

Sacral values as a phenomenon of Kazakhstan spiritual heritage

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Abstract

The interest in the sacred problem, clearly felt throughout the centuries, was caused by those socio-historical processes called social disasters, which raised the question of the very possibility of the existence of modern man. In the modern century, the process of destroying the fundamental foundations of traditional life, the growth of an ever-deeper feeling of losing a person's sense of stable, guaranteed being, became clearly apparent. Similar processes took place in Kazakhstan, in the history of which, over the centuries, the events of the beginning and the end of the century are surprisingly synchronized when it comes to their impact. The essence of these events was a sharp demolition of the integrity of the way of life and the transition to new foundations of being. The relevance of our study is determined, on the one hand, by the realities of the modern state of society, the intensity of experiencing the deep needs of its development, and, on the other, by the state and logic of the development of historical, cultural, philosophical and religious knowledge. As for the first aspect, it is determined, firstly, by the systemic crisis experienced by civilization, the essential feature of which is the destruction of the fundamental foundations of traditional life, the growing sensation of loss of the person's lasting guaranteed existence. This caused the rapid development of new anthropological concepts that seek to comprehend the "position of man in space," the main ways of its constitution, and the main directions of socio-cultural determination. Secondly, the complexity of the transitional processes of the modern world, the dramatic tension in the atmosphere of spiritual life. The essence of this period is rooted in a radical and fast-paced change of the whole lifestyle.

Key words: sacral values, spiritual phenomenon, spiritual heritage

Introduction

The appeal to socio-philosophical analysis in the study of the sacred is caused by the ambiguity of its manifestation, the uncertainty, and inconsistency of the description of this phenomenon in philosophical and social sciences. (Roberts, 2001) So, for example, the adequacy of the stereotypical interpretation of the sacred as exclusively religious can be called into question. In European traditionalism, the phenomenon of the sacred is revealed through the correlation of man with the transcendental principle, while the dimension of the sacred is determined by three coordinates: God, man, nature. The main intention of this study is to analyze the sacred phenomenon in an unconventional aspect, to identify the mechanism of sacralization in the history of human culture, and to show that the sacred belongs to the social sphere, although it includes personal experience.

The relevance of the study of the sacred phenomenon is due to two factors. Firstly, the widespread opinion about the strengthening in public life and the consciousness of secularization processes that supposedly lead to its complete desacralization. Secondly, by the fact that modern social consciousness is still deeply mythologized, saturated with various mythologies (including sacred ones) that set some "ideal" patterns of behavior. Speaking about social mythology, it is necessary to point out two points: one of them is the meaning of mythologies for adapting a person to the existing social order, the second is that myths are part of the social mechanism that

sets the masses in motion, generates and consolidates social innovations. Upon reaching a certain critical state of society, a collective obsession can cause an avalanche-like process of mental breakdown. Hence the tendency to all kinds of mysticism and sacralization.

Society needs some kind of reference point, a value reference, as the abundance of poorly or incorrectly perceived information leads, as a rule, to the creation of myths and gradually in society, belief in something incomprehensible to the mind becomes dominant. Fear of the forces opposing an individual person, such as a formidable state organism, a high rate of changes in lifestyle, the negative consequences of the conquest of the mind (environmental disasters, wars), etc., intensifies the growth of superstitions and mysticism in various spheres of public consciousness. For example, the mystical connotation even acquired an attitude towards mathematical modeling, which is ordered to lead to the discovery of many secrets of nature and society. (Restivo, 1985)

Understanding the dynamics of social processes is impossible without understanding the mechanisms of formation and functioning in the public consciousness of sacred myths and the corresponding ritual practice. The intellectual atmosphere and spiritual searches of humans in modern society are determined by the awareness of the crisis of the system of worldviews. Moreover, the sense of crisis of the fundamental foundations of human life and the search for a way out of it are characteristic of both Western civilization and Russia, which indicates a certain commonality of trends occurring in the world, regardless of the prevailing socio-political situation. The mental crisis of man today is a great danger. Under these conditions, the task of understanding the meaning of the foundations on which people's attitude to the world and the development of their life strategy is becoming urgently necessary. This greatly exacerbates the theoretical and practical interest in what a person associates with the concept of the sacred.

The sacred problem is a concrete expression of anthropological interest in the metaphysical aspects of human existence. Unlike foreign philosophical, cultural, and religious thought, it turned to the study of a complex of problems connected with the sacred only in the last decades of the past century, which was caused by the realities of being in history. A recent appeal to a holistic study of the problems does not allow us to talk about any established tradition of research, which, in turn, determines difficulties not only of a methodological nature but also of the difficulty of formulating the problem itself.

The desire to comprehend the new ontological foundations of human life caused a peculiar "anthropological turn" in modern philosophical thought, carried out by M. Sceller, A. Gelen. The concepts formed in the framework of the existentialist approach (K. Jaspers, 2014), the psychological method (A. Adler, 2014; S. Freud, 1977; E. Fromm, 1990) were permeated with anthropological pathos, and new questions are posed within the framework of ontology and epistemology, in the analysis of the problems of which the praxiological problems sound more distinctly (J.F. Lyotard, 1984; J. Habermas, 1984).

The state of knowledge of the problem is characterized by a peculiar paradox. On the one hand, since the sacred is an important intentional element of the structure of religious consciousness, it has always been in the field of attention of theology and religious philosophy. This term was also widely used by the literature of an extra-scientific nature, within the framework of which the sacred was regarded as an adjective to various spheres of human existence, which allegedly testified to the clarity and transparency of the meaning of this term. To a greater or lesser extent, philosophical and cultural thought turned to the problems connected with the sacred. However, it approached it as a concomitant, not distinguishing it as an independent one. On the other hand, the sacred has not been, until now, at least within

the framework of the national scientific consciousness, the subject of special and exceptional scientific research, and has not attracted close attention.

The terms “sacred” and “profane” were first conceptually used at the end of the 19th century in the works of R. Smith, A. Hubert and M. Moss. These researchers used the two terms to denote the two extreme poles of religious action and religious thought.

The problem of the sacred attracted close attention at the beginning of the 20th century. Extensive research was undertaken by R. Otto (1958) and the French sociologist E. Durkheim (1982), whose work is recognized as a classic (Otto). They formulated two different models of the sacred. R. Otto developed a theological concept, which was supported by the English anthropologist R. Marett (1967) and the Scandinavian religious scholar N. Soderblom (1962). The pathos of this position lies in the fact that the sacred was declared the ontological object of another world, the answer to which is religious behavior (Otto, 1958).

E. Durkheim, unlike his predecessors, who attributed the sacred to a priori religious reality, to transcendental subjects and, therefore, were closed to thorough analysis, formulated a new approach, within which the sacred is not a term of another world, but a sign of behavior, a systemic property possessing own nature. The distinction between sacred and profane, made by Durkheim, “relates more to the regulation of behavior than to metaphysical dualism” (Paden, 2016: 235).

A further step in the analysis of the sacred was taken by M. Eliade (1959), author of the special work “Sacred and profane.” Based on the fact that religious experience presupposes the division of the world into sacred and profane, the opposition of which, as a model, enters into countless systems of binary opposites, M. Eliade associated the sacred with mythological time, and the profane with history, with temporary irreversibility (Eliade).

A new surge of interest in the sacred problem was indicated in the last quarter of the 20th century, among Western European researchers, G. Becker, D. Bell, P. Berger – T. Lukman (1995), H. Waldenfels, among other foreign researchers as V. Vinokurov, A. Hoffman, A. Zabiako and others.

Important for the present study were the results of foreign and domestic religious studies, primarily those sections that are devoted to the study of the characteristics of religious consciousness and the problems of religious psychology. Although the sacred and profane were not the subject of special attention in the writings of the aforementioned researchers, they were analyzed in a number of other questions as an integral part of a wider range of problems. The approaches and results of their research have undoubted positive value, since certain features of the sacred, sacralization process are fixed in them.

Thus, W. James (1917) in *The Variety of Religious Experience* considered the sacred as a specific phenomenon of religious consciousness, which is the result of the expansion of the unconscious into the sphere of consciousness. K.G. Jung (2014) emphasized the positive functional orientation of the sacred, which in turn was a manifestation of the collective unconscious. In the works devoted to the analysis of culture and religion of the East, Jung emphasized the uniqueness of the national lines of holiness and sainthood. The present study is meant as an attempt to create a holistic concept of the sacred as a familiarization with the absolute (Jung, 2014).

Research Methods

The goals and objectives demanded the use of comprehensive methodology, which includes the principles of a synthetic interdisciplinary approach, a historical-genetic method that allows us to consider the process of formation and development of the sacred in its personality-individual form. The work also uses methods of structural and functional analysis, phenomenology, as well as historical and cultural reconstruction in the analysis of a specific historical and cultural form of the sacred,

and hermeneutics in describing the results of the study and interpretation of empirical facts.

Discussion of the Findings

For the first time in the domestic philosophical, cultural and religious thought, an attempt was made on the basis of generalization and analysis of the phenomenology of the sacred, and on the empirical basis of the historical existence of religion, to approach and describe the concept of the sacred as involvement in the absolute. The sacred is presented as a specific cultural phenomenon that performs a number of functions within its borders.

This determines the boundary of a new problem for domestic cultural thought. The social need for the sacred is considered, expressed in the fact that it is a means of introducing a person to being; the personality-individual aspect of the sacred in the history of culture is considered on the example of the analysis of the religious sacred; it is shown that the sacred is formed in individual religious experience and, being a mode of a concrete historical context, determines the way out of the sphere of existence into the sphere of being.

The deep socio-ontological basis of the sacred is rooted in the fundamental inconsistency of human existence, in which a number of fundamental aspects can be distinguished. First of all, one should consider the fundamental problem of an existential nature - the understanding of being as a whole. The birth of philosophy, its entire history testifies to the indestructible desire to understand what being is. "A dizzying, almost leading us to the brink of madness, question: 'what exactly do we mean by the word 'is'? what does it mean that something or everything at all is?'" asks Bulgakov (1917). A man lives in the real conditions of existence, which he organizes and as he organizes himself. The introduction of order is a necessary condition for the realization of human existence.

It can be clearly defined, but on the other hand it should become for a person specifically defined, that is, not a general being, but a concrete being, close and understandable to a person. Being addressed to man, as the inescapable and unconditional beginning of his existence, becomes not just an ontological given, but an axiological given. Such a perception of being is recorded as sacred, that is, sacredness, as the quality of the absolute characterizes its being in relation to a person. S. Bulgakov noted the necessity of combining the ontological and inherent to the characterization of the deity (sacred): "An absolute that would only be premium or transcendental to the world would not be God for man, remaining for him to be completely neutral, meaning pure nothing. God, who would become completely immanent and only immanent, would not be God, it would be a person or the world, taken in its last depth." (Bulgakov, 1917: 22)

Man is necessary for being; without him, it is incomplete. And man must be open to being in order to take it into himself. At the level of religious interpretation, this problem is fixed in the idea of the necessity for God of man. Man is necessary for the deity to realize his own fullness. It is in the light of this that the idea expressed by many Russian saints becomes clear: God is where they let him in. The sacred as an attribute of the whole is a characteristic of the spiritual thread connecting this whole while being internally voluntarily accepted by a person who is intimately experiencing it.

Another basis for the need for the sacred is rooted in the contradictory nature of human existence, characterized by the fact that initially, man belongs to two worlds: he is part of nature and, at the same time, an "extra-human" creature. Man belongs to nature, obeys its laws and, with all his will and desire, is not able to free himself from this dependence. The history of society, the development of civilization, based on confidence in the power of reason, can be considered as a process of increasing the

measure of freedom, greater independence from the power of nature. Still, this measure only makes sense when the dependence itself is recognized.

But man, in its wholeness, is a socio-cultural phenomenon. There is an objective separation, the gap between man and nature, which nourishes the inner drama of the human soul. "The disharmony of human existence gives rise to needs that go far beyond its animality. These needs call for the restoration of unity and balance between him and the rest of nature. Man is trying to recreate unity and balance primarily through thinking, constructing a comprehensive picture of the world in the mind." (Bulgakov, 1917: 24)

The need for the sacred reflects the need for spiritual unity, a spiritual means that ensures the preservation of the integrity of the human collective while recognizing the sovereignty of the individual. The sacred is a means of social cohesion and solidarity, the inviolability, and eternity of a collective. The solution to the problem of the connection between the finite and the infinite, the absolute and the transient, the universal and the individual, is not achievable unless some timeless, ultimate values of being are formulated. The sanctity of the divine is an indication of the value character of the transcendent in its relation to the concrete individual. Thus, the sacred is rooted in the fundamental contradictions of human existence; it ripens in the force field of the antinonymity of human existence.

The sacred reveals its content in opposition to the profane (sacred as that, which is not profane). Sacred and profane thus designates the two different spheres of being. The profane characterizes a life filled with the solution of short-term affairs, needs, a clash of private interests, self-esteem, will. The sacred is oriented towards a different being. We can say that the profane reveals the fullness of the human (Mitrokhin, 1993)

The sacred indicates the value priority of being in relation to existence. The sacred indicates a transpersonal, supra-individual being, the existence of the whole and appears in connection with this symbol of integrity, its eternity. G. Pomerants once remarked that God connects the fragmentation of facts with a "divine knot" (Saint-Exupery) and is present as a beautiful whole in which private ugliness disappears. In this sense, the sacred, as a designation of transpersonal being, its fullness and absoluteness, is synonymous with a transcendental, infinite, higher reality. The desire for the sacred, his "thirst" is an expression of the need for a greater existence. The sacred characterizes the axiological aspect, demonstrating the highest value, the root system of a person's connection with being (Pomerants, Mirkina, 2006).

The sacred and profane characterize two types of cultural space. The space of culture, as L. Kogan noted, is a special kind of social space, the internal essence of which is a system of social ties that have a direct and indirect impact on human development. The space of culture is a space for the production, dissemination of cultural values. Sacred space is a special type of cultural space that has rigidly defined boundaries that separate it from the profane space, within the boundaries of which the empirical life of people unfolds. Profane space is accessible to all (Kogan, 1993)

The absoluteness, and infinity, along with the separation of the sacred, are connected with the system of taboos. The taboo nature of the sacred reveals its reserved nature. The sacred is protected by taboos, which testifies to its special being and to such a trait as a mystery. Moreover, a special system of relations with the sacred is connected with this. It is carried out through a system of clearly developed cults, rites, rituals. "Any cult worship, if we consider it in the broadest sense, is a person's answer to the sacred" (Kogan, 1993: 12), the authors of a modern textbook on religious studies note. It underlies the hierarchy of personality values and defines the whole spectrum of a person's connections with reality. The hierarchical system of values of the human individual is formed by the entirety of personality-individual, social, and historical conditions. Sacred is the highest value, occupying a dominant position in the hierarchy of personal values, evoking a wide range of feelings: faith, love, worship,

reverence, etc. Sacred is an expression of ultimate and absolute value. The absolute nature of the sacred value is expressed in the idea of its power, strength, and coercion, sacred as the highest value, a guideline for understanding the whole spectrum of life-meaning problems (Samugin et al., 1996). The sacred in this sense is characterized by authority and universality.

As the ultimate, highest absolute value of the sacred causes a contradictory, ambivalent response of man. Reaction to the sacred and attitude to it contain fear, love and attraction. "I am a small person" and "A person with a capital letter" - these common expressions outline the boundaries of different strategies of behavior and self-esteem of a person. In the first case, conscious repulsion from the sacred: I am not given the opportunity to embody absolute requirements in my individual being, in the second - recognition of authority for someone. The duality of the experience of the sacred is also manifested in the fact that it outlines the boundaries of the permitted and unresolved, freedom and responsibility. Approaching the sacred is entering the higher realm, joining it.

The sacred, being the expression of the highest, manifests itself in the profane. Sacralization is a kind of metamorphosis: the sacred that is transcendental to the world becomes immanent to it; in this sense, it is total. The sacredness of the profane is a value that needs supernatural justification, overcoming the narrowly pragmatic, purely rationalistic justification of something.

Within the framework of culture as a whole, in relation to a living human personality, the sacred performs functions. First of all, the sacred allows one to overcome value chaos; it acts as the constitutive principle of the individual's value system. Hegel also considered the words as eternal, holy, absolute, infinite, able to lift a person, who at the same time feels something, in height, warm him, fill him with heat. These are the forces that control him, and the sign of their power over him is that he, hearing them, feels himself. (Hegel, 1998) The sacred, thereby, is the core around which a system of human values is formed (Hegel).

The sacred is an expression of spirituality, which can be understood as the immanent need of a person for the fullness of being, overcoming the limitations of individual being and involvement in the absolute. The sacred makes possible the authentic existence of man, defining the boundaries of his freedom and responsibility. The sacred, considered as a fact of the historical activity of individuals, is expressed in different types of activity. The prophet, in the course of his creative activity, which takes place at turning points in history, formulates new religious and moral ideas that allow laying the foundation for a new socio-historical community of people. Speaking on behalf of the transcendental world, he gives an absolute character to those moral ideas that become the foundation of a new being. Analysis of the sacred in the system of relationships with various cultural phenomena allows us to imagine the ways and forms of the change of some historical forms of the sacred by others. Social being is characterized by the fact that in it there is constantly a need for the sacred. This circumstance makes obvious the need for further comprehensive studies of the sacred. Of particular interest to the content and logic of this study were the works of D.V. Pivovarov (1993). Two provisions of his concept were of fundamental importance. First, considering culture as an ideal-forming side of people's lives, the researcher emphasizes that the totality of culture in the unity of its essence and existence should not be reduced to either religious or purely secular. Rather, it is the result of the interaction of the economic and spiritual spheres of human existence. Secondly, defining religion as the search and establishment of sacred connections that provide the individual and social groups with the required integrity, the scientist offers a peculiar methodology for the analysis of the sacred (Pivovarov, 1993).

Due to the fact that in this work the sacred is considered in its personal-individual aspect and at the same time as a cultural phenomenon, the research context was the

work on the philosophy and history of culture, cultural studies, as well as works devoted to the problems of the spirituality of a person (Blanchot, 1995).

Conclusion

Sacred is an expression of ultimate and absolute value. The absolute nature of the sacred value is expressed in the idea of its power, strength, motivation, and coercion. Sacred as the highest value is a guideline for understanding the whole spectrum of life-meaning problems. The sacred indicates the value priority of being in relation to existence. The sacred indicates a transpersonal, supra-individual being, the existence of the whole and appears in connection with this symbol of integrity, its eternity. In this sense, the sacred, as a designation of transpersonal being, its fullness and absoluteness, is synonymous with a transcendental, infinite, higher reality. The desire for the sacred, man's "thirst," is an expression of the need for a greater existence. The sacred characterizes the axiological aspect, demonstrating the highest value, the root system of a person's connection with being. The sacred lies at the heart of the hierarchy of personality values. It defines the whole spectrum of a person's connections with reality. The hierarchical system of values of the human individual is formed by the entirety of personality-individual, social, and historical conditions. Sacred is the highest value, occupying a dominant position in the hierarchy of personal values, evoking a wide range of feelings: faith, love, worship, reverence, etc. The socio-ontological basis of the sacred is rooted in the fundamental contradictions of human existence. The sacred represents the understanding of being as a whole, acts as a recognition of the extra-natural essence of man, and expresses a desire for social cohesion and solidarity. In the system of culture, the sacred performs a number of functions, acts as the basis of human existence itself, guides a person's life in the light of higher values, thereby indicating the boundaries of human freedom and his responsibility. The prophet formulates new ideals and values, giving them the character of the sacred, and thereby lays the foundation for a new type of community. The activity of the reformer and the missionary is the unity of sacralization and desacralization, which allows us to argue that in historical dynamics, there is not a linear change in the sacred to the profane, but a change in various historical forms of the sacred. The individual form of the sacred is the being of a saint, which has an important formative effect on the characteristics of national culture.

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