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THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN MEDIEVAL SOCIETY

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Abstract:

In article discusses the role of the church in medieval society, where religion and the church continued to be an important component of medieval culture. In the context of the general decline of culture immediately after the collapse of the Roman Empire, only the Church was the only social institution common to all countries of Western Europe.

The church was not only the dominant political institution, but also had a significant impact directly on the consciousness of the population. In a difficult and scanty life, against the background of an extremely limited and unreliable knowledge of the world, the Church offered the people a moral worldview system. This religious worldview fully determined the mentality of the population of Western Europe based on the interpretation of the Bible.

Keywords: Church, religion, society, Christianity, middle ages, history, culture, monasteries, faith.

I. INTRODUCTION

The church played a very important role in medieval society. Possessing religious and moral authority, she promoted the idea of the divine origin of royal power and encouraged people to be humble and submissive. Church parish was one of the most important forms of organization of social intercourse of people. He exercised ideological and moral control over the population.

One of the main tasks of the Church was the formation and support of the religious worldview of life. It was based on the demand for the killing of the flesh and the liberation of the spirit, which is contained in the philosophy of asceticism. Under these conditions, the Church cultivated the institution of monasticism. The first form of monasticism was asceticism on the principle of solitude in the desert of St. Anthony. Gradually, black and white clergy began to emerge. In 529, Thomas Nursiysky organized the first joint monastery in Monte Cassino (Italy). Contempt for the world, expressed in the pursuit of monastic life, is one of the most important features of medieval culture.

II. METHODOLOGY

Turning to a more detailed study of Church History as a science, It should be noted that the General history of the Church has its own tasks and methods.

The task of science is not just to describe the reality of historical events and learn them, but to make clear the whole historical development, to explain the course of history and the historical process. Church history, in addition to its secular part, depicts the aspiration of believers, as an integral whole of Church history, to the eternal heavenly goal and salvation of human souls.

The method of science is historical-critical. Our task is to take a separate area from the history of the Church and collect all the facts; critically examine and process the information, followed by a systematic presentation. Only with the help of this method can we understand more fully how the development and formation of the Church took place, as a separate God-Human society.

III. DISCUSSION

The entire literature on the research topic can be divided into three groups. The first group consists of texts that are characterized by a comparison of theoretical forms of religious knowledge (theology) with regular natural science. Most of these works belong to the flow of so-called "scientific creationism" and are aimed at projects of convergence of scientific and religious principles and paintings. As a rule, we are talking about the comparison of Christian ideas about the world with modern achievements of science. Where the question of the need for a new world view is raised, it is considered exclusively within the framework of Christian theology and Western science. Such studies appeared in the second half of the 20th century, and their influence is still great. Most of the authors are representatives of the Western European and American scientific communities: D. Devidson, M. Heller, D. Hedley, Ch. Henderson, J. Lilies, J. Moreland, R. Trigg, I. Barbour, et al.

In the second group, the works of Russian researchers are mainly represented. This is due to the fact that in the past one and a half decades, independent studies have emerged in historical science devoted to the study of religion as a form of knowledge. The works of contemporary Russian authors are characterized by a theoretical orientation, as well as the construction of abstract concepts that reveal the peculiarities of religion as a form of world outlook and reveal the possibilities of its interaction with science and practice.

Here are analyzed such concepts: worldview, spiritual knowledge, religion, faith, intuition - and also identify their relationship with the logical mind, philosophy and myth. These problems are devoted to the works of such authors as S.S. Gusev, S.V. Devyatova, O.A. Don, A.N. Kochergin, V.A. Lektorsky, A.F. Losev, L. A. Markova.

The third group includes works created during the Soviet period and aimed at studying the role of religion in society. They are characterized by an irreconcilable critical position in relation to religion and everything connected with it (faith, church organization, etc.), unconditional priority of scientific knowledge over religious beliefs. Of course, the ideological orientation of the scientific works of this period in many respects does not correspond to the current understanding of the role of religion in the field of spiritual quest, as well as to the modern way of life of our compatriots. However, this kind of publication greatly influenced the minds and the formation of the views of several generations of Russians. Today the works themselves and references to them are quite often found in the scientific literature devoted to the study of religion. In addition, some authors (in particular, T. I. Oizerman) admit to recent publications that they reconsider their previous views on the role of religion in society in accordance with the current state of affairs. This group may include research G.S. Arefieva, R.A. Artsishevskogo, V.G. Astakhova.

IV. RESULTS

The main role of the Christian religion and the Church in all areas of social and cultural life was a fundamental feature of European medieval culture. The Church subordinated politics, morality, science, education and art. All human worldview of the middle ages was theological (from the Greek "theos" - God). What can explain this exceptional position of religion in medieval society?

One of the answers to the question gives the very meaning of the Christian faith. It arose from the struggle and mutual influence of many philosophical and religious movements. If we talk about primary Christianity, one of the main ideas that ensured the wide spread of the new religion was the idea of equality of people - equality as the sinfulness of being before the Almighty and all. Christianity, having arisen in the colonies of ancient Rome, among slaves and freedmen, from the very beginning was not the religion of any one people, it had a supranational character. As a religious teaching, Christianity is based on three main ideas:

- ideas of sinfulness of the entire human race, infected with the original sin of Adam and eve;
- ideas of salvation that must be earned every person;
- the idea of redeeming all men before God. But on his way there was humanity because of the suffering and voluntary sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who combined both God's and human nature.

In primitive Christianity was very strong belief in the imminent second coming of Jesus Christ, the last judgment and the end of the sinful world. However, as time went on, nothing like this happened, and in place of this idea comes the idea of consolation - the afterlife recompense for good or bad deeds, that is, hell and Paradise.

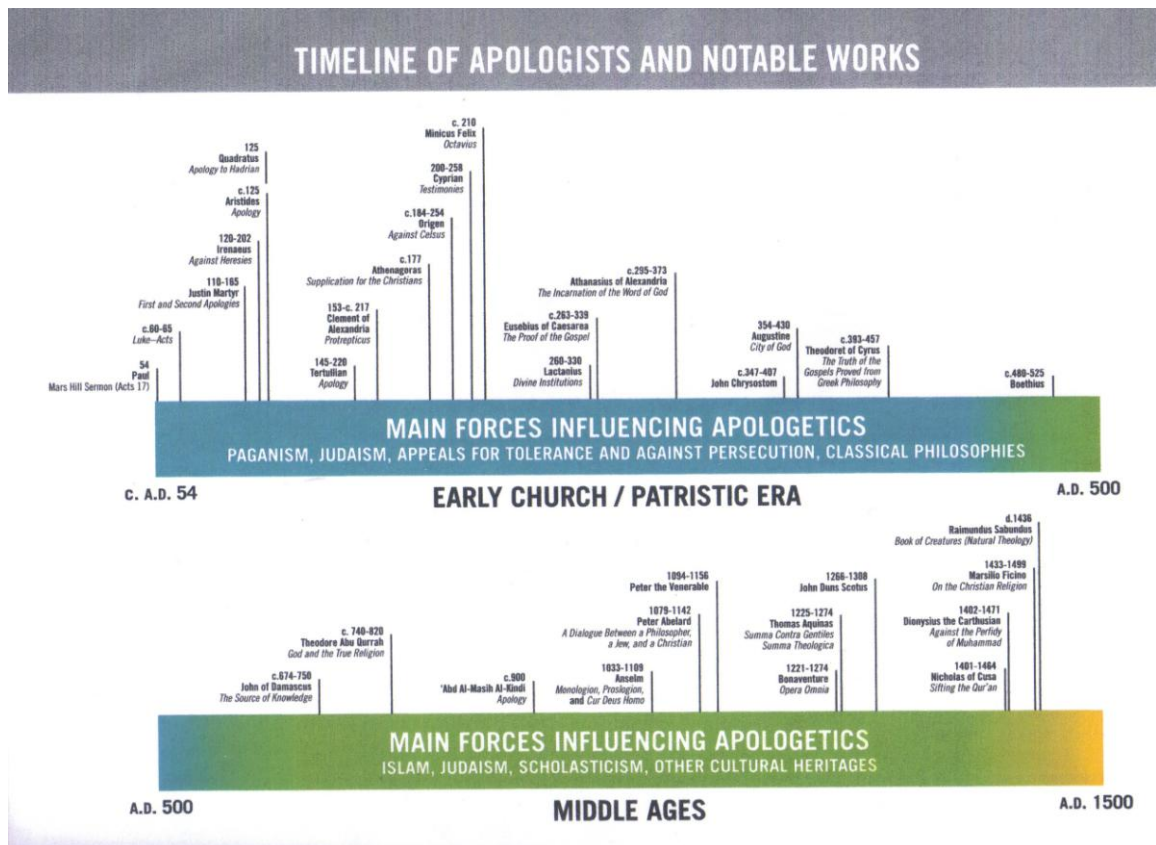
Naturally, in real life it was not possible to completely neglect ordinary human activities, which is why the Church has created an extensive system of regulation of public life by limiting its manifestations to various rules, regulations, customs, etc. At the same time to maintain the unquestioning authority of the Church, to preserve the purity of its dogmas, the emphasis is placed on the development of not rational, but mainly emotional perception of reality and the foundations of the doctrine. On the one hand, any manifestations of carnal passions were recognized as sinful. They were replaced by a passionate, sometimes fanatical love for Christ and the virgin Mary. On the other hand, the irreconcilable hatred towards the enemies of Christianity was cultivated. Faith in visions, miraculous healings, visits of people by evil spirits were an integral part of individual and social consciousness. People lived in the atmosphere of a miracle, which was considered a daily reality. In the heyday of the middle ages heresies were directed against the institution of the Church, a large part of the clergy (gr. KLEROS is the common name of Church).

Such heresies include the heresies of the Cathars (Italy, Flanders, France, XI-XIII centuries), the Waldensians (France, the end of the XII century), the Lollards (Antwerp, the special distribution was received in England), the Albigenses (France, XII–XIII centuries.), etc. classic Heretical movements of the middle ages mainly reflected the interests of the poor classes, were opposed to Church lands, preached the philosophy of asceticism. At the same time they put forward ideas against certain dogmas of the Church.

The Catholic Church in the period of its highest power ruthlessly suppressed heresy. To combat heresy in the late TWELFTH century was a system of special Church tribunals – the Inquisition (from the Latin. inquisitio-search). From the thirteenth century she became an independent institution under the supreme authority of the popes. The activity of the Inquisition was directed not only against heretics, but against the various manifestations of dissent, witchcraft, quackery, etc. People often denounced others. In the process of secret torture, inquisitors forced people to confess guilt. In addition, to intimidate the Church tribunals practiced *Autodafe* (lat. *actus fidei*, Spanish *auto de fe*, letters. – act of faith) – public executions, the burning of heretics, because it was believed that the fire totally consumes the most criminal. Significant was the fact that part of the expenses of the Inquisition were covered from the amounts confiscated from the executed heretics.

Another instrument of the Church against the heretics were the mendicant monastic orders- Franciscans and Dominicans. Both orders were founded in the thirteenth century representatives of the order of the "brothers preachers" – of the Dominicans, which was called the dogs of the Lord, usually formed the courts of the Inquisition. The Franciscan order was proclaimed a beggar: monks were ordered to live only by begging, to dress in rough clothes, to walk barefoot, to be girded by a rope and not to have any property. His goal was to distract the urban poor from heresies.

In addition, the practice of the Catholic Church includes the sale of indulgences-evidence of absolution. the whole doctrine of indulgences was developed. The price of indulgence depended on the severity of the crime, there was a kind of "price list" prices for absolution. Revenues from the sale have become an important source of replenishment of the Church Treasury. Over time, the trade in indulgences takes the character of shameless profit and indirectly begins to contribute to the spread of vices. This activity of the Catholic Church greatly contributed to the spread of heretical movements.



The political influence of the papacy spread throughout Europe. For a long time only the Pope appointed bishops to all countries. The Church widely used system of penalties (including against the rulers): "excommunication" that placed man outside of the Church, "anathema" - a solemn public transfer curse, "interdiction" - the ban on worship. The election of the Pope from XI S. began to take place at special meetings of the cardinals, without the slightest possibility of interference of secular power. About a third of all arable land in Europe belonged to the Church, all States paid "tithing" (a tenth of the taxes collected) in its favor. In the Catholic Church to century X is set to the custom of celibacy (celibate) clergy. This custom closely connected estates of feudal lords and clergy: in families of feudal lords the eldest son usually inherited land property, and the second became the pries.

Monasteries played a special role in spreading the influence of the Church. They originated in the third century in Egypt and represented the first settlement of hermits (from the Greek for "hermit). Monasteries in Europe become large landowners, centers of diversified farms, fortified fortresses, and centers of cultural life. The first monastic order was organized by Benedict of Nursia in the sixth C. further, the order of the Benedictines were combined to two thousand monasteries, in the twelfth century in connection with a string of major folk performances there is a new trend in monasticism. Francis of Assisi in Italy and Dominique in Spain almost simultaneously preach poverty, renunciation of property, respect for simple work. The main thing for the priest they considered not solemn worship, and preaching in wanderings among ordinary people. There was very broad support for such views. Rome officially recognized the Franciscans and Dominicans - the order of the mendicant monks-preachers. We must take into account another reason for the influence of the Church, especially in the early middle ages. This is a General cultural decline, the degeneration of ancient culture, which came after V century.

Political and cultural ties were destroyed. Literacy is becoming a rarity. In place of the classic comes vulgar (folk) Latin. In such circumstances, it is the church that acts as the custodian of the ancient cultural heritage. Priests turn out to be the most educated people. After all, even among the rulers then literate people were a relative rarity. For example, Charlemagne - the creator of a huge empire, a hero of tradition and legends - respected education, spoke Latin, Greek, and understood literature. But ... he did not know how write. His biographer tells us that the emperor drove "on the bed under the pillow of the plank and sheets, to in his spare time to teach his hand to deduce the letters. But not had success. " At the monasteries organized scriptora - special workshops for the correspondence of books. Handwritten books were created of parchment - in a special way processed calfskin or sheep skin. For the manufacture of one large-format Bible, 300 sheep skins were required; it took 2–3 years to complete. Such books, naturally, were incredibly expensive. At monasteries, libraries were usually organized. In addition to the Bible, Books Christian theologians have been corresponded, the lives of saints, the surviving antique works were copied (without such a rewriting to us, these works simply would not have reached). Here are stacked the chronicles - a description of the events by year. The schools of the early Middle Ages were opened only at churches and monasteries. Gradually formed the school program. She didn't change then for centuries. It included seven free arts, three introductory disciplines - "trivium" - grammar, rhetoric (mastering eloquence, dialectic (mastering correct eloquence, ie, formal logic); four disciplines of the highest cycle - "quadrium" - arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music.

In the XII century. Knights had to assemble for the war many times under the sign of the cross (Second Crusade - 1147–1149; Third Crusade - 1189–1192) in order to keep the occupied territories. However, all the crusade campaigns failed. When at the beginning of the XIII century. at the call of Pope Innocent III, the Fourth Crusade was organized (1202–1204), the French, Italian and German knights did not fight against the Muslims, but attacked the Christian state of Byzantium. In April 1204, the knights seized and ransacked its capital, Constantinople. The fall of Constantinople was followed by the seizure of half of the Byzantine Empire, where the Crusaders founded their state, the Latin Empire, which lasted only 57 years (1204–1261).

Social Hierachy Chart of the Middle Ages



The Crusades brought many disasters, they not only failed to achieve their direct goal, but also brought death to hundreds of thousands of their participants and were accompanied by a waste of enormous funds from European states. At the same time, they stimulated the development of contacts with the East. The influence of the Islamic world (Egypt, Morocco, Spain, Persia and even India), where the Crusaders visited, manifested itself in acquaintance not only with the new religion - Islam, but also with the new culture.

The crusades introduced Western scholars to Arabic and Greek science (in particular, to the works of Aristotle). The geographical knowledge of Europeans has significantly expanded, and mathematics, astronomy, medicine, history have also made progress. In European art from the era of the Crusades, the influence of Byzantine and Muslim art is noticed. For example, horseshoe-shaped and pointed arches, trefoil-shaped arches, flat roofs appear in architecture; in art crafts, the arabesque ornament becomes popular (so named because it looks like Arabic script). Thanks to the crusades, poetry was enriched - new plots, new poetic forms appeared.

V. CONCLUSION

So, from all the above we can conclude that the role of the Church and religion in the life of medieval man and in the West, and in the East, and in Russia is undoubtedly great. Religion is not only a fantastic representation in the minds of people, rituals, ceremonies, sacrifices, prohibitions. Religion is a code of morality and law, which is an integral part of the family and social life. It is undeniable that religion in a class society becomes an instrument of social oppression, it is involved in long and bloody wars, persecutions and executions of dissidents, murder of people on superstitious suspicion of witchcraft.

But a significant advantage of religion and its representatives - the clergy-is that they helped believers to overcome fear, grief, despair, gave comfort. Biblical and Evangelical stories condemned cruelty, violence, injustice, called people to peace, courtesy, generosity.

Religious motives permeate the work of artists, musicians and writers of all countries and eras, give it depth, meaning. Religion as a necessary element of human culture carries a humanistic potentia.

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