

УДК 271.2

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Received 29 September 2021

THE PROBLEM OF POWER IN THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE¹

The article is devoted to the study of the foundations of power in the Christian doctrine. The author analyzes the development of the first concepts of power.

The main models of the correlation between secular and spiritual power in the Western and Eastern traditions are considered.

Keywords: *power, church, state, papocaesarism, caesaropapism, symphony, Reformation.*

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ПРОБЛЕМА ВЛАСТИ В ХРИСТИАНСКОМ ВЕРОУЧЕНИИ

Статья посвящена исследованию истоков и сущности власти в христианском вероучении. Автор анализирует особенности становления и развития первых концепций власти.

Рассматриваются основные модели соотношения светской и духовной власти в западной и восточной традициях.

Ключевые слова: *власть, церковь, государство, папоцезаризм, цезарепапизм, симфония, Реформация.*

¹ Статья публикуется в авторской редакции.

Introduction. The importance of this study is due to the need to study the main stages in the concept of power contained in the Christian doctrine. There is reason to believe that these ideas served as the basic elements of many classical doctrine on state, politics and law. This topic has not received sufficient coverage in modern academic studies.

Main part. Let us distinguish the main aspects of Christian doctrine concerning the exercise of power.

In regard to the necessity of the existence of power, the Bible proceeds from the fact that it recognizes its positive role in society. To the Romans points out that for the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer (Rom.13:4). God uses government to prevent anarchy, protect people's lives, curb evil and stop injustice, punish criminals and encourage people to do good (I Pet. 2:14).

The divine nature of authority is pointed out by the apostle Paul when he says there is no power which is not of God, and all powers are ordered by God (Rom. 13:1). The Bible clearly justifies the idea of submission and unconditional obedience. Everyone who puts himself against the authority puts himself against the order of God, so put yourselves under the authority, not for fear of wrath, but because you have the knowledge of what is right (Rom. 13:2-5).

When the power of the state contradicts to God's will, citizens must obey God alone rather than men (Acts 5:29). In general, the problem of political power is the most significant theological theme of the study of the book of Revelation, where John speaks out against the repressive power of the state. Through apocalyptic imagery, government is presented in its most negative image. The Dragon (the Devil and Satan) is the imperial power, which is identified with Rome (Rev. 12:9).

The problem of accepting the power of the state as the realization of the idea of salvation on earth was central to the political concepts of the Middle Ages. It evolved from identifying the role of the church in relation to the state to identifying the theological and the political and then to their ideological unity. The first concepts

of power are based on the postulate of the divine origin of power. This aspect is clearly metaphysical in nature, revealing the ontological essence of power [4, 33].

Augustine the Blessed, in his treatise *On the City of God*, speaks of the predestination of the earthly hierarchy. There are two states in the world: the earthly city, the State, and the city of God, the Church. The state can achieve its political self-determination only through the church. Augustine's political conception is a doctrine of a system of domination in which the state solves the problem of the survival of the citizen, and the church gives meaning to the existence of both man and the state. The meaning of government here is the creation of a just peace in which agreement between rulers and subjects is observed.

Thomas Aquinas proceeded from the idea that the lower forms are subordinated to the higher forms by virtue of the authority given from God. Therefore, the duty of authority is in dominion and subordination. This is how the scholar interpreted the apostle Paul's clause that "all powers are ordered by God". God is the source of good, order and administration.

But is all authority from God? Aquinas argues, men are equal by nature, and authority is the mediator between God and man. But is all authority from God? As Aquinas argues, men are equal in nature, and authority is the mediator between God and man. Unlawful or evil authority is not from God. A prince may be a usurper, a tyrant, a madman, for he, like every man, has free will. In these cases, the judgment of the legitimacy of the ruler's origin and use of power belongs to the church. Obedience to authority comes from the good that authority brings, so Aquinas allows for rebellion against the tyrant, explaining that his rule is established for private benefit and is contrary to the interests of the people.

Thus, Aquinas views the legitimacy of power as dependent on law. The law is the essence of power as an order of administration and subordination, established by God, who is the source of power, its ontological foundation.

The division of power between the church and the king is a divine providence. Legislative power belongs to the people within the parish of the church. The kingdom of the people must not serve the king, the king must serve the people,

so it is not the king but the church that is the supreme and sacred institution in society. This statement prevented an absolutist interpretation of the clause "all powers are ordered by God", and ultimately denied secular authority a claim to supremacy in government.

Thus, Christian theologians did not recognize the state as the highest virtue because of the impossibility of achieving human welfare, and hence obedience to it was not unconditional. Scripture expressed a critical attitude toward all forms of the despotism of power, and the biblical doctrine of salvation rejected the idea of a rational social order, thereby separating state authority from spiritual authority.

The Church promoted the separation of authorities, which eventually led to their mutual control and interpenetration. The period from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries was the period of papocesarism, or papocesarism in Western Europe. This is the model of political power, where both secular and spiritual power was concentrated in the hands of the Pope, who declared himself both earthly ruler and high priest, head of the church. The concept of power was based on the theological exegesis of Holy Scripture, the dogmas of official doctrine of the church and the religious ideas of the church fathers.

In Byzantium the problem of the ratio of secular and spiritual power was solved in favor of the power of the emperor, as the empire was considered the most perfect state structure, embodying harmony and order. This is reflected in the concept of "symphony of two powers", i.e. consonance of secular and spiritual authorities. It appeared in V - VI centuries when the term "symphony" for the first time was mentioned in the legislation of the Byzantine emperor Justinian I.

According to the sixth 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. In defining the limits of the competencies of the higher secular and ecclesiastical hierarchs, Justinian indicates that the priesthood should concern itself with pleasing God, and the kingdom with other human subjects. 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 [2, 59-60].

In Justinian's opinion, this could only be achieved by observing the sacred rules handed down by the apostles and carefully preserved by the fathers of the Church. Thus, the essence of the concept of a symphony of the two powers was secular and ecclesiastical authorities must be in cooperation and inspiration.

The second idea, derived from the concept of "symphonia," was in postulate supreme spiritual and secular powers belong to the elected emperor, thereby reinforcing the idea of the divine origin of imperial authority.

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The Reformation of the Christian Church, led by Martin Luther, led to a revision of Catholicism. The doctrine of salvation by faith was proclaimed as a personal choice, regardless of the performance of "good works," sacraments, and rites. Rejecting the Catholic Church as the institution of collective salvation, Luther proclaimed the idea of the independence of the secular state from the authority of the church. The separation of secular and state powers led to the emergence of the idea of a politically and religiously neutral society, which in Modern times took the form of a civil, or bourgeois, society.

Conclusion. Thus, the Apostle Paul's dogma on the divine origin of powers initiated the development of concepts of authority by the Christian theologians Augustine the Blessed and Thomas Aquinas. They did not recognize the state as a reasonable social structure, preferring the ecclesiastical authority. The church promoted the separation of authorities, which eventually led to their mutual control and interpenetration. In the Western Catholic tradition there was papocesarism, a model of political power in which both secular and spiritual power was concentrated in the hands of the Pope, who declared himself both the earthly ruler and the head of the church. Eventually later the Reformation rejected the authority of the Catholic Church and proclaimed the idea of the independence of secular and spiritual authorities.

In the Byzantine Orthodox tradition, the question of the relationship between secular and

spiritual authority was resolved in favor of the power of the Emperor, since the empire was considered the most perfect state structure, embodying harmony and order.

Thus, the research of the phenomenon of power in the Christian doctrine has shown that power is an independent object of study, it has a divine nature and always has a political character.

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Статья поступила 29 сентября 2021 г.