
UPBRINGING TRADITIONS OF EASTERN ORTHODOXY IN THE CREATIVE HERITAGE OF SAINT DEMETRIUS OF ROSTOV (D.S. TUPTALO)

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Abstract

The paper presents a study of Eastern Orthodox upbringing traditions in the creative heritage of the renowned churchman, preacher and educator Demetrius of Rostov. The materials investigated include the literary works by Demetrius and the existing culturological and historical papers on his life. The study characterizes the origins of the homiletic works by Demetrius and analyses his pedagogical and educational preaching activity. The authors conclude that Demetrius was one of the first to pave the way for nurturing the spiritual world of man in the traditions of Eastern Orthodox pedagogy.

Keywords: Eastern Orthodoxy, homiletics, sermon, clergy, moral upbringing

1. Introduction

The role of the Eastern Orthodox Church and Christianity in the history of Russian education is a topic of research and discussion among historians. Studies on this matter are diverse, and the attitude to the topic varies depending on the ideological and political contexts [1-4].

In the Soviet period, there was a noticeable tendency toward a negative perception of religion and the Church. Due to the atheistic ideology of the communist regime, official textbooks and studies often emphasized the negative aspects of the Church's role in Russian history or simply ignored it. Nevertheless, even during this period, some studies took a more objective look at the role of the Church [5-7].

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After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia began a process of re-evaluation of historical events and the role of the Church. Many researchers increased their attention to the contribution of the Orthodox Church to the development of culture and education. Today, many works emphasize the significant role of Christianity in the history of Russia [7, 8].

In this study, we consider Christianity as a pivotal element in the development of the education and upbringing system, including the foundations of moral principles, understanding of good and evil, and the relationship between God and man. In the patriarchal-communal system of ancient Russia and later the Russian state, Christian values formed the corresponding spiritual and moral guidelines and ideas about the ways and means of their achievement.

The fundamental means of upbringing in Christian pedagogy is the word of God to the individual, community, and nation. Jesus Christ, seen as the first preacher in this paradigm, spread the truth through His apostles. The Gospels of His disciples are the result of Jesus' teaching, and in character, they are didactic texts that call to follow Christ. "Jesus appealed to the disciples, the apostles - to the Gentiles, the preacher - to the congregation." [9]

Religious texts affect believers' emotions and will and thus create a fertile ground for the perception and acceptance of the word [10-12]. These texts were read and most often listened to in the form of sermons. In the course of the sermon, the mentor framed the teacher-disciple relationship as that of a son and a loving father, insistently rebuking, forbidding and instructing.

A prominent representative of the Russian Orthodox Church who paid much attention to educational issues in his sermons was Demetrius of Rostov (1651-1709), otherwise known as Metropolitan Dmitri Tuptalo. His writings, including the lives of the saints, liturgical texts and sermons, played an important role in the spiritual life of Russia in the 17th and 18th centuries. The pedagogical aspects of his teachings remain relevant in the modern context. The study of his pedagogical ideas gives a deeper understanding of the cultural and historical context of education and upbringing in Russia in the 17th and 18th centuries, revealing the roots of traditional values and approaches. The teaching of Demetrius combines Theology, Pedagogy, Psychology, and literature, offering a comprehensive view of human development.

Furthermore, Demetrius' teaching emphasizes the harmony between a person's spiritual and intellectual development. This approach can be utilized in modern education to create holistic pedagogical approaches. In addition, Demetrius' teaching pays much attention to forming the moral qualities of a person, which is topical for modern society in search of moral guidelines.

Analysis of the upbringing methods proposed by Demetrius can therefore enrich contemporary pedagogical practice by offering alternative approaches to child upbringing. Research into the pedagogical foundations of Demetrius's teaching can open up new horizons for contemplating the goals and methods of education and upbringing in today's world, bringing in deep spiritual values and traditions.

The goal of the present study is to analyse the pedagogical and educational activity of Demetrius and define the ethical foundations of Christian values in his works that influenced the spiritual improvement of man.

2. Methods

The chronological scope of the study is from the second half of the 17th century to the beginning of the 18th century - the period of public and educational activities of the churchman, preacher and educator Demetrius of Rostov. The paper reports on a qualitative study of Eastern Orthodox upbringing traditions in the creative heritage of Demetrius, utilizing the research methods of scientific literature analysis and an expert survey on the reliability of the selected sources.

The analysis of scientific literature was used to collect diverse information due to the great variety of assessments and opinions. Given the existing limitations of literature analysis (the quality of the selected sources, their exhaustiveness and the subjective positions of their authors), we conducted an expert survey to assess the reliability of the source base.

The first stage of the study involved the selection of information sources necessary to fulfil the purpose of the study, including:

- primary information sources: the literary heritage of Demetrius;
- secondary sources: articles and monographs devoted to the creative heritage of Demetrius.

In the second stage, an expert survey including 12 experts was conducted to evaluate the reliability of the chosen secondary information sources. The criterion for the sampling of experts was the presence of at least three articles on Eastern Orthodox pedagogy published in journals indexed in the Russian Science Citation Index, Scopus or Web of Science. The experts were forwarded emails asking them to assess the reliability of the materials collected for the study. Overall, the experts rated the sample of documents as high in reliability. In the third stage of the study, based on the literary heritage of Demetrius, as well as the selected scientific literature, a consistent analysis of the origins of Demetrius' homiletic creativity was carried out, followed by an analysis of his pedagogical and educational preaching activity.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. The origins of the homiletic work of Demetrius

A prominent place among the teachers who nurtured the future preacher is held by Meletius Dzik. Meletius was one of the highly educated, deeply religious and influential people of his age. At the time in question, he was hegumen of the Saint Cyril Monastery, where the father of Demetrius, Savva Tuptalo, served. Meletius often visited the Tuptalo family's home, facilitated Demetrius' home-schooling, and initiated his profession. Later, Meletius

recommended Demetrius to Archbishop Lazar (Baranovich) of Chernigov for the post of the priest of the Gustyn monastery and later - as a Chernigov preacher [13].

Daniil Tuptalo (as Demetrius was named at birth) began to learn the fundamentals of eloquence in the rhetoric class of the Kyiv-Mohyla Collegium, where he was a student from 1662 to 1665. There he mastered the Church Slavonic language, which at that time was considered to be “the language of scholarship and mental labour” [14]; Latin, which opened the way to the world of Western theology; and Greek, which allowed studying the ancient heritage of writers, historians and preachers. Ultimately, Daniil Tuptalo caught the attention of teachers with his ability in poetics: “his special talent for poetics was reflected in his sermons, which were distinguished by soulfulness and poetic character” [15].

Poetics and rhetoric, which built the ability to compose and proclaim prose forms, including sermons, had for some time been taught indivisibly at the Kyiv-Mohyla Collegium because they were seen as a means (or path) of mastering diction, literature and eloquence. The students of the collegium learned poetics and rhetoric and thus acquired a true liberal arts education [16].

The ability to speak and deliver sermons was learned by the future Metropolitan of Rostov both from Latin, Italian and German manuals and from a manual by Archimandrite Ioannikiy (Galyatovsky), issued in 1660 as an addition to his collection of sermons and stories ‘Kliuch razumeniia’ (‘The Key to Cognition’) (1659). Archimandrite Ioannikiy taught the theory of eloquence in Russian and not in Latin. He believed that a sermon had to confirm people in their faith, instruct them morally, awaken vigorous thought, broaden their understanding of the world around them, and increase their knowledge. A sermon should be understandable and interesting, which is why the preacher should not only refer to the Holy Scriptures and the works of the Church Fathers, but also draw on examples from history, nature, folk traditions and the like [17].

These and other works of Archimandrite Ioannikiy (‘Nebo novoe’ (‘New Heaven’), ‘Skarbnitsa potrebnaiia’ (‘The Necessary Treasury’)) influenced the first work by Demetrius ‘Miracles of the Most Holy and Blessed Virgin Mary, working from her miracle-working image in the monastery of the Holy Glorious Prophet Elijah of Chernihiv’ (1677), a supplemented version of which is best known as ‘Fleece Watered’ (1680) [18]. In this work, Demetrius not only described the facts of the miraculous influence of the icon of the Mother of God in the Ilyinsky Monastery but also added moral instructions and gave examples of similar miracles in other countries. This manner of writing aligns with the spirit of Baroque culture when an image or symbol is presented and accompanied by inscriptions and interpretations.

3.2. Pedagogical and educational preaching activities of Demetrius

In the 17th century, the Russian kingdom was famed for its sermons, which were delivered in a lively language. Preachers demonstrated the

knowledge acquired during their studies, supplemented by self-education. The historian of religion, theologian G. Florovskii described Demetrius' library as follows: "This is a typical selection of books of an erudite of that time. Something from Aquinas, M. Bacon, Acta Sanctorum, and many books on history." [2, p. 26]

As a gifted preacher, Demetrius attracted public attention from the start of his spiritual service. He was supported by influential preachers, such as Archimandrite Ioannikiy and Archimandrite Lazarus of Chernigov. Father Demetrius was first invited to the Chernigov Cathedral, later he preached in Belarus, and since 1683, his sermons were heard in the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra.

At present, there are over 100 surviving sermons by Demetrius, which were extremely popular during his life and after his repose. The dialogical form of the saint's address to statesmen, politicians, clergy, parishioners and schoolchildren gave his sermons the characteristic features of sincere communication, expressiveness and persuasiveness of the high truth. This form of sermon awakened the desire to realize the high truth and strive for betterment: "What are you, Saint Paul, saying?... 'I have great sorrow', he says, 'and unceasing anguish in my heart' (Romans 9.2). How can my heart not ache? Because they beat with sticks, they kill with stones. No, he says, it is not that I lament and ache that I am stoned. Then about what? About those who beat me." [19]

According to Metropolitan Evgenii (Bolkhovitinov), the eloquence of Demetrius' sermons was not in its external expressiveness, but in an internal power, truth, and energy of the 'living word' that came from the depths of his pure heart as the result of arduous mental labour, faith, love, sincere inspirational pathos, visible communication with the sacred and high. Dialogue in the dramas, poems, and sermons of the saint was an effective technique of eloquence that harmoniously combined theatrical expressiveness with deep substance [20].

In his sermons, Demetrius also touched upon the problem of moral upbringing. The contexts of choosing the right behaviour and thoughts, body, flesh, soul, mind, conscience, heart, spirit, light, darkness and love were always a strong moral component of his speeches. Faith itself is spread through the sermon. The main idea of any sermon is to find the way to the hearts of different people through special techniques of rhythm, meter, repetition, parallelisms, symbols, images and allegories. These verbal techniques of visualization through comparison and juxtaposition contributed to better memorization and perception of sermons as rules for one's own life.

In the eyes of a Baroque person, every phenomenon of nature or human life would be a mysterious sign hiding some wise thought addressed by God to man [21]. In his 'Word on the Day of the Holy Trinity', Demetrius notes "that a man of reason, considering the things created, as by climbing a ladder, came to the cognition of the Creator Himself, and through many created things... came to know the infinite perfection that is in God the Creator". This expression draws on a verse of the Psalm: "I meditate on all that you have done; I ponder the work of your hands" [22, p. 136].

The clergy, in contrast to the advocates of bloodshed and force of arms, saw their vocation as the promotion of Christian morality. The power of the rhetorical word of sermons was used as a counterbalance to the argument of physical force between people, for preaching was based on faith in the power of the Gospel Word to inspire listeners to godly living.

In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, a whole campaign was launched against the so-called supporters of the god of war, Mars. Demetrius participated in it, condemning the supporters of war and writing about the eternal beauty of the world. He preached Christian love that transforms the world. The sermon before Tsar Peter the Great on the subject of Christian peace-making is one of his finest. Demetrius stigmatized such traits as anger and ferocity and exposed Alexander the Great as a model for conquerors. Under the figures of Bacchus, the god of drunkenness, Venus, the goddess of debauchery, and Mars, the god of war, the figure of Peter the Great himself and his entourage could be recognized. "And as for Bacchus, I see that this desire is also loved by ours who call themselves Christians... Drinking day and night is fellowship, spending time in idleness is friendship", "Says Bacchus, the insatiable god with his martyr Martin Luther: In the regiments, they should not observe fasts, and eat meat even during the fast so that the military would be stronger in war... Yet the army of Gideon defeated the Midianites despite fasting" [19, vol. II, p. 660].

In one of his sermons in honour of another victory of Peter the Great, Demetrius reminded the ruler that mercy is the main dignity of a tsar, and a true victory is one over oneself: "In war, the tsar is helped by military commanders, military commanders are helped by the army, and only in a struggle with oneself is a man alone, and only a victory over oneself is the one true victory" [23].

While in Russia, Demetrius witnessed how, simultaneously with the growth of her greatness, oppression and cruelty towards the peasants grew. In one of his sermons of social content, the Metropolitan said: "When the rich man eats, he eats the labours of the poor... And when he drinks, he drinks human blood and washes himself with human tears... He who is dishonourable is wretched! A rich man, no matter how stupid he may be, is considered clever because he is rich!" [19, vol. II, p. 435] In this thought about the rich, Demetrius resembles John Chrysostom in the force of his preaching.

Demetrius defended the poor and denounced the lazy. He did not spare even the bishops of the Rostov diocese, who had forgotten that the Holy Scripture forbids a priest to be ignorant [24]. The thinker exposed and also condemned those priests who were buying, renting, and selling their posts, trying to live better at the expense of the congregation: "What drew you to the priesthood? To save yourself and others? No, to feed your wife and children... They were seeking Jesus not for Jesus, but for a piece of bread." [24, p. 73]

The saint's sermons rebuked not only the priests but also the congregation: "Our time is dark when the planting of the Word of God has withered so much... And I do not know whom to blame first, the sowers or the earth, the priests, or human hearts, or both together? The priests are indifferent.

And people fornicate! Priests do not teach, and people walk in darkness.” [25, p. 120]

The topic of light and darkness is quite popular in theological literature. According to O.B. Ionatis, enlightenment in the Christian tradition meant “to illuminate the inner space of the learner with the light of faith, to show the righteous paths that a true Christian must walk to merit salvation and eternal life” [26, p. 207].

In the view of Demetrius, God is always light, but only for those who are light and able to see the light; for others, the light turns to darkness. Demetrius himself, in his word on the feast of Our Lady of Don, depicts her arrival in the following way: “appears in the Sun, enlightening our darkness” [19, vol. III, p. 180]. The illuminated image of Our Lady is the system of virtues to be cultivated in disciples, the way to a righteous life, and a role model. Light is the ‘alphabet of Christ’, and darkness is the ‘alphabet of the Devil’.

Comparing the mind and reason to the light of a candle that drives away the darkness of ignorance, Demetrius suggests: “A candle shows what is good and evil, and forever guides man on the light path of God’s commandments... And he who is not guided by his reason will go according to his lusts, doing ugly things.” [27, p. 171] The enlightening faith in reason and the word as a way of ‘edification’ was reflected in his preaching instructions: “An evil word makes the good people evil, but a good word makes the evil people good!” [27, p. 173]. An enlightened mind is the way to spirituality: “A mind untreated and uncleaned for a long time is an unreasonable, erroneous, and insubstantial mind... There is a spiritual mind, and there is also... a carnal. He who is not concerned about walking the narrow path of the gospel will not care about the purification of the mind and is blind in spirit... A mind purified and educated can understand all things external and internal, for it is spiritual.” [28, p. 380]

Many years of work on the ‘Lives of the Saints’ changed Dmitry himself and the style of his sermons. They increasingly called to oppose everything that leads to sin. “Do not doubt that there are idols and tormentors among us, and there are plenty of idolaters, yet few martyrs. Whatever sin is the idol, whatever passion or accident that prompts and leads to sin - it is a torturer, and one who resists sin is a martyr who glorifies Christ in his body through his daily sufferings.” [29, p. 110]

The worldview of Demetrius drew on Christian anthropology, which recognized the integrity of spirit, soul, and body as the prime constituents of the human being. The idea of bodily and mental purity, the physical and the moral, is imprinted in all his works. The saint compares the body to a house where each virtue resides in a separate place: in the head - prudence and wisdom; in the mouth - the silence desired by God; in the hair - repentance; in the feet - obedience; in the spine - patience; in the stomach - fasting; in the chest - striving after God; in the face - honesty; in the eyes - chaste shame; in the heart - love; the ears and hands are taken up by faith as the foremost charity: “the ears she took to be heard, and the hands - to be embodied and realized” [19, p. 506-507].

The thinker presents an interesting dialog of soul and body, which accuse each other, because the body “tempts with sinful loves” and leads the soul into iniquity, but the soul does not control the body well, “the mind does not keep from evil like reins and bits” [19, p. 158-159].

The saint also compares the body to a boat: “We walk and sail in the boat that is our body” [28, p. 383]. A parallel is also drawn with a fertile ground in which the soul takes root in the image of ‘spiritual grapes’ and calls for the soul and body to exist as ‘friends born together’. So man as a spiritual and material being should not only care about his external nature but also be mindful of the virginity and lightness of the inner world and not burden “his soul with impure thoughts” [19, p. 521]. The preacher is convinced that treating one’s body as God’s temple will keep one from giving in to laziness, fornication, carnal comforts and temptations.

In his speeches, Metropolitan Demetrius addresses the youth, because he realizes that even “wordless animals need a good shepherd, and children even more so”, because “a young boy is like a board for writing icons..., on it, whatever he writes... be it honest or dishonourable... will be” [32, p. 79]. Demetrius compares young people to an “unharvested field” and their abilities to “unharvested grapes”, the fruits of which are sought by all: “the world with turmoil... and the devil with temptations”. This is why it is so important for a young person to choose the righteous path in this life so that in old age, when physical beauty fades, there will come “the dawn of the beauty of the spiritual - a strong and pure soul”. One of the righteous ways, as seen by Demetrius, is upbringing: “A vessel does not lose the odour, stupid or beautiful, with which it was once soaked: such is the upbringing of children! Therefore, it is necessary to teach them good from childhood” [30, p. 80].

4. Conclusions

Thus, the development of Christian moral values in the preaching of Demetrius was accomplished through influence on emotions and feelings and brought the realization of universal human norms, principles, ideals, religious precepts and canons, providing for the development of beliefs, habits and stable moral qualities.

In his sermons, Demetrius appealed to the idea of the organic unity of physical and spiritual beauty, of word and deed in man, and in his activities condemned drunkenness, debauchery, idleness, immorality, and non-observance of religious canons. Demetrius criticized the rich for unjustly gaining wealth, calling for charity and opposition to sin. Thus, the hypothesis of the study that the preaching (homiletics) of Demetrius had a major impact on the spiritual perfection of man is confirmed.

The scientific novelty (contribution) of our research consists in the complex analysis of the creative heritage of Demetrius of Rostov concerning the upbringing of the spiritual world of man in the traditions of Eastern Orthodox pedagogy.

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