

The martyrdom of St. Stephan in Medieval and. Early Modern hagiography

[Zinaida Andreevna Lurie](#), doctor of History, assistant lecturer, Faculty of foreign languages, St. Petersburg State University (Universitetskaya nab., 7/9, Saint-Petersburg, Russia, 199034)
z.lurie@spbu.ru

[Lurie Z. A.](#) The martyrdom of St. Stephan in Medieval and. Early Modern hagiography, *Religiya. Tserkov'. Obshchestvo. Issledovaniya i publikatsii po teologii i religii [Religion. Church. Society: Research and publications in the field of theology and religious studies]*, Saint-Petersburg, 2013, vol. 2, pp. 185-206.

DOI: 10.24411/2308-0698-2013-00001

Language: Russian

Despite the rather late development of the cult of the first martyr at the end of the 3rd - 4th centuries, it occupied an unusually important role in Christian rhetoric as an imitator of Christ. The article analyzes the references to the first deacon of the apologists and the early fathers of the Church (Clementus, Irenaeus, Augustine, etc.). In the medieval period, the regional traditions of veneration, on the one hand, and, on the other, the widespread presence of his worship in temples as one of the first deacons can't be led to the single tendency of perception of the image. One of the recurring motives was the opposition of Stephen to the Jewish antagonists. During the Reformation, this antagonism was transferred to the realities of confessional confrontation, but the interest in the martyr was not great and even the influence of the Catholic renewal had a very limited effect on the iconography of Stefan. In turn, for the late Protestantism of the 1560-1590s. it was Stefan who turned out to be an iconic figure. The author examines the reasons for the popularity of the plot, analyzing the conflicts inherent in the book "Acts", and illustrates the perception of the plot in the Lutheran tradition on the example of the tragedy of Melchior Neukirch in 1592, which completed a series of dramatic adaptations. The writer raised a number of extremely relevant topics for his time: the problem of tyranny and punishment of tyrants "for audacity", and, equally, developed the concept of an ideal world order, reflected also at the family level. No less significant theologian in the drama was the preaching of Christ.



Key words: [Stephan](#), [hagiography](#), [Reformation](#), [Counterreformation](#), [confessionalisation](#), [Melchior Neukirch](#), [theater](#), [drama](#)

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