

Specifics of Interaction between the Media and the Russian Orthodox Church

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Abstract—The article discusses the peculiarities of interaction between the mass media and the Russian Orthodox Church. It is noted that there is a certain commonality of approaches and interests in the issues of education and training. Attention is drawn to the problems of modern social consciousness, in which the ideas of consumerism, nihilism, egoism, lack of spirituality, pseudo-culture, militant religious fanaticism plays a negative role. Mass media are considered as a generator of ideas of patriotism and tolerance, which contribute to the revival of national identity. They emphasize the positive activities of the media, aimed at criticizing negative quasi-scientific thinking, immorality, vice, priority of hedonistic values. The article presents the facts that are condemned by both the Orthodox Church and the Russian media. It is noted that the Church, in the institutional aspect, enters into interaction not only with the state, but also with numerous public organizations, and this important circumstance introduces it into the field of law. The state of modern society cannot be called sustainable neither in the worldview, nor in the moral sense; therefore, productive interaction between the media and the Church makes it possible to direct civil society to solve moral problems, among which an important place is occupied by the social justice and national interests of the country.

Keywords—*religious denominations, religious fanaticism, media holding, tolerance, spiritual vacuum, consumerism*

I. INTRODUCTION

According to modern sociological studies, Russian society is experiencing the degradation processes [1] and increasing pessimistic moods, which reflect the spiritual vacuum in which the ideas of consumerism play a major role. The features of individualism – egocentrism, the cult of material values, the desire for consumption and over-consumption, luxury, pseudo-culture, ignoring the role of moral and religious values arise in social consciousness more often.

For the revival of the traditions of spirituality, the historical memory of the people, it is necessary to create a multi-purpose program in the field of education and upbringing in which questions of religious and moral competences will play an important role. In addition, the development of a short-term course on religious education for preschool and early school age, as well as for students in higher education institutions of humanitarian and technical profile can be urgent and topical.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The article uses general research methods (simulation, analysis, synthesis, etc.); theoretical methods (comparison, generalization, classification, concretization, induction, deduction, idealization, analogy, etc.); philosophical methods (dialectics, metaphysics, phenomenology); interdisciplinary methods (synthesis, integration). Special attention is paid to objective principles (determinism, systematicity, development, historicism). The authors identified some objective regularities, and causal relations characterizing development of ethical principles in technical education. The authors also used historical system analysis.

III. KEY RESEARCH ISSUES AND APPROACHES

The analysis of interaction of the Russian Orthodox Church and mass media, implemented within the bounds of law, allows to focus on the principles of international law, right to liberty and security of person.

V.V. Putin's words that "people that have democratic convictions believe that representatives of traditional religions should not be given a lot of airtime," but "at the same time, we have lost certain values of the Soviet period associated with the Moral Code of the Builder of Communism" were quoted in an interview with archpriest Maxim Kozlov. In fact, this Code "is an excerpt from the Bible and humanity did not invent a thing." Vladimir Putin notes that our traditional religions – Buddhists, Christians, Jews, Muslims adhere to basic moral values, that should be strengthened, since "we have no other value guidelines and they unlikely to appear in the near future" [2].

Vladimir Putin emphasized the preserving the secular nature of our state and education, but noted that the activities of religious denominations in educational institutions, the army, and places of detention would be welcome.

Undoubtedly, interaction of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) and the mass media will help to solve effectively many moral and educational problems.

Today, the Church carries out its educational function in conditions of democratic freedom and a new socio-historical situation [3].

IV. RESULTS

The universality of educational mission of the Church implies a variety of forms of its existence. In this regard, the authors consider a course on religious education for students in higher education institutions of humanities and technical profile to be necessary. The content of the course should reflect the problems of the modern Church, its history and the specifics of interaction with the state. Students should know the peculiarities of thinking of other religious denominations and should not insult the sentiments of religious believers. No accident that A. P. Chekhov said: "A person must be either a believer or a seeker of faith, otherwise it is an empty person."

Cooperation of the Church with educational organizations of all levels, including preschool age, involves the following areas of work:

- familiarization with the basics of religion, cultural and historical traditions of Orthodoxy;
- assistance in development of a system of spiritual, moral, civil and patriotic education from preschool to higher education;
- joint projects for development of educational materials, providing the educational process-programs, educational complexes, multimedia materials and others [4];
- development of scientific problems in the field of spiritual and moral education in such scientific fields as pedagogy, psychology, philosophy and sociology of education;
- joint network projects of Orthodox and municipal education: regional school and student scientific and practical conferences, forums, festivals, exhibitions, Olympiads, competitions, scientific and educational-methodical developments, sports and patriotic civic events;
- promotion of in-depth, specialized study of Orthodox culture in municipal educational organizations;
- confessional examination of educational programs and educational and methodological support in terms of subjects, courses, disciplines, modules of Orthodox culture [5].

ROC (the Russian Orthodox Church) has a negative attitude to fee-based education, as it prevents access to education for all segments of the population, including the poor.

Within the framework of the church-state partnership, it is possible to achieve the results to which the national education systems are forward-looking. In particular, the full development of the personality, a true patriot, a citizen of one's Motherland.

Thus, the ideological, educational and subject function of education will be expressed in its entirety.

Orthodox education is based on the worldview of the Orthodox faith and involves familiarity with the Christian morality, history and culture of the people, region and country.

Orthodox education involves the assimilation of Christian virtues, such as:

- Piety
- Fear
- Faith
- Hope
- Love
- Conscientiousness
- Sacrifice
- Modesty
- Humility
- Hard work
- Moderation
- Diligence
- Chastity

The above-mentioned virtues were laid throughout the history of mankind.

Thus, the books of ancient Russia list the virtues that every person should adopt as the guiding principles of living. There are seven main virtues: abstinence (from excess); chastity (modesty, purity); selflessness (accepts what is offered); meekness (avoiding of rage, anger, patience); sobriety (zeal for every good deed, keeping yourself from laziness); humility (silence before the offended, the fear of God); love (to the Lord and neighbours) [6]. Of course, it is difficult for modern people to adopt some of them.

The Church is an expression of religious values, not limited to cultural and national values. It cares about the improving of spiritual and moral state of people, their cultural and educational level, preserving their identity [7].

Currently, the Church is working on a program of its activities, consisting of television and radio channels, print and electronic media, the work of which is determined by The Holy Synod.

The most important basis for the relationship between the Church and the secular media is the social teaching of the Russian Orthodoxy.

Basing on the social doctrine, the ROC understands the huge role of the media in the modern world and respects the work of journalists, based not only on a firm commitment to the truth, but also on the care of the moral state of people and society in general [8]. Fig. 1 shows the intertwining of relationships between the ROC and the media [9].

The media today perform the function of a mediator. They actively carry out communicative work, transmitting information from the scene of action. Naturally, any information in the process of transmission undergoes transformation.

Now, thanks to the media, programs about the life of the Church, its history and culture are especially popular [10].

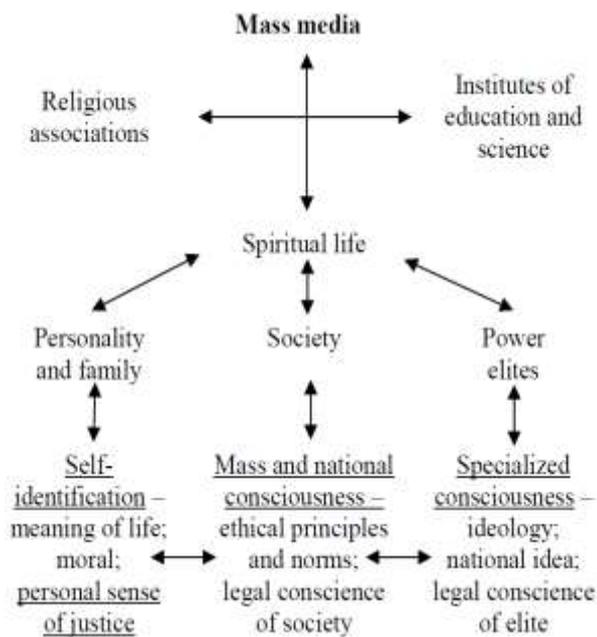


Fig. 1. Relationships between the ROC and the media

The role of the media in disclosing of the banned reactionary sects, cults based on blind faith in the possibility of psychics, fortunetellers, pseudo-healers and others is very important. The cult of violence, immorality, vice, hedonistic values often erases traditional religious values and distorts personal priorities, including the ability to sympathize, love, understand and help [11].

Modern science, schools and universities cannot study the functioning of human society without taking into account the impact of the religious factor on the individual. The manifestations of extreme positions of religious fanaticism and extremism, which deny the importance of the peacekeeping policy of states, should be taken into account and critically evaluated [12].

The emergence of religious fanatics and extremists necessitates religious and moral education, which improves and heals the educational environment.

Today, the family does not always fulfil its educational function, does not cultivate in children senses of justice, kindness, compassion. Drinking and depraved parents cannot be a positive model to their children. Not coincidentally, an 18-year-old resident of Irkutsk after passing his exams and graduating from school ran away from home and left a message in social media announcing that he had joined a foreign legion, whose military goals are directed against Russia's interests. His mother is an owner of a boarding house for the elderly people, and it would seem that she should have instilled the "right values" and at least a gratitude to the country that provided her son with free education and not only that. This fact proves the need of forming a sense of patriotism, collectivism and respect for the traditions of the native country from early childhood [13].

The above example is no exception. It is known that the danger is posed by people who are intolerant of other beliefs.

Such behaviour can contribute to a specific nihilism, which is based on the denial of the spiritual values of society, as well as intolerance to other religions, hatred and aggression against other faiths, religious-militant fanaticism.

The modern mass media are interested in the possibility and necessity of interaction between science and religion. The authors of the article see the resolution of this historical conflict in the constant pursuit of rational and objective knowledge, but taking into account the elements of tolerance – tolerance towards others, and at the same time, criticality towards itself and own views. Tolerance is not a manifestation of hesitation and uncertainty, weakness and indifference in matters of moral choice, but a genuine humanity that denies violence and coercion [14].

When discussing the need of a dispute between religion and science it is appropriate to cite the words of the German physicist Werner Heisenberg (1901–1976), who noted that "the first sip from the vessel of natural science generates atheism, but at the bottom of the vessel God waits for us."

The commonality of some goals of religion and science prove the following functions:

Functions of religion

1. **Worldview:** any religion is a certain worldview, that is, a view of the world as a whole. Having a worldview, a person realizes his purpose and place in the world;
2. **Regulatory:** religion in a certain way regulates the thoughts, aspirations of people and their activities;
3. **Therapeutic:** religion makes up for the limitations, dependence, powerlessness of people in terms of restructuring consciousness and changing the objective conditions of existence [15];
4. **Cultural-broadcasting:** religion promotes the development of certain foundations of culture - writing, art, ensures the preservation and development of the values of religious culture, carries out the transfer of experience.

Functions of science

1. **Cultural worldview:** shaping the attitudes, scientific understanding;
2. **Cognitive-explanatory:** science has become a factor in the production process, the development of technology is increasingly dependent on the success of scientific research;
3. **Prognostic:** sciences are used to develop plans and programs of socio-economic development for the management of cultural processes.

As a result of renewal of Russian society and the processes of democratization, there are changes in the socio-political and economic systems. The processes of perception of the world and worldview have undergone fundamental changes, in which the media play an important role as a regulator of public order and justice.

Unfortunately, operational information supplied by television, radio, Internet, periodicals does not always reflect the objective situation, often deliberately distorting it.

For the purpose of the present research, we used general scientific methods (modelling, analysis, synthesis, etc.); theoretical methods (comparison, generalization, classification, specification, induction, deduction, idealization, analogy, etc.); philosophical methods (dialectics, metaphysics, phenomenology); interdisciplinary research methods as a set of several synthetic, integrative methods. Special attention is paid to the objective principles: the principle of determinism, consistency, development, historicism.

The authors have revealed some objective regularities of cause-and-effect relations characterizing the specifics of interaction between the Russian Orthodox Church and the mass media.

V. DISCUSSION

Media activity is not always unambiguously positive, it is often even contradictory. The media often provoke debate in society. One of the disadvantages of the media, in particular television, is the tendency to demonstrate films that destroy the psyche of adolescents. Very often films related to crime are presented as "heroic". They elicit admiration but not condemnation.

At the same time, the media sharply condemn the facts of vandalism and desecration of monuments for soldiers of the great Patriotic war. So, we all remember the cases when teenagers used the eternal flame as barbecue or danced drunk on the graves of soldiers [16]. A blatant case of cruelty to animals by young girls was widely publicized in the media and sparked debate in society [17].

The growth of the volunteer movement is opposed to such cases. Volunteers work in educational institutions, supervise orphanages, nursing homes, participate in community work; care about elderly, lonely people, feed animals. The activities of volunteers are reported by the media and are noted by the church.

Russia has adopted a number of laws limiting the activities of the media in moral and ethical matters, such as insulting religious feelings, inciting hatred, promoting homosexuality, extremism, disrespect for society and others [18].

VI. CONCLUSION

One of the significant goals of the media is to form an objective view of the world in which religious and moral competences occupy a certain place.

Only joint efforts of the Church and the media are able to solve the problems of education.

The school lays the foundation for self-knowledge of society, so a certain short-term religion-related course in schools and universities will contribute to the formation of a systemic worldview, to teaching of the correct literary discussion, dialogue and the art of tolerance.

Interaction between the ROC and the media in Russia is a generator of new ideas that contribute to the awakening of not only the historical memory of the people, but also the revival of its spirituality and traditional values.

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