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**NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS UNITY IN TERMS OF
HISTORICAL TRANSIT**

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Abstract

The article analyses the issue of correlation of national and religious aspects in conditions of dynamically developing social relations. The urgency of this problem is due to the complex multinational and multireligious composition of modern states, Russia in particular. The aim of the work is to establish a link between the national and religious existence of a person and social communities, to develop proposals for harmonization of interethnic and inter-confessional relations. During this work, results of sociological studies of the level of religious commitment in Russia and the Krasnodar Krai were analysed. Conclusions about the need for closer study and consideration of interests of all ethnic groups, creating all necessary conditions aimed to preserve culture and traditions, are made. It seems appropriate to build awareness aimed at formation of both religious and national tolerance, respect for culture of other nations and ethnic groups. The state policy should be aimed at legislative consolidation and implementation of the principle of equality in relation to various confessions and nationalities, consistent observance of the principle of legality in activities of government bodies and formation and functioning of religious and public organizations. The state should take necessary measures to prevent politicization of interethnic and interfaith relations. A special role in resolving these issues should be played by regional government bodies and local governments that are closest to the population and have the full range of means of influence on the confessional and national interaction.

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1. Introduction

At the time of ongoing transformations: historical, political, cultural and religious, there is a great need to understand the nature of religious and national relationship, the influence of global post-secularity, the development trend of a country and a particular region. Today, the science refines the basic characteristics of such categories as ethnos, nation and people, and actualizes the topic of national and religious relationship. At the same time, the changed nature of social and political system of the Russia has significantly changed the trend of studying this phenomenon: from the negative assessment of this connection and its influence on public life to the exclusively positive role of religion in overcoming tensions and conflicts in the interfaith and interethnic areas and, finally, understanding the complexity and ambiguity of the impact of religion and its institutions on ethnic and national processes (James, 1993). All this makes the problem of national and religious relationship of Russia actual and requires legal regulation and humanistic reflection.

2. Problem Statement

In modern Russia, national problem is one of the most difficult issues, which is associated with another problem, the religious one. It is not a rare case when both religious and national issues are connected with conflicts, tensions, obstinacy and despair.

The history of modern Russia began with the wave of sovereignty, disintegration of the country, alienation of citizens from the state, from each other, and alienation on a national basis. As a result, the worldview has changed, priorities have changed, values have shifted, a fundamentally new reality has arisen, in which a new state, a new law, a new economy and a new social and cultural space have emerged.

We believe that these processes should be deeply understood; the correct approaches to the harmonization of religious and national relations should be found; the system for timely removal of contradictions arising in this area should be created, as well as the bodies responsible for the dialogue between believers and non-believers, the state and the church, interfaith harmony and civil solidarity.

3. Research Questions

What determines the national differentiation in different countries? Is M. Weber right? He believed that religious communities created a popular character through their spiritual sermons and instructions (Akayev & Nanaeva, 2017). They also protected the ethnic identity of religious organization. What strengthens the consciousness of the religious and national unity? Can faith lose its original individuality, enhancing national identity? When does faith become a proof of national identity, and when it does not? It is important to understand that the processes of secularization in the context of globalization reduce the religions to the sphere of private and separate them from social and political life. And as a result, even within the same religious tradition, there are many different points of view on the national question.

The cult of the nation: How does it arise and what trouble may it involve? Why does it provoke fear, greed, mistrust and lies about peace? These problems will make it possible to see something new in the national and religious interaction, to clarify the conceptual apparatus of the problem, to find the right approaches to the elimination of existing difficulties.

4. Purpose of the Study

The sociological material on the problem of religious and national relations, primarily in relation to the Krasnodar Krai of the post-Soviet period is of great importance. To identify this experience in the implementation of the policy of harmonization of ethnic and national, as well as interfaith relations in the region at the present time will allow us to avoid mistakes in the future.

5. Research Methods

The work is based on the fundamental research on national and religious relationship belonging to A.V. Pchelintsev, N.G. Skvortsov, I.V. Zagrebina, R.N. Lunkin, A.A. Mamedzade, James U., K.N. Khabibullina and others.

In addition, materials from complex sociological studies Religion and Interethnic Relations in Russia: Issues of Harmonization of Interethnic and Interfaith Relations (order of the Ministry of the Russian Federation for Nationalities and Federal Relations, 1998) and survey materials of 2018 were used.

6. Findings

The ways and methods of interaction between a religion and a nation are expressed with the help of special concepts and categories the meaning of which is constantly being clarified and verified. The concept of nation is perceived as a historically established stable ethnic and social community of people with a common territory, language, economic life, mental abilities, culture and self-consciousness.

This is not a citizenship that makes the nation and the state equal and according to which it will be necessary to include Russians, Tatars, Chechens, Yakuts, Lezghins, Adygeis, etc. in the Russian nation, while they have different cultures, languages and national characters. National self-awareness is understood as a complex of ideas of nationality about oneself ..., its interests, values and attitudes in relation to other nationalities. The emotional side of national identity is constituted by national feelings (Bromley, 1990).

The authors refer to the notion of ethnos, which is enrooted in the public consciousness of Kuban Cossack. Ethnos is a set of people historically established in a certain territory, having common, relatively stable features of culture (including language) and state of mind, as well as consciousness of their unity and difference from other similar entities, that is, self-consciousness (Bromley, 1988).

The scientists often use the term ethnonational, vividly indicating the ethnic and national relation. They operate with such words as interethnic relations and national processes. The second is wider in significance than the first one because in addition to the relations between nations and various communities it includes their inner development.

Some scientists consider various forms of interethnic relations as the interaction of cultures (Khalilova, Khashba, Osmaev, & Lysenko, 2016). They claim that a person considers himself to be of that nationality in which culture he/she has grown up. The interethnic contacts and interactions are the contacts of different cultures.

To reveal the role of religion as an element of culture in the national relations, is a methodological approach that will allow us to establish the limits of mutual influence between the national and the religious relations.

In the historical events in the life of ethnic groups, the religion has always been a means of retaining identity, a factor in the struggle for national independence.

The history of the emergence and adoption of Christianity in its Byzantine version of Rus shows how religion influenced the formation of the ethnos and how the culture of the ethnos influenced the development of religion. The original Christianity “worked” with each specific public association. As a universal religion the Christianity started to exist since 311 when it became the ideology of the Roman Empire. “Go and teach all the nations ...” the Gospel of Matthew claims (MTF.28: 19). So Christianity became a world religion, proclaiming the equality of all people regardless of nationality and social affiliation. Independence from the nation and the territory made the religious association free. The faith no longer determines the state, the nation and the spiritual leader. Jesus Christ is not a politician, not a statesman, but the spiritual driver of all mankind.

However, in the bosom of Christianity three models of attitudes toward the nation have been formed for various reasons:

- Catholic, which made a bet on individuality, taking into account the belonging to a nation and universality (because St. Paul was a Jew and he did not reject it when he became a Christian);
- Orthodox, which is closely associated with one nation;
- Protestant, which is the most versatile.

Thus, the universal religions demonstrate the priorities of faith but not nations; a religious group or an organization is always broader and more influential than a national one. Of course, these religions should be separated from the national religions (Judaism, Shintoism, Sikhism, etc.) for which the main thing is nationality.

Assessing the nature and the level of religiosity of the Orthodox world, one may come to the following conclusion: Orthodoxy is a universal religion, while its structure and organization are based on a national but not a universal principle. Still, the Orthodox churches were established in the bosom of the national states, often they were state-forming (Russia, Serbia).

The supranational religion is the second religion in the number of followers in the Russian Federation, i.e. Islam. Many theologians in Islam consider traitors to the values of Islam to be those who uphold the “nation – state” idea. Islam is not based on a nation, but on a community of Muslims, not Ummah. Many European theorists have noted the hostility and even denial of national attributes, which are considered as a threat to the integrity of the Islamic community. In the writings of Muslim theologians there is a claim that the national idea destroys the universality of Islam. At the same time, in the framework of Islam, a so-called “political Islam” arose, recognizing the nationality and the right of an individual to individuality. The development of modern Islamic world reveals many contradictions in the implementation of supranational aspect of religion. The supporters of the nation argue that the universality of Islam impedes the development of national sentiment, on the other hand, claims have arisen that Islam may become the basis for the emergence of nation attitude and its self-identification. An example could be the emergence of Bosnian nation in the Balkans after the well-known events of Yugoslavia collapse.

The supranational religions often invade the zone of national interests, focusing on the tradition in the organization of social relations. The connection of religion and the nation is actively carried out in the

rituals and rites of particular people. As a result, the national and religious aspects are closely intertwined so that it is impossible to distinguish one from the other.

Different correlation models of religious and national relation are possible:

- identification of religious and national groups (for example, Russian Orthodoxy);
- a model of national and religious discrepancy (Bosnians, Albanians use Islam).

The rich history of peoples and their cultures, their mixing faith have resulted in the creation of their own cultures not related to those that existed before. The destinies of peoples and their religions intertwined, giving rise to contradictions and conflicts, wars, and at the same time creating new forms of cooperation, establishing traditions of tolerance and respectfulness, accepting something different, alien and giving rise to new models of national and religious interaction and influence.

When a faith plays the role of national ideology, sacralization of national feeling, national holidays, national heroes takes place. This strengthens the consciousness of inseparability of the religious from the national aspects. Therefore, nationality is reduced to confessional affiliation: Russian is an Orthodox, Tajik is a Muslim. This is an example of the reduction of universal religions to nationality.

In the situation of a merger of the national and religious aspects, the process of secularization is inevitably intensified. The national aspect is more and more interested in religion, and religion is perceived as a political ideology and cultural background that creates a nation. The associations of believers begin to care not about faith, but about cultural traditions and cultural heritage. The researchers believe that this situation may indicate the beginning of a crisis of religion. There is also a directly opposite tendency, when a religious organization meaningfully performs the role of a “national tradition” with the help of which the national aspect manifested itself in the conditions of oppression and unequal relations in society.

In the framework of this problem a special topic is nationalism, which is based on mutual religious denial, mythology, and plots about “historical rights”. Here we find the roots of ecclesiastical nationalism (phyletism).

Nationalism is an ideology, politics and psychology in the national issue. It is based on the ideas of national superiority and exclusivity. “Nationalism is a love of a personal “myself” for that national “ourself”, which alone can bring to the universal “ourself”. It is incompatible with the recognition of a nation of its superiority. “True nationalism is a spiritual nationalism, which comes not only from the instinct of national self-preservation, but from the spirit and it loves not just “native”, “own”, but native - great and its own – sacred” (Ilyin, 1937).

Nationalism is different from chauvinism, for which the love for its people is fraught with hatred for other nations, and “self-affirmation takes the form of attacks and conquests. A true nationalist is at the same time a true patriot, that is, a person who loves not everything in his people, but something that rises to such a height of spiritual culture that is visible to other nations and respected by them”.

Modern nationalism is being modernized throughout the world and in Russia. New type of nationalists are organized on the principle of marketing, they declare commonality with Europe, rejoice at the failure of multiculturalism, oppose globalization for democratic values. They set the task of integrating into political life. The recent events show that they succeed. New type of nationalists demonstrate organizational flexibility. They do not have offices, full-time employees who receive wages, they are successful because of the Internet, where they create websites, send SMS, make phone calls, that is, perform

the functions of a virtual organization. Such a situation allows nationalists to keep it low in front of law enforcement structures, and allows them to save money.

In the conditions when a significant number of people are afraid of the external influences that destroy the traditions of Russian life, painfully experience the loss of faith, state, nation, community, family and moral purity, more and more citizens support conservative attitudes as a natural reaction to destructive large-scale changes in social and cultural economic and political life of the country. At the same time, there is a growing understanding that just like the Europeans we have largely lost the ability to create capable communities for the implementation of national ideas. We all see how dangerous the situation of absorption of traditional culture by more active migrants and newcomers from the Islamic world. For example, in the German lands the ministers of culture are the Turks who profess Islam, and the Islamic centers are becoming the leading cultural centers. All this is the result of an individualism, which opposes the formation of communities. The problem of individualism is very acute in our country (Danilova, 2001) because it is wild and may put an identity at risk; however, a nation cannot exist without an identity, it threatens the integrity of the state. Therefore, the main task here is to find the grounds for the association establishment. Any appeals to historical roots, patriotic feeling, hopes for the Russian Orthodox Church do not work. For this reason there appeared the communities of sports fans, skinheads, sympathizers, various informal groups (Embulaeva & Embulaeva, 2017).

Noteworthy are the data of sociological polls conducted by the Levada Center in 2007 and 2010, which showed that 78% of the respondents consider themselves to be patriots in 2007 and 70% in 2010; 19% and 12% of the respondents do not consider themselves to be patriots. For the respondents, patriotism means “to love the motherland” and “to be ready to defend it”. There is no hint of a nation or religion.

We can say that a nation and religion are autonomous social phenomena, nationality is one thing, and religious affiliation is another thing. In principle, the religious differences may not be of fundamental importance and have no influence on the process of the formation of a nation. There are examples when the universal religion in a certain historical context negatively influenced the national consciousness, for example, the persecution of the Glagolitic alphabet in some countries. In other cases, it contributed to its development, for example, when introducing the national language into the liturgy. Universal religion can support the ideas of cosmopolitanism and, thereby, suppress national identity, as in the case with the Muslim Ummah.

On this basis, an assumption can be made that the religion cannot be a determining factor in the emergence of a new nation. Here we come to the most difficult issues, i.e. the concept of “people”. A person as a part of a people can not associate him or herself with any religious organization. Social, political and national ideas are intertwined in the doctrines of religious organizations (the charge for secularization). In the universal religions there are no similar interpretations on the national issue. The religious and confessional affiliation is determined, as a rule, unmistakably, however, the situation is more difficult with national affiliation. How to define “Russianness”? The difficulties are connected with the processes of transformation of religion into national ideology. The national identity of the Jews, for example, was built on the awareness of their election and union with God. Such an idea ensured national unity, while the self-consciousness of the Jews gained religious significance.

Can a faith be considered as a basis for self-identification? The answer is yes and no. There are nations, for example, Serbs, Croats who identify themselves on the basis of religion, language and culture. The differences between them are poorly expressed (exception: Christians and Muslims). National borders are identical with religious affiliation. At the same time, these are universal religions around which live Muslims, Christians are Catholics, Orthodox who belong to completely different ethnic and national communities. Both the confession and religion become a factor of national self-determination in the conditions of a crisis of ideology, primarily national one. In some regions of the world, the religion and confession are determined by the method of self-identification. National groups differ in relation to a particular religion. So, in Sri Lanka, the Sinhala are Buddhists, and the Tamils are Hindu. In the USA, some religious organizations identify themselves with any nation. The confessional identification for Americans is even more important; it keeps the language in the new society. As M. Weber noted, the religion and denomination here have a function of belonging. In the light of the above said, the famous American melting pot seems doubtful (Weber, 1920).

The belonging to a particular confession can differentiate people on national grounds. In Germany, the religion did not play any role in the formation of the nation. However, among the Jews, the nation and confession are fully identified. Such a coincidence is abused by nationalists in Poland, Armenia, Ireland.

Any religion performs an integrative and regulatory functions that promote the establishment of connections between co-religionists, maintain confessional community and regulate people's behaviour. Besides, it performs a segregating function that causes conflicts, tensions and opposition from the representatives of different religions. In the past, we find many examples when religion softened manners, established a dialogue and ensured mutual understanding between nations, resolving disputes and contradictions in the interethnic conflicts. At the same time, there are many examples when the religious factor strengthened the confrontation, and the leaders of religious organizations were not negotiable and only intensified interethnic conflicts. No wonder it is customary to remember the religious wars as the most terrible and merciless.

The religious factors are often used by various political forces in their own interests, which always exacerbate conflicts. The connection between religious and national aspects always manifests itself in the protracted and, as a rule, violent conflicts. As an example the Armenian-Karabakh conflict will be given. Under these conditions, it would be natural to exclude the religious factor, to analyze not the history of the conflict, but to develop a positive program of future relations. The experience of this kind is accumulated in various regions of Russia. Sociological measurements of ethnic and confessional relations are being conducted in order to work out the specific measures that can prevent conflicts both in the interfaith and in interethnic relations.

In 1998, a sociological survey was conducted for the first time in the Kuban region, commissioned by the Ministry of the Russian Federation for Nationalities and Federal Relations, which showed that over 80% of the respondents indicated problems and contradictions linked to the interethnic relations. This fact did not come as a surprise, it was explained by the proximity of Krasnodar Krai to the conflict areas of the North Caucasus - Chechnya, Abkhazia, the flow of refugees, Meskhetian Turks, Ukrainians, Armenians and others. All this seriously aggravated the social and economic development of the region: there was a job competition between the local population and visitors. The particular ethnic community - the Cossacks,

in a specific way defending the rights of the local population, made this process especially acute. The interethnic problems also appeared at the household level, among which was disregard for people of other nationalities, mistrust and suspicion towards them, struggle for the areas of influence between national communities, protectionism based on nationality, hooliganism, rape, disrespect for traditions and culture, striving for national isolation, requirements aimed at the construction of religious buildings to meet religious needs.

Every sixth respondent named the main reasons for this tension to be wrong national policy, as well as the influx of refugees, growth of ethnic self-consciousness of people and nationalistic aspirations of some political parties and movements.

Basing on the survey data and using the recommendations of the expert group, local authorities and media, public institutions had promptly responded to the situation, which allowed the researchers to conclude that local authorities and the media are acting in an aggravated ethnic and religious relationship more carefully and objectively, using the positive experience of the past and focusing on mutual understanding, mutual assistance and friendship. Moreover, every seventh respondent noted that nationality has the least effect on the establishing friendly relations, therefore, among friends and close friends they have people of different nationalities. As the main measure for the harmonization of interethnic relations the participants identified strengthening the rule of law (60%), solving social and economic problems (25%) and cultural development (15%). The respondents noted that the region, the city and the village is a home, bringing the feeling of homeland, understanding that Russia is not an accidental heap of territories, but a living organism that has historically and culturally justified itself, which must be loved and cared for depending on nationality and religious commitment.

The survey showed that religious differences are much less common, although the facts of mutual hostility between people of different faiths still occur. As a rule, tensions arise between Orthodox and Protestants. The most aggressive were called “Jehovah’s Witnesses”, in addition, conflicts arise between the Orthodox, identifying themselves with the Russians, and the followers of the new religious movements, the so-called Eastern cults. The intolerance was found in the behavior of Orthodox and Protestants, most often competing in the struggle for their flock.

A special attitude to Muslims in the territory is due to the fact that, on the one hand, Islam is a very peaceful religion, condemning intolerance, and on the other hand, the survey participants noted an ability of Muslims to infiltrate and provoke the situation. About half of the respondents expressed a forecast for the deterioration and complication of interfaith and interethnic relations. In addition, a negative attitude was expressed to the realities of that time and to the circumstances of life. There are many statements in the survey materials about violations of the principle of secularism of the state, violations of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the need to adopt a law on the civil service, which would regulate the activities of officials in the state-church relations.

In 2017, the Department of Philosophy of Kuban State Agrarian University conducted study devoted to the relationship between national and religious aspects in the public life of the territory and the city of Krasnodar, which involved 48 experts. It showed a generally more positive picture compared with the previous survey. Over the past twenty years, the ethnonational problems have lost their urgency, multinationality has become more complicated and multiplied, and the psychological climate has improved.

Moreover, the population of Kuban has become more homogeneous, people of different faiths and nationalities got used to each other, became more tolerant, the atmosphere of acceptance of people from Central Asian has improved due to migrants' hard work and peace, as well as demonstrative respect for local traditions and culture. Besides, the tensions in the interfaith field have diminished: a dialogue between Christian churches has emerged, Orthodox attitudes towards Protestants have become more tolerant; however, the need of building the communication bridges between traditional religions and new religious organizations is denied.

New concerns related to the "Islamization of the North Caucasus republics, Stavropol and Adygea have arisen (Akayev & Nanaeva, 2017; Gapurov, 2017). That gave rise to new phenomenon – the religious migration, which is why neo-Christian, neo-Protestant groups and organizations, headed not by Russians, but by people from the Caucasus, actively join the life of the region. In the ministry, they often demonstrate exaltation, connection with pagan, national and ethnic traditions. In the judgments of ordinary believers there is a fear of being expelled, and hence, they are trying to substantiate their otherness. In such groups, an increased mysticism and isolationism are noted" (Embulaeva, 2014). Secondly, the uncertainty of the borders of the secular state and the appearance of signs of clericalization of the state, manifested primarily in the field of education and the Russian army, as well as active lobbying of interests of one religion in the state structures, which is regarded as violating the constitutional rights and freedoms of believers of other faiths. Experts highlighted the main condition for overcoming the inter-confessional and national contradictions and conflicts, i.e. the equality of religions against the law.

7. Conclusion

The importance of studying this problem for the state and society is great, because the role of the religious factor in the interethnic relations will be growing. Both politicians and civil servants at the federal level, as well as national elites at the regional level, who take advantage of religions for the political interests are the sources that give an urgency to this problem. Certain pro-Orthodox groups continue to exaggerate the issue of monarchist Orthodoxy and the state Orthodox Church. The following directions aimed at the harmonization of interethnic relations can be considered:

- -to study and take into account the interests of large and small ethnic groups living in the territory of the region in order to coordinate them among themselves and with the interests of population of the region as a whole;
- to create optimal conditions for each ethnic group of the population, including national minorities and those, living in the isolation from their historical homeland to preserve cultural and national identity, language, and confession of traditional religions;
- to provide assistance to national and cultural associations;
- to build awareness among population aimed at the formation of national and religious tolerance, friendship, interest in the culture of other national groups;
- to provide all ethnic and national groups with equal opportunities to participate in decision-making on the matters affecting their interests;
- to oppose attempts to politicize interethnic relations, speculations on the national feelings of people;

- to adhere to the legislation in the interfaith field, which provides a legal solution to national and religious issues;
- to ensure attentive and equal attitude to different religious denominations, optimally address the issues of creating conditions to meet the religious needs of believers;
- to create permanent advisory councils under local authorities on the issues of interreligious harmony and cooperation.

In modern conditions of globalization processes an awareness has to be built about the upbringing of tolerance, friendliness, respectfulness and interest in the cultures of other nations. It is easy to find what separates us and it is very difficult to find something what unites us. We must love our country, our people, in order to understand, accept and forgive everyone whom Russia has united.

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