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Editorial Office:

CENTRAL ASIA AND THE CAUCASUS  
Hubertusstigen 9. 97455 Luleå  
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**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

***The Special Feature section in the next issue will discuss:***

**Central Asia and the Caucasus**

- What Makes the Parliamentary and Presidential Elections in Central Asia and the Caucasus Specific
- Political and Economic Development Trends
- World and Regional Centers of Power and their Impact on the Regional Situation

**DEMOCRACY AND  
TRANSITION PERIOD****REVOLUTIONARY WAVES  
IN THE POST-SOVIET EXPANSE****Sergey ZHILTSOV**

*D.Sc. (Political Science),  
observer for the journal Vestnik Kaspiia  
(Moscow, Russia)*

The tempestuous events over the past two years in several CIS countries have led to the formation of a qualitatively new geopolitical, economic, and political situation in the post-Soviet expanse. Although the assessments of these events are largely emotional (some call the changes in power in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan revolutions, others refer to them as coups), the general conclusion drawn is that all the former U.S.S.R. republics have entered a qualitatively new stage in their development. This new stage could end in the formation of an essentially different geopolitical reality and new political plots in each of the countries indicated.

The situation which has developed in the Commonwealth states is, first, the result of the geopolitical rivalry among Russia, Europe, and the U.S. for domination throughout the expanses of the former Soviet Union, second, is caused by the economic struggle between competing groups within each country, and, third, is generated by the people's discontent with the authorities' policy during the almost 15 years of their independence. Here it is important not to roll everything into one lump, but to look at the main causes of what happened, identify the laws governing them, and determine what awaits these republics in the future.

**Revenge of the Post-Soviet Elites**

The changes in the breakdown of forces in Ukraine, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan show that the so-called revolutions were a form of opposition by the local elites. The leaders of the new independent

states created after the U.S.S.R. collapsed almost always succeeded in putting the clamps on the political and financial opportunities of their opponents. The absence of democratic procedures to procure a change in power in these countries and the fact that elections turned into a struggle for survival gave rise to a certain type of political culture which does not envisage rotation of the elites, at least not on the basis of elections and transfer of power.

The events in Ukraine, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan showed that this situation is changing and the old elites are beginning to yield their ground. Shielded by such definitions as the Rose Revolution, Orange Revolution, and Tulip Revolution, the forces removed from power had the opportunity to take revenge, in so doing adhering if not to the law, at least to the semblance of objectivity of the political processes. What is more, the events in these countries demonstrated the weakness of their state power institutions, while presidential and parliamentary elections became an excuse to consolidate the political opposition, mobilize its supporters, and attract the attention of third countries. And last but not least, in actual fact, the opposition leaders did not want serious changes, presenting their demonstration against the authorities as a revolution only to mobilize the population, which was promised radical changes, including the rejuvenation of power, and the arrival of new, honest, and uncorrupted people at the helm. But it ended up with those people returning to the ruling structures who just yesterday occupied the highest posts in them and then, for various reasons, found themselves by the wayside. For example, in Ukraine, new "old" Viktor Iushchenko run with the country's political elite for the past 10 years and used to occupy a key position in its developed oligarchic system. In particular, he was chairman of the National Bank, and then even held the post of prime minister.

In order to better understand Iushchenko as a politician, let's take a look at the people who officially made up his team (which scandalously collapsed in September 2005) at the peak of the Orange Revolution. Without doubt, a symbolic figure and vivid emblem of oligarchic capitalism was now ex-prime minister Iulia Timoshenko. In order to resolve her own personal problems, she was ready to stand under any banner which could later be converted into financial resources and power, or, vice versa, into power and financial resources. Along with her, three former vice premiers were members of Iushchenko's entourage (Viktor Pinzenik, Yuri Ekhanurov, and Igor Iukhnovsky), as well as several politicians who at one time occupied ministerial posts (Ivan Zaets, Yuri Kostenko, Sergey Golovaty, Gennadi Udovenko, and Boris Tarasiuk).

Les Taniuk, Ivan Pliushch, Evgeni Chervonenko, and Pyotr Poroshenko can also be said to belong to this team. A total of four former vice premiers and ten ministers gathered around Iushchenko. On the whole, they comprised a full compliment of retired parliamentary members. These people received state posts, decorations, and other awards courtesy of Leonid Kuchma himself (when he was prime minister, and then president).

A similar picture developed in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan. It resulted not in a qualitative renewal of power (which was one of the main theses of the opposition), but rotation within one circle of officials. However, the change in leaders is increasingly going beyond legal bounds, causing instability in the political situation and turning the economy into a victim of populist promises.

While the United States managed to achieve progress in advancing its interests in many republics which used to belong to the U.S.S.R., in Ukraine this was more difficult due to its geographical dimensions, size of population, and a few other reasons.

The answer to the question of why the West nevertheless supported Viktor Iushchenko should be sought in the economy. Financial flows and business in Ukraine, as in any other country, go in different directions. The paradox of the situation lies in the fact that the business structures (coal, metal, and so on) related to Viktor Ianukovich, Iushchenko's main opponent at the 2004 presidential election, can successfully develop only if aimed at the West, thus creating competition for analogous Western structures, which naturally does not interest the latter. While the business structures



close to Viktor Iushchenko (confectionary goods, and so on) are capable of competing with their Russian “colleagues.” This is why the East and West are financing opposing business groups: Russia wants to curb the expansion of Viktor Iushchenko’s business groups, while the West is striving to stymie Viktor Ianukovich’s (many representatives of big business have their own interests in different regions).

In turn, the European Union, first, does not want Ukraine to interfere with its absorption of new territories and, second, is trying to protect itself from Ukraine’s export of metal and agricultural produce. What is more, the European countries are interested in the unhindered transit of Russian energy resources, as well as in Kiev maintaining an equal distance in its political relations between Moscow and Washington. Finally, the EU is trying to conquer Ukrainian sales markets and wants Ukraine to buy European products and technologies, while selling the Europeans its industrial enterprises and land. The U.S. also wants the same things from Ukraine, whereby it is mainly bent on protecting its economic interests here. After all, in this former Soviet republic, labor is cheaper than in China, while it is rich in natural resources, particularly those needed for metallurgy and agriculture, and the price of energy resources is half what it is in Central Europe.

In light of the possible stronger foothold being gained by the countries of the Single Economic Space (SES), to which Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan belong (with Ukraine likely to join them), the West is justifiably beginning to worry about an Eastern analogue to the EU, which in terms of its political and economic influence could become a serious rival not only to the European Union, but also to the U.S.

European politicians have stated, without beating around the bush, that Ukraine is a kind of buffer with its population of 48 million people for protecting Europe in the event of a conflict with the East. This point of view was confirmed in particular by German political scientist Alexander Rahr, who said that while official Kiev is striving to join the EU and NATO, Europe can sleep in peace, the East-West conflict will not be revived. What is more, Western circles see Iushchenko as that reformer who will turn Ukraine into another Poland.

For this reason, we should put an end to all the discussions about post-Soviet revolutions and set off in search of money. The creation of myths about the “democratic” opposition in post-Soviet countries served and still serves the economic interests of the West, which is exerting enormous efforts to build oil pipelines for transporting Caspian oil to the Western market, including via the Ukrainian Odessa-Brody route. This pipeline was intended for pumping Caspian oil controlled by the Americans to the Western markets, but now it is pumping Russian oil, which cannot please the U.S., whose interest in the CIS countries is explained by the problems of producing and transporting energy resources. Given the instable conditions of the American economy, it is Washington’s main strategic goal to seize or take firm control over the world’s main sources of energy. In keeping with this logic, the United States must (in addition to other goals) deprive its main rivals, primarily Western European states, of guaranteed sources of oil and gas.

## To a Market Economy through the Dictates of Power

From the economic viewpoint, the events in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan have similar features. And we are not talking about the names of the financial-industrial groups close to the authorities, or, vice versa, far away from them. These countries are united by systemic socioeconomic problems which not only have long been awaiting a solution, but have even frequently become more aggravated. It is the contradictions in the economy which are one of the main reasons for the current

upheavals in the above-mentioned countries. Other factors, political, ideological, socio-psychological, etc., are actively being manifested only as catalysts and tools facilitating the processes going on.

At the foundation of the above-mentioned contradictions lies the fragmentary nature of the post-Soviet economies, which was caused by a breakdown (after the collapse of the Soviet Union) in interrelations at the regional and branch level. This gave rise to a divergence in national and regional interests, as well as in the preferences of the main clans and financial-industrial groups, and alienation of some of them from the government decision-making process. For example, one of the special features of the current political process in Ukraine is the huge role played by big capital and business-political groups (BPG), which clashed in the struggle for control over the economy. Whereby these groups have still not drawn up civilized rules of the game, fair competition, civilized redistribution of property rights, and their mutual guarantee.

Despite the declared priority on developing small businesses, the de-facto government policy is promoting not only its conservation in semi-primitive and rudimentary forms, but is also pushing it into the shadows, prompting it to cooperate with the local authorities, local elites, and law enforcement bodies. Whereas big business prefers to resolve its problems largely by means of contacts with the central authorities, including through its people in the government.

For example, until recently, economic growth in Ukraine was speculative in nature and ensured mainly by export of the lion's share of manufactured production, whereby most of the profit stayed abroad. And the part of it that nevertheless returned to the country mainly was not invested in production, due to the high level of political risk, but used to purchase luxury items.

The concentration of capital and financial expansion of industries and companies which for one reason or another have undergone steadier development was frequently expressed in conflicts between the central and regional elites. In so doing, the Center was using all the influence available to it for inflating the headstrong "regionals" and setting the fiscal, law enforcement, and judicial bodies on them. And the regional elites have been creating their own parties, public structures, and even semi-criminal and semi-legal formations for resolving their problems. The events in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan demonstrated regional differences and a huge number of extremely urgent social problems, which have led to a conflict between the prosperous and depressed regions. What is more, the fact that one of the main drug transit routes passes through the south of country had an impact on the situation in Kyrgyzstan. It is believed, and apparently not without justification, that it was the drug barons who brought about the changes in the political situation in the republic.

The "insulted" elites not only did not see a place for themselves in the new economic system, they did not see the possibility either of opposing (economically) the powerful financial-industrial groups close to the authorities who had created their own capital on the export markets. The consequences of this policy had a negative effect on the state of affairs throughout the economy. Significant financial flows have been draining from the domestic market, which placed exporters in a no-lose position. The distortions in the economy have aroused great doubts among the ordinary citizens of these countries in the authenticity of the indices declared by the government of its growth and suspicion that certain members of financial-industrial groups (FIG) are appropriating its fruits. For the population of the post-Soviet states placed great hopes on the economic reforms. For example, it was expected that a socially-oriented market economy could be created in the country as a foundation for contemporary Ukrainian society. But this did not happen. Despite the propagandistic rhetoric about the achievements in this sphere and overall stability, people have been assessing the processes going on rather skeptically. The main reason for this is the enormous gap between the intentions declared at the beginning of the 1990s and the real results of the authorities' activity.

Despite the annual upswing in the economy and growth of the GDP, the situation has not changed. The increase in wages and pensions was immediately devoured by the increase in cost of

utility and transportation services, energy resources, basic necessities, and the gap between the richest and the poorest widened. As a result, the achievements in the economy yielded a minimum social effect.

## “Seizure of Bridges, Telegraph Stations, and Banks”

The events occurring in the post-Soviet countries are a continuation of the war among the oligarchic clans, but using different, more up-to-date, methods. Glaring confirmation of this is the tactic of revolution organization in Ukraine, in which Georgia’s recent experience was used, but it did not lead to such harsh collisions as occurred in Kyrgyzstan.

One of the main components of the moral victory of the supporters of the Orange Revolution was music. The team in Iushchenko’s headquarters responsible for public relations did not create anything new—art has always been a vital tool of protest and emotional driver of struggle. But the way in which it achieved this indicated its high level of professionalism. The center of the campaign was a stage, which in size met the requirements of a rock concert, set up in the main square of the Ukrainian capital. It was equipped with a compact mobile television station, which provided round-the-clock transmissions of everything that went on, not only live, but also via satellite. This meant that the events on Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square) could be seen in real time everywhere around the world. What is more, the stage was placed in such a way that Independence Monument lit up in keeping with all the laws of a state-of-the-art laser show was always in the background of the meeting as seen on the television screen.

Even without detailed excursions into the history of national protests, this example could be called unique: Independence Square was more reminiscent of an auditorium where people came to socialize. Essentially all the television screens showed political masters of ceremony taking turns to warm up the audience during the breaks between concert programs, or individual orators making speeches which rallied together the masses of people by means of standard slogans. What is more, for the sake of exotics, interviews were broadcast with people dress-rehearsed in advance who were to show that the whole of Ukraine had gathered in the center of Kiev. The promotion of Orange music on TV was based on the simple idea of staging the chronology of events on Maidan to the accompaniment of a string of songs, particularly since there was a lot of video material.

The meeting and its organization were maintained not so much by administrative methods, as by psychological brainwashing. Two techniques were used for this. The first, bringing people into a state of narcotic intoxication. This has nothing to do with taking drugs internally—it is merely a common brainwashing technique. The goal here is achieved by external mechanical effects, for example, rhythmic music with a predomination of percussion instruments. The endless music programs and performances of singers intermingled with the chanting (even singing) of slogans, such as “Iushchenko! Iushchenko! Iushchenko!,” “Get’! Get’! Get’!” (which means “Out!” for Kuchma and Ianukovich), as well as drumbeat, held the people on the square.

And when there was a break in the music, the percussion instruments were replaced by voices (the second brainwashing technique was used). By chanting words and phrases by syllable (“shooting” them out from the throat), rhythmic infrasonic fluctuations were created. Their shortcoming was their low power level, to reach the level of the percussion instruments, a huge crowd was needed and coordinated repetition of the slogans to create the desired effect.

As a result, there was too much of one color (orange), loud music, and standing all day long on Independence Square. Reinforced by universal verbal stamps and abstract slogans, the intensive color information had an impact on the subconscious. Whereby the brain perceived it without re-processing it, it did not pass through the logical apparatus, and people lost their ability to critically perceive everything related to the color orange. As a result, the participants in the meeting, particularly those living in the camp on Kreshchatik, the central street in the Ukrainian capital, were sure that when Viktor Iushchenko became president their lives would dramatically and rapidly change for the better.

A so-called field headquarters of Iushchenko's team was set up on Maidan for counting the votes. It became the base camp for organizing the ongoing meeting, the nucleus of which was formed by the same team. And transportation supplied by the business structures associated with several deputies from the opposition was used to bring meeting participants from other regions of the country. These same structures supported the vital activity of the active meeting nucleus. The main acts of protest initiated by the People's Power coalition on Independence Square and taken up by the mass media made it possible to create the myth within the shortest time of Viktor Iushchenko's national support. The mass psychosis which infected Kiev graphically demonstrated how the promotion of a commodity, the Orange Revolution, was imposed on the voters, who found themselves in the role of buyers.

In this way, Iushchenko and his entourage succeeded in bringing people out into the streets who were disillusioned by the authorities (central and local), on whom they placed the blame for all their problems. Only this time, in contrast to the confused staggering of the multi-thousand crowd in 2001 and 2002, the people on Maidan deployed their forces quickly, concentrating them in the necessary place. This says that the leaders of the opposition to Kuchma and the invisible organizers of the national uprising underwent good training on the eve of November-December 2004.

## What Next?

The political situation in the post-Soviet countries in which the Color Revolutions took place will be determined by the ability of the new leadership to resolve the problems of socioeconomic development and by the possibilities of the current authorities to consolidate society. If these issues are not resolved, the change in political elites in Ukraine, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan will create conditions for repetition of the revolutionary situation.

Regardless of who takes the helm in Ukraine, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan, Russia will develop relations with these countries. The Russian president spoke about the need to develop cooperation with the post-Soviet states at a meeting of the Russian Federation Security Council, at which the question of relations between official Moscow and NATO was discussed. "Cooperation within the CIS will remain Russia's foreign policy priority. I have said repeatedly that work in the Commonwealth is a priority area in our foreign policy doctrine. And this approach should become a principle of the activity aimed at maintaining regional stability within the Commonwealth." The question is only of how to work, with whom, and what goals to set.

Under the new conditions which have developed in several CIS countries, it will be much more difficult to develop bilateral cooperation. In many post-Soviet states, a new elite is coming to power which is more hard-line and pragmatic, less influenced by the stereotypes characteristic of political relations during the Soviet era, and relies on Western political support and (partially) resources.

Attempts to divide power (and following it property too) will be seen in all the post-Soviet countries. This process will likely take quite a long time. What is more, taking the helm does not mean the

problem is solved. Most important is the policy the new authorities begin to conduct, and whether it will be different from the actions of the former leadership. Whether the former Soviet republics are able to become full-fledged states, or whether they continue to be tossed about on the waves of world politics will depend on this.

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## PARADOXES OF DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIZATION TRENDS IN CENTRAL ASIA AND THE SOUTHERN CAUCASUS

Arthur ATANESIAN

*Ph.D. (Political Science),  
Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Sociology,  
Erevan State University  
(Erevan, Armenia)*

The world's latest history has unequivocally demonstrated that most states have opted for democracy, at least for the foreseeable future. Indeed, democracy proved to be the most tempting, and the most successful of all the utopias offered to mankind throughout its history. It seems that unlike many other political systems, democracy which relies on the support of the majority will survive. After all, most states across the world have already accepted the idea: the democratic conception, in fact, stems from democratic choice.

Much has been already written about democracy: classical philosophers and thinkers of later ages were attracted to it; political scientists, politicians, journalists, and sociologists of our time display an inordinate interest in democracy and democratization. It is lauded from all sides; political theories, such as transitology, based on the study of the waves and processes of democratization, have added fire to the heated discussions about democracy. In fact, democratization is moving ahead much slower than the discussions about it. This is one of the many paradoxes of democracy.

### Paradoxes of Democracy

The Soviet Union's disintegration was accompanied by deliberations about democracy; all the changes across the post-Soviet expanse are likewise peppered with slogans on democratization. The Soviet conception of democratic centralism, a "special type of democracy" of sorts, is being replaced in the CIS countries with "special types" of democracy tailored to the specific needs of each country. This is a sure sign that democracy has no uniform interpretation which completely fits the idea of pluralism as one of the democratic products. In fact, the greater the variety of models of democracy,

the more fruitful is the conception itself: there is no uniform democracy—each and every country has its own idea about it. Which of them should be chosen as the beacon of democracy? This is one of democracy's paradoxes.

The idea of democracy can be described as an axiological process; in the course of time, this unique phenomenon has acquired both high values and base ideas. When going back to the sources of the idea's contradictory nature (this can be said about many other similar key concepts), we cannot help but ask what was meant by "democracy" from the very beginning and how its content changed depending on how related ideas were interpreted and realized. "This word could mean the triumph of a rebellious mob, the domination of the lower classes, or equal involvement of all citizens in the affairs of the polis (that is, in politics), the decisive role of the people's assembly, or the rule of those empowered to rule by the demos through formal procedures.

"Since that time, the concept has developed into an even more complicated idea. Today the word 'democracy' is applied to a certain political principle, a certain type of political regime, a certain political culture, a fairly loose set of ideas, and even a philosophy and a lifestyle."<sup>1</sup>

The highly varied axiological content of democracy as a concept and a phenomenon stems not only from the extremely fluid realities of its sociopolitical, economic, cultural, ethnic and, in the final analysis, civilizational context and perception, but also from its different interpretations rooted in the system of axiological-teleological and ideologically varied political trends/philosophies and the corresponding organizations/institutions. On the one hand, democracy has the "potential of a political myth as an obvious principle."<sup>2</sup> On the other, its interpretations are brought together by civilizational considerations (the causes behind its own development coupled with the possibilities and types of its admissible and inadmissible, effective and ineffective manifestations, their pluses and minuses) and the ideological aspects of democracy.

Opinions about one and the same democracy (that is, about what is described by the term within the framework of one and the same political system with fairly sustainable development and consistent trends) differ. For example, while political scientists agree about American democracy as the originally typical, ideal type of contemporary democracy, they fail to agree about its axiological descriptions. Alexis de Tocqueville, who, after discovering American democracy for himself, offered his discovery to all other generations, represented one of the trends. According to him, the American democratic model was an absolute value with good development prospects.<sup>3</sup> Today, most of works in this sphere deal with the positive-analytical theories and studies of democracy (transitology). A large number of them directly or indirectly describe American democracy as a relatively attainable democratic ideal.

Another group of authors who are developing theories of their own are very negative or at least skeptical about democracy. Normally, they too turn to the American model as the most developed one to hurl criticism at it. Michael Parenti's *Democracy for the Few* is the most typical example. The very title suggests that there is a gap between democracy's original aim as "government by the people" and the fact that today it serves the chosen few. Mr. Parenti is very critical of the presidential power in the United States, its Congress, the Constitution (which he calls "the constitution for the few"), the entire legislative system, the social sector (health and social services, education), the media, etc. He perceives them as vehicles of the private interests of the ruling elite and the oligarchs (often united) concealed under democratic garbs.<sup>4</sup> This approach can be described as fruitful because it warns against worshipping certain political ideas which can be taken up as an argu-

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<sup>1</sup> M.V. Il'in, *Slova i smysly. Opyt opisania kliuchevykh politicheskikh poniaty*, ROSSPEN Publishers, Moscow, 1997, p. 317.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 319.

<sup>3</sup> See: A. de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, New York, 1954.

<sup>4</sup> See: M. Parenti, *Democracy for the Few*, 6th ed., St. Martin's, New York, 1995.

ment in favor of opposite actions. Indeed, many of the antidemocratic decisions were made under the aegis of democracy.

I am convinced that the anti-democratic, aggressive actions and use of force to which democratic states resort is another paradox of democracy. If the old rule, “democracies do not fight against each other,” is true, we are tempted to ask, “so they do fight, but not against each other?” Indeed, the legitimate right of a democratic state to wage a war sounds like nonsense: democracy spells civilization, which means the ability to avoid the use of force and to settle all conflicts by peaceful means. Meanwhile, it is democratic states, primarily the United States, which are involved in the major conflicts in Yugoslavia, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The most democratic state is the most belligerent one—here is another paradox of democracy for you.

## Specific Features of Democratization in Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus

The current age of political changes can be described as a transition from the authoritarian-totalitarian system to a system in which popular masses are involved in the political process and are even more actively included in decision-making. Translated into academic parlance, this is described as “participant administration” or as the “democratic form of political involvement” with the people playing the role of the key political entity. Mankind learned long ago that people cannot directly rule the state (I shall not yet discuss whether people can rule at all), therefore there is only one, widely used form of democracy—representative democracy.

People are represented in power by small groups or individuals “speaking in the name of the people and for the people.” In representative democracy, the political elite is expected to be an intermediary of sorts between the political mechanism and the people, rather than an independent political entity. Those elected by the people are expected to use this mechanism in the interests of the people (it turns out that the most common and the most important interests seen as an integral system can be protected and realized only with the help of a political mechanism). This means, among other things, that the people should elect the most skilful of the “mechanics” able not only to operate the mechanism, but also maintain it in working order, preserve it, and ensure its stable functioning. This is what the political leaders and all those involved in the political process are expected to do.

From this it follows that people have to elect individuals to rule the country—otherwise they would be unable to contribute to the country’s administration. This creates the problem of social control over those whom society entrusted to represent itself.

At first glance, in democratic societies the problem of control looks rather straightforward and easily realized. This is a delusion. For example, if a deputy failed to justify the expectations of his constituency, he stands no chance of being re-elected. The logic of practical marketing suggests that a rational voter mistaken once will not repeat the same mistake: once disappointed, nobody will buy the same shoddy product again.

The theory of political marketing patterned on the theory of economic marketing says that the voter (like the shopper) is not inclined to “buy” a shoddy politician: he will not vote for him for the simple reason that he will be forced to tolerate him throughout the deputy’s term in office. The rational voter, like the rational shopper, prefers to pay the minimum price to receive the maximum profit. Each voter has his/her reasons for voting for a particular candidate: each expects to gain something (in

the material, legal, moral, or even aesthetical sphere) for his/her choice. Not infrequently men and especially women base their choice on the candidates' good looks to then enjoy them on their TV screens. This is what normally happens, this is the normal logic and psychology of the voters; this is what I have deduced from the theory of political marketing.

The experience of our "freshly baked" CIS democracies has revealed a paradox: our voters refuse to behave like rational shoppers: they go on electing people they do not trust to parliaments for several consecutive terms. This also fully applies to presidential elections. For this reason, those who have already discredited themselves as deputies or who did nothing to win the confidence and respect of their constituencies are re-elected to the representative bodies of power again and again. After a while the nation grows accustomed to the same faces on their TV screens even though they have discredited themselves to the extent that they should be banned from power forever (this can be called "the Chubais phenomenon"). This breeds apathy among the electorate: it looks as if the nation's political choice, on the one hand, and power and administration, on the other, are two different and unrelated phenomena.

The experience of post-Soviet democratization has demonstrated that if all formally necessary mechanisms for setting up democratic bodies of power are present in the newly democratized societies, their political elite is capable of self-reproduction to the same extent as in monarchies or totalitarian regimes. The electorate at best is invited to watch how the ruling party reproduces itself by "playing democracy." It sets up an obedient opposition; it readjusts its ideology ostensibly to meet the nation's interests while changing nothing in its political course, etc. This is done under the aegis of democracy.

Today "democracy" has become the catchword of political rhetoric; such concepts as terrorism, fascism, peace, globalization, integration, etc. trail behind as far as their usage (abusage) is concerned. Democracy is the weightiest of arguments regularly evoked to support any policy, even the least democratic. This is especially true of the West where political scientists and politicians alike regularly remind the public about totalitarianism and its inadmissible practices. Americans, for example, are still using totalitarianism (its Soviet variant) as a bogey. This works in the following way: totalitarianism is presented as the only alternative to democracy. This has nothing to do with world-wide political reality where there is any number of fairly smoothly functioning intermediate or alternative political systems. According to the commonly accepted opinion, the only choice is between totalitarianism (which is inadmissible) and democracy (as the inevitable option). Meanwhile, the experience of most post-Soviet states has demonstrated that rejection of totalitarianism does not mean an immediate transfer to democracy: democracy is not the absence of totalitarianism.

There is another paradox of democracy: the most democratic of voting procedures may propel the most undemocratic people into power. To be more exact, the undemocratic elite reproduces itself through the most democratic methods—created and applied in democratic states—for forming bodies of power. In the post-Soviet states, the voting procedure—universal, equal, and fair voting—has assumed even more democratic and transparent forms, ranging from transparent ballot boxes to marking those who cast their votes (to avoid repeat voting). In other words, straightforward and transparent democratic policies are replaced with primitive forms of political involvement at all levels, from top to bottom. These democratic forms (formalities) notwithstanding, democratic procedures regularly bring to power the people we would prefer not to see there (or anywhere else).

In these cases, the "raw materials" from which the local elites are made are more important than the procedures. Indeed, the end product of the cooking process depends more on the quality of the initial products than on the quality of the implements used. In this context, the phenomenon of the so-called velvet revolutions looks rather contradictory. There is the opinion that they do not fit democracy and the democratic procedures of power-forming. For example, A. Tastenov and A. Ustimenko of Kazakhstan have the following to say: "The velvet revolutions discredit democracy, since rejecting



one of its cornerstones—the election process, which usually generates a coup—is gaining momentum and spreading to wider areas.”<sup>5</sup>

The active involvement of the ordinary people in rallies as part of the scripts of the “velvet revolutions” (such as the Rose Revolution in Georgia and the Orange Revolution in Ukraine) may testify that electoral procedures had nothing to do with democracy and did not meet the society’s need for democratic leaders and reforms. Those who went to the polls in the hope of changing something took part in a fictitious process, therefore it is correct to say: public manifestations by those who wanted to replace the people at the top were objectively needed. They replaced the discredited election system and can be described, therefore, as a form of people’s democratic involvement. Experts and many of the participants, however, are convinced that their democratic message was discredited: it failed to improve their social and economic situation and merely replaced the old elite with a new one.

There is another typical feature, and a paradox, of post-Soviet democratization: after fourteen years of independence, many of the CIS countries are still ruled by members of the Soviet nomenklatura. It is stranger still that in many cases they enjoy wider popular support than the newfangled liberals (the politically ignorant sections of the public take the word “liberal” as a synonym of “bourgeois,” “radical,” etc.).

Viewed in the context of the CIS political culture, which is the direct outcome of the uniform Soviet political culture with ethnic overtones, this phenomenon looks absolutely logical. More likely than not, people tend to apply their own yardsticks to politicians suggested by their own everyday lives rather than political reality. This borders on political ignorance.

In Central Asia, in particular, the former Soviet apparatchiks’ firm grip on power can be explained by the national tradition of venerating the older generation: the degree of respect paid to such people increases with age. The newly baked democrats cannot compete with the political heavyweights of Soviet stock, such as Nursultan Nazarbaev and Islam Karimov. The same applies to their children: the older ones (like Dariga Nazarbaeva) are more respected than their younger siblings; just as in the distant past, power can be inherited, with the older children having advantages over the younger.

Some republics, however, have freed themselves from the older leaders inherited from Soviet times to the hooting of crowds and scathing criticism. This is part of the Soviet political heritage: in the Soviet Union nearly every leader had to build up his authority by disgracing his predecessor (Stalin gradually removed Lenin from power; Khrushchev trampled on Stalin’s personality cult; Brezhnev plotted to topple Khrushchev; Gorbachev was prone to criticizing all his predecessors, while Yeltsin never hesitated to criticize and humiliate Gorbachev.) The recent developments in Georgia (where Eduard Shevardnadze was removed from power), Ukraine (where the same happened to Leonid Kuchma), and Kyrgyzstan (where Askar Akaev lost his post) have amply demonstrated that the members of the former Soviet elite were removed according to the Soviet scenario (a coup organized by a small group of elite members) tinged in “democratic” hues by active involvement of the broad masses and political technologists. This shows that the politicians inherited from Soviet times are ill-suited to the new context of democratization, while the above-mentioned politicians lost their posts because of their impotence rather than their advanced age or Soviet past. Indeed, several years ago the Georgians were lauding President Shevardnadze as a politician and diplomat of European and world stature; and in Kyrgyzstan, President Akaev was respected as a member of the Soviet academic elite. This proved to be of little importance when it came to adjusting to the new conditions and rivalry over the presidency.

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<sup>5</sup> A. Tastenov, A. Ustimenko, “Kontseptual’nye osnovy fenomena ‘barkhatnykh revoliutsiy’ na postsovetском prostranstve,” *Analytic*, No. 2, 2005, pp. 20-24.

The pragmatism of democratic and democratizing societies (the post-Soviet societies which have just begun mastering Western political values) is gradually replacing the traditional values (respect for elders, family and clan ties, etc.) with such functional qualities as the ability to cope successfully with all sorts of problems. This should not be taken to mean that politicians of Soviet stock stand no chance (Nazarbaev is the best example of this), yet young and mobile politicians of the Saakashvili type have a much better chance of succeeding.

There is a lot of talk today about the “models of democracy” adjusted to individual CIS countries. This rhetoric is closely connected with the political regimes in some of these countries. I have in mind the authoritarian democracies like Putin’s regime in Russia and Nazarbaev’s regime in Kazakhstan. The authoritarian leaders carry out democratic reforms; they sparingly portion out rights and freedom; while gradually delegating powers, they remain in control and keep the opposition on its tenterhooks; they let the people appreciate freedom, yet they are never too lavish with it. This is the main meaning and the main advantage of moving away from totalitarianism toward democracy via authoritarianism. Moderate and reasonable authoritarianism is a link between two extremes—totalitarianism and democracy—two antinomies that need a charismatic leader’s personal power to be paired.

At the same time, authoritarianism makes the country mainly dependent on the leader’s personal domestic policies, which may be both positive and negative. There is the opinion in Russia and Kazakhstan that these countries are lucky to have these outstanding leaders, powerful personalities, and masterful politicians as presidents, who know when to apply power, how to carry out reforms, who to punish and encourage, and how to rule “with stick and carrot.” Some people in these countries, however, are apprehensive of their presidents’ authoritarianism. (The authoritarian nature of the president’s rule in Turkmenistan is a different matter: this is an example of totalitarian authoritarianism vested in elements of democracy and embellished with the illusion of civic support, promotion of national values, the president’s openness, etc. This authoritarianism is not only far removed from democracy, but also from the authoritarian regimes in Russia and Kazakhstan, which in a way are moving toward democracy.)

Authoritarianism equally tends toward totalitarianism (retreat from democratization) and toward democracy, therefore much depends on the authoritarian leader’s personality. This is the main problem of this political regime. I have already written about the drift toward usurping power for themselves and their family (clan) which Shevardnadze and Akaev demonstrated and which was cut short with the use of force even though this coup was called a bloodless “velvet revolution.” Today everybody knows that authoritarian leaders and their families expect to profit more than others from authoritarianism. The ordinary people have finally grasped this (for example, President George W. Bush, who owns oil fields and is lobbying the interests of business partners in the name of his country’s official policies); they also know that by way of compensation their security must be guaranteed lest a slide back to totalitarianism cause mass discontent and civil disobedience. Reforms, rights and freedoms, higher living standards, and ideological mechanisms should be used to preserve the nation’s loyalty. This is what Putin and Nazarbaev are doing: they are knocking together civil support of their authoritarianism, thus probably rescuing the democratization processes in their countries from hasty, ill-judged, and spontaneous actions and slogans similar to Gorbachev’s glasnost, which turned into chaos, or Yeltsin’s privatization, which produced “robber barons.” Today, the two leaders have to ward off the danger of a coup disguised as another “velvet revolution.” Authoritarian power should remain within the limits of authoritativeness—this is the most reliable method for moving smoothly toward democratization, at least in some of the CIS countries.

I would like to go back to the problem of the national political cultures and democratization processes in the CIS; I would like, in particular, to investigate the family phenomenon in the cultures of the CIS members in the context of their efforts to create models of democracy of their own.

Along with national security, the family has been and remains the main value among the Central Asian and Caucasian nations which lived, and are still living, in the harsh steppe and mountain environments of Asia and the Caucasus. The clans kept together by family ties tended to live together to be sure of mutual support and assistance.

Seventy years of Soviet power naturally affected the family cult of these peoples (I shall leave outside the scope of this article the family cult among the Slavic nations of the Soviet Union and the CIS, and of Russia in particular, which is a blend of Eurasian traditions with numerous specifics of its own). The Soviet family cult as a “cell of society” strengthened the family cult in the cultures of Central Asia and the Caucasus, which treated the family as a more important and a more reliable guarantor of security than the state. The downfall of the Soviet Union, which deprived people of their civil identity and security guarantees, strengthened the cult of the family still further. In other words, weak states have strong clan systems and vice versa. This is deeply rooted in history and culture. In the absence of adequate state protection and in the context of a centuries-old social order, the mafia or a clan plays the role of family.

The time has come to go back to the roots of the loyalty CIS citizens are demonstrating toward the involvement of the families of their leaders, presidents in particular, in the political life of their countries. This relates mostly to the Central Asian and South Caucasian republics, with the exception of Kyrgyzstan, which lost patience with Akaev’s family business; Armenia, where President Kocharian’s family is keeping a low profile; and Georgia, where the post-revolutionary leaders, by demonstrating their affiliation with the Western political culture of individualism, obviously want to disassociate themselves from Shevardnadze and the abuses of his family. Even in post-Orange Revolution Ukraine, the family cult rose from its ashes in the form of media reports about the financial excesses of President Iushchenko’s son. This means that the president’s offspring, who has absolutely no role to play on the political stage, is regarded as a public figure, who is reproducing the anti-culture of political clans and hereditary power.

Why do people in most CIS countries tolerate the rule of the president’s family? Why do people accept as normal that the extended family of any bureaucrat is entitled to privileges, money, and security, in other words, to a well-padded existence? Because any member of the public would have behaved similarly in his place. People get the leaders they deserve—here is another paradox of democracy.

The cult of the family and the specifics of national culture in the CIS and other nations suggest that the politician unable to procure privileges for his own family will fail his voters as well, therefore he is a bad politician not worth the public’s votes. In the United States, victory in any elections depends on social, political, and financial support; all three types of support are generated as the idea of family, corporation, and party.

If democracy means freedom of choice, including the right of the people to elect the leaders they trust, then democracy has already won across the former Soviet Union. Even if they vote for an aggressor, a demagogue, or a Mafioso, this is still democracy if the electorate is aware of what it is doing. The president who looks after his family, his wife, children, grandchildren, and other relatives by showering privileges and power on them is the most adequate leader—at least within the family cult context—because he is being guided by the same principles as his compatriots. The ethical side of this is irrelevant—the main question is: Why does this happen at all?

Democracy as a system that allows people to realize their aspirations through elections has given rise to another fairly urgent problem: bribery of voters. This is typical of all the CIS republics, it is practiced in towns and villages and betrays itself during the last month of parliamentary or local election campaigns. In cities and towns, candidates buy votes for money, in the villages they go around distributing food parcels. Bribes are one of the factors affecting the nation’s electoral behavior. This does not contradict the very spirit of democracy, since people are not expected to justify their choice, whereas this would make elections more democratic.

There is another aspect of the political process. I have in mind its media coverage and the way the CIS political elite uses the media to promote its decisions and actions in light of the democratic changes, while many of the newly-baked democrats look at these changes as a burden rather than their political doctrine.

Everyone knows that the democratic media are biased; they have become a mechanism for reproducing the “democratic elites,” as well as an instrument these elites use to protect themselves against fluid public sentiments; the democratic elites are too smart to set themselves against the people. They have already replaced themselves with their TV and radio images, press reports, and Internet sites. Politicians use the media as a shield and remote control to channel politics without having personal contact with it.

The public nature of politics in representative democracies is a mechanism of public control and the nation’s political involvement: all important decisions should be approved by the public before the politicians turn them into laws. The public and open nature of the contemporary political processes means that the nation is directly involved in decision-making.

This mechanism of public control and involvement in decision-making at the grass-root level is part of political culture. The people expect new decisions, while the politicians are prepared to explain them to the nation. S. Zapasnik has the following to say on this score: “Today, much less attention is paid to the correlation between political programs and the seemingly related ideological goals, yet the decision-making mechanisms are much more obvious. American voters, for example, kept Ronald Regan in the White House for two terms, even though his programs were internally contradictory... Today political careers are unrelated to the politician’s ability to fulfill his election programs. They depend on the methods used to feed information to the public, on the politician’s ability to win debates convincingly and to win the voters over to his cause... In a democratic society where the nation expresses its will through voting, the politicians marred by justified suspicions of concealing information about alternative programs or about their aims and possible difficulties stand less chance of being elected. Those who are known to use persuasion and brainwashing techniques, which the voters dismiss as ‘manipulative,’ have no chance of being re-elected.”<sup>6</sup>

Today, the electorate responds to the form and presentation manner, rather than to the content of any political message. In so-called traditional democracies, the desired effect is achieved with the help of the latest media technologies, skilled speechwriting, and painstaking image-making. In budding democracies, personal contact between the politician and the crowd produces a similar effect.

It is hard to distinguish between manipulation and the politician’s straightforward efforts to explain to the nation the meaning of another draft law, initiative, or decision. Indeed, public politics requires public control, which makes the politicians accountable to the nation. The experience of centuries-old pre-democratic regimes says that no politician will address the nation if he can avoid it. From this it follows that the public nature of politics and the public justification of political actions can be described as an effort by the political elite to adjust itself to its contemporary social environment.

Talking of adjustment (this is the term to be applied to most politicians in the CIS countries), it should be said that the elites will try to create conditions which are as conducive as possible to their political survival in the new system. More likely than not, they will try to alleviate the pressure of public control by manipulating mass consciousness.

If we accept the description of social manipulation as a “set of methods of ideological and socio-psychological impact applied with the aim of changing the conduct and thinking of people contrary to their interests,”<sup>7</sup> then we should conclude that the need to adapt the old political elite to the new po-

<sup>6</sup> S. Zapasnik, “Lozh v politike,” *Filosofskie nauki*, No. 8, 1991, p. 95.

<sup>7</sup> N.E. Iatsenko, *Tolkoviy slovar obshchestvovedcheskikh terminov*, Lan Publishers, St. Petersburg, 1999.

litical environment, which includes the requirement to publicly justify all political decisions, has become part of sociopolitical manipulation.

Gorbachev's glasnost (I say Gorbachev's because it was he who launched the period of uncontrolled glasnost), which raised the banner of rights and freedoms, freedom of speech in particular, was used to protect the ruling elite. Indeed, it is much better to know what the people think in order to defend oneself (not to address long overdue problems). The politicians of the era of democracy are guided by the principle well-known to doctors: the silent patient is much worse than the complaining one. Likewise the political elite finds it easier to orientate itself in an outspoken rather than silent society, in which bottled-up discontent may damage the political class (up to injuring the politicians) or even topple the regime.

Putin's inauguration ceremony as the president of Russia, which is a democratic procedure affirming the election results, turned into his enthronization. In the context of Eurasian political culture and psychology burdened with Great Power components inherited from the past, the procedure acquired authoritarian hues and looked more like a coronation than an inauguration. Its TV coverage was obviously not Putin's personal initiative: everything was done as it should have been done. The ceremony was aimed at the Russian (post-Soviet) man in the street who admired Putin's inauguration and his power. The monarch responsible for everything is the Eurasian ideal of a leader still alive in people's hearts. In the Armenian countryside, old people still call the president a czar; this is not deliberate—they are merely convinced that the president is omnipotent.

It should be said that the independent media in democratic and democratized countries are doing a lot to help politicians survive: it is through them that the elite can control public sentiments. Those ruling CIS elites which ban independent media in their countries or interfere with their functioning are short-sighted. They have failed to grasp the media's full functional value as outlets of public discontent acting in favor of the elites themselves. By bottling up these sources, the authorities may remain ignorant of a "velvet revolution" ripening in their country.

On the other hand, the experience of post-Soviet societies has demonstrated that deliberations about democracy and the freedom of speech (glasnost) do not mean that people who are free to criticize or to complain are well protected. While in Soviet times people were not free to say what they thought and could not, therefore, influence the ruling elite, today, when saying what they think and what they do not think (many people speak without thinking), they cannot influence the elite. The ruling classes at best are guided by public opinion polls to manipulate the nation in order to ensure their greater survival.

At the same time, political leaders can exploit the public nature of contemporary policies and decision-making to shift part of their personal responsibility for the decisions they make onto their electorate. In other words, while the monarch is completely responsible (or completely free of such responsibility) for his decisions, the democratic leader is responsible for his actions as a person chosen by people. His errors can be referred to his electorate. After acquiring popular support in decision-making or when carrying out reforms, the leader makes the nation responsible for the decision and reforms. By the same token, if the program fails, he can easily channel popular indignation away from himself. The nation in general is an abstract category used by populists, therefore culprits are nearly never found. This is another paradox of democracy normally passed over in silence. It is the democratic leaders, rather than the popular masses, who profit from this shared responsibility.

I have demonstrated that the post-Soviet CIS leaders are doing their best to adjust to the need to carry out democratic reforms and adapt them to themselves. This is a normal procedure and another paradox of democracy.

## TRANSFORMATION IN THE POLITICAL REGIME IN UZBEKISTAN: STAGES AND OUTCOME

Nikolai BORISOV

*Lecturer at the Russian State University of Humanities  
(Moscow, Russia)*

Researchers are showing a great interest in the political changes occurring in the post-Soviet countries. This is because these changes have led to the creation of absolutely different political regimes which at times are even totally opposite to each other in their nature and content. This has not only given experts much food for thought regarding the factors prompting the formation of these regimes, the reasons for their differences and the possibilities of further changes, but has also given rise to the need for reconsidering the traditional trans-istological approaches which view political

transformation as the democratization and modernization of the political system of a particular state.

The most important presuppositions from which our analysis of the current situation proceeds are based, first, on the hypothesis that the transformation process and the existence of so-called "paths of dependence" are historically determined; and, second, on the hypothesis that the regime which formed in Uzbekistan differs in several key characteristics from Soviet power, being more akin to the pre-Soviet regimes of the Central Asian khanates.

### Was There an Alternative?

It should be noted that Uzbekistan extricated itself from its indeterminate position by means of the "winner takes all" scenario, and a noncompetitive regime was set up in the country which relies not only on formal, but also on informal institutions (with the prevalence of the latter), while differing from Turkmenbashi's power and from the situation, for example, in neighboring Tajikistan. The reason for this should be sought both in structural factors and in the nature of the special features of the transfer itself.

The most important structural factors include state- and nation-forming (the presence or absence of the experience of statehood in the pre-Soviet period, political tradition, degree of national consolidation), socioeconomic (the predominating sector in the economy, standard of living of the population), and cultural-value (the special features of culture, including religious traditions).

The main state- and nation-forming factor is the incomplete formation of a single Uzbek nation, which is shown by the presence of clans (sub-ethnic communities). The experience of statehood acquired in the pre-Soviet period was also of great significance, since it potentially hindered the establishment of a severe monocentric regime.

Uzbek society is traditionally agrarian, and during Soviet power the percentage of agriculture in the population's occupation, in the production of the GDP, and in the national income of this republic

was extremely high, which was combined with the low standard of living of its population. The dynamics of urbanization of the titular nation in Uzbekistan were a notch lower than in the neighboring republics of then Central Asia.

The role of the Islamic factor should also be emphasized. Uzbeks were always more Islamized than the region's other indigenous peoples. What is more, this society was very strong in traditionalism, which implies complete negation of anything new brought into the customary way of life from the outside. In so doing, the younger generation only receives information which helps to preserve the traditional way of life, whereby all changes in society occur only by means of traditional methods.<sup>1</sup>

In this way, structural factors hindered (at least, they did not favor) the establishment of a polycentric regime in the republic. Specific action on the part of political actors or a grassroots revolution was needed to overturn the political heritage. Researchers believe that political dissidents, members of the cultural underground movements related in one way or another to the official culture, and the supporters of a soft line in the communist elite could also act as forces potentially capable of accelerating a weakening in the regime and its subsequent collapse. There is no need to talk about the possibilities of a developed dissident and human rights movement in Soviet Uzbekistan (they simply did not exist). And for several reasons, the special features of the late-Soviet political elite of Uzbekistan made it impossible for a split to occur among the leaders of the republic's Communist Party into advocates of a soft and hard line regarding the opposition, and consequently any form of pact agreements between the authorities and the opposition. Nevertheless, in the republic's cultural sphere, there were already certain forms of political protest. For example, as early as the 1970s, environmental, cultural, sociopolitical, and then (after the mid-1980s) strictly political problems began to be discussed in the Uzbekistan Writers' Union (after Muhammad Salih joined), which was a strictly formal organization. Admittedly, articles on these topics mainly appeared on the pages of Moscow publications. But it was thanks to the Writers' Union, which united the liberal creative elite of the republic, that the Uzbekistan opposition movement came into being, which largely promoted a weakening in the late-Soviet regime. What is more, it began relying on mass support, the basis of which was formed by the population of the republic's large cities, primarily their "Europeanized" city intelligentsia, as well as students from the rural regions.

In this way, we can say that when the Soviet regime collapsed and the period of indetermina- tion set in, there were alternative political forces enjoying mass support which were potentially capable of changing the political regime and eliminating the historical (or political) heritage and political tradition (the Birlik and Erk movements which arose at the end of the 1980s). At that time and at the beginning of the 1990s, under slogans of national revival, democratization, and independence of the republic, opposition actors came together in multi-thousand meetings in the country's major cities.

But the actions of the main actor were mainly aimed at removing all the other political activists and at establishing a monocentric regime, which was justified as a necessary condition of stability in the region. It can be presumed that under other conditions, primarily if the Center had not interfered in the political processes in the republic (at the end of the 1980s), or if the Uzbekistan Communist Party had a different leader, events would have developed entirely differently. If the authorities had used softer strategies, both the arrival of members of the national-democratic opposition at the nation's helm, as well as the seizure of power by leaders of radical Islamic groups and even a split in the country might have occurred. On the other hand, the very actions of the main actor were to a certain extent caused by the structural framework of the transformation, which dictated his need to establish

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<sup>1</sup> See: S.P. Poliakov, *Traditsionalizm v sovremennom sredneaziatskom obshchestve*, Moscow, 1989.

a monocentric regime. As a result, we can talk about the mutual influence and mutual generation of structural and procedural factors.

In contrast to his predecessors, I. Usmankhojaev and R. Nishanov, First Secretary of the Uzbekistan Communist Party Central Committee Islam Karimov, who came to power in 1989 when oppositional political parties arose and began their dynamic activity, used a flexible strategy. It evolved from a dialog with several members of the opposition, a soft-peddled discussion of meeting passions, including attempts to form a legal semi-opposition, to gradual removal from the political scene of all actors who were in one way or another capable of changing the political regime, by arresting the leaders and forcibly depriving them of resources. Karimov was right in thinking that the only true strategy conducive to retaining power in face of the weakening in the U.S.S.R. leadership was to borrow the main slogans of his political opponents and engage in a more radical struggle for their implementation. Revival of the national culture and language, rehabilitation of major historical figures of the pre-Soviet period “slandered” by Moscow, the republic’s sovereignty, and democratization of the political system were all goals Karimov essentially began to declare straightaway from the highest rostrums. For this he chose an essentially no-lose scenario for his actions—he became an even greater nationalist and democrat (at least outwardly, at the level of slogans and laws) and advocate of Islam than the most radical oppositionists, and in this way deprived them of mass support. Since the current situation helped to resolve these tasks, in particular, Karimov had the necessary resources at his disposal (a Supreme Council subordinate to him, no internal split in the elite, and weakness of the Center), he was able to successfully implement this strategy. For example, the republic’s authorities approved numerous laws affecting the development of language, culture, and religion, adopted the Declaration on State Sovereignty, and organized a campaign for restoring the good name of Sharaf Rashidov (first secretary of the Uzbekistan Communist Party Central Committee in 1959-1983) as a “fighter against the Center’s dictatorship in the republic.” Karimov began talking about unofficial movements as an “objective and legitimate” process within the framework of democratic development as an “indication of the politicization of our society.” He admitted that the “party bodies had made many mistakes regarding the informal movements” and stated that now the party had advanced from “complete non-recognition to a constructive dialog” with them.<sup>2</sup> Along with this, Karimov hastened to legitimize himself as the republic’s president, which emphasized that he was not controlled by the C.P.S.U. Central Committee Politburo.

His next step was an attempt to divide the opposition into relatively “loyal” and “disloyal” elements. The thing was that since the opposition had less room for maneuver through formal institutions, a final split, which began as early as the end of 1989, occurred in the Birlik movement. Its more moderate members did not want to entirely lose the possibility of participating legally in political life and retained the hope of coming to power by legal means. So it agreed to tactical cooperation with the republic’s leadership and rejected meeting tactics. This part of Birlik also declared (on 20 February, 1990) the creation of a new public organization called Erk (Freedom), which was headed by Muhammad Salih. (The split in Birlik was also explained by the longtime hostile personal relations between Abdurahim Pulatov and Muhammad Salih.) The main differences in the new structure were that it instantly advanced the slogan of Uzbekistan’s immediate and full independence,<sup>3</sup> and also severely criticized Birlik for organizing mass demonstrations. It is obvious that both the first and second provisions were also shared by the current authorities. At that time, the idea of independence interested Karimov more than democracy, and he was also encouraged by the opposition’s rejection of meet-

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<sup>2</sup> Speech by I.A. Karimov at the 18th Plenum of the Uzbekistan Communist Party Central Committee on 24 November, 1989, *Pravda Vostoka*, 1 December, 1989.

<sup>3</sup> On the contrary, Birlik’s main slogan was “first democracy, then independence.” What is more, independence was viewed by its leaders as a possible threat to the democratic trends coming primarily from Moscow.



ings, as well as its desire to cooperate with the authorities. In this respect, it is not surprising that in exchange for Muhammad Salih's complete loyalty, Karimov wanted to integrate Erk as a legal semi-opposition into the republic's political system. The party was officially registered in September 1991, and in December Muhammad Salih was even allowed to participate in the first presidential election as a candidate for the head of state. To a certain extent, we can say that the authorities had a limited amount of control over this part of the opposition, while the Birlik movement remained entirely beyond their control and was not allowed to register. But Karimov, who soon obtained new legitimacy by means of general elections and strengthened his power, no longer needed even a semi-opposition, and he set about systematic removal of all the actors he did not control from the political process—first by adopting restrictive laws, and then by means of actual elimination of the opposition parties and their leaders. January 1992 can be considered the milestone marking the main actor's new strategy, when the student demonstration was fired at, and Muhammad Salih, Abdurahim Pulatov, Safar Bekjan, and other opposition leaders were forced to emigrate since they were being criminally persecuted by the law.

Karimov's flexibility also comprised of the fact that, until August 1991, he had never been in favor of the republic's full independence, of its withdrawal from the U.S.S.R., or of rejecting Marxist-Leninist ideology. Nor did he unequivocally criticize the coup of 19 August, 2001. The position occupied by the president on this issue can be called wait-and-see: on the first and second day of the coup, when its outcome was still not clear, Karimov talked about the need to strengthen order and discipline, noting that "perestroika had entered an impasse."<sup>4</sup> But right after the coup organizers were defeated, he hastened to declare independence and disbandment of all the Communist Party structures, and then did everything to present himself in the eyes of the people as a "fighter for [Uzbekistan's] national independence" and against the dictatorship of the Union Center, of which he had supposedly been in favor almost since the very first day he came to power in 1989. It is also obvious that the main demand put forward by the opposition, the republic's independence, was carried out without its efforts, deprived it of its goal, and gave Karimov the opportunity to state that independence was achieved precisely thanks to him (and only him).

What is more, the main actor used a variety of methods for eliminating his political opponents. Among them we can also single out his striving to achieve the loyalty of part of the opposition by means of its legal incorporation into the political system, and formal-legal restrictions to participation in this system of certain forces and their leaders opposed to him (the issuing of restrictive laws), and the criminal persecution of political figures, as well as open coercion (attempts at physical reprisal).

This strategy allowed Karimov to retain the reins of power in his hands and to ensure relative stability in the republic. It should be emphasized that the main actor also found extricating the country from its indeterminate position by means of the "winner takes all" scenario using force strategies the most acceptable technique, since this extrication was self-evident. The unresolved territorial and ethnic conflicts, as well as the regions (Ferghana and Namangan) which might "explode" in response to any provocation "hinted" to Karimov the need for a return to authoritarianism and for elimination of all the opposition movements. To this should be added the possibility of mobilizing the masses under slogans of building an Islamic state, the example of neighboring Tajikistan, where the weakness of the authorities had given rise to a civil war, and the position of a "front-line state" (of course, taking into account the situation in Afghanistan).

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<sup>4</sup> "Obrashchenie Prezidenta Uzbekskoi SSR, Pervogo sekretaria Tsentral'nogo Komiteta Kompartii Uzbekistana I.A. Karimova k naseleniiu respubliki" (Address of President of the Uzbek SSR, First Secretary of the Uzbekistan Communist Party Central Committee I.A. Karimov to the republic's population), *Pravda Vostoka*, 21 August, 1991.

During the transformation, the opposition Islamic movements (particularly Adolat) also posed a serious threat to the main actor. The latter tried to “privatize” the functions of the internal affairs structures in investigating crimes and intercepting law violations, and also put forward the demand to create an Islamic state in Uzbekistan. Karimov saw the danger coming from these movements in time, which prompted him to take tougher measures in his fight with precisely the Islamic opposition.

On the whole, all the factors (structural and procedural) gave rise to the special features of the transformation process and extrication from indeterminacy by means of the “winner takes all” scenario. In this respect, it can be maintained that the procedural factors are a kind of extension of the structural, giving “context” to the changes and keeping them within the necessary frameworks. For example, the insufficient autonomy of the actors in the previous regime and special features of Uzbek society, which at its foundation remains non-modernized (traditional), helped to successfully apply force strategies and the resources necessary for this during the transfer, as well as to establish a mono-centric regime which relied both on informal and formal institutions.

## The Special Features and Nature of the New Authorities

In our opinion, as early as the mid-1990s, clear signs of consolidation of the new regime appeared. The following facts are evidence of this: by this time, all opposition parties were made illegal; on the basis of restrictive laws on elections, a new representative body of power was formed, the Oliy Majlis (Supreme Council), in which there was not one member of the opposition parties and movements. The president extended his powers without an election (by means of a national referendum), which would have been impossible to do in an unconsolidated regime. The same regime created a pseudo-party and public organization system, which became part of its fulcrum.

Taking a look at access to supremacy, we will note that it is restricted primarily in a formal way: the law on election of the country’s president prohibits previously convicted citizens and citizens persecuted under criminal cases from participating in this process. What is more, only parties and regional soviets (councils) of people’s deputies under the president’s control have the right to nominate candidates. The possibility of candidates being directly nominated by the voters is not envisaged. In so doing, the regime essentially limited potential access to power, since an alternative candidate to Karimov could not be nominated by pseudo-parties and particularly not by regional soviets, which were headed by khokims, the president’s representatives in the regions. It is understandable that actual restrictions are no longer needed during the direct election process. Even A. Jalalov, as the only alternative candidate for head of state at the 2000 election, himself, on his own admission, voted for Karimov.<sup>5</sup>

The regime’s claims for supremacy can be characterized as extensive and encompass leadership throughout the entire public sphere. It can be claimed that the main actor sees his task as all-encompassing governance over the whole of public life (including Islamic organizations, political parties,

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<sup>5</sup> See: L.I. Levitin, *Uzbekistan na istoricheskom povorote: Kriticheskie zametki storonnika Prezidenta Islama Karimova*, Moscow, 2001, p. 24.

public movements, and the mass media), and even over public consciousness, both political and religious. In other words, the ruling elite is firmly convinced that social processes not only can, but must be controlled.

The regime could potentially incorporate the semi-opposition into the political system (providing it is completely loyal), which Karimov has stated on more than one occasion. But the Erk and Birlik structures, which still function in the republic, have not been cooperating with the regime and so not registered. And the opposition leaders who “repented” and cooperated with the president lost their independent positions, although they are engaged formally (within the framework of government structures) in human rights protection and the development of democracy in the country. As for the “nomenklatura” branch of the opposition, it is not posing any threats to the regime today: it is either partially integrated into the political system or has so few resources that it cannot even openly say it exists.

The new political parties and public organizations have become support institutions of the new regime. A pseudo-party system has formed, under which the parties are not independent political actors and do not act as organizations independent of the bodies of power, but only serve as an additional support for the consolidated regime. It is interesting that each of these parties promulgates some area of its activity which coincides with the president’s declarations (social justice, national revival, national ideology, strengthening statehood, developing the economy). For example, the Vatan Tarakkieti (Progress of the Homeland) party declared that it represents the interests of businessmen and private entrepreneurs and is in favor of “creating an economic and moral foundation for Uzbekistan’s independence and supporting the development of democracy and market relations.”<sup>6</sup> The main slogan of the social-democratic party Adolat is maintaining social justice. The founders of the democratic party Millii tiklanish (National Revival) were creative workers, members of the humanitarian intelligentsia, and scientists, and it declared its goal as “strengthening statehood and developing culture.” The national-democratic party Fidokorlar (the Devoted Ones) stated that its main assignment was “to form an appropriate attitude among young people toward the national ideology and national idea, as well as a conscious perception of the idea of national independence.”

In this way, each party outwardly strives to claim its “expression of the interests” of a certain social stratum (the intelligentsia, private businessmen, farmers, young people), and the “main” one, the National-Democratic Party of Uzbekistan, talks about all the areas at once and claims to represent all the people. It is understood that in so doing not one of them is striving to fight for participation in power, which makes it impossible to consider it a party as such in the generally accepted sense of this word.

The reasons for forming such a system consist in the following.

- First, the regime is experiencing a need to create a wide social base and mechanisms for guiding voters’ interests in the direction it wants, to attract various strata of society to its side, and to create additional channels for mobilizing its own social base.
- Second, this is part of the general course of Karimov’s fight against the clans and clannishness in politics. In other words, by forming parties, the president is trying to clamp down on the influence of the clan leaders and former party bigwigs, in so doing attempting to accelerate consolidation of the Uzbek nation and make the head of state the be-all-and-end-all of this process.

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<sup>6</sup> Predvybornaia programma partii “Vatan Tarrakkieti”, in: *Uzbekistan: Etnopoliticheskaia panorama: ocherki, dokumenty, materialy*, in 2 vols., Vol. 2: *Natsionalno-kulturnye obshchestva*, Moscow, 1995.

- Third, Uzbekistan must create a new image, that is, the image of a country which is adhering to the fundamental principles of pluralistic democracy, respect for human rights, and so on.

The regime is also building a public organization system with similar goals. It is called on to encompass all social strata by means of corresponding unions formed in keeping with professional, age, and gender characteristics, and frequently also according to the territorial-production principle.

Freedom of speech, although it is guaranteed by the Constitution and special laws, is extremely limited, whereby both formally and informally. The formal limitations include the possibility of closing any form of mass media by a registered body (without a court decision), whereas censorship is considered an informal institution, despite the fact that it acts within the framework of and under the cover of a formal structure—the Department for the Protection of State Secrets of the State Printing Committee.

The structure of supremacy is monistic, which can also be seen during an analysis of even the formal institutions. For example, the Constitution grants the president the right to disband the parliament “if insurmountable discrepancies arise among its members,”<sup>7</sup> that is, essentially at any time, and does not envisage impeachment of the head of state. Each session of the representative branch of power continues for two days, during which it can adopt up to 15 laws. In this way, the entirely subordinate role of the Oliy Majlis (legislative body) under the new regime can be considered formally enforced.

Another very important fulcrum of the regime is rotation of the regional leaders (khokims) by the president, who carries this out regularly, every two or three years, whereby frequently khokims are dismissed from their post for “serious shortcomings in their work” and for engaging in “nepotism, cronyism, and parochialism.” The motives for constant rotation are understandable: it is not only a way to direct mass discontent into the channel the head of state needs, it is also an instrument for preventing any regional leader, clannishness, or community spirit from becoming too strong. In so doing, Karimov is trying to eradicate traditional community ties and relations.

One of the most important characteristics of any regime has to do with the ways and types of its legitimization. If the republic’s current regime is evaluated from this viewpoint, structural factors (the accelerated increase in the authority of Islamism in society and the experience of statehood in the past) have also given rise to the possibility of its two-component (national-Islamic) legitimization. By way of the national component, the regime is addressing well-known historical personalities. For example, the main national hero, freedom-fighter, and defender of human rights in Uzbekistan is Amir Timur (1336-1405), one of the most brutal rulers of the Middle Ages. Another honorable hero is Sharaf Rashidov, who is now presented as a “fighter against the expansion of the union Center in the republic during the years of Soviet power,” while his enemies from Moscow, on the contrary, are thought of as “stranglers of the Uzbek people.” Like other CIS states, Uzbekistan is trying to create a new conception of national history. The republic’s new history has three very important ideological precepts: depiction of the more than seventy-year Soviet period of Uzbekistan’s life as a “period of colonialism” and its full-fledged criticism; rampant praise of the sovereignty gained in 1991, which was achieved as the result of the Uzbeks’ steadfast struggle for independence and not due to the collapse of the U.S.S.R.; and searching in the distant past for new heroes to make them symbols and the pride of independent Uzbekistan. From the viewpoint of this conception, the Russians are presented as conquerors and colonizers who brought the Uzbek people many misfortunes, and Russia itself (imperial, Soviet, or present-day) is seen as unequivocally negative.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> “Konstitutsiia Respubliki Uzbekistana,” in: *Konstitutsii gosudarstv-uchastnikov SNG*, Moscow, 2001.

<sup>8</sup> See: Zh. Rakhimov, *Istoriia Uzbekistana*, Tashkent, 2001.

What is more, the president found certain ways to justify the new autocratic regime, without denying in so doing that Uzbekistan is still far from democracy. In particular, he believes that if society is democratized, the “mentality of our people and the uniqueness of national thought [will have to be] taken into consideration.”<sup>9</sup> Another time, he put forward a different justification of authoritarianism, the difficult situation in the region: “I admit that there may be signs of authoritarianism in my actions... But I can give only one explanation for this: at certain times in history ... a strong executive power is still required. This is necessary in order to prevent bloodshed and conflict... If you like, it is necessary to move toward that very same democracy.”<sup>10</sup>

On the whole, it is still early to talk about the totalitarian nature of state ideology. The thing is that it does not contain (in contrast to totalitarian ideologies) a socioeconomic and/or sociopolitical integrity and internally consistent doctrine as such, which would unequivocally explain all the social processes and give forecasts for the future, like Marxism, for example.

Another component of the regime’s legitimacy can be called Islam and all that is related to it. The main goal of ascertaining legitimacy through Islam is to show that only power can be a representative and bearer of “true” Islam, refusing in so doing oppositional Islamic movements the right to represent it and taking this function away from them. For example, the most important Islamic holidays gained state recognition, and the president carried out a hajj to Mecca and made an oath on the Koran. On the other hand, the president interprets all manifestations of Islam which are alternatives to official power as deliberately oppositional and so potentially dangerous to the regime.

In other words, the conclusion can be drawn that the regime’s tough fight against the national-democratic and Islamic opposition is also explained, in addition to everything else, by the current authorities’ struggle for legitimacy, which also consists of these two components. The regime simply cannot allow the forces it does not control to take away part of its legitimacy by claiming monopoly representation of both nationalism and Islam.

After the analysis we conducted, we are bound to look for an adequate definition of the regime that has formed in Uzbekistan and identify how it differs from the former (Soviet) authorities. It can be said that as a result of the transformation, a new political regime has indeed evolved, that is, there has been a transfer from one monocentric political regime to another monocentric political regime.

- First, the new regime is also making eager use of formal institutions as part of its fulcrum, which distinguishes it from the former authorities, under which these institutions did not play any role at all. We will present just a few examples. The powers of the state’s leader, the subjugated role of the parliament, the procedure for appointing regional heads, that is, the formal status of these institutions, in contrast to Soviet times, essentially corresponds to their actual significance. In other words, the gap between the formal and informal institutions, which was characteristic of the political systems in all the Soviet republics, has significantly narrowed in the present-day political system of Uzbekistan. In this respect, we can talk about monocentrism not only at the level of informal, but also at the level of formal institutions. In other words, the main actor is relying both on informal and formal institutions which restrict political participation.
- Second, the type of legitimization of the regime has changed. Whereas earlier legitimization was based on a total world outlook ideology, now the regime relies primarily on

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<sup>9</sup> I.A. Karimov, *Uzbekistan na poroge XXI v.: ugrozy bezopasnosti, usloviia i garantii progressa*, Moscow, 1997, p. 26.

<sup>10</sup> I.A. Karimov, *Stabil'nost i reformy: statii i vystupleniia*, Moscow, 1996, p. 38.

basic mentalities in the form of the country's "higher spiritual values"—nationalism and Islam.

- Third, the new regime (in contrast to the previous) is not spreading its claims for dominating the private sphere of civil life, although it is making attempts to control traditional informal institutions (for example, the mahallias). Thus, it is obvious that the regime considers the main condition of stability to be its full control over the political parties and public organizations created which claim to represent the interests of all the strata of the population before the authorities.
- Fourth, the new regime created institutions of access to supremacy which were not known to the Soviet regime, under which access to supreme power was absolutely closed. But the special features of these new institutions consist of the fact that they severely restrict access to supremacy, mainly on a formal basis.
- Finally, it is obvious that the new regime will use other mechanisms for transferring power, and not those which were used in Soviet times. Most likely this mechanism will consist of appointing a successor to the president from among the people close to him (from his clan), who will merely be officially legitimized after this by means of general elections. This mechanism is more reminiscent not of the Soviet, but of the pre-Soviet practice of power transfer.

Based on the system proposed by certain researchers,<sup>11</sup> the regime should be called "authoritarian," although it differs from classical (ideal) authoritarian regimes. It is presumed that it will be more legitimate to define the regime that has developed in Uzbekistan as neo-patrimonial, that is, based on the personal supremacy of the ruling leader or clan. M. Weber maintained that neo-patrimonialism "tends to appear every time, when traditional authority develops the administration and military force as purely personal leader's instruments... However, non-traditional element doesn't rationalize as impersonal and consists only in extreme development of use of authority at leader's discretion. This is what distinguishes it from any form of rational authority."<sup>12</sup> In other words, all the formal political institutions which arose in Uzbekistan after the collapse of the Soviet regime were not, as Weber put it, rationalized (in the sense of impersonality), but became instruments of dominance at the leader's discretion. In this respect, we will note that the regime is giving greater attention to the formation and development of formal institutions. But they are not being used to curb the power of the main actor, but, on the contrary, are helping to expand the resource base of his power claims, and ensuring a more flexible policy, legitimization, and other urgent needs of the current head of state.

It is obvious that in present-day Uzbekistan a neo-patrimonial Sultanic political regime has developed which has adjusted the outwardly contemporary political institutions to political tradition by making them instruments and a formal fulcrum of the personal supremacy of the head of state. In terms of its main characteristics, this regime is close to the traditional pre-Soviet regimes of the Central Asian khanates (although this statement of course requires more serious arguments based on a detailed analysis of the political practices of these khanates). It is for this reason that the conclusion can be drawn that the transformation of the political regime has led not to modernization of the republic's political system, as could be expected, but to its de-modernization and archaism.

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<sup>11</sup> See: W. Merkel, A. Croissant, *Formal Institutions and Informal Rules of Defective Democracies*, Central European Political Science Review, 2000.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted from: J. Linz, A. Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore; London, 1996, p. 51.

***C o n c l u s i o n :***  
**the Problem of**  
**Power Transfer and**  
**the Threat of Disintegration of**  
**the Regime**

When talking about the problems of power transfer and the potential possibilities of regime transformation, it should be noted that “inheritance” of power by the president’s relatives is essentially excluded, since they have never manifested political activity and they are not considered possible successors (in contrast, for example, to the children of the heads of Kazakhstan or Azerbaijan). But the recently adopted Law on Guarantees of the Activity of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, appointment of Shavkat Mirziyev to the post of prime minister, as well as transfer to head of the government of several presidential powers are leading to the thought that Karimov is preparing to retire. He will probably choose a person more devoted to him (from his clan) as his successor, whereby it might possibly be this same Mirziyev (who comes from Samarkand).

As for potential threats to the regime, today the more or less significant ones can be singled out, in particular, aggravation of the fight for leadership of the country within the political elite in the event of illness or death of the leader and the absence of developed mechanisms for transferring power. Until recently, it was hardly worth classifying outside influence as one of the factors causing a weakening in the regime, since the U.S. was interested in stability in Uzbekistan, which is guaranteed by Karimov. By rendering him military assistance and economic support, Washington one way or another helped to strengthen the existing political regime. But the events of 2005 in Andijan showed the limits of this support. Clearly annoyed by the sharp criticism from the U.S. (and West as a whole) of the methods for putting down the Andijan uprising, Karimov made a decision to eliminate the American military bases in Uzbekistan, obviously understanding that the West in principle might support the forces opposed to the regime, whereby not only diplomatically, but by military means, particularly if a “convenient” moment for this arose. (For example, during the presidential election which is supposed to take place in 2007, or during the parliamentary elections.) In so doing, we should keep in mind the scenario of development of events in Kyrgyzstan, where such a revolution occurred very quickly. Rejection of partnership with the U.S. almost inevitably presupposes a strategic partnership with Russia, which Karimov talked about during his recent visit to Moscow. In this way, from now on it will not be Washington, but Moscow and its economic and military assistance to official Tashkent that will be the guarantor of stability of the regime from the outside. On the other hand, financing by the United States and other Western countries of the actors opposed to the regime could appear to be a serious factor of its destabilization (keeping in mind that this assistance will not only be rendered informally, as before, but also at the formal level, since the U.S. has already begun talking about bringing Karimov to account for what he did in Andijan and about his official recognition as a dictator).

As a result, we should not unequivocally maintain that the regime will not undergo any changes in the foreseeable future. In addition to everything else, the spheres not controlled by the main actor are leading to this thought. They could include, for example, the informal structures of the opposition parties which operate in the republic; the members the cultural elite dissatisfied with the regime; and students and specialists who receive their education abroad and count on subsequently finding a job at home. What is more, we must keep in mind that in Uzbekistan (in contrast to Turkmenistan) there

is no iron curtain, which also means no iron control over the exit of citizens abroad and their entry into the country. All of this says that small potential pockets of resistance to the regime still exist. What is more, in a certain situation, they might be “actualized” (as the example of neighboring Kyrgyzstan demonstrated). Time will show whether or not they will make a significant contribution to its next transformation.

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## BORDER ISSUE

**THE BORDERS BETWEEN AZERBAIJAN,  
GEORGIA, AND RUSSIA:  
SOVIET HERITAGE**

Ekaterina ARKHIPOVA

*Ph.D. (Hist.), senior lecturer,  
Religious Studies and International Relations Department,  
Volgograd State University  
(Volgograd, Russian Federation)*

The administrative-territorial reforms carried out under Soviet power in the Caucasus to delimitate Russia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia have always been and remain a bone of contention. So far their governments have not yet come to terms on several problems on certain border stretches. For fourteen years now, delimitation has been going on with varying intensity. Russia and Azerbaijan have come the closest to settling these disputes with respect to the Daghestanian stretch of their common border. The last talks about the debatable territories in the Khachmaz, Gusar, and Balakian districts of Azerbaijan were held in April 2005.<sup>1</sup>

Delimitation of the Russian-Georgian border is burdened with the uneasy relations between

Tbilisi and the break-away republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The budding advance toward a settlement was cut short by the military actions undertaken by Mikhail Saakashvili's cabinet. Continued delimitation of 13 percent of the Russian-Georgian border is rigidly associated with the restoration of Georgia's territorial integrity.

So far, there is no clearly delimited border between Georgia and Azerbaijan. Chairman of the Border Guard Department of Georgia Lieutenant-General B. Bitsadze offered the following comment on the closed meeting with the Azeri delegation held on 7 July, 2005: "We have an administrative border, but we still do not know where the state border runs."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See: "Azerbaidzhansko-rossiiskoy komissii po delimitatsii ne udalos priyti k soglasheniu," IA REGNUM [www.regnum.ru/news/435712.html], 9 April, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> "Gruzia-Azerbaidzhan: pogranichnye nedorazumenia," IA REGNUM [www.regnum.ru/news/482332.html], 23 September, 2005.

The area where the state borders of the three countries meet gives rise to many debates; the same can be said about the Krasniy Most checkpoint. A glance at the ethnic map reveals the causes of these problems. The borders of the three countries have made the local homogenous population a divided nation: any positive development requires close cooperation among all of the states involved. In the case of the Krasniy Most checkpoint, the countries are confronted with discrepancies between the state and ethnic borders which appeared several centuries ago. After 1801, the

Russian Empire was busy dividing the Caucasus into administrative units with the aim of strengthening its influence there. The borders which appeared between the three states during the short period of independence in 1917-1921 are mainly responsible for the current disagreements.

According to the Alma-Ata Declaration and the CIS Charter of 1991 the administrative borders of Soviet times should serve as the starting-point of border delimitation in the post-Soviet era. Under Soviet power border delimitation principles went through several stages.

## First Stage: For the Sake of Influence

In the 1920s, when the Gorskaia and Dagesthanian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics were set up, there was a lot of talk about the priority of ethnic borders over all other considerations.<sup>3</sup> In fact, however, the administrative borders were drawn with an eye to preserving the republics as economically integral units.<sup>4</sup>

Many Soviet researchers have already written that the Gorskaia Republic was set up in direct proximity to Menshevik Georgia, which offered asylum to the former "governments" of the North Caucasian republics. The Bolsheviks wanted to unite the mountain (*gorskie*) peoples as a counterbalance to the activity of the leaders of the "independent Gorskaia Republic."<sup>5</sup> In other words, the Soviet government did try to level out the economic and cultural levels of various republics. It seemed advisable to take into account not only the geographical factor created by the Main Caucasian Range but also, in individual cases, the ethnic factor (the border between Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachaevo-Cherkessia).

This was done to keep in mind the administrative borders inherited from the Russian Empire and the borders agreed upon under the Russian-Georgian Treaty of 1920, under which Georgia could claim the territories along the River Psou and the Zakataly Okrug.<sup>6</sup> The government of the Azerbaijanian S.S.R. contested the treaty in the part related to the Zakataly Okrug and kept it within Azerbaijan on the strength of the local people's cultural affinity with the Azeris. In 1920, an appendix to the Russian-Georgian Treaty was signed in Moscow.<sup>7</sup> The Zakataly issue was related to the parity Georgian-Azerbaijani commission chaired by an R.S.F.S.R. representative. N. Diakova and M. Chepelkin have

<sup>3</sup> See: "Doklad I.V. Stalina na s'ezde narodov Terskoy oblasti 'O Sovetskoy Avtonomii Terskoy oblasti' (17 noiabria 1920 g.)," *Obrazovanie SSSR: Sb. Dokumentov 1917-1924*, ed. by E.B. Genkina, Moscow, 1949, p. 188.

<sup>4</sup> State Archives of the Russian Federation (SARF), Record group 5677, Inventory 1, File 3415, sheets 01-9.

<sup>5</sup> *Istoria natsional'no-gosudarstvennogo stroitel'stva v SSSR: natsional'no-gosudarstvennoe stroitel'stvo v SSSR v perekhodnyy period ot kapitalizma k sotsializmu (1917-1936)*, Moscow, 1968, p. 254; S.V. Kharmandarian, *Lenin i stanovlenie Zakavkazskoy Federatsii (1921-1923)*, Erevan, 1969; idem, *Splochenie narodov v stroitel'stve sotsializma (opyt ZSFSR)*, Moscow, 1982.

<sup>6</sup> See: *Sbornik deystvuiushchikh dogovorov, soglashenii i konventsiy, zakliuchennykh RSFSR s inostrannymi gosudarstvami*, Issue 1, Petrograd, 1922, p. 27.

<sup>7</sup> See: "Dopolnitel'noe soglasenie k mirnomu dogovoru mezhdru Rossiei i Gruziei ot 7 maia 1920 g.," *Sbornik deystvuiushchikh dogovorov...*, p. 33.

pointed out: "Later the Zakataly Okrug was returned to Azerbaijan."<sup>8</sup> This raises the question: When was the okrug (area) transferred to Georgia, if ever? Indeed, by 28 June, 1920 the administrative boundaries inside Azerbaijan had been already drawn up according to the Decree on the Regional Soviets of National Economy (with the Nukhinskiy uezd and Zakataly Okrug registered as part of the Nukhinskiy District of Azerbaijan).<sup>9</sup> Judging by these documents, in June 1920 the Zakataly Okrug still belonged to Azerbaijan.

Significantly, the Soviet-Georgian treaty related to the territory of a third republic, even though the Azerbaijanian S.S.R. and the R.S.F.S.R. had not yet been joined by the treaty on a military and financial-economic alliance (signed on 30 September, 1920).<sup>10</sup> It seems that the transfer of the Zakataly Okrug ("along its eastern border"<sup>11</sup>) to Georgia was a temporary concession on the part of Soviet power prompted by strategic considerations; Moscow probably merely limited itself to a statement of intentions to establish better relations with Tbilisi.

In February-March 1921, when Soviet power struck root in Georgia, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia, the Georgian S.S.R. and Soviet Russia entered into a treaty on a military and economic alliance.<sup>12</sup> It should be said that the document, as well as the treaty between R.S.F.S.R. and the Az.S.S.R., never mentioned border issues. On the basis of the treaty signed on 7 May, 1920 with independent Georgia, however, the borders were delimited, therefore the territory up to the borders mentioned in the treaty should have belonged to Georgia.

The question of whether Abkhazia and South Ossetia should be joined to Georgia was discussed separately. According to the official version, Abkhazia was joined to Georgia because "the economic destiny of the Abkhaz nation is intimately connected with that of Georgia."<sup>13</sup> Abkhazia's request to be included in the R.S.F.S.R. was declined because of the "economic and cultural ties between the Georgian and Abkhazian peoples."<sup>14</sup> This was how Abkhazia became part of Georgia with "special conditions" on which it managed to insist. Tiflis and Sukhumi signed a corresponding treaty on 16 December, 1921.

The joint sitting of the revolutionary committee of South Ossetia and its party committee held on 6-8 September, 1921 decided to enter into "federative relations with the S.S.R. of Georgia." The sides signed a document under which "ethnographic, geographical, and economic conditions"<sup>15</sup> should be taken into consideration for the purpose of border delimitation. In the mountains, the ethnic and economic borders could coincide; however, this formula opened up the possibility of uniting the northern and southern Ossets. It was obviously necessary to specify the borders. On 31 October, the Caucasian Bureau made South Ossetia an autonomous region,<sup>16</sup> thus firmly attaching it to Georgia. Point 2 of the Decree which created this autonomous region said: "The Autonomous Region of South Ossetia should include the territory on which the South Ossetian people live within the following borders: (a) in the north, the border runs along the Main Caucasian Range and the southern state border of the A.S.S.

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<sup>8</sup> N.A. Diakova, M.A. Chepelkin, *Granitsy Rossii v XVII-XX vv. Istoricheskiy ocherk; prilozhenie k "Istorii Rossii,"* Moscow, 1995, p. 181.

<sup>9</sup> See: "Dekret o rayonnykh sovetakh narodnogo khoziaistva, 28 iunia 1920 g.," *AzSSR. Dekrety Azrevkoma (1920-1921 gg.): Sb. dokumentov*, Baku, 1988, pp. 87-88.

<sup>10</sup> See: "Dogovor mezhdru RSFSR i Azerbaidzhanskoy Sovetskoy Sotsialisticheskoy Respublikoy o voenno-ekonomicheskom soiuze obeikh respublik, 30 sentiabria 1920 g.," *Obrazovanie SSSR...*, p. 247.

<sup>11</sup> *Sbornik deystvuiushchikh dogovorov...*, p. 27.

<sup>12</sup> See: "Dogovor mezhdru Gruzinskoy SSR i RSFSR o voennom i khoziaistvennom soiuze, 12 maia 1921," *Obrazovanie SSSR...*, p. 257.

<sup>13</sup> Quoted from: *Istoria Abkhazskoy ASSR (1917-1937)*, ed. by G.A. Dzidzaria, Sukhumi, 1983, p. 103.

<sup>14</sup> Iu.M. Kacharava et al., *Istoria Gruzii*, Part 3, Tbilisi, 1968, p. 89; *S'ezdy Sovetov sovetskikh sotsialisticheskikh respublik. Sb. dokumentov. 1917-1922*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1960, p. 457.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted from: *Iz istorii vzaimootnosheniy gruzinskogo i osetinskogo narodov (Zakliuchenie komissii po izucheniu statusa Iugo-Osetinskoy oblasti*, Tbilisi, 1991, p. 457.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

Gorskaia Republic...<sup>17</sup> It should be added that the northern border was described in fewer details than the southern border, which means that either the Main Caucasian Range was seen as a natural geographic boundary connected to the economic boundaries of the time or that by that time the border issue had not yet been settled.

It was a logical decision: even though the northern and southern Ossets belonged to the same ethnic group, their unification at that time would have destroyed the already accepted borders and would have caused Georgia's strong opposition. The Bolsheviks, who were not yet sure of their grip on power, could not afford this risk.

In the process of border delimitation between the Georgian and Azerbaijanian republics it was decided to leave the administrative border between the Elizavetpol and Tiflis gubernias intact because of complicated land ownership relations along this border.

The republics could not agree on border issues even after Soviet power had been established in the Transcaucasus. Land, pastures especially, were scarce in the areas of developed cattle-breeding. On 9-12 June, 1923, speaking at a meeting of the C.C. R.C.P. (Bolsheviks) with officials of the national republics and regions held in Moscow, the Azerbaijanian executive representatives pointed out: "In summer Azeri peasants have to drive their cattle up to the mountain pastures, one part of which belongs to Armenia and the other to Georgia. Even before that, before Soviet power, the disputes over pastures caused a lot of bloodshed and ethnic strife in the Transcaucasus. We should say that the problem has not been resolved under Soviet power either."<sup>18</sup> "Some progress was achieved"<sup>19</sup> when the Transcaucasian Federation was set up on 29 November, 1921. The second territorial party meeting of the Transcaucasus pointed out that "the unification of the Transcaucasian republics into a federation put an end to a lengthy and hard period of ethnic strife."<sup>20</sup> The documents paid special attention to the need to establish a "close economic alliance."<sup>21</sup>

It seems that the Soviet leaders did not limit themselves to political and economic tasks, but addressed territorial disputes as well: the boundaries between the sovereign republics no longer divided the states, but were merely administrative borders. They were open, therefore the peasants of the united republic could more or less freely move across its territory. Conditions were created under which part of territories could be temporarily used by a neighboring republic, which considerably relieved tension in the adjacent territories.

In 1922, the Transcaucasian Federation (Z.S.F.S.R.), as well as Soviet Russia went through administrative-territorial reforms based on the ethnic principle. The Georgian Bolsheviks declared: "The present administrative borders of the uyezds should not prevent us from creating regions with an ethnically homogeneous population wherever this can be done."<sup>22</sup> The Gardabani-Akstafa stretch of the Georgian-Azerbaijani border did not follow this principle. After 1948, this territory was turned into a training ground of the Transcaucasian Military District and thus belonged to the state rather than a nation.

The administrative-territorial changes in the Caucasus fit the pattern of the administrative-territorial reforms in the R.S.F.S.R. carried out with the aim of setting up integrated economic regions. The reform was prompted by a "discrepancy between the present administrative-territorial division

<sup>17</sup> *Osetia: istoriko-etnograficheskii spravochnik*, Compiled by V.A. Torchikov, M.Sh. Kisiev, St. Petersburg, Vladikavkaz, 1998, pp. 159-161.

<sup>18</sup> *Tainy natsional'noy politiki TsK RKP (B)*, Moscow, 1992, p. 159.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>20</sup> "Iz rezoliutsii Vtorogo kraevogo zakavkazskogo partiynogo soveshchania o federatsii respublik Zakavkaz'ia, 7 noiabria 1921 g.," *Obrazovanie SSSR...*, p. 281.

<sup>21</sup> "Iz resolutsii Kavkazskogo biuro TsK RKP (B) o federatsii Zakavkazskikh respublik, 3 noiabria 1921 g.," *Obrazovanie SSSR...*, p. 280.

<sup>22</sup> *Kommunisticheskaia partiia Gruzii v rezoliutsiakh i resheniakh s'ezdov, konferentsiy i plenumov TsK, 1920-1976*, Vol. 1, Tbilisi, 1976, p. 28.

and the new political and economic requirements.”<sup>23</sup> The following principles of administrative-territorial division were applied: “on the basis of

- (1) concentration of industry;
- (2) concentration of culture;
- (3) the local people’s gravitation toward the industrial and distribution centers;
- (4) the directions and nature of the communication routes—railways, water routes, highways, etc.;
- (5) population size; and (6) the local people’s ethnic composition.”<sup>24</sup>

The economic interests were obviously treated as a priority, while ethnic considerations were put on the back burner. Moreover, official propaganda did its best to convince the public that national (ethnic) interests were treated as a priority and that by acting in this way the state was demonstrating its concern for the economic wellbeing of “fraternal peoples.”

While drawing the borders, the Bolsheviks, who had not yet consolidated their power, preferred to follow the 1913 frontiers. The new leaders, who had virtually no control over the country’s fringes, had to follow the old patterns and be guided by what the old-timers had to say. For obvious reasons both sources were not completely reliable.<sup>25</sup> Not infrequently, local administrators, well-versed in the situation, used their influence to achieve desirable results.

A lengthy process of more exact delineation in the ethnically mixed areas started in the mid-1920s. The northwestern border of Abkhazia was changed several times: after the civil war it was pushed to the south of the River Psou, as a result of which the R.S.F.S.R. acquired the Pilenkovskaia volost. In 1922, the Central Executive Committee and the Soviet of People’s Commissars of Abkhazia asked the R.S.F.S.R. government to restore the old border. Under a decision of 31 October, 1924, the volost was made part of the Gagra uezd.<sup>26</sup> On 19 March, 1926, it was restored as part of the Chernomorskiy Okrug of the R.S.F.S.R.; and on 31 December, 1928, the territory of the Pilenkovskiy rural soviet of the Sochi District (Chernomorskiy Okrug, Severokavkazskiy Territory) was returned to Abkhazia by a decision of the All-Union Central Executive Committee.<sup>27</sup> In this way, the present border with Russia took on its final shape, with the area of Gantiadi and Yermolovka (Lesilidze) becoming part of Abkhazia. It is interesting to note that the border follows the line agreed upon by the Russian-Georgian Treaty of 7 May, 1920; any other configuration of the same border would have created problems: the local terrain left no choice for the delimitation commission—65-70 km of the River Psou goes up into the mountains; further on the Aigba and Gagra ranges intersect. The border obviously followed the local geographic features.

Since it was officially declared that the new administrative division was based on ethnic principles, the mixed commission had, from time to time, taken the ethnic factor into account. For example, the Chechen villages of Melkhesty and Tsekaroi were transferred temporarily from the Georgian S.S.R. to the Chechen Autonomous Region.<sup>28</sup> In the event of unsettled territories, the commission was guided by economic considerations: the territorial dispute between the Georgians and the Chechens about the Allako area was resolved in favor of the Chechen Autonomous Region

<sup>23</sup> *Administrativno-territorial’noe delenie Soiuza SSR i spisok vazhneyshikh naseleennykh punktov s khronologicheskimi perechnymi postanovleniyami ob izmenenii granits guberniy, oblastey i respublik s 1917 po 1929 gg.*, Moscow, 1929, p. 7.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> See: *Administrativno-territorial’nyy sostav SSSR na 1 iulia 1926 g. v sopostavlenii s dovoennym deleniem Rossii*, Moscow, 1926.

<sup>26</sup> See: *Administrativno-territorial’noe delenie Soiuza ... 1929*, p. 313.

<sup>27</sup> See: *Ibidem*; *Administrativno-territorial’nyy sostav SSSR...*, p. 206.

<sup>28</sup> SARF, Record Group 1235, Inventory 141, File 248, p. 18.

since it was tilled by Chechens.<sup>29</sup> In other cases communication lines were considered: the territory along the River Kistinka was given to Georgia because the Ingush settlements were separated from it by a mountain range.<sup>30</sup>

The Georgian-Daghestanian and the Azerbaijani-Daghestanian border stretches, as well as the Azerbaijani-Georgian border, were also contested: the Daghestanian cattle-breeders “mainly move to Azerbaijan and Georgia for nine months, while the local administrators of the two republics impose special taxes on them.”<sup>31</sup> Georgian sheep-breeders, in turn, used Daghestanian pastures. To avoid conflicts and to redistribute the land, the All-Union Central Executive Committee passed a decision that allowed the local sheep-breeders to use pastures and routes in the neighboring territories.<sup>32</sup> Judging by the documents related to the administrative-territorial changes in the U.S.S.R., the border in these places remained the same<sup>33</sup>: it was unadvisable to apply the ethnic principle of delimitation because the local mixed population had been living for a long time within historically established borders. The borders were preserved, while the neighboring populations acquired a chance to establish close economic ties.

The problem of unification of North and South Ossetia stands apart from the other border issues. It was revived in 1925 because of land scarcity in South Ossetia and the common culture of the Ossets living on both sides of the Caucasian Range. Those who insisted on uniting South Ossetia with the Northern Caucasus argued: “If there were a good road across the mountains, South Ossetia would undoubtedly prefer to buy cheaper bread in North Ossetia and in general would prefer to trade on the North Caucasian side of the range...”<sup>34</sup> Two variants were suggested: either united Ossetia should be joined the Georgian S.S.R. (that created the problem of changing its northern borders) or united Ossetia should be attached to the R.S.F.S.R. (according to G. Orjonikidze, this gave “food for all sorts of idle talk about Russia wishing to take Tskhinval from Georgia”).<sup>35</sup> After realizing that the unification plans were fraught with ethnic tension in the region, the Soviet government first suspended and then cut short the process. The border following the terrain was preserved.

In this way, when drawing the borders between the R.S.F.S.R., Georgian S.S.R., and the Azerbaijani S.S.R., Soviet power was guided by economic considerations and the need to protect its authority. Still, before the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945, the Bolsheviks tried to take into account the interests of the people living along the border.

## Second Stage: Divide and Give Away!

When the Northern Caucasus was liberated from the short-lived fascist occupation, some of the North Caucasian peoples were accused of high treason. According to some academics, the deporta-

<sup>29</sup> See: I.B. Didigova, *Chechnia i Ingushetia: territoria, granitsy, upravlenie*, Moscow, 2003, p. 84.

<sup>30</sup> SARF, Record group 1235, Inventory 121, File 521, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup> *Tayny natsional'noy politiki TsK RKP...*, p. 196.

<sup>32</sup> See: “Vypiska iz protokola No. 70 ‘O predostavlenii ovtsvodam Gruzii pastbishch v Daghestanskoy ASSR,’ 14 sentiabria 1928 g.,” SARF, Record group 1235, Inventory 140, File 1075, pp. 1-2.

<sup>33</sup> See: *Administrativno-territorial'nyy sostav SSSR... 1926*, pp. 53-60.

<sup>34</sup> M. Bezegov (executive secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia (Bolsheviks) Tskhinval Committee), “K vo-prosu ob'edineniia Severnoy i Iuzhnoy Ossetii,” SARF, Record group 1235, Inventory 140, File 175, sheet 3.

<sup>35</sup> G.K. Orjonikidze, *Stat'i i rechi*, in two volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1957, p. 63.

tion and consequent administrative-territorial changes were planned long before the war. They were part of Stalin's plan to extend the territory of Georgia. It should be borne in mind that not only Georgia, but also some of the North Caucasian autonomous republics received territories. Here I shall concentrate on the border changes between the R.S.F.S.R. and the Georgian S.S.R.

In 1944, the Uchkulanskiy and part of the Mikoianovski districts of the Karachai Autonomous Region were transformed into the Klukhorskiy District within the Georgian S.S.R.<sup>36</sup> The southern border of the former Kabardino-Balkarian A.S.S.R. was also changed. Lavrentiy Beria supported the plan for territorial changes by saying that Kabarda would be unable to develop the mountainous areas, while "Georgia should have a defense line along the northern slopes of the Caucasian Range: during the occupation, Kabarda ceded the area to the Germans."<sup>37</sup> Georgia received the southwestern part of the Elbrus and Nagorny districts.<sup>38</sup> On top of this, the Dusheti and Kazbegi districts of the Georgian S.S.R. (within the limits of the Itum-Kali district, the western lands of the Sharoy district, and the southern territories of the Galanchoj, Galashki and Prigorodny districts) were extended by means of the southern part of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic.<sup>39</sup> I have already written that some of the peoples who lived along the borders were deported, in particular, the Balkars, Ingushes, Karachais, and Chechens.

As a result, Georgia enlarged its territory by extending to the northern slopes of the Caucasian Range; the territorial changes completely ignored economic ties, ethnic boundaries, and the need to connect the newly acquired territories to the rest of the republic, which was separated by hardly negotiable mountains. In May 1944, an effort was made to address the latter problem: the Soviet of People's Commissars and the C.C. C.P. (B.) of Georgia adopted a resolution On Creating the Elbrus Rural Soviet within the Zemo-Svanetia District and on the Measures to Settle the Rural Soviet. The document paid particular attention to telephone lines between the newly created administrative unit and Tbilisi through Nalchik and Dzaujikau.<sup>40</sup> Nothing was said about the need to create an economically integrated territory.

According to the results achieved by a special commission, the border was drawn in the following way: "along the River Kyrtuk and further to the east of the Verkhniy Baksan settlement (Uchkumumel) and to the south along the River Adyr-Su to the Mestia pass. As a result, the Verkhniy Baksan (Uchkumumel) settlement was included in the Georgian S.S.R. and settled with Svans."<sup>41</sup> The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kabardinian A.S.S.R. sent a letter to the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet with a request to restore the old border according to the 8 April, 1944 Decree, but received no answer.

Some Daghestanian ethnic groups and some of the peoples who lived in Georgia were also deported. In 1944, the Kvarelia Avars, who before the Great Patriotic War were living in the Geor-

<sup>36</sup> See: "Ukaz Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR o likvidatsii Karachaevskoy avtonomnoy oblasti i ob administrativnom ustroystve ee territorii, 12 oktiabria 1943 g.," *Tak eto bylo: Natsional'nye repressii v SSSR*, in three volumes, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1993, p. 259.

<sup>37</sup> "Iz vospominaniy byvshego pervogo sekretaria Kabardino-Balkarskogo obkoma VKP (b) predsedatelia Nalchikskogo komiteta oborony Z.D. Kumekhova," *Liki voyny: sb. dokumentov po istorii Kabardino-Balkarii v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny (1941-1945 gg.)*, Compiled by R.M. Ashkhotova, Nalchik, 1996, pp. 314-315.

<sup>38</sup> See: "Ukaz Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta Kabardinskoy ASSR o chastichnom izmenenii granits mezhdu Kabardinskoy ASSR i Gruzinskoy SSR, 7 aprelya 1944 g.," *Liki voyny...*, p. 329.

<sup>39</sup> Established by: "Izmenenie granits," *Vedomosti VS SSR 1957 g.*, Moscow, 1957, p. 399; D. Masal'gov, "Annek'sia: kak eto bylo," *Tak eto bylo: Natsional'nye repressii v SSSR*, in three volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1993, pp. 144-145.

<sup>40</sup> See: "Iz postanovleniya Sovnarkoma Gruzinskoy SSR i TsK KP (b) Gruzii 'Ob obrazovanii Elbrusskogo sel'soveta v sostave Zemo-Svanetskogo rayona i o meropriyatiakh po zaseleniu etogo sel'soveta,' 3 maia 1944," *Liki voyny...*, p. 345.

<sup>41</sup> "Pis'mo Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta KASSR Predsedateliu Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR o vozvrashchenii sel. Verkhniy Baksan (Uchkumumel), zaniatogo Gruzinskoy SSR, 24 maia 1944 g.," *Liki voyny...*, pp. 350-351.

The R.S.F.S.R. Borders in the Northern Caucasus between 1944 and the Mid-1950s



Source: N.A. Diakova, M.A. Chepelkin, *Granitsy Rossii v XVII-XX vv.* (Russia's Borders in the 17th-20th Centuries), Moscow, 1995.



gian villages of Tivi, Teberjokhi, and Areshi, were deported to Chechnia where they remained till 1957 when they were allowed to come back providing that the former Tivi inhabitants could return to their old places of residence, while the others had to settle in the marshes of Chantliskuri, Saruso, and Tkhilistskaro.

The academic community so far has failed to agree on the real causes of territorial changes in the Caucasus; there is an agreement, however, that Georgia failed to develop the larger part of the newly acquired lands. The absence of roads made communication between Georgia and these areas complicated; this is another confirmation that the Soviet leaders ignored the region's historical, geographic, and economic conditions.

### Third Stage: Restoration?

When Stalin died, the deported people acquired the hope of being allowed to return to their homeland. In November 1956 and January 1957, the C.C. C.P.S.U. passed a resolution on the rehabilitation of the Kalmyks, Karachais, Balkars, Chechens, and Ingushes and the restoration of their national autonomies, as well as of the border between the R.S.F.S.R. and the Georgian S.S.R. (as it had existed on 7 March, 1944). Before the 20th C.P.S.U. Congress, the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet published the decree On the Transfer of the Klukhorskiy District of the Georgian S.S.R. to the R.S.F.S.R. Simultaneously the border between the R.S.F.S.R. and the Georgian S.S.R. was changed.<sup>42</sup> According to the Decree of the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet of 26 May, 1955, "the territory of the Ialbuskiy Agricultural District of the Klukhorskiy District, Stavropol Territory, was transferred to the Elbrus District of the Kabardinian A.S.S.R."<sup>43</sup> The fact that many regions became depopulated while communication remained problematic confirmed that Stalin's reforms had been a mistake. The old borders should be restored: this became possible when the Soviet Union entered a new stage of its political history.

Restoration of the old borders, however, was not complete: some of the North Caucasian borders remained unchanged; the borders between the Northern Caucasus and the Transcaucasus, suggested by the terrain, were restored: a high price had to be paid for ignoring geographical barriers. The changed ethnic borders created tension and the danger of a "decline in national culture."<sup>44</sup> The steps taken by the new generation of Soviet leaders demonstrated that they wanted to relieve the country of Stalin's heritage and its excesses.

It proved to be hard to move people who had already put down roots in the lands vacated by the deported nations. Some of the territories of Kabardino-Balkaria, Checheno-Ingushetia, and the mountainous regions of Karachai were occupied by Georgians and some of the Daghestanian peoples. The administrations of these areas had to provide those who returned with new homes since their old houses had either been abandoned and fallen in disrepair, or were occupied by others. In the latter case, conflicts between new and old owners flared up.

People had been moved by force to the vacated places, yet later their presence created a volatile atmosphere of ethnic tension. This was the result of Stalin's repressions of 1944. For this reason, the borders between the Georgian S.S.R., the Azerbaijanian S.S.R., and the R.S.F.S.R. were not revised

<sup>42</sup> See: "Ukaz Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta SSR 'O peredache Klukhorskogo rayona Gruzinskoy SSR v sostav RSFSR, 14 marta 1955,'" *Sobranie deystvuiushchego zakonodatel'stva SSSR*, Section I, Book 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 51.

<sup>43</sup> *Vedomosti VS SSSR 1955 g.*, Moscow, 1955, p. 287.

<sup>44</sup> Russian State Archives of Recent History (RGANI), Record group 89, Inventory 61, File 13, sheet 1.

later, while the problems of land use were settled at the republican level. Later, administrative borders were changed elsewhere in the Soviet Union; whereas in the Caucasus, territories were transferred for temporary use and people living along the borders were resettled. For example, in the 1960s, the Zeikhur-oba village of the Mageramkentskiy District of Daghestan was included in the Khachmasskiy District of the Az.S.S.R. to improve its cooperation with the Mageramkentskiy District. In the post-Soviet years, it must be decided whether to move the local people back to Daghestan or change their status.<sup>45</sup>

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It should be said in conclusion that during the years of Soviet power, the Caucasus received administrative borders. Not perfect, they were nevertheless accepted by several generations of Soviet peoples: there was no phenomenon of “divided nations” in the Soviet Union. When independent states replaced the former Soviet republics, the border regions could still communicate; contacts among local people living in the adjacent territories could have created a basis for economic cooperation between the regions far removed from the center. The governments of the new independent states, however, preferred to set up national (mono-national) states and destroyed the economic ties between border regions. This created problems with drawing the borders of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Chechnia (the Pichvny village), along the Daghestanian stretch of Russia’s border, along the border between Georgia and Azerbaijan, at the monument to David Gareji, and at the place where the borders of the three countries meet.

The borders between Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Russia depend on the landscape, which might either prevent cooperation or promote it. This is especially true of the border areas. These borders are rather old, therefore any attempts to change them cause a lot of discontent on both sides. The old administrative borders should obviously remain unchanged, yet the protracted delimitation process testifies to the sides’ unwillingness to facilitate cooperation between the now divided peoples.

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<sup>45</sup> See: G. Inandj, “Sostoianie granitsy Daghestana s Azerbaidzhanom” (an interview by M.M. Gusaev, Minister of Ethnic Policies, Information, and Foreign Relations of the Republic of Daghestan) [<http://www.azeri.com>].

## REGIONAL POLITICS

**CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES AND  
THE UNITED STATES:  
UPS AND DOWNS  
IN THEIR RELATIONSHIPS**

Rashid ABDULLO

*Political scientist, independent researcher  
(Dushanbe, Tajikistan)***1**

The events that took place in Central Asia in the first half of 2005 changed the geopolitical situation in the region to a certain extent. I have in mind the political crisis and the regime change in Kyrgyzstan, the clashes in the Uzbek city of Andijan, the request the SCO summit addressed to the United States to specify the terms for withdrawing its bases from the region, and finally Tashkent's official demand that the United States should remove its base from Khanabad in 180 days. This was the first time in the post-Soviet era that Washington was confronted with political difficulties in the region.

One of the factors behind the new developments is the changed attitude toward the United States obvious both at the top and at the grassroots level: the original welcome has gradually waned to be replaced with a guarded attitude. The region has never been overly enthusiastic about the United States: in the first couple of years of their independence, the former Soviet Central Asian republics still looked at the U.S. from the Soviet viewpoint. At all times, however, local ideas about the United States differed greatly from those in the European part of the U.S.S.R.

Most of the local people are Muslims, therefore a Western lifestyle was at no time accepted as an alternative to the Soviet way of life. The values were different, even though there were exceptions to this rule too.

The local guarded attitudes were mostly prompted by the negative perception of the West's colonial and postcolonial domination in the Muslim countries; its meddling in the Muslim countries' internal affairs, and its openly biased approach and dual standards when dealing with old conflicts, especially in the Middle East. Obviously different people treated these issues and the Western policies in the Islamic world differently. The Soviet Muslims, who discerned not only the political, but also the religious-civilizational aspect of Western policies, responded much more vehemently.

With the Soviet Union receding into the past, the attitude toward the United States in Central Asia began slowly but steadily to improve. The region as a whole and each of its countries individually looked at America and its growing presence in the region with respect: it was regarded as a force able to help the local countries liberate themselves from their former dependence on Moscow and to cement their newly found sovereignties. In part, this attitude was fostered by the fairly contradictory and inconsistent attitude demonstrated by the Kremlin and a large part of the Russian public.

Before Evgeny Primakov was appointed foreign minister and later prime minister of Russia, the Kremlin seemed to look at Central Asia (if ever), first, in the context of its desire to promptly integrate into the West (it kept assessing its cooperation with the local states in the context of bringing it closer to this aim). Second, there was a lot of ideological rejection, if not more, of the political situation taking shape in the region. In the foreign policy context of the time, the Central Asian leaders had good reasons to believe that orientation toward the West would protect them from the hostility of those who came to power in Russia in August 1991.

The Central Asian republics' desire to develop their relations with the United States in all spheres was matched by the Central Asian policy of the Clinton Administration. The U.S. administration demonstrated political pragmatism and was eager to cultivate the local countries' enthusiasm toward the United States. In fact, it was America's pragmatism and its realistic assessment of the political processes unfolding in Central Asia, which became obvious by President Clinton's second term in office, that saved his administration from the mistake of meddling in the local countries' domestic developments, even though the White House voiced its doubts about the course of democratization there. By the 1990s, the United States had created a friendly atmosphere in the region and strengthened its foothold in this part of the post-Soviet world.

## 2

Starting with the middle of President George W. Bush's first term in the White House, signs of mistrust unconnected with the region's Soviet past reappeared in local politics. The 9/11 events and the American course directed toward what it called the struggle against international terrorism (actively supported by Russia) changed the geopolitical situation in Central Asia: the U.S. and its Western allies stationed their military contingents in some of the region's countries. This opened the doors to America's wider political and economic involvement in Central Asia and put an end to Russia's monopoly domination in the region. There was a lot of mutual interest in the military sphere between the West and the Central Asian republics. The local countries interpreted their closer military cooperation, as well as wider political, economic, scientific, cultural, and other contacts with the United States and the West in general as an important factor of independence. It was then that George W. Bush's administration showed that its policies differed from those of its predecessor, which aroused natural concern among the local leaders over the United States' true, rather than

declared, aims in Central Asia. For example, the American president described his counterterrorist initiative as a Crusade, something that the countries with the predominantly Muslim populations associated with a political and religious war of the Christian West against the Muslim states and Islamic civilization as a whole. The traditional Muslim interpretation of Crusade was applied to the counterterrorist campaign. Indeed, this campaign developed into a war against Muslim states with the aim to impose an alien lifestyle and political culture on them. This strengthened the doubts of the Muslims, and the predominantly Muslim Central Asian nations and leaders, about America's true aims in the region.

There is another factor behind the local suspicions about the United States: today its foreign policymakers tend to misuse ideological issues when talking about Central Asian events and developments. This is mostly true of civilian politicians: under Colin Powell, a four-star general, America's attitude to what was going on in Central Asia was much more balanced.

The manifestations of this are varied: Washington refuses to accept regional specifics and to take them into account in its policies. The United States is absolutely convinced that everything it believes to be positive should be accepted in the region with thanks; it is deeply convinced that the American model of democracy not only perfectly fits the Central Asian republics, but that it should be immediately planted there, local conditions notwithstanding. America is pursuing its policies in the Muslim countries with the deep conviction that they are benefiting from its efforts and that, therefore, its policies are totally justified. The American politicians believe that the Muslim countries should guide themselves by what the United States thinks about them and offers them, rather than what the nations and leaders of these countries think and offer. Finally, the United States tends to accept a priori the opposition in any of the local countries as a source of truth and to dismiss the leaders as a source of lies. It would have been wiser to accept a more realistic approach to both as much more complicated and contradictory phenomena.

The same applies to the United States' conviction that democratic freedoms are much more important for the local countries than what is potentially much more important for them at present. For example, there is no greater value in Tajikistan than its statehood. The experience of the last fifteen years has shown that the Tajiks will hardly survive as an ethnos without a statehood of their own, or outside the borders of their own state. The republic, confronted with numerous problems and struggling to fortify its statehood, should concentrate on everything that will help it survive and develop. Strong presidential power and the political specifics stemming from it is one such element. Anyone expecting the country to embrace Western political thinking and fully correspond to it is indulging in wishful thinking.

### 3

Washington's response to the Andijan crisis is another example of an excessively ideological approach to Central Asian developments which erodes its foothold in the region. It was absolutely obvious to any unbiased observer that what the Uzbek authorities were doing, starting with the armed attack at the locally-stationed military unit, was having a harsh response to an equally harsh attack. The armed opposition tested the Uzbek leaders' readiness to respond in kind—the leaders accepted the challenge, otherwise they would have lost control of the country. The results might have been appalling: a wave of crime, mass disorders, and looting. We already saw this in Kyrgyzstan after the parliamentary elections of 2005 when the government building came under attack. This might have triggered a civil war: this was what happened in Tajikistan in 1992.

The very nature of the anti-government actions in Andijan, the media reports about regular rallies, picketing, and other mass actions in this and other Uzbek cities speak of a vast protest potential in the country. This, and the fact that the opposition and authorities were equally prepared to go to extremes, made the situation far from simple: the opposition cannot topple the regime, while in the current worldwide situation official Tashkent cannot squash the opposition with the use of arms. A long and harsh confrontation will undermine statehood to the extent that any careless or ill-advised step by the sides or the international community, for that matter, will upturn stability and negatively affect Uzbekistan's neighbors.

It would have been wiser to respond to the Andijan events by moving to a different paradigm of relations: the sides should abandon the barricades and move toward a discussion of settlement alternatives for the sake of the country and the nation. There were objective prerequisites for this course of events: President Islam Karimov has always wanted, and still wants, to see Uzbekistan an independent, united, strong, and prosperous country. His secular and Islamic opponents obviously want the same. Tajikistan's experience has already proved that this is more than enough to start negotiations.

Sooner or later the sides will be forced to do this; this will not be easy even if there are objective prerequisites for this and a mutual subjective desire to prevent a catastrophe. Everyone aware of the very complicated relations between power and its opponents in Uzbekistan knows that even the tiniest step in the right direction will be burdened with huge political and psychological problems. They are hardly capable of doing this today, therefore it is vitally important to bring in initiatives able to freeze the conflict and lead to a constructive dialog. The world community and the United States, in particular, could have helped defuse the situation. Yet politicians—let me say once again, civilian politicians—burdened with their excessively ideological foreign policy with respect to the Central Asian states preferred another, far from fruitful, course. They subjected the president of Uzbekistan to scathing criticism and insisted on international investigation of the Andijan events.

This was hardly rational: domestic tension had reached its highest point, therefore international investigation could only plunge the country into a far deeper crisis. Such proposals (in an imperative form, as it were) lead to heightened tension, since they are essentially spearheaded against the one side in support of the other participant in the domestic conflict.

The U.S. civilian politicians' viewpoint on the Uzbek issue was also irrational because, in the context of Moscow's and Beijing's concern over the U.S.'s growing influence in the region and their greater efforts to consolidate their own presence in Central Asia (which provided Uzbekistan with a wider leeway), America's continued pressure on President Karimov might bring unwelcome results. And this was what happened. At first Tashkent and some other countries initiated an address from the July 2005 SCO to Washington in which the SCO summit countries asked the United States to specify the term its bases would remain in the region. Later, because of the White House's even harsher stance, Uzbekistan asked America to evacuate its air base in Khanabad within six months.

Much is being said today about America's intention to maintain the state of controlled conflict in the Muslim world, in Central Asia in particular, which perfectly serves U.S. national interests. Indeed, continued conflicts squander a lot of material and intellectual resources which could be otherwise used to promote these countries' development and bring them closer to Western development standards. Today, they remain dependent on consumption rather than oriented toward independent scientific and technological progress. The war on Iraq, accompanied by the total destruction of its infrastructure, as well as the West's obvious desire to prevent Baghdad from acquiring science-intensive and high-tech technologies of its own, which will liquidate its dependence in these spheres on the West, are ample proof of America's true goals. In Central Asia, the continued permanent crisis is allowing the United States to cut down Russia's influence in the region by driving away the Russians and Russian speakers as vehicles of this influence.

This is hardly rational. First, it is obviously impossible to contain the Muslim nations' desire to achieve a development level, in science and technology among other spheres, comparable to that of the West. In fact, inside and outside the Western world there are forces wishing to help the Muslim states advance in the right direction. Second, today as never before Russia's influence in the region is supported and strengthened not so much by Russian speakers, as by members of the titular nations who move to Russia as guest workers and whose money earned there supports stability and economic development of their countries. Third, controlled crisis politics is not only promoting anti-American sentiments—it spreads them far and wide. In other words, the ideological bias of America's Central Asian policies is not merely irrational—it is anti-American, since it has already damaged Washington's interests in the region.

## 4

It fell to the lot of Donald Rumsfeld, John Abizaid, and other top-ranking Pentagon officials to remove America from the corner into which the civilian politicians had driven it. It should be said that from the very beginning the military displayed much more pragmatism on the Andijan issue. They were convinced that by confronting Karimov on the ideological issue, they would achieve little or no progress in improving Uzbekistan's domestic policies, economic and political transformations in particular, over which both countries have so far failed to agree.

They were also aware that this confrontation would force the leaders of Uzbekistan to question the expediency of continued military cooperation with the United States, as well as continued functioning of the U.S. military base in Khanabad. In fact, the American top military could easily predict that continued confrontation with Washington would drive Tashkent closer to Moscow and Beijing in the military sphere, among other things. The nature of power in Uzbekistan, Russia, and China, as well as Russia's and China's desire to intensify their relations with Tashkent make this variant possible.

The fact that the American professional military displayed a lot of pragmatism when dealing with the developments in Uzbekistan and in the region as a whole is typical of all career military in any country: they abhor adventurism. Most of them are practically-minded people due to their professional training and education, which taught them to soberly assess any new situation.

## 5

The political upheavals in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have brought to light the problem of the best possible correlation between the development level of any country and the level of its relations with any of the influential external forces, the United States in particular. The crises in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have demonstrated that the contacts between the Central Asian countries and the United States should strictly correspond to these countries' real development level. If these contacts in any sphere, military, political, economic, information, etc., prove greater than these countries' mentalities and their institutional, cultural, and other abilities to adequately use them, they will find themselves in a crisis for the simple reason that if the level of relations with the United States overtakes the absorption potential of any of the Central Asian countries, partner relations will rapidly backslide into the painfully familiar "elder brother" pattern. The "elder brother" will dominate and will strive to realize its interests in total disregard of what the "younger brother" wants or needs.

Under Askar Akaev, Kyrgyzstan reached the point in its relations with the United States when first, power, and second, the country's sustainable development depended on Washington and its goodwill. As soon as this became obvious, the country's leaders were immediately confronted with the demand to meet certain standards, which while absolutely natural for the United States, could not be accepted as such in Kyrgyzstan for obvious reasons. These demands, which absolutely ignored the country's real circumstances, were one of the reasons why the country moved dangerously close to the boundary beyond which disintegration and loss of statehood were inevitable.

The political and military-political contacts between Tashkent and Washington were steadily growing stronger from the very first day of Uzbekistan's independence; the process accelerated after 9/11 when America acquired its military base in Khanabad. Many of the Western and Russian media assessed the new situation as one of the key conditions under which Islam Karimov could retain his power.

It seems that after a while Washington's politicians imagined that they could toughen up their attitude toward Uzbekistan's leadership without straining American relations with this country too far. They started openly insisting on a domestic (and less openly, foreign) course corresponding to the political, legal, and economic norms allegedly widely accepted in the West, as well as the specific interests of the United States and its allies. (Washington was pursuing a more or less similar course in other countries as well.) This could have been accepted; however, after the Andijan events, America's persistent efforts developed into open pressure and attempts to impose its conditions on Uzbekistan's leadership.

Tashkent has never doubted and does not doubt that the country should eventually embrace Western political and economic standards; in many respects, its political and other aims correspond to those of Washington and its Western allies. The republic's authorities, as well as the authorities of other Central Asian countries are convinced that closer relations with the U.S. and the West are helping them consolidate their newly-found independence and overcome the social and economic problems of the post-Soviet period. This shows that a dialog about these issues could have brought success.

It seems that the White House interpreted its growing influence in the region not only as a chance to extend the range of its possibilities needed to help the Central Asian countries realize adequate models of post-Soviet democratic development, but also as a condition conducive to planting the ready-made Western models in local soil in the shortest time possible and in total disregard of the local realities. In Kyrgyzstan, that all ended in the downfall of President Akaev, the most consistent supporter of Western political standards among the Central Asian leaders, and in chaos.

Uzbekistan, which was developing its military-political cooperation with the United States on a grander scale than its neighbors, experienced the Andijan tragedy, for which the Kyrgyz events served as the background—directly or indirectly they blazed the trail for it. The United States could use its influence to channel the relations between the opposing sides into a positive dialog, yet the civilian politicians from Washington preferred to put pressure on the country's leaders, who turned out to be staunch enough to resist the pressure and cut short all attempts to impose unacceptable conditions on them.

## 6

It seems that today the Central Asian countries should maintain relations with the United States and other large countries with their own interests in the region at a level equivalent to their absorption potential in order to be able to keep the contacts going without negative consequences.



The level might change from country to country—there are different criteria of its equivalency. For example, in Tajikistan the level and volume of contacts with any of the three world powers (Russia, China, and the U.S.), which can affect the republic's political and socioeconomic context, are considered equivalent if they correspond to the country's main task: building up a stable nation-state. This state alone can save the Tajiks from the danger of being engulfed by their much stronger and more numerous neighbors.

The present level of relations between Dushanbe and Washington, as well as the American presence in Tajikistan (direct and indirect, in the form of international and local organizations functioning on American money), completely corresponds to the republic's main task and does not strain the absorption potential of the state and the nation. This level of bilateral relations and of America's presence cannot develop into destabilizing factors threatening to undermine Tajik statehood.

At the same time, any further development of relations with the United States (which might not prove equivalent to the absorption potential of the state and society), such as permanent U.S. military bases in Tajikistan, a great increase in the number of NGOs and other structures living directly or indirectly on American money, a great increase, indirect or indirect, in American funding of the local media or American interference in domestic political processes, and excessive interest from U.S.-controlled international financial structures in the economic and other transformations occurring in Tajikistan may cripple the so far equivalent Tajik-American relations and make the level of American presence excessive. This will negatively affect the nature of their bilateral relations: instead of a partner we will acquire a mentor with all the negative consequences for both sides. In any case, this happened in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan when American's presence in both countries became excessive. This may happen in Ilkham Aliev's Azerbaijan.

## 7

To some extent, to a great extent in certain cases, as Tajikistan's experience has demonstrated, the dogmatic attitudes of influential politicians far removed from the region are alleviated by the realism of the career American diplomats stationed in the Central Asian countries. While being exposed to the political processes and aware of the real level of these countries' political, social, economic, information, etc. development, they have to adjust the abstract schemes imposed on them from above to the local developments—life has shown that this cannot always be accomplished.

So far, the situation in Tajikistan has been favorable; we owe a lot to the American ambassadors in Tajikistan, who are career diplomats not burdened with ideological considerations about life in the republic and their mission. The first of these ambassadors was Stanley Escudero, who was well aware of the problems plaguing post-Soviet Tajikistan and who was delighted to talk to the Tajiks in their native tongue. As distinct from other members of the American mission and, certainly, from his Washington-based bosses, he recognized the fact that this former Soviet republic had chosen the road of independent national development and that this transformation comprised the main content of its post-Soviet development. The question about Tajikistan's political future—totalitarian, authoritarian, or liberal—was purely utilitarian. The country obviously needed a state order and form of power best suited to its national character and had to carry out the task of cementing its independence. Our experience, as well as that of our neighbors has demonstrated that in the final analysis the Central Asian countries preferred strong presidential power.

Stanley Escudero fully recognized this, while his colleagues from the American embassy and, what was even more important, their bosses across the ocean continued living in the Cold War realities. They regarded the fight of the Tajik opposition against then President Rakhmon Nabiev as a fight of anti-Soviet (read democratic) forces, against the post-Soviet (read anti-democratic) structures. In fact, the forces that came to power in Russia after the events of 19-21 August, 1991 in Moscow were similarly deluded. The political situation in Tajikistan actually comprised two elements: one of them, according to a very apt description by Tajik political analyst Parviz Mullojanov, was the fierce struggle of the regional elites for supreme power to gain access to the republic's fairly limited resources, while the other was the fight over the future nature—national-secular or national-clerical—of the new Tajik state. In other words, the political passions that developed into a civil war as soon as the country became independent cannot be described as the “good guys”(democrats) fighting the “bad guys” (anti-democrats).

An adequate assessment of these events by all influential foreign forces would have probably changed their treatment of the situation as a whole. The first American ambassador to Tajikistan used to say that the U.S. State Department was too big for its own good and needed at least ten years or more to re-adjust and start treating the local states as sovereign nation-states rather than as former Soviet republics.

Today Washington no longer looks at Tajikistan and other Central Asian states as post-Soviet republics, yet Washington's inveterate desire to arrange life in the Muslim countries to its own liking cannot but make the task of the American ambassadors much harder. Indeed, they are stationed to translate into practice the unrealizable ideas of their Washington bosses, while working hard not to come into conflict with the local realities and retain America's foothold in the region to the extent possible.

Current U.S. Ambassador Richard Hoagland is successfully coping with this far from easy task, mainly because of his highly realistic approaches to the processes underway in Tajikistan and thanks to his understanding that some of the positive changes are evolutionary. Mr. Hoagland and the U.S. embassy offered an adequate assessment of the February 2005 parliamentary elections when they described them as another step on the long road to democracy. On 11 August, 2005, when talking at the Johns Hopkins University, he described Tajikistan as a state following the road of political reforms and completely corresponding to international political standards. He also pointed out that thanks to the peace settlement, which put an end to the civil war, the republic has become the most politically pluralistic state among its Central Asian neighbors with real political parties, including the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan, the only legal religious political organization in the entire region, rather than puppet ones set up by the government for its own purposes.

Still, the smooth and mutually advantageous relations between the Central Asian countries and the United States depend on the local leaders' rather than on the ambassadors' ability to maintain a balance between the key international players. More than that: the heads of the Central Asian countries should learn to preserve this balance in order to prevent it from being overturned. They should avoid excessive relations which will inevitably develop from partnership into something undesirable.

## COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND MEMORY POLITICS IN THE CENTRAL CAUCASIAN COUNTRIES

Rauf GARAGOZOV

*Ph.D. (Psychol.),  
leading research associate,  
Institute of Strategic Studies of the Caucasus  
(Baku, Azerbaijan)*

The recent media reports<sup>1</sup> about the progress made by a group of academics from Armenia, Russia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan working on a joint textbook on the history of the Caucasus from the ancient times to 1921 revealed how much tension this topic has created in the region.

The project known as the Tbilisi Initiative launched in 1997 was encouraged and funded by the Council of Europe within a program for promoting education reforms in the former Soviet republics. This work designed to provide objective and reliable information about the local nations' past was expected to help develop tolerance and openness and overcome xenophobia, prejudice, nationalism, chauvinism, etc.<sup>2</sup> The published interview,<sup>3</sup> however, revealed that the dis-

agreements about the interpretations of history were too deep to be overcome: each national team set about writing its own history of the Caucasus.

This symbolic fact opened up a large layer of cultural, historical, political, and other aspects typical of the region that normally remains concealed. This shows that the sides cannot agree on an interpretation of even their distant past, to say nothing of the present.

In the present context of ethnic conflicts and war, it would be too much to expect the project to be an instant success: too many regional conflicts were accompanied by what is known as a "war of historians,"<sup>4</sup> in which historical facts were retrieved from archives to justify territorial claims. In other words, in Caucasian history is part of today's politics; and the stakes are too high to expect the project to succeed in the near future.

<sup>1</sup> *Golos Armenii* [URL: <http://armenianhouse.org/forum/>], 10 June, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> See: M.V. Novikov, T.B. Perfilova, "Sovet Evropy i Rossia: reformirovanie shkol'nogo istoricheskogo obrazovaniya," *Iaroslavskiy pedagogicheskiy vestnik*, Nos. 3-4, 1999, pp. 22-31.

<sup>3</sup> In his interview with *Golos Armenii* newspaper, S. Melikian, one of the project's members who represented the Ministry of Education and Science of Armenia, said: "It was an uphill job from the very beginning. This especially held true for the Armenian team. You want to know why? It seems that the main reason for this was the Council of Europe's view of the history of these four countries, from which it followed that the joint work should go ahead smoothly without conflicts. This was how it wanted to organize a dialog between the Armenian, Georgian, and Azeri historians... At first, it was suggested that the texts should be agreed upon in the following way: historians from Armenia should approve the texts of their Georgian, Russian, and Azeri colleagues. I can't accept this... At best

we can accept the following pattern: each of the sides submits its text and is fully responsible for it; other teams have no right to suggest amendments, they should merely take the text into consideration ... such amendments will not be needed... We could not agree with the Azeris on many issues. For example, they falsified the entire ancient period, not only of Armenia, but also of neighboring Iran... The Georgian team also indulged in falsifications ... they greatly distorted many problems related to the history of Azerbaijan and Georgia... If our demands are accepted, the textbook will be published, and Armenia will take part in other projects. Yet I have my doubts. This textbook will probably be published, but without Armenia's participation" (see: [URL: <http://armenianhouse.org/forum/>], 10 June, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for America's Past*, ed. by E.T. Linenthal, T. Engelhardt, Metropolitan Books, New York, 1996.

This is not the only reason why the attempts to write a common history had to be abandoned. The participants failed to see eye to eye on the past because the past looks different when viewed from different countries; the sides interpret its actions and the actions of others in different ways. This means that the project is open to the interfering influence of forces and phenomena which belong to the collective memory category. It was these phenomena that doomed the Soviet project aimed at writing history textbooks for the Soviet peoples (the Tbilisi Initiative brings to mind the Soviet efforts in the same field) to failure. The history textbooks designed for the Transcaucasian republics, which bore the stamp of the Soviet "friendship of nations" ideology, became a target of nationalist attacks and failed to advance this friendship.

The peoples of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and Russia can see for themselves how the im-

ages of the past transferred to the present revived old animosity and suppressed hatred and were used by all sorts of forces, ethnic "interpreters," agents, etc. to stir up and mobilize the popular masses. (Some nations were drawn into the process or became victims of it.) It is the collective memory that triumphed over history as presented by the Soviet textbooks.

The above raises questions about the relations between history, historical texts, and collective memory: Can new historical textbooks detached from the specifics of collective memory be written? To what extent can "revision of history" affect the collective memory, way of thinking, and conduct of a group?

To answer these questions let us discuss certain specific features of the Russian, Azerbaijani, Armenian, and Georgian forms of collective memory.

## Collective Memory, Historical Narration, and Identity

The research boom of collective memory of the past several decades is marked by an extremely wide range of ideas about it.<sup>5</sup> Many researchers, however, do agree that historical narrations, historiography, and ethno-histories<sup>6</sup> of all sorts play an important role in molding the nation's collective memory. This idea is being most consistently developed within the sociocultural approach.<sup>7</sup>

J.V. Wertsch,<sup>8</sup> for example, understands collective memory as the memory formed by all kinds of "textual resources," especially narratives. According to this approach, historical narratives are

<sup>5</sup> I have mentioned only few on the long list of research studies and ideas of collective memory: M. Bilig, "Collective Memory, Ideology and the British Royal Family," *Collective Remembering*, ed. by D. Middleton, D. Edwards, Sage Publications, London, 1990, pp. 60-80; J. Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1992; J. Cole, *Forget Colonialism? Sacrifice and the Art of Memory in Madagascar*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2001; A. Confino, "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method," *American Historical Review*, 1997, pp. 1386-1403; P. Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989; M.A. Conway, "The Inventory of Experience: Memory and Identity," in: *Collective Memory of Political Events: Social Psychological Perspectives*, ed. by J.W. Pennebaker, D. Paez, B. Rime, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, N.J., 1997, pp. 21-45; M. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, Edited, translated and with introduction by L.A. Coser, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992; J.K. Olick, "Collective memory: The Two Cultures," *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 1999, pp. 333-348; *Collective Memory of Political Events: Social Psychological Perspectives*.

<sup>6</sup> See: A.D. Smith, "Nations and History," in: *Understanding Nationalism*, ed. by M. Guibernau, J. Hutchinson, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2001, pp. 9-31.

<sup>7</sup> See: M. Cole, *Cultural Psychology: A Once and Future Discipline*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1996; J.V. Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002.

<sup>8</sup> See: J.V. Wertsch, op. cit.

considered to be cultural tools, promoting collective remembering. Certain properties of narratives shape this process. As one such property, Wertsch has identified abstract and generalized narrative forms that underlie diverse narratives, what he calls “schematic narrative templates.”<sup>9</sup> In his view, “a particular set of these narrative templates forms ... a ‘textual heritage’” with its “uniquely national modes of explanation” for a nation-state. According to Wertsch, these templates differ from one cultural setting to another and require special analysis to reveal their role as a basic model for constructing plot lines for major historical events, including events that may not fit particularly well in this scheme. The example of such templates the author identifies is the specifically Russian schematic narrative template of “triumph-over-alien-forces.”<sup>10</sup>

The Russian schematic narrative template consists of the following elements:

1. “An initial situation” ... in which Russian people are living in a peaceful setting where they are no threat to others is disrupted by:
2. The initiation of trouble or aggression by an alien force, or agent, which leads to:
3. A time of crisis and great suffering, which is:
4. Overcome by triumph over the alien force, by the Russian people acting heroically and alone.

My study<sup>11</sup> has demonstrated that the Russian narrative template emerged at the turn of the 16th century as a product of several intertwining conditions and circumstances of political, religious, socio-cultural, historical, and even psychological nature. It was in the late 15th and early 16th centuries that its ideological foundation arose: Moscow is the Third Rome, Russians are the God-Chosen People, Russians are the New People, etc. These ideological constructs, which can be described as mythologemes, fulfilled the function which, according to A.M. Lobok,<sup>12</sup> belonged to the myth as a construction material used to create a foundation for a new social entity and its shared identity. In the very beginning, it was the creation of “magic” Christianity and a corresponding type of thinking and consciousness; later this scheme, which contained narrative of the “sacrificial” type, was developed by the strengthening Russian state represented by the Moscow czars, Russian autocracy, and Communist rulers.<sup>13</sup>

By the time Russia set off on the road of imperialist conquests its schematic narrative template had been already cast. The “imperial” narratives, however, failed to fit the old, mainly sacrificial, template, therefore all key events, such as Russia’s conquests or aggression, were interpreted as “liberation” from and “defense” against “alien enemies.”

There is the opinion<sup>14</sup> that Russian historiography was never critical of the chronicles; moreover, for certain political reasons the Russian template was not only readily accepted, but also promoted through history textbooks and official historiography to become a fact of Russia’s collective memory.

Russian historiography is not alone when it comes to a schematic narrative template. I have demonstrated<sup>15</sup> that most of the Armenian historical narratives are based on shared elements of a re-

<sup>9</sup> See: J.V. Wertsch, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>11</sup> See: R.R. Garagozov, “Collective Memory and the Russian ‘Schematic Narrative Template,’” *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology*, Vol. 40, No. 5, 2002, pp. 55-89.

<sup>12</sup> See: A.M. Lobok, *Antropologia mifa*, Education Department of the Oktiabrskiy District Administration, Ekaterinburg, 1997.

<sup>13</sup> See: R. Garagozov, *Metamorfozy kollektivnoy pamiati v Rossii i na Tsentral’nom Kavkaze*, Nurlan Publishers, Baku, 2005.

<sup>14</sup> See: L.N. Gumilev, *Drevniaia Rus i velikaia step*, Terra Publishers, Moscow, 2000; V.I. Koretskiy, “V.N. Tati-shchev i nachalo izucheniia russkikh letopisey,” in: *Letopisi i khroniki. 1980*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1981, pp. 5-13; V.K. Romanov, “Stat’ia 1224 g. o bitve pri Kalke Ipat’evskoy letopisi,” in: *Letopisi i khroniki*, pp. 79-103.

<sup>15</sup> See: R. Garagozov, *Metamorfozy kollektivnoy pamiati*.

ligiously tinged historiographic pattern: at all times, the fate of the Armenians depended on their loyalty to their religion. Many narrations, all of them rooted in this ideological construct, betray a certain variant of this plot, which can be called the specific Armenian schematic narrative template. The template that describes the Armenians as “loyal people encircled and tortured by the enemies” consists of the following major components:

1. An initial situation in which the Armenian people are living in glorious times disrupted by enemy intrigues, as a result of which
2. the Armenians fell victim to aggression,
3. they have to live through a period of suffering and difficulties,
4. if they remained loyal to their faith, they overcame their enemies; if they betrayed their faith, they were defeated.

The conclusion drawn with respect to the Russian templates can be safely applied to the Armenian narrative template as well. The Armenian template does not follow historical events, but reconstructs them in a very specific, and sometimes, inventive way. More often than not these “histories” created by the Armenian Church tend toward the “sacrificial” type to an even greater extent than the Russian templates; they present events in a very specific religious-ideological light which has nothing to do with the findings of contemporary historians.<sup>16</sup>

I have already written that there are factors and circumstances which influence historiography and, by the same token, contribute to the narrative templates.

Most of the Armenian narrative templates were patterned according to the needs of the ruling clan, they were designed to glorify its members who patronized the authors of these narrations and to demonstrate the clan’s ancient origins; this was done to present the rule of the clan as fully legitimate, therefore, these narrations were inevitably biased.<sup>17</sup>

Viewed in a wider historical and ideological context, it was the Armenian Church that patronized history-writing. We all know that the Armenian historical narrations were authored by members of the clergy, while the church itself as an institution responsible for the creation, preservation, and reproduction of certain historical writings was pursuing its own aims. These can be described as maintaining the numerical strength of its followers and increasing its influence on the minds, hearts, and ideas of the popular masses and the nobility. It is also responsible for the appearance of this narrative template based on the Oriental version of Christianity and obviously influenced by it. Hagiographic literature, Christian martyrologies, the Bible, and especially the Maccabees, etc. all left their imprint on the Armenian historical narrations, which perfectly fit the frameworks of providential and magic Christianity. It is for this reason that these compositions abounded in detailed descriptions (in the Christian moralizing vein) of the martyrdom of Armenians who suffered at the hands of “aliens.”

I have demonstrated in my book that, as distinct from the Russian and Armenian historical narrative traditions, the Georgian and Azerbaijani narrations did not contain any pronounced narrative template.<sup>18</sup> These differences in the form of history-writing are responsible for the different forms of Russian, Azerbaijani, Armenian, and Georgian collective memory and identity.

<sup>16</sup> See: R. Garagozov, *Metamorfozy kollektivnoy pamiati*.

<sup>17</sup> See: Th. Artsruni, *History of the House of the Artsrunik*, Translation and Commentary by R.W. Thompson, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1985.

<sup>18</sup> See: R. Garagozov, *Metamorfozy kollektivnoy pamiati*.

## Collective Memory: Patterns and Manifestations

The schematic narrative templates present in the Russian and Armenian historic narrative tradition are responsible for special forms of collective memory and identity. I can point here to the following aspects.

In these cultures, the templates served as the foundation for historical narratives and are planted in the collective memory through the education system, primarily history lessons. In this way, they gradually develop from mere facts of the Russian or Armenian collective memory into a force that structuralizes the Russians' and Armenians' perception of themselves and their history, their interpretation of their own motives and the motives of others, etc. In other words, they develop into what can be called a collective memory pattern, understood as a certain configuration of collective experience responsible for sound ideas of the group's members about their historical past. It also influences their understanding and interpretation of historical events, motivations, and heroes.<sup>19</sup>

What I have in mind is very close to the interpretation offered by R. Benedict in her anthropological and cultural studies,<sup>20</sup> as well as that presented in the works by A.L. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn.<sup>21</sup>

R. Benedict, who is well known for her classical anthropological works, developed the idea of patterns; she believes that each culture has its own unique configuration of elements united by the "ethos" of culture (cultural theme), which determines both the nature of the correlation of the elements of culture (its attributes) and their content (the "style" of culture). For example, some cultures are arranged around such ideas as equality and social justice, others, around individual responsibility and financial success, and still others, around military glory, hunting, etc.<sup>22</sup>

By way of developing these ideas, Kroeber and Kluckhohn formulated a theory of behavior patterns in culture. In one of their works, they wrote: "Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior, acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action."<sup>23</sup> The authors used the word pattern to describe the "main and recurring cultural elements" expressed in different ways (they can be explicated in individual and group behavior). Patterns can be applied to various elements and levels of culture. J. Chris has the following to say in this respect: all levels of culture are seen as open to patterning—to varying degrees and at different levels of comprehension.<sup>24</sup>

The pattern's most outstanding feature is its ability to blend with other sides of collective experience. For example, exploitation of the Russian narrative template by the Church and the state for their own aims created a specific attitude toward the state as an omnipotent force that ensures "triumph over the alien force." This attitude was marked by the cult of authoritarianism and feelings of

<sup>19</sup> See: R. Garagozov, *Metamorfozy kollektivnoy pamiati*.

<sup>20</sup> See: R. Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston & New York, 1934.

<sup>21</sup> See: A.L. Kroeber, C. Kluckhohn, "Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions," *Papers Peabody Mus.*, Vol. 47, No. 1, 1952, pp. 181-198.

<sup>22</sup> See: R. Benedict, op. cit.

<sup>23</sup> A.L. Kroeber, C. Kluckhohn, op. cit., p. 181.

<sup>24</sup> See: J. Chris, *Culture*, Routledge, London, New York, 1993, p. 27. Quoted from: A. Kroeber, C. Kluckhohn, op. cit.

collectivism which went hand-in-hand with the limited or suppressed value of the free and autonomous individual and civil society. This, in turn, left its imprint on such spheres of collective experience as everyday life in the family, the upbringing of children, attitudes toward the authorities and the state, etc. It is precisely this ability to blend with various sides of collective experience that accounts for the amazing ability of the narrative template to reproduce itself in new conditions and new generations, even those that have never been exposed to the traditional programs of historical schooling.

Over the course of time, especially between the late 18th and early 20th centuries, the Armenian schematic narrative template was actively promoted through a huge number of published historical works<sup>25</sup> used for teaching history in religious schools, etc. to become part of the Armenians' collective memory. Armenian clerics, of the Orthodox and Catholic branches alike, had an important role to play in the process, especially at the very beginning: they organized translations and mass publications of Old Armenian historical works.<sup>26</sup>

In the 19th century, the nationalist-minded Armenian intelligentsia—teachers, artists, writers, historians, etc., many of whom belong to the clerical environment by birth—continued what the Church had begun. They created historical and literary works based on the facts found in historical sources,<sup>27</sup> which meant that they were reproducing the same schematic narrative template with minor adjustments needed in the secular “epoch of nationalism.” It was their intention to supplant the religious elements of the template with secular ones.

No wonder, according to R.G. Suny,<sup>28</sup> that at this time the Armenian Church and religion came under fire from Armenian nationalists convinced that the Church was interfering with their desire to adjust the template along secular lines. In the final analysis they did this: the “Armenian faith” was replaced by the “Armenian people” or “nation.” The nationalist-minded intelligentsia changed the religious ideogeme that said “the fate of the Armenians depends on their loyalty to their faith” into a new, national idea. With some readjustment, the template's religious nature could be expressed in the following way: “the fate of the Armenians depends on their loyalty to their nation.” After creating a powerful instrument for influencing collective consciousness and group behavior, the Armenian nationalists used it to achieve their own political aims.<sup>29</sup>

Over time, this template, which can be described as “loyal people encircled and tortured by enemies,” blended with various sides of collective experience and developed into a pattern of the Armenians' collective memory, which is still influencing their collective behavior and their ideas about the world around them.<sup>30</sup>

Georgian and Azerbaijani historiographic traditions, which have failed to develop even the most rudimentary forms of narrative templates, have no pattern similar to that of the Armenians.

<sup>25</sup> See: Agathangelos, *History of the Armenians*, Translation and Commentary by R.W. Thompson, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1976; K.N. Iuzbashian, “Introduction,” in: Egishe, *O Vardane i voyne armianskoy*, Translation from Old Armenian by Academician I.A. Orbeli, Prepared for press, introduced and commented by K.N. Iuzbashian, Academy of Sciences of the Arm.S.S.R., Erevan, 1971, pp. 4-23; Moses Khorenats'i, *History of the Armenians*, Translation and Commentary on the literary sources by R.W. Thompson, Harvard University Press, London, 1978.

<sup>26</sup> See: C.J. Walker, *Armenia. The Survival of a Nation*, St. Martyn's Press, New York, 1990.

<sup>27</sup> See: R.W. Thompson, “Introduction,” in: Elishe, *History of Vardan and the Armenian War*, Translation and Commentary by R.W. Thompson, Harvard University Press, London, 1982.

<sup>28</sup> See: R.G. Suny, *Looking Toward Ararat*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1993.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>30</sup> One example of this influence, which can be seen in how the Armenians perceive themselves and others, is given by the researcher: “Most Armenians rejected (and by and large still do reject) the Middle Eastern elements in their heritage, choosing to see themselves as an island of civilized Christian ‘Europeans’ in a hostile sea of barbarous Muslim Asiatics... All the strands of Armenian nationalism are to some extent irredentist: all consider the territory currently occupied by the Republic of Armenia to be only a fraction of what Armenians can legitimately claim and nurture hopes of one day recovering some of the land lost to Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan” (E.M. Herzig, “Armenia and the Armenians,” in: G. Smith, *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States*, Longman, London, 1996, p. 253).



This does not mean, however, that their collective memories do not have patterns, albeit of a different nature.

I have already written that the Azerbaijani historical tradition is a fairly young one: as distinct from the Armenians and Georgians, for a long time, the Azeris had no chroniclers to create historical chronicles and narrations. The Azeris had no “ethno-histories” similar to those produced by the Armenian Church, which used its specific historical narrations to build up a strong religious component of the Armenians’ collective identity. Among the Azeris this role belonged to the dastans,<sup>31</sup> folk songs, tales, and legends extremely popular with the common people.<sup>32</sup> Because of the special nature of these texts, which helped create the Azeris’ collective memory, we can surmise that they did contain a certain collective memory pattern: for a long time, epic songs in the native tongue served as the cornerstone of collective memory and developed the “national tradition of epic narration.”<sup>33</sup> For this reason they could contain narrative templates potentially leading to certain collective memory patterns. This interesting and highly important problem is too vast to be discussed here; besides, I have undertaken to limit my discussion of the vast variety of collective memory text resources to historiographic texts only. I feel it important, however, to register this unique feature of the textual resources of the Azeris’ collective memory.

Suffice it to say that thanks to their varied epic songs and rich folklore tradition, the Azeris can boast of an ethnocultural “memory text” which sets them apart from other nations. Meanwhile Islam, which in the early 8th century was accepted as Azerbaijan’s main religion,<sup>34</sup> deliberately strove to overcome the narrow ethnic limits (as distinct from the Russian or Armenian churches, which placed their stakes on the exclusive nature of their ethnoses and/or their isolation). For this and certain other historical reasons, the Azeris long felt no need for ethnonational self-identity: they found the cultural components of their identity to be much more important.

A.D. Smith<sup>35</sup> has identified three transmissions or forms through which “ethnic histories,” the content of collective memory, are passed: religious, cultural, and state. There are mixed forms, too. For the purpose of simplification, we can say that while the Armenian collective memory, which relied on historical narrations created within the Armenian Church, stemmed from the religious form to assume the form of religious socialization, the collective memory of the Azeris, based on language, epos, and other cultural elements, took the form of ethnocultural socialization through “cultural transmission.”

The cultural instruments which serve as the cornerstone of the Azerbaijani collective memory are limited; at the same time, it has certain advantages. On the one hand, in the absence of fully developed “ethnic histories,” for a long time this form of collective memory did not allow the Azeris to look at themselves as an ethnonational collective. On the other, this memory, while not being too concerned with the historical past, gave the Azeris a wider leeway when it came to the inevitable mythological images of the past: otherwise they would have been tempted and captivated by them. This offered many

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<sup>31</sup> Dastans—an epic genre of a mainly heroic nature, the most important among the Azeri (Oguz-Turkic) epic creations being the *Dede Korkut* dastan, which includes 12 individual songs recounted by a legendary holy wise man Korkut. Since such works had *plots* (each of the *Dede Korkut*’s songs has a plot and heroes), we can assume that they did contain narrative templates of sorts. For example, many of the heroic dastans dated to different historical periods and created in various sociocultural, political, and other contexts (*Kerogly*, *Molla Nur*, *Gachag Nabi*, and others) follow an identical plot: the hero or his near and dear ones suffer injustice (or loss). He rises to struggle (alone or as the head of the group he knocked together), takes revenge on his enemies and, in general, shows himself as a brave man of inordinate physical strength.

<sup>32</sup> See: A.L. Altstadt, *The Azerbaijani Turks*, Stanford Hoover University Press, Stanford, 1992; H.B. Paksoy, *Alpamysh: Central Asian Identity under Russian Rule*, Association for the Advancement of Central Asian Research, Hartford, Conn., 1989, pp. 1-2.

<sup>33</sup> A. Niabiyev, *Gatyr Miammiad dastany. Kitabda: gatyr Miammiad*, Aziarniashr, Baku, 1985, pp. 3-17.

<sup>34</sup> See: Z.M. Buniatov, *Azerbaidzhan v VII-IX vekakh*, AS Azerb. S.S.R., Baku, 1965.

<sup>35</sup> See: A.D. Smith, *Nations & Nationalism in Global Era*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1995.

more options and opened many more roads to “inventing the past,” along which contemporary historians and historiographers busy with creating myths will willingly travel.

In the post-Soviet period, the absence of historiographic tradition makes the task of writing history textbooks much more difficult. All attempts to reinterpret the Soviet version of Azerbaijan’s history vacillate between the “nationalist” and “scholarly objective” poles. Conventional terms adequately describe the different aims and different interpretations stemming from these two different poles. In the former case, history is called upon to “educate” and “foster patriotic feelings” while carrying out a “national identity project.” In the latter, history is expected to “provide information” and “develop analytical skills.” It seems that this contradiction is evident in all other former Soviet republics. A “golden mean” between the two poles could have been described as success: today this can hardly be said about the new history textbooks written by Azerbaijani authors.<sup>36</sup>

While the Azerbaijani textbooks cannot provide a clear and integral picture, the Armenian history textbooks present a fairly clear-cut and logical picture of the past, which relied on the schematic narrative template described above. This picture, however, imposed by the “nationalist” pole is achieved through an extreme simplification of history. To quote from Marc Ferro, these textbooks present history in a naïve and pure way; it is populated by good and evil people, traitors and heroes. Armenia, which suffered many defeats in the past, is eager to beautify its history and present it in the noble light of martyrdom. The divided, plundered, and persecuted country is busy weaving a history for itself in the form of a golden legend about giants and heroes famous for defeating lions and slaying dragons. It is hard to imagine that this nation suffered defeats and lost its statehood. Indeed, the children’s book on the history of Armenia published in 1979 in Venice by the Armenian Benedictine monks tells the story of the Armenians’ misfortunes in a skilful and heart-warming way. After reaching the end, the reader still does not know when Armenia was an independent state and when it was ruled by other countries... Legends and reality are intertwined even when the matter concerns well-researched periods.<sup>37</sup>

In other words, the Armenian historical narrations which appeared in the Soviet period and are created today<sup>38</sup> and which to a large extent are a product of Armenian Soviet historiography, which used extensively and indiscriminately Armenian historical sources, are reproducing the Armenian schematic narrative template under the new conditions. These narrations, while concentrating on the “glorious past” marked by irredentism, are tied, once more, to the mythological images of the past; they clash with a strictly scholarly treatment of history.<sup>39</sup>

The continued existence of this template, a product of mythologized consciousness, leaves people tied to the mythological images of the past. It has been noticed<sup>40</sup> that it is responsible for the mythologized elements in people’s ideas about the world. Superficial and indiscriminating histori-

<sup>36</sup> The new post-Soviet textbooks on the history of Azerbaijan are full of contradictions; this makes it hard to acquire an integral picture of the country’s past. This probably explains the fact cited by the Minister of Education of Azerbaijan at the ministry’s 2003 fall meeting: students prefer to avoid maths exams (the old practice) and history (this is a new development).

<sup>37</sup> See: Marc Ferro, *The Use and Abuse of History: Or How the Past Is Taught to Children*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1984 (quoted from: M. Ferro, *Kak rasskazyvaiut istoriiu detiam v raznykh stranakh mira*, Vysshiaia Shkola Publishers, Moscow, 1992, p. 178).

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, a recently published work by G.Kh. Sarkisian, K.S. Khudaverdian, and K.N. Iuzbashian, *Potomki Khayka*, Armianskaia entsiklopedia Publishers, Erevan, 1998.

<sup>39</sup> This is a bitter conflict which developed into accusations hurled at Western historiography engaged in Armenian studies. See, for example, the article “Intellectual’naia agressia protiv Armianskoy nauchnoy mysli finansiruetsia Gosdepom SShA,” which appeared on-line in *Zemskoe obozrenie* (No. 38, 2003). The article quotes from a statement by a group of Armenian historians published within the framework of the first international congress of experts in Armenian studies (held in Erevan on 15-20 September, 2003) that said: “Intellectual aggression against Armenian scholarly thought and historiography is funded, in part, by the U.S. State Department and is reflected in consistent distortions of the key issues of Armenian history starting in the ancient times” [URL:<http://www.regnum.ru>], 2 April, 2004.

<sup>40</sup> See: E.M. Herzig, op. cit.

ans, politicians, political agitators, etc. are using the mythological images of the Armenian template to achieve their own political, ideological, and other aims.

Armenian historiography supplies a picture fairly typical of the nationalist historiographic trends in the post-Soviet states.

## “Politics of Memory” and Prospects of Nation-Building

The current attempts of the conflicting sides to create national myths which cultivate the old images of hostility and hatred may become part of the “politics of memory”<sup>41</sup> and “identity politics”<sup>42</sup> in the conflicting states. They will push the elites toward nationalist projects of national identity and memory. The old examples of hatred and enmity are often used to justify the “clash of civilizations”<sup>43</sup> thesis, as well as talk about allegedly “primordial” and “eternal” cultural, religious, and ethnic “incompatibility.” In the final analysis, the essentialists resort to these theses to camouflage their assertions about the “real” nature of memory and identity.<sup>44</sup>

Since the groups are dealing with historically approved images and narrations brimming with mutual hatred, their members will hardly be tempted to seek reconciliation. This “politics of memory” not only makes it hard to achieve any peace agreement—it interferes with the attempts to build up democracy and a civil society, the “democratic politics of memory” being one of the attributes of such a society.<sup>45</sup>

By admitting that the socially-adjusted instrument of collective memory is invented to pursue certain aims, strengthening the group’s identity and solidarity, among other things,<sup>46</sup> we acquire the chance of modifying collective memory and of relieving it of the burden of old images, the staple food of collective experience.

It seems important, therefore, to take into account the collective memory dimensions responsible for reproducing the old images of hatred and enmity, as well as to investigate the possibility of relieving collective memory of the negative images of the past. This should be done to achieve conflict settlements, otherwise stability in one of the key geopolitical regions will remain frail.

Going back to the questions formulated at the beginning of the article about the correlation between history, historical narrations, and collective memory, the following answer suggests itself in the context of what was said above.

Anyone who wants the Tbilisi Initiative or similar projects to succeed must do a lot of preliminary work designed to cleanse the warring historiographies of their confrontational attitudes. It is absolutely necessary, in particular, to identify and reflect upon the schematic narrative templates and collective memory patterns, and comprehend the mythological components of the “hatred texts,” as

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<sup>41</sup> J.R. Gillis, “Memory & Identity. The History of Relationship,” in: *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. by J.R. Gillis, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994, pp. 3-24.

<sup>42</sup> *Identity Politics and Women: Cultural Reassertions and Feminisms in International Perspective*, ed. by V.M. Moghadam Boulder, Westview Press, 1994; E.E. Sampson, “Identity Politics. Challenges to Psychology’s Understanding,” *American Psychologist*, Vol. 48, No. 12, 1993, pp. 1219-1230.

<sup>43</sup> S.P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Touchstone Books, New York, 1996.

<sup>44</sup> See: D. Senghaas, *The Clash within Civilizations. Coming to Terms with Cultural Conflicts*, Routledge, London, 2002.

<sup>45</sup> See: J.R. Gillis, op. cit.

<sup>46</sup> See: B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, 1991; J.R. Gillis, op. cit.

part and parcel of the historical narrations, which feed confrontational attitudes. No joint historiographic project has a chance of survival without spadework.

Finally, the main thing: all those involved in such projects should first clarify their own ideas about the most desirable future for their nations and the Caucasus as a whole. No matter how strange this may sound, a joint history should start not with disagreements over the past, but with an agreement about the future. In other words, we are facing a dilemma: either the future for the sake of the past, or the past for the sake of the future. Which of the “politics of memory” should be selected: a course toward creating national mythologies which make nations prisoners of old enmities and hatreds and endanger the region’s future, or a course toward a profound contemplation of the past for the sake of the future? Indeed, in the Central Caucasus, the future stands a chance of becoming a genuinely historical time to be brought closer through civil nationalism, a democratic state, and an open society, rather than through ethnic isolationism.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> It should be said in this connection that less “ethnic” nationalism in any society creates greater opportunities for achieving “civil” nationalism. In the final analysis, according to R. Poole (R. Poole, *Nation and Identity*, Routledge, London, 1999), the drift toward one or the other nationalism is determined not so much by history or geography as by the morals and politics prevalent in any given society.

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## THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS: THE STATEHOOD ISSUE AS TREATED BY THE NATIONAL, ISLAMIC, AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

Irina BABICH

*D.Sc. (Hist.), leading research associate  
at the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, RAS  
(Moscow, Russia)*

In the 1990s, the Northern Caucasus was swept by ideas of setting up different kinds of statehood which to a large extent determined the directions of the national, Islamic, and political movements. The problem of statehood assumed its most complicated form in Chechnia.

### National Movements

In the early 1990s, when Islam had just resumed its former place in the Northern Caucasus, but the Muslim leaders had not yet gained political weight and had no money to speak of, national movements pushed to the fore. Judging by their leaders’ political statements, the statehood issue was one of the priorities. In Kabardino-Balkaria (KBR), for example, the law passed by the R.S.F.S.R. Supreme

Soviet, *On the Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples*, added impetus to the local and similar movements elsewhere in the region. The law not only stipulated that the formerly repressed peoples should receive privileges—it was a political document. The national movements in the republic developed “within the framework of restoring Kabardinian and Balkar statehood.”<sup>1</sup> In the first half of the 1990s, the national movements still thought of the statehood issue as a national-territorial principle of state organization and so-called national-political self-identification. These were two major instruments of political struggle in the Caucasus.

In 1991, the leaders and supporters of the Balkar national movement adopted a Declaration on Setting up the Republic of Balkaria and the National Sovereignty of the Balkar People, the main principles of which were formulated in the Key Provisions of the Conception of the National-State Organization and the Reform of the Political System of Kabardino-Balkaria.<sup>2</sup> In 1992, the leaders of the Kabardinian national movement, being convinced that “the statehood of the Kabardinian people was restored in 1921,” responded with a similar decision *On the Restoration of the Kabardinian Republic*.<sup>3</sup> Even though both movements spoke about the peoples’ cultural resurrection and partially implemented corresponding programs,<sup>4</sup> they were political movements first and foremost.

At the early stages of the national movements, they were actively used by the local authorities, who were pursuing their own political aims. These could be described as wider functions and wider powers transferred to them by the federal center. This is why the following republic-level documents entitled *Resolution on Establishing a Memorial Day for the Adighe-Victims of the Caucasian War and of Forced Deportation Abroad* and *Resolution on Establishing a Memorial Day for the Victims of the Forced Deportation of the Balkar People* were drafted and adopted. Later the Supreme Soviet of the KBR invited all political parties and public movements “to refrain from any actions designed to change the republic’s national and political order.”

It should be added that there were also purely political structures acting in Kabardino-Balkaria, such as the Democratic Party of the KBR, the Republican Party of Kabardino-Balkaria, and the Communist Working Party of the KBR, which concentrated on political struggle yet failed to properly organize it. We can say, therefore, that in the first half of the 1990s the leaders and followers of the Kabardinian and Balkar national movements were the only real political force able to change the republic’s socioeconomic and political context. After failing to accomplish this they gradually left the political scene.

In 1996, at the First Congress of the Balkar People, the Balkar National Movement began to decline: at its fifth stage the congress elected Sufian Beppaev as chairman of the National Council of the Balkar People, and on 17 November adopted a fairly radical *Resolution on Measures to Execute the Declaration on Setting Up the Republic of Balkaria and the National Sovereignty of the Balkar People*. Ten days later, on 28 November, the newly elected chairman addressed the people of Kabardino-Balkaria with a statement that marked a turning point in the history of the Balkar National Movement. He said that, first, by the end of 1996 the KBR government had “settled many of the problems related to the rehabilitation of the Balkar people,” second, that by that time the Balkar people had carved an adequate niche in the republic-level power bodies, and that, third, he had met with KBR President V. Kokov who, having examined the remaining rehabilitation problems in detail, promised to settle them in the near future. By arguing in this way, Beppaev invited the nation to retreat from the

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<sup>1</sup> *Etnopoliticheskaia situatsia v Kabardino-Balkarii*, Compiled and edited by I.L. Babich, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1994, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Documents related to the activities of the National Council of the Balkar People, 1994-1998, from the author’s personal archives.

<sup>3</sup> See: *Etnopoliticheskaia situatsia v Kabardino-Balkarii*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1994, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> See: *Ibid.*, pp. 55, 91, 104.

too rigid and radical course for the Balkars' sovereignty embraced by the previous leaders of the national movement. He said, in particular: "In view of the current situation in the republic and around it and having become convinced that inside the republic and outside it (in Moscow, in particular) there are forces wishing to build up tension in the Northern Caucasus, I, as the leader elected unanimously at the congress of our people, believe it expedient to suspend the activities of the National Council of the Balkar People and its executive committee to avoid escalated tension."<sup>5</sup> At essentially the same time, the Public Prosecutor's Office of KBR instituted a criminal charge (Art 79 of the RF Criminal Code) against the activities of the National Council of the Balkar People.<sup>6</sup> This greatly weakened the Balkar movement; the Kabardinian national leaders also curtailed their activities, since their structure had been set up to counterbalance the Balkar organization. All efforts to set up new public organizations, such as Malk'ar Auzy (The Voice of Balkaria), failed.<sup>7</sup> The Kabardinian public political organization Adighe Khase with Valeri Khatazhukov as its leader is struggling to retain its political role in the republic.<sup>8</sup>

It seems that the national-political movements of Kabardino-Balkaria share one common mistake which weakens them and their leaders: they are too busy fighting each other to pay attention to concerted efforts to oppose the conservative authorities and the still prevailing old economic conditions in the republic (the republic's official leaders have fanned their squabbles).

The situation in Kabardino-Balkaria and the correlation between its national and political leaders in the first half of the 1990s was fairly typical: the movements blended into one national-political movement, while national culture, traditions, and languages were not merely defended—they were used as instruments of political struggle waged to bring about more or less radical changes in the political system, as well as in the foundations and the structure of power. Later this role shifted to Islam. Late in the 1990s and early 2000s, some of the activists of these movements tried (and are still trying with no effect) to appeal to ethnic North Caucasian traditions. For example, I. Basova has pointed out that one of the models of Chechnia's future statehood "is associated with the ancient Chechen clan structure—the system of teips—which has recently acquired purely ideological overtones. Attempts are being made to build up new political institutions using the revived teips as the cornerstone. The ideas of Chechnia's historical predestination and its future have been put in a nutshell as 'Chechnia's future is its distant past.'"<sup>9</sup> Some Chechen ideologists, including "wanted" Kh.-A. Nukhaev, believe that this conception serves its aim. Nukhaev has offered his own plan for setting up a Chechen state based on the clan structure and the adat law in Chechnia's mountainous area and transferring the valley part of the republic to the Russian Federation.<sup>10</sup> This is an anachronism rather than a well-substantiated political position, although it has found supporters in the academic community of Russia, Sergey Arutiunov, Corresponding Member of the RAS, being one of them.

## Islamic Movements

It was around the mid-1990s that the North Caucasian leaders started looking for different forms of political struggle, picking up Islam as a newly discovered tool of political influence. Political Islam

<sup>5</sup> Documents related to the activities of the National...

<sup>6</sup> See: *Kabardino-Balkarskaia pravda*, No. 220, 1996.

<sup>7</sup> Documents related to the activities of Malk'ar Auzy, 1997-1999, from the author's personal archives.

<sup>8</sup> Documents related to the activities of Adighe Khase, 1997-2000, from the author's personal archives.

<sup>9</sup> I.O. Basova, *Gosudarstvenno-pravovaia ideologia islama i praktika stroitel'stva musul'manskikh gosudarstv*. Ph.D. thesis, Stavropol, 2000, p. 102.

<sup>10</sup> See: Kh.-A. Nukhaev, "Chechnia i Rossia: odno tsnennostnoe prostranstvo—dve obshchestvennye sistemy," in: *Rossia i Chechnia. Poiski vykhoda*, St. Petersburg, 2003.

acquired a new form of a public movement first in Daghestan. D. Khalidov, Ph.D. (Philos.), himself an active supporter of this movement, has pointed out that it aims to build up public Muslim political organizations as “constructive opposition to and cooperation with the state structures and institutions of power; this cooperation should bring to light the specific interests of the Muslim ummah.”<sup>11</sup> Several new Islamic political parties appeared in the region at the same time: the Union of Muslims of Russia headed by N. Khachilae; the Nur movement; the Islamic Party of Daghestan headed by S. Asiati-lov; and the Islamic Party of Russia headed at that time by Daghestanian S. Raja-bov, etc.

The first step taken in the Islamic political activities in the Northern Caucasus was to spread the idea that Islam should be recognized as a state religion of the Russian Federation. Russia is a secular state in which religion is separated from the state. Nevertheless, Christian Orthodoxy merges with the state on many occasions to the extent that people look at Christian Orthodoxy as the religion of all Russian citizens. This explains why the Islamic leaders out to boost the impact of the Islamic norms and institutions on the state and constitutional field are calling for making Russia’s two traditional religions—Orthodoxy and Islam—state religions. The most radical changes in this respect took place in the Northern Caucasus when Chechnia amended its Constitution in 1992 to make Islam the state religion in the republic. In 1997, the Chechen rulers passed a Law on Amending the Constitution of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria: Item 4 made Islam the state religion in the republic. The Muslim youth of other regions, the northwestern Caucasus in particular, has willingly embraced these ideas.<sup>12</sup>

An “assault” on the Caucasian culture was another step taken by Islamic politicians. Until the mid-1990s, the national-public structures extended their “political” support to the national traditions; when this practice proved disappointing, Islamic ideologists shifted their support to Muslim culture. They have discarded all the Caucasian traditions of the mountain dwellers, in particular their ethnic dress and dances.<sup>13</sup> The Islamic leaders of Kabardino-Balkaria, Adigey, and other republics started talking about abandoning the adat custom of bride-abduction as banned by the Muslim laws, which permit only matchmaking.<sup>14</sup>

The efforts to extend the sphere of the Shari‘a as a legal system and to accept it as an alternative to Russia’s judicial system was the third step taken by Islamic politicians.<sup>15</sup> Muslim civil law, especially those branches which deal with the family and inheritance practices, stirred up a lot of interest. The northeastern Caucasian republics (Ingushetia, Chechnia, and Daghestan) embraced more of its elements than the rest of the Northern Caucasus. D. Makarov has pointed out that individual Shari‘a norms are used in the family, landowning, and economic spheres of the Muslims’ everyday life.<sup>16</sup> In the northwest of the region (in Adigey and Kabardino-Balkaria), Muslim law is used unofficially mainly by the young and more or less radically-minded Muslims.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>11</sup> D. Khalidov, “Otvét na dva istoricheskikh vyzova,” *NG-religii*, No. 11, November 1997; idem, “Islamskiy terrorizm v Rossii: mify i real’nost,” *Musul’mane*, No. 1, February-March 2000, p. 25.

<sup>12</sup> See: I. Babich, A. Iarlykapov, “Islamic Movement in Kabardino-Balkaria: Trends and Problems,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (22), 2003, pp. 167-168.

<sup>13</sup> See: I.L. Babich, “Islamskie organizatsii i religioznaia politika vlastey,” in: *Islam i pravo v Rossii*, Issue 3, *Pravovoy status islama na Severnom Kavkaze*, Compiled by I.L. Babich, 2004, pp. 107-108.

<sup>14</sup> See: I. Babich, “The Republic of Adigey: Islam and Society at the Turn of the Century,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (30), 2004, p. 58.

<sup>15</sup> See: K.M. Khanbabaev, “‘Shariatizatsia’ postsovetskogo Daghestana: Mify i real’nost,” in: *Islam i pravo v Rossii*, Issue 1, *Materialy nauchno-prakticheskogo seminará ‘Problemy realizatsii zakonodatel’sтва o svobode sovesti i religioznykh ob’edineniiakh v otnoshenii rossiiskikh musul’man (Severnii Kavkaz, Povolzhie)*, Compiled and edited by I.L. Babich, L.T. Solovieva, Moscow, 2004, p. 163; A.M. Rajabov, “Vo imia naroda,” *Istimy put. Obshchestvenno-politicheskaia i dukhovno-prosvetitel’skaia gazeta*, June 2003, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> See: D.V. Makarov, *Ofitsial’nyi i neofitsial’nyi islam v Daghestane*, Moscow, 2000, pp. 14, 74.

<sup>17</sup> See: A.E. Astemirov, “Sovremennaia praktika primeneniia musul’manskogo prava v Kabardino-Balkarskoy Respublike,” *Islam i pravo v Rossii*, Issue 2, *Materialy nauchno-prakticheskogo seminará ‘Musul’manskoie pravo v mire i Rossii (Severnii Kavkaz, Povolzhie)*, Compiled and edited by I.L. Babich, L.T. Solovieva, Moscow, 2004, pp. 183-184.

In Chechnia, the 1996 decree on the reorganization of the secular (Russian) courts of justice and on introducing the Shari‘a (Akhmad Akhtaev was appointed the first Qadi of the Supreme Shari‘a Court) launched the process of transforming the republic into an Islamic state. This was followed by a decision on a new state-religious body—the Shura—which appeared in 1998; in February 1999, the rule of the Shari‘a was proclaimed, under which all laws should be adjusted to the Koranic and Shari‘a norms. The parliament and the republic-level muftis were instructed to come up promptly with a draft Shari‘a constitution.<sup>18</sup>

In 1998-1999, there were attempts to set up the rule of Islam and Muslim law in some of the Daghestanian regions (the Kadar zone of the Buynaksk District). The leaders of the Salafi jamaats proclaimed the zone to be “Islamic territory ruled according to the Shari‘a” and annulled all of Russia’s laws. Village Shari‘a courts were set up across the entire zone. They survived until the fall of 1999 when the federal troops liquidated the power of the Salafi leaders.<sup>19</sup> In 1998, similar courts were set up in the village of Kirovaul (Kiziliurt District) where, as D. Makarov wrote, “the Shari‘a was introduced not only under the pressure of public opinion (social pressure) and the religious leaders’ authority, but also because there was a special structure of coercion in the form of a Shari‘a armed unit; this was not typical of all Daghestanian villages though.”<sup>20</sup> By the end of 1998, the inter-district office of the public prosecutor liquidated the court.

The Islamic leaders and deputies of the republic-level parliaments shared the desire to legalize some of the Muslim legal norms. In 1997, Ingushetia adopted a law on justices of the peace, which replaced the village courts with Shari‘a courts expected to observe the following legal procedures: oaths on the Koran accepted as evidence; Muslim laws applied to cases of property and inheritance division, divorce, slander or insult, as well as traffic accidents. In May 1999, the Shari‘a court became the republic’s official juridical body composed of the qadi (alim A.Sh. Martazanov), elected for life by a two-third majority of the republic’s Council of the Alims, and five more alims appointed by the qadi from among the people well-versed in Muslim law. The court used the native tongue of the citizens to deal with divorces and division of property (primarily landed property) and issued its decisions in writing. In 2001, after examining over 1,000 cases, the court stopped functioning as a juridical body and continued as a consultation structure for physical entities.

In Adigey and Kabardino-Balkaria, the Islamic leaders and jurists apply Muslim family law; Muslim marriage rites are performed and registered in the mosques.<sup>21</sup> In the 1990s, not only marriages, but also divorces and related Muslim legal norms attracted the local Muslims (especially their female members). In Daghestan, Ingushetia, and sometimes in Kabardino-Balkaria, the imams perform Islamic divorces and the property division procedure. In Ingushetia, they issued corresponding documents identical to those issued by the Shari‘a courts during the period of their official functioning.<sup>22</sup> It was back in 1994 that then President of Ingushetia Ruslan Aushev suspended the articles of the RF Criminal Code that envisaged criminal liability for polygamy, and for abducting and redeeming brides, which he described as local customs prompted by demographic problems. This brought together the adat (bride redemption) and Shari‘a norms (polygamy). Later, on 9 October, 1998 Ingushetia acquired

<sup>18</sup> See: V. Akaev, “Religious-Political Conflict in the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria,” in: *Political Islam and Conflicts in Russia and Central Asia*, ed. by L. Jonson, M. Esenov, Stockholm, 1999, p. 48.

<sup>19</sup> See: R.G. Gajiev, *Wahhabizm: Osobennosti ego protivleniia na Severnom Kavkaze*, Makhachkala, 2002, p. 216.

<sup>20</sup> D. Makarov, “Opyt vvedeniia shariata na mikrourovne: primer daghestanskogo seleniia Kirovaul,” in: *Islam i pravo v Rossii*, Issue 2, p. 166.

<sup>21</sup> See: I.L. Babich, A.A. Iarlykapov, *Islamskoe vozrozhdenie v Kabardino-Balkarii: perspektivy i posledstviia*, Moscow, 2003, p. 90.

<sup>22</sup> See: Archives of the Qadiat of the Republic of Ingushetia, the 1999-2001 cases.



a law on polygamy annulled by the federal powers in 2000. Scores of such marriages were contracted in the republic while the law was in force.

The Muslim law on inheritance is cultivated mainly in Daghestan; in Adigey, the Adighes who recently resettled there from Kosovo where no limits were placed on Muslim rites and customs are trying to apply the Muslim inheritance-related laws. They still stick to the practice of Muslim last will and testament.<sup>23</sup> Anzor Astemirov, one of the young Islamic leaders of Kabardino-Balkaria, pointed out that the local Muslims are showing an interest in this practice and gradually embracing it.<sup>24</sup>

Muslim law was successfully applied in the 1990s when practically all the North Caucasian republics were beleaguered by land conflicts created by the wide-scale redistribution of the arable lands and pastures (including those which belonged to collective and state farms). V. Bobrovnikov wrote that, early in 1991, three villages (Sasitli, Kedi, and Sildi) of the Tsumada District of Daghestan went to the Shari'a court chaired by S.-M. Abubakarov (he also chaired the Shari'a court at the main mosque of Khasaviurt). His colleagues—S.G. Pirmagomedov from the village of Agvali and M.-S. Gaziev from the village of Khushkada—were members of the court.<sup>25</sup> Umar Arapkhanov, imam of the Galashki village, wrote that the Shari'a court, which was officially functioning in Ingushetia in 1999-2001, had to sort out, quite often on the basis of the Shari'a, land-related conflicts.<sup>26</sup>

The problem of the restoration of *waqfs*—the institutions of Muslim property—proved to be especially acute. In some of the settlements of the Tsumada District of Daghestan, the village mosques managed to revive the earlier *waqfs*.<sup>27</sup> According to V. Bobrovnikov, the local administration in scores of mountain and piedmont villages returned to the mosques, sometimes secretly, the larger part of the lands (privately owned arable lands and orchards—*waqfs*) taken from them during collectivization. The norms of Muslim law applied to this property were restored.<sup>28</sup> However, in the 1990s, even in Daghestan, the *waqfs* were not restored to their old role in the life of the Muslim communities. The *waqf* payments were no longer obligatory—they became community-controlled voluntary donations. Not supported by the Russian laws, the *waqf* lost its legitimacy with Muslim law as well.<sup>29</sup>

The northwest of the region also has a mosque *waqf* property problem. In 2003, for example, the government of Adigey offered land to Muslim communities; in April the Council of the Spiritual Administration of the Republic of Adigey and the Krasnodar Territory discussed this at one of its sittings. Nurbi Emij, the republican mufti, called on “all those who want to work on these lands to cover the costs of running their local mosques to lodge applications saying how much land they are prepared to till and where.” The Adighe Muslims, however, were not prepared to introduce the system of mosque *waqf* landed property for several reasons. First, as I have already written above, the republic lacks the historical experience of using *waqfs* for the needs of the mosques; second, despite the command from above, in some places the local administrations refused to transfer land to the mosques. Finally, land-tilling is not profitable in the Northern Caucasus today. Significantly,

<sup>23</sup> See: *Islam i pravo v Rossii*, Issue 3, p. 35.

<sup>24</sup> See: A.E. Astemirov, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-184.

<sup>25</sup> See: V.O. Bobrovnikov, “Shariatskie sudy na Severnom Kavkaze,” *Otechestvennye zapiski*, No. 5, 2003, p. 426.

<sup>26</sup> See: U.A. Arapkhanov, “Pravo i islam v Ingushetii,” in: *Islam i pravo v Rossii*, Issue 1, p. 79.

<sup>27</sup> See: P.A. Ibragimova, “Sud'ba waqfnoy sobstvennosti v Daghestane (protsess razvitiya i transformatsii),” *Gosudarstvo i religia v Daghestane: Informatsionno-analiticheskiy biulleten*, Makhachkala, No. 2, 2003, p. 114.

<sup>28</sup> See: V.O. Bobrovnikov, “Islam i sovetskoe nasledie v kolhozakh Severo-Zapadnogo Daghestana,” *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie*, No. 5, 2000, pp. 137-138.

<sup>29</sup> See: V.O. Bobrovnikov, *Musul'mane Severnogo Kavkaza: Obychay, pravo, nasilie. Ocherki po istorii i etnografii prava Nagornogo Daghestana*, Moscow, 2002, p. 275.

the Adighes from Kosovo, where they had land and rented it out to pay for the mosques, refused to accept the waqfs in Adigey.<sup>30</sup>

Other norms of the Muslim law on property are accepted more willingly. The mosques are maintained at the expense of *zakiat* (*zakat* in the Adighe language), even though during the years of Soviet power the North Caucasian mosques lost the skill of collecting and distributing *zakiat* money among those categories for whom the money was collected in the first place. A. Iarlykapov pointed out that many of the Adighe Muslims are aware of this duty and are doing their best to perform it. Voluntary distribution of alms—*sadaqa*—is more widely known and practiced. There are no special periods for it—it can be given when people feel inclined to do this. Normally the money goes to the poor, disabled, orphans, and children.<sup>31</sup>

Only the Chechens and Daghestanis showed an interest in Muslim criminal law. In 1996, Zelimkhan Iandarbiev, who headed Chechnia, issued a decree which enacted the Shari'a-based Criminal Code of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria (CRI). Its purpose was described as "cementing the foundations of state independence and the rule of law according to the principles of the Shari'a, that is, the Law given by Great Allah, gracious and merciful, ruler of the worlds."<sup>32</sup> This Criminal Code was patterned after the Criminal Code of Sudan.<sup>33</sup> Akaev, one of the leading students of Islam in Chechnia, pointed out that the Criminal Code was expected to regulate social and legal relationships in Chechen society according to the Shari'a.<sup>34</sup> I. Gerikhanov, who headed the Constitutional Court of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, never tired of saying that the Code provided the only opportunity to curb crime. He compared this with the executions of robbers and bandits in post-war Russia.<sup>35</sup> The Criminal Code contained such punishments as fines, imprisonment, exile, death, etc.<sup>36</sup> In 1997, the Supreme Shari'a Court of the republic sentenced several criminals to public executions for first-degree murder and adultery. Some of them were executed. Six leaders of criminal groups and drug barons were also sentenced to death. The sentenced people were either hanged, or their throats were slashed, or they were stoned to death.<sup>37</sup> The Shari'a courts were expected to punish thieves by chopping off their arms—after a while this practice was abandoned in favor of large fines: too many young Chechens were losing their arms, while the number of thefts was not diminishing. The Shari'a courts looked into the cases of drinking and selling liquor—the guilty were whipped.

Under the Muslim law that was in force in Daghestan in 1998 those, mainly young people, caught drinking liquor were punished with 40 blows of the stick in the Kadar zone.<sup>38</sup> R. Gajiev described the procedure: "The imam of the Karamakhi village announced his intention to punish any specific person after the morning namaz; the punishment was carried out in the square in front of the local administration. Before the people gathered, the culprits were kept locked in the building that used to house the militia precinct. More than once, Jarullah Gajimagomedov, known as the 'four-star' general with merely eight years of school behind him, personally delivered the punishment."<sup>39</sup>

<sup>30</sup> See: Archives of the main mosque of Maykop. Verbatim report of the sitting of the Council of the SAM RA and KT of 9 April, 2003.

<sup>31</sup> See: A.A. Iarlykapov, "Religioznoe povedenie," in: *Islam i pravo v Rossii*, Issue 3, pp. 56-58.

<sup>32</sup> Z. Iandarbiev, "Ob UK ChRI," *Ichkeria*, No. 25, 1996, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> See: "Ugolovny kodeks Chechenskoy respubliki—Ichkeria," *Ichkeria*, No. 24-26, 1996.

<sup>34</sup> See: V. Akaev, "Sufiiskie bratstva i Wahhabyty," in: *Religii, verovania, kul'ty*, Moscow, 1997, p. 54.

<sup>35</sup> See: *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 25 September, 1997.

<sup>36</sup> See: V.Kh. Akaev, "Religiozno-politicheskiy konflikt v Chechenskoy respublikе—Ichkeria," *Tsentrāl'naia Azia i Kavkaz*, No. 4 (5), 1999, p. 102.

<sup>37</sup> See: N. Pulina, "Shariatskiy sud stal pravit sud'bami," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 5 September, 1997, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> See: K.M. Khanbabaev, "Vozrozhdenie musul'manskogo prava v Daghestane: teoriya i praktika," in: *Islam i pravo. Materialy nauchno-prakticheskogo seminarā "Musul'manskoe pravo v mire i Rossii (Severniiy Kavkaz, Povolzhie)*, Issue 2, RUDN, Moscow, 2004, p. 128.

<sup>39</sup> R.G. Gajiev, op cit., p. 215.

The Kirovaul village of the Kiziliurt District also lived according to Muslim criminal law: in 1998 alone over 30 people were sentenced to imprisonment or stick beating for drinking or stealing.

The idea of the Islamic state was the fourth, and by far the most important step of Islamic political propaganda among the North Caucasian Muslims. In fact, this is one of the key postulates of a corresponding doctrine which speaks of the interrelation between Islam and an Islamic state. The most radical of the Islamic leaders are therefore convinced that the efforts to spread Islam far and wide inevitably suggest that political struggle for the right to introduce a new constitution and a state order as loyal as possible to Islam and Muslim law is inevitable. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the idea of an Islamic state in individual republics or across the Northern Caucasus was greatly inflated by the idea of restoring the Arab Caliphate, in which Chechnia was supposed to play the leading role, in the Northern Caucasus. It was this aspect of Islamic political activities that evoked the most obvious negative response from the authorities and power-wielding structures of the Russian Federation and negatively affected Muslim developments in Russia as a whole and the Northern Caucasus in particular. Some of the North Caucasian republics, for example, adopted legal documents which gave a much wider interpretation of the concept of “destroying the foundations of the RF constitutional order” than the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. In 1998, the People’s Assembly of Ingushetia passed a Law on the Regulation of Certain Aspects of the Religious and Missionary Activities in the Republic of Ingushetia, which included the concept of an “extremist religious organization” identified, in particular, by the intention “to use force to change the foundations of the constitutional order of the Republic of Ingushetia.” In 1999, the authorities of Daghestan adopted the Law on Banning Wahhabi and Other Extremist Activities on the Territory of the Republic of Daghestan. It banned, in particular, all Islamic organizations working toward “changing the constitutional order of the RF by force.” The Council of the Muftis of Russia and the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of the RF European Part supported this by issuing Basic Provisions of the Russian Muslims’ Social Program in 2001, in which they outlined the Muslims’ legal position in the secular Russian state and expressed their official conviction that the Muslims are completely loyal to the state and its laws.<sup>40</sup>

It should be said that the discussions and promotion of the idea of a Muslim state revealed a schism inside the Muslim community of Russia rather than between Russia’s authorities and the Muslims. On the one hand, the official clergy, primarily the leaders of the republican spiritual administrations, were completely loyal to the RF Constitution, the authorities, and the Russian state as a whole. They entirely support its course and the local administrative structures by actively cooperating with them. Nurbi Emij, the Mufti of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of the Republic of Adigey and Krasnodar Territory, is the best example of loyalty and cooperation. The leaders of the official Islamic organizations are not so much willing to set up the foundations of Islamic statehood as to raise the “political and legal status” of Islam by “pursuing political activities of their own.”<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, the young Muslim leaders of the North Caucasian republics are insisting on the idea of Islamic statehood. They are convinced that they need time and skilful political and religious maneuvering. This process was actively unfolding in Chechnia; in other republics, too, the ideas of an Islamic state and purely political aims are obviously interconnected. This can be clearly seen in Daghestan<sup>42</sup> and Kabardino-Balkaria.<sup>43</sup> In the latter half of the 1990s, it was the Muslim youth organizations (the Youth Islamic Center, which described its ultimate goal as achieving the “Islamization of the people and power,” and others) undertook the task of promoting the idea of an Islamic state in the northwestern Caucasus, in Kabardino-Balkaria among other places. The Center’s leaders were quite open about their

<sup>40</sup> See: *Osnovnye polozenia sotsial'noy programmy rossiiskikh musul'man*, Moscow, 2001.

<sup>41</sup> D.V. Makarov, *Ofitsial'nyy i neofitsial'nyy islam v Daghestane*, p. 15.

<sup>42</sup> See: M.O. Osmanov, “Daghestan—glukhaia provintsia v musul'manskom mire,” *Nash Daghestan*, Nos. 189-191, September-October 1999, p. 15.

<sup>43</sup> See: I. Babich, A. Iarlykapov, “Islamic Movement in Kabardino-Balkaria: Trends and Problems,” p. 168.

political aims. At first they tried to gain a foothold in the republic's Spiritual Administration of the Muslims, then they moved to spreading their influence to the republic-level authorities.<sup>44</sup> They use all opportunities to plant the ideas of an Islamic state and Islam as a state religion in the minds of the young mountain people during prayers, at all kinds of courses, in Sunday schools, etc. Some young men have already become imbibed with the idea that the future of Islam and the Islamic state are inseparable.<sup>45</sup>

## Political Movements

In 2001-2005, the authorities and the power-wielding structures raised an offensive against those Islamic movements either preaching the idea of an Islamic state or engaged in corresponding political activities, and undermined their drive to a great extent.

There is a more or less widely accepted, yet fairly debatable, opinion that the North Caucasian mountain societies will not accept democracy; the Islamic leaders are actively exploiting it, while promoting the idea of a Muslim state. I have already written that in such a state, power and the Shari'a are inseparable; Prof. M.-N.O. Osmanov, a well-known translator of the Koran into Russian, suggested the term "Shari'a statehood." This power does not rely on democracy in its Western interpretation, but is a highly special form of power—nomocracy, or the power of the law—according to L. Sjukijainen, who is widely known in Russia as an expert on Muslim law. There is a fairly substantiated idea favored by many of the Islamic leaders that the North Caucasian mountain peoples are much closer to the Muslim principles of statehood and that, if implemented, these principles would usher in modernization of all sides of the local peoples' existence, including the nearly ruined economy. The economic changes launched in the late 1990s-early 2000s in the Russian Federation are stalling in the Northern Caucasus.

It seems that the political leaders of the region's republics look at the conception of Islamic statehood as part of the political process unfolding before them rather than as a necessary process and part of the Muslim faith as a whole. L. Sjukijainen has also emphasized the political aspects of the idea of the Shari'a and an Islamic state. He has pointed out in particular that, as distinct from the Chechen radicals, the Daghestani Islamic radicals "looked at the Shari'a as a weapon to be used primarily to fight corrupt power rather than crime."<sup>46</sup> At the same time, K. Gajiev has pointed out: "They [the Islamic leaders of Daghestan.—*I.B.*] are essentially openly preaching the pan-Islamic ideas of bringing together all Muslims of the region to push Russia away from the Northern Caucasus and to set up an Islamic state there ruled by the Shari'a."<sup>47</sup>

It seems, however, that the Russian Muslims could resolve many of their social, economic, political, national, and cultural problems with the help of the Shari'a. The specifics of the mountain dwellers mentality more willing to accept the "dictatorship of the Shari'a" than the "democracy of Russia's laws" should not only be reckoned with when creating a new legal field in the Northern Caucasus: it should be used to establish (de facto and de jure) law and order in the region to put an end to the era of lawlessness which partly dates back to the Soviet period and which reached its heyday in the 1990s.

The history of Islam in the Northern Caucasus has taught us that, on the one hand, its advance among the local peoples was a torturous process and that, on the other, the efforts of the Russian au-

<sup>44</sup> Talks with the Director of the Islamic Center of the KBR (today the Islamic Institute) Musa Mukozhev in July 2002, from the author's personal archives.

<sup>45</sup> See: I.L. Babich, A.A. Iarlykapov, *Islamskoe vozrozhdenie v Kabardino-Balkarii: perspektivy i posledstvia*, p. 57.

<sup>46</sup> L.R. Sjukijainen, "Naydetsia li shariatu mesto v Rossiiskoy pravovoy sisteme?" in: *Islam na postsovetskom prostranstve: vzgliad iznutri*, ed. by A. Malashenko and M. Brill Olcott, Moscow, 2001, p. 30.

<sup>47</sup> K.S. Gajiev, *Geopolitika Kavkaza*, Moscow, 2001, p. 34.

thorities to create alternative state and legal mechanisms to bring law and order and develop the mountain nations failed. The centuries-old rivalry between the Russian and Ottoman empires interfered with the latter's intention to set up an Islamic order there. Starting in the late 18th century, Russia began setting up its own power and power-wielding structures, which could barely cope with the local temperaments and traditions. Even if the authorities and the legislative bodies of the Russian Federation provide the local nations with the possibility of using those Muslim legal norms which do not contradict the Russian laws, the process of incorporating them into everyday life in the mountains with the aim of modernizing this life will be a long, complex, and rather painful process: on the whole, North Caucasian society is not ready to travel this road. V. Bobrovnikov has justly written: "Those who think that the absolute majority of the local North Caucasian nations have returned to the strict observation of Islamic norms and have patterned their lives according to the Shari'a are wrong." From the viewpoint of "legal options," therefore, the use of Muslim legal norms in the region will for a long time remain a declaration rather than a reality.

In the 1990s-early 2000s, new people emerged as national religious leaders in the Northern Caucasus. Obviously, the time has come to form purely political movements pursuing political goals and free from nationalist claims or religious slogans. One wonders to which extent the local mentality, way of life, and other factors will promote (or interfere with) the process of setting up new political parties and the emergence of new political leaders and whether purely political parties which have nothing to do either with national or religious issues are possible in the specific conditions of the Northern Caucasus.

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## ARMENIA AND THE EU'S EUROPEAN NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY PROGRAM

Sergey MINASIAN

*Ph.D. (Hist.), director of the Scientific-Research Center of  
the Southern Caucasus' Regional Security and  
Integration Problems, Russian-Armenian (Slavic) State University,  
researcher at the Institute of History,  
Republic of Armenia National Academy of Sciences  
(Erevan, Armenia)*

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### 1. Introduction

Integration into the European structures is a priority task of Armenia's foreign policy, which is shown by the republic's cooperation with the EU, Council of Europe, NATO, and other organizations, as well as by its bilateral relations with continental states. What is more, Armenia is nurturing the hope of becoming a full-fledged member of the European Union in the future.

On 14 June, 2004, the European Union Council made a decision to include the South Caucasian states in its European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) program and approved the ENP Strategy Paper submitted in May of the same year by the European Commission.<sup>1</sup> The European Neighborhood Policy program is based on the Wider Europe-Neighborhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbors project,<sup>2</sup> prepared by the European Commission in March 2003. The purpose of this document is to develop a universal, proportional approach which also includes financial mechanisms and should meet the development requirements of international and regional cooperation on the periphery of the enlarging European Union. We will note that this document was adopted right before the most extensive enlargement of the European Union to date—in May 2004, ten new states swelled this organization's ranks. In October 2004, the European Commission began preparing Country Reports for the Southern Caucasus, which will form the basis of specific Action Plans between the EU and the region's states within the ENP.

The Report on Armenia was presented in March 2005, after which official Erevan and the EU began drawing up an Action Plan for Armenia under the ENP program. What is more, both sides intend to develop their relations within the already existing Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which came into force as early as 1999.

The undertakings of the European Union within the ENP program presuppose a new approach which is not part of the contacts this organization has already developed with its neighbor states along the entire eastern and southern perimeter of its borders. The purpose of this policy is not only to share the benefits of the EU's enlargement with all interested neighbor states by strengthening their stability, security, and prosperity, but also to prevent the appearance of new dividing lines between the enlarged European Union and the states bordering on it. Implementation of the ENP will be supported by significant financial and technical assistance from the EU, for which a special mechanism is to be formed—the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). It will begin functioning in 2007 and will provide broad opportunities for cooperation between the European Union and the countries which fall under the ENP program, including by means of new forms of influence which make it possible for the partner states to come as close as possible to European regulations and standards.

But an analysis of the possible level of the new relations between the EU and countries to be included in this program does not give rise to tremendous optimism. These relations not only do not envisage mandatory membership of these states in the European Union, they do not even allow them to count on the same help and assistance rendered to the EU member states. Incidentally, the ENP states are not required to adhere as stringently to specific political and economic criteria as countries applying for EU membership, although adherence to these criteria is just as essential. Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that the ENP program has no analogues (including in terms of its financial potential) and is an entirely new system of partnership between the European Union and its new neighbors.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Development Dynamics of Cooperation between the EU and Armenia

Armenia is placing top priority on its contacts with the European Union. This is dictated by the traditional values of the Armenian people who, due to their Indo-European origin, feel a deep genetic bond with Europe and have a world outlook oriented toward it.

<sup>1</sup> See: COM (2004) 374 final, Brussels, 12 May, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> See: COM (2003) 104 final, Brussels, 11 March, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> See: K.E. Smith, "The Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy," *International Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 4, 2005, pp. 763-767.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement mentioned above forms the legal foundation of cooperation between the European Union and the Republic of Armenia. It was signed as early as April 1996, but it did not come into effect until July 1999. In particular, it envisages that the European Union will render Armenia every possible assistance in its transition to a market economy and sustainable democracy. The document encompasses essentially all spheres of cooperation, with the exception of military, and the desire of the sides to establish closer relations is manifested primarily in the measures aimed at maximum implementation of this agreement.

In the past, Armenia's policy regarding European integration has not been declarative. This is shown by the specific reforms the republic is carrying out within the framework of a political dialog, in the socioeconomic, trade, legislative, and scientific-educational spheres, as well as in high technology (including information).

### **2.1. Development of a Political Dialog**

A corresponding EU-Armenia Cooperation Council was created and functions within the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. In this Council, the European Union is represented by members of its own Council and the European Commission, and our country is represented by members of its government. The procedures and mechanisms of a regular political dialog between Armenia and the EU are also being executed by means of consultations at the level of their experts. What is more, an EU-Armenia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee (PCC) was formed which coordinates the relations between Armenia's National Assembly and the European Parliament and parliaments of the EU member states. In addition, an Interdepartmental Commission on European Integration and Cooperation between European Regional Organizations and the Republic of Armenia was created by a decree of the President of Armenia. This structure, which functions under the auspices of the Ministry of Trade and Economic Development, is the executive body for implementing this agreement and other relevant agreements on Armenia's part. TACIS renders technical support to the commission's work, and the Armenian-European Policy and Legal Advice Center (AEPLAC), also financed by TACIS, provides consultation assistance.

After the last enlargement of the European Union (May 2004), the EU and Armenia signed the Protocol on the Extension of the PCA to the New Members States, and on 4 December of the same year, this protocol, which had already been ratified by the Armenian National Assembly, was signed by the republic's president, Robert Kocharian. What is more, in 2004, the European Commission made a decision to raise the level of its representative office in Armenia to the status of a full delegation (a corresponding agreement was signed in September 2004).

In addition, serious measures are being carried out to achieve the proper level of bilateral military-political cooperation between our country and the EU states, which is largely being established on a planned basis. For example, exchange visits by heads of state have helped to create friendly ties with Great Britain, Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Germany, Lithuania, Latvia, Greece (in particular), and other countries.

### **2.2. Joint Efforts to Harmonize Legislation**

In compliance with Art 43 of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, one of the most important conditions promoting deeper relations between Armenia and the European Union is maximum

harmonization of our republic's legislation with European regulations and standards. Main areas of cooperation have also been defined in this sphere: customs, tax, banking, labor, and antimonopoly legislation; the legal regulation of enterprise activity; protection of intellectual property, the environment, and the consumers; public health, nuclear energy (technical instructions, standards, and regulations), transportation, and so on. In particular, based on Art 14 of the Agreement, both sides assumed obligations with respect to anti-dumping and compensation measures: official Erevan pledged not to carry out such measures if the WTO had not registered (or approved) them and to adopt the necessary legislative acts for this. In compliance with Art 42, Armenia joined several international conventions on the protection of intellectual, industrial, and commercial property.

A similar situation is also developing in other areas relating to harmonization of the republic's legislation with European standards and regulations. But, despite the achievements, much work still remains to be done in this sphere.

### ***2.3. Cooperation in Trade and Economic Development***

On 5 February, 2003, Armenia joined the World Trade Organization, as a result of which the WTO's provisions on trade and goods exchange became part of its international obligations both within the framework of this structure and in the format of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed with the EU.

In compliance with Art 11 of the latter, official Erevan must observe international conventions and agreements regulating international and transit transportation, as well as continue its efforts to improve customs and tax procedures which primarily relate to customs assessment of goods imported into the republic. The European Chamber of Commerce, which opened its representative office in Erevan in February 2003, is playing an important role in intensifying and improving trade relations between Armenia and the EU, including by providing our country's business circles with information about the possibility of establishing corresponding contacts with European partners.

Several measures have been adopted for regulating and licensing certain goods exported to the European Union countries, in particular products of the textile industry. As for trade in nuclear materials, the sides assumed obligations to carry it out in compliance with a treaty to be entered between Armenia and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM). But there is no urgent need for this document so far, since Armenia is not engaged in any significant trade in these materials.

Measures aimed at investment in Armenia are of immense importance, including in the development of the republic's service sphere. Official Erevan signed a bilateral economic trade agreement with many European countries, in particular with Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Cyprus, Greece, Great Britain, France, and Italy. The Law on Foreign Investments adopted by the republic is creating a favorable environment for further economic interaction with these countries.

Regular contacts at the level of numerous commissions and sub-commissions created in keeping with the provisions of this agreement are continuing. Their work focuses on giving Armenian goods the most favored treatment status. Measures to establish legal conditions and legislation with the aid of the TACIS-supported AEPLAC and VET (Vocational Education and Training) projects are playing an important role in developing our country's private sector.



### **2.4. Regional Economic Relations**

Armenia is participating in regional programs sponsored by the European Union. In October 2003, the tenth intergovernmental ministerial meeting of the TRACECA countries was held in Erevan. (In 2004, our republic chaired this program.) The European Union granted Armenia more than 10 million Euros in 2004 in the TACIS program format envisaging, in particular, technical support of the CIS countries. It received the same help within the Food Program. What is more, our country is receiving grants from the EU within the framework of regional integration financial support programs, in particular the INOGATE project. Armenia has also been participating in conferences at the foreign minister level of the Black Sea and Caspian Region countries and the European Commission (November 2004). They were devoted to integration and development prospects of the transportation and energy markets in the countries of these two regions. Armenia welcomed this initiative by the European Commission and expressed its willingness to actively participate in developing mutually advantageous cooperation in the mentioned spheres.

### **2.5. Results and Efficiency Assessment of EU-Armenia Cooperation**

Cooperation between Armenia and the EU has also been developing in high technology, education, and the social sphere (particularly in ensuring food safety). An important role in this cooperation was played by the significant financial and technical assistance rendered to Armenia all this time. It came primarily through ECHO (European Commission of Humanitarian Aid Office), TACIS, and FSP (the WHO Food Safety Program), between 1991 and 2004 the European Union gave the republic aid amounting to more than 380 million Euros and also granted loans of more than 86 million Euros.

## **3. EU-Armenia Cooperation Prospects in the Context of Development of the European Neighborhood Policy Program**

### **3.1. ENP—A New Way to Strengthen Partnership**

This program is important for Armenia not only from the viewpoint of its economic development interests, the strengthening of democracy and democratic institutions in the republic, a political dialog, and regional security problems. It is also important in the conceptual respect, since it presumes using the integration processes to achieve stable regional development and create an atmosphere of mutual respect in the Southern Caucasus. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that the orbit for removing the main obstacles hindering Armenia's security and further development is located precisely in the European dimension. Talks are being held in the OSCE on settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, while normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations, lifting the blockade of the

borders, the problem of Ankara recognizing the Armenian genocide, and so on are mandatory conditions being imposed on Turkey, which wants to join the EU. So the important political significance of the ENP program lies in the fact that it could provide a new foundation for Armenia's cooperation with the EU countries in security, foreign, and defense policy, as well as in strengthening stability in the Southern Caucasus. The European Union is also interested in this. The European Security Strategy notes in particular that "it is not in our interest that enlargement should create new dividing lines in Europe. We need to extend the benefits of economic and political cooperation to our neighbors in the East while tackling political problems there. We should now take a stronger and more active interest in the problems of the Southern Caucasus, which will in due course also be a neighboring region."<sup>4</sup>

It goes without saying that Armenia is cooperating with NATO, the leading organization for ensuring European security, at a very high level. But as the military component of the EU develops, the time is also drawing near for our country to possibly become involved in several undertakings within the Common Foreign and Security Policy/European Security and Defense Policy program (CFSP/ESDP).

Since Armenia and the EU entered the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (which envisages strengthening relations in essentially all spheres apart from the military), significant changes have occurred in the foreign and defense policy of the European Union, and European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) has been formed and achieved specific development. Armenia's security policy has also undergone a certain amount of transformation, in which an increasingly greater accent is being placed on strengthening military-political cooperation with European countries. Taking into account the new geopolitical realities in the Southern Caucasus and the EU's interest in preventing the appearance of new dividing lines in Europe, as well as against the background of Armenia's ongoing effective partnership with NATO and Erevan's military-political cooperation with Washington, it would be expedient to define the parameters of cooperation between Armenia and the EU within the framework of the CFSP/ESDP. In particular, significant prospects in this sphere are related to the conception of *preventive engagement* of the European Union in ensuring stability and security along its new borders.<sup>5</sup>

What is more, one of the special features of Armenia's policy regarding Euro-Atlantic and European military-political integration should be kept in mind. In contrast to Georgia, for example, where this process is characterized by greater declarativity, as shown in every move made by official Tbilisi aimed at cooperation with NATO or the U.S., in Armenia, decision-making and decision-implementation in this sphere are somewhat different. As members of the highest Armenian foreign policy leadership justifiably note, a special feature of our state's Euro-Atlantic and European integration consists in the fact that official Erevan makes a political decision for every, even relatively small, step toward developing partnership in this sphere. This is due to the geopolitical reality which has formed around Armenia, and is also dictated by the conceptual basis of its foreign and defense policy—complementariness. What is more, this special feature of the political decision-making process in Armenia regarding questions of military-political cooperation with NATO and the EU (just like with the U.S.) gives these relations greater specificity and intensity.

Along with the far-reaching political and regional goals, the ENP program has a vital economic significance for Armenia. It is no accident that the European Union has become one of Armenia's largest trade partners (it accounts for approximately 40% of its commodity export struc-

<sup>4</sup> See: *A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy, Part II, Strategic Objectives: Building Security in Our Neighbourhood*, Brussels, 12 December, 2003.

<sup>5</sup> See: *EU Security and Defense Policy: The First Five Years (1999-2004)*, ed. by N. Gnesotto, ISS-EU, Paris, 2004, p. 51.

ture). At the same time, the EU is making serious efforts to gain a stronger foothold in the Southern Caucasus with the help of several programs called upon to promote the development of regional cooperation and the implementation of reforms in keeping with European standards. In the cultural, scientific-technical, and educational spheres, Armenia is primarily attracted by the fact that the ENP program provides it with the opportunity to participate in similar programs in the EU itself. In particular, our republic is showing an interest in joint environmental protection, technical staff retraining, training organization, information, and telecommunication projects, as well as those aimed at resolving youth problems.

### **3.2. Erevan's Principled Approach to Implementing ENP Programs**

Armenian experts and members of the country's leadership believe that significant adjustments should be made to the measures being undertaken within the framework of the Action Plan to ensure that the new document does not become a replay of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and is not limited only to the items set forth in it. All the same, this agreement will still form the legal basis for EU-Armenia cooperation, which naturally will allow for full use to be made of the opportunities envisaged in it. In other words, when carrying out the Action Plan, one of official Erevan's main tasks is to avoid strictly formal or cosmetic changes. Whatever the case, reference to specific measures will become one of the basic elements of the Action Plan.

The main parameters for drawing up the Action Plans for countries to which the ENP program applies have already been defined in corresponding documents, including in the Country Reports for the Southern Caucasus. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that one of the main aspects of Armenia's viewpoint with respect to carrying out the ENP has been repeatedly voiced by its leadership: for our state, cooperation with the EU is not a goal in itself, just as it is not limited to our desire to become (in the future) a member of this structure. No less than the goal itself, Armenia is just as interested in the process of European integration, since this process is capable of bringing our country closer to the standards toward which the republic is striving (regardless of its membership in European structures and organizations). Without making political declarations about its possible membership in the EU at the current stage, and thus not placing its European partners before a choice, official Erevan is asking for the emphasis to be placed on intensifying cooperation in such key spheres as bringing the republic's legislation into harmony with European norms, developing democracy and democratic institutions, encouraging economic cooperation, and so on. In some sense, this may be one of the main differences of Armenia's policy and approach in its relations with the EU structures. As members of the republic's official circles and experts note, this policy is arousing a positive response in its European partners. This is what the republic is interested in: using European methodology and standards is important to it not so much because the EU or another organization demands it, but because it is vitally important for achieving the level in the mentioned spheres to which our country is striving.

An important indicator of the seriousness of Armenia's intentions regarding intensification of current relations with the EU and the development of new ones is the decision to approve the National Program for Implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, Decree No. 743-A, 29.04.2004, which has no analogue in other South Caucasian countries. In so doing, it should be added that this decision was made by the republic's government even before official settlement by the European Commission and EU Council of the question of including our state in the ENP program.

In so doing, it can be maintained that in the context under review, Armenia's goal is European integration (with ambitious and far-reaching plans regardless of implementation of the ENP). But in so doing, the republic will exert maximum efforts to make use of the opportunities opening up before it within the framework of the ENP program.

## 4. Spheres of Specific Cooperation Within the Framework of the Action Plan

### 4.1. *Analysis of the Country Report and Contours of the Action Plan*

On 2 March, 2005, the European Commission prepared ENP Country Reports for the Southern Caucasus, which were to become the basis for drawing up individual Action Plans for these countries within the framework of the ENP program. The European Commission gave a generally positive assessment both of the overall level of cooperation between the EU and Armenia, as well as the development level of our state in all the reviewed areas. The picture becomes even clearer when comparing Armenia's Report with the Country Reports of other South Caucasian states. For example, according to EU experts, in terms of certain parameters, Armenia has made greater achievements than Georgia and particularly Azerbaijan.

As was expected, in the Report on Armenia, the main emphasis was placed on the insufficiently efficacious formation of democratic institutions and on the need to continue work to harmonize the republic's legislation with European standards. An important aspect is the need to continue cooperation in power engineering (in the context of the EU's demands to close down the Metsamor Atomic Power Station). It was noted in particular that the results leave something to be desired in this sphere.<sup>6</sup> Another important aspect of this Report is reference to the National Program for Implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which was given a high appraisal by experts from the European Commission. An integral component of the Report on Armenia, like the Reports on Georgia and Azerbaijan is reference to regional conflicts and the need for their rapid settlement.

Along with this, in the recommendations to the EU Council (when presenting the Country Reports for Southern Caucasus), the European Commission particularly emphasized the achievements made by Armenia in some key spheres: "Armenia has achieved a good macro-economic performance in recent years with impressive economic growth rates. There are indications that this is starting to have some impact on the high levels of poverty in Armenia. Its accession to the WTO in 2003 indicates that it has made progress towards key market-oriented reforms. There has also been progress in aligning Armenian legislation with that of the EU. The adoption of an anti-corruption strategy and the creation of an anti-corruption council are important steps."<sup>7</sup> In other words, it was noted that Armenia was paying keen attention to the development of those spheres within which it has been cooperating with the EU.

<sup>6</sup> See: *European Neighbourhood Policy Country Report, Armenia*, COM (2005) xxxxxx.

<sup>7</sup> *European Neighbourhood Policy Recommendations for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and for Egypt and Lebanon*, Communication from the Commission to the Council. COM (2005) xxx, xx February 2005.

The list of specific areas of cooperation within the framework of the Action Plan given below could help to develop relations between the EU and Armenia, as well as reveal a new set of problems requiring solutions. The information was gathered on the basis of consultations with interested government structures, NGOs, and independent analytical centers and experts.

#### **4.2. Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms**

The entire set of obligations aimed at protecting basic human rights and fundamental freedoms was drawn up in strict compliance with the Copenhagen political criteria, that is, it envisages stability of the institutions guaranteeing democracy, execution of international legal regulations and documents adopted in this sphere, and so on. In so doing, special attention was focused on the following areas:

- confirmation of adherence and guarantees of implementing the main conventions of the U.N. and Council of Europe, as well as the additional protocols related to them;
- freedom of speech and mass media;
- respect and protection of the rights of national minorities;
- unconditional ban against torture, and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, the creation of acceptable conditions in places of confinement;
- further development of the structures of a civil society.

#### **4.3. Development of Democratic Institutions, Legal Regulations, and Judicial Reform**

In compliance with the Copenhagen criteria, the main international agreements and conventions adopted in this sphere must be ratified and observed, fundamental democratic institutions developed, and the judicial system reformed in compliance with European standards. In this respect, the following measures must be carried out:

- developing and reforming the voting system and its institutional structure;
- carrying out judicial reform and developing the judicial system;
- raising the qualifications of judges and other employees in this sphere, improving the material and information support of courts;
- establishing efficient cooperation between judicial bodies of the EU and Armenia.

#### **4.4. Political Dialog, Reforms in Public Management and Local Self-Government, Fighting Corruption**

Cooperation in these areas should primarily be related to the processes occurring within the framework of the general political and constitutional reforms being implemented in Armenia. Here the following aspects can be singled out:

- holding another referendum to make amendments to the country's Constitution;
- developing a local self-government system;
- reforming public management;
- anti-corruption measures within the framework of the provisions of the international organization called Council of Europe Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO). What is more, efforts must be continued to implement the republic's Anti-Corruption Strategy, including with respect to synchronizing its main provisions with the corresponding European base.

#### ***4.5. Synchronization and Harmonization of Armenian Legislation in Trade, Market Mechanisms, Standardization, etc.***

- Developing and implementing European standards and mechanisms in the tax sphere, legislative regulation of value-added and excise tax in compliance with WTO regulations, as well as the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed by the EU and Armenia.
- Reviewing the possibility of creating free economic zones in harmony with WTO regulations and EU legislation.
- Drawing up and approving measures to protect consumer rights.
- Creating conditions for improving the convertibility of currency, developing the financial market, and so on.
- Improving anti-monopoly legislation, making structural changes in anti-monopoly bodies.
- Protecting author's rights, intellectual and scientific-technical property, developing and establishing cooperation among statistical and among regulating services.

#### ***4.6. Socioeconomic Development and Trade***

- Improving the investment climate, including transparency, predictability, and simplification of regulation, guaranteeing the protection of foreign investments and envisaging consultation on the liberalization of other capital movement within full implementation of Section V of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.
- Closer harmonization with European standards and practice in employment and social policy, coordinating the development of the social security system.
- Achieving maximum support from the EU in implementing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.
- Intensifying cooperation in the energy sphere, including in the creation of alternative sources of electric energy (or help to build a new atomic power station) after depletion of resources and closing down of the Metsamor Atomic Power Station.

- Achieving a qualitatively new level of integration between Armenia and the European Union in the socioeconomic and trade spheres by providing our republic with access to the market of the European Union countries, which is envisaged by the conceptual documents of the ENP program.

#### **4.7. Prevention and Settlement of Regional Conflicts**

It can be presumed that this sphere of cooperation will be of special significance, since without settlement of the Karabakh conflict, no serious results can be expected when implementing the objectives declared by the ENP program—achieving regional stability and economic development of the South Caucasian states.

- Keeping in mind the specifics of the Karabakh conflict, some synchronization of measures to settle it should be enforced in the ENP Action Plans for Armenia and Azerbaijan.
- Measures should be drawn up aimed at post-conflict rehabilitation of the affected territories, including with respect to their de-mining, rebuilding border population settlements, rendering social assistance to the conflict victims, refugees, and so on.

#### **4.8. Cooperation in Foreign and Defense Policy**

As the practice of several countries which have already submitted their ENP Action Plans (Israel, Ukraine, and Moldova) shows, these documents enforce several parameters of prospective cooperation within the CSDP/ESDP. Based on this, it would be wise to enforce similar measures in Armenia's Action Plan too. But in so doing, we should not forget that the European Union has still not fully defined its cooperation priorities in the security sphere with states involved in the ENP program. So for starters, it seems most realistic to cooperate both in problems of prime importance in international security as a whole (nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, fighting terrorism), as well as in the military-civilian activity of the European CSDP group (political planning and joint studies, military-civilian relations, development of legislation in the military sphere, tightening up parliamentary control over armed forces).

- Crisis management, political planning, joint assessment of threats and risks, cooperation between analytical and other organizations in strategic studies and problems of regional security.
- Nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and development of a system of export control in Armenia. Despite the fact that Armenia is party to essentially all the international documents in this sphere and is actively cooperating on problems of export control and nonproliferation, the republic's corresponding departments are in need of technical refurbishment. Relations should be developed under the EU WMD Strategy and other joint undertakings.
- Cooperation in the struggle against international terrorism, including by implementing the UNSC Resolutions 1373/01 and 1269/99 and the U.N. Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism of 1992.

- Adopting joint measures against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW), man-portable SAM, and so on, including within the framework of the U.N. Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (UNPoA);
- Military-civilian relations, cooperation in improving civilian and parliamentary control over the military sphere, development of corresponding legislation.

#### **4.9. Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation**

As the basic documents of the ENP program show, cooperation between the border territories of neighboring countries under the auspices of the EU should play an important role in implementing this policy (in compliance with the Convention on Cross-Border Trade, as well as other relevant documents adopted within the European Union and Council of Europe). There are already successful precedents of this cooperation between states which are not members of the EU, for example, between Rumania and Moldova, for which money is allotted from a special fund. At the same time, the thesis often voiced by EU official representatives not to allow communication projects to be implemented in the region which could entail the isolation of one of the South Caucasian countries should be enforced in conceptual documents. One such project is the Kars—Akhalkalaki railroad branch, since there is already a Kars—Gyumri railroad which links Armenia to Turkey.

- Taking into account the prospects for Turkey joining the EU, cross-border cooperation between Armenia and Turkey could stimulate not only their commercial ties. From the viewpoint of European integration, this cooperation is important for Brussels in a slightly different respect too—the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border—which could help the development of Turkey’s eastern regions and improve the social status of the population living there. In a certain sense, this aspect is also important for stimulating the rates of development and reform of the European Union itself. Otherwise Brussels will need to allot large amounts of money from its own structural funds to raise the standard of living of the population in Turkey’s eastern regions and bring it into harmony with average European standards (in the event Turkey joins the EU).
- Another successful example might be similar cooperation between the northeast border regions of the Republic of Armenia (Lori and Shirak) and the southern territories of Georgia (Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti).
- Further development within the framework of the TRACECA and INOGATE regional communication transportation projects.

#### **4.10. Cooperation in Migration, Employment, Human Contacts, Science and Technology, Culture and Education, and Environmental Protection**

These spheres have still not been given as much attention as the ones mentioned above, due to which fewer financial resources have been allotted to their implementation. Nevertheless, these spheres encompass a wide range of important issues, without which EU-Armenia cooperation would be incomplete. They include:



- full implementation of Art 24 of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which envisages the creation of equal conditions for migrating workers and the guarantee that discrimination based on national, race, and other differences is abolished;
- interception of illegal migration and traffic;
- creation of as many conditions as possible for contacts among people, which presumes a certain simplification of visa conditions, right down to liberalization of entry into the Schengen zone (these measures can even be carried out in the medium term);
- participation in joint projects in science, culture, education, in the development of new technologies, and so on;
- implementation of joint projects in the postal and telecommunication sphere, in the development of the information society, and in environmental protection.

## 5. Conclusion

The European Neighborhood Policy document is a long-term program. Armenia has a long path to go in order to establish full-fledged cooperation with the European Union, whereby it should not expect immediate and major financial support from the EU. In the short term, developing ties in the political sphere is designated, whereas the financing of specific projects will not begin until 2007.

On the whole, the South Caucasian countries do not have any particular way to defend their interests in Brussels, as was the case with Finland, for example, which at one time lobbied the EU "North Dimension," or Spain, which stated its case within the framework of the so-called Barcelona Process. A certain exception is probably Georgia, which with its striving (supported by the states of East/Central Europe and the Baltic) for military-political integration with NATO can count on similar assistance in other areas of cooperation with the EU as well. On the other hand, although the Southern Caucasus has already geographically come right up to the borders of the European Union and so is already of importance to it, the threats ensuing from this region are not so serious that they arouse particular (and immediate) concern from the viewpoint of security of the European community. This is probably what explains the fact that in 2003 the Southern Caucasus was not included in the Wider Europe project and it did not become part of the ENP program until 2004.<sup>8</sup> This is compelling the countries of the region to take a more serious approach to carrying out such unconditional prerequisites of cooperation with the EU as the development of democracy and democratic institutions, fighting corruption, protecting fundamental human rights, and so on.

Armenia will assume obligations which not only correlate with the Copenhagen criteria, but which also harmonize as much as possible with the conditions demanded of prospective member states in the EU. What is more, as already emphasized, official Erevan is setting itself very realistic goals, the achievement of which directly depends on the success of the ENP program. For example, to obtain (in future) the status of associated member in the EU, which, along with political dividends, could become a powerful boost to economic development in our country, and in particular will be of special significance for its free as possible access to the European market.

The process of institutional integration of the South Caucasian states into the European community requires masses of time and effort. On the one hand, the region's countries must strive to meet the

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<sup>8</sup> See: D. Lynch, "The EU: Toward a Strategy," *The South Caucasus: A Challenge for the EU, Chailot Papers*, No. 65, ISS-EU, Paris, December 2003, pp. 171-179.

European criteria and requirements, which will make it possible for these countries to resolve the problems in their relations with the European Union (when they join it). On the other hand, the EU must free itself from its currently justified worries and concerns regarding undesirable complications during this process when/if it is ultimately crowned by success. In this respect, it would be wise for the states of the region to acquaint themselves with the experience of successful interrelations between the ten countries which joined the European Union in 2004 and this organization.

Armenia views European integration not only as institutional integration into the European economy and politics, but also as a way to return to those spiritual values and to that world outlook which linked the country with Europe in the past for a long historical period of time.

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## REGIONAL SECURITY

**AFGHANISTAN:  
DRUG TRAFFICKING AND  
REGIONAL SECURITY**

Irina KOMISSINA

*Senior researcher at the Department of Asia and APR Affairs,  
Russian Institute for Strategic Studies  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

It has been almost four years since the Taliban regime was overthrown in Afghanistan (an interim government was formed in June 2002) and the country began building a new state with direct assistance from the international anti-terrorist coalition. This gave the world community reason to hope that the new authorities, albeit not immediately, would be able to stem the flow of heroin pouring out of the country. After all, in the 1990s it became the leading opium drug producer in the world. Later, when the Taliban came to power, the situation took a dramatic turn for the worse. As follows from a report by the Vienna branch of the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime—UNODC<sup>1</sup>—published in 2003, between 1996 and 1999, the manufacture

<sup>1</sup> Before October 2002, it was called the U.N. Office on Drug Control and Crime Prevention.

of drugs in this country increased twofold. And these indices are more than 15-fold higher than during the time a limited contingent of Soviet troops was stationed in Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup> In 2000, this state accounted for 70% of the world's opium production, while Myanmar's "contribution" amounted to 23%, Laos' to 4%, and Columbia's to 2%.

When the new forces came to power in the country, the situation in this business did not change. Getting the population of a country which had been cultivating opium poppy for more than 25 years to switch gears overnight and start growing agricultural crops proved a rather difficult task. For example, the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime report published in December 2004 on the

<sup>2</sup> See: *The Opium Economy in Afghanistan. An International Problem*, U.N., New York, 2003.

results of a survey of the drug situation in Afghanistan noted that this year the area on which opium is grown in the country has increased by two thirds, reaching an unprecedented 131,000 hectares (in 2003, it amounted to 80,000 hectares).<sup>3</sup> Precursors for processing opium into heroin and morphine are imported mainly from Pakistan, Thailand, Hong Kong, and India.

According to U.N. specialists, in 2004, at least 4,200 tons of raw opium were gathered in Afghanistan, although this index could have been much higher had not bad weather conditions interfered. According to the estimates, 420 tons of heroin would have been obtained from this poison,<sup>4</sup> that is, 87% of its world production, 11% more than in 2003.<sup>5</sup> But according to the U.S. State Department International Narcotics Control Strategy Report published in March 2005, opium poppy was planted on 206,700 hectares of land in Afghanistan and under favorable conditions its harvest could reach 4,950 tons.<sup>6</sup> From this same report it follows that the data Washington obtained as a result of a scientifically substantiated random survey of the agricultural regions of Afghanistan (with the use of American satellites) are much higher than those presented by the U.N.

The Central Asian republics are the countries which bear the main brunt of the influx of Afghan drugs. According to the region's experts, the situation will only get worse. For example, representatives of the Drug Control Agency under the Tajikistan President believe that due to the increase in planting areas in the northern provinces of Afghanistan, the expanded capacities of mini factories, and the creation of additional laboratories in which heroin is made, the production of drugs in this country in the next two years will increase by 20%. According to the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, in 2003, the planting areas of

opium poppy in the Afghan province of Badakhshan alone, which borders on Tajikistan, increased by 55%.

This gives every reason to believe that the country is very quickly overcoming the consequences of the anti-opium policy conducted by the Taliban during the last years of its rule. In order to improve its image in the eyes of the world community, in 1999, Taliban leader mullah Omar banned the cultivation of poppy and the production of opium (but not its trade), as a result of which laboratories for manufacturing heroin were eliminated and plantations of the poison in its main cultivation areas were destroyed. In 2001, as a result of the punitive measures, 96% of the harvest of raw opium in the territory controlled by the Taliban was destroyed, leaving the miserly amount of 185 tons, which led to the world market shrinking by two thirds (traffickers were even forced to resort to the extreme measure of thinning down the commodity).

But the very year after the Taliban regime was overthrown, poppy plantations were found in 24 provinces (in 1999, they were found in 18). At present, a record increase has been noted in opium poppy plantations even in those territories where it did not used to be cultivated—now all 34 provinces in the country are engaged in this business (in 2003 there were 28).<sup>7</sup> But by and large opium poppy is cultivated in the southern (37%), eastern (28%), and northeastern regions (13%), and the contribution of three provinces—Nangarhar, Helmand, and Badakhshan—amounts to 56% of the drugs produced in the country.

According to U.N. data, in 2004, the income of local dealers from the export of drugs (opium, morphine, and heroin) was equal to 2.8 billion dollars (60% of Afghanistan's GDP).<sup>8</sup> Despite the growing risk of delivering the commodity generated by the anti-drug campaign in Afghanistan itself and the efficient measures undertaken by neighboring countries to intercept transit of the poison through their territory, an increase in the profit of drug couriers has been noted from

<sup>3</sup> See: *Afghanistan. Opium Survey 2004*, UNODC, November 2004, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> 10-15 kg of raw opium is required to produce 1 kg of heroin in underground laboratories and at mini factories.

<sup>5</sup> See: *Afghanistan. Opium Survey 2004*, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> See: *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, U.S. Department of State, March 2005.

<sup>7</sup> See: *Afghanistan. Opium Survey 2004*, p. 24.

<sup>8</sup> See: *World Drug Report 2005*, UNODC, Vol. 2, p. 181.

1.3 billion dollars in 2003 to 2.2 billion dollars in 2004. The income of the actual manufacturers, however, was no higher than 0.6 billion dollars. (For sake of comparison, in 1994-2000, the gross income from the sale of opium was equal to 150 million dollars a year.)

According to the UNODC Commission on Narcotic Drugs Report, which presented the results of field studies, an increasing number of peasants (despite the anti-drug policy conducted by the government) intend to grow this high-income plant. For example, such a survey conducted in October 2003 in the poppy-growing regions showed that more than 70% of the peasants plan to increase the planting areas in 2004 and only 4% were inclined to reduce them.<sup>9</sup>

The reasons for Afghanistan's transformation into an opium state are the following: the ongoing political instability, the absence of efficient state power, the degradation of agriculture and the economic infrastructure during the decade of hostilities, and the black market. The country's economy is undergoing collapse, irrigation and road systems have been destroyed, and the output of ordinary agricultural produce is being curbed due to the absence of granaries, markets, and a transportation network. The cultivation of opium does not encounter these difficulties, it is easy to store and transport (the only hindrance of course is the fight against drug trafficking).

Over the long years of opium poppy cultivation, the system for processing it has also been streamlined. There are currently more than 400 laboratories for manufacturing heroin in the country.<sup>10</sup> Until the mid-1990s, about 100 of them were situated in the border regions of Pakistan. The Taliban's victory made it possible to relocate these factories to Afghanistan, and drug dealers have created a superbly streamlined logistics system which makes it possible to provide the laboratories located even in the most inaccessible mountainous regions with a continuous supply of raw material.

<sup>9</sup> See: *World Drug Report 2005*, UNODC, Vol. 2, p. 206.

<sup>10</sup> See: McDonald M. "As Heroin Flourishes, So Could Terror," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 10 May, 2004.

Most of the poison is sold beyond the country, which is not hindered, but even helped by the weak central authorities and the transparency of the borders (see diagram). From the commercial viewpoint, the success of illegal Afghan opiates as a global commodity is impressive, which currently satisfies 100% of the demand of neighboring countries (primarily those which belong to the Economic Cooperation Organization—ECO), and 80-90% of the countries of Europe, Arabia, Africa, and South Asia (mainly India and Sri Lanka).

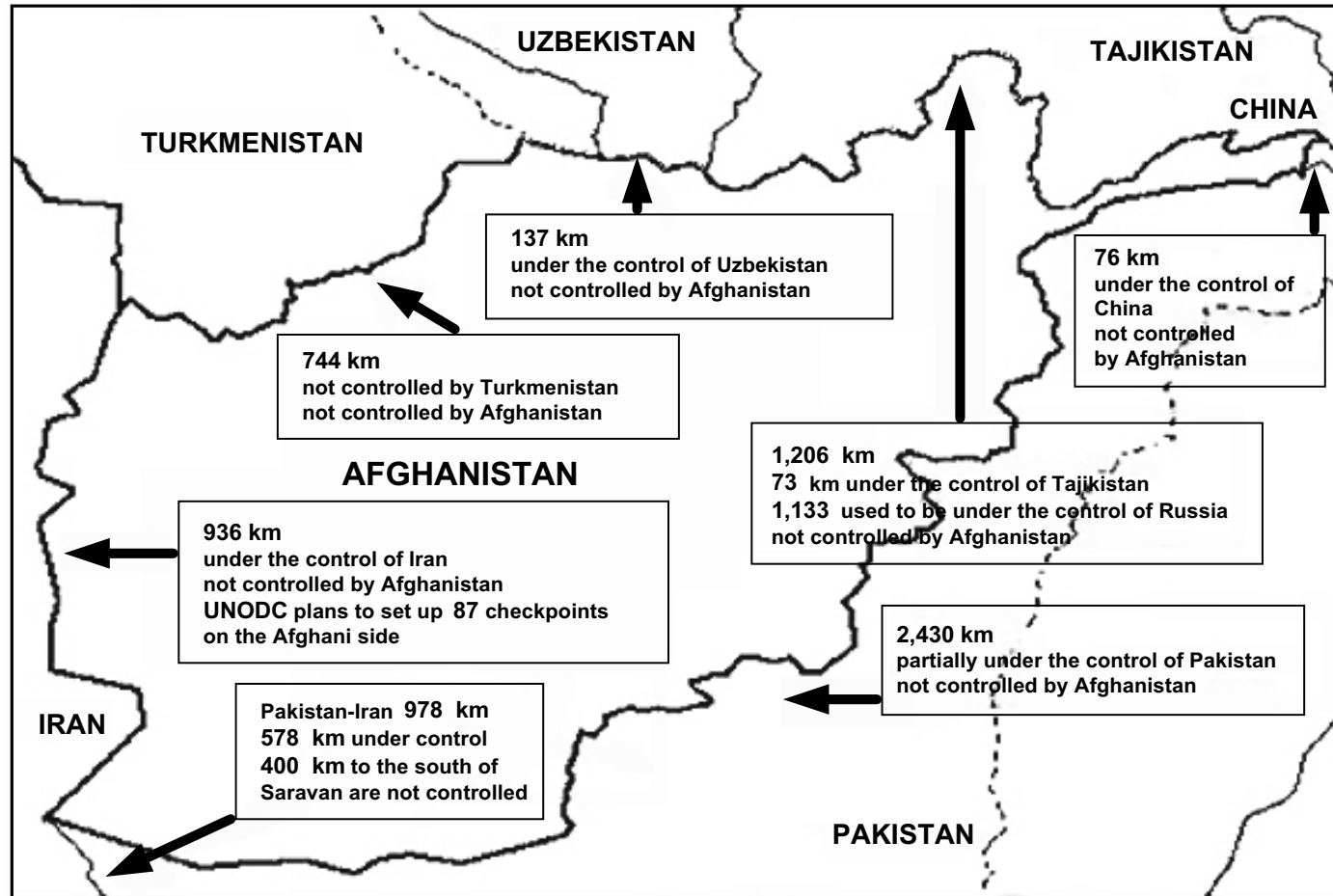
Drugs are exported in three main directions: via the northern route (through Central Asia and Russia), via the Balkan route (through Iran, Turkey, and the Balkans), and via the Pakistani route.<sup>11</sup> In so doing, a large portion "settles" in the transit states. As a result, the number of drug addicts has dramatically risen in the countries contiguous to Afghanistan. For example, in Pakistan, their numbers have reached 4 million people, and in Iran there are 1.25 million drug addicts. According to different estimates, over the past ten years, the number of drug addicts in the Central Asian republics has increased between 3- and 7-fold.<sup>12</sup>

Iran is waging an active war against drug trafficking, since around 40% of Afghan drugs pass through its territory (to Turkey, then on to Europe). During the past few years, huge concrete barricades have been erected, pits dug, and large army units and subdivisions of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps set up along the Iranian-Afghan border (which is more than 900 km in length). Nevertheless, numerous armed groups of Afghani and Iranian smugglers get into the country, and clashes on the border (with the use of firearms) have become chronic. According to official data, 3,200 Iranian policemen, border guards, and servicemen have been killed during these clashes over the past twenty years. But there is no hope of fully closing off drug traffic.

<sup>11</sup> See: Iu. Spirin. "Afganski heroin pod amerkanskim flagom," *Izvestia*, 11 March, 2005, p. 6.

<sup>12</sup> See: V.P. Voitenko, "Ugroza narkotrafika iz Afganistana dlia evropeiskogo soobshchestva," *Pravo i bezopasnost*, No. 1 (10), March 2004.

## Protection of the Afghanistan Border



In 2004, around 200 tons of drugs were confiscated in Iran.<sup>13</sup>

The second largest flow of drugs (36%) goes through Pakistan (the transit point is the port of Karachi) mainly to the UAE and Europe. In Pakistan itself, the number of drug addicts is increasing yearly by 7% (0.5 million of them are occasional heroin users). In the 1970s-1980s, this country was one of the largest producers and suppliers of heroin: at the end of the 1970s, about 800 tons of drugs were manufactured there annually. But during the second half of the 1980s, the Zia ul Hak government carried out stringent measures to destroy this production, for which it even used aviation. And in 2000, the UNODC stated that as the result of implementing a 15-year program in the country, the manufacture of opium had essentially ceased and all the drugs had been destroyed. Pakistan was recognized by the U.N. as a state "free from the cultivation of opium poppy." But opium, morphine, and heroin are still coming into the country. Head of the Pakistan Interior Ministry Moinuddin Haider stated that over the past five years, 347 drug dealers have been executed and 167 were given life prison sentences. The police confiscated drugs amounting to 84 million dollars.<sup>14</sup> The swelling drug flow from Afghanistan in recent years led to the revival of heroin production in Pakistan. A significant role in the process is played by its Chitral Region. According to General Director of the Drug Control Foundation Nadim Akhmed, in 2003-2004, poppy plantations covered 6,694 hectares, on 78% of which the harvest was destroyed. In 2004, a special division of the Pakistani police confiscated 7,783 kg of heroin, 679 kg of raw opium, and 57,111 kg of hashish, and during approximately the first six weeks of 2005, 1,359 kg of opium, 1,654 kg of heroin, and 3,719 kg of hashish were intercepted.<sup>15</sup>

The northern route of Afghan drugs (24% of the entire circulation) passes through Afghan-

istan's border with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan.

The largest confiscations from illicit circulation were noted on the Tajik-Afghan border. As drug production in Afghanistan rose so did the amount confiscated. Heroin was first confiscated in 1995, and since 1997, its confiscation has dramatically increased. In 2004, according to the Drug Control Agency under the Tajikistan President, more than 8 tons of drugs were removed from illegal circulation, 5.1 tons of them heroin and more than 2,315 kg of raw opium.<sup>16</sup> In 1998-2003 alone, 30 tons of drugs were confiscated in the republic, including more than 16 tons of heroin. Corresponding international structures highly evaluated the model of trilateral cooperation which has developed on this section of the border (among the Tajik authorities, Russian border guards, and the UNODC) for combating drug transit.

Keeping in mind the overall high level of corruption among Tajikistan's officials, many influential figures of whom are also involved in this business, a number of experts maintained that the withdrawal of Russian border guards from the republic would make its state borders essentially transparent. And now that this is an accomplished fact, up to 90% of Afghan heroin which crosses the Tajik-Afghan border will go to Russia. What is more, there is no reason to believe that its flow will dissipate in the near future. On the contrary, taking into account the trans-nationalization of the drug business which has begun in the region, we can forecast an abrupt increase in the illegal export of narcotics from Afghanistan.

In this way, it is obvious that the military presence of the antiterrorist coalition troops headed by the U.S. in the region has in no way broken down the structure of illegal production and transit of drugs streamlined by the Afghan drug mafia. Although specialists believe that the situation could be dramatically improved if this military contingent were used for its direct purpose, for example, to establish strict control over all the internal Afghan transportation corridors, that is,

<sup>13</sup> See: K. Kazeev, "Borba s narkotorgovlei," ITAR-TASS, 10 March, 2005.

<sup>14</sup> [<http://www.radiomayak.ru/archive/text?stream=abroad&item=10076>].

<sup>15</sup> See: "Afghan Drugs Trade Matter of Concern: Shaukat," *Pakistan Link*, 18 February, 2005.

<sup>16</sup> ITAR-TASS, 3 March, 2005.

to create checkpoints equipped with vehicle inspection devices on the roads. But as practice shows, the financial aid allotted by the international community for controlling drugs essentially does not reach the population living directly in the transit territory, for example, on both sides of the Tajik-Afghan border. Targeted distribution of these funds could help to intercept drug traffic.

In the meantime, Russia and the countries neighboring on Afghanistan are anxiously waiting to see what the 2005 opium poppy harvest will yield, which, according to preliminary estimates,

produced a record amount of 5,000 tons. Last winter there was a large amount of precipitation, which favored the abundant growth of this plant. Russia is particularly worried that the areas where poppy is grown are spreading more and more into the northeast provinces bordering on Tajikistan, primarily the Badakhshan Province, leading to an increase in drug traffic volume in Russia's direction. The situation, which is aggravated anyway, is being made even worse by the above-mentioned withdrawal from Tajikistan of the Russian military subdivisions engaged in defense of this border.

## Government Policy in the Struggle against Illicit Drug Circulation

The country's new administration undertook several measures called on to assist the fight against this national catastrophe. As early as January 2002, a decree was issued on banning the cultivation of opium poppy, in February, the National Drug Control Agency was created, and in April of the same year, a decree was issued on monetary compensation to peasants (500 dollars for every acre—0.4 hectares) who expressed their intention to destroy their poppy plantations.

But Hamid Karzai soon realized that it was a mistake to pay compensation for destroying the harvest, since most of this money did not go to the peasants, but went into the pockets of state officials. And on the contrary, after receiving the money, some opium producers continued to grow it. Compensation of the losses incurred from destroying their harvests frequently prompted peasants to increase the size of their poppy-growing areas. Attempts to reorient rural residents toward growing grain, for example, did not meet with an enthusiastic response, since the revenue from growing poppy is several times higher.

Then Kabul announced it was launching a campaign to eliminate poppy plantations. But this decree came out after the fields had already been sown. What is more, the dealers' high prices had already taken their toll, as a result of which Afghanistan retrieved its title of the world's main opium manufacturer. In several provinces—Nangarhar, Helmand, Uruzgan, and others, armed clashes were noted between the peasants growing opium poppy and the police squadrons coming to destroy their fields. In Jalalabad (the administrative center of the Nangarhar Province), an attempt to put pressure on drug manufacturers almost cost Defense Minister General M.K. Fakhim his life, on whom an assassination attempt was made on 8 April, 2002. A significant decrease in areas planted with poppy (by 63%) was noted only in the Vardak Province (data for 2004).<sup>17</sup>

Thus the new authorities encountered resistance from the peasants when trying to oppose the cultivation of opium poppy. Although a different reaction was hardly to be expected. First, due to the hostilities which have been going on for such a long time, there are essentially no jobs in the country. Second, conditions have not been created which might encourage the peasants to give up planting this crop. Third, the Karzai government acknowledges that if it begins a large-scale campaign against drug

<sup>17</sup> *Afghanistan. Opium Survey 2004.*



manufacturers and drug dealers, Afghanistan could find itself embroiled in yet another internecine armed conflict, which, of course, is absolutely unacceptable. Since the end of the civil war, during which farm land was abandoned or turned into waste ground, and due to long years of severe drought, opium poppy has become the only means of survival for the impoverished peasants. There are also several other reasons encouraging peasants to grow it.

- Extensive areas are not needed to cultivate it, in 2000, they amounted to only 0.9% of the country's plough land. Even in villages which are fully orientated toward growing poppy no more than 8% of this land is used.
- Opium does not require as large investments of labor and capital as the planting of wheat, rice and other crops.
- Poppy is best suited to Afghanistan's dry climate. It does not have to be grown on irrigated fields, although of course irrigation yields larger amounts. It is a simple crop which does not require special care and produces a stable harvest (on average 45 kg per hectare, compare—
- Poppy brings in much more revenue than other crops—4,600 dollars per hectare, whereas wheat generates only 390 dollars. In 2003, this difference was much higher (12,700 and 470 dollars, respectively). Whereas a peasant receives between 600 and 1,000 dollars for 1 kg of opium, he gets only 1 dollar for 1 kg of rice.

The problem of Afghan drugs is multifaceted in nature. Executive Director of UNODC Antonio Maria Costa noted: "The entire economy, the entire social fabric of Afghan society is imbued with the drug problem. Just as people can be drawn to drugs, so the governments are drawn to the drug economy." The drug business is pushing out the legal spheres of economic activity: before the beginning of the civil war, peasant farms produced more than 80% of the foodstuffs consumed in the country, now they only produce up to 60%.<sup>18</sup> Drugs are also having a significant influence on the military-political situation. An impressive stratum of drug barons has formed in the country, among whom warlords dominate. Money from the drug business is used to finance their armed detachments and to swell their personal coffers. Many warlords have ties not only with representatives of the local administration, but also with certain officials in the central state structures, which is giving rise to unprecedented corruption. The Taliban leaders, as well as Osama bin Laden, also have a certain share in the drug business and also use these funds to finance their own armed detachments. It is highly likely that the Afghan drug dealers are closely associated with the international drug mafia network.

Alexander Baranov, former commander of the Russian border group in Tajikistan, believes that the armed formations of the Afghanistan government and foreign subdivisions are only controlling the situation in the country on a pro forma basis. At present, an armed opposition has essentially formed there, which is putting up resistance to the government and international forces, particularly in the southern and southeastern provinces. These forces are striving to create support bases which will make it possible to engage in large-scale partisan action in the northern border provinces too—Kunduz, Takhar, and Badakhshan, from where attempts to illegally send drugs over the border are unceasing. It can be presumed that the opposition forces are being financed by means of opium and heroin trade.

The increase in the number of drug addicts (0.5% of adults use opium and 0.1% heroin)<sup>19</sup> is also becoming a problem for Afghanistan, although it is not as significant as in its neighboring countries.

<sup>18</sup> See: V. Korgun, "Afganskije narkotiki—glavnaia ugroza Rossii i Tsentralnoi Azii" [<http://centrasia.org/newsA.php4?st=1113768840>].

<sup>19</sup> See: P.-A. Chouvy, M. Koutouzis, A. Labrousse, *Afghanistan and Narcotraffic, Paper for Ministerial Conference on the Drug Routes from Central Asia to Europe*, Paris, 21-22 May, 2003.

But intensive marginalization of the population might rapidly lead to the use of heroin becoming a mass phenomenon, particularly in the northern provinces.

In October 2004, Afghanistan's re-elected president Hamid Karzai said that drugs threaten the country's political and economic security more than the Taliban and al-Qa'eda, and the fight against them will become a priority of his government's policy. And in December, the post of deputy minister responsible for drug control was instituted in the Interior Ministry, and a Ministry for Drug Control Issues (to replace the former Agency) was also created. What is more, the destruction of opium poppy plantations was to be assisted by armed units and the police.

At the beginning of 2005, the government approved the Drug Business Combat Plan, which envisaged developing alternative forms of agriculture, creating special anti-drug force structures and judicial bodies, destroying poppy plantations, reducing the demand for opium, treating drug addicts, and encouraging regional cooperation. The timeframe for implementing this program was 10 years, but by 2008, the production of drugs was to be decreased by 75%.<sup>20</sup> Deputy Interior Minister General Mohammad Daud was to be responsible for implementing this Plan. Incidentally, the work already carried out in this sphere is quite impressive: in 2004, special drug control forces confiscated 80 tons of opium, destroyed 75 laboratories, and closed several drug markets, including two large ones near Kandahar and Jalalabad.<sup>21</sup>

In an interview with the Integration Regional Information Networks Agency, head of the Afghanistan anti-drug department Habibulla Kaderi noted that poppy-growing areas had shrunk by 30-50%.<sup>22</sup> Admittedly, this contradicts the data of Deputy Interior Minister General Daud, whose anti-drug squadrons destroyed 14,800 hectares of plantations between December 2004 and March 2005, and declared 2005 the year for eliminating all opium plantations. According to the official statistics, during the first few months of 2005, 70% of the opium plantations in Nangarhar were destroyed, 50% of those in Helmand, and 60% in Badakhshan,<sup>23</sup> which, however, is extremely doubtful.

The U.S. State Department presents a more realistic evaluation of the situation. Its experts believe that if the areas in Afghanistan where poppy is planted decrease by at least 15,000 hectares in 2005, this will be a good result.<sup>24</sup>

## International Aid

Immediately after the Taliban regime was overturned, the world community began rendering Afghanistan extensive aid, the goal of which was to restore its economy and fight the drug business. The principles and amounts of aid in these spheres were discussed at numerous international conferences. For example, at the meeting of representatives of sponsor countries (Berlin, March 2004), a decision was made to allot official Kabul 8 billion dollars over the next three years. The U.S. assumed responsibility for building the state apparatus and armed forces, Germany for creating a police service, and Great Britain for fighting drug trafficking.

In so doing, London singled out two areas, training the local security officials in how to fight the illicit circulation of drugs and developing alternative forms of agriculture, but both tasks ended in a fiasco. After pondering on how to involve the local customs and police officers in fighting the drug

<sup>20</sup> See: "Afghanistan Launches Poppy Eradication Force," *Kabul, AFP*, 2 February, 2005.

<sup>21</sup> See: "The Fight against Narcotics Is On and Will Continue Unabated Until a Narcotics-Free Afghanistan," *Presidential Palace Press-Release*, 2 March, 2005.

<sup>22</sup> The Integrated Regional Information Networks Agency (IRIN) covers the humanitarian activity of various U.N. organizations and charity missions in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Iraq.

<sup>23</sup> See: "Afghanistan Seeks World Support to Fight Drug," *Kabul, Xinhua*, 5 September, 2005.

<sup>24</sup> See: *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, p. 52.

business, the British organized two-week training courses for them. But their students proved to be either destitute peasants, or ... petty militants hoping to legalize themselves under the new regime. It stands to reason that it was essentially impossible to reliably check the latter for their involvement in drug trafficking. After attending the short courses on how to detect the poison and identify drug dealers, they not only obtained weapons, they were also essentially no longer under the patronage of the British. The plans to transfer Afghanistan to alternative forms of agriculture did not materialize either. London hoped that the local peasants would switch from growing opium poppy to planting wheat, corn, apricots, and grapes with international aid. But due to the vast difference in profitability between this illegal plant and the legal crops, the production of opium, to put it mildly, is not declining. Nor did the money loans for developing peasant farms change the situation. Not only did no one intend to return them, some of these funds, as Russian observers working in Afghanistan believe, went to develop ... drug manufacture. According to the RF Foreign Intelligence Service, many representatives of the Afghan official elite, governors, and even members of the government have direct ties with the drug business, since it is they who are in charge of distributing all the financial aid sent to the country by the world community. The lion's share of these funds fell into the hands of dummy dealers. Then this money nevertheless went to the peasants in the form of loans, but what did they do with it ... purchased opium poppy seeds.

Acknowledging their own mistakes, the British decided to reduce the funds going to the alternative economy project, whereby even in cases when peasants really did begin growing wheat, corn, and other legal crops. But due to the infrastructure destroyed by the war and the lack of transportation vehicles and roads, the peasants are simply unable to transport these goods further than the next village and sell them for decent prices. As a solution to the problem, the British initiated the adoption of a special program to develop Afghanistan's transportation system.

According to British Minister of International Development Hilary Benn, the total amount of aid granted to official Kabul for 2002-2007 will amount to 500 million pounds Sterling. It is envisaged that this money will mainly go to strengthening the country's security (on its southern and eastern borders) and to fight drug trafficking. But it is obvious that Great Britain is not coping with the task it has taken on.

Nor did the Afghan government repeated requests for assistance to the U.S. bring the desired results. Each time, the Americans said that drug control was not one of their functions, the United States' main task was to fight the Taliban and al-Qa'eda, and drugs were the responsibility of Great Britain. What is more, Washington decided to ignore the activity of the warlords related to the drug business, since it wanted to use them in its fight against the terrorists. For example, during almost all of his trips to Afghanistan, U.S. Defense Minister Donald Rumsfeld met with the most influential warlords, many of whom are well known as drug mafia godfathers. The point of these meetings was clear: you help us fight the Taliban, and no one will interfere in your business. In this way, the White House, which had been watching the rapid increase of poppy plantations for several years, essentially rendered no help in intercepting the growing manufacture of drugs. The Russian special services tried repeatedly to establish cooperation with the Americans in this area, in particular, they provided them with up-to-date information on the whereabouts of large drug laboratories, heroin storehouses, and even the Afghan drug barons themselves. But these data were not used.<sup>25</sup>

Nevertheless, the situation which developed in 2004 could not but help arouse Washington's concern, since Afghan heroin began threatening not only European countries, but also the U.S. itself. For example, whereas in 1999, 6% of the heroin consumed by Americans was of Afghan origin, in 2003, this index was already as high as 15%.<sup>26</sup> The United States was forced to become more involved

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<sup>25</sup> See: *Izvestia*, 28 August, 2003.

<sup>26</sup> See: *News International—Pakistan*, 31 August, 2003.

in the international efforts to fight Afghan drugs. Pentagon representative Peter Rodman said that drug trafficking corrupts all the Afghanistan government structures and without its most energetic destruction, it will be impossible to ensure security in this country. "We know that profits from the production of illegal narcotics flow into the coffers of warlord militias, corrupt government officials, and extremist forces," noted Rodman. And on another visit to Kabul in August 2004, U.S. Defense Minister Donald Rumsfeld finally said that Washington was ready to make drug control one of the priority areas of its policy. Although not long before his visit, he told journalists that the Pentagon was still working on the "general plan" of its drug control operation in Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup> But the document, called the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, did not come out until March 2005.

American aid to Afghanistan has also increased. Whereas in 2004, Washington allotted 127 million dollars for this purpose, in 2005, U.S. Congress approved a decision to grant 780 million dollars. Implementation of a corresponding plan (along Columbian lines) was calculated for three years. One hundred and twenty million dollars of this amount are to be used to develop alternative forms of agriculture (the cultivation of grains, vegetables, and fruits). What is more, the money will be used to restore the irrigation system, repair roads, create a small loan system, and distribute the seeds of improved types of traditional crops and fertilizers among farmers.<sup>28</sup>

The first phase of this project began in Nangarhar, one of the largest opium-producing provinces. For example, there are plans to involve 50,000 local workers in restoring its irrigation channels and other economic infrastructure facilities. As a symbolic gesture, the U.S. government has already delivered the local peasants 500 tons of wheat seeds and 500 tons of fertilizer, which, admittedly, is only enough for 5-10% of the farmsteads.<sup>29</sup> The rest of the money will go to destroying opium poppy plantations and training security structures specializing in fighting the drug business. Whereby many American congressmen are also in favor of making more active use of the Pentagon's contingents deployed in Afghanistan to combat drug trafficking.

At the same time, official Kabul is also diversifying its search for means and methods to fight the drug business. For example, in August 2004, the peasants of several districts in the Nangarhar and Badakhshan provinces complained to the government that their fields were being sprayed with pesticides from the air, which was causing irreparable damage not so much to the opium plantations, as to people, domestic animals, and traditional agricultural crops. The suspicion fell on the Americans and British, who hurried to refute it. But it is unlikely that, since the Americans have complete air control, anyone else could have organized such undertakings. The matter became so serious that in December 2004, 32 international and Afghan organizations asked U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to take corresponding measures and stop the fields from being sprayed with pesticides.<sup>30</sup> Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai also came out against this practice.

As of the present, with U.S. and British assistance, a special drug control group of 1,000 people has been formed in Afghanistan. Six hundred of them are responsible for destroying opium poppy fields. By the end of 2005, according to preliminary data, their numbers increased to 2,300 people. But, according to the estimates of experts, the country needs at least 4,000 specialists to monitor and destroy opium poppy plantations and another 5,000 to guard the border.<sup>31</sup>

Nevertheless, as paradoxical as it may seem, the Karzai government is against rapid elimination of the drug business, since a significant percentage of income from it goes into the country's econo-

<sup>27</sup> See: K. Entekhabi-Fard, "The U.S. is Still Working on the General Plan of Afghan Drug Control," *Eurasianet.org*, 16 August, 2004.

<sup>28</sup> See: "Afghan Anti-drug Czar Says Opium Fight Needs Farm Subsidies. South Asia," *AFP*, 19 January, 2005.

<sup>29</sup> See: "Afghans Report Decline of Poppy Crop," *The Washington Post*, 2 August, 2005.

<sup>30</sup> See: P.R. Newberg, *A Drug-Free Afghanistan Not So Easy*, Yale Center for the Study of Globalization, 3 August, 2005.

<sup>31</sup> See: H. Kazem, "Crop Spraying Draws Controversy in Afghan Drug Fight," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 25 January, 2005.

my. "We should not rush to eliminate all the opium fields in one year," said Narcotics Minister Habibulla Kaderi. "Otherwise we will lose 2.8 billion dollars, which we cannot allow, since this money goes into the economy."<sup>32</sup> This illegal branch has so penetrated the country's economic activity that if all international programs to eliminate drugs were implemented at the same time, the Afghan economy would go into a recession. What is more, accelerated elimination of opium poppy plantations which is not accompanied by providing the peasants who tend them with alternative sources of existence could lead to a dramatic increase in unemployment, starvation, and consequently overall discontent and destabilization of the situation. But at the same time, these measures will help to raise the price of the poison, which drug dealers and drug barons, who have accumulated large supplies of it at their warehouses, will profit from.

International experts have a very pessimistic view of the situation: in the next few years, there will be no changes in the fight against growing opium poppy, since the economic measures being undertaken by the Afghan government on this front are not promoting an improvement in the situation in agriculture. So according to their forecasts, peasants can be convinced not to grow poppy, but not for another 10-15 years. Well-known French drug specialist Alen Labrousse said in an interview right after the Taliban was overthrown that neutralization of drug traffic from Afghanistan would take a lot of time: "Until a sufficiently authoritative central government is established in Kabul, it will be impossible to control the situation involving drug manufacture."<sup>33</sup> A recently published U.S. State Department report on the problem of drug control also talked about deterioration of the situation in this area.<sup>34</sup>

One thing is clear, the efforts of all the sides concerned—Russia, the Central Asian countries, Iran, Pakistan, European states, as well as the U.S., China, and India—must be joined to effectively combat Afghan drug trafficking. Drug trafficking is a world problem in the same ilk as global terrorism and poses a threat to all the countries of our planet.

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<sup>32</sup> A. Lobjakas, "Afghanistan: Anti-drug Minister Vows Action But Says Farmers Need Aid, Alternative Incomes," *RFE/RL*, Brussels, 21 January, 2005.

<sup>33</sup> *Izvestia*, 12 October, 2001.

<sup>34</sup> See: *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*.

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## THE NORTH CAUCASIAN PRESS ABOUT TERRORISM

Valery PETUKHOV

*Ph.D. (Hist.), assistant professor,  
Department of History and Culture, Ulianovsk State Technical University  
(Ulianovsk, Russia)*

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All extremist organizations rely on aggressive and deliberate scare tactics to achieve their aims. They seek not so much to procure propaganda effects or unlikely concessions from the authorities as to have a social and psychological impact on society as a whole. They concentrate on discrediting the power-wielding structures to undermine public confidence in them, achieve greater

sociopolitical disintegration, and widen the gaps within society. Their main aims, however, are to teach people to fear them, plant feelings of depression in their minds, and deprive people of confidence in their own future.

The attempts to use the media to achieve these aims naturally run counter to the state and the law enforcement structures' efforts to use the media to prevent terrorist acts and their tragic results. The dichotomous trends intertwine to form one single information core and actualize the role of the press and the Internet publications, making them markers of information-psychological warfare in people's minds.

The Northern Caucasus, which has become a zone of terrorist risks, found itself in the center of the information warfare waged by the terrorists and the federal and local power bodies. The press of the North Caucasian republics, territories, and regions can potentially influence the local population in view of the high prestige the press traditionally enjoys there.

I have analyzed 29 printed and Internet publications (the latter normally are not regarded as part of the media) of Dagestan, Ingushetia, Chechnia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, the Stavropol Territory, and Rostov-on-Don. The terrorists are using the Chechen sites Kavkaz.org., Chechen.press, Kvestnik.org., as well as the newspapers *Chechenskaia pravda* and *Chechenskoe obshchestvo*. Even though their information resources are found abroad, according to my sociological poll, Russian society takes them for locally-based media well-informed about the current developments in the Caucasus. They use a lot of military terms, such as frontline, military operation, check-point, sharpshooters, bombardments, etc. The language of the above-mentioned Internet publications is highly expressive and tends to present assessments rather than facts. The texts abound in such words as surprise attacks, cold-blooded murder, bloody war, firmness and courage, pitiless and cruel battle, and verbs such as destroyed, annihilated, ruined, etc.

This is done to create an atmosphere of hysterics and revenge and to present Russia as a "sinister and blood-thirsty monster." Those who run the sites deliberately concentrate on the war to disseminate aggressive and militarist sentiments among the local people and present Russia as the main enemy and a source of terrorist threat in the Caucasus. This makes the rhetoric question of journalist M. Taramov of the Kvestnik.org site very logical: "Why should the Chechens, who enjoy the moral support of the absolute majority of countries and peoples around the world and who are waging a just war against the colossal Russian Barbarian, limit their means and instruments while defending themselves?" Absolutization of the national-liberation struggle suggests that terror is one of the approved methods. Language, as an indicator of sociocultural tension, plays an important role in the process.

Syntax is used to raise the tension by using several consecutive interrogative sentences; the authors are aware of the fact that the human mind (or subconscious) operates in frame structures to which all information is adjusted.

An analysis of the Chechen sites reveals that the terrorists think in militaristic terms, that practical considerations rub shoulders with emotional and mystical imagery; their texts are dominated by motives of vengeance abounding in dichotomous oppositions, strong mythological reflexivity of speech, and dual standards in their social and linguistic practice. The 2003-2004 publications demonstrate a trend toward more frequent use of religious terms of the Wahhabi and Qutb types. This probably testifies that the Chechen separatists and terrorists have embraced a different ideological paradigm, which is indirectly confirmed by much larger circulation of such opposition Chechen newspapers as *Put islama* (The Way of Islam) and *Khalif* (Caliph).

An analysis of the local press has revealed several variants of information tactics. One of them can be conventionally called "still waters." These publications cite facts and present official approaches; sometimes they offer concise descriptions and versions of terrorist acts; they carry no analytical material and organize information in short notes. The following newspapers prefer this tactic: *Kabardino-Balkarskaia pravda* (Nalchik), *Den respubliki* (Cherkessk), *Novoe delo* (Makhachkala), and *Molot* (Krasnodar). They stick to official and businesslike phraseology.

There are local publications that offer legal assessments of terrorist acts, which they treat as crimes. They pay much attention to the trials of terrorists, commentaries offered by officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Federal Security Service, and details of counterterrorist operations. Their texts abound in legal terms and juridical assessments of the described events. These newspapers obviously condemn terrorism and offer their moral assessments of terrorist acts. At the same time, the newspapers point out that the victims of terror should not be forgotten; they invite psychologists to give practical advice on how to overcome the fear of terrorism. The following newspapers have opted for this tactic: *Daghestanskaia pravda* (Makhachkala); *Priazovskiy krai* (Rostov-on-Don), *Delovoi Kizliar*, and *Vecherniy Stavropol*.

There are newspapers that work for religious (Muslim) readers. They lay the blame for terrorism on the ideology of Wahhabism, which they describe as the main threat to public safety. They are *Serdalo* (Ingushetia), *Assalam*, and *Islamskiy vestnik* (Daghestan). The titles of their articles are eloquent enough: “Raby sobstvennogo umozakliuchenia” (Slaves of Their Own Ideas); “Wahhabizm—ideologiya, nesushchaia zlo” (Wahhabism—Ideology of Evil) (M. Movliev and Z. Isaev, *Serdalo*), “Ot Wahhabizma do terrorizma odin shag” (There is One Step from Wahhabism to Terrorism) (Kh. Gurazhiev), and “Islam protiv ekstremizma” (Islam Against Extremism) (M. Vyshegurov, *Severniy Kavkaz*). Significantly, these and similar publications pay much attention to religious tolerance.

There is another group which strives to show terrorism as a complex and multilayered system. They give much space to serious analysis. For example, the article “Rekviem ideynomu terrorizmu” (Requiem for Ideological Terrorism), which appeared in *Daghestanskaia pravda* on 23 January, 2004, analyzed how contemporary terrorism developed into one of most effective foreign policy instruments used by the U.S. and transnational financial-economic groups. Its author Guria Murklinskaia wrote that the collapse of the bi-polar world resulted in complete deideologization, marginalization, and commercialization of terrorism. To confirm her view she cites al-Qa‘eda, a semi-virtual organization set up by the American special services, as an example. She is convinced that it succeeds mainly because it has chosen the role of a worldwide *agent provocateur*. The author has pointed out that Osama bin Laden hits the TV screens every time a successful terrorist act is carried out anywhere in the world if the United States needs to justify its preemptive strikes. By demonizing al-Qa‘eda and by giving it money, the United States is successfully exploiting another American provocative myth—Huntington’s clash of civilizations theory—to strengthen its worldwide position by setting up its military bases in all corners of the world.

The above suggests that the military of the United States and NATO, while exploiting terrorist provocateurs and the slogan of protecting Western civilization, have not only assumed the role of a worldwide policeman, but are also pursuing concrete economic aims by trying to establish American control over the major oil-rich regions. She believes that the current stage of America’s counterterrorist efforts can be compared with America’s active anti-drug struggle of the 1990s. It turned out, however, that U.S. bogus organizations and America’s military presence in various parts of the world allowed it to control the major drug producing centers and the drug trafficking routes. The author is obviously concerned that America’s permanent counterterrorist struggle may produce similar results.

This article is very typical of the media which reflect the political interests of strong state power and are resolved to ideologically mobilize the population in the context of an anti-American patriotic wave. In other words, terrorism is presented as an alien force resolved to undermine Russia’s national security and as an instrument used to brainwash the world community on a global scale. At the same time, the problem is being discussed outside the context of the Northern Caucasus and Russia’s counterterrorist struggle. The subject seems to be divided into international and domestic aspects, the latter being removed from the common denominator, by which Guria Murklinskaia means commercial terrorism, which came to replace its ideological variant. The author, however, does not regard this delimitation as fundamentally important. On the whole, its anti-American message notwithstanding, the

article is an attempt to analyze the evolution of terrorism, which, however, decreases the readers' negative assessment of terror.

B. Prokhorov's article entitled "Rossia sidit na Chechne, kak iog na gvozdiakh" (Russia is Sitting on Chechnia Like a Yogi on Nails), which appeared in February 2004 in No. 6 of *Severniy Kavkaz*, produces a different impression. The very title is paradoxical enough: it activates the chaotic "Dionysian" impulses of an information impact, while the text itself is brimming with negative emotions. It was the February 2004 blast in the Moscow underground that prompted the article, yet it says nothing about the tragedy. In the same way the author expressed neither his compassion nor condolences to the victims; and he said nothing about the need to close ranks in the face of the catastrophe. He opposed Moscow and the rest of the country, which sounded blasphemous. Here is a typical excerpt: "The grief is made even worse because of what I call 'Moscow nastiness': 'blacks' will be stopped and searched much more often; the 'people of Caucasian origin' will have to pay many more bribes. Moscow is still Moscow: it strives to protect itself without giving a damn about the rest of Russia. Meanwhile, people in Stavropol, Volgodonsk, Buinaksk, Vladikavkaz, and Daghestan think differently. They are compassionate, yet it is not them who appear on TV screens as the 'voice of the people.' This and other political talk shows are dominated by those eggheads who have already brought the country to civil war. Each blast produces a volcanic eruption of idle talk which sounds like ritual scoffing at another mountain of dead bodies." The author could hardly conceal his irritation when he wrote that two months later the national press seemed to lose interest in the blasts in the suburban trains in the Northern Caucasus in Kislovodsk. B. Prokhorov seems to be dissatisfied with the state structures: "Unprecedented measures create nervousness, but no security. Everybody knows this. The authorities have demonstrated their impotence and uselessness." He is convinced that the law enforcement bodies, army, and entire power system are corrupt, incompetent, and impotent in the face of terrorists. It seems that the author would prefer to use force and forget about democracy. He sees Chechnia as a General Governorship ruled by the military with the widest possible administrative powers. This requires a strong state power which Russia lacks, says he.

The author is obviously a xenophobe; he refuses to tolerate the Chechens. He writes: "Whether we like it or not, we are all different. There are Ingushes and Ossets, Adighes and Karachai, Cherkesses and Avars, Lezghians and Kumyks—all of them are 'people of Caucasian origin,' they are all temperamental southerners. Why did the Chechens flood the Caucasus in blood? Was it predetermined or not? The time has come to ponder on this and dot the i's." The second question is obviously a rhetorical one: he knows the answer. He sees the Chechens as ferocious and blood-thirsty enemies with folk customs that he describes as "brutal and savage, inherited from old times and approved by all." Some of his deliberations sound strange in the 21st century: he has revived the colonialist ideology which juxtaposed the "values of civilization" to "primitive barbarians." He goes on to remind the reader that under Soviet power, the city of Grozny was a large industrial center, a cozy and hospitable city with marvelous theaters and libraries, a magnificent museum, higher educational establishments, and research institutes. Some 10 km away from it, in a small village, men could dispose of their sisters and daughters as they saw fit; blood feud was an everyday norm and a feat; crime was approved, while there were slaves in nearly every household. Neighbors were well aware of this—some even envied the slave-owners. B. Prokhorov concludes: "Those people were living in the Middle Ages and nobody could do anything about it." He goes on to say, however, as if following the best traditions of Stalinism, that "Stalin's repressions brought the people to the summit of civilization, while 'independence' pushed them back down to the 'folk traditions,' which turn people into wild beasts." This and similar publications serve no useful purpose—they intensify ethnic tension and terrorist intentions.

This is provocation: the author is pushing readers toward extremist action; his psychological pressure is designed to affect the youth, the most aggressive and credulous population group. "We have no tears left to weep over the victims; we have spent our human fury. We have scads of patience,



though. The dream of our American 'friends' has come true—there is no longer a 'new community of people—the Soviet people.' Let's congratulate ourselves! After surviving 70 years of totalitarianism, we have consumed enough freedom to make us want to throw up! At long last 'we have become aware of our country.' What are your feelings? We finally feel that we are not 'mere cogs in an inhuman machine,' but a herd with rights. Yes, we are a herd, let me say this!" These inspiring words will ignite many "hotheads" wishing to prove that they are not a herd. They will not resort to peaceful means—they will unleash terror against "people of Caucasian origin." Deliberately aggressive and vulgarized publications play into the hands of those political forces that have chosen terrorism as their instrument. This and similar publications show that the terrorists have managed to influence the public through the media.

All regional analytical publications resolved to support the state in its antiterrorist struggle concentrate on international aspects.

In his article "Uroki Dubrovki" (The Lessons of Dubrovka), which appeared in the newspaper *Stavropolskie gubernskie novosti* on 22 November, 2002, Evgeni Satanovskiy drew parallels of strategic importance between the situation in Russia and that in the Middle East. He used Israel's experience to convincingly demonstrate that the withdrawal of Russian troops from Chechnia would not stem terrorist attacks—it would intensify them. To support his prediction, he argues that Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip raised another wave of terror in Israel; for ten years now the Palestine Authority and its Administration have been unable to reach stability in order to control its own territories. This is true of Chechnia as well: in the three years that followed the Khasaviurt agreement, it proved unable to rule itself. Evgeni Satanovskiy offers the following conclusion: "Wider Palestinian independence created more civilian deaths. People died at the hands of terrorists. This is a well-known fact: there are people able to create a state and there are others who can fight for independence by shedding blood—their own and other people's. Having discovered that they cannot knock together a state—they are unable to do this—they go on with what they can do, fighting." A casual observer may take these for xenophobic and chauvinistic views, yet a more careful analysis reveals that the author did not mean nations (Palestinians or Chechens). He was referring to the adepts of terrorism and confirmed extremists. Terrorism, writes he, is not a product of ethnic features or religious convictions of the entities of terrorist activities—it is born from the political ambitions of terrorist leaders resolved to extend the limits of their power by playing on people's ethnic sentiments and religious feelings.

Evgeni Satanovskiy's firm support of the state is not cheap patriotic talk designed to lure the masses. His ideas are purely rational and rooted in common sense and Russia's recent experience. He is out to demonstrate that terrorist anarchy is much worse than military administration: "No matter how displeased we are with our own state power, we should never forget that the war against terror can be either won together with the state or lost together with the future. Nobody has any future in a state of triumphant terrorism." These are not his personal views—this is a reflection of what politically aware people concerned with public security think about the state and its efforts to make the country a more secure place. At the same time, the author failed to provide the exhaustive analysis of the Nord-Ost crisis a reader would expect to find in the article; he obviously never intended to sort out the domestic causes of the Dubrovka terrorist act.

In her article "Vysshiaia mera demokratii" (The Highest Degree of Democracy), which appeared in the *Stavropolskaia pravda* newspaper on 12 February, 2004, V. Lezvina examined the problem of state vs. terror and the role the public can play in fighting terrorism. She insists that it is state power and the law enforcement bodies which should stem terror. As a firm supporter of a strong state, she accuses the power structures of being excessively biased toward democratic principles and Western human rights organizations. Ms. Lezvina is convinced that the right to live in safety is one of the basic human rights, yet she does not suggest that the law enforcement bodies should receive more power—

they have enough of it. She writes about the impotence and irresponsibility of the bureaucrats, especially those at the top of the pyramid of power who prefer to look for scapegoats at the grass-root level. The author is skeptical, if not ironic, about the idea that the problem of terror can be resolved by democratic means—in fact, she does not believe in democracy, which, she says, breeds irresponsibility. Ms. Lezvina is very much concerned about the possibility of the “highest degree of democracy” Russia is striving to achieve turning into a death sentence for the people of the Stavropol Territory and other areas in the region if it is not placed on the firm foundation of an effective law enforcement system based on the strictest responsibility of all its levels from the grassroots up to the top crust. This metaphor is rooted in the sentiments and hopes of hundreds of thousands of those who have found themselves in the zone of terror.

An overall view of the Caucasian media which cover the subject of terrorism reveals six common features: they are convinced that the impotent and irresponsible power-wielding and civilian structures have failed to protect the local people against terror; they consider the foreign political aspects of the problem; no one cares enough to analyze the domestic sources and causes of terrorism; they believe that the state should formulate and carry out effective counterterrorist policies; the media have identified the tendency of opposing the center in an indirect way—it is most obvious in the Stavropol and Rostov press and is much less obvious in the Daghestani, Osset, Ingush, and Kabardino-Balkarian press; the media are skeptical about a possible democratic settlement of conflicts which breed terrorist acts.

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## TAJIKISTAN: NEW STABILITY THREATS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Abdurakhmon MAKHMADOV

*D.Sc. (Political Science), professor,  
rector of the Tajik State Institute of Physical Culture  
(Dushanbe, Tajikistan)*

Makhfirat KHIDIROVA

*Ph.D. (Political Science), assistant professor,  
Department of Philosophy and Cultural Studies,  
the State University of Commerce  
(Dushanbe, Tajikistan)*

**T**oday, life in Tajikistan, an independent country and an entity of international relations which has left the stage of civil confrontation behind, has changed in all its aspects. Indeed, no stage of human society's development is free from potentially conflicting factors. If tapped in the right

way, the contradictions may even help the country to advance. Even though the domestic conflict was settled peacefully, the problems associated with the current political processes are still lingering; they should be successfully addressed on time, otherwise they may develop into stability threats. Poverty of a considerable part of the republic's population is one such problem, although today its level is much lower than the 82 percent registered in 1997.

It is much easier to involve poor people in criminal activities or treason; they can fall prey to the manipulations of rich criminal or terrorist groups, since it is easy to tempt them with even small sums of money. In the final analysis, this could turn into a destabilizing factor in any society. This is especially true of Tajikistan which, for geopolitical, regional, ethnic, and religious reasons, attracts all sorts of forces trying to put pressure on it. The problem is obviously of great political importance. Poverty is conducive to corruption in all echelons of power; it breeds criminal groups, which are inclined to divide zones of influence, and intensifies drug trafficking. All this may finally destroy the country's statehood.

Tajikistan's leaders are doing their best to raise the standard of living; they are employing the medium-term Strategy for Reducing Poverty, which envisages:

- First, achieving social justice by establishing social equality among the different population groups.
- Second, the state will manage demographic processes by introducing family planning and improving the quality indices of the local population. Much will be done to improve the people's economic activity and to make women active entities of social life.
- Third, labor resources should be distributed and redistributed more reasonably.
- Fourth, ecological problems call for attention, while the republic's national riches should be used more sparingly.
- Fifth, migration policies need better organization: in the near future, the accelerating migration processes could assume mass proportions. If regulated and managed correctly they will help the country to cope with unemployment and raise the nation's standard of living.
- Sixth, the republic needs more jobs and better management of all available vacancies through vacancy fairs.
- Seventh, the local jamaats, as well as banks (as far as granting credits is concerned), should improve their performance, and NGOs should step up their efforts to implement small-scale projects, etc.
- Eighth, the taxation system should be streamlined, since the country lives on tax returns.

Since 1996, the decline in agriculture and industry has been slowing down, yet it is too early to say that all the social and economic problems have been resolved. No stability can be achieved in this context; the Hizb ut-Tahrir party is another threat to the country's stability: it aims at replacing the state with an Islamic Caliphate ruled by a Caliph. To achieve this, the party program has divided the process into three stages: the first stage presupposes brainwashing; at the second stage people should be prepared for a revolution; and at the third, a state coup is expected in order to achieve absolute power across the world.<sup>1</sup> Taqaiuddin Nabaqhani (1909-1979), who lived in Palestine, was one of the party leaders. It was set up in 1952 and immediately attracted Nabaqhani's followers from Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. Its leaders expected to reach their final goals in 13 years; after failing to do this they settled on 30 years.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Kh. Musozoda, "Z-in khilofat bui ihtilof oiad," *Chumhuriyat*, 29 July, 2000, p. 3.

It should be said that during the ten years of its activity in Central Asia the party failed to score impressive political victories because it rejects compromises. Radicalism was the main cause of its failures. It was because of its radicalism that in 1984 its leaders were brought to court on criminal charges. Since that time, its supporters in the Arab and Central Asian countries have become outlawed.

Its activity in Tajikistan is threatening the country's stability; in fact, in any country that has just emerged from a civil war there are always people dissatisfied with its outcome; there is any number of people living below the poverty line who can be tempted by even the smallest sums of money. In a country where educational organizations are underperforming and where political and legal education leaves much to be desired, the youth cannot correctly assess the social and political situation and find its bearings in it; the level of political awareness of a large part of the country's population allows the radical forces to entice young men away. There are also social outcasts among the members of Hizb ut-Tahrir and other illegal organizations.

In Tajikistan, this party is especially active among the young people in Khujand, Hissar, and Zafarabad.<sup>2</sup> Its influence mainly comes from Uzbekistan, while its popularity in the north of Tajikistan is explained by the proximity of the Ferghana Valley, the base of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).

An analysis of publications of this pan-Islamic party has revealed the fact that it does not limit itself to any specific territory, but is striving to set up a worldwide caliphate. It rejects compromises and negotiations with other parties and movements<sup>3</sup>—this is why it is dangerous. Indeed, a party ready to compromise may readjust its program aims (depending on the specific features of its development stage). Hizb ut-Tahrir is too radical to establish any links with other parties.

The Islamic extremists exploit the local people's religious feelings, freedom of conscience, and the state structures' inexperience in dealing with religious organizations to change the constitutional order by any means, including violence.<sup>4</sup> This is why radical ideas travel freely in Central Asia, yet the party acts differently in different countries because of their specifics and, first and foremost, the authorities' attitude toward religion. For example, after the series of blasts organized by the IMU in Tashkent, the movement was outlawed and had to go underground or join Hizb ut-Tahrir. Political experience the world over has demonstrated that pressure is not the best or most infallible policy. According to Sh. Akiner, "it is not enough to accuse the Hizb ut-Tahrir members of extremism. It is important to grasp their arguments in order to respond to them in the best way possible. This is the responsibility of all thinking people, and it especially poses a challenge to the Council, and to the members and leaders of the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan (IRPT). This is not an easy task, yet it is the best method for creating a stronger integrated society."<sup>5</sup>

In our country, however, there were other factors that helped Hizb ut-Tahrir promote its ideas. Many of IRPT's radical leaders were convinced that by signing the General Agreement on Peace and National Harmony, the party leaders betrayed their ideals by cooperating with the secular regime.

The IRPT has admitted that it was partly to blame for the Hizb ut-Tahrir's growing influence in Tajikistan. "In the past few years, Hizb ut-Tahrir has become very active since many of the Muslims became disillusioned with our party. They expected their life to improve as soon as our party took power, but ... nothing happened and we are following the course of concessions. They concluded that since the IRPT could not foster any change, they did not need it."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See: *Tajikistan: khрупkiy mir*. ICG Interview with U. Faizulloev, first deputy chairman of the Sogd Region branch of the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan, Khujand, 6 December, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> See: O. Moldaliev, "Islamic Extremism in Central Asia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5, 2000, pp. 34-37.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>5</sup> Sh. Akiner, "Ekstremizm: globalniy fenomen," *Religiozniy ekstremizm v Tsentral'noy Azii*, Dushanbe, 2002, p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> *Tajikistan: khрупkiy mir*. ICG Report, No. 30, Azia Osh-Brussels, 24 December, 2001, p. 11.

The above suggests that the IRPT, an influential and very much respected party, lost some of its followers in Tajikistan and that political parties are an all-important force which keeps society together, stems the dissemination of radical ideas, and prevents brainwashing. Political parties should become more efficient and closer-knitted organizations for protecting society against an onslaught of alien radical structures.

According to Report No. 4 “ICG-Asia” of 1 March, 2001, “Hizb ut-Tahrir rejected violence as a method of struggle and switched to propaganda by distributing leaflets. Its members are organized into independent groups; their ties with the leaders are limited; money and information are distributed through the mahallia mosques and other places where the party’s supporters congregate.”<sup>7</sup>

According to the media, this has already caused a split in the party’s Central Asian network. There is a group of members convinced that leaflets are not effective and that regimes cannot be toppled by propaganda, so they are calling for active struggle and violence. There is information that two groups—Aqramiyya and Hizb-an-nusra—detached themselves from Hizb ut-Tahrir. The former was set up in 1996 by Aqram Yuldoshev, former Hizb ut-Tahrir member; his followers are convinced that the ways and methods of struggle used in the Arab countries do not work in Central Asia. They argue that an Islamic organization should strive to capture power on the national rather than local level.<sup>8</sup> Hizb-an-nusra, set up by those who believed that armed struggle alone could topple the Karimov regime, appeared in 1999 in Tashkent.

This shows that there were differences among the Hizb ut-Tahrir members, on the one hand, and that the “imported” methods of struggle were successfully adapted to the local conditions, on the other. In principle, these methods do not threaten any one political area—when adjusted to its conditions, however, they acquire viability and become dangerous. From this it follows that Hizb ut-Tahrir threatens the stability of all Central Asian countries. Tajikistan, therefore, should concentrate on eliminating poverty, improving the social and economic conditions, upgrading performance of the educational establishments and the structures of political socialization, and coordinating activities of all political parties and public organizations without encroaching on political pluralism. We should pay more attention to the jamaats to help them develop into civil society structures able to maintain stability in the provinces. The state should step up the activity of the law enforcement structures (the ministries of the interior and national security among others) to effectively protect the country against new threats. People should be taught to raise their political awareness and political culture.

The very fact that Tajikistan borders on Afghanistan and Uzbekistan is a source of threat. The problem is of a dual nature: “The border is an arena of permanent political battles and a source of potential conflicts.”<sup>9</sup> The Afghan border will remain unstable while instability inside the country lasts, whereas the threats it emanates are of a sociopolitical, economic, and psychological nature.

The sociopolitical threat is generated by the armed groups seeking new targets to continue fighting; the border is frequently violated by drug traffickers (drugs being so far the only source of money for the illegal armed units operating in Afghanistan).

The economic threat is created by the ruined economy of Tajikistan’s neighbor, while the landscape and the terrain allow local people to cross the border into Tajikistan and carry away large quantities of foodstuffs, thus negatively affecting the economic situation along the border and in Tajikistan as a whole.

The dissemination of extremist ideology negatively affects the psychological climate in our country along with certain so-called borrowed values which could undermine our society’s moral foundations.

<sup>7</sup> *Tajikistan: khрупkiy mir*. ICG Report, No. 30, Azia Osh-Brussels, 24 December, 2001, p. 11.

<sup>8</sup> See: *Ruz nav*, 30 October, 2003, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> R. Merton, “Sotsial’naia struktura i ekonomia,” in: *Sotsiologia prestupnosti*, Moscow, 1966, p. 12.

S. Zokhidov has the following to say about the social and psychological makeup of the Tajiks living on the River Panj, along which the border with Afghanistan runs: "They are mainly conformists with elements of deviational behavior."<sup>10</sup> Conformist-deviational behavior is one of the prerequisites for this society's continued existence: each of the individuals and the social group as a whole can be transferred from this alternative group to another only if they are involved in public activities. This duality is explained by their life on the border, where both sides have an influence on them.

Uzbekistan is the source of psychological threat: Hizb ut-Tahrir is fairly influential there. This could turn out to be the greatest threat since all psychological attacks are aimed at the individual as the key entity of political relations. Psychological threats can undermine the state's ideological stability; this may lead to complete disintegration of society. To avoid this, the local state structures and border guards should do everything to create and develop political culture along with stable ideological convictions and behavioral patterns of the local population.

Societies plagued with social and economic problems are especially vulnerable—manipulation of public conscience becomes even easier than usual. This suggests that we should pay particular attention to stability on the state borders and their security: any armed conflict on the state borders has many aspects, primarily military and political, which negatively affect the relations between neighbors in the political and military sphere.

Drug trafficking is another problem; the common border with Afghanistan, one of the world centers of drug production, has made our republic a corridor through which drugs are exported.

Matthew Kahane, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) representative in Tajikistan, estimates that about 30 to 50 percent of our economy is generated by drug trafficking. The U.N. has already identified six routes by which drugs are exported from Afghanistan. Two of them cross Tajikistan: one starts in Kunduz, in the north of Afghanistan, passes through the Khatlon Region, and continues on to the CIS and West European countries; another starts in Badakhshan in Afghanistan, crosses the Gorno-Badakhshan Region of Tajikistan, and continues on through Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Russia to reach Europe.

This incessant traffic causes skirmishes and exchanges of fire between the border guards and drug carriers; common people, many of them very poor, fall easy prey to drug couriers, whose aim is to sell their cargo as soon as possible; many of those who live along the border have already become hostages of drug traffickers and taken across the border to Afghanistan. On top of this, some of the drugs are sold locally, which threatens public health and public order.

This forced Tajikistan to adopt a National Program for Fighting Illicit Drug Trafficking; and a Drug Control Agency was set up under the president. The country is obviously prepared to actively cooperate with international organizations and countries fighting this evil.

The very term "illicit drug trafficking" speaks of the criminal nature of this activity; it is closely connected with the crime scene in general. An increase in crime could undermine the country's and government's image at home and abroad. Indeed, the rising wave of crime says that the government, to which the nation delegates its rights to be protected, fails to do this; the same applies to the political system as a whole. We should obviously step up our efforts to prevent drugs from Afghanistan from reaching our country; we should improve the law enforcement structures' performance and their cooperation. This applies to the ministries of the interior and national security, the Border Guard Service, and the Drug Control Agency. They should obviously work better to stem drug trafficking and crime in general. Social services should upgrade their performance in education, propaganda, and agitation among the ordinary people, etc.

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<sup>10</sup> S. Zokhidov, *Vlianie pograniichnykh konfliktov na gosudarstvo i sistemu iego bezopasnosti (na primere tadzhiksko-afghanskoy granitsy)*. Avtoreferat na soiskanie uchenoi stepeni kandidata politicheskikh nauk, Dushanbe, 2003, p. 13.

We have already written that today the country's socioeconomic situation is a threat to the country's stability. This creates other threats: the proliferation of radical movements; illicit drug trafficking, a rise in crime, etc. In view of this we should:

- Strengthen the political system of our country, which has lived through many hardships. Earlier, immunity to all sorts of threats prevented many unwelcome developments—today, in view of potential new threats, the system should activate many of its elements to act together and in full coordination.
  - Address and resolve the socioeconomic problems as soon as possible.
  - See to it that educational institutions work hard to create stable ideological convictions based on the common human values in all people, the youth especially.
  - Make more energetic efforts to develop a high political culture among the people to help them sort things out in the midst of ideological pluralism and stepped-up extremist activities.
  - Pay more attention to guarding the state borders with Afghanistan and Uzbekistan; take more effective measures to combat drugs, and the illegal circulation of arms, radical and extremist literature, and radical ideas.
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## REGIONAL ECONOMIES

### TURNING THE CORNER: THE ECONOMIC REVIVAL OF CENTRAL ASIA

Malcolm DOWLING

*Visiting Professor at Singapore Management University  
(Singapore)*

Ganeshan WIGNARAJA

*Senior Economist,  
Asian Development Bank  
(Manila, Philippines)*

#### 1. Introduction

The Central Asian Republics (CARs) occupy a strategic position straddling East and West and have a significant development potential. In the aftermath of transition, however, the CARs witnessed a period of prolonged slow and negative growth and a rising incidence of poverty.<sup>1</sup> Many

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*The views expressed in the paper are solely the responsibility of the authors and cannot be attributed to the organizations to which they belong.*

<sup>1</sup> A plethora of literature exists on the history, strategic significance, economic record and reform experience of Central Asia during the first decade of transition to a market economy. For a selection, see: S.F. Starr, "Making Eurasia Stable," *Foreign Affairs*, January-February 1996, pp. 80-92; idem, "Central Asia in the Global Economy", *Foreign Policy*, September-October 2004; E. Trushin, E. Trushin, "Basic Problems of Market Transition in Central Asia," in: *Central Asia and the New Global Economy*, ed. by B. Rumer, M.E. Sharpe, New York, 2000; R. Pomfret, K. Anderson, "Economic Development Strategies in Central Asia Since 1991," *Asian Studies Review*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 2001, pp. 185-200; N.F. Campos, F. Coricelli,



factors have been put forward to explain the difficult transition experience, including the disruption in production and economic relations existing in the former Soviet Union, the collapse of aid as it was in the former Soviet Union, the nascent private sector, the lack of capital markets, the limited number of institutions required for a market economy, and the gaps in infrastructure.

Nevertheless, Central Asia seems to have turned the corner during the last few years. Economic growth, which accelerated to historically unprecedented levels, has been driven by high commodity prices—particularly for oil and natural gas—and buyout demand, increasing inward investment, improved macroeconomic management, and development of infrastructure.<sup>2</sup> There are signs that oil-and-gas-sector-led growth has stimulated the development of the services sector (construction and banking), as well as some manufacturing activities. There are also indications that economic prosperity has been accompanied by job creation and some reduction in poverty. There is optimism in Central Asia's political circles with some even predicting that the region will join the ranks of middle income countries within a decade or so.

Against this backdrop, this paper reviews the characteristics of the boom that has evolved since 1997, with particular reference to macroeconomic developments and poverty. Distinctions are drawn between the economic structure and performance of resource-rich (oil and natural gas) economies and other CARs which have fewer resources. Drawing on this analysis, the outlook for the CARs for the next ten years is projected against a background of global prospects. The paper also seeks to guide CARs' policymakers by suggesting the direction of future economic performance, as well as indicating key policy issues. As long-run forecasts can change in response to external events, the risks for the CARs' outlook are also highlighted.

## 2. Accelerating Economic Performance

### Growth and Inflation

After nearly a decade of dismal economic performance following the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Central Asian republics have been demonstrating booming economic performance since 1997. From 1997 to 2001, the GDP grew by nearly 6% per annum compared with the negative growth in the previous five years (see Table 1). In the next three years, growth accelerated to a spectacular 9.7%, the highest in the post-transition period for any group of countries in the Soviet expanse and a performance that compares favorably with the fastest-growing economies in Asia and the rest of the developing world.

The high energy prices and investments in the oil and gas sector, including petrochemicals, were the main growth drivers in the three oil-exporting economies of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan. In Azerbaijan, oilfield and pipeline investment, as well as natural gas development have

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"Growth in Transition: What We Know, What We Don't and What We Should," *Journal of Economic Literature*, XL, September 2002, pp. 793-836; *Transition: The First Ten Years: Analysis and Lessons for Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*, World Bank, 2002, Washington DC; S. Zhukov, "Central Asia: Development Under Conditions of Globalization," in: *Central Asia: A Gathering Storm*, ed. by B. Rumer, M.E. Sharpe, New York, 2002; E. Loukoianova, A. Unigovskaya, "Analysis of Recent Growth in Low-Income CIS Countries," *IMF Working Paper/04/151*, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> In its first regional economic outlook for the Middle East and Central Asia, the IMF notes that "a favorable external environment combined with generally sound economic policies to produce strong macroeconomic performance for the countries of the Middle East and Central Asia in 2003 and early 2004...Prospects are for continued strong performance through 2005" (*Middle East and Central Asia: Regional Economic Outlook*, International Monetary Fund, Washington DC, 2004, p. 2).

Table 1

**Current Economic Performance  
in Central Asia**

Country	Real GDP Growth % per year		Manu- factured Exports per Capita, \$	Per Capita Income, \$	Poverty Incidence, % of Population (b)
	1997- 2001	2002- 2004	2003	2003	Latest
<b>Oil Exporters</b>					
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>865.0</b>	<b>49.6</b>
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>142.1</b>	<b>1,995.0</b>	<b>27.9</b>
<b>Turkmenistan</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>21.3</b>	<b>46.9</b>	<b>1,236.0</b>	<b>29.9</b>
<b>Non-Oil Exporters</b>					
<b>Kyrgyz Republic</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>38.2</b>	<b>344.0</b>	<b>52.0</b>
<b>Tajikistan</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>207.0</b>	<b>56.6</b>
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>389.0</b>	<b>27.5</b>
<b>CARs</b>	<b>6.1 (a)</b>	<b>9.7 (a)</b>	<b>57.1</b>	<b>839.3</b>	<b>40.6</b>
<p><i>Notes:</i> (a) Weighted average, GDP weights. (b) National poverty lines.</p> <p><i>Sources:</i> Calculated from ADB Asian Development Outlook, various; ADB, <i>Poverty in Asia</i>, Asian Development Bank, Manila, 2004; World Bank World Development Indicators 2005; national sources.</p>					

contributed to a strong growth environment. In Kazakhstan, oil and natural gas investments have been a source of rapid expansion. In addition, economic diversification has begun recently as food processing, machinery, oil refining and chemicals showed strong growth.

Among the non-oil economies, growth in the Kyrgyz Republic averaged around 5% beginning in 1997 and accelerated further to 7% in 2003 and 2004. A buoyant minerals sector led by gold exports expanded rapidly. Uzbekistan's economy grew steadily at just over 5%, beginning in 1997, as agricultural production benefited from restructuring and privatization, as well as from favorable cotton prices. Per capita income has also grown dramatically, since population growth remained low. By the end of 2003, per capita income increased to an average of \$840.8.<sup>3</sup> In Tajikistan, the

<sup>3</sup> Despite these recent gains in income growth, per capita income in the CARs remains low by international standards as they are categorized as low income countries (with the exception of Kazakhstan, which is a middle income country).

end of civil war served as the main impetus for expansion as GDP growth averaged about 10% during 2002-2004.

Macroeconomic stability, empowered by inflation, has also improved. Inflation rates have fallen significantly throughout the region over the past few years, indicating improved macroeconomic stability. Average inflation for the CARs as a group declined from 20.4% to 6.9% between 1997-2001 and 2002-2004. Furthermore, both oil exporters and non-oil exporters were typically able to contain inflation in 2002-2004 at levels lower than in 1997-2001. This may be partly the result of greater fiscal and monetary discipline, as well as greater stability in the exchange rate and moderate inflation worldwide. The Kyrgyz Republic (3%) had the lowest inflation among the CARs in 2002-2004, while Tajikistan, with double-digit inflation, had the highest.

### Structural Change

This boom has been driven by structural changes in the economies and has resulted in a shift toward the production of industrial goods and minerals and away from agriculture.<sup>4</sup> While oil and gas continued to drive the industrial sector, the rest of the industrial sectors and manufacturing also grew rapidly. The share of industry in the GDP and manufacturing value added increased. For example, manufacturing value added increased by over 25% per annum in Azerbaijan and 10% per annum in Kazakhstan between 1998 and 2003. Manufacturing value added per capita also increased. By 2003, Kazakhstan had the largest industrial base, while the Kyrgyz Republic had the smallest. The remaining CARs fall in between these extremes.

The recent industrial recovery in the CARs is closely linked to the performance of manufactured exports, which grew about 10% per annum for the region as a whole between 1998 and 2003. Both oil and non-oil exporters had respectable manufactured export growth, although the former (11.0%) was somewhat higher than the latter (7.8%). By 2003, manufactured exports per capita in Kazakhstan were more than three times higher than those of the other CARs (see Table 1). The structure of manufacturing and manufactured exports varies from country to country. Textiles and garments comprise over 80% of manufactured exports in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan (driven in part by foreign investors from Turkey and Korea) and about 37% of the Kyrgyz Republic's manufactured exports. Meanwhile, Kazakhstan's manufactured exports are dominated by iron and steel with some focus on chemicals and plastics, as well as on machinery and transport equipment. Azerbaijan also has a mix of iron and steel, chemicals, and machinery.

### External Developments

External sector performance has generally improved compared with the past as exports have grown more rapidly. This improved trade performance, particularly since 1997, has been driven by developments in the minerals and metals sector in the oil-exporting countries and by prices for gold and cotton in the non-oil-exporting economies. Manufacturing has also been buoyant and the overall performance has improved dramatically compared with a decade ago. Between 1997 and 2004, overall export growth from the oil-exporting CARs was strong, averaging about 18% per annum. In the non-oil-

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<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, the pace of structural change in Central Asia has been slower than those witnessed in the high performing Asian economies such as South Korea, Malaysia and the Peoples Republic of China (see: G. Wignaraja, A. Taylor, "Benchmarking Competitiveness: A First Look at the Manufacturing Export Competitiveness Index," in: *Competitiveness Strategy in Developing Countries*, ed. by G. Wignaraja, Routledge, London, 2003).

exporting countries in the region, export performance accelerated after 2001. By 2004, export growth in the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan averaged over 20%. In the Kyrgyz Republic, export growth has fluctuated between negative and strong growth, primarily because of movements in gold prices and exports of gold and petroleum products. In Tajikistan, exports of cotton and aluminum steadily increased as the economy continued to recover. In Uzbekistan, export growth picked up dramatically in 2003 and 2004 on the back of higher prices for gold and cotton.

The boom has increased government revenue and has helped fiscal performance and reduced reliance on external borrowing. As a result the total debt for the CARs has typically fallen as a % of the GDP. In 2004, the total debt of the region (aside from Kazakhstan) was just over \$8 billion, and it has not increased substantially since the late 1990s. In 2004, the debt service ratio was highest in Tajikistan and Kazakhstan at 49% and 26%, respectively, and less than 20% in the other countries. A worrisome development in Uzbekistan is that the debt service ratio has been increasing steadily.

There are also signs that foreign investors are beginning to take greater interest in the CARs. This is reflected by strong inflows into the oil rich exporters. This is a classic example of natural resource seeking FDI (mainly from the United States, EU, and Russia) and has brought with it capital, foreign technology, and western management expertise to facilitate the efficient development of oil and gas exports. Most of Central Asia's FDI since the mid-1990s has gone to Kazakhstan, which has by far the largest potential for further economic development. Such FDI is concentrated in the oil and gas industry, but has gradually spilt over into electricity, metals, manufacturing, and banking. In the last several years, however, there has also been a dramatic increase in FDI flows to Azerbaijan to the extent that by 2003 FDI of \$2.3 billion slightly exceeded that in Kazakhstan (\$2.2 billion).

It is striking that FDI in the three non-oil-exporting CARs is negligible, amounting to only \$107.5 million in 2003. The lack of natural resources, high transaction costs due to landlocked terrains, vast distance from markets, and perceived political risk are among the explanations for the low FDI in non-oil-exporting CARs.

### *Per Capita Income and Poverty*

Despite these recent gains in income growth, per capita income remains low by international standards. In current dollar terms, four out of the six CARs had a per capita income of \$600 or less per year in 1997-2001, and these levels were lower than those achieved by China at the time. As Table 1 shows, by 2003 Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan were able to raise per capita income to over \$1,200, and the other CARs were also able to make some progress. However, exchange rate movements negated some of these gains.

Growth in government revenue has enabled the governments in the CARs to increase spending on human resource programs. As a result, there has been a gradual improvement in social sector spending for health and education. These expenditures, along with more rapid economic growth, have resulted in an improvement in human resource development indicators and a reduction in poverty.

Poverty line estimates are useful for cross-country comparisons and reveal a variable pattern of poverty incidence in the CARs. Based on estimates made in the late 1990s and early years of the new millennium, national poverty line estimates show that between 25% and 30% of the population was living in poverty in the two oil-exporting CARs—Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan—and in Uzbekistan (see Table 1). In the remaining three CARs (Azerbaijan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan), the poverty estimates were nearly twice as high, ranging from around 50% to 56%. For the CARs as a whole, poverty averages around 41%. Poverty has fallen somewhat in Kazakhstan, where poverty

estimates made in the late 1990s were in the range of 40%. It is difficult to determine trends in poverty in the other CARs based on national estimates due to the lack of data. It is worthwhile noting that international poverty line estimates made by the World Bank show somewhat lower levels of poverty and that poverty has been declining slowly.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. Future Outlook

The pressing question facing the CARs is whether the boom that started in the late 1990s will continue for the next decade. While this is impossible to predict with certainty, we are offering the outcome we believe most likely.

#### World Outlook

The projections for the CARs are made based on certain assumptions about the future direction of the world economy. The World Outlook is developed with the aid of a world econometric model developed by Oxford Economic Forecasting (OEF 2005). These can be summarized as follows.

- Robust world growth of about 3.3% and buoyant global demand;
- Favorable commodity prices, including oil prices of about \$35 per barrel;
- The emergence of China and India as regional economic powerhouses;
- No wars or major disruptions in the region;
- Growing investor confidence (particularly with regard to foreign direct investment);
- Continued implementation of policy reforms at a moderate pace in the CARs.

These forecasts form a global macroeconomic background for analyzing the future prospects for the CARs. We derived our forecasts for the CARs based on initial conditions (e.g. resource endowments and human capital) and the expected pace of implementation of policy reforms. Where events seemed to be evolving smoothly, time trends were used for projections. In other cases, structural changes were incorporated to provide a more comprehensive framework.<sup>6</sup>

#### Growth

As Table 2 shows, GDP growth in the region is likely to be robust, averaging 7.2% per annum in all the CARs (2005-2015). This is quite high by the historical standards of developing and transition countries. As a group, the oil-rich economies will grow more rapidly than the non-oil economies. Azerbaijan is expected to grow the fastest at around 11% per annum and Uzbekistan the slowest (5%

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<sup>5</sup>Although the data are very sketchy and there are issues of data consistency and reliability, the available international poverty line estimates suggest that poverty has declined in several CARs. It seems that greater economic prosperity in recent years has spilled over into employment creation and some reduction in poverty in the region. Furthermore, it seems that the oil exporters typically have a lower poverty incidence than the non-oil exporters (for detail, see: *Central Asia: Mapping Future Prospects*, Asian Development Bank, Manila, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> For more detail, see: *Ibidem*.

per annum). In between these, Kazakhstan is likely to grow at 7.4%, Tajikistan 6.1%, the Kyrgyz Republic 5.8%, and Turkmenistan 5.8%. This is a strong performance for developing countries in general and even compared with Asian transition economies such as Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Robust growth combined with different endowments and development opportunities suggest that the CARs will emerge as one of world's most dynamically developing regions. There will be significant potential for structural changes and a number of opportunities for trade and international investment in manufacturing, as well as in the booming oil and gas industry.

Table 2

## Future Prospects in Central Asia

Country	Real GDP Growth 2005-2015 % per year	Manufactured Exports per Capita, \$ 2015	Per Capita Income, \$ 2015	Poverty Incidence 2015, % of Population (b)
<b>Oil Exporters</b>				
Azerbaijan	11.2	37.4	2,829	26.6
Kazakhstan	7.5	365.3	5,248	16.3
Turkmenistan	5.8	136.2	1,959	18.1
<b>Non-Oil Exporters</b>				
Kyrgyz Republic	5.8	57.4	593	32.9
Tajikistan	6.1	83.0	375	31.3
Uzbekistan	5.2	82.3	591	17.8
<b>CARs</b>	<b>7.2 (a)</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>1,933</b>	<b>23.8</b>
<i>Notes:</i> (a) Weighted average, GDP weights. (b) National poverty lines <i>Source:</i> Authors' estimates.				

Structural Change

Structural changes will occur as a result of increased exploitation of the mineral resource base and industrialization, which is projected to continue. By 2015, total oil and gas exports from the oil-rich CARs will amount to about \$32 billion, a nearly three-fold increase from the export value of about \$12 billion today.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> These projections were based on forecasts of oil prices, production capacity, proven reserves and anticipated developments in transportation (e.g. pipelines).

Oil and gas exports will continue to be the main drivers of economic growth and dynamism in the three oil-rich economies. The proven reserves of oil and natural gas should be sufficient to maintain current and projected future rates of extraction for the next 25 to 60 years in the three oil-exporting economies. Growth in oil and gas exports will be strongest in Azerbaijan following the opening of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline. This pipeline opens up the European oil market to Azerbaijan and potentially also to Kazakhstan. The BTC pipeline will provide an alternative oil shipment route to Europe, avoiding the high transit charges levied by the Russian Federation. Oil sector growth will slow somewhat in the medium term as prices for oil and gas stabilize at around \$35 per barrel and output growth slows as existing pipeline capacity is more fully utilized. Nevertheless, the oil and gas sector will grow faster than the GDP in all the oil-exporting countries.

Economic diversification will continue at a more rapid pace through the expansion of manufactured exports. As Tables 1 and 2 suggest, total manufactured exports per capita in the CARs are predicted to triple to \$141 by 2015 (up from \$57.1 in 2003). The region's manufactured export base will continue to be dominated by Kazakhstan (\$4.8 billion) and Uzbekistan (\$2.5 billion). Kazakhstan will continue to have the highest manufactured exports per capita. Turkmenistan comes next. Azerbaijan remains the smallest exporter in terms of manufactured exports per capita. Capital-intensive petroleum products like plastics and petrochemicals, metal products, engineering goods, and some textiles and garments are likely to underlie this manufactured export growth. There is also likely to be diversification of export markets away from Russia as the demand from China and India grows rapidly. Industrialization and structural change will result in a wider variety of products being produced for regional and international markets, help boost per capita income, and result in job creation.

### External Sector

The external sector projections focus on the three non-oil-exporting countries (the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan). This is because the external sector accounts for the three oil-producing countries are dominated by oil and gas. As a result, these countries have high enough incomes and sufficient foreign direct investment to go to capital markets for additional resources. The current account deficit is predicted to increase in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. These current account deficits will be modest in size, ranging from \$200 million per annum in the Kyrgyz Republic to \$70 million in Tajikistan for the period 2011—2015. This is because import demand growth to meet various infrastructure and manufacturing project requirements, as well as for some consumer goods is projected to be somewhat stronger than the expansion of exports proceeds. Growth in the current account deficit will be constrained by already high levels of external debt and limited sources of finance for the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. In Uzbekistan, the current account balance is predicted to remain in surplus over the forecast period as a result of stronger export growth to the Chinese market and continued slow growth in imports. Structural factors and a restrictive policy environment, which discourages trade liberalization, will also inhibit more rapid import growth.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is expected to rise slowly as the external policy environment improves in the Kyrgyz Republic and (to a lesser extent) in Tajikistan. FDI inflows of \$125 million per annum in the Kyrgyz Republic and \$75 million in Tajikistan, while modest in size by international standards, will help to offset the rising current account deficit and should contribute to an increase in technology transfer and productivity gains in industry. The slower reforming policy environment in Uzbekistan is expected to keep inflows of FDI growth to around \$120 million per annum.

Total outstanding debt as a % of the GDP is expected to decline slowly in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan and more rapidly in Uzbekistan. The stimulators of debt reduction are increased inflows of FDI in all three non-oil economies, debt restructuring in the Kyrgyz Republic and possibly Tajikistan, remittances in Tajikistan, and the use of some trade and current account surplus to reduce external debt in Uzbekistan.

### Per Capita Income and Poverty

Average per capita income for the CARs of just under \$2,000 in 2015 will place the region firmly within the ranks of today's middle-income economies.<sup>8</sup> However, there will be significant variation within the region among the oil-rich economies led by Kazakhstan, which have per capita incomes more than six times higher than those of the non-oil economies (see Table 2). With a per capita income of \$5,248 by 2015, Kazakhstan will be firmly established as an upper middle-income country. The other two oil-rich economies' per capita income will be comparable to the current per capita income of Russia and Thailand. Tajikistan (per capita income of \$375) will remain the poorest CAR and be among the ranks of today's low-income countries (\$450 per capita). With just under \$600 per capita, the Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan will be somewhat higher and have graduated into the category of lower middle-income countries. Nevertheless, they will remain among the low-income countries in terms of per capita income levels. These forecasts highlight the impact of successful exploitation of oil and gas resources and indicate that there will be increased divergence in the economic prosperity of the oil- and non-oil-rich economies. They also underline the likely emergence of Kazakhstan as a regional growth pole with the potential to promote expanded trade and investment relations with other CARs. Kazakhstan and the two oil-rich economies will also increasingly become a magnet for labor migration from poorer CARs. For the non-oil economies of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and the Kyrgyz Republic there will be a continued need for external assistance to raise incomes and reduce the impact of poverty.

Rapid growth in income will facilitate a sustained reduction in poverty in the CARs during the forecast period. As a whole, the incidence of poverty will fall from 40.6% today to about 23.8% in 2015 (see Tables 1 and 2).<sup>9</sup> This means that around 12 million more people will leave the poverty ranks as a result of strong economic performance. While still high, this poverty rate is around the level of poverty in Poland today and slightly less than the current poverty rate in the Russian Federation. The poorest country in 2015 will be Tajikistan, with about a third of its population living below the poverty line. The Kyrgyz Republic will have a somewhat lower incidence of poverty, followed by several other CARs which will be able to bring poverty down to the range of 15-18%. In all the CARs, rural poverty will remain higher than urban poverty, while pockets of urban poverty are likely to persist. An analysis of future trends in poverty suggests that the high rates of rural

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<sup>8</sup> S. Zhukov says that to restore income to 1990 levels, the CARs will have to grow at between 4.5 and 5% per annum until 2015 (see: S. Zhukov, "Central Asia: Midterm Economic Prospects," in: *Central Asia and the New Global Economy*, ed. by B. Rumer, M.E. Sharpe, New York, 2000, p. 254).

<sup>9</sup> A crucial aspect of the poverty projection for 2015 was the elasticity of poverty reduction with respect to GDP growth. The reported poverty estimates are somewhat conservative considering the development experience of other Asian economies. Oil-exporting countries were assumed to have somewhat lower poverty elasticities due to the capital-intensity of oil sector and industrial production. Remittance income from overseas workers in the non-oil economies are also taken into account in making poverty assessments for the future. These projections were based on historical information for the CARs, staff estimates of structural change in the poverty-income relationship over time and poverty elasticity's for other Asian countries. On other Asian countries and other developing countries in general see: J.M. Dowling, M.R. Valenzuela, *Economic Development in Asia*, Thomson Learning, Singapore, 2004.



poverty will continue to stimulate rural to urban migration and that international migration is likely to continue at a significant rate. Even though the reduction in poverty will be substantial, some of the poorer CARs will need to devote more resources to reducing poverty by expanding current programs to fight poverty and developing new programs to address the needs of specific target groups. The development of labor-intensive sectors, such as agriculture and tourism, will also contribute to poverty reduction.

## 4. Risks

There are two fundamental sources of risks associated with the forecasts contained in this paper. The first relates to prospects for the world economy, particularly in industrial countries. The second involves the CARs themselves.

### *Risks to the global economy*

There are a number of risks associated with the forecast that could result in lower growth and poor economic performance of the world economy. Persistent higher oil prices are the most immediate threat. Higher oil prices will slow down growth in the United States and other industrial countries, which will have an adverse effect on the rest of the world through international trade. Another risk relates to future economic performance in China. Much of the income added to the world economy in the past few years was from China's rapid growth, a trend which is built into our forecast. If China is not able to slow its growth gradually, it could result in a sharp economic slowdown which could have serious repercussions on world growth and the rest of Asia.

### *Risks to the CARs*

There are several risks associated with the outlook for the CARs. Some of these risks relate to the outlook for the world economy. These include sluggish growth or a collapse in energy prices and/or weakness in the major commodity exports of the CARs, including cotton, aluminum, and gold. Terrorism is a continuing potential threat to the region, particularly where ethnic tension could surface. Political instability and poor governance pose considerable risks to the CARs' outlook. Particularly relevant is the prospect of prolonged economic and political uncertainty in the Kyrgyz Republic following the sudden change of government, political protests in Azerbaijan, and escalating tensions in Uzbekistan in the wake of the Andijan crackdown.

At the policy level, the timing of structural and policy reforms envisaged in the outlook could be delayed or postponed. These include regional cooperation arrangements in the oil and natural gas sector, which would increase revenue and reduce transit taxes, as well as general regional cooperation measures to deal with trade and transit bottlenecks. Reforms in the non-oil economies which could lift productivity, contribute to diversification of the industrial base, and increase efficiency may also be delayed. Slower economic growth or slower implementation of initiatives to address social sector issues could also have an adverse impact on the anticipated reduction in poverty.

## 5. Summary and Policy Implications

The overall outlook for Central Asia up to 2015 is positive. The region seems set to join the ranks of middle-income countries driven by robust GDP growth in excess of 7% per annum in the CARs. Furthermore, poverty will fall dramatically to about 23% of the region's population. The oil and gas sector will underlie economic prosperity alongside an emerging private manufacturing sector. At the same time, some outstanding challenges will remain. In spite of rapid growth, poverty levels will be unacceptably high in several Central Asian republics. The nascent manufacturing sector and particularly private enterprises need to be supported by business-friendly policies. Slow population growth means that the domestic market and skill base might have to be enhanced by regional cooperation and labor migration.

The realization of this positive outlook will depend upon a number of factors. Some are promoted by external influences, while others are within the realm of policymakers. There are three principal policy priorities which require initiatives at the national level, as well as regional cooperation within the CARs.

**Continued Development of the Region's Energy Resources while Further Diversifying the Economy.** On the energy side, this will require a transparent, predictable policy environment to attract continued inward investment, rationalization of power prices to reflect cost consideration, development of pipelines featuring both national and regional priorities, judicious investment in energy resources, and environmental management to best international standards.<sup>10</sup> Key priorities for industrial diversification might include: small and medium enterprise development through financial and non-financial support, attraction of export-oriented foreign investment through competitive incentives and more aggressive promotion, streamlining of business procedures, and encouraging spillovers from oil and gas industries.

**Development of Cost-Competitive Infrastructure including Regional Cooperation.** Given the distance from international markets, it is critical to improve infrastructure. Some of the projects could include: improvement of the internal and external road network; expansion, harmonization, and modernization of the railway network; investment in ICT infrastructure; and ensuring free and flexible air transport. Small and segmented domestic markets, high infrastructure development costs, transit bottlenecks, and dispersed resource endowments make regional cooperation crucial to future prosperity. Some initiatives might include: reduction of barriers to regional trade and investment, harmonization of regional customs administration, resolution of disputes over the water-energy nexus, and further cooperation to resolve problems in the transportation of energy via pipelines.

**Poverty Reduction.** The persistence of poverty requires special attention in future economic strategy. Measures to reduce poverty further might include: providing targeted provision for groups at risk, expanding the provision of micro-financing, increased expenditure on social sectors targeting the poor, and education of women. The development of labor-intensive sectors, such as agriculture and tourism, would also contribute to poverty reduction.

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<sup>10</sup> For an analysis of some of the policy issues in the oil and gas sector of Kazakhstan see: B. Khusainov, K. Berentaev, "Kazakhstan: Problems of Developing the Oil and Gas Sector and Improving the System for Taxing Subsurface Users," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (29), 2004, pp. 70-81.

## INTEGRATION PROCESSES IN CENTRAL ASIA. PROSPECTS FOR A COMMON MARKET

Gulnur RAKHMATULLINA

*Ph.D. (Econ.), principal researcher,  
Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of  
the Republic of Kazakhstan  
(Almaty, Kazakhstan)*

Globalization processes have a growing effect on the development of individual countries and the world economy, with the Central Asian states, among others, being drawn into their orbit. The advantages of globalization are realized precisely at the integration and regional levels. That is why it is so important today to implement the initiative launched by President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan for creating a Central Asian Common Market (CACM). The idea is that this market should include Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. However, an analysis of the development of their cooperation shows that integration processes in the region have not yet reached the desired intensity and that many problems of interaction between these states in the real sector of the economy and in the social and cultural spheres have not been resolved.

A key problem of economic cooperation between the Central Asian (CA) states is rational use of their water and energy resources. With this aim in view, annual agreements are concluded on guaranteed supply of coal, fuel oil and gas from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to Kyrgyzstan, while the latter undertakes to supply the agriculture of these states with water during the vegetation period. But since Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan fail to perform their obligations in full, Kyrgyzstan's thermal power stations cannot reach the desired parameters, which puts additional pressure on the Naryn hydropower system, leading to an increase in water release from the Toktogul Reservoir and to a reduction in its volume. In other words, the mechanism for mutual supply of water and energy resources is virtually inoperative. If such practices continue, the level of the Toktogul Reservoir will drop to a critical point known as "dead storage."

In addition, there are still contradictions between Astana and Tashkent over Uzbekistan's intake of water from Syr Darya in the vegetation period beyond the agreed limit and the problem of pollution of this river. The supply of water to Kazakhstan's southern regions remains one of the most important problems for our republic, which could lead to tensions in interstate relations.

In order to improve the mechanism for rational use of water and energy resources, a project for the establishment of an International Water and Energy Consortium was put on the agenda back in the days of the Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC). Unfortunately, this project is still at the discussion stage.

Problems remain in the transport sector as well, connected with the rational use of the CA countries' transit potential. For example, the not too flexible railway policy sometimes pursued by Kazakhstan (mainly regarding tariff terms) is not conducive to an expansion of trade or economic ties between the countries of the region. In view of this, Uzbekistan's transport companies have been trying to find alternative routes for freight transportation and to a certain extent have resolved this problem. That is why Tashkent's interest in the creation of a Single Transport Space has waned significantly in recent years. The existence of numerous unresolved problems and the lack of concerted ac-

tion in addressing them hinders the development of integration processes in this area of the economy. In particular, the project for the creation of an International Transport Consortium, which could help the CA states to formulate a common policy in this area and effectively develop their transit potential, has not been implemented to date.

Lack of coordination is also evident in the sphere of agriculture. Thus, in the mid-1990s Tashkent pursued a policy designed to ensure "self-sufficiency in grain." But when it comes to grain crops, Uzbekistan's climatic conditions are much worse than those in Kazakhstan. That is why the measures taken by Tashkent in this area did not yield the desired results. It would make sense for the CA states to coordinate their approaches to the development of agriculture, including their policies on regional division of labor in this sector and specialization of agricultural production. Moreover, the Central Asian countries do not use the favorable opportunities for developing the processing sector of the food industry and do not take any measures to implement the project for the establishment of an International Food Consortium.

All these trends point to the existence of serious problems in the development of integration between the CA republics and, in particular, to lack of coordination in their economic policy, which is contrary to the treaties and agreements adopted within the framework of the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO), primarily to the basic document on the creation of a Single Economic Space. So, the absence of a mechanism for implementing decisions taken at the interstate level is the main reason for the slowdown in regional integration processes.

Another factor holding back cooperation between the CA countries is the different pace of their economic development and market transformation.

The most stable rate of economic growth is recorded in Kazakhstan. Based on the results for the past few years and in the current period, Kazakhstan is among the leaders of the CIS countries in terms of GDP and industrial production growth. According to the republic's Statistics Agency, in 2004 its GDP grew by 9.4%, and industrial production, by 10.1%, and in the first quarter of 2005 the growth rates were 9.1% and 7.4%, respectively. In view of its stable pace of economic development and its efforts to create a favorable climate for foreign investment, Kazakhstan was the first CIS country to be assigned (in 2002) an investment grade rating by Moody's Investors Service; in May 2004, its foreign currency rating was upgraded from BB+ to BBB-, and its local currency rating, from BBB- to BBB.

In other Central Asian countries, economic growth is so far slower. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, growth rates in 2005 declined considerably. Whereas in 2004 its GDP grew by 7.1%, in the first quarter of 2005 it increased by only 2% (compared to the same period of the previous year), which is only a third of the figure for the first quarter of 2004 (when the increase was 6.1%). And in the first five months of 2005, GDP growth (compared to the same period of 2004) amounted to 3.3%. Industrial production in the first quarter of 2005 fell to 95.3% (108% in January-March 2004), and in the first five months of 2005, to 91.9%.

The situation in the Kyrgyzstan economy is due, in the first place, to the political events that have occurred in the republic (during the disturbances, according to experts, its economy was losing over \$1 million per day; thousands of small and medium businesses suffered huge losses from closed shops, merchandise markets and other trade and service facilities). Second, the republic has an ineffective economic structure hinging on two sectors: the electric power industry and gold mining. But there are serious problems in these sectors as well. In the electric power industry, equipment is 80% worn out; there are virtually no new generating facilities and no capital construction. In gold mining, there are big problems in the development of the Kumtor deposit. One should also note the poor development of the processing sector (primarily the food and light industry) and the tourist sector. Use of their potential with the attraction of large-scale investment could help to carry out structural changes in the country's economy and to the attainment of stable rates of growth.

In the mid-1990s, there were clear signs of regressive development in Uzbekistan as well, with a considerable worsening of the socioeconomic situation in the country. The relative economic upturn (in recent years, annual GDP growth ranged from 4% to 8%; in the first quarter of 2005, the GDP growth rate was 4.8%) has a purely extensive, resource-consuming nature.

The main factors holding back the country's economic development include slow market transformation, a high level of state regulation of the economy, which impedes the development of small and medium business, lack of favorable conditions for foreign investment, restrictive trade practices and corruption. According to the estimate of international financial organizations, macroeconomic indicators are grossly overstated (the official figures are at least twice as high as the actual figures), and declared economic growth is not accompanied by real qualitative development. In particular, living standards in the republic remain quite low, with pronounced income inequality. According to various estimates, from 40% to 80% of the country's citizens are living below the poverty line; real income per capita is 8-12 times lower than it was in the Soviet period, and the monthly wage of most employees is equivalent to \$5-\$15. Informal employment or labor activity concealed from supervisory bodies is a significant traditional source of additional household income. But whereas in the Soviet period it accounted for no more than 10-20% of total income, today its share is 25-50% or even higher. There is also growing social degradation, which manifests itself in the deprofessionalization of entire strata of the population. On the one hand, highly skilled personnel (engineers, researchers, teachers, etc.) are obliged to change their sphere of activity, joining the ranks of "shuttle" and other small traders; on the other hand, the quality of education and professional training tends to decline. The socioeconomic transformations carried out in the country have done virtually nothing to modernize the system of education, health care or the society in general. It is quite possible that the current state of affairs will persist in the medium term as well, and this is bound to lead to growing protest among a significant part of the population.<sup>1</sup>

As regards Tajikistan, in terms of per capita GDP (\$236) it is the poorest country among the former Soviet republics and one of the poorest countries in the world. The UNDP Global Human Development Report for 2003 ranks the republic among the "top priority countries" in which poverty has led to a crisis requiring close attention and use of resources of the international community. The five-year civil war, which ended in 1997, emigration of skilled specialists and lack of a favorable investment climate—such are only some of the numerous factors hindering the country's economic development. And its geographical isolation compounds the problems in the field of regional cooperation: the mountains constituting over 90% of Tajikistan's territory are a big obstacle to transport and communications.

Fiscal and economic administration is complicated by the republic's large external debt, which did not exist before Tajikistan gained independence. Virtually the entire investment budget of the state is funded out of official development assistance. By agreement with the IMF, the country's government set a limit on new borrowing at 3% of GDP; in 2005, this limit was raised to 4% (with the possibility of further review).

A key problem of economic development is the high level of corruption and organized crime. The shadow economy, mostly connected with the transit of drugs through Tajikistan, is estimated at 100% of the country's GDP. The government regards organized crime in general and drug trafficking in particular as an interstate problem whose solution requires coordinated international efforts, seeking active cooperation with foreign partners. The situation that has taken shape in the region in view of illicit drug trafficking creates many problems for Tajikistan.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See: Kazakhstan i Uzbekistan: tochki konfliktka [www.policy.kz].

<sup>2</sup> [www.undp.tj/documents/CPAP%20Rus.pdf].

In the late 1990s, the republic entered a period of economic stabilization. Over the past three years, the average annual rate of GDP growth was around 10%, but almost two-thirds of the population still live in poverty, so that a third of all adults (about 630 thousand) migrate to other countries every year in search of work. Less than 50% of rural inhabitants have access to tap water. Moreover, a significant part of the water supply system is unreliable and ineffective because of poor maintenance or, rather, lack of it. The incidence of infectious diseases and the rate of infant and maternal mortality in the republic are very high. The official average wage is \$10 per month.<sup>3</sup>

As we have already noted, the national economies of the Central Asian countries differ in terms of the pace of market transformation.

Kazakhstan, for example, is actively reforming its economy and taking measures to enhance its competitiveness. That is why the republic has become one of the first Commonwealth states to be recognized by the European Union and the United States as a market economy country.

In Uzbekistan, on the other hand, the creation of market mechanisms is at its initial stage. In particular, its economic development model is characterized by evolutionary transition to the market (without any “revolutionary leaps forward” or “shock therapy”) and continued tight control of the economy, which slows down the advance to sustainable economic growth. Strict control, a closed domestic market, and administrative and legal pressure on business prevent its efficient operation, considerably impeding the development of industrial production. Today most of the enterprises operating in the republic are unprofitable; some of them are on the brink of collapse and others operate at 15-20% of capacity (compared to 1991).<sup>4</sup> The economy is increasingly inaccessible to international trade and investment. The measures being taken by the government to create favorable conditions for foreign investment are not translated into practice, primarily in view of the lack of transparency in political and economic decision-making, restrictive trade practices, high level of corruption, and other factors.

Pressure from international financial organizations induces the Tashkent authorities to carry out market reforms and liberalize foreign economic activity. But the government prefers half-measures: either these reforms are confined to the initial stage or parallel steps are taken to create conditions under which the economic transformations have no real significance. Such an approach is explained by the fact that today Uzbekistan lacks the resources required to finance the reforms and minimize the negative effects of the “shock therapy” period in the social sphere. There was a time when market reforms could be carried out at minimal social cost, but the republic’s authorities missed that opportunity. In current conditions, both economic transformations and a retention of the administrative-command model could entail a serious worsening of the socioeconomic situation.

The differences in the pace of market transformation and in the development models of the CA countries tend to limit mutual access for their industrial, commercial, financial and insurance capital to the markets of partner states, reduce the effectiveness of economic ties, and impede the advance to deeper integration forms and mechanisms. And the low level of their economic interaction becomes the main factor behind the ineffective development of mutual trade.

The increase in trade between the CA republics is also impeded by Uzbekistan’s special policy serving to restrict mutual trade: reduction in the range of goods involved in trade operations, exceptions to the free trade regime (for example, such exceptions in relations with Kazakhstan cover more than 100 items) and, as a result, the establishment of high rates of customs duties on imports and excise taxes, a ban on the export of certain goods, and restrictions on the registration of contracts between the economic entities of these states.

<sup>3</sup> [www.undp.tj/documents/CPAP%20Rus.pdf].

<sup>4</sup> See: Kazakhstan i Uzbekistan: tochki konflikta.

As a result, trade and economic relations between the CA countries are mostly confined to supply of energy resources and transit of goods. Mutual exports and imports of manufactures and food are very limited. For example, the CA countries account for only 2% of Kazakhstan's trade turnover, which is yet another indication of the untapped potential of mutual trade. It is true that in recent years a positive trend has been recorded in this area: in 2003, Kazakhstan's trade with Kyrgyzstan increased by 47%, and in 2004, by 48.4%; our republic's trade with Tajikistan increased by 69% and 66%, respectively, and with Uzbekistan, by 16% and 44%. However, the potential of the CA countries allows a higher level of mutual trade, because in many respects their economies are complementary, providing opportunities for widening the range of goods in their trade with each other. The current situation shows that there are many unresolved problems in this area.

Little progress has been made in regional investment cooperation as well. In Uzbekistan, for example, there are only about 50 enterprises with Kazakhstan capital (1.5%), which is primarily due to Tashkent's policy of limiting trade and economic ties with neighboring states. Similarly, the share of Kazakhstan enterprises is just as low in Kyrgyzstan (a considerable reduction in investment activity in this country is explained by the political events of the first half of 2005) and in Tajikistan, where Kazakhstan investments could be used, in our opinion, in the development of the energy sector, including the construction of the Sangtudin Hydroelectric Plant.

So, economic cooperation among the Central Asian states is clearly marking time. The level of implementation of the decisions being taken remains low, which means that these states are repeating the mistakes of the CIS, where many documents have been signed but few have been actually translated into practice.

On many issues a special position is adopted by Uzbekistan, whose active involvement is crucial to the effective development of integration processes in the region. In practice, the solution of problems relating to the development of cooperation ties unfortunately boils down to mutual apprehensions and mistrust instead of mutually beneficial cooperation.

That is why the implementation of the initiative to establish a Central Asian Common Market should be regarded primarily in the light of efforts to create a truly functioning free trade area, develop business and investment cooperation, pursue a concerted customs, tax and tariff policy, harmonize monetary and exchange relations, and take active measures to unify national legislation.

In order to implement the free trade regime, it would make sense to take measures to:

- carry out the decisions taken within the CACO framework on abolishing customs duties, taxes and charges, quantitative and other restrictions;
- harmonize the customs legislation of the common market countries, tariff and nontariff regulation mechanisms;
- ensure compliance with the principles of free transit.

Other major factors in the creation of a common market include harmonization of the macroeconomic policies of CA states and concerted action in carrying out economic reforms. In our view, concrete measures should be taken to even out the pace of market transformation in the economies of these countries and to create conditions for advancing toward a common market of goods and services. Priority here should be given to deepening cooperation in the financial and monetary spheres, ensuring free movement of capital and favorable conditions for the activities of business entities of the member countries, and setting up joint ventures and financial-industrial groups. Such measures will help to develop relations in the real sector of the economy and to create common markets of energy resources, transportation services and agricultural products. It is also important to develop mechanisms for the operation of sectoral consortia (water and energy, transport and food) and the respective conceptual

approaches. In particular, the Concept of an International Water and Energy Consortium should provide for the development of a joint balance for managing the region's water, fuel and energy resources, in which it is necessary to estimate the member states' demand for these resources and the opportunities for covering their shortages, formulate a common approach to dealing with the threats of border area flooding and to the performance of joint shore protection works, and project measures to improve water quality and address environmental problems.

In the Concept of an International Transport Consortium, it is necessary to project measures for developing rail and road transport routes, the transit potential of the member states and the appropriate branch of engineering. It is very important to concert the principles of customs, tax and tariff policy in the field of transport. In customs policy, for example, concrete measures should be taken to simplify customs clearance and control procedures at internal borders, to ensure unimpeded freight transportation between these countries and transit through their territories, and to implement the "two borders one stop" principle.

In the sphere of taxes, the member countries should develop a flexible taxation system for their transport companies in order to reduce tariffs on all kinds of transport. In the field of tariff policy, it is important to even out domestic and international railroad rates, since different rates hinder the development of interstate traffic and lead to a higher transport component in the final price of products. Over the long term, it will probably be necessary to develop a single tariff policy within the CACM framework, and also to take measures to unify and harmonize the member countries' transport legislation and to create appropriate legal conditions.

The implementation of the Transport Consortium Concept should help to develop the transit potential of the Central Asian Common Market countries, to extend their trade and economic ties within the CACM and their relations with their major trading partners outside the region (Russia, China, countries of the APR, EU, Middle East, etc.), to modernize their transportation infrastructure and develop related industries, to raise the level of employment (especially in areas along the transportation corridors) and to create a single transport space.

In the Concept of an International Food Consortium, it is necessary, in our view, to lay down guidelines for a concerted agroindustrial policy designed to ensure the member countries' food security. The implementation of these guidelines presupposes the development of concrete measures to enhance the competitiveness of the agricultural sector in the CA republics through the application of advanced technology in crop and livestock production, attraction of foreign investment, use of foreign experience, creation of interstate clusters for the production of foodstuffs (rice, grain, meat and dairy products, juices, canned fruits and vegetables) and development of an innovative infrastructure. Overall, a solution of these problems should help to enhance the competitiveness of agriculture in the CA countries, to fill their consumer market with high-quality products and, in the long run, to create a common agricultural market.

So, the development of economic cooperation between the Central Asian countries with the establishment of an effectively functioning free trade area is an important stage on the road to a common market, which will help to ensure sustainable development of the member countries and their successful integration into the world community, bring them closer to a single economic space, raise living standards, and ensure stability and security in Central Asia.



## THE IMF IN GEORGIA: EVALUATING THE FUND'S UNIQUE VISION OF ECONOMIC SUCCESS

Lasha TCHANTOURIDZÉ

Adjunct Professor of Politics,  
Research Associate, Center for Defense and  
Security Studies, the University of Manitoba  
(Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada)

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

Many things have changed in Georgia after the Rose Revolution of November 2003. Certain changes are very positive and praiseworthy, such as the abolition of deeply corrupt and universally hated traffic police, and its replacement with the Western style patrol police. Reforms in the armed forces are also heading toward a positive direction. However, the economy does not seem to be the new government's priority. The leader of the Rose Revolution and the current president of Georgia Mikhail Saakashvili has made it clear a number of times that he was not interested in solving economic problems of the country as much he was interested in dealing with security and defense issues. When presenting a newly composed government in February 2005, Saakashvili was quoted by saying: "I can build the army, I can build the police, but development of the economy is up to the entire society."<sup>1</sup> Prior to that President of Georgia voiced similar sentiments at his address to the country's parliament.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, compared to reforms in the military and law enforcement agencies economic reforms in Georgia have fallen far behind. This was partially acknowledged by Saakashvili in his above-mentioned address to the Parliament. According

to Mr. Demur Giorkhelidze, a Georgian economist, no one in the Georgian government has an idea whether the country has a general program dealing with the economy or not. Instead, some government officials have "fragmented" views about certain issues related to the economy.<sup>3</sup> The government of Georgia has no master plan for economic development and rehabilitation. In any case, it has no published plan or program whatsoever.

A superficial review of the country's economic performance in recent years does not produce a full picture. Georgia has been both praised and criticized for its economic reforms or the lack thereof. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has given positive evaluations to the Georgian economy. In a statement published on 13 June, 2005, Rodrigo de Rato, Managing Director of the IMF, declared that Georgia has "accelerated the transition to an open, market-based economy, most visibly in the reform of the tax code..."<sup>4</sup> At the same time, according to the annual publication by the U.S. based Heritage Foundation in cooperation with *The Wall Street Journal*, 2005 *Index of Economic Freedom*, Georgia remains in

<sup>1</sup> "Saakashvili Speaks of Successes, Presents New Cabinet," *civil.ge* [www.civil.ge], 15 February, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> See: "Saakashvili Addressed the Nation, Parliament," *civil.ge* [www.civil.ge], 10 February, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> See: "Sakartvelos mosaxleobis naxevarze meti gharibia," *Rezonansi*, No. 260, 29 September, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> "Statement by IMF Managing Director Rodrigo de Rato at the Conclusion of His Visit to Georgia," The International Monetary Fund [http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2005/pr05140.htm].

the group of “mostly unfree” countries, with its index worsening in 2005. The publication lowered Georgia’s index by 0.15 points compared to 2004, and gave it the 100th spot on the list of 161 countries.<sup>5</sup> In September 2005, the World Bank named Georgia among the top reformers in the world, and ranked it number one among the former Soviet states, and number two globally (after Serbia and Montenegro).<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, another U.S. based think-tank, the Cato Institute, which monitors economic freedoms around the world, ranks Georgia the 66th in the world among the 127 countries sur-

<sup>5</sup> See: *2005 Index of Economic Freedom*, The Heritage Foundation [http://www.heritage.org/research/features/index/countries.cfm].

<sup>6</sup> See: “Doing Business in 2006: CIS Economies Pick Up the Pace of Reform,” The World Bank news section, 12 September, 2005 [www.worldbank.org].

veyed.<sup>7</sup> The data used by the Cato Institute was collected in 2003, and since then a number of things have changed negatively for the Georgian economy.

Tbilisi follows IMF recommendations without reservations. This is the reason why the IMF and the World Bank are praising Georgia. That does not, however, translate into improved economic conditions and alleviation of poverty. The latter remains especially acute problem for Georgia—with a negligible number of families below the poverty line in 1991, now more than 50 percent of the population lives in deep poverty, according to the World Bank itself.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See: “Economic Freedom of the World,” The Cato Institute [http://www.cato.org/pubs/efw].

<sup>8</sup> See: “Sakartvelos mosaxleobis naxevarze meti gharibia.”

## Georgia’s Economy and Finances

The country’s foreign debt has increased to more than \$1,700 million by the beginning of 2005. It has stabilized at that level in 2005, but likely to increase further as Georgia will get more loans from the IMF, World Bank, and other sources, as an IMF poster boy for economic reforms.<sup>9</sup> This is a huge amount for a country with the population of around 4 million people.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, Georgia’s trade deficit in the first six months of 2005 was more than \$500 million, and it reached \$733 million by the end of August 2005.<sup>11</sup> The country is not making hard currency while its debt to foreign creditors is set to grow further. In September 2005, the World Bank approved another cache of loans for Georgia in the amount of \$143 million for the period of 2006-2009.<sup>12</sup> The loan is earmarked for economic growth, job creation, and strengthening of the public sector. While the fulfillment of these projects is a theoretical possibility, Georgia faces a real danger of falling into a debt spiral, which will further undermine the country’s economic base. The current debt accumulated over 14 year period since 1991,

<sup>9</sup> See: *Bulletin of Monetary and Banking Statistics (January-August 2005)*, The National Bank of Georgia [http://www.nbg.gov.ge/].

<sup>10</sup> Various sources estimate Georgia’s population to be more than 5 million. This figure derives from the 1989 Soviet census, and now seems to be much exaggerated. At the 1989 census, Georgian authorities artificially inflated population numbers of their republic to get higher allocation of funds from Moscow—the Soviet system depended on the centralized distribution of funds for almost all aspects of life. Further, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, out-migration from Georgia achieved staggering proportions. More conservative estimates put the number of those who left the country at one million. Finally, Georgia’s separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia also experience demographic problems of their own. More than 300 thousand people have been either expelled or left Abkhazia and South Ossetia since 1991, most of them were Georgians the majority of whom remained in Georgia, but among them were ethnic minorities as well (Jews, Greeks, Ukrainians, Russians), and there were Ossetians who left the Tskhinvali and other regions for the Russian Federation. Therefore, it is unlikely that the population of Georgia currently is much higher than 4 million people.

<sup>11</sup> See: *Bulletin of Monetary and Banking Statistics (January-August 2005)*.

<sup>12</sup> See: “World Bank Approves USD 143 Million for Georgia,” *civil.ge*, [www.civil.ge], 16 September, 2005.

with the rate of more than \$120 million a year. Less than 10 percent of this amount would have been sufficient to improve job creation and eradicate poverty, had they been spent properly. Georgia's debt to GDP ratio reached 44 percent in 2003, but it decreased to 34 percent by the beginning of 2004,<sup>13</sup> and remains within 35-40 percent range in 2005.

It is noteworthy that Georgia's trade deficit almost doubled during Saakashvili's first year in office. In 2004, Georgia's trade deficit was \$1,199 million, compared to \$675 million in 2003. According to the first seven month figures of 2005 (\$733 million), the trade deficit is very likely to increase by the end of 2005.<sup>14</sup> Georgia's trade deficit is somewhat off-set by grants and aid money from foreign donors, plus Georgia has a positive balance in service trade. Therefore, the current account deficit even decreased in 2004 compared to 2003 from \$346 million to \$308 million.<sup>15</sup> What should be noted here is that the trade deficit figures only reflect the so-called "registered trade," while smuggling and extra-legal (non-registered) trade activity is very widespread in Georgia. In Tbilisi's wholesale markets and bazaars one could see an assortment of smuggled goods, as well as goods imported by shuttle traders from Azerbaijan, Turkey, Russia, Syria, China, and other countries. Such non-registered trade in Georgia (also common in other post-Soviet states) is mostly comprised of such imported items as alcohol, tobacco, clothing, jewelry, etc. Further problems in proper accounting are presented by still corrupt customs officials, who could register lesser values for imported goods (in exchange for bribes, of course).

A trade deficit itself may not be a bad thing for a developed industrialized country. According to a conventional (neo-liberal) view, a country with a trade deficit normally experiences a rise in direct foreign investments.<sup>16</sup> At least, this is an IMF principle, which also serves as a "comfort food" for this organization when it praises poor developing countries with large trade deficits. Theory of trade deficits promoting investments definitely works for the United States—the U.S. currency being the most widespread means of exchange in the world. It may work for industrialized countries with hard currencies. However, it is very unlikely to ever work in poor developing countries. Why would anyone keep soft currency or invest large sums in an unstable environment, especially these days when everything from natural disasters to terrorists affect smaller economies on daily bases? As it was noted above, Georgia's trade deficit almost doubled from 2003 to 2004. At the same time, foreign direct investments increased only marginally from \$340 million in 2003 to \$499 million in 2004.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, this increase was due to only one project: the five billion dollar Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. The pipeline, which runs from Azerbaijan's Baku to Turkey's Mediterranean Ceyhan, was completed in 2005, and the numbers for foreign direct investments in Georgia for 2005 are due to decline.

In June 2005, the International Monetary Fund cited "the real GDP growth of 6.2 percent in 2004" (compared to the average of 4.9 percent from 1998 to 2003, the last five years of Mr. Shevardnadze's rule).<sup>18</sup> However, with growing foreign debt and disproportionately large trade deficit for a small country, this economic growth is mostly fuelled through loans and aid coming from foreign sources. According to the owner and publisher of the *Rezonansi*, a leading Georgian newspaper, there is almost no internal investment and business development in the country.<sup>19</sup> Georgia experienced growth

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<sup>13</sup> See: "Annual Reports" for 2003 and 2004, The National Bank of Georgia.

<sup>14</sup> See: *Bulletin of Monetary and Banking Statistics (January-August 2005)*; "Annual Reports" for 2003 and 2004.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>16</sup> See: Th.D. Lairson, D. Skidmore, *International Political Economy: The Struggle for Power and Wealth*, Thomson Wadsworth, Toronto, 2003, p. 24.

<sup>17</sup> See: *Bulletin of Monetary and Banking Statistics (January-August 2005)*.

<sup>18</sup> "Analysis of Recent Growth in Low-Income CIS Countries," *IMF Working Paper* No. 04/151, p. 7 [www.imf.org]; "IMF Mission Assesses Fiscal Situation in Georgia," *civil.ge*, 10 June, 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Mr. Zurab Macharadze, Tbilisi, 25 August, 2005.

in domestic business enterprises in 1997-1999, but since then there has been a steady decline, and the revolutionary regime of Mr. Saakashvili has not been able to reverse it. It should also be noted that the sustained growth in GDP numbers since 1998 may be due to other factors than government policies or foreign direct investments. According to Ariel Cohen of the Heritage Foundation, "close to 1 million Georgians are repatriating their earnings to their homeland to the tune of up to one-fourth of Georgian GDP."<sup>20</sup>

Government's reconstruction projects mostly include nonproductive infrastructure: rebuilding roads, repainting buildings, and repairing schools. Although all these help to improve basic infrastructure of the country, and the image it presents to the visitors, they are not nearly enough to address the real issues of economic devastation, deep poverty and hardship. Georgian regions outside Tbilisi have suffered a tremendous economic decline since the beginning of the 1990s. The economic situation has got even worse with the Saakashvili administration, with unemployment rising and residents of rural areas getting further impoverished. According to residents of the Guria Region in western Georgia, they mostly survive through subsistence farming, and whatever little cash they make comes from their hard work for very little pay during the tourist season in summer.<sup>21</sup> Guria was one of the wealthiest regions in Georgia and the former Soviet Union; now vast majority of its residents make less than one dollar a day. Overall, there is a large gap between the living standards in Tbilisi and rural Georgia. Vast majority of Georgia's poor population resides in rural areas and small towns.<sup>22</sup>

According to Georgian newspaper and TV reports, agricultural sector in the country faces a serious crisis.<sup>23</sup> There is a danger that farmers and peasants in eastern Georgia will abandon the tradition of grape harvesting, which is thousands of years old.<sup>24</sup> In 2004, a lot of grape harvest went to waste, and in 2005 the farmers were facing the same prospect. Georgia abandoned agricultural subsidies as it was demanded by the IMF and the World Trade Organization (WTO). In western Georgia similar problems exist for growers of citrus cultures, especially in the Ajaria Autonomous Republic, which until last spring was under authoritarian rule of Mr. Aslan Abashidze. Mr. Abashidze, who is in self-imposed exile in Moscow, was deposed through the efforts of local population and pressure from Tbilisi. The people of Ajaria invested a lot of hope and trust into the new government of the region appointed by Mr. Saakashvili. However, so far this government delivered very little to rural residents of the autonomous region.

To escape hardship and poverty rural population pursues illegal and extralegal logging operations. Georgia as a mountainous country is wealthy with forests and rivers. However, often clear-cut logging operations are conducted without any planning and nearby densely populated villages. This contributes to the rise of flooding and landslides in the country. The year of 2005 witnessed the highest number of major floods and landslides in Georgia in recent memory. In spring, the second largest city, Kutaisi was flooded by rising waters. In spring and summer flooding and landslides were experienced in almost all parts of Georgia. In Svaneti, a regional center Lentekhi was almost completely destroyed, and some villages were fully erased from the map. In August, major

<sup>20</sup> A. Cohen, "Our Challenge in Georgia," The Heritage Foundation [<http://new.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ed011504a.cfm>].

<sup>21</sup> Interviews with Guria residents in Poti, Ozurgeti, and Lanchkhuti districts, July 2005.

<sup>22</sup> According to City of Tbilisi officials, no one really knows what is the current population of Tbilisi. Conservative estimates put it around 50 percent of the country's total.

<sup>23</sup> TV and newspaper reports in September 2005.

<sup>24</sup> The Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia tried to convince the grape farmers that their lot will improve "next year." They are projecting increased wine exports for 2006. The grape harvest in 2005 was more than 145 thousand tons in the Kakheti Region only, while winemakers only need about 70 thousand tons (see: "Kurdzeni iafdeba," *Rezonansi*, No. 242, 11 September, 2005).

floods and landslides were registered in Guria and Ajaria.<sup>25</sup> Ironically, in one case in Guria floods and landslides damaged and destroyed property of local small logging companies.<sup>26</sup> Illegal logging is fueled by demands in the neighboring Turkey, very cheap Georgian labor, and rising local demand for fire wood. Increasing number of city residents, and vast majority of rural residents use fire wood for winter heating.<sup>27</sup> Eighty percent of residents in Georgian regions do not have access to natural gas—either it is not available or they cannot afford it.<sup>28</sup> Natural gas will become even more expensive before this winter: to retaliate for reneged privatization of the Georgian gas pipeline system, the Russian gas giant Gazprom is planning to double the price for natural gas it is supplying to Georgia.<sup>29</sup>

Hardship and economic devastation is accompanied by the spread of illiteracy and crime. Many families in rural areas cannot afford to send children to school—they do not have winter shoes and/or clothing, do not have access to school supplies or children have to work to support their families. Georgia had close to 100 percent literacy in the beginning of the 1990s. According to the research published by the Prime-News agency in July 2005, currently about 20 percent of young people cannot read and write.<sup>30</sup> Crime is on the rise as well. A significant number of crimes committed are basically thefts of food, and minor property—anything that could be sold at local markets for few laris (\$1 equals to 1.8 lari). According to newspaper reports, violence among family members is rising significantly, and the major cause of this is quarrel for money or material resources.<sup>31</sup> According to the Ministry of Interior, in 2004 there were 302 murders registered in Georgia, and in the first three months of 2005 there were 65 murders. The Ministry of the Interior does not offer separate statistics for domestic violence, but Georgian news-media estimates that a large number of these murders are committed among family members vying for limited resources.<sup>32</sup>

Despite all these, there are developments that give reasons for optimism. The signing of a compact between the governments of the United States and Georgia under the U.S. sponsored Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) on 12 September, 2005, during the visit of the President of Georgia to the United States for the U.N. summit, will no doubt help to alleviate certain problems that mainly stem from bad administrative and managerial decisions by the Georgian government. For instance, the compact which allocates more than \$295 million over a five-year period, prohibits selling of the main Georgian gas pipeline, and earmarks funds, about \$49 million for its rehabilitation. Earlier in 2005, the Georgian government was getting ready to sell this strategic pipeline to the Russian *Gazprom*.<sup>33</sup>

The compact, which also addresses problems of economic development of Georgian regions, and private enterprises, is the most important economic aid project offered to Georgia since its gain-

<sup>25</sup> Newly appointed governor of Guria, Mr. Irakli Giorgadze has pointed out that the authorities are aware of the problems related to illegal loggings, and that they will address it in due time. "This country was looted for 14 years, and now you cannot demand it to be restored in one," he told *Guria-News* weekly (see: "Irakli Giorgadze: khe-tkis problema mogvarebulia..." *Guria-News* weekly, No. 32-33, 13 September, 2005.

<sup>26</sup> Georgian TV reports, 25-27 August, 2005.

<sup>27</sup> See: "Sakartveloshi cxovreba 30-40 protsentit gadzvirdeba: mosaxleoba masobrivad sheshis ghumelze gadadis," *Rezonansi*, No. 243, 12 September, 2005.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>29</sup> See: "Ruseti bunebriv airs gvidzvirebs," *Akhali Taoba* weekly, No. 251, 11-17 September, 2005.

<sup>30</sup> See: "15 Years Old Boy Cannot Afford Himself To Get Education," The Prime-News agency [<http://eng.primenewsonline.com/?c=134&a=1588>], 27 July, 2005.

<sup>31</sup> See: "Zaza lomidzem sakutar dedas keli gamochra," *Akhali Taoba* weekly, No. 250, 10 September, 2005; "Roman potskhverashvilma shelaparakebisas sakutari dzma mokla," *Akhali Taoba* weekly, No. 253, 13 September, 2005.

<sup>32</sup> See: "Sakartveloshi ojaxuri mkvlelobebis faqtebi katastrofulad matulobs: khashurshi shvelma dedas keli gamochra, terjolashi dzmam dzma sanadiro topit mokla," *Rezonansi*, No. 244, 13 September, 2005.

<sup>33</sup> See: "Millennium Challenge Corporation Signs \$295.3 Million Compact with Georgia." For more detailed information on the MCC Georgia program, and information about the Millennium Challenge Program itself, see: [<http://www.mca.gov/>].

ing independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. In its scope and magnitude, the Millennium Challenge Corporation is the most important global economic initiative by the U.S. government since the creation of the Bretton Woods system in 1945. The success of the program will depend on the effective management of the projects not only in Georgia but in other beneficiaries of the MCC: these nations are not only very poor, they are also very corrupt.<sup>34</sup>

## Fiscal and Monetary Policies

In 2004, the Georgian government under Saakashvili initiated tax reforms that lifted some burden from business. A number of business taxes were either combined or eliminated altogether. However, the new government was not able to reduce by much the biggest burden businesses have to carry, the European style value added tax. From the mid-1990s, at the insistence by the IMF, the value added tax was 20 percent. The Saakashvili team had promised prior to reduce this tax, but after they were elected they only managed to reduce it by 2 percent. The IMF simply did not allow a further reduction.<sup>35</sup> The IMF pushed such a high tax in the mid-1990s, amid the lack of basic market structures and the absence of necessary legal and political frameworks. Such rushed policies and exaggerated expectations contributed to social tensions, impeded capital accumulation, and worsened allocation of savings.<sup>36</sup>

The value added tax is the single biggest source of tax evasion and extralegal economic activity in Georgia. For a number of years now, corrupt officials and private entrepreneurs have devised a number of illegal schemes that allow most businesses not to pay value added tax or to pay it partially or to get refunds where no refund is due. Value added tax may be working in European countries, but in Georgia's tax system it has been the single biggest disaster since 1991. Value added tax also discourages many small businesses to register their activity, and to pursue their business through legal channels. Under the previous government headed by Mr. Shevardnadze, Georgian extralegal economy was estimated at 50 to 60 percent of its GDP.<sup>37</sup> The levels are not as high anymore; however, it is clear that a considerable portion of Georgian economic activity is still outside the legal system. Every private enterprise in Georgia, big or small, has some kind of loophole, scheme or a "roof" to reduce its tax burden.<sup>38</sup>

Mainly because of widespread extralegal business activity, Georgian banks are not very eager to loan funds to upstart businesses. Bank interest rates are very high in the country, again a policy advised and supported by the IMF. Annual interest rates range between 16 and 24 percent. At the same

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<sup>34</sup> Besides Georgia, MCC has signed Compacts with Madagascar, Cape Verde, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

<sup>35</sup> According to Professor Joseph Stiglitz, a Nobel Prize winner in Economics, and former Vice-President of the World Bank, the IMF is very fond of such taxes, since they are regarded as sure ways to raise revenues (see: J.E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003).

<sup>36</sup> See: O. Kandelaki, "Georgia: Economic Policy After the 'Revolution of Roses,'" *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (29), 2004.

<sup>37</sup> See: H. de Soto, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*, Basic Books, New York, 2000, p. 69.

<sup>38</sup> The institution of the "roof" or "krysha" in Russian, are a sets of arrangements between a business or a group of businesses and influential politicians or civil servants. According to such arrangements, government officials provide a cover for businesses under their protection. Such covers could protect businesses from warranted or unwarranted investigations, harassments, etc. by government agencies. This institution in Georgia is not nearly as big and violent as it is in Russia, where "roofs" are needed to protect businesses from both government agencies, and organized crime.

time, banks pay around 10 percent a year on deposits (held for a year, on longer-term deposits interest rates are higher). IMF's "wisdom" here is obvious: it is believed that higher interest rates on savings will convince people to save more, and it also will attract foreign investors. Indeed, high interest rates on savings partially fulfilled such sentiments, savings rates in Georgia have risen over the last ten years; however, there is no increase in the interest of foreign investors to keep savings in Georgian banks or to invest in anything for that matter.<sup>39</sup>

At the same time, in the existing climate of economic decline and poverty, small and medium size businesses have very hard time to raise funds and create jobs. High taxes combined with high interest rates on bank loans do not favor small and medium manufacturing businesses. The most widespread type of economic activity in Georgia is trading, namely shuttle trading. Small and medium size merchants flood Georgian markets with cheap goods from Turkey, Syria, China, Russia and some other countries. Such shipments could change hands a number of times before the goods reach consumers, with each pair of hands making a small profit. Trading is advantageous for entrepreneurs since they could get away from customs and tax officials after paying small amounts in bribes, if necessary. Exporters do not own shops or other expensive infrastructure, instead they sell their goods to tens of thousands of small shop traders who are only happy to sell the products and make a couple of dollars of profit a day. Anyone who owns a more or less large enterprise in a fixed location could become subject to constant shakedowns by various government agencies (of course, in the absence of a proper "roof").

Such government sanctioned shakedowns intensified under the present Georgian government. Presumably, they have been conducted to recover unpaid or concealed taxes. Georgia's budgetary surplus has been largely due to such operations conducted by much feared financial police of Georgia. The other major source of the increase in budgetary income is the fact that taxes collected in Ajaria do not anymore end up in the pockets of the Abashidze clan.

Georgian customs and tax authorities, in cooperation with the financial police, occasionally initiate new forms of tax collection that are normally illegal. For instance, in August 2005, they started charging one thousand laris (about \$560) per cubic meter of imported goods at the country's land entry points. This meant that an entrepreneur importing soft toys for which he had paid around \$3 per cubic meter, had to pay \$560 at the customs.<sup>40</sup> It has not become clear yet who initiated this customs duty. The rumors had it that the new duty was invented by the financial police. Cases of the invented one thousand lari duty were widely reported by Georgian media, to the extent that Georgia's ombudsman got involved in the case. Such fiscal innovations are clearly illegal under the Georgian Tax Code, but in weird ways they do take place. Importers normally do not go to courts for they know that the judges are useless—they basically do whatever high executive government officials tell them to do. There are other kinds of abuses by tax and customs officials.<sup>41</sup> State sanctioned shakedowns of exporters,

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<sup>39</sup> See: *Bulletin of Monetary and Banking Statistics (January-August 2005)*.

<sup>40</sup> Interviews with Georgian business people, end of August 2005. The importer brought a container of soft toys from China. His entry point to Georgia was Poti, a sea port at the Black Sea. There he was asked to pay GL 1,000 (\$560) duty per cubic meter of imported goods, for which he paid approximately GL 4 (\$2.20) in China. The importer knew this demand was illegal, and probably an innovation of local customs officials. He decided to clear customs in the capital city, Tbilisi, which is legal under Georgian law. However, he was asked to pay the same duty in Tbilisi. Unable to meet such demands, the importer decided to keep the imported goods at a customs terminal. Subsequently he cleared customs through his friend, a government official, who negotiated a duty equaled to 35 percent of the product value (an average import duty in Georgia).

<sup>41</sup> Interviews with Georgian business people, and government officials. Customs officials frequently exaggerate the value of imported products. In one case, a businessman was importing blankets. He had paid for each blanket approximately GL 2 (\$1.11), but the product was evaluated at GL 35 (\$19.4) by Georgian customs (although such blankets retail for GL 7 (\$3.90) each in Georgian shops). Therefore, the importer was required to pay GL 12.25 (\$6.80) duty per GL 2 blanket, which made no economic sense. Unable to meet such demands, the importer offered the blankets to the state, he ex-

normally foreigners taking souvenirs abroad, are also common.<sup>42</sup> It is clear that the IMF never studied tax and customs practices in Georgia, but offered its praises noted above based on the data supplied by the government. The main result of innovative approaches by Georgian tax and customs officials is a four kilometer long truck line-up on the Turkish side of the Georgian-Turkish border in Sarpi. A more general implication of such fiscal innovations is the message that business activity in Georgia still depends on whims of high-level officials with wild imagination.

## Real Estate

In 2004-2005, Georgian banks have been mostly funding real estate development projects in Tbilisi, the capital city of Georgia. Real estate prices have risen considerably, and in some cases reached astronomical levels for a poor country. Real estate is especially expensive in Tbilisi, where the price for a new apartment reached \$1,500 per square meter. Single family housing is even more expensive. Banks are investing heavily in new real estate projects, and in more prestigious older areas of the city, where it is believed the demand for residential and commercial real estate will rise in the future. If Georgian banks get heavily dependent on such real estate projects, expectations may become unrealistic and this potential real estate bubble could drag down the whole banking system of the country.

Real estate speculation in Tbilisi is further fuelled by the presence of many residential buildings that had to be condemned many years ago. Buildings that are more than hundred years old in hilly areas of Tbilisi are damaged, some of them heavily, and all of them are still occupied. Some of these buildings are missing walls or have huge cracks in ceilings and walls. Tbilisi is located in a seismic area, and the next big earthquake will destroy these buildings, and produce hundreds of casualties. Real estate developers and banks expect that the national or the city government would step in and relocate people from the damaged buildings. If that happens the vacated property would become available for new developments. In September 2005, two damaged buildings collapsed in Tbilisi, with few casualties. The authorities currently do not seem have any program to relocate residents or to allow banks and developers to rebuild damaged areas. The previous mayor of Tbilisi, who was removed by President Saakashvili in June 2005, had a plan developed to relocate residents from damaged buildings with proper compensation. However, with his ouster this plan has died.<sup>43</sup>

## Concluding Remarks

In the first half of the 1990s, Georgian economy declined sharply, with the GDP indices falling more than 30 percent every year from 1992 to 1995, and whopping levels of inflation that turned into wild hyperinflation of 1994. Inflationary processes stabilized in 1995, after the introduction of lari, the new Georgian currency. For the ten years of its existence, lari remained very stable. Georgia has followed very closely to the policy recommendations it got from the IMF and the World Bank. These

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pressed his willingness to donate the imported blankets to some worthy cause. Georgian customs refused to accept the donation. In the end, the importer cleared the customs through an influential friend, who negotiated the price down to GL 8, which was still higher than the retail value of the product, but much better than the original demand.

<sup>42</sup> Such cases were reported by an English language Georgian *Business Week* in July and August 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with the Deputy Chief of City of Tbilisi Service Department, 1 October, 2005.



institutions pay a lot of credence to financial and economic austerity. However, the stable currency and austere policies have not changed much for vast majority of Georgian citizens. The National Bank of Georgia, the country's central bank, has been obsessed with inflation, just like most Western and IMF supported central banks around the world. This obsession at times goes too far. From 2001 to 2004, the country's monthly consumer price index dropped a number of times,<sup>44</sup> while such commodities as fuel, housing, tuition have been steadily increasing in prices. Such deflationary tendencies changed more recently—now Georgia is on a steady inflationary curve (so far it remains in single digits), which is not great but much better than deflation.

Georgia has served as an example for IMF's economic reform programs. Tbilisi and other capitals of developing and poor countries need IMF's positive evaluations in order to present themselves in "pro-business" or "pro-Western" light. This is the main reason why high government officials in Georgia, even those who disagree with the IMF, do not criticize the organization. Criticism has been voiced, however, to the displeasure of the IMF.<sup>45</sup>

Georgians have invested a lot of hope into the country's new leadership. President Saakashvili and his team have to pay more attention to the economy, if they want to justify that investment. So far nothing much has been done in the country to alleviate acute poverty and hopelessness. Georgia's youth is still hoping to "go West"—in a random poll among young Tbilisi residents by TV channel *Mze* conducted in July 2005, all respondents indicated that one of their main goals in life was to emigrate to the West.

The economic situation in Georgia is far from being satisfactory. By the World Bank's own estimates, for the next ten years Georgia will not be able to reduce its poverty levels even by half.<sup>46</sup> Despite such dire predictions, the country's leadership has to do more to give future generations hope, and provide basics for its population. For this they need not follow blindly policy recommendations from the IMF or elsewhere, but the government has to develop its own industrial and trade policies to remedy Georgia's abysmal foreign trade performance. Even if society could build the economy, the government has to guide it through promoting the manufacturing cycle and exports. No country with a large trade deficit has ever developed into a better society, and Georgia will be no exception.

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<sup>44</sup> See: *Bulletin of Monetary and Banking Statistics (January-August 2005)*.

<sup>45</sup> A former Minister of the Economy of Georgia, 1994-2000, Vladimer Papava has provided critical examination of IMF's activities in Georgia in his "On the Role of the International Monetary Fund in the Post-Communist Transformation of Georgia," *Emerging Markets, Finance, and Trade*, Vol. 39, No. 5, 2003; and *Splendours and Miseries of the IMF in Post-Communist Georgia*, Laredo, TX: we-publish.com, 2003.

<sup>46</sup> See: "The WB's Forecasts are Not Consoling," Prime-News Agency [www.primenewsonline.com], 29 September, 2005.

ETHNIC RELATIONS AND  
POPULATION MIGRATION**MIGRATION  
IN THE MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS  
OF EURASIA:  
PAST AND PRESENT**  
*(Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan,  
and Pakistan)*

Saodat OLIMOVA

*Ph.D. (Hist.),  
researcher at the SHARQ Scientific-Research Center  
(Dushanbe, Tajikistan)*

Pamiro-Alai, Tien Shan, Hindukush, Karakorum, and the Himalayas are not only the highest mountain systems on Earth located in the heart of Eurasia, they are also the place of residence of Kyrgyz, Tajiks, Pashtuns, Punjabis, the peoples of Badakhshan, Chitral, Gilgit, Nuristan, and Punjab, etc. Mountains occupy 93% of Tajikistan, 94% of Kyrgyzstan, 61% of Pakistan, where 25% of the country's population lives, and 60% of Afghanistan (occupied by 89% of the population).<sup>1</sup> The inaccessibility, isolation, and re-

moteness of these regions have helped to retain the ancient traditions and exclusively cultural, linguistic, and anthropological diversity of the local population. These factors and the harsh bioclimatic conditions make the mountain dwellers extremely vulnerable. Nevertheless, in recent decades the outside contemporary world has been encroaching more and more on them, and they are feeling its impact. Political upheavals, the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. and formation of new

<sup>1</sup> See: D. Nygaard, D. Jumakhonov K., Hendrickx, "Trends: Food Security and Livelihoods," in: *Strategies for*

*Development and Food Security in Mountainous Areas of Central Asia*, International Workshop, Dushanbe, 6-10 June, 2005.

states in Central Asia, the war in Afghanistan, the antiterrorist campaign, Indo-Pakistani relations, and the Kashmir problem have all had a direct influence on the residents of this part of the world. Their isolation is gradually being broken down by such globalization processes as mobility of the population, development of infrastructure, evolution of information technology, and so on. One of the most noticeable new phenomena in the life of the mountain dwellers is large-scale migration.

Leaving the mountains in search of a living, which has been an inviolable part of the activity of mountain dwellers from time immemorial, has now acquired top priority for many regions of Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Its dimensions can be judged by the number of people participating in this process: 350,000-500,000 people in Kyrgyzstan, 650,000 in Tajikistan, 1,500,000-1,700,000 in Afghanistan, and 4-5 million in Pakistan. Revenue from labor migration is playing an increasingly important role in the development of these states. For example, in 2004, according to estimates, labor migration brought 500 million dollars into Tajikistan, more than 120 million dollars into Kyrgyzstan, approximately 200 million dollars into Afghanistan, and 3.5 billion dollars into Pakistan. Along with the increase in volume of labor migration, its qual-

ity, areas, types, and even the forms of economic, social, and cultural influence on the life of the mountain communities have also changed. The urgency of this problem is giving rise to discussions in which opposing views are being expressed about whether labor migration is helping or interfering with the development of these regions.

Our article is devoted to issues relating to labor emigration of mountain dwellers and its economic and social influence on the life of the mountain communities in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. The article was prepared using data from the *Migrants from Badakhshan*<sup>2</sup> and *External Labor Migration in the Kyrgyz Republic (2003)*<sup>3</sup> studies, work on labor migration in Tajikistan carried out by the Sharq Center in 2002-2004, as well as a series of interviews conducted by the present author and Professor Muzaffar Olimov in March-June 2004 in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan under the IOM (International Organization for Migration) program.

<sup>2</sup> See: I. Haqnazar, *Migranty iz Badakhshana. Programma podderzhki i razvitiia obshchestv gornykh raionov (proekt Fonda Aga-khana)*, 2004 (as manuscript).

<sup>3</sup> See: *Vneshniaia trudovaia migratsiia v Kyrgyzskoi Respublike*, IOM, 2003.

## Historical Context

Mountain dwellers have always engaged in seasonal migrations, driving cattle to seasonal pastures, and other seasonal work to make a living. Production in the mountains is much less developed than in the valleys, while the natural increment in the population is rather high. Land and food shortages and the need to look for a way to make a living have long forced the mountain dwellers to leave their homes in search of temporary earnings or to emigrate.

### Kyrgyzstan

In the past, the main form of seasonal work for the indigenous peoples was transporting cargoes on camels. Very poor Kyrgyz, who due to circumstances had lost all their cattle and were unable to

lead a nomadic way of life, were hired to cultivate land for a certain percentage of the harvest.<sup>4</sup> Seasonal work as hired hands was always a rare phenomenon for the mountain-dwelling Kyrgyz, and in Soviet times this kind of work disappeared entirely. But after the U.S.S.R. collapsed and its employment system fell apart, unemployment rose and personal incomes abruptly dropped. Between 1993 and 1994, labor migration in Kyrgyzstan began to grow (including among the mountain dwellers), which was prompted by the difference in income level in the CIS countries, and alleviation of the border conditions with China, which is leading to greater opportunities for border and transit trade. Its main trends are shuttle trade and construction. Peasants leaving in search of seasonal farm work and specialists with diplomas and qualified workers to find jobs at Russia's industrial enterprises followed a little further behind.

### Tajikistan

The main territories in the Bukhara and Kokand khanates which supplied seasonal workers were Baljuvan, Kulob, and Hissar, but particularly Karategin and the upper reaches of the Zeravshan River. For example, Russian researcher A.P. Fedchenko frequently mentioned seasonal workers from Karategin. In 1871, he met many Karategins in Ferghana and Tashkent, who worked there as seasonal workers and day laborers.<sup>5</sup> V.P. Nalivkin, who described the Ferghana Valley shortly after Kokand joined Russia, also talked about the Karategins in Ferghana.<sup>6</sup> At one time, A.A. Semenov also wrote about the Karategin seasonal workers.<sup>7</sup> N.A. Kisliakov explained their migration by "...agrarian re-population of Karategin at the existing level of development of productive forces, the shortage and absolute lack of land among a certain percentage of its population, the overall poverty, and the surplus of manpower."<sup>8</sup> At the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, between 25% and 75% of the men<sup>9</sup> left certain settlements on the upper reaches of the Zeravshan every year in search of a living, primarily in the Ferghana Valley. The main spheres of occupation were construction, humping loads, and working at cotton-cleaning mills.<sup>10</sup>

We already mentioned above that seasonal work as a phenomenon disappeared during Soviet times. But during the civil war in Tajikistan a reverse process began, the country's mountain regions began receiving hundreds of thousands of refugees, which caused a rapid increase in population in these areas, an increase in the number of unemployed, aggravation of economic and social problems, the constant threat of starvation, and, as a result, rapid growth in foreign labor emigration. Between 1995 and 1999, its abrupt increase was observed on the upper reaches of the Zeravshan, in the Rasht (former Karategin) Valley, and in other mountainous regions of the country. But since 2000, the socioeconomic situation in the republic began to improve, personal income has been gradually rising, and the labor market is expanding, which has stabilized the migration situation.

<sup>4</sup> See: V.P. Nalivkin, "Tuzemtsy ranshe i teper," in: *Musul'manskaia Sredniaia Azia. Traditsionalizm i XX vek*, Moscow, 2004, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> See: A.P. Fedchenko, "Puteshestvie v Turkestan. V. Kokandskom khanstve," in: *Izvestia Obshchestva liubiteli estestvoznaniia, antropologii i etnografii*, XI, 1875, p. 95.

<sup>6</sup> See: V.P. Nalivkin, *Kratkaia istoria Kokandskogo khanstva*, Moscow, 2003, p. 22.

<sup>7</sup> See: A.A. Semenov, *Etnograficheskie ocherki Zarafshanskikh gor, Karategina i Darvaza*, St. Petersburg, 1903, p. 67.

<sup>8</sup> N.A. Kisliakov. *Ocherki po istorii Karategina. K istorii Tadzhikistana*, Stalinabad, 1954, p. 120.

<sup>9</sup> See: V.V. Dynin, "Ocherk byta gortsev verkhoviev Zerafshana," in: *Izvestia Turkestanskogo otdeleniia Russkogo geograficheskogo obshchestva*, Vol. X, Iss. 1, Tashkent, 1914, p. 72.

<sup>10</sup> See: S. Gubaeva, *Naselenie Ferganskoi doliny v kontse XIX- nachale XX veka*, Fan Publishers, Tashkent, 1991, pp. 60-63.

A slightly different picture was designated in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAR), where the level of labor migration is just as high as in other mountainous regions of the country, but where the situation has been alleviated to a certain extent by mass humanitarian aid to the population from the Aga Khan Foundation. But since 2000, this Foundation, the UNDP, and other international organizations have begun changing their strategy and switching to technical assistance and the implementation of development projects. The halting of large-scale humanitarian aid, withdrawal of the Russian border troops in 2004-2005, and the ensuing reduction in jobs has stimulated a further increase in labor migration from the GBAR.

### Afghanistan

In the first half of the 20th century, a large number of the country's mountain seasonal workers set out from Badakhshan, Hazarajat, Panjsher, and Nuristan in search of a living. At that time, the same types of temporary labor migration as today were widespread.

They included:

- Long annual trips to bazaars in West Badakhshan, Takhar, and Kattagan for purchases accompanied by employment on the way at temporary and casual jobs in order to earn more money to buy the needed wares.
- The migration of individuals or entire families to find seasonal work. As the sources testify, in the 1940s-1950s, landless and poor peasants also went beyond Badakhshan with their families to Kattagan and other provinces where they gathered harvests at estates and large farms, receiving 1/10 and 1/8 of what was gathered for their efforts.
- The migration of individuals or entire families to make a living between fall and spring, that is after the end of the farm season in the mountains. Migrants most often engage in hard labor (including humping loads and grazing cattle).<sup>11</sup> At the end of the 1950s, the wages a shepherd at a large cattle-breeding farm earned were different in every province. In Herat, a shepherd received between 180 and 200 Afghani a month, in Kattagan between 150 and 200, and in Badakhshan between 70 and 150.<sup>12</sup>
- Migration of men to the cities in search of work. The most popular cities are still Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif.

Researchers agree that the particularly high level of migration in the mountains of Badakhshan was caused by the limited land resources and the parceling out of inherited endowments, as a result of which their size and grain production per capita gradually decreased and led to a shortage of agricultural products. According to some assessments, before the war (before 1979), agriculture in the province met only 50% of the population's demand for food. (And in the 1920s, in some high mountainous regions, for example, in the villages of the Koran and Munjan districts, there was only enough bread for ten months of the year. The situation was the same in the Shugnan District and Vakhan uezd.<sup>13</sup>) The hostilities had a negative impact on the production of food and indirectly increased labor migration. For example, an increase in it was noted in 1992 after the mojaheds came to power, and in 1996,

<sup>11</sup> See: A.D. Davydov, *Agrarny stroi Afghanistana*, Moscow, 1967, p. 130.

<sup>12</sup> See: O.R. de Baer, *Afghan Interlude*, London, 1957, pp. 130-131.

<sup>13</sup> See: *Afghanistan na perekhodnom etape*, Moscow, 2002, pp. 121-122.

when the combat action between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance led to a 40% decrease in the output of agricultural products.<sup>14</sup>

The migration of Afghan nomads was unusual. Let us take a look at it using the example of commerce in Badakhshan. The regular exchange of goods between the local peasants (nuts, fruit, wheat, rice, imported fabric, and wool) and the nomads who came from Kattagan during the summer season to Northern Badakhshan, to the region of Lake Shiva, greatly promoted the formation of trade migration among the mountain-dwelling Pashtuns. Immense growth in this and other business migration and the transformation of traditional caravan trade into contemporary commercial migration were assisted by the formation of a contraband market in the country. The transportation and sale of smuggled goods from and into Pakistan and Iran became the basic sphere of activity of many mountain-dwelling Pashtuns, who were compelled to leave the country due to war, starvation, and collapse of their former sphere of employment. On the whole, they participate in transporting goods along the main Peshawar-Karachi highway, many work in the Persian Gulf countries, primarily in the UAE (Dubai, Abu Dhabi), Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.<sup>15</sup>

Before the 1980s, there were no more than 5,000 people beyond Afghanistan who were mainly engaged in trade and other types of business, and more than 1.5 million nomad-*kuchi* who left in search of seasonal work.<sup>16</sup> Beginning in the 1980s, the country was engulfed by waves of forced migration which tossed millions of refugees beyond its borders. By the mid-1990s, some of them began to adapt to the situation that developed, look for work and find it in the countries these people had been forced to emigrate to. Since this time, we can talk about the formation of foreign labor migration from Afghanistan. In recent years, it has begun to noticeably exceed domestic migration, a clear trend has formed not only in its growth, but also in its transformation into one of the most important types of the population's activity. Correspondingly, the attitude toward it is constantly changing. Whereas earlier, Afghans frowned on taking jobs in other countries and saw this as an extremely undesirable phenomenon, peasants are now selling land to send their children to work abroad.

The highest level of labor emigration is found in the large cities (Kabul, Herat), the country's mountainous regions (Afghan Badakhshan, Panjsher, Parvon, Nuristan, and so on), border provinces (Herat, Kunar, Jalalabad, Paktica, Kandahar, and so on), and the poorest regions (Hazarat, and so on).

### Pakistan

In the mountainous regions of the country, seasonal work also assumed the same forms as in Pakistan. The military factor was of great significance for its transformation into contemporary labor migration. The upheavals which accompanied the formation of Pakistan (1947) gave rise to flows of refugees, defined the routes of departure, gradually formed spheres of employment, and created migrant networks.

A significant factor in the development of labor migration was the demographic explosion, which led to a drastic shortage of land, stimulating in turn the departure of redundant work hands in search of a living. During the 20 years since the country gained its independence, the amount of land per family has decreased 2.1-fold.<sup>17</sup> The rapid increase in population prompted mountain dwellers to look

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<sup>14</sup> See: *Afghanistan*, Moscow, 2002, p. 33.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with employee of *Asia Foundation*, Islamabad, May 2004.

<sup>16</sup> See: "Migration and Development," AISA Afghan Investment Support Agency [[http://www.aisa.org.af/migration\\_delawri.htm](http://www.aisa.org.af/migration_delawri.htm)].

<sup>17</sup> See: *Trudovye resursy Vostoka. Demografo-ekonomicheskie problemy*, Moscow, 1987, pp. 102, 191.

for jobs first in the cities, and then beyond the country. This process was stimulated by the British policy aimed at attracting foreign manpower in the 1950s, which promoted the organization of a state system for the departure of Pakistanis abroad (the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, and the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation).<sup>18</sup> Labor migration began to rapidly grow during the oil boom in the Persian Gulf. (Between 1971 and 1984, it increased three-fold.<sup>19</sup>) Its level is highest from the mountainous regions of Punjab, Beluchistan, and Vaziristan.

## Evaluation of the Dimensions of Labor Migration. Directions of Departure

Due to the shortage of data, it is difficult to carry out a comparative analysis of the influence of labor migration on the development of present-day mountain communities, although this problem is attracting ever greater attention. During the past few years, several studies have been carried out in Tajikistan on this topic, but they all looked at migration on a nationwide scale.<sup>20</sup> The only special study which looks at the influence of these processes on the mountainous regions is "Migrants from Badakhshan," which was carried out within the framework of the Support and Development Programs of Mountain Communities (2004).<sup>21</sup>

Labor migration is also being actively studied in Kyrgyzstan. For example, the IOM organized the *Internal Migration in the Kyrgyz Republic* (2001) and *External Labor Migration in the Kyrgyz Republic* (2003) studies.<sup>22</sup> The numerous studies by Professor A.B. Elebaeva<sup>23</sup> and other researchers<sup>24</sup> became well known. But research of the influence of migration on the society providing the migrants (departure from the country) has still not reached the necessary level.

In recent years, regional projects for studying migration of different country compositions have begun in Central Asia. For example, in 2004, the IOM conducted a study project called *Labor Migration in the Central Asian Countries, Russian Federation, Afghanistan, and Pakistan*.<sup>25</sup> The same year, on the initiative of UNESCO, the International Migration in Central Asia Project was carried out.<sup>26</sup> But both these projects, in which the author of this article participated, did not single out the mountainous regions as a special topic of study.

In Pakistan, labor migration has long attracted the attention of researchers. Individual anthropological works have been published devoted to the movement of nationalities and tribes living in the

<sup>18</sup> See: *Emigration Ordinance, 1979 and Emigration Rules*, Updated by Nazir Ahmad Aasi, Islamabad, 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Data of the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment of Pakistan.

<sup>20</sup> See: S. Olimova, I. Bosk, *Trudovaia migratsiia iz Tadzhikistana*, IOM, 2003; A. Aminov, T. Bozrikova, et al., *Tadzhikistan: problemy trudovoi migratsii i vozmozhnye podkhody k formirovaniu politiki*, Dushanbe, 2004.

<sup>21</sup> See: I. Haqnazar, op. cit.

<sup>22</sup> See: *Vnutrenniaia migratsiia v Kyrgyzskoi Respublike*, IOM, 2001; *Vneshniaia trudovaia migratsiia v Kyrgyzskoi Respublike*, IOM, Bishkek, 2003.

<sup>23</sup> See: A. Elebaeva, "Migratsionnye protsessy i rynek truda v Kyrgyzstane," in: *Migratsiia i rynek truda v stranakh Srednei Azii*, ed. by L.P. Maksakova, Moscow, Tashkent, 2002; A. Elebaeva, "Labor Migration in Kyrgyzstan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3 (27), 2004.

<sup>24</sup> See: G.V. Kumskov, *Zakonomernosti i osobennosti razvitiia migratsionnykh protsessov Kyrgyzstana na sovremenom etape*, Bishkek, 2002; *Kyrgyzstan: problemy v sfere trudovoi migratsii i vozmozhnye podkhody k formirovaniu politiki*, Bishkek, 2004.

<sup>25</sup> See: *Trudovaia migratsiia v stranakh Tsentral'noi Azii, Rossiiskoi Federatsii, Afganistane i Pakistane*, Analytical Review, IOM, Almaty, 2005.

<sup>26</sup> See: *Materialy Tsentral'no-Aziatskoi konferentsii UNESCO po mezhdunarodnoi migratsii*, Almaty, May 2005.

mountains. In 2004, the IOM office in this country organized a labor migration study. But it was not aimed at defining the influence of this process on the development of the mountainous regions.

The current migration situation in Afghanistan has been studied the least, where there are the fewest statistics. Apart from the IOM studies on women and children trafficking, reports, and other information from the U.N. High Commission for Refugees, IOM, and NGOs, there are no data on migration.

What is more, the migration statistics in all the countries under review are extremely scanty. In such post-Soviet countries as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, keeping track of labor migration is made difficult due to the non-visa system with the main destination countries, Russia and Kazakhstan. So household surveys and sociological polls are the main sources of data. In Pakistan, a sufficiently complete record of foreign labor migration has been kept since 1978, but there are no data on illegal migration, which is especially widespread in the mountainous regions.

For the above reasons, it is very difficult to determine the volume of labor migration from the mountainous regions of each country. It can be estimated only approximately, making use of data supplied by the local power agencies (if they gather them), indirect indices, corresponding information from local NGOs, and the results of scientific studies.

The level of labor emigration in the mountainous regions of Tajikistan is the highest in the country, from 17% to 30% of the able-bodied population, and it is 20% in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region. More than 34% of the households in the GBAR have at least one migrant.<sup>27</sup> The main host country is the Russian Federation (this is where 97.6% of migrants looking for work go). Their numbers are much fewer in other countries: in Kazakhstan and the United Arab Emirates—0.8% each, in Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan—0.4% each.<sup>28</sup>

According to the Migration Service Department under the Kyrgyz Republic Foreign Ministry, overall labor migration from the country exceeds 350,000 people. The highest level is observed in the mountainous Chatkal area and in the Osh Region, and the highest departure level in the Osh Region is noted in the city of Kara-Kulja and in the Uzgen District. It is high and constant in the Alai District.

The main host countries are Russia and Kazakhstan. According to the data of the Kyrgyz embassies in these countries, there are more than 200,000 Kyrgyz labor migrants in the Russian Federation, between 50,000 and 100,000 in Kazakhstan, and 20,000 in the United Arab Emirates.<sup>29</sup> According to Professor A. Elebaeva, two thirds of the labor migrants from the Osh Region go to Russia and one third to Kazakhstan.

As we noted above, the volume of labor migration from Afghanistan is very difficult to account for, since it is still impossible to clearly separate labor from forced and traditional (seasonal) migration. It is not clear who should be counted as a refugee, who as a labor migrant, and who as a nomad (*kuchi*). Nor is it clear who should be counted as a citizen of Afghanistan, and who as a stateless person or the citizen of another state. The lack or insufficient number of laws, regulatory legal acts, and official instructions when drawing up national legislation hinders the organization of record-keeping in this sphere. But according to experts, the total number of Afghan citizens who have become refugees and are engaged in labor activity beyond their country amounts to 1,500,000-1,700,000 people. In recent years, strictly labor migration has also appeared. According to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, in 2002-2003, 25,000-27,000 people annually left Afghanistan in search of work.<sup>30</sup> The main countries receiving them are Iran and Pakistan. The most attractive cities in Iran are Tehran and Mashhad.

<sup>27</sup> See: I. Haqnazar, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>28</sup> See: *Materialy oprosa migrantov*, Sharq Center, Dushanbe, March 2004 (as manuscript).

<sup>29</sup> See: A. Elebaeva, *Migratsionnye protsessy i ryok truda v Kyrgyzstane*, p. 49.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with employee of the Afghanistan Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Kabul, April 2004.



In Pakistan, a sufficiently complete record is kept of legal labor migration. According to the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, the total number of those leaving in search of work to all countries of the world reaches 4-5 million. But there are no separate data for the mountainous and lowland regions. Pakistanis mainly work in the Middle East countries, 45%, Western Europe, 29%, and the U.S., 23%.<sup>31</sup>

## Reasons for Migration

At present, labor migration from the mountainous regions of the countries under review is caused by the shortage of food, demographic pressure on the labor market, unemployment, and poverty. For example, according to the 2000 data, in certain regions of Afghan Badakhshan, there is not enough food for 2 to 6 months of the year.<sup>32</sup> In the GBAR in 1999, 54% of children were chronically undernourished (according to the weight-to-height ratio index). Admittedly, in 2005, the number of such children dropped to 32%.<sup>33</sup> According to the *Migrants from Badakhshan* study, the main reasons for leaving in search of work were the following: 40% of the surveyed migrants noted the insufficient supply of food for their families, 41% referred to unemployment, 17% wanted to earn money for study, to buy a house, to cover wedding expenses, and so on, and 2% hoped to open their own business.<sup>34</sup>

## Migrant Profile (Gender, Age, Qualifications, Occupation, Period of Work)

The gender structure of labor migration depends on the countries and on the altitude of the departure regions. Men make up the absolute majority of migrants from Afghanistan and Pakistan. Eighty-five percent of men and 15% of women leave Tajikistan in search of work,<sup>35</sup> and 60% and 40% leave Kyrgyzstan, respectively.<sup>36</sup> But recently, a greater number of women from the high mountainous areas are being incorporated into this process.

The data of the *Migrants from Badakhshan* study give us an idea of the age of those leaving these regions: young people between the ages of 15 and 29 make up 56.5% of the migrants from the GBAR, and 36.7% are between 30 and 45.<sup>37</sup> A similar picture developed in Afghanistan and Pakistan. There are many more middle-aged people among the Kyrgyz migrants.

At the same time, a significant difference is noted among the countries in level of education of the migrants. A high level of education is characteristic of emigrants from the mountainous regions of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. For example, 32% of those who leave in search of work from Badakhshan

<sup>31</sup> See: P. Tahir, *Diaspora's Implication for Human Resources in Pakistan*, Paper for National Seminar "Labor Migration and Socio-Economic Development", Islamabad, 23-24 September, 2003.

<sup>32</sup> See: *Afganistan na perekhodnom etape*, pp. 121-122.

<sup>33</sup> See: D. Nygaard, D. Jumakhonov, K. Hendrickx, op. cit.

<sup>34</sup> See: I. Haqnazar, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>35</sup> See: S. Olimova, I. Bosk, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>36</sup> See: A. Elebaeva, "Labor Migration in Kyrgyzstan."

<sup>37</sup> See: I. Haqnazar, op. cit., p. 26.

have higher education, 23% have incomplete higher and secondary special education, and 45% have secondary education. But they rarely work in their fields of specialization. They are most frequently compelled to do low-skilled work, since they do not have the required qualifications for the host countries.<sup>38</sup> Admittedly, in recent years, there has been a rapid increase in the qualification of migrants who have assimilated fields of specialization in demand in the countries where they have come to work. A similar situation is also developing among those leaving Kyrgyzstan.

The level of education among migrants from the mountainous regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan is not high. According to the 2004 data, it was equal to 41.5% in Pakistan as a whole, but in the northern high mountainous areas it was much lower. Nevertheless, qualified workers make up more than 50% of the country's labor migrants.<sup>39</sup> According to the available data, 40% of Pakistani migrants are engaged in unskilled labor in the countries of the Middle East.<sup>40</sup>

Labor migration from Afghanistan is represented mainly by people with a primary education or who are entirely illiterate (according to the U.N. High Commission for Refugees, 83% of refugees fall into this category).<sup>41</sup> Only one out of a thousand migrants working in Iran has the proper qualifications.<sup>42</sup> The lack of education and low skill level are the reasons why most Afghani migrants are employed at low-paying jobs.

The spheres of employment in which labor migrants from the mountainous regions of Tajikistan specialize are construction (48%), commerce (20%), unskilled jobs (26%), and agriculture (6%).<sup>43</sup> And 75% of those who left the Osh Region of Kyrgyzstan are so-called shuttle traders, 16% work in construction, and the rest found jobs in other spheres.<sup>44</sup>

Afghans of all ethnic groups from the mountainous regions are occupied in difficult, hazardous, and low-skilled jobs, including lifting work (especially in Karachi), mainly in transportation and construction. They also work in the service sphere, commerce, at brick factories, and in chemical enterprises, in particular those manufacturing plastics and items made from them. Their salaries are 20-30% of the amount received by residents.<sup>45</sup> The percentage of day laborers in Afghan migration is high. In the summer and fall season, they are hired by rich farm owners in Iran and Pakistan, where they carry out the heaviest farm work for a miserly wage, and those who are older mainly engage in commerce and garbage collection.<sup>46</sup>

The structure of Pakistani labor migration significantly differs from the Afghan. Production workers (75%) prevail in it, including vehicle drivers, builders, etc.<sup>47</sup>

## Dependence of Migration Flow Characteristics on the Altitude of the Exodus Regions

The study showed that the type and profile of migration depends on the altitude of the exodus regions. Migration from medium-altitude areas can be singled out, certain regions of the Sogd Region

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<sup>38</sup> See: I. Haqnazar, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>39</sup> Interview with director of the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, Islamabad, April 2004.

<sup>40</sup> Data of the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation.

<sup>41</sup> See: OCM Kabul. *Operational Information Summary Report* 28/03/04.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with Afghanistan Deputy Minister for Planning, Kabul, April 2004.

<sup>43</sup> See: I. Khaknazar, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>44</sup> See: A. Elebaeva, *Migratsionnye protsessy i rynek truda v Kyrgyzstane*, p. 45.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with an employee of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Kabul, April 2004.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with the chief of border police of Sherkhon-Bandar, Sherkhon-Bandar, April 2004.

<sup>47</sup> Data of the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation.

and Rasht Valley (Tajikistan), Osh and Batken regions (Kyrgyzstan), Parvon (Afghanistan), and Northern Punjab (Pakistan). It is characterized by the prevalence of seasonal workers, a relatively high level of qualification among the migrants, a significant percentage of shuttle traders, and relatively large money transfers.

Slightly different parameters are characteristic of migration from such high-altitude regions as the GBAR of Tajikistan, Afghan Badakhshan, several regions of Pakistan, and so on. In particular, migrants from these areas are young and thus have a lower level of qualification, while a large number are single, there is a relatively high percentage of women, a small number of those participating in commercial activity, and relatively small money transfers to relatives remaining at home.

But the most noticeable difference is in the amount of time these migrants stay in the host country, as well as in economic efficiency. Migration from the medium-altitude areas is mainly seasonal. Migrants are mainly men who leave for seasonal work (March thru November) and return home in the winter. Most of them have families and leave the household in charge of the women, adolescents, or other male relatives. During the four winter months they live at home and carry out part of the most difficult farm work. The economic efficiency of labor migration from the medium-altitude areas is higher than from the high-altitude areas due to the lower travel costs and fewer expenses during the winter season (the "dead" season for migrants). But the most important factor is keeping close ties with the family, so migrants try to send home as much of their earnings as possible.

Departure from the high mountainous areas is characterized by longer periods of stay in the host country, a weakening or loss of ties with families due to their remoteness, inaccessibility, poor communication, much higher level of so-called net emigration, and consequently smaller money transfers home.

## **Influence of Migration on the Housekeeping and Economy of the Mountainous Regions. Money Transfers**

Money transfers improve the situation of households in which there are migrants. The significance of labor migration income for the mountainous regions is shown by the fact that it is the main source of existence for 50%-60% of all the households in Gorny Badakhshan (Tajikistan).<sup>48</sup> The amount of hard currency transfers depends on the number of migrants, the size of their income, and their inclination to save during their stay abroad, as well as on how close their ties are with their families.

According to poll data, the most popular ways to transfer money are the following: bank transfers—54.8%, passing money on via acquaintances—33.2%, carrying out currency transactions (*Hawala*)—5.2%, taking it home themselves—24.8%, refused to answer—2.8%. What is more, many migrants return to their native land with expensive items (79% of the respondents said that they brought them for their own families and as presents for relatives).<sup>49</sup> During 2003, money transfers amounting

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<sup>48</sup> See: I. Khaknazar, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>49</sup> See: S. Olimova, M. Olimov, *Mezhdunarodnaia migratsiia v postsovetskom Tadjikistane*, Analytical Report, in: *Materialy Tsentral'no-Aziatskoi konferentsii UNESCO po mezhdunarodnoi migratsii*, p. 24.

to 256 million dollars came into Tajikistan through banks alone.<sup>50</sup> In 2004, all types of income from labor migration reached 500 million dollars, which amounted to 22% of our country's GDP.<sup>51</sup>

Afghan migrants rarely transfer money through banks. The main ways for transferring it are Hawala, taking it themselves, or sending it with relatives and acquaintances. Due to the absence of official statistics, it is difficult to assess how much this money amounts to. Nevertheless, based on the data of Afghan Sarai Shazda exchange companies, it reaches 197,300,300 dollars.<sup>52</sup>

Money transfers are the second most important source of revenue in Pakistan. In the 2002-2003 fiscal year, migrants transferred 423,685,000 dollars to the country, and between June 2003 and March 2004, 2,840,450 dollars.<sup>53</sup>

Studies in Tajikistan and Pakistan showed that the increase in income of migrants' families does not prompt them to slacken off their own efforts. On the contrary, relatives who remain at home work longer and harder, and sometimes even hire people to compensate for the absence of the most able-bodied members of the family. But observations showed that labor migration is leading to a deterioration in the quality of manpower and to "depopulation of the village."

Agriculture in the mountains requires immense physical expenditures. Work which used to be done by family members who have left in search of money is most often compensated for not by introducing modern technology, but by involving and intensifying female and child labor. This prevents an upswing in agriculture and makes it harder to cultivate food crops and develop animal husbandry. What is more, the earnings of migrants have an ineffectual impact on the increase in production, in particular on the development of small and medium businesses.

But there is an indirect tie between the transfers of migrants and business development. In Afghanistan and Pakistan, it is carried out on the basis of the Hawala system, which is used as a way to finance wholesale-retail trade. Its mechanism is as follows: in the host country, say Iran, a labor migrant, say from Afghanistan, approaches an agent—a *dalol* or a dealer-*Hawaladar*, to whom he gives money intended for relatives back home. The *Hawaladar* approaches a merchant-*dukandar*, or banker/moneychanger (*sarrof*). The *sarrof* passes it on to a merchant. The merchant buys goods with this money, which he sends to his colleague in Afghanistan. The latter sells the goods he receives and, from the money procured, gives the family of the labor migrant the amount the latter originally handed over. Everything is recorded in writing at every stage of the transfer. In other words, the money transfer chain and simultaneous financing of the commercial activity consists of the following links: labor migrant (*korgar*)—agent (*dalol*)—dealer (*Hawaladar*)—moneychanger (*sarrof*)—wholesale merchant (*tudjor*)—retail merchant (*dukandar*)—family of the labor migrant. During the transfer, the money is circulated, finances wholesale purchases in the host country, is again converted into money (during retail sale of the imported goods in Afghanistan), and ultimately reaches the family of the labor migrant.<sup>54</sup> But this does not mean that the labor migrant waits for his money to turn over. Transfers occur instantly, but at the same time they help to finance the commercial activity of Afghan merchants, participate in currency exchange and support the Afghani exchange rate.

In this way, transfers by migrants by means of Hawala work in the same way as bank transfers. They lessen the pressure on the state's payment balance; they constitute a very significant supplement to domestic savings and reduce the foreign currency deficit; and they support the employment sphere

<sup>50</sup> In 2002, the total amount of transfers amounted to 75 million dollars. The dramatic increase in currency transfers in 2003 is explained by the fact that favorable conditions for migrants to transfer money through Tajikistan's banks did not develop until the beginning of 2003.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with employee of the World Bank mission in Tajikistan, Dushanbe, March 2005.

<sup>52</sup> See: *Migration and Development*.

<sup>53</sup> Data of the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment of Pakistan.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with merchants and *Hawaladars* in Kabul and Kunduz, April 2004. The information on Hawala as a vital source of financing small commercial business in Afghanistan was confirmed by French researcher Alessandro Mansutti at a presentation of his book on the migration of Hazars in Kabul in April 2004.

in the country by creating jobs, since bazaars, which mostly survive on migrant transfers, promote the formation of the commercial, transportation, service sphere, and public catering infrastructure.<sup>55</sup> What is more, this way of transferring money helps to bring food into the mountainous regions by means of the increase in bazaar trade. The growth in bazaars in Afghan Badakhshan noted by researchers is in our opinion related to the formation of contemporary labor emigration using Hawala as the main channel for transferring migrants' savings. At the same time, this money is becoming the main legal source of financing for promoting economic development of the mountainous regions.

But the main problem resolved by this income is supplying food and meeting people's other basic needs. Along with this, the households of migrants are much better off than others, and are provided with durable items, in particular, expensive radio and television equipment, and transportation vehicles.<sup>56</sup> The family nature of migration in the mountains is becoming universal: almost every such family is involved in familial and communal relations. For example, in Tajikistan 3/4 of migrant households directly or indirectly help several of their relatives' households (25.8% of the surveyed migrants render this kind of help continuously, 46.3% from time to time).<sup>57</sup> In this respect, labor migration has not led to individual families (those in which migrants live) getting rich quick, and property differentiation remains almost the same. In other words, labor migration in the mountainous regions of Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan should not be viewed as a means of quick prosperity for the chosen few, but as a strategy of survival for mountain communities as a whole.

## Conclusions

The influence of labor migration on the life of mountain communities is multifaceted and contradictory. Money transfers to relatives who remain at home help to boost trade and indirectly support the employment sphere. This is shown for example by the development of markets in recent years in the Afghan and Tajik parts of Badakhshan, as well as in Kyrgyzstan. At the same time, labor migration has not become a major source of savings and, consequently, of economic development. The mass exodus of young men (accompanied by the lack of modern technology in agriculture) is causing the spread and intensification of ineffectual and backbreaking female and child labor.

In the high mountainous areas, the migration of men is gradually leading to a decrease in these regions' own production of food, which is not fully compensated for by the import of food by migrants from outside due to the remoteness, inaccessibility, and high cost of delivering goods. Labor migrants from such regions prefer to invest their earnings in moving their families to medium-altitude areas or to the valleys, where life is much easier. In this way, labor migration from the high mountainous areas is triggering a collapse in mountain communities and degradation of the regions where they live.

Disputes about the impact (positive or negative) of labor migration on the life of these communities are legitimate and necessary. But whatever the case, the study results show that labor migration, which is highly efficacious under current conditions in the short and medium term, will lead in the longer term to mountain dwellers moving to the valleys and depopulation of the high mountainous regions.

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<sup>55</sup> For more details on the history of bazaars in Afghanistan, see: A.D. Davydov, *Traditsionny rynek Afganistana (vozniknovenie i modernizatsiia promtovarnykh bazarov)*, Moscow, 1999.

<sup>56</sup> See: *Materialy oprosa migrantov*.

<sup>57</sup> See: S. Olimova, I. Bosk, op. cit., p. 93.

## GERMANS IN AZERBAIJAN: A RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

Sudaba ZEYNALOVA

*Researcher at the Bakikhanov Institute of History,  
National Academy of Sciences  
(Baku, Azerbaijan)*

Azerbaijan, which is located between the West and East, became the home of representatives of many different nationalities at certain times throughout history. This ethnic diversity, which is still retained today, and the peaceful coexistence in our state of members of different nationalities, cultures, and confessions show the tolerance and respect the

Azeris have for these people. Germans are also some of the representatives of the European culture who have lived for a long time in Azerbaijan. Looking at their lives and vital activity in this country is of special interest and presents a graphic example of the interrelationship between western and eastern cultures within a single society.

### Migration Processes

Germans began migrating to Azerbaijan in the first decades of the 19th century for a number of reasons.<sup>1</sup> The primary reason was the disastrous political and economic situation in Germany at this time as a consequence of the Napoleonic wars, which gave rise to mounting discontent among the masses and intensified the migration processes. The south of Germany, Württemberg, where dissident movements, including separatism, were becoming active, found itself in particularly dire straits. In search of salvation, some of its residents expressed the desire to move to the East, in particular to the Caucasus, since, in their opinion, it was located “not far from the cradle of the human race.”<sup>2</sup> They made this request of Russian Emperor Alexander I, who, on his way back from the Vienna Congress in 1816, was traveling through Stuttgart.<sup>3</sup>

We will note that by this time, the Central Caucasus, including North Azerbaijan, had already been conquered by the Russian Empire, after which czarism was faced with the question of reinforcing its supremacy among the local population. For this purpose and further development of the region's resources, the Russian autocrat had to create a reliable sociopolitical, economic, and ethnocultural fulcrum in the region. When carrying out these tasks, the czarist authorities engaged in targeted resettlement of Armenians and Russians, which led to serious ethno-confessional and demographic changes in the very region where a group of German colonists were resettled at that time. We will remind you that on 22 July, 1763, Catherine II issued a manifesto which blazed the trail for mass

<sup>1</sup> See: E. Ismailov and Z. Kengerli, “O kategorii Kavkaz,” Reports of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, Vol. LVIII, No. 5-6, Elm, Baku, 2002, pp. 290-294.

<sup>2</sup> S. Smirnov, “Nemetskie sektanty za Kavkazom,” *Russkii vestnik*, Vol. 57, Moscow, 1865, pp. 230-233.

<sup>3</sup> See: P. Basikhin, “Nemetskie kolonii na Kavkaze. Etnograficheskie ocherki,” *Kavkazskii vestnik*, No. 1, 1900, p. 14.

emigration of Germans to Russia.<sup>4</sup> So migration of Germans to the new lands of the Russian Empire, before they were fully assimilated, became traditional as early as the second half of the 18th century.

According to some data, between 1816 and 1818, 1,400 families (6-7,000 people) left Württemberg for the Central Caucasus.<sup>5</sup> But as a result of the immense losses along the way, by the fall of 1818 only about 500 of them arrived in Tiflis.<sup>6</sup> Initially, six German colonies were founded in Georgia. But there was not enough convenient public land for all the emigrants near Tiflis, so the authorities decided to send them to the Elizavetpol uezd. General Ermolov's letter missive noted: "There is a lot of public land in the Elizavetpol uezd and it is beneficial in many respects to settle the colonists there."<sup>7</sup> So in the spring of 1819, some families were sent to Azerbaijan, to the Elizavetpol area (now a suburb of Ganja), where two of their settlements were established. One of them (Helenendorf) was built on the territory of the destroyed Azerbaijani village of Khanlyklar (today Khanlar), seven versts from the town of Elizavetpol, and the second (Annenfeld) arose at the site of the ancient Azerbaijani town of Shamkir. Referring to several studies, we can maintain that 127 families settled in Helenendorf (approximately 600 people) and 67 families (300-400 people) in Annenfeld.<sup>8</sup> By the beginning of the 20th century, there were as many as eight German settlements in Azerbaijan: Helenendorf, Annenfeld, Georgsfeld, Alexeevka, Grünfeld, Eigenfeld, Traubenfeld, and Elizavetinka. They were all built in the Khanlar, Shamkir, Kazakh, Tauz, and Akstafa districts (mainly on the sites of old Azerbaijani settlements).

## Economic and Cultural Life

The period between the founding of the first settlements in Azerbaijan (1819) and the mid-19th century can be called the stage of initial establishment, setting up, and adaptation of the colonists to the local living conditions. At that time, their economic activity was mainly of an in kind, consumer nature aimed at meeting their own needs. We will note that being peasants by origin and social class, they engaged in agriculture.

During the second half of the 19th century, the main area of their activity was winegrowing and winemaking, which successfully blended with the elements of capitalist relations that appeared in agriculture and with the emergence in Azerbaijan of certain industrial branches. By applying the skills brought from their historical homeland, making use of the local features of the developed winegrowing culture, exchanging experience with members of the indigenous population, and engaging in painstaking labor, the vineyards and wine of the German colonists acquired wide renown. The efforts exerted by the winemaking companies of the Vohrer Brothers and the Hummel Brothers made an immense contribution to the development of this sphere. By this time, these families owned many in-

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<sup>4</sup> See: *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii s 1649 goda* (Full Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire since 1649), Vol. XVI, 1830, pp. 313-316.

<sup>5</sup> See: Schweinitz, *Helenendorf. Eine deutsche Kolonie im Kaukasus*, Berlin, 1908, p. 3; P. Basikhin, op. cit.

<sup>6</sup> See: F. Zimmer, *Koloniia Helenendorf, Elisavetopolskoi gubernii i uezda*, SMOMK, Iss. 29, Tiflis, 1901, pp. 2-3.

<sup>7</sup> *Akty sobrannye Kavkazskoi arkhograficheskoi komissiei (AKAK)* (Acts Gathered by the Caucasian Archeographic Commission (ACAC), ed. by Adolf Berzhe, Vol. 6, Part 1, Tiflis, 1874, p. 331.

<sup>8</sup> See: K. Stumpp, "Die Auswanderung aus Deutschland nach Rußland in den Jahren 1763 bis 1862," *Jahrbuch für ostdeutsche Volkskunde*, Band 22, Stuttgart, 1979, pp. 210-217; N.K. Nikiforov, "Ekonomicheskii byt nemetskikh kolonistov v Zakavkazskom krae," in: *Documents for Studying the Economic Existence of State Peasants of the Transcaucasus Territory*, Vol. 1, Tiflis, 1886, p. 104.

dustrial enterprises, trade outlets, land plots, and a large amount of capital. Even then they were the largest entrepreneurs among the German colonists not only in Azerbaijan, but also throughout the entire Central Caucasus.

At the end of the 19th-beginning of the 20th century, a large number of foreigners appeared, including Germans, in Azerbaijan, particularly in Baku. Among them were businessmen, industrialists, engineers, architects, doctors, scientists, teachers, and so on. In particular, we will note such well-known German industrialists as Siemens, who owned large copper-smelting production plants, and the owners of the Benkendorf Trade House Company, who also acquired oil plants. Incidentally, this flow of foreigners was generated by the oil boom in Azerbaijan which began at this time.

Of course, World War I, in which Russia and Germany found themselves in opposite camps, had a negative influence on the status of the Germans living in the Russian Empire. At the beginning of the war, the czarist government adopted several laws which restricted their rights to own real estate, teach in German, and so on. Only after the February Revolution did the Provisional Government annul these laws.

On 28 May, 1918, Azerbaijan was the first independent democratic republic to appear in the East, which existed until April 1920. The resolution on declaring Azerbaijan an independent state adopted on 28 May, 1918, announced: "The Azerbaijani Democratic Republic guarantees civil and political rights to all citizens within its borders, regardless of nationality, confession, social status, and gender. The Azerbaijani Democratic Republic grants broad maneuver for free development to all the nationalities residing on its territory."<sup>9</sup>

The sociopolitical, economic, and cultural reforms which took place in Azerbaijan in 1918-1920 also affected the Germans in the republic. For example, their deputy, Lorenz Yakovlevich Kuhn, was represented in its parliament.<sup>10</sup> A vibrant event in the life of the German colonies at that time was the celebration of Helenendorf's anniversary, that is, the 100th anniversary of the Germans' emigration to Azerbaijan. This celebration, which was held on 9 June, 1919 with the permission of the governor of Ganja, took place in an atmosphere of great festivity.

In April 1920, as a result of the republic's occupation by the Red Army, Soviet power was established in North Azerbaijan. All of the changes which took place during the subsequent years had an enormous impact on the life of its population and, naturally, on the status of the Germans living here.

During the first years of the Soviet era, instability and an economic slump were observed in their settlements due to the so-called "war communism" policy. After ratification of the first Soviet decrees, including on land and on nationalization of private industrial enterprises, throughout Azerbaijan (and throughout the Soviet expanse as a whole), expropriation of land endowments began, which were redistributed in keeping with the egalitarian principle. What is more, a large number of beasts of burden and other property were confiscated from the German peasants, mainly for the needs of the Red Army contingents.<sup>11</sup> The colonists' winemaking enterprises, including the well-known large companies of Vohrer and Hummel, were nationalized, which led to their collapse.<sup>12</sup>

Between 1921 and 1922, due to the country's transfer to the new economic policy (NEP), certain improvements were designated in the socioeconomic conditions of the German settlements. For

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<sup>9</sup> *Azerbaidzhanskaia Demokraticheskaia Respublika (1918-1920). Vneshniaia politika*, Azerbaijan, Baku, 1998, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup> State Archives of the Azerbaijani Republic (SAAR), rec. gr. 894, inv. 10, f. 53, sheet 5.

<sup>11</sup> State Historical Archives of the Azerbaijan Republic (SHAAR), rec. gr. 508, inv. 1, f. 459, sheets 24, 35, 51; f. 468, sheet 1.

<sup>12</sup> See: *Ekonomicheskii vestnik Azerbaidzhana*, No. 23 (30), 1922, p. 27.



example, in 1922, the Concordia Production Cooperative of Viniculturists and Winemaking of the Ganja Region was created, to which 90% of the German vineyards belonged. By 1926, this enterprise had as many as 9 still-houses and alcohol-rectification factories, 5 cognac houses, 11 wine and cognac cellars, as well as subsidiary enterprises and workshops distributed around all the colonies, which promoted the development of each of them.<sup>13</sup> Concordia opened its representative offices and branches in many Soviet cities. What is more, we should take special note of the activity of Concordia's Berlin representative office, which was engaged not only in the export of the cooperative's products, but also purchased equipment for it, as well as medication for its employees.<sup>14</sup> As a result of the expansion in the cooperative's sphere of activity, its revenue also grew. For example, it emerged at the end of the 1924/25 fiscal year with a positive balance of more than 8 million rubles,<sup>15</sup> and throughout most of the 1920s, this enterprise was one of the best winemaking cooperatives in the republic.

But as early as the second half of the 1920s, the situation began to deteriorate, which was primarily caused by the change in political and economic course carried out by the Soviet authorities. Prosperity, economic independence, ties abroad, insulation, and other features characteristic of the cooperatives' activity in the German settlements were not in keeping with the precepts of the U.S.S.R. leadership, which led to their initiatives being clamped down on and then to their elimination. For example, in 1925-1926, an investigation was run on the Concordia cooperative.<sup>16</sup> As a result, on the basis of Central Executive Committee and the U.S.S.R. Council of People's Commissars resolutions of 18 September, 1929 on the reorganization of agricultural cooperatives, the corresponding authorities of the Azerbaijani S.S.R. adopted a decision on transforming the Concordia cooperative into the Regional Association of Settlement Companies of Winegrowing and Winemaking Cooperatives.<sup>17</sup> In 1935, a trial was held to review the Concordia cooperative case. After deeming its economic activity not only detrimental, but also subversive, the court adopted a decision to eliminate the cooperative once and for all.<sup>18</sup>

In 1930-1932, during the collectivization that went on throughout the entire country, collective farms were created in the German settlements too: in Helenendorf, the Telman collective farm, in Annenfeld, the Clara Zetkin collective farm, in Georgsfeld it was called Borba (Struggle), in Traubenfeld—Sovetstern, in Marksovo (Elizavetinka), the International, in Grünfeld—Rote-Fane, and in Alexeevka, the Lenin collective farm. They all specialized in winegrowing, they were given the property confiscated from the German holdings of kulaks and even middle peasants. What is more, in the middle and second half of the 1930s, intensified measures were carried out against the kulaks. For example, a report of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs stated that in 1935, 381 Germans were repressed in Azerbaijan, most of whom were either dispossessed or arrested under the Concordia case.<sup>19</sup> As a consequence of the dispossession and collectivization measures, conflicts became aggravated in the German settlements and the discontent of their residents grew. For example, on 18 March, 1930, a protest demonstration was organized in Helenendorf against the collective farms and the incorporation of the colonists into them.<sup>20</sup> But by the end of the 1930s, most of their households had to

<sup>13</sup> SAAR, rec. gr. 2384, inv. 1, f. 2, sheet 214; rec. gr. 816, inv. 6, f. 56, sheets 7-8.

<sup>14</sup> SAAR, rec. gr. 2384, inv. 1, f. 17, sheet 100-101; State Archives of Political Parties and Public Movements of the Azerbaijan Republic (SAPPPMAR), rec. gr. 1, inv. 85, f. 613, sheet 65.

<sup>15</sup> SAPPPMAR, rec. gr. 1, inv. 235, f. 303, sheet 141.

<sup>16</sup> See: M. Jafarli, *Nemtsy v Azerbaidzhane*, Baku, 1998, p. 21; SAPPPMAR, rec. gr. 1, inv. 235, f. 102, sheet 657.

<sup>17</sup> SAAR, rec. gr. 2384, inv. 1, f. 10, sheets 85-86; rec. gr. 379, inv. 7, f. 87, sheet 9.

<sup>18</sup> See: *Concordia*, Astroprint, Odessa, 2001, pp. 17-18.

<sup>19</sup> See: M. Jafarli, *Politicheskii terror i sudby azerbaidzhanskikh nemtsev*, Baku, 1998, p. 71.

<sup>20</sup> See: E. Ohngemach, "Memoire eines Unbekannten," in: *Heimatliche Weiten*, M., 1989, S. 112.

be incorporated into collective farms. Of course, this had a negative effect on the socioeconomic conditions in the German settlements.

It is interesting to take a look at the cultural life of the first German emigrants, who paid a great deal of attention to teaching their children, at first at home, and then in schools. For example, the first school was built in 1842 in Helenendorf.<sup>21</sup> Until the 1890s, these schools were ecclesiastical-parochial in nature and were under the care of the local pastors. In 1890, after the Russian government issued a decree on the re-subordination of Protestant and Lutheran schools to the Ministry of National Education, the school in Helenendorf was turned into a two-year academy, and in 1917, a mixed non-classical secondary school opened there in which Germans from all over the Central Caucasus studied.<sup>22</sup> In 1924-1926, in all the German settlements of Azerbaijan, there were eight German primary schools with an average of 1,090 students in each and one secondary school in Helenendorf, in which there were 213 pupils. A total of 69 teachers worked in these learning establishments.<sup>23</sup> What is more, as corresponding documents noted, "due to the existing need for local staff in technology and agriculture," at the end of the 1920s, a Machine-Building Polytechnic was opened in Helenendorf. In the 1930s, there was a Viniculture and Winemaking Polytechnic in Helenendorf, in which the students were to assimilate a great deal of specialized knowledge. In March 1938, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the U.S.S.R. Council of People's Commissars adopted a joint resolution on the mandatory study of the Russian language in non-Russian schools. Later, a similar decision was adopted by the Azerbaijan leadership, as a result of which reorganization of German schools and transfer of all classes to the Russian language began in the republic.<sup>24</sup>

Soviet power paid much attention to ideological work among the Germans of Azerbaijan in order to involve them in the sociopolitical processes going on in the country, which was one of the areas of the Bolsheviks' national policy. In order to carry out the tasks in this sphere, as early as 1921, a German faction was created under the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in Baku. Its report for 1926 stated that at that moment 136 Germans in the republic were members and candidates for members of the Azerbaijan Communist Party (Bolsheviks).<sup>25</sup> In the 1920s-1930s, two German newspapers came out in Baku: *Bauer und Arbeiter* (Peasant and Worker), published in 1924 and distributed among the Germans living in Azerbaijan and Georgia,<sup>26</sup> and the *Lenins Weg* (Lenin's Way) newspaper, which was published in Helenendorf since 1932 and in Baku since 1936. It was considered the republic-level newspaper for the German population of the Azerbaijan S.S.R.<sup>27</sup> Both of these newspapers were to make a significant contribution to organizing ideological work among the German national minority.

Spiritual life was of great importance in the lives of the emigrants and their descendents. Religion and the church were a uniting link, a symbol of their national culture and uniqueness, which were zealously preserved far from their historical homeland. In 1854, the first stone of St. John's church

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<sup>21</sup> SHAAR, rec. gr. 508, inv. 1, f. 436, sheet 26; N.A. Ibragimov, *Nemetskie stranitsy istorii Azerbaidzhana*, Azerbaijan Publishers, Baku, 1995, pp. 165-166.

<sup>22</sup> SHAAR, rec. gr. 830, inv. 1, f. 7, sheet 8; SAAR, rec. gr. 2602, inv. 1, f. 18, sheets 36, 47.

<sup>23</sup> See: *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Azerbaidzhane 1920-1927*, Publication of the ASSR People's Commissariat of Education, Baku, 1928, p. 143; *Izvestia AzTsSU* (Bulletin of the Azerbaijan Central Statistics Board), No. 1 (8), 1924, pp. 28-29; SAPPMMAR, rec. gr. 1, inv. 235, f. 303, sheet 141.

<sup>24</sup> See: T.A. Musaeva, *Revoliutsiia i narodnoe obrazovanie v Azerbaidzhane*, Elm, Baku, 1979, p. 147; I.I. Kasumova, *Kulturnoe stroitelstvo v Azerbaidzhane v 1920-1930-e gody (na primere natsionalnykh menshinstv i malochislennykh narodov)*: Dissertation... Ph.D. (Hist.), Baku, 1996, p. 103.

<sup>25</sup> SAPPMMAR, rec. gr. 1, inv. 235, f. 303, sheets 140-141.

<sup>26</sup> SAPPMMAR, rec. gr. 12, inv. 2, f. 108, sheets 155, 158; rec. gr. 1, inv. 235, f. 160, sheet 148.

<sup>27</sup> SAPPMMAR, rec. gr. 1, inv. 74, f. 807, sheets 8-9; f. 425, sheet 18.

was laid in Helenendorf, and on 10 March, 1857, it was solemnly consecrated.<sup>28</sup> In 1897, a German Lutheran church was built in Baku (architect A.W. Eichler), and in 1909, a church was opened in Annenfeld (architect F.A. Lemkul). During the Soviet period, there was an ambiguous attitude toward religion. As early as the beginning of the 1920s, an Evangelist-Lutheran community officially functioned which united the Germans of the Central Caucasus, including Azerbaijan.<sup>29</sup> But at the beginning of the 1930s, a wave of arrests of German pastors swept many regions of the U.S.S.R., who were accused of anti-Soviet activity, of liaisons with Germany, and of receiving corresponding assistance from this country. According to the archives of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, at the beginning of 1936, there were 7 Lutheran pastors in our republic who were arrested in 1936-1938 for espionage.<sup>30</sup> In this connection and for several other reasons, the Lutheran churches were also closed. Incidentally, by 1937, not only the German churches, but also most of the mosques and cult buildings of other confessions at one time built in Azerbaijan ceased their activity once and for all and were turned into something different, for example, St. John's church in Helenendorf became a sports hall.<sup>31</sup>

One of the interesting events in the cultural life of the German settlements during the Soviet period was the creation in 1928 of a regional studies museum in Helenendorf (the town of Khanlar). It was organized by local resident Yakov Ivanovich Hummel, who made a significant contribution with his scientific studies (including archeological digs) to Azerbaijan's archeological and ethnographical sciences.<sup>32</sup>

## Deportation

The last and rather tragic page in the history of the Germans of our republic, which put an end to their existence, development, and vital activity in Azerbaijan, was deportation. At the beginning of the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945), it was organized in all the Soviet republics, whereby this process affected not only Soviet Germans, but also the members of several other nationalities of the Soviet Union, whom the country's leadership considered the "fifth column." Here it is worth noting that according to the results of the last prewar census of 1939, 23,133 Germans lived in Azerbaijan (0.7% of the total size of its population).<sup>33</sup>

Deportation was carried out as follows. On 8 October, 1941, the State Defense Committee adopted a resolution (No. 744 ss) On the Resettlement of Germans from the Georgian, Azerbaijan, and Armenian S.S.R., which envisaged: "To resettle the German population from the Georgian S.S.R.—23,580 people, from the Azerbaijan S.S.R.—22,741 people, and from the Armenian S.S.R.—212 people." All the measures for their forced resettlement in the Kazakh S.S.R. entrusted to the bodies of the U.S.S.R. People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs were to be carried out in a short time, between 15 and 30 October, 1941.<sup>34</sup> According to the available data, Azerbaijan's Germans were placed

<sup>28</sup> SHAAR, rec. gr. 508, inv. 1, f. 436, sheet 26.

<sup>29</sup> SAAR, rec. gr. 27, inv. 1, f. 377, sheets 5-6.

<sup>30</sup> See: M. Jafarli, *Politicheskii terror i sudby azerbaidzhanskikh nemtsev*, p. 45.

<sup>31</sup> See: T.F. Gumbatova, "Dukhovnaia zhizn nemtsev v Baku," in: *Rossiiskie nemtsy. Problemy istorii, yazyka i sovremennogo polozheniia*, Documents from the International Scientific Conference, Gotika, Moscow, 1996, p. 345; *Heimatbuch der Deutschen aus Rußland*, Stuttgart, 1961, S. 115.

<sup>32</sup> See: Ya.I. Hummel, *Kraevedcheskii muzei Khanlarskogo raiona*, Baku, 1939, pp. 3-19.

<sup>33</sup> See: *Vsesoiuznaia perepis naseleniia 1939 g. Main Results* (All-Union Population Census for 1939), ed. by Yu.A. Poliakov, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1992, p. 71.

<sup>34</sup> See: "To mobilize Germans into working colonies... (J. Stalin)," Collected Documents, ed. by N.F. Bugai, Gotika, Moscow, 1998, p. 37-38.

**Size of the German Part of  
the Population of  
the Central Caucasus**

Location		1818-1819*	1897**	1926***	1939****	1989*****
In the Russian Empire	Azerbaijan	194 families (approx. 1,000 people)	6,834	—	—	—
	Georgia	292 families (approx. 1,500 people)	405	—	—	—
In the Soviet era	Azerbaijan	—	—	13,149	23,133	748
	Georgia	—	—	12,074	20,527	1,546
	Armenia	—	—	104	—	265

\* See: N.K. Nikiforov, op. cit., p. 104. The source indicates the number of German families who moved to Georgia and Azerbaijan based on which the approximate number of people was estimated.

\*\* See: *Pervaia vseobshchaia perepis naseleniia Rossiiskoi imperii 1897 g.* (First National Population Census of the Russian Empire of 1897), Vol. LXIII, Elizavetpol Gubernia, 1904, p. 3; Vol. LXI, Baku Gubernia, 1905, p. 52; Vol. LXXI, Erivan Gubernia, 1905, p. 53; Vol. LXIX, Tiflis Gubernia, 1905, pp. 76-77; Vol. LXVI, Kutaisi Gubernia, 1905, pp. 2-3. In the data of the *Pervaia vseobshchaia perepis naseleniia Rossiiskoi imperii 1897 g.*, the country's national composition was defined according to native language, based on which the number of Germans was indicated as the number of people who declared German as their native language.

\*\*\* See: *Naselenie Zakavkazia. Vsesoiuznaia perepis naseleniia 1926 g.* (Population of the Transcaucasus. All-Union Population Census of 1926), Publication of the Transcaucasus Central Statistics Board, Tiflis, 1928, p. 8.

\*\*\*\* See: *Vsesoiuznaia perepis naseleniia 1939 g.*, pp. 71-72.

\*\*\*\*\* See: "Rasselenie narodov SSSR po soiuznym respublikam po perepisi 1989 g.," *Soiuz* newspaper, No. 32, August 1990.

(in groups) in special settlements created in the Akmolinsk, Karaganda, Kustanai, Pavlodar, and North Kazakhstan regions of the Kazakh S.S.R.,<sup>35</sup> where they were mobilized into a working army, were

<sup>35</sup> See: *Iz istorii nemtsev Kazakhstana (1921-1975)*, Collected Documents, Gotika, Almaty-Moscow, 1997, pp. 105-106; P.B. Rempel, "Deportatsiia nemtsev iz evropeiskoi chasti SSSR i trudarmii po 'sovershenno sekretnym' do-

registered with the bodies of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, and were deprived of many rights, primarily to free movement.

Only many years after the end of the war, on the basis of decrees of the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet of 13 December, 1955, 29 August, 1964, and 3 November, 1972 were they given the opportunity to leave these special settlements. But they were ultimately rehabilitated on the basis of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet Declaration On Recognizing Repressive Acts Against Peoples Subjected to Forced Resettlement as Illegal and Criminal, and On Guarantee of Their Rights signed on 14 November, 1989.<sup>36</sup> At the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, most Soviet Germans emigrated to the FGR. Only a few of their families returned to the places of their former residence, in particular to Azerbaijan (see table), mainly to Baku. In this way, deportation put an end to the history of the German population which lived for almost two centuries in Azerbaijan.

## The Situation Today

As we have already noted, the representatives of many nationalities, including Germans, live in Azerbaijan today. They all enjoy the equal rights and freedoms guaranteed by the republic's Constitution and preserve and develop their own culture, language, customs, and traditions.<sup>37</sup> In our country, several societies and organizations have been created which hold functions to acquaint people with the German culture, spiritual life, and history of these people, including evenings devoted to the memory of well-known German figures of literature, art, and science.<sup>38</sup> Among such organizations we can note the Azerbaijan National Cultural German Society, *Vozrozhdenie* (Revival), the German-Azerbaijani Cultural Society, Kapellhaus, the German-Azerbaijan Society, and the Evangelist-Lutheran Society in Baku. So the members of this nationality now living in the republic have the opportunity to celebrate national holidays, go to church, and remember the history of their ancestors, the life and destinies of whom were linked with Azerbaijan for almost two centuries.

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kumentam NKVD SSSR 1941-1944 gg.," *Rossiiskie nemtsy. Problemy istorii, yazyka i sovremennogo polozeniia*, p. 73.

<sup>36</sup> See: *Istoria rossiiskikh nemtsev v dokumentakh (1763-1992)*, Collected Documents, ed. by V.A. Auman and V.G. Chebotareva, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1993, pp. 177-179, 266-267.

<sup>37</sup> See: G. Orudzhev, "Azerbaijan's National Minorities Today," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (22), 2003, pp. 139-141.

<sup>38</sup> See: T.F. Gumbatova, "Vozrozhdenie nemetskoi kul'tury i religii v Azerbaidzhane," *Nemetskoe naselenie v post-stalinskom SSSR, v stranakh SNG i Baltii (1956-2003)*, Documents of the International Scientific Conference, Moscow, 2003, pp. 333-347; Ch. Abdullaev, B. Gulieva, *Nemtsy v Azerbaidzhane*, Baku, 1992, pp. 26-28.

## THE GREEKS OF GEORGIA: MIGRATION AND SOCIOECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Mamuka KOMAKHIA

*Research  
associate,  
Institute of Political Studies,  
Georgian Academy of Sciences  
(Tbilisi, Georgia)*

Greeks first came to western Georgia in the 8th-7th centuries B.C., yet the ancestors of most of the Greeks now living in the country came in the 19th and 20th centuries. Today, the once large diaspora (which comprised a significant part of Georgia's population) has shrunk to several thousand people.

The first wave of Greeks from Asia Minor (the Anatolian Greeks) was generated by Czar Irakly II's economic projects implemented in the 1770s and the policies of the regional countries. Under the Kuchuk-Kaynardji Peace Treaty of 1774 between Russia and Turkey, the Russian Empire acquired a protectorate over the Greeks; this was followed by Greek migration to Russia. It was at the same time that Irakly II invited Greek artisans from the Erzurum and Kars regions to work at the newly-opened silver and copper plants in Akhtal and Alaverdi. (About 800 Greeks with families moved to Georgia from the industrial centers of Asia Minor.)

In fact, Russia deliberately created a Christian area in Georgia (where Armenians lived side-by-side with Georgians) which bordered on the Islamic world; this was further promoted by the resettlement of Greek refugees who came in great numbers, especially in the 19th century. Under the Adrianople Peace Treaty which put an end to the Russo-Turkish war

of 1828-1829 Russia was expected to remove its troops from the Erzurum vilayet, a move which would have left the local Greeks who had been on the Russian side during the war unprotected. At General Paskevich's request, Nicholas I allowed the Greeks to settle in Georgia. They came mainly to the Borchala uezd, which had been completely ruined by Turkish and Daghestani inroads. By 1830, about 18 Greek settlements had appeared in the Tsalka District. Simultaneously, Greeks from the northwestern vilayets of Turkey started moving to the Dmanisi District; they replaced the local Georgian geographic names with the names of the villages they left behind in Turkey. This part of the country still abounds in Turkish geographical names, even though over time some of the villages restored their old Georgian names. In the 1830s, Greeks moved to Samtskhe: 200 Greek families settled in the villages of Tsikhisdjvari (Borzhomi District) and Mikeltsminda (Akhaltsikhe District) depopulated by the Muslim incursions. The favorable living conditions made it much easier to strike root there than in the Tsalka District.

Greeks appeared in Abkhazia and Ajaria after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878; the Russian government believed it expedient to move Greeks, politically reliable Orthodox Christians,

to the lands depopulated by mutiny in Abkhazia. Greeks started pouring into these lands in great numbers in 1881; they settled in Batumi and the Dagva village. By the early 20th century, their numbers increased considerably. It should be said that the local Greeks were fairly well-educated and cultured people.<sup>1</sup> Mass Greek migration ended in the 1930s.

It is worth noting that even earlier, in the 1920s, the Greeks started emigrating from Georgia:

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<sup>1</sup> See: I. Garakanidze, "History of Greek Resettlement to Georgia (18th-19th Centuries)," in: *The Greeks of Georgia*, 2000, pp. 28-70 (in Georgian).

Sovietization, the dire economic situation,<sup>2</sup> and the processes unfolding in Turkey<sup>3</sup> forced the Greeks to seek a better life in their historical homeland. The next emigration wave arose in the 1940s when the Soviet authorities moved the Pontic Greeks living along the Black Sea coast in Georgia, Abkhazia, and Ajaria to Central Asia and Kazakhstan, areas with bad climates and adverse geographic conditions. Few of them came back after rehabilitation.

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<sup>2</sup> See: "Ot'ezd grekov," *Batumi* (newspaper published by the Greeks of Ajaria), No. 1-2, January-February 2001.

<sup>3</sup> See: "Den pamiati genotsida Pontiyskogo ellinizma," *Eliniki diaspora* (publication of the Union of the Greek Communities of Georgia), Nos. 5-6 (V-VI), 2003.

## The Settlement Pattern

Until the 1990s, the Greek population of Georgia grew steadily first due to migration (in the 19th century) and later thanks to natural population growth: in 1926, there were 54,000 Greeks, or 2.0% of the total population, living in Georgia; in 1937, 85,000 (2.4 %); in 1959, 73,000 (1.8%); in 1970, 89,000 (1.9%); and in 1979, 95,000 (1.9%).

Greek settlements are mainly found in the southern and southwestern regions of Georgia—in the Tsalka, Tetrtskaroy, Dmanisi, Marneuli, Akhaltsikhe, and Borzhomi districts—and in the Autonomous Republic of Ajaria.<sup>4</sup>

In 1989, there were about 100,000 Greeks (or 1.9% of the total population) living in Georgia; they were in the majority in the Tsalka District (27,000, or 61.0%) where they lived side-by-side with Armenians (28.5% of the district's total population) and Azeris (5.1%). Driven away by natural calamities in the mountains of Svanetia and in Ajaria, Georgians returned to the region in the late 1980s after several centuries of absence. They were resettled there for political reasons as well: Tbilisi wanted to tip the demographic balance in this mainly non-Georgian district by moving Georgian ecological migrants there. By helping the newcomers to adapt to the alien conditions, public organizations supported the official structures. Since that time, the number of Georgians has been growing slowly but steadily.

According to the national population census of 2002, the number of Greeks in Georgia dropped to 15,000, or 0.3% of the total population. About 3,800 of them live in Tbilisi; 2,200, in Ajaria; and 7,500 in Kvemo Kartli, including 4,600 Greeks in the Tsalka District. Today, Armenians are in the majority there.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See: M. Pkhakadze, "The Current Settlement Patterns of the Greeks in Georgia," in: *The Greeks of Georgia*, pp. 71-83.

<sup>5</sup> See: *The State Department of Georgia for Statistics. Results of the First National Population Census of 2002*, Vol. 1, 2003, pp. 110-116 (in Georgian). It should be said here that the local Greeks are convinced there are fewer of them still living in Georgia: because of mistakes, some of those who had emigrated were entered on the lists as still living in Georgia.

Greeks were involved in the migration processes which began in the 1990s to a much greater extent than other ethnic groups, mainly because Greece helped all Greeks from former Soviet republics to resettle in their historical homeland. Nearly all of the 14,700 Greeks who lived in Abkhazia in 1989 left the country for Greece after the war of 1992-1993.<sup>6</sup>

The nationalism raging in the country during Zviad Gamsakhurdia's presidency spurred on emigration: nationalists of all hues and their organizations persecuted ethnic minorities without impunity; they were especially active in the places where ethnic minorities lived in compact groups. There were no cases of deliberate persecution of the Greeks, yet nationalist hysterics caused apprehension and urged people to emigrate. With the removal of Gamsakhurdia, the wave of nationalism subsided, while Greeks continued to emigrate for socioeconomic reasons.

The absolute majority emigrated to Greece; fewer people went to Cyprus, other European states, and Russia. The larger part of the émigrés expected to get residence permits to be able to stay in the country, mainly because back home the strained socioeconomic conditions were killing hopes of getting adequate employment. This has already deprived the Tsalka District of young people, while those of the Greeks who preferred to stay behind (mainly the elderly) live on the money their relatives send them from other countries. In fact, members of the older generation have also decided to emigrate with the help of the same relatives. Crime is another reason behind this: Greeks are attacked, their houses and farm buildings are burned down, and there were several murders.<sup>7</sup>

The Georgian authorities so far have done nothing to stem the outflow. They have limited themselves to statements,<sup>8</sup> while two presidential acts (of 1996 and 2002) on the sociopolitical development of the Tsalka District remained on paper. The outflow is going on.

## One Ethnos— Two Languages

In the past, all the Greeks who settled in Georgia belonged to one of the two language groups—the Greek-speaking Ellinophones (they called themselves “Romeos” or, rarely, “Grekos” and “Elinos”), who on the whole preferred Abkhazia and Ajaria (and, to a lesser extent, south Georgian villages), and Turkic-speaking Greeks who called themselves the “Urums.” They preferred the Tsalka and Dmanisi districts.<sup>9</sup> The Greek-speakers use the Pontic dialect. In Greek “ponto” means a sea coast or a coastal country. In antiquity this word referred to the territory along the southern and southeastern Black Sea coasts where, in the 6th century B.C., the Greeks founded their first colonies and where, some 300 years later, the Pontic Kingdom was located. Later, Ponto (the Pontic area) and the Pontic

<sup>6</sup> See: R. Gachechiladze, *Population Migration in Georgia and Its Socioeconomic Results*, Tbilisi, 1997, p. 37 (in Georgian). To move the Greeks away from Abkhazia, the Greek government carried out a special operation in the course of which Greeks were evacuated by sea: *Athens News Agency Bulletin*, 19 August, 1993. About the Greeks living in Abkhazia see the website of Post Factum Radio: [<http://www.postfactumk.org/index.php?tim=2-5-2003&ID=103>].

<sup>7</sup> See: P. Kotanov, “Kogda zhe nastupit spokoystvie?” *Eliniki diaspora*, No. 1-2 (I- II), 2005.

<sup>8</sup> See: “Migratsia grekov iz Tsalkskogo rayona dolzhna byt priostanovlena,” *Mnogonatsional'naia Gruzia*, No. 4, August 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Two different languages used by the same ethnic community have created an identity problem for the local Greeks as one ethnic group. This is not obvious, yet there is alienation between the Greeks of the Black Sea coast and Eastern Georgia.



population remained closely connected with the territory and its people. In the course of history, the Pontic population lived under different rulers in different historic conditions, yet they kept their collective name—the Pontic people. Today, they live in Ukraine, Russia (mainly in the Northern Caucasus), in Armenia, and Georgia.

The local Greek speakers use the term “Romeyka” to describe their Pontic dialect, which is fairly common in Georgia, and apply the word “Romey” to themselves. They also call their language the Pontiaka. Another term, Elinika, is also applied, although much more rarely, to describe the same language together with the Pontiaka; people in Greece mainly use it to describe the Greek language. For several reasons, the Pontic dialect in Georgia has moved farther from the contemporary spoken and written Greek than all other Greek dialects. The language of the Greek-speaking community in Georgia was influenced by neighboring tongues—Russian, Georgian, Turkish, and Armenian.<sup>10</sup>

The Turkic-speaking population of the Tsalka District mainly uses the eastern Anatolian dialects of the Turkish language<sup>11</sup> and call the local Greeks “Urums.” The term that appeared after the collapse of the Eastern Roman Empire, when the Turks conquered Byzantium stems, from the Latin root “Roma” which means “Rome” or rather the “Roman” (a subject of the Eastern Roman Empire living in one of its provinces, irrespective of his/her ethnic affiliation, captured by the Turks).

The Urums of Georgia use a Turkish dialect divided into local dialects very close to the Turkish dialect. It developed under the strong influence of three languages: the Azerbaijani, Georgian, and Russian. Most of the Tsalka population are Christians—Georgians and Greeks who are Orthodox Christians and Armenians who are Gregorians, as well as Azeris who are Sunni Muslims.<sup>12</sup>

## The Problem of the State Language

Under Soviet power most Greek children attended Russian schools since knowledge of Russian was needed to enter colleges and universities and be employable across the country. With the Soviet Union out of the picture, the Georgian tongue became the main language of the country’s sociopolitical life, while the Greeks living in compact groups, as well as the Azeri and Armenian majority of Kvemo Kartli and Javakheti do not know Georgian at all.

In the Tsalka District there are several factors behind this. The district is populated mainly by Greeks, Armenians, and Azeris who use Russian or Turkic for communication; in Soviet times and today, the Georgian taught in local schools was inadequate, to say the least. There were practical reasons to learn Russian too—the knowledge of Russian alone was more than enough. The Greeks living in Tbilisi have a more or less adequate command of Georgian, yet Russian is still their main spoken language.

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<sup>10</sup> See: A. Mikaberidze, M. Shakhpazidi, “On the Dialect of the Greeks of Georgia,” in: *The Greeks of Georgia*, pp. 129-177.

<sup>11</sup> See: N. Djanashia, “General Description of the Tsalka Urums’ Turkic Dialect,” in: *The Greeks of Georgia*, pp. 178-192.

<sup>12</sup> See: L. Pashaeva, *Sem’ia i semeyny byt grekov Tsalkskogo rayona*, Tbilisi, 1992, pp. 18-19.

This has inevitably created problems in independent Georgia: the Greeks became virtually unemployable; they found themselves in an information vacuum and were excluded from the country's sociopolitical life. The only Greek deputy who served two terms in the Georgian parliament (of the 1995 and 1999 convocations) was practically excluded from law-making because of the language barrier. Those Greeks who can potentially find good jobs cannot do this because of the language exams required in certain spheres of activity. For them emigration is the only option. In the present socioeconomic and political context, the younger generation sees no prospects for themselves and, therefore, sees no reason to study Georgian. The state, on the other hand, cannot organize the teaching of Georgian in the areas where national minorities live in compact groups. After the Rose Revolution, the state started stepping up its activity in this sphere, yet the modest results achieved so far give no hope of a breakthrough.

## Socioeconomic Conditions

Even though only 94 km away from Tbilisi, the Tsalka District (with its adverse climate and bad roads, which means that it takes people 4 to 5 hours to reach the capital) is in a more deplorable socioeconomic situation than many other areas. In winter, things become even worse.<sup>13</sup> Nearly all the local enterprises are idling, many of them have been plundered, and the power supply is erratic. The local Greeks, mostly jobless, are living on money transfers from relatives who emigrated to Greece; agriculture is no longer as profitable as it used to be.

The Greek government and public organizations are doing much to help the local Greeks within the international humanitarian programs.<sup>14</sup> The programs themselves are not limited to the Greek population alone: the three clinics opened under the aegis of the World Congress of Greeks Abroad in Tbilisi, Tsalka, and Tsikhisdjvari extend medical assistance to all ethnic groups living in Georgia.<sup>15</sup> The Greeks do hope that thanks to the international efforts and joint initiatives of the Georgian and Greek governments, the emigration wave will gradually subside.<sup>16</sup> So far this has not happened—young people are still resolved to leave the country.

### Compensation Problem

The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline could have potentially created jobs for the local Tsalka Greeks, yet they were never employed. Moreover, there were problems with getting compensation for the land taken up for laying the pipeline. From the very beginning, BP, which funded the project, bought

<sup>13</sup> Only a small stretch of road was repaired under the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project on BP money. It is expected that in the near future the highway that used to connect Armenian-populated Javakheti with Tbilisi will be restored. The road will cross the Tsalka District and will improve its communication with the capital. This project is realized by the Georgian government on American money under the Millennium Challenge program.

<sup>14</sup> See: V. Nekresidi, "Spasibo za pomoshch," *Eliniki diaspora*, No. 6-7, 1998; V. Kekchidi, "Blagotvoritel'nost," *Eliniki diaspora*, No. 4 (IV), 2003.

<sup>15</sup> See: A. Umudumova, "Vsemirny sovet grekov zarubezh'ia prodolzhit svoi prorammny v Gruzii," *Eliniki diaspora*, No. 5-6 (V-VI), 2003; A. Papanidi, "Ambulatorii primimaiut patsientov," *Eliniki diaspora*, No. 1-2 (I-II), 2004.

<sup>16</sup> See: K. Diamantopulo, "Grecheskaia programma podderzhki ekonomicheskogo i sotsial'nogo razvitiia Gruzii beret start," *Eliniki diaspora*, No. 4 (IV), 2003; idem, "Iannis Makriotis privez iz Gretsii programmu ekonomicheskoy i sotsial'noy podderzhki naselenia Gruzii," *Eliniki diaspora*, No. 5-6 (V-VI), 2003.

44m-wide land stretches and paid compensation not only to the people living in the direct proximity of the route, but also to those who were living within the 2km-wide area around the pipeline. The money, however, was intended for the so-called legal residents, while the Georgian ecological migrants mentioned above, who recently moved to the area and who occupied houses abandoned by their Greek owners without their permission, were not counted as legal residents. It is next to impossible to locate the houses' legal owners since all of them have emigrated.<sup>17</sup>

The newcomers were even suspected of moving to the area in the hope of receiving the compensation money.<sup>18</sup> The local people (Armenians and Greeks) find it hard to accept the ecological migrants (Georgians). This causes conflicts, while the fact that the compensation was intended only for the Greeks adds tension.

### **Other Problems of Private Property Protection**

The Greeks are confronted with the problem of how to protect their property. This is especially true of those who emigrated and left houses behind; some of them are occupied by relatives, some of them were sold. It is hard to sell a house in the Tsalka District, because people from the capital or other places do not want to move there, while the local people have no money to buy property. The abandoned houses are either plundered or squatters move in; some of the ecological migrants, however, moved into houses with the permission of the Greek owners. The authorities should buy these houses from emigrants, but they do not have sufficient funds to do this.<sup>19</sup> However, in 2004 the Ministry for Refugees and Resettlement bought about 100 houses for ecological migrants in the Tsalka District. The 2005 budget has allocated 4.5 million laris, or \$2.5 million, to buy another 100 houses.<sup>20</sup> The house owners, however, are not happy with the state prices<sup>21</sup> and prefer to wait until better times.

The socioeconomic problems in the region notwithstanding, ecological migrants continue pouring into the Tsalka District mainly in the hope, as a representative of the Georgian Ombudsman Office pointed out, of getting well-paid jobs with the pipeline construction project.<sup>22</sup> Those who are critical about the way the government is dealing with the migrants' problems never tire of saying that housing construction is proceeding slowly while only a few of the vacated houses are being bought. Migrants squat in the abandoned houses and cultivate the abandoned lands—this is all happening mainly in the Greek villages. In the absence of a land-redistribution mechanism, the situation is growing even more complicated.<sup>23</sup>

Ethnic conflicts are fuelled by squatting and many other everyday problems plaguing the area.<sup>24</sup> The situation is further aggravated by the fact that some of the ecological migrants are Muslims from the mountainous regions of Ajaria: this adds religious overtones to their conflicts with the local Greeks

<sup>17</sup> See: J. Wheatley, "Obstacles Impending the Regional Integration of the Kvemo Kartli Region of Georgia," *ECMI Working Paper #23*, February 2005.

<sup>18</sup> See: Z. Kechakmadze, "The Situation in Tsalka is Aggravated by the Special Services," *Rezonansi*, No. 81, 15 October, 2002 (in Georgian).

<sup>19</sup> See: M. Narchemashvili, "Why were Internal Troops Moved into Tsalka?" *Rezonansi*, No. 200, 26 July, 2002; Interview with Chairman of the Tsalka District Administration Georgi Kvaliashvili," *Eliniki diaspora*, No. 6-7 (46-47), 2003.

<sup>20</sup> See: *Interpress*, 14 December, 2004.

<sup>21</sup> See: P. Kotanov, "Stoimost domov znachitel'no vyshye," *Eliniki diaspora*, No. 7-10 (VII-X), 2004.

<sup>22</sup> See: I. Zurabishvili, "From Internal Migration to Ethnic Misunderstandings," *Mtavari gazetii*, No. 83, 9 April, 2004 (in Georgian).

<sup>23</sup> See: Z. Baazov, "Napriazhennost iz-za neprodumannosti planov po pereseleniiu," *Panorama*, No. 7, April 2005.

<sup>24</sup> See: M. Mosiashvili, "Armenians are Keeping Down Migrants from Ajaria," *24 saati*, 2 April, 2003 (in Georgian).

and Armenians who are Christians.<sup>25</sup> The media, which tend to look at all conflicts as either ethnic or religious, are doing nothing to defuse the situation: the local people blame the journalists who come to Tsalka for a couple of days to look around (which is obviously not enough to assess the situation) for the very superficial reports about the local developments.<sup>26</sup>

According to Kiriak Iordanidi, Chairman of the Union of Greek Communities of Georgia, the conflicts between the Georgians and the Greeks are rooted in the still unresolved social and economic problems, primarily regarding real estate.<sup>27</sup> Conflicts between ethnic groups periodically flare up; recently the number of crimes, robberies, and murders has increased. The local Greeks explain this by the erratic way the newcomers' problems are dealt with. K. Iordanidi has pointed out that hundreds of criminals came to the area along with workers, peasants, and intellectuals.<sup>28</sup> The Greek ambassador to Georgia responded to the increased number of crimes against the Greeks in Georgia with a statement addressed to the Georgian Ministry of the Interior.<sup>29</sup> On 16 March, 2005 a family of elderly Greeks was beaten up and robbed. The Greeks and Armenians laid the blame on the Georgian newcomers and demanded that they should be allowed to pass judgment on the detained suspect. Later they beat up Georgians and raided a Georgian school. The Georgians complained about continued violence by Greeks and Armenians. This brought the Minister of the Interior to the district; additional policing was organized.<sup>30</sup>

## C o n c l u s i o n

Greeks, especially the Tsalka Greeks, are bent on emigrating to a much greater extent than the other ethnic minorities of Georgia. In the 1990s, their numbers sharply declined; the process will continue unabated due to the social and economic difficulties; as a result Georgia might lose its Greek community.

The Greeks living in the Tsalka District are very much concerned with the safety of their private property; the conflicts between the local Greeks and Armenians, on the one hand, and the ecological migrants (Georgians), on the other, stemming from the property issue are of an everyday nature, yet the periodical flare-ups are gradually acquiring ethnic hues against the background of the social and economic hardships. The media, which tend to describe the local events as ethnic confrontations, are failing to defuse tension. This, and the present attitude of the authorities toward the socioeconomic problems, will increase the danger of a full-scale ethnic conflict there.

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<sup>25</sup> See: N. Molodini, "The Danger of Religious Confrontation in Tsalka," *Akhali versia*, 7-8 April, 2004 (in Georgian).

<sup>26</sup> See: Z. Baazov, "Tsalka—rayon neotlozhennykh konfliktov," *Kavkazskiy aktsent*, No. 8, 16-31 May, 2005.

<sup>27</sup> See: I. Zurabishvili, "Aliens in Their Own Country," *Mtavari gazeti*, No. 88, 16 April, 2004.

<sup>28</sup> See: K. Iordanidi, "An Open Letter to the President of Georgia," *24 saati*, No. 136, 10 June, 2004.

<sup>29</sup> See: "Presech vylazki kriminaliteta," *Mnogonatsional'naiia Gruzia*, No. 3, March 2005.

<sup>30</sup> See: Z. Anjaparidze, *Georgia's Greek and Armenian Communities Decry Resettlement Plans*, The Jamestown Foundation, 23 March, 2005.