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РЕЛИГИОЗНЫЕ УСТАНОВКИ МОЛОДЕЖИ ПРИНИМАЮЩЕГО СООБЩЕСТВА В ИММИГРАНТСКОЙ СТРАНЕ

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Аннотация. Рассматриваются вопросы взаимовлияния религиозных ориентиров молодежи принимающего сообщества и мигрантов. Общество, в котором сильна религиозная идея, имеет больше шансов для культурного поглощения мигрантов. Это, с одной стороны, грозит мигрантам утратой религиозной самобытности, но с другой – мощная этнорелигиозная традиция, обладающая пассионарным зарядом, нередко вызывает уважение у мигранта. И это уважение транслируется на все социокультурные пласты принимающего сообщества. В данном ключе совершенно необходимо исследовать религиозные установки принимающего сообщества, прежде всего, молодежи. На основе диффузного (количественного и качественного) анализа результатов опроса российских студентов выявлены различные нюансы в отношении студенчества к Русской православной церкви и обряду крещения. В этом ключе определен ряд разнонаправленных тенденций и векторов в развитии молодежного религиозного сознания, установлен ряд парадоксальных социальных фактов. Предпринята попытка глубинного социально-психологического анализа выявленных противоречий. Показаны перспективы исследования молодежного религиозного сознания в условиях роста миграций.

Ключевые слова: мигрант; иммигрантская страна; принимающее сообщество; молодежь; религиозная вера; крещение; христианство; православная церковь; традиция.

ИММИГРАНТ ӨЛКӨДӨГҮ КАБЫЛ АЛУУЧУ КООМДУН ЖАШТАРЫНЫН ДИНИЙ КӨЗ КАРАШТАРЫ

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Аннотация. Макалада кабыл алуучу коомдун жаштары менен мигранттардын диний багыттарынын өз ара таасири тууралуу маселе каралат. Диний идеясы күчтүү коомдун мигранттарды маданий жактан өзүнө синирип алууга мүмкүнчүлүгү көбүрөөк. Бул, бир жагынан, мигранттарга диний иденттүүлүктү жоготуу коркунучун туудурса, экинчи жагынан, пассионардык зарядга ээ болгон күчтүү этно-диний салт мигранттын урмат-сыйына ээ болот. Ал эми бул урмат-сый кабыл алуучу коомдун бардык социалдык-маданий катмарларына берилет. Бул багытта кабыл алуучу коомдун, биринчи кезекте жаштардын диний мамилелерин изилдөө зарыл. Россиялык студенттердин арасында жүргүзүлгөн сурамжылоонун жыйынтыктарын диффузиялык (сандык жана сапаттык) талдоонун негизинде студенттердин Орус православ чиркөөсүнө жана чөмүлтүлүү ырымына болгон мамилесинде ар кандай нюанстар аныкталган. Бул багытта жаштардын диний аң-сезиминин өнүгүүсүндөгү бир катар көп багыттуу тенденциялар жана векторлор аныкталып, бир катар парадоксалдуу социалдык фактылар белгиленген. Аныкталган карама-каршылыктарга социалдык-психологиялык терең талдоо жүргүзүү аракетин жасалды. Өсүп бара жаткан миграциянын шаргында жаштардын диний аң-сезимин изилдөөнүн келечеги көрсөтүлгөн.

Түйүндүү сөздөр: мигрант; иммигрант өлкө; кабыл алуучу коом; жаштар; диний ишеним; чөмүлтүлүү; христиан дини; православ чиркөөсү; салт.

RELIGIOUS TENETS FOR YOUTH OF THE HOST SOCIETY IN THE COUNTRY OF MIGRATION

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Abstract. The paper deals with the issues of mutual influence of religious orientations of the youth of the host community and migrants. A society in which the religious idea is strong has more chances for cultural absorption of migrants. On the one hand, this threatens migrants with the loss of their religious identity. But, on the other hand, a powerful ethno-religious tradition with a passionate charge often commands respect from migrants. And this respect is transmitted to all socio-cultural layers of the host community. In this context, it is absolutely necessary to investigate the religious attitudes of the host community, especially the youth. Based on diffusive (quantity and quality) analysis of the survey conducted among Russian students, some specific aspects of their attitudes to the Russian Orthodox Church and baptizing have been identified. A series of multidirectional trends in the development of youth religious consciousness have been spotted and a number of social paradoxes have been discovered. The authors hereof aim to provide a deep socio-psychological analysis of the contradictions exposed. The paper highlights prospects for further research into youth religious consciousness in the wake of growing migration.

Keywords: migrant; country of migration; host community; religious faith; baptizing; Christianity; Russian Orthodox Church; tradition.

Religious aspects of social communication between migrants and a host community are generally investigated from a one-sided perspective. When studying migration, researchers pay attention primarily to the religious affiliation of a migrant, to their worldview attitudes and moral bearings underpinned by religion. Only then, scholars compare these attitudes to the religious worldview of a host community. However, they typically fail to dive deep into the nature of this worldview. In certain studies, there is a tendency to scale back the role of religion in interethnic interaction or to focus on religious similarities rather than differences. Most commonplace arguments underscore “the affinity of the Abrahamic religions” (since they trace their origins to Abraham). However, many authors fail to explore why despite so much in common, these religions split and became highly separated from each other.

For example, back in 1987, L.T. Keck studied emerging changes in the ethnic identity of Egyptian migrants who arrived in the United States. The researcher focused on cultural adaptation, including in the context of overcoming religious predilections. Differences were revealed in the acculturation of the representatives of three separate ethno-religious groups of Egyptians: Coptic Orthodox Christians, Muslims, and Protestants. According to Keck, it was the last group that appeared to be most prepared to integrate into the new society. Muslims were defined as least integratable [1].

There is an opposite opinion claiming that religion gives people the will to survive. In his 1975 book, R.A. Corseri shows that religion was the tool

that helped the Jews arriving in the New World to survive but also to preserve their identity [2].

L.T. Keck and R.A. Corseri concur that religion rather than language is the most powerful factor in uniting and preserving ethnic identity for a migrant diaspora. The extent of religious differences between a host community and migrants is one of the factors in the formation of a diaspora, as opposed to melting into the host socio-cultural environment. We encounter similar conclusions in “The Zoroastrian Diaspora: Religion and Migration”. The author of this book J.R. Hinnells proves that a religious cult (in his case, archaic Zoroastrianism) makes it possible to form a diaspora no longer according to ethnic, but according to superethnic religious criteria [3].

Two traditions have evolved in Russian science: 1) to deny the role of religion in both ethnic integration and disintegration; 2) to seek for religious similarities rather than differences.

To illustrate the first one, we shall refer to [4] describing peasants migration from European Russia to Siberia in the period between the abolition of serfdom in Russia (Emancipation reform of 1861) and World War I (1914). This phenomenon is often cited as an example of successful migration that gave a tangible boost to agricultural and industrial development in Siberia. Meanwhile, Kirillov and Karavayeva wonder why this migration process did not become as epoch-making as the mass migration of Europeans to America at the turn of the 19th–20th centuries. Searching for an answer, these authors analyze conflicts between Siberian locals

and newcomers. Religious cleavage between supporters of the Russian Orthodox Church (migrants from European Russia) and Old Believers, whose ancestors had moved to Siberia several centuries earlier, is assumed to be one of the reasons for these clashes. The authors reach an unexpected conclusion that religion was not a factor in the conflict, but rather served as a pretext for differences and disagreements. Kirillov and Karavayeva reckon that the conflict stemmed from the lack of land that for the first time became a scarce resource in Siberia during the period of the Great Siberian Migration.

Another group of researchers that premised on contemporary materials, on the contrary, believe that universal human values laid down in Christianity and Islam become a basis for integration. To illustrate their point, they describe peaceful coexistence of Christians and Muslim migrants in traditionally Orthodox regions across Russia [5].

Anyway, researchers generally pay attention to religious trends in the migrant environment but overlook the fact that the religious consciousness of a host community is also changing. Such transformations cannot but affect the acculturation of migrants.

A society with a strong religious idea is more likely to absorb migrants culturally. On the one hand, migrants find themselves at risk to lose their religious identity. On the other hand, a powerful ethno-religious tradition often commands respect from migrants. This respectful attitude extends to all socio-cultural layers of a host community. In this vein, it is crucial to study current religious attitudes of a host community, especially young people.

Russia is a traditionally Orthodox country and, at the same time, one of the major countries of international migration (destination country). Most migrants in Russia, like in Europe, are Muslims that arrive from the former USSR republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Empirical studies of recent years [6] reveal contradictory transformations of religious consciousness, in particular, among Russian youth. This paper focuses on one of the aspects of this context: young people's attitudes towards the Russian Orthodox Church and baptizing.

The authors hereof arranged a survey "The Russian Orthodox Church and Baptizing" that lasted

from September 28, 2020 to May 27, 2021. Through representative sampling, the survey addressed university and college students of the 2nd – 4th years in Nizhny Novgorod and the Nizhny Novgorod Region (Arzamas, Vacha, Kstovo, Perevoz, Vyksa, Zavolzhye, Dzerzhinsk, Bogorodsk, Bor). The total number of respondents is 947 people aged from 18 to 23. The margin of sampling error is under 4.7%. The vast majority of respondents are Russians.

A respondent's answer to every question comes with a comment. The style and vocabulary of the comments are provided as is, only spelling and punctuation have been edited.

Results. When asking our first question, we wanted to find out the attitude of young students towards the Russian Orthodox Church (hereinafter referred to as the Church). Although we deliberately avoided using the abbreviation ROC, respondents referred to it quite often with negative connotations. Only 11 % of respondents demonstrated a positive attitude to the Church, 17 % were indifferent, 39 % had a negative attitude, while 33 % were ambivalent.

The students who seem to be positive about the Church explain their stance as follows: "The attitude is positive because I am an Orthodox" (young man, 20 y/o); "I am Russian. The Orthodox Church is one of our core values" (young man, 20 y/o); "I have a positive attitude to the Russian Orthodox Church. My associations with ROC are most beautiful churches, amazing interior decorations, and irenic church servants" (girl, 20 y/o).

However, these few positive opinions are lost against a barrage of critical and even extremely negative attitudes towards the Church:

Young man, 20 y/o: "I believe that ROC has become a propaganda machinery".

Young man, 19 y/o: "It is about brainwashing".

Girl, 22 y/o: "They batten on the faith of ordinary people".

Girl, 21 y/o: "ROC has become a for-profit institution, while religious and moral principles are fading away".

Young man, 20 y/o: "ROC has a tainted image in Russia because of its well-known representatives. For example, a Russian celibate priest Vsevolod Chaplin ate at McDonald's during the Lent. There are pedophile priests, drunkards, priests who beat people".

Girl, 20 y/o: "They completely distorted all the canons of Christianity. The head of ROC is a complete opposite to a true Christian. I regret to say this but our religion is about extorting money in exchange for hope".

Young man, 20 y/o: "This is the most stupid thing in the modern world. Especially in our country. Fat, self-indulgent priests. Would you treat them differently?"

Girl, 19 y/o: "All the church decorations are made of gold, everything looks rich, and all the clergymen drive expensive cars and live in huge country houses".

Ambivalent comments about the Church differ little from the negative ones:

Girl, 20 y/o: "It's a controversial issue. There is too much emphasis on money, and religion is not about money at all".

Girl, 21 y/o: "It seems to me that ROC has become worse, as there is a flow of money, and all the senior priests are wearing gold and living large. This is wrong".

Girl, 21 y/o: "Too many ridiculous statements and events".

Young man, 20 y/o: "There is a growing number of immoral clergymen. Perhaps the church is swindling people out of money, especially in big cities".

Indifferent comments about the Church are scarce: "It has nothing to do with me", "I prefer not to think about it", "I have something else to think about", "I am neutral. I go to church only to take confession" (girl, 21 y/o).

Based on the above, it is obvious that students are rather critical of the Church hierarchs and some of the Church activities. Such trends can be explained by a dramatic impact of radical liberal clichés, rumors, and speculations, as well as by commitments of young people to traditional spirituality and culture. We reckon that in order to promote its reputation, the Russian Orthodox Church should focus more on young people and find innovative ways to work with the mass media.

Question 2 "Are you baptized?" suggested an uncommented brief reply. According to our statistics, 96 % of respondents are baptized, 3 % are not baptized, and 1 % do not know for sure.

Another question went to those 96 % who confirmed that they had been baptized. The question ran as follows: "If you are baptized, what is your attitude to baptizing?" 43 % of respondents are positive about their status, while a comparable figure of 41 % take their status for granted. Only 9 % have a negative attitude towards baptizing, and 7 % are ambivalent.

Judging by the answers to the second question, the vast majority of respondents formally identify themselves as believers. At the same time, not all of them, as can be seen from the answers to the first question, have a positive attitude towards the Russian Orthodox Church.

Those who are positive about the fact they are baptized often explain their attitude by saying that baptizing and wearing a cross have protective power:

Girl, 21 y/o: "I believe in my guardian angel. So I'm fine with it".

Young man, 20y/o: "Yes, I am baptized. I am very positive about it. I'm wearing a cross and never take it off".

Others explain their positive attitude by the feeling of respect they have for their parents who baptized them and, in general, by the Russian cultural tradition of baptizing children in infancy:

Girl, 20 y/o: "I am baptized and I am positive about it. In Russia, people are baptized in infancy, thereby introducing them to Orthodoxy and a certain idea of God".

Young man, 20 y/o: "I am baptized, I feel good about it, because this is my parents' choice, and I respect it".

Young man, 22 y/o: "Baptism is a way to feel engaged in your own culture".

Respondents who are ambivalent about their status most often complain that they were not asked before being baptized:

Young man, 20 y/o: "I was baptized, but I have mixed feelings about that, because they baptized me without taking into account my opinion".

Girl, 22 y/o: "I am baptized, but still I like the idea of choosing one's own religion at an older age".

Girl, 20 y/o: "I take this with a bit of disapproval. I was often reminded that I should wear a cross, believe in God, etc., since I was baptized. I strongly disagree with this".

Some explain their ambivalent attitude to baptizing by doubting its saving grace: "To be honest, I'm not sure that if I wasn't baptized, I would always get into trouble and face many misfortunes" (girl, 21 y/o).

Those who share an utterly negative attitude to baptizing are close to respondents with ambivalent views, but the former are more categorical and irreconcilable.

Girl, 21 y/o: "I don't take it very well, because I was not asked if I wanted to be a Christian".

Young man, 21 y/o: "I think it was useless and unnecessary. A man should find their own path to God".

Taking one's own baptizing for granted means acceptance, certain melancholy, and a tendency to philosophize:

Girl, 20 y/o: "I'm okay with it, but basically I don't care. Perhaps in a few years my opinion will change. Perhaps I will turn to God. I don't know".

Girl, 20 y/o: "I was baptized as a child when I was about two years old. I don't think it should have happened. But it did. Actually, I don't care".

Young man, 19 y/o: "I'm okay with this. I understand that this is part of a tradition".

Young man, 21 y/o: "I was baptized by my grandmother. I do not make much of it, because for me it is nothing more than just a tradition".

In general, the attitude of students towards them being baptized is moderately positive. The Russian Orthodox Church has significant potential to increase their influence on young people.

Then we asked students if they would baptize their own children. More than half of the respondents (53 %) answered in the affirmative, 23 % hesitated but seemed inclined to baptize their future children, 15 % had not decided yet, 9 % were sure that they would not baptize their children.

Below are the comments of those who will definitely or probably baptize their children.

Girl, 20 y/o: "I will because there is such a tradition in my family".

Young man, 21 y/o: "It's a tradition. I don't see anything wrong with it".

Young man, 19 y/o: "It will be better for me and my relatives".

Some are ready to baptize their children with certain reservations:

Young man, 21 y/o: "I will baptize my children when they themselves are able to decide whether they need it".

Young man, 21 y/o: "Yes, I will baptize my children. But later on, they will decide for themselves which religion to follow".

Girl, 20 y/o: "Perhaps I will baptize my children, because if I don't, my family and my relatives will get me wrong".

Those few students who are determined not to baptize their future children explain their decision by the "right of independent choice": "No. My child will have the right to choose which faith to embrace"; "My children must decide for themselves if they want to be baptized or not. It is their choice"; "I won't baptize them. It is up to them to decide". There are views that are even more radical: "It's a waste of money. I don't want my children to be religious".

The respondents who have not decided whether to baptize their children or not provide a clear reasoning: "I don't know. When I get kids, I will decide" (young man, 20 y/o).

Thus, we can conclude that the emotional and aesthetic side of worship as an element of Russian culture still finds a positive response among young people. This is another factor in the role that the Church plays in the spiritual and moral transformation of modern society.

The final question of the survey was supposed to add clarity to the problems discussed and contradictions found in the consciousness of the young generation: "Do you believe in God?".

As can be seen from the diagram, the same number of respondents answered straight away in the affirmative (17 %) and in the negative (17 %). 11 % believe in God rather than not. 29 % disbelieve in God rather than not. 22 % believe in some higher power, and only 4 % have not yet found an answer to this question.

In general, the number of those who either believe in God or in some sort of divinity or higher power (51 %) slightly exceeds (within the margin of error) the number of nonbelievers or those who tend to disbelieve (39 %). However, it must be borne in mind that the so-called belief in a higher power is not considered a proof of faith in most modern religions.

In this case, the ratio of believers (29 %) and nonbelievers (39 %) will shift towards the latter.

Students who answered in the affirmative offer the following explanation:

Young man, 19 y/o: "It's hard to explain why. Everyone decides for themselves whether to believe or not, without finding a reason. You can either believe or not".

Girl, 20 y/o: "People need to believe in something. Or in someone. I believe in God, I was born to an Orthodox family. But my faith is not as strong as that of my parents".

Thus, those who definitely believe explain their choice with an existential spiritual urge or a family tradition.

Here is a typical comment offered by those who believe, but still feel some doubts: "I can't give an exact answer. I go to church on Orthodox holidays with my older relatives. I am baptized, but know little about the Bible or other sacred books. I have only superficial knowledge about that" (girl, 21 y/o).

Those who believe in a higher power say something like this: "I believe that there may be something supreme and mystical above us, but I cannot say for sure that this is God. However, I do not rule Him out" (girl, 19 y/o). We see how the belief in a higher power of supreme mind demonstrates the signs of the post-modern medieval consciousness that we described earlier [7].

Those who disbelieve refuse to be called atheists, preferring the term "agnostic" obviously picked up from the course of philosophy, and thus demonstrate respect for scientific knowledge:

Young man, 20 y/o: "I consider myself an agnostic. I prefer not to believe in something unproven". Girl, 18 y/o: "Scientific rationale is closer to me". Girl, 20 y/o: "God is something doubtful for an ordinary man". Young man, 21 y/o: "I don't need this. Besides, there are no documentary proofs of God's existence".

Similar reasoning is provided by students who disbelieve in God, but do not rule out that something may happen in their life that will make them believe ("highly unlikely").

Young man, 20 y/o: "I don't really believe in God, since we live in a post-industrial society, and many phenomena can be explained in scientific terms".

Girl, 21 y/o: "I do not rule out the existence of God and other supreme entities. However, until I personally witness their divine works, I cannot call myself a believer".

Some explain their disbelief by knowing human nature, human weaknesses and vulnerabilities: "I don't know if God really exists, probably this is no more than a fairy tale invented by people who need to believe in something supernatural. After all, people find it critical to know that they are not alone in this universe. I believe that faith is inside a person, and there is no need to prove anything to anyone" (young man, 21 y/o).

The comments reveal another crucial issue – understanding God in the form He is presented in Christianity: "If we talk about God as a power that exists in the form presented to us (icons, the Bible), then I'm rather a nonbeliever" (girl, 20 y/o).

Indeed, in their comments, speaking about their disbelief, doubts, hesitations, as well as belief in some kind of "supermind", the respondents often refer to the Christian and Biblical understanding of God.

Can we talk about atheism in this context? What exactly is atheism? Does atheism mean disbelief in God or disbelief in Christ? It is instructive to refer to Jean-Paul Sartre talking about atheism, in particular, Jewish atheism. Jewish atheists confessed to him that they were having their disputes about God with the Christian religion. The religion they attack and want to get rid of is Christianity. They have never been atheists fighting the Talmud, and the priest for all of them is a curé, not a rabbi [8, p. 159]. Likewise, young respondents, most of whom are nonbelievers, deny Jesus as the embodiment of the Christian faith rather than Buddha, Allah or Krishna.

However, this downright denial is a matter of concern for the respondents. A big part of the respondents are critical of the church and even of God, but being baptized for the most part, they believe that baptism is rather good than bad. Many refer to family traditions and do not want to offend older relatives with their neglectful attitude. A fair share of those who will likely baptize their future children believe that it should be done to be on the safe side.

Thus, a number of antinomies have been discovered in the minds of young people. These antinomies pose a number of challenges that need to be tackled in terms of migration.

On the one hand, a good number of young people are critical of the Russian Orthodox Church and have doubts about the genuineness of the Christian faith. On the other hand, young people demonstrate an apparent interest in its activities, are formally affiliated with it, and are willing to baptize their children. Which of these extremities will resonate with migrants, especially young ones?

Young people receive information about the Church mostly from media and web resources, some of which often attack Orthodoxy. At the same time, young people are little aware of the real social role of the Church, its history, and its place in the culture and spiritual life of our people. Here comes the question. What channels of information will young migrants opt for in the first place: media and the Web or scientific, literary, and artistic sources?

Quite often, young people attempt to startle the older generation and their peers with radical anti-religious views. At the same time, some are quite sincere trying to assimilate spiritual, moral, and cultural values. It is also important to find out whether migrants are actually interested in such a discrepancy, or it may go unnoticed for them.

Taking stock, we reckon that deeper research is required. In the future, it will definitely contribute to the formation of a scientific platform for the sustainable development of society and the formation of a favorable socio-cultural climate in a country of international migration.

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