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## The Russian Krishnaism: Problem of «Conventionality» in the Modern Culture

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*The given article is dedicated to the research of some aspects of the modern Russian Krishnaism (Vashnavism). Its central problem is a study of the question of criteria of «conventionality» and «non-conventionality» in appliance to the mentioned religious movement. Performing a comparative analysis of the ethic aspects of the modern Krishnaism theory and practice in this county, the author comes to a conclusion that the given religion is untraditional as for the Russian history and culture, so for the original Hindu tradition of Vaishnavism.*

*Keywords: religious tradition, untraditional religiosity, ethic values, modernization, transformation, new-age cults.*

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One of the most complicated and most often discussed problems of the modern religious studies is the problem of searching of criteria and correct ways of traditional and untraditional religions' features determination in the context of the modern culture.

In the second part of XX century, there appeared a lot of Krishna (Vashnava) and other oriental organizations (neo-oriental?) in the West, and afterwards in Russia as well, and it raised the problem of their conventionality determination.

One of such organizations is the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKON), which has been in Russia for more than 30 years. According to N.A. Trofimchuk's research data, already towards 2000 the Russian affiliation of ISKON was almost the largest in the world and numbered about 10 thousand active members, totally accounting for 200 thousand church

members (Trofimchuk and M.P. Svishjev, 2001-2009). Naturally, such a notable phenomena of religious life could not fail to attract careful attention of religious studies scientists. And one of their tasks appeared to define the criteria for classification of the given phenomena and its reference to a certain religious tradition or a system.

If in 70-s-90-s of XX century most foreign and native religious studies scientists characterized western Krishnaites as «a new, untraditional religious movement», which founder was Abhai Charan De, also known as Shрила Prabhupada, and as corresponding to the main features of «religions of the New Age» (new-age cults) (Mitrokhin, 1985; Falikov, 1990; Tkachjova, 1994.), then recently the situation has been noticeably changing. Krishnaites themselves persist that they represent one of the oldest

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oriental religions – Hinduism on the territory of this country. Just recently, S.I. Ivanenko, a famous Russian religious studies scientist, has published his new book «Vashnava Tradition in Russia» (Ivanenko, 2008). ISKON regularly publishes the collection of works «Vashnavism. An Open Forum», where various authors publish their articles, proving historical conventionality of the given religious movement. Thus, for the moment, the question of «conventionality», as a purely scientific–theoretical problem, remains to be open for discussion and demands further researching.

Tradition – (from Latin «traditio» – transference, attribution) is a universal form of fixation, consolidation and selective preservation of these or those elements of socio-cultural experience, and also a universal mechanism of its transference, providing a steady historical and genetic succession of socio-cultural processes» (Modern Philosophical Dictionary, 2008).

To traditional religions, L.I. Grigorjeva, a researcher of the newest untraditional movements, refers those religious forms, «which consider a wide-spread, traditional text – Bible (Koran, Veda and so on.) as the only true source of their religious doctrine» (Grigorjeva, 2000). Then those religious systems, within which belief-teaching base elements of oriental and western religions are eclectically combined, should be defined as untraditional. Eclecticism of the religious doctrine is revealed in the course of analysis of its «key paradigms, fundamental ideas, world outlook paradigms, and its axiology» (Grigorjeva, 2000), which contain principally new ideas and values of new religious movements, being a reflection of the modern social problems (mystical ecologism, holistic therapy, feminization and so on.).

We cannot fail to accept that religious doctrine defines the essence, original ideas and principles of this or that religious form, though

one should exercise a complex approach in the course of analysis of its conventionality. Structures of the religious organization, of its cult, and religious conscious – the main components of any religion (within which the forms, which provide succession, are fixed) should be also taken into consideration. In the given research, under the term «tradition» we shall understand the mechanism of historical cultural, social succession, being fixed in the norms, ideas, and traditions, which form the man's personality, connect him with the outer world and harmonize his existence.

If we speak straight about Russian Krishnaism, then in this country we observe the process of appearance (at the end of XX century), fast expansion and specific adaptation of the religion, which historically has not been at all connected with the culture and religions of Russia. Then, may we suppose that here we see a classic Hindu tradition, having been expanded over the new territory, as the representatives of the given movement insist on? Surely, a full answer to this question cannot be given just in one minor work, as far as it requires a complex, methodic and deep research of various components and aspects of traditional basis of Vashnavism: its doctrine, cult practice, its organization structure, historical development and its reference with western modifications of the modern Krishnaism, by means of comparative analysis.

Independently from whatever aspect of original Hindu tradition would be taken by the researcher for consideration, the difficulty lies also in the following: classic Hindu tradition has a plenty of various schools and trends. As a part of Hindu, Vashnavism is characterized by its heterogeneity. Universalistic tendency of development allows continuous changing of religious traditions, and the fact does not let us single out anything clear and unchangeable as a canon.

If in classic Hindu philosophy we do not observe any contradiction between the orthodox (astika) and neo-orthodox (nastika) systems, then a real religious system can include both in itself. Thus, for example, in Vashnavism the person of Buddha, who is the founder of the neo-orthodox philosophic school, has been perceived as an avatar of Vishnu and thus it has been added to the tradition (Marcelle Saindon, 2004). Hence, some modern Russian religious studies scientists come to a conclusion that exclusive tolerance of the Hindu way of thinking does not allow negating any kind of outstanding achievements of the human thought, but it thinks it over again and introduce them into the religious systems of the previous tradition, thus enriching and developing it. Consequently, the modern western Krishnaites are just new adapts of the oldest oriental religious tradition independently from the content of their religious notions and practice. But, is it «a tradition»?

From our point of view, religious tradition changing can be considered at least in two aspects:

- As a modernization – (from French «modern» – present) – «changing, refinement, meeting the demands of the modern requirements and tastes» (Modern Philosophical Dictionary, 2007). That is such a changing, whereupon religion is changed only in its outward, but not principal elements, it is modernized, but not changed in its essence. The core of the doctrine, of the cult and – what is the main – its axiological basis – its original ethic values and norms remain unchanged.
- And as a transformation (from Latin «transformatio» – to change, to turn into) – in social sciences it is taken as «a socio-political packet notion, having been used since 1950-1960-s for description

radical structural changes in a society, and also (in its narrow sense) for denotation of the process of social-historical changes. It means a transition to a qualitatively new condition of society's organization» (Modern Philosophical Dictionary, 2007). To our mind, qualitative changes of a religious doctrine, religious practices and religious conscious in the sphere of its original ethic basis bring to appearance of principally new religious forms, being later defined as «untraditional».

In the given article we shall consider only one aspect of the modern Russian Krishnaism – axiological ethical basis of traditional and untraditional religiosity.

From our point of view, changing of original **ethical concepts** of the conventional Hindu tradition has become precisely a vivid example of its transformation in the Russian Vashnavism. As far as ethic is an evolutionary phenomenon, which allows a person to exist harmoniously, changing of the conditions of human's existence involves transformation of the ethical system (Viktoruk, 2002). On the verge of XX – XXI centuries, globalism and westernization became rather powerful factors of influence on the sphere of mass conscious. To the mind of many social philosophers, «new ethic concepts» (which are sooner anti-ethic in reference to almost any religious tradition), are a revelation of «crisis conscious» of the post-modern epoch. Thus, Jean-Francois Lyotard asserts that modern automatization of the person leads him to the collapse of ethic, and that belief in universal judgments has been lost along with the belief in meta-narratives (large doctrines and philosophies of the world) (Lyotard, ...). Karl Jaspers singles out criticism (or sooner skepticism) as one of the reasons of changing of man's conscious in the post-modern epoch, which leads to the loss of authorities: «and in the result we observe

cynicism, which is peculiar of the modern man; people just shrug shoulders, when they see dirty tricks, happening in major and minor scales and being hidden. On the other hand, reliability of obligations of binding fidelity has disappeared» (Jaspers, Baudrillard, 2008). In the second part of XX, philosophy of rabid consumerism and voluntaristic egocentrism came in stead of «categorical imperatives» of traditional religious and cultural ethic doctrines and theocentric bases of social consolidation were being sweepingly changed by the anthropocentric subjectivism.

Hedonistic world outlook mind sets, which are characteristic precisely of the new-age cults, post-modern philosophy, which leads to ethic relativism – all these features are not at all typical of traditional oriental religions, including classic Vaishnavism. Dharma orders usually rather toughly and categorically regulate all the sides of life of the Hindu, as of the external, practical, so of the inner spiritual line. Concrete requirements to the way of life and behavior differ to a certain degree in dependence on a sectarian affiliation; but exactly social motivation, but not subjective-egoistic one of hedonistic sense determines religious life, such as a public duty and social serving for everyone.

Western, and along with it Russian Vashnavism declares certain ethic principals, which are taken as a guidance by its followers. In ISKON, to the number of the most popular ones we may render well-known «four regulating principles», which are considered by the followers as the stages of spiritual purgation and perfection, bordering with ascetic practices and proving «traditional» character of the given religious movement. But, on a closer examination, the prohibitions on the usage of intoxicating substances, on the animal food, on the gambling games, and on so called «illegal sex» (which does not mean any conception) which are accentuated by the followers, so, these prohibitions turn out to

be in the sphere of peculiar ethic vacuum. This ethic vacuum is more related to fundamental principals, connected with the sphere of interindividual relations. In comparison with the «classical» or «traditional» Hindi, wherein interindividual ethic norms of behavior and interrelations are strictly regulated by the dharma orders, here the authority of «a spiritual leader» is put on the first place. It will be illustrated below as he has a right to almost any form of behavior, being out of the sphere of influence of whatever original moral principles and orders.

Within the system of the modern western and also of the Russian Krishnaism not only a guru is considered to be out of any ethical laws and sectarian orders, but also a vaisnava, the person being engaged in devotion: «Even if a person is going beyond the law, but is engaged in devotion, he should be considered to be a righteous one, as far as he is on the right track» (Shri Shrimad A.Ch. Bkhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupada, 1986).

The given quotation is from «Bhagavadgita as it is» and it can be illustrated by a very classical case, which took place in the USA in the period of ISKON becoming. In the course of an audio-lecture, which could be titled as «Prabhupada's Life Stories», one of the ISKON's gurus tells about temple building purchase in Detroit. The cost of the building made up about 8 million dollars, while the owner asked only 1.5 million dollars for it. Using the financial resources of his disciple Ambarishi, a grandson of Ford, Prabhupada collected 350 thousand dollars. For a week he led negotiations with the owner and asked to benefit the building to their organization, and when the later had already lost his hope for closing, Prabhupada offered him 350 thousand dollars in cash (it was rather a large sum of money for the United States). The deal was consummated immediately, and when on the next day the owner of the building understood how much he had lost, he desperately blamed Prabhupada in deception.

Having known about it, Svami just smiled and said: «Yes, I am a lairy guy from Calcutta». After those words one can hear a chorus of laughter of the audience, as far as the followers understand, that the main goal of human's life is satisfaction of Krishna, while the owner of the building is deprived of that knowledge.

So here, a logical paradox appears: pretending on the status of «traditional religion», the ethic system of Krishnaites is externally strict, forbids all the forms of violence, and gambling games, but it turns out to be relativistic in its essence. It is peculiar, that ethic relativism is typical to new (also including neo-oriental) religious movements, and today it steadily enters the system of modern values and correlates with the ethics of post-modern: «Ethics of new religious movements is yet another outbreak of the passionate energy, which is expressed in the change of ethical dominants and in formation of new social-ethic imperatives» (Viktoruk, 2002).

Addressing to the religious ethics of Vashnavism, a modern man tries to fill the vacuum of ethical dominants in the modern society, but at the same time he chooses such a religion, which ethical system is relativistic by its essence and does not contradict the modern life conditions.

To the mind of American sociologist R. Ingleheart, one of the reasons of values changing is an improvement of the western society's welfare. Under these conditions the majority of people do not know the fear of survival on the verge of death; the years of these people's formation have been spent in safety, which has become their basic feeling. Thus, compensatory function of any religion, which provides an existential sense of safety, becomes less topical. The mentioned reasons have given an impulse to development of «post-modern orientations, which do not so much accentuate traditional cultural norms, especially those ones, which limit individual self-realization» (Ingleheart, 2000-2008). Krishna's

life description is full of amoral behavior from the point of view of the western culture man: his oil snatching, plays with married shepherdesses of Vrindavan, but all these is explained to be a revelation of special relations between God and his devoted followers: «thus, though outwardly resembling lust, gopis' relations with Krishna should not be compared with the lustful desires of women... actions, which are devoted somehow to serving Krishna, are transcendent to any karmic consequences» (Shri Shrimad A.Ch. Bkhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupada, 1989) explain ideologists of the modern Krishnaism to their «devotees». We may suppose that not so many unconditional norms and values, being clear and historically fixed in the religious ethics of this or that tradition, such as «thou shalt not steal», «thou shalt not commit adultery», dominate in the post-modern conscious of the modern western seeker of the truth, but interpretations, which are convenient for hedonistic existence. So, it turns out that just being a part of «the devotees» automatically releases the modern western Krishnaite-Vaishnava from «whatever karmic consequences» of his behavior, and also from moral obligations before the society on the whole.

Thus, correlating with the post-modern values, such «neo-oriental» religiosity becomes not only the means of self-expression, but, as a consequence, there increase the number and the quality of various types of activities, by which means the followers can not only express their individual ambitions, but also realize their financial claims. We may also observe one more principally new phenomenon of the Russian Vaishnavas' religious life – for the last 15-20 years their commercial activity becomes more and more active and noticeable. In the last decade, a big number of projects, including the festival «Ethno life», Vedic astrology and Ayurvedic medicine seminars, various yoga schools, personality

management and development coaching-seminars have rather noticeably changed the image of the Russian Vashnavism.

At the end of 90-s, there appeared new possibilities of proselytism, along with the appearance of various commercial projects, which participants were not only members of the Russian ISKON, but also of other Vashnava matkhes. **The company «Ayurveda plus»** was formed in March, 1998, in St. Petersburg. The project was unique by itself, as far as the network marketing company was founded by I.I. Vetrov, a disciple of Kharikesha Svami and by Alexander Zeiko, a follower of Sathya Sai Baba, as they introduced themselves: «the founders of the company are enthusiasts and followers of Vedanta, the most ancient philosophical doctrine about the harmonious way of human civilization development». Their commercial activity started from distribution of the biologically active supplement «Chavanprash» by «DABUR». Afterwards, the scope of company's activity was well expanded and today «Ayurveda plus» cooperates with such companies as «SHAHNAZ HERBALS», «BIOTIQUE», and sells products of functional food, curative cosmetics and biologically active supplements, performs training seminars, creates educative programs, issues training audio- and video-aids, publishes books and journals.

At present time, activity of the company involves: creation of educative centers, opening of Ayurvedic medicine and personality harmonious development centers, beauty salons, provides medical insurance, and pension capital fund. The company carries out clinical checking of Ayurvedic preparations in collaboration with medical institutions for scientific substantiation of efficiency of the distributed biologically active supplements.

«Elevated spiritual ideals» have become ideological bases of such a wide commercial

activity of the company «Ayurveda plus»: «the main goal of the company is man's recovery, to reveal his external and internal beauty. That is why revival and development of the authentic Ayurveda– most ancient and wonderful «science of life», has become our main task».

Organizers of the company promise its distributors that they will:

- Acquire knowledge of physical, intellectual and spiritual perfection from the Ayurvedic point of view.
- Rejuvenate their organisms and improve their health with the help of unique and effective Ayurvedic procedures and preparations.
- Become more attractive and beautiful, using exclusive natural substances and elite Ayurvedic cosmetics.
- Significantly improve their financial condition, helping others and professionally using their marketing-plan, knowledge and Ayurvedic production.
- Liquidate deficit of communication and find like-minded people and friends.

«Collaborate with us and your beauty, health and wealth will be in safe hands», – appeal company's creators.

One of the first Ayurvedic medicine clinics «Dhanwanthari» was founded by I.I. Vetrov in St. Petersburg. In 1998, along with creation of the company «Ayurveda plus», they organized the journal «Ayurveda – the science of life», and in 2001 they founded the publishing house «Svyatoslav», which task was to issue not only the journal, but also an astrological newspaper. Appeal to «the modern science» and presentation of the journal as of «scientific», but not of religious knowledge, is well-known in the modern religious studies to be denoted by the term «pseudo-scientism» and one of the characteristic features of the already mentioned new-age cults (Balagushkin, 1984).

Since 2000 the company «Ayurveda plus» has been a member of St. Petersburg commerce & industry chamber and has been taking an active part in chamber events. Alexander Zeiko, the Company General Director, visited Seoul on the chamber delegation in order to participate in the 2-d World Congress of Commerce & Industry Chambers.

In order to make the work of distributors more efficient, they created a management, which, from the point of view of its authors, contributed to the understanding of divine harmony and which was called **Vedic Management of Maharishi (VMM)**. «It is the management, being based on the Natural Law, that is on the Reason of the Omnipotent Nature, which diapason is spreading from the very depths of unrevealed aspects of the Universe and up to the most expressed ones, from the human organism cytology and up to the dynamism of Cosmic bodies. All and everything is governed by this inexhaustible and unmistakable Reason. The power and uniqueness of VMM is expressed in its self-existence, i.e. it is not an invention or a product of an individual brain. It should not be studied. It should be just revived, i.e. be made accessible for personal usage».

Having substantiated the necessity of the Vedic Management, the organizers suggest taking courses to master VMM at the same very site. The cost of the course is 3000 rubles (pensioners are given 50% discount).

To our opinion, mixing of ideas of neo-oriental religious systems and Ayurvedic ideas on the network marketing bases is a vivid example of syncretism, which is typical to the new-age movements.

Spiritual business has obviously become a regular fixture of the modern Vashnavism. Various lectures, seminars, and plunging are offered by the specialists-psychologies for comparatively small fee.

Here are some of the advertisements about the paid services, which can be found in the pages of printed and electronic mass media of the Russian International Society for Krishna Consciousness:

*«Ruzov Vjacheslav Oljegovich is a well-known lector in the sphere of psychology, philosophy, management and Orient studies. He is an author of 25 books. At present time, he has given 1300 public lectures in more than 40 cities of the world. V.O.Ruzov is an honored member of the International Club of Intellectuals (ICIRD).*

*The Sounds Karma Changing School «Giriradzha Makharadzh» – the cost of the course is \$300.*

*Personal psychological consultation is 5000 rubles».*

Yet in 90-s in the Russian Society for Krishna Consciousness there was a principle, according to which one was allowed to read only the books, having been written or commented by Prabhupada, and the best method of karma changing was considered to hymn Hare Krishna. As far as now, an alternative has appeared, we may speak of a further transformation of Vashnavism, of vanishing of original declaratively strict mind sets and all that confirm the thesis of Ronald Ingleheart that the improvement of material sphere of life leads to individualization of the human existence.

*«courses of miraculous gymnastics «surja namaskar and chandra namaskar», the cost of 3 lessons' course (1.5 hour) is 1.5 thousand rubles».*

*«KOLADVIP» is the first Bengal chiromancy and numerology school in Russia conducts an all-year-round registration for distance education in astro-psychology and consulting. The course of education is 4 years, text- and audio- materials are supplied. Study and open a filial in your native city!».*

*«External-predicatory programs department of ISKON carries out a preliminary registration for the class of Indian classic Odissi dance. It is an exclusive educational program. Master-classes with an Indian instructor are also possible. The classes are given by Sat-yabkhama-dasi (Ruzova Tatjana), a graduate of the Institute of Art n.a. Shri Venunad Kala Kendra (India, Vrindavan). Dance staging, individual approach and possibility to become an instructor. The time of classes is to be coordinated».*

Near by the advertisement concerning oriental philosophy lectures, one can also meet the following advertisement «Psychology and sales technique» for 1000 rubles in mp3 format.

Thus, nowadays, in his choice of Vashnavism as his religion, every adept may find a sphere of his personal development: astrology, dance, chiromancy, gymnastics, and sales technique. And in the result of all this, the movement's soteriological character, which has been originally given to it by its founder Shrila Prabhupada, is paling into insignificance. And it also proves a successive changing of the vector of religious searching from theocentric (typical of traditions) to anthropocentric (typical of new-age cults, to the mind of many researchers of the new forms of religiosity).

Today, according to its activity, the second matkh, which develops large commercial projects, is Sri Chaitanya Sarasvat matkh. To the most successful matkh projects we may refer the followings:

**The store chain of ethnic clothes «Mantram»:** the first store was open in May 13, 2002. The given commercial organization distributes oriental (mainly) Indian ethnic clothes, foot-wear, accessories, and also various utensils: dishes, fragrances, various fabrics and finery. Its organizers underline that there is certain philosophy in the basis of their business. Its title «Mantram» means making free and underlines

the idea of liberation of the modern person from his stereotypes: «all the aspects of our salon's work are subordinated to our credo – unusual things for unusual people». The goal of the project is «that every man <...> could create his own exclusive image, reveal himself as a person, and become his own designer and stylist with the help of the clothes, foot-wear and accessories».

Organizers of the commercial organization Mantram provide financial support of the project ETHNOLIFE, which populates just the same ideas within the frames of music, dance and dramatic art.

**The Festival ETHNOLIFE** has been run since 2002 on the Yakhroma river bank. Since that time the festival has turned from an annual event to a whole movement in the new-age style, which has found its own followers not only in Russia, but also in Ukraine. Today, ETHNOLIFE presents various kinds of ethnic arts: music, dance, drama, and also goods and services, which are connected with folk and ethnic aspects, being not only Vashnava, but also neo-pagan, and pseudo-Christian and so on.

Among all the other goals of the festival, its organizers propagandize the following ones: revival and *integration* of creative ethnic traditions of various cultures; propaganda of ethnic and racial tolerance, non-violence and healthy life style.

Within the frames of the ETHNOLIFE movement, they carry out various projects all year round. The festival «Ethno-stream-1» took place on November 27, 2005, where there were presented a wide range of various modern healthy life schools, martial arts, yoga, Chi Kung, belly dance – all the spectrum of phenomena, being integrated today in the word «new-age» in the scientific literature.

Partners of the festival are commercial organizations, which are developed on one and the same ideological religious platform, such

as «Ayurveda plus», the ethnic fashion salon «Mantram», the vegetarian Vashnava restaurant «Dzhagannat», the ethnic musical instruments firm «Ethnotrading» and various esoteric centers: «the Other World», «Touching», and also «Sri Chaitanya Sarasvat» – the center of Vedic culture. From our point of view, this fact proves that the world outlook of the activists and followers of the modern Russian Krishnaism is originally of eclectic character. To the mind of many religious studies scientists, eclecticism of the world outlook is one more typical feature of the new-age cults, which principally differs or even opposes any classical religious tradition.

Along with the Russian market development, Russian Vashnavism has been modified as well, meeting the market conditions and becoming more and more commercialized. But, today its distinctive feature is the following: there appear private enterprises, which aim is to earn money not for the organization, but for some of its representatives. Yet L.N. Mitrokhin wrote in his famous work «Religions of «the New Age» that under the modern conditions, the images and the symbols, which have been born by the Indian culture, «appear to be as some dead products, where emotions and feelings are condensed on, emotions and feelings, which have been generated in quite another spiritual-psychological atmosphere» (Balagushkin, 1984).

American theologian Harvey Cox considers, that under the conditions of society-consumer, which main motive is the relation of «purchase and sale»: «...religious doctrines, as oriental, so the western ones, can be turned into a commodity with an attractive package and with a denoted price» (Marcuse, 2003). «These products possess

a convincing and manipulating power; they form a false conscious, which has immunity to its own falseness. And as far as they become open to new social classes, their impact on the conscious ceases to be just advertizing; it becomes a life style».

Thus, having considered and analyzed some facts, connected with the theory and practice of the modern Russian Vashnavism, the author of the article supposes that the given religious movement has not enough bases to be defined as a form of traditional Indian Vaishnavism.

Proceeding from the given analysis, we come to a conclusion that on the verge of XX – XXI centuries, the Russian Krishnaism presents an example of a qualitative transformation of the original Indian tradition in the new-age movement style and can be defined as a new-age cult with a whole row of features, being peculiar to this trend: eclecticism, anthropocentrism, moral relativism, commercialization. Values, being traditional for the religious and moral Russian conscious, such as priority of the spiritual over the moral, of the social over the egoistic, concreteness and absoluteness of the fixed moral values and norms, are hardly correlated with those principals and practices, which the modern Russian Krishnaism is based on. That is why, we suppose that, this very religion may not make pretence to the status of a traditional Russian religion, not only from the point of view of its historical and chronological realities of its recent formation, but also because of its specific principals and practices, which are in a noticeable contradiction with religious and ethic bases of the religions, which have been traditionally professed for centuries by the nationalities of this country.

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## **Российский кришнаизм: проблема «традиционности» в современной культуре**

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*Представленная статья посвящена исследованию некоторых аспектов современного российского кришнаизма (вайшнавизма). Центральной проблемой является исследование вопроса о критериях «традиционности» и «нетрадиционности» в приложении к указанному*

*религиозному движению. Автор, проводя сравнительный анализ этических аспектов теории и практики современных кришнаитов в нашей стране, приходит к выводу о нетрадиционности этой религии как для российской истории и культуры, так и по отношению к исходной индуистской традиции вишнуизма.*

*Ключевые слова: религиозная традиция, нетрадиционная религиозность, этические ценности, модернизация, трансформация, ньюэйджевские культы.*

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