MISSIONARY ACTIVITY OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN RUSSIA

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Abstract

The article discusses the missionary activities of the Orthodox Church in Russia. It has been revealed that the Christianization of the non-Russian peoples of Russia was a complex and controversial problem, since missionary activity affected the most important, defining aspects of the ethnos life, such as ideology, traditions, customs and way of life.

Special attention is paid to the enlightenment of the Orthodox faith of many peoples of Siberia, who were representatives of various religious beliefs: paganism, Islam, Buddhism. To work with them, the Church developed a set of measures that contributed to the conversion of these peoples to Orthodoxy.

Keywords: missionary, orthodoxy, priest, state.

I. INTRODUCTION

Religious education and missionary activities have become an important activity of the modern Orthodox Church. The goal of the Church, according to numerous statements by Orthodox hierarchs, is the moral education of believers, their acquaintance with a rich religious and cultural heritage. In addition, new religious (or pseudo-religious) antisocial or extremist movements are prohibited.

At the same time, however, the active implementation of Orthodox programs in the system of education, health, social security, in the army sometimes causes rejection by representatives of other faiths or non-believers. It is obvious that the activities of the religious, educational and missionary work of the Russian Orthodox Church in modern conditions should go without violating the rights of non-Orthodox citizens of the Russian Federation.
II. METHODOLOGY

When writing an article, the authors were guided by the principles of historicism, science and objectivity. In solving research problems, both general scientific methods (analysis and synthesis, deduction and induction, abstraction, concretization, idealization, generalization) and traditional methods of historical analysis (historical-genetic, historical-typological, comparative-historical, historical-functional). When collecting materials, the main role was played by the method of archival research.

III. DISCUSSION

In the last quarter of the 20th century, with a revival of interest in the Orthodox Church, as an important component of the history of the Russian state, scholarly works began to appear on its missionary activity. In the works of N. Yu. Khrapov "The place and role of the Altai spiritual mission in the process of colonization and economic development of Gorny Altai, 1828-1905" by W. Vanin on the topic: "The missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church in Northeast Asia from the Middle XVIII - the middle of the XIX century Razdolsky "Missionary activity of the Orthodox Church in the North Caucasus in the XIX - early XX centuries."

Ipatiev in his book “Missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church in the south of the Far East in the 19th - early 20th centuries” emphasizes the positive role of elements of the missionary activity of the Church in the development of the social and political life of the peoples of these regions. In the last years of the 20th century The Orthodox Church in such a multi-ethnic and multi-religious region as the Urals.

In 1996, the international scientific-practical conference "Christian Missionary as a Phenomenon of History and Culture" was held in the central city of the Western Urals, dedicated to the 600th anniversary of the memory of the famous missionary and enlightener of Komi Stefan Velikopermsky. In the reports of scientists from Perm, Yekaterinburg and Moscow: N.A. Minenko, Chagina K.B. Kuzmina A.B. Chernykh, E.G. Glavatskoy, A. Marchenko, Semenov and discussed in detail the history of the Christianization of the Urals in the XV - XX centuries.

Missionary activities of the church in the period 1905-1916. analyzed in the work of the church historian MG Nechaev. This author comprehensively investigated the missionary system not only in the “external” mission, aimed at attracting “foreigners” to Orthodoxy, but also in the “internal” mission, the object of which was Old Believers, sectarians, representatives of non-Orthodox: Catholics and Protestants. Nevertheless, the strengthening of missionary activity at the stage of 1908-1914 is noted. through the involvement of ecclesiastical organizations: sober societies, fraternities, and circles of pious devotees.

The overall outcome of the conference was the identification of the positive contribution of Orthodox missionaries to education and familiarizing Russian civilization with non-Russian peoples living in this territory: Udmurts, Mari, Komi, Perm, Khanty and Mansi, an active position of the Church in the public life of Russia.

A review of the historiography on this issue reveals the existence of a relatively small number of special studies of secular historians on the missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church. Only in the last quarter of the 20th century, studies of Orthodox missionary work began to appear in different regions of Russia. However, to date, not a single special work on the history of the church has been published, devoted to Orthodox missionary work in the first third of the 20th century, in the period that is the boundary between the new and modern history of Russia.
IV. RESULTS

The idea of missionary work was one of the main ones in Christianity; the local clergy continued their diligent educational work among the pagans. Thanks to parish priests, there were frequent cases of the baptism of pagans.

The principle of tolerance was proclaimed in Russia, and at the same time there was a process of strengthening administrative and religious measures to involve "foreigners" in the Orthodox faith. This was expressed in the creation of instructions, rules that established the procedure for preparing pagans for the adoption of the Orthodox faith.

The main activities of the missions were conversion to Orthodoxy, the approval of new converts in the faith and their education. The brotherhood that existed in the missions expanded their fields of activity, such as health care, charity and research.

Each mission had its own characteristics. The missionaries used various methods in their activities, such as conversation, preaching, and worship. For meetings with the indigenous population, they traveled to places of nomadism, in the summer by boat, in the winter by deer. The missionaries tried to take into account the psychology of the indigenous population, for example, used pictures from the New Testament during conversations.

The teaching method is widespread. Several schools were created for Aboriginal children, and after graduation, some graduates continued their studies in secondary schools. Pursuing enlightenment, the missionaries hoped that the children would become agents of the ideas of Christianity, but in general this was not achieved. Missionaries translated books into Aboriginal languages, which largely contributed to the emergence of national writing. In addition to liturgical literature, they created the alphabet, dictionaries. The first museum and libraries were created, the children of the Russian population studied in schools with the children of the aborigines. Cultural and educational activities of missionaries contributed to raising the educational level of the entire population of Russia.

Activity in missions, the appearance of positive results in the circulation and approval of new nations depended to a large extent on the personality of the missionary. There are several names of missionaries who worked in the XIX - early XX centuries. in Northwestern Siberia and who made the greatest contribution to the development of missionary work.

This is Archimandrite Arseny, rector of the Kondinsky Monastery; Archpriest Peter Popov, who served in the Obdorsk mission; Igumen Averky, head of the Obdorsk mission, previously served in the Kondinsky monastery; member of Obdorsk mission, teacher, translator I. Egorov. Hegumen Irinarkh, rector of the Obdorsk mission, who was called the educator of the North, is especially worth noting. He earned the respect and gratitude of not only his contemporaries, but of all subsequent generations of the inhabitants of Obdorsk North. As a result of the missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church in North-Western Siberia in the XIX - early XX centuries.

It was possible to convert the Ugrians, Selkup, part of Obdorsk Khanty and Nenets to Christianity. In our opinion, the number of converts to Orthodoxy is a formal result that cannot serve as an indicator of the success or failure of missionaries.

The real result was as follows: at the beginning of the 20th century, most of the baptized Khanty, Mansi, Nenets, Selkup were Christians “by name only”. Christianity influenced the religious beliefs and traditional rituals of Aboriginal people in North-Western Siberia. In the process of the penetration of Orthodoxy, religious syncretism or dual faith developed.
Elements of Christianity manifested themselves in the external attributes of the cult, in the inner, spiritual world of the indigenous population. In many Aboriginal groups, baptismal, wedding, and funeral rites appeared. In general, the Aboriginal family ritual has retained its traditional features. Missionaries sought reasons for the failure to spread Orthodoxy among Aboriginal people due to lack of financial support from the state, the lack of a permanent policy of spiritual authority on the ground, the lack of missionary personnel, a lack of knowledge of indigenous languages, a weak missionary initiative, etc.

We believe that the reasons for the low efficiency of the missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Khanty, Mansi, Nenets and Selkup groups were that their traditional beliefs corresponded optimally to their way of life.

V. CONCLUSION

Thus, the various historical periods of the missionary work of the Russian Church were characterized by the strengthening of the integration function of the missionary activity of the Church, the high degree of activity of the Orthodox population in religious, educational, social, charitable activities of all faiths in Russia. All these factors indicate an increase in the real status of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russian society.

REFERENCE LIST


