth Petition to Aleksei Mikhailovich of 1669 [hereafter *FPAM*] in the draft and mature redactions of *Zh* respectively.³⁸

This comparison of the use of visions indicates the increasing sophistication with which *Zh* embodied Wisdom. It shows how Avvakum refined the structure of *Zh* to be in a dialogic relationship with *FPAM* and model the action of the sphere: In the mature redaction, Avvakum's inner visions in *FPAM* functioned as rungs in the mystical hierarchy through which Divine Light flows into the surface of Being; it flowed first through Avvakum's mystical body and then into this body's recreation in *Zh*, filling the council scene with hidden Wisdom.³⁹ In revising his text, Avvakum placed the visions in relationship to the narrative as Archetype to image, as creative Thought to its experiential realization outside the creator's mind. The differing treatment of the visions in the draft and mature redaction of *Zh* offered a key to Avvakum's imitation of The Passion through the interplay of surface and depth activated by his foolishness-in-Christ.

The Pauline Paradigm

Dionysius the Areopagite's deep model of the sphere realized relationships inherent in Paul's Foolishness of the Cross. These relationships were modeled by the functional interaction of perpendicular (vertical and horizontal) axes that intersected at the center of the sphere. Expanding simultaneously away from the center to the surface, they together manifested the sphere's integrity and open-ended volume.⁴⁰ The expansion of the vertical axis modeled transcendental reality with depth/height. It signified degrees of mystical union of surface with depth, humankind with God. Its outer extreme was absolute interiority, unadulterated depth, submersion in the eternal and unchanging nature of God. This vertical movement encompassed human return to God through ascent and

the so-called Druzhinin sbornik, see *Zhizneopisaniia*, 139-178. On the four redactions of the text, the draft, B, A, V, and their dating, see N.S. Demkova, *Zhitie Protopopa Avvakuma (tvorcheskaia istoriia proizvedeniia)*. (Leningrad: Izd. Leningradskogo universiteta, 1974), 107-41. This study does not address redaction B, intermediate between the draft and redaction A.

³⁸ *FPAM* can be found in GIKhL, 195-202.

³⁹ On the hierarchical structure of *Zh* marking the stages of the protagonist's movement to the sphere's center, see P. Hunt, "Structure and Function," 165-69.

⁴⁰ See the diagrams in P. Hunt, "The Wisdom Iconography of Light."

separation from the world. It thus modeled a progress from outward to inward, from points on the surface to center, from part to whole, time to eternity, man to God.

The horizontal axis measured the opposite: degrees of decreasing integration of surface and depth and separation from God. Its movement inverted the vertical axis: from inner to outer, from the expanding oneness of the center to isolated points on the surface, from whole to part, eternity to time, God to man, life to physical death. Its outermost extreme was total detachment from the center, absolute externality—the fall into spiritual death and eternal oblivion. Movement on this axis modeled a person’s chronological progress in historical time/space into the world and away from God. At its outermost limit, the surface becomes an end in itself outside the volume of the sphere, depriving both life and death of the Spirit of redemption that is the inner Wisdom of God.⁴¹

The average Christian strove to integrate the two axes and participate in the mystery of Christ’s redemptive death. The Christian with the courage to embrace the Foolishness of the Cross lived out these two axes at their outer limits and in their inverse relationship to one another. The fool-in-Christ hovered on the verge of loss of integrity; He existed at the nexus where the simultaneity of the two axes threatens to break apart, and he risked oblivion and perdition in his zeal to submerge himself in God’s essence. Existing at this outer limit, his foolery militantly defined itself against the extremity of the horizontal axis in his antagonists, i.e. against the forces shattering integrity and making the surface an end in itself. It had boundary power to both heal (integrate the center) and destroy (expose the non-being in the forces that oppose the center). In this

⁴¹ Iur. Lotman used a similar model to describe the abstract language of space in medieval texts but he did not connect it with the underlying model of the sphere. See “O poniatii geograficheskogo prostranstva v russkikh srednevekovykh tekstakh,” *Trudy po znakovym sistemam*, 2, (1965): 210-16. He was intimating the presence of the intersection of the horizontal and vertical axes when he noted that geography becomes a bearer of ethical knowledge, and moral conceptions are linked to a location. On my application of this model to Avvakum’s *Zhitie* see P. Hunt, “The Outer Limits,” 146, and “Structure and Function.” Lossky, “Tradition and Traditions,” 15, referred to the horizontal plane of “revealed Truth” and to the vertical axis signifying “freedom from every condition of nature, every contingency of history....it is inherent in Christian gnosis—‘Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free’ (John 8:32)’...’But where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty’ (2 Cor. 3:17). ”

way, he endowed his imitation of Christ's death and resurrection with the power to set Divine Wisdom against the wisdom of the world.

As an act of foolery, Christ's scandalous crucifixion brought the horizontal axis to its outer boundary and epitomized the fallen, dying nature of the world, its disconnection from the center. Christ's dying *in* the world was simultaneously its inverse opposite, an ascent up the vertical axis, a dying *to* the world and inward return to God. The inner Light of faith and hope delivering him to the Father informed his voluntary suffering and descent into the darkness of death. As he realized the outer limit of the "external" horizontal axis, he also was reaching the outer limit of the "internal" vertical axis: As he suffered in the flesh and died, he inwardly returned to his Father to be resurrected in the flesh to sit at the Father's right hand. Christ's Foolishness was archetypal because it expressed timeless, immutable ontological Truth experientially in time. His Death epitomized in one moment the always present corruptibility of the world; In the same way, his Resurrection epitomized the always present renewal of the inner man through faith that resulted in the flesh's transfiguration (1Cor. 45-53). Thus the Christian who lived out the Foolishness of the Cross had prophetic power, the ability to manifest on the surface the changeless inner depth.

The Foolishness of the Cross relied on an inverse paradox: the defeat of death by death. The reality of Christ's human death at the outer limit of the horizontal axis was shattered by his simultaneous presence on the outer limit of the vertical axis, the Life-giving essence of God. As seen from the surface, from the viewpoint of worldly wisdom, his human death signified an ending; from the point of view of depth and Divine Wisdom, it was the opposite of what it seemed; it was a door onto the vertical axis of renewal and eternal life.⁴²

⁴² The icon of Christ's Resurrection encompasses the explosive and mysterious nature of this paradox as he bursts open the maw of hell and death by the door of the cross. The cross is often surrounded by keys that allude to the unlocking of the mystery -- the defeat of death by death. Christ's inner Wisdom, manifest as aureoles of Light, illuminates the surface, filling it with the Spirit of redemption and sanctification. See, for example, a 16th century icon in *Sofia Premudrost' Bozhiiia* (Moscow: Radunitsa, 2000), 226, catalog no. 77. This icon also celebrates the triumph of human moral virtues, interpreting Christ's action in an ontological sense that is relevant to on-going life in time. It thus foreshadows

Paul's interpretation of worldly wisdom modeled the extremity of the horizontal axis where it has lost its relationship to the vertical axis and is an end in itself, an embodiment of mere surface, an appearance (without Being, Light, or Life).⁴³ Paul described the "natural man" (*dusheven chelovek*) as blind to the spiritual depth that illuminates the surface with the Divine Thought or Providence.⁴⁴ Natural man therefore lived a Lie, seducing others by "glorifying the flesh" instead of dedicating his flesh to glorifying God. He used words boastfully, as empty display and artifice disconnected from lived, inner spiritual content that would make them a Word .

By contrast, the fool-in-Christ existed where the horizontal and vertical axes were at an extreme of reciprocal tension, at the outer extremities of the expanding center. He lived at the terminus of the horizontal axis, dying everyday, degraded unto death, the lowest of the low. Yet the vertical axis exploded through the surface, filling his enigmatic behavior and words with mystery and import.⁴⁵ This explosion shattered the authority of

Avvakum's use of the Resurrection archetype for publicistic moralistic purposes in his own day at the end of time.

⁴³ See 2 Cor. 10:7, 12: "Iazhe li pred litsem zrite; Ashche kto nadeetsia sebe khristova byti, da pomyshliaet paki ot sebe...Ne smeem bo suditi, ili prikladovati sebe inym *khvaliashchym sebe samekh*: no sami v sebe sebe izmeriaiushche, i prilagaiushche sebe samim sebe, *ne razumevaiut* [my italics]. "Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? If anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ's let him again consider this in himself... For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves are not wise."

⁴⁴ See 1 Cor. 2:14: "Dusheven zhe chelovek ne priemlet iazhe dukha bozhii: iurodstvo bo emu est', i ne mozhet razumeti, zane dukhovne vostiazuetsia...." "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Paul opens with a description of the hidden depths of these "things": "...no glagolem premudrost' bozhiiu v *taine sokrovennuii*, ...Nam zhe bog otkryl est' dukhom svoim: dukh bo vsia ispytuet i *glubiny bozhii*. (1 Cor. 2:7, 10) [my italics]. "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom ...But God has revealed them to us through his Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God." See also 1Cor.15:45-55.

⁴⁵ See 2 Cor. 4:16, 18: "...temzhe ne stuzhaem si: no ashche i *vneshnii* nash chelovek tleet, obache i *vnutrennii* obnovliaetsia po vsia dni...ne smotriaiushchym nam vidimyk, no nevidimyk: vidimaia bo vremenna, nevidimaia zhe vechna." "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our *outward* man is perishing, yet the *inward* man is being renewed day by day...while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." [my italics]

appearances and provoked his spectators to question where to find reality and how to see both themselves and the fool. To those participating in the Light of the center, i.e., to those who had eyes to see, the fool's reality was the opposite of what it seemed from the vantage point of worldly wisdom, just as Christ's death was secretly a door to life.

The fool gloried in the Foolishness of the Cross to model the opposition between appearance and reality. He confronted the world with a puzzle, and demonstrated how to find the key. He modeled the inverse opposition—dying *in* the world and *to* the world—to show that appearances are the opposite of what they seem. Appearing debased and impure, he was inwardly (secretly) chaste, free from the temptations of the world. The fool's vulnerability laid bare the world's material corruptibility and movement towards death; but his countervailing inner strength and prophetic knowledge that the world was secretly united with the Spirit showed the Lie in this death. Dying *in* the world, the fool confronted his viewers with the fragility and vanity of the fallen creation separated from God. Simultaneously dying *to* the world in his inner ascetic life, he undid the Fall and himself opened the door to returning the world to God. His degradation gave the appearance that he had been abandoned by God, when in fact it was separating him from the vanity that disconnected him from God.

The more the fool counterbalanced his obvious death *in* the world with a hidden ascetic death *to* the world, the more he exposed the worldly death as mere appearance, as deception. His degradation functioned as a mask, a mere surface that hid the Reality undermining its authority. In the same way, Christ's human death covered over the deep Wisdom that defeated death. This inverse functionality made foolery a powerful rhetorical and polemical force for setting Truth against the Lie and Divine against worldly wisdom. St. Paul's foolery involved masquerade and spectacle that alerted his audience to his meaningful play, and invited them to join.

The fool's embodiment of this dynamic of inversion meant he could catch "the wise in their own craftiness" (1 Cor. 3:19). His play with illusion, masquerade, and spectacle uncovered and exposed Illusion. His pretended ignorance exposed the illusory nature of the world's knowledge that made the world truly ignorant. His pretended ignorance was an inverted expression of the world's real ignorance so as to confront the world with its own delusion. Flagrantly he violated the world's rules and exploded the

authority of the surface to expose the worldly repudiation of depth that desecrated the rules.⁴⁶ At the basis of these inversions was the simple antithesis between Divine and worldly wisdom. In Avvakum's case, his foolish words were nonsensical and rule-breaking but filled with Divine Wisdom. His antagonists' words were esthetically pleasing and rationally correct in the way of human wisdom. His words were prophetic and revelatory, inviting further inquiry. Their words were authoritarian in spirit, deterring further questioning.

Avvakum received the heritage of St. Paul through its interpretation in the written Lives and behavior of actual holy fools.⁴⁷ However Avvakum's task was to counter the desecration of the meaning of Wisdom by the elite of the institutional church. This agenda inspired him to integrate the paradigm of foolery in St. Paul's writings and deeds with the Wisdom theology that sanctified the Muscovite state. Avvakum was thus the first to embody Paul's Foolishness of the Cross in autobiographical narrative and the first to embody it in a theologically self-conscious poetic form.⁴⁸

There were standard methods for revealing hidden Wisdom in the written Lives of fools. The protagonist was often paired with an acolyte, an initiate in Wisdom who could

⁴⁶ This subversive aspect was enhanced by the fool's assimilation of the language of carnival "laughter" and parody. On this language, see D.S. Likhachev and A.M. Panchenko, "*Smekhovoi mir*," 7-91. For its logic, see I.P. Smirnov, "Drevneusskii smekh i logika komicheskogo," *TODRL* 32 (1977): 305-18. For its dialectical nature see B.A. Uspenskii, "Antipovedenie v kul'ture drevnei Rusi," *Problemy izucheniia kul'turnogo naslediiia*, ed. G.V. Stepanov (Moscow: "Nauka," 1985), 326-36; S.K. Lashchenko, *Zakliatie smekhom* (Moscow: "Ladimir," 2006) esp. 143-6.

⁴⁷ Scholars who have acknowledged Avvakum's debt to the carnival tradition that informs foolery include P. Hunt, "The Ritual Dynamics of Dissent in Avvakum's 'Fifth Petition,'" 483-510; J. Bortnes, *Visions of Glory*, 272-77; H. Birnbaum, *Aspects of the Slavic Middle Ages and Slavic Renaissance Culture* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), 483-503; Iur. Lotman and B.A. Uspenskii, "Rol' dual'nykh modelei v dinamike russkoi kul'tury (do kontsa XVIII veka)," *Trudy po russkoi i slavianskoi filologii*, 28, (1977): 18-21.

⁴⁸ On the Wisdom of the cross in Muscovite theocratic ideology, see my analysis of the Four-Part Icon of the Blagoveshchenskii sobor of the Moscow Kremlin, in P. Hunt, "Ivan IV's Personal Mythology," 778-81. The Life of Andrew the Fool does present a theologically self-conscious interpretation of foolery, but does not model this interpretation on the level of structure. I will explore this subject in a future article.

explain to the reader what was happening beneath the surface.⁴⁹ Alternatively, the author himself could reveal hidden Wisdom's depth. Avvakum broke with convention when he cast himself as both the fool and the wise observer/narrator/author and when he structured *Zh* as an interaction between the two.

Avvakum's narrative structure modeled the inverse functionality in the Foolishness of the Cross.⁵⁰ As Avvakum the protagonist traveled away from the center along the horizontal axis, his foolish behavior and words expressed his inner ascent on the vertical axis and return to the center of the sphere.⁵¹ He arrived at an end of the horizontal axis when he was officially separated from the Church on May 13, 1666, and then, a year later, appeared before the Council in the presence of ecumenical patriarchs and elite Russian clergy. At these moments the vertical axis broke through in the form of visions and self-transcendence, and he modeled the simultaneity of inverted opposites at the center. When the protagonist reached the Council and presented himself as a fool, he activated the inverse functionality of these opposites to expose the Nikonians and teach his followers.

At this moment, the protagonist realized his self-identity with the narrator/author as he presented himself in *FPAM*.⁵² Incarcerated in a living death at Pustozersk, experiencing ecstatic visions, the narrator/author was living archetypal Reality relative to the protagonist in time; he was higher on the vertical axis and thus closer to the sphere's center than the protagonist; he represented the creative depth to the protagonist's surface. Yet the protagonist fully reflected the narrator/author's archetypal dimension when he behaved as a fool-in-Christ, and modeled the outer dimensions of the volume of the

⁴⁹ For example, see the role of Epiphanius in A. Moldovan, *Zhitie Andreia Iurodivogo v slavianskoi pis'mennosti* (Moscow: Azbukovnik, 2000).

⁵⁰ J. Bortnes, *Visions of Glory*, 267 notes that the victory over death in death is the teleological principle that generates the structure of the *vita*. He does not relate this principle to foolery.

⁵¹ The narrative represents a progressive journey through a series of centers marked by deaths and resurrections that denote the stages of his integration of the horizontal and vertical axes and expansion of the center. See P. Hunt, "The Outer Limits," 146-47, 153; "The Structure and Function, 169-70;" On its connection with Pauline foolishness, see "A Penitential Journey," 207-9. See also J. Bortnes, *Visions of Glory*, 260-62.

⁵² See P. Hunt, "Structure and Function."

sphere as he confronted the Nikonians with their own essential vanity.⁵³ Avvakum placed *Zh* in a dialog with FPAM to create a two-planed structure that modeled his nature as a Word of Wisdom exposing the Nikonians' worldly wisdom.

Thus the poetic structure of *Zh* itself was suffused with the spirit of foolery. Avvakum embedded scriptural citations in the surface narrative that functioned as windows onto the vertical axis. They were clues to hidden subtexts in the writings of St. Paul and in Avvakum's *FPAM*. These "vertical" subtexts elucidated the didactic-polemical import of the surface action, its power to reveal inner Wisdom. They also showed the surface to be the inverse or opposite of what it seemed from the viewpoint of the Nikonians' worldly wisdom. Thus the narrative surface itself, like the protagonist's actions and words, was a provocative mask, a puzzle demanding a solution.

The following section will unlock this puzzle by examining the rhetoric of the protagonist's actions before the Council as conveyed by the interrelationship between the surface narrative and the subtexts.

Before the Council of 1667 (Version B)

Avvakum produced his final version of the council scene (B) in the draft redaction and made only minor changes later. He opened the council scene with an allusion to St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians that immediately set up its deeper frame of meaning: "bog otverz gresh"nye moe usta i posramil ikh Khristos!"⁵⁴ These words refer to 1 Cor. 1:27: "no buiaia mira izbra *bog*, da premudryia *posramit*', i nemoschnaia mira izbra bog, da posramit krepkaia." [my italics, P.H.]⁵⁵ The subtext

⁵³ Avvakum made the protagonist's historical reenactment of his archetypal situation as narrator/author at Pustozersk explicit in the text: He embedded in the narrative a passage borrowed from *FPAM* to signify his metaphorical death after his anathema. He added to this passage a citation from Romans 8:35 that made his inner resurrection explicit: "...kaia vozmozhe nas razluchiti ot liubvi bozhii. Skorb'li ili tesnota, ili gonenie...ili mech...?' Eshche na nebe i ko Khristu poshlet." ("Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution...or the sword? Even more, [love] will send us in heaven to Christ.") See GIKhL, 329.

⁵⁴ "God opened my sinful lips and Christ put them to shame!"

⁵⁵ "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty."

from St. Paul revealed that Avvakum was setting holy foolery against worldly wisdom. His reference to his “sinful lips” (“*gresh”nye usta*”) implied that God himself engaged in foolery when He chose the least likely candidate—Avvakum, a professed sinner, a debased outcast, a fool in the eyes of the world—to speak for Him. Thus confounding the authority of appearances, God made use of Avvakum both to shame the pretensions of those who judged His work, and to judge them in return.

Next Avvakum portrayed the Nikonians judging the Russian saints from the viewpoint of worldly wisdom.⁵⁶ The Nikonians refused to accept the saints’ sacred authority on the basis that they lacked proper education and were unable to evaluate the “correctness” of the church books: “Glupy-de byli i ne smyslili nashi russkie sviatyia, ne uchonye-de liudi byli,--chemu im verit’? One-de gramote ne umeli!”⁵⁷

From Avvakum’s “divine” transcendental viewpoint, this charge was outrageous since worldly wisdom had nothing in common with the saints’ lived knowledge of the Truth in the Church books. He countered the Nikonians’ behavior with an outrageousness of his own that wrapped the saints’ lived knowledge in the garb of foolery.

First of all, he demonstrated his voluntary separation from the Nikonians to show himself beyond worldly corruption: “‘Chist esm’ az, i prakh prilepshii ot nog svoikh otriasiau pred vami.’”⁵⁸ With almost the same words, Paul separated himself from the Jews who blasphemed Christ: “...otrias rizy svoia, reche k nim:’ krov’ vasha na golovakh vashikh: chist az,’...(Acts 18:6).”⁵⁹

Avvakum’s provocative display of his own cleanliness incited his judges to aggression that exposed their lack of cleanliness and their unfitness to judge the saints.

⁵⁶ They were trespassing against the commandment in 1Cor. 4:4: “Temzhe prezhdre vremene nichtozhe sudite, dondezhe priidet gospod izhe vo svete privedet tainaia tmy i obiavit sovety serdchnyia...” (1 Cor. 4:5). “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts.” This chapter informs the rhetoric of the whole scene as Avvakum revealed when he triumphantly quoted 1 Cor. 4:10.

⁵⁷ “‘Our Russian saints were stupid and without understanding, they were not educated people,--why would we believe in them? They had no mastery of grammar!’” See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 168.

⁵⁸ “I am clean, and I shake off the dust from my feet before you.”

⁵⁹ “...when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said..., ‘Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean.’”

On the other hand, Avvakum's refusal to engage in the fray revealed his own death to the world and his fitness to judge them for judging the saints. They rose up to pummel him, until Avvakum reproached their behavior with another citation from St. Paul about the gentleness that should inform ecclesiastical authority. Their actions revealed their subjection to animal passions, their lack of inner freedom from the temptations of the world and thus their nature as St. Paul's "dusheven chelovek." Avvakum's words demonstrated the inner freedom, the control over his passions that made him an initiate into Wisdom.

The protagonist continued his foolish battle. He consciously took on himself the stupidity the judges had found in the saints in order to show it to be a source of knowledge and power. Bizarrely and suddenly, he lay down while inviting his judges to sit: "Posidite vy, a ia polezhu—govoriu im."⁶⁰ Caught off guard by this ridiculous role reversal, the Nikonians couldn't restrain themselves from laughter. This laughter exposed their lack of real authority since it voided the distance between them and Avvakum and showed Avvakum's power over them. Quickly they recovered themselves, and, answering Avvakum's provocation, flung onto him a similar epithet to what they had "vomited" upon the saints: "Tak oni smeitsia: 'Durak-de protopop-ot! I patriarkhov ne pochitaet!'"⁶¹ This dynamic showed what the claim of "stupidity" actually meant. It was a testimony to an inner freedom and power that enabled him and the saints to refuse to play by the rules of the world.

Avvakum embodied the paradoxes that expressed the Foolishness of the Cross. Demonstrably acting like an idiot (*durak*), he laid bare the ignorance and passion that the Nikonians were hiding under the cloak of ecclesiastical authority. Deprived of beard and priestly garment, metaphorically naked himself, he made them naked in the eyes of God.⁶² When they rose to his bait and persecuted him for his apparent stupidity, they manifested their own ignorance of the nature of knowledge. Avvakum's foolery-in-Christ

⁶⁰ "You sit down a while, but I will lie down for a bit—I say to them"

⁶¹ "They laugh despite themselves: 'What an idiot this archpriest is!' they say, 'He doesn't respect even the patriarchs!'"

⁶² On the stripping of Avvakum's beard and clothing during the rite of anathema, see P. Pascal, *Avvakum et les debuts du raskol*, 378.

communicated a lesson to the larger audience about Truth and Lie, reality and illusion.⁶³ His masquerade of stupidity brought into the open the Nikonians' hidden Truth. This Truth was their secret dedication to the Lie, i.e. their use of appearances to suppress and deny Reality, and their use of false authority to discredit the saints' true authority.

These inverted antitheses challenged the validity of their respective status and the authority of appearance itself. They highlighted the difference between the true and false Christian teacher, in the spirit of 1 Cor. 4:15.⁶⁴ Avvakum's rhetoric of foolery had interpreted this difference as their respective ability to see and manifest the Truth of their inner natures. He had proven himself the true teacher "bringing to light the hidden things of darkness" (1 Cor. 4:5). Avvakum now triumphantly proclaimed a citation from 1 Cor. 4:10: "My urodi Khrista radi! Vy slavni, my zhe bezchestni! Vy silni, my zhe nemoshchni!"⁶⁵ By calling himself and the Russian saints fools-in-Christ through allusion to 1 Corinthians, chapter 4, he gave his audience the key to his puzzling behavior, and implied that appearances were the opposite of what they seem.

In the draft, Avvakum presented the Archetype of the crucifixion as a higher model for his on-going foolishness-in-Christ. The Nikonians cried out "'raspni ego—vsekh nas obeschestil!"⁶⁶ However in the mature redaction, he expunged this phrase while

⁶³ Avvakum made his concern with the Lie and Truth clear in the introduction to *Zh* when he defended the truth of the Holy Spirit and the nature of the "true Christian" by passages from "On the Divine Names." See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 139-40. In Avvakum's worldview, the Lie (*lozh'*, *lest'*) was inseparable from deception, seduction and illusion, all subsumed under the term "prelest." The Lie involved the use of surface appearance to cover over, and suppress deeper Reality in order to create Illusion that seduces others away from the Truth. The theme of "prelest" rang through Avvakum's and the larger Old Believer corpus. See Deacon Fedor's "O poznanii antikhristovoi prelesti" in *Pustozerskaia Proza*, 251-57, and the collective endeavor, "Otvety pravoslavnykh," in N.S. Demkova and L.V. Titova, "Polemicheskii traktat pustozerskikh uznikov 'Otvety pravoslavnykh' v sostave sbornikov XVII veka" *Obshchestvennoe soznanie i literatura XVI-XXvv* (Novosibirsk, Izd. SO RAN, 2001), 199, 216.

⁶⁴ "Ashche bo mnogi pestuny imate o khriste, no ne mnogi ottsy." ("For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.")

⁶⁵ "We are fools for Christ's sake! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! You are strong, we are weak." Avvakum slightly changes the order of the wording.

⁶⁶ "Crucify him— he has dishonored us all!" See Luke 23:21.

keeping his proclamation of his own foolishness- in-Christ.⁶⁷ He thus transferred attention onto his embodiment of the rhetorical, spiritual power of Foolishness of the Cross. This lived Foolishness embodied the militancy expressed in 1 Cor. 2:2: "...not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" so that [my] "speech" and "preaching" be not the "persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power..."⁶⁸ Just as Christ's elevation on the cross judged the world for being blind to His Light (John 12:31-41), so Avvakum's Foolishness of the Cross judged the Nikonians for their blindness to the Spirit and embrace of "the persuasive words of human wisdom."

The crucifixion was foolish because it caught the worldly wise in their own craftiness. Christ turned the tables on the powers of the world, using their own weapons against them. He had defeated death by a death that contained its opposite, the Spirit of eternal Life. It had exploded the doors of hell, and revealed the Illusion in death's dominion. It had subjected the world to judgment by its unenlightened judgment of him. In the same way, Avvakum defeated the Nikonians' true ignorance by his assumed stupidity. His inner freedom exploded the Nikonians' surface authority and revealed it to be an illusion. He subjected the Nikonians to judgment by turning back onto them their judgment on him and the saints.

The rhetoric of the council scene transformed Avvakum's imitation of Christ's crucifixion into a manifestation of Paul's Foolishness of the Cross. The play with

⁶⁷ GIKhL, 335. In the mature redaction, Avvakum transferred the allusion to the crucifixion to the next paragraph where it enjoyed a more generalized meaning. There, lamenting the fate of others who also stood up to the council (his future co-exiles at Pustozersk), he exclaimed, "Umnomu cheloveku pogliadet' da lishe zaplakat', na nikh gliadia...Chto o nikh tuzhit? Khristos i lutche ikh byl, da tozh emu, svetu nashemu, bylo ot pradedov ikh, ot Anny i Kaiafy." (If an intelligent person saw them, he could only weep looking at them...But why grieve over them? Christ was better than they, and he, our light, also got it from their forefathers, from Annas and Caiaphas.") *Zhizneopisaniia* 168. (See Luke 3:2;23:23.) Pascal, *Avvakum et les debuts du raskol*, 378, points out that during the rite of anathema, Avvakum was expelled from the altar and compared to Judas. Avvakum has reversed this logic when he exposed the Nikonians as Anna and Caiaphas who sentenced Christ to death.

⁶⁸ "...ne sudikh bo vedeti chto v vas, tochiiu isusa khrista, i sego raspiata. ... i slovo moe i propoved' moia ne v prepretelnykh chelovecheskii premudrosti slovesekh, no v iavlenii dukha i sily..."

paradox, contrast, and inversion brought to light Avvakum's and the Nikonians' respective relationships to surface and depth. The unseen subtexts informing the protagonist's actions filled his surface foolery with hidden Wisdom and showed him to be a meeting of opposite extremes. At the end of the horizontal axis, a disreputable and lowly thing (*buiaia, nemoshchnaia*), the protagonist also participated in the vertical axis and was a mouthpiece of God. At an apotheosis of degradation, he achieved an apotheosis of hidden revelatory power. His play with inverted opposites prophetically illuminated the Nikonians' hidden moral state as the antithesis to his own. It intimated their respective essential reality that would be revealed at time's end: The Nikonians' place beyond the center in the outer darkness and his own in the center in the inner Light.⁶⁹ To those who could solve the puzzle, the council scene located Avvakum within and the Nikonians without the divine circle/sphere that signified the Wisdom of the Word.

The Evidence of the Draft Redaction

In the draft redaction of *Zh*, Avvakum included passages that he later expunged. Their content and his choice to remove them shed light both on his creative idea and his creative process. These passages include an early version of the council scene (A) and two visions that he reported to the Tsar in *FPAM*.

Version A appears to be Avvakum's first attempt at describing his experience before the council. It occurred before the second version of the council scene (B) so that the two existed almost side by side.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ In the draft, Avvakum explicitly placed the Nikonians in outer darkness and implied his own ascent to the Light, "vo svete neizrechenne bliz sviatyia troitsy." ("in the ineffable light near the holy trinity." See GIKhL, 342. The theme of the Nikonians' perdition (*paguba*) is present in *Zh* and in *FPAM*. See the introduction to *Zh*: "vsia siia vneshniaia bliad' nicto zhe sut', no tokmo prelest' i tlia i paguba...deistvo l'sti." ("all these things are external error and are nothing else than illusion, vanity and perdition...the action of the lie.") *Zhizneopisaniia*, 140. Their spiritual perdition inspired the prophetic warnings that Avvakum scattered throughout the narrative of *Zh* and openly expressed in *FPAM*. See P. Hunt, "Justice in Avvakum's Fifth Petition."

⁷⁰ Demkova, *Zhitie Protopopa Avvakuma*, 109-10 showed that the draft redaction was more factual than the later redactions.

Vse sudii trepeshchut i uzhasaiutsia, iako ot mudrovo cheloveka. A ia i aza ne umeiu protolkovat' i svoe ima zabyl... tokmo nadeius' lishe krepko na sveta Khrista...u menia zagoritsia serdtse-to,--ne razbiraiu, patrearkh li ili in...Da i v to vremia vspomniu, chto ot iunosti v knigakh chital. A s sudishcha soshed, zabudu, chto govoril.⁷¹

Avvakum structured this more authentic narration of his experience to reflect the Archetype of the cross, but it did not yet testify to the Foolishness of the Cross. Here he expressed his death *in* the world, his position at the end of the horizontal axis in cognitive terms. He lost his sense of self. He replaced this with faith in Christ, the consequence of his death *to* the world. He described this faith as a leap beyond human knowledge to Divine Wisdom. It empowered him with a fearless lack of calculation that made him oblivious to the power relationships in the world (“...ne razbiraiu...”). His personal boundaries opened. (He was not trying to protect himself or define himself). The surface disappeared before his eyes and divine depth poured into his awareness. Filled with inner Light, his heart leapt up like a flame. His consciousness widened to encompass the Wisdom of all the books he had read throughout his lifetime. This knowledge implicitly concentrated the Wisdom of tradition as a whole. His word thus became a mouthpiece for the Wisdom of the Word.

Version A lacked the rhetorical sophistication, including the feints and disguises, of version B. In A, stupidity was not yet foolery. Avvakum's sense of idiocy was sincere and did not function as a mask. On the other hand, the wisdom he revealed here was the same wisdom that he demonstrated in the second council scene when he taught, and exposed his judges by citations from books. These similarities and differences suggest that version A was written before version B. This first attempt represented a “straight” (poetically undeformed) version of Avvakum's likeness to Christ.

⁷¹ “All the judges tremble and recoil in awe as though from a wise person. But I can't even make sense out of the letter “a” and I have forgotten my name—but I ardently put my hope in Christ our light...my heart flares up—I can't distinguish who is a patriarch or something else...but in that moment I recall everything that I have read in books from youth. But after I have left the place of judgement, I forget what I said.” See GIKhL, 332.

In version A, Avvakum's loss of self-awareness was similar to Christ's at death. The fire filling his heart and mind was analogous to the inner Spirit of Life that transfigured Christ's body at the resurrection. In version B, Avvakum also imitated Christ's death and resurrection. But he subjected them to a process of poetic deformation where they modeled the inverse functionality describing the volume of the sphere. There Avvakum's stupidity was analogous to Christ's death and his hidden Wisdom to Christ's resurrection. By placing the former on the outer horizontal axis and the latter on the hidden vertical axis, he made his stupidity the deceptive outer face of his inner Wisdom. Similarly, he made his and the Nikonians' attributes dynamic and oppositional in version B by projecting them onto this dynamic grid. His reference to his vast book learning in version A become militant in version B--his citations from Scripture *against* the Nikonians in B and in antithesis to the Nikonians' appeal to grammar. The Nikonians' fear and awe in A became uncontrolled aggression in B. His obliviousness to status relationships in A became his shocking and self-conscious voiding of the categories of rank in B. These deformations endowed the narrative with polemical force.

A comparison of the two versions of the council scene indicates that 1) version A was a more documentary portrayal of his behavior at the council and also the archetypal basis of version B; 2) version B projected the material of version A onto the structure of inverse oppositions that characterized the fool-in-Christ, subjecting this original material to poetic deformation; 3) Avvakum expunged version A from the narrative because he found version B more effective in communicating his message; 4) the editorial process that produced version B focused on his polemical message and heightened the scene's rhetorical power; 5) This refinement in version B involved hiding behind the mask of foolery the inner Light that he had openly described in version A.

Avvakum realized that, for his text to model surface and depth and function as a prophetic Word, he needed to create a two-layered poetic structure. We can observe him creating this structure if we examine his treatment of two visions that were originally in *FPAM*. He incorporated them in the draft to openly reveal his participation on the vertical axis, just as he had openly revealed his inner ascent in version A of the council scene.

He received the first vision in prison on Ascension Day, May 24, 1666, several weeks after he was shorn, defrocked, and anathematized in the Assumption cathedral. He

described it a week later in a letter to his family. Three years later he included an elaborated version in *FPAM*. He entered this expanded version into the draft of the narrative, only to expunge it in the mature redaction.⁷²

In the original and in the elaborated version, the ascended Christ appeared to him and said: “ne boisia, az esm’ s toboiu.” Avvakum’s vision recreated an experience that St. Paul underwent after he had separated himself from the blasphemers of Christ and pronounced himself clean (Acts 18:6). God then said to St. Paul: “ne boisia, no glagoli i da ne umolknesi, zane az” esm’ s toboiu...”.⁷³ Avvakum, however, left in silence the most crucial words in Christ’s message to Avvakum: “no glagoli i da ne umolknesi.” (“but speak and do not keep silent.”)

This vision with its implied instruction that Avvakum speak openly was an Archetype for his empowered speech in both versions of the council scene. In its larger context, this vision itself manifest the Archetype of the cross. Avvakum’s state of mind before the vision showed him at an outer limit like Christ on the cross. He experienced an agony of faith: “togda napade na mia pechal i zelo otiagotikhsia ot kruchiny i razmyshliakh v sebe, chto se byst’...I o tom stuzhakh bozhestvu, da iavit mne, ne tune li moe bednoe stradanie.”⁷⁴ Christ in his agony had asked God a question, “Why have You forsaken me” and received an answer.⁷⁵ Avvakum in his agony asked whether his

⁷² For the simplest, original version in the letter, see GIKhL, 218, 422; for the elaborated version in *FPAM*, see GIKhL, 201; for its presence in the draft redaction of *Zh* see GiKhL, 330. In the mature redaction of *Zh*, Avvakum referred the reader to *FPAM* to find it when he was describing the protagonist’s imprisonment after his excommunication. See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 165: “Derzhali menia u Nikoly v studenoi polatke semnadtset’ nedel’. Tut mne bozhie prisheshchenie byst’; chti v tsareve poslanii, tamo obriashchesi.” (“They held me in a freezing chamber in the Nikola monastery for seventeen weeks. There I had a divine visitation; read it in the epistle to the tsar, you will find it there.”)

⁷³ “Do not be afraid but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you.”

⁷⁴ “and then sorrow consumed me and I was overcome with grief and confusion and I was trying to make sense of it within myself ...and I pleaded to the Divinity to show me whether my poor suffering had been in vain.”

⁷⁵ Christ cried out: “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Mark 15:33). This is a direct allusion to Psalm, 22:1 where the Psalmist continued to lament: “Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning?, ...All those who see Me ridicule Me... My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me: You have answered me...My praise shall be of You in the great assembly...” (Ps. 22:1, 7, 14, 21, 25). On the

suffering was in vain and elicited an answer from Christ. God answered Christ with the resurrection; Christ answered Avvakum by filling his word with the implied power of His resurrection.

The vision showed that at the point of apparent liturgical death, Avvakum was in Reality participating in the glorification of the ascending Christ.⁷⁶ In the elaborated version of this vision, he placed emphasis on this glorification.⁷⁷ On its archetypal level, this glorification by Christ, which signified Christ's presence "with him" and in his speech, informed both versions of the council scene: In version A his glorification was manifest by the fire in his heart; in version B it was expressed by God speaking through "his ... lips."

Version B of the council scene denigrated Avvakum's lips as "sinful," reversing the import of the vision while alluding to 1 Cor. 1:27 and the "foolish things of the world." The subtext to this citation alluded to the secret behind this denigration, according to the teaching of 1 Cor. 1:29, 31: "iako da ne pokhvalitsia vsiaka plot' pred bogom...da iakozhe pishetsia; khvaliaisia o gospode da khvalitsia."⁷⁸ Avvakum took on the mask of foolery in version B so as not to openly boast of the divine empowerment given him in the vision.

Accordingly, when Avvakum refined his text and produced the mature version, he deleted the vision of 1666 from the narrative surface so as not to boast, except inversely as a fool. Avvakum kept his glorification secret by leaving it in *FPAM*.⁷⁹ He thus

way the narrative expresses Avvakum's imitation of the kenotic Christ as interpreted by St. Paul, see P. Hunt, "A Penitential Journey," esp. 224.

⁷⁶ In the conclusion to the mature redaction, Avvakum echoed his sense of ascending with Christ in a curious manner, beginning with a citation from 1 Cor. 10:12: "Posem razumeia vsiak, mniasia stoiati, da bliudetsia, da sia ne padet. *Derzhis za khristovy nogi i bogoroditse molis'...tak budet khorosho.*"[my italics] ("Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.' *Hold on to Christ's legs (feet)* and pray to the Mother of God...and everything will be fine.") See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 178.

⁷⁷ The simple reference to "Gospod'" in the original letter became "Khristos s silami mnogimi" preceded by "gospozha bogoroditsa." ("Christ with many powers" preceded by "the queen Mother of God"). See GIKhL, 330.

⁷⁸ "that no flesh should glory in His presence....as it is written, 'He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.'"

⁷⁹ In *FPAM* where Avvakum first narrated the vision, he was conscious of the need for foolery and introduced it through a reference to 2 Cor. 12:5 "yet of myself I will not

transformed *FPAM* into a subtext that modeled hidden depth. The editing process made Avvakum truer to his intention, expressed to the Tsar in *FPAM*, that the vision be kept secret: “Za liubov’ tebe gospodniu, Mikhailovich....ne povedai vragom moim, nikonianam, tainy seia, da ne porugaiut Khrista isusa...glupy vet’ one, duraki, bliuiut i na samogo boga nechestivya glagoly.”⁸⁰

The remark in *FPAM*—that the Nikonians were stupid and vomited on Christ himself—was a response to the Nikonians’ claim that the saints were stupid at the actual council two years earlier.⁸¹ The use of the word “bliuiut” echoed with Avvakum’s description of the Nikonians’ behavior in version B of the council scene: “a nashi...blevat’ stali na ottsev svoikh, govoria: ‘Glupy-de byli...’.”⁸² When Avvakum deleted the vision of 1666 from the narrative and sent the reader to *FPAM* to find it, he gave the reader the opportunity to see the Nikonians’ stupidity that they had tried to hide

boast, except in my infirmities...for I will speak the truth.” Earlier, in his First Petition to the Tsar, he quoted from 2 Cor. 12:6 to show that he was refraining from boasting in the flesh, and choosing to boast as a fool, i.e., inversely, by a lengthy enumeration of his persecutions and sufferings. This enumeration, the nucleus of the extended narrative in *Zh*, reveals Avvakum’s intention to leave the secret of his Wisdom undisclosed on the narrative surface so as not to “boast.” See GIKhL, 187 and P. Hunt, “Avvakum’s Theological Agenda in his ‘Life’ and his polemic with the Nikonians.”

⁸⁰ “Our of respect for God’s love for you, Mikhailovich...don’t let my enemies, the Nikonians, know about these mysteries, so that they don’t blaspheme Jesus Christ...for they are stupid, idiots, they vomit out their impious (insolent) words on God himself.” See GIKhL, 201. Avvakum, who claimed in the Petition to have the Psalter by heart, could have been inspired by Ps. 31:18, 20: “Let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak insolent things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous,... You shall hide them [the goodness laid up for the saints] in the secret place of Your presence from the lots of man; You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.”

⁸¹ In his later writing, “O vneshnei mudrosti,” when Avvakum reminisced about the Council, he showed that he based the council scene in on the actual facts: “Pomnite li?—na sonmitse toi lukavoi....govorite mne Ilarion [Riazanskii] i Pavel [Krutitskii]: ‘Avvakum miloi, ne upriam’sia, chto ty na ruskikh sviatykh ukazvaesh, glupy nashi sviatyia byli i gramote ne umeli, chemu im verit’!...*Razumnyi! Mydreny vy so d’iavolom...znaiu vse vashe zlokhitrstvo.*” [my italics] (Do you remember?—at that craftily conceived convocation, Hilarion and Paul say to me: ‘Avvakum darling, don’t be stubborn and keep referring to the Russian saints, because our saints were stupid and had no mastery of grammar, so why believe in them!’ ...Smart! You are wise like the devil...I know all your evil cleverness [trickery].”) See *Pustozerskaia proza*, 106.

⁸² “but ours...began to vomit on our fathers, saying: ‘they were stupid...’”

by blasphemously projecting it from themselves onto the saints.⁸³ The relationship between Avvakum's revelations about the Nikonians in *FPAM* and the Nikonians' representation of the saints in *Zh* embodied the dialectic of inversion on the level of structure. It indicated *FPAM*'s place on the vertical axis of depth relative to the narrative of *Zh* on the horizontal axis of the surface. The interaction between the two showed the surface narration to be the opposite of what it seemed. It confirmed that his own stupidity in version B of the council scene was a foolish mask that reflected back onto the Nikonians their own inner Reality that they refused to see.⁸⁴

Avvakum included yet another vision in the surface narration of the draft that he first reported in *FPAM*. It occurred in 1669 in Pustozersk during a period of creative fervor that included the writing of the Fifth Petition and the planning of *Zh*. He inserted it where he was describing the effect on the Nikonians of the polemical writings that he was sending back to Russia from Pustozerk.⁸⁵

⁸³ Avvakum did intimate this stupidity in *Zh* in a digression that looked forward to the council scene: "Sami vidiat chto *duruiut*, a otstat' ot *durna* ne khotiat." [my italics]. ("They themselves saw that they were acting like *idiots [badly]* but they did not wish to cease from their *idiocy [bad behavior]*." See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 165.

⁸⁴ Avvakum's and the Nikonians' hiding were the inverse of one another. In the Nikonians' case, hiding was a refusal to see the Truth and a desire to hide it rather than a decision to express its hidden nature. They attempted to hide Avvakum, a witness to Truth: "vesli [menia] ne dorogoiu..chtoby liudi *ne vidali*. *Sami vidiat*, chto ne dobro delaiut, a otstat' ot *durna ne khotiat*." ("they didn't take me by the road so that people *wouldn't see*. They themselves *see* that they are doing wrong, but *they do not wish* to cease from their bad behavior [*durna*].") See, GIKhl, 329. They were unable to see another such witness, Fedor the Fool, when he escaped from prison. See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 166. They tried to blind others: "Ia otritsaiutsia, chto ot besov, a one *lezut v glaza!*" ("I keep saying no to them as though to demons but they keep *flying into my eyes!*") See *Ibid*, 164. Avvakum interpreted their refusal to see as an inverse miracle, placing them in the realm of the Antichrist: "Chiudo, kak to v *poznanie ne khotiat* priiti: ognim, da knutom, da visilitseiu khotiat veru utverdit'...I te uchiteli iavny, iako shishi antikhristovy." ("It's a wonder how they *don't want to know*: they wish to strengthen faith by fire, the knout and the noose...clearly these teachers are pawns of the Antichrist"). See *Ibid.*, 171. All italics are mine. The related theme of darkness and light has been addressed earlier. See footnote 30.

⁸⁵ See GIKhL, 200 and GIKhL, 339.

...rasprostranisia iazyk moi i byst' velik zelo, potom i zuby bysha veliki, a se i ruki i nogi bysha veliki, posem ves' shirok stal i prostranen, pod nebesem po vsei zemli rasprostranilia, a potom bog vmestil v mia nebo i zemliu i vsiu tvar'....⁸⁶

This vision revealed his arrival at the mystical center at the outermost limit of both intersecting axes, in indescribable height, depth and width.⁸⁷ It thus demonstrated the Wisdom hidden in his writings.

In its contexts in *FPAM* and *Zh*, this vision communicated the ontological power of the Archetype of the cross in an eschatological perspective that summarized the meaning of the whole. The vision was a consequence of his final death to the world at the extremity of his lived crucifixion. It likened him to the early martyrs and, implicitly, to all the martyrs in between (who would be standing together with him before God at the Last Judgment).⁸⁸ In the draft he associated this vision with his total self-purification from worldly passion: "Sie byvaet v velikikh i sovershennykh po ochishchenii dushevnem, strastnym zhe siia um ne mozhet vmestiti."⁸⁹ It fulfilled the promise of his earlier vision of 1666, when Christ sanctified Avvakum's speech with the power of the Ascension. Now, implicitly, his expanding tongue, teeth, and body filled the creation with his inner spirit of renewal and transfiguration just as Christ-Wisdom would fill it at the Second Coming.⁹⁰ His expansion revealed the Truth in his writings from exile, his ultimate verbal self-accounting before the only Judge.⁹¹

⁸⁶ "and my tongue broadened and became very large, and then my teeth enlarged and lo, my hands and legs became large, and then the whole of me became wide and spatious, spread out under the heavens over the whole earth, and then god placed within me heaven and earth and the whole creation...."

⁸⁷ In 1664, in the First Petition, Avvakum included a citation from Phil.3:7-14 that indicated his interpretation of his life on the horizontal axis as a movement to transcendental knowledge of the power of the resurrection. See GIKhL, 187. The vision of 1669 embodied this climax.

⁸⁸ See P. Hunt, "Justice in Avvakum's Fifth Petition, 276-97 and Rev.14:1-5: "These are the ones who were not defiled...And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God."

⁸⁹ "This happens to those whose souls have achieved the utmost purification, the mind of a passionate person would not be able to encompass this". GIKhL, 339.

⁹⁰ Avvakum described this transfiguration in the conclusion to the draft: "...I my obozhenie poluchivshe...Togda bo izmenit gospod' sie nebo i zemliu, i budet nebo novo i

However, Avvakum refused to “boast” about this inner Wisdom and disguised it in foolery.⁹² His vision turned the surface inside out. It demonstrated his inner power through an apotheosis of his human “weakness.” It modeled his inner dynamism as the expansion of his external bodily organs of speech; it dressed up his glorification in the “base things of the world” (1 Cor. 1:28). At the same time, on an esoteric subtextual level, this expansion alluded to its opposite-- his mystical openness of heart, cleansed “from all filthiness in flesh and spirit” (2 Cor. 6:11, 7:1).⁹³

His vision was a mask that covered his open heart and cleansed flesh. They were hidden under the blasphemous apotheosis of his carnal limitations in an apparent act of overweening pride. When he included this vision in the draft, he highlighted its violation of the rules of mystical experience by juxtaposing it with a conventional model:

...videnie ugodnika bozhii venedika, tako emu pokazano, iako pod edinu solnechnuiu luchiu vsemu miru sobratisia. Tako i on umnyma ochima vide, iako soshedshisia ves' mir pred ochima ego i prevyshe vsego miru ustroisia.⁹⁴

zemlia nova i zemlenaia vsia obnoviatsia....” (“And when we are deified ...then God will transfigure this heaven and earth and the heaven will be new and the earth will be new and all earthly things will be renewed....”) See GIKhL, 342.

⁹¹ “Tsar'-gosudar' liubim bo esi mne, ...ispovem ti vsia chiudesa gospodni. Ei, ne lgu—budi mne s sei u lozh'iu stati na strashnem sude s toboiu...pomyshliaet mi sia budet skoro o[t]lozhenie telesi moemu, iako utomil mia esi zelo...da nikak ne lgu, ni pritvoriasia govoriu:v temnitse mne, iako v grobu, sidiashchu, chto nadobna? Razve smert'? ei, tako.” (Sovereign-Tsar, you are dear to my heart,...I will confess to you all the miracles of the Lord. Truly, I do not lie—I would have to stand with that lie and face you at the terrible judgment...it seems that the my bodily life is almost at an end, since you have thoroughly exhausted me, ...there is no way I can be lying nor pretending when I speak: What can my sitting in prison as though in the grave be like if not death! Truly it is so.”) See *FPAM*, in GIKhL, 199.

⁹² Avvakum's reference to 2 Cor. 12:5 after this vision and before the vision of 1666 suggests its functional similarity with Paul's refusal to boast about his experience of being caught up to the third heaven, “whether in the body, I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know” (2 Cor. 12:2). See GIKhL, 201.

⁹³ For the subtexts to this vision in Chrysostom and St. Paul, see “Justice in Avvakum's Fifth Petition,” 290.

⁹⁴ “...the vision of Benedict, favored of God, how he was shown the whole world gathered in one ray of the sun's light. He saw with his intellectual eyes how the whole world as a simultaneity appeared before his eyes and how he was placed above the whole world.”

The dissimilarity of this model with his own vision suggested that he was “boasting of his infirmities” (2 Cor. 12:6), and engaging in foolery.

Avvakum could have represented his mystical experience as a vision of the world concentrated in a ray of Light. He had introduced his vision with a claim that he had the whole Psalter by memory, implying that all the Psalter’s “Light” was within him. However, he decided to mask his concentrated inner knowledge under the expansion of his gross physical limits. In the same way, when he produced version A of the council scene in *Zh*, he described how the Light inflamed his heart and he remembered all the books from his youth. However, in the more sophisticated version B of the same scene, he expunged the reference to his inflamed heart and retained the reference to his stupidity.

The vision of 1669 was the deeper Archetype for his surface stupidity in the council scene. His expanding tongue and teeth showed how his deliberate “ignorance” of conventional norms revitalized the meaning of the whole. In the same way, the protagonist’s mask of stupidity in the council scene (B) had revitalized the situation by bringing into the open the suppressed truth of the Nikonians’ stupidity. His expanding tongue and teeth inverted the “straight” message he had communicated in his vision of 1666 when Christ inspired him to speak out. This “straight” vision had sanctioned his claim that the protagonist was speaking the words of Christ in the council scene (B). His “deformed” vision of 1669 sanctioned the passage of God’s words through his “sinful lips” in the foolish spirit of 1Cor.1:27. Since foolery was his dominant language of revelation, in *FPAM* he narrated the vision of 1669 first and the vision of 1666 second. When he expunged the vision of 1669 from the narrative surface of *Zh*, he allowed it to function as a hidden Archetype in *FPAM*. There it modeled the mystery of his own transgressive creativity, including the foolery through which he hid his inner identification with the expanding sphere of Light.

Avvakum’s creative work consisted of making *Zh* an image of this archetypal vision, the surface manifesting its creative depth, the portrayal of an individual person illuminated by the Wisdom of his inner mystical body. This work entailed deliberately deforming his “straight” message by projecting it onto the grid that modeled the inverse

interplay of surface and depth. In this way his archetypal identification with the crucified Christ became his embodiment of the Foolishness of the Cross. Thus, in council scene B, he deformed the material of council scene A; similarly, in the vision of 1669, he deformed the vision of 1666. Once he had moved his visions to the subtext, they modeled the inner Wisdom that was implicit in the remaining council scene (B) through citations from St. Paul. The inverted relationship of these visions to the narrative embodied the very foolery that was implied by the citations. Avvakum expressed in poetic deed (structure) the meaning of St. Paul's scriptural word. In an enigmatic and hidden way, the council scene (B) manifested the inner Wisdom revealed to him in scripture and in visions.

Avvakum did other editorial work to emphasize his foolery. He added several new episodes: the story about Fedor the Fool delivering a petition to the Tsar, and the brief biographies of the fools Fedor and Afanasii.⁹⁵ He also added a citation from St. Paul to his concluding apologia: "...No eshche i ne uchen slovom, no ne razumom; ne uchen dialektika i ritorika i filosofii, a razum khristov v sebe imam, iako zhe i apostol glagolet: ashche i nevezhdza slovom, no ne razumum."⁹⁶

He embedded his deeper message in his citation from 2 Cor. 11:6: "ashche i nevezhdza slovom, no ne razumum." The subtext (2 Cor. 11:1, 3, 16) laid bare the import of his apologia. He, like St. Paul, was asking the reader to be patient with his unusual method: "da byste malo poterpeli bezumiiu moemu. No i poterpite mia."⁹⁷ Like Paul, he was explaining his reasons: "boiusia zhe, da ne kako, iakozhe zmii Evu prel'sti lukavstvom svoim, tako istleiut razumy vashi ot prostoty ezhe o khriste. Ashche bo griady inago isusa propovedaet, egozhe ne propovedakhom, ili dukha inago priemlete, egozhe ne priiaste,...dobre byste poterpeli."⁹⁸ Like Paul, he was asking his readers to

⁹⁵ Note the absence of these biographies in GIKhL, 327, 328 and their presence in *Zhizneopisaniia*, 164, 165-7.

⁹⁶ "...But even if I am not educated in word, I am in understanding; I am not educated in dialectics and rhetoric and philosophy, but I have within me understanding-in-Christ as the apostle said: 'Even though I am untrained in speech, yet I am not in knowledge.'"

⁹⁷ "...bear with me in a little folly."

⁹⁸ "I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached.... you may well put up with it! "

accept his paradoxical glorification of his own ignorance since this foolishness harnessed Christ's power to unmask the Lie and testify to Truth: "Est' istina khristova vo mne, ...pone iako bezumna priimate mia, da i az malo chto pokhvaliusia."⁹⁹

The changes that Avvakum made in the mature redaction testify to his intention to saturate his autobiographical material with the Pauline spirit of foolery and project it onto the two functionally interdependent axes modeling the integrity of the hidden sphere of Light. He testified to this spirit on the semantic level by eulogies to Fedor and Afanasii, by the protagonist's foolery at the council, and by spoken citations from St. Paul that informed the actions of the protagonist. He embodied this spirit on the structural level of text and subtext to model the inverted relationship between surface and depth. In this way, *Zh* embodied the Wisdom of the expanding center. The deep, hidden visions manifesting Avvakum's penetration with the unfathomable Light inspired Avvakum to enlighten the next outer layer, his biographical material, with the Archetype of the crucified and resurrected Christ. Then, by activating the inner relations within the sphere, he assimilated this Archetype to the Foolishness of the Cross, which was always pushing and exceeding its limits. This foolishness filled *Zh* with power to teach, to expose, and to distinguish between the ontological Truth and the Lie. In this way *Zh* opened up a path of renewal and transfiguration to those with the inner Light to solve its puzzle.

Conclusion

Avvakum's *Zh* revealed how deeply its author had comprehended the lesson that Joseph Volotsk and St. Paul offered about God's crafty ways. It deformed the conventional imitation of Christ's martyrdom to shock his readers and listeners into new perception, to challenge them to shed their habitual reactions and look beneath a deceptive surface to find the Truth. The foolishness in *Zh* was Avvakum's most powerful teaching tool about the nature of understanding and of the Wisdom in Christ. It gave his followers access to the meaning of his admonition in *FPAM*: "Vsia tserkovnaia prava sut' razumevaiushchim istinnu i zdrava obretaiushchim razum po Khriste Isuse, a ne po

⁹⁹ "...As the truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting, .. at least receive me as a fool that I may boast a little." On Paul's rhetoric of boasting, see also 1Cor.11:29, 31; 3:21, and 2 Cor. 10:7-18; 12:11.

stikhiiam sego mira, za niu zhe my strazhdem i umiriaem i krovi svoiia prolivaem.”[my italics].¹⁰⁰

Avvakum’s foolery linked the crucial theme of judgment to the problems of knowledge, perception, and moral action. In his view, the Nikonians’ primary sin was moral cowardice. They had defined the saints as ignorant in order to avoid facing their own inner stupidity and their sense of shame at the betrayal of their own beliefs.¹⁰¹ Avvakum’s foolish mirroring of their inner state judged them for silencing the voices of their conscience as they attempted to silence Avvakum and the saints. Avvakum’s foolery placed the Nikonians before the judgment seat of the lived spiritual Church as they would eventually be before the Judgment of God.¹⁰² The explosive power of his speech organs in his vision of 1669 showed that the Truth cannot be suppressed, that ignorance and the Lie cannot prevail, just as the gates of hell could not remain closed against Christ’s resurrection.

Avvakum’s foolery in *Zh* testified to his own moral courage. Avvakum presented Fedor the Fool as his moral beacon. Fedor was fearless when the protagonist was not, zealous in ascetic trials when the protagonist was weak; Fedor’s witness to faith was

¹⁰⁰ “The whole truth of the Church belongs to those who strive to understand truth and who fully acquire understanding-in Christ-Jesus, but not according to the turbulence of this world, for which [truth] we suffer and die and shed our blood.” See *FPAM*, GIKhL, 196.

¹⁰¹ In *FPAM*, Avvakum reproached the Tsar for the same: “Ne khotelosia bolo mne v tebe nekrepkodushiia tovo: vet’ to vsiacheski vsiako budem vmeste, ne nyne, ino tamo uvidimsia, bog izvolit. (I can’t countenance any more of this faintheartedness from you: after all, in any case we will be together, if we don’t see each other now we will then, as God wills.”) See GIKhL, 202. He directed this critique against “nashi,” (“ours”) the Russian prelates of the church who uncritically accepted the new concept of knowledge imported by clergy from White Russia and Ukraine: “I patriar”si zadumalisia; a nashi, ...vskocha, zavyli...govoria: ‘Glupy-de byli...’”. (And the patriarchs took thought; but ours...jumping up, howled...saying: ‘They were stupid...’.”) See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 168.

¹⁰² On the inner nature of the Church, see Avvakum’s “Tolkovanie na psalom LXIV, *Pustozerskaia Proza*, 110-11: “Tserkov’ zhe glagoliu ne steny, no cheloveki... Zri,..Tserkov’ odushevlennaia, vnutr’ tvoia krasota, ezhe est’ v serdtsy tvoem i vo izvole tvoem...ot vnutrenniago tsarstva i nebesnoe prikhodit.” (The church, I say, is not walls but persons...Take note...the Church is spiritualized, your beauty is within, that is in your heart and in your will... from the inner kingdom comes the heavenly one.”)

lived while the protagonist's occurred only in writing: "Zelo u nego vo Khrista goriacha byla vera!...Ne na basniakh prokhodil podvig, ne kak ia okaiannoi." ¹⁰³

Fedor lived out the moral self-consciousness that Avvakum embodied in words. He dared look at the inside from the outside. Rather than being horrified, he sat still and curiously measured the length of his own protruding intestines as though he were documenting the extent of his ascetic exertions: "Nemozhet, a kishki peremeriaet; i smekh s nim i gore!" ¹⁰⁴ Fedor's behavior epitomized the state of "apatheia" or inner freedom that informed Avvakum's ability to look at himself. ¹⁰⁵

Avvakum did perfect his foolery "na basniakh" in the writing of *Zh*. His refusal to make his surface narrative authoritative or correct, his choice to make his word a two-layered puzzle solvable only by spiritual vision testified to the necessary courage for a fool. In the same way that Avvakum the protagonist died to the world, Avvakum the author died to convention. Avvakum fearlessly looked at himself in *Zh* and discovered an integral wholeness in the process of self-realization. His self-conscious human weakness was the outer face of inner faith; his foolery was the outer face of inner Wisdom. Outwardly participating in the crisis in the universal Church, he inwardly experienced the providence of the resurrection.

The foolery in *Zh* exhibited the characteristic traits of fools in Byzantino-Slavic tradition: dedication to penitential self-cleansing in a battle against the world; play with recognition and non-recognition through inversions and other forms of trickery; saturation with prophetic power of revelation and judgment; moral extremism; self-scrutiny in the face of a foreshortened sense of divine scrutiny; responsibility to see what the Judge sees—the ontological battle between good and evil taking place under the

¹⁰³ His faith in Christ burned with extraordinary intensity! ...he did not undergo his ascetic trial in fables, not like I, accursed as I am."

¹⁰⁴ "He is too weak to move, but he sits there measuring his intestines; with him it is laughter and tears!"

¹⁰⁵ On "apatheia" (*bezstrastie*) in the tradition of holy foolery, see Ivanov, *Blazhennye pokhaby*, 141-42.

surface; shocking people into an awareness that invites moral self-judgment to escape the Divine Judgment.¹⁰⁶

Yet despite Avvakum's similarity to the lived and written fools in Muscovite tradition, his autobiographical *Zhitie* was unique. His foolery actualized an innate nexus of relationships that, in his tradition, signified Wisdom. Confronted with a new secular concept of knowledge and a new esthetic, Avvakum faced an extreme situation--the reduction of knowledge to a surface phenomenon that strived for correctness, rationality and superficial display. Fearing that the perception of transcendence and depth would be lost, he drew deeply on the theology that would enable him to model these dimensions and on the fool's method of awakening perception. He challenged his readers/listeners' faith by bringing the narrative to an outer limit where it negated conventional expectation and confounded worldly norms while rewarding them with hidden visions and scriptural wisdom. To the spiritual eyes of these faithful, Avvakum's visions filled the enigmatic surface of *Zh* with the hidden Light of the Resurrection in anticipation of Light's triumph at time's end.

Avvakum deformed the conventions of the martyr's Life to elevate his *Zh* to the status of meta-text. The inverse relationship of visions and surface narrative foregrounded the mystery of the Word, the communication of knowledge. This poetic self-consciousness transformed *Zh* into a Wisdom text about the nature of its own inner Light. As a Wisdom text, *Zh* is unique but not unprecedented. It can be placed in a lineage of texts that deconstructed convention to emphasize inner Wisdom and that manifest experientially the Archetype of the cross.¹⁰⁷ None of these texts, however, was

¹⁰⁶ On eschatology and foolery, see P. Hunt, "Ivan IV's Personal Mythology of Kingship," and P. Hunt "The Ritual Dynamics of Dissent." Another study will relate Avvakum's foolery to the larger tradition of holy foolery.

¹⁰⁷ See P. Hunt, "The Tale of Peter and Fevroniia: Icon and Text," *Elementa*, 3 (1997): 291-308; "The Interpretation of the Last Judgment in a Novgorod Wisdom Icon," *Byzantino-Slavica*, 65 (2007): 275-325; "Andrei Rublev's Old Testament Trinity Icon in Cultural Context," *The Trinity-Sergius Lavr in Russian History and Culture: Readings in Russian Religious Culture*, ed. Deacon Vladimir Tsurikov (Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Seminary Press, 2006), vol. 3, 99-122. On the relationship between tradition and convention, see P. Hunt, "Andrei Rublev's Old Testament Trinity Icon: Problems of Meaning, Intertextuality, and Transmission," *Symposion: A Journal of Russian (Religious) Thought*, ed. Roy Robson (2002-2007): 15-46. Rublev's Holy Trinity icon did

responding to the breakdown of the ideological system that had sanctioned the culture as a whole, nor to the immediacy of time's end. None, therefore, rose to the same level of self-consciousness as the Archpriest Avvakum's *Zh*.¹⁰⁸

Avvakum's *Zh* realized potentials in the Pauline paradigm of holy foolery that were previously unexpressed in both Wisdom tradition and the hagiographical Lives of holy fools. It embodied the rhetoric of Wisdom/foolery through an expanded personal consciousness that was the outer face of the inner teacher and guide, "...Khrista istinnago, rekshago, iako 'Tserkvi Moeia vrata adova ne odoleiut.'" ¹⁰⁹

not appeal to the cross as its Archetype but rather to the Trinity's Thought about the Descent of the Spirit after the crucifixion.

¹⁰⁸ Ivan IV's form of foolery was the opposite of self-conscious. It was the Tsar's inverted form of hiding from his own moral responsibility. This personal dynamic made it more transgressive and militant than Avvakum's. Also it went beyond a battle of words and aimed at cleansing his kingdom of corruption by dividing it against itself. See "Ivan IV's Personal Mythology of Kingship," 769-809.

¹⁰⁹ "....the true Christ who said 'the gates of hell will not overcome My Church' (Matt.16:18)." "Otvét pravoslavnykh," 171: 'I se nyne pride chas iskusheniia na vsiu vseleñnuiu, ...v tom zhe iskushenii i my plavaem, boriushchesia so mnogim oburevaniem protivnykh dukhov, no kormshchika i pravitelia korablia svoego imamy Khrista istinnago, rekshago, iako 'Tserkvi Moeia vrata adova ne odoleiut.' ("And now has come the hour of trial for the whole universe...and we sail in this time of trial, fighting tumultuously against the opposing winds, but we have as our master and helmsman the true Christ, who said, 'the gates of hell shall not overcome My Church.'") On the metaphor of journey by boat in *Zh*, see J. Bortnes, *Visions of Glory*, 256-258. On this journey as an inner voyage, see P. Hunt, "A Penitential Journey," 209-10. In a concrete experiential way, Avvakum's *Zh* playfully echoed this passage from "Otvét pravoslavnykh" when he described his miraculous return from Dahuria in a boat guided by a helmsman who, from the inner viewpoint, was Christ himself: "A ia,v lotku sedshe, upovaia na Khrista i krest postavia na nosu, poekhali, amo zhe bog nastavit, nichevo ne boiasia. Knigu Korm"chiiu dal prikashchiku, i on mne muzhika kormshchika dal." ("But I, [along with my family and retainers]...having taken my seat in the boat, placing my hopes in Christ and setting up a cross at the bow, journeyed wherever God sent us, fearing nothing. I gave to [Pashkov's] steward the [church] book, the Helmsman, and he gave me a helmsman in return from among the men.") See *Zhizneopisaniia*, 158.