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<http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1133232>orcid.org/0000-0003-4226-3047**Володимир Гуржи**

ГУРЖИ Володимир Сергійович – магістр релігієзнавства, молодший науковий співробітник, аспірант кафедри філософії Донецького національного університету імені Василя Стуса. Сфера наукових інтересів – ідеологічні особливості і мобілізаційний потенціал релігійно мотивованих проєктів.

THE MOBILIZATION POTENTIAL OF THE RELIGIOUSLY-MOTIVATED RHETORIC OF THE PROJECT «RUSSIAN WORLD» DURING THE EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE IN DONBASS IN 2014

The article analyzes the religious rhetoric and markers originated from the project «Russian World». At the present stage of its development, the appeal to religious rhetoric and markers allowed modeling potential threats for ideological axioms of its supporters. This has made the cultural boundaries of global development projects potentially conflict zones. The mechanism of building one's own, private religiosity is described. Given examples show the usage of religious markers in the daily life of the population (procession), in combat units (Separatist forces of the war in Donbass), as well as in the rhetoric of the «leadership» and official documents of the so-called «DNR». The author substantiate the idea that such mobilization was possible, thanks to the modeling of the existential threat to the marginal values. It has been suggested that these appeals and threats do not need to be considered under the project “ Russian World”, but rather have a universal character and are a sufficiently powerful tool for the deployment of conflicts in the modern world.

Tags: *Russian world, everyday religiosity, marginal values, existential threat*

The so-called «Russian Spring» included events that took place in Donbass in 2014 remains an extremely painful fact of the recent past, not only in political, but even in scientific discourse. Nevertheless, unlike politicians

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who have definitive answers to all questions, in scientific research we try to understand mechanisms of what happened, leaving open the ethical significance of this issue. The existential basis of the investigation in this case is connected with the author's conviction that no one knows the final answer to the question, what happened in Donbass and in the heads of some of its inhabitants. One more preliminary observation related to the view below is that the Eastern Ukrainian conflict can in any way be regarded as religious. However, it was exactly the usage of religious rhetoric and markers to actualize potential threats to marginal values, which in many ways affected the mobilization of the grass-roots, especially during the first months of the conflict, that is, in its most acute phase. The religiously colored rhetoric of the «Russian world» and the religious markers used in Donbass should be understood as part of political and cultural promotion, rather than purely religious activity.

At the present stage of the development of the project «Russian World», an appeal to religious rhetoric and markers allowed modeling potential threats for ideological axioms of its supporters. This has made the cultural boundaries of global development projects potentially conflict zones.

The goal: to analyze religious rhetoric and markers as a component of the worldview impact of the project «Russian World» at the beginning of the conflict in Donbass.

Presentation of the main material: People residing in Western secular society are characterized by dividing the laws, ethical and everyday norms into secular ones, which establish public legal relations, and religious ones that regulate a person's relationship with God and enter the realm of the human self. But this division did not appear immediately. From the early stages of the development of society and approximately from the middle of the XVIII to the beginning of the XIX century laws and norms were understood as religious, and hence given a priori, as the highest value and universal model for inheritance. A man must followed those norms blindly.

Secular laws were developed through dialogue, public discussion, conventional truth that was not took for granted, but always established as a reaction to emerging challenges in society. These laws were the subject of different treaties. Also, they could include amendments and adjustments, based on changes in the public consciousness. This was a kind of template, an instruction on proper behavior in any given situation. Compliance with laws was facilitated by various sanctions, certain restrictions imposed by society on the offender, which depended on the type and severity of the crime. But blindly pursuing of secular laws was not supposed. Any laws had exceptions and particular aspects of implementation that affect the severity of sanctions.

But we can not speak about «evolutionary» transition from religious laws and norms to secular ones. Religious or proper norms contain a religious core and exist in the modern world. Their influence on everyday processes is sometimes much more serious than the influence of secular norms. For example, the Ukrainian researcher Alexander Belokobylsky writes: «The religious core of social reality, the matrix of culture categories formed around it are metaphysical and ontological centers of social reality which make individual meanings possible and determine adequate ontology of strategy of rationality» [8].

Faith is one of the central focus in the life of every person, because reality itself, its initial state is created on the basis of beliefs that have become laws (which are perceived as limiting values). Although, over time, some beliefs may weaken or disappear at all. Therefore, beliefs do not exist independently of society. Contemporaries need to make considerable efforts to support them. «The destruction of the religious-ontological core of social reality is the destruction of cultural thinking and existence, the destruction of the community that has emerged thanks to it and is perceived by the adepts of culture as a threat of death. Therefore, challenges in this area are existential challenges by definition» [8].

These marginal values form the social context of human actions during the crisis moments of personal development, community or state. At the same time, people themselves can not always express these values, or at least say for sure the right to what they are ready to defend with weapons in their hands. The threat to the ultimate values is perceived as a threat to one's own being and «launches» one of the basic instincts of man, the instinct of self-preservation. Therefore, a behavior that does not rely on rational arguments, but is built on religiously-labeled values, undoubtedly contributes to the restoration of a sense of security and personal integrity. Sufficiently rational fear of death, «lose ground» to the «Kingdom of heaven and eternal life», which can not be verified. The person «behind whom God stands», as an infinite force and the basis of being, does not know fear and is absolutely sure of the rightness of one's own judgments and actions, therefore, existentially is safe.

Today for authorities is becoming more difficult to ensure the safety of society. And in the case of occurrence of the events in Donbass during the spring of 2014, it was fully impossible. The complete paralysis of the law enforcement system, the authorities in general and the key guarantors of the security of society made this society extremely vulnerable to religiously marked rhetoric, because if the authorities can not protect, then only «God» remains. «The existential threat to social existence, which is felt at the level of rationally realized influences, but directed to the mytho-

metaphysical depths of cultural existence, is perceived / understood as an axiological challenge» [8]. The axiological challenge should be understood as the right to have such values for which it is worth fighting, which, in our opinion, the ordinary man has not been able recently formulate. When it comes to the usage of religious markers, this does not necessarily mean that the conflict is religious one and takes place between believers. It is more about «everyday» religiosity, which is characterized by the construction of their own religious beliefs from really existing dogmatic norms. It does not completely abolish their truth for the adepts and in turn contributes to the unfolding of the conflict situation: «In my opinion, the war threatens the modern world most of all, like confrontation between the forces of irrational» marginal values «(absolutes) and the pragmatic world of rational polemics and treaties, that is with that secular, liberal, politically correct world, which is called Western civilization «[9]. The creation of an existentially limiting situation with the help of religious markers was used to mobilize the population in the «Russian spring» events, that we could observe in Donbass during the spring of 2014. Rallies calling for a «referendum» took place near the building of the Donetsk Task Force since March 1, 2014. At the same time the first attempts to seize the building occurred. Also, according to information that was distributed in local news and social networks, the same day a group of people with the icon of the Virgin «The Vozvrannoï Voivode Pobeditelnaya», drove cars across the administrative border of Donetsk. It was the beginning of the so-called «procession» in Donetsk. In April, the political situation got worse and after the next capture of the DonTF, the protesters decided not to leave the building and began to equip the headquarters at that place. The flag of the Russian Federation was raised above the building. The protesters put forward such demands as to convene an extraordinary session of the DonTF and vote for the accession of the Donetsk region to the Russian Federation.

According to the first mentions, April 7-8, a daily «procession» began around the buildings of Donetsk Task Force, as well as around the regional administration of the SSU. The participants were mostly people of retirement age, with icons and crosses in their hands, without any clergymen: «Every day, at 7 p.m. in Donetsk, the Cross procession is held around the regional council. All the time people read akathists, psalter, prayers for the salvation of Holy Russia, against the onslaught of fascism, and for the expulsion of NATO from the Donetsk Republic and Ukraine «[2]. If at the initial stage of the procession there were not more than 10 participants, few days later there were more than 50 and among them there were people in the cassock. On April 10, posters with religious symbols and inscriptions «Holy Russia, keep the Orthodox faith», with images of saints as well as with the

flag of the so-called «People's Militia of Donbass» appeared on the building of DonTF near the chevron «Berkut»[3].

The «religious procession» continued even further. Reports about such events appeared almost every week. So, for example, in August 2014, a «procession» was held for «Igor, a man who united Russian lands (Strelkov / Girkin), the unification of all Orthodox, the salvation and protection of all inhabitants of Novorossia» [4]. Also on the video you can see that the participants are younger and the elderly people practically do not participate.

Also, a few words should be said about the choice of places around which the «procession» was held. This is not the main Svyato-Preobrazenskiy Cathedral which is situated in the center of the city and is not a religious structure at all. «Actions of faith» were held around the DonTF and the SSU, which embody the fullness of secular power in the administrative territory. It will not be superfluous to recall the words of the adviser of the «Minister of Defense of the People's Republic of France» on information policy, who in August 2014 said: «There are no Orthodox people at all at the Ukrainian side, because no one who is Orthodox will fight against Novorossia because he knows that the unity of the Holy Russia is pleased to God» [5]. If you analyze the program documents of the so-called «L / DNR», for example their constitutions, then from the very beginning you can see appeals to the «Russian world», Orthodox faith, a common history and ancestors who «shed their blood and defended their identity.» So-called «Armed forces» of «DNR» and «LNR» included units that called themselves religious ones. Probably one of the most famous units is the NAF (the United Armed Forces of Novorossiya). Of course, there were less known units, such as the Legion of St. István, the «Eastern Orthodox» battalion, the battalion of the «Holy Virgin Augustus «Augustus» and others. There are a lot of evidence from the media about activity of the NAF. Igor Strelkov / Girkin, the so-called «Defense Minister of the DNR» commanded this unit. Religious markers except their title were also used on the banner of the unit that had colors of the Russian flag with the cathedral cross and depiction of Yuriy Zmeiborets. Particular attention was paid to the coverage of everyday life, the arrangement of barracks in the form of «monasteries» with chapels and a large number of icons inside. Of course, these activities of this organization in reality are very different from their media image. It is significant that after the religious rhetoric has fulfilled its role, it has become a law priority. Thus, the text about the «Russian world» was excluded from the text of the «constitution». Now this document does not contain such appeals. Also, in the first half of 2015, the NAF was reorganized into a secular unit, an ordinary combat unit with a serial number and religious markers were removed from the front line.

Conclusion. It was exactly the creation of the existentially limiting situation through the usage of religious markers that we could observe in the spring of 2014 in Donbass. The religiously colored rhetoric of the «Russian world» and the religious markers used in Donbass should be understood as part of political and cultural promotion, rather than purely religious activity. Religious rhetoric and markers were quite an effective mobilization factor during the first stage of the conflict. Such actions, documents, as well as information support, based on religious markers, became one of the factors allowed to mobilize the population at the first stage of the conflict (not only in our state) and withdraw the armed confrontation during the first months on its top. Such appeals to religious markers are not unique and do not reflect solely the «Donbass scenario» of the conflict deployment. If the analysis of the cultural characteristics of the population of a certain territory turns to be successful, then this technology can be used to mobilize and deploy conflict situations in the future. Moreover, these appeals do not have to be considered under the project «Russian World».

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МОБІЛІЗАЦІЙНИЙ ПОТЕНЦІАЛ РЕЛІГІЙНО-МОТИВОВАНОЇ РИТОРИКИ ПРОЕКТУ «РУССКІЙ МІР» ПІД ЧАС ПОДІЙ, ЯКІ ВІДБУЛИСЯ В ДОНБАСІ В 2014 РОЦІ

У статті проводиться аналіз релігійної риторики і маркерів, які походять від проекту «Русскій мір». На сучасному етапі розвитку проекту «Русскій мір» апеляція до релігійної риторики та маркерів дозволила моделювати потенційні загрози для світоглядних аксіом своїх носіїв, що зробило культурні кордони проектів глобального розвитку потенційно конфліктними зонами.

Показано механізм побудови власної, приватної релігійності. Наведені приклади використання релігійних маркерів в повсякденному житті населення (хресний хід), в бойових підрозділах (РПА), а також в риториці «керівництва» і офіційних документів т.зв. «ДНР».

Обґрунтовується думка, що подібна мобілізація була можлива, в тому числі, завдяки моделюванню екзистенціальної загрози граничним цінностям. Висунуто припущення, що ці апеляції і загрози не обов'язково повинні бути в рамках проекту «Русскій мір», а скоріше мають універсальний характер і є досить вагомим інструментом розгортання конфліктів в сучасному світі.

Ключові слова: *Русскій мір, побутова релігійність, граничні цінності, екзистенційна загроза.*

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