

Date of publication: June 12, 2018

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.2529414](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2529414)

Historical Sciences

INTERACTION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AND THE STATE IN RUSSIA AT THE PRESENT STAGE

Ershov, Bogdan Anatolievich¹, Ashmarov, Igor Anatolievich²

¹Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor, Voronezh State Technical University,
Street 20 years of October, 84, Voronezh, Russia, E-mail: bogdan.ershov@yandex.ru

²Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor of the
Chair of Humanitarian and Socio-Economic Disciplines,
Voronezh State Institute of Arts, 394053, Voronezh, st. General Lizyukov, 42,
Russia, E-mail: dobrinka75@mail.ru, 8-951-851-6-111

Abstract

The article examines the relationship of church and secular authorities at the present stage in the Russian state. It is shown that, after decades of forced isolation, the Russian Orthodox Church is gradually beginning to take the most energetic part in the moral development of Russian society. Particular attention is paid to the doctrine of the Russian Church, which identifies important principles of spiritual regeneration, which will guide the Church in its relations with government institutions in the future.

The scientific problem resolved in the article reveals the need for a historical analysis of the relationship between the Church and society. This helps to determine the meaning and place of the Orthodox Church in the existing moral and social environment, as well as to determine the objective status of the state in the world system in accordance with the principles of the Orthodox faith.

Keywords: Church, State, Society, Nation, Faith, Moral Foundations of Public Policy, Globalization.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, we hear more and more voices about the "spiritual revival" in modern Russia. New temples are being created, the priests of the Orthodox Church are increasingly conducting propaganda on television of spiritual values. The history of Russia shows that our country was given the opportunity to use spiritual experience, and the Church (as an ideological institution) was a social structure that existed and continues to exist together with the state mechanism, thereby providing a certain social stability. Today, the Church acquired a huge prestige that allowed it to become the bearer of the idea of patriotism in Russia, which spiritually united the Russian people.

This important role of the Church in the political conglomerate of the Russian state requires the support of our society to revive the spiritual and moral ideals of good and justice.

Currently, there are several options for the relationship between the Church and state structures. In Orthodoxy, the most familiar is the theory of "Symphony of the Church and secular authorities" when their relations are based on cooperation, where mutual assistance and responsibility are the prerogative of both.

State power in Russia has always supported a symphony of relations with the Church, especially in matters aimed at achieving goals that would meet the interests of society and the people. In addition, the Church receives from the state the full opportunity to preach and spiritual education to those who need it.

II. METHODOLOGY

The theoretical and methodological basis for the study was the problem of the attitude of the authorities, clergy and believers through a comprehensive study of the main aspects: namely, the reasons for the closure of churches, the social aspects of the activities of the clergy and believers in those years. Such comprehensive approaches presuppose the consideration of the problem in all its multifacetedness, which indicates an inseparable connection with the objective development of the Soviet state and the entire Russian Orthodox Church.

In the process of research historical-genetic, historical-comparative and historical-statistical methods were used. Application of the first, includes a detailed description, the saturation of facts. The comparative method helped to reveal in the life and work of the Orthodox both general and specific features.

The work is completely based on the principles of historicism (consideration of the topic from the point of view of historical conditioning and development), objectivity (a comprehensive analysis of historical documents and an objective evaluation of the studied), unity and interrelation of the general and special (for example, almost all antireligious events planned by the central state power, found its expression in the region of interest). In the course of the research, a method of complex analysis of historical sources, a cause-effect analysis was applied; general scientific methods - induction and deduction.

III. DISCUSSION

In the domestic science a considerable amount of material is accumulated, which touches upon the problems of studying the various political aspects of Orthodox dogmatics. Nevertheless, there are no special studies devoted to the conceptual analysis of contemporary interpretations of the Orthodox teaching about the relationship between Church and state in the history of socio-political thought in Russian political science.

It is necessary to highlight a collection of articles edited by A. Velichko and M. Smolin "Orthodox statehood: 12 letters about the Empire." These authors in their study describe in detail the idea of the Empire, as well as various aspects of the symphonic connection between the Church and the state, the moral foundations of law, the issues of state and legal regulation in the light of the rights of Christianity, the problems of the inner church structure and ensuring its integrity. We can say that the authors introduce the reader into the classical interpretation of the phenomenon of "Orthodox statehood".

However, a significant drawback of this work is a one-sided approach to the study of this issue because of the personal religiosity of the authors. Opposite opinions and interpretations are either criticized or not given at all. Therefore, this work of authors can not be fully called scientific. Rather, it can be attributed to journalism. In addition to the above collection, it should be noted that Velichko and Smolin are authors of independent works, which to some extent affect the problem of forming a doctrine on building relations between the Church and the state.

This is especially true of the social concept of the Church, because this was the first experience of the modern Church in the complex expression of its socio-political positions.

In a short time a significant number of articles were published in which the authors expressed their opinion on the social concept, approved or criticized it. Round tables were organized in which the developers discuss this document.

Among the numerous works devoted to the analysis of relations between the Church and the state, it is worth mentioning the articles of O. Shvedov and V. Semenko, who, in our opinion, reflect the scatter of opinions prevailing in Orthodoxy regarding the adoption of the social life of the Russian Church. According to Shvedov, the adopted document should be coordinated with supporters of the Church in different positions. That is, the social concept is inherently akin to a constitution that unites citizens of the country, despite all the differences. At the same time, the author believes that the Council of Bishops of 2000, approving this concept, is developing liberal decisions of the Local Council of 1917-1918. As a confirmation of this thesis Semenko V.P. in his article expresses the opposite point of view.

In his view, the "Fundamentals of the Social Concept" witnessed the complete victory of a healthy conservative majority over liberal extremists in the Church. In addition, the author in the thesis of the non-priority of any state system sees not the development of liberal tendencies, but, on the contrary, the consolidation of the entry of church dogmas. First of all, the concept declares the principle of the metaphysical superiority of the Church as an institution established by God over any forms of earthly power and, above all, of the state.

A special place is occupied by the work of sociologist KN. Kostyuk, whose research interests lie in the study of social and political concepts of various Christian faiths. Kostyuk's analysis is based on the thesis of a social concept, which is a unique document for the entire Christian world, because neither Catholics nor Protestants have a single full-fledged social concept. Accordingly, in his works the author tries to formulate criteria for assessing the social concept of the Russian Church. In the article on the emergence of a social concept, Kostyuk presents the historical and theological grounds for this document, reveals the social and ecclesiastical context.

A vivid example of works for which criticism of a destructive nature is inherent is the analytical article of historian and publicist E. Kholmogorov. In his notes the author agrees with Kostyuk that certain provisions of the social concept of the Russian Church are typical for the fundamentalist thinking of believers and clergy. However, from this thesis, Kholmogorov makes more radical conclusions. The researcher comes to the conclusion that the change in theological views led to the declaration of atheistic views on the church.

Thus, the above examples once again point to the disunity of opinions within the Orthodox community, which in turn leads to the appearance in church journalism of a huge number of interpretations of any official document adopted by the church authorities.

IV. RESULTS

According to the official concept of the Church, approved in 2000, the Church cannot engage in tasks that are contrary to its direct purpose. Such tasks include, for example, the overcoming of sin through violence, the assumption of tasks that determine such motives as constraint and coercion.

At the same time, the Church is trying to draw attention to the requests of the secular authorities in addressing urgent issues of moral upbringing of the youth. However, as practice in different countries of the world shows, the state should not remain indifferent to this issue. The realization of these aspirations in the education of youth accompanies the Church throughout its history. At the same time, the Church was not involved in the political aspects of the struggle. The Russian Orthodox Church did not nominate a single representative from political parties, and this is a special mission of the Church.

The Council of Bishops adopted the church decree on the moral education of the youth in 1997. However, the issues of political life to a certain extent were to be solved without the participation of ordinary citizens.

The former Patriarch Alexis II expressed this as follows: "Every religion should be responsible for the family, society, for the nation, for the present and future of our country; therefore everyone should contribute to a constructive renovation of Russia." Orthodox parishioners on this basis often organize socio-political associations, whose activities function under the direct control of the Orthodox Church.

Important work is related to the legal issues of cooperation between the secular authorities and the Church in various fields. As a result, agreements were concluded on cooperation between individual government ministries and the Church.

Today, church-wide projects dedicated to major events in the church and public life are prepared. This, for example, is the 100th anniversary of the October Revolution. These projects will include scientific and social forces. At the present time, voices about the constant and professional interaction of the Church with state structures in the political and legal spheres are heard more clearly. In some dioceses, special law faculties have been established. The purpose of this work is to analyse regional rules and other laws, prepare reports on their development and improvement, especially in the fields of education, science and culture, and consider regional cooperation projects between the state and the Church.

Cooperation between church and secular authorities is of great importance in strengthening moral and public security.

In the 1990s, several conferences were held, at which issues of strengthening national security and relations between the Church and the Russian Armed Forces were discussed. Some military schools began to teach the course "Introduction to Orthodoxy." The general church council resumed its work.

All this made it possible to take the first steps to hold a national conference at the General Staff, which took place in 1994. The agreement on cooperation between the Ministry of Defence and the Church was signed. The Department for Cooperation with the Army and Law Enforcement Agencies formed the results of this conference in the Moscow diocese.

In the future such agreements were signed by the Church with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The agreements determine the goals of overcoming the moral crisis, the consolidation of law and order, spiritual enlightenment, the realization of the religious rights of military, patriotic upbringing, the opening of new churches. With the support of the Ministry of the Interior, military-historical clubs and youth associations began to be created, which were usually named after Russian rulers Dmitry Donskoy, Alexander Nevsky, generals Georgy Zhukov and Alexander Suvorov and others.

Since the mid-1990s, the military, on the advice of priests, could serve in military garrisons, where the military built Orthodox churches and monasteries and conducted pastoral work. In the military garrison, located next to some large monasteries - Valaam, Trinity-Sergius Lavra, etc., in coordination with the clergy formed the spiritual schools in which seminarians studied.

Since 1992, educational Christmas readings have been held, which indicate a significant result of cooperation between the Church, society and authorities in the field of education. The value of Christmas readings is that they unite thousands of specialists from different disciplines and clerics from dozens of Russian regions. Today, the educational work of the Church takes place in various forms, especially in schools. Community "Radonezh" created the first such school in 1991. In addition, regional schools have been established.

However, despite the successes of the Orthodox Church in the sphere of internal religious work, various sects flourishing on the basis of local conflicts and moral disintegration of society continued to develop and spread. Therefore, today the Church should be ready to promote a new Russian national idea, which Russian President Vladimir Putin called patriotism. There is no doubt that today it is necessary to use the entire historical and cultural experience of our country, including the achievements of Soviet power, relying on the traditions and mentality of the Russian people. Orthodox faith in this respect should be one of the main components of the formation of national ideology in Russia.

Thus, church-state relations in the modern Russian state are based on the principle of relative independence of the Church and the state. The most important is cooperation in the social and cultural sphere.

To date, one of the aspects of preserving the spiritual worldview in the process of globalization is the missionary work of the Russian Church, which helps the weak and needy throughout the world. Missionary mission of the Church is to support interregional relations of Russia by strengthening inter-ethnic relations. The missionary ministry of the Church, in the opinion of the majority of Orthodox leaders, does not pretend to be a political aspect of the government, since the government provides substantial assistance. For example, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, money is constantly allocated for the construction of new churches around the world. Patriarch Kirill repeatedly said this: "Revival and development of missionary congregations and new churches is a powerful stimulus that neutralizes various manifestations of sectarianism and extremist ideas throughout the world".

V. CONCLUSION

The Orthodox faith, based on historical and political experience, approves the idea of cooperation and symphony with state structures. The concept of the Orthodox Church clearly defines this step, in particular, says that the Church can enlist the support of state structures in those cases when it is necessary to solve the moral paradigm of the nation, but the right to vote remains for the authorities. If you look at the sociological research received by scientists, in the era of globalization, various differences may appear in the environment of the Church, which in principle can have an ambiguous impact on social and political activity.

Summing up, it can be noted that the duality of political reality is that it is capable of exerting a favorable influence on Orthodox dogmatism because the competition of spiritual truths and different religions contributes to the strengthening of the Orthodox faith, which in turn can bring innovation to the work of the clergy and the whole Church. The global processes of globalization have always had an ambiguous impact on the functioning of civil society institutions. But in general, these processes allow you to follow the dynamics of the formation of the spiritual Renaissance in modern Russia.

REFERENCE LIST

Denisenko P.A., (1997) The modern religious situation in the Russian Federation and its Armed Forces; The main contradictions and development tendencies, social-philosophers. the analysis. 187 p. (in Russ).

Dobrenkov, V. I., (1989) Methodological issues of the study of religion. 189 p. (in Russ).

Dzhoraeva SV, Medvedko S.V., (1996) The attitude of Russian political parties to the religious issue. Pp. 12-76. (in Russ).

Ershov B.A., (2010) Church landmark of the Russian province in the XIX century. Society. Environment. Development. Pp. 38-42. (in Russ).

Ershov B.A., (2013) Russian Orthodox Church in the structure of state administration in the XIX - beginning of the XX centuries. 245 p. (in Russ).

Ershov B.A., (2011) Social and psychological characteristics of the principles of the government central black soil in the XIX - the beginning of the XX century Historical, philosophical, political and legal sciences, culturology and art history. Questions of theory and practice. Pp. 91-94. (in Russ).

Gordienko N.S., (1984) Evolution of Russian Orthodoxy (20-80s of XX century). 64 p. (in Russ).

Kanevsky K. G., (2005) The relationship of the secular school and religious associations: the legal aspect Pp. 28-30. (in Russ).

Kanevsky K.G., (2003) The social concept of the Russian Orthodox Church. Institute of the State through the eyes of Orthodox Christians Pp. 53-59. (in Russ).

Odintsov M. I., (1993) Religion, national Concord and revival of Russia. Pp. 99-106. (in Russ).

Mitrokhin, N., (2004) Russian Orthodox Church: contemporary condition and current problems. 648 p. (in Russ).

Nabiev R. A. (1997) Theory and ideology of Church-state relations. Religion in contemporary society: history, problems, prospects Materials of international scientific-practical conference. Pp. 5-14. (in Russ).

Polorotov, N. N., (2000) The state and the Church: history and modernity. 124 p. (in Russ).

Zaluzhny A., (2005) Ensuring legality in the sphere of state-confessional relations and counteraction to extremism. Pp. 25-33. (in Russ).

Zhusubaliyev, M. A., (1995) the Russian Orthodox Church in the role of civil religion in post-Soviet Russia. Pp. 159-160. (in Russ).