

the “punk prayer service,” the pogrom in the Manege on August 14, 2015, the program for the construction of 200 churches in Moscow and related activities of the organization “Sorok Sorokov.” Most of the article is devoted to discussion about the film *Mathilde*. The factual basis of this research, which allows the author to draw original and, undoubtedly, strongly supported conclusions about the new cultural boundaries in the Russian public space, is striking.

Finally, Anne-Sophie Lamine calls for an examination of the multifaceted nature of radicalism from the perspective of social

psychology. She shows how the attitudes of “faith-identity” and “faith-confidence” influence manifestations of radicalism.

The undoubted merit of the book’s editors is that they managed to gather such different points of view in one collection and literally “dissect” the problems of interaction between the state and religious communities. Updating the discussion on many painful issues of French and Russian society is, perhaps, the greatest success of the publication under consideration.

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M. Iu. Smirnov, ed. 2017. *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar' sotsiologii religii* [Encyclopedic dictionary of the sociology of religion]. Saint Petersburg: Platonovskoe Filosofskoe Obshchestvo (in Russian). — 508 p.

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There is no question that the editor-in-chief of this publication, Yuri Smirnov, and the circle of authors representing established, well-respected post-Soviet religious studies, proceeded from the best motives and spent a lot of effort to make a useful book. The result was ambiguous: sometimes impeccably solid, but in general not very clear and sometimes even strange. While some articles are thoughtfully and pro-

fessionally written, and some important sociological theories and names are adequately presented and have reference and educational value, it is still not quite clear how to use this book.

The original design itself is questionable. The very idea of arranging everything alphabetically — names, concepts, organizations — as is usually done in large universal encyclopedias, does not seem to be a very ap-

appropriate solution in the case of representing a specific academic discipline. *Handbooks* and *companions* of this kind are never structured in this way: they usually consist of thematic sections, partly reminiscent of classic textbooks, that can be supplemented with reference materials as an appendix. Here everything is mixed together, and different articles follow the same alphabetical order: “Agnosticism,” “Adept,” “Asad, Talal,” “Atheism,” and so on. The problem seems to begin with the criteria for determining the “weight” of names and concepts to be included. There is, for example, the article “Eschatology in Mass Consciousness.” Perhaps, the reader is familiar with the concept of “eschatology,” and the reference to the “masses” assumes its sociological relevance. But there are separate articles about atheism, hierophany, rituals, worship, prayer, ecumenism, pacifism, etc. In the article “Atheism” the author (E. Ufimtseva) has to explain what atheism is in general, and to present its entire history starting with Democritus (!); the article never arrives at the real *sociology* of this phenomenon. It is clear that all these phenomena — fasting, rituals, prayer, monasticism, etc. — have a sociological dimension, but the authors seldom manage to keep this particular, sociological emphasis, or to

avoid a common, even if sometimes quite good, but excessive description of certain phenomena with long historical essays and philosophical speculations.

There is also confusion in the initial idea of the dictionary: a whole series of articles begins with the word “religion,” on the model “religion and . . . something”; it is clear that religion can be connected with any other element of society and culture, but also it is obvious that using such a principle in writing a dictionary does not seem very helpful. All the more so because this model suddenly appears in the opposite order for unknown reasons, for example, “Terrorism and Religion.” Or the article “Civil Society and Religion” (whose author is well-known Italian sociologist S. Ferrari), where, for some reason, we read a long passage about what civil society as such is, and in the end we are offered some casuistry about the correlation between faith and truth, while the problem put forward in the title of the entry has a number of concrete sociological implications, which the author ignores. The same is true of the word “concept”: there are a number of articles starting with this word; it is not clear why the articles “Implicit Religion,” “Invisible Religion,” and “Public Religion” could not be named in this direct way, without the term

“concept” coming first. And there is an article titled “Postulate of ‘Conservative Churches’” (a separate aspect of Stark and Finke’s theory of religion), immediately following the article on fasting (*post* in Russian). It is not very clear which user would suddenly browse the book in search of the word “postulate,” and why.

In some formulations and styles, one can sense the worn-out, proven combination of sociology and religious studies that derives from the old Marxism: for example, the author of the article “The Phenomenon of Religion” (E. Arinin) presents a long and painful discussion of what a “phenomenon” is and what “phenomenology” is in general. In the same vein, articles such as, for example, “The Typology of Religion” or “Those Hesitant toward Religion” (sic! separate article!) are of little relevance — it is not very clear how they relate to each other. The concept of *fuzzy-religiosity* suddenly resurfaces as a separate article (not as a “concept”!) and for some reason in English (unlike all the others), although there are many other, more significant, related concepts that are omitted. And in general, why are all these notions singled out and not combined in the framework of the same typology within a complex, but semantically compact and transparent concept of “religiosity”? “Religiosity”

is undoubtedly a central term in the sociology of religion, and it seems correct that the book includes four authors’ articles about this concept (R. Lopatkin, E. Ostrovskaya, E. Rutkevich, I. Yablokov). But other entries seem unnecessary or excessive: for example, the entry called “The Religious and Mythological Complex in the Public Consciousness” (by M. Smirnov). It is not clear how this relates to “religiosity,” “religious consciousness,” and many other terms to which other entries are devoted and with which this text intersects; not to mention the fact that the very word “complex” (in the dreary combination “religious and mythological complex”) may not be understood by people who are not familiar with Soviet philosophical language.

I repeat: there is a thoroughness and strength in the efforts of the sociologists involved in the book. For example, the already mentioned decision to include several articles by different authors on the same topic is very correct and reasonable. Apart from “religiosity” the dictionary contains four articles on identity, which is certainly one of the most important sociological concepts. The same applies to a number of other important concepts, such as secularity. But in other cases, logical failures are too frequent. When, next to several articles on

the topic of “Globalization and Religion,” you suddenly stumble upon an article titled “Global Perspectives of Religion,” you begin to doubt whether the whole project had any central coordination. Or another example: along with a short article on the privatization of religion (K. Kolkunova), there is, for some reason, an equally short article on the privatization of *faith* (M. Smirnov), and at the same time — an article five times as long on the “deprivatization of religion” (E. Rutkevich). It is strange that three different authors talk about two aspects of the same sociological discourse; it is doubly strange that the concept of the “privatization of religion” — which has a much more elaborate, substantive core and remains at the center of the sociology of religion — is given much less space. Or further, there is a separate entry about the “profane,” a separate entry about the “sacred” (*sakral’noe* in Russian), and one more entry about another Russian word for the “sacred” — *sviashchennoe*, which does not add much to the previous articles.

Some texts are really solid and systematic, with references to the latest Western works, and these articles to some extent justify the project as a whole. In other cases, however, the wording does not stand up to criticism. For example, although it is use-

ful that the notion of “vernacular religions” is introduced into the vocabulary, this term is defined quite vaguely: “Vernacular religions are the interpretation of the dependence of perception of a religion to sth. by specific communities. . . , etc.” (E. Grishaeva); there is clearly confusion in the syntax (how can “religions” be “an interpretation?”) and the content. Or in the entry about Talal Asad, K. Medvedeva says that Asad considers Islam “not as a theoretical object, but as a specific historical totality”; although the further description of Asad’s approaches is adequate, the first formula is strange: why would “historical specificity” make it impossible to consider Islam as a “theoretical object”? Perhaps the author wanted to express some other thought?

Or let us take the definition of “religious movement,” which, as author M. Smirnov writes, is “in the broadest sense . . . any independent group of believers, different from others by their faith and religious actions.” It remains quite unclear how this definition of “movement” actually differs from non-movement — while in fact the concept of (religious) movement is sociologically quite clear and well-defined. Smirnov also equates the word “adept” with the concept of “religious virtuoso,” which does not seem to be correct. The entry on Max

Weber (by the same author) formulates “Weber’s so-called thesis” about the alleged dependence of society and culture on the “content of religious beliefs.” Such a “thesis,” in such a rigid formulation, of course, is a serious simplification, which neither Weber nor contemporary sociologists could allow. And if we call secularization “the process of the loss of religion’s social significance,” then the statement that follows seems to be, to put it mildly, a particular exaggeration, namely, that all of the Christian reformers, such as Wycliffe, Hus, and Luther, “called for secularization” (author E. Elbakyan): even if it may be only a clumsy formulation, still . . . let us try to imagine Luther calling for “the loss of the significance of religion”! Maybe I’m a little too picky. But there are a lot of clumsy instances like this.

The dictionary contains useful and important essays on personalities, especially some major Western sociologists, whose work is not very well known in Russia and who are therefore on the periphery of at least the Russian student community: Pierre Bourdieu, Robert Bell, James Beckford, Brian Wilson, Grace Davy, Robert Wuthnow, and others. However, some other names included in this series do not seem entirely appropriate, for example, someone named E. Ba-

bosov, especially after we read that his main contribution was that he “considered religion as a specific spiritual and social phenomenon in its interaction with other spheres,” as if one could see religion in a different way. It also seems inappropriate to honor, along with Bourdieu and others, a certain A. Lukashevsky, “an active member of the Union of Militant Godless.” Or, say, the Soviet academician and state official Georgy Frantsev, who once studied ancient Egyptian religion and had no relation to sociology.

The dictionary pays great attention to the academic institutional structures related to the sociology of religion; the relevant Russian, foreign, and international societies, organizations, and associations of different ranks and scales are described in detail. The professional life of a discipline is important and useful, but numerous dry pages devoted to it make the whole thing strongly resemble a reference book.

Speaking as a whole, the book, by virtue of a design that was not quite thought-out, leaves the impression of a sum of fragments of different orders and levels, from which the contour of a whole is not visible. Apparently, the alphabetical principle itself was in the first place unsuitable for such a project, especially if we

take into account how difficult it is for the reader to predict the quirks and whims of a haphazardly composed dictionary. As for the content, despite the solidity of some texts, in my opinion, the authors failed to reflect the *actual* status of the discipline — the sociology of religion — what it was formerly and at the time of publication. Sociological aspects are often dissolved in traditional, general religious studies issues. The history of the discipline and basic information about it prevails, and many relevant topics are entirely or mostly omitted.

There is almost no attempt to understand the status of the sociology of religion in the era of poststructuralist and postmodernist criticism. There is no description or theoretical assessment of post-colonial or feminist approaches. The concept of post-secularity is ignored. There is almost no coverage of the commodification of religion — the rethinking of religious objects and practices in the neoliberal economic and consumerist environment. There is nothing concerning studies of religion within the framework of the sociology of space (especially within urban studies). There is no in-depth theoretical analysis of the mediation of religiosity in the digital environment (although there is an article on religion on the In-

ternet). There are no separate articles on the national and ethnic dimension of religion, or on migration and diasporas (these central topics are only touched upon in the articles on globalization). There is no interpretation of religious violence as a sociological problem. There is no real, deep interpretation of the relationship between religiosity and spirituality; the relationship of popular (urban), folk, and “invented” religion, understood not within the framework of the old Marxist concept of “mass consciousness,” but in the context of a set of actual discourses and practices. The methods of the discipline are not sufficiently covered — although there is information about textbook approaches to “measuring religiosity” (to which two articles are devoted), there is nothing on the new challenges and problems of the research *consciousness* itself: dependence on academic background, open or implicit political and confessional engagement, disputes about reliability and representativeness, and so on. In addition, the book treats the sociology of religion like a separate locked office, or as a separate bookcase rigidly dedicated to a specific subject: the book seems blind to the general environment in which sociology actively interacts with other disciplines in the social sciences and humanities.

However, it is easy to criticize and list what the book does *not* contain. Yet, we have it, and it is good that we do, and what it contains is a collection of texts, albeit of different quality and caliber, which are important for students at all levels and for researchers;

these texts adequately reflect the professional view of the discipline (or subdiscipline) from the Russian perspective; the sociology of religion has a long history in Western academia, to which the Russian contributions belong as well.

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