

УДК 271.2

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Received 8 October 2020

MODELS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE CHURCH IN THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF RUSSIA¹

This article is devoted to the study of state-church relations from the period of the adoption of Christianity to the beginning of the XXI century. The author analyzes the peculiarities of the formation of three models of relations between the state and the church on the basis of ideology, political structure and approaches to religious politics.

Keywords: State-Church relations, Russian Orthodox Church, symphony, secular state, freedom of conscience and religion.

МОДЕЛИ ВЗАИМООТНОШЕНИЙ ГОСУДАРСТВА И ЦЕРКВИ В ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЙ ИСТОРИИ РОССИИ

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Статья посвящена исследованию государственно-церковных отношений от периода принятия христианства и до начала XXI века. Автор анализирует особенности формирования трех моделей взаимоотношения государства и церкви на основе идеологии, политического строя и подходов к вероисповедной политике.

Ключевые слова: государственно-церковные отношения, «симфония», Русская Православная Церковь, светское государство, свобода совести и вероисповедания.

¹ Статья публикуется в авторской редакции.

Introduction. The importance of the topic is to explore interaction between the state and the church in the political history of Russia and to develop approaches to research models of state-church relations. In modern Russian historiography, this topic has been studied since the early nineties. Scientists have proposed various approaches to the periodization of state-church relations in Russia. These approaches were based on the religious policy of the state. This problem was investigated in the academic writings of V. Alekseeva, O. Vasilyeva, A. Gorbатов, A. Luukkanen, M. Odintsov, T. Chumachenko, and others. Most scientists chose the history from 17th to 20th century as the object of their research. There were the Synodal period, the Provisional Government period, the Soviet period and the modern period, within which models of state-church relations were revealed [5, 14]. According to M. Odintsov, during the 20th century the history of state-church relations, the evolution of state policy in the "religious issue" appeared as a change of models, which corresponded to the forms of government in Russia: monarchy, bourgeois and Soviet republics [3, 6]. We believe there were three models of church-state relations, the fourth covers the modern period starting from the mid-1980s of the last century.

Main part. Before analyzing the models of state-church relations in the political history of Russia, let us define the model. The model of state-church relations are the characteristics of the state's policy towards religious organizations. It consists of three parts - the theoretical and ideological basis, the legal framework, and institutions implementing state policy on freedom of conscience and religion [4, 7].

The first model had a similar characteristic to those of Byzantium symphony model of church-state relations, which was prescribed by the sixth Novella of the emperor Justinian in the 6th century. According to Novella, the church and state are two gifts from God to humanity, two orders of things following from one source, which is divine will, and therefore, should be in the accord, that is, in symphony. "When the church is well-managed and state system firmly keeps the law and directs the life of the people to true goodness, it will bring a firm, mutually

beneficial and much desired union for mankind [1, 59-60].

In Byzantium, this type of the state-church relationship was developed between the 9th and 13th. A number of scholars suggest that the symphony is the ideal of state-church relations, a specific cultural phenomenon, which could never be realized either in the history of Byzantium or in the history of Rus-Russia, but only appeared in its symbiotic, hybrid forms [2, 14]. It is generally believed that the principle of "symphony" consistently manifested itself in the activities of the Orthodox Church during the reign of Russian princes and monarchs and before Peter the Great.

The Byzantine model of a symbiotic church and state promoted a similar model of church development in Russia after the conversion. Vladimir's initiative for the adoption of Christianity as the official religion and his universal support of the church caused the dependence of the church on state authorities. Moreover, analysis of the state-church interaction during the 10th –13th centuries demonstrates that the Russian Church did not exert influence on policy of the state. Usually church leaders maintained a policy of feudal groups, or acted as peacemakers in political conflicts. By means of canonization of the political or church leaders the church proved authority of the state.

The establishment of the Patriarchate in 1589 approved the principle of autonomy of the Russian church from Constantinople's patriarchy, but placed the church in a position of complete dependence on state authority. Patriarch Nikon's attempt to put the church over the state ended in failure, tsar Alexis had him removed from patriarchal office in order to ensure that the church remained under authority of the state. It meant the end of the "symphony" and the beginning of Caesaropapism in Russia [6, 66]. Thus the Russian church and state became as one.

Tsar Peter the Great made significant changes in the area of church-state relations. He removed the opposition of the church to the state, to make church the part of the state system, and to make Orthodoxy a strong supporter of absolutism. The theory of natural law became the ideological basis for the monarch to assume the right to administer the

affairs of the church. It was recognized that the first duty of the state is to ensure the "common good" for the citizens of the state. Proceeding from this, the clergy should be an instrument of the temporal power of the state. With this purpose in mind, the tsar took under his control the landed property of parishes and monasteries.

Tsar Peter borrowed the European collegiate control system and attempted to adapt it to the church domain. The Russian Orthodox Church was placed under the Synod system and became little more than a department of state for the remaining two hundred years of the tsarist state.

Peter's successors kept on the policy of secularizing church property and subordinating the church to the state. During of nineteenth century, the state was strengthened by the role of the Chief Procurator who practically managed the church.

At the beginning of twentieth century, the prevailing attitude called for drastic changes in the area of church-state relations. The majority of newly organized political parties advocated freedom of conscience ideas and pointed out the necessity for the Orthodox Church to become independent from the state. During the first Russian revolution of 1905 these questions were debated in the press, in the higher circles and the State Duma. Under influence of public sentiments, in April 1905 Tsar Nicholas II issued the decree "On Maintaining of Liberal Attitudes towards Religion". For the first time, the freedom of conscience and religion were proclaimed.

So, the State Duma had not any chance to affect governmental politics towards the church. None of the draft laws on freedom of conscience has been passed. The attempts of interests group directed on the democratization of state-church policy and maintaining of the freedom of conscience principles have failed.

In 1917 with the collapse of the monarchy a Provisional Government was set up. State-church policy was reoriented towards building a secular society in Russia. It can be characterized as contradictory and inconsistent.

In the beginning government implemented reforms in the area of church-state relations. It was canceled all class and religious restrictions and amnestied persecuted believers. The equality of citizens in all areas of public life was proclaimed, the freedom of conscience for everyone was granted and the order of

conversion from one religion to another was defined in the governmental decree "On a Cancellation Belief and National Restrictions" and "About Freedom of Conscience." The agencies that implemented the church policy were reorganized, the Affiliation Ministry of the Provisional Government was established.

The difficult socio-political situation in the country has not been conducive to the implementation of religious policies. From the mid-summer 1917 the government leaders began losing the interest to implement reforms in the area of church-state relations. On one hand, they guaranteed freedom of conscience to all Russian citizens. On other hand, they abandoned principles of a secular state and they never realized that people expected radical reforms in the area of church-state relations.

The positive trends such as the autonomy and independence of religious organizations from the state, were interrupted by the October Revolution of 1917. Under the influence of Marxist class struggle theory, the secular state principles were substituted by the atheistic state principles. The Land Decree of October 26, 1917 deprived the Church of the bulk of its lands. On January 21, 1918 the Soviet government separated the church from the state and formally declared the freedom of conscience by passing the law "About Freedom of Conscience, Church and Religious Communities". As a result, all church organizations lost her rights as a juridical person and were deprived of the legal means to acquire property.

The relationship between the church and the state during the seventy years of Soviet regime can be characterized as ambiguous. At times same Head of the state implemented opposite policies towards the church. Joseph Stalin stressed dictatorial and charismatic leadership, hostility and ruthless terror to Christianity and all religions in 1930s. But in 1940s, he provided a "religious revival" in the USSR. The catastrophic course of combat at the beginning of World War II forced Stalin to mobilize all the national resources for defense, which included using the Russian Orthodox Church as the moral force of the people. In spite of this fact, however, the church remained under state control and any attempts to spread its work outside its walls were met with a strong rebuff including administrative sanctions.

If in 1950s Nikita Khrushchev declared necessity the freedom of conscience in society, but later, during 1960s, during the so-called "thaw", thousands of churches throughout the Soviet Union were closed "for ideological reasons." The task of constructing of a society without religion was again put forward. The government declared a "crisis of religion" in the USSR. The totalitarian methods of governance were extremely significant in the process of the secularization of society. For this reason, in 1965, the Religious Affairs Council was organized to promote the elimination of religious handovers and to reduce number of religious organizations, which at that time were predominantly Orthodox. At this time lot of Orthodox churches, monasteries and publishing houses were closed, and any administrative or financial activities were prohibited.

At the end of 1970s, antireligious methods became unpopular, a tendency toward liberalization of church policy emerged. In 1977, the Constitution of the USSR declared in article 52 that citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess or not to profess any religion. In practice, however, due to the social stagnation, these principles were not effectively enforced. The atheistic viewpoints were still prevalent among the public, and the idea of restrictions of religious freedoms dominated.

So, analysis of the Soviet model of church-state relations demonstrates that there was no consistency.

Conclusion. There were three models of church-state relations in political history of Russia. The first one had a similar characteristic to those of Byzantium symphony model of church-state relations. The model existed from the 10th century to 1917. At the beginning, the church was merged with the state. Then, in a so-called patriarchal period, when the tsar appointed a patriarch, the church was placed in a position complete dependence on state authority. Later on, in Synodal period, the state incorporated the church into the state system.

The second model of church-state relations was developed by provisional government from March through October of 1917. The provisional government attempted to implement reforms in the area of church-state relations, but it did not follow them up.

The third model was developed in the Soviet Time, between October 1917 and 1985. On the whole, the state built up a society without religion, implementing generally totalitarian politics towards the church. If first model is based on concept of Christian state, the two last models were developed on the basis of the secular state concept.

The radical changes in church-state relations became possible only under M. Gorbachev. His policy of perestrojka gave a fresh impetus to church-state relations. The state began a dialogue with the church, building these relations on the basis of the recognition of the special role of Orthodoxy in history and with its respect to other religions.

The modern Russian state does not interfere in the affairs of religious organizations, today their relationship can be described as cooperation. This fourth model of State-church relations can be defined as «cooperative», based on partnership with traditional religions.

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Статья поступила 8 октября 2020 г.