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THE SPECIAL ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE MODERN WORLD

Introduction. Religion is a phenomenon that conquers people's hearts. One believes in God without asking questions, without any proof and refutation. Consequently, the state uses religion as a tool of influence on its citizens and as a political tool for achieving certain goals. In the 21 century religious conflicts are considered to be an extremely pressing issue due to the exacerbation of interreligious (Islam-Christianity) as well as inter-confessional relations (confrontation between representatives of different sects within the religion). Religious disputes are one of the most common sources of political instability.

Review of recent publications. S. Huntington and M. Albright contemplated about the role of religion in the modern world in their works. They tell us about that special influence of religion that is impacting both inter-individual and interstate relations. Works by H. Kazanova, P. Kasatkin, and others are crucial in determining the general tendencies of the influence of the religious factor on the world politics. V. Yelensky explores the factors that rushed the return of religion to the world arena. Nevertheless, diverse religious relationships develop and change, therefore researchers should constantly pay attention to them.

The objective of the paper is to define and analyze the influence of religion on the contemporary international environment.

Results of the research. After the establishment of secular states and the growth of atheism in European states, adding the reign of socialism, the abandonment of religion led the international community to being less concerned about religious conflicts. Mostly, the rise of the Islamic factor in the world and the formation of religious theocracies in the Middle East changed the course of events. At the moment, the concepts of political Islam and Orthodoxy have emerged, which testifies religion to be an integral part of the state power.

Harvard professor S. Huntington once said: "In today's world, religion is the central force that motivates and mobilizes people. ... Religion discriminates sharply and exclusively among people. A person can be half-French and half-Arab and simultaneously even a citizen of two countries. It is more difficult to be half-Catholic and half-Muslim" [4].

S. Huntington is the author of the theory of the "clash of civilizations". It is based on the fact that multipolarity will replace bipolarity and confrontation of cultures (civilizations) and then replace confrontation of ideologies. In this context, it is important to emphasize the special role of religion particularly for the reason of singling out Islamic, Orthodox and Western (identifies with Western-Christian) worlds [7]. However, the acuteness of interreligious relations does not end with the "clash of civilizations", but deepens and transforms into "clashes within the civilizations" [6]. Division of Sunnis and Shiites in Islam arises as an extremely pressing issue.

Religion has the power to influence how people think and act. A clear example of religious influence was the visit of John Paul II to Poland in 1979. It became an example of the important role that religion plays in the history of Poland. While the communist government told the Poles what they should do, parish priests in every corner of the country spoke to Poles about their beliefs. As a result, Karol Wojtyla helped to construct a bridge between Western and Eastern Europe through his speeches that demonstrated emptiness in the communist system. Several Pope's visits to the states of Eastern Europe “raised the revolution of the spirit that liberated Poland, brought down the Berlin wall, reunited Europe, and transformed the face of world” [5: 66-68].

Today, D. Trump’s Republican administration and the ruling elite of the Russian Federation have shown to pay the special attention to the religious factor in their foreign policy. The evidences are the visits of the US President to the centers of world religions in May 2017 – to Saudi Arabia, the Vatican, and Jerusalem. On the other hand, the Russian Federation promotes geopolitical projects of the “Orthodox world” and the “Russian world” [2: 28].

The researchers analyzed the influence of the religious factor on the world politics and identified some general tendencies:

- Transnationalization (H. Kazanova, S. Rudolph, P. Kasatkin, V. Naumkin) is characterized by the emerging role of transnational actors which are capable of acting through the mobilization of religious identity and the use of the religious factor in order to satisfy their own interests. Each transnational religious system consists of heterogeneous elements – both states and religious enclaves in the borders of other states and transnational religious movements.

- Deterritorialization (H. Kazanova, O. Roy) – the change of the intra-religious landscape and geopolitics of world religions, the growth of the number of proponents of various religions in the East and the West. Particularly, Christianity loses its “western” traits and finds more and more proponents in the East (by 2050, most Christians will come from the Third World countries), and Islam increases the number of followers in the West, in Europe. This tendency is closely linked to transnationalization.

- Decentralization of religions. It leads to the formation of transnational religious communities, the emergence of new religious movements with qualitatively new globally organized subcultures that do not associate themselves with a particular territory, since their main goal is to achieve a goal on a global scale [2: 28].

Political religion binds religion and political actions together; thus religion itself becomes a political tool. Often, the religious factor is being secondary in the eruption of conflict, but it is the most acute factor in the confrontation. For example, in the confrontation between Saudi Arabia and Iran, dogmatic differences are not the original root of the conflict between states, but rather these differences act as a veil that hides the political ambitions of actors [3: 126]. Both states are trying to increase their influence in the region and in the Islamic world, forming blocks, supporting the side of Sunnis (Saudis) or Shiites (Iranians) in regional conflicts (Syria, Yemen) and sectarian Islamic organizations (Hezbollah, etc.).

The danger of using religion as a political tool lies in the nature of religious conflicts. They are cruel and difficult to solve, for the reason that they are related to the people's deep feelings. As I. Stone said: "Too many throats have been cut in God's name through the ages. ... War for sport or plunder has never been as bad as war waged because one man's belief was theoretically "irreconcilable" with another" [5: 64]. As a result, the confrontation of various religious groups mixed with the political struggle leads to xenophobia and violence, justified by religion.

Conclusion. Religion is a complex social phenomenon and a strong driving force. In addition, the religious environment is always of a conflict nature (because of the human nature to reject other beliefs but their own). According to V. Yelensky, reasons why the religion was again brought up to the world arena are connected with the Islamic explosion, the gospel boom, the Catholic awakening, as well as the burst of new religious movements and globalization [1].

The essence of the interaction between religion and the world depends on the kind of feelings and actions it tries to inspire. Therefore, it is important for state leaders not just to use religion but to use its full potential for the good. Both religion and state is able to unite people and try to prevent the emergence of religious disputes. The world has already ascertained that religion is not only the Pope, mother Theresa, but also shahids, fanaticism and terror [1: 6]. Consequently, politicization of religion could become dangerous for international security.

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ORTHODOXY AS A SUBJECT AND OBJECT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Introduction. At the present stage of our society development there is an increasing role of religions, including Orthodoxy, in the international relations. The topic is becoming more and more relevant in our time. No significant event in our social life can occur without the participation of the church that influences relations and political events. Considering the rapid development of the Orthodox religion as an actor of international relations, the topic is getting more and more attention.

Review of recent publications. The issue of the religion's role in the international relations concerns many scholars, but the role of the Orthodox Church itself is less presented. This is mainly referred to the literature of the 1990s, when this issue was considered again.

There should be mentioned several works among the important work of researchers: 1) Lebedev A. P. "Essays on the internal history of the Byzantine-Oriental church in the IX, X and XI centuries" presented in the book "Collection of church and historical writings"; 2) Sahan O. "Ecumenical Orthodoxy: essence, history, modern state"; 3) Hrushevskiy M. S. "From the history of religious thought in Ukraine". These book make up the background for the current paper.

Objectives of the paper. The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of the Orthodox Church on the international relations and its place on the international arena. Objectives of the study imply: