

HOLINESS IN THE EASTERN CHRISTIAN TRADITION (ON THE EXAMPLE OF SAINTS FROM THE KYIV-PECHERSK LAVRA)

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Abstract: *The article found out that holiness in the Eastern Christian tradition is spiritual perfection. Moreover, in the understanding of human holiness there is a constant and sincere spiritual improvement, which takes the individual to a higher level of spirituality. In addition, it was analyzed that spirituality is interpreted in terms of activity, in particular, the path to spiritual height is achieved by a lot of work on oneself, namely: the rejection of everything created, material - everything that can distract from the achievement of the desired. The etymology of the concept of holiness and the search for analogues in pre-Christian ones are also considered linguistic and religious traditions. The priority in the study is the image of holiness, as a peculiar summary of the formation of the moral ideal of Ancient Russia. This statement is demonstrated on the personages in the Kyiv-Pechersk Pateryk, in particular, on Saints Anthony the Great and Theodosius of Pechersk. Their thorny elevation is emphasized, which is full of humility, reverence, patience and work in the name of Jesus Christ. Attention is drawn to the visual connection between the holy and the earthly, the provision of certain aesthetic images (glow, brilliance, sun rays, golden color), which speaks of the vision and influence of the emotional on the sacred. It is emphasized that holiness is a powerful factor influencing human feelings. It is updated that the phenomenon of holiness gives rise to a blessed feeling of its equal, but still dependent on it, which does not oppress, and elevates to the heights of the World Objective Spirit. Due to the feeling of its involvement in the Universe, the spiritual and moral state of a person acquires a spiritual motive. In this environment, a person loses a sense of completeness and receives a guarantee of a bright continuation of life after death. A person is not afraid, he believes in his arrival in God, if he cleanses himself of everything “sly” and reaches the highest point of bliss.*

Keywords: *Holiness, saint, holy place, Kyiv-Pechersk Pateryk.*

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Introduction

Nowadays, The present, which is filled with dramatic and tragic collisions, makes its corrections to the worldview and worldview of a person. This is especially deepened in the context of Russia's aggressive actions toward Ukraine. Therefore, in this difficult time, such a moral and ethical factor as holiness is actualized. The crisis situation affected every person and, thereby, brought about a "Copernican revolution" in our hierarchy of values. An acute problem has also become the spirituality of a person, and attachment to certain religious values. It is believed that the manifestation of Eastern Christian spirituality is its continuity and harmonized unity. It rests on a wide field of Christian life and morality. Thus, it can be emphasized that "spiritual values form the psychological foundation of an ethnonational community, regulate its living space, give meaningfulness to actions and guide the results of society's vital activities" [Предко, 2019, p. 53-54].

1. The phenomenon of holiness is the philosophical concept.

The phenomenon of holiness is usually considered in various aspects of religious studies, in particular in axiological, psychological and phenomenological. Speaking about the etymology of the word "holiness", it is worth starting with the fact that the word comes from the ancient Hebrew language "kadesh". It meant, first of all, something mysterious, alien to the world, separate, requiring a reverent distance between man and the supernatural. Holiness was primarily a property of the transcendent Deity and could not be described in kataphatic terms (Kuca, 2014). In the Old Testament, everything that was dedicated to God was called "holy", that is, it was considered separate: "If it is livestock that is sacrificed to the Lord, then everything that is given to the Lord must be holy" (Lev. 27:9). Therefore, in the biblical understanding, the phenomenon of holiness is part of divine revelation, God reveals himself to man, and reveals His holiness to him (Kuca, 2014).

It should be noted that for the history of the formation of the philosophy of language, the very fact of the ancient Greek philosophy separating the problem of the name, the status of concepts of religious language, their imaginary content and the practice of use is important. Returning to the problem of the formation and evolution of ideas about the holy in pre-Christian linguistic and religious traditions, it is worth noting that there are 3 analogues ("ἅγιος", "ἱερός", "ἄξιος") for the designation of the category "holiness" in the ancient Greek language, which grew up in the semantic field of Greek ideas about the holy (Забияко, 1998, p. 98). This category served the Greeks as an important aspect, as it was necessary to give and convey the supernatural character or powers of the deity (Віллямс, 1993).

The complete Church Slavonic dictionary of G. Dyachenko, analyzing the origin of the word holiness, concentrates on the root “holy” and attributes its origin directly to the Sanskrit verb “çvi” (to shine, to shine) (Kuca, 2014). At the same time, the adjective “çvinta” (or “çvênta”) implies a saint, literally translated as shining, purifying. That is, there is already a need to abstract the property from one or another carrier, when studying the concept as an independent cultural phenomenon (Ланно, 2011). So, for example, Pateryk of Kyiv-Pechersk shows the connection of holiness with images of radiance, brilliance, sun rays, and golden color. This is an explanation of the aesthetic aspect of holiness, and its visual examples. Along with that, as noted by V. Toporov, “the origin of the word “holiness” from the ancient Hebrew “kadesh” means not only the growth of physical matter, but also of spiritual energy and the external form connected with it - worldly and colored. The appearance of color, its differentiation into separate colors, and the emergence of radiance covers not only the physical space, but also the spiritual. The lower pole of the glow is represented by violet color, and the upper pole is represented by purple color, which is a universal form of manifestation of the saint” (Ковальчук, 2015)

It is known that the prominent Ukrainian philosopher V. Horsky dedicated a number of works to the category of “holiness”. He elucidates the deep spiritual meaning of holiness, its manifestations, prerequisites, and the highest goal (Ланно, 2011, p. 153- 161). In addition, the concept of holiness is connected with the phenomenon of sophistry, which is presented in relief by the Ukrainian religious scholar E. Kharkivshchenko. This speaks of nothing more than the interest of Ukrainian philosophy in this issue.

Another Ukrainian religious scholar, O. Predko, who also studies the phenomenon of holiness, notes in her book “Psychology of Religion” that the American psychologist V. James believes that the state of holiness “ensures” a religious feeling, which gives it that incomprehensible color that amazes, captivates, and makes the heart beat faster. Holiness is the highest manifestation of human life, it gives intimacy to its connection with the Absolute: “the boundaries of personal life disappear, a breakthrough is made into the realm of the superhuman. In holiness, the highest moral ascents of the soul are observed, in which the desire for a religious ideal led to mercy, patience, courage and even hard work” (Предко, 2014, p. 122-133)

It is believed that holiness is a state of spiritual perfection and was formed at the early stages of the development of humanity, in the process of distinguishing and forming first national and then world religions, the concept of holiness received the status of a universal religious category, which is an essential characteristic of the fullness of divine existence. V. Lappo thoroughly approaches this question and notes that at the same time, holiness presupposed the ontological joining of relative existence to the absolute, the state of the consecration of the earthly world with Divine light. Later, theologians interpreted the category of holiness as a state of human nature, free from sin and open to the perception of divine grace (Ланно, 2011).

Saints are creators of good, they radiate mercy, and they become bearers of goodness and light that can cut through the darkness. It turns out that a saint is a realized ideal of religious experience (Предко, 2014).

2. Saints as a moral ideal (on the example of saints from the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra).

In the national cultural tradition, which reproduces the Christian understanding of holiness, a certain image of the saint was formed, which acted, first of all, as a connecting link between the earthly world and the afterlife. V. Holoborodko in his work "The ideal of holiness and its influence on the moral experience of the individual" points out that domestic hagiographic literature presents the image of a saint in the form of a story about the difficult path that an outstanding person goes through in order to achieve the highest life goal - deification. Hence, the idea of holiness as an embodied moral ideal of behavior. Holiness is also thought of as a sacrifice that has its origins in higher divine values and is carried out on earth. The set of moral qualities characteristic of each saint forms a collective image of a moral ideal. Hagiographical works were dedicated to the topic of holiness - "Pateryk" and "Lives of Saints" (Голобородько, 2013).

Thus, in the "Kyiv-Pechersk Pateryk" the internal paradoxical essence of the saint is defined. Here, the saint is an earthly angel and a heavenly man, he is "a man of heaven walking on earth" (Paterik of Kyiv-Pechersk, 1998, p. 38). In the worldview of medieval man, the earthly world and the heavenly world are opposites, but they are constantly reduced to each other, forming a paradoxical unity of what cannot be combined (Paterik of Kyiv-Pechersk, 1998).

Coincidentally, the founders of the Kyiv-Pechersk Monastery, Saints Anthony and Theodosius, were considered the ideal of holiness among the Pechersk ascetics. The life feat of Antony the Great had a great influence on various people, especially on Augustine Aurelius, who notes this in his work "Confession". Before founding the monastery, Anthony the Great went to Mount Athos to join the saints there. Holy Mountain was known for the fact that the monks here were distinguished by life above the human being, imitating the angelic life. It is in such a holy place that Anthony takes the angelic image of the monastic order and transfers it to Kyiv (Paterik of Kyiv-Pechersk, 1998).

The ascetic's path of holiness is actually perceived as overcoming death through the "truly human", which meets the highest requirements of the moral canon drawn up by God. Calling on the brothers to reject everything from the evil one, Theodosius explains that this is how we will "follow the path of God." Such conversion is possible through atonement, since repentance is the key to the kingdom of heaven (Paterik of Kyiv-Pechersk, 1998, p. 41-42).

Speaking about holiness, as a norm and a model of moral behavior related to the life of the saints depicted in the Kyiv-Pechersk Pateryk, we want to draw attention to the diligence in Christ that was mentioned earlier. N. Kovalchuk in his article “The phenomenon of holiness in the context of Pateryk of Kyiv-Pechersk” mentions V. Toporov, who turns to the analysis of the semantic meaning of the word “work” and its origin. He notes that “this word comes from the old Hebrew “treud” - “to press”, “to squeeze”, “to crush”, “to push”, that is, it means that work is hard, it denotes the whole set of difficulties, sufferings of human life”. Thus, through labor and suffering, the saints paved their way to salvation and eternal life (Ковальчук, 2014, p. 236).

So, for example, the determining principle of life behavior of Saint Theodosius is the principle of imitating Christ. The feat of hard work, the work that this or that saint was engaged in always performed in specific accordance with the set goal [4, p. 237].

The peculiarity of his work is that his work is doubly voluntary: he did not only himself, but also helped others to perform the most difficult work. His industriousness testifies to the connection between work, asceticism, and service to God (spinning wool, testing the flesh, and singing psalms). If the work of the saints of the Kyiv-Pechersk monastery has such a deep meaning, and is so close to God, then we can conclude that it is carried out in the name of Jesus Christ (Ковальчук, 2014, p. 237).

Mystical experience is available to a few - more often it is revealed to “religious geniuses”, from whom it is transmitted to ordinary people. This experience of contact with the “other world” is most consonant with the feeling of reverence. Saints are bearers of goodness, mercy, and humility (Предко, 2014, p. 44)

The saint is thought to be inseparably connected with the pilgrims, in communication with whom his earthly life took place. Actually, the congregation and the saint form that community within which the miraculous power of holiness is revealed. The relationship between the pastor and the saint, according to contemporary ideas, is understood through the categories of loyalty and help. This understanding was the basis of Pateryk’s central idea about the sanctity of the Kyiv-Pechersk Monastery - a place that marks the force field of the miracle-working power of the saints who served here according to God’s law. Theodosius, addressing his brothers before his death, says that he will be the deputy of the monastery in which he spent his earthly life before God.

Therefore, the study of the phenomenon of holiness on the example of the saints of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra allows us to draw the following conclusions. Holiness is a special state of mind, where the main components are charity, asceticism, strength, work, humility and purity of soul. It converges with spirituality and acts as a specific intimate relationship of a person with God. A person can reach a spiritual state of exaltation, it creates a feeling of reverence and causes a thrill of the soul. Spirituality, which appears in an inextricable connection, is the upbringing of the ethical-value core and anthropological- sociological meaning. Therefore, holiness is a special type of spirituality.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of the phenomenon of holiness on the example of the saints of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra allows us to draw the following conclusions. Holiness is a special state of mind, where the main components are mercy, asceticism, strength, work, humility, and purity of soul. It is close to spirituality and acts as a specific intimate relationship of a person with God. A person can reach a spiritualized state of exaltation, it gives rise to a sense of awe and awe of the soul. Spirituality, which is inextricably linked, is the education of ethical and value core and anthropological and sociological sense. Therefore, holiness is a special type of spirituality.

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