

DOI 10.15826/qr.2016.4.201

УДК 271.2+311.3+2.184.2+94(470)+94(481)

**RELIGIOSITY FROM RUSSIA TO NORWAY:
THE ORTHODOX AND THE JEWS
IN THE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES* ****

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The article overviews the history of two religious groups which have been significant among Russian migrants to Norway: Orthodox Christians and the Jews. They are described in detail in microdata from the nominative censuses of 1865, 1875, 1900, and 1910, which are used for both qualitative and quantitative purposes. The aggregates from other censuses during the period between 1845 and 1960 are employed more summarily. Together with Canada, Norway has the world's longest history of censuses with religious affiliation as a variable. The number of Orthodox Sami peaked in the second half of the 19th century, but declined together with the number of persons classified as Sami thereafter. Traditionally the Orthodox Christian 'Skolt' Sami in the northeast worked as reindeer herders. Further south, we regularly find Orthodox Christians who were ethnic Russians employed as saw sharpeners. In the 20th century, the number of Orthodox Christians increased in southern Norway, especially in the Oslo area, where they organised their own congregation in 1931; their numbers peaked in 1960. In addition to Orthodox Christians, the article overviews the establishment and growth of a Russian Jewish community in Norway. Because of a prohibition in the 1814 Constitution, the Jews were not allowed to migrate to Norway until 1851, so they were only a handful of them according to the 1865 and 1875 censuses. However, from 1891, Jewish immigrants made up a significant and growing element of the population, which can be explained by their emigration from the western parts of the Russian Empire due to pogroms. Most men were employed in trade, although some of them were also itinerant. Thus, Russian religiosity in Norway, which started as a predominantly rural phenomenon in the north, became more important in southern Norway over

* The research was sponsored by the Russian Science Foundation grant (project №16-18-10105).

** *Citation:* Thorvaldsen, G. (2016). Religiosity from Russia to Norway: The Orthodox and the Jews in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries. In *Quaestio Rossica*. Vol. 4. № 4, p. 207–220. DOI 10.15826/qr.2016.4.201.

Цитирование: Thorvaldsen G. Religiosity from Russia to Norway : The Orthodox and the Jews in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries // *Quaestio Rossica*. Vol. 4. 2016. № 4. P. 207–220. DOI 10.15826/qr.2016.4.201.

time. However, the Norwegian State Church maintained its strong traditional position, with 96 per cent of the population being members in 1960.

Keywords: Orthodox Church in Norway; Russia; Norway; religiosity; migration; Orthodoxy in Norway; Jews in Norway; censuses.

Рассматривается история двух религиозных меньшинств Норвегии, сформировавшихся за счет иммигрировавших из России православных и иудеев. Исследование стало возможно благодаря использованию номинативных источников – переписей 1865, 1875, 1900 и 1910 г., а также агрегированных данных из переписей за период с 1845 по 1960 г. В переписях Норвегии систематически регистрировалась религиозная принадлежность граждан, это позволило установить, что приверженцами православия в Норвегии были саамы. Их численность достигла своего пика во второй половине XIX в., после чего снижалась параллельно с сокращением числа саамов. Православные саамы (так называемые скольт-саамы) проживали на северо-востоке страны и занимались оленеводством. В южных районах Норвегии к православным относились немногочисленные русские, наиболее распространенным занятием которых была заточка пил. В XX в. количество приверженцев православия резко увеличилось именно в южной Норвегии, в особенности в районе Осло, где в 1931 г. появился самостоятельный православный приход. Численность православных в Норвегии достигла своего пика в 1960 г. Отмечено, что помимо православия, российские иммигранты принесли в Новегию традиции иудаизма. По Конституции 1814 г. иудеям было запрещено эмигрировать в Норвегию, этот закон соблюдался до 1851 г., и, согласно данным переписей, даже в 1865 и 1875 г. в стране было всего несколько представителей иудаизма. С 1891 г. иммигранты-иудеи составляли заметную все увеличивавшуюся часть населения, что можно объяснить их исходом из-за погромов в западных губерниях Российской империи. Большинство мужчин были заняты в торговле. «Русская» религиозность, первоначально утвердившаяся в форме православия в сельских районах северной Норвегии среди саамов, к концу XIX в. сместилась к югу страны и официально институционализировалась в столице в виде православного прихода и еврейской общины. Норвежская государственная церковь сохраняла свою традиционно сильную позицию и высокую численность, к ней принадлежало 96 % населения (по переписи 1960 г.).

Ключевые слова: православная церковь в Норвегии; Россия; Норвегия; религиозность; миграция; евреи Норвегии; переписи населения.

In spite of the homogeneous character of Norwegian society, there have been Orthodox Christians in Norway for centuries, but never many. We find an early reference in the published aggregates from the national census taken in 1845, where the Statistical Office noted that 28 out of 12 405 ethnic Sami in the northern and easternmost province of Finnmark confessed to the “Greek-Catholic” religion.¹ At this time, there can be no doubt that

¹ Departementet for det Indre (1847): Statistiske tabeller for Kongeriget Norge, Ottende Række, Christiania: I.

the reference is to persons who adhered to the Russian Orthodox Church, although most Sami remain Lutherans since the 17th century as can be seen from the censuses. The Sami have for centuries roamed with their reindeer across the borders between Russia, Finland, Sweden and Norway, spending summers by the coast and winters in the interior, for instance on the Finnmark mountain plateau [Sami Institute, 1990]. The 1845 census, which was taken when the census year ended, included a group of 28 Sami who likely had their traditional summer quarters by the coast of the Kola Peninsula. Also in later Norwegian census aggregates we find the main category Greek-Catholic meaning eastern Christianity, and with Russian Orthodoxy as an explicit subcategory. The Norwegian Parliament had repealed the laws prohibiting unauthorized mass meetings and the establishment of dissenting societies as recently as in 1842 and 1845 respectively [Thorvaldsen]. There would have been no time for proselytizing.

In addition to the Orthodox, this article overviews the start and growth of a Russian Jewish community in Norway. Visits by other religious groups to this country are not documented, although it is known that Old Believers from the Daniila monastery in Kem by the White Sea participated in fisheries and hunting also at Spitsbergen [Russland kommer nærmere]. Norway was chosen as the topic for this article about Russian religiosity, because it is the only Scandinavian country which borders on Russia, and unlike Finland, it has never been part of the Russian Empire. There is in addition a good historiographic basis due to the recent publication of a four-volume work on the history of immigration to Norway and the volumes on the history of relations between Russia and Norway [Myhre, Kjeldstadli, Niemi; Russland kommer nærmere; Holtsmark].

The settling of the border between Russia and Norway in 1826, meant that groups of people who had migrated freely over the common territory had to formally belong to one of the countries. The ratified border treaty explicitly determined that “those inhabitants along the border who now will belong to a different government, shall enjoy religious freedom”. This was the formal background for the four or five Skolt Sami families in Neiden village on the Norwegian side having their right to remain Orthodox, just like Lutherans could keep their religious traditions on the Russian side. Such rights were nothing new, however, since the free trade agreements in the new towns in Finnmark in the late 18th century had given similar rights to all Christians. The military and administrative authorities expressed some concerns about the danger of Russian proselytizing in Norway, but the priest who represented the border area in the Norwegian Parliament found no reason for such worries. It was hard to find any Lutheran who had ever converted to Orthodoxy, and the priest from Kola town who visited the Orthodox chapel in Neiden to officiate holy service, did so only once each summer. However, the Russian plans to build an Orthodox church in Vardø town for the Pomor traders were met with Norwegian procrastination, and the building was never realized. Orthodox sermons were even so officiated at irregular intervals [Russland kommer nærmere, p. 14–33].

Religion in the Census

When it is possible to trace religious minorities such as the Orthodox historically, it is also due to one of the world's longest series of census data asking about the persons' religious affiliation, from 1865 to 1980. Only Canada has a longer series with religion among the census variables, with nominative and aggregated information on the population's religion. Religion was introduced in the censuses by the Belgian statistician Adolphe Quetelet who presided over the discussions of the International Statistical Congresses from 1851 onwards [Торвальдсен]. There was a question about ethnicity already in the 1845 and 1855 censuses, but since these were only numeric, there is usually not the kind of detail needed in this article. Columns for religion and birthplace came only with the methodological freedom provided by the nominative censuses.² On the 1865 form the heading of column number nine read: *Profession of faith, if someone does not confess to the State Church*. Thus a mixture of faith and religious society was asked for, and nothing was written in the instructions in order that religious minorities should be adequately represented in the aggregates. This is hardly surprising since in the 1875 census only 7,180 persons in a population of 1.8 million belonged outside the State Church [Statistics Norway, 1954, p. 13–33]. There the Bureau of Statistics added the following to the column heading: “note here to what specific profession of faith everybody belongs”. In 1891, they for the first time assumed that the specification of faith was not self-explanatory: “Field 9. The name or type of the religious community must be noted. If someone has left the State Church without joining a specific religious community this should be noted thus: “withdrawn, no community”.

Although the 1900 instructions caused some confusion by using the confession concept, from this time onwards the census forms asked about religious *community*. For instance, the questionnaire in 1930 gave the options to write the State Church, another religious community, or no community. It was thus explicit that specifying a special religious community was only an option for those who had left the State Church. After the war the first census was taken in 1946 and the next ones each decade in years ending in zero.

In addition to the religious community variable, the birthplace, the citizenship and the ethnicity variables are identity-oriented variables in the Norwegian censuses. Russian was seldom reported as ethnicity and citizenship has not been systematically aggregated, so we should concentrate on the two other variables: religion and birthplace. It is usually impossible to distinguish between people born in contemporary Russia and those born in territories belonging to the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union; for instance, entries such as “Riga, Russland” were counted together with other

² The Norwegian censuses are described, with questionnaires and instructions at [The Arctic University of Norway]. This website and its references is the general background for the information about the Norwegian censuses, questionnaires and instructions below.



Fig. 1. The Orthodox chapel in the village of Neiden (Norway) built by the St. Tryphon of Petchenga in 1565

birthplaces containing some version of Russia. Even more problematic is the categorization of religious communities in the published aggregate statistics. All adherents to eastern Christianity were lumped together in the category “Greek orthodox” which was one of thirty main categories in the summary about religious adherence in the 1950 census, based on the censuses since 1875. The following examples of religious groups were mentioned: “Greek Orthodox (Catholic)”, “Orthodox”, “Orthodox Russian”. In 1970 and 1980 censuses no details about religious communities were taken, Statistics Norway then only distinguished between members of the State Church, members of a “Religious community outside the State Church,” or those “Not belonging to a Religious Community.” The 1990 census was the last to ask personal information with questionnaires, and it did so only for a representative sample of the population, complementary information being collected from diverse person registers. No question on religion was included in this census, one reason being that congregations outside the State Church were small in Norway and it could be hard to estimate their size and other characteristics from a sample. Other reasons were the heightened concern about disclosure of sensitive personal data and the possibility to obtain information about religious groups with surveys and from the religious communities. Thus, the 1980 full count census became the last to ask a question about belonging to religious societies, while the 1960 census was the last to ask about adherence to specific religious communities.

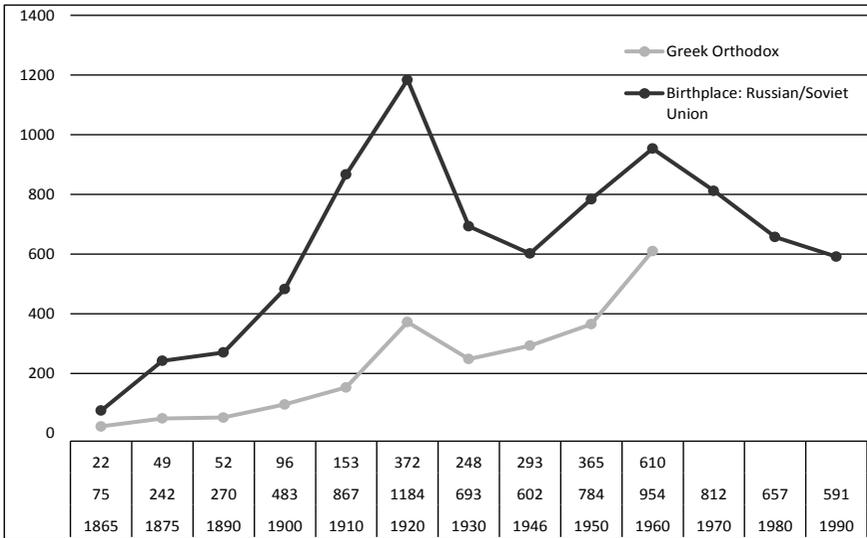


Fig. 2. Number of persons who according to the Norwegian censuses from 1865 to 1960 or 1990 were either born in Russian Empire / the Soviet Union, or were noted with adherence to an Orthodox religious society³

* Bottom line – census year; middle line – persons born in Russian Empire / Soviet Union; top line – number of Orthodox.

Fig. 2 gives a statistical overview of persons born in the Russian Empire / Soviet Union or adhering to Orthodox Christianity in the censuses from 1865 to the second half of the 20th century. The aggregates produced by Statistics Norway and its forerunners on the basis of the nominative census manuscripts are consistently higher with respect to Russian birthplace than with respect to Orthodoxy. We would expect this among emigrants from a multireligious society, and it is well known that many of the immigrants from the western parts of the Russian Empire in the early 20th century were Jews. That immigration from a neighbouring country after the Revolution would peak is also natural, but the increase in the century's first decade was more unexpected. It is also noteworthy that the birthplace and the Orthodoxy numbers moved in parallel; until 1920 and from 1950 an increase in the number of the Russia-born was followed by a corresponding increase in the number of Orthodox. The exceptions are the parallel decrease in both series in the 1920s and the special development from 1930 to 1946 due to World War II. Especially the increase in the number of persons who belonged to Orthodoxy after the Revolution strengthens our hypothesis that most of the persons in this statistical category were Russian Orthodox, rather than from other eastern churches in Bulgaria, Romania or the Middle East. Unfortunately, Statistics Norway never published tables which cross-tabulate

³ Sources: [Statistics Norway, 1954; Statistics Norway, 1964; Statistics Norway, 1995]. The 1865 data is based on microdata available at: [The Arctic University of Norway. The Norwegian Historical Data Centre].

the birthplace and the confession criteria, so we cannot be certain about the birthplaces of the Orthodox individuals in their aggregates. Especially in the 1950 census, however, there is information about the characteristics of those belonging to different religious societies after they came to Norway. Therefore, we know that two-thirds (249) of the Orthodox then lived in towns rather than in rural areas, and that 203 of these lived in Oslo with 39 more in the county of Akershus surrounding the capital. However, in the tables about the age and gender structure among religious dissidents, there are no specifics about the Orthodox [Statistics Norway, 1954].

According to the Law of Statistics, we may only use census data younger than 100 years for statistical purposes. This makes it less worthwhile to transcribe the information in the nominative census manuscripts into textual computer versions, which we can search and analyse statistically on the individual level. Fortunately, such detailed analysis can be performed on the censuses from 1865, (most of) 1875, the 1900 and the 1910 censuses which are available as full count databases with, in principle, the whole population in Norway (cf the web reference by table 1 for results from the microdata). Here we can inspect the verbatim information written by the census takers who met the individuals and noted their names, occupations, birthplaces, religious allegiances and other social and demographic characteristics – in the towns the homeowners were supposed to note the information themselves. We can compare the information provided source critically and for instance ask whether it is reasonable that an immigrant born in Novgorod is a *Roman* Catholic when he is noted as “Katolsk” in the 1910 census or more likely Orthodox.

Looking at the individual level data from the 1865 census manuscripts, we identify 15 persons belonging to Orthodoxy in eastern Finnmark, close to the Russian border – likely the same Orthodox Sami families mentioned in the 1845 census aggregates. 12 of these persons were born in Norway. We have to use the spelling of their names in censuses, even though we are aware that Sami and Russian name forms may be norwegianized. They are all ethnic Sami, except for a wife and a worker who were born in Russia and noted as ethnic Russians. A third person, Marie Fodrovits is also born in Russia, but identified as ethnic Sami, and the wife of Anders Fodrovits born in 1801 with two sons and a lodger. Another household was headed by Boman Fodrovits born in 1796, thus likely Anders’ brother; with two children, one foster son, a lodger and a servant. All persons in these two households were “Greek Catholic” according to the 1865 census. In addition to being fishers, brothers Boman and Anders had the occupation title “Rettighetsmand”. This means that they held rights to land areas, which is peculiar since the Norwegian State was supposed to own all land in Finnmark. A third household consists of the married couple Wasili Anisimof and Anna Gregoriobna from Astrakhan born in 1830 and 1834 respectively and living in Vardø town. In addition, there is the Sami servant Zacharias born locally in 1848. (The microdata have been searched at the web address provided with table 1 to find the examples from the 1865, 1875, 1900 and 1910 censuses.)

The population belonging to Orthodoxy had expanded by the time the 1875 census was taken, particularly in its core areas in the northeast close

to Russia. (About a fourth of this census has not been computerized, but since we have the north and the towns, nearly all the Orthodox should be covered.) We now find households with several members noted as “Græsk-Katolikk” not only in Vardø, but also in the towns of Vadsø and Tromsø. The fishers Krestian Jerma and Alexandr Lipponen were inter-urban migrants from Arkangelsk to Vadsø, marked as Russian ethnic lodgers, born in 1832 and 1852. In spite of Russian citizenship, their names indicate Finnish background, and both were noted as speaking Finnish. Krestian was married to ethnic Fin Mathilda Kjurujervi, born locally in 1849. Their two small children were marked as ethnically mixed: Russian-Finnish, but like the mother not as baptized into the father’s religion. Lauritz Brodtkorp, Russian Consul, houseowner and merchant born in Vadsø in 1832 was together with his wife and children marked as purely Norwegian co-ethnics together with the rest of the Brodtkorp families in Vardø and Vadsø. He had two male servants from Onega in his household though, both Orthodox with Russian citizenship. His superior, General Consul Albert Theodor Tøtterman born in Finland and living in Oslo, however, had a wife born in Russia, but she was the only Orthodox household member.

Back in the rural parish Tana in Finnmark, we find ethnically Finnish fisher and farmer Petter Olsen born in “Birtelatti”, Russia as Orthodox. His wife born in Finland and children born in Norway, however, were ordinary State Church members. His co-ethnic Gabriel Johnsen, born in “Donkol”, Russia was in a similar situation, although a day labourer rather than farmer and 23 years younger. In the province capital Tromsø, we find the Russian Consul Nicolai Sventorgetsy, an ethnic Fin from Viborg. All four members in his family were Russian citizens, but rather strangely marked with the mixed ethnicity Norwegian-Russians. Unlike him, his wife Catrine and the two children were Orthodox, likely because they were born in Russia. It is interesting that they followed traditional rules about multi-religious marriages: a Protestant man could marry an Orthodox woman on the condition that their children were baptized into Orthodoxy. The couples in Vadsø and Tana mentioned above, however, did not follow such Russian rules – if in Russia these wives would have had to convert to the Orthodox religion of their husbands. In Vadsø, Mathilda Kjurujervi could calmly remain a Protestant together with her many Finnish co-ethnics in the town and its surroundings. When people from north-eastern Norway settled on the Kola Peninsula before the Revolution rather than emigrating to America, one argument was the easy access to religious services back in Norway. We can conclude that the Orthodox population had grown from 1865 until 1875, but nearly exclusively lived in the parishes close to Russian in the northeast.

The nominative microdata from the census in 1900 are full count, and we can seemingly identify nearly as many as were counted by the Statistical Central Bureau at the turn of the century, and again it looks like Orthodoxy had expanded its number of adherents in Norway. The increase may have been preliminary, however, for 17 of the Orthodox belonged on board ships, and 11 additional were sailors enumerated, not as residents, but as visitors in Tromsø. Then in Skedsmo outside Oslo, there were three members

of a troupe of artists noted as “Gr. katolsk”, all of them not residents and most born outside Norway. Deducting these 31 brings the number of Orthodox living *de jure* as residents in the country down to about the same level as in 1875. We must therefore conclude that even if the number of persons born in Russia had increased during the last quarter of the century, the number of Orthodox was stable. Catharina Tøftesman had been joined by two more in the capital, one of them a prisoner in the National Prison for women. There were also a mechanic in Stavanger, a shop assistant in Trondheim, a woodchopper at Voss east of Bergen and two itinerant saw sharpeners at Kråkstad east of Oslo, but otherwise the Orthodox were still confined to their traditional areas from Tromsø and northwards.⁴ In the Kirkenes district close to the Finnish/Russian border, they still had a stronghold, but the 1900 census only lists four Orthodox persons in Vardø and two in Vadsø towns.

In 1910, the census takers did their canvassing along the same lines as in 1900 in the field, but the central aggregation techniques were different. Some variables did not fit onto the Hollerith punch cards for use with the electro mechanic machinery, which the Statistical Central Bureau had rented from the US. To save space, the variables for small groups such as foreign nationalities, ethnic minorities and the religious dissenters were copied onto coloured paper cards in order to be aggregated manually. These have not been archived, unlike the nominative lists filled during canvassing. Therefore, we do not have access to the full contents of the microdata on which the Statistical Bureau based the published statistic and cannot explain how they allegedly counted 80 Orthodox persons in Oslo. A few Russian ships in the harbour could be the explanation, as we saw from the original lists preserved from the 1900 census. In that case, the increase in Orthodoxy was in the number of such visitors during these times of easier travel by steamship and train, rather than in the resident population. The National Archives in Oslo confirm that some ships’ lists have disappeared from their collection of 1910 census manuscripts.⁵

The concentration of Orthodox Sami in the Kirkenes district was still there in 1910, together with the handful in Vardø town and the couple of itinerant saw sharpeners further south. With the most notable concentration of the Orthodox in Finnmark Province. As could be expected after Norway’s independence in 1905, the diplomat representing Russia had been upgraded from Consul to Minister: de Kroupensky with his wife born in Vienna – both found it below their dignity to report their age or birthdate. Even more of a celebrity couple were the painters Christian Krogh from Bergen and Julie de Holmberg Krohn from the Kursk province. She confessed to Orthodoxy, but so far the census listed them without children. They are still celebrated as prolific artists with large productions from their international careers. They mostly lived in Russia until 1917 and in

⁴ I am reluctant to include the 69 year widow born and living in Larvik town by the Oslo fiord among the Orthodox – the noting of her as “Greek Catholic” is likely an error since it lacks other connections with Russia.

⁵ Personal communication from Senior Advisor Lars Nygaard of the National Archives in Oslo, 11 August 2016.

Norway thereafter. Somewhat lower on the social ladder was the widowed machine worker Martin Martinsen, who had brought his two small sons and the householder Xenia Kolobhakia from Arkangelsk the year before. Xenia and her infant daughter Anna were both noted as “Gresk katolsk” in the census. Along the west coast, we find Orthodox Russians in Bergen and Kristiansund, but as hotel guests in both towns they only added to the visiting, not the resident population.

From the later censuses, we have access to far less information about the individuals and households due to the 100-year rule about use of aggregates only in the Law of Statistics. Thus, Norway may have the world’s strictest rules about the use of historical microdata. The census manuscripts are preserved in the National and Regional Archives, but due to the legal restrictions, we would only be allowed to publish statistical results and no identifiable information, even if the microdata had been computerized for such practical purposes. What we have, are the printed aggregates from each census, which only contain the number of people belonging to religious societies in each administrative district and whether these were rural or urban places. The Russian Revolution and the Second World War fundamentally changed the size and the distribution of the Orthodox population in Norway. The Orthodox Sami in the northeast had been local with a long tradition of reindeer herding and fishing on both sides of the Russian-Norwegian border. The Orthodox immigrants in the 20th century had a very different background – often their main reason for escaping Russia was involvement in anti-revolutionary activities. They primarily came from more densely settled areas further south in Russia, so it was natural to settle in similar places in Norway. After 1920, the capital Oslo and its surrounding province of Akershus became the centre of gravity for the Orthodox Russians, and by the last census with information about religion, more than half of them had settled here. The nuclei in Stavanger and Bergen on the west coast were much smaller, but still added to the urban dominance. According to the 1960 census, the Orthodox flock in Norway had grown to 610 souls, up from the 28 Sami mentioned in Finnmark 1845, or the less than hundred by the turn of the century. But the 28 on the border with Russia had declined to 12 in 1960 – just like Sami ethnicity had been exposed to the Norwegian nationalisation policy and was decimated during the second half of the 19th and first half of the 20th century.

The Russian Jews

The Norwegian Constitution, which was adopted when Norway was transferred from a Danish province to a more independent Kingdom under Swedish supremacy in 1814, contained a rather racist second paragraph. It denied Jews and Catholic monastic orders the right to enter the country. This was an extension of prohibitions from Danish times, and they were enforced strictly until they were repealed by Parliament in 1851. Only a few rich bankers were welcome into the country [Ulvund]. It was, therefore, expected that when we meet the first Jews in the 1865 census, they are few

indeed. Only six persons in the capital were listed; none were born in Russia but rather in Germany and Denmark. The number remained the same in the 1875 census, but now we find merchant Transgott, born 1835 in Kurland, Russia. By 1891 the number of Jews in Norway had increased substantially to 214 persons, but since we do not yet have complete microdata from that census, it cannot tell us to what extent they were Russian. We only know that they overwhelmingly lived in urban places, 136 in Oslo and many of the rest in towns not far from the capital [Statistics Norway, 1894–1898)]. Only six lived in Northern Norway, and we can only guess that some of these persons hailed from across the border in Russia or its Finnish Grand Duchy. From other sources we know, however, that pogroms, especially those connected to the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881, together with increasing poverty forced many Jews to leave the western parts of the Russian Empire.

The computerized version of the 1900 census manuscripts provide further details. 671 persons were identified as Jewish in that census, and 143 or 21 % of these were born in the Russian Empire. The urban character of their settlements is confirmed both here and in the next censuses. The map in figure 1, which is based on the 1910 census microdata shows how the towns to the south-east and especially Oslo was their preferred residential location, but that they also had started to spread throughout the country. On the west coast, the travelling salesmen with woollen clothes, Moses Isaksen was only visiting in the village of a Volda north of Bergen. We find a more typical household in Oslo, headed by Samuel Markus Fridman, with his wife Ragna, 20 years old. He was her senior by 9 years and senior clerk in a clothes store. She was born in Oslo, but Samuel was joined by his sister Frida Adelsten, also born in Russia, and owner of the Adelsten clothes store. Her son, born 1894 in America was the fourth household member, but Frida's husband was not listed, although she is marked as married. The census listed most men with occupations in the trade category, plus the occasional shoemaker or goldsmith. Most grown-up women were homemakers. Russian-Jewish immigration being a quite recent phenomenon, we naturally find this to be a sub-group of young people; relatively few were born before 1870.

Ten years later 289 or 32 % of the 907 Jews originated in the Russian Empire, thus a significant increase both in absolute and relative numbers. The likely explanation for this intensified immigration wave to Norway, were continued pogroms in the western parts of the Empire at the time [Myhre, Kjeldstadli, Niemi, p. 498]. While the first official Orthodox congregation in Norway was only established in 1931, the Mosaic congregation was organized already in 1892 [Aschehoug og Gyldendals store norske leksikon]. Generally, religion was the central element in eastern Jewish ethnicity rather than nationality. Inter-marriage with other religious groups was rare, the aim being to preserve Jewishness over the generations [Myhre, Kjeldstadli, Niemi, p. 408, 413]. In 1910, Heinrich Dsenselsky was temporary Mosaic "priest", but according to the 1900 census, he was a teacher in a private school. Then he was married to Jetta with whom he had six children, but in 1910, Jetta cannot be found. The oldest daughter, Rosa had taken over

as household administrator, and four of the other children were still there. The family had migrated to Scandinavia via Germany, where the youngest son was born, while the other children were born in Poland, which was also the birthplace of their mother, Jetta. Since Heinrich is not marked as a widower, it is more likely that his wife Jetta has left Norway than that she died less than 50 years old. Allegedly, Jews pioneered the divorce as a way of ending marriages in Eastern Europe [Freeze], but it would still be a shameful marital status to enter in the Norwegian census.

As we saw in the table (fig. 2), the number of people living in Norway, but born in Russia, peaked in the 1920 census. Also, the number of Jews increased rapidly in this census, but unfortunately the aggregates do not cross-tabulate the birthplace and the religion variables, and we have to wait four years before we can create our own statistics from 1920 microdata. There were 1045 Jews in Norway according to the 1910 census and 1457 in 1920, while in the 1930 census the number had declined to 1359. During the 1920s, about a third of the Russia-born left Norway. Many of these were Jews, and there is no doubt that one reason was discrimination, for instance when the authorities tried to block their access to trading licenses and other facilities [Thorvaldsen]. The 1940 census was cancelled due to the German occupation in April, but other sources indicate that the Jewish population by then had increased to more than 2000 – many had escaped from Germany and its occupied territories. The reason for the further decline in the number of Jewish persons in the 1946 census, some of them from Russia or with Russian ancestry, are sadly all too familiar. Unlike in Denmark, the Norwegian resistance did not manage to rescue most Jews across the border into neutral Sweden. The biggest group was transported from Oslo to Germany on the steamship *Donau* on that fateful 26 November 1942, some with the assistance of Norwegian policemen. 772 Jews were altogether sent from Norway to the concentration camps, only 34 survived [Aschehoug og Gyldendals store norske leksikon]. According to the 1960 census, 841 Jews lived in Norway, not much more than half of when the number peaked between the wars. Thus, in relative terms the number of Orthodox increased more rapidly than the number of Jews in the long decade after World War II (cf.: table (fig. 2)). In 1960, a majority of both religious groups were concentrated to the towns. That went especially for the Jews who had over 60 % of their congregation in Oslo.

This article overviews the history of the two religious groups, which have been significant among immigrants to Norway from Russia: the Orthodox and the Jews. They are followed in detail in microdata from the nominative censuses 1865, 1875, 1900 and 1910 and more summarily in aggregates from other censuses during the period 1845 to 1960. 28 orthodox Sami are mentioned in the 1845 census; they were Skolt Sami with a history of migrating with their reindeer across the Russian-Norwegian territory for centuries, who became Norwegians after the border was fixed in 1826. Orthodox persons, many of Sami ethnic background can be found in the censuses in rural and some urban places in Finnmark province through the whole period. A Russian priest

officiated an Orthodox service each summer in Neiden chapel, but the relative absence of proselytizing contributed to the peaceful relations along the border. The number of Orthodox Sami peaked in the second half of the 19th century, but declined together with the number of persons classified as Sami thereafter. Instead the number of Orthodox increased in Southern Norway, especially in the Oslo area, where they organized their own congregation in 1931 and their numbers peaked in 1960.

The Jews were not allowed to immigrate to Norway until 1851, so they were only a handful according to the 1865 and 1875 censuses. But from 1891 Jewish immigrants made up a significant population element, which can be explained by emigration from the western parts of the Russian Empire due to pogroms. They started their own congregation in Oslo in 1892. Even more than the Orthodox, they lived in urban places, especially the capital. Most men were employed in trade, some of them itinerant, and their presence on the west coast was often as temporary visitors. Oslo is still the predominant centre for imports to Norway, and from there goods were sent to dealers in other towns. Most women were homemakers, but some ran their own business. Thus, Russian religiosity in Norway, which started up as a predominantly rural phenomenon in the north, ended up in the urban religious landscape of southern Norway. This geography turned upside-down is in sharp contrast to the Norwegian State Church, which still kept its traditional strong position well, with 96 % of the population as members of its congregations in 1960.

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This article was submitted on 03.08.2016