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THE ESSENCE OF RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM AS A SUBJECT IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

СУТНІСТЬ РЕЛІГІЙНОГО ФУНДАМЕНТАЛІЗМУ
ЯК ПРЕДМЕТ РЕЛІГІЄЗНАВЧИХ ДОСЛІДЖЕНЬ

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Purpose. The main purpose of the article is to consider the methodological features in the formation and interpretation of religious fundamentalism within the context of the deepening religious influence in the course of current political processes. This involves solving the following tasks: firstly, to reveal the content of modern approaches in understanding the peculiarities in the interpretation of the phenomenon of religious fundamentalism, and what causes their occurrence within the processes of globalization and secularization; and secondly, to reconstruct the dynamics of the transformations, as they relate to fundamentalism and extremism, within the context of social changes, and rethinking the role of spiritual practices in the life of the individual.

Theoretical basis. The author's analysis is based on a systematic reconstruction of theoretical comprehension models of religious fundamentalism, and their connection to the current research in the field of political science. As a result of the study, we find that the taxonomy of various types of religious fundamentalism includes political, legal and economic markers. What is not resolved is the qualitative influence of fundamentalist ideas on the political and legal reality. Considering the problem of religious fundamentalism and the spread of post-secular tendencies is obviously associated with the actualization of these phenomena at different levels of social life. That is why, in the context of this analysis, taking into account the goals formulated in the paper, the main contemporary approaches were considered. What were the causes that spread religious fundamentalism, and how to address the threats to security (individual and social) in the context of the return of the religious factor to public life through politics.

Originality. When analyzing the processes of fundamentalization and extremism of religious movements, it is necessary to pay attention to their specific historical types, ideological peculiarities and the economic basis for their functioning. These components allow us to establish that the use of violence, on the part of extremist movements, arises when artificially formed stereotypes about the threatening state of any religion, are supported by an aggressive non-recognition of religious diversity, and the desire to restore the role of one particular religion, to a high level of absolute social solidarity of its own religious identity.

Conclusions: Restoration of religious influences in the social sphere can be reestablished by fundamentalists in several ways. These include: by way of Differentiation, by the desire for Unity, and by Coercion. The ideology of differentiation includes the provision that the restoration of the rights of religion are possible only, by obtaining from the state the rights of broad autonomy for regions in which the fundamentalist movements have gained popularity. Unity, as a way of achieving political goals, is conceived when there is a total unified world outlook of the representatives of specific religious traditions, for which obtaining supreme political power is the only possible way of achieving the political goal. The Coercion factor, as a strategy of fundamentalists, is aimed at eliminating the personal rights and freedoms gained in the process of democratic development and expressed in the right to freedom of conscience.

Keywords: religious fundamentalism, modernism, globalization, secularization, extremism.

Мета. Основна мета статті полягає у розгляді методологічних особливостей формування і інтерпретації поняття релігійного фундаменталізму в контексті поглиблення впливу релігії на перебіг політичних процесів сучасності. Це передбачає вирішення наступних

завдань: по-перше, розкрити зміст сучасних підходів в розумінні особливостей інтерпретації феномену релігійного фундаменталізму та причини його виникнення у зв'язку з процесами глобалізації та секуляризації і, по-друге, реконструювати динаміку трансформацій в уявленнях фундаменталізм та екстремізм в контексті соціальних перетворень та переосмислення ролі духовних практик у житті особистості.

Теоретичний базис. Аналіз автора заснований на систематичній реконструкції теоретичних моделей осмислення релігійного фундаменталізму і його зв'язку з тематикою сучасних досліджень в галузі політології. Зафіксоване в результаті дослідження положення про те, що таксономія різних видів релігійного фундаменталізму включає в себе політичні, правові та економічні маркери. При цьому, залишається не вирішеним питання про те, яким є якісний вплив фундаменталістських ідей на політико-правову дійсність. Звернення до проблеми релігійного фундаменталізму в контексті поширення постсекулярних тенденцій призводить до актуалізації цих явищ в на різних рівнях суспільного життя. Саме тому, в контексті проведеного аналізу та враховуючи цілі, сформульовані в роботі, були розглянуті основні сучасні підходи до аналізу причин поширення релігійного фундаменталізму, які розглядають проблем загрози безпеці (індивідуальної та суспільної) в контексті повернення релігійного фактора в суспільне життя через політику.

Наукова новизна. при аналізі процесів фундаменталізації та екстремізації релігійних рухів необхідно звертати увагу на їх конкретно-історичні типи, ідеологічні особливості та економічний базис їх функціонування. Врахування цих складових дозволяє встановити, що застосування насильства з боку таких рухів виникає тоді, коли штучно утворені стереотипи про загрозове становище релігії у сучасному світі підкріплюється агресивним невизнанням релігійного різноманіття, прагненням відновити роль релігії, націленістю на високий рівень соціальної солідарності та абсолютизацію власної релігійної ідентичності.

Висновки. Відновлення релігійного впливу у суспільній сфері вбачається фундаменталістами декількома шляхами. До них можна віднести: шлях розмежування, налаштованість на єдність та примус. Ідеологія розмежування містить у собі положення про те, що відновлення прав релігії можливе виключно за умов отримання від держави прав широкої автономії регіонів у яких отримали популярність фундаменталістські рухи. Єдність, як спосіб досягнення політичної мети, мислиться в контексті тотальної моделі світобачення представників конкретних релігійних традицій, для яких отримання верховної політичної влади є єдиним можливим засобом досягнення мети. Примус, як стратегію фундаменталістів, орієнтовано на ліквідацію особистих прав і свобод здобутих у процесі демократичного поступу і виражених у праві на свободу совісті.

Ключові слова: релігійний фундаменталізм, модернізм, глобалізація, секуляризація, екстремізм.

(стаття друкується мовою оригіналу)

In order to provide a more complete educational process in the system of higher education, special courses are introduced, the main task of which, is to form a meaningful attitude to those differences that may arise on a religious or ethno-national basis. Here we discuss the connection between theoretical and methodological developments in the practice of teaching socio-humanitarian disciplines, and the peculiarities in the perception of political, legal, and religious phenomena of everyday life. Deepening the integration processes which are inherent in the present, the researchers have found the question of determining the essence and features of the interpretation of religious fundamentalism, as one of the most important phenomena common to the whole world. We believe that the study of theoretical details in the comprehension of fundamentalism, will enable students to become acquainted with contemporary, balanced and fundamentally unbiased representations of the nature and essence of religious differences. This will help to overcome the false stereotypes that have been widespread by the Mass Media, due to the uncritical attitude about the «differences». It is our opinion, that this is due to an erroneous identification of concepts such as fundamentalism, extremism and terrorism, where the last two terms have acquired a

definitely negative meaning. Not distinguishing the semantic differences in the use of these terms, leads to the erroneous identification of those phenomena that are defined by these words. We are talking not only about formal definitions, but also about the need of clarifying their terminology, since their specification seems to be sufficiently relevant in connection with the crisis of world security and the need to ensure individual rights and freedoms.

Among the reasons for the fundamentalization of religious movements, are found in recent scientific studies. Valuable conclusions are drawn by V. Yelensky, in his monograph «The Great Return: Religion in Global Politics and International Relations of the End of the 20 – the beginning of the 21st Centuries» [6]. Referring to the problem of comprehension of the origins of religious fundamentalism, the author notes that among the important factors of the «religious renaissance» are both, the globalization processes, and the course of nation-building, which, without contradicting each other, form new challenges facing both religions and individuals. Another work that attracts attention due to the complex consideration of issues in the interaction between religion and politics, in the context of rethinking the role of fundamentalism and extremism in present day political practices, is the monograph, «Divisions of Secularization» [2]. Its authors, O. Bilokobylsky, V. Levytsky, R. Khalikov, I. Kozlovsky, S. Geraskov, V. Gurzhi and others, and also R. Harle, M. Yilmaz [11; 12], devoted much attention to the analysis of social religious doctrines, stressing that among the important characteristics of globalization are those, which are caused by the collision of «spiritual practices» in the post-secular age. In our opinion, it is advisable to define the semantic boundaries of the concepts used, but at the same time, we should also clarify the reasons for the return of the religious factor into politics. This will allow us to detail functional characteristics of secularization, and encourage understanding the reasons for the spread of fundamentalist sentiment in modern society. In addition, the following presentation will pay attention to the correlation between the concepts of fundamentalism and extremism, the nature of their relationship, and peculiarities of their use in the political science of religion, and as an independent branch of humanitarian knowledge [10].

Being extremely heterogeneous, fundamentalism can manifest itself not only in the religions of the world, but also in various cognitive practices, and also in cultural and civilizational identities. Cultural fundamentalism finds the reason for the uniqueness of a particular spiritual tradition that is in the distinctive features of national characteristics. Therefore, cultural fundamentalism can be considered an important element in the fundamentalism of national religions. This connection becomes apparent when we determine that the moral values and ideological guidelines are directly rooted in a concrete historical form of nationgenesis. In such a format, these characteristics acquire not only the signs of uniqueness, but also the exclusivity that is based on the attitude towards itself as a special subject of history. These characteristics are designed to become a «model» for its multicultural

environment, and in such an interpretation, the definition of fundamentalism approaches universalism.

As we see in today's research literature, fundamentalism is not identified with traditionalism, but with modernism, which is inherent in spiritual phenomena, and which represents a way in which culture or religion, responds to the challenges of crisis situations. In the writings of R. Scott Appleby and Martin E. Marty, it is argued that fundamentalism is a response to modern secularization processes that are considered by fundamentalists as a manifestation of «universal evil», which endangers the existence of human civilization. In this context, the consolidation of one's own identity, at the level of religious patterns, looks like the only possible way to achieve victory of good in the whole world. Here there is a twin attitude in the creation of a «counterculture» to the environment. On the one hand, it is doctrinal isolationism, which demands the complete abandonment of any links with the dominant secular culture, and on the other hand, the use of the achievements of this other culture (e.g. political, legal, economic, and scientific achievements), in order to extend its programs of action, and extend the values of the fundamentalist world outlook, on the largest number of people. Referring to the socio-philosophical analysis of religious fundamentalism, A. Volobuev emphasizes that this phenomenon can be understood as one of the forms of ideology, and in this sense, it competes with the ideologies of modernism and globalism [3]. As a result, fundamentalism, which is still opposed to globalism, does not close itself off to the idea of exclusivism, but tries to extrapolate its ideas into a hierarchy of values, imposed by the secular outlook.

In modern studies of fundamentalism, including the religious area, this phenomenon has a political orientation, in the sense that it affects the peculiarities of political practices, and also the economy of the whole world [e.g. 5]. At the same time, the widespread dissemination of fundamentalist views is often associated with the conviction of their followers in their ideals of ethnic exclusivity and cultural hegemony. This fundamentalist position brings special attention directed at mechanisms of political and legal influences, which are involved in the process of social transformations. At the same time, the internal contradictions embodied in religious practices, may be the reason for the ambiguous interpretations of political ideals, in the consolidation of various movements and currents. Among the established interpretations of fundamentalism, the most exhaustive are those that pay attention to the structural and functional peculiarities of this meaningful phenomenon. The most common definition of fundamentalism, which is used by most researchers in politics and religion, is the following: «an ideology that affects all forms of political life» [9]. An essential feature of such an interpretation is that emphasis is placed on the counter-position of fundamentalism in relation to the propagation of liberal ideas. This socio-cultural reaction can take on different forms, and manifest itself in different levels of social life, articulating its own ideas about the ideals of social perfection.

Spiritual traditions, in which the fundamentalist sentiments may emerge, create a unique world of socio-

cultural practices that regulate the process of life in the community and the individual, whose autonomy is denied. Often, we witness fundamentalist ideas, radicalized in understanding of the methods that can be used to achieve their goal. They acquire the character of extremists, by negating human rights and denying the value of human life. This changes the provisions of national security and the geopolitical situation in the region affected by its dissemination. Another possible way of spreading fundamentalist ideas is using the traditionalist currents that propagate the same principles of loyalty to authentic values, but at the same time they are less radical in the choice of methods. Here we speak about the priority of education, which should promote the ideas inherent in fundamentalism. The study of these processes is possible due to the development of sociological studies, in which the manifestations of fundamentalism are expressions of functionality found in certain social phenomena that are complex in their structure and form of expression. As a political project, this phenomenon can rarely be clearly identified, due to the difference in regional conditions of occurrence; for some countries, it can be considered authentic, but for others, a foreign phenomenon. The absence of typical characteristics of the doctrine complicate the possibility of analysis, since the teachings from which they originate have significant differences.

In the understanding of religious fundamentalism, we are in agreement with P. Gurevich, who believes that this phenomenon is an expression of a dual perception of history [4]. On the one hand, it refers to the return to the authentic, peculiar to this religious complex, but on the other hand, there is the practice of forming new social orientations, which is not typical of traditionalism. It is sufficiently obvious that when interpreting fundamentalism in the philosophical context, one should take into account that this term implies the existence of a certain unchanging reality, that determines the nature and quality of values, morals and virtues. Therefore, fundamentalism can be expressed in metaphysical, ethical, cultural (national) or religious forms.

Modern transformations, in the political and socio-economic areas, are influenced by the religious factor no less, than they were in the past. The difference here is observed to a greater extent in the degree of reflection of this phenomenon, which was called politicization of religion. This process is often manifested in connection with the aggravated political situation, the legal uncertainty in the interfaith dialogue, the spontaneous migration processes, etc.

In analyzing the nature of religious fundamentalism, we believe that it is important to take into account the significance of social doctrine, which is expressed in various positions, about how to implement a perfect social system, and offers different ways to achieve social justice. Today, strategies for the implementation of social programs, which are an important component of the religious scholars of various spiritual traditions of the world, become of a qualitatively new character. Finding their way into specific political projects, these social programs determine the choice of instruments to be used by religious figures and their followers. The diversity of doctrinal positions and ideological peculiarities greatly complicate the possibility of distinguishing the general

characteristics of these religious practices. At the same time, we still believe that this prospect of researching the phenomena of religious fundamentalism is possible. The results of the generalizations received, will contribute not only to understanding the causes of fundamentalization and radicalization of religious and political movements, but also help to create conditions for forecasting the prospects of state-confessional relations.

Another component in the study of religious fundamentalism should be the study of characteristics of the individual factor, which predetermines the involvement of the individual in fundamentalist ideals or organizations. In other words, the question of why a person perceives and shares fundamentalist views should be rethought, if neither the educational, nor the humanitarian policy implemented by the state, does not officially support such movements. The unpredictability of the ideology of religious fundamentalism manifests itself in several respects. First of all, it is a characteristic of almost all religious traditions that were influenced by modernization, and secondly, it arises in connection with the politicization of religion, when against the background of spiritual ideals and ideas, appear concepts directly related to political practices, aimed at the implementation of conservative social goals.

The first aspect – the precondition in the discovery of the processes of fundamentalization, in connection with the modernization and secularization of the world – is studied by the researchers of the political science of religion. This means that the subject field of this discipline is at the junction of political science and religious studies, and serves as a guide to interdisciplinarity. An objective and non-confessional approach, in turn, leads to the fact that the phenomenon of fundamentalism is considered artificially, by being isolated from everyday life, and as a consequence, it is devoid of any connection to the not obvious, non-religious factors, that influence its emergence, formation and functioning. The complications also arise, because understanding the peculiarities in the formation of moral norms and rules of social behavior, are based on the unreflected notion of the inequality of secular (scientific) and religious ontology, on the basis of their moral and behavioral standards. That is, when we talk about religious fundamentalism, for example, we place it opposite modernism, secularization, globalization, and so on. In our opinion, to consider such a strategy of research as incorrect, is counterproductive, because it does allow us not only to distinguish basic characteristics of fundamentalism, but also to substantially enrich the understanding of this phenomena. At the same time, using this approach alone means a methodological limitation of research opportunities. The second aspect, when examining fundamentalism, takes into account the individual. And here it is important to focus on religious views which penetrate into the field of political thought, aimed to change the world using social practices, which transform the world in accordance with the notions of a perfect world, and its arrangement, as expressed in their concrete historical religious concept.

The aforementioned issues represent the relevance of the study of religious fundamentalism, especially when there is an identification of religion and politics.

The adjustment of religion to all aspects of social life, including law, economics, education and the social sphere, is laid down in the specifics of the appropriate religious worldview. It has an all-inclusive nature that goes beyond the limits of personal life and extends to socially significant phenomena, giving rise to its moral dimension, and giving religious views the character of an ideological model. Representatives of various fundamentalist religious traditions, movements, factions and associations are usually extremely critical of various reformist and ecumenical movements that are gaining popularity in the modern world. Modern researchers have reached a valuable conclusion, namely that one of the socio – psychological foundations in religious fundamentalism, is the definition of «comfortable borders of identity». These prevent the trends that globalize culture and they don't advance the unification of political and legal mechanisms by which the world economy functions.

There is a widespread view among religious scholars, that there are two most pragmatic models, among the optimal state-confessional samples of democratic societies, and their conventional names are, the «American model and European model» [7]. The first of these, the American model, is based on the principle of minimized intervention, which is carried out only when the appropriate type of social relations must be regulated by law. Here, the state applies all possible mechanisms to prevent negative effects of the activities of religious communities, to protect national interests of the state, social harmony or the individual security of citizens. The European model represents the practice of actively harmonizing individual and social relations, in which the religious factor may be identified as creating crises or tensions on an interconfessional level. According to Andriy Yurash, it is civil society, whose institutions are intended to ensure the sustainable development of democracy, and can contribute to the protection of national security from these manifestations of religious fundamentalism in the form of extremism or radicalism [10].

At the same time, when using these terms, there should be a clear understanding of their content and scope. That is why the theorists of humanitarian research have repeatedly raised the question of the content of these concepts, and their relationship to the social phenomena that these terms affect. This understanding is used by experts to verify the manifestations of religious extremism, which is based on determining the conditionality of a particular ideology and activity by religious factors, which include religious ideas and elements of religious doctrines. In addition, as an expression (type) of religious ideology, religious extremism spreads within religious groups, which is characterized by a radical understanding of the strategies of achieving the ideals of social life, set forth in their confessional doctrine. The experience of applying such methods exposes the purpose of extremist ideology, and the participants of social relations, whose views do not conform to those of the representatives of extremist associations, become the objects of criticism.

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Another common model for interpreting religious extremism, is to view it as a different model for globalization [e.g.: 8]. The difference is in the sense that globalization, as generally defined, is based on the principles of integration and unification of all elements of social life, while globalization, as implemented by an ideology of religious extremism, changes the structure of world economy, division of labor, social standards, and makes them correspond exactly with religious instructions, as interpreted by this religious group. The objects of influenced by extremism, can be civil institutions and structures, the liquidation of which should contribute to the achievement of the group goals inherent in extremist unions. Ideological dominance, in particular, starts with the domination of moral standards based on a specific religious doctrine, which changes the social, legal, and political principles of an existing functioning society. Therefore, the complexity in the analysis of religious extremism, arises in connection with the fact that it can be manifested at the individual and/or social levels. As a manifestation of «specific religious attitude», it represents a negative attitude, characterized by a nihilistic character, and by fatalism, or fanaticism. As an ideology, religious extremism contains a simplified interpretation of the division of the world into them and us. They redefine the nature of evil and the hierarchy of values. Given the focus of action on the implementation of religious doctrine, religious extremism is divided into inter-confessional, for example Sunni vs. Shiite, and other-confessional, as in Muslim vs. Christian, with emphasis on the transformation of «the other». We believe that in such a typology, it is useless to distinguish between independent, social, or religio-political activity, since each of them is an element in the total religious outlook of a particular individual. At the same time, we are conscious that the study of any phenomenon, from the historical point of view, leads to relativization. Therefore, when analyzing the processes of fundamentalization and extremism of religious movements, one should pay attention not only to their specific historical types, but also to their ideological peculiarities and economic basis of their functioning. This approach allows us to conclude that the use of violence on the part of such movements arises, when artificially formed stereotypes about the threatening position of religion in the modern world, are

supported by aggressive non-recognition of religious diversity, the desire to restore the role of their religion, a high level of social solidarity, and the absolutization of their own religious identity. If religious extremism is interpreted as a social phenomenon, then its form of expression will be a combination of actions, aimed at the realization of its religious doctrine, and serve as the main tool for achieving the goal of social transformations, by denying the right to personal autonomy and freedom in choosing religious canons.

On the other hand, if the representatives of fundamentalist movements do not resort to radical action, then they must choose different strategies to find ways of spreading their moral ideals. Restoration of religious influence in the social sphere is achieved by fundamentalists in several ways. These are: By the way of differentiation, by the mood for unity, and by coercion. The ideology of differentiation includes the provision, that the restoration of the rights of religion is possible only with the condition of obtaining from the state, the rights of a broad autonomy by regions in which the fundamentalist movements have gained popularity. Unity, as a way of achieving a political goal, is conceived in the context of the total model of the world outlook of representatives of specific religious traditions, for which obtaining supreme political power is the only possible means of achieving the goal. Coercion, as a strategy of fundamentalists, is aimed at eliminating the personal rights and freedoms, gained in the process of democratic progresses, as expressed in the right to freedom of conscience.

In the future, researchers should pay close attention to the current trends in the Orthodox religions, emphasizing regional peculiarities that are related not only to the internal political situation of the present, but also to a large extent, it is dependent on foreign policy factors. The context for such research may be the currently ongoing process, of acquiring «Autocephaly» by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and the Ukrainian States policy of promoting harmonization of inter religious relations.

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