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**ETHNOSOCIAL PROCESSES THROUGH PRISM OF ETHNIC
TENSION**

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Abstract

The article evaluates ethnosocial processes in Russia through the prism of inter-ethnic tensions. The authors consider the nature of these processes in relation to the polyethnic, multicultural region - the South of Russia - on the basis of research data collected by well-known scientists in the field of regional studies and Caucasus history. The purpose of the article is to assess ethno-social processes in Russia in the context of ethnic tension. The article reviews the studies on ethnicity, ethnosocial processes, interethnic tensions carried out by leading Russian research centers. Ethnosocial interethnic tension development vectors are described. They are associated with the degree of ethnic mosaic of the population of the South of Russia. The article identifies the nature of ethnosocial processes in the Russian society in the context of implementation of the project aimed at forming civic nation, civic identity and civic unity. The authors use the following approaches in the study: a primordial approach, an instrumentalist approach, a constructivist approach. The approaches to the ethnicity do not exhaust the whole variety of conceptual scenarios for the study of ethnicity as well as formation and functions of ethnic groups. It should be noted that the dynamics of ethnic processes is directly related to inter-ethnic contacts. Identification of the mosaic ethnic composition of the population helps simulate the orientation of ethnic and social processes, predict potential centers of ethnic tension.

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1. Introduction

Actualization of studies on ethnic and social processes in our country indicates the deepening of ethnic contradictions in the world (the events in Syria, Ukraine and other countries). Ethnic conflicts in some parts of the world have already resulted in a large number of civilian casualties, increased the number of refugees.

Increasing significance of the ethnic factor in the life of the world nations and the world community as a whole at the end of the last century gave impetus to numerous studies on ethnicity and related processes and phenomena, required more extensive scientific generalization, construction of theoretical models of ethno-social and ethno-political processes, and regulation mechanisms. Currently, theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of these processes and methods for controlling them show their insufficiency.

Ethnic factor " significantly affects the nature and development of complex ethnic processes occurring in Russia. Therefore, it is important to reconsider ethno-social processes..." (Matishov & Khunagov, 2012). Attention to the issue is due to the need to identify the nature of ethnic and social processes in the context of the project which aims to form the civil nation and ensure civil unity in our country.

In recent years, the process of national strategy development has been activated. The first step in this direction was adoption of the " Strategy of the national policy of the Russian Federation until 2025" which is based on the fundamental idea of Russia as a nation-state and a civilization-state. The adoption of the Strategy was followed by development of federal government decisions. The Government of the Russian Federation adopted the Federal target program "Enhancing the unity of the Russian nation and ethno-cultural development of the peoples of Russia (2014-2020)". These important political and legal documents emphasize the fundamental nature of the national issue for Russia as a country with a variety of languages, traditions, ethnic groups and cultures.

2. Problem Statement

According to the researchers, it is difficult to write about ethnopolitical and ethnosocial processes in the Russian Federation for two reasons. The first one is extreme complexity of the research object: in the country with one and a half hundred ethnic groups, these processes are complicated and diverse. The consequences of decades-long and ongoing attempts to manage these processes are equally complex. The second problem is the state of national scientific and political discourse. Over the decades of discussions, participants have not been able to develop single terms or common understanding of the nature of the tasks to be solved. In scientific and political communities, there are two polar approaches to ethnopolitics. Since ethnicity issues are perceived and debated on an emotional level, confrontation between the representatives of these approaches is tough.

3. Research Questions

Ethnic tension is perceived as one of the characteristics of modern ethno-social processes. Russia is a country of regions, so regional ethno-social processes have to be analyzed to study ethnic tension. The region is a certain social environment operating within specific space-time boundaries which determine

living and working conditions of the population. The region as a structural entity of the Russian Federation is a socio-cultural component of the Russian society rather than an administrative district. Regional life activity is characterized by nature of historical conditions, ethnic composition of residents, household features, economic specialization, etc. Assessment of ethnic tension in regions allows us develop a scientific basis for implementation government decisions aimed to increase the integration potential of ethnic groups, and minimization of destructive conflict risks. We believe that analysis of ethnic tension in regions is a significant factor of consolidation of the Russian community which determines its social and psychological climate.

Ethnic and social processes are characterized by two different vectors: integrating and differentiating ones. The predominance of any vector is characterized by various determining factors. Ethnic tension is qualified as a factor differentiating ethnic and social processes.

Social tension, according to Soldatova (1998), is a phenomenon of the XX century associated with increasing variability of social processes. Instability, uncertainty cause social tension. The derivative of social tension in a multi-ethnic society is ethnic tension. Transformation of social tension into ethnic tension involves ethnicity as a determinant.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the article is to assess ethno-social processes in Russia in the context of ethnic tension. The following tasks have been solved: reconsidering the nature of these processes in relation to the polyethnic, multicultural region – the South of Russia; review of studies on ethnicity, ethnic and social processes, ethnic tension carried out by leading Russian research centers; identification of ethnic and social process development vectors; identification of the level of ethnic tension associated with the degree of ethnic mosaic of the population of the South of Russia ; identification of the nature of ethnic and social processes in the Russian society in the context of formation of the civil nation, civil identity and civil unity.

5. Research Methods

The phenomenon of ethnicity can be characterized using the following approaches:

- Primordial approach: ethnicity is a primordial attribute of humanity (Bromley, 1988); ethnic groups are considered from the standpoint of language, culture, identity, i.e., those properties that allow to distinguish them from other groups (Gumilev, 1989). This approach deals with identification of the impact of ethnicity on social differentiation.

- Instrumentalist approach: ethnicity is a means of achieving group interests, and preservation of ethnicity is due to the human need to overcome alienation inherent in the information society (Arutyunov, 1989). Actualization of the values of ethnic groups is considered as a protective mechanism of the human psyche aimed at overcoming complexity and ambiguity of the modern society. Ethnos serves as an information buffer.

- Constructivist approach (Anderson, 2001; Brubaker, 2004; Gellner, 1991; Hobsbaum, 1998; Tishkov, 1997; Tishkov, 2013): ethnicity is an issue of consciousness, therefore, the priority is cultural characteristics which discover dissimilarity and boundaries of existence of ethnic groups rather than ethnic culture in general. Ethnicity is an intellectual object.

The approaches to the ethnicity do not exhaust the whole variety of conceptual scenarios for the study of ethnicity as well as formation and functions of ethnic groups. We believe that studies on ethnicity allows us to approach the micro-level of society, as the problems of ethnic and social interaction are the source of ethnic tension, conflicts in places of residence, companies and public organizations.

Let us present the criteria according to which we divide the republics of the Russian Federation by the degree of ethnic tension (Bedzhanov, 2002):

1. The lack of tension. This group is represented by Karelia, Komi, Mari El, Mordovia, Udmurtia, Chuvashia, which are characterized by the small number of titular ethnic groups, historically established (from the XVI-XVII centuries) principles of united existence with the Russian ethnic group, priority of the Russian language even at the household level, agricultural employment of titular ethnic groups.

2. Background tension. The group is represented by Buryatia, Tuva, Yakutia, Kalmykia which are characterized by dominance of clan forms in the organization of social life; prevalence of environmental problems, hegemony of the Russian ethnic group in the company management, marginalization of representatives of titular peoples.

3. Potential tension is typical of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan which stand out on the basis of the following criteria: historical memory of the past periods of statehood; development of ethnic radical movements, contradiction between actual settlement of ethnic groups and administrative-territorial borders, ethnic differences between Kazan and Ufa Tatars.

4. Open tension and conflict. Ethno-political processes in North Ossetia, Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachay-Cherkessia, Adygea are determined by the following factors: geopolitical importance of the North Caucasus; territorial resettlement of the North Caucasian peoples; mountain mentality uniting various ethnic groups, Caucasian war of the XIX century.

It should be noted that the distribution of the republics by the degree of ethnic tension in the current context can be presented in a different form. Particular attention is paid to the South of Russia. Since 1991, it consists of the Southern and North Caucasus Federal districts of the Russian Federation. In our opinion, ethnic and social processes in the republics of the South of Russia are characterized by strengthening role of the dominant ethnic groups.

According to Avksentyev, Lyashenko, Mayboroda, and Solovyov (2010), this macroregion plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity of the Russian Federation and successful implementation of Russia's development strategy until 2020. To harmonize ethnic relations in the South of Russia, it is necessary to reassess the nature of ethno-cultural and ethno-political components of the regional society, develop and implement regional development strategies in line with the federal policy.

6. Findings

Today, the South of Russia is associated with conflicts caused by ethno-social and ethno-confessional factors. This image was constructed due to the fact that the region is ethnically and culturally diverse. The spiritual sphere has become one of the determinants of national security. Denial of traditional forms of spiritual culture is typical of the modern information technology development stage. The main reason for this process is sharp changes in social conditions of human existence. Traditional conditions were a symbiosis of the world of nature and culture, while the modern form of social existence is more

dynamic which disorientates individuals. A human understands that the Earth cannot survive in a soulless, conflict, violent and destructive world.

However, despite the inevitable processes of ethnic self-determination, different ethnic groups living in a multi-ethnic society have developed norms of communication which allow them to coexist in an ethnically diverse society, avoid or keep conflicts.

Thus, it is impossible to understand the nature of ethnic and social processes in the South of Russia without understanding the structure of ethnic interaction of the peoples living in this region. Representatives of various ethnic groups live in cities and rural areas, have various stereotypes of behavior, follow ethnic traditions. Ethnic tension plays a destructive role in ethnic interaction which results in ethnic conflicts.

Therefore, it is impossible to understand the nature of ethnic and social processes in the South of Russia without establishing the level of ethnic tension associated with the degree of ethnic mosaic of the population. It should be noted that the dynamics of ethnic processes is directly related to inter-ethnic contacts. Identification of the mosaic ethnic composition of the population helps simulate the orientation of ethnic and social processes, predict potential centers of ethnic tension.

Let us analyze the ethnic composition of the population of some Russian regions (the Republic of Adygea, the Kabardino-Balkar Republic, the Karachay-Cherkess Republic, Krasnodar krai, Stavropol krai, Rostov oblast) based on the results of the all-Russian population census 2010 (All-Russian population census 2010) and using the Eckel method by formula

$$P_j = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^m (p_i)^2$$

where m is the number of nations (ethnic groups) in the j -th country (district); p_i is the share of the i -th nation in the population of the country (district). Let us calculate the index of ethnic mosaic (IEM) of the above-mentioned regions, given that the higher the value of the index (from zero to one), the more ethnic groups live in the territory. According to the method, $P_j < 0.4$ indicates monoethnicity of the region; $0.4 < P_j < 0.6$ – an average population mix; $0.6 < P_j < 0.7$ – highly mixed population; $P_j > 0.7$ – super mixed areas.

With a total population number of 43,996 people, the ethnic composition of the population of the Republic of Adygea is quite diverse. Representatives of the following ethnic groups live here: Russians- 63.6%, Adygeans – 25.2%, Armenians – 3.7%, Ukrainians – 1.4%, Kurds – 1.1%, Circassians – 0.6%, Tatars – 0.6%, Roma – 0.5%. The index of ethnic mosaic is 0.5302.

The population of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic is 859939 people: Kabardians - 57.2%, Russians – 22.5%, Balkars – 12.7%, Turks – 1.6%, Ossetians – 1.1%, Armenians – 0.6%, Ukrainians – 0.6%, Koreans – 0.5%, Roma – 0.3%, Circassians – 0.3%, Tatars – 0.3%, Azerbaijanis – 0.2%, Chechens – 0.2%. The index of ethnic mosaic is 0.605.

477859 people live in the Karachay-Cherkess Republic. The ethnic composition of the population is as follows: Karachai - 41.0%, Russians - 31.6%, Cossacks - 0.1%, Circassians - 11.9%, Abazins - 7.8%, Nogai - 3.3%, Ossetians - 0.7%, Armenians - 0.6%, Ukrainians - 0.4%. The ethnic mosaic index is 0.7106.

5226647 people live in Krasnodar Krai: Russians - 88.3%, Cossacks - 0.1%, Armenians - 5.5%, Ukrainians - 1.6%, Greeks - 0.4%, Belarusians - 0.3%, Tatars - 0.5%, Georgians - 0.3%, Germans - 0.2%,

Adygei - 0.3%, Azerbaijanis - 0.2%, Roma - 0.3%, Turks - 0.2%, Kurds - 0.1%, Moldovans - 0.1%, Shapsugs - 0.1%. The ethnic mosaic index is 0.216505.

The population of Stavropol Krai is 2786281 people. The ethnic composition of this region is as follows: Russians - 80.9%, Cossacks - 0.1%, Armenians - 5.9%, Dargins - 1.8%, Greeks - 1.2%, Roma - 1.1%, Ukrainians - 1.1%, Nogais - 0.8%, Azerbaijanis - 0.6%, Karachai - 0.6%, Turkmen - 0.5%, Chechens - 0.4%, Tatars - 0.4%, Avars - 0.3%, Kabardians - 0.3%, Ossetians - 0.3%, Lezgins - 0.3%, Turks - 0.4%, Georgians - 0.3%, Belarusians - 0.3%, Tabasaran residents - 0.3%, Koreans - 0.2%. The ethnic mosaic index is 0.340448.

In Rostov oblast, 4277976 people live: Russians - 90.3%, Cossacks - 0.7%, Ukrainians - 1.9%, Armenians - 2.6%, Turks - 0.9%, Belarusians - 0.4%, Azeris - 0.4%, Chechens - 0.3%, Roma - 0.4%, Tatars - 0.3%, Koreans - 0.3%, Dargins - 0.2%, Georgians - 0.2%. The ethnic mosaic index is 0.183026.

The analysis of the ethnic mosaic of the South of Russia allows us to rank its regions in accordance with the calculated index (Table 01).

Table 01. Index of ethnic mosaic in the regions of the South of Russia

No	Region	IEM	Degree of mosaicism
1.	Karachay-Cherkess Republic	0.7106	Super-mixed population
2.	Kabardino-Balkar Republic	0.605	Highly mixed population
3.	Adygeya republic	0.5302	Medium mixed population
4.	Stavropol krai	0.340448	Monoethnic region
5.	Krasnodar krai	0.216505	Monoethnic region
6.	Rostov oblast	0.183026	Monoethnic region

7. Conclusion

Some social researchers are fair to say that the index of ethnic mosaic cannot be considered as a determining factor of ethnic tension. However, it should be noted that ethnic diversity is a concomitant environment for inter-ethnic interaction.

The essence of the index of ethnic mosaic can be defined as follows: the value of the index is higher (close to 1), the greater the diversity of ethnic groups with a greater proportion represented in the population of a region. The higher the value of the index, the greater the degree of ethnic diversity of the society. Thus, the ethnic composition of the population of Stavropol and Krasnodar krajs, Rostov oblast is quite homogeneous which is confirmed by a low level of ethnic mosaic - < 0.4. The resulting index indicates a low degree of intensity of inter-ethnic contacts in the region. In our opinion, the main reason for monoethnicity of these regions is the predominant share of Russians in the overall population structure. In this regard, we can assume that the intensity of possible conflict-oriented inter-ethnic processes is currently lower here than in other regions of the Russian Federation.

The number of ethnic groups living in the territory, the proportion of the numerical ratio, the degree of ethnic mosaic determines the diversity of intercultural communication and intensity of ethnic contacts. Representatives of different ethnic groups live in Karachay-Cherkess and Kabardino-Balkarian republics, the Republic of Adygea, interact, compete for resources, jobs, etc. Applicants for various benefits emphasize the ethnicity of the competing party. In the regions with super mixed, highly mixed and medium

mixed population, it increases ethnic tension. The practice of multi-ethnic community indicates that ethnic consensus is achieved by ensuring interests and needs of various ethnic groups which coexist in the territory.

There is a direct relationship between the mosaic structure of the ethnic composition and interethnic contacts: the level of ethnic mosaic is the higher, the greater the number of ethnic groups represented in a given territory and the smaller they are in number. The described nature of the population indicates possible ethnic conflicts. Any dissatisfaction in the polyethnic republics of the North Caucasus can be transformed into ethnic relations, since ethnosocial processes are most vulnerable and sensitive.

The lack of stability and agreement between ethnic groups on a global scale is the result of growing conflicts. Due to the complexity of conflict management, they involve a larger number of participants which threaten all people. Despite the complexity of ethnic relations, the ethnic picture of the world remains diverse. Awareness of a person of his ethnicity is his need, as it helps identify his place in the world.

Therefore, it is important to pay attention of researchers to ethno-social processes in terms of interethnic tension. After all, social micro-problems become primary causes of interethnic tension. A timely tool for stabilizing the situation may be monitoring ethnic tension which can identify the degree of harmonious / disharmonious ethnic relations. This degree can be used to make adjustments to regional development strategies in line with the federal policy, to draw attention to the value of a dialogue for shaping ethnic harmony and eliminating ethnic tension (Shadzhe & Lyausheva, 2015).

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