

PRACTICES FOR ENSURING RELIGIOUS SECURITY: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS

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Abstract: Today, it is important to understand that normative conflicts are at the root of the destruction of the existing system of religious security. The essential features of normative conflicts lie in the contradictions between parts of a separate system of norms and values, or between normative value systems of a different nature, but included in one dominant culture. The authors determine that to ensure religious security, it is necessary to minimize the destructive effects of normative conflicts through the removal of contradictions. The study proposes a classification of practices that make it possible to remove the severity of normative conflicts, including in the sphere of the "secular" – "religious" segments. Based on the principles of the anthropological approach, conflict functionalism, and marginal anthropology, the authors identify a system of authoritarian and humanistic practices of religious security. The authoritarian type of practice includes stigmatization and legal protection of the feelings of believers. Humanistic practices should include tolerance, nonviolence, and calls for a peaceful resolution of conflicts. The classification of religious security practices is based on the interpretation of the concept of norm represented by two paradigms: classical and nonclassical. The authors conclude that all types of religious security practices are actively used in the modern world.

Keywords: mental health, aggression, empathy, authoritarian practices, humanistic practices, religions, religious consciousness, normative conflicts, rule of law.

1 Introduction

Modern society is characterized by the presence of a large number of heterogeneous communities and social groups with their systems of values, worldview guidelines, and norms. Within the framework of a particular society, such a variety of normative systems aggravates the contradictions between individuals and social groups, leading to confrontations, clashes, and even wars based on the inconsistency of group cultural norms. Particularly irreconcilable positions in such conflicts are held by adherents of systems of norms and values of a religious and secular nature, which actualizes the task of ensuring religious security as one of the aspects of national security.

The scientific discourse is characterized by fragmented ideas about religious security. The provision of religious security is considered by researchers mainly in the aspects of countering political and religious extremism and terrorism as types of deviant behavior [1], removal of interfaith tensions [2], functioning of religious syncretism in cross-border regions [3], prevention of the destructive influence of nontraditional religious movements [4] and discrimination, as well as restrictions on religious freedom [5]. Moreover, in many studies, there is a bias towards the analysis of measuring and predicting the spread of Islam [6, 7] and antireligious legislation as a mechanism for ensuring religious security [6, 8].

The problem of ensuring religious security concerns all countries. At present, the leading practices for ensuring religious security are, on the one hand, civic, patriotic, spiritual, and moral education as a mechanism of value identification and, on the other, social control of deviations from norms, including legal authorization. At the same time, such an aspect of religious security as minimizing the negative effects of normative conflicts, which are based on the contradictions of moral and aesthetic values and legal norms, is on the periphery of researchers' attention. Traditionally, the safety of society was associated with the conscious and purposeful observance of the majority of generally accepted norms, as well as predictability of the behavior of the majority [9, p. 186]. However, in the

conditions of the "mobility" of norms and renewal of the normative order, the concept of security, including religious, requires its rethinking, first, in terms of studying the system of religious security practices.

2 Methods

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study is the anthropopractic approach developed in the works of J.R. Wikse, B. Root, T. Burrow, and D. Bohm [10-13]. This approach allows considering social and religious security not only as a concept, but as a practice. Based on the principles of conflict functionalism by L.F. Coser [14] and the marginal anthropology of J.M. Cooper and M.A. Czaplicka [15-17], we believe that the problem of religious security needs additional philosophical research, taking into account the demarcation of the normal and abnormal and the assessment of functionality and dysfunctionality of normative conflicts.

By the practices of religious security, we mean the established (both at the level of trends and rare case) ways of creating conditions that ensure stability and preservation of the religious system within a certain paradigm in understanding the norm. From the position of antireductionism, it is proposed to abandon the reduction of marginality and relativity of norms to negative and destructive, the threat to security, and the practice of religious security to neutralize such threats.

The material for the analysis was provided by individual cases describing normative conflicts, which corresponds to the methodology of qualitative philosophical and conflictological research.

3 Results and Discussion

Normative conflicts lie at the root of the violation of religious security. They are the result of contradictions between different parts of a single normative system or between different normative value systems of one dominant culture. To remove contradictions and minimize conflict factors, various religious security practices are used. At present, in accordance with the existing paradigms of interpreting the concept of norm, opposite practices and religious security are being built.

The classical paradigm of understanding the norm (Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, G. Hegel, etc.) corresponds to authoritarian practices of religious security, which include: stigmatization and legal protection of the feelings of believers. The analysis of these practices deserves special attention.

Stigmatization is a violation of the identification of religious groups, communities, or individuals, expressed in the public by "labeling" them, endowed with negative connotations in public discourse. Stigmatization is most commonly used in multiconfessional societies where there is one dominant religious system that is considered historically traditional for the given society. Recognizing the right to be able to adhere to any religion, representatives of the dominant religion "label" adherents of other religious cults and teachings. This is largely due to the fact that stigmatization was originally embedded in the normative value systems of religions, which recommend and encourage people to renounce infidels, publicize their unwanted apostate deeds, and label them as "apostate", "henchman of the devil", "antichrist". For example, in the books of the New Testament, the Bible says: "Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning" [18, pp. 181-182], "and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist" [18, p. 182]. Unfortunately, situations often arise in which religious groups or individual believers fall under stigmatization without any action/incentive. This is especially true of adherents of new religious movements and adherents of autochthonous

cults, who are often called pagans and idolaters. Practices of stigmatization have a negative impact on the mental health of believers, cause psychological problems, form personality complexes and the perception of “oneself” as an outcast, and contribute to the destruction of social groups.

Legal protection of the feelings of believers is a fairly widespread practice of ensuring religious security. The legislation governing the activities of religious organizations in society is an integral component of the legal and regulatory system of many secular states. The regulation of interactions between the secular and religious segments of society, as well as the extracult activities of religious organizations, is of particular importance, first of all, for polyconfessional societies, since it is designed to maintain the stability of the space for the coexistence of many confessions with their specific systems of norms and values. However, legislation is often on the side of the historically traditional religion for a particular region. This violates the constitutional principle of freedom of conscience and religion. Examples of this are laws on granting citizenship to immigrants of certain religions, state protection and state funding of religious buildings and structures of religion traditional for a particular country, while buildings and structures of other religions are not subject to state guardianship [19], legislation of several countries, providing for punishment for insulting the feelings of believers, which discriminates against atheists.

It should be noted that not only representatives of the atheistic worldview, but also adherents of new religious movements and cults, including those of a syncretic nature, suffer from this kind of legislation. For example, by decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation in 2016, the activities of Jehovah’s Witnesses were banned, and the religious organization “Soiuz sotvortsev sviatoi Rusi” (Union of Cocreators of Holy Russia) and “Saentologicheskaja tserkov Moskvy” (The Church of Scientology of Moscow) were liquidated [5].

In general, authoritarian practices of religious security are characterized by the priority of national security over the security of the individual, the idea that some authority over the individual is the source of norms and the guarantor of their observance. Mechanisms of this kind to ensure religious security are based on traditional, conservative systems of norms and values. Their essence is itself conflictogenic, since it is based on the opposition “ours is good, and someone else’s is bad”.

The nonclassical paradigm in the understanding of the norm (S. Freud, F. Nietzsche, M. Foucault) leads to the emergence of humanistic practices of religious security: tolerance and a call for a peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The *essence* of the practice of tolerance lies in a tolerant/nonaggressive attitude towards the presence of a variety of forms of social behavior.

The practice of tolerance must be viewed in an individually psychological and socially oriented aspect. The line between these aspects is thin and rather arbitrary.

The individual psychological content of tolerance for otherness is characterized by the psychological sensations of individuals, arising based on mental processes and states of an individual. This is, first of all, the psychological depression of an individual due to feelings of pity, empathy, and a sense of involvement in the experiences of another person. Empathic experiences are based on natural prerequisites – the instinct of caring for others and the instinct of mutual assistance perform the most important functions of the development and preservation of society. N.D. Subbotina rightly notes: “society could not exist in the absence of qualities in people that are opposite to aggression and selfishness – altruism, empathy and instinctive concern for loved ones. These features, as well as aggression, have a natural prerequisite” [20, p. 58]. Therefore, minimization of the danger of normative conflicts in society is sometimes carried out due to the unconscious desire of individuals to protect another person

or at least not to harm them, which to a certain extent stabilizes society.

The individual psychological content of the practice of tolerance can, to a certain extent, explain the withdrawal from the conflict, the suppression of the conflict by representatives of different normative value systems: representatives of different religions or believers and nonbelievers.

The social level of the practice of tolerance is represented by religious tolerance, largely based on the moral and legal provision of religious security. Religious tolerance presupposes tolerant relationships between believers of different confessions, tolerant attitude towards representatives of other religions in situations of lack of contacts between believers of different religious traditions, recognition of their right to religious activities of a different nature. However, there is no talk of adopting the normative system of another religion. In contrast to the secular understanding of tolerance, which allows the acceptance of “alien” values and worldview guidelines in view of the relativity of any ideals and truths. Religious tolerance, as professor A.Iu. Grigorenko writes, “only means the absence of statements or actions that could be regarded as derogatory or offensive for representatives of another religious tradition and would be aimed at infringing on the rights and freedom of religion and worship (closing churches, banning missionary activities, etc.)” [21]. The important point is that religious tolerance has found its consolidation in legal norms (*Dignitatis humanae* (Declaration on Religious Freedom) 1965, *Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief* 1981, etc.).

The growth of aggression and hatred in society testifies to the need for calls for tolerance and prevention of conflicts that split society.

The practice of calling for a peaceful resolution of conflicts is currently being used quite actively. The call to end conflicts between warring parties and eliminate differences between different worldview systems, is an essential element of peacemaking service in traditional religions. In Christianity, the Bible indicates the need for peacemaking: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” [18, p. 89]. The very same facts of conflict are considered as sinful behavior. However, some researchers assess the normative conflicts in the world as constructive, signaling the problems of society [2, 22], while criticizing the widespread in society perceptions of protesters as traitors.

In general, the specificity of the humanistic practices of religious security lies in their nonviolent nature, the recognition of the well-being of the individual as the only criterion for a normative assessment.

4 Conclusion

In the 21st century, the world remains religious; moreover, the number of new religious movements is increasing and religious and esoteric teachings appear, aimed at personal, individualistic spirituality. This inevitably entails the formation of new normative-value systems of a specific nature, exacerbating the problem of opposition and rivalry between their adherents. In such conditions, the religious segment of society is increasingly drawn into a series of normative conflicts. Conflicts of this kind are cyclical (they subside and flare up again), characterized by a protracted nature, and difficult to resolve. To minimize normative conflicts in modern world practice, authoritarian and humanistic methods of ensuring religious security are used.

Practices of an authoritarian nature arise under the dominance of the classical paradigm of understanding the “norm”. They are characteristic of the authoritarian level of government (government bodies, religious clerks) and carriers of traditional religious consciousness. The implementation of this type of religious security practice is ambiguous and often leads to the aggravation of conflicts.

Humanistic practices of religious security arise in line with the nonclassical interpretation of the norm. Mostly, they are realized by the bearers of the religious consciousness of a “new type” with sufficiently “flexible boundaries” for interpreting the normativity of a particular system. The humanistic essence of the practice of religious safety lies in the proclamation of free thought, in respect for individuality in the choice of rules and regulations.

In general, authoritarian and humanistic practices describe radicalism and moderation in the process of ensuring religious security.

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