Humanitarian Knowledge as a Resource for the Political Conflict Management

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Abstract: The need for writing the proposed study is caused by several factors. First of all, we realize the fact that political conflicts often become uncontrolled, so they create threats to stability and security of countries and the whole world. Secondly, we try to structure conflictological knowledge for its more efficient use because it is scattered in different branches of humanitarian sciences. Thirdly, it is necessary to define real opportunities of humanitarian knowledge to ensure the political conflict management. The main purpose of this research is identifying of the dominating humanitarian science which knowledge is deeper and richer for understanding of the essence of the political conflict management. The research of the study also tried to find out what specific knowledge of political conflicts and their management humanitarian sciences have accumulated. Moreover, one of the researchers' tasks was to define types of political conflicts that are less likely to be managed. The result of the researchers' work are the findings that the idea of permanence of conflicts in socio-political life, impossibility of getting rid of them and even their particular usefulness for the development of public relations has become dominant in human sciences. There is no humanitarian discipline that could provide political actors with complex knowledge on political conflict management that is why anti-disciplinary approach seems to be the most preferable as it does not accept the limits of knowledge and prefers a holistic understanding of the conflict. And finally, the idea that political conflicts caused by the subjective contradictions are less influenced by managerial efforts because they are often latent in nature and are hardly diagnosed. Their institutionalization is rather a difficult task due to the spontaneity of appearance.

Key words: Contradiction, conflict, institutionalization of the conflict, conflict resolution humanitarian, task

INTRODUCTION

There was no epoch without wars and other forms of violence that would not cause people's ineradicable desire to live in peace and prosperity in the whole observable history of the humanity. However, quarrels pursue the humanity since the time of Abel and Cain despite simple human desires. Being in the state of constant fear for their life made people to formulate in general, immoral formula that the war is rooted in the very nature of human existence and there by it justifies the right of force over the force of law.

Famous English philosopher Thomas Hobbes in his time came to the ruthless assessment of the natural human condition in the period of their pre-state existence, noting the position of people during the Civil war in their country. He called it a "war against everybody" and he saw the concluding of the social contract: paxquaerendaest (it is necessary to look for the peace) as the only way out of the existing condition. This political-philosophical imperative was to be extended not only to the military confrontation of international character but also to the other types of political conflicts that exist within the country. The Hobbessian formula had a wide spectrum for interpretation. It could be considered as an ability of getting a pause and gathering strength to continue the war. In the domestic sphere, it gave an opportunity to concentrate the absolute power in the monarch's hands, to refuse the separation of powers because all this was believed to lead to the undermining of the authority itself and inability to ensure citizens' safety. According to Hobbes, citizens had to refuse their

natural rights in favor of the absolutist state, for the sake of their own security. Later formulas of such political philosophers of the Age of Enlightenment as John Locke, Charles Louis Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau made significant changes in the views on the social contract, conflicts which has not become the subject of the scientific studies yet but are suspended and effected by the management impact with the help of the social contract mechanism. The idea of the permanence of the conflicts in socio-political life, of the impossibility to get rid of them and even certain usefulness for the development of public relations becomes dominant in the humanitarian sciences.

The group of researcher considers the identification of dominating humanitarian subject which knowledge would be deeper and more extensive to comprehend the essence of the political conflict management as the purpose of this study. In addition to the first task we find out what concrete knowledge of political conflicts and their management humanitarian sciences have accumulated. We also intend to find out which type of the political conflicts is less amenable to the managerial efforts of decision makers, mediators and conflictologists.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Despite the fact that the conflicts have been always related to natural disasters, epidemics, devastation and other anomalies in textbooks on humanitarian subjects, people with inquisitive mind were trying to understand its ontological essence, the nature of its origin, the reasons of "viability" and if not final resolution but at least reasonable restriction. These people, often risking their career and comfortable position in scientific hierarchy, loosing worldly peace, tried to find the truth in the sphere which was far from reason and justice, where only "the powers that be" had the right to assess the situation and the means of resolving the confrontation. For this reason, the theoretical basis of this article will be the quintessence of the ideas proposed by humanitarian scientists on the problem of conflict (political conflict) management.

For this purpose, we judge from the fact that political conflicts in the broadest sense are always social conflicts because the policy itself, having the property of inclusivity, as a rule, tries to impose its own "rules of the game" on the other public segments. The absence of frames of policy is fraught with danger of competition stifling in all spheres of public life that finally leads to the total society politicization and its degradation. "The presence of conflicts is as natural as the presence of different and even diametrically opposed interests and values, roles and statuses both in political sphere itself and in indirectly political fields. It is unproductive to try

to suppress conflicts by volitional ways as it has happened more than once both in Russian and world history. Actions on suppression of conflicts are always directed not at finding resources that gave rise to them but just at elimination of only external forms of conflict confrontation, the bearers of which, as a rule, are people with point of view different from the authorities" (Suslov, 2012).

The ability to manage political conflicts is the dream of all, without an exception, subjects of political power because it means the possession of the dominant position in the sphere of decision making both in domestic and foreign segments of the policy. According to the author of the first Russian textbook on the Political Science of Conflicts D. Feldman, "conflict management includes its ending not as an imperative, necessary and categorical requirement but as one of the goals set by the participants. This goal may be set due to the increase of costs and risks connected with the achievement of the objectives initially set by the parties to the conflict or due to their successful implementation. So, it is clear that political conflict management implies the following: each party to the conflict (or at least some of them) produces or chooses the strategy that provides maximizing of his own win and minimizing of his own expenses". It is necessary to add that preserving existing status quo or maintain the power by the current political regime can be the purpose of political conflict management.

Political conflict management is a complex process with many factors influencing it. The most important among them is the conditions of political regime in which the procedure takes place. Russian conflict researcher A. Bolshakov points at regime peculiarities of political conflict regulation, he considers that "democracy creates conditions for the institutionalization of political conflicts within the country and consequently, for their proper management. But authoritarian regimes don't contribute to the regulation of political conflicts, their retention in certain institutional frameworks. As a rule, they suppress political conflicts and contribute to their latency" (Bolshakov, 2007). In our view, the institutionalization of political conflicts precedes the actual process of political conflict management, though in a broad sense it is its integral part. For this reason, speaking about the political conflict management, we will mean the presence of the component of institutionalization in it as a favorable condition that ensures their effective management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study of the conflicts is unique in its nature because the conflict is a subject of scientific interest of several sciences and paired interdisciplinary research

areas at the same time. According to A. Antsupov and A. Shipilov, the conflict is studied by the representatives of eleven science disciplines: Military Science, Study of Art, Historical Studies, Mathematics, Pedagogics, Political Science, Legal Studies, Sociobiology, Sociology and Philosophy (Shapovalov, 2000).

Disciplines mentioned above reflect on the conflict in isolation, without having a single paradigm of knowledge acquisition on conflicts. They were optimal, though not without some drawbacks, research paradigms of the role of political conflicts in the life of state and society and their managing according to the pragmatic political considerations for each historical time. Unlike A. Antsupov and A. Shipilov, who believe that Psychology is the main backbone science in the field of conflict study, we consider that conflictology is first of all antidisciplinary approach that doesn't accept limits of knowledge and prefers a holistic understanding of a social conflict. It was offered by J. Burton. He called his concept "conflict resolution on the basis of principal resolution of problems" a new political philosophy (Avksentyev *et al.*, 2008). This approach appeals to the fact that "it helps to determine an acceptable level of analysis, the unit of analysis and social sciences which are most appropriate for adequate understanding and resolution of the conflict in its each case" (Nikovskaya, 2006).

The absence of interdisciplinary division was a characteristic feature of the first steps of science even in the era of Greco-Roman cultural traditions, that made a phenomenon of the universality of the ancient science. An integrated approach was a product of the universalistic abilities of the antique thinkers, it experiences its second birth today. For example, ancient rhetoric, anticipating some conflictological commands in future, came to the understanding that "inadequacy and ineptitude of the speech is a factor of the world's impoverishment and its disharmony, a factor that threatens its very existence" (Shapovalov, 2000). This maxim calls for the linguistic security and directly warns of inadmissibility of "words-conflictogens" which are able to create conflict situations with aggressive content spontaneously. Perception of measures as values should be considered as an achievement of ancient ethics. Thus, Aristotle gives measure a special place in his ethical theory, it is the virtue that holds a person from mistakes made in the moments of passion. In our opinion in this case it is said practically about the inception of the psychology of conflicts. According to famous Russian psychologists V. Zazykin and Y. Obolonsky, "it often happens that personal reasons: arguments with other political leaders, maniacal desire to hold a prestigious

government position, actions of unconscious motives, personality, psychological incompatibility are the main determinants of politicians' conflict behavior".

The bundle of knowledge was enlarged by the efforts of the ancient philosophers. Thus, a famous ancient dialectician Heraclitus of Ephesus was one of the first philosophers who comprehended the nature of political conflicts rationally, judging by existing for that time ideas of creation. Considering that in the world there is an eternal cycle, not excluding human life, everything is born through hatred and strife. According to Heraclitus, that is why "the war is the only common law prevailing in the universe, it is father of all and king of all. It determined that one would be god, another would be a human, it made some people slaves, the others-free" (Dmitriev, 2009). The conflict in that case was presented as an essential attribute of social life and condition of social development.

Referring to the category of "contradiction" understood as the universal characteristic of exist-ence, which will become a central definition of dialectic is considered to be the merit of ancient philosophers. Contradiction discloses the universal nature of the conflict which is one of its states and characteristics. In other words, the basis of the conflict is always a contradiction which presents objectively in human life because of the imperfection of socio-economic conditions and due to the divergence of interests and needs of people in their desire to possess power in the political sphere. Some contradictions may be resolved by themselves without reaching the extent of conflict. It is important to understand the conflict as a case of extreme escalation of contradiction between the participants of the conflict interaction for the proper political conflict management. Therefore, conflicts often act as a means of resolving contradiction, however, it does not mean that there will not happen another aggravation of contradictions after a certain time.

Political conflicts are often raised by the contradictions of subjective nature, for example, psycho-logical traits of decision-makers, by their desire to justify inability by the presence of external hostile forces. If these circumstances are crucial for a mass audience, they can create dangerous conflict situations. In our opinion, political conflicts caused by the contradictions of subjective nature are less yielded to managerial efforts because they are often of latent nature and hard-diagnosed. Their institutionalization is rather difficult task due to the spontaneity of the appearance.

Furthermore, ancient philosophers enriched future conflictological science with the concept of "struggle" which means not only the moment of obvious

confrontation of opposing forces itself but also a certain duration of their existence in such a state and that proves impossibility of coexistence of social subjects outside the struggle. Paradoxically, the ancient philosophers, with all their universality, avoided the problem of international relations because "the relations between peoples didn't interest neither philosopher, nor legislator" (Baryshnikov, 2008). The Greek model of civilization turned out to be static: the vector of its dynamics was aimed at self-preservation, ignoring self-development and this doomed it to its destruction.

In the Middle Ages, there were some attempts to understand the essence of conflicts and wars from the perspective of Christian ethics. Initially, the advantage of living in friendship, harmony and love among people was proved. So, it was natural that the calls for rejecting wars and other forms of violence were made to numerous European monarchs. Having convinced of the groundlessness of these appeals, the fathers of unified Christian Church began to justify wars against non-Christians and heretics and condemned wars among Christians considering them as God's punishment for human sins.

In later Middle Ages English philosopher F. Bacon, having analyzed the causes of conflicts leading to social upheavals in the country, came to a disappointing conclusion that poverty and poorness pushed to riots and other forms of disorders. Bacon's recommendations addressed to the monarchs sound rather modern. According to Bacon, firstly, the sovereigns should listen to the opinions of their subjects (e.g., social classes, the Senate) while making decisions. Secondly, they have to change the unsatisfactory social position of the most suffering social classes radically. Thirdly, anticipating modern sophisticated political technologies, the philosopher considers that "one of the best ways to avoid unrests is to amuse people with hopes and to lead them from one hope to another. The government that knows how to lull people with hopes when it cannot supply their needs and leads the case in such a way that any evil could be soften by hope, is truly wise". It is hard to agree with the latest Bacon's recommendations, though many leaders, monarchs, chief secretaries and presidents have repeatedly addressed to this manipulative approach, however its effectiveness of the frequency of use tends to zero.

Humanitarian scholars of the Modern Age (J.J. Rousseau, I. Kant, G. Hegel) evaluated social conflicts and opportunities of their overcoming in different ways but they were united by their acceptance of the dominant role of consent among people in the process of public development as well as the bet on "eternal peace". Both thesis had utopian nature, though they performed the function of the significant step in comprehension of nature and content of the social conflicts.

The first researchers of social conflicts belonged to sociologists, that is why they did not pay attention to political conflicts for a long time. However, an indirect interpretation of the political conflict was present even in the "Theory of conflict" which appeared as an alternative to the "Theory of order" in L. Coser's work "The Functions of Social Conflict" (Coser, 1956) and it was noticeably developed in the work of another classic of conflictology R. Dahrendorf "Social Classes and Class Conflict in the Industrial Society" (Dahrendorf, 1976). The "Theory of conflict" unites a whole set of different concepts such as the functional concept of the conflict (L. Coser), the dialectical concept of the conflict (R. Dahrendorf), the concept of structural violence (J. Galtung), "General theory of the conflict" (K. Boulding, L. Kriesberg).

Though classics of conflictology did not study political conflicts directly, their sociological views are widely used for the identification of political conflicts and their management. Interactionalist interpretation of the conflict which meant "it is necessary to have two or more parties with different, colliding interests for the appearance of conflict" was defining in their understanding of the social conflict. Mainly, the subject of the conflict is a "deficit": on the one hand, the deficit of social roles and statuses, on the other-the deficit of material and spiritual resources. Political conflict in this sense has few differences from social conflict: its opposing parties conflict for political dominance, i.e. for the possession of political power as politicians are always short of it and there is constant tough struggle for it.

It was impossible to create original concepts of political conflict within the political science because of its late institutionalization. However, conflictological issues are presented in the theory of political stability (D. Easton, S. Lipset, D. Sunders, J. Blondel), ethnopological theory (D. Gorovits, R. Petrella, T.R. Gurr, R. Vayrynen, M. Gechter, J. Rotschild), elite theory (V. Pareto, G. Mosca, R. Michels), the theory of political groups (A. Bently, L. Truman, J. Sorel, F. Oppenheimer), theories of centralization and decentralizations (K. Jacobsen).

Thus, the factors which may contribute to the prevention of conflictogenity in society are also treated in the theory of political stability among others. One of these factors is the category of "normality" which participates in maintaining the system in balance. According to the researchers working in this paradigm, only those systems are stable, that maintain permanent state of political democracy that does not give rise to serious opposition

movements. D. Easton followed the conservative model of stability, where political authorities are the objects of support of the political system and a set of legal and informal rules is used for resolving conflicts within the system. According to another representative of this group S. Lipset, cultural factors are hardly manipulated, that is why those who want to "transit" good democracy to their country have to concern about changes in political institutions (including electoral systems and constitutional arrangement) because they change more easily. Representatives of the theory of political groups are A. Bently, J. Sorel and F. Oppenheimer. They were connected by the idea of political conflict management on the basis of permanent change of elites which required forces, able to replace existing government.

Sociological character of conflict study has affected not only on the study of political conflicts but it also has influenced psychological understanding of conflicts and accordingly, appearance of politico-psychological studies. Famous Russian specialist in the field of conflict psychology N. Grishina notes that "sociological works are largely addressed both to human psychology and phsychological abilities to regulate their relations". (Grishina, 2005). Already mentioned book "The Functions of Social Conflict" by Coser (1956) was beyond competition due to its power of influence on the development of conflict psychology. According to the conflict psychology, the idea of a modern approach to conflict management comes to the statement that "conflict may be managed and managed in such a way that its result will have constructive character". Therefore, the term "constructive conflict management" was born and it appears to be more preferable than the concepts of "conflict resolution", "reconciliation" and "ending of conflict". But still "recognition of the opportunity for constructive conflict management does not guarantee that in some cases the difficulties of practical realization of this opportunity can be considered as insurmountable" (Grishina, 2005).

Political conflicts are often fundamentally irrepressible. So, eliminated political conflict has a potential to erupt again. For this reason, it is appropriate to speak about reducing of the conflictogenity level which is provided by obtaining consensus, social harmony, interparty consensus, parliamentary conflict resolution and constitutional justice, according to V. Zazykin and Y. Obolonsky. It also should be noted that "consensus does not mean getting rid of the conflict. The nature of conflict is more complicated. Due to the fact that conflict is one of the essential conditions for development, it continues to present latently in different spheres of human interaction, even if it seems to be resolved" (Suslov *et al.*, 2015).

The most important achievement in conflict psychology should be considered the conventional statement that conflicts cannot be definitely judged as destructive, as system's dysfunctions because an ability to avoid more violent conflicts is one of the positive conflict's functions. In conflictology, this Coser's conclusion was called "Simmel's paradox" in honor of German researcher who created in fact, the foundations of conflictology. Revealing the essence of the mentioned paradox, L. Coser wrote: "The most effective means of prevention of strife is exact knowledge of both sides' comparative strength, which very often can be obtained only in the result of the conflict itself" (Coser, 1956). "Simmel's paradox" frequently brought positive results in the sphere of international relations when pre-conflict situations allowed to assess the resources of the parties to a conflict and if they were approximately equal, the parties could come to the model of power balance.

One of the first sciences, accumulated knowledge about international conflicts and wars was his-tory which was interested, first of all in chronicle and geography of military events, statistics of human casualties and territorial acquisitions, personalities of military commanders and heroes. One of the authoritative Russian researcher of the problems of international relations, M. Lebedeva, notes that "wars and conflicts existed before the beginning of the 20th century, however they were studied mainly by historians. The First World War made researchers to think about its reasons not only from the historical point of view. This question was considered in terms of politology. That meant that scientists were interested not only in reasons of appearance of a concrete conflict or war in various historical conditions but general principles of interaction among states, leading to armed conflicts" (Lebedeva, 2009). The institutionalization of research in the field of international relations and world politics facilitated resolution of these specific problems. "In fact, international relations as a scientific discipline began to form 90 years ago as a result of answers to the question: What caused World War I and how could we avoid such conflicts in the future?" (Grum, 1998).

The events following World War I created a feeling of manageability of postwar Europe. International order which entered the history of international relations as "postwar multi-polarity" had to satisfy many actors of European politics, but the expected idyll did not happen. American president W. Wilson, locomotive and soul of the Treaty of Versailles, saw the postwar arrangement of Europe through the prism of the regulation mechanism of international relations that would be able to resolve

conflicts between states without using military force and violence in general, basing on the universal norms of the International law. Wilson saw the League of Nations, the product of his theoretic politological creativity in the quality of this unique international political institution.

The activities of this institution were based on theoretical approaches, developed by the repre-sentatives of the idealistic school of international policy, one of the founders of which was W. Wilson. The idealists have proceeded from ethical imperatives and therefore considered that a man was a rational being, ready to refuse the usage of force, threats by force which dominated in the international relations for many centuries in favor of wellbeing of society and world in general. Basing on this moral postulate, they thought it was possible to create a harmonious model of international relations without wars and military conflicts. The institutionalization of international cooperation on the basis of jointly developed standards of international conduct was the most appropriate according to the theorists of the idealistic school.

However, relying on the principle of self-determination of nations did not yield desirable results. The newly formed states which borders invaded "foreign" territories for reasons of the unification of compactly living ethnic groups into nations-states, caused a lot of secessionist conflicts. The League of Nations was torn apart by numerous contradictions and did not have a real mechanism of influence on the arising conflicts, so it was not ready to regulate them. Meanwhile, the political practice of idealism was not limited only by bad design of the League of Nations. The Kellogg-Briand Pact was another significant project, it included a refusal to use force in international relations and "created international legal grounds for restriction of the usage of aggressively directed military methods in international relations". Finally, the United Nations was established under the influence of the idealistic school in 1945. It is an international organization which has a set of military and non-military means to maintain peace and resolve international conflicts.

The school of international relations realism has been the direct opposite of the idealists. Its appearance was connected with the beginning of the Cold War. The leading researcher of this scientific field was an American political scientist G. Morgenthau who believed that only national state can be the dominant actor of international politics and it leads a power contest in the international scene. In the "rules of the game" among great powers there is a power balance. Successful diplomacy means negotiations with support of military capacity. Contracts based on trust begin to act only in the condition of achieving of the power balance. In Morgenthau's views, the world appears one-dimensional and excessively simplified because everything was explained by the aspiration for power. That is why researchers of this direction were interested in the problem of political conflict management only from the standpoint of their own security. The authority and influence of the political realism now makes it popular both among real politicians of different countries and in the academic environment. The reason for this lies in impartial and strict analysis of international policy and refusal of abstract humanistic ideals.

Fortunately, realism does not dominate undividedly in the science of international relations. Despite the beliefs of the realists, it is connected with appearance of transnational Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on the international stage which entered into conflict relations with the traditional actor of world policy-government, having quite a comparable potential with the state. The former role of national states starts to be limited with the globalization of international relations and NGOs' acquisition of the opportunities for political influence. Shaken status of the states and first of all, their national sovereignty in set with the growing importance of transactional NGOs makes former ways of resolving international conflicts historical property. This fact especially actualizes the problem of searching for the new strategies of management of the complicated political conflicts.

CONCLUSION

This study has investigated the problems of political conflict management using the resources of humanitarian knowledge. We came to the following conclusions: nowadays, the idea of permanence of conflicts in socio-political life, impossibility of getting rid of them and even their particular usefulness for the development of public relations has become dominant in human sciences.

There is no humanitarian discipline that could provide political actors with complex knowledge on political conflict management that is why anti-disciplinary approach seems to be the most preferable as it does not accept the limits of knowledge and prefers a holistic understanding of the conflict.

Political conflicts caused by the subjective contradictions are less influenced by managerial efforts because they are often latent in nature and are hardly diagnosed. Their institutionalization is rather a difficult task due to the spontaneity of appearance.

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