Washington's Destructive Use of Religious Sects

In recent years, an ever increasing number of countries started paying closer attention to the activities of various religious sects, as they started suspecting those organizations in advancing the agenda of other international players or terrorist organizations.

Whenever this topic is brought up, one can't escape mentioning the notorious Japanese religious sect Aum Shinrikyo. It's been noted that the name Aum Shinrikyo, is usually rendered in English as "Aum Supreme Truth", deriving from the Sanskrit syllable Aum, used to represent the universe. Back in 1995, this group launched the deadliest terrorist attack in Japan's history, by releasing the chemical agent sarin inside the trains on three subway lines of metropolitan Tokyo, during the peak of the morning rush hour. This attack resulted in 13 individuals perishing, while 5,000 more got injured. Last year, Japan executed Shoko Asahara, the founder of Aum Shinrikyo, along with six more senior members of this sect.

Prior to these tragic events, the sect would be officially registered in Japan as a religious organization back in 1989. Its popularity in this country was quick to spike, which resulted in Aum Shinrikyo expanding to a number of countries, some of which were even visited by its founder personally. With each such visit, Shoko Asahara would gain acquaintance with influential people working in different fields, while showing an avid interest in all sorts of military equipment. The rumor has it that at some point in time the founder of Aum Shinrikyo would express his desire to purchase components necessary for the production of a nuclear device. As early as in the 1990s, the sect would open its offices in New York, Bonn and a number of other large cities.

Yet, if the activities of Aum Shinrikyo have been outlawed by the absolute majority of states across the globe these days, there's thousands of other religious cults operating without any form of scrutiny from government officials all across the globe. Needless to say, most of those originate from the United States due to the historical peculiarities that shaped the development of this state.
In recent years, the United States has become particularly active in expanding the activities of its religious sects to other states, thus undermining the religious foundation of other societies. Moreover, those sects have played a major role in the intensification of protest activities in a number of coup d'etat attempts across the globe over the years.

The most striking example of Washington's attempts to export its religious sects can be observed in Ukraine, where its actions has already provoked a major religious conflict. It is a known fact that the so-called Orange Revolution of 2004 was advanced by more than 50,000 active members of the Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for All Nations.

The danger that religious sects represent to society lies in the parasitic nature of those organizations that, unlike the traditional confessions, exist exclusively to feed upon the human and financial resources of a society, living according to their own rules that may often contradict the existing laws.

Previously, we've examined in much detail the true goals behind the extensive support that Washington is providing to such cults as the Jehovah's Witnesses and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Armenia. Washington's official programs alone provide some 250 million dollars each year to those religious sects, while the overall sum siphoned from the US budget exceeds 1 billion dollars. Additionally, it's noteworthy that those funds arrive to Armenia through sectarian channels, which means that technically they do not count towards the total some that the US spends on undermining the government in Yerevan through a network of NGOs. Therefore, it's safe to say that the absolute majority of religious sects in Armenia are no more than tools that external forces would use to meddle in Armenia's internal affairs. This fact becomes particularly worrisome i we are to take a look at the official numbers provided by Armenia's government, that show that there's 54 sects operating in this country, while the total number of their followers exceeds 350 thousand people.

Sectarianism has become a major obstacle to Tbilisi's attempt to preserve peace and tranquility in Georgia, as the activities of religious sects in this Caucasian country share the same exact features with those operating in Armenia, which means that they are doing the bidding of Western intelligence agencies.

In recent years, sectarianism has become Washington's tool of choice for meddling in the internal affairs of the Central Asian republics that used to be part of the USSR. Branches of the US-based Jehovah's Witnesses sect have become particularly active in this region. According to Central Asian experts, there is a considerable number of similarities in the steps that this sect makes and the steps made by such religious and such Islamist radical movements as Hizb ut-Tahrir: both organizations profess the establishment of the theocratic rule across the entire world, both use the hands-on door-to-door approach in hiring their followers, promote intolerance to all other forms of religion due to their belief that their religious movement should supplant all of the five major religions. The ideology of the Jehovah's Witnesses prevents its followers from coming into contact with representatives of other religions, even if the latter happen to be their close relatives, which erodes the very foundations of a society - family relations. In a situation when the absolute majority of the population of Central Asian countries are Muslims, the aggressive missionary activities of the Jehovah's Witnesses leads to family feuds, undermines the spirit of good-natured neighborhood that all the major religions try to uphold and creates preconditions for bloodshed. It's clear that the activities of this sect contribute nothing to the social advancement of those states, as it sows the seeds of separatism across Central Asia.

Under this context, it's hardly a surprise that a number of Central Asian countries, in particular Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, outlawed the activities of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

However, one would be naive to assume that Washington would only use religious sects to undermine the former Warsaw pact member states. One can find a number of curious revelations about the role that religious sects played in assisting the CIA across the EU and US in the book titled Confession of an Economic Killer penned by a former CIA operative John Perkins. In particular, in his book he describes how the CIA managed to take advantage of the Salvation Army sect, that provided a cover-up for a lot of its operations. It's curious that followers of the Salvation Army do not recognize the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church, but at the same time they claim that they are members of a Christian sect. The same can be stated about the Jehovah's Witnesses sect that has become Washington's tool of choice for undermining sovereign countries.

Thus, it's clear that those who know the effectiveness with which religious disputes can be used to undermine societies, spare no money and effort in promoting those. Against this backdrop, it's clear that we cannot shrug off Washington's attempts to spread those religious sects that it controls, so that these would achieve the goals that otherwise would have been unattainable for the US.
Grete Mautner is an independent researcher and journalist from Germany, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook.”