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# SOCIO– CULTURAL BASIS OF POLITICS IN A MULTI– CONFESSIONAL SOCIETY

## SOCIO–CULTURAL BASIS OF POLITICS IN A MULTI–CONFESSIONAL SOCIETY

### Abstract

The article considers the problem which is extremely important and is caused by increased attention to the issue of the status of ethno–political processes in the States of Central Asia in the new world order. Interethnic relations are often a factor determining domestic and international policy. Ethnic confrontation is one of the most common and intractable types of conflict. Therefore, the development and study of the mechanism of prevention, regulation and resolution of each individual ethno–territorial interethnic conflict is of great scientific and practical interest.

**Keywords:** multi–confessional community, ethno–cultural, ethno–political process, interethnic relations, ethnic confrontation.

### Introduction

After gaining sovereignty in our multi–ethnic state of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the most acute issue was the regulation of relations with religious associations. Therefore, in order to achieve multi–confessional harmony in our country, very important attention was paid to this problem. In his Address, the leader of the nation N. A. Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan “Strategy “Kazakhstan–2050: a new

political course of the established state” emphasized the historical milestone in the development of the Republic. Summing up the results of the implementation of the Strategy “Kazakhstan–2030”, N. A. Nazarbayev stated that the main tasks set in it have been fulfilled. A set of state development programs has been formed and implemented, a policy of systemic industrialization and introduction of innovative technologies has been taken, and Kazakhstan’s foreign policy initiatives

to strengthen security and stability in the region and in the world have been implemented. Nursultan Nazarbayev noted that despite the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity, we have maintained peace and political stability in the country. He also used the form “new Kazakhstan patriotism”, calling it “the basis of success” of the multinational and multi-confessional community of the country. At the same time, he focused on the special role of religion in Kazakhstan in the XXI century. And this is not accidental, because religion has a powerful consolidation, peace-loving potential, at the same time, can be used by destructive forces to divide people and peoples.

In our opinion, the ethno-cultural component of religious views is very important. We think that the deep roots of religion are in the culture of the ethnic group, the people and the nation.

The problem before us is extremely important and is caused by increased attention to the issue of the status of ethno-political processes in the States of Central Asia in the new world order. Interethnic relations are often a factor determining domestic and international policy. In the light of modern integration processes taking place in the region, stability in interethnic relations has a direct impact on the economy and political course of the Central Asian countries, the prospect of their good-neighborly relations and the security of the region as a whole. Timely identification of problem areas makes it possible to develop preventive measures and avoid ethnic tension.

### **Methods**

The dialectical method of studying socio-cultural and spiritual processes in a multi-confessional society, freed from one paradigm-class-deterministic, which

did not allow the possibility of contradiction in interethnic relations under socialism, is applied. Therefore, emphasis is placed on pluralistic approaches and comparative studies.

### **Discussion**

Ethnic confrontation is one of the most common and intractable types of conflict. Therefore, the development and study of the mechanism of prevention, regulation and resolution of each individual ethno-territorial interethnic conflict is of great scientific and practical interest. New studies of the relationship between ethnic and geopolitical processes are extremely important and relevant also because they can contribute to the development and approval of optimal models of the organization of the world community, ensuring the consideration of ethnic (national) differences and interests of each people, which is necessary for the preservation and strengthening of international peace and cooperation.

After the civilization break, the new sovereign States faced the problem of the lack of sufficient scientific and methodological basis necessary for the timely prevention of inter-ethnic tensions, and the shortage of specialists in this field. The widespread inter-ethnic conflicts of the first years of independence, as a rule, were provoked by the unstable economic situation and the lack of state policy, considering this problem as one of the determining factors in the creation of civil society and a favorable environment for the establishment of democratic principles.

Therefore, it can be assumed that the problem of prevention and resolution of interethnic and ethno-territorial conflicts here will remain relevant in the coming years, and requires attention and prevention by the state and the public.

In Soviet science, which was engaged in comparative and theoretical studies of Nations and national processes, the state of interethnic relations was not the subject of special scientific analysis. This was due to the dominance of one paradigm in science – class–deterministic (a combination of elements of the economic approach of K. Marx and F. Engels and the idealistic concepts of O. Bauer), which did not allow the possibility of contradictions in international relations under socialism [1, p. 33]. The analysis of the essence of modern Nations was dominated by the ethnic factor. Therefore, the work of ethnographers, in particular Yu. V. Bromley on the nation as an ethno–social organism and the information theory of ethnos N. N. Cheboksarov and S. A. Arutyunov [2, p.106] of the early 50s laid the theoretical approaches to the study of the social conditionality of the phenomenon of ethnicity.

In the post–Soviet period, a lot of attention was paid to the study of ethno political processes; the main object of the study was the phenomenon of nationalism. Under the influence of national movements in the post–Soviet space, which contributed to the fall of the totalitarian regime, foreign and domestic scientists and politicians have grown interest in the world experience of assessing ethnic nationalism and inter–ethnic conflicts. From the point of view of the objectives of the study, the most significant is the concept of O. Dann, according to which the modern nation is a political model and is not limited to specific social structures that are part of it [3, p. 95 ]. The role of the state principle in the formation of the national community, which was revealed through the concept of nationalism, was carefully studied by E. Gellner. He considers nationalism as a political principle, the

essence of which is that the political and national units must coincide [4, p. 54].

At present, post–Soviet science is largely at the stage of familiarization with the world literature and is trying to approach the study of ethno political processes from new positions. Modern research based on new methodological principles and based on extensive empirical research in the field of ethno political processes is invaluable. These are, first of all, the works of L. M. Drobizheva [5, p. 18], V. A. Tishkov [6, p. 88 ], M. V. Jordan [7, p. 156], A. G. Zdravomyslov [8, p. 48], and A.V. Glukhova [9, p. 63 ].

### **Result**

The experience of interethnic interaction in the newly formed sovereign States of the Central Asian region was the reason for the increased attention to this phenomenon of their scientific elite. To fully disclose this problem, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the state of ethno political processes in the Central Asian region. In turn, it is necessary to solve a number of research problems, among which should be highlighted:

- comprehension of the phenomenon of ethnic communities, their evolution based on the study of the basic concepts of Nations and national relations;
- consideration of methodology for forecasting interethnic conflicts;
- analysis of objective domestic causes of interethnic tensions and conflicts in Central Asian States;
- study of the specifics of regional ethno–nationalism, the main reasons for its growth;
- identification of a system of preventive measures to neutralize the causes of ethnic tension in the Central Asian States.

The analysis is based on historical,

logical and political approaches to the problem of ethno–political processes in the Central Asian region at the present stage, the ways of their course and the conditions affecting them. The application of an interdisciplinary approach in this field of research allowed us to offer our vision of this phenomenon. The methodology of forecasting interethnic conflicts makes possible an attempt to develop a system of preventive measures to neutralize the causes of interethnic tension. A thorough study of the features of ethno–political processes in Central Asia, the positive and negative consequences of democratization and sovereignization of the post–Soviet States, the search for acceptable preventive mechanisms, taking into account not only international experience, but also the mentality of the peoples of the region.

First, it is necessary to consider the concepts of “ethnicity”. Although the term “ethnos” has been used in the scientific literature for a long time, scientific understanding of it as a special concept to designate a special community of people occurred only in recent decades, but to date there has been no generally accepted definition of the essence and structure of the ethnos. Let us consider several approaches to the understanding of ethnicity, which, in our opinion, are of the greatest interest – primordialist, instrumentalist and constructivist.

Representatives of primordialism American biochemist Pierre van den Berg and Russian scientist, defending the socio biological understanding of ethnicity, L. N. Gumilev consider ethnos and ethnicity to be real phenomena that have an objective basis in nature or in society. In General, within the framework of primordialism, ethnos is considered as a General concept, a scientific term that is designed to

characterize the communities of people who appear in history and real life in their specific historical forms. The formation of ethnic groups is a long historical process, in which a whole group of factors plays a decisive role. Among these, the most important are the natural prerequisites of a common language and a common territory. Ethnic groups are seen as based on cultural unity, as ontologically real. This understanding of ethnicity was widespread in the West in the 60s of the XX century in the context of modernization theory.

In the mid–70s of the XX century, another interpretation of ethnicity – instrumentalist, according to whom it considered as a tool used by political leaders to achieve their interests, became widespread in Western Ethnology. Such an understanding of ethnicity, typical for political studies of interethnic relations, has developed in the framework of political science, sociology of power and political anthropology. In this sense, ethnicity is understood as an ideology created by the political elite to mobilize the masses in the struggle for power.

The creators of the instrumentalist approach – ethno politics L. Bell, N. Glazer, A. Cohen, J. Rothschild, M. Esman, H. Colborne, K. Jung and others proceeded from the fact that the differences between groups of people in society could serve as a basis for the formation of ethnic identity of each group which determines, in turn, the nature of intergroup relations and mobilizing ethnic groups for purposeful political activity. An essential feature of all instrumentalist theories is their reliance on functionalism and pragmatism.

The well-known Russian ethnologist V. A. Tishkov, who is also a supporter of this approach, sees ethnicity as just a means “in the collective pursuit of material advantage in the socio-political arena”. An

example of an instrumentalist approach to ethnicity is the information concept of ethnos by ethnographer N. N. Chebokarov and ethno sociologist S. A. Arutyunov. They propose to describe the mechanism of existence of all ethnic communities based on connections that can be described within the concept of information. These information links exist in the form of various forms of communication. Any relationship that people enter into with each other accompanied by a flow of information. Information transmitted in different ways – language communication, in the form of display, imitation. The concept of “information” includes the cultural tradition of the people, their creative heritage.

According to the constructivist approach to the understanding of ethnicity, ethnic feeling and the ideas and doctrines formed in its context is nothing but the intellectual construct of writers, scientists, politicians.

The most widespread constructivist concept of ethnicity in world science is associated with the name of the Norwegian ethnologist Frederick Barth, who defines it as the broadest category of social identity, the situational phenomenon created by means of symbolic distinction, emphasizes the contractual nature of the boundaries between ethnic categories. For the first time in Ethnology, as the main criterion of ethnicity, Barth proposed the ethnic boundaries of a group, which it limits itself to. The choice of this criterion explained by the fact that ethnic borders direct social life in a certain direction, which results in a complex organization of behavior and social relations. For this reason, there are also different cultural phenomena exhibited by members of a group within different ethnic boundaries.

Not all the above approaches to ethnicity are mutually exclusive, and

therefore, a promising way to study the problem of ethnicity in the near future will probably be the integration of their most important aspects and the creation of a coherent theory of ethnicity. In addition, we see that ethnos has turned from a cultural concept inherent in primitive, undeveloped or backward peoples into a political concept, now considered in the framework of ethno politics, referring to any people, which means giving them certain rights, interests and needs.

To do this, it is necessary to study the theory of Nations, presented by K. Marx and F. Engels, in order to trace the parallel development of the theories of the nation and ethnos and to raise the question: why, in the presence of Nations, interethnic problems are relevant. K. Marx and F. Engels concluded that all ethnic communities (tribe, people, actually, ethnos, nation) arose from the needs of the progressive development of society and their essence is determined by the corresponding socio-economic formation (primitive, slave-owning, feudal, bourgeois and Communist). In this connection, the ethnic community in them acts as an ethno-social organism, which at each stage of social development is increasingly complicated, acquiring new qualitative characteristics. K. Marx and F. Engels did not allow the reference to a single nation of people of the same nationality, but do not have a common territory. They considered self-determination of small ethnic groups as a reactionary phenomenon, preventing the formation of a common capitalist market, industrial development and, as a consequence, class struggle within one state. An important condition for the functioning of the nation, they considered the common language [1, p.78].

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be noted that we analyze the national question of such prominent figures as O. Bauer, K. Renner and K. Kautsky, forced the aggravation of the ethnic situation in Eastern and Central Europe in the early XX century. So, in particular, Otto Bauer deduced the essence of the nation from the category of “national character”. The position of K. Renner

(Springer) was similar. He stated: “Nation is a Union of equally thinking and equally speaking individuals. This is the cultural community of a group of modern people, not associated with “the land”. Proceeding from such theoretical premises, the Austrian leaders reduced the solution of the national problem to the creation of cultural and national autonomy for the multinational States of Europe [10, p. 65].

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## КӨПКОФЕССИОНАЛДЫ ҚОҒАМДАҒЫ САЯСАТТЫҢ ӘЛЕУМЕТТІК-МӘДЕНИ НЕГІЗДЕРІ

### Аңдатпа

Мақалада Орта Азия мемлекеттерінің этносаяси үдерістері төтенше назар аудартуда және оның негізгі мәселелерін талқылау маңыздылығы жаңа әлемнің реттелуі туралы мәселелермен шартталған. Этностар аралық қатынастары халықаралық саясат пен оны анықтаушы факторлар болып табылады. Этникалық қарсы тұру – бұл шешілмейтін қақтығыстардың едәуір тараған типтеріне жатады. Сондықтан, этнотерриториялық этностар арасындағы жеке қақтығыстарды шешу, реттеу мен алдын–алу тектіктерін

құрастыру мен зерттеу жұмыстары ғылыми–зерттеуге және тәжірибелік қызығушылыққа ие.

**Трек сөздер:** көпконфессиялы топтар, этномәдени, этносаияси үдеріс, қатынастар, этникалық қарсы тұру.

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**СОЦИОКУЛЬТУРНАЯ ОСНОВА ПОЛИТИКИ В МНОГОКОНФЕССИОНАЛЬНОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ**

**Аннотация**

В статье рассматривается проблема, которая чрезвычайно важна и обусловлена повышенным вниманием к вопросу о состоянии этнополитических процессов в государствах Центральной Азии в новом мировом порядке. Межэтнические отношения часто являются фактором, определяющим внутреннюю и международную политику. Этническое противостояние – один из наиболее распространенных и неразрешимых типов конфликтов. Поэтому разработка и изучение механизма предотвращения, регулирования и разрешения каждого отдельного этнотерриториального межэтнического конфликта представляет большой научный и практический интерес.

**Ключевые слова:** многоконфессиональная общность, этнокультурный, этнополитический процесс, межэтнические отношения, этническое противостояние.

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