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Confessional Conflicts as A Form Of Social Disputes

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Abstract: The article examines confessional conflicts as a form of social conflict in multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies. The reasons for the origin of confessional conflicts, stages of development and methods of their resolution are analyzed. The author details cultural pluralism and the struggle for economic and political supremacy between denominations, as well as the impact of these conflicts on societal stability. Different models of conflict resolution are considered and their positive and negative aspects are analyzed. The main idea of the article is that the resolution of confessional disputes is important in maintaining and developing social and political stability of society.

Keywords: Confessional Conflicts, Social Conflict, Cultural Pluralism, Confession, Socio-Political Stability, Conflict Dynamics, State Policy.

Introduction

The issues related to the existence of multinational and multireligious societies are considered one of the pressing problems in the socio-political development of modern states. In the last quarter of the 20th century, the conflicts that began to emerge as a result of confessional disputes-representing the expression of long-standing socio-economic and political contradictions-became a permanent phenomenon in the historical process.

Undoubtedly, the analysis of these conflicts has allowed the identification of several common trends: the transition from collective loyalty to national self-awareness, the replacement of religious law with more rational legislation, the spread of demands for more equitable distribution of resources, and the increase in public political activity. Socioeconomic and confessional conflicts can take various forms of opposition, such as separate separatist movements, civil wars, and so on. Studying the development of events and the dynamics of conflicts allows for the identification of whether society can resolve all problems simultaneously, or whether the causes of old conflicts merge with new sources of conflict.

Methodology

The nature of the conflict and subsequent social explosion is that its subjects operate within a wider network of relations, which are subject to change under the influence of the conflict (strengthened or destroyed). Each opposing party perceives the situation as a problem in which three main aspects are crucial:

- 1. The level of significance of the wider network of relations, the advantages and losses arising from the previous state and its destabilization.
- 2. The level of understanding of their own interests and the readiness to take risks to achieve them.
- 3. The ability of the opposing sides to accept each other and take the interests of the opposition into account.

In this regard, several stages of conflict dynamics are observed:

- 1. The latent (hidden) stage, where the conflict is not yet apparent, and only specialists can discuss its existence.
- 2. The manifestation of the conflict, in which ideologists with specific goals, political movements, and parties emerge among the supporters.
- 3. The armed conflict itself.
- 4. The post-conflict situation.

The latent phase assumes that each side is capable of taking the interests of the other into account. This approach creates an opportunity for peaceful resolution of the conflict through negotiations and adjustments to the previous relations system that are acceptable to both sides. In a situation where the interests of the opposing parties are not taken into account, the likelihood of resorting to force and military actions increases, i.e., the hidden phase turns into the open stage.

In the phase of conflict, the use of force or the demonstration of force, the involvement of opposing resources, the creation of an enemy image, and the effort to ideologize the conflict through justice are typical characteristics. The conflict permeates all structures and relationships and becomes the dominant concern in the minds of the opposing forces, leading to a difficult situation (a dead-end). Its destructive impact is reflected in all social relations within society.

Confessional conflicts, as a form of social conflict, arise between different ethnic or religious communities. The latter is highly organized, often with its own governing apparatus, representing a group of people united by a common culture. A unique feature of these communities is that their members, who live together, interact with each other, and enter into political and economic relationships, are simultaneously citizens of one state.

When describing such a state, the concept of "cultural pluralism" should be considered. Its essence lies in the coexistence within a single state of closed social segments that recognize their ethnic, caste, religious, or linguistic characteristics. The unity of these segments forms the starting community, which represents a broader "society." A pluralistic society expresses the intermingling of non-state social structures, where membership is required, and a closed community exists alongside one another. In this society, every individual, understanding their belonging to a particular cultural community, naturally

prioritizes their community or kinship bonds as the most important. Pluralism leads to the emergence of terms like "patronage," "clientelism," and "groupism," all stemming from the dominance of "community" interests over national ones. Cultural pluralism also serves to soften horizontal conflicts between classes, contributing to a certain degree of social stability.

The clash of interests often does not manifest openly but sometimes remains under the influence of clientelistic obligations within cultural segments.

Result and Discussion

The distinctive feature of analyzing a state consisting of several confessional communities is that the confessional institution is a key element for studying all social relations and structures. Confessions, forming a complex hierarchical structure, hold certain political dominance and use corresponding economic resources based on their position. As a result, privileged confessions must protect their political and economic positions from the claims of confessions that find themselves in a discriminatory situation. Confessional conflicts are largely rooted in the distribution of economic benefits and the struggle for dominance. This aspect forms the interactions between confessions and the state.

The struggle for economic and political superiority deepens with the ideologies surrounding the values and interests of confessions. The deep identification with one's own society leads to individuals expressing their "patriotism" more within the scope of their confession's interests rather than the whole society, which often leads to escalating conflicts threatening the stability and unity of the state. This psychological and ideological aspect plays a primary role in the mobilization of forces in confessional conflicts. Values such as language, religion, and customs unite members of the same confession, making them view themselves as protectors of their culture. Hence, the family becomes an important substructure of the confessional institution in such societies. In these societies, socialization occurs within the "society - confession - family - individual" system.

Choosing a path to resolve such conflicts is one of the main problems faced by their participants. Several approaches to conflict resolution are distinguished in conflict theory, including:

- 1. Separatist approach, where instead of one multinational state, several national states emerge.
- 2. The emergence of a new society where one confession dominates politically and economically over others.
- 3. The strengthening of the assimilation process, where one confession fully integrates into the dominant one.
- 4. The emergence of political autonomy, where each confession has its own rights and autonomous territory.
- 5. Agreement on an egalitarian approach, where all confessions are granted equal rights and opportunities to participate in the country's social, political, and economic life.

Conclusion

The outcome of processes aimed at resolving conflicts is the relative stabilization of society. All social elements are reorganized, new social relations are formed, and a new social order is established. The negative consequences of the conflict are eliminated. The state plays an active role in strengthening its political and economic positions through social policy measures during the restoration of the social sphere.

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