EXAMINATION OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS: OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the study of possibilities and the limitations of a religious conflict analysis. The interest in this problem is conditioned by to the complexity of the phenomenon itself, because there is still an open question about the existence of mandatory characteristics of a conflict, which will allow to identify it as a purely religious one (Brain, 2012). Also, the complexity of the study is determined by the specifics of its development and diagnosis.

This actualizes the need for the development of a conceptual and methodological framework to study the problems associated with the emergence of religious contradictions. To do this, it is necessary to integrate the main theoretical positions developed within the framework of religious studies and conflictology, and the work of practitioners engaged in research of state-confessional relations. This will accelerate the process of a religious conflict institutionalization and the development of religious conflictology as an independent branch of knowledge, and will simplify the process of its analysis (Bolshakov, 2014). The article uses neoinstitutionalism to study the stated topic.

The results of the study showed that any conflict with a religious factor is unique in terms of its origin sources, the forms of interaction between the parties and consequences. This explains why religious conflicts are classified not by the sphere of manifestation, but by the specificity of subjects participating in it. They can affect any sphere of public relations (Tishkov & Shirel'man 2012). This should be taken into account when you develop the main parameters and conflict analysis variables, which are also not static and vary depending on the tasks assigned to an expert.

In general, any expert should pay attention to the structural, dynamic and social-psychological characteristics of a conflict and to the type of a prevailing group perception. This will allow to perform a comprehensive analysis of a conflict and contributes to its early resolution, which is, as a rule, the main goal of conflict analysis.

Key words: conflict expertise, tracking, mapping, religious conflict.

1. INTRODUCTION

The analysis of a religious conflict involves the study of its causes, forms and the contexts of its manifestations; the determination of its structural and functional features; the study of its dynamics patterns and the prediction of this conflict possible consequences. The outcome of such a comprehensive analysis of a particular religious conflict at the level of a concrete case is a conflict examination. The expert who conducts this research has to objective, neutral and has to know the specifics of the religious sphere and state-confessional relations.

The problem is that many of those who work in the field of state-confessional relations and deal with the settlement of religious conflicts in practice, note the following: quite often the concepts of religious conflict analysis differ in theory and practice (Bercovitch & Jackson, 2009). Therefore, relying on the development of domestic and foreign authors (*Work with a conflict: skills and strategies for practical work with a conflict,* 2001), we will try to consider the features of conflict religious situation analysis.

The practical process of research and the realization of a religious conflict reality from different aspects is understood under the analysis of a religious conflict within the framework of this article. This understanding can form the basis for a strategy development and work planning concerning a specific case by interested persons. The article presents a number of practical methods and techniques adapted to the study of any type of conflict.

The urgency of a set of parameters and variables development is conditioned to the fact that the analysis of even the same conflict that is not settled requires a regular research (tracking). This is a continuous process that accompanies the analysis of state-confessional relations, an ethnic-confessional and religious situation, which will help to adapt the actions of various structures to changing factors, dynamics and circumstances.

Regardless of a stage at which an expert is appealed, it is important for him to understand the thing he deals with, whether this conflict a real or an imaginary one, and if it really needs an urgent solution. An imaginary type of a conflict, as a rule, arises from misunderstandings or from an incorrect interpretation of the actions or behavior of others. Also, an expert can deal either with a situation that

requires an immediate resolution, that is, when there is already a need to take operative measures to resolve a religious conflict, or when there is enough time to conduct an in-depth comprehensive analysis of a situation and to develop measures for its resolution. Parameters and variables in this case will differ.

Thus, the conflict analysis allows, first of all, to understand the underlying causes and identify the historical prerequisites of the conflict under study, as well as to assess current events. Secondly, it helps to identify all conflict parties, as well as all those who may be drawn into it for some reason, consciously or under the influence of manipulative technologies. Thirdly, to learn the points of view of all the subjects of a religious conflict, to understand their relationship, to assess the level of tension between them. Fourth, to identify the factors and the trends that underlie a religious conflict in order to extract useful information for its regulation.

2. METHODS

In this article, the author relies on a modern general conflictology paradigm, developed in the middle of the twentieth century by sociologists (L. Cozer, R. Darendorf, C. Boulding). The essence of this paradigm is to recognize a conflict as a necessary and a natural phenomenon of social life and the driving force of any progress in social-political changes, a positive role of conflicts in social development, and also to emphasize the principle possibility of conflict regulation constructive way development and application and the prevention or the minimization of its destructive manifestations.

Neo-institutional method was used as the main method. It allows us to consider a religious conflict as an institution from the point of view of formal norms and informal game rules, which in the end form a continuum of complex organizational relations and forms. The institutionalization of a conflict presupposes the achievement of such a level of its management, when its settlement is carried out in accordance with the rules and norms recognized by both sides; there are institutions that regulate a conflict behavior.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

When a religious conflict is analyzed, it is important, first of all, to determine its basic structural characteristics. The determination of its basic structural elements causes a certain understanding of conflict procedural properties or

the most common features of a competitive dispute course between the parties.

The most common and settled approach in domestic and foreign science is the identification of the following main elements of a conflict: the subjects of a conflict, their perceptions and positions; a conflict source, cause, a conflict means and its nature (Tishcov & Stepanov, 2004). However, in my opinion, these are inaccurate parameters that are necessary for the analysis of a conflict.

It is necessary to isolate the parameters of the structural and the dynamic analysis of a conflict. Among the parameters of structural analysis, it is more expedient to single out the subjects of the parties, their perception; the borders of a conflict; the subject of a conflict; the environment in which a conflict takes place. Let us describe them in details.

So, the subjects of a conflict are direct or indirect participants in a conflict, who generate a conflict by their actions, give it some content or sharpness, determine its flow or change. The subjects of religious conflicts can be the adherents of various religions, neophytes, religious organizations and the groups, individuals of different levels of religiosity, as well as religious and state institutions, etc.

However, when you analyze the subjects it is also important to pay attention to the quantitative and qualitative composition of a group, the degree of their politicization, the level of mobilization, the availability of external resource and moral support. A particular attention should be paid to sympathizers. A conflict escalates because of them as a rule.

Also, when you analyze a conflict, it is important to establish what kind of relations between the parties were before the start of a conflict, what they became during the analysis period and what relations are planned after the conflict is over. This is necessary, because there is a close relationship between the nature of conflicting subject relationship and the models of their behavior (from restrained to aggressive one) (Zartman & Rasmussen, 1997).

At that it is important to pay attention to the following variables: the nature and the degree of the party integration; the balance of powers and its evaluation by the parties; the compatibility of the party characteristics; Structural and social-psychological characteristics, the type of intergroup perception (essentialist, pragmatic, reciprocal one).

However, the problem is that such data can only be obtained "in the field", i.e. with the direct interaction of the conflict parties with an expert, otherwise it will not be the analysis and the prediction of a situation, but its modeling.

One of the effective methods aimed at the work with subjects is a conflict situation analysis method, "a conflict mapping". It is a visual means which shows the main sides of a conflict and the relationship between them (close, interrupted one, confrontation). When you apply this method, an expert must decide what he wants to map by himself (all subjects or only individual ones), at what point of analysis he will do it, whether it is necessary to compile several maps or whether all parameters and variables need to be fixed on one. At that it should be borne in mind that conflicts that are extended in time or have historical preconditions can make a map heavier so an expert will not be able to use it by himself.

If an expert determined the subjects of a conflict, he can use the following method "UPK Triangle", which is the analysis of factors related to the attitudes, the behavior and the context of each of the main parties to a religious conflict. This method allows you to determine the starting point for a third-party intervention. When you use this method, it is important to realize, on whose perception the analysis is based, because ultimately, it is important to be able to take each conflict participant's place and see the attitudes, behavior and the context from their point of view, and then decide on the contact points of their interests.

If a religious conflict is at the intergroup level, then the "Bulb" method can be applied, which will allow to analyze what different parties of a conflict say, i.e. to determine common positions of groups. The essence of this method is a step-by-step examination of individual layers of a conflict. For example, the top layer is the positions shown to other people. There are interests under them that are based on what the party desires in the course of a conflict. The core is made up of the needs that the participants require. Such an analysis must be carried out for all subjects of a conflict.

As we see, only the use of a set of methods allows us to obtain detailed information about the subjects of a conflict, which in the future will contribute to its resolution or to the prevention of similar situations.

The subject of a conflict is an equally complex element of conflict analysis. This is an objectively existing or an imaginary problem that is subject to a solution and causes a divergence in the views, assessments and goals of the opponents who try to solve this problem actively in a profitable way.

The following problems can be distinguished in intergroup religious conflicts: the differences in dogmatic interpretation; the infringement of the rights and freedoms of an individual or a group on religious grounds; The identity of the territory with which the identity of a particular religious group is tied; Property and distribution of resources, the conditions for their use; the equality or inequality of religious group statuses; the recognition or the ignoring of certain group values, etc.

In order to determine the subject of a conflict, they use the method of "Religious conflict tree", which is a graphical method of the main problems, the causes and the consequences of a conflict in the representation of the conflicting parties. This method allows the parties and an expert to set the priorities to deal with problems, to determine a main problem, the solution of which requires the efforts of all interested parties. When this method is used in a group, an expert can act as a discussion leader, being a neutral side only to focus the attention of the parties on the common points that they have singled out.

It is also important to determine the boundaries of a conflict for an expert, i.e. the outer limits in space and time. The spatial boundaries of a conflict are the territory on which it occurs. At that, it is important for an expert to know what kind of territory it is - of a local or a regional level. For example, intra-state religious conflicts in Sudan or the areas of religious and communal conflicts in India.

Time boundaries of a conflict are characterized by its duration in time, which is determined by the separation of a conflict interaction beginning and end. The determination of the fact whether a conflict has begun, whether it is an ongoing one or has ended is of a great importance for a proper evaluation of its topical or joining participant composition and role.

Naturally, no conflict is born and developed on its own. Certain conditions are necessary for this, - an environment that is also in the center of an expert's attention. The environment makes a significant impact on the emergence and the development of any conflict, including religious one. External factors include the involvement of a third party (mediators, arbitrators) in a conflict, the activities of the media, public attention, stereotypes, etc. All this has a special impact on the development of goals and strategies for a conflict interaction between the subjects of a religious conflict.

Also it is important to determine a conflict stage for an expert, and its stage during an expert's connection to it. Depending on this, certain goals and tasks are set before him. An expert can be connected at the stage of a conflict situation development, during a period of a conflict interaction or at the stage of a conflict end.

Thus, we see that an expert has a certain set of tools that he can use, depending on a situation and the tasks assigned to him. The methods used by him are not rigid formulas, but flexible and practical tools which help to understand the complexity of a situation and choose the most effective strategies to deal with specific cases.

Often these methods are more effective if they are used in different combinations to look at an object from different aspects. Such a multidimensional analysis can help to improve the understanding of a situation and offer a number of opportunities for an effective resolution of a religious conflict. Unfortunately, a religious conflict is one of the most difficult ones from the point of view of its resolution. Not every expert will be able to study it due to its specificity.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Conflictological expertise the conflict monitoring and management making its basis are the effective tools to monitor the emergence of a conflict situations, to identify their "pain points", the level of tension, dynamics, the nature of the conflicting party actions, and on this basis to implement the measures preventing and resolving conflicts and stabilizing social relations.

In conflict analysis, one must remember that a number of factors contributes to the aggravation of an ethnic-confessional tension, so special attention should be paid to conflict agents, which cause and exacerbate typical conflict situations in polyconfessional regions (Jindra, 2001). The problem of social partnership provision as the main way of principle social conflict resolution is the main problem, which must be addressed by an expertise.

The main mistake of modern ethnic confessional politics is that it relies on a situational approach (Eck, 2009). This determines the desire to influence an unfolding and an escalating interconfessional and religious conflicts from the point of view of "expediency", given by a certain political position and assessment, often very weakly based on preliminary expertise and the recommendations arising from it.

5. SUMMARY

Everyone is familiar with conflicts, and initially they cause negative emotions. Especially when it comes to religious, ethnic-confessional or interconfessional conflicts that are difficult to regulate. Despite the fact that conflicts can perform both positive and negative functions, it is the conflicts in the ethnic-confessional sphere that cause the complexity of analysis even among professionals. In many ways, this is conditioned by the fact that ethnic-confessional conflicts, as a rule, are characterized by a clash of people with different values, behaviors and perceptions of both an opposite side and a situation. The contradictions are insoluble sometimes, and the relationship is very tense and emotionally costly for all conflict parties. Conflict practitioners warn that emotions and values are the worst enemy of a conflict resolution.

That is why a comprehensive analysis of religious conflicts, their causes, and the ways of their solution, the use of their potential is especially important and extremely constructive. The inability to understand a situation, the desire to find the "guilty one" leads to the application of harsh methods of a conflict resolution in this area. In many respects it is connected with the fact that such conflicts are the bloodiest ones in history. However, the avoidance or the suppression of a conflict is not the best way to respond to it. There is nothing unnatural in these conflicts. History shows that contradictions always arise where people live together, and they need to understand the consequences of their actions for this and strive for a common goal - the attainment of peace.

The article considers the main elements of a conflict and provides the techniques for effective work with them. Conflict analysis is needed to describe, classify and systematize conflicts, register its various forms. The dynamics analysis should explain the development of a conflict and the mechanisms of their influence. It also allows the conflict participants to understand the differences that arise between them and to identify the most compromise way to resolve them. A religious conflict can be resolved only when all parties are interested in this and know the main methods of conflict analysis.

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