

Protestantism and Its Effect on Spiritual Traditions of English-Speaking Countries

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Abstract—The article raises serious aspects of the relationship of the historical and cultural situation in English-speaking countries in the era of introduction and domination of Protestantism. The article deals with issues related to the establishment of national identity in the difficult era of the reformation and the assertion of a new morality. Particular emphasis is placed on the relationship of the rapid development of the natural sciences and art and the characteristics of their relationship in the history of England of the 17th century. The article analyzes the movement of Protestantism as a reflection of the new ideals of the bourgeois era in the context of ethnic and aesthetic concepts. Attention is drawn to the features of the Protestant interpretation and its reflection in the genres of art. The role and significance of the work of Handel who fully expresses the spirit of the Protestant ethics and culture are considered. The article reveals special paths that the United States and other British colonial countries passed at a specified time. Finally, conclusions are drawn, where the future prospects of work on this relevant topic are outlined.

Keywords—*Protestantism; Handel; Catholic Church, Reformation; humanism.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Turning to Christianity, as one of the world religions, one should mention its main components: Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Protestantism which have had an impact on all sociocultural processes in the world.

Without considering the evolution of religious views, it is practically impossible to understand the processes of formation and development of all areas of the spiritual culture in the society. This understanding is extremely difficult, contradictory, and inherently dialectical. We can turn to Berdyaev who reflecting on the role of spiritual culture in human civilization, wrote: "The old Christian consciousness always wavered between ascetic, world-hostile consciousness and consciousness justifying the creativity of culture in the world and illuminating the forms of society" [1].

Moreover, partly expanding some provisions of his work "The Meaning of Creativity," he comes to an optimistic conclusion about faith in the "creative calling of the man, connected with metaphysical depths" [1]. We will trace these processes by the example of some English-speaking countries after the introduction and domination of Protestantism. One of the most prominent researchers who studied the relationship of

the most significant religions with economic conditions, social factors was German sociologist M. Weber (1884-1920). In one of his main works, "Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism", he puts forward some positions and conclusions that are still relevant and can to some extent be used to analyze the spiritual life of the post-industrial society of the 21st century.

It should be noted that at present in various Protestant denominations, researchers number more than 800 million adherents. This is the most heterogeneous branch of Christianity [2].

II. METHODS AND MATERIALS

Having originated in the 16th century as a movement for the transformation of the church in the spirit of evangelical ideals, it quickly spread across Europe, North America, becoming the second most influential religion in Western Christianity. This movement was called the Reformation.



Lucas Cranach. The portrait of Martin Luther

The Protestants call themselves "evangelical churches," emphasizing that they return, as they consider the foundations of the gospel faith. Without going into the essence of the Protestant faith, we merely note that its main branches - Lutheranism, Calvinism, or Reformism and Anglicanism - become most widespread.



The front page of the Martin Luther's address to the German nobility against Rome

Having emerged as a protest against the emerging disintegration of the Catholic Church, this movement became the "new morality" of society, where the denial of the sinful world meant the rejection of its benefits, the conscious suppression of emotions and the subordination of the entire way of life to the idea of serving God.



Albrecht Durer. Four Apostles. Old pinacotheca.

John Knox; ok. 1510-24 .11. 1572

All opponents of Catholicism were counted among the supporters of such protest. Among them were the English and Scottish followers of J. Calvin — the Puritans and Presbyterians.



Unknown painter. The portrait of J. Calvin.

Modern Protestantism is a variety of areas where there are fundamentalist, liberal and ecumenical organizations. The trend towards the integration of various areas of modern Protestantism was reflected in the creation of the governing body of the ecumenist movement, the World Council of Churches. Returning to the initial period when new moral values were approved, it should be noted that the process of reformation led to a radical restructuring of the Catholic Church in accordance with the needs of the emerging classes of the bourgeoisie and the new nobility, united in the 16th

century to directly support the absolute monarchy. This conservatism of bourgeois-gentry political thought apparently affected the spiritual life of Europe throughout the 17th century. English art and especially literature went along the path of in-depth study of their history and further influence on the growth of national self-awareness. A great role in the social life of England was played by the Puritanism which from the end of the 16th century gradually embraced all the larger circles of society. The Puritan era proclaimed the ideals of community, nationality, citizenship, diligence. This was the movement of the bourgeois era which opposed the estate-feudal system of ideology of private entrepreneurship, personal initiative and spiritual freedom: but if the Protestant worldview in central Europe and especially in Germany gave the world the great art of the Reformation era, in England these processes acquired a slightly different meaning.

Concluding the centuries-long struggle of the kings of England and local Catholic hierarchs against the unlimited power of the Vatican, Parliament in 1534 declared the king "the only earthly head of the English church". This trend of Protestantism was called "Anglicanism".

In England, the Reformation was of moderate nature and the Anglican Church was able to reconcile the almost irreconcilable Humanism and the Reformation. There were conflicting values: one led to religious skepticism, a culture of reason and the spiritual liberation of people from dogmatism and church prejudice; the other was focused on religious issues and the religious and moral transformation of the society, seeking to subordinate worldly life to rigid norms of religious morality. Such were the fundamental principles of the ideological intransigence of European humanists, T. More and Erasmus and reformers W. Tyndall and M. Luther. In England the ideas of the Reformation were put forward by Fortescue, Dudley, and Starkey who supported the idea of subordinating the church to the authority of the king. These views of the English humanists were a reflection of the general process of rapprochement, which to a large extent contributed to the rapid development of the natural sciences. Literature and drama flourished. English poetry in the 80s of the 16th century was at its peak. Among the poets, the most famous ones are J. Lily, F. Sydney, writers T. Nash, R. Green: they create sensational novels read by the whole country.

As a synthesis of advanced humanistic ideas and folk drama, dramaturgy flourished. London in the 17th century had more than 20 theaters with the world phenomenon of W. Shakespeare.

Turning to the musical culture of England in the 17th century, one can notice its multilateral ties with the theater, literature, and musical folklore.

The economic and cultural upsurge of the country, which began in the 16th century, led to the rise of musical creativity and the spread of vocal and instrumental music in public life and in everyday life. In this regard, it should be noted that, unlike the Catholic interpretation, the Protestant interpretation does not recognize the idea of the message through the sacraments of special grace. The bases of worship are reading the Bible, preaching, singing religious hymns, which resulted in the wide penetration of musical art in the widest strata of

society. All this forced the composers to pay more attention to polyphonic works for the choir, vocal ensembles and varieties of church cantatas. In turn, the majority of the English enlighteners proceeded from the close connection of the aesthetic and ethical, developing on this basis the idea of the educational role of art. On the paths of moral, political and aesthetic education, they wanted to improve society, to achieve a softening of people's egoism.

However, since the 18th century there was a spiritual break in England when according to the level of its musical achievements, it could not compete with other national schools. What served the reason for this is the subject of serious disputes between historians and art historians. It seems that the main role belongs to such factors as the positioning of England as a world colonial power, the rapid growth of capitalist relations, island psychology and the religious separation from the European unification processes, in which the Vatican played its serious, though not always an unambiguous role.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that England willingly provided opportunities for prominent composers of continental Europe for intensive activities in their own country.



Johann Christian – “London’s Bach”

Thus, composers Handel and Haydn became idols in England, creating operas, symphonies, oratorios. In the traditions of English secular culture, called



G.F. Handel

"masks", Handel wrote the biblical epic "Esther". However, twenty years of efforts to arouse in England interest in the Italian opera, which prevailed throughout Europe, ended in complete failure for Handel. English spiritual climate, rooted

in the traditions of Protestantism and the new thinking turned out to be completely unsuitable for this.



Genres, where all the components of the spiritual life of England were fully reflected, were Handel's oratorios and cantatas, which became masterpieces written on religious themes. We can name "Messiah" with the lyrics written by Jennes and the oratorio "Judas Maccabaeus" which made him the national composer of England.



Musicians are rehearsing the oratory “Messiah”

Here, leaving English spiritual traditions of the 17th -18th centuries, it can be stressed that the English Reformation, where its figures and propagandists acted from the standpoint of religious individualism, was embodied in the work of German composer F. Gendel, who gave this country best years of his life expressing all the spirit of English Protestant ethics and culture.

Undoubtedly a different socio-cultural situation evolved in other English-speaking countries where along with the English colonizers, Protestantism also penetrated as the main religion of the conquerors which displaced the traditional beliefs of the indigenous population. In modern Canada, there are still numerous groups among Protestants, and yet the most characteristic feature of the Canadian population is Ecumenism. Almost two-thirds of the Protestants in the country belong to the United Church of Canada or to the Anglican Church. A serious church split between French Canada influenced by the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant British Canada had a serious impact on the entire spiritual life of the country. Firstly, it affected its uneven development. It should be noted that clashes, especially in music, of indigenous Indian culture with imposed alien traditions, a large number of various religious sects hampered the development of secular culture and the constant

differences between Britain and France in the struggle for Canada prevented the consolidation of a stable European influence.

Only in the second half of the 19th century, there the preconditions for a more rapid development of Canadian art, particularly music, arose, which is associated with the general trend in the development of musical performance in the world and a certain overcoming, or more precisely, a more tolerant attitude toward the church split.

III. RESULTS

Undoubtedly, a different situation in the relationship between religion and spirituality is noted in the United States. Despite the fact that freedom of religion there is a constitutional right, Americans fully enjoy this freedom. At the same time, Catholics and Protestants continue to take leading positions among adherents of the religions widespread in the US. It should be noted that the serious influence of religions on the political and spiritual life of America is counterbalanced by a number of legal barriers that do not allow mixing religion and the state. If we try to form the main factors influencing the formation of the spiritual trends of the United States, the main will be individualism, work and religion.

Turning to the musical culture of America, it should be noted that the dominance of the English, since the 17th century, was reflected in the distribution of Anglo-Celtic folk songs, Elizabethan ballads and especially the Puritan psalms. Settled in New England (the North Coast of America with a center in Boston), the Puritans, preachers of asceticism, banned theatrical music with the exceptions of Protestant chants. The first musical book printed in the United States was the Massachusetts Book of Psalms (1640), which was reprinted 26 times (the 9th edition at the end of the 17th century already had a musical notation).

The Puritans recognized music only as part of the divine service, which explains more than a century long domination of the Protestant chant. At the same time, being the only way out for people who tried to express their aspirations, the chorale eventually acquired with new content, becoming a free choral hymn (18th century). This hymn, a secular genre, reflected the moralizing tendencies of that time. By the end of the 18th century, new secular art replaced religious motives, and the hymn approached the folk ballad, which in many ways determined the development of American music in the future.

Turning to the sociocultural processes that took place in the English colonial countries, it should be said that, unlike the

European states, influence of Protestant theology and its extreme rationalization fell on a somewhat different national ground and, even though they delayed the formation of their own musical culture until almost 19th - 20th, as it happened in Australia or in India, but at the same time provided the convergence of these cultures with the European one.

IV. CONCLUSION

The interrelations and interrelationship of Protestantism and culture over the centuries have caused fierce controversy. Such negative aspects of the Protestant culture as rationality and utilitarianism, alienation and individualism undoubtedly cause a certain rejection, especially in line with the movement of the world community to preserve the cultural and spiritual national heritage. At the same time, the dominance of Protestantism in the development of Christianity, in the fields of economy, politics and science, compels researchers to pay close attention to the study of the phenomenon of Protestantism and its special role in the process of globalization.

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