

FAITH AND ATHEISM IN WAR AS A SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM

Stasiuk V. V.

Doctor of Psychological Sciences, Professor,
Professor of the Chair of Moral and Psychological Support of Troops (Forces),
National University of Defense of Ukraine named after Ivan Chernyakhovsky,
Kyiv, Ukraine

Dykun V. G.

Senior Lecturer of the chair of Moral and Psychological Support of Troops (Forces),
National University of Defense of Ukraine named after Ivan Chernyakhovsky,
Kyiv, Ukraine

Будь-яка війна активізує стихійну релігійну свідомість безпосередніх учасників бойових дій, при цьому переважні форми її прояву напрямку залежать від панівного в суспільстві виду світогляду. За наявності релігійного світогляду природні для екстремальних умов психологічні потреби реалізуються у звичаях та обрядах, які є частиною традиційної культури. Якщо панівним є атеїстичний світогляд – залишаються елементом індивідуальної чи групової психології, виявляючись у найпростіших чи навіть примітивних формах.

Ключові слова: віра, релігія, релігійність, екстремальні умови, війна, стрес, невизначеність.

Any war activates the spontaneous religious consciousness of the direct participants in hostilities, and the predominant forms of it is manifestation directly depend on the worldview prevailing in society. In the presence of a religious worldview, psychological needs that are natural for extreme conditions are realized in customs and rituals that are part of traditional culture, if an atheistic worldview dominates, they remain an element of individual or group psychology, manifesting in the simplest, even primitive forms.

Keywords: faith, religion, religiosity, extreme conditions, war, stress, uncertainty.

Any religion is a social institution, and religiosity is an element of mass and individual consciousness. Also, in societies with a deeply rooted confessional tradition, household religiosity often goes beyond its boundaries, and in societies with a destroyed or deformed religious tradition, and especially with state atheism, household religiosity, without disappearing, acquires non-traditional forms (non-pagan and individualized).

All social cataclysms and especially wars belong to certain social situations, when the scale of spread and intensity of religiosity increase dramatically. Moreover, everyday religious consciousness in a combat environment is a direct continuation of its most common forms in the conditions of peaceful life.

War from a psychological point of view, war is a borderline situation, that is, extremely dangerous, uncertain, unpredictable, threatening to a person's life and almost independent of his will and mind. The less controllable the situation, the stronger a person's tendency to seek psychological support, attempts to control external circumstances through irrational actions.

“The atmosphere of constant danger and death in the war is good because it directs the soul to the questions of eternity, away from the garbage of life, from the twilight of everyday life”, — wrote in his diary a participant in the Russo-Japanese War, divisional doctor V. Kravkov.

Uncertainty, unpredictability of events in conditions of constant threat to life opens the way to belief in supernatural forces, which has a quite practical purpose — to receive mystical protection, by performing certain ritual actions (reading prayers, wearing amulets, observing situational taboos) to protect oneself from dangers.

Such a desire to influence fate is especially characteristic of a military situation, which in the conditions of traditional religiosity is manifested in prayers and rituals, appeals to God even by people who are not very believers in the ordinary, peaceful life of people.

In an atheistic society in the extreme conditions of war, too there is an intensification of religiosity: there is a significant influx of people into religious communities, the activity of the Orthodox Church is becoming more active: the clergy comforts people in grief associated with losses in the war, calls to believe in victory, patronizes hospitals, collects money and valuables for the construction of military equipment.

The main bearers of religious consciousness in the rear are women-mothers, wives, sisters, fiancées of men who went to the front. They pray for the salvation of their loved ones, for victory over the enemy and the end of the war as soon as possible, and those who constantly walk under God turn to faith on the front lines.

Often, the impetus for the emergence or strengthening of religious feelings in a combat environment is psychological stress, for example, a «miraculous» rescue from a seemingly hopeless situation. There are known cases when soldiers who found themselves in the face of, in their opinion, inevitable death, made an oath to themselves: if they were lucky enough to survive, they would begin to believe in God or devote themselves to serving him (go to a monastery, become priests), and after the war they fulfilled these promises. Sometimes the attitude towards religion changed under the influence of despair caused by the death of friends or someone close to them.

For example, the Afghan war with a deeply religious opponent was specific. For the Afghans, who were distinguished by their fanatical attachment

to Islam, the Soviet soldiers were not just enemies, but «infidels», the war with whom was considered sacred and received the blessing of Allah. The attempt to jump from the Middle Ages to modernity, from traditional Islamic society to «socialism» turned into a powerful activation of the religious factor. Disrespect for the feelings of believers in a Muslim country, the desire to «relegate» religion to the background in a traditionally religious society naturally provoked the development of the struggle of the opposition to the Kabul regime into a «holy war» — «jihad» and manifested itself almost immediately after the introduction of a «limited contingent» of Soviet troops into the country. The specifics of this war contributed to the conversion of many recent atheists to faith in God — due to the need to confront a fanatically religious enemy not only on the battlefield, but also in the spiritual sphere.

Today, one of the main problems of modernity is the Russian-Ukrainian war, under its influence there is a rethinking of the essence of man, a reevaluation of internal beliefs aimed at the unity of the Ukrainian people and the development of spiritual culture. All the mentioned processes do not pass by the Armed Forces of Ukraine, they convincingly testify that the combat capability of the troops (forces) largely depends on the human factor, the construction of reliable spiritual foundations and the moralization of public life. An important element of the humanitarian policy of the state in the Armed Forces of Ukraine is the implementation of the modern concept (model) of effective interaction between religious organizations and military structures, the creation of proper conditions for the actualization of the religious factor in the army.

The state, in the person of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, ensuring the observance of the freedom of conscience and religion of military personnel, guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine, and the church (religious organizations) in the sphere of providing for the spiritual needs of believers, direct their efforts to the organization of systematic work to establish pastoral care in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

According to art. 35 of the Constitution of Ukraine, which guarantees the right to freedom of outlook and religion, art. 21 of the Law of Ukraine «On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations», which determines that the command of military units provides the opportunity for servicemen to participate in religious services and the performance of religious rites, as well as in accordance with the norms of international humanitarian law, activities aimed at ensuring pastoral care from the church have begun (religious organizations) of servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other military formations.

The phenomenon of pastoral care in the armed forces represents a variety, a complex of humanitarian activities of religious organizations among military personnel regarding the satisfaction of their religious needs, solving the problems

of a person in the conditions of military service, creating a favorable incentive and motivational complex for the realization of his personal potential. Pastoral care is a mechanism of inclusion (launch), disclosure of the extraordinary social potential of a person.

Thus, the pastoral care of military personnel, the interaction between religious organizations and the Armed Forces of Ukraine should have a complex and systematic nature. The result of such interaction is the creation and maintenance of a proper moral and psychological state in military teams, the satisfaction of the religious and spiritual needs of the personnel of the troops (forces), which are an effective means of forming military personnel's readiness to perform the assigned tasks.

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