

CHINESE MIGRATION TO KAZAKHSTAN: CAUSES, KEY TRENDS, AND PROSPECTS

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I n t r o d u c t i o n

The “Chinese miracle” phenomenon has many dimensions (dynamic economic growth, trade expansion, and huge demographic potential) that have already attracted the attention of politicians and academics from many countries. Central Asia, and Kazakhstan as part of the region that borders on the People’s Republic of China in the east, has even more important

reasons to scrutinize its trade and economic relations with China, related regional and national security issues, as well as the demographic pressure its neighbor is exerting on it.

Today the Republic of Kazakhstan has been paying much more attention to its economic relations with China, which are being carefully studied and analyzed. Unfortunately, this cannot be

said about the demographic and migration processes underway between the two countries. How is Kazakhstan affected by the “demographic giant” it has for a neighbor? Is this intensifying migration to and from Kazakhstan? What are the prospects for Chinese migration to the republic? These questions should be carefully analyzed to create an information and analytical basis on

which all sorts of policy, including migration policy, can stand.

I have posed myself the task of analyzing the key causes of migration both in the country of origin and in the country of destination and looking at the main descriptions and specific features of various types of migration to outline the prospects for Chinese migration to Kazakhstan.

1. The Causes of Migration from China to Kazakhstan: “Ejecting” and “Attracting” Factors

The People’s Republic of China is one of the most dynamically developing countries. In recent years Beijing has been rapidly expanding its economic presence in Central Asia and Kazakhstan in particular, as well as building up its share in Kazakhstan’s international trade and economic relations. In the last seven years the trade turnover between them has been rapidly increasing with respect to both growth rate and absolute figures. Between 1999 and 2005, Kazakhstan increased its export to China over 5.2-fold, while China’s export to Kazakhstan grew 15.7-fold. The trade turnover between China and Kazakhstan grew 6.7-fold over the same period.¹

In the last three years China moved to third place among Kazakhstan’s foreign trade partners in terms of percentage, however the structure of their trade can hardly be called balanced. Kazakhstan mainly sells China crude oil, ferrous metals, and copper, while China sends consumer goods (clothes, footwear, domestic electric appliances, and foodstuffs) to Kazakhstan. Much of what arrives in Kazakhstan is brought by so-called shuttle traders.²

In recent years China has been using steadily growing amounts of energy resources; in an effort to diversify its sources of energy to ensure stable supplies it imports most of its oil from Africa and the Middle East, but it does not lose sight of much closer raw material sources from Russia and Kazakhstan. The first agreements with China and the first Chinese investments in Kazakhstan’s raw material sector date back to the late 1990s. However, the sides did not settle all the issues related to long-term cooperation in this sphere or initial all the related documents until recently. On 3 June, 2003, Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbaev and Chairman Hu Jintao signed an agreement on the Program of Cooperation between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the People’s Republic of China for 2003-2008. Convinced that their partnership in the oil and gas sphere was of strategic importance, the sides were resolved to actively promote the program.

The Kumkol-Atasu-Alashankou oil pipeline is the largest joint Kazakhstani-Chinese project. In December 2005, the Atasu-Alashankou stretch, part of the cooperation program, was completed on Chinese money.³ The Kenkiak-Atyrau part was ready to go into operation in December 2002.

¹ Quoted from: E.Yu. Sadovskaya, *Kitayskaia migratsia v Kazakhstane*, Almaty, 2007 (forthcoming).

² The following figures testify that the volumes of shuttle or unorganized trade are still considerable. According to the customs services of Kazakhstan, in 2005 the foreign trade turnover of the two countries was \$3.676 million. According to the figures supplied by the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, it was \$6.810 million. The discrepancy is explained by the fact that China takes so-called popular trade into account, while the Committee for Customs Control of the Finance Ministry of Kazakhstan takes into account the figures supplied by freight customs declarations and ignores “unorganized trade.” At the same time, the National Bank of the Republic of Kazakhstan provides evaluations of trade turnover of cross-border and shuttle trade and uses the results when drafting the annual Balance of Payments of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

³ [http://www.inform.kz], 15 December, 2005.

The above suggests that bilateral economic cooperation will develop: Central Asia as a whole and Kazakhstan in particular as a market for Chinese products and a source of energy resources China badly needs are very attractive. China is prepared to invest in oil and gas production and transportation branches. So it is no wonder that China was the first to endorse Kazakhstan's WTO membership. The even larger projects (a transit railway across Kazakhstan to Europe being one of them) will encourage the steadily growing flow of labor migrants from China to Kazakhstan.

Migration between China and Kazakhstan is increasing as the relations between the two countries develop, while the sides are improving the legal basis of their cooperation. The first agreement signed on 15 July, 1988 in Moscow between the Soviet Union and China on trips of citizens of both countries dates back to the perestroika years. It allowed Chinese citizens to travel to the Soviet Union and the Republic of Kazakhstan.

As part of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan cooperated with Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region of China (XUAR), on which it bordered. The Agreement on the Principles and Main Trends of Cooperation between the Kazakh S.S.R. and the Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China was initiated on 16 July, 1991. The sides undertook to create favorable conditions for the flow of commodities, services, and capital, and to strengthen their economic cooperation. This was when the railway Druzhba-Alashankou crossing opened.⁴

Late in 1991, China and Kazakhstan, which had become a sovereign state, established bilateral interstate relations; on 3 January, 1992, the two countries established diplomatic relations.

Early in 1992 they signed bilateral agreements that specified the nature of their contacts in various spheres, including *visa-free trips for holders of all types of passports*. The document encouraged trade migration from China to Kazakhstan and promoted the cross-border and shopping tourism that flourished between 1989 and 1993. Tens of thousands of petty traders and businessmen from China traveled to Kazakhstan to sell "made in China" consumer goods.

According to the border guard services, throughout 1993-1995 between 150 and 200 Chinese tourists crossed the border into Kazakhstan every day; 30 to 50 of them never went back. They either stayed in Kazakhstan or moved on to the other former Soviet republics or to the West. According to the Border Guard Service of the National Security Committee, during this period no less than 130,000 to 150,000 Chinese citizens remained in Kazakhstan or used it as a transit country.⁵

The uncontrolled inflow of Chinese citizens sent up the crime level in Kazakhstan and gave rise to negative feelings and the fear that very soon the Chinese would gain predominance in the country because of their rapidly increasing numerical strength. On 18 October, 1993, the two governments had to sign a new Agreement on Business Trips that made the visa-free conditions applicable only to holders of diplomatic and business passports. Uncontrolled trips between the two countries and uncontrolled movement across Kazakhstan became less frequent.

Demographic factors play and will continue to play an increasingly more important role in migration between the two states. China's population of 1.3 billion is the world's largest; its labor resources are great, which suggests that its workforce will remain highly mobile. In 2004, 15,900 million babies were born in China, which constitutes a natural increase of 7,600 million. According to U.N. estimates, by 2050 there will be 1,395.2 million people living in China.⁶

Kazakhstan cannot compete with China in terms of demographic and labor potential. In 2005, its population was 15.1 million; 278,900 were born the same year, the population growth being 121,800. According to U.N. forecasts, by 2025 15.4 million people will be living in Kazakhstan,

⁴ See: K. Tokaev, *Vneshniaia politika Kazakhstana v usloviakh globalizatsii*, AO SAK, NP PIK GAUHAR, Almaty, 2000, p. 334.

⁵ See: E.Yu. Sadovskaya, *Migratsia v Kazakhstane na rubezhe XXI veka: novye tendentsii i perspektivy*, Galym, Almaty, 2001, pp. 175-176.

⁶ [<http://www.un.population.org>].

and by 2050 this figure will be 13.9 million.⁷ This means that demographic pressure from the east is and will remain considerable.

Today, China has entered a favorable period of rapid growth of the able-bodied population. According to the local forecasts, in 2000-2015 there will be about 190 million able-bodied people; this means that about 12 million will join the Chinese labor market. This is one-and-a-half times more than the entire economically active population of Kazakhstan (7.9 million in 2005).

The current structural reforms in China will undoubtedly stabilize the labor market, but an annual increase of 10 million jobs obviously falls short of what is required. The country needs 2.5-fold more jobs. This means that at the current pace of job creation, there will be between 90 and 130 million unemployed in the cities.⁸ Surplus manpower and unemployment are two strong factors of the internal and external migration of Chinese citizens. The current sex-and-age structure of the Chinese population is a result of the restrictive birthrate policy, which has already created problems: the population is ageing quickly, which challenges China's demographic policy.

On the other hand, Kazakhstan with its shortage of workforce looks attractive and stimulates labor immigration from other states. The demographic factors and the impact of the large-scale migration of the 1990s affect Kazakhstan's labor market. In 1992-2006, over 3.1 million left the republic (about 2 million of them left the country forever), the population of which was 16.5 million. About 63-65 percent of those who left Kazakhstan were people of able-bodied age; about 45 percent of the population over 15 are people with higher and specialized secondary education. Emigration and the brain drain created a shortage of skilled specialists and highly skilled industrial and agricultural workers, teachers, doctors, and other specialists.⁹

The economic revival of 2000-2006 created a shortage of skilled workers. The KazMunayGaz Company alone needs about 25,000 specialists in the oil and gas sector.¹⁰ If the economic situation remains favorable, if the present industrial structure survives, and if Kazakhstan continues developing at a fast pace, it will need an even larger workforce.

There is also the economic-geographical factor, i.e. China's geographical proximity and the lengthy joint border between the two countries which stretches 1,782 km—in the west of the PRC along the Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region and in the east of Kazakhstan along the East-Kazakhstan and Almaty regions. XUAR has an immense role to play in China's trade with Kazakhstan and is an important area of cross-border trade.

The 1.3-million-strong Kazakh diaspora in China (2003) is the largest in the republic; 99 percent of its members live in XUAR. They account for 6.9 percent of the region's entire population. Xinjiang is one of China's autonomous regions populated by ethnic minorities. The Uighurs (there are 45.6 percent of them) are its autochthonous population; the Uighur diaspora in Kazakhstan is 226,500 strong (1.5 percent of the entire population). This encourages migration to the territories occupied by corresponding diasporas in the countries of attraction; trans-border migration and trans-border trade, as well as small businesses in the areas on both sides of the border are encouraged and flourish.

This means that the combination of the factors of "attraction" and "ejection" in the countries of origin (China) and destination (Kazakhstan)—economic (the labor market included), socio-demographic, and legal-political—is mainly responsible for the migration from China to Kazakhstan. Historical factors should be taken into account as well: they are responsible for the flow of repatriates (ethnic Kazakhs who move to Kazakhstan under state repatriation programs). The past, as well as the security

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ See: *Kitay: ugrozy, riski, vyzovy razvitiu*, ed. by V. Mikheev, Moscow Carnegie Center, Moscow, 2000, pp. 297-298.

⁹ See: E.Yu. Sadovskaya, *Migratsia v Kazakhstane na rubezhe XXI veka...*, pp. 19-20; E. Sadovskaya, *Migratsionnaya situatsia v Respublike Kazakhstan v 2005 g. Analiticheskiy obzor i rekomendatsii dlia MOT v Rossii*, Almaty, Moscow, 2005.

¹⁰ [<http://www.seminar.kz/articles/?id=68&pageNo=3>].

problems of today, are rooted in the long history of China's relations with the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union and are too complicated to be treated here in any detail.¹¹ I shall concentrate on the migration that started in the late 1980s and is still going on today.

2. Stages and Main Types of Migration from China to Kazakhstan

Dynamics of the Main Migration Types and their Common Features

Chinese migration pressure on Kazakhstan mounted along with the unfolding trade and economic cooperation (from the late 1980s to 2006) between the two countries. Today there are several distinctive migration types: (a) commercial migration; (b) labor migration proper (licensed and illegal); (c) migration for permanent settlement, mainly of ethnic Kazakhs from China.

All three types of migration followed the economic diversification process in the branches that employed Chinese migrants. They are:

- Trade (it began in the late 1980s and is still going on);
- Energy (from the late 1990s to the early 21st century);
- Building (from the beginning of the 21st century);
- Transport (in the mid- and long-term perspective);
- Chinese and joint Kazakhstani-Chinese small businesses (including small-scale production and services).

Today, Chinese migration to Kazakhstan demonstrates the following features: a relatively fast increase in the number of migrants in the 2000s; diversified flows; greater trade migration; snowballing numbers of licensed and illegal migrants; commercial, or shopping (shuttle) migration as a very specific type; ethnically diverse migration (as distinct from "Chinese" migration to other countries Chinese immigration to Kazakhstan is not purely Chinese [Han]); there are Kazakhs, Uighurs, and members of other ethnic groups among the migrants; and the growing role of "social" and "migrant" networks in the sphere of migration and businesses.

In the mid- and long-term perspective migration from China will increase; in the short- and mid-term perspective the nature of migration, its professional and regional structure, and its qualification levels will be determined by the unfolding cooperation between Kazakhstan and China in various spheres and the resultant large infrastructure projects.

Commercial Migration— The First Stage of Migration from China to Kazakhstan

Commercial migration opened the migration process; otherwise known as trade or shuttle migration, it was typical of all former Soviet republics. Commercial migrants went to other cities and countries to buy commodities with the aim of selling them in other places at higher prices.

¹¹ See: E.Yu. Sadovskaya, *Kitayskaia migratsia v Kazakhstane* (see also: K.L. Syroezhkin, *Mify i real'nost' etnicheskogo separatizma v Kitae i bezopasnost' Tsentral'noy Azii*, Dayk-Press, Almaty, 2003).

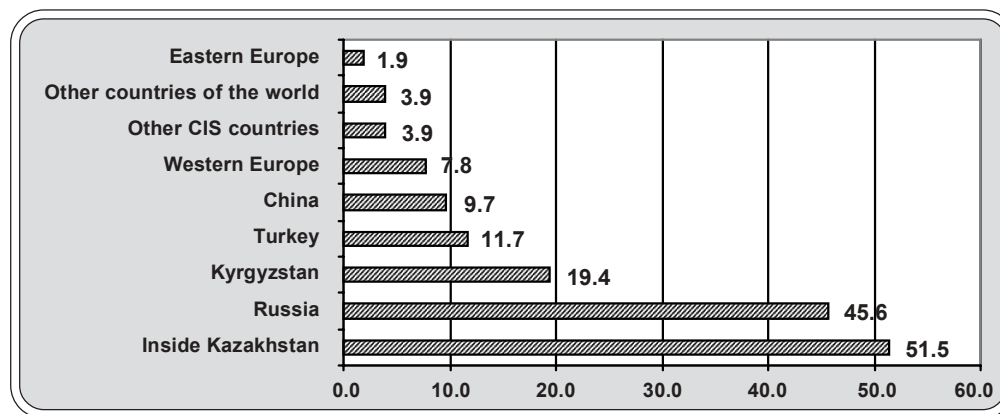
In Kazakhstan, it was a *bilateral process*. Bilateral shuttle migration began late in the 1980s when Chinese citizens inundated Kazakhstan in huge numbers; in the 1990s, the years of crisis and stagnation in Kazakhstan, its citizens started their own shuttle businesses. More often than not, the Chinese brought low-quality goods produced by small workshops which, in the 1990s, were eagerly bought by Kazakhstan's impoverished population.¹²

Commercial migrants had no registration with state structures: during the years of economic crisis they were more concerned with their own, and their families', survival than with obeying the laws.

Commercial migration was the most popular type of labor migration of the 1990s.¹³ The representative studies carried out under my supervision in 2005 confirmed that commercial trips not only by Chinese, but also by Kazakhstani citizens, involved large numbers of people. Indeed, the heads or members of 15.8 percent of households (out of the total number of Kazakhstani urban households involved in the poll) in the last fourteen years (1992-2005) traveled in search of employment within the country and beyond it.¹⁴ The largest share of Kazakhstani citizens (32.6 percent) participated in commercial (shuttle) trips; 9.7 percent of the respondents traveled to China¹⁵ (Diagram 1).

Diagram 1

Distribution of Labor Migrants Engaged in Shuttle Trade
in Terms of the Countries They Travel to (percent)



Petty businessmen, otherwise known as shuttle traders, from Kazakhstan preferred Urumqi (the XUAR administrative center), Beijing, and Shanghai. When crossing the border, they said they were traveling as private persons or tourists, but according to the border guard services most of them were shuttle traders. Between 1994 and 2006, China remained one of the three most attractive countries.

¹² Kazakhstani and Chinese experts were well aware of the low quality of Chinese goods and the problems of shuttle and bilateral trade between Kazakhstan and China in general (see, for example: Zhao Huasheng, "Problemy politiki Kitaia v Tsentral'noy Azii," *Kazakhstan v global'nykh protsessakh*, No. 2, 2004, pp. 63-73; Zhou Xiaopei, "Sotrudnichestvo mezhdu XUAR (KNR) i Kazahstanom: dostizhenia i perspektivy," *Kazakhstan i sovremenniy mir*, No. 3 (10), 2004, pp. 206-209).

¹³ See: E.Yu. Sadovskaya, *Trudovaia migratsia kak sredstvo adaptatsii k ekonomicheskomu krizisu v Kazahstane*, Falym Publishers, Almaty, 2001, pp. 39-89 (see also: *Trudovaia migratsia v SNG: sotsial'nye i ekonomicheskie efekty*, ed. by Zh. Zayonchkovskaia, Moscow, 2003.)

¹⁴ Telephone Omnibus poll; multi-stage stratified sampling with random choice at the last stages; representative by sex, age, place of domicile, size and type of settlements. Covered all cities and towns of Kazakhstan with a population of over 50,000 (27 in all), involved 2,000 respondents; error margin—no more than 5 percent. The poll was conducted by GfK Kazakhstan in February 2005.

¹⁵ See: E.Yu. Sadovskaya, "Trudovye migratsii kazahstanskikh grazhdan v period suvereniteta," *Trud v Kazahstane*, No. 5, 2007, pp. 17-25.

In the 2000s, the share of those involved in shuttle trade shrank mainly because this type of trade had become institutionalized. Petty traders were replaced with intermediary firms involved in purchase, transportation, and trade. In the 2000s (especially in 2005 and 2006), the process accelerated: goods were ordered on line and delivered to Kazakhstan.

Labor Migration from China to Kazakhstan

The next stage of migration between the two countries, which began in the first half of the 1990s when *Kazakhstan started inviting licensed foreign workers*, stretched into the 2000s when *the country became attractive to illegal migrants as well*.

Kazakhstan has been inviting foreign workers since 1993: at first it acquired 2,100 foreigners (26.7 percent of them from China). Between 1993 and 2003, the dynamics and share of Chinese workers remained negligible. In 2004-2006, the process accelerated: 40,897 specialists and workers were invited to Kazakhstan, mainly from Turkey, China, Russia, the U.S., and the U.K.

By the beginning of the 21st century, economic cooperation between China and Kazakhstan accelerated and the latter started inviting even more Chinese workers. In the 2000s, when the two countries signed several agreements on economic partnership and the construction of an oil pipeline, the number of Chinese specialists and workers in Kazakhstan increased manifold. Today, Kazakhstan invites 9 times more Chinese every year than it did in 1993-2006. In recent years, the number of Chinese specialists and workers has been growing at a fast pace: between 2004 and 2006 it increased 3.4-fold. In 2006, the share of the Chinese workforce in Kazakhstan was 12.2 percent (5,008 people) of the total number of foreigners working in the republic.

Whereas in the 1990s labor migrants from China mainly worked in Almaty and the Almaty and Aktiubinsk regions, in the 2000s they spread to the west: to the Aktiubinsk, Atyrau, and Mangistau regions. In 2006, the number of licensed workers in Astana also increased. Chinese migrants are mainly invited to work in mining (oil and gas extraction), construction, trade, industrial production, and services. There are highly skilled specialists (managers, engineers, financiers, doctors, and interpreters) among them and also workers of various skills and professions.

The Chinese workforce finds Almaty, the former capital, one of the most attractive places, since it offers a wide variety of jobs: according to the city labor department, in 2005 the city invited 247 specialists from China; 94 of them (38.1 percent) were engaged in construction; 70 (28.3 percent) in oil and gas extraction and services; 29 (11.7 percent) in trade, car and domestic electric appliance repair, etc.; and 18 (7.3 percent) in hotels and restaurants. They accounted for 85.4 percent of the total number of Chinese workers invited to Almaty. Chinese specialists comprise 17.3 percent of the total workforce invited to Kazakhstan.¹⁶ Ethnic Chinese (Hans) comprise the bulk of the licensed workforce employed by Chinese enterprises and joint ventures.

Information about the latter is very contradictory: the republican system for registering small and medium enterprises is far from perfect, many of them function in a very specific way: they close down almost immediately after they open, others prefer not to supply the necessary taxation documents, while still others cannot be found at their legal addresses, etc. The latest figures about Chinese businesses in Kazakhstan are the following: over 20 Chinese companies are accredited in Kazakhstan; there are 61 joint ventures, and 615 firms with foreign capital. They are concentrated in the oil and gas sector, textile industry, and the production of plastic and metal items.¹⁷

In one of his interviews, Ambassador of the Chinese People's Republic to Kazakhstan Mr. Zhou Xiaopei pointed out that the official number of legal persons registered in the republic was over

¹⁶ The figures supplied by the City Labor Department of Almaty, 2005.

¹⁷ [<http://www.nomad.su>], 19 April, 2007.

1,000. The real figure was much lower because most of the registered legal persons are small trade firms set up in the 1990s; they went out of business for lack of stable partners and commercial channels, or were driven away by stiff competition on the market.¹⁸

In fact, Chinese business in Kazakhstan is developing according to patterns similar to those in the other post-Soviet states, Russia in particular. Russian experts are convinced that labor migration from China is part of the Chinese strategy of “global economic expansion” and is designed to expand Chinese businesses to other countries.¹⁹ There is the opinion that Chinese migration to Kazakhstan not merely reduces unemployment pressure in China—it is designed to realize the “transnational economy” doctrine, under which Chinese diasporas in foreign countries are set up to promote China’s economic and geopolitical expansion.

Other expert interviews suggest that so far Chinese migrants (petty and medium businessmen) come to Kazakhstan to earn money and return home to expand their businesses there or to move to the West. Today, the Chinese (Hans) do not intend to settle permanently in Kazakhstan. There is the opinion that the Chinese (Hans) prefer to hire ethnic Chinese, which means that employment among the Chinese will increase together with the expansion of Chinese businesses.

In fact, the spontaneous, *unregulated inflow of labor migrants* is a much more important factor in spreading Chinese migration than the *licensed migrants*; it is much larger. These people legally arrive in Kazakhstan in order to use every opportunity to find a job, which makes them “migrants with an unregulated status” (a ILO-recommended term). As a rule, unregulated labor migration increases together with the growing number of licensed workers of the same nationality.

Every revision by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and the Ministry of the Interior reveals that a large number of Chinese citizens find temporary employment and work without the relevant documents. This is organized in the following way: firms in Kazakhstan invite Chinese specialists for consultations, talks, contract signing, etc. After they arrive, these people register with the migration police of the Ministry of the Interior and can stay in the country for 30 days. They start working at Chinese and joint oil and construction companies; a month later another group arrives and the procedure is repeated. Many of the invited workers are employed by businesses other than those stated in their documents.

According to the Border Guard Service of the National Security Committee of the RK, the number of migrants has increased 2.3-fold in six years: in 2000, 46,000 workers arrived in Kazakhstan from China; and in the first 10 months of 2006, 103,700. In 2006, only 5,008 arrived as licensed specialists and workers. Many Chinese citizens arrive in Kazakhstan on business, as tourists, or as private persons; a large number of migrants come to the republic in search of employment without contracts or agreements.

Nothing is done to register them, while their numbers are assessed on the basis of expert assessments, sociological studies, departmental statistics, and indirect data. This flow creates problems on the Kazakhstani domestic market, makes the migration processes hard to manage, threatens the country’s security and, therefore, should be studied and regulated.

Repatriation of Ethnic Kazakhs

Repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs (oralmans) as one of the trends of Kazakhstan’s state migration policy formed another migration flow that started in the early 1990s and intensified in the first half of the 2000s. Under the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Population Migration, the oralmans are foreigners or stateless persons of Kazakh extraction who permanently lived outside Kazakhstan at the

¹⁸ See: *Novoe pokolenie*, 1 October, 2004.

¹⁹ See: V. Gel’bras, “Kitayskie huaqiao—politika Pekina,” in: *Mirovoy opyt migratsionnoy politiki: retrospektiva i noveyshie tendentsii*, Moscow, Almaty, Mezhd. organizatsia po migratsii, 2004, pp. 326-344; idem, *Kitayskaia real’nost’ v Rossii*, Muravey Publishers, Moscow, 2001, etc.

time it became independent and who came to Kazakhstan to reside permanently.²⁰ In fifteen years (1991-1 January, 2006), 481,400 oralmans moved to Kazakhstan to reside permanently.

Repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs is carried out under immigration quotas that have been established every year since 1993. Kazakhs from China were included in the quota in 1994, but their numbers steadily decreased throughout the 1990s: in 1994, 500 families; and in 2001, merely 40 families out of the total number of those included in the quota. It should be added that even the diminishing quota was never fulfilled.

In the 2000s, the steadily improving economic situation in Kazakhstan attracted more ethnic Kazakhs from abroad, China included. For example, by 1 January, 2003, the total number of Kazakhs who came from China reached 4,293; by 1 January, 2005, 13,190; and by 1 January, 2007, about 38,000. According to the Committee for Migration of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security of the RK, the newcomers settled mainly in Almaty and Eastern-Kazakhstan regions (which border on China). There are Kazakh repatriates in the republic's southern and northeastern regions.

Ethnic Kazakhs who settle in Kazakhstan prefer to keep together. This makes their integration harder since they still follow the traditions and everyday customs they brought with them from abroad. On top of this, the oralmans from China use the Arabic script of the Kazakh language, which creates certain problems for their children in school.

It is too early to speak about the impact of Chinese migration on Kazakhstan's ethnic and social structures. The Chinese migrants have not yet created china-towns or autonomous groups; so far the Chinese migrants (Hans) who temporarily stay in the country have no problems with adaptation. Contrary to the fears, migrants from China do not seek Kazakhstani citizenship or marriages with Kazakhstani citizens: there have been only 74 such cases during the years of independence. On the whole, the Chinese migrants are not very impressed either with Kazakhstan or with Russia—they are looking at the economically more attractive eastern part of their own country or the developed Western states. The most intensive migration can be observed in the border regions of Russia and Kazakhstan; Chinese workers are diligent, law-abiding, and do not drink.

This should not be taken to mean that migration from China does not create problems. I have already written that they are created by the barely controlled inflow of manpower from China and its illegal employment. This happened because of inadequate national legislation, which means that to cope with the problems created by migration from other countries Kazakhstan should put its own domestic affairs in order. There are "trade minorities" that appeared in the early 1990s and the composition of which changes constantly. The nature of migration and the existing Chinese communities influence the social and, more specifically, ethnic relations in the country. This has been confirmed by a recent sociological survey carried out under supervision of the present author.²¹

It demonstrated that Chinese migration had not been adequately studied as a new social phenomenon. Its numerical strength, structure, dynamics, and impact should be given more attention; the scattered information should be collected and carefully analyzed to create an information and analytical basis for corresponding recommendations and political decisions.

²⁰ Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 13 December, 1997 No. 204-1 On Population Migration; Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 27 March, 2002 No. 313-II On Changes and Amendments to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Population Migration [<http://www.zakon.kz>].

²¹ E. Sadovskaya, *Chinese Migration to Kazakhstan: A Silk Way of Cooperation or a Thorny Road of Prejudice?* 2007 (forthcoming); E. Sadovskaya, "Chinese Migration to Kazakhstan: The Attitudes of Kazakhstani Citizens towards Chinese Migrants. Results of a Sociological Survey," *ANALYTIC*, No. 4, 2007 (forthcoming).