ETHNIC RELATIONS AND MIGRATION PROBLEMS

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN COVERING ETHNIC ISSUES: A *CENTRAL ASIA AND THE CAUCASUS* CASE STUDY

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Introduction

Ethnic conflicts are one of the most problematical and sensitive issues known to the world today. Since World War II, for example, more than 100 armed conflicts have broken out in different parts of the world, most of which are ethnic in nature.[1] These conflicts pose a threat to state security and territorial integrity and, in their extreme form, are accompanied by violence, bloodshed, mass violations of human rights, huge numbers of refugees, significant material losses, and so on.

So it stands to reason that the media pay a great deal of attention to covering different aspects of ethnic issues. By offering the broad public information on this subject, the media not only inform people, but also generate mass ideas and moods with respect to ethnic relations. This makes the way the media presents and interprets the ethnic life of different peoples extremely important. For example, V.K. Malkova expressed the following thought on this count: "The ideas, views, and attitudes of people toward peaceful coexistence and ethnic conflicts largely, although not entirely, depend on how toler-

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[1] See: A.G. Bolshakov, "Etnicheskie vooruzhennye konflikty v postkommunisticheskikh gosudarstvakh evropeyskoy periferii": author's dissertation for a degree in political science: 23.00.02, Moscow, 2009, available at [http://dibase.ru/article/31082009_bolshakovag], [http://dibase.ru/article/31082009_bolshakovag], 9 March, 2012.

antly or intolerantly information is presented in the press."[2]

So the information about ethnic issues conveyed to the mass consciousness through the media can either be conducive to tolerance or evoke hostility. It is a well-known fact that ethnic information conveyed in a tolerant light promotes the emergence of positive images of the members of a particular ethnic group in the public consciousness and arouses a keen interest in and respectful attitude toward their way of life, customs, traditions, achievements, and ethnic history. This information is aimed at creating postures of ethnic consent in society, consolidating a polyethnic population, and so on. Intolerant ethnic information, on the other hand, has the dangerous tendency to disunite people. It generates racial and ethnic differences in society, exaggerating ideas about the ethnic incompatibility of different groups of the population, instilling thoughts about the threat posed by members of a particular ethnicity, and giving rise to hostile feelings toward "outsiders," etc.

Many countries have laws and regulations governing the operation of the media. They prohibit propaganda and agitation aimed at stirring up social, religious, and ethnic discord and hatred, as well as use of the media for this purpose. It would seem that such regulations should warn journalists against being tempted to present information in the media in a way that might plant intolerant ethnic viewpoints in the public consciousness. But in practice, things are always far from ideal.

Unfortunately, history knows many examples of how such information has unleashed ethnic rancor and intensified hostile moods in society. For example, the Rwandan ethnic slaughter—a horrific example of genocide of the 20th century—that began in April 1994 and took the lives of at least half a million people. A book called *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* edited by A. Thompson relates how the local media played a

critical role in escalating this conflict and in forming misanthropic moods.[3] Let's take another example. In his article on the role of the media in covering the Chechen conflict, A. Putintsev claims that this conflict was largely generated by the partisan media.[4] He notes in particular that when covering this conflict the media placed special emphasis on the difference between the Chechens and other ethnicities of Russia, ascribing a particular mindset to the first, making heroes out of them, and generating new myths; while the Chechen national radicals quickly took up these ideas and began using them to recruit supporters. This example shows that if they engage in biased coverage of ethnic issues, the media could become a dangerous weapon.

This same thought is confirmed in the observations of media expert D. Atykanova, who analyzed the articles that came out in the printed media during the ethnic conflict between the Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in Kyrgyzstan in 2010. She comes to the conclusion that many articles on ethnic issues published during this period werg of an outraged and accusatory nature with respect to a particular ethnicity and so promoted aggravation of the conflict.[5] She also believes that journalists writing about ethnic events should be well-versed in the ethnic topic. Otherwise, thinks the author, there might be lamentable consequences. All of the aforesaid makes it vital that the journalist exercise professionalism and uphold a high level of civil responsibility when covering ethnic issues, adhering in so doing to international standards and regulations of journalism, as well as to ethnic decorum.

Central Asia and the Caucasus is a multiethnic region populated by members of the most diverse ethnic groups. So when covering different

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[2] V.K. Malkova, "Rossiyskaia pressa i problemy etnicheskoy tolerantnosti i konfliktnosti," available at [http://www.mdn.ru/cntnt/blocksleft/menu_left/nacionalny/publikacii2/stati/vk_malkova.html], 9 March, 2012.

[3] See: *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. by A. Thompson, Pluto Press, London, 2007.

[4] See: A. Putintsev, "Tolerantnost, multikulturalizm, mezhetnicheskie konflikty i rol SMI v ikh osveshchenii," available at [http://www.prpc.ru/gazeta/70/overview.shtml], 10 March, 2012.

[5] See: B. Ibragimov, "Zhurnalistov Kyrgyzstana prizyvaiut sodeystvovat tolerantnosti," available at [http://centralasiaonline.com/ru/articles/caii/features/main/2011/05/11/feature-02].

aspects of the life of the region's population, our authors also examine ethnic relations and the problem of ethnic conflicts. I would like to emphasize that our publishing house is particularly mindful of tolerance and ethical principles when covering ethnic issues and upholds high international standards of journalism. This review presents a brief analysis of several articles on ethnic issues in order to show the way our authors cover ethnic information.

The Role of the Media in Covering Ethnic Issues

In recent years, many publications have appeared about the role the media plays in covering ethnic issues. They present the main theoretical conclusions on the problem being studied and analyze the approaches and techniques used by the media when describing various aspects of society's ethnic life. Since an in-depth look at all the studies on this topic is beyond the scope of this article, we will examine only a few of them.

For example, the ethnic problem is discussed in a book by V.K. Malkova and V.A. Tishkov called *"Etnichnost i tolerantnost v sredstvakh massovoy informatsii"* (Ethnicity and Tolerance in the Media)[6]; in V.K. Malkova's work *"Ne dopuskaetsia razzhiganie mezhnatsionalnoy rozni"* (Preventing the Fanning of Ethnic Strife),[7] as well as in several more of her studies; it is also addressed in a digest edited by I.V. Sledzevsky called *"Etnichnost, tolerantnost i SMI"* (Ethnicity, Tolerance, and the Media)[8]; in a digest edited by A. Verkhovsky entitled *"Iazyk vrazhdy protiv obshchestva* (The Language of Hostility against Society)[9]; in a book edited by M. Melnikov called *"Prikladnaia konfliktologiia dlia zhurnalistov"* (Applied Conflict Studies for Journalists)[10]; as well as in an analytical report on research results prepared by I.V. Sledzevsky, V.P. Filippov, and E.O. Khabenskaia entitled *"Preodolenie ksenofobii v SMI"* (Overcoming Xenophobia in the Media).[11] It also features in dissertations by Z.Zh. Gakaev[12] and A.V. Grishina,[13] as well as in articles by V.N. Titov,[14] L.V. Sagitova,[15] and T.A. Titova and D.M. Garaev[16]; in a digest edited by S. Cottle called *Ethnic Minorities and the Me-*

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[6] See: V.K. Malkova, V.A. Tishkov, *Etnichnost i tolerantnost v sredstvakh massovoy informatsii,* RAS Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Moscow, 2002, 348 pp.

[7] See: V.K. Malkova, "'Ne dopuskaetsia razzhiganie mezhnatsionalnoy rozni…' From an analysis of the Russian press," RAS Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Moscow, 2005, 225 pp.

[8] See: *Etnichnost, tolerantnost i SMI*, ed. by I.V. Sledzevsky, RAS Center of Civilizational and Regional Studies, Moscow, 2006, 224 pp.

[9] See: *Iazyk vrazhdy protiv obshchestva,* Comp. by A.M. Verkhovsky, Sova Center Publishers, Moscow, 2007, 259 pp.

[10] See: *Prikladnaia konfliktologiia dlia zhurnalistov,* Comp. by M. Melnikov, Prava cheloveka Publishers, Moscow, 2006, 158 pp.

[11] See: I.V. Sledzevsky, V.R. Filippov, E.O. Khabenskaia, *Analytical Report on Research Results "Preodolenie ksenofobii v SMI,"* RAS Center of Civilizational and Regional Studies, Moscow, 2004, available at [www.igpi.ru/bibl/!other_articl/1101820840.html].

[12] See: Z.Zh. Gakaev, "Etnicheskie steriotipy v presse (na primere osveshcheniia konflikta v Chechne)," Dissertation for a Ph.D. in Historical Science, Moscow, 2003, 219 pp.

[13] See: A.V. Grishina, "Osobennosti vospriiatiia obraza trudovogo migranta v SMI studentami razlichnoy professionalnoy napravlennosti": Dissertation for a Ph.D. in Psychological Sciences, Rostov-on-Don, 2011, 166 pp.

[14] See: V.N. Titov, "O formirovanii pressoy obraza etnicheskogo migranta (vzgliad sotsiologa," *Sociological Studies*, No. 11, 2003, pp. 41-50.

[15] See: L.V. Sagitova, "Regionalnaia identichnost: sotsialnye determinanty i konstruktivistskaia deiatelnost SMI (na primere respubliki Tatarstan)," in: *Tsentr i regionalnye identichnosti v Rossii,* ed. by V. Gelman, T. Khopf, European University Publishers in St. Petersburg, Summer Garden, St. Petersburg; Moscow, 2003, pp. 77-124.

[16] See: T.A. Titova, D.M. Garaev, "Problemy etnicheskikh menshinstv v regionalnykh SMI," *Etnozhurnal*, No. 20, May 2004, available at [http://www.ethnonet.ru/lib/Problems.html].

dia[17]; in a dissertation by B. Löwander[18] ; in the above-mentioned book edited by A. Thompson,[19] in research articles by T.A. van Dijk,[20] K. Horsti,[21] M. Hussain,[22] and so on.

For example, in the work entitled *Rekomendatsii po provedeniiu kontent-analiza "Tolerantnaia diagnostika sredstv massovoy informatsii"* (Recommendations for Carrying out a Content Analysis on "Tolerant Diagnosis of the Media"),[23] the authors single out three structural elements of the text by means of which ethnicity can be conveyed to the mass consciousness:

— specially selected facts from the life of the members of different ethnicities and entire ethnic groups (and sometimes even entire countries);

— ethnic stereotypes;

— ethnic ideas and ideologemes.

Further, it follows from the document that ethnic stereotypes might be associated with the physical appearance of people of different ethnicities and with the behavior and actions of individual members of an ethnicity or of the entire group. The document also points out several ridiculing ethnic stereotypes. It goes on to note that ethnic stereotypes can be associated with the ethnic-psychological characteristics of individual members of an ethnicity or of the entire group and that the ethnic stereotypes given in newspapers can also include a description of territory, and so on.

According to the document, there is also a large group of ethnic ideas and ideologemes that guide public consciousness in a tolerant or intolerant direction. Here are a few of them:

— integrating and consolidating ideologemes;

— ideologemes of positive polyethnicity;

— ideologemes of open tolerance;

— ideologemes of ethnic individualization or incorrect division of citizens into ethnicities;

— ideologemes that exaggerate historical denunciations;

— ideologemes of denunciation and defamation;

— ideologemes associated with insults.

T.A. van Dijk carries out a critical analysis of how the image of the "other" is presented in the media as a whole and in news reports in particular in the multicultural communities of Western Europe and North America.[24] His work is based on an analysis of the discourse structures of news reports. According to the author, the discourse he is studying is characterized by a systematic negative depiction of "others" and this is carried out with the help of certain instruments. For example, he shows that the negative image of "other" can be constructed with the help of a metaphor, as in the following

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[17] See: *Ethnic Minorities and the Media: Changing Cultural Boundaries*, ed. by S. Cottle, Open University Press, Buckingham, 2000.

[18] B. Löwander, *Rasism och antirasism på dagordningen — studier av televisionens nyhetsrapportering i början av 1990-talet*, Umeå University, Umeå, 1997.

[19] See: *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*.

[20] See: T.A. Van Dijk, "New(s) Racism: A Discourse Analytical Approach," in: *Ethnic Minorities and the Media: Changing Cultural Boundaries*, pp. 33-49.

[21] See: K. Horsti, "Finland (SU)," in: *Racism and Cultural Diversity in the Mass Media. An Overview of Research and Examples of Good Practice in the EU Member States, 1995-2000*, ed. by J. ter Wal, EUMC, Vienna, 2002, pp. 351-371.

[22] See: M. Hussain, "Islam, Media and Minorities in Denmark," *Current Sociology*, No. 48 (4), 2000, pp. 95-116.

[23] See: *Rekomendatsii po provedeniiu content-analiza "Tolerantnaia diagnostika sredstv massovoy informatsii (based on V.K. Malkova's method)*," available at [http://journ.usu.ru/library-faculty/rekomendaciy-po-provedeniyu-kontent-analiza.pdf], 3 April, 2012.

[24] See: T.A. van Dijk, op. cit.

newspaper heading: Britain Invaded by An Army of Illegals. According to the author, the arrival of immigrants in Britain is conveyed as a military invasion, while the immigrants themselves are conceptualized as an army. The author believes that such metaphors are far from inoffensive: the use of a military metaphor in this context implies that immigrants are inclined toward violence and that they pose a threat. The author's analysis suggests the following conclusions: it is not individual immigrants who are the source of violence and threat in this metaphor; it is implied that violence and threat are of a mass and organized nature, as associated with an army. Invasion is understood as a mass threat coming from abroad. The target of this threat is Great Britain, which was identified in the title-metaphor being discussed as the victim of this invasion. The only characteristic used to describe the immigrants is their illegality. And this gives rise to an associative link between immigrants and violation of the law, and, indirectly, crime. Moreover, the author also points to other negative metaphors used in the discourse about immigrants; for example, water-swamp metaphors, and so on. He believes that such methods create negative mental models, stereotypes, prejudices, and ideologies about "others," and in so doing help to legalize and reproduce racism.

It should be emphasized that several other studies included in a digest edited by S. Cottle also present different aspects of representing an image of ethnic minorities in the British and American media.[25]

Furthermore, ways of presenting ethnic issues in the media of the post-Soviet states have their special features and so deserve particular examination. As we know, the formation of the newly independent countries after the collapse of the Soviet Union was accompanied by their search for a new identity. At this time, the topic of the ethnic history of the peoples of the region acquired extraordinary popularity in the Central Asian republics. Articles on this topic regularly appeared not only in specialized publications and history books, but also on the pages of newspapers and magazines. Not only professional historians participated in its discussion, but also a wide range of public figures, intellectuals, politicians, and so on. According to specialists, these discussions at times presented ideas that were extremely dangerous for the ethnic world. For example, in 2006, a work came out by academics E. Rtveladze and A. Sagdullaev that aroused a wide public response. In it, the authors noted the domination of the following trends in covering the ethnic history of the region's countries:

—creating myths and using stories and legends as historical sources;

—propagandizing the grandeur of the Golden Age of one's ethnicity in Antiquity and the Middle Ages and making unfounded claims to the fact that its ethnonym (self-name), as well as statehood, is older than it actually is;

—denying the reality that all peoples have made an equal contribution to the development of the region's historical and cultural heritage;

—promoting the theory that a particular ethnicity is a "phenomenon," emphasizing its ethnic selectness and cultural superiority;

—taking a comparative-competitive approach based on the principle of which ethnicity is older, who founded the earliest states and cities, who invented the first wheel and cart, and so on;

—using history for purposes of political expediency.[26]

As we know, Central Asia is a region with a polyethnic population and so the above-mentioned ideas and concepts harbor the danger of stirring up ethnic strife. Researchers note that similar coverage of historical events is also characteristic of other post-Soviet republics.[27]

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[25] See: *Ethnic Minorities and the Media: Changing Cultural Boundaries*.

[26] See: E.V. Rtveladze, A.S. Sagdullaev, "Sovremennye mify o dalekom proshlom narodov Tsentralnoy Azii," Chulpan, Tashkent, 2007, available at [www.bilim.kz/Docum/Libs%5Crtveladze._mifotvorchestvo.doc], 2 April, 2012.

[27] See: N.S. Mukhametshina, "Osnovnye elementy natsionalisticheskoy ideologii," *Vestnik Samarskogo universiteta* (Samara), No. 1, 2004, available at [http://vestnik-samgu.samsu.ru/gum/2004web1/soci/200410702.html], 2 April, 2012.

Further, academics claim that ethnicity in itself cannot be the cause of a conflict, while the real cause lies in the interests of the elites, which take advantage of the ethnic factor to their own ends. For example, it has been established that, at the instigation of the elites, the media might exaggerate topics that are distressing for a particular ethnicity, placing particular emphasis on its suffering and deprivations. According to V.A. Tishkov, at one time deportation was such a topic for the Chechens. The author believes that the image of a victim nation was gradually created in the mass consciousness on this basis, which was needed to validate the lawlessness and justify the armed struggle of those who personally did not experience this deportation.[28] Another academic, Z.Zh. Gakaev, states that at the turn of the 1980s-1990s, the topic of the oppression of the Chechen people in Russia was popular in all the newspapers of the Chechen Republic, while the topic of the deportation of the Chechens and Ingush did not leave the pages of the Chechen press. As we know, the existence of a victim presumes the existence of an aggressor who caused the victim suffering. And Gakaev shows how at that time the Russian state (although not the Russian people) was presented as a "source of evil."[29] According to the observations of academics, at the end of the last century, the media of other post-Soviet republics also harked on the image of victim nation and the image of enemy.[30]

Further, there are several works in the academic literature that analyze the special features of covering ethnic issues in the mass media of individual countries. For example, an article by R. Karymsakova is devoted to studying Kazakhstan's media.[31] In particular, the author lists several ethnic clashes that occurred in the country in 2006 and 2007 and notes that most publications on these events attempted to create an objective picture of the conflict. She also gives examples of publications that cover ethnic conflicts in an intolerant light. According to the author, they do not present precise or complete information about the causes of the ethnic standoff, the opponents are presented as enemies, and the tension in relations as hostility; they are looking for external enemies and espouse the idea that the national minorities live better than the Kazakhs. These publications also exaggerate the belief that one nationality dominates over another, which could lead to the idea that the members of the indigenous nationality require benefits and privileges. The author critically evaluates the trend established in the Kazakhstan media of passing over acute ethnic issues, which, in her opinion, can only exacerbate the existing problems.

K. Horsti carried out an analytical review of the Finnish media for 1995-2000 in order to study the main ways ethnicity is represented in them.[32] According to the author, when covering the topic of ethnic minorities, the media often refers to the opinion of ethnic Finns and not to the opinion of members of the ethnic minorities. The author goes on to state that ethnic minorities are frequently mentioned in the context of "problems"; the media constantly emphasize the ethnic origin of the people featured in their reports when the matter concerns crime, regularly using such expressions as "the Russian mafia" and "Estonian drug gangs" for designating organized crime. The author also tells us about the measures being undertaken by different organizations to ensure balanced coverage of the topic of ethnic minorities in Finland.

Further, B. Löwander's dissertation is devoted to a study of the ideas about immigrants, racism, and the struggle against racism in Swedish news journalism of the beginning of the 1990s.[33] Its main conclusions boil down to the following: in the news, racism is often identified with racist and Nazi

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[28] See: V.A. Tishkov, Chapter 16: Chechnia kak stsena i kak rol, in: *Obshchestvo v vooruzhennom konflikte,* Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 2001, 552 pp.

[29] Z.Zh. Gakaev, op. cit.

[30] See: N.S. Mukhametshina, op. cit.; L.V. Sagitova, op. cit.

[31] See: R. Karymsakova, "Osveshchay, no ne razzhigay: Posobie dlia zhurnalistov," Almaty, 2007, available at [http://www.zonakz.net/blogs-respect.php], 4 April, 2012.

[32] See: K. Horsti, op. cit.

[33] See: B. Löwander, op. cit.

organizations that use violent methods; they also point to the relation between racism and the pathological defects of the offender; racism is becoming an expression that designates a lone madman, and the possible existence of wider-spread structural racism is ignored.

A book by E. Poole[34] is devoted to studying the image of Muslim immigrants in the British media, and a work by M. Hussain analyzes the image of Muslim migrants in Denmark.[35]

As we see, the conclusions set forth in the works examined above clearly show that coverage of ethnic issues is an extremely sensitive subject and requires that the journalist exercise immense prudence and responsibility. The recommendations in these works can help journalists find the correct approach to covering ethnic issues and avoid many mistakes.

Articles
in *Central Asia and the Caucasus*

The articles in this journal covering ethnic topics are distinguished by great diversity both in terms of thematic scope and content. In terms of thematic scope, they can be divided into five main groups (I use M. Melnikov's classification here with some modifications[36]):

(a) studies about the role of history in forming national, ethnic, and regional identity;

(b) articles relating the life and activity of ethnic minorities that traditionally live in a particular republic of Central Asia and the Caucasus;

(c) articles on the problems of recent ethnic migrants and the ethnicities that receive them;

(d) studies covering ethnopolitical conflicts in the region; and

(e) articles that examine the traditions and culture of particular ethnicities populating the countries of the region.

An article by V. Voropaeva belongs to the first group of articles.[37] The author draws our attention to the fact that for over two hundred years of their common history, the Russian and Kyrgyz people have developed indissoluble spiritual and cultural ties. V. Voropaeva calls for further strengthening of Kyrgyz-Russian relations since history itself requires that the strong century-long ties that have developed between the two peoples be preserved and enhanced. Presenting the idea of historical communality of the Kyrgyz and Russian peoples, the author uses a metaphor coined by Chinghiz Aitmatov. In the previous section, we also noted that ethnic images can be construed through metaphors. So the indicated metaphor is another confirmation of this idea: "The Turkic-Slavic shared existence is a fertile soil for two branches—the Kyrgyz and the Russians stemming from one common root. Roots should not be torn up…"

In this discourse, Turkic-Slavic unity is conceptualized as a plant, while the Kyrgyz and Russian people are two branches of the same plant. It should be noted that use of the plant metaphor is not accidental here. In the minds of many ethnic groups, it stands for kinship and unity. For example, in Ozhegov's dictionary, one of the meanings of the word *branch* is "a line of kinship."[38] On

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[34] See: E. Poole, *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims*, I.B. Tauris, London, 2002.
[35] See: M. Hussain, op. cit.
[36] See: *Prikladnaia konfliktologia dlia zhurnalistov.*
[37] See: V. Voropaeva, "Kyrgyzstan and Russia: Past and Present," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3, 2000, pp. 28-35.
[38] *Mir slov Ozhegova,* available at [http://www.mirslovozhegova.ru/show_termin/48314/].

the strength of the aforesaid, the metaphor being discussed is a unifying symbol. It conveys in very laconic terms the author's main view of how ethnic relations between the Kyrgyz and Russian ethnicities should be built.

As we see, in Voropaeva's research study, history is an argument in favor of strengthening ethnic relations between two peoples. But the results of the studies of some other authors show that there are often cases when history is used in the regional discourse for entirely different purposes.

For example, F. Muminova[39] notes that, on the instigation of leaders and academics, journalists select the most convenient period from the ethnic history of a nation and, on its basis, begin to create a new ideology as an expression of national identity. She goes on to write that for Kazakhstan, this was the era of Farabi and the enlighteners of the 19th century; for Kyrgyzstan, it was Manas and the enlighteners; for Uzbekistan, Amir Timur and the Jadids, and so on. The author demonstrates that this is a far from innocuous trend, since ethnic history is used by leaders to justify their political claims (to leadership in the region, among other things). S. Horák[40] explains the need for ancient and epic history in the new states of Central Asia as follows: the existence of ancient history aggrandizes one nation over others (as a rule, over neighboring ethnicities); "great" states are considered predecessors of the current territorial formations, while the heroes are associated with leaders of the most recent times. The author illustrates these ideas using Tajikistan as an example.

According to S. Kamenev,[41] several articles by Turkmen academics claim that there are more than 60 countries in history that have either been created by the Turkmen or have been headed by them; the history of the Turkmen state is presented as an unprecedented phenomenon in world history, and the thought is being implanted in the humanitarian sphere about the exclusivity of the Turkmen nation and its enormous contribution to the development of world culture. But S. Kamenev's conclusions must be qualified with the following important remark: all of this occurred in Turkmenistan against the background of denial of the contribution made by non-Turkmen peoples to the development of the country and its culture. So it is not surprising that the author concludes that the course steered by the country's leaders toward "Turkmenization" of all spheres of public life led to the Russian-speaking citizens of Turkmenistan being squeezed out of these spheres, as well as to their mass dismissal from their jobs and discrimination.

The author also emphasizes that one newspaper article claims that Saparmurat Niyazov "has given the Turkmen people back their language, religion, culture, customs, traditions, literature, and art." Here Niyazov is presented as a "returner" of lost national values, which according to the logic of the aphorism being discussed, were *taken away* from the Turkmen people during the Soviet period. The danger of this approach to recent history, in our view, is that the ordinary person will begin blaming people of a specific ethnicity for the imaginary losses.

Many conclusions drawn in M. Kirchanov's work[42] confirm the main ideas expressed by S. Kamenev. P. Kokaisl[43] also draws attention to the intolerant nature of the discourse in the Turkmen media, believing that by using the expression "my dear black-eyed children" when addressing the Turkmen, Saparmurat Niyazov related his people to a specific racial type.

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[39] F. Muminova, "National Identity, National Mentality, and the Media," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (17), 2002, pp. 132-138.

[40] See: S. Horák, "Leader Ideology in Post-Soviet Tajikistan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (60), 2009, available at [http://www.ca-c.org/journal/2009-06-eng/11.shtml].

[41] See: S. Kamenev, "The Current Sociopolitical Situation in Turkmenistan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (14), 2002, available at [http://www.ca-c.org/journal/eng-02-2002/05.kamprimen.shtml].

[42] M. Kirchanov, "Turkmen Nationalism Today: Political and Intellectual Mythologemes," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Volume 11, Issue 1, 2010, available at [http://www.ca-c.org/journal/2010-01-eng/05.shtml].

[43] See: P. Kokaisl, "Democracy in Post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (54), 2008, pp. 154-164.

It is important to note that some of our authors think that historical mythology is also actively used to justify the territorial claims of the sides in ethnoterritorial conflicts. For example, R. Garagozov[44] is of the opinion that "wars of historians" were associated with many ethnic conflicts in the Caucasus. His observations are also confirmed by the data presented by V. Malkova,[45] who states that in Nagorny Karabakh, when defending their territorial claims, both the Armenians and the Azeris assert that they appeared there first, referring to historical sources to prove their claims. And, finally, Zh. Urmanbetova[46] believes that in polyethnic and polycultural societies, such as Kyrgyzstan, national ideology should be built on the basis of civil, and not ethnic identity.

Another group of articles covers the topic of the ethnic minorities who have long populated the region. For example, S. Zeinalova's article[47] tells about the Germans living in Azerbaijan. In it, the author gives us detailed information about the history of German migration to Azerbaijan and about their present-day economic and cultural life. When describing the labor activity of the Germans, the author uses words and expressions that create an impression of the Germans as diligent, enterprising, and successful people. For example: *the painstaking labor of the German colonists, well-known German industrialists.*

The author also names several professions the Germans who moved to Azerbaijan at the end of the 19th-beginning of the 20th centuries commanded. They were *businessmen, industrialists, engineers, architects, doctors, academics, teachers,* and so on. As we know, these professions require not only diligence, but also a great deal of knowledge. So the author presents us with a picture of the Germans as educated people. She also uses several consolidating and integrating symbols. For example, the symbol of a common Homeland: S. Zeinalova calls Azerbaijan "home to representatives of many different nationalities." The author goes on to use words and expressions that designate peace-loving relations among the ethnicities. For example: *tolerance, respectful attitude.* She also provides information about the German culture and traditions "zealously preserved far from the historical homeland." In addition, the author tells us about the churches and schools founded in the country in different years, as well as the national-cultural societies that still function today. All of this makes us think of the Germans as people who were able to preserve their original culture in a new environment. It arouses a keen interest in the reader in their lives and traditions. Addressing the topic of deportation of the Germans, the author claims that this process not only affected the Soviet Germans, but also the members of several other ethnicities of the Soviet Union. That is, deportation is presented as a common tragedy and not as the problem of one particular ethnicity. In our opinion, this is a very responsible approach, since when tragic events of history are taken out of context and presented as the misfortune of a particular ethnic group, this approach often stirs up ethnic passions.

An article by D. Mukanova-Khurshudian and E. Khurshudian[48] acquaints the reader with the history and contemporary life of the Armenian diaspora in Kazakhstan. As in the previous case, the authors tell us of the labor activity of the ethnic group they are studying, of their successes and achievements. We find out from the article, among other things, that one of the members of this ethnic group, Levon Mirzoian, headed Kazakhstan in 1933-1938. The authors go on to place particular emphasis on the existence of extremely human relations between the Kazakhs and Armenians.

[44] See: R. Garagozov, "Collective Memory and Memory Politics in the Central Caucasian Countries," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (36), 2005, pp. 51-60.

[45] See: V. Malkova, "Rossiyskaia pressa i problemy etnicheskoy tolerantnosti i konfliktnosti."

[46] See: Zh. Urmanbetova, "Kyrgyzstan: Today and Tomorrow," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Volume 11, Issue 3, 2010, pp. 155-161.

[47] See: S. Zeinalova, "Germans in Azerbaijan: A Retrospective Analysis," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (36), 2005, pp. 142-149.

[48] See: D. Mukanova-Khurshudian, E. Khurshudian, "Armenians in Kazakhstan: Past and Present," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3 (9), 2001, pp. 185-192.

For example, they tell us about instances when the Armenians adopted children from Kazakh families in order to save them from starvation. In one place, the authors cite the words of national artiste of Kazakhstan Kurmanbek Jandarbekov written to Levon Mirzoian. They say, "He will not be forgotten while the cultural centers he founded, beautiful cities, mines, plants, streets, eternal mountains, and my nation remain on Earth. Mirzajan (local pet name for the popular leader.—*D. M.-Kh., E.Kh.)*, you will remain in our hearts and our history. When you come back home, please bow to the land that gave my nation Levon."

The change in Mirzoian's name to Mirzajan, in the Kazakh style, draws attention to itself in this excerpt. There is a tradition in the culture of certain Central Asian peoples when a particular ethnic group gives the representative of a different ethnicity a new ethnic name, which often sounds like his own name, for special services he has rendered to that ethnicity. This symbolizes acceptance of that person as "one of us." After all, if a name is part of a person's identity, ethnic names are part of ethnic identity. Whereby this is not simply accepting a person from a different ethnic environment into one's own group, it means giving him a particularly honorable place within the group.

An article by B. Zhanguttin[49] tells of the Slavic population of Kazakhstan. The author emphasizes that after the country acquired state independence a difficult period of adaptation to the new conditions began for the Slavic part of its population and notes that resolving the problem of adaptation largely depends on the country's authorities, who should keep in mind now safe the decisions they make are for the different ethnocultural groups. B. Zhanguttin believes that Kazakhstan is not interested in the mass exodus of the Slavic population, since this would mean the loss of the most qualified specialists and the disappearance of an entire stratum of culture. The author claims that creating real conditions for integration into the new circumstances primarily meets the interests of the republic itself. Ch. Chotaeva[50] expresses a similar opinion about the Slavic population of Kyrgyzstan, stating that mass migration of the Slavs from the country caused the national economy irreparable damage.

It should be noted that in B. Zhanguttin's interpretation, the culture of Kazakhstan is not only the culture of its titular ethnicity. It is a kind of symbiosis, the particles of which comprise the cultures of different ethnicities. Incidentally, P. Shozimov[51] is also of a similar opinion, believing that the purely cultural models constructed by intellectuals often prove unviable when they come face to face with reality. It is important to emphasize that this approach integrates the culture of different ethnicities living in the same space into a single system.

Finally, other studies also belong to the group of articles being discussed: an article by E. Tukumov[52] talks about the Kazakh diaspora in Uzbekistan; O. Sidorov's study[53] is devoted to the German ethnic group in Kazakhstan; G. Svanidze[54] covers the topic of the ethnic minorities living in Georgia, while M. Komakhia's articles[55] discuss the Assyrians, Azeris, Greeks, Slavs, and Yezidi Kurds who

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[49] See: B. Zhanguttin, "Kazakhstan's Slavic Population: Demographic Characteristics and Status," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (16), 2002, pp. 116-120.

[50] See: Ch. Chotaeva, "Language as a Nation-Building Factor in Kyrgyzstan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (26), 2004, pp. 177-184.

[51] See: P. Shozimov, "Tajikistan: Cultural Heritage and the Identity Issue," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (30), 2004, pp. 144-148.

[52] See: E. Tukumov, "The Kazakhs of Uzbekistan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6, 2000, pp. 186-192.

[53] See: O. Sidorov, "Migration Intentions of the Germans of Kazakhstan and Possible Repercussions," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (22), 2003, pp. 145-149.

[54] See: G. Svanidze, "National Minorities in Georgia: Problems of Definition and Legal Status," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (42), 2006, pp. 145-152.

[55] See: M. Komakhia, "The Assyrians of Georgia: Ethnic Specifics should be Preserved," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3 (39), 2006, pp. 159-164; idem, "The Greeks of Georgia: Migration and Socioeconomic Problems," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (36), 2005, pp. 150-156; idem, "The Greeks of Georgia: Migration and Socioeconomic Problems," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (36), 2005, pp. 150-156; idem, "Georgia"s Azerbaijanis: Problems of Civilian Integra-

traditionally live in this country. M. Bekker[56] acquaints us with the life and activity of the Jewish community in Azerbaijan; G. Orudzhev[57] tells of the national minorities in Azerbaijan; and S. Iliashenko[58] looks at how Russian and Russian-speaking residents live in Daghestan, and so on.

Several articles in this journal cover the topic of recent ethnic migrants and the ethnicities that receive them. For example, in his study, A. Popov[59] focuses on the status of recent ethnic migrants in the Krasnodar Territory. As we know, the Krasnodar Territory is a border zone and, according to the author's information, since 1988, migrants have been appearing there from those regions of the Soviet Union that suffered from ethnic conflicts, as well as migrants forced to leave their former places of permanent residence due to economic problems. The author criticizes the migration policy of the local authorities, which he describes as discriminatory. This, in his opinion, has been manifested, among other things, in the refusal to register certain groups of ethnic migrants, and so on. A. Popov believes that the tight migration policy of the territorial authorities is a conflict-prone factor capable of having a negative effect on ethnic relations.

The author goes on to inform us that a negative anti-migrant discourse is still going on in the region: statements are being made about "disruption of the ethnodemographic balance" and "cultural incompatibility" of the local population (Cossacks) and the migrants (ethnic minorities); a negative image is being created of non-Slavic ethnic migrants: unconfirmed data has been appearing in the media about the criminal inclinations of the Meskhetian Turks and about the drug addiction, thievery, and sexual perversion that are supposedly widespread among them. The author thinks that the negative assessment of ethnic migration by the territory's officials ignores the fact that migration is becoming the main way to replenish human resources in most regions. The leitmotif of this article is that ethnic minorities should have the same rights as the dominating ethnic group and for this reason infringement of their rights and discrimination of them are impermissible.

Another author, S. Markedonov,[60] notes that conflict situations are also periodically arising in the Rostov Region between the members of Caucasian ethnicities and Russians; but in the slogans and actions of the regional authorities there is neither ethnic alarmism nor exploitation of the myth of a migration threat for Russians, while the local elite is not using ethnonationalism as a resource for political mobilization. The author goes on to point out that ethnonationalist moods and mass xenophobia are increasing in the Stavropol Territory owing to the territory being drawn into the Chechen crisis and to the mass migration of groups of other ethnicities, and so on; but, in contrast to the Kuban region, ethnonationalism has not become the ideology of the territorial elite. The author also formulates several pertinent tasks that designate the ethnopolitical situation in the regions of the Northern Caucasus he is studying. One of them is doing away with the ethnic and migration myths that prevent the establishment of normal ethnic relations.

In her research, E. Sadovskaya[61] addresses the topic of Chinese migration to Kazakhstan. She comes to the general conclusion that since migration from China is temporary, it is still too early

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tion," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (29), 2004, pp. 166-172; idem, "Georgia's Slavic Population," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (46), 2007, pp. 132-143; idem, "Yezidi Kurds in Georgia: Ethnic Self-Awareness and Consolidation," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (32), 2005, pp. 133-139.

[56] See: M. Bekker, "Jews in Azerbaijan: Past and Future," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2, 2000, pp. 185-193.

[57] See: G. Orudzhev, "Azerbaijan's National Minorities Today," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (22), 2003, pp. 139-144.

[58] See: S. Iliashenko, "On the Migration Processes in the Republic of Daghestan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (24), 2003, pp. 176-182.

[59] See: A. Popov, "Ethnic Minorities and Migration Processes in Krasnodar Territory," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (13), 2002, pp. 168-176.

[60] See: S. Markedonov, "Ethnopolitical Processes in the Rostov Region, the Krasnodar and Stavropol Territories: Problems, Contradictions, and Prospects," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (32), 2005, pp. 139-148.

[61] See: E. Sadovskaya, "Chinese Migration to Kazakhstan: Causes, Key Trends, and Prospects," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (49), 2008, pp. 160-168.

to talk about its influence on the ethnosocial structure of Kazakhstan. Within the framework of her article on labor migration in Kyrgyzstan, A. Elebaeva[62] analyzes the relations between Kyrgyz labor migrants and the local population in Russia and Kazakhstan. S. Iliashenko's article[63] also looks in part at how ethnic migrants from Daghestan are faring in Russia. A joint article by D. Nikitin and A. Khalmukhamedov,[64] as well as V. Viktorin's study,[65] can also be included in this group of articles.

It is known that ignorance of ethnic traditions, culture, and habits often promotes the emergence of conflict in relations with people from a different ethnic group. So we think it is very important to inform our readers about the ethnic characteristics of the life of the peoples of the region. So the next group of articles acquaints the reader with the traditional way of life and culture of the ethnicities that populate the countries of the region. It includes Z. Arifkhanova's article,[66] for example, in which the author tells us about the *mahalla* community organizations in Uzbekistan and their role and function in the life of this ethnicity. V. Mesamed[67] informs the reader about the development and trends of Uzbek cinematography. A. Fedorovich's article[68] is devoted to a study of teip and religious relations in Chechen society. M. Vachagaev[69] analyzes the internal structure of contemporary Chechen society in his article. Going on, N. Amrekulov[70] looks at the role of the Zhuze (tribe unions) in the social and political life of Kazakhstan; D. Dzhunushaliev[71] and V. Ploskikh analyze the problem of tribalism in Kyrgyzstan; while D. Gullette[72] also expresses his viewpoint on tribalism in Kyrgyzstan. I. Babich's article[73] can also be placed in this group.

The journal has also published many articles that cover the ethnopolitical conflicts in the region. They express the viewpoint of the different sides involved in a particular conflict. Moreover, specialists from different countries studying the conflicts being discussed also publish their articles in the journal. For example, in their research, D. Linotte and M. Yoshii[74] analyze, among other things, the reasons for civil wars in general and the reasons for the war in Chechnia in particular. They state that contrary to the popular opinion that an uprising is a protest evoked by insult, it is often also generated by greed. The authors think that the leaders of the uprising might go for a compromise if they were offered material benefits, for example, in the form of income from the production and export of raw materials and minerals. They also note that such things as inequality, ethnic and religious disagreements, political repressions, and the absence of democracy play an insignificant role in explaining civil

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[62] See: A. Elebaeva, "Labor Migration in Kyrgyzstan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3 (27), 2004, pp. 78-86.

[63] See: S. Iliashenko, op. cit.

[64] See: D. Nikitin, A. Khalmukhamedov, "Migration as a Destabilization Factor in the Northern Caucasus," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (14), 2002, pp. 163-171.

[65] See: V. Viktorin, "The Lower Reaches of the Volga and the Northern Caspian at the Crossroads: Time and People, Past and Present," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3 (27), 2004, pp. 90-97.

[66] See: Z. Arifkhanova, "Traditional Communities in Modern Uzbekistan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4, 2000, pp. 56-63.

[67] See: V. Mesamed, "Uzbek Cinema and Slow Revival," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (29), 2004, pp. 180-184.

[68] See: A. Fedorovich, "Clans and Religion in Chechnia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (8), 2001, pp. 108-113.

[69] See: M. Vachagaev, "Chechen Society Today: Myth and Reality," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (20), 2003, pp. 14-21.

[70] See: N. Amrekulov, "Zhuzes and Kazakhstan's Social and Political Development," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3, 2000, pp. 100-115.

[71] See: D. Dzhunushaliev, V. Ploskikh, "Tribalism and Nation-Building in Kyrgyzstan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3, 2000, pp. 115-123.

[72] See: D. Gullette, "Tribalism in Kyrgyzstan Examined," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (14), 2002, pp. 31-37.

[73] See: I. Babich, "The Clan Structure and its Impact on the Political Situation (A Case-Study of Northwestern and Central Caucasus)," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (19), 2003, pp. 32-39.

[74] See: D. Linotte, M. Yoshii, "The Reconstruction of Chechnia. A Long-Term and Daunting Task," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (23), 2003, pp. 85-98.

wars. Moreover, they emphasize that "the Russian Federation is a huge country characterized by unique multiethnical, cultural, and religious diversity, where tolerance and mutual respect are essential for peace and prosperity."

In his article, V. Petukhov[75] analyzes, among other things, the publications of several pro-terrorist websites covering the terrorist acts in Chechnia. According to his data, such websites are characterized by the abundant use of military vocabulary: *frontline, checkpoint, sharpshooter, military operation,* and so on; the articles published are also liberally sprinkled with emotional and judgmental phrases: *pitiless and cruel battle; cold-blooded murder, annihilated, ruined,* and so on. According to V. Petukhov, these modes of expression conjure up an atmosphere of military hysteria aimed at:

(a) instigating feelings of revenge among the population; and

(b) creating an image of Russia as a "sinister and blood-thirsty monster."

The author believes that focusing website users' attention on war is aimed at spreading aggressive and bellicose moods among the population and an image of Russia as the main enemy and source of terrorist threat for the Caucasus.

Among the publications analyzed by the author are also articles that espouse the opposite sentiments, presenting Chechens as ferocious and blood-thirsty enemies. The author believes that such publications can only lead to an increase in tension in ethnic relations and, as a result, to an increase in pro-terrorist moods. The author also refers to the existence of another type of article that suggests that the essence of terrorism is not in the national or religious characteristics of those who commit terrorist acts but in the political ambitions of terrorist leaders who use national and religious slogans to their own ends.

And finally, the group of articles we are looking at also includes M. Roshchin's report,[76] which briefly presents the results of a seminar held at the Moscow Carnegie Center on 19 January, 2000 on the topic being discussed and articles by M. Basnukaev,[77] S. Shermatova,[78] M. Iusupov,[79] E. Pain,[80] S. Berezhnoy,[81] V. Avioutskii and H. Mili,[82] R.B. Ware,[83] Ia. Akhmadov,[84] S. Markedonov,[85] O. Alissoultanov,[86] and others.

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[75] See: V. Petukhov, "The North Caucasian Press about Terrorism," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (36), 2005, pp. 93-98.

[76] See: M. Roshchin, "Who Holds the Key to the Chechen Problem? Summary of a Seminar Held at the Moscow Carnegie Center," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1, 2000, pp. 8-11.

[77] See: M. Basnukaev, "Chechnia's Constituency—the Problem of Russian Federalism," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (7), 2001, pp. 173-181.

[78] See: S. Shermatova, "The Oil Factor in the Chechen Conflict," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (11), 2001, pp. 71-77.

[79] See: M. Iusupov, "Islam v sotsialno-politicheskoy zhizni Chechni," *Tsentranaia Aziia i Kavkaz,* No. 2 (8), 2000, available at [http://www.ca-c.org/journal/cac-08-2000/16.isupov.shtml].

[80] See: E. Pain, "The Second Chechen War: Possible Variants," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4, 2000, pp. 97-103.

[81] See: S. Berezhnoy, "The Role of Islamic Factor in Crisis Settlement in Chechnia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (19), 2003, pp. 169-176.

[82] See: V. Avioutskii, H. Mili, "The Geopolitics of Separatism: Genesis of Chechen Field Commanders," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (20), 2003, pp. 7-14.

[83] See: R.B. Ware, "Prospects for Peace in Chechnia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (20), 2003, pp. 21-28.

[84] See: Ia. Akhmadov, "Russia and Chechnia: From a Fief to a Federation Subject," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (20), 2003, pp. 28-36.

[85] See: S. Markedonov, "Polemical Notes about the Constitutional Referendum in Chechnia: Was It Another Khasaviurt?" *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3 (21), 2003, pp. 109-119.

[86] See: O. Alissoultanov, "The Chechen Crisis: Genesis, Dynamics, and Recent Trends," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (26), 2004, pp. 13-23.

The journal's contributors also cover the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. For example, in his article, A. Dashdamirov[87] regretfully notes that such unique elements of the Caucasian social experience as close ethnic coexistence and co-creativity, a tolerant and respectful attitude toward the interests and special features of other nationalities, and so on, have proven not to be highly sought after in this conflict, while the centuries-long experience of internecine war and ethnic enmity is very much in demand. He also shows that opportunist and politically motivated interpretations of ethnic history used in territorial disputes only stir up ethnic hostility. The author is convinced that the political elites have exerted great efforts to reanimate the old and time-tested means of ethnic hostility: ethnophobia, negative images of neighbors, and skillfully cultivated ideas about ethnic and interconfessional incompatibility. The author looks at the Karabakh conflict as a tragedy for both Azerbaijan and Armenia. He states that for centuries both countries have gone through difficult trials and have been able to preserve their ethnicity and culture at the expense of enormous sacrifices, while in the current conditions poisoned by hostility they have become the hostages of their own historical memory. As we see, the author depicts ethnic enmity here as poison and the two nations as patients poisoned by it. The metaphor of poison and poisoning/illness is of course a negative metaphor. It, like nothing else, reflects the author's attitude toward ethnic hostility. Another metaphor is also used here: the author describes the Armenians and Azeris as *hostages* of their historical memory. So in this case, negative historical memory is described as a kidnapper and the two peoples as hostages who have been taken prisoner.

Further, O. Geukjian[88] analyzes the mediating activity of the OSCE in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in 1992-1996. The different aspects of the Karabakh conflict are also discussed in articles by A. Allakhveranov,[89] V. Priakhin,[90] D. Babaian,[91] E. Nuriev and K. Salimov,[92] L. Shirinian,[93] T. Musaev,[94] L. Tchantouridzé,[95] R. Garagozov,[96] and so on.

The first issue of *Central Asia and the Caucasus* in 2009 featured a series of articles on the Georgian-Ossetian conflict that occurred in August 2008. The series was published under the general title "The 'Five-Day War' and Prospects for Peace in the Caucasus." The authors of the articles in this series are L. Tchantouridzé,[97] K. Kakachia,[98] A. Skakov,[99] and S. Genç.[100] This topic was also ana-

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[87] See: A. Dashdamirov, "Ideological Contradictions of Ethnic Policies in the Caucasus," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (11), 2001, pp. 48-55.

[88] See: O. Geukjian, "Limits of International Involvement in the Southern Caucasus: The OSCE Mediation in the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict (1992-1996)," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (37), 2006, pp. 61-72.

[89] See: A. Allakhveranov, "The Migration Situation in Azerbaijan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (14), 2002, pp. 172-180.

[90] See: V. Priakhin, "The 'Black Garden' of the International Community: Nagorny Karabakh and the Post-Cold War World Order," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (18), 2002, pp. 14-24.

[91] See: D. Babaian, "The West and the Conflict in Nagorny Karabakh," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (30), 2004, pp. 18-23.

[92] See: E. Nuriev, K. Salimov, "The Realities and Prospects for Settling the Karabakh Conflict. Could There Be an International Peace Enforcement Operation?" *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (18), 2002, pp. 7-14.

[93] See: L. Shirinian, "Karabakh Settlement: Exchange of Territories Variant," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (20), 2003, pp. 43-47.

[94] See: T. Musaev, "The Legal Aspects of Territorial and Border Settlement Using Armenia's Territorial Claims against Azerbaijan as an Example," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (20), 2003, pp. 37-43.

[95] See: L. Tchantouridzé, "Globalization of Regional Conflicts: A Future War for the Upper Karabakh," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (60), 2009, pp. 24-31.

[96] See: R. Garagozov, op. cit.

[97] See: L. Tchantouridzé, "It Does Not Take a Prophet: War and Peace in the Caucasus," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (55), 2009, pp. 7-12.

[98] See: K. Kakachia, "The Russo-Georgian Five-Day War: The Price to Be Paid and its Unintended Consequences," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (55), 2009, pp. 12-22.

[99] See: A. Skakov, "The August Crisis in the Caucasus and its Consequences," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (55), 2009, pp. 22-33.

[100] See: S. Genç, "Significance of the Georgian-South Ossetian Conflict for Turkish Foreign Policy," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (55), 2009, pp. 33-41.

lyzed in articles by the following authors: A. Magomedov,[101] N. Silaev,[102] A. Shelest,[103] M. Volkhonskiy,[104] G. Gogia,[105] R. Desseyn and L. Tchantouridzé,[106] and N. Lemay- Hébert.[107] In addition, studies covering different aspects of the Georgian-Ossetian and Georgian-Abkhazian conflicts were published in our journal even before the events of August 2008. They also reflect very different opinions on the ethnic conflicts being examined. They include articles by the following authors: N. Akaba,[108] M. Saldadze,[109] M. Mayorova,[110] R. Gotsiridze,[111] L. Tania,[112] and others.

C o n c l u s i o n

The ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of Central Asia and the Caucasus is one of its greatest assets. It has evolved from many centuries of coexistence and interaction among different ethnicities. During this interaction, the peoples of the region have developed common spiritual values that unite and bring them together. These values must be preserved and multiplied. When talking about the region's ethnic and cultural diversity, our authors place special emphasis on unifying ideas, such as common history, culture, universal values, and so on. They also inform the reader about the successes and achievements of the members of different ethnic groups and about their contribution to the region's development. All of this is promoting the formation of positive ideas about the ethnic groups living in the region.

Moreover, our authors identify and analyze conflict-prone factors that could promote an escalation of ethnic tension. For example, this article has discussed some of them: an unbalanced national policy, politically charged interpretations of ethnic history, ethnic and migration myths, the discriminatory policy of the authorities in the regions, and so on. The second point is fraught with the greatest danger for the region we are discussing. As we already know, ethnic history can be used to justify territorial claims or armed struggle of the elites, as was the case in the Karabakh and Chechen conflicts; for justifying the political claims of the elites to leadership in a particular region; for substantiating the supremacy and exclusivity of the titular ethnicity, and so on, as was the case in Turkmeni-

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[101] See: A. Magomedov, "The Conflict in South Ossetia and the Frontiers of Struggle for the Greater Caspian's Energy Resources," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (56), 2009, pp. 32-43.

[102] See: N. Silaev, "How the August War Affected the Caucasus," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3 (57), 2009, pp. 7-18.

[103] See: A. Shelest, "The Georgian-Russian Conflict, Energy Projects, and Security of the Black Sea-Caspian Region," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4-5 (58-59), 2009.

[104] See: M. Volkhonskiy, "Medvedev-Sarkozy's Six Points: The Diplomatic Aspect of the South Ossetian Settlement," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4-5 (58-59), 2009.

[105] See: G. Gogia, "Georgia-South Ossetia: A Prelude to War. Did Economic Assistance Strengthen Competing Spoilers in Georgian-South Ossetian Conflict?" *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (60), 2009, pp. 32-41.

[106] See: R. Desseyn, L. Tchantouridzé, "*Realpolitik* and the Russia-Georgia War: Three Years On," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Volume 13, Issue 1, 2012, pp. 111-119.

[107] See: N. Lemay-Hébert, "The 'Frozen Conflict' That Turned Hot: Conflicting State-Building Attempts in South Ossetia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (53), 2008, pp. 150-159.

[108] See: N. Akaba, "Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict: Rooted in the Past, Resolved in Future," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6, 2000, pp. 117-121.

[109] See: M. Saldadze, "Defrosting the Conflict in Tskhinvali: Is the 'Revolution of Roses' Still Going On," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (29), 2004, pp. 40-45.

[110] See: M. Mayorov, "South Caucasian Conflicts: Recovery Begins When the Disease is Recognized and There is a Desire to Cure It," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (26), 2004, pp. 7-13.

[111] See: R. Gotsiridze, "Georgia: Conflict Regions and the Economy," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (25), 2004, pp. 144-152.

[112] See: L. Tania, "Strategic Variants: How the Conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia Can Be Settled," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (23), 2003, pp. 43-49.

stan. The danger of this factor lies in its catastrophic consequences: these include the threat of territorial breakdown of the state, mass discrimination of certain ethnic groups, and their departure from the country, etc. Identifying these factors can help to prevent them in the future.

Our authors also put forward the idea that the monoethnic model of development of society that was promulgated in the states of the region during the first years after the collapse of the Union has become entirely irrelevant, since it does not take into consideration the region's polyethnic or polycultural aspects. They are in favor of creating a national policy that would take into consideration the interests of all the ethnic groups. In this respect, it is proposed that the political leaders of the region's states concern themselves with how safe the decisions they make are for the ethnic groups.

When covering the problems of ethnic migrants, our authors emphasize that they should have the same rights as the other citizens of the state. Their publications are aimed at helping migrants to realize their civil rights and oppose discrimination of ethnic migrants.

The contributors, who discuss the ethnic traditions, culture, and customs of the individual ethnicities living in the region, have all the necessary knowledge in the sphere they are studying. The value of the information they present lies in the fact that it helps to expand our readers' perspective on the ethnic characteristics of the members of different ethnicities. After all, it is a well-known fact that it is precisely ignorance of such details that can sometimes lead to ethnic conflicts.