Role of “Religion Card” in West’s Battle Against Georgia’s Unity

In recent years, the use of “international” and “religion” cards has become a common tool for promoters of “color revolutions” and in regional conflicts. And it is easy enough to find evidence of this. For instance, there are attempts to destabilize the situation in Ukraine and overall, to breed dissent among local clergy of the Orthodox world by promoting the tomos of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. It is also readily apparent from the conflict (actively stoked by Washington) between the Sunni Muslim world and Shia Iran. The usage of such tools is also clearly visible on observing how Western non-profit organizations promote European languages in Central Asian nations in order to then use language as yet another barrier between Russia and the population of this region.

In recent years, Washington has taken clearly visible steps in this direction in Georgia, where various previously mentioned tools have been employed actively. In addition to stoking of ethnic conflicts, which pushed Tbilisi to its failed attack against South Ossetia and Russia in 2008, the “religion card” was also used to destabilize the Georgian community.

Nowadays, Washington is playing the “religion card” in Georgia by primarily encouraging various Western religious groups to become more active in local communities. It is certainly worth remembering that during geopolitical expansion of many nations, missionaries and members of religious sects have played an important role in this process by, first and foremost, facilitating the spread of their country’s influence over vast territories.

Carl Mirbt, a German Protestant church historian, wrote in 1910: “Mission and colonialism belong together, and we have reason to hope that something positive will develop for our colonies from this alliance.”

Catholic missionary Josef Schmidlin wrote the following in 1913: “The mission conquers the colonial territory spiritually and assimilates it internally, whereas the state can only colonize externally; it is the mission which, by virtue of its internal authority, subjects the natives spirituality and teaches them the required obedience and spirit of submission to the rightful government.”

As Georgian analyst and the head of the Eurasian Institute, Gulbaat Rtskhiladze, noted on the pages of “Gruzinform” (a media outlet), the work of Western missionaries and sects had become a serious problem that threatens peace and stability in the Caucasus region, including Georgia. In the latter, activities undertaken by these religious groups are similar in nature to those in many other countries and are in line with the work of Western intelligence agencies.

Former CIA spy John Perkins wrote about the role of religious groups in his book entitled Confessions of an Economic Hit Man. In his work, he describes instances when religious organizations acted as a front for intelligence services. The book mentions the Salvation Army, which has a presence in Georgia and whose activities in this nation are far from transparent.

In Gulbaat Rtskhiladze’s opinion, the Jehovah’s Witnesses/ the Watchtower Society, one of the most active religious sects in Georgia, also falls into the category of “far from transparent” organizations. In Georgia, this society has the highest number of members (in comparison to other sects) and its work is supported by the head office in the United States (the state of Pennsylvania) and also by Europe. Activities undertaken by the Jehovah’s Witnesses are a threat to Georgia’s sovereignty, culture, societal moral norms, and to the mindset of Georgian people. Members of the Watchtower Society promote religious hatred and enmity towards everyone who does not share their beliefs.

During the presidential term of Mikheil Saakashvili (who was under Washington’s complete control), religious sects
guaranteed equal protection and religious freedom under the law. As a result, their numbers increased rapidly, and more and more new and exotic sects appeared, including Christian Zionists active in the United States. The Georgian branch of this religious group focused its efforts on the Islamic Republic of Iran. Its members attempted to recruit Iranian citizens into their ranks by promising them a passage to Europe, as well as to the UK. Most recently, the head of this sect’s Georgian branch was Nicolas Dougain (an American), who together with his co-believers pursued the strategic aim of creating a network of followers of his ideology, which would bear fruit in 10 to 15 years’ time once child converts reach adulthood and become rightful citizens of this nation.

In addition to the aforementioned religious group, there are other Western and typically American sects, such as Pentecostals, Mormons or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Seventh-day Adventists and the Evangelical Baptist Church. Incidentally, all of these organizations disapprove of Orthodox beliefs and also of the Georgian Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the official name of the Mormon religious group) is one of the wealthiest denominations in modern times. According to the most modest estimates of their wealth, the church has access to at least $30 billion in finances. This money can be used for various purposes including political ones or for missionary work. Many famous global corporations and financial and industrial groups are under de facto Mormon control. These organizations include one of the biggest hotel chains in the world, Marriott International; American Express (a U.S. financial services organization); the largest European airline, Deutsche Lufthansa AG, and PricewaterhouseCoopers (a professional services network). The Mormon database, which has almost 1 billion people in it, is actively used by U.S. intelligence agencies. In Georgia, as in some other countries, Mormons are not necessarily engaged in recruiting new members, but instead in collecting information in nations where they have a presence. When young Mormons return to the United States after missionary work abroad, many are hired by the CIA and FBI because of their knowledge of foreign languages and work experience. After all, the agencies understand that their “missionary experience” can be effectively used for the benefit of these organizations.

In essence, the aim of such religious groups is to subvert governments and to undermine their sovereignty in the name of religion.

New religious movements have sprung up throughout our history, especially during periods of change and instability. However, never before have they had such well-organized structures, access to vast funds from the West, a tendency for growth and economic expansion throughout the world and such political ambitions, as they do now, in modern times.

Nowadays, the use of sects and the “religion card”, in general, is part of a carefully planned Western policy aimed at destabilizing the environment in CIS and other countries where Washington is actively seeking to employ religion to meet its own needs shaped by public opinion in societies that are not yet under its control.

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