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- ***Central Eurasia: Politics Today***
- ***Central Eurasia:  
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**ECONOMICS AND ENERGY POLICY**

**NEW SILK ROAD:  
OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS  
FOR CENTRAL ASIA  
(A VIEW FROM KAZAKHSTAN)**

**Amina AUBAKIROVA**

*D.Sc. (Geography), Professor in Economics of  
the Higher Attestation Commission of the Ministry of Education and  
Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan;  
Professor at the Department of Economics,  
School of Economics and Management,  
Narxoz University Joint Stock Company  
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Narxoz University Joint Stock Company  
(Almaty, Kazakhstan)*

## A B S T R A C T

**I**n connection with the Chinese project *One Belt, One Road*, the article deals with geopolitical aspects of the ways of its implementation.

The focus is on the participation of Kazakhstan and the post-Soviet countries of Transcaucasia and Central Asia in the project. Highlighted are the geopolitical interests

of Russia and China, Turkey and Iran, as well as the extra-regional powers—the European Union and the United States. An attempt is made to outline new threats and risks for the region in connection with the building of the New Silk Road. Contributors represent their point of view mainly through the prism of the interests of Kazakhstan.

**KEYWORDS:** *Central Asia, New Silk Road (NSR), the participation of China, Russia, and Western countries in the construction of the NSR, the risks and challenges for Central Asia.*

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

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the geopolitical position of the republics of Central Asia and Kazakhstan proved to be extremely difficult. All of them are located in the depths of the largest continent—Eurasia, away from the sea routes. In the last two centuries, being part of the Russian Empire, and then the U.S.S.R., these republics were perceived by the world community as the backward provinces of the two empires.

For many centuries, the region was located along the Great Silk Road and was a link between the West and East. Many medieval cities in the territory of Southern Kazakhstan and the republics of Central Asia appeared only because of its existence. And now, the modern tourist value of these cities is, in many respects, connected with preserved objects of the Silk Road. As a matter of course, it is possible to say that the obsolescence of the region, as the link between the East and West, was caused by the opening of the maritime communications between them. The second reason for the rupture of the links has been artificial, for ideological reasons of the Russian Empire and then of the Soviet Union. However, maybe because of the disruption of the ties with the outside world, while in a kind of artificial suspension, the region did not lose its distinctive identity during the Soviet period. In recent times, for a quarter of a century being between two strong states, Russia and China, on the one hand, and the Islamic world, Turkey and Iran in particular, on the other, the post-Soviet Central Asia has been experiencing not only a political but also strong civilizational influence from these countries. The realization of the membership in the Turkic-Muslim culture, the influence of China in the modern times, strong traditions of the post-Soviet mentality, search for national identity—all this constitutes a very complex fusion in the modern history of the region. How will the revival of the Great Silk Road be reflected in search of a region's place in the world community? Will the region remain in the post-Soviet space with the strong influence of Russia, become the commodity appendage of China or endeavor to experience the influence of its Turko-Muslim roots?

For the last 25 years of their independent development, the post-Soviet republics of Central Asia have become full members of the U.N. and many other international and regional organizations. However, the absence of direct means of communication with Europe and China created great difficulties in integrating these republics into the world economic and political space. All of them were aware of the weakness of their inland position. To break out of this trap, huge financial resources and



the goodwill of the neighboring countries were necessary. Necessary finances from the states of the region were absent. In addition, all countries in the region during this period were dominated by centripetal forces, aimed at finding political and economic partners outside the region. And, in the 1990s, citizens of the region were surprised to discover the Turkic-speaking and Islamic world, from which they were artificially ostracized for many centuries. However, the historical memory of the people persevered; they remembered the times of the Great Silk Road.

The term “Silk Road” was put into circulation by Ferdinand von Richthofen, after his expeditions to China in 1868-1872.<sup>1</sup> The revival of the historical route was thoroughly discussed at the end of the 20th century, when technologies and transport appeared that made it possible to make large transcontinental shipments in difficult weather conditions, while preserving their profitability.

Asia, in the 21st century, shows unprecedented openness and high growth rates. But, the economic development of the internal spaces of Eurasia is constrained by the lack of transportation communications. From this point of view, it can be said that the Chinese initiative to revive the Great Silk Road was at the right time and in the right place. Yet, in conditions of global development of the world, political interests of countries, often located far away, interfere with this economic necessity. Possible routes for establishing communications are used by the leading powers as instruments of their foreign policy.

The purpose of this study is to analyze possible routes for the New Silk Road from the point of view of Kazakhstan’s interests, as well as to identify concurrent threats and risks.

## Interests of the Central Asian Region in Light of the One Belt, One Road Project

For today, it can be said that Central Asia, as a whole, does not have its regional identity, and, in international relations, it does not act as a single region with common core regional problems. There are no common regional projects either. But, in fact, for many centuries, geographically and historically, this Turkic-speaking and Islamic region represented a single whole. The region united nomadic and sedentary culture of the people, who needed each other economically. And, in the U.S.S.R., the region developed as a single territorial production complex—an analog of modern clusters operating under specific Soviet conditions. Water and other resources of the region were utilized in common. Subsequently, during the period of independent development, they have become a source of persistent conflicts in the region.

We must point out immediately that there is no unity in the political decisions of the republics of the region. The initiative to create the Central Asian Union did not get a chance for implementation because of the position of Uzbekistan. Economically, the countries are separate. Of all the states, only Kazakhstan has achieved certain successes in the way of market reforms in its economic development. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which experienced civil wars and social upheavals, are among the poorest countries (156 and 158 seats, respectively, according to the GNI per capita rating).<sup>2</sup> Turkmenistan prefers to distance itself from its neighbors. Until recently, Uzbekistan has pursued an unpredictable foreign policy, maneuvering between the U.S., China, and Russia. And in this sense, the initiative of regenerating the Silk Road should unite the regional states. Region’s countries should use their historical chance, in spite of mutual distrust, in amending attitudes regarding one another. From

<sup>1</sup> V. Elisseff, *The Silk Roads: Highways of Culture and Commerce*, Berghahn Books, New York, 2000, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> See: *Rating of the Countries of the World Based on the Level of Gross National Income Per Capita*, Humanitarian Technology: Information and Analytical Portal, 30 October, 2016, available in Russian at [<http://gtmarket.ru/ratings/rating-countries-gni/rating-countries-gni-info>], 11 June, 2017.

all the states of the region, Kazakhstan has the longest boundary with China, and, accordingly, the big interest in the Chinese project One Belt, One Road.

## *Interests of Kazakhstan*

It should be said that even before the presentation of Xi Jinping's historic project of the New Silk Road, Kazakhstan, earlier than its neighbors, realized the need for the building of transportation infrastructure. In 2011, the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, announced the revival of the Silk Road as a strategic task. In January 2013, the Government of the Republic adopted a comprehensive plan of measures to implement the project,<sup>3</sup> which is being successfully employed. At the end of 2014, the president proposed the program Nurly Jol (The Light Road).<sup>4</sup> It is based on a five-year plan for infrastructure development of the regions.

During the 25 years of its independence, Kazakhstan has built more railroads than all the CIS countries combined. Of the major projects, Kazakhstan built an egress hub through Turkmenistan to Iran, as well as the second one on the border with China. Also, located here is the Khorgos free economic area on the border of Kazakhstan and China, in addition, major work is underway to build a large sea port of Aktau on the Caspian Sea. Under the auspices of the European Union, the Western Europe-Western China road is being built across Russia and the four southern regions of Kazakhstan. The Kazakhstan section of the road was completed in December 2016 and will allow reducing the time for delivery of goods by road by almost 3.5 times, in comparison to the sea route. The length of the Kazakhstan section of the international transit corridor is 2,787 km. The completion of the Russian section of the highway is planned for no earlier than 2020.<sup>5</sup>

At this time, four main transportation corridors have been planned. Each of them has its pros and cons in both economic and geopolitical sense, but in any case, they are quite competitive with the maritime routes. Kazakhstan and Russia are the main participants in the project. The route through Kazakhstan and the Caucasus reduces the distance from China to Europe, compared to the sea through the Suez Canal, by almost two times, and by 2-3,000 km, compared to the Trans-Siberian Railway (Transsib). It is estimated that goods from the Chinese port of Lianyungang to Berlin (more than 11 thousand km) are delivered by sea in 20 to 40 days and by rail in 11 days. At present, the Chongqing-Duisburg freight train is in operation, which covers this distance in 15 days; its average speed is 726 km per day.

## *Interests of the States of the Post-Soviet Central Asia*

Of the four countries of the post-Soviet Central Asia, apart from Kazakhstan, only two—Kyrghyzstan and Tajikistan—share a common border with China, but they do not have direct rail links

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<sup>3</sup> See: *The Directive of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 25 December, 2012, No. 231-r "On Approval of the Comprehensive Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Project "Kazakhstan—The New Silk Road"*, The Adilet Republican Center of Legal Information of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, available in Russian at [<http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/R1200000231>], 15 June, 2017.

<sup>4</sup> See: *The Nurly Jol State Program for Infrastructure Development for 2015-2019*, National Control Holding Baiterek, available in Russian at [<http://www.baiterek.gov.kz/ru/activities/state-programs/nurly-zhol/>], 15 June, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> T. Shadrina, "Ot Evropy do Kitaia prolozhat dorogu," *Rossiiskaia gazeta RG.RU*, 18 March, 2013, available at [<http://www.rg.ru/2013/03/18/doroga-site.html>], 22 May, 2017.

with it. The route, proposed by China as far back as 1996, envisaged the construction of a railway through Kyrgyzstan to Uzbekistan and further, through Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey. However, Kyrgyz experts believe that uniting Kyrgyzstan to Uzbekistan will break the tacit balance between the northern and southern elites of Kyrgyzstan, and that at first, it is necessary to build an internal branch, connecting the north and south of the republic.<sup>6</sup>

The fact is that the northern railway connects Kyrgyzstan with Kazakhstan, and the southern road—with Uzbekistan. There are also tracks, linking Kyrgyzstan to the densely populated areas of the Fergana Valley of Uzbekistan, but in all three directions, Kyrgyzstan depends on the goodwill of its neighbors. The public opinion prevailed that the project, offered by Beijing, is beneficial to China and Uzbekistan, but not to Kyrgyzstan. There were difficulties concerning the terms of conditions under which Chinese investments will come to the country. At a press conference on 16 December, 2013, Kyrgyzstan's President Atambaev even admitted that the project "does not solve any problems" of the country and is contrary to its national interests, the project as a result was suspended. But since then, the political priorities of Atambaev's government have shifted from the U.S. to Russia, which is confirmed by the Americans' withdrawal from the Kyrgyz base Manas. The republic became a full-fledged member of the Eurasian Economic Union and Eurasian infrastructure projects initiated by China. All this accelerated the decision, declared by Atambaev at the Tashkent summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in July 2016, to build the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway.<sup>7</sup>

However, some experts give another assessment to the transcontinental transit through Kyrgyzstan. The well-known expert on infrastructure projects of Central Asia, Kubat Rakhimov, names the weak points of the project—"No transcontinental railway transit from China to Europe through Kyrgyzstan is feasible... The route will have eight state borders, two procedures for changing wheel sets: the first on the Kyrgyz-Chinese border, then on the Turkmen-Iranian border, and two more ferry crossings in Turkey through Lake Van and through the Bosphorus Strait."<sup>8</sup> Also, Rakhimov asserts that, in economic terms, the railroad connecting the north and south of the republic should be the priority for Kyrgyzstan. This direction is interesting for investors from Russia, Kazakhstan and the southern countries, including India and Pakistan. Close to the opinion of Rakhimov is the view of the American expert, Johan Engvall, who also does not gauge the chances of Kyrgyzstan very high, describing the republic as a "Central Asia's unorganized island of democracy."<sup>9</sup> Most experts put a focus on the continued instability in neighboring Afghanistan.

For Kazakhstan, the new Chinese-Kyrgyz direction is a competitor in the transportation of goods from China to Europe, but China proceeds from the interests of its southwestern regions. By and large, for Kazakhstan, this is another way to access the markets of Europe and the Middle East, as well as Turkey and Iran.

China offers another option through Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Iran. For Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, this is a more acceptable project since their transport dependence on Tashkent would have significantly decreased. Both republics have complicated relations with Uzbekistan, which, during the deterioration of the situation in the region, could always block transit through its

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<sup>6</sup> S. Pale, "Kirghizia i kitaiskiy 'Novy Shelkovy put,'" *Novoe Vostochnoe obozrenie NEO*, 3 September, 2015, available at [<http://ru.journal-neo.org/2015/09/03/kirgiziya-i-kitajskij-novy-j-shelkovy-j-put/>], 27 May, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> V. Kuriatov, "ShOS-2016: vyzovy i perspektivy," *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 25 June, 2016, available at [<http://www.kazpravda.kz/articles/view/shos-2016-vizovi-i-perspektivi1>], 24 May, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted from: A. Timofeenko, "Zheleznaia doroga Kitai-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan, Voprosy bez otvetov," *Vecherniy Bishkek*, 4 February, 2013, available at [<http://stanradar.com/news/full/503-zheleznaia-doroga-kitaj-kyrgyzstan-uzbekistan-riski-i-vygody.html>], 27 May, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> J. Engvall, *Flirting with State Failure: Power and Politics in Kyrgyzstan since Independence*, A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, Washington, D.C., 2011, p. 18.

territory. It should be noted that both routes pass through the mountainous territories of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan and are associated with construction in hard-to-reach areas.

For Kazakhstan, this project is a more significant competitor than the first option since the length of the road through Tajikistan will be 1,972 km;<sup>10</sup> the length of the Kazakhstan route from China to Iran is 10 thousand km. However, the Kazakh road has already been built with access to the largest Iranian market. In any case, the existence of multiple passages from China to Europe through the territory of these countries should be viewed only in a positive light for the whole region. However, politics prevail over the economy. Each country, not trusting its neighbors, proceeds from purely parochial interests, not solving common regional problems for the benefit of all.

Thus, the economic and geopolitical interests of the two largest countries of Eurasia—China and Russia—play an important role in solving the transportation problems of the region. The uncoordinated policy of the countries of the region does nothing to improve the situation.

## Interests of China and Russia in Light of the One Belt, One Road Project

*China*, the initiator of the project One Belt, One Road, solves several tasks in its domestic and foreign economic policy. The country needs to find the ways to use excess capacity for the construction of roads, rail, and other railway equipment, to find new markets for its products to ensure the goal of creating a moderately prosperous society by 2021.<sup>11</sup>

China is also interested in the intensive development of the poorest internal and western regions, in particular, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). Their lagging behind the coastal, eastern regions is fraught with social upheavals. Consequently, China, with its annual growth in turnover of 7-8%, is very interested in the formation of the transportation system to the west through the territory of Kazakhstan, Russia and the states of Central Asia. However, cultural differences represent barriers to solving these problems.<sup>12</sup>

Of the external factors, note the following: with its project, backed by solid investments, China will strengthen its influence in Central Asia. Furthermore, most importantly, according to many American and European analysts, China needs more continental supply routes in the event of an aggravation of confrontation with the United States and the blocking of the traditional sea routes, bypassing Eurasia. The New Silk Road plays an important role in the unofficial confrontation between China and the United States.<sup>13</sup>

China is fairly well represented in the economies of Central Asia, particularly in the commodity sectors. "In Kazakhstan, China's companies already account for 20-25% of the oil production, not much less than the state's KazMunayGas. The same situation is observed in the neighboring republics—"Chinese investment in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, exceeds Russia's by 10.7

<sup>10</sup> "Iran obeshchaet predstavit proekt zheleznoi dorogi cherez Tadjikistan cherez tri mesyatsa," Iran.ru: Russian Information Agency, 12 May, 2012, available at [[http://www.iran.ru/news/economics/80454/Iran\\_obeshchaet\\_predstavit\\_proekt\\_zheleznou\\_dorogi\\_cherez\\_Tadjikistan\\_cherez\\_tri\\_mesyaca](http://www.iran.ru/news/economics/80454/Iran_obeshchaet_predstavit_proekt_zheleznou_dorogi_cherez_Tadjikistan_cherez_tri_mesyaca)], 3 June, 2017.

<sup>11</sup> V. Tsepliaev, "Kitai v Si mazhore: Chemu Rossia mozhet pouchitsia u vostochnogo soseda," *Argumenty i fakty*, No. 13, 2013, p. 7.

<sup>12</sup> See: D. Tang, "China Bans Ramadan Fast for Muslims in Northwest," *The Telegraph*, 3 July, 2014, available at [<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/10942493/China-bans-Ramadan-fast-in-Muslim-northwest.html>], 10 July, 2017.

<sup>13</sup> See: N. Beauchamp-Mustafaga, "Dispatch from Beijing: PLA Writings on the New Silk Road," *China Brief*, No. 15, 2015, p. 1.

times—and in the future, the balance will not be in our favor,” indicated the Russian economist, Vladislav Inozemtsev.<sup>14</sup> In Turkmenistan, China replaced Gazprom as the main gas buyer.

However, the experience of the states of the East and Southeast Asia region, which have a long history of relations with China in the current period of its strengthening, tells us that such fears are in vain. China firmly adheres to its foreign policy, formulated in the 1950s on five principles of peaceful coexistence. These principles are based on respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. The American political scientist, David Kang, confirms that the East Asian countries do not see China as a threat and it is profitable for them to develop friendly relations with it.<sup>15</sup>

Probably one of the reasons for this attitude is to be found in the intensive economic ties of the countries of the East and Southeast Asia with China. The level of development of China, in comparison with the border countries, allowed the former to be, historically, in the position of the Center for a long time.<sup>16</sup> The implementation of the maritime Silk Road project in the 21st century allows China to develop more in-depth relations with the countries of the region. It is worth noting that 80% of energy supplies to the PRC go through the Strait of Malacca in Southeast Asia.<sup>17</sup> Close economic ties are a reliable basis for preserving political stability in the region. For the states of Central Asia, this is a good example.

But regardless of China's intentions, the One Belt, One Road initiative will lead to geopolitical consequences due to China's growing power and its economic influence around the world.<sup>18</sup> And, for China itself, moving to Central Asia, to the borders of Afghanistan, presents certain risks. It is probably difficult to discuss stabilization in this country, not only in the short but also in the long run.

Russia's influence in Central Asia cannot be overestimated, although at different times of their independent development the states of the region were oriented toward different external players. In such conditions, relations with Russia remained, although they lost their priority character, and in some places (Uzbekistan) started to be marginalized. This was also tied to the priorities of Russia's foreign policy after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The desire for rapid integration with Western countries has led to Russia's loss of political and economic influence in Central and Eastern Europe, and also the weakening of its positions in the countries of Central Asia.<sup>19</sup>

But the rethinking of the country's geostrategy, with Vladimir Putin's coming to power, has led the government to change the priority of its foreign policy regarding the Asian countries. As the director of the Institute of the U.S. and Canada, Russian Academy of Sciences, Sergey Rogov, has written: “The Russian Federation, unlike the Soviet Union, cannot claim the role of a superpower. Although in terms of the size of its territory, its population, its economic and scientific and technical potential, it can become one of the leading participants in the multipolar world as a great Eurasian power, taking an equal part in resolving issues that affect its legitimate interests.”<sup>20</sup>

This fact changed the circumstances of Russia's presence in Central Asia. Russia, with the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union, is again regaining its strength and influence in this region. But what is very important to understand is that, in the informational space of the region, Russia's

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<sup>14</sup> M. Overchenko, “Kak Kitai otvoevyvaet u Rossii Tsentralnuiu Aziyu,” *Vedomosti*, 25 October, 2015, available at [<http://www.vedomosti.ru/economics/articles/2015/10/26/614254-kitai-aziyu-rossii#/galleries/140737492479880/normal/1>], 22 June, 2017.

<sup>15</sup> D. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power and Order in East Asia*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2007, p. 296.

<sup>16</sup> E. Zicheng, *Geopolitika i diplomatiya Kitaa*, Peking, 1998, pp. 9-13.

<sup>17</sup> T. Fallon, “The New Silk Road: Xi Jinping's Grand Strategy for Eurasia,” *American Foreign Policy Interests*, Vol. 37, Issue 3, 2015, pp. 140-147.

<sup>18</sup> T. Summers, “China's ‘New Silk Roads’: Sub-National Regions and Networks of Global Political Economy,” *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 37, Issue 9, 2016, pp. 1628-1643.

<sup>19</sup> V. Kolossov, R. Turovsky, “Russian Geopolitics at the Fin-de-siècle,” *Geopolitics*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, 2001, pp. 141-164.

<sup>20</sup> S. Rogov, “Kontury novoi rossiiskoi strategii,” *Nezavisimaya gazeta: Stsenarii*, No. 3, 1998, pp. 14-15.



presence remains extremely strong. Furthermore, its relations with Central Asia cannot be attributed exclusively to interstate relations. The historical, cultural, socioeconomic, civilizational and geographical links of the former U.S.S.R. with the region are too strong. The human factor still has an enormous significance. Western experts underestimate that the Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 is still a strong cementing factor for most of the peoples of the post-Soviet space. They also underestimate the post-Soviet mentality.

The most far-sighted Russian experts are sure that Russia can and should position itself not only as an advantageous economic partner for the states of the region but also as an effective guarantor of their economic independence.<sup>21</sup> This contrasts sharply with the prevailing sentiment in the West and among some circles within the Central Asian elites that Russia is allegedly seeking to regain control of the region in a colonial-imperial style.

Russia has a competitive advantage due to its enormous latitudinal size: the railways, the Transsib and Baikal-Amur Mainline (BAM), represent a unique opportunity to transport cargo from East and Southeast Asia to Europe.

It is argued that, in a global sense, the niche of transcontinental transit is heavily engaged in ocean transportation, and the land infrastructure of Russia, primarily the railway infrastructure, is obsolete technologically and cannot keep up its competitive edge. In addition, advocates of this opinion consider transit as an insufficiently attractive way of earning money, suggesting that transport systems should be used primarily for export-import of goods. Thus, across the Far East, the goods are sent from South Korea and Japan to the CIS countries. The Russian Transsib and BAM occupy a traditionally important place in these transports. In fact, during the Soviet and the 25-year post-Soviet period, the Russian Pacific ports and the Trans-Siberian Railway actually had no competitors. Cooperation with China implies investment for Russia to modernize technologically obsolete main transit railways in eastern Siberia and the Far East. Without offering concrete plans for modernization, Russia is clearly missing out time-wise.

However, most Russian experts believe that “transit potential can become an important geostrategic advantage of Russia if the needs of the rest of the world for its natural resources are reduced.”<sup>22</sup> Another thing is that for a long time Russia had a competitive advantage in the delivery of goods from Japan, China and South Korea to the territory of the CIS countries and Europe. How not to lose this competitive advantage in the new conditions? In connection with the relatively effective measures taken by Kazakhstan to strengthen its transportation infrastructure, Russia’s efforts to modernize clearly lag behind. Russian experts are compelled to admit that some cargos are already being reoriented toward Kazakhstan’s routes. “We cannot exclude the possibility that they will be reoriented from the ports of the southern Primorye to the more developed infrastructure of Lianyungang, in which the joint Kazakh-Chinese logistics complex already operates and which is the starting point of the container train that follows the Lianyungang-Almaty route.”<sup>23</sup>

However, Russia at this stage has a trump card, the Eurasian Union as an instrument of pressure, to take its place in the emerging infrastructure. Undoubtedly, this is in line with Russia’s strategic interests in the region, and it does much to achieve this. Suffice it to recall the initiation by Russia of the creation in November 2014 of the United Transport and Logistics Company (JSC “OTLK”).<sup>24</sup>

Russia would like to be in the position of solving the problems of infrastructure projects along the line of the China-Eurasian Union, but China has already developed the practice of bilateral nego-

<sup>21</sup> See: G.I. Chufirin, *Rossia v Tsentralnoi Azii*, KISI, Almaty, 2010, 220 pp.

<sup>22</sup> V. Inozemtsev, “Tranzitnoi strany iz Rossii uzhe ne vyidet,” *Vedomosti*, 29 November, 2012, available at [[https://www.vedomosti.ru/opinion/articles/2012/11/29/tranzita\\_ne\\_vyidet](https://www.vedomosti.ru/opinion/articles/2012/11/29/tranzita_ne_vyidet)].

<sup>23</sup> I. Zuenko, S. Zuban, “Trankontinentalnyi transit Aziia-Evropa,” *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnoshenia*, No. 7, 2016, pp. 70-76.

<sup>24</sup> See: AO “OTLK” website, available at [<http://www.utlc.com/>], 14 June, 2017.

tiations in its relations with the post-Soviet countries. This practice has been carried out by China for a long time and includes trying to find resolutions to the problems of trans-boundary rivers as well.

Both China and Russia understand that they should not necessarily oppose the EAEU with the Chinese initiative. There is alignment of many interests of the two countries. Russia is interested in the development of its eastern regions, and China is interested in the development of its north-eastern regions, historically oriented toward Russia. In addition, Russia needs Chinese loans for the modernization of the Trans-Siberian Railway and BAM. It is also important that in the conditions of a single economic space, new opportunities for cooperation arise within the framework of the EAEU. In addition, both states are interested in maintaining stability in the region.

On 8 May, 2015, Russia and China signed an agreement on co-opting the Chinese initiative of the Silk Road Economic Belt (the "Belt") by the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). This was the culmination of an unprecedented Russian-Chinese rapprochement, engendered by the rupture of Moscow with the West. Russia received a vivid symbol of support from the second world economy in the period of confrontation with the West, the opportunity to modernize its infrastructure with Chinese money. In addition, it was the first international treaty concluded between the EAEU and the country outside the former U.S.S.R. The following days were marked by the celebration of the Victory Day of the two countries in World War II.

Russia, it would seem, received a unique chance to solve its traditional problems with the railway infrastructure. China also provides investments and its almost 30-year experience in building roads in the most difficult conditions. However, in the analytical works of the Russian scientists, the opinion about mutual distrust between Russia and China can be inferred. The post-Soviet Central Asia is traditionally a sphere of Russian interests and the strengthening of China is clearly not entirely acceptable to Russia. China does not tire of repeating that it views Russia as an important participant in its infrastructure projects. In Central Asia, they understand the significance of the Russian-Chinese partnership for the region, its role in preserving peace. At the same time, political scientists also express the inevitable clash of interests of China and Russia in Central Asia.

## **Interests of the West in the Central Asian Region in Light of One Belt, One Road Project**

Of all the Western world, Western Europe is the one most closely associated with Central Asia, if only because they are located on the same continent. Security throughout the Eurasian continent has always had the attention of the European Union. This is evidenced by the fact that all the states of the region are members of the OSCE. At first, after the collapse of the U.S.S.R., Europe took an active part in developing market relations and imparting Western ideas of democracy to the newly independent countries of the region.

Modern relations of the region with Europe are viewed by the population as the promotion of democratic values, especially in the fields of culture and education, which, in most cases, are understandable to the population. It can already be stated that in 25 years, a whole generation of young people, educated in Europe and imbued with European values, has grown up in the region. However, assessing the situation in the region, experts should not forget that at the core of the society, the republics remain traditional, eastern, with a large share of their values and perceptions steeped in the post-Soviet mentality.

The initiatives of Europe to create transportation corridors were also positively adopted by the region. These are the famous TRACECA program, which included all the republics of the post-Sovi-

et Central Asia, Kazakhstan and the republics of Transcaucasia,<sup>25</sup> and the INOGATE program.<sup>26</sup> The European Union funds both programs. Naturally, Russia cannot find favor with the geopolitical setting of both programs, aimed at bypassing Russia and reducing the dependence of the republics within the region on Russia, and, therefore, cannot grant its approval.

With the launch of the One Belt, One Road initiative, new opportunities have opened for European countries to expand cooperation with the countries of Central Asia, China, etc. However, there are fears that the implementation of the Chinese concept may contribute to dissonance within the EU.

The interest in attracting Chinese investments by the countries of the “New Europe”<sup>27</sup> has led to the creation of the “16+1” forum (the countries of Eastern and Central Europe). There are concerns that 11 of the EU member states may lobby for China’s interests in carrying out the Brussels policy.<sup>28</sup>

Despite the fact that Central Asia is not a sphere of special interest for the United States, since 2001, the interest in the region has been evidenced due to its proximity to Afghanistan. In the event that the U.S. and NATO forces leave Afghanistan, this will inevitably mean a reduction in the geopolitical influence of the West and, probably, the strengthening of Iran, Russia and China in the region.

According to Emre İşeri, the goal of the great U.S. strategy for the twenty-first century is the strengthening of American political control over the Eurasian landmass and its hydrocarbon resources.<sup>29</sup> As William Engdahl has succinctly explained, “In short, the Bush administration which took office in January 2001, was steeped in oil and energy issues as no administration in recent U.S. history had been.”<sup>30</sup> Thus, Central Asia, the Caspian region, in particular, has gained significance in the eyes of the United States. Political support for the construction of an expensive Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline serves as evidence. In July 2011, the then U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, during her visit to India, put forward the idea of a New Silk Road—a transportation corridor from South Asia through Afghanistan, north to Central Asia. One of the components of this plan should be the construction of the Trans-Afghan gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Pakistan and India (TAPI). Of course, one of the official motives for the proposal by the Americans of the TAPI project is the stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan. Russia’s experts see this project, primarily, as an attempt by the U.S. to gain access to the resources of Central Asia, bypassing Russia and Iran.<sup>31</sup>

For a long time, China did not support this initiative either. As noted by a prominent Kazakh political scientist, Sultan Akimbekov, in an interview with *Kazakhstanskaia pravda* at the first meeting of the Astana Club in 2015, China announced for the first time that it would support the Trans-Afghan gas pipeline.<sup>32</sup> After that, Beijing strengthened relations with Kabul, and further prospects are likely to contribute to them.

Given the Trans-Afghan gas pipeline, the countries of Central Asia would have received yet another gateway through Afghanistan to the south, to Pakistan and India. These large countries of South Asia repeatedly expressed their interest in natural gas and oil from the region. For the countries

<sup>25</sup> See: TRACECA website, available at [<http://www.traceca-org.ru/glavnaja/>], 14 June, 2017.

<sup>26</sup> See: INOGATE website, available at [<http://www.inogate.org/?lang=ru>], 14 June, 2017.

<sup>27</sup> B. Volkhonskiy, “Pererozhdenie ‘novoi Evropy’,” *Russkii zhurnal*, 25 November, 2008, available at [<http://www.russ.ru/pole/Pererozhdenie-novoj-Evropy>], 25 June, 2017.

<sup>28</sup> T. Fallon, op. cit.

<sup>29</sup> E. İşeri, “The U.S. Grand Strategy and the Eurasian Heartland in the Twenty-First Century,” *Geopolitics*, Vol. 14, Issue 1, 2009, pp. 26-46.

<sup>30</sup> W. Engdahl, *A Century of War: Anglo-American Oil Politics and the New World Order*, Pluto Press, London, 2004, pp. 246-247.

<sup>31</sup> V.G. Korgun, “Vyvod voisk SShA/NATO iz Afganistana: problemy i vyzovy,” in: *Afganistan i Pakistan: sovremennoe sostoianie i perspektivy razvitiia (po materialam soveshchania, sostoiavshegosia v Tsentre izucheniia stran Blizhnego i Srednego Vostoka)*, Moscow, 2012, p. 27.

<sup>32</sup> S. Enaleev, “Astaninskii klub: dialog o budushchem Tsentralnoi Azii,” *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 28 October, 2016, available at [<http://www.kazpravda.kz/fresh/view/astaninskii-klub-dialog-o-budushchem-tsentralnoi-evrazii/>], 16 June, 2017.



of the region, in the search for ways to diversify their resources, the southern direction is seen as a reduction of dependence on one country—Russia. The implementation of the One Belt, One Road initiative opens new routes for China to the Indian Ocean, which can change the whole geostrategic nature of the Eurasian continent.<sup>33</sup>

## Interests of the Countries of Transcaucasia, Turkey, and Iran

Azerbaijan has interesting opportunities, as a country that also occupies strategic positions on the routes of the New Silk Road. Much attention is paid to the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, running through the territories of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey. Completion of construction is planned toward the end of 2017. The launch of the railway communication between Turkey and Georgia will give a powerful impetus to the new direction of the international transportation route. For Kazakhstan, this is a very promising direction, as the work is actively expanding the Aktau seaport, through which the cargo flow from Turkey to the countries of the region keeps increasing. So, in just two months of 2016, more than 1,660 units passed, while for the whole of 2015 it amounted to 1,885.<sup>34</sup>

In light of the complex internal and external situation, political complications may arise in Turkey, in which the United States, the European Union, Russia, Iran and the Middle East may be involved.

At the same time, the lifting of sanctions from Iran caused a dramatic increase in economic cooperation between Russia, Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states with this largest regional power in Eurasia. There is a sharp increase in the cooperation of the countries of the region with Iran on diverse projects. An agreement has been reached between Kazakhstan and Iran on the joint construction of the terminal at the seaport of Bander Abbas. Infrastructure facilities are built on the principle of a dry (inland) port on the border of Turkmenistan and Iran. The first pass of a container train from the city of Yiwu (China) to Tehran has taken place. The length of the route is more than nine thousand kilometers, the term of delivery of goods is 14 days, which is much less than by sea—up to 30 days. Issues of attracting Russian exports to Iran through the Uzen-Bereket-Gorgan railway have also been discussed. For the region, the importance of the Iranian direction cannot be overestimated, since it is an outlet to the ports of the Persian Gulf and then to Europe.

The interests of Turkey and Iran are determined by the receipt of new benefits by approaching the markets of China. In addition, the Central Asian region itself is of great interest to both countries, since it provides close communication with the states, related in language, historical roots, the dominant religion from which they were severed for the entire period of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. Turkey's TURKSOY organization does a lot for cultural and civilizational rapprochement of the related peoples. The transition of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan to the Latin alphabet brought them closer, in the informational sense, to Turkey. Kazakhstan, after long years of discussions, is also on the verge of a positive resolution of this issue. The transition from Cyrillic to Latin script causes many difficult, unpredictable questions in the relations of the countries of the region with Russia. Also in the future, this will facilitate access to the informational space not only in Turkey, but also in Europe.

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<sup>33</sup> D. Brewster, "Silk Roads and Strings of Pearls: The Strategic Geography of China's New Pathways in the Indian Ocean," *Geopolitics*, Vol. 22, Issue 2, 2017, pp. 269-291.

<sup>34</sup> G. Malykh, "Sozdaetsia perspektivnyi marshrut," *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 10 March, 2016, available at [<http://www.kazpravda.kz/fresh/view/sozdaetsya-perspektivnii-marshrut/>], 17 June, 2017.

## New Challenges and Risks for Central Asia in Light of One Belt, One Road Project

Lately, Central Asia faced new challenges and risks, which can intensify in light of the participation of the countries of the region in construction of the roads of the Silk Road. These are ethno-confessional conflicts. To the post-Soviet republics of Central Asia came new forms of Islam, previously not characteristic to the peoples of the region. There are several reasons—both internal and external. At the root of the internal causes lies the natural, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, process of searching for national identity. Very soon, the search for national identity has led the peoples of the region to the realization of their religious identity, from which they were separated during the Soviet era, the realization of belonging to the Islamic world. But by this time, the Islamic world had changed beyond recognition. The world was shaken by the Sunni-Shi'a contradictions and the terrible force of terrorist acts under the flag of Islam. New religious ideas, not understood by nomadic peoples in the past, began to penetrate the region.

In addition, for 70 years of the Soviet power, atheism has firmly established itself in certain sectors of society. However, the spread in recent years of various radical forms of Islam has put society and the state at a dead end. The basis for spreading Islam in the region is the poverty of the population.

The construction of the New Silk Road will expand the possibilities of transportation infrastructure, and this will inevitably strengthen the religious infrastructure. It should be noted that the legislation of the republics of the region in the sphere of religion, especially in Kazakhstan, was extremely liberal.

The external factor of the spread of Salafism and other religious trends of radical Islam, which are not typical of the region, are, of course, the actions of international terrorist organizations that are trying to destabilize the situation in the states of Central Asia. And the poorer the population, the greater the chances of destabilization. Nobody knows how many people from the region are fighting on the side of terrorists, but they certainly are. The possible spread of radical forms of Islam in such a densely populated region of Uzbekistan as the Ferghana Valley is fraught with devastating consequences.

With globalization and the involvement of the region in global processes, the influence of the world's Islamic community (ummah) on the life of the peoples of Central Asia will undoubtedly increase. This is an objective process. To date, according to the Russian scientist Vitaliy Naumkin, the region has developed three models of behavior with respect to Islamists: total suppression of all Islamists (Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan); suppression of radical groups and cautious dialog with moderate representatives (Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan); cooperation and inclusion in power structures (Tajikistan).<sup>35</sup> We would like to add that the countries of the region have the opportunity to take into account the experience of countries that previously recognized the danger of radical Islamist organizations.

In the post-Soviet countries, the process of searching for national identity continues after years of oblivion. In the field of confessional identity, it is necessary to prevent a transition to a radical Islamist, essentially terrorist identity.

At the same time, the long-term interests of the world community, of course, are to prevent the formation of new hotbeds of tension and international terrorism in the post-Soviet space. When building the New Silk Road, this danger must be taken into account, and the countries of the region should adopt a common policy on this matter.

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<sup>35</sup> See: V. V. Naumkin, *Gody, kotorye izmenili Tsentralnuii Aziu*, TsSPI-IV, RAS, Moscow, 2009, p. 331.

## *Conclusion*

In Central Asia, over the past 5-10 years, two major projects have been implemented—the Eurasian integration in the form of the emerging Eurasian Economic Union and the Economic Belt of the New Silk Road. Of course, experts assess these projects differently. Western experts tend to see in them the restoration of the Russian Empire or the creation of the Chinese. With all the diversity of analyst approaches, both projects do exist.

Naturally, national interests of each of the countries of Eurasia dictate their subjective behavior, and this situation is imbued with uncertainty with regards to Afghanistan. Infrastructure projects require enormous investments, which are often absent in most countries of Central Asia.

How should the New Silk Road project be viewed? We believe that all possible transportation corridors work for one common goal—the development of the potential of a huge region in the center of Eurasia. And such venture changes the essence of regional politics. Sooner or later, such projects had to appear. The Chinese project is the basis of a new world transportation infrastructure for Eurasia. Still, history tells us that a railway, especially such a long stretch, is always a penetration, one can say an expansion of a stronger country. It was always so—with the development of Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Central Asia by Russia. This is the way it is happening now, in the 21st century.

Is it possible, in the new global conditions, to restore the spirit of the Great Silk Road—the commonwealth of cultures, civilizations, economy? Is it possible to develop a mechanism for interaction between countries, regional organizations, and integration groups? Each country has the right to expect maximum benefits from such a large-scale transportation megaproject, but only while taking into account the interests of its neighbors. Undoubtedly, transportation corridors provide for the greater interdependence of states, including their potential capability of generating profits. Therefore, the maintenance of their stable functioning becomes common to all states through which such corridors pass. China, as the initiator of the project, will undoubtedly strive to minimize risks for itself and for the Central Asian region.

At the time this article was being written, in Beijing, China hosted the First High-Level Forum on International Cooperation within the framework of the One Belt, One Road Project (14-15 May). The volume of participating countries' economies at this meeting was compared to the G-20 summit by the international media. The experts' assessment of the results of the forum is yet to come, but it should be emphasized that if China had previously proposed and successfully implemented regional projects with the countries of Southeast Asia (ASEAN+3), now China is entering the continental, Eurasian project of global significance. In addition, backing it with multi-billion-dollar loans.

The republics of the region have the opportunity to be not only transit countries for the transport of Chinese goods, but also to diversify the ways of exporting raw materials and, in the future, to participate more fully in world trade, exporting goods with higher added value. Of course, the processes of reform and political and economic liberalization are going through complicated paths in the region. Democracy is often replaced by a set of democratic, in name, but not essence, institutional organizations.

As a result of the diversified interests of regional and extra-regional states during the construction of the New Silk Road, by and large the question is whether the region will remain in the post-Soviet space, the Islamic world or China's sphere of influence. Or the region, without already having a common regional identity, will finally fracture into several parts. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan will remain in the sphere of influence of Russia and China and will become more secular. Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, while maintaining ties with Russia and China, as guarantor countries of security in the region, will attempt rapprochement with Iran, Turkey, and the Islamic world.

Much in this struggle of the diverse interests of the states of the post-Soviet Central Asia depends on positions of the extra-regional powers. Will the New Silk Road cause a new round of geopolitical struggle for influence in Eurasia?

But once again, the region should use its historical chance in the form of the New Silk Road, get all the possible benefits from it, minimizing the risks. The region can recreate its regional identity in the new conditions of the 21st century, using its geographical location and intra-regional resources.

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## AZERBAIJAN'S ENERGY POLICY: RESULTS, PROBLEMS, PROSPECTS

Sergey ZHILTSOV

*D.Sc. (Political Science), Head of the Department of Political Science and Political Philosophy of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (Moscow, Russian Federation)*

Dmitriy SLISOVSKIY

*D.Sc. (Hist.), Professor of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (Moscow, Russian Federation)*

Nadezhda SHULENINA

*Ph.D. (Philos.), Associate Professor of the Department of Political Analysis and Management, Professor of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (Moscow, Russian Federation)*

Evgeniy BAZHANOV

*D.Sc. (Hist.), Chancellor of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (Moscow, Russian Federation)*

### ABSTRACT

**F**ollowing the dissolution of the U.S.S.R. Azerbaijan gained an opportunity to shape its energy policy based on its own national interests. In the several years after attaining independence, Azerbaijan's

energy policy was heavily influenced by internal events related to the power struggle within the Azerbaijani elite. This impeded the expansion of Azerbaijan's cooperation with Western oil and gas companies, which

expressed an increased interest in this Caspian state's petroleum resources. Internal political struggles did not affect the country's energy policy priorities. The latter involved, first and foremost, the choice of strategic partners for cooperation that would allow Azerbaijan to expect an increase in oil and gas production. The choice was made in favor of foreign petroleum companies and strengthening relations with Western states. Their support played a key role in further development of petroleum fields and the choice of routes for oil export.

Between 1991 and 2017, Azerbaijan's energy policy went through several stages. In the early 1990s, Azerbaijan focused on oil production, engaging Western petroleum companies, whose interest was sparked by evidence of considerable petroleum reserves, in field development. Azerbaijan possessed well-developed infrastructure and experienced personnel, and had long-standing oil production traditions that arose in the 19th century, when Baku was the world capital of oil production. The key goal of Azerbaijan's energy policy was not merely to increase Caspian oil field production volumes, but also to construct new pipelines that would ensure the delivery of Azerbaijani oil to export markets. Azerbaijan managed to achieve substantial progress in this area, having built new pipelines for exporting oil

with the assistance of the petroleum business community and Western countries. In addition, the surge in oil production volumes allowed Azerbaijan to stabilize the political situation and resolve social and economic issues that emerged following the disintegration of the Soviet Union due to the disruption of trade and economic bonds with ex-Soviet republics.

In the early 21st century, Azerbaijan's energy policy underwent a major transformation. Having begun its development as an oil state, Azerbaijan has consequently focused on developing gas fields that were discovered in the course of oil field development. Proven gas reserves and gas production volumes allowed Baku to plan an increase of exports to outside markets.

In recent years, Azerbaijan has been pursuing an energy policy that aims to secure its role as a petroleum resource exporter to European countries. The expansion of cooperation with Turkey is contributing to the resolution of this issue. Cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey allowed to begin the implementation of new gas pipeline projects, the construction of which will increase the volume of Azerbaijan natural gas deliveries to outside markets. Azerbaijan's energy policy is in keeping with EU interests, which regards Caspian energy resources as an alternative to Russian gas export.

**KEYWORDS:** Azerbaijan, energy policy, pipelines, oil, gas, international legal status, Russia, the U.S., EU, Turkey.

## Introduction

After gaining independence in 1991, Azerbaijan had focused on the development of the country's fuel and energy complex. The primary focus was on increasing production of hydrocarbon resources and shaping new routes of their export to outside markets. Caspian oil has once again acquired an exceptionally great significance, becoming the foundation of economic development for the countries of the region<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> G.I. Starchenkov, "Neft Kaspia i puti ee transportirovki," in: *Musulmanskie strany u granits SNG*, Institute of Oriental Studies, Kraft+, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 2001, p. 298.

Unlike Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, which also possessed considerable reserves of hydrocarbon resources, Azerbaijan enjoys a far more favorable geographic location. In addition, Azerbaijan had the experts, who accumulated enormous experience in developing oil- and gas-bearing regions around the Caspian Sea.

Prospecting data obtained during the Soviet Union's existence also played its role. This information had largely pre-determined the vector of Azerbaijan's energy policy and assured the success attained by the country in producing energy commodities after gaining independence.

## Sources of Energy Policy

After the dissolution of the U.S.S.R., Azerbaijan became a focus of the Western countries' attention due to its geographic location. The country could export hydrocarbon fuels to the North, in the direction of Russia, as well as to the West, which immediately became a priority. The Western states attached great significance to the issues of oil production in Azerbaijan and the direction of its export. A discussion of pipeline projects that would bypass Russian territory and provide Azerbaijan's hydrocarbon fuels with direct access to outside markets was initiated with active participation of the Western states. In 1992, a meeting took place in Turkey where major Western oil companies' representatives proposed the idea of transporting Caspian oil from Baku through Turkey into the port of Ceyhan. In fact, this is when the "great game" for Caspian oil began.<sup>2</sup>

Russia also placed great emphasis on the direction of Azerbaijan's oil export, attempting to influence the country's politics. As a result, the pipelines became a burning issue in Russia's foreign policy, and, concurrently, one of the key instruments in the struggle to maintain a dominating position in the region<sup>3</sup>.

Azerbaijan attempted to derive political and economic benefits from the competition between Russia and the West, becoming one of the initiators of accelerated development of Caspian oil fields and construction of new export pipelines. The focus was placed on engaging Western states and oil companies in oil field development. This was the course pursued by President Ayaz Mutalibov, who was an adherent of expanding cooperation with the West.

The implementation of these ambitious plans was hindered by the complicated political situation in Azerbaijan. As a result of a political struggle, Abulfaz Elchibey came to power in March 1992. The new head of Azerbaijan was also an adherent of engaging Western oil companies in oil field development, and advocated limiting Russia's participation in Azerbaijan's oil and gas field development. In the fall of 1992, British Petroleum (U.K.), Statoil (Norway), Amoco and Unocal (U.S.) have finally signed an agreement for joint development of Gunashli, Azeri and Chirag oil fields, and Shah Deniz prospective area with the State Oil Company of the Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR).

Azerbaijan's aim to promptly proceed with hydrocarbon resource development was deterred by a number of issues. One of them was the lack of infrastructure required for oil export<sup>4</sup>. This has led to the development of several pipeline projects that were supposed to ensure unhindered entrance of Azerbaijan's oil to outside markets. Chief interest was aroused by the *Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline* project. In March 1993, Azerbaijan and Turkey have signed an agreement in Ankara regard-

<sup>2</sup> S. Shermatova, "The Oil Factor in the Chechen Conflict," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 5 (11), 2001, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> S.S. Zhiltsov, I.S. Zonn, *Kaspiiskaia truboprovodnaia geopolitika: sostoianie i realizatsia*, Vostok-Zapad, Moscow, 2011, pp. 52-63.

<sup>4</sup> E. Ismailov, E. Polukhov, "The 'Old' and 'New' Players in Caucasian Politics," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (28), 2004, pp. 46-54.



ing the construction of a 1920 km-long pipeline with a capacity of 50 million tons per year, with a projected cost of \$3 billion.<sup>5</sup>

This project was promoted by Turkey, whose interest in Azeri, Gunashli and Chirag was a significant one. Utilizing its beneficial geographic location, the existence of port infrastructure for transporting Caspian oil, and also relying on U.S. support, Turkey aimed to play an increasingly more active role in the Caspian region, participating in the export of Caspian hydrocarbon resources to outside markets. In turn, cooperation with Turkey provided Azerbaijan with new opportunities for oil export bypassing Russian territory. Baku tried to enlist the support of Western countries and oil companies on this issue. Azerineft has signed a declaration of joint development of Gunashli, Azeri, Chirag and Shah Deniz in the Azerbaijani part of the Caspian Sea with consortium representatives in London in June 1993<sup>6</sup>. Long-term negotiations were supposed to end with the signing of the agreement on developing Azerbaijan's oil fields. However, it was once again hindered by internal political events. In June 1993, Abulfaz Elchibey was removed from power, and in September of the same year Heydar Aliev became president. The change of leadership in Azerbaijan temporarily suspended the implementation of the agreements reached, but did not lower foreign companies' interest in Azerbaijan's oil fields.

## Azerbaijan's Reliance on the Western States

After his assumption of power, the new president revitalized the process of negotiations with international oil and gas companies. Azerbaijan actively pursued an energy policy aimed to prepare the signing of an agreement related to the development of its oil and gas fields. In the first half of 1994, Azerbaijan's leader visited a number of European countries (France, the U.K.), and signed political, economic and trade-related agreements with them. For example, in February Heydar Aliev and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom John Major signed an agreement in London, which was related to oil production sphere, wherein the governments of the two countries guaranteed the compliance of British Petroleum and SOCAR with their obligations. This document established the term "Azerbaijan's sector of the Caspian Sea." This approach by Baku aimed to strengthen its positions in negotiations with Western oil and gas companies, for whom the lack of clarity in the international legal status of Caspian Sea increased the financial and political risks of developing Azerbaijan's Caspian Sea hydrocarbon resources. During the same time period, Azerbaijan signed a number of documents on conducting research work at several fields in Azerbaijan. For example, Schlumberger, a French company, was engaged in conducting geophysical exploration at the Gunashli field.

Azerbaijan's efforts directed at engaging Western companies in cooperation have yielded their results. On 20 September, 1994, Azerbaijan signed a contract with major foreign companies for the development of oil fields on the Caspian shelf (Azeri, Gunashli, Chirag), called "the contract of the century." Azerbaijan's expenses constituted 24% of the total cost, while its revenue equaled 76% (approximately \$99 billion)<sup>7</sup>. At a later time, President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliev noted that the "signing of the 'contract of the century' on 20 September, 1994, marks the beginning of an oil strategy and the independent Azerbaijan doctrine."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> O. Kasenov, "Transcaucasia and Central Asia: Oil, Pipelines and Geopolitics," in: *Central Asia: Conflict, Resolution and Change*, ed. by Roald Z. Sagdeev and Susan Eisenhower, CPSS Press, Chevy Chase, Maryland, 1995, pp. 67-79.

<sup>6</sup> I.S. Zonn, *Kaspiiskiy memorandum*, Korkis, Moscow, 1997, pp. 39-40.

<sup>7</sup> V.V. Shorokhov, "Neft i politika Azerbaidzhana," *Issledovaniya TsMN MGIMO*, № 9, 1997, p. 65.

<sup>8</sup> I. Aliev, *Kaspiiskaia neft Azerbaidzhana*, Izvestia, Moscow, 2003, p. 475.

In economic terms, the “contract of the century” provided Azerbaijan with an opportunity to bring its oil to the European market, creating the basis for developing other prospective fields. This promoted major investments in oil-related sectors, replenishment of currency reserves, and adopting an active investment policy.

After signing a contract with oil and gas companies, Azerbaijan aimed to gain Iran’s support. Baku’s commitment to expanding its cooperation with Iran was dictated by the negative reaction of Russia, which opposed the “contract of the century.” In November 1994, the Iranian and Azerbaijani sides signed a document, according to which Iran could be considered a party to the “contract of the century” through Azerbaijan’s assignment of a part of its share to Iran<sup>9</sup>. Azerbaijan’s efforts were directed at shifting Iran’s position on the international legal status of the Caspian Sea. Baku was also striving for Tehran to agree to a sectoral method of dividing the Caspian, especially since the new Constitution of Azerbaijan stated that “internal waters of the Azerbaijan Republic, sector of the Caspian Sea (lake) belonging to it, air space over the it are integral parts of the territory of the Azerbaijan Republic” (Art 11).

The arrangements between Azerbaijan and Iran could have left Russia on its own on the issue of regulating the status of the Caspian Sea. Moreover, Iran’s acknowledgement of the “contract of the century” could raise doubts about the Soviet-Iranian agreements of 1921 and 1940. However, Baku’s plans were not about to be fulfilled. The U.S. opposed Iran’s participation in developing Azerbaijan’s oil fields. In April 1995, under pressure from the U.S. side, Azerbaijan declared the exclusion of Iran from the consortium.

The conclusion of the “contract of the century” for the development of Azerbaijan’s Gunashli, Chirag and Azeri offshore fields once again drew attention to the ways of transporting oil which was to be produced in the future. Considering the significant volumes of future oil production, a decision was made to divide the produced oil into “early” (whose volume was supposed to reach 5 million tons per year by the end of the 20th century), and “late,” or “principal”—30-40 tons of oil annually that was scheduled to be produced in Azerbaijan’s offshore fields by 2015.<sup>10</sup>

## Diversifying Export Routes of Hydrocarbon Resources

In the early 1990s, Azerbaijan’s energy policy was determined by the development of the oil and gas complex, as well as by the stance taken by the Western states. In addition, the flywheel of political advertising related to the existence of significant hydrocarbon reserves in Azerbaijan justified the need for building new pipelines to transport oil out of the Caspian region.

The chief focus was on selecting the direction of Azerbaijan’s oil deliveries—either Russia or Europe. The U.S., which pursued an active policy in the region, was interested in obstructing Azerbaijani hydrocarbon exports through the Russian territory, since the export route through the port of Novorossiysk would allow Russia to have influence over Baku. Pumping oil through the pipelines towards Russia was considered a threat to the geopolitical interests of the West. However, despite the pressure from the U.S. and EU, Azerbaijan strived to pursue a balanced policy, not in a hurry to sever relations with Russia. It was steered in this direction by the lack of precise terms of the implementation of the new pipeline projects, which raised enormous interest, yet did not translate into reality. As a result, Baku signed an agreement with Russia on transporting oil through to Novorossiysk in January 1996. However, the Russian route, which passed through Chechnia, immediately began

<sup>9</sup> I. Aliev, op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>10</sup> Yu.E. Fedorov, *Kaspiiskaia neft i mezhdunarodnaia bezopasnost*, Moscow, 1996.



encountering difficulties. Finally, along with the discussions related to Azerbaijan's oil delivery to Russia, the western route—*Baku (Azerbaijan)-Supsa (Georgia) pipeline* (the Azerbaijani segment constituted 492 km from Sangacal to the Georgian border)—also came into focus. The pipeline required a reconstruction of a 425 km segment on the Georgian territory, while its entire length was 917 km. It could ensure transit of 5 million tons of oil per year. In March 1996, the presidents of Azerbaijan and Georgia signed three agreements related to the transportation of Caspian oil through Georgia, as well as an agreement on the construction and maintenance of the Baku-Supsa pipeline. Considering the great variability of export pipelines, new agreements were concluded in March 1997 between Azerbaijan and Georgia on the delivery of oil along the Baku-Tbilisi-Supsa route, with access to the Black Sea.

However, the main attention of Azerbaijan and Western states was devoted to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project, which was intended for the delivery of Caspian oil to the West. In June 1997, the concept of *Main export pipeline (MEP)* was introduced, reflecting the changes in Azerbaijan's energy strategy. Baku concentrated on the realization of MEP, aiming to engage other Caspian states in the project. In September 1997, the president of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev for the first time called the Turkish route through Azerbaijan and Georgia to port Ceyhan “the safest and most important for Kazakhstan” and expressed his hope for the speedy construction of the *Aktau-Baku underwater pipeline*.

In implementing its energy policy Azerbaijan relied on the support of Western countries. For example, the U.S. had justifiably assumed that the Baku-Ceyhan project will strengthen its position in the strategic Caspian region, on the one hand, and will decrease the dependence of the ex-Soviet republics on Russia and the Baku-Novorossiysk route, on the other. Eventually, as the U.S. administration projected, it should weaken the position of Russia in the Caspian region. In late 1997, two more Baku-Ceyhan pipeline construction-related agreements were concluded in Baku.

In 1999, Azerbaijan attained the first results in diversification of its oil export routes. Azerbaijani international operational company—a consortium with participation of major Western oil companies and the State Oil Company of the Azerbaijan Republic have completed the construction of the *Baku-Supsa pipeline*, which was built on the foundation of the old Baku-Batumi oil pipeline<sup>11</sup>. The pipeline spans 850 km through Georgian territory. The capacity of the oil pipeline intended to transport “early” oil constitutes 6 million tons per year. In the future, the volume was supposed to increase to 10 million tons of oil per year<sup>12</sup>.

In April of the same year, this pipeline began delivering “early” Azerbaijani oil from the Chirag field. As a result, the Baku-Supsa pipeline began competing with the Baku-Novorossiysk route, although its transit capacity was several times smaller. The Baku-Supsa pipeline not only provided Western companies with non-obstructed access to Caspian coastal fields, but also created a safe route for oil export to outside markets, and increased the country's budget revenues. In 1999, a state oil fund was created in Azerbaijan in order to accumulate funds<sup>13</sup>.

For the Western countries, the commission of the pipeline meant the decline of Russian influence on Azerbaijan. Just as important was its geopolitical significance, as it strengthened the relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia, whose role in the transportation of Caspian hydrocarbon resources increased sharply.

In 1999-2001, the main documents aimed at the implementation of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project were signed. In May-June 2000, the parliaments of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey ratified

<sup>11</sup> A.K. Bystrova, *Problemy transportnoi infrastruktury i ekologii v Kaspiiskom regione*, IMEMO, Moscow, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> S.S. Zhiltsov, I.S. Zonn, A.M. Ushkov, *Geopolitika Kaspiiskogo regiona*, Moscow, 2003, p. 114.

<sup>13</sup> K. Aslanli, “Fiscal Sustainability and the State Oil Fund in Azerbaijan,” *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, No. 6, 2015, pp. 114-121.

the package of previously concluded agreements related to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline construction. In early 2000, a State Commission was created per the Georgian president's orders, indicating the project's great importance for Georgia. It was supposed to deal with the organization of Caspian basin oil and gas resources delivery through Georgian territory.

In the early 2000s, Azerbaijan began to abandon its harsh stance on the sectoral division of the Caspian Sea. The change in Azerbaijan's approach to this issue resulted in the signing of an agreement with Russia and Kazakhstan regarding the junction point of the demarcation lines between adjoining areas on the bottom of the Caspian Sea. The settlement of the international legal status in the northern part of the Caspian Sea served Azerbaijan's interests,<sup>14</sup> since the development of offshore mineral resources gained an international legal foundation, which provided an impulse for further research and development of oil and gas fields<sup>15</sup>.

In 2005, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline was completed. The implementation of this project further weakened Azerbaijan's dependence on exporting Caspian oil to Russia. As a result, the Baku-Novorossiysk pipeline, which had previously allowed Russia to influence Azerbaijan's oil policy, lost its strategic importance<sup>16</sup>.

The construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline provided additional opportunities for Azerbaijan to export its hydrocarbon resources. Concurrently, Baku faced the problem of pipeline fill, since the rate of production lagged far behind the previously made forecasts. In order to resolve this issue, Baku began considering the option of engaging Kazakhstan in the hydrocarbon export pipeline project. Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan's negotiations resulted in the conclusion of a strategic partnership and allied relations in 2005. The president of Kazakhstan stated that his country has joined the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project, noting that the pipeline should hereafter be called Aktau-Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan<sup>17</sup>. The idea of the necessity of constructing a pipeline between Aktau and Baku with a capacity of 20 million tons per year emerged<sup>18</sup>. However, the agreement on Kazakhstan's affiliation with this pipeline project was never implemented. Aside from technical issues and the unsettled international legal status of the Caspian Sea, Kazakhstan's energy policy focused mainly on pumping oil through the Caspian pipeline consortium (CTC), which delivered Kazakhstani oil to Russia. In addition, this was the period when Kazakhstan's relationship with China in the energy sphere was developing further.

In 2006, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan once again began discussing the possibility of launching the Trans-Caspian project. In June of the same year, the presidents of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan signed a new agreement on facilitation of oil transportation from Kazakhstan through the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, and then further on via the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. This concerned the delivery of oil from Kazakhstan's Kashagan field to Black and Mediterranean Sea coasts via Azerbaijan.

The constantly strengthening Kazakhstan-Azerbaijan axis aimed to form an energy corridor, which could allow Kazakhstan's resources to enter the European market. The first stage involved an increase in Kazakhstan oil delivery by tankers. Crude oil produced at the Tengiz field was to be delivered from port Aktau to Azerbaijan, and then pumped into the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. The oil flow was intended to start at 2 million tons and grow to 5 million tons. The volume of tanker deliveries from Kazakhstan to Baku was supposed to be brought up to 20-25 million tons<sup>19</sup>. The Aktau-

<sup>14</sup> *The Caspian Sea Chessboard*, ed. by C. Frappi, A. Garibov, Institute for International Political, Baku, 2013, pp. 93-111.

<sup>15</sup> M.R. Hafeznia, H. Pirdashti, Z. Ahmadipour, "An Expert-Based Decision Making Tool for Enhancing the Consensus on Caspian Sea Legal Regime," *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, No. 7, 2016, pp. 181-194.

<sup>16</sup> M.A. Kaimarazova, "Prikaspiiskie territorii Rossii i sopredelnykh gosudarstv v novykh geopoliticheskikh usloviakh," in: *Sbornik dokladov mezhdunarodnoi nauchnoi konferentsii "Rossiiskaia politika sosedstva"*, Moskva, 12-13 October, 2007, Moscow, 2008, p. 434.

<sup>17</sup> "Kazakhstan prisoedinilsia k projektu Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan," *Vestnik Kaspia*, No. 3, 2005, p. 71.

<sup>18</sup> M. Zaslavskiy, *Delo truba*, Evropa, Moscow, 2005, p. 84.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

Baku segment was expected to act as an independent transportation route. With this purpose in mind, the construction of a new terminal for storing and pumping oil in the Kuryk village (a port 76 km to the southeast of Aktau), as well as a number of connecting pipelines, were intended.

In January 2007, a memorandum of understanding was signed regarding the creation of a Kazakhstan Caspian oil transportation system, intended for tanker export of Kazakhstan oil via the Caspian Sea. The capacity of this system was supposed to be raised to 25 million tons with a further increase to 38 million tons. The system's commissioning was planned for 2012-2013, when oil production was supposed to start at the Kashagan field in Kazakhstan. In this manner, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan have closely approached the joint implementation of the Trans-Caspian project, which involved crude oil loading terminals on Kazakhstan's coast, tankers, and a connective system to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, which was in dire need of additional oil volumes.

The difficulties linked to production in its own fields preserved Azerbaijan's interest in Kazakhstan oil. In October 2010, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan have once again begun negotiations on the development of the feasibility study of the Trans-Caspian route. It involved future deliveries of the oil produced at the Kashagan field to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. However, the Kazakhstan side kept postponing the beginning of production at the field.

The possibility of Kazakhstan's participation in the operations of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline was largely pre-determined by this country's oil production volumes. In 2010, the country produced approximately 81 million tons of oil, most of which was exported to Russia. Furthermore, the build-up of oil production has met with a number of difficulties, which made Kazakhstan authorities lower the estimated figures projected at the turn between the first and the second decades of the 21st century. For example, it was originally expected that the Kazakhstan annual oil production volume will reach 130-135 million tons in 2015. These figures were consequently altered. According to the forecast, the production in 2015 should amount to 100 million tons per year, and 130 million tons in 2018-2020.<sup>20</sup> By the middle of the second decade of the 21st century, Kazakhstan's lack of available oil volumes, as well as the continual postponement of the Kashagan field development launch eliminated the question of the country's participation in filling the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline from the agenda.

## Azerbaijan Builds Up Gas Production

In the late 1990s, Azerbaijan made efforts to strengthen its position on the gas market. The production of associated natural gas was meant to increase along with the rise in oil production. However, even if the natural gas production volume was to increase, the opportunities for its export would be highly limited. The nearest export market in this case would be Turkey, and in order to re-enforce its position as a transit state, Azerbaijan supported the idea of constructing *the export TransCaspian gas pipeline* (TCGP) that would originate in Turkmenistan and run under the Caspian Sea, particularly since Ashghabad was suffering from isolation in communications and transportation, and was searching for new marketplaces for the gas it was producing in large quantities. In May 1998, Georgia declared its intention to join the construction of the TransCaspian gas pipeline.

The discovery of significant gas reserves in Azerbaijan at the Shah Deniz field changed Baku's stance on the issue of the TransCaspian project implementation. The Azerbaijani side began to lay plans in regard to constructing a pipeline for exporting its gas to Turkey.

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<sup>20</sup> *Panorama (Kazakhstan)*, 8 October, 2010.

The situation changed radically with the discovery of new reserves of natural gas instead of oil at the Shah Deniz field. The increase in gas production volume raised the issue of creating the infrastructure required for its transportation to outside markets, which was the reason behind Azerbaijan's heightened interest toward the layout of the *Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline* project with a projected capacity of 16 bcm. Azerbaijan has entirely lost interest in the TransCaspian gas pipeline.

Construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline began in 2001, when Azerbaijan and Georgia signed a corresponding agreement in Baku. By 2007 the gas pipeline was built, which allowed Azerbaijan to count on an increase in hydrocarbon deliveries to the West and bring its export to Russia down to a minimum<sup>21</sup>.

## Turkey's Role in Azerbaijan's Energy Policy

In the second decade of the 21st century, Azerbaijan adjusted its energy policy, departing from the univocal commitment to the Nabucco European pipeline project. In conjunction with Turkey, Azerbaijan proposed pipeline projects that were intended to ensure the entry of Azerbaijani gas to the European market<sup>22</sup>.

Baku's chief focus is on the implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor, which is supposed to provide a framework for the export of Azerbaijan's gas to the European market. The first phase of the Southern Gas Corridor includes the construction of a system consisting of the Trans Anatolian (TANAP) and Trans Adriatic (TAP) gas pipelines, which are supposed to be in operation by 2019. The Shah Deniz field is meant to become its resource base, and 16 bcm of its gas should be delivered to European countries. The volume of export to Turkey is expected to constitute 6 bcm, and export to the European market—10 bcm.

The above-mentioned projects corresponded to Baku's strategy on expanding its footprint on the European market following the discovery of new natural gas reserves at the Shah Deniz field. Azerbaijan has great expectations of increasing its export as this field is developed further<sup>23</sup>. In addition, the agreements between Azerbaijan and Turkey strengthen both countries' positions, making them a significant element of the European energy safety system.

## Conclusion

Azerbaijan's oil industry accounts for over a half of its budget revenues. The prosperity of practically every social stratum in the country depends on global oil price fluctuations. However, in the near future the role played by oil may become less significant, and chief attention will be drawn to gas, which is likely to become Azerbaijan's chief export product in the 2020s. This Caspian state's oil industry will remain one of the largest ones in the region, but will probably decrease its share in

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<sup>21</sup> K.S. Stegen, J. Kuznir, "Outcomes and Strategies in the 'New Great Game': China and the Caspian States Emerge as Winners," *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, No. 6, 2015, pp. 91-106.

<sup>22</sup> *Evolutsia postsovetского prostranstva: proshloe, nastoiashchee, budushchee: khrestomatia*, RSMD, Moscow, 384 pp.

<sup>23</sup> "Ekonomicheskie problemy Azerbaidzhana," in: *Postsovetские gosudarstva: 25 let nezavisimogo razvitiia*, Collection of articles, in two volumes, Vol. 2, ed. by A.B. Krylov, IMEMO RAN, Moscow, 2017, p. 29.

the country's economy as the largest fields become depleted. Secondary enhanced oil recovery technologies are applied at a number of giant fields, discovered and placed in operation by Soviet geologists in the 1970s-1980s, and they've already passed their peak of production. For example, the peak of production at Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli fell on 2014-2015. Although the project's shareholders intended to stabilize production in 2015-2020 at the level of 33-34 million tons of oil per year, a level of 30-31 million tons seems more realistic. Oil companies are actively developing the previously undeveloped parts of the fields. There's also work being undertaken in developing deposits beyond Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli. For example, production has been going on for several decades at a shallow area of Gunashli that was not included in the "contract of the century."

In recent years, oil production in Azerbaijan has been fluctuating in the range of 42-43 million tons. In 2013, the country produced 43.1 million tons of oil, and in 2015 the production amounted to 41.6 million tons.

There are fundamental problems behind the decrease in production volumes in Azerbaijan, problems whose roots are concealed in the late 1990s. Accordingly, gas will play an increasingly greater role in the country's energy complex. Gas production in Azerbaijan between 2006 and 2016 has tripled from 6 bcm to 19 bcm.

Implementation of new routes for natural gas delivery should provide Azerbaijan with an opportunity to increase export volumes. Thus, Baku has great expectations connected to the second phase of the Shah Deniz field development, located on the Caspian Sea shelf 70 km from Baku. This gas condensate field with recoverable gas reserves of 1.2 trillion cubic meters has been developed since 2006, and the production there reached a peak level of 10 bcm in 2015, during the first development phase.

The new round of development, referred to as Shah-Deniz 2, will increase the production on the field to 26 bcm. The main portion of the growth gain, 10 bcm, is intended for European delivery, while 6 bcm will be exported to Turkey under the provisions of the existing bilateral agreement.

Azerbaijan has aligned its energy interests with Turkey, which plays a significant role in ensuring the uninterrupted delivery of oil to Europe, and its weight will only grow after the new gas pipelines are put into operation. Since the Turkish segment of the TANAP gas pipeline will, according to the plan, be completed in 2018, Turkey will be the first to receive gas, while European consumers will begin receiving the Shah Deniz 2 gas somewhat later, in 2020.

Perhaps, Azerbaijan's Caspian shelf does not contain enough natural gas to provide competition to Russian export. On a scale of separate European countries, particularly the ones located in the south of Europe, Azerbaijani gas deliveries may play a positive role. Generally, however, Azerbaijani gas will not seriously influence the European gas market.

In any case, the volume of Azerbaijani natural gas will be sufficient for Baku to retain its leading role in the Caspian region. Possessing the required infrastructure and an advantageous geographical location half-way en route from the Caspian to the Black Sea, Azerbaijan possesses all the conditions necessary to strengthen its position as the principal exporter of Caspian hydrocarbon resources.



## THE ROLE OF ENERGY IN IRAN-TURKMENISTAN RELATIONS

Mukhtar Ahmad BHAT

*Ph.D. (Political Science), Aligarh Muslim University  
(Aligarh, India)*

### ABSTRACT

**T**he emergence of independent countries in Central Asia in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991 marked the beginning of a new chapter and a turning point in Iran-Turkmenistan relationships. The Islamic Republic of Iran perceived cooperation with independent Turkmenistan as an opportunity to play an influential role not only in the newly emerged Central Asian regional political structure, but also at the international level, as an important corridor for supplying energy to other countries. Turkmenistan is among the countries with huge energy resources, but no direct access to outside markets except through Russia. Therefore, Iran can play an important role for Turkmenistan in diversifying its energy exports, which is crucial for Turkmenistan in order to reduce its dependence on the Russian market.

Thus, the main focus of this paper is the energy-related cooperation between the two countries, which may play a significant

role not only in developing a close relationship between Iran and Turkmenistan, but also in opening up a new chapter in their mutual cooperation. In addition, Iran has great geostrategic significance, since in the south it borders the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf—the biggest energy exporting center in the world. In the north, it borders the Caspian Sea, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. In the east, it shares borders Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the northwest, Iran borders Iraq and Turkey.

Thus, Iran's geographical location has catapulted it to a significant role in regional connectivity, particularly after the situation exacerbated following the United States' armed intervention in 2001 in Afghanistan and in 2003 in Iraq, which increased instability in the region. Therefore, Iran is currently the most stable and suitable country for the Central Asian nations to rely on for connecting their economies with the other countries of the world.

**KEYWORDS:** *energy sector, electrical power generation sector, transit routes.*

### *Introduction*

In contemporary world politics Iran and Turkmenistan are among the countries that enjoy a mutually beneficial relationship in the region. Iran was one of the first countries to recognize the independent Turkmenistan in 1991, following the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. Of all the Central Asian republics, Turkmenistan is the only country that shares both its land and maritime borders with Iran.

In the northwest, there is Kazakhstan, in the north—Uzbekistan, in the east—Afghanistan, and Iran in the southeast. Turkmenistan has been at the crossroads of civilizations throughout all of its history, but it lacks direct access to international waters.

Iran, on the other hand, occupies an advantageous geostrategic location and possesses vast energy resources. Iran has the largest coastline in the region. On its northern side lies the Caspian Sea, in the south there is the Gulf of Oman, Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz, with the latter acting as the jugular vein for the whole world's energy supply. To the east there are Afghanistan and Pakistan. Iran also has the capacity to act as an access point for the landlocked Central Asian countries for reaching out to other countries and regions of the world. Central Asian countries, particularly Turkmenistan, would be able to transit energy and other resources to energy-starved regions and countries through Iran.<sup>1</sup> Strategic interests, ample economic opportunities, particularly in the energy sector, and Turkmenistan's role as a gateway to the Central Asian republics have maintained Iran's interest in furthering relations with Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan, on the other hand, not only considers Iran a consumer of its energy, but also sees it as a transit route for exporting energy supplies to other countries. Over the years, both countries have identified various areas that have laid the foundation for strengthening their bilateral relationship. However, due to the imposed economic sanctions and instability in the region, the two countries could not expand their cooperation to its fullest potential. Nonetheless, with the removal of international sanctions and integration of Iran into the global economy, the country has demonstrated tremendous improvement in its relations with other countries, particularly with European states. Further implementation of Iran's participation in projects like the International North-South Transport Corridor and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor should expand the reach and access potential of Central Asian countries, and particularly of Turkmenistan, which will ultimately transform the cooperation between the countries into a natural long-term partnership.

## Energy Cooperation

As far as Turkmenistan's resources are concerned, it is a country with abundant energy reserves, which has become increasingly important for the contemporary energy-starved world. According to the EIA (U.S. Energy Information Administration) report dated January 2016, Turkmenistan, with an estimate of 265 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, occupies the sixth place in the list of countries with the largest natural gas reserves, and was among the top 15 dry natural gas producers in 2015.<sup>2</sup> Turkmenistan's proven crude oil reserves are estimated at 600 million barrels. Turkmenistan's total production of petroleum and other liquids in 2015 amounted to 261,000 barrels and 2.5 trillion cubic feet of dry natural gas.<sup>3</sup> Despite its huge energy resources, due to its geographic location, lack of infrastructure, and limited exporting capabilities Turkmenistan has not been able to increase its influence and play a role of a major energy exporting country in the era of growing energy demands.

On the other hand, Iran has the second-largest proven natural gas reserves in the world after Russia. Iran holds 17% of the world's proven natural gas reserves and more than one-third of OPEC's (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) reserves. However, the vast majority of Iran's gas reserves are unexploited, which may lead to Iran's inability to utilize its resources. Iran's gross natural gas production in 2012 reached almost 8.2 trillion cubic feet, showing an increase of 3% from

<sup>1</sup> See: A. Mafinezam, A. Mehrabi, *Iran and its Place among Nations*, Praeger Publishers, London, 2008, pp. 77-78.

<sup>2</sup> See: *U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), 2014*, available at [<http://www.eia.gov/countries/countrydata.cfm?fips=tx>], 25 July, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> See: *EIA Turkmenistan Overview*, available at [<https://www.eia.gov/beta/international/analysis.cfm?iso=TKM>], 8 August, 2017.

5.2% in the year 2011.<sup>4</sup> In 2013, it decreased to 8.1 tcf. Meanwhile, Iran's domestic natural gas consumption has also been growing, and Iran is currently the third largest consumer of natural gas after the U.S. and Russia. In 2011, domestic consumption of natural gas in Iran equaled 3.5 tcf, which grew to 5.6 tcf in 2013, showing an increase of 2.1 tcf in comparison to 2011.<sup>5</sup> According to the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, the average annual increase from 2000 to 2011 in domestic natural gas consumption in Iran constituted 9.3%, which was almost equivalent to the production growth rate (9.5%).<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Iran, a major exporter of natural gas, is forced at the same time to import great volumes of gas, in order to meet the needs of the fossil fuel-free northern areas: purchasing gas from the northern neighbors is generally cheaper than its delivery from the southern fields across the entire country. In 2013, Iran imported over 90% of natural gas from Turkmenistan. In 2013, over 90% of Iran's exported natural gas went to Turkey and the rest—to Armenia and Azerbaijan. It is a fact that Iran accounts for less than 1% of the global natural gas trade, but with the reintegration of Iran into the world economy after the suspension of international sanctions and implementation of proposed regional gas pipelines, Iran can act as a major natural gas exporting country in the future. Iran has signed many agreements with various countries for exporting natural gas via pipelines. The following are Iran's major pipeline projects: (a) Iran-Iraq gas pipeline. (b) Iran-Oman gas pipeline. (c) Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline.

The Iran-Iraq gas pipeline has been inaugurated and started supplying natural gas to Iraq in June 2017. The pipeline increased the flow of natural gas from Iran to Iraq from 7 billion cubic feet to 35 billion cubic feet per day. The two countries have also signed another agreement in 2015 for supplying natural gas from Iran to the Iraqi city of Basra.<sup>7</sup> In 2013, Iran has signed a \$60 billion agreement with Oman to export natural gas over the course of 25 years. Evidently, the implementation of the project was delayed because of international sanctions on Iran, but both countries have renewed their efforts immediately after the suspension of sanctions on Iran in 2016.<sup>8</sup> The third important gas pipeline is intended to link Iran and Pakistan. Clearly, the gas pipeline project is also delayed due to sanctions, but the Iranian side has completed its work on the pipeline, and Pakistan is also determined to start working on the project as soon as possible.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, Iran can play a vital role in acting as a transit route for Turkmen energy export to other countries and regions of the world.

In addition, Turkmen natural gas can act as one of the preferred solutions for Iran to satisfy its growing domestic energy demand, particularly during winters. Secondly, imported natural gas from Turkmenistan is cheaper in comparison to delivering gas from the south to the north of Iran.<sup>10</sup> For that purpose, in 1994, the two countries presented their first formal proposal for developing cooperation in the energy sector by constructing the 1,400-km-long Turkmenistan-Iran-Turkey gas pipeline with a capacity of 28 bcm per year. The pipeline project was conceived in the context of building a gas pipeline for supplying natural gas from Turkmenistan to Turkey, and then to European

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<sup>4</sup> See: U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), "Country Analysis Brief: Iran," 21 July, 2014, available at [<http://www.eia.gov/countries/analysisbriefs/Iran/iran.pdf>], 25 February, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> See: *ELA Iran Overview*, available at [<https://www.eia.gov/beta/international/analysis.cfm?iso=IRN>], 8 August, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> See: D.R. Jalilvand, *Iran's Gas Export: Can Past Failure Become Future Success*, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies Oxford University, London, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> See: *Radio Free Europe*, 22 June, 2017, available at [<https://www.rferl.org/a/iran-iraq-gas-pipelines-years-of-delay-exports/28573674.html>], 9 August, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> See: *Reuters*, 7 February, 2017, available at [<http://www.reuters.com/article/iran-oman-gas-idUSL5N1FS2ZK>], 10 August, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> See: *The Times of Islamabad*, 7 March, 2017, available at [<https://timesofislamabad.com/iran-pakistan-gas-pipeline-project-status/2017/03/07/>], 11 August, 2017.

<sup>10</sup> See: F. Atai, H. Azizi, "The Energy Factor in Iran-Turkmenistan Relations," *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 6, November 2012, available at [[http://www.academia.edu/6557443/The\\_Energy\\_Factor\\_in\\_Iran\\_Turkmenistan\\_Relations](http://www.academia.edu/6557443/The_Energy_Factor_in_Iran_Turkmenistan_Relations)], 25 June, 2017.



countries via Iran. But due to U.S. opposition, the project could not be carried out. However, the two countries did not stop their cooperation efforts in the energy sector.<sup>11</sup> A year later, in 1995, the National Iranian Oil Company signed an agreement with Turkmenistan for constructing the 200-km-long Korppeje–Kurt-Kui gas pipeline with a diameter of 40 inches (1,000 mm). The National Iranian Oil Company assured Turkmenistan of maintaining its supplies by signing an agreement with a term of 25 years. In 1997, the pipeline started supplying natural gas from the Turkmen Korppeje gas deposit to the northern part of Iran. In the beginning, it pumped 6 bcm of natural gas per year, later increasing the volume to 8 bcm per year.<sup>12</sup> The actualization of the project is not only important to Turkmenistan for the purpose of diversifying pipeline infrastructure, but also provides leverage against Russia in gas price discussions.

Based on previous experience, and with an objective to further strengthen their relations, on 6 January, 2010, during the visit of Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinejad to Turkmenistan, the two countries inaugurated the 182-km-long Dovletabad-Serahs-Hangeran gas pipeline. Its capacity equals 12 bcm per year, which will more than double Turkmen gas exports to Iran—from 8 bcm to 20 bcm annually.<sup>13</sup> During the inauguration, the Iranian president said: “The pipeline will be a good stimulus for energy co-operation between Turkmenistan and Iran, as well as for the delivery of Turkmen gas to the Persian Gulf and the world market.”<sup>14</sup> Both countries regarded the implementation of the project as a foundation for the development of long-term strategic partnership, and as an important factor in promoting the possibilities of expanding bilateral and multidimensional relations between Iran and Turkmenistan.<sup>15</sup> In order to further deepen their relations, both countries have extended their cooperation in developing the new jointly controlled gas fields, as well as the development of the Gonbadli natural gas field, which is located in northeastern Iran and is expected to yield 700 hundred cubic meters of sweet (hydrogen sulphide-free) gas per day (0.7 bcm/d). There are several other completed joint oil and gas projects, such as the \$47-million gasoline production unit construction project at the Turkmenbashi refinery. Other projects include the \$200 million Korppeje gas refinery unit, the \$160 million Korppeje gas compressor station, as well as liquid gas terminals, worth \$33 million.<sup>16</sup> Both Iran and Turkmenistan have continuously vowed to further boost their cooperation in this sector.

## Electrical Power Generation Sector

The sector of energy generation in Turkmenistan that is second in significance is electrical power generation. Turkmenistan’s electrical power generation is entirely fueled by natural gas. The country’s total capacity for electrical power generation in April 2016 was about 5.2 gigawatts, which

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<sup>11</sup> See: *Ibidem*.

<sup>12</sup> See: V. Mesamed, “Iranian-Turkmen Relations in an Era of Change,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4 (46), 2007, available at [<http://www.ca-c.org/journal/2007-04-eng/13.shtml>], 25 July, 2017.

<sup>13</sup> See: B. Pannier, “Turkmen Gas Exports to Iran a Boon for Both Countries,” Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 5 January, 2010, available at [<http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1921933.html>], 26 July, 2017.

<sup>14</sup> “Turkmenistan Opens New Iran Gas Pipeline,” BBC News, 6 January 2010, available at [<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/2/hi/asiapacific/8443787.stm>], 26 July, 2017.

<sup>15</sup> See: *Press Release on Gas Pipeline from Turkmenistan to Iran on a Route of Dovletabad-Serahs-Hangeran*, Embassy of Turkmenistan, 6 January, 2010 available at [[http://www.turkmenembassy.org.uk/news/january\\_2010/PRESS\\_RELEASE\\_TURKMENISTAN\\_IRAN\\_GAS\\_PIPELINE.pdf](http://www.turkmenembassy.org.uk/news/january_2010/PRESS_RELEASE_TURKMENISTAN_IRAN_GAS_PIPELINE.pdf)], 1 August, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> See: F. Atai, H. Azizi, *op. cit.*

exceeds domestic demand. In 2015, Turkmenistan generated over 22 billion kWh of the required amount and exported 3.2 billion kilowatts to Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and other Central Asian countries. In addition, Turkmenistan has continuously adopted different policies and programs to modernize and expand its electrical power generation sector by establishing new transmission lines and constructing fourteen new natural gas-fueled electricity generation plants from 2015 to 2020. By April 2016, the country had twelve operational thermal power plants, and plans to further increase its electrical power generation capacity from 19 billion kWh to 35.5 billion kWh in between 2011 and 2030.<sup>17</sup>

The Turkmenistan-Iran bilateral relationship reached new heights in 2003, when both countries signed an agreement of cooperation in the electrical power sector. The signing of the agreement enabled Iran to import electricity from Turkmenistan and to establish a Turkmenistan-Iran-Turkey energy corridor. Via this corridor, Turkey receives 600 million kWh of electricity generated by power stations in the western regions of Turkmenistan annually. June 2003 marked the implementation of the first phase of the jointly built 220 kV Balkanabat-Gonbad power transmission line, which stretches between Balkanabat in Turkmenistan and Aliabad in Iran and supplies 562.2 million kWh per annum. In 2004, the second phase of 220 kV Serakhs (Turkmenistan)-Sarakhs (Iran) transmission line with a capacity of 100 mWh (megawatt hour) was launched. Following the implementation of the two transmission lines, Iranian electricity import from Turkmenistan reached 375 million kWh per year.<sup>18</sup> In February 2014, during a meeting with Iranian Energy Minister Hamid Chitchian in Tehran, Meredov, the foreign minister of Turkmenistan, stated that Turkmenistan exported over 1.5 billion kWh of electric power to Iran in 2013, and has 800 million kWh in excess, which it is seeking to export to Turkey via Iran.<sup>19</sup>

## Iran as a Transit Route

Geographically, the Central Asian region is landlocked. It does not have any direct land route to access international waters. It is enclosed by China in the east, in the west there are Russia and the Transcaucasian republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. On the northern side is the snow-bound Western Siberian taiga, and on the southern side of Central Asia there are Afghanistan and Iran.<sup>20</sup> Before independence, the Central Asian republics were wholly and solely dependent upon the U.S.S.R. leaders. The whole infrastructure of connectivity was developed according to the needs and requirements for the region's integration with the other republics of the U.S.S.R. But their independence provided them with an opportunity to diversify their economies and seek alternative routes to access other countries and regions of the world in order to promote their trade. Apart from Russia, the Central Asian republics have three options to access the world, namely via

- (i) China,
- (ii) Afghanistan and Pakistan, and
- (iii) Iran.

<sup>17</sup> See: *EIA. Turkmenistan Overview*, available at [<https://www.eia.gov/beta/international/analysis.cfm?iso=TKM>], 8 August, 2017.

<sup>18</sup> See: "Another Power Transmission Line Commissioned on Turkmen-Iranian Border," *Turkmenistan.ru*, 23 August, 2004, available at [[http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=5375&type=event&sort=date\\_desc](http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=5375&type=event&sort=date_desc)], 2 July, 2017.

<sup>19</sup> See: *Tehran Times*, 16 February, 2014, available at [<http://www.tehrantimes.com/economy-and-business/114118-turkmenistan-seeks-to-transit-electric-power-via-iran>], 3 July, 2017.

<sup>20</sup> See: Shamsuddin, "Central Asia: A Factor in Indo-Iranian Relations," in: *Contemporary Iran and Emerging Indo-Iranian Relations*, ed. by Girijesh Pant, P.C. Jain and A.K. Pasha, Neelkanth Publishers, New Delhi, 1996, p. 160.

While the route through China is the longest, the one passing through Afghanistan and Pakistan is the shortest. However, due to the civil war in Afghanistan, the possibility of Central Asia's access through the Afghan route is ruled out in the near future. Therefore, the only palpable alternative route for Central Asia to access the world passes through Iran.<sup>21</sup> Iran enjoys a special geographical location, being a crossroads of transit routes from the Middle East and Persian Gulf to the Central Asian republics. The landlocked countries of the Central Asian region can only access the sea through the land of their neighbors. Therefore, due to its convenient geographical location, Iran is the most suitable country that can provide a direct access link between Central Asian countries and the outside world.<sup>22</sup> Secondly, Iran is the shortest route, only 2,000 miles away from the Persian Gulf shore, making it the most economical route for Central Asian republics to reach the Persian Gulf.<sup>23</sup>

### *Conclusion*

After going through all the details and initiatives taken up by the two countries, we can clearly see that the energy sector has the capacity to play an important role in strengthening their bilateral relationship. Iran views cooperation with Turkmenistan as an opportunity to play an influential role, particularly in the energy export sector. Similarly, for Turkmenistan, the relationship with Iran is important in several respects. Iran can become the main route for Turkmenistan to access international waters. Not only does Iran serve as an energy consumer/market for Turkmenistan, but it can also play an important role in providing technical knowledge and expertise in the energy sector. The successful completion and operationalization of the Iran-Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan rail link through the east coast of the Caspian Sea, which was designed with the purpose of enhancing Central Asia's access to the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, has further strengthened the possibilities of deepening their cooperation, since it can act as a route for transporting oil and gas supplies to world markets. However, Iran-Turkmenistan relations have been affected by U.S.-Iran relations, but the success of ongoing negotiations between Turkmenistan and IRI will definitely take Iran-Turkmenistan relations to new heights.

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<sup>21</sup> See: *Tehran Times*, 16 February, 2014.

<sup>22</sup> See: M. Aghazadeh, "Iran's Foreign Policy Approach Toward Central Asia and the Caucasus," *Eurasian Universities Union Academic Journal*, Winter 2015, Turkey, p. 199, available at [[http://www.researchgate.net/publication/275689164\\_Irans\\_Foreign\\_Policy\\_Approach\\_toward\\_the\\_Central\\_Asia\\_and\\_Caucasus](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/275689164_Irans_Foreign_Policy_Approach_toward_the_Central_Asia_and_Caucasus)], 12 July, 2017.

<sup>23</sup> See: F. Atai, "A Look to the North: Opportunities and Challenges," in: *Iran in the 21st Century: Politics, Economics and Conflict*, ed. by H. Katouzian and H. Shahidi, Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, New York, 2008, p. 125.

## GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION IN THE ECONOMY AND CRISIS RESILIENCE

Fidan ISMAILOVA

Post-graduate student, Academy of State Governance  
under the President of the Azerbaijan Republic  
(Baku, Azerbaijan)

### ABSTRACT

**T**he author relies on the results of the latest global crisis to discuss the methodology by which the correlation between the level of government intervention in the economy and its crises resilience is assessed.

She proceeds from the modified variant of the Index of Leftness (Rightness) of Economy formulated by Prof. Nazim Muzafarli and the Cumulative Loss Index. An

analysis of this correlation calculated for 57 states revealed that in the countries with a higher degree of government intervention in the economy before the global crisis the defensive response to crisis was weaker and cumulative losses bigger, which made it clear that government intervention in the flow of capitals, price formation and licensing greatly undermines the economic entities' "immunity" to crises.

**KEYWORDS:** *Index of Leftness (Rightness) of Economy, Cumulative Loss Index, crisis resilience of economy, global financial crisis, government intervention in the economy.*

### *Introduction*

In his *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* Joseph Shumpeter wrote: "The opening up of new markets, foreign or domestic, and the organizational development from the craft shop and factory to such concerns as U.S. Steel illustrate the same process of industrial mutation—if I may use that biological term—that incessantly Revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one. This process of Creative Destruction is the essential fact about capitalism."<sup>1</sup>

Caused by "creative destruction" and unfolding inside the economic system, the process of renovation during which weak and inefficient enterprises are replaced by more efficient ones consists of several phases called economic (or business) cycles. During the crisis phase, the most difficult and practically unpredictable stage of an economic crisis, inefficient enterprises go bankrupt, new technologies are introduced, while either new and more efficiently managed enterprises appear on the market or the old-timers expand at the expense of bankrupt enterprises' shares. The innovational

<sup>1</sup> J.A. Shumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, Taylor & Francis e-Library, London, New York, 2003, p. 83.

enterprises that replace the “weak links of the chain” lead to a more efficient distribution of resources while the economy is gradually reviving from the crisis. This means that in market economy crises are accompanied by economic purification and revival.

In fact, today the state is also involved in economic processes and directly affects them. It adds efficiency to the market system by creating the basic conditions of business activities (infrastructure, security, etc.) and more refined mechanisms of economic rivalry and fair control of the “rules of the game.” However, excessive government intervention in price formation, free movement of commodities, services and labor creates vast monetary resources used for state funding while the private sector is “squeezed out”; this, in the final analysis, interferes with “creative destruction” and, therefore, with the process of market purification and revival.

A higher level of government intervention undermines the economic entities’ “immunity” to crises, weakens their ability to respond promptly and efficiently. This means that economic growth, distribution of profit and greater resilience to crises need clear definitions of an efficient level of government intervention in the economy.

The correlation between the level of government intervention in the economy and its crises resilience is assessed below in the context of the latest financial crisis to specify whether a higher level of government intervention in the economy makes it more responsive to crises. In addition, the comparative analysis of this correlation in 57 countries with different development levels is given.

## Methodology

Cumulative Loss Index (CLI) was used to assess the crisis resilience of economy in units of actual rate of cumulative growth in 2009-2010 vs. its pre-crisis expected (potential) growth rate, relying on the figures of expected (forecasted) growth rates in the next two years supplied by the International Monetary Fund.<sup>2</sup>

The CLI was calculated in the following way:

$$CLI = (Agrowth / Egrowth) - 1, \quad (1)$$

where *Agrowth* is the actual rate of cumulative growth (as a coefficient) in 2009-2010, while *Egrowth* is the expected, forecasted growth (presented, likewise, as a coefficient).

The countries with calculated CLI value below zero sustained the greatest losses from the crisis.

To assess the extent of government intervention in the economy, the modified variant of the Index of Leftness/Rightness of Economy formulated by Prof. Muzaffarli<sup>3</sup> was used.

In the reports regarding the Indices of Leftness/Rightness of Economy for 2015, the extent of government intervention in the economy (according to the formulated methodology) was calculated on the basis of sub-indices.<sup>4</sup>

**Public Finance Sub-Index (PF)** signifies the level of income redistribution through taxes, and is calculated as a simple average of two indices, namely, Budget Expenditures and Business Tax Burden. The former is calculated by indexing the share of budget expenditures in GDP (in %). The latter is counted by indexing the total taxes paid in a given year by a modeled company as share of its profit. For both indices  $V_{\min} = 0$  and  $V_{\max} = 100$ .

<sup>2</sup> See: International Monetary Fund “World Economic Outlook: Housing and the Business Cycle,” April 2008.

<sup>3</sup> See: N. Muzaffarli, *Sotsialnaia orientirovannost ekonomiki v pravistskikh i levistskikh sistemakh*, Sharg-Garb, Baku, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> See: *IL(R)E-2015: Liberal Potential of Economy*, ed. by N. Muzaffarli, Institute of Economics, NANA, Baku, 2017, p. 13 (in Azeri).

**Price Regulation Sub-Index (PR)** identifies the level of freedom of pricing, and, at the same time, the level of government intervention in price formation. When the PR of a country approaches 0, it means that pricing is growing more liberal; if it approaches 1, it means that the state is tightening price regulation. PR is calculated as a simple average of two indices, that of Price Freedom and Monetary Freedom. For Price Freedom Index  $V_{\min} = 0$ ,  $V_{\max} = 10$ , for Monetary Freedom Index  $V_{\min} = 0$ ,  $V_{\max} = 100$ . Since in the statistical bases used in calculation of both indices higher scores denote less government intervention, the final values of PR Sub-Index are obtained by subtracting from 1.

**Foreign Trade Sub-Index (FT)** measures the freedom of foreign trade and the rigidity of foreign trade regulations. If FT Sub-Index of a country goes down to 0, it means that the freedom of these countries' companies to trade internationally is increasing; if government regulations of foreign trade are becoming stricter, then FT Sub-Index approaches 1. FT Sub-Index is calculated as a simple average of three indices, namely, Foreign Trade Freedom, Economic Value of Imports, and Trade Freedom. For Foreign Trade Freedom Index  $V_{\min} = 0$ ,  $V_{\max} = 10$ , for Economic Value of Imports Index  $V_{\min} = 1$ ,  $V_{\max} = 7$ , and for Trade Freedom Index  $V_{\min} = 0$ ,  $V_{\max} = 100$ . Since in the statistical bases used to calculate the sub-indices higher scores point to less government intervention, the final values of FT Sub-Index are obtained by subtracting from 1.

**Licensing Sub-Index (L)** calculations lean on the World Bank's methodology and are based on the indicators of time and costs required for a hypothetical company to obtain licenses and construction permits. Licensing Sub-Index is a simple average of two indices. For Licensing Time Index  $V_{\min} = 0$ ,  $V_{\max} = 1000$ , and for Licensing Cost Index  $V_{\min} = 0$ ,  $V_{\max} = 100$ .

**Employment Regulation Sub-Index (ER)** measures the extent to which the government intervenes in the employer-employee relationship, and regulates the labor process. ER Sub-Index is based on two indices, specifically, Rigidity of Employment and Redundancy Cost. The former, in turn, is an average of three indicators: difficulty (ease) of hiring, rigidity (flexibility) of working hours and difficulty (simplicity) of redundancy. Considering the greater importance of the Rigidity of Employment Index, it is weighted as 0.75, and Redundancy Cost Index, accordingly, as 0.25. For both indices— $V_{\min} = 0$ ,  $V_{\max} = 100$ .

**Minimum Wage Sub-Index (MW)** is the indexed version of the legal minimum wage share in GDP per capita. It is accepted that  $V_{\min} = 0$ ,  $V_{\max} = 100$ .

For 2015 the Index of Leftness/Rightness of Economy is calculated by the formula:

$$IL(R)E_i = 0.30*PF_i + 0.14*PR_i + 0.14*FT_i + 0.14*L_i + 0.14*ER_i + 0.14*MW_i \quad (2)$$

As was already noted above, the Index of Leftness/Rightness of Economy was included in price formation in a modified form that differed from the original:

The Price Regulation Sub-Index (**PR**) is calculated with correction for the purchasing power parity (PPP). The idea stems from the thesis that, all other factors being equal, the highest level of state involvement in price formation is observed in the countries with high PPP coefficients. For this reason, the Max-min variant of the indicative method was used to calculate the average of the PPP coefficient for the three pre-crisis years (2006, 2007, and 2008).

The Foreign Trade Sub-Index, or Trade Regulation Sub-Index (**TR**), is a variant of the indicative Max-min method calculated as an average of three indices adopted in the original methodology on the basis of the Index of Economic Freedom elaborated by the Heritage Foundation.<sup>5</sup>

Price formation includes the Capital Flow Regulation Sub-Index (**CFR**) as a separate component; it comes to the fore when crises emerge and spread far and wide. It is a variant of the indicative

<sup>5</sup> See: K.R. Holmes, E.J. Feulner, M.A. O'Grady *et al.*, "2008 Index of Economic Freedom. USA," Heritage Foundation and *The World Street Journal*, 2008.



Max-min method related to the figures of the Restrictions on Capital Flows presented by the World Economic Forum in its Global Competitiveness Report.<sup>6</sup>

Since the data for the period of calculations of the final values of the Index of Leftness/Rightness of Economy is unavailable, we could not take into account the Minimum Wage Sub-Index.

In this work, the Index of Leftness/Rightness of Economy was calculated by the following formula:

$$IL(R)E_{mod} = 0.30*PF + 0.15*TR + 0.15*CFR + 0.15*PC + 0.15*ER + 0.10*L. \quad (3)$$

The following formula of the equality of regression coefficients was used to calculate the correlation between the extent of government intervention in the economy and its resilience to crises for the Index of Leftness/Rightness of Economy and its sub-indices:

$$CLI = \beta_0 + \beta_1*IL(R)E + \beta_2*D_1 + \beta_3*D_2 + \varepsilon, \quad (4)$$

where *CLI* —the Cumulative Loss Index;

*IL(R)E* —the Index of Leftness/Rightness of Economy (also calculated separately, and its subindices);

*D*<sub>1</sub>, *D*<sub>2</sub> —fictitious variables used to express the biggest and the smallest (as compared to the average) losses observed in certain countries for several reasons;

$\varepsilon$  —the white noise element.

The number of analyzed countries was limited due to their accessibility/inaccessibility. The results obtained for 57 countries are presented below.

## The Level of Government Intervention in the Economy and Cumulative Losses (By Country)

The calculated levels of the Index of Leftness/Rightness of Economy before the world crisis point to Switzerland (0.172) as the most “Right” (the closest to the Right pole), in which government intervention is minimal. The most developed states are among the top ten countries that approach the Right pole.

At the same time, government intervention in India (0.600), Iran (0.500), and China (0.481) is at the maximum level and very close to the Left pole. Italy is the only exception among the countries found close to the Left pole: all others are developing countries.

In the Table where the countries are arranged from the smallest to the biggest index values, Azerbaijan’s economy occupies the 45th place with the index of prices at 0.375, and as such it belongs to the Leftness economy group. The mean index for 57 countries, that is, the relative center of the scale is found at 0.334, the median, at 0.326 (Croatia). In this respect, Azerbaijan is close to the Left pole (see Table 1 and Fig. 1).

In 2009-2010, when the global crisis reached its peak, the economy of the analyzed countries (Uruguay, Singapore and Iran being the only exceptions) sustained considerable losses. The highest

<sup>6</sup> See: K. Schwab, M.P. Porter, “The Global Competitiveness Report 2008-2009,” *World Economic Forum*, 2008.

Table 1

**Ranking of Countries according  
to the Level of Government Intervention in the Economy  
(the Index of Leftness/Rightness of Economy) before the Global Crisis (IL(R)E)**

Place	Country	IL(R)E	Place	Country	IL(R)E
1	Switzerland	0.172	30	Slovenia	0.332
2	Singapore	0.179	31	Belgium	0.334
3	Denmark	0.192	32	Mexico	0.339
4	Iceland	0.198	33	Rumania	0.343
5	Luxembourg	0.245	34	Poland	0.344
6	Ireland	0.246	35	Greece	0.344
7	United States	0.247	36	Czech Republic	0.348
8	United Kingdom	0.257	37	Lithuania	0.348
9	Canada	0.261	38	Hungary	0.351
10	Israel	0.268	39	Portugal	0.353
11	Chile	0.271	40	Spain	0.355
12	New Zealand	0.274	41	Uruguay	0.365
13	Australia	0.285	42	Macedonia	0.370
14	Finland	0.285	43	France	0.373
15	Norway	0.294	44	Bulgaria	0.374
16	Estonia	0.300	45	<i>Azerbaijan</i>	0.375
17	Latvia	0.300	46	Albania	0.386
18	Korea	0.302	47	Bosnia and Herz.	0.392
19	Netherlands	0.302	48	Moldova	0.414
20	Sweden	0.302	49	Kyrgyz Republic	0.418
21	Austria	0.303	50	Serbia	0.421
22	Turkey	0.306	51	Ukraine	0.436
23	Georgia	0.313	52	Russia	0.439
24	Armenia	0.313	53	Italy	0.449
25	Germany	0.314	54	Brazil	0.450
26	Kazakhstan	0.318	55	China	0.481
27	Slovak Republic	0.319	56	Iran	0.500
28	Japan	0.322	57	India	0.600
29	Croatia	0.326	IL(R)E-average arithmetic		0.334

*Source:* Author's calculations.



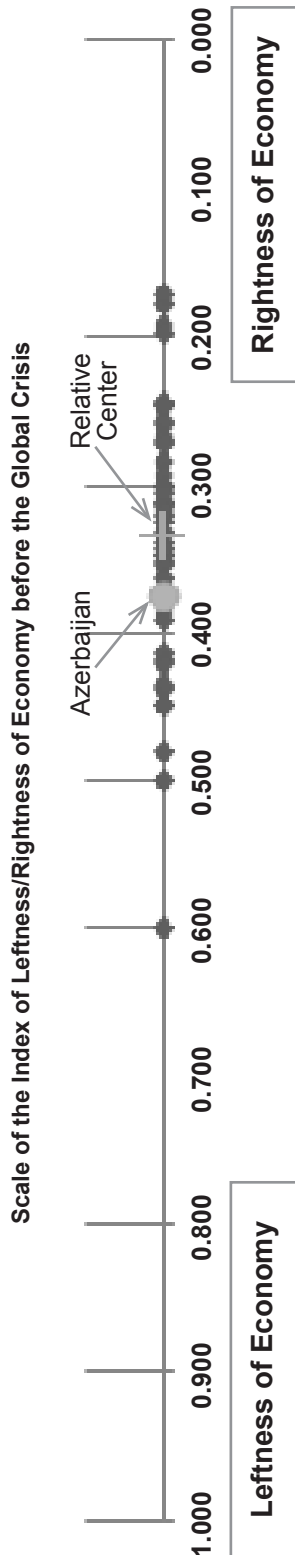
Table 2

**Cumulative Losses of Countries at  
the Peak of the Global Crisis (2009-2010):  
Cumulative Loss Index (CLI) Results by Country**

Place	Country	CLI	Place	Country	CLI
1	Armenia	-0.242	30	Austria	-0.055
2	Lithuania	-0.224	31	Denmark	-0.055
3	Estonia	-0.194	32	Azerbaijan	-0.053
4	Latvia	-0.186	33	New Zealand	-0.052
5	Ukraine	-0.177	34	France	-0.052
6	Rumania	-0.166	35	Turkey	-0.051
7	Croatia	-0.158	36	Albania	-0.050
8	Russia	-0.147	37	Portugal	-0.050
9	Bulgaria	-0.140	38	Norway	-0.050
10	Slovenia	-0.137	39	Canada	-0.048
11	Moldova	-0.133	40	Italy	-0.047
12	Georgia	-0.131	41	Chile	-0.046
13	Serbia	-0.128	42	Japan	-0.044
14	Greece	-0.128	43	Belgium	-0.043
15	Iceland	-0.124	44	United States	-0.041
16	Ireland	-0.122	45	Germany	-0.039
17	Slovak Republic	-0.121	46	Sweden	-0.038
18	Bosnia and Herz.	-0.113	47	Poland	-0.036
19	Hungary	-0.110	48	Korea	-0.024
20	Czech Republic	-0.102	49	Australia	-0.023
21	Finland	-0.095	50	Switzerland	-0.016
22	Kyrgyz Republic	-0.093	51	Brazil	-0.010
23	Luxembourg	-0.092	52	Israel	-0.007
24	Spain	-0.084	53	China	-0.003
25	Macedonia	-0.080	54	India	-0.001
26	Mexico	-0.074	55	Iran	0.004
27	United Kingdom	-0.069	56	Singapore	0.028
28	Kazakhstan	-0.057	57	Uruguay	0.039
29	Netherlands	-0.056			

*Source:* Author's calculations.

Figure 1



cumulative losses were registered in Armenia, while Lithuania and Estonia followed with smaller, yet considerable losses. Developing countries belonged to the top ten with the biggest losses.

Azerbaijan came 32nd among 57 countries, close to some of the developed countries (Austria, Denmark, New Zealand and France) (see Table 2).

### Regression Analysis Results

Figure 2 does not reveal a clear connection between CLI and IL(R)E, yet the outlines of this connection can be clearly seen in the period of neutralization of crisis repercussions in the countries that sustained the greatest losses (in the process of price formation this was realized through fictitious variables).

Table 3 demonstrates that greater government intervention in the economy weakens its resilience and increases cumulative losses.

According to calculations based on 4.1 model, an increase of IL(R)E by 0.100 units decreases the CLI volume by 0.032 units, which means that the process is accompanied by an increase of cumulative losses by this value. The determination coefficient ( $R^2$ —R squared) indicates that 63.3% of losses in the selected countries during the global financial crisis were caused by new variables added to the model. In some countries (Armenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Rumania) cumulative losses proved to be bigger than calculated, while in other countries (Brazil, China, India, Iran, Italy, and Uruguay) they were smaller.

A similar picture is observed in different trends of government intervention in the economy, which are related to sub-indices IL(R)E. All sub-indices, with the exception of the Employment Regulation Sub-Index (ER), have negative coefficients. This means that the state’s greater involvement in any trend expressed by any of the sub-indices negatively affects crisis resilience and increases cumulative losses. It is hard to describe the effects of these processes on the Public Finance Sub-Index (PF) and Foreign Trade Sub-Index (TR) in definite terms since statistically their coefficients are negligible. This effect is much clearer for other sub-indices.

A 0.100 increase in the value of the sub-index related to the restrictions on capital flows decreases crisis resilience of economy by 0.0123 units. In other words, it increases the volume of CLI by this value. The coefficient at the level of 0.01 is statistically valid.

Greater price regulation, likewise, negatively affects crisis resilience: an increase in the value of the sub-index by 0.100 units decreases crisis resilience by 0.006 and increases the volume of CLI.

Figure 2

Diagram of Correlation between Fictitious Variables  
(extract from EViews)

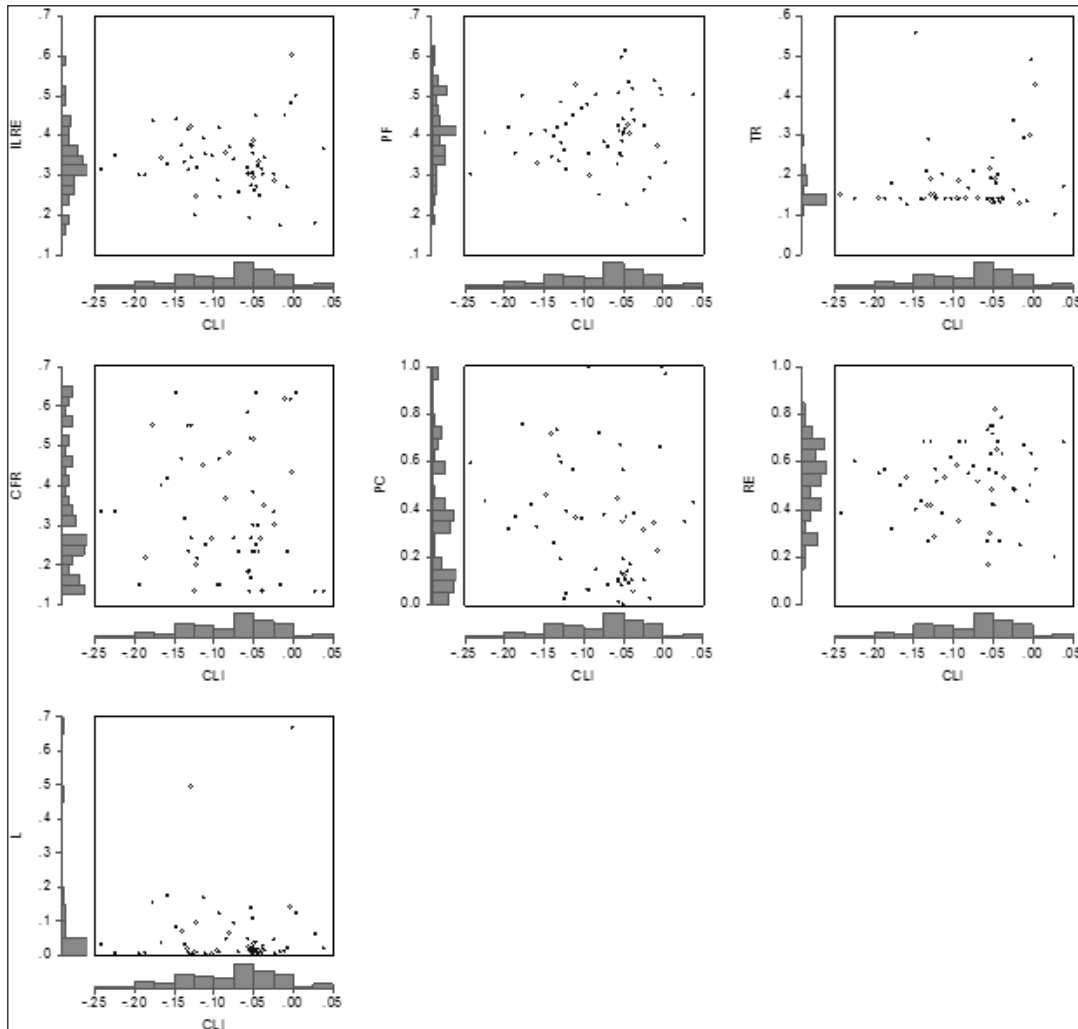


Table 3

The Influence of the Level of Government Intervention in the Economy on Crisis Resilience: Regression Analysis Results

	CLI						
	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7
IL(R)E	-0.316						
	0.000						
PF		-0.082					
		0.245					

Table 3 (continued)

	CLI						
	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7
TR			-0.109				
			0.153				
CFR				-0.123			
				0.001			
PC					-0.057		
					0.013		
ER						0.003	
						0.936	
L							-0.091
							0.095
C	0.024	-0.044	-0.058	-0.039	-0.059	-0.078	-0.072
	0.369	0.130	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.000
D <sub>1</sub>	-0.125	-0.128	-0.129	-0.129	-0.119	-0.126	-0.129
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
D <sub>2</sub>	0.123	0.082	0.089	0.099	0.089	0.073	0.084
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000
R <sup>2</sup>	0.633	0.539	0.545	0.610	0.580	0.527	0.551
F stat.	30.410	20.646	21.153	27.637	24.368	19.676	21.708
Durbin-Watson stat.	2.263	2.224	2.255	2.005	2.176	2.201	2.215
AIC	-3.623	-3.396	-3.409	-3.563	-3.488	-3.370	-3.423
N—number of observations (countries)	57	57	57	57	57	57	57

*Note:* The figures in plain script under the coefficients reflect probable indices.  
*Source:* Author's calculations.

Greater licensing regulation, likewise, limits the possibilities of crisis response. According to the result of price formation, an increase of the Licensing Sub-Index (L) by 0.100 units (which tightens the rules of coming into the market/pulling out of the market) increases the volume of cumulative losses by 0.009 units.

The empirical conclusions, therefore, confirm the stated thesis that an increase in government intervention in the economy undermines its crisis resilience.

## *Conclusions*

Analysis and assessment of the correlation between the level of government intervention in the economy and its crisis resilience in 57 countries at the stage of maximum cumulative losses (2009-2010) in the period of the latest global crisis have demonstrated that the countries, in which the pre-crisis level of government intervention in the economy was higher, responded to the crisis weakly and sustained the greatest cumulative losses.

This suggests that a lower level of government intervention in the economy, particularly free movement of capital (the absence of administrative economic barriers), market price formation (non-interference of state in price formation) and the absence (through licensing) of pinching limitations of entering to/pulling out of the market raises the immunity of economy and creates conditions in which its response to crises becomes efficient and timely.

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# ETHNIC RELATIONS AND MIGRATION

## INTERNAL MIGRATION IN CENTRAL ASIA: SOCIAL RISKS (CASE STUDIES OF KAZAKHSTAN, TAJIKISTAN, AND KYRGYZSTAN)

Roza NURTAZINA

*D.Sc. (Political Science), Professor,  
Department of Political Science, Lev Gumilev Eurasian National University  
(Astana, Kazakhstan)*

Arman TOKTUSHAKOV

*Doctoral Candidate, Department of Political Science,  
Lev Gumilev Eurasian National University  
(Astana, Kazakhstan)*

### ABSTRACT

**T**he article deals with the examination of the processes of internal migration in the countries of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan) and the risks that this phenomenon represents for the societies of those countries. The objectives of the study are the definition of the theoretical concepts of migration, internal migration and social risks, as well as an

analysis of the main social risks in the countries of the region. In the course of the study, the context of internal migration is identified and the likely points of social concern and dissatisfaction of the population—the social risks—are revealed.

Also identified are the main social risks of internal migration (disruption in the balance of the labor market, the growth of con-



*flict proneness in society, reduction in the tolerance toward migrants, excessive urbanization, the decline of rural areas, crime increase, lowered birth rates, the violation of human rights, deterioration of the environment, the weakening of territorial and*

*cultural unity, the threat to security and quality of life of local communities, and civic passivity of the migrants) in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, their causes and connection to the current migration processes.*

**KEYWORDS:** *migration, internal migration, social risks, unemployment, Central Asia.*

### *Introduction*

In the context of globalization and economic crisis, there has been an increase in migration around the world. Migration dynamics are influenced by the liberalization of national economies, the transnationalization of labor markets, and uneven socioeconomic development of countries. The increase in the volume of international migration also occurs due to the presence of hotbeds of conflicts and destabilization of political situations in certain regions of the world.

In recent years, the problem of migration has become particularly acute in the countries of Western Europe (Germany, France, and Italy). Major migratory flows originating from the Middle East Region are shaping a new social reality in these countries. The issues of infrastructure, logistics, housing, employment and social adaptation are becoming relevant to migrants. Against this backdrop, however, there is a threat of terrorist and extremist organizations' members entering a country under the guise of refugees.

The strengthening of the dynamics of migration processes is characteristic for the countries of Central Asia, namely Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. In addition, while there are many causes of internal and external migration, the main reason for it is an economic one: the loss or lack of work, low level of income, low level of urbanization. "The main influence on migration is the economic factors, the most important of which is the quality of life"—as rightly pointed out in the 1970s by one of the researchers of migration, D.D. Moskvina.<sup>1</sup>

The study used a considerable amount of scientific work by scholars from CIS countries, as well as countries' statistics. Particularly noteworthy are the studies by: Olga Vorobyeva, Vladimir Moiseyenko, Mikhail Kurman and Vladimir Staroverov, Leonid Rybakovskiy, Viktor Perevedentsev, Alevtina Kelnik, Ludmila Nivorozhkina and Nikol' Kolosova, Pavel Vasilenko, Eldar Gabdullin, Mukhit Asanbaev and others.

Among foreign studies, the authors used the works of Ernest George Ravenstein and Immanuel Wallerstein.<sup>2</sup>

The current study is relevant, as the internal migration processes largely determine the status of the regional labor markets, current socioeconomic and demographic situation in the region. In turn, the internal political stability and security of countries are qualified by and dependent on this data.

<sup>1</sup> See: D.D. Moskvina, *Naselenie SSSR: problemy migratsii*, Moscow, 1991, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> See: I. Wallerstein, *The End of the World as We Know It: Social Science for the Twenty-First Century*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, London, 2001; E.G. Ravenstein, "The Laws of Migration," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, No. 46, 1885, pp. 167-235; idem, "The Laws of Migration: Second Paper," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, No. 52, 1889, pp. 241-305.

The tasks of this investigation are:

- defining theoretical concepts of migration, internal migration and social risks;
- estimating the processes of internal migration in the countries of Central Asia, based on the case studies of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan;
- identifying the main social risks, which are driven by the process of internal migration in the countries of Central Asia.

Achieving a goal is impossible without using a set of complementary theoretical research methods. The most important role in the construction of the research methodology is played by the systemic approach and the theory of international relations, in the framework of which the method of summary data and the problem-logical method of data analysis have been used.

## 1. The Concept of Internal Migration and Social Risks

Before proceeding to the analysis of the problem, it is necessary to come to a clear understanding of the terminology.

Let us start with a definition of the term “migration.”

In scientific literature, there is no single approach to the definition of the concept. It should be noted, however, that there are a number of theoretical approaches developed by the scholars of the Western research school.

One of the first theoretical studies of migration was proposed by the English scientist, Ernest George Ravenstein, who formulated the “laws of migration.” The main idea of these laws is that migrants, leaving places with limited opportunities, move to regions with greater prospects. Different levels of prosperity among countries have an impact on the volume and direction of migration flows.<sup>3</sup>

According to the neoclassical theory, the causes of migration mobility of the population lie in the differences of wages between countries of origin and destination. Migration is the result of geographical differences in the ratio of demand and supply of labor. The difference in wages causes labor migrants to move from regions with lower to regions with higher wages.<sup>4</sup>

Structural historical approach is reflected in the Immanuel Wallerstein’ world systems theory. The basis of this approach lies in the idea that the world is divided into more developed and less developed countries, with different access to enhanced resources. Capitalism, penetrating less developed countries, draws them into international migration flows, and thereby aggravates global inequality.<sup>5</sup>

It should also be noted that there are two basic approaches to the definition of migration. In the broad sense, migration is perceived as any form of territorial mobility of a populace, irrespective of its regularity, objectives and duration. Mikhail Kurman<sup>6</sup> adheres to such definition, for example. In the narrow sense of the word, “migration” is changing the place of residence outside specific locality.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See: E.G. Ravenstein, op. cit. (see also: P.V. Vasilenko, “Zarubezhnye teorii migratsii naselenia,” *Pskovskiy regionologicheskii zhurnal*, No. 16, 2013, pp. 36-41).

<sup>4</sup> See: P. Samuelson [1948], *Economics: An Introductory Analysis*; with William D. Nordhaus [since 1985], 2009, 19th ed., McGraw-Hill.

<sup>5</sup> See: I. Wallerstein, op. cit.

<sup>6</sup> See: M.V. Kurman, *Dvizhenie rabochikh kadrov promyshlennogo predpriatiia*, Moscow, 1971, p. 15; idem, *Aktualnye voprosy demografii*, A Textbook, Statistika, Moscow, 1976, p. 138.

<sup>7</sup> G.S. Vechkanov, *Migratsia trudovykh resursov v SSSR*, LGU, Leningrad, 1981, p. 73.

The most accurate definition is provided by Leonid Rybakovskiy, for whom spatial migration of a population is predicated on two simultaneous conditions:

- a population moves from one settlement to another and secondly,
- the movement is accompanied by changing the location of its permanent residence.<sup>8</sup>

Viktor Perevedentsev refers to the migration of the population as “the totality of such movements of people, which are inextricably linked with the change of residence.”<sup>9</sup> With that, the concept of migration excludes the changing of the place of residence within the settlements.

With regard to the concept of internal migration, in most of the scientific works it is considered as the process of movement of people within the national borders.<sup>10</sup>

It is important to distinguish the two types of internal migration: intra-regional (intra-district)—within the boundaries of a certain administrative-territorial unit, inter-settlement (rural-urban)—population movements in directions: city-village, village-city, city-city, village-village, and inter-regional (inter-district)—moving from one region (district) to another. Inter-settlement migrations can be both inter-regional and intra-regional. Intra-settlement movements (for example, change of residence within the same city) are not considered in this classification, since they do not relate to migration of the population proper.<sup>11</sup>

In modern conditions, the most widespread classification is the one that delineates the factors of migration by economic and non-economic characteristics. The reasons for the economic characteristics are:

- the differences in the levels of economic and industrial development of individual countries and regions (districts of a particular country).
- the national differences in the size of the salary, overpopulation, high level of unemployment in the country;
- the international movement of capital and the activity of international corporations.

Also important is the definition of the concept of social risk in the context of the current study.

In the scientific literature, the concept of social risk includes such types of risk, which permeate all public sectors of the population and involve a possible social impairments and detriments. The social risks include a possibility of universal losses, affecting elements of the quality of life.

The key signs of social risks include the following:

- universality (social risks become the responsibility of each individual and society as a whole);
- inevitability (social risks initiate problems which cannot be ruled out completely, and can only be minimized in order to manage them with any degree of efficiency);
- social responsibility of all social and professional groups of society (management of social risks achieves success only in the presence of the effective partnership with participation of all vested parties in the process);
- potential crisis proneness (social risks are potential sources, catalysts of the crises of economic, political, and demographic nature).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See: L.L. Rybakovskiy, *Regionalny analiz migratsiy*, Statistika, Moscow, 1973, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> V.I. Perevedentsev, *Metody izucheniya migratsii naseleniya*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1975.

<sup>10</sup> See: A. Kelnik, *Regulirovanie vnutrennei migratsii naseleniya v aspekte regionalnogo razvitiya Respubliki Belarus*, Belorusskaia nauka Publishing House, Minsk, 2012, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup> See: O.D. Vorobyeva, A.V. Topilin, V.I. Mukomel, *Migratsia naselenia: teoria, politika*, A Textbook, Ekonomicheskoe obrazovanie, Moscow, 2012, p. 13.

<sup>12</sup> See: Analytical report on the topic: *Relevant Questions of Migration Policy: An Assessment of the Current Situation, Forecast of the Demand for Labor Migrants, Taking into Account their Qualifications; Illegal Migration, the Experience of Foreign Countries*, The Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Astana, 2015.

The main social risks of internal migration include:

- the decline in living standards;
- rising unemployment;
- the loss of labor skills;
- narrowing of access to housing and social services;
- the growth of crime and social tension;
- decline in production.

## 2. Internal Migration in the Countries of Central Asia: The Main Causes and Trends

Central Asia is a unique region of its own economic, political, geographical and cultural orientation. With significant natural resources and energy potential, transit and transport capacity, the region is regarded to be within the scope of interests of Russia, China, and the U.S. In addition, the interests of each of the countries in the region often overlap.

Central Asia is characterized by active processes of formation of institutional structures, the search for cultural and political identity and a place in the system of international relations.<sup>13</sup> Having a number of political, economic, and geographical advantages, the states of the region have a number of problems that threaten stability and sustainable development. These include: the intensification of internal political processes, formation and activation of extremist and terrorist organizations, growth of drug trafficking, the environmental problems, shortage of water resources, conflict proneness, based on the ethnoconfessional factor, as well as the large-scale internal migration. The last problem will be the focus of the study.

### 1.1. Kazakhstan: Analysis of the Current Situation

The migration processes in the Republic of Kazakhstan are characterized by the growth of external labor migration, increased illegal migration, intensive internal migration, the increasing migration of ethnic repatriates. The external migration policy is oriented toward the question of promoting ethnic repatriation and attraction of labor migrants, while the internal migration—toward the solution of problems of population resettlement in the regions in accordance with the needs of the economy, considering their particular demographic situation.

The main reason for the internal migration are the economic factors, resulting from the search for work and more favorable labor conditions. According to statistics, the volume of internal migration of Kazakhstan amounts to approximately 360 thousand people annually.<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that within the framework of internal migration, the outlines of the socioeconomic problems of society are

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<sup>13</sup> See: E. Gabdullin, "Central Asia: Geopolitics, Security, and Development Scenarios," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Volume 12, Issue 1, 2011, pp. 22-35.

<sup>14</sup> See: *The Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Statistics Committee*, available at [[http://www.stat.gov.kz/faces/homePage/homeDinamika.pokazateli?\\_afzLoop=324764655061000#%40%3F\\_afzLoop%3D324764655061000%26\\_adf.ctrl-state%3Dxbexh1k3c\\_37](http://www.stat.gov.kz/faces/homePage/homeDinamika.pokazateli?_afzLoop=324764655061000#%40%3F_afzLoop%3D324764655061000%26_adf.ctrl-state%3Dxbexh1k3c_37)].

more clearly identified. These problems clarify the emergence of various kinds of social risks within society, such as growth of unemployment, loss of labor skills in the labor force, restriction of access to housing and social services, growth of criminalization and social tensions.

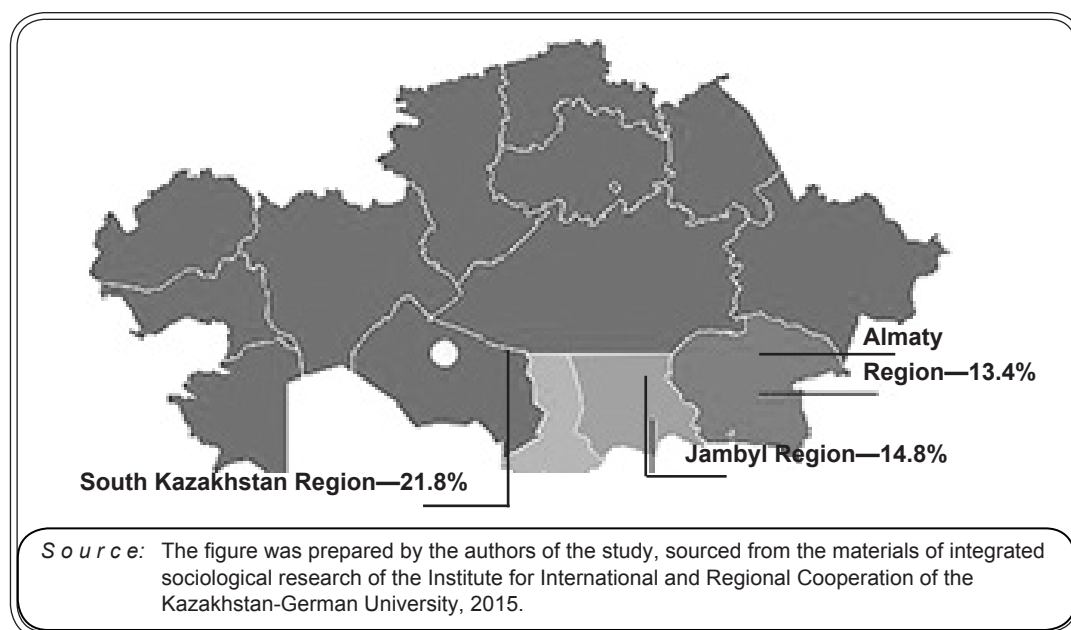
The key trend of internal migration in Kazakhstan is the intensive resettlement of the economically active population of the villages and economically disadvantaged regions in the regions with more favorable economic conditions.<sup>15</sup>

The main centers of attraction of migratory flows are the city of Astana and Almaty, as well as the western region of Kazakhstan (Mangistau and Atyrau regions).<sup>16</sup> The highest outflow of migrants is from the southern regions of the country (Southern Kazakhstan, Jambyl and Almaty regions).

A significant impact on the interregional migration is produced by the level of income of the population. The latest data of average per capita nominal monetary income in the Atyrau and Mangistau regions and in the cities of Astana and Almaty are the highest in the republic. In the regions with the highest outflow of the population (South Kazakhstan and Jambyl regions), the nominal monetary income is the lowest. The top three regions—suppliers of labor migrants, are the southern regions of South Kazakhstan, Jambyl and the nearby Almaty regions. The percentage of this ratio looks as follows (see Fig. 1):

Figure 1

#### Regions Supplying Labor Migrants to the City of Almaty



High level of crime rates growth is characteristic in the regions, where there is a high migration activity of the population (South Kazakhstan, Karaganda regions).

The decision on the migration of the population is also directly impacted by such indicators as the gross regional product, average wages, the subsistence minimum, the level of unemployment, the structure of employment, etc.

<sup>15</sup> See: M.B. Asanbaev, *Analiz vnutrennikh migratsionnykh protsessov v Kazakhstane*, Almaty, 2010.

<sup>16</sup> See: *The Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Statistics Committee.*

Overall, it should be noted that high enough migration movement of people within the country is one of the key factors in the functioning of the national economy.

It is necessary to point out that apart from the problems in host regions, migration produces a negative impact on the donor regions in particular. Because of migration, the countryside becomes increasingly desolate; the base of its agricultural labor resources is undermined.

## **2.2. Tajikistan: Analysis of the Current Situation**

According to the rating of the World Bank for March 2017, Tajikistan has the income level below the average comparing with the other members of this Organization.<sup>17</sup> According to the latest available official data for the year 2016, the level of registered unemployment was 103.6 thousand people.<sup>18</sup>

One of the most acute public problems for the country is the external migration. The causes of this phenomenon are similar in many ways to the prerequisites of internal migration: cessation or termination of activities of enterprises, decline in household income, the impoverishment of population, and search for work.<sup>19</sup> The solution to this problem is one of the central issues in the social policy of the state, as evidenced by the number of documents: the *Laws of the Republic of Tajikistan on Migration* (11.12.1999, No. 882), *The Concept of External Labor Migration of the Republic of Tajikistan*, the *Decrees on the Establishment of a Procedure for Recording Foreign Labor Migration of Tajik Citizens* (6.06.2003, No. 264), *The Introduction of Migration Registration Cards for Citizens of the Republic of Tajikistan* (01.08.2008, No. 378), *Program of External Labor Migration of the Citizens of the Republic of Tajikistan for the Years 2006-2010*.

At the same time, the problem of internal migration is no less acute. Economically active population of the country actively moves within its borders. Particularly high population outflows are in the high mountainous regions, where there is no industry, while farming and agriculture are difficult because of the natural and geographical conditions. Similar to Kazakhstan, the main reasons for changing the region of residence are unemployment, unsatisfactory level of wages, weak social infrastructure, etc.

According to Mavjuda Tajibaeva's definition, factors, which determine internal migration within the country, are as follows:

- (A) destructive processes that give rise to social tension (the economic crisis, lowered standard of living, unemployment);
- (B) the development of market relations;
- (C) private enterprise and commerce, causing capital transfers, and, consequently, the movement of labor.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> See: *World Bank. World Bank Country and Lending Groups*, available at [<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>].

<sup>18</sup> See: *The Agency of Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan*, available at [<http://www.stat.tj/ru/macroeconomic-indicators/>].

<sup>19</sup> See: M.N. Tajibaeva, "Vnutrenniaia migratsia i ee vliianie na sotsialno-ekonomicheskie protsessy Respubliki Tadjikistan," *Vesnik Tadjikskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta prava, biznesa i politiki*, Seria gumanitarnykh nauk, 2012, pp. 175-180.

<sup>20</sup> See: *Ibidem*.



The most attractive for internal migrants is the city of Dushanbe (the main population inflow is directed there), Khujand and Kurgan-Tyube.<sup>21</sup> The massive intra-republic migration is one of the internal threats to the stable economic and social development of the state. The consequence of this phenomenon is the outflow of specialists from the rural areas, disruption in the balance of the labor market, seizure of land within the urban periphery in the absence of the necessary social infrastructure.

In Tajikistan, the internal migration flows can be divided into two types: intra-regional and inter-regional. The greatest volumes of intra-regional migration have been recorded in the Khatlon (82%) and the Sughd (72%) regions.<sup>22</sup> Accordingly, it is possible to speak of the appearance of the recipient and donor regions.

As in Kazakhstan, the predominant trend of migration is from villages to a city. For Tajikistan, rural-urban migration, in principle, is the basic domestic migration trend. The reasons for it are simple: in the cities, rural residents see more opportunities for education and careers, further employment, saving initial capital and conducting private business. The outflow of youth, as the most active and educated part of the population, leads to social, vocational and skill-set decline in the countryside.

Another similar feature between the countries is the fact that migration within countries is focused on those regions that have a high level of industrial and economic development and a more developed structure of the labor market.

### **2.3. Kyrgyzstan: Analysis of the Current Situation**

Like Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic is a country with per capita income below average among the members of the World Bank.<sup>23</sup> The poor economic situation causes stable flows of migrants within the country. The situation was aggravated in 2005, when representatives from the Southern Region came to power in the country, the population of which, under the leadership of Askar Akaev, had fewer opportunities for migration to the more developed North of Kyrgyzstan.

Ethnic conflicts also played a role in the past. Particularly important were the periods in 1991, 2005 and 2010.

In the republic, there is an intensive internal re-allocation of the working-age population. Particularly high outflow of the inhabitants is from the mountain regions. The main causes of the outflow of the population of the republic from a number of regions are unemployment, low level of wages, and poor social infrastructure.

In internal migration of the Kyrgyz Republic, currently, the following trends are revealed:

- (1) migration from the countryside to a city;
- (2) from regional cities to large cities (Bishkek, Osh, Dzhalsalabad);
- (3) from economically underdeveloped, disadvantaged regions to the more developed, prosperous ones.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> See: *The Agency of Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. The Size of the Population of the Republic of Tajikistan as of 1 January 2016*, available at [[http://www.stat.tj/ru/img/7a20337ca019c92e18235196b4e62aa\\_1470198679.pdf](http://www.stat.tj/ru/img/7a20337ca019c92e18235196b4e62aa_1470198679.pdf)].

<sup>22</sup> See: M.N. Tajibaeva, op. cit.

<sup>23</sup> See: *World Bank. World Bank Country and Lending Groups*, available at [<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>].

<sup>24</sup> See: Zh.K. Belekov, "Osobennosti vnutrennei migratsii v Kyrgyzskoi Respublike," *Vestnik KazNU*, 2011.

In Kyrgyzstan, the internal migratory flows are differentiated as inter- and intra-regional, and usually the volume of inter-regional migration prevails. The highest level of inter-regional migration is in the Naryn (82%) and Batken (72%) regions of Kyrgyzstan. Whereas in the Osh and Dzhalsalabad regions, the greatest relative volume of migratory flows is intra-regional (70% and 63%, respectively).<sup>25</sup>

The most economically attractive areas in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan are the Chui Region and the town of Bishkek. Of all the administrative and territorial units in the Kyrgyz Republic, only the Bishkek and Chui regions have a positive migration population growth. All other areas of the republic suffered very considerable human losses.

The bulk of the intra-republic migrants settles in the cities of Bishkek, Osh and Dzhalsalabad.<sup>26</sup> In addition to the capital, there is also the resettlement in such developing cities of the Chui Region as Kant and Tokmak, as well as some of the villages and settlements in Issyk Ata and Moscow regions.<sup>27</sup>

Due to the lack of developed infrastructure and manufacturing enterprises in the regions, as well as imperfections in the reforms of local self-government, there has been a steady trend of migration from rural areas of Kyrgyzstan to Bishkek and its outskirts.<sup>28</sup> As in the case of Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, the outflow of youth from villages causes significant harm to the rural areas in terms of economic social and demographic development. Because of internal migration, the rural population of Kyrgyzstan is declining annually by 3-5 thousand people.

### 3. Social Risks of Internal Migration in the Countries of Central Asia

Internal migration flows have a significant impact on the sociocultural appearance of a particular region, and also affect the sociopolitical situation in a country. In cities, subjected to strong migration processes, the issue of increasing social tension becomes more relevant. This migration movement contributes to the process of urbanization of countries. The process of urbanization is accompanied by spontaneous, unsystemic expansion of cities and their suburbs, exacerbation of environmental, transportation, housing and social problems. Among the social risks of this process are the increased burden on urban infrastructure and violation of human rights.

As has been proven empirically, migration processes have an impact on individual and group security of the host population.<sup>29</sup> At the source are the increased competition in the local labor markets and housing, social and cultural marginalization of migrants, their criminalization. In addition, migration can create hotbeds of social tension in locations of increased concentration of migrant workers, local outbreaks of ethnic conflicts, the spread of xenophobia, provoked by tensions and conflicts.

A common trend is the situation, according to which a part of the migrants cannot find work or are not employed in their specialty. In this regard, the real threat is the loss or irrational use of the qualification potential of migrants. Also in such situations, there is a risk of reducing their motivation for work.

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<sup>25</sup> See: Zh.K. Belekov, op. cit.

<sup>26</sup> See: Ibidem.

<sup>27</sup> See: R. Rakhimov, "Vnutrennaia migratsia v kontekste zemelnykh otnoshenii," available at [[https://auca.kg/uploads/Migration\\_Database/Rahimov\\_rus.pdf](https://auca.kg/uploads/Migration_Database/Rahimov_rus.pdf)].

<sup>28</sup> See: Ibidem.

<sup>29</sup> See: Z.K. Shaukenova, *Sotsialnaia aktivnost molodezhi Kazakhstana v sovremennykh sotsialno-politicheskikh realiiakh*, A Collective monograph, IFPR KN MON RK, Almaty, 2014.

Due to the fact that a number of the migrants cannot legally be employed and get normal housing and social services, there is a number of large settlements (neighborhoods) outside the main part of the cities, in which the inhabitants do not have the required residence registration (*propiska*) and ownership rights in their homes. In addition, this group of citizens is deprived of access to quality public and social services, and what is important, work in the informal sector of the economy.

It should be noted that the internal migrants substantially alter the structure of the labor force in the cities. On the one hand, in centers of attraction, either there is a shortage of jobs or the existing jobs do not match the skilled set of the population structure. Thus, in the labor market of the host region there is an inconsistency between the demand for the labor force and its supply, which in turn leads to the growth of unemployment. A typical example is the fact that in the regions of recipient countries there is a high level of unemployment.

On the other hand, a sufficiently high degree of unemployment of the total population appears in the regions of donor areas. It is clear that the lack of employment opportunities is the main reason why migrants leave their places of residence.

The consequence of unemployment is poverty, high level of crime, illnesses, and increased social tensions in society.

Housing is the factor of high concentration of social risks. It is largely confirmed by the low supply of housing, crisis in the housing fund of a country, the unavailability of mortgages for the majority of the citizens.

In addition, this is due to the insufficient rates of providing new housing, a small share of social housing, and limited budget subsidies to the established categories of citizens. Also, one of the factors affecting the unwarranted overestimation of housing prices is the internal migration of the population. In the situation being what it is, the influx of migrants promotes the demand for housing in the regions of the recipient countries.

Because of the shortage of new residences, migrants are forced to settle in nearby territories, thus creating risks of social tension.

The environmental side of the issue lies in the fact that there is an overpopulation of cities. There is an imbalance and increased pressure on the social infrastructure of cities. An increase in the number of people leads to the use of a large number of natural resources. The other side of the issue is pollution of the atmosphere and biosphere in overcrowded cities.

The spontaneous internal population migration could become a serious threat to sustainable economic and social development of countries; uncontrolled internal migration leads to the occurrence and aggravation of ethnic contradictions.

If one summarizes all the above, the social risks, which are common to the analyzed countries of Central Asia, are the following: imbalance in the labor market; growth of conflict proneness in society; reduced tolerance toward migrants; excessive urbanization, growth of mega-cities; decline of villages; increased crime rate; violation of human rights; environmental degradation; the weakening of territorial and cultural unity of the host communities; the threat to security and quality of life of local communities; civic passivity of migrants, their shadow adaptation and self-realization.

## *Conclusions*

The analysis of internal migration in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan showed active movements of population from less to more developed regions. The three countries have similar problems:

- (1) low wages;
- (2) lack of employment;
- (3) unemployment;
- (4) low level of social security.

For Kyrgyzstan, another factor, affecting internal migration, is the inter-ethnic conflicts. These problems give rise to the following trends:

- mass migration from villages to cities;
- migration from regional to larger cities;
- the preeminence of inter-regional over intra-regional migration;
- migration to capitals, as the most attractive places of residence.

These trends have a negative potential for development. With unfavorable scenarios, migration flows can continue and, in these conditions, donor regions will not be able to achieve a high level of socioeconomic development. In this regard, the social burden for the states of the Central Asian region will increase.

After reviewing the migration situation in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, it should be noted that questions of housing, social adaptation, logistics and employment are of particular importance to migrants.

Migration processes have a considerable impact on urban infrastructure, sanitation, epidemiological and ecological conditions, crime rate and sociocultural environment in a city.

Against the background of such factors as overcrowding and physical workload, reducing the quality of the natural habitat, high unemployment, social problems of migrants are exacerbated. As a result, the question of security becomes more relevant, while the protest potential in these countries is increased.

The analysis of internal migrations showed that of all the migration factors, economic indicators exert the most important impact on internal migration flows. These are: the level of well-being of a population and a situation on a regional labor market. The “pull” migrant factor is “the status of a prosperous region.” Meanwhile, the “push” factor is the unfavorable socioeconomic and ecological situation in a region.

Influencing the internal migration is possible only by addressing the underlying causes, namely:

- “pushing” migrants from economically disadvantaged regions;
- the unregulated labor markets and an active urban growth;
- uncontrolled migration.

**SOUTH CAUCASIAN COUNTRIES:  
SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND  
DEMOGRAPHIC POTENTIAL  
IN THE NEW GEOPOLITICAL CONDITIONS**

**Elena PISMENNAYA**

*D.Sc. (Sociol.),  
Professor at the Department of Sociology,  
Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

**Sergey RYAZANTSEV**

*D.Sc. (Econ.), Corresponding Member of  
the Russian Academy of Sciences, Professor,  
Head of the Department of Demographic and Migration Policy,  
Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University) of  
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation;  
Head of the Center for Social Demography of the Institute of  
Socio-Political Research, Russian Academy of Sciences  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

**Oleg PICHKOV**

*Ph.D. (Econ.), Dean of the School of  
International Economic Relations, Moscow State Institute of  
International Relations (MGIMO University) of  
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

**Artyom LUKYANETS**

*Ph.D. (Econ.), Associate Professor at the Department of  
Demographic and Migration Policy, Moscow State Institute of  
International Relations (MGIMO University) of the Ministry of  
Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; Leading Research Fellow  
at the Center for Social Demography of the Institute of  
Socio-Political Research, Russian Academy of Sciences  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

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**ABSTRACT**

**T**he article considers the specific features of socioeconomic and demographic development in the three South Caucasian countries in the new geopolitical conditions. It identifies the demographic trends in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, shows the specific factors behind these trends, and describes fertility, mortality and migration processes in the three countries. In particular, it shows the specific patterns of emigration from the South Caucasian countries, including to the Russian Federation, as well as the new geographical destinations for migrants from the region. The authors note that the diasporas formed as a result of emigration have contributed to socioeconomic stability in the region. Thanks to material support from the diasporas, their home countries have managed to stabilize

the socioeconomic situation, maintain the income level of a significant part of the population, and avoid mass unemployment and poverty.

As the socioeconomic situation has stabilized, the development of the South Caucasian countries has become more uneven. The best situation is in Azerbaijan, which is relatively rich in fossil fuel, while the situation in Armenia and Georgia is much worse. Demographic processes in the Southern Caucasus also differ from country to country: the most favorable demographic situation is in Azerbaijan, and the least favorable in Georgia. Azerbaijan also has the most balanced age and sex structure of the population. Armenia and Georgia, despite rising birth rates, still have negative population growth due to migration outflows.

**KEYWORDS:** *Southern Caucasus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, socioeconomic development, labor market, employment, unemployment, demographic potential, labor resources.*

*Introduction*

The three South Caucasian countries are unique in historical, political, sociocultural and economic terms. Economic transformations have significantly changed employment patterns, income levels and living standards in these countries and have influenced the sociodemographic situation in the region. The lifting of restrictions on emigration and employment abroad against the background of a sharp reduction in the number of jobs and a decline in production in the South Caucasian countries have induced many specialists and workers to emigrate. Their main destinations are Russia, Turkey, and other countries (the U.S., European states) with established diasporas from the respective countries. Diasporas have been a stabilizing factor for the socioeconomic situation in the region, since the material support provided by diaspora members has made it possible to maintain the income level of a significant part of the population in the home countries and to avoid mass unemployment and poverty. The best situation is in Azerbaijan, which is relatively rich in fuel and energy resources, while the situation in Armenia and Georgia is much worse. The socioeconomic and demographic situation in the region has also been compounded by ethnic conflicts and local wars, which have erupted in the Southern Caucasus with varying degrees of intensity since the early 1990s.

The geo-economic position of the region is primarily determined by its energy resources. This applies, in the first place, to Azerbaijan's oil and gas. The region also has other mineral, natural,



recreational, demographic, and human resources, which can eventually make its economies competitive, possibly even on a global scale.

## Methods and Materials

This study is based on official statistics from the three states on the key indicators of socioeconomic and demographic development for the period from 1991 to 2016. We also used population census data from the three South Caucasian countries and the Russian Federation, as well as statistical data from the Federal Migration Service (FMS) of Russia, which existed until the middle of 2016 and kept a record of the number of permits and patents issued to foreign citizens. Some FMS statistics used in this study were adjusted based on information obtained from expert and public opinion surveys, including surveys of migrant workers living outside of the South Caucasian countries. Another major source of information is the World Bank, which estimates the amount of money transfers flowing into a country from abroad. Most of these funds are remittances from diaspora members and migrants working outside of their home country.

## Results

***Socioeconomic development and demographic potential of Azerbaijan.*** Azerbaijan is the only South Caucasian country that has not only been able to maintain the size of its population after the breakup of the U.S.S.R., but has actually increased it. From 1991 to 2016, the country's population grew at an average annual rate of 1.1%, from 7.22 million in 1991 to 9.85 million in 2017. In 2015, the birth rate was 17.4 per 1,000 population (‰), and the mortality rate was 5.7‰. The population structure in Azerbaijan is characterized by a slight prevalence of females (50.1%) over males (49.9%). Azerbaijan also has a young age structure: 22.5% of the total population are under 14 years of age; 71.3% are aged 15-64 years, and 6.2% are aged 65 and over. Young people aged 14-29 constitute 27% of the total population. In 2015, life expectancy at birth was 75.2 years, including 72.7 years for males and 77.6 years for females.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the demographic structure of the population in Azerbaijan is currently progressive, balanced, and more favorable than those of the other South Caucasian countries.

The demographic structure of the population determines the country's significant labor potential. In 2015, its labor resources totaled 6.3 million people, having increased by 915 thousand over the previous ten years.<sup>2</sup> The economically active population was 4.9 million, having increased by 532 thousand in ten years. In 2016, the number of people employed in the economy of Azerbaijan was 4.7 million, having increased by 610 thousand. The labor force is mainly concentrated in agriculture: in 2015, 36% of all economically active people were employed in that sector. Employment in trade (15%), education (8%), public administration, defense and social security (6%), and industry (5%) is also important for Azerbaijan's economy.

Despite the country's economic successes, the problem of unemployment remains significant, though less acute than in the neighboring countries. In 2015, the number of unemployed persons was 244 thousand, and the unemployment rate was 5% of the economically active population. The un-

<sup>1</sup> See: The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, available at [<http://www.stat.gov.az>].

<sup>2</sup> See: *Labor Market. Statistical Yearbook 2016*, State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, available at [[http://www.stat.gov.az/menu/6/statistical\\_yearbooks/source/labour\\_2016](http://www.stat.gov.az/menu/6/statistical_yearbooks/source/labour_2016)].

employment is due, on the one hand, to the economic consequences of the disintegration of the single economic space of the U.S.S.R., including the rupture of economic ties between enterprises that were once part of a single production complex, the loss of material suppliers and buyers of products. On the other hand, Azerbaijan's largely obsolete technologies prevent its enterprises from producing world-class products and entering new markets. Investments are sector-specific: most of them go into the oil industry. This makes it impossible to diversify the economy and thus to diversify employment opportunities. The crisis in global commodity markets, which caused a drop in world oil prices, led to an insignificant increase in the number of unemployed in 2015 (by 6 thousand persons).

Another factor that reduces tensions in the national labor market of Azerbaijan is labor migration. A significant part of the economically active population (about 2 million persons) work abroad and live there temporarily or permanently.<sup>3</sup> Russia continues to be the main destination country for migrant workers leaving Azerbaijan, although migration flows to countries of the Persian Gulf, other Middle East countries, Europe, and the United States are increasing. According to the 2010 All-Russia Population Census, 600 thousand ethnic Azerbaijanis and 150 thousand citizens of Azerbaijan were permanently resident in Russia, and another 12 thousand Azerbaijani citizens were living in Russia temporarily.<sup>4</sup> But it is difficult to say how far these categories overlap, because the technique used to collect census data has been widely criticized. According to the U.N. Population Division, the total number of Azerbaijani citizens living abroad in 2015 was about 1.2 million.<sup>5</sup> Experts estimate the number of Azerbaijanis in Russia at 0.5 million to 1.2 million.<sup>6</sup> Many Azerbaijanis have been able to acquire Russian citizenship. Under Russian laws, Azerbaijani citizens wishing to enter the Russian labor market require a patent, a special document that is not subject to the quota system. In 2013, according to the FMS of Russia, 50 thousand citizens of the republic obtained patents in Russia; in 2014, the figure nearly doubled.<sup>7</sup> Azerbaijanis live in different regions and cities of Central Russia, Siberia, the Far East, the North, and the Northern Caucasus. The largest Azerbaijani communities have formed in the Moscow Region (from 200 thousand to 800 thousand persons) and in St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Region (up to 200 thousand persons).<sup>8</sup>

In the last few years of the Soviet Union and right after its breakup, the ethnic niche of Azerbaijanis in Russia included trade in fruits and vegetables in the public markets of big cities and public catering.<sup>9</sup> But they have gradually diversified their activities. Many Azerbaijanis who are citizens of Russia have their own businesses in trade, catering, transport, construction, and agriculture. Many qualified specialists work in education, administration, and healthcare. According to the FMS of Russia, migrant workers from Azerbaijan are employed in construction (34%), the service sector (28%), and trade (5%). It should be noted that Azerbaijanis tend to live in clusters in some big cities and regions of Russia. According to World Bank estimates, remittances from the diaspora to the home

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<sup>3</sup> See: *Away from Azerbaijan, Destination Europe: Study of Migration Motives, Routes and Methods*, IOM, Geneva, 2001, 59 pp.

<sup>4</sup> See: All-Russia Population Census of 2010, available in Russian at [[http://www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/perepis2010/croc/Documents/vol8/pub-08.04.pdf](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/Documents/vol8/pub-08.04.pdf)], available at

<sup>5</sup> See: *International Migrants by Country*, U.N. Population Division, 2015 [<http://www.pewglobal.org/interactives/migration-tables/>].

<sup>6</sup> See: *Migration Trends in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: 2001-2002*, Review, IOM, Geneva, 2002, pp. 59-61; A.S. Yunusov, "Trudovaia emigratsia iz Azerbaidzhana: strategii integratsii v rynki truda i riski," in: *Trudovaia migratsia v SNG: sotsialnye i ekonomicheskie efekty*, ed. by Zh.A. Zaiionchkovskaya, Moscow, 2003, pp. 121-132.

<sup>7</sup> See: *Trud i zaniatost v Rossii v 2013 godu*, Rosstat, Moscow, 2014, 550 pp.

<sup>8</sup> See: S.V. Ryazantsev, A.S. Lukyanets, "Transformation of Labor Markets of the Southern Caucasus Countries in New Geopolitical and Economic Conditions," *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*, No. 6 (8S), 2016, pp. 90-95. EID: 2-s2.0-85004073518.

<sup>9</sup> See: M. Lyange, "Delovoie litso 'kavkazskoi natsionalnosti'," *Ogoniok*, No. 2, 1997, pp. 25-29.

country reached a maximum of \$1,846 million in 2014. Later on, however, remittances began to decline because of the economic crisis: in 2016, they totaled 643 million, including \$374 million from Russia.<sup>10</sup> Despite the significant reduction in remittances, the Azerbaijani diaspora takes an active part in the economic and social life of Azerbaijan, supporting families and relatives in the home country. Thanks to migrant workers, Azerbaijan obtains significant resources for the development of the national economy.

***Socioeconomic development and demographic potential of Armenia.*** The population of Armenia rapidly decreased from 2000 to 2015. In ten years, it shrank by 217 thousand people (6.7%) to 3 million.<sup>11</sup> The decline was mainly due to rising mortality and migration outflows. The death rate in Armenia rose from 7.5‰ in 2000 to 9.3‰ in 2015, while the birth rate rose in that period from 10.6‰ to 13.9‰, which amounted to a slight natural population increase. But the country's total population decreased rapidly due to significant migration losses.

In 2015, Armenia's labor resources totaled 2.4 million people, with 64% of them living in cities. Women made up more than half of the labor resources: 56%.<sup>12</sup> The economically active population decreased from 1.5 million (61% of labor resources) in 2010 to 1.3 million (63%) in 2015. The employment rate rose by 1.3% in 2010-2015, while the unemployment rate declined by 0.5%.

The largest share of the population in Armenia is employed in agriculture: about 35% of all employed persons, although the figure is gradually declining (in 2005, it was 46%). Other significant employers include trade (11%), education (9%), public administration and defense (8%), and healthcare (5%). A large informal sector and a high rate of informal employment are a specific feature of the Armenian economy. This sector includes paid domestic workers, employers and self-employed persons who have their own informal enterprises, and other categories. In 2015, about 584 thousand persons worked in the informal sector of the Armenian economy, including 71% in agriculture.

A high rate of unemployment is a serious socioeconomic problem for Armenia, threatening economic growth and public welfare. The situation in the Armenian economy is heavily dependent on the state of the Russian economy. Since the beginning of the latest economic crisis in Russia, unemployment in Armenia has increased. In 2015, the highest unemployment rate was in the 20 to 24 age group (52%). A national peculiarity in Armenia is a roughly equal unemployment rate in different education groups: 18% for people with a tertiary, specialized secondary or general secondary education, and 16% for those with a vocational education.

Massive labor emigration is a specific feature of the socioeconomic situation in Armenia. According to experts, about 1.5 million citizens of Armenia have left the country since 1991. Today, a third of Armenia's permanent population (36%) is abroad, mainly for the purpose of work.<sup>13</sup> According to the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia, push factors driving people to emigrate are unemployment (46% of men and 24% of women), lack of employment in certain occupations (5% of men and 3% of women), the impossibility of ensuring a decent standard of living (19% of men and 13% of women), and family reunification (7% of men and 40% of women). Emigration has significantly enlarged the Armenian diaspora, which currently numbers about 7 million persons, far outnumbering the population of Armenia itself.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See: Data Base of the World Bank, available at [<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/labormarkets/brief/migration-and-remittances>].

<sup>11</sup> See: Data of the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia, available at [<http://www.armstat.am/>].

<sup>12</sup> See: *Statistical Yearbook of Armenia 2015*, National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia, Erevan, 2016, 350 pp.

<sup>13</sup> See: Data of the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia.

<sup>14</sup> See: R. Pannossian, "Courting a Diaspora: Armenia-Diaspora Relations since 1998," in: *International Migration and Sending Countries: Perceptions, Policies and Transnational Relations*, ed. by E. Ostergaard-Nielsen, Palgrave, 2003, 142 pp.

According to the U.N. Population Division, the number of Armenian citizens living outside of their country in 2015 was around 940 thousand.<sup>15</sup> The 2010 All-Russia Population Census estimated the number of ethnic Armenians permanently resident in Russia at 1.2 million, with another 12 thousand citizens of Armenia living in Russia temporarily.<sup>16</sup> But the latter estimate is obviously too low. In 2014, according to the FMS of Russia, Armenian citizens in Russia were issued 31 thousand work permits and 150 thousand patents. Thus, the number of Armenian migrant workers in Russia was at least 180 thousand. Since 2015, Armenian citizens are not required to obtain authorization to work in Russia due to the establishment of a single labor market within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).<sup>17</sup>

Studies show that Armenian communities in Russia formed in Soviet times have become “cores” around which new migrants settle.<sup>18</sup> Armenian communities tend to settle in relatively compact clusters across Russia, primarily in Moscow and the Northern Caucasus (Krasnodar Territory, Rostov Region, and Stavropol Territory).

In 2014, according to the FMS of Russia, more than half (54%) of migrant workers from Armenia were employed in construction, 16% in the service sector, and 10% in transport. Most work patents were issued in Moscow, Moscow Region, regions of the Northern Caucasus, Samara Region, and Yakutia. Studies on the Northern Caucasus note the existence of strong family, ethnic and homeland ties as vectors that determine the destination for migrants from Armenia.<sup>19</sup>

Many Armenians are also employed in public administration, education, healthcare, and other sectors of the Russian economy. The range of Armenian business activities in Russia is fairly wide. In many regions, Armenians have opened numerous stores, cafes, restaurants, shoe repair shops, consumer service centers, commercial companies, etc. Many have become Russian citizens. Armenia’s entry into the EAEU will evidently further increase the outflow of labor from Armenia to Russia.<sup>20</sup> The World Bank estimates total remittance flows from the diaspora to Armenia in 2016 at \$1,382 million, including \$879 million from Russia.<sup>21</sup> The Armenian diaspora has a serious stabilizing effect on the socioeconomic situation in Armenia.

***Socioeconomic development and demographic potential of Georgia.*** In 2017, the population of Georgia was 3.7 million, with another 300 thousand people living in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which Georgia considers to be part of its territory. The most complicated demographic situation in the South Caucasian region is precisely in Georgia. Although the crude birth rate rose from 10.7‰ in 2005 to 15.9‰ in 2015, the crude death rate also increased significantly: from 9.3‰ to 12.2‰. Life expectancy at birth fell from 74.3 to 72.9 years. Natural population growth in 2005-2015 was positive, but overall the population decreased. The main factor behind the population loss in that period was emigration. In 15 years, the country’s population shrank by 722 thousand people (or by 16%).<sup>22</sup> This is the most significant population decline in the South Caucasian region.

<sup>15</sup> See: *International Migrants by Country*, UN Population Division, 2015 [<http://www.pewglobal.org/interactives/migration-tables/>].

<sup>16</sup> See: All-Russia Population Census of 2010, available in Russian at [[http://www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/perepis2010/croc/Documents/vol8/pub-08.04.pdf](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/Documents/vol8/pub-08.04.pdf)].

<sup>17</sup> See: *Trud i zaniatost v Rossii v 2013 godu*.

<sup>18</sup> See: L.A. Arutyunian, “Novye tendentsii migratsii v Armenii,” in: *Migratsionnaia situatsia v stranakh SNG*, Kompleks-Progress, Moscow, 1999, pp. 72-80.

<sup>19</sup> See: S.V. Ryazantsev, “Etnicheskoe predprinimatelstvo kak forma adaptatsii migrantov,” *Obshchestvennye nauki i sovremennost*, No. 5, 2000, pp. 80-90; idem, *Sovremennyi demograficheski i migratsionnyi portret Severnogo Kavkaza*, Ser-visshkola, Stavropol, 2003.

<sup>20</sup> See: S.V. Ryazantsev, A.S. Lukyanets, op. cit.

<sup>21</sup> See: Data Base of the World Bank [<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/labormarkets/brief/migration-and-remittances>].

<sup>22</sup> See: Information from National Statistics Office of Georgia [[http://www.geostat.ge/index.php?action=page&p\\_id=146&lang=eng](http://www.geostat.ge/index.php?action=page&p_id=146&lang=eng)].

In 2005-2015, Georgia's economically active population remained sufficiently stable at around 2 million people. Its labor force was mainly concentrated in agriculture (51%), in the service sector and trade (32%), and in industry (10%).<sup>23</sup> Agriculture is the main sector of the Georgian economy: it accounts for 9% of GDP, although labor productivity in this sector remains low. In recent years, services related to trade and tourism have been developing rapidly. The number of self-employed persons has been growing, while the number of employees has remained virtually the same. Most people working in some sectors of the economy are self-employed workers, and not employees. In 2015, for example, 85% of all employed persons in agriculture worked on their own farms.<sup>24</sup>

Unemployment and the lack of well-paid jobs seriously slow down Georgia's socioeconomic development. In 2015, the unemployment rate slightly declined to 12%, but it varied significantly across the country. For example, in rural areas it was 5% compared to 22% in the cities. The territorial differences are due, among other things, to better registration of unemployed persons in the cities. High youth unemployment is a pressing problem: in 2015, the highest rate was in the 20-24 age group (32%), followed by the 25-29 and 30-34 age groups (21% and 15%, respectively).

According to the U.N. Human Development Report, unemployed persons with a secondary or tertiary education in Georgia make up 74%.<sup>25</sup> This means that most specialists with a high education level do not contribute to the country's economic development, while its labor resources are used extremely inefficiently.

There has been a significant outflow of working-age people from Georgia for the purpose of work. Active emigration of different ethnic groups from the republic began after the breakup of the U.S.S.R. In 2015, the U.N. Population Division estimated the number of Georgian citizens living outside of their country of birth at 840 thousand.<sup>26</sup>

According to the All-Russia Population Census, in 2010 there were 200 thousand ethnic Georgians and 50 thousand citizens of Georgia permanently resident in Russia, and another 1.5 thousand Georgian citizens were living there temporarily. These figures do not reflect the real picture of labor migration from Georgia to Russia. FMS data show that in 2000-2015 the number of migrant workers from Georgia obtaining work permits in Russia varied from 3 thousand to 7 thousand persons. A third of Georgian migrant workers in Russia (33%) are employed in construction, 17% in the service sector (catering, restaurants, cafes, etc.), and 12% in the transport sector. Georgian restaurants are particularly popular in Russian cities.

Such small numbers of Georgian migrant workers in Russia show that many of them have moved into the informal (unregistered) employment sector. This has taken place against the background of strained political relations between the two countries: in 2008, Russia introduced a visa regime for Georgian citizens. Since 2008, the number of Georgian migrant workers in Russia has declined because of the political tensions and the visa regime. However, the amount of remittances to Georgia has not decreased, but has actually risen as many migrant workers have found informal jobs in Russia while many others have headed for the United States, Italy, Greece, Turkey, and other countries. In 2009, according to the World Bank, Georgia received \$1,112 million, and in 2016, \$1,641 million (including \$893 million from Russia).<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See: Information from the International Labour Organization (ILO) [<http://www.ilo.org>].

<sup>24</sup> See: Information from National Statistics Office of Georgia.

<sup>25</sup> See: *Human Development Report 2015*, United Nations, Geneva [[http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015\\_human\\_development\\_report.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report.pdf)].

<sup>26</sup> See: *International Migrants by Country*, UN Population Division, 2015 [<http://www.pewglobal.org/interactives/migration-tables/>].

<sup>27</sup> See: Data Base of the World Bank [<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/labormarkets/brief/migration-and-remittances>].



Migrant remittances have supported many households in Georgia and have made it possible to ensure minimum living standards for a significant percentage of families.

### *Conclusion*

Socioeconomic and demographic indicators vary widely among the South Caucasian countries. The most developed country is Azerbaijan, whose economy is based on oil resources, while Armenia and Georgia are less developed. In geo-economic terms, their development models and vectors point in totally different directions. Azerbaijan is largely oriented toward cooperation with Turkey, the U.S., and countries of the Middle East; Georgia toward Europe and the U.S.; and Armenia toward Russia.

At present, the specificity of national labor markets in the region tends to increase. Despite similar features and common problems (youth unemployment, low labor productivity, labor migration to Russia), the South Caucasian countries differ in many key parameters of their labor markets.

Demographic processes in the South Caucasian countries are also uneven. The most favorable demographic situation is in Azerbaijan, and the least favorable in Georgia. Azerbaijan has the most balanced age and sex structure of the population. Armenia and Georgia continue to lose population despite rising birth rates, which is due to migration outflows.

Russia remains the main destination for migrants, although in recent years there has been a diversification of migrant destinations as more and more migrants have gone to Europe, the United States, the Persian Gulf countries, and other countries of the Middle East. The diasporas formed as a result of migration have had a significant stabilizing effect on the socioeconomic situation in the South Caucasian countries.

Despite the socioeconomic development peculiarities of the South Caucasian countries, one can suggest a number of universal approaches to developing the labor market and promoting employment. This includes active efforts to create new jobs. It is necessary to develop business based on public-private partnerships, which can be a spur to the development of economic sectors into which private entrepreneurs cannot enter or are wary of doing so. The main obstacles to starting a business and doing business in the South Caucasian countries are a lack of financial support at the startup stage, inflation, and low-skilled labor due to migration outflows, as well as bureaucratic barriers erected by the state.

# MIGRANT WORKERS FROM CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES ON THE RUSSIAN LABOR MARKET: LIVING CONDITIONS AND SELF-PRESERVING BEHAVIOR

Alla IVANOVA

*D.Sc. (Econ.), Professor,  
Head of the Public Health Statistics Department of  
the Central Research Institute for Organization and Informatization of  
Health Care, Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

Sergey RYAZANTSEV

*D.Sc. (Econ.), Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences,  
Professor, Head of the Center of Social Demography of the Institute of  
Socio-Political Research of the Russian Academy of Sciences,  
Head of the Department of Demographic and Migration Policy of  
the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University) of  
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation,  
Professor of the People's Friendship University of Russia  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

## ABSTRACT

**W**ork migrants fall into the category of vulnerable groups in the host society, a fact that is stipulated by a wide range of risk factors, on the one side, and obstacles in obtaining medical and social assistance, on the other. Thus, the danger of spreading public health hazards within migrant groups in host societies is growing, which may, according to certain experts, pose a problem to the society as a whole. The goal of this research is to determine the tenability of concerns regarding the substantial threat of spreading public health hazards among Central Asian work migrants in Russia. 498 work migrants, citizens of Central

Asian states, were polled in Moscow. The social and demographic makeup of the respondents largely coincides with that of similar groups examined by other authors, which allows us to consider our results on the health status and self-preserving behavior representative of this population group in major Russian cities. The results attest to the fact that the main health risks, aside from professional ones, lie with the work migrants' living conditions and the nature of their diet, which is characterized by a high intake of low-quality meat products, and a low intake of dairy products, fruits and vegetables. The nature of the diet is directly

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linked to provoking diabetes mellitus and cardiovascular disease, the risk of which is increased by family anamnesis and the lack of information on risk prevention. While the frequency of sexual contacts is relatively high, only under 50% of the respondents use any means of protection. Over one third of the men and over one half of the women with more than one sexual partner practice unprotected sex, which may lead to the

spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Meanwhile, work migrants intend to seek medical aid in case of an illness, particularly if they possess Mandatory Medical Insurance, and, regardless of the motives that prioritize a visit to a medical institution over other methods of "fighting the disease," these results are significant in improving the epidemiological situation in the regions that actively attract work migrants from Central Asia.

**KEYWORDS:** work migrants, health, risk factors, self-preserving behavior, seeking medical aid.

## Introduction

Work migrants are considered one of the vulnerable groups in the host society due to a wide range of risk factors (poverty, poor living conditions and nutrition, heavy non-regulated labor with adverse factors, racial and ethnic discrimination), on the one side, and obstacles to receiving medical and social assistance (language barrier, cultural differences, subjective perception of health and illness, etc.), on the other<sup>1</sup>. The overlap of poor socioeconomic conditions with political, administrative and cultural factors leads to the deterioration of migrants' health indicators and a loss of working capacity. From this perspective, international organizations emphasize the risks of work migration for both countries of origin and host societies. For the former, the risk is linked to an increase in the number of work migrants with "ruined" health, who return to their communities for treatment and rehabilitation. In the host societies, the danger of spreading public health hazards that develop due to

<sup>1</sup> See: I.V. Zhuravleva, L.Iu. Ivanova, "Migranty: sotsialno-ekonomicheskie usloviia zhizni, vliiaushchie na zdorovie, i obrashchaemost v rossiiskie meditsinskie uchrezhdeniia (rezultaty oprosa v Sankt-Peterburge)," *Sotsialnye aspekty zdorovia naseleniia. Elektronnyi nauchnyi zhurnal*, Vol. 43, No. 3, 2015; L.Iu. Ivanova, "Sotsialnye riski dlia zdorovia trudovykh migrantov," *Vestnik Instituta sotsiologii*, No. 1 (6), 2013, pp. 130-145; G.A. Ivakhnenko, "Zdorovie migrantov: sotsiologicheskii analiz," in: *Sotsiologiia meditsiny: nauka i praktika, Sbornik statei po materialam nauchno-prakticheskoi konferentsii s mezhdunarodnym uchastiem*, ed. by A.V. Reshetnikov, Moscow, No. 2, 2012, pp. 267-270; idem, "Zdorovie trudovykh migrantov v Rossii," *Sotsiologiia meditsiny*, No. 2 (23), 2013, pp. 48-51; N.F. Izmerov, N.I. Izmerova, I.V. Bukhtiiarov, M. Khodzhiiev, "Osobennosti adaptatsionnykh reakttsii u zhenshchin-migrantok i riski narusheniia zdorovia pri razlichnoi dlitelnosti prebyvaniia na territorii moskovskogo regiona," *Analiz riska zdoroviu*, No. 2, 2017, pp. 119-127; I. Kuznetsova, L. Mukhariamova, "Trudovye migranty v sisteme meditsinskikh uslug: formalnye i neformalnye strategii," *Zhurnal issledovaniia sotsialnoi politiki*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2014, pp. 7-20; I.B. Kuznetsova, L.M. Mukhariamova, G.G. Vafina, "Zdorovie migrantov kak sotsialnaia problema," *Kazanski meditsinskii zhurnal*, Vol. 94, No. 3, 2013, pp. 367-372; L.M. Mukhariamova, I.B. Kuznetsova, G.G. Vafina, "Bolnoi, patsient, client: pozitsii trudovogo migranta v rossiiskoi sisteme zdravookhraneniia (na primere respublik Tatarstan)," *Vestnik sovremennoi klinicheskoi meditsiny*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2014, pp. 43-49; S.V. Riazantsev, Sh.Iu. Akramov, "Vliianie trudovoi migratsii na zdorovie migrantov v Rossii i ikh suprugov v Tadjikistane," *Vestnik Tadjikskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta prava, biznesa i politiki*, Social Sciences Series, No. 5 (61), 2014, pp. 189-197; V.G. Khrantsov, V.V. Khrantsov, "Zdorovie trudovykh migrantov—zdorovie rossiian," *Meditsinskii aliats*, No. 1, 2015, p. 79; P.S. Iuriev, "Zdorovie trudovykh migrantov, kak faktor, zatrudniaiushchii ikh sotsialnuiu adaptatsiiu v Rossii," in: *Obshchestvo i zdorovie: sovremennoe sostoianie i tendentsii razvitiia, Sbornik materialov Vserossiiskoi nauchno-prakticheskoi konferentsii s mezhdunarodnym uchastiem*, Moscow, 2013, pp. 1485-1497.

lowered immune function, poor nutrition, unsanitary living conditions, cultural shock and social exclusion, emerges.

Russia is one of the world leaders in terms of the scale of migration. A substantial proportion of all work migrants arriving in Russia hail from Central Asian states. Temporary work migration became an essential resource for Russian economy in the 1990s, as labor resource-related problems exacerbated. The number of work migrants in Russia has reached its peak in the 2000s. Currently, the Russian labor market appeals to able-bodied populations from Central Asia, Transcaucasia, certain Asian and Eastern European countries<sup>2</sup>. The official statistics on the number of work migrants in the Russian Federation is based on the number of authorization documents issued by the Federal Migration Service. In 2014, 3.69 million such documents were issued, including 2.387 million patents and 1.303 million work permits. However, the latest financial and economic crisis has once again cut down the number of work authorization documents issued in Russia, and in 2016 their number declined to a total of 1.887 million, including 1.71 million work patents, and 177,000 work permits<sup>3</sup>.

An unfavorable epidemiological situation in most of Central Asian states and considerable health risks that await work migrants in Russia are, according to the experts,<sup>4</sup> what determines the emerging threat of spreading public health hazards not only within the work migrant community, but also within the Russian population.

## Methods and Materials

The goal of this research was to determine the feasibility of concerns related to the significant threat of spreading public health hazards among work migrants from Central Asia in Russia.

In the course of our research 498 work migrants, citizens of Central Asian countries, were polled in Moscow. Two thirds of them (68.6%) were citizens of Uzbekistan, a quarter (25.9%)—of Tajikistan, the remainder was comprised of Kyrgyzstan citizens. Dominant ethnic groups were prevalent in the national makeup of the migrants, comprising from 84% among Kyrgyzstan citizens to 95.3% among Tajikistan citizens. The national makeup of Uzbekistan citizens is the most diverse—besides 87.8% of Uzbeks, there also Tajiks (3.9%), Tatars (4.2%). Koreans (1.8%), Russians (1.5%), along with persons of Kyrgyz, Karakalpaks and other nationalities.

Work migrants are mostly male, with three times more men in the sample than women. Moreover, the men are generally younger—the average age for males is 32.4±0.6 years, for women — 37.9±0.7 years. Among those under 25, there are 13 men per 1 woman, while there are 2 men per 1 woman in the 45-54 age group.

Work migrants from Central Asian countries are fairly educated: two thirds (65% of men and 61.7% of women) have completed secondary education or secondary vocational training, while one quarter (26.9% of men and 29.6% of women) received post-secondary education, including incomplete higher education. Only slightly over 8% of the respondents have not completed secondary edu-

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<sup>2</sup> See: Ryazantsev S. "Russia Needs a New Migration Policy," *Russian Politics and Law*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 2013, pp. 80-88. DOI: 10.2753/RUP1061-1940510305.

<sup>3</sup> See: E. Pismennaya, S. Ryazantsev, V. Bozhenko, "Central Asian Diasporas in the Russian Federation: Migration Channels and their Contribution to the Socioeconomic Development of Sending Communities," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 4, 2016, pp. 87-94; S. Ryazantsev, I. Bogdanov, V. Dobrokhleb, A. Lukyanets, "Migration from Central Asian Countries to Russia and Kazakhstan in the Context of Integration Processes in the Eurasian Economic Union Format," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 18, Issue 1, 2017, pp. 39-49.

<sup>4</sup> See: L.Iu. Ivanova, "Trudovye migranty: infektsionnye zabolevaniia, kontrol za zdoroviem pri v'ezde i meditsinskaia pomoshch v RF," in: *Obshchestvo i zdorovie: sovremennoe sostoianie i tendentsii razvitiia*, pp. 503-515; I.B. Kuznetsova, L.M. Mukhariamova, G.G. Vafina, op. cit.; V.G. Khramtsov, V.V. Khramtsov, op. cit.

cation. The education status depends significantly on the respondent's original place of residence: approximately one half of the respondents from capital cities have a higher degree (56% of men and 47.4% of women), while the numbers are significantly lower for rural population—18.4% and 15.8%, respectively.

The social and demographic makeup of the polled work migrants from Central Asian countries generally coincides with that of similar groups examined by other authors<sup>5</sup>. This allows us to consider the results obtained regarding the health status and self-preserving behavior as representative for this population group in major Russian cities.

## Results

Our research has demonstrated that male work migrants are most frequently engaged in the following labor spheres: construction (26.6%), sales (20.5%), food industry (13.7%), transportation (13.1%), housing and utilities sector (11.7%), services, including remodeling and repairs, hotel and tourist services, security, etc. (6.7%). Among females the distribution is as follows: food industry (29.6%), sales (24.1%), service industry (13.6%), house-making and housing and utilities services (10.5% each). Only in rare cases the migrants are employed in health care, educational, cultural, advertising or financial spheres.

The sector of employment depends to a certain extent on the education received. Men and women with a higher education level are more frequently employed in the food industry and sales, while the less educated migrants work in the housing and utilities sphere and house-making. As for the service industry, it employs a greater number of less-educated men along with better-educated women, which is due to the differences in their specific occupations. Meanwhile, the share of men employed in construction and transportation sectors does not depend on their education level. For females, this correlation is non-existent due to their low level of engagement in these types of labor.

Work conditions, earnings and place of habitat are partly determined by the sector of employment, which, in turn, configures the health predictors.

More than a half of work migrants (53.9%) live in an apartment or a room rented jointly by several people; another quarter of the respondents (23.9%) rent an apartment or a room for themselves or their families. A little less than one tenth of the respondents (8.2%) live in dormitory-type housing. Living on the work site (office, basement, trailer, attic, house to be demolished, garage, etc.) is considered the option that is most detrimental to health, and it was selected by 10.4% of the respondents. Living at the employer's home was the least common (3.6%).

In addition, the place of habitat depends significantly on the nature of employment. For example, two thirds of those engaged in house-making live on their work site, which includes 44.1% of the respondents who live at their employers' homes. The largest percent of workers who rent an apartment for themselves and their families was discovered among those employed in sales (31.0%). The majority of workers employed in the service and food industries live in housing rented jointly by several people (70.4% and 69.4%, respectively). The share of workers living in dormitory housing is

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<sup>5</sup> See: I.V. Zhuravleva, L.Iu. Ivanova, op. cit.; L.Iu. Ivanova, "Sotsialnye riski dlia zdorovia trudovykh migrantov"; G.A. Ivakhnenko, op. cit.; E.Iu. Tiavokina, A.G. Sofronov, A.E. Dobrovolskaia, A.P. Saveliev, "Opyt primeneniia metoda anketirovaniia pri izuchenii riskovannogo povedeniia kak znachimogo faktora rasprostraneniia VICH-infektsii sredi trudovykh migrantov," in: *XVI s'ezd psikiatrov Rossii. Tezisy Vserossiiskoi nauchno-prakticheskoi konferentsii s mezhdunarodnym uchastiem "Psihiatriia na etapakh reform: problemy i perspektivy."* ed. by N.G. Neznakov, St. Petersburg, 2015, p. 338; P.S. Iuriev, op. cit.

greater among those employed in transportation (13.9%), the housing and utilities sector (12.8%) and construction (13.1%).

There were no persons with self-assessed poor health among the respondents. Two thirds of the men deemed their health excellent or good, and one third stated that it was satisfactory. Among females the good and satisfactory ratings were distributed uniformly. A large share of satisfactory evaluations is related to the higher average age of female work migrants in comparison with their male counterparts, as the subjective perception of health becomes more negative with age. Meanwhile, the proportion of good and satisfactory health self-assessments among men and women of the same age did not differ significantly (see Table 1).

Table 1

Health Self-Assessment of Work Migrants from Central Asia, %

Age	Men		Women	
	Excellent or Good Health	Satisfactory Health	Excellent or Good Health	Satisfactory Health
Under 25	84.4	15.6	75.0	25.0
25-39	68.9	31.1	63.9	36.1
40 and older	48.7	51.3	38.2	61.8
Total	65.2	34.8	53.0	47.0

Health self-assessment is practically unrelated to the presence of chronic diseases, the incidence of which is relatively low among work migrants for apparent reasons. Only very few respondents (1.8% of the men and 6.0% of the women) reported being aware of suffering from a chronic health condition. Both men and women reported diabetes mellitus as the prevalent condition, along with tuberculosis and hepatitis. Meanwhile, there are grounds to believe that the incidence of chronic health conditions among work migrants is, in fact, higher, and they may not suspect the presence of serious conditions at early stages. Burdened medical history and wide propagation of risk factors attest to that possibility.

For example, the respondents' closest relatives, including parents, brothers and sisters present with a relatively wide range and high incidence of chronic conditions. Approximately one half of the respondents (44.9% of the men and 45.2% of the women) have pointed out that their parent families present with serious chronic conditions, the most common of which are diabetes mellitus, myocardial infarction, stroke, as well as alcoholism, hepatitis and tuberculosis.

Health-related behavior can also hardly be considered self-preserving, although the situation in regard to the leading risk factors is relatively favorable.

On the average, over one half of the men (54.3%) and 9/10 of the women (89.2%) do not smoke. Among those who do smoke, there are no heavy smokers—most respondents smoke up to 10 cigarettes daily. Furthermore, there's a clear correlation: 63.2% of the men who consider their health excellent or good do not smoke, whereas only 37.6% do not smoke among those who consider their health satisfactory. There's no such correlation for women due to the low number of smoking women.

29.3% of the men and 63.4% of the women do not consume alcohol. Meanwhile, 7.5% of the men consume alcohol daily, although the consumption is predominantly limited to low-alcohol drinks, such as beer and unfortified wine. Just as in regard to smoking, healthier behavior is characteristic of people who consider their health excellent or good—36.2% of them don't consume alcohol

at all, and only 5.6% do so daily. At the same time, only 16.6% of the respondents who assess their health as satisfactory do not consume alcohol, while daily consumption is characteristic of 11%.

The frequency of food intake, as well as its structure, are important factors in health preservation. According to the poll data, the majority of the respondents eat three times a day, while a greater number of meals per day is characteristic of both respondents with excessive body weight, and those with a body mass deficit. The obtained results contradict the conventional patterns, and are probably explained in the former case (obesity) by excessive consumption of high-calorie food, and in the latter case (body mass deficit)—by a disorder of the digestive system, wherein significant intervals between meals provoke pain symptoms (see Table 2).

Table 2

**Frequency of Food Intake among Central Asian Work Migrants,  
Relative to Body Mass, %**

	Typical Number of Meals Per Day				
	One	Two	Three	Over Three	Total
Deficit of body mass	—	18.2	54.5	27.3	100.0
Excessive body mass	0.5	23.0	59.0	17.6	100.0
Normal body mass	0.5	13.5	67.6	18.4	100.0
Obesity	—	13.8	48.3	37.9	100.0
Total	0.5	17.0	63.3	19.3	100.0

Meat products take up a significant place in the structure of nutrition: over one half of the respondents (54.8%) reported eating meat daily. In addition, one third of the respondents (31.7%) reported consuming meat only several times per month, and 5% claimed that they do not eat meat products at all. The frequency of meat product consumption is linked closely to body mass: almost 70% of obese respondents eat meat daily, and only one third of those with a body mass deficit report daily meat consumption. Furthermore, 8.3% of the respondents with body mass deficit do not eat meat at all, while this type of eating behavior is not encountered among the obese respondents (see Table 3).

Table 3

**Frequency of Meat Product Consumption by Central Asian Work Migrants,  
Relative to Body Mass, %**

	Daily	Several Times Per Day	Several Times Per Month	Do Not Consume	Total
Body mass deficit	33.3	20.8	37.5	8.3	100.0
Excessive body mass	58.0	8.5	29.5	4.0	100.0
Normal body mass	53.1	7.6	33.5	5.7	100.0
Obesity	69.0	10.3	20.7	—	100.0
Total	54.8	8.5	31.7	5.0	100.0

Consumption of fruits and vegetables is a significant indicator of healthy nutrition. At first it seems that the situation is favorable in that respect: almost two thirds (61.6%) of the respondents reported eating fruits and vegetables daily, however, a quarter of the respondents (26.1%) stated that they only consume fruits and vegetables several times a month. The correlation of fruit and vegetable consumption with body mass corresponds to familiar patterns—minimal frequency of consumption is characteristic for respondents with obesity (48.3%—daily and 41.4%—several times a month), and maximum frequency—for respondents with normal body mass (66.2%—daily, 22.6%—several times a month) (see Table 4).

Table 4

**Frequency of Fruit and Vegetable Consumption by Central Asian Work Migrants, Relative to Body Mass, %**

	Daily	Several Times Per Day	Several Times Per Month	Do Not Consume	Total
<b>Body mass deficit</b>	58.3	4.2	37.5	—	100.0
<b>Excessive body mass</b>	60.7	9.4	21.4	8.5	100.0
<b>Normal body mass</b>	59.1	8.4	29.4	3.0	100.0
<b>Obesity</b>	48.3	3.4	31.0	17.2	100.0
<b>Total</b>	59.2	8.4	27.0	5.4	100.0

Thus, as we sum up the analysis of health risk factors, it should be noted that the main risks, aside from professional risks, lie with the living conditions and the nature of the diet. The latter is directly related to the provocation of diabetes mellitus and cardiovascular diseases, the risk of which is increased with regard to work migrants' family anamnesis.

Judging by the research results<sup>6</sup>, the practice of unprotected sex, which leads to the spread of infections, is an important risk factor in the work migrants' health.

Based on the poll results, occasional irregular sexual relations are characteristic of most respondents (64.9% of men and 58.9% of the women), while another quarter of the men (26.7%) and approximately a third of the women (31.1%) claimed having sexual contacts several times a week. Among women the maximum frequency of sexual contacts is typical of those under 25 (57.1%—several times a week, 28.6%—daily), and among men—of those between 25 and 39 years of age (27.8%—several times a week, 12.5%—daily). In all age groups the frequency of sexual contacts is greater among women, although for men and women over 40 these indicators converge (see Table 5).

Despite the relatively high frequency of sexual relations, the respondents use means of protection in less than one half of the cases—42.0% of the men, and 46.0% of the women. Approximately one fifth of the men and a quarter of the women never practice protected sex (18.9% and 26.0%, respectively). The means of protection were least frequently used in daily sexual relations, and most frequently—in occasional and irregular contacts (see Table 6).

<sup>6</sup> See: L.Iu. Ivanova, "Trudovye migranty: infektsionnye zaboлевaniia, kontrol za zdoroviem pri v'ezde i meditsinskaia pomoshch v RF," pp. 503-515; G.A. Ivakhnenko, op. cit.; E.Iu. Tiavokina, A.G. Sofronov, A.E. Dobrovolskaia, A.P. Saveliev, op. cit.; V.G. Khramtsov, V.V. Khramtsov, op. cit.

Table 5

## Frequency of Sexual Contacts among Polled Central Asian Work Migrants, %

Age	Frequency of Sexual Contacts			
	Daily	Several Times Per Week	Irregular, Occasional	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Under 25	3.0	14.9	82.1	100.0
25-39	12.5	27.8	59.7	100.0
40 and older	3.4	29.9	66.7	100.0
	8.4	26.7	64.9	100.0
<b>Women</b>				
Under 25	28.6	57.1	14.3	100.0
25-39	12.5	30.0	57.5	100.0
40 and older	4.7	29.7	65.6	100.0
	9.9	31.1	58.9	100.0

Table 6

## Using Means of Protection in Sexual Contacts by Central Asian Work Migrants, Relative to Frequency of Contacts, %

Frequency of Sexual Contacts	Using Means of Protection				Total
	Yes, Always	Use Frequently, But Not Always	Use Sometimes, But Not Frequently	Never Use	
<b>Men</b>					
Daily	31.7	17.1	12.2	39.0	100.0
Several times per week	38.0	21.7	23.3	17.1	100.0
Irregular, occasional	45.7	19.6	19.2	15.5	100.0
Total	42.0	19.7	19.5	18.9	100.0
<b>Women</b>					
Daily	20.0	6.7	6.7	66.7	100.0
Several times per week	34.8	21.7	17.4	26.1	100.0
Irregular, occasional	56.2	7.9	16.9	19.1	100.0
Total	46.0	12.0	16.0	26.0	100.0



It was expected that daily or periodic (several times per week) sexual contacts imply a regular partner, which would lower the risk of sexually transmitted diseases. However, as the poll had demonstrated, the share of men and women who always use protection is greatest among those with a single partner—47.9% among men and 47.2% among women, as opposed to 37.5% and 33.3%, respectively, among those with several partners. Meanwhile, over a third of the men and over a half of the women with several sexual partners do not use any means of protection (more often than not or never).

If the respondents' answers regarding their sexual behavior are regarded as authentic, then the responses related to sexually transmitted diseases in the preceding six months should be recognized as misleading. For example, only 2.2% of the men reported contracting sexually transmitted diseases in the preceding six months, with a uniform distribution among those who have claimed using means of protection and those who have neglected protected sex. According to the women's responses, there weren't any cases of sexually transmitted diseases among them in the preceding six months. Such results can probably be attributed to an attempt to conceal the presence of a disease, as well as to the existing symptoms being misjudged as irrelevant to a disease.

### *Conclusion*

The socio-demographic makeup of the polled work migrants from Central Asian states generally corresponds to that of the groups examined by other authors, which allows us to assess the obtained results related to the health status and self-preserving behavior as representative for this population group in major Russian cities. Work migrants from Central Asia are represented by persons of working age: mostly young men and middle-age women, predominantly urban residents (from large and mid-size towns), fairly educated (predominantly with secondary education or secondary vocational training), capable of understanding and speaking the Russian language in social interactions.

The sector of employment partially determines the work conditions, earnings and place of residence, which, in turn, form the predictors of the work migrants' health. The most frequent spheres of work for men are construction, sales, food industry, transportation, housing and utilities sector. The women mostly work in food industry, sales, service industry, house-making and housing and utilities sector. Over one half of work migrants live in an apartment or a room rented jointly by several people. Living at the workplace (office, basement, trailer, attic, house to be demolished, garage, etc.) is the most detrimental to health, and was the option indicated by one tenth of the respondents.

There were no persons with self-assessed bad health among the respondents. That said, there are grounds to believe that chronic conditions are more frequent among work migrants than it is reported, and they may not be aware of the early stages of their chronic diseases. Burdened anamnesis (chronic conditions in the parental family) and widespread distribution of risk factors may attest to this fact.

Aside from professional risks, the main risks lie with the living conditions and the nature of work migrants' diet, which is characterized by high consumption of low-quality meat products, and low consumption of dairy products, fruits and vegetables. The nature of the diet is linked directly to provoking diabetes mellitus and cardiovascular diseases, the risk of which is increased in light of the family anamnesis.

Respondents with a high risk of chronic pathology lack information on risk management, since the majority of them does not possess the data on their blood pressure, cholesterol level or even body mass index. With due regard for the categories who have not indicated the time or reason for the last medical treatment sought, as well as those who have sought such treatment over a year prior to enter-

ing Russia, it can be stated that over one third of work migrants have arrived without up-to-date information regarding their health status.

While reported sexual contacts are relatively frequent, the respondents use means of protection in less than one half of the cases. Over one third of the men and over one half of the women with several sexual partners practice unprotected sex. If the respondents' answers are to be considered authentic, then it should be recognized that the responses related to sexually transmitted diseases in the preceding six months (2.2% of the men, and none of the women) are not true to reality. Such results can probably be attributed to an attempt to conceal the presence of a disease, as well as to the existing symptoms being erroneously assessed as irrelevant to a disease.

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## RELIGION IN SOCIETY

**STATE AND RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS  
IN KAZAKHSTAN:  
LEGAL REGULATION AND  
POLITICAL CONTEXT****Roman PODOPRIGORA***D.Sc. (Law), Professor at the Caspian University  
(Almaty, Kazakhstan)***Nargis KASSENOVA***D.Sc. (Political Science), Associate Professor at KIMEP University  
(Almaty, Kazakhstan)***ABSTRACT**

**T**he article discusses the main features of social, political and legal status of religious associations in contemporary Kazakhstan. The data of sociological studies and the analysis of state policy and legislation allow drawing the conclusion that the ongoing religious revival and an increase in the number of religious associations in the post-Soviet period have not led to a significant growth in religiosity of the Kazakhstani society and dramatic change in the role of religion and religious associations in the political and public life. Nevertheless, after a

certain period of liberalization (1991-2004), the state resumed tough control of the religious sphere and re-installed constraints on public activity of religious structures. This change was triggered, among other things, by processes of politicization of religion, mainly associated with Islamic associations or movements that are unrecognized or banned in Kazakhstan. Despite the principle of separation of religion from the state, stipulated in the legislation, the state develops its own policy in the religious sphere aimed at the consolidation of secularity of the Ka-

*zakhstani society. However, such consolidation—in the way it takes place in Kazakhstan—is accompanied by exerting pressure on believers and religious associations, the majority of which distance themselves from any political activity. The state also creates*

*unequal opportunities for religious associations, cultivating the privileged status of the Spiritual Board of the Muslims of Kazakhstan and the Russian Orthodox Church in Kazakhstan to gain more legitimation of the system both in its domestic and foreign policy.*

**KEYWORDS:** *religious associations, Kazakhstan, religious policy, legislation on religious associations.*

## *Introduction*

In 2017, Kazakhstan, along with other states of the post-Soviet space, is summing up the results of its 25 years of existence as an independent state. Many phenomena and institutions of social life have undergone a series of changes both in terms of their status and meaning in society, and the relevant state policy.

Religion and religious institutions give a vivid example of such changes. If relatively recently, on the historical scale, religion was considered as a temporary phenomenon that did not play any role in the public life, today nobody would deny the importance of religious factors in the political, social and cultural spheres. Believers and religious associations stopped being pariahs; they are introduced into the public and legal spaces. The head of the state regularly meets with leaders of the largest world religions and participates in religious holiday celebrations, two of which are official holidays.<sup>1</sup> Since 2003, Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, has been hosting every three years a Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions enjoying the patronage of President Nazarbayev.

However, despite such an incorporation of religion in the public life of the country, both the state and society retain a cautious attitude toward religion. The heritage of the Soviet atheist past and perception of religion as “opium of the people” and element of the archaic past are well alive in the Kazakhstani society. The majority of the society has positively accepted religious revival, but it is afraid of growing religious pluralism that is growing due to the country’s openness to various external influences, including the entry of foreign missionaries and religious associations. It is believed that this process leads to the dissolution of national identity. As for the state, it sees in religious associations and ideologies, especially the so-called “non-traditional” ones, a challenge and threat to the political security of the country. This threat has become visible since 2011 when Kazakhstan experienced extremist and terrorist acts carried out by radical Islamists.<sup>2</sup>

The cautious attitude of the state and society toward religion and religious processes has created a difficult environment for the existence and development of religious associations in Kazakhstan. Since the conditions for their activities are first of all determined by the state, this article mainly focuses on the state policy toward religious associations and the legal regulation as its main instrument. First, we consider the situation with religiosity of the population and the dynamics of both the number of religious associations and the proportionate representation of different religions and movements. Further, we describe the evolution of legal regulation of religious activities in the context of

<sup>1</sup> The first day of Kurban-ait and Christian Orthodox Christmas.

<sup>2</sup> See: “Terakty v Kazakhstane. Khronika pyati let,” *The Open Asia*, 6 July, 2016, available at [<http://theopenasia.net/articles/detail/terakty-v-kazakhstane-khronika-pyati-let/>], 14 July, 2017.

various factors that influenced the state policy. In the concluding part we analyze the current model of relations between the state and religious associations.

## Religiosity of the Population and Religious Associations

In the course of the last national census of 2009, 70.2% of Kazakhstani respondents indicated themselves as Muslims, 26.2% as Christians, 0.1% as Buddhists, 0.2% as other, and 2.8% as atheists.<sup>3</sup> These numbers, at first glance, give evidence of the ongoing processes of religious revival in Kazakhstan that accompany the consolidation of ethnic identity in the post-Soviet period. Religious identity has become a component of ethnic self-identification. To be Kazakh or Russian almost automatically means to consider oneself Muslim or Orthodox. Kazakhs and Russians constitute two biggest ethnic groups in Kazakhstan—63.1% и 23.7% according to the census.<sup>4</sup>

However, sociological studies show the rather shallow level of this revival. At present, it has not resulted in a drastic change in the level of religiosity of the Kazakhstani society and has not created a serious challenge to the secular way of life of the majority of the population. Kazakhstani visit cult buildings, follow religious rites and participate in religious events more frequently than before. At the same time, they often do not join concrete religious associations, celebrate all kinds of religious holidays, and not only the holidays of their own religion, and do not follow religious prescriptions in their daily lives. According to one of the latest national studies of the ethnic-religious identification of the youth in the regions of Kazakhstan, 76% of respondents consider themselves believers. However, less than half of respondent believers consider that they do have religious knowledge. More than one third of them have never read Quran, Bible or other primary religious texts. 71% once, rarely or never attended a mosque, a church or any other religious building. The majority of respondent believers feel themselves relatively free from the main religious prescriptions and rites, carrying out only some of them. Every fifth of them ignores religious canons and prescriptions. Only every fifth respondent consistently follows religious prescriptions and rituals. Seventy two percent are not members of religious associations.<sup>5</sup>

In another study of the level of religiosity of the adult population, 86.4% said that they believe in God. However, only 15.4% regularly visit religious buildings; 19.1% pray regularly; 35.8% try to live according to the commandments; 10.1% regularly read religious literature.<sup>6</sup>

Estimates of the real religiosity of the population of Kazakhstan vary from 15-20% to 40-50%.<sup>7</sup> Experts note the overall non-religious consciousness of the predominant part of the population, indif-

<sup>3</sup> See: *Perepis naseleniia Respubliki Kazakhstan 2009 goda. Kratkiye itogi. Statisticheskii sbornik*, ed. by A. Smailov, Astana, 2010, pp. 10, 101.

<sup>4</sup> See: *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> See: B. Bekturganova, M. Nurgaliyeva, "Etnoreligioznaia identifikatsiia regionalnoi molodezhi," Association of Sociologists and Political Scientists, 23 April-6 May, 2016, available at [[http://ru.soros.kz/uploads/user\\_68/2016\\_14\\_12\\_\\_02\\_44\\_55\\_\\_981.pdf](http://ru.soros.kz/uploads/user_68/2016_14_12__02_44_55__981.pdf)], 8 May, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> See: *Religiia v sovremennom Kazakhstane—otsenki naseleniia*, Institute of World Economy and Policy Under the Foundation of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty, 2013, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> See: Z. Shaukenova, E. Burova, D. Sikhimbayeva, "Phenomen religioznoi konversii: metodologiya issledovaniia," *Al-Farabi*, Journal of Social and Humanities Studies, No. 3, 2015, p. 11; "Kak chuvstvuesh sebya, strana?," *Mezhdunarodnaia gazeta*, No. 11-12, December 2014-January 2015, available at [<http://gazetavesmir.com/kak-sebya-chuvstvuesh-strana/>], 10 May, 2017; E. Burova, A. Kosichenko, *Aktualnye problemy razvitiia religioznoi situatsii v Respublike Kazakhstan*, ed. by Z. Shaukenova, Institute of Philosophy, Political Science and Religious Studies of the Committee of Sciences of the Ministry of Education and Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty, 2013, p. 56.

ferent to religion as faith, meaning and way of life, and the remaining rather significant number of citizens with atheist dispositions.<sup>8</sup>

It is worth mentioning that the surveys carried out in the mid-1990s showed the proportion of active believers at 26.3%.<sup>9</sup> In the 1980s, the number of believers and those sympathizing to religion varied from 20% to 70% depending on the region.<sup>10</sup> The south and west of the republic were considered to be more religious. Thus, the figures show that the number of people identifying themselves as believers has grown, but the number of people actively participating in the activities of religious organizations and following religious prescriptions in their lives has not changed much since the mid-1990s.

The low level of religiosity is one of the reasons behind the active missionary activities by foreign subjects. Kazakhstan has been viewed as an open field with big possibilities for conversion. While Muslim missionaries do not pay much attention to the Slavic population, Christian missionaries often consider Kazakhs and representatives of other traditionally Muslim ethnic groups as their primary target.<sup>11</sup> Having this rather stable situation with the religiosity of the population, the dynamic of the religious associations in the country at first seems paradoxical. In 1989, there were 671 religious organizations. Protestant organizations stood out: out of 671 registered, 171 were Lutheran, 168—Evangelical Christian-Baptist, only 62—Orthodox and 46—Islamic.<sup>12</sup> The strong position of Protestantism in Kazakhstan during Soviet times can be explained by the presence of many ethnic groups, first of all, Germans for whom religion was an element of maintaining their culture and identity.<sup>13</sup> Out of all religious communities in 1990 more than 70% were fully or partially composed of ethnic Germans.<sup>14</sup>

The largest number of registered religious organizations in the post-Soviet period—4,551—was fixed in 2011 (as of 1 January).<sup>15</sup> Such a rapid growth in the number of religious associations against the slow positive dynamic of the number of believers can be explained by different reasons.

- The first factor was the adoption of the liberal Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Freedom of Religion and Religious Associations in 1992. According to this law the registration of a community required 10 members, while in Soviet times 20 members were required. Registration procedures became simpler.
- Secondly, multiple structures that could not have received registration during Soviet times, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, were legalized.

There appeared representatives of religious groups previously absent in Kazakhstan: Charismatic, Neo-Pentecostal, Neo-Apostolic Churches, Scientology Church, Unification Church and oth-

<sup>8</sup> See: Z. Shaukenova, E. Burova, D. Sikhimbayeva, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> See: "Otnosheniye kazakhstantsev k religii. V zerkale oprosa," *Informatsionno-analiticheskiy bulletin Assotsiatsii sotsiologov i politologov Kazakhstana*, Almaty, 1998, p. 11. However, there were other assessments as well: 39.7% of respondents providing positive answer to the question "Are you a believer?" and 85.3% of respondents not participating in the activities of religious organizations (see: K. Kusherbaev, E. Nazarbayev, N. Sadykov, *Uroven religioznosti i konfessionalnye orientatsii naseleniia Respubliki Kazakhstan*, Institute of Development of Kazakhstan, Almaty, 1996, pp. 7, 13).

<sup>10</sup> See: L. Kolesnikov, A. Artemyev, "Sovremennaiia religioznaia situatsiia v Respublike Kazakhstan," in: *Kazakhstan: realii i perspektivy nezavisimogo razvitiia*, ed. by E. Kozhokina, Russian Institute for Strategic Studies, Moscow, 1995, p. 295.

<sup>11</sup> See: S. Peyrouse, "Christian Proselytism in Kazakhstan," *CACI Analyst*, 25 January, 2006, available at [<https://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/10590-analytical-articles-caci-analyst-2006-1-25-art-10590.html>], 14 June, 2017.

<sup>12</sup> See: V. Ivanov, Y. Trofimov, *Religii v Kazakhstane*, Higher School of Law "Ödilet", Almaty, 1999, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> See: R. Podoprigora, *Gosudarstvo i religioznye organizatsii: administrativno-pravovye voprosy*, Arkaim, Almaty, 2002, p. 242.

<sup>14</sup> See: A. Artemyev, *Ateizm, religiia, lichnost*, Kazakhstan, Alma-Ata, 1990, p. 50.

<sup>15</sup> See: K. Lama Sharif, "Religioznaia gramotnost—zalog bezopasnosti obshchestva," *Kazakhstanskaya pravda*, 16 November, 2012.



ers. As a result of the adoption of the 2011 Law on Religious Activities and Religious Associations that contained a requirement of re-registration, the number of religious associations decreased to 3,088 (as of 25 October, 2012, the end of the term of re-registration).<sup>16</sup> Thus, around one third of religious associations could not pass the re-registration. The main hindrance was the increased number of members required for the establishment of a local religious association—from 10 to 50. There was obvious reluctance of the authorities (despite the fulfillment of the registration requirements) to re-register the Akhmadi community and organizations of the Scientology Church. The Spiritual Board of the Muslims of Kazakhstan is actively against the registration of the Akhmadi community, and the state does not consider Scientology as a religion. As of 1 January 2017, there are 3,658 religious associations registered in Kazakhstan, the most numerous group being Islamic—2,250, Protestant—667 (Pentecostals, Baptist Churches, Presbyterian Churches, Seventh Day Adventists and Lutheran Churches), Christian Orthodox—325; Roman-Catholic—85.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, since the end of the 1980s, the composition of the religious organizational structures in Kazakhstan has changed considerably. At present, Islamic religious associations dominate the field. All Christian religious associations add up to only half of the Islamic ones. It is important to keep in mind the existence of around 2,000 unregistered religious associations.<sup>18</sup>

The above-mentioned figures show that religious associations today occupy a rather significant niche in the social structure of the Kazakhstani society. The comparison with other non-governmental organizations is revealing. According to the official statistics, there are 18,000 registered non-governmental organizations in the country now, however, only 8,000 of them are active.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, religious associations that in the overwhelming majority are functional, in terms of their number are only half of the total number of all active non-governmental organizations.

In this regard, the situation in Kazakhstan, at first glance, does not differ from the situation in other countries, where religious associations constitute a considerable part of the non-governmental sector and represent an important form of self-organization by citizens. In political science, there is a body of research on linkages between membership in religious association and participation in public life, political life and democratization.

Thus, one of the biggest and most authoritative international studies carried out by Pippa Norris and Robert Inglehart using the data of two waves of World Value Survey in the early 1990s and in 1999-2001, makes the following conclusions: regular church-attendance is strongly associated with membership in associations concerned with the traditional philanthropic functions of religious institutions, including those for social welfare such as for the elderly or handicapped, educational and cultural groups, local community action groups on issues such as poverty, housing and racial equality, women's groups, and youth work. The relationship between church attendance and membership in religious organizations is strongest for Protestants and Hindus, weaker for Muslims (possibly due to the limited number of cases from Muslim states), and becomes negative for the Orthodox Christians.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>17</sup> See: *Kontsepsiia gosudarstvennoi politiki v religioznoi sfere Respubliki Kazakhstan na 2017-2020 gody*, Adopted by Decree of the President of RK on 20 June, 2017, available at [[www.din.gov.kz/details/ndownload.php?fn=737&lang=rus](http://www.din.gov.kz/details/ndownload.php?fn=737&lang=rus)], 14 July, 2017.

<sup>18</sup> 1,463 religious associations did not pass re-registration in accordance with the requirements of the Law on Religious Activities and Religious Associations adopted in 2011. Most of them continue to exist in different forms. As of 1 January, 2012, there were 579 small-size religious groups (without the right of a legal entity), which also did not disappear after the small-size religious group institute was liquidated (see: "K. Lama Sharif: Malochislennye religioznye gruppy ozhidaiut perezheniia," *Zakon.kz*, 1 March, 2012, available at [<https://www.zakon.kz/4476912-kajjrat-lama-sharif-malochislennye.htm>], 14 July, 2017). The existence of such small unregistered groups is proven by their regular disclosure and corresponding administrative punishment (see: "Kazakhstan: Pensioners Fined as Parliament Awaits New Law," *Forum 18 News Service*, 31 August, 2016, available at [[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2212](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2212)], 14 July, 2017).

<sup>19</sup> See: S. Sadyrova, "Nadezhnyi partner gosudarstva," *Yuridicheskaya Gazeta*, 5 October, 2016.



The study also confirms the positive correlation between the level of political development, that is, the state of political rights and civic liberties, and associational membership.<sup>20</sup>

We can assume that members of Kazakhstani religious associations also possess a considerable potential for participating in the public life and addressing societal problems. However, it is difficult to realize it due to serious constraints on their implementation of social projects imposed by the legislation. For example, religious associations have practically no access to public healthcare and education organizations, state institutions that are in charge of social protection, penitentiary institutions and Armed Forces. Besides, the existing taxation policy does not allow receiving and spending significant resources on socially useful projects.

Thus, the state limits the sphere of activity of religious associations to carrying out exclusively religious activities (rituals, services, other religious events). The only exception is charity but on the condition that it will not involve using citizens' material needs for their engagement in religious activities.<sup>21</sup>

## Evolution of the Legal Regulation of Religious Associations

The current model of relations between the state and religious associations did not emerge at once. The analysis of the legal regulation of religious associations in the post-Soviet period allows defining two stages.

- The first stage lasted from 1992 till 2004. During this period, Kazakhstan, as many other former Soviet republics, adopted legislation addressing the issues of freedom of religion, religious activities and religious associations.<sup>22</sup> Religious associations were acknowledged as legal entities (as non-commercial organizations) with all relevant consequences: possibility of participation in legal relations, ownership, use and disposal of property, defense of their rights and interests in court. Their ownership status changed considerably. Religious associations acquired their own property, received the right to conclude labor agreements and other contracts, and to enter into contact in one's own name with state authorities. Religious associations independently or in cooperation with the state actively engaged in socially useful activities. There was no state organ on religious affairs, and the administrative impact on religious associations was not excessive. For example, during this period, there were no requirements of compulsory registration of religious associations and missionaries, and also there were no religious examination and rigid conditions with regard to places of conduct of religious services and distribution of religious literature.
- The second stage started in 2005 and has lasted since then. It is characterized by stronger administrative pressure on religious associations and return of control and supervisory functions. The institute of compulsory registration of religious associations was revived, and a special state body dealing with religious affairs (today it is the Committee on Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Civil Society) was created. There

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<sup>20</sup> See: P. Norris, R. Inglehart, "Religious Organizations and Social Capital," *The International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law*, Vol. 7, Issue 1, September 2004.

<sup>21</sup> Art. 10, Item 2 of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 11 October, 2011 On Religious Activities and Religious Associations.

<sup>22</sup> During Soviet times the legal status of religious associations was regulated by acts of less juridical force than law.

appeared an institute of religious examination and compulsory registration of missionaries. The Law on Religious Activities and Religious Associations adopted in 2011 established rigid registration requirements for religious associations, added limitations on places for religious activities and distribution of religious literature.

The comparison between the current post-Soviet legal status of religious associations with the Soviet one will not be in favor of the latter. The legal capacity that religious associations have today seem mundane, but only 30 years ago, for example, all property used by religious associations belonged to the state, labor contracts with workers of religious associations, when it was allowed, were registered in trade unions, any presence in court was out of the question, since these associations did not possess legal standing.

Therefore, a fundamentally new level of legal recognition provided religious associations with multiple legal capacities that they did not have before. At the same time, the style of legal regulation of religious associations has not changed much since Soviet times. This style is characterized by rigid administration and domination of state control and supervisory functions. Thus, new legal capacities exist only for registered religious associations that received the status of legal entity. Unregistered religious associations, and it does not make sense to deny their existence in society, are outside of the legal space. Their activities are not allowed and punished in accordance with the Administrative Offences Code of 2014.

Compulsory state registration of religious associations and criminalization of the activities of non-registered structures is one of the most problematic of legal institutions. All arguments that international legal acts signed by Kazakhstan (such as the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights of 1966) do not stipulate collective confession with a state permission, proved to be weaker than arguments about the necessity of state registration as an instrument of control over the activities of religious associations. During post-Soviet times there were periods when religious associations could operate either without state registration (1991-2005), or in the status of small-size religious group, not having the status of a legal entity (2005-2012), which caused no serious problems with unregistered associations.

However, even if a religious association wants to register (and this does not apply to all religious associations), it is not easy to do so. Although formally the registration is supposed to confirm the new ownership status of the community of believers, in practice, in the process of registration the state assesses the utility of the religious association, its loyalty to the existing social and legal order, and clarifies its religious attitudes. That is, issues of legality are combined with issues of expediency. Out of all non-commercial organizations religious associations, along with political parties, face the toughest registration requirements. For example, if to establish any other non-commercial organization, it is necessary to have from 1 to 10 founders, a religious association needs 50 citizens of Kazakhstan, and, as assumed by representatives of state bodies, residing in the same administrative-territorial unit, where the association will be active.<sup>23</sup>

Even in case of successful registration, religious associations face legal constraints to a greater extent than other legal entities.

- First, their activities are limited primarily to religious services, rites and ceremonies, which can be justified considering the main goals of religious structures. However, religious associations, as a rule, are also interested in other types of activities: educational, cultural, medical, and provision of social support, and encounter serious legal constraints to pursue those. For example, many organizations in the social and cultural sphere are state-run. The appearance of a religious association representative there will not be a violation of law, but

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<sup>23</sup> The law does not contain such a requirement.

administering any religious rituals and conducting a service or a meeting, which might accompany a socially useful activity, would be.

- Second, religious associations in their activities are attached to the place of registration. The vast majority of religious associations have the status of a local religious association, and their activities cannot spread beyond the boundaries of the appropriate province, city of the national importance and capital.
- Third, the activities of religious associations should be carried out either in buildings dedicated to religious services (religious buildings) or in premises agreed with the state authorities (except for cemeteries, crematoriums, residences, public catering facilities).
- Fourth, religious associations are not permitted to form all-national associations. Regulations of the current Law on Religious Activities and Religious Associations with regard to the possibility of establishing all-national structures mostly take into account the interests of the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Kazakhstan (SBMK). There is one center (SBMK), which has branches (Muslim communities) in all provinces (*oblasts*) of Kazakhstan. Branches do not have the legal entity status, and therefore, all their property belongs to the SBMK that decides all the matters of local mosques, including the appointment and resignation of religious personnel. Many other religious associations cannot agree with such strict centralized system of governance, but the law does not allow them to self-organize in any other way.<sup>24</sup>
- Fifth, while in the issues related to property not used in religious activities religious associations are not different from other legal entities, the use of religious literature, information materials with religious content and religious items is conditioned in a special way. The importation, production, publication and distribution of such literature and materials are allowed after receiving a positive conclusion of the religious examination. Distribution of religious literature and other information materials of religious content is allowed only in religious buildings, spiritual education organizations and stationary premises defined by the state bodies.

Thus, while there has been considerable progress in the legal regulation of non-religious activities of religious associations, the legal regulation of religious activities remains rather Soviet-style. The state resorts to tested administrative instruments: registration, approval of activity, control, and liability. The only different with the Soviet period is that regulations on administrative pressure are constrained in laws and not in sub law acts. The specifics of religious associations (presence of their own rules and governance systems) are not taken into account in law making and law enforcement practices. Besides, issues of legal regulation in the religious sphere are often considered through the lens of combatting extremism and terrorism, which creates additional tension in relations between the state and religious groups.

## Special Features of the Kazakhstani Model and the Political Context

The analysis of legal regulation allows defining the following features of the current model of relations between the state and religious associations in Kazakhstan.

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<sup>24</sup> At present, only two structures have the status of national religious association: Spiritual Board of Muslims of Kazakhstan (SBMK) and Metropolitan Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

- First, despite certain liberalization of the general legal regime to put it more in line with the provisions of developed liberal democracies and international conventions, the style of regulation remains Soviet in spirit with the high level of state interference in the religious sphere. Religion is perceived as a source of risks and challenges for the state and society.
- Second, the state both at the legislative and law enforcement levels does not allow religious associations in the political and public spheres. It should be noted that the vast majority of religious associations do not show any political ambition and this issue arises in connection with Islamic radical groups that are outside of the control of the state. The state tries to limit not only political, but any other public activity of religious associations in the spheres that are remote from politics (education, healthcare, social protection, etc.), afraid of direct or indirect development of religious institutions.
- Third, the state does not create equal conditions for the activities of religious associations. Representatives of the so-called “world” and “traditional” religions enjoy certain privileges, and their centralized structure comfortably fits the centralized structure of the state.

The privileges of traditional religious associations are not normatively defined, but emerge in the practice of their interaction with the state bodies. The latter create dialog platforms with the representatives of SBMK and Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), conclude memoranda on cooperation with them, and attract them to discussions of matters of public importance. For example, on 15 February 2017, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Civil Society and SBMK signed an agreement on cooperation that would include joint “events, aimed at the prophylactics of spreading of religious extremism, making additional steps for spiritual and moral upbringing of the younger generation.”<sup>25</sup>

The state patronage of SBMK and ROC allows their engagement in socially useful activities even if its legality is dubious. The other religious associations doing the same activities risk to be punished and therefore do not try to be active in the social sphere.

- Fourth, along with the privileged structures, there is a group of “outcast” associations. The state pushes into the illegitimate space not only radical extremist religious groups, but also associations that do not fit the strict requirements determined by the legislation or the state’s idea of useful associations.

Thus, despite the principle of separation of religion from the state, enshrined in the legislation, the state clearly actively participates in the formatting of religious life in Kazakhstan. It incorporates in its system of governance the privileged “traditional” religious associations. Such cooperation is mutually beneficial: SBMK and ROC enjoy status and relative freedom from pressure, and the state receives a certain share of “sacrality” through the support of religious representatives, providing itself with an element of “traditional” legitimacy, along with the rational-legal and charismatic, using the typology of Max Weber.<sup>26</sup> It also acquires instruments to shape society in order to support the Kazakhstani model of secularity. That is, the state, on the one hand, protects the public and political space from religious influence, and on the other, actively uses religious associations for its own legitimation and maintenance of the political system.

The state relies on cooperation with representatives of “traditional” religions to carry out its foreign policy and create a positive image of a country of inter-confessional concord. As already

<sup>25</sup> “Mezhdu Ministerstvom po delam religii i grazhdanskogo obshchestva i DUMK podpisano soglasheniye,” *Zakon.kz*, 15 February, 2017, available at [<https://www.zakon.kz/4844330-mezhdu-ministerstvom-po-delam-religij.html>], 10 May, 2017.

<sup>26</sup> See: M. Weber, “Politics as Vocation,” in: *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. by H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, Oxford University Press, New York, 1946, pp. 77-128.

mentioned in the beginning of this article, every three years Astana hosts Congresses of leaders of world and traditional religions under the patronage of President Nazarbayev. Kazakhstan's model of tolerance (including religious one) was offered as a model one during the chairmanship of Kazakhstan in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).<sup>27</sup> Rigid control over the under-privileged religious associations is part of the general control over society and its capacity to self-organize and mobilize. It is difficult to imagine what would be the dynamics of the development of society given full liberalization of the religious sphere, however, we can suppose that partial liberalization of the legislation allowing religious associations to freely engage in socially useful activities, would have helped the state in resolving problems and would contribute to humanization of society by the society.

### *Conclusions*

Over 25 years of Kazakhstan's independence, the role and place of religion and religious associations of citizens have changed considerably. The search for identity and religious revival led to self-identification of citizens as believers, and the new post-Soviet legislation in this sphere—to the growth in the number of religious associations and the change in the share of Islamic associations. Although sociological data does not register a significant increase in the number of people with stable religious attitudes and behavior based on religious norms, religious associations occupy a rather big niche in the structure of Kazakhstani society and represent an important form of self-organization of citizens.

As the experience of other countries shows, religious associations can actively engage in charitable activities and play a considerable role in resolving social problems. We can suppose that Kazakhstani religious associations also have such potential. However, its realization is constrained by the legislation. The analysis of legal regulation shows that the current model of relations between the state and religious associations has emerged in two stages. Liberalization of legislation in the 1990s provided religious associations with multiple legal capacities first of related to property ownership and contract making that they had not had before. However, during the second stage that started in 2005, the state decided to return its control and supervisory functions and started to rigidly administer the religious sphere.

The established model has a number of special features.

- First, the style of regulation remains Soviet in spirit with a high level of state interference in the religious sphere. Religion is perceived as a source of risks and challenges for the state and society.
- Second, the state both at the legislative and law enforcement levels does not allow religious associations in the political sphere and strongly limits their presence in the public sphere.
- Third, the state does not create an equitable playground for religious associations.

Representatives of “world” and “traditional” religions enjoy various formal and informal privileges. At the same time, there are religious associations that do not fit the rigid requirements determined by the legislation or the state's idea of useful associations and therefore are pushed outside the legitimate space. Cooperation with representatives of “traditional” religions, SBMK and ROC, gives the state a certain share of “sacrality” and “traditional” legitimacy, and also the opportunity for using them as instruments of shaping society in order to maintain Kazakhstan's model of secularity. That

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<sup>27</sup> See: “Kazakhstanskaja model tolerantnosti mozhet byt adaptirovana na vsem prostranstve OBSE—Nazarbayev,” *Kazakhstan Today*, 29 June, 2010, available at [[https://www.kt.kz/rus/politics/kazakhstanskaja\\_modelj\\_tolerantnosti\\_mozhet\\_bitj\\_adaptirovana\\_na\\_vsem\\_prostranstve\\_obse\\_nazarbaev\\_1153520413.html](https://www.kt.kz/rus/politics/kazakhstanskaja_modelj_tolerantnosti_mozhet_bitj_adaptirovana_na_vsem_prostranstve_obse_nazarbaev_1153520413.html)], 14 July, 2017.

is, the state, on the one hand, protects the public and political space from religious influence, and on the other, actively uses religious associations for its own legitimation and maintenance of the political system. Such active participation of the state in the religious sphere contradicts the principle of separation of religion from the state, enshrined in Kazakhstan's legislation. Rigid control of the rest of religious associations is part of the general control over society and its capacity to self-organize and mobilize. In our view, partial liberalization of the legislation would allow religious associations to freely engage in socially useful activities, would help the state in resolving problems and would contribute to humanization of society by the society.

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## POLITICAL PROCESSES IN RUSSIA AND ISLAMIC RADICALISM

Svetlana GALIULLINA

*D.Sc. (Hist.), Associate Professor,  
Department of History and Religious Studies Abroad,  
Ufa State Petroleum Technological University  
(Ufa, Russian Federation)*

Artur SULEYMANOV

*Ph.D. (Political Science), Associate Professor,  
Department of History and Religious Studies Abroad,  
Ufa State Petroleum Technological University  
(Ufa, Russian Federation)*

Gulsina NIYAZOVA

*D.Sc. (Philol.), Professor, Department of Journalism,  
Institute of Philology and Journalism, Tyumen State University  
(Tyumen, Russian Federation)*

Yulia BAKULINA

*Ph.D. (Philos.), Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy,  
Ufa State Petroleum Technological University  
(Ufa, Russian Federation)*

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## A B S T R A C T

**T**he authors reveal the role Islamic radicalism plays in the political processes unfolding in Russia, its global and internal sources and explain how and why it takes shape and develops within the political agenda. Today, Islamic radicalism is no longer a potential threat—it carries political risks for Russia's national security. Studies of the ways in which Islamic radicalism affects the political agenda of the Russian Federation remain a highly topical or even a burning issue: the latest methodological instruments have opened new vistas for scholarly studies of this highly complicated phenomenon and its in-depth analysis. These instruments are absolutely indispensable in forecasting the risks of Islamic radicalism spreading far and wide at the regional and local levels; these risks, in their turn, are changing under the pressure of globalization.

In fact, traditional (moderate) and radical trends in Islam are its intrinsic features, while Islamic radicalism of the twenty-first century is an absolutely new social and political phenomenon—no longer a “confes-

sional issue” within Islam but a global threat. This has been fully confirmed by the recent outbursts of criminal activities perpetrated by Islamist radicals, extremists and terrorists who have already crossed the borders of Muslim countries into other countries and stirred up Islamophobia on a global scale. Today, political conflicts rooted in confessional aspects have acquired a special importance and echo far and wide in social and political spheres. Radical Islamist teachings, even if disjointed, are extremely dangerous: they dent the social and political order within states. We should, however, distinguish between “Islamic radicalism” and “Islamic extremism,” concepts that are similar, but not identical. The former shapes political positions and a fundamentalist world outlook, and may remain within these limits rather than slip into criminal activities. Islamic extremism can be described as a practical implementation of radical ideas: terror, fanning religious conflicts, seizure of political power and regime change. The question is: are these phenomena related?

**KEYWORDS:** *Islamic radicalism, political process, national security, risks, modernization, federalism, democracy, pluralism, prevention, politicization.*

### *Introduction*

In this article we examine Islamic radicalism as a system of ideological and political paradigms and conceptually substantiated social and political practices that propose the only correct world order based on Islam and monopoly on power.

According to scholarly and expert assessments, the popularity threshold of Islamic radicalism in the worldwide Muslim community is no higher than 0.5% of its total size.<sup>1</sup>

The results of sociological studies among Muslims in Russia cause no concerns: about 60.4% of Muslims are positively disposed to Orthodox Christianity, while 2.8% are indifferent or negatively disposed.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See: T. Ramadan, *To Be a European Muslim*, Islamic Foundation, Leicester, 1999, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> See: S.A. Vorontsov, “Islamskiy radikalizm kak ugroza natsionalnoy bezopasnosti sovremennoy Rossii,” *Filosofia prava*, No. 6, 2008, pp. 94-100.

It seems absolutely correct when observed through the prism of social, moral and lofty ideas, yet we should also take political practices into account.

In his Ph.D. thesis, Alexei Tsurkan writes the following: “Today we can say that despite the fact that for the purposes of sociological studies Islamists are seen as a uniform phenomenon within Islamic radicalism, in real life they are far from being united. This means that the phenomenon of radical Islam is treated as a wrapping of sorts with specific trends and characteristics inside.”<sup>3</sup>

One can agree with Igor Dobaev, who points out that the ideology of Islamic radicalism is based on the irreconcilable division of human society into the “world of Islam” and the “world of the faithless.”<sup>4</sup> This is fully reflected in the unambiguous rhetoric of the contemporary world’s apocalypse in the context of coexistence of these two confessions.<sup>5</sup>

There is a widespread and commonly accepted opinion that radicalism as a political phenomenon took shape in Western Europe in the eighteenth century and played a special and important role in consolidating the new social and political relationships of the modern age. By the twentieth century it lost its popularity to become a mere political attribute in the Third World.<sup>6</sup>

Recent events point to the contrary: radicalism is coming back and, despite its superficially humanistic declarations and programs, it is blending with religious canons and dogmas. Today (14 September, 2017) Google browser offers over 240 thousand “Islamic radicalism” websites.

## Methods and Materials

Our methodology is based on the social and philosophical paradigm that orientates scholars toward formulating metatheoretical concepts and undertaking theoretical studies of global and regional policies (Zb. Brzezinski, A. Dugin), civilizational conflicts (S. Huntington) and religious syncretism (N. Kapustin).

Recently it has become even clearer that Islamic radicalism should be discussed as a multi-dimensional (ideology and political practices) and ideologically patchy social phenomenon that includes moderate, extremist and mixed trends.<sup>7</sup>

Vladimir Volkov notes that “the postulate of Islam’s intrinsic radicalism, its refusal to accept the non-Islamic part of the world has become all but the central mythologeme of our days, defining ordinary people’s fears and affecting global political processes. This can be explained by the media’s poor habit of exploiting the subjects of violence, radicalism and extremism. It seems, however, that numerous instances of religious intolerance, justification of acts of terror by jihad, etc., demand that

<sup>3</sup> A.A. Tsurkan, *Islamskiy radikalizm: analiz podkhodov i vozmozhnostei vzaimodeystvia Rossi i SShA*, Author’s abstract of the Ph.D. thesis defended at the Institute of the United States and Canada, RAS, Moscow, 2012, 42 pp.

<sup>4</sup> I.P. Dobaev, *Islamskiy radikalizm: genezis, evolutsia, praktika*, Rostov on Don, 2003, pp. 373-377.

<sup>5</sup> See: E. Ermakova, M. Jilkisheva, G. Fayzullina, I. Karabulatova, Kh. Shagbanova, “The Media and Fiction: Postmodernist Discourse of Contemporary Terrorism in the Context of Apocalyptic Rhetoric,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 2, 2016, pp. 61-69.

<sup>6</sup> See: V. Volkov, “O prirode islamskogo radikalizma,” *Otechestvennyye zapiski*, No. 5 (13), 2003, pp. 46-51.

<sup>7</sup> See: I. Karabulatova, B. Akhmetova, K. Shagbanova, E. Loskutova, F. Sayfulina, L. Zamalieva, I. Dyukov, M. Vykhristyuk, “Shaping Positive Identity in the Context of Ethnocultural Information Security in the Struggle against the Islamic State,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 1, 2016, pp. 84-92; I. Mkrtumova, A. Dosanova, I. Karabulatova, V. Nifontov, “The Use of Communication Technologies to Oppose Political-Religious Terrorism as an Ethnosocial Deviation in the Contemporary Information-Digital Society,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 2, 2016, pp. 54-61; M. Seidina, I. Karabulatova, Z. Polivara, A. Zinchenko, “A Publicist Discourse of the Islamic Organizations of the Central Federal District of Russia and the Issue of Tolerance,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 18, Issue 1, 2017, pp. 109-117; I. Karabulatova, “The Islamic Factor and the Political Processes in Tajikistan,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 18, Issue 1, 2017, pp. 118-123.

the nature of contemporary radicalism, and the causes and nature of its ties with religion in general, and Islam in particular, should be analyzed.”<sup>8</sup>

## Results

The term “Islamic radicalism” as we understand it today was first used in the Islamic world when the Ottoman Empire had ceased to exist.

The radical trend in Islam is a result of the changed status of Muslim states in the system of world coordinates. The Muslim Brotherhood, set up in Egypt in 1928, was one of the first radical Islamic organizations that dismissed Western values as false.<sup>9</sup>

While discussing the impact of Islamic radicalism on the political processes unfolding in Russia, we should take into account an important factor that predetermined further development of Islam.

In the wake of disintegration of the Soviet Union, when freedom of worship was officially recognized, the degree of religiosity in the Russian Federation increased. This narrowed down what is called the secular field and added weight to confessional groups and communities, thus increasing their role in the political processes.

An upsurge of religious feelings in the post-Soviet period was caused by several reasons.

- First of all, the objective nature of the social, psychological and epistemological roots of religious feelings in people scared of their vulnerability in the face of new challenges: default, financial instability, ideological vacuum and unemployment of the 1990s.<sup>10</sup>
- Secondly, adoption of the liberalization agenda, which played an important role in consolidating the multinational and polyconfessional milieu. Democracy and civil society institutions, as well as informational pluralism, have moved to the foreground in the religious sphere.
- Thirdly, the regulatory function of Islam and its movement toward social regimentation. Unlike other religions, Islam relies not only on moral rules but plays an important role in social and personal relationships through the Shari‘a.

## Discussion

It has been repeatedly stated that “unlike Christianity, Islam is perceived by its followers as a monolithic entity of faith, religion, state legal provisions and certain cultural forms. This explains its attraction and its use as a foundation for politics, economics and social relationships; hence its amazing ability to politicize, especially apparent in the post-bipolar world, in which Islam appears as an alternative development path amid disintegrating socialism and discredited Western values.”<sup>11</sup>

Samuel Huntington points out: “Muslims in massive numbers were simultaneously turning toward Islam as a source of identity, meaning, stability, legitimacy, development, power, and hope, hope epitomized in the slogan ‘Islam is the solution.’ This Islamic Resurgence in its extent and pro-

<sup>8</sup> V. Volkov, op. cit.

<sup>9</sup> See: K.I. Poliakov, *Arabskiy Vostok i Rossia: problema islamskogo fundamentalizma*, URSS, Moscow, 2001, p. 17.

<sup>10</sup> See: A.R. Suleymanov, “Regionalnaia bezopasnost i natsionalnaia politika Rossii,” *Gosudarstvennoe i munitsipalnoe upravlenie. Uchenye zapiski SKAGS*, No. 3, 2015, pp. 158-160.

<sup>11</sup> A.V. Beloglazov, *Vlianie islama na politicheskie protsessy v Tsentralnoy Azii*, A textbook, Kazan University Press, Kazan, 2013, p. 5.

fundity is the latest phase in the adjustment of Islamic civilization to the West, an effort to find the 'solution' not in Western ideologies but in Islam."<sup>12</sup>

This means that the Islamic factor has not lost its political significance, which helps promote a variety of ideological (including radical and extremist) constructs in mass consciousness.

Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and the disappearance of the "iron curtain" contributed to the process of planting numerous radical elements borrowed from the "outside" into the social consciousness of Russians. This was particularly evident in the North Caucasian republics.<sup>13</sup>

The way Islamic radicalism has influenced Russia's political reality has its own peculiarities.<sup>14</sup>

- First of all, Muslims in Russia are not an immigrant community, but an autochthonous population that has been living in Russia since time immemorial; hence their difference from the Muslims who live in the West.
- Secondly, the "Islamic radicalism" concept is, thus, not typical or natural in Russia; it is a relatively recent phenomenon free from political speculations and manipulations.
- Thirdly, the first and second Chechen wars proved to be the most important factor in the current perception of Muslim radicalism. So, it is commonly believed that Islamic radicalism might be especially welcome in the Northern Caucasus.

## *Conclusion*

Islamic radicalism as part of the political agenda of the Russian Federation is spreading both vertically and horizontally.

It spreads vertically on the basis of the administrative-territorial division and the periphery-megacity regionalization. The process proceeds in two directions: sources of Islamic radicalism may appear either on the periphery or in megacities, which makes it hard to identify its sources.

When spreading horizontally, it remains within the same community, which attempts to affect other social institutions by establishing various contacts and cooperation. This process creates networks of radicals, which makes it especially dangerous. Such networks are hard to identify and suppress.

"...Islamic groups brought into existence an Islamic 'civil society' which paralleled, surpassed, and often supplanted in scope and activity the frequently frail institutions of secular civil society."<sup>15</sup>

Semed Semedov emphasizes that the efficiency of Islamist structures is closely aligned with the aims and purposes of what may be called creeping Islamization, designed to create networks of social structures to be used as centers of political and ideological propaganda.<sup>16</sup>

Generally speaking, the ideology of Islamic radicalism can be reduced to two theses.

1. Islam might be condemned to oblivion by the materialist, secular values and behavior models characteristic of the liberal Western world, rather than by aggressive methods prevalent in the past. These Western ideas seem attractive to the naïve members of the Muslim com-

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<sup>12</sup> S.P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Touchstone Books, New York, 1998, pp. 109-110.

<sup>13</sup> See: I. Karabulatova, "Ethnocultural Communication Systems in the Northern Caucasus and the Problem of Radical Islam," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 2016, pp.71-78.

<sup>14</sup> See: A.A. Tsurkan, op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> S.P. Huntington, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

<sup>16</sup> See: S.A. Semedov, *Politicheskiy islam v sovremennoy mire*, Doctoral thesis, The Russian Civil Service Academy at the President of the RF, Moscow, 2009, p. 261.

munity who are not firm enough in their faith. Pro-Western values are promoted and implemented by the state apparatus and its political influence on all spheres of human life (the media, education, healthcare, etc.).

2. True Muslims should unite into autonomous alliances beyond the reach of the state apparatus and, in this way, come to power guided by the Machiavellian “the end justifies the means.” Islamist radicals are not alien to the use of coercion and violence up to and including terror and wars. Having studied Islamic radicalism, M.A. Hermassi concludes that “the concept of moderate Islamism is practically dead... What has changed is that violence, formerly an exception, is now used as a method and as a strategy to get power. We have moved from Islamism as a moderate political formation to Islamism as a new form of attempted terrorist takeover.”<sup>17</sup>

In an attempt to adjust the holy books to the political and/or social realities of the present day Islamic radicals resort to their arbitrary interpretation.

In their practical activities, they pay special attention to jihad (the holy war) which literally means “striving or struggling” and, more generally, “spiritual or moral” jihad.<sup>18</sup>

It is crucial to bear in mind that the term jihad has many meanings:

- Jihad of the heart (greater jihad) is concerned with combatting the devil in an attempt to escape his sinful discourse. This is the most complex form of struggle.
- Jihad by the tongue (Jihad of the word) is concerned with speaking the truth and spreading the word of Islam with one’s tongue.
- Jihad by the hand refers to choosing to do what is right and to combat injustice and wrongful actions.
- Jihad by the sword (lesser jihad) means armed fighting in the way of God, or holy war.

Islamic radicals have pushed aside three forms of jihad, not to mention the moral norms that prohibit hurting old and sick people, women and children, to concentrate on the jihad by the sword.

Until recently, politicization of Islam (Islamism) looked quite logical: Islamic radicalism (Wahhabism) was a subject of politics, while traditional Islam was concerned with confessional issues and remained outside politics.

It is held that politicization of traditional Islam in Russia began early in the twenty-first century and, since then, has been gaining momentum.<sup>19</sup>

Sufism (people’s Islam), popular mainly in the Northern Caucasus (Chechnia, Daghestan, and Ingushetia), preaches that the truth can be cognized through purification of the soul (*nafs*) and self-development (*ruh*) on the basis of the Shari‘a. Such a definition brings out Sufism’s similarity to other, not necessarily Islamic, confessions and philosophy of life.

We have every reason to claim that certain trends of traditional Islam can also change in the context of social relationships and norms; this is crucial for a correct assessment of the influence of Islamic radicalism on the political processes.

Politicization of Islamic radicalism proceeds under the pressure of several circumstances.

<sup>17</sup> M.A. Hermassi, “Islam, Democracy, and the Challenge of Political Change,” in: *Democracy in the Middle East: Defining the Challenge*, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Washington, 1993, pp. 42, 45.

<sup>18</sup> V.I. Oleynik, “Radikalny islam v sovremennom mire: politicheskiy aspekt,” *Vestnik Akademii ekonomicheskoy bezopasnosti*, Moscow, No. 6, 2015, p. 41.

<sup>19</sup> See: V. Akaev, *Islam i politika (na primere Chechni). Chechnia ot konflikta k stabilnosti (problemy rekonstruktsii)*, Moscow, 2001, pp. 139-141.

- First of all, a society confronted with new phenomena and challenges, not yet sufficiently studied, cannot deal with certain problems by traditional methods.
- Secondly, Islamic radicalism as a social and political phenomenon is intensified by related ethnic, migration, economic, elite, cultural and religious problems, as well as by internal, endogenous causes of Islamic radicalism.<sup>20</sup>
- Thirdly, technologies of deliberate politicization make it possible to attach social and political importance of the highest degree to issues unrelated to politics, yet indispensable for specific political schemes.

Islamic radicalism, combining objective and subjective causes, is progressing from a potential to a real threat to national security.

The Russian Federation is vulnerable to the following risks created by the impact of Islamic radicalism on political processes: criminalization of society and appearance of Islamist criminal groups, terrorism and separatism. Some of them are well known, others need an in-depth analysis.

The risks or, rather, cause-and-effect factors responsible for the extreme forms of radicalism enumerated above should receive more academic attention.

Alexander Pishchik underscores the following in this regard: “The idea that Moscow is the Third Rome was formulated to support and protect the Orthodox world. The idea of the Third International was designed to spread the ideas of communism far and wide, to build up communism to planetary dimensions and to support and protect those who share this idea.”<sup>21</sup>

Thus, the transition to the Russian Federation has inaugurated the new social and political status of Islam as a legal religion, and promoted potential conflicts between its Soviet, post-Soviet and current trends.

Islamist radicals are determined to identify these spheres of conflict in the model of decentralized federalism to disunite the society and stir up centrifugal trends (separatism), even though there are no real separatist trends in Russia. This does not mean, however, that there are no political risks in the sphere of federal relations.

The attempt to examine Islamic radicalism in Russia as a social and political phenomenon suggests that all possible forms of its interaction with the national and federal processes unfolding in Russia should be taken into account.

We should bear in mind that many risks outlined above are mostly present in the North Caucasian republics, while “creeping Islamism” is not limited to the region.

We should use all means and methods and all their modifications adequately and reasonably to intercept the spread of Islamic radicalism and its export to the Russian Federation. The educational component should receive special attention: official Islamic clergy at all levels should not fall behind in mastering information technologies in order to be able to compete with Islamist radicals, who are already actively using social networks and other instruments provided by the Internet to lure young people to their side.<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, the latest technologies used for education and enlightenment offer the shortest way toward prevention of Islamic radicalism. We need a unified and impeccable (as far as the biographies of Islamic clerics are concerned) institute of Russian Islam promoted by the media, including, in

<sup>20</sup> See: A. Ignatenko, “Endogenous Radicalism in Islam,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2, 2000, pp. 118-130.

<sup>21</sup> A.M. Pishchik, “Kontseptsia natsionalnoy idei Rossii,” *Educatio*, No. 5 (12), 2015, p. 69.

<sup>22</sup> See: I. Karabulatova, I. Mkrtumova, Z. Polivara, B. Akhmetova, S. Galiullina, E. Loskutova, E. Abylkasymov, “Protest Behavior of Present-Day Russian Youth as Ethnosocial Deviation in an Ethnopolitical Conflict-Prone Situation,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 2, 2016, pp. 94-103.



particular, its history and traditions, which will allow it to comfortably coexist and cooperate with the other traditional confessions of the Russian Federation.

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## HOW THE DISCOURSE OF SUFISM BECAME THE EXPRESSIVE DISCOURSE OF ISLAMIC RADICALISM IN THE REGIONS OF “POPULAR ISLAM” IN RUSSIA

Irina KARABULATOVA

*D.Sc. (Philol.), Member of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences,  
Research Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages,  
Philological Faculty, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN)  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

Maya POLEKHINA

*D.Sc. (Philol.), Professor, Department of Russian Language and Literature,  
Philological-Psychological Faculty, MGIMO Odintsovo Branch  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

Svetlana LYAUSHEVA

*D.Sc. (Philos.), Professor, Head of the Department of  
Post-graduate Courses and Academic Theses, Adyghea State University  
(Maykop, Republic of Adyghea, Russian Federation)*

Natalia DUBININA

*Senior Lecturer, Department of Foreign Languages,  
Philological Faculty, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN),  
Head of the Sector of the Arabic Language  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

### ABSTRACT

**A**t the turn of the twenty-first century, the Caucasus became, once more in its history, the sphere of vital and strategic interests of Western and Eastern powers that placed a stake on separatist sentiments and Islamic forces. The importance of

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researching this issue is explained by the fact that radical Islam, which professes the idea of “pure Islam” (purified from the extraneous layers that built up over the course of history), made the ideas of Wahhabism easily grasped and, therefore, willingly embraced, making regional communicative practices very distinctive. Salafism in its neo-Wahhabi garb opposes the region’s traditionalism. Given the vehement conflicts unfolding between groups of Muslim clerics and their followers in Daghestan, the already familiar antagonism between the traditionalists (followers of three Sufi tariqats) and fundamentalists (conventional definition of those who believe that Islam should be returned to the times of the Prophet Muhammad) was further intensified by the contradictions between spiritual leaders, each of whom represented specific ethnic groups. The communicative register is not relevant to the conflict discourse of extremism and/or terrorism, while any communicative failure may reveal its constructive potential if those

involved in the discourse, which may unfold according to any scenario, are not afraid to define the situation. It was in the wake of the Chechen wars that the radical Islamic movement in the Northern Caucasus acquired specific organizational forms. The wars served as a catalyst for the Wahhabi movement in Daghestan, and were responsible for the gradual emergence of a highly specific discourse of radicalism, the product of transformation of the traditional Sufi discourse as one of the common features of “popular Islam”. It was at that time that the neo-Wahhabi discourse acquired predominantly extremist features, which is especially apparent in the digital format. The systemic crisis transformed the idea of Imarat Kavkaz into the only force that offered its own model of unification of the Caucasus. The idea of pure Islam willingly embraced by the local Muslims, first and foremost the younger generation, which became cannon fodder for the leaders of Imarat and the sluggish civil war underway in Daghestan.

**KEYWORD:** *the discourse of Sufism, Islamic radicalism, “people’s Islam,” the Northern Caucasus, extremism.*

## *Introduction*

In 2004, according to a sociological poll, over 83% of the clerics and up to 40% of the faithful in Daghestan were fundamentalists. The studies of radicalization of the Islamic movement in the Republic of Daghestan at the turn of the twenty-first century relied on the methods that combined statistics related to the regional context, results of empirical studies, and relevant information scattered across all sorts of publications. This information, however, is complicated by the dilettantism of certain experts at the earliest research phase, different methods/methodologies employed, and the hardly compatible territorial scopes ranging from the scale of an educational establishment and/or a town to practically the entire Northern Caucasus. This explains the baffling variability in the numbers and ages of the polled individuals, the frequently ignored social statuses and the town-countryside definition. The prominence of the law and order structures on the regional scene complicates sociological studies and academic research; the same applies to the hardly consistent official figures supplied by the administration, FSB, Ministry of the Interior that differ significantly from those obtained through empirical studies. Badma Biurchiev has correctly pointed out that the somewhat contradictory situation is explained by the more stringent anti-terrorist laws and the considerably widened range of crimes defined as crimes of terror. Strange as it may seem, Ramazan Abdulatipov, who until

recently headed Dagestan, and Minister of the Interior Abdurashid Magomedov were right in their own way. "There are fewer terrorist attacks yet, paradoxically, the number of associated crimes has been steadily rising."<sup>1</sup> Irina Starodubrovskaja, likewise, was correct when she wrote that the youth of Dagestan is not only more religious but also more conservative than of other Caucasian regions.<sup>2</sup>

Today, the ideology of armed national separatism has been replaced with the ideology of armed jihad of supranational (caliphate) nature and the changes in the ruling circles of the so-called Caucasian Emirate (Imarat Kavkaz).

As a part of the political process, the religious factor may stabilize or destabilize the political space, which means that we should identify the mechanisms and technologies of politicization of religion: religious organizations have become important political actors, yet their role on the political arena has not been adequately studied.

## Methods and Materials

In our studies of the radicalization of the Islamic movement in the Republic of Dagestan at the turn of the twenty-first century we relied on official statistics, the results of our own empirical studies, and information obtained by linguists, sociologists, political scientists and experts, which appeared in various publications. Our Internet poll produced 1,675 completed questionnaires with three maximally precise basic questions (the result of discussions with religious people and imams) as the starting point for an analysis of religious groups:

- "Do you pray five times a day?" to identify practicing and ethnic, or secularized Muslims;
- "Do you belong to a tariqat?" to identify Sufis among practicing Muslims;
- "Do you take part in mawlid?" to identify traditionalists and those who profess non-traditional Islam among practicing Muslims, who do not consider themselves to be Sufis.

Sociological polls showed that in the early 1990s young people were less xenophobic than the older generation. Starting in the mid-1990s, however, the youth has been increasingly more responsive to radicalism. By the early 2000s, xenophobia among the youth became more prominent than in all other age groups, up to and including the older, traditionally xenophobic, generation. In Soviet times, one out of four polled young men spoke of himself as a believer; today, the correlation is three out of four.

The number of Muslims who performed hajj is the best illustration of the rising religious feelings in Dagestan: 365 Muslims in 1990; 1,200 in 1991; 6,000 in 1992; 9,398 in 1995; 12,525 in 1996; 12,208 in 1997; 13,268 in 1998; 5,449 in 2000; 14,000 in 2001; and over sixteen and a half thousand in 2004. In 1986, there were 27 functioning mosques in the republic; by 2014, their number rose to 2,350.

Zaid Abdulagatov has analyzed the results of four sociological polls to conclude that at first, starting in 1996, the level of religious feeling in Dagestan was slowly decreasing from 85% to 79%. In 2010, however, the degree of religiosity among young people spiked to 94.3%. About 12% of the respondents demonstrated extremist potential; while the highest figure of losses in the republic's gene pool was registered among the young members of illegal armed groups. "In 2005, 76% of casualties

<sup>1</sup> B. Biurchiev, "Dvoynaja bukhgalterija borby s terrorizmom," available at [[http://kavpolit.com/articles/dvojnaja\\_buhgalterija\\_borby\\_s\\_terrorizmom-19093/](http://kavpolit.com/articles/dvojnaja_buhgalterija_borby_s_terrorizmom-19093/)], 15 September, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> See: B. Biurchiev, I. Starodubrovskaja, "Dagestanskikh musulman ob'ediniat modernizatsionnye tsennosti," available at [[http://kavpolit.com/articles/irina\\_starodubrovskaja\\_Dagestanskikh\\_musulman\\_obedi-29816/](http://kavpolit.com/articles/irina_starodubrovskaja_Dagestanskikh_musulman_obedi-29816/)], 12 September, 2017.

among the members of illegal armed groups were young men between 15 and 30; in 2008, their share was 71.2%; in 2009, 70.1%.<sup>3</sup> Nearly 30% of the polled Muslims in Dagestan were ready to protest if “state laws contradicted their faith.” Between 2000 and 2010, the share of “fundamentalists” in the youth milieu increased from 53.9% to 77.6%. In 2010, the share of “fundamentalist” answers among the students of secular and Islamic educational establishments rose from 63.1% to 89.1%. According to another sociological poll, 60.78% of the students were negatively disposed to atheism; 50.98% preferred to live in a theocratic state. This looks like a latent threat of a Caucasian version of the Islamic Caliphate.

In 2012-2013, Anastasia Rogovaia registered in the Khasaviurt region “consistently high values of the two main factors of the spread of terrorist ideology:

- (1) displeasure with authorities, bordering on hatred of some of its structures and representatives and
- (2) ethnoconfessional and religious tension.”<sup>4</sup>

Further studies revealed the two main opposing groups and their “peripheral” zones: those who support the ideas of extremism and terrorism and do not bother to conceal their membership in nationalist and religious organizations and are ready to use force (4.5% of the total people polled) and those who reject the ideas of terrorism (29.7%); 5.7% of the peripheral zone lean toward extremist and terrorist activities (“support and ready to join an extremist organization”), while 37.9% side with anti-terrorist ideology (“do not support extremist organizations as sources of conflicts”). There are “in-between” groups in the zones of ideological confrontation: depending on the situation they are either “affected by extremist ideology” or “undecided”—8.3% and 13.9%, respectively.

It should be said that the highly emotional extremist discourse of Islamic radicalism may infiltrate the region through Northern Caucasus border zones.<sup>5</sup>

Cultural relativism claims that “cultures are different but equal,” which means that all cultures, values and traditions are equally important for human civilization. Negative stereotypes of, attitudes to and prejudices against representatives of a different ethnic culture are spawned by the distortion of the principles of cultural relativism. It is noteworthy that the conflicting discourses between or within confessions, or between ethnicities is a natural and inevitable result of the evolution of ethnic groups: it is neither positive nor negative, it is merely a fact of life.

## Results

Twenty-two percent of the polled were secularized; 27% were Sufis; 28% traditionalists, 23% represented non-traditional Islam. The latter group is very archaic in many respects, yet a closer scrutiny of its axiological structure reveals that it is not homogenous.

About 90% of the polled agreed that secular education was highly important either in its own right or combined with religious education.

<sup>3</sup> I. Grimasov, “Politologi prosledili zavisimost mezhdru religioznostiu i ekstremistskim povedeniem sredi dagestanskoi molodezhi,” 29 October, 2016, available at [<http://lawinrussia.ru/content/politologi-prosledili-zavisimost-mezhdru-religioznostyu-i-ekstremistskim-povedeniem-sredij>], 4 November, 2017.

<sup>4</sup> A.V. Rogovaia, “Protivodeystvie ideologii ekstremizma i terrorizma na rossiyskom Kavkaze (po materialam sotsiologicheskikh issledovaniy),” *Oekumene. Regionovedcheskie issledovania*, No. 3 (38), 2016, pp. 45-54.

<sup>5</sup> See: A. Shadzhe, I. Karabulatova, R. Khunagov, Z. Zhade, “Ethnopolitical Influence in Regulating National Security in Border Territories of the Countries in the Caucasian-Caspian Region,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 3, 2016, pp. 66-75.

In July 2014, Head of the Main Administration of the RF Ministry of the Interior General Sergey Chenchik illustrated the situation of the last decade with the following figures: “There are 250 nongovernmental Islamic religious educational establishments in the republic; 14 of them are higher educational establishments; there are 105 madrasahs and 130 maktabas at mosques. Only 59 of them are registered with the Republican Ministry of Justice; only 14 madrasahs and 1 higher educational establishment are licensed. The student body is approximately 2 thousand 700 hundred. The question is: How can this happen within a law-governed state?”<sup>6</sup>

Different experts offer different periodization of the process of the radicalization of Islam in Daghestan: definitive chronological frames are impossible to outline, since it is an ongoing process.

Here is our own more complete and updated periodization: I—late 1980s-1991: general Islamic ideas planted in the minds of the republic’s population; Wahhabis move from semi-legal to legal activities; official Muslim clerics are discredited. II—1991-1997: the conflict between the Wahhabis and Sufis is intensifying, as the former attract more and more supporters; foreign fundamentalist centers extend their aid; Wahhabi literature is printed and distributed on a mass scale; three centers of Wahhabism—radical, moderate-radical and moderate—appear. III—late 1997-mid-1999: calls to jihad against the “enemies” of Islam to bring the Daghestani society into accordance with “the Shari’a and establish the power of Allah on earth”;<sup>7</sup> independent Islamic territory is proclaimed in the villages of the Kadar Zone; cooperation with Chechen separatists and Wahhabis to oppose governmental structures in Daghestan is launched; attacks on militia checkpoints and border guard units occur along the entire stretch of the Chechen border. IV—1999: perfidious attacks are undertaken by Wahhabis as part of international terrorist bandit groups led by warlords Basaev and Khat-tab in August-September 1999 on the Tsumada, Botlikh and Novolakskoe districts of Daghestan; illegal armed formations are defeated and the Wahhabi enclave in the Kadar Zone is liquidated; the Law of the RF on Banning Wahhabi and Other Extremist Activities in the Territory of the Republic of Daghestan is passed on 19 September, 1999. V—2000-2006: Wahhabis become a clandestine organization engaged in terrorist activities against state and municipal officials, officers of the law and order structures, regular people (so-called blind terrorism). Umalat Saygitov has the following to say about this period: “Religious, political, pro-Chechen, criminal, economic and, finally, state terrorism is present in the Republic of Daghestan to different degrees. Nationalist terrorism in Daghestan has been replaced with terrorism as a form of religious extremism.”<sup>8</sup> VI—2007-2012: a network of subversive terrorist underground appears in the Northern Caucasus and Daghestan (Imarat Kavkaz, 2007) as part of the international terrorist structures; shahid terrorism, as the most dangerous type of terrorism, becomes more active than ever and is aimed against servicemen of the law and order structures, state officials, official Muslim clerics; terrorist groups become financially independent at the expense of those from whom they extort money as a “tax on jihad”; terrorist activity is developing in waves. VII—2013-now: Neo-Wahhabis are actively and successfully luring young men from Daghestan to the Middle East, with the numbers steadily rising; a number of factors points to the fact that the idea of Imarat is receding into the past; in 2013, the Islamic State calls on the Muslim youth to perform hijrah; a latent threat of the revival of the Caucasian version of Islamic Caliphate persists; harsher anti-terrorist laws are passed in the Russian Federation; the civil war in Daghestan drags on.

<sup>6</sup> According to the Ministry of the Interior, in 2014, 36 officers of the law and order structures were killed in the North Caucasian Federal District (see: [<http://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/252039/>], 15 September, 2017).

<sup>7</sup> K.M. Khanbabaev, “Vahhabizm v Dagestane,” *Severo-Kavkazskoe obozrenie*, 29 March, 2013 [<http://userdocs.ru/geografiya/12152/index.html?page=4>], 4 November, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> U.T. Saygitov, “Poniatie terrorizma kak formy nasilstvennoy organizovannoy prestupnosti,” *Voенно-ugolovnoe pravo*, No. 4, 2004 available at [<http://voenprav.ru/doc-2729-1.htm>], 15 September, 2017.

## Discussion

Geert Hofstede has rightly noted that different power distance indices (PDI) in different countries are responsible for the rate of success in intercultural communication. He says with good reason that a harsh management style dominates in social organizations with high PDI: those low in the chain of command structure live in dread of their superiors and of losing their colleagues' trust. The situation is very different in the low-PDI structures. The road to success in the cultures with low PDI involves knowledge, love and happiness at the core of the value system. On the other hand, members of the high-PDI cultures cherish ancestry, heritage, wealth, stinginess, shrewdness and unscrupulousness in business.<sup>9</sup>

Human consciousness is an "external world" of communications that is systemically organized with the help of the category of meaning tying together its dynamic elements, i.e. emotions. This fact is widely used in the apocalyptic discourse of contemporary Islamic terrorism.<sup>10</sup> Niklas Luhmann rightly defined the contemporary media as one of the basic cognitive systems of the society<sup>11</sup> that helps create an illusion of a new and self-sufficient reality. This means that by monitoring the media that deals with the issues of confessions and ethnicity we can trace the evolution and transformation of ethnic stereotypes in Russian society. This becomes especially important in the context of a new Cold War and information-related provocations.

The head of FSB warned that international terrorism was actively moving into new zones of influence and that the Islamic State organization was the main danger: its cells in different regions of the world threaten to destabilize the situation in the CIS, and Central Asia in particular.<sup>12</sup>

The latent negative attitudes that surface in media discourse cause ethnic and confessional tension at the level of everyday conflicts as well as on a larger scale. Interaction in conflict dialogs is possible

- (a) if the sides are able to exert influence on each other and
- (b) if this influence is organized and can, therefore, be regulated.

## Conclusion

An examination of the contemporary infosphere of the Russian Federation makes it possible to analyze the situation and draw up a very much needed program that would allow to prevent the insertion of negative sentiments into the linguistic conscience of people. Today, in the specific cultural and historical context of a systemic crisis of the civilized world, informational and psychological impact on the human psyche is growing rapidly, undoubtedly acting as a permanent source of psychological stress and dissonance with the real ethnolinguistic milieu.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See: G. Hofstede, "Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations," Second edition, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks CA, 2001, Ch. 3.

<sup>10</sup> See: E. Ermakova, M. Jilkisheva, G. Fayzullina, I. Karabulatova, Kh. Shagbanova, "The Media and Fiction: Post-modernist Discourse of Contemporary Terrorism in the Context of Apocalyptic Rhetoric," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 2, 2016, pp. 61-69.

<sup>11</sup> See: N. Luhmann, "Neveroiatnost kommunikatsii" (Transl. from the German by A.M. Lozhnitsyn, ed. by N.S. Golovin), in: *Problemy teoreticheskoy sotsiologii*, Issue 3, ed. by A.O. Boronoev, St. Petersburg University Press, St. Petersburg, 2000.

<sup>12</sup> FSB learned that the Islamic State wanted to destabilize the situation in the CIS, available in Russian at [<http://govoritmoskva.ru/news/42717/>], 15 September, 2017.

<sup>13</sup> See: I. Karabulatova, Kh. Vildanov, A. Zinchenko, E. Vasilishina, A. Vassilenko, "Problems of Identificative Matrices Transformation of Modern Multicultural Persons in the Variative Discourse of Electronic Informative Society Identity," *Pertanika Journal of Social Science & Humanities*, No. 25 (S), July 2017, pp. 1-16.



This made the Middle East and a considerable part of Africa a seat of regional and global destabilization: in this context, no country is immune to regime change that radical Islamists might undertake to set up a World Caliphate.<sup>14</sup>

Not infrequently radical Islamists and terrorists profit from foreign interference, while the illusion that they are guided by certain states and their special services causes havoc in world politics. The means and methods of influence in the contemporary digital information society are varied: they are used to impose alien experience and alien secondary feelings presented as unique authenticity and individually perceived reality.

The situation in the post-Soviet space is somewhat different.<sup>15</sup> In many post-Soviet states, including Russia, the global crisis moved the state into the center of economic, social and cultural life and consolidated the authoritarian trends in politics.

Ethnoconfessional deviations within confessions are based on the friend/foe opposition within the Caucasian and/or Russian culture. Unlike the cosmos-centric culture of antiquity and/or egocentric culture of the West, Russian culture is socio-centric and relies on the friend/foe dichotomy.

Caucasian sociocentrism is characterized by the fusion of the individual with the collective “we”-space. Sociocentric cultures invariably preserve the image of an enemy in individual consciousness. The friend/foe distribution can be differently justified: in sociocentric cultures the entire space of meanings and associations of the tolerance concept (support, aid, cooperation, patience, leniency, etc.) can be applied only to “friends.” This makes the antagonism of the “foe” a specific feature that separates friends from foes. In real life, there are certain stereotypes at the national self-awareness level that are responsible for the domination of a particular type of culture.

Today, a wide spectrum of communications has become a virtual reality of real life.<sup>16</sup> Emergence of ethnic and/or confessional identity is conditioned by the stereotypes planted in the mind by the instruments of digital information society. This creates a new reality in which certain types of ethno-linguistic-mental identification come to the forefront.

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<sup>14</sup> See: I.M. Gabdrafiqov, I.S. Karabulatova, I.G. Khusnutdinova, Kh.S. Vildanov, “Ethnoconfessional Factor in Social Adaptation of Migrant Workers in the Muslim Regions of Russia,” *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 6, No. 3, Supplement 4, May 2015, pp. 213-223.

<sup>15</sup> See: I. Karabulatova, “The Islamic Factor and the Political Processes in Tajikistan,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 18, Issue 1, 2017, pp. 118-123; M. Seidina, I. Karabulatova, Z. Polivara, A. Zinchenko, “A Publicist Discourse of the Islamic Organizations of the Central Federal District of Russia and the Issue of Tolerance,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 18, Issue 1, 2017, pp. 109-117.

<sup>16</sup> See: I.S. Karabulatova, P.V. Barsukov, I.V. Akhmetov, O.V. Mamatelashvili., F.F. Khizbullin, “‘Network Wars’ as a New Type of Deviation Processes in the Modern Electronic and Information Society in the Context of Social and Economic Security,” *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, No. 6 (6S3), 2015, pp. 150-159.

## TERRORISM OF OUR DAYS: GLOBAL AND REGIONAL MANIFESTATIONS

Vakhit AKAEV

*D.Sc. (Philos.),  
Member of the Academy of Sciences of the Chechen Republic,  
Professor, Department of Philosophy,  
the Academician M. Millionshchikov Grozny State Oil Technical University  
(Grozny, Russian Federation)*

Murad KELIGOV

*D.Sc. (Philos.),  
Professor, Department of Philosophy,  
the Academician M. Millionshchikov Grozny State Oil Technical University  
(Grozny, Russian Federation)*

Boryat NANAeva

*D.Sc. (Philos.), Professor,  
Head of the Department of Philosophy,  
the Academician M. Millionshchikov Grozny State Oil Technical University  
(Grozny, Russian Federation)*

### ABSTRACT

**T**oday, terrorism has developed into a highly specific phenomenon, the content of which and the conditions in which it was taking shape are fairly complicated. It figures prominently in domestic and foreign policies of certain states and international organizations. It is rooted in hoary antiquity, yet its various manifestations are

characteristic of our days as well. The global, political and ideological processes unfolding in the world are accompanied by international terrorism in different forms and carried out under specific ethnic or religious slogans. We have analyzed Islamism and "Islamic" terrorism and their radical or extremist manifestations camouflaged as Islamic values.

**KEYWORDS:** *terrorism, radicalism, extremism, Islamism, Russia, the Middle East, the U.S., methods of opposition, ethnocultural resource.*

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## Introduction

Since time immemorial, mankind has been aware of terrorism, which became a very common phenomenon and one of the global problems of our days. Viciousness, known since the end of the eighteenth century as terror or terrorism, was one of the instruments used by practically all states on their paths toward becoming great empires, paths that were dotted with wars and territorial acquisitions. While differing from one epoch to another in form, methods and scale, terrorism has never disappeared from the history of human civilization. At the turn of the twenty-first century, terrorist acts became a favorite subject of the media, some of them watched online by huge TV audiences (suffice it to mention the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York on 11 September, 2001).

What is terrorism as a social and historical phenomenon? Whence its hectic activities? Why has religiously tinged terrorism (brandishing Islamic banners, in particular) spread far and wide to become one of the most dangerous threats?

## Terrorism: Content of the Phenomenon

The terms radicalism, extremism and terrorism describe phenomena that are close in meaning and invariably go to extremes either in statements or in action. Terrorism is more than violence: it does not merely threaten lives and security of states and will not stop at total extermination of individuals or groups. It relies on extremely radical methods of vice and violence; at all times, it was and remains an extremely radical method of deterrence used by the weaker side to impose its demands, conditions, laws and beliefs on the stronger side, or vice versa. Here is what Sergey Nechaev, a Russian revolutionary of the latter half of the nineteenth century, had to say about the role of terror in social struggle: “Any revolutionary joins the state, the social and the so-called educated world and lives in it for the sake of its prompt and complete destruction... Those who are especially harmful to the revolutionary organization and those whose sudden and violent deaths might spread fear in the government, deprive it of its brightest and most energetic members and shatter its power should be liquidated in the first place.”<sup>1</sup> “Terrorism in the most widely accepted contemporary usage of the term is fundamentally and inherently political. It is also ineluctably about power: the pursuit of power, the acquisition of power, and the use of power to achieve political change.”<sup>2</sup> “Terrorism is thus violence—or, equally important, threat of violence—used and directed in pursuit of, or in service of, a political aim.”<sup>3</sup>

Over the course of history, terrorism as a phenomenon acquired different forms and employed different methods, yet its core remained the same: extremist-minded individuals or groups of people or even states that rely on demonstrative psychological, moral or physical intimidation or even extermination, when deemed necessary, of people to insist on their state, political, social, ethical, confessional and other socially important demands and conditions.

This, however, should not obstruct the specific features of terrorism of the last decades of the 20th and the first decades of the twenty-first century.

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<sup>1</sup> S.G. Nechaev, “Katekhizis revoliutsionera,” pp. 13; 16 in: *Revoliutsionny radikalizm v Rossii: vek deviatnadsatnykh*. Documents, Arkheografichesky tsentr, Moscow, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> B. Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Columbia University Press, New York, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

Due to globalization and widespread mobile communication terrorism has spread far and wide beyond the old national and territorial limits to transnational and international levels. Terrorism of the twenty-first century no longer entails isolated acts of violence carried out by individuals. It is a multilevel and ramified system of ideological and practical actions perpetrated, for geopolitical, ideological and religious purposes, by ultra-radical forces with considerable financial, informational, material and technical resources and armed units at their disposal. This explains the U.N. Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism adopted on 9 December, 1994 and the U.N. Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted on 8 September, 2006.

## Terrorism in Russia: From Past to Present

In the last third of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, terrorist acts in Russia committed by members of the Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) organization and their ideological descendants, the SRs (Socialist-Revolutionaries), were aimed at the czars and top officials (ministers and governors). Czar Alexander II was assassinated on 1 March, 1881; Grand Prince Sergey Alexandrovich, Governor General of Moscow and uncle of Czar Nicholas II was killed on 4 February, 1905; Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior Pyotr Stolypin was mortally wounded in the Kiev Opera House on 14 September, 1911.

In her fundamental study of terrorism in Russia of the early twentieth century, Anna Geifman has quoted official figures: "During the one-year period beginning in October 1905, a total number of 3,611 government officials of all ranks were killed and wounded throughout the empire... By the end of 1907 the total number of state officials who had been killed or injured came to nearly 4,500." She has estimated the total number of victims in 1905-1907 as "more than 9,000 casualties" and further: "From the beginning of January 1908 through mid-May 1910, the authorities recorded 19,957 terrorist acts and revolutionary robberies, as a result of which 732 government officials and 3,051 private persons were killed, while 1,022 officials and 2,829 private persons were wounded";<sup>4</sup> "Moreover, it is also very probable that, in the general chaos of the revolutionary situation, a significant number of local acts went unregistered and did not become part of either the official statistics or the records of the radicals. It therefore seems plausible to conclude that in the period under consideration, close to 17,000 individuals became victims of revolutionary terrorism."<sup>5</sup>

During the 1905-1907 revolution the SRs reached the peak of their terrorist activities: 233 acts of terror in which 2 ministers, 33 governors and 7 generals lost their lives; between 1902 and 1911, Socialist-Revolutionaries carried out 216 terrorist acts.<sup>6</sup> Members of the Narodnaya Volya Party and the SRs were convinced that the czars and officials were responsible for the suffering of the people, that each of them was corrupt and despotic, which added great symbolic value to the acts of their assassination.

On 6 July, 1918, that is, after the October Revolution in Russia (carried out on 25 October, 1917) a member of the SR party murdered the German Ambassador to Russia Wilhelm von Mirbach, a provocation that started the SRs' power struggle with the Bolsheviks, which later developed into terror waged by both sides.

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<sup>4</sup> A. Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill: Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia, 1894-1917*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1993, pp. 20-21.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>6</sup> See: "Partiia sotsialistov-revolutsionerov," available at [[https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Партия\\_социалистов-революционеров](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Партия_социалистов-революционеров)].

It should be said that during the Civil War that followed the October Revolution, “red” and “white” terror alike was an instrument of struggle between antagonistic classes. Today, terrorist acts are justified by the principle of collective guilt: those who support the ideas of extreme radicalism regard any individual, a group of people or a nation not so much as an opponent or an enemy, but as a vehicle of guilt that should be publicly punished and exterminated. This makes the ideology and political practice of terrorism not only merciless, but also amoral. Abdusalam Guseynov, a prominent Russian philosopher, has justly described terrorism as “an embodiment of absolute evil.”

Today, the public is well aware of violent actions and linguistic aggression of ultra-radicals. In the past, terrorists invariably strove to spread the knowledge about their crimes and assassinations far and wide, especially among their potential enemies. In the twenty-first century, terrorist acts became a TV show of sorts, an instrument and an object of publicity that throws the highly contradictory role of the media into sharp relief. Indeed, TV normally exposes and criticizes all manifestations of extreme radicalism, a function that cannot be underestimated. At the same time, it indirectly admires or even exonerates them. The vast audience that watched the TV broadcast of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on 11 September, 2001 “could see that the maximally effective killing of thousands of civilians could be easily realized with minimal instruments... In recent years, media reports have become a textbook of sorts for potential terrorists.”<sup>7</sup> It seems that the media coverage of terrorist acts and the methods employed should be discussed in detail.

It is highly unlikely that today terrorists are “not guided by religious convictions and are not tempted by money but by the chance to appear on TV screens as central figures in a show,”<sup>8</sup> as some people believe. Money is not the main motivation, yet the role of religious convictions should not be underestimated: “Today the psychology of terrorists,” writes Valentina Fedotova, “brings them closer to people of deep convictions, if not to Luther (‘I cannot and I will not recant anything’), rather than to fanatic bandits who take up arms to commit crimes.”<sup>9</sup>

The religious factor figures prominently in contemporary terrorism: it does not merely justify terrorist acts, but, more importantly, tinges them with religious colors and tries to infuse their antihuman nature with spiritual and theological meaning and values; religious radicalism and religious terrorism being its extreme and logical form.

## Terrorism: Ultra-Radical Islamist Forms

“Islamic” or Islamist terrorism (we prefer to avoid the terms “terrorist Islam” and “terror in Islam” as inadequate and hardly correct) actively use certain misinterpreted religious principles and ideas for their anti-humane and basically anti-religious purposes. Indeed, the combination of the religious and the ultra-radical in the contemporary religious-political discourse should be further specified. It is fundamentally important to distinguish between “Islamic” terrorism and Islam as one of the world religions with its spiritual wealth and values common to all mankind. The U.N. Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy stresses that “terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.”

The following definition is probably the most adequate interpretation of the essence of “Islamic” terrorism. “Islamic” terrorism is an ideology and political practice of extreme radical organiza-

<sup>7</sup> “Terrorizm,” in: *Bolshaia aktualnaia politicheskaia entsiklopedia*, Eksmo, Moscow, 2009, p. 329.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 329-330.

<sup>9</sup> “Terrorizm v sovremennom mire. Opyt mezhdistsiplinarnogo analiza (material ‘kruglogo stola’),” *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 6, 2005, p. 12.

tions, movements and religious groups that take hostages, organize explosions in crowded places, destroy objects of life support, murder officials and respected people and use suicide bombers to sow fear among common people, suppress their will to resist, disorganize social and state life by imposing certain behavior patterns on the stronger of the opposing sides, force it to retreat on certain issues, replace the leaders or, in extreme cases, the form of government.

One cannot but wonder how the Northern Caucasus, with its deeply rooted democratic norms, traditions of coexistence of different peoples and cultures, lofty examples of spirituality and morality became a scene of extremism and terrorism, anti-humane and shockingly cruel phenomena.

It was the comprehensive social, political, economic and moral crisis caused by the Soviet Union's disintegration and the highly exacerbated ethno-political relations between individual subjects, and between them and the federal Center, which made religious terrorism, the plague of the twenty-first century, possible. Tempted by President Yeltsin's highly provocative statement "Take as much sovereignty as you can stomach," the Chechen Republic (Ichkeria), which emerged as the result of the splitting of the Chechen-Ingush A.S.S.R. into its component parts, opted for independence from Russia and entered the path of seemingly independent development. Moscow perceived its Dudaev-style sovereignty as separatism and violation of integrity of the Russian Federation. Restoration of the constitutional law and order took the form of an armed confrontation between Russia and the separatist forces, as a result of which the Dudaev-Maskhadov regime was liquidated at the cost of a huge loss of life, destroyed economy and the ruined capital Grozny.

It should be noted that both during and after the armed confrontation, terrorist groups and movements operating in Russia, both internal and external, hoisted the banner of Islam as their philosophy, operant ideology and mobilizing force.

Islamization of society and the politicization and radicalization of Islam were the two most obvious processes. One of contemporary authors has written that Muslim peoples started "identifying themselves with Islam," while "extremist trends, the consolidation of which provoked another war in the region" became part and parcel of Islamic resurrection.<sup>10</sup> The adepts of North Caucasian terrorism were influenced and are influenced today by the ultra-radical ideas of Salafi authors from other countries that exonerate acts of terrorism and subversion.<sup>11</sup>

Neo-Wahhabis are determined to disintegrate the Islamic world, while ethnoconfessional organizations and movements that represent the interests of those international political forces that support the idea of a regional or world Caliphate and Islamic states play into the hands of extreme Islamic radicals. Despite the different levels and forms of Islamic radicalism, "all radical Islamic groups are tied together by a common aim — creation of Islamic states on the entire (or parts of) territories of their countries. This implies radical changes and Islamization of all social, economic and state political institutions."<sup>12</sup>

Radicalization of the Islamic movement in Russia and in other geopolitical regions of the world is strongly affected by globalization and the related aggressive insertion of Western values into the spiritual space and life of peoples of the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia (the process is most apparent in those that follow Islam and have no statehood of their own). They have already come dangerously close to the loss of their ethnic, confessional and social identities.

This should not be taken to mean that all achievements of Western culture should be pushed aside, yet the cult of material riches, a lack of spirituality, as well as the standardization of nation-

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<sup>10</sup> V.Kh. Akaev, *Sufijskaia kultura na Severnom Kavkaze: teoreticheskie i prakticheskie aspekty*, 2nd edition, GUP Knizhnoe izdatelstvo, Grozny, 2011, pp. 150, 194.

<sup>11</sup> See: I.P. Dobaev, "Politicheskie protsessy na Severnom Kavkaze," *Nauchnaia mysl Kavkaza*, No. 1, 2008, p. 32.

<sup>12</sup> I.P. Dobaev, *Islamskiy radikalizm: sushchnost, ideologiya, politicheskaia praktika*, Author's abstract of a doctoral thesis, Rostov-on-Don, 2003, p. 19.



specific characteristics of social and spiritual life and gradual destruction of the traditional moral bases of the family, social and public forms of life should be avoided. To save their national identities, traditions and customs, faiths and tongues, psychological makeup and world outlook, individuals or whole nations have to use radical and extremist means and methods. We should accept the fact that international terrorism is an instinctive response to globalization in the interests of the “golden billion” and “the mounting and unceremonious worldwide domination of the West.”<sup>13</sup>

There is another, frequently underestimated, source of religious ultra-radicalism. Religion, and Islam in particular, has become one of the most politicized forms of public consciousness used by those who support terrorism to justify the most monstrous of crimes. Indeed, religious forms addressed to the masses explain the world in terms that require no arguments and no deliberations on whether religious principles are true or not and are, therefore, easily understood by the general public, or, to be more exact, the spiritually and secularly uneducated milieu. Such people, especially young adults, are highly susceptible to the ideas of terrorism and terrorist acts, which have nothing to do with genuine Islam.

Anybody wishing to grasp the meaning of contemporary “Islamic” terrorism and learn more about the ways and means of opposing it efficiently should take into account the new features of this religious and political movement. Analysts have pointed out that

- (a) in the twenty-first century the ranks of radical Islamic movements swell with mainly young people; the same applies to the network structures organized into ethnically homogenous jamaats. This is closely connected with another typical feature of the radical Islamic movements, namely, a higher educational level of those who organize terrorist acts and those who obey their orders. “Terrorism has become younger, intellectually stronger and demonstrates the ability to organize and reproduce itself,”<sup>14</sup>
- (b) religious, ethnic and criminal sides of terrorism supported by similar international structures are intertwined on the ideological foundation of radical Islam<sup>15</sup>, which makes it much harder to fight it.

International experience has taught us that as of now concerted efforts of several countries are not sufficient to oppose, let alone liquidate religious radicalism. Certain aspects of this highly topical subject have not been studied yet, while others need further comprehension. This poses a question: What is the most relevant spiritual and intellectual resource of counter-terrorism? It should be said that by “counter-terrorism” we do not mean armed struggle against terrorists, but, rather, the struggle against terrorism as a religious and political movement and an ideological doctrine. Law and order structures should liquidate terrorist organizations and groups along with their material and technical bases; today, this is also the job of the armed forces (the Russian VKS in Syria). It is the task or even the duty of theoreticians and intellectuals, whose profound knowledge of secular and spiritual aspects helps them reveal the false and anti-Islamic nature of extremist ideas, to fight terrorism as a system of social, political, ethnic and religious ideas and ideological provisions that justify terrorist acts and terrorists.

Counterterrorist struggle should be well-organized, it should be waged consistently and take into account the fact that there are different levels and forms of radical manifestations; it is highly important to involve specialists and experts in ideological issues in this process. Today, the situation is strange, to say the least: there is an ideology of terrorism but no counterterrorist ideology. Not all educated people or even scholars can become ideologists. An ideologist is expected to blend knowledge and political, historical, religious, scholarly, ethical and philosophical values into an ideology.

<sup>13</sup> “Terrorizm v sovremennom mire. Opyt mezhdistsiplinarnogo analiza (material ‘kruglogo stola’),” p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> See: A.I. Lukienko, “Kulturno-ideologicheskie aspekty rosta napriazhennosti v Severno-Kavkazskom regione,” *Nauchnaia mysl Kavkaza*, No. 4, 2011, p. 103.

<sup>15</sup> See: I.P. Dobaev, *Islamskiy radikalizm: sushchnost, ideologiya, politicheskaia praktika*, p. 16.

Prevention looks like the most promising trend: we should move purposefully and consistently toward immunizing young people against this anti-human ideology. It is highly important to plant, at all levels and in all forms of education and upbringing, the precepts that prohibit murder and insist on moral purity, fulfillment of one's moral obligations to one's relatives, family, teachers, nation, Motherland, God, preservation of clear conscience and religious tolerance, etc. as supreme values for all those who believe in God (Allah). There is no chance of dissuading the young men who have already been drawn into a terrorist organization and taught that the murder of those who adhere to different ideas or follow different faiths is a worthy deed endorsed by God.

## Anti-Terrorist Struggle: Ethnocultural Resource

The anti-terrorist potential of all available means and methods should be used in the struggle against religious and political radicalism. In the Northern Caucasus, we should rely on the ethnocultural resource of the local, including Chechen, peoples: honor, dignity, courage, respect for the honor and dignity of others, love of freedom, respect for their history and love of the land of ancestors planted in the souls and minds of all Chechens since childhood has powerful potential that should be tapped to the fullest extent in our struggle against Islamic radicalism. Cultures of other peoples of Russia are also brimming with humanism, spirituality and morality.

It is wrong to limit our opposition to terrorism by ethnic and cultural potential: we should tap into a wider range of cultural and educational resources; values shared by mankind as well as scientific, political, legal, moral, artistic, esthetic achievements that belong to all of us.

Indeed, poorly educated people, especially young people, cannot assess the situation critically; their vague moral convictions make them easy prey for those who draw them into hazardous adventures or even criminal activities. Radicals and ultra-radicals spare no effort in explaining to the young people the meaning of such concepts as shahid, jihad, takfir, gazavat (jihad by the sword), etc. and concentrate on those particular meanings that support extremist ideologies and extremist political practices. Speaking at the International Theological Conference in the Republic of Ingushetia the Secretary General of the International Union of Muslim Scholars Sheikh Dr. Ali Muhiuddin Al-Qurra Daghi had the following to say about jihad: "This excellent word has been distorted. Jihad does not mean war since Islam bans all wars. Jihad is related to the ideological side of Islam, it is inside each of us. It means that we should study, work in various spheres and help our relatives. In the Koran, all ayats that deal with war talk about defensive wars."<sup>16</sup>

It should be said that the problem of choosing anti-terrorist means and methods is one of the most complicated and least studied. Without going into detail, it should be noted that

1. Radicalism in its extreme manifestations makes it very difficult to prevent terrorist acts carried out by shahids; it is very hard, if at all possible, to liquidate terrorism. Acts of terror exclude any possibility of moral or more or less productive dialog with carriers of absolute evil; retribution is the only adequate response. This means that ideological and theoretical opposition to terrorism should be consistent, preventive and planned out for many years to come.
2. Successful struggle against "Islamic" terrorism as an ideological doctrine cannot and should not be limited to a simple statement that it is criminal and anti-religious. People should be

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<sup>16</sup> Ali Muhiuddin Al-Qurra Daghi, "Vystuplenie na mezhdunarodnoy bogoslovskoy konferentsii v Respublike Ingushetia," *Serdaro*, 16 May, 2015.

informed that, besides Islamic radicalism, there are other social, political and religious movements and groups that can implement spiritual and social aims and dreams in adequate (even if contradictory) forms. Regrettably, the collapsed Communist ideology left a void in the greater part of Russian society, which still remains unfilled with a commonly shared world outlook as a system of knowledge and convictions to be followed and defended. A great part of the Russian society, first and foremost, its younger segment, has no clear spiritual or moral landmarks, lofty aims or meanings; they do not believe that a fair social and state order is possible, hence their psychological instability, social and civil apathy and vagueness which makes them easy prey for those whose job is to replenish the ranks of terrorists.

3. At one time, Descartes offered the following heuristic idea: “The more assured he [a person] is of choosing truth and goodness, the more likely he is to avoid error.”<sup>17</sup> This is true: deeper knowledge suggests correct decisions. The seeds of extremism will never sprout in the soul and mind of a young man who grew up in intellectual and socio-cultural milieu guided by lofty divine and humane values, including awareness of moral duty and responsibility to parents, teachers, society, the state, Motherland and God, acquisition of a profession and skills needed to serve society, a taste for and skills of independent thinking, conscience, and an ability to feel shame for his weaknesses and misdeeds. The words of the first President of the Chechen Republic Akhmad Haji Kadyrov “We need intelligent, educated youth healthy in body and spirit” are as topical as ever.

### *Conclusion*

Specific features of contemporary terrorism are closely connected to the global, economic, political and ideological processes that have betrayed themselves differently in different regions, whose cultural and civilizational values turned out to be incompatible with Western materialism and hedonism. Certain forces in Islamic countries present the West as a natural enemy that follows in the Crusaders’ footsteps to capture lands and holy places—Mecca, Medina, Najaf, Karbala, etc.

Public Muslim discourse accuses those Muslim rulers who have accepted the dominance of Western Christian states that capture the riches of the Muslim world, occupy Muslim lands and torture those who live on them as is the case, for example, in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Chechnia, Bosnia, the Philippines and Iraq, not to mention the U.S. Guantanamo concentration camp in Cuba.<sup>18</sup>

People who support political Islam blame Muslim countries for moving away from their religious traditions, and the Shari‘a as the foundation of their lifestyle and culture. They harshly criticize the ongoing Westernization of Muslim habits and traditions and suggest sometimes too radical means and methods of opposition.

Movements and organizations designed to wake Muslims up to politics are forming in Muslim countries. Violence and terrorist acts that threaten lives and social systems have become more or less accepted methods of struggle. This dents the image of Islam and its law-abiding followers who seek a dignified life and the right to peacefully realize their creative abilities in their countries and in the West.

<sup>17</sup> R. Descartes, *Sochineniia*, in two volumes, Vol. 2, Mysl Publishers, Moscow, 1994, p. 118.

<sup>18</sup> See: G. Korm, *Religiozny vopros v XXI v. Geopolitika i krizis postmoderna*, Institute of General Humanitarian Studies, Moscow, 2012, p. 203 (see also: G. Corm, *La Question religieuse au XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle: géopolitique et crise de la post-modernité*, La Découverte, 2006).

## ADYGHE CHRISTIANS TODAY

Irina BABICH

*D.Sc. (Hist.), Chief Research Associate, Department of the Caucasus,  
Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences  
(Moscow, Russian Federation)*

## ABSTRACT

**T**he author relies on the field ethnographic materials, collected in the Republic of Adyghea in 2016-2017, to analyze a new and little studied religious phenomenon, i.e., the emergence of Christian communities among the Adyghe, its sources and possible repercussions for the Adyghe society. The first trends became obvious in the 1990s, when the south of Russia was flooded by Western missionaries. The interrelationship between the Adyghe Protestant and Orthodox communities is dis-

cussed; the attitude of the Adyghe Christians relating to their ethnic culture, the current state of the relations between the Muslim and Christian Adyghe in Adyghea and the specifics of the everyday life of Adyghe Christians are examined.

The author provides a conclusion that the emergence of the Adyghe Christians should be discussed in the context of the spiritual crisis of traditional—Muslim and ethnic—identities and the quest for new mountaineer ideologies.

**KEYWORDS:** *ideology, Islam, Protestantism, Orthodoxy, Adyghe people, Adyghe culture, religious life, the Northern Caucasus, Adyghea, missionary activities.*

*Introduction*

According to the Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), in 2017, the population of the Adyghe Republic was comprised of 26% of Adyghe people and 64% of Russians (mainly descendants of the Kuban Cossacks) of the total population of 453,366. Today, based on ethnographic data, the following religious trends are represented in the republic: the Russian Orthodox Church (over 50 communities,<sup>1</sup> ten of which are practicing in Maykop, the republic's capital), Old Believers (3 communities, one in Maykop), the Armenian Apostolic Church (2 communities, one in Maykop), Islam (16 registered communities, two in Maykop), Judaism with 1 community in Maykop. There are Protestant communities: the Evangelical Christian-Baptists, Evangelical Christians, Evangelical Christians in the Spirit of the Apostles, Adyghe Eparchy of the Evangelical Christians, Christians of Full Gospel—Pentecostals, Seventh-Day Adventists and others (about 80 communities, 15 of them

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<sup>1</sup> Here and elsewhere registered and unregistered communities are taken into account.

in Maykop), as well as the Jehovah's Witnesses banned in 2017 (about 20 communities in all, two of them in Maykop); there are also several Oriental teachings present in the republic.

The auls or villages, with their mono-ethnic (Adyghe) population, are mono-confessional. In these mountain villages, Islam is professed in two main forms: people's Islam closely connected with the indigenous traditions (Adyghe Habze), the religion of the majority of the local people, and new Islam, loosely connected with ethnic culture<sup>2</sup>, mostly practiced by the younger generation. According to the Adyghe sociologists, although 70% of the Adyghe people consider themselves to be Muslim, only a small share of them, 4%, may be considered to be practicing Muslims in the true sense of the word.<sup>3</sup> Among the Adyghe intellectuals and the creative class (academics, artists and writers), ethnic culture, rather than Muslim renaissance, occupies (and occupied in the past) a central place.

The above adds special importance to an interesting event: a first meeting of the Adyghe Christians, members of diverse Protestant communities, initiated by the Protestant Charismatic Community, The Word of Life, held in Maykop in June 2017.<sup>4</sup> There are Orthodox Christians among the Adyghes; the Protestant community in the republic, however, is much larger. As a new phenomenon in the religious life in the south of Russia, Protestantism has not yet been studied in any detail. The present article, based on the field ethnographic materials collected by the author in the Republic of Adyghea in 2016-2017, analyzes this phenomenon, its origins and consequences for Adyghe society.

## Description of the Adyghe Christians

In the early 1990s, Western and also American Protestant missionaries poured into Russia (including the Adyghe Republic), and began to actively preach their doctrines to the Russians in general, and the indigenous peoples of the Caucasus in particular. Leo Martinson was one of those who supervised missionary activities in Adyghea; he had learned the Adyghe language and translated the Bible into it. In the beginning of the 2000s, his missionary work was cut short by the authorities, yet his efforts did bear some noticeable results. Certain sections of the Adyghe society abandoned Islamic traditions and Adyghe Habze or Habzist worldview, supported by the Adyghe intellectuals, as part of a rise in nationalism and cultural identity, and joined all sorts of Protestant communities, as well as the Jehovah's Witnesses community banned in Russia.<sup>5</sup> There were followers of the Russian Orthodoxy among the Adyghe population and those who favored Eastern religious disciplines (there were people in Maykop, who joined the neo-Hinduism movements, including Sathya Sai Baba and Krishnaitis).<sup>6</sup>

Those, who adhered to the ideas of Christianity among the Adyghes, relied on historical facts about the Adyghes' Christian past (in the 5th-15th centuries they had been Christians) confirmed by the closeness between the Adyghe values and Christian ethics.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See: I.L. Babich, " 'Miagkaia islamskaia revoliutsia' v sovremennoy Adyghee," *Rossia i musulmanskii mir*, No. 4, 2014, pp. 31-31; idem, "Urgent Problems of the Western Circassians in the 21st Century," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2, 2014, pp. 121-132.

<sup>3</sup> See: R. Khanakhu, "Islamskaia obshchina segodnia," *Vestnik Adygheyskogo Universiteta*, No. 12, 2012, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> See: I.L. Babich, *Polevyie materialy avtora*, Adyghea, 2017 (hereinafter PMA—2017).

<sup>5</sup> See: I.L. Babich, "Protestantskoe dvizhenie v Adyghee," in: *Khristianstvo na Severnom Kavkaze: istoria i sovremennost*, Moscow, 2011, pp. 162-185.

<sup>6</sup> PMA—2017.

<sup>7</sup> See: A.A. Muzalev, M.A. Shorova, "Khristianstvo v Adyghee: istoria i sovremennost," *Vestnik Adygheyskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta*, No. 1, 2006, pp. 54-56; R.A. Ostapenko, "Religioznye verovaniia Adyghov po svedeniiam evropeyskikh avtorov," *Kulturnaia zhizn yuga Rossii*, No. 41, 2001, pp. 36-38; I.L. Babich, V.O. Bobrovnikov, L.T. Solovieva, "Islam i Khristianstvo na Severnom Kavkaze," in: *Severny Kavkaz v sostave Rossiyskoy imperii*, Moscow, 2007, pp. 88-111.

Today, the Adyghe Christians are convinced that Christianity was the Adyghe religion because St. Andrew the First-Called Apostle had reached Adyghea at one time; Christianity began to spread in Adyghe territory in the 3rd-4th centuries, even before Russia was baptized. Christianity was not widely adopted even though it remained present in the region until the 15th century, when Islam began to spread. The second Apostle, Simon the Cananite (Zealot), lived in Abkhazia. The Adyghe were Orthodox Christians and even had their own Orthodox bishop. Later, Christianity went into decline.<sup>8</sup>

On the one hand, according to the Adyghe Protestant neophytes, Islam, commonly called in Adyghea “the religion of ancestors,” was an “elite” religion, since it required the knowledge of the Arabic language. This explains why the majority, which does not understand services performed in Arabic, are not practicing Muslims. On the other hand, in the 1990-2000s, Adyghe Habze (the moral code of Adyghe culture) lost much of its former significance and was reduced to traditions: respect for elders, mutual assistance and family values revived through Christianity as its main ethical norms. One of the follower of Orthodox Christianity said that the “damaged nature of the Adyghe can be restored and they can be returned to the sources, that is Adyghe culture, only through Christianity.”<sup>9</sup>

It should be noted that in the 1990s, Protestantism was promoted on a wide scale among the Adyghe, and these efforts have become an important instrument of their conversion, even though there were examples that produced a diametrically opposite effect. For many decades, a big Protestant community of the so-called Walters (The Union for the Sake of Unity in Christ) has been functioning in a big Muslim aul, Koshekhabl. It did not expose itself by missionary activities, while its members, among whom there were no Adyghe, were keeping within their own fraternity. Our poll revealed an amazing fact: the Kabardians (Adyghe) from the same village had never suspected that they were neighbors of a religious community.<sup>10</sup>

Earlier, the Protestant Adyghe lived in Adyghe auls; in the 2000s, however, they started moving to the settlements with Cossack population and Russians from other regions of the country, where Christian communities exist. In the 1990-2000s, the Cossack village of Khanskaya, with the population of thirteen thousand, received several waves of Protestant migrants from Belarus, Ukraine, the Central Asian republics and the Republic of Adyghea. According to school statistics, in the local schools, there were about 20-25 pupils from Adyghe (or mixed Adyghe-Russian) families per 1,000 pupils.<sup>11</sup> Some of them still live in their auls; they keep within their own circle and never socialize with their neighbors. There is a big Adyghe family in Koshekhabl that attends the Baptist community in Kurganinsk; its members, who belong to different generations, prefer to stay away from their neighbors.

Unlike Muslims, members of Protestant communities can count on material assistance: a bicycle for a child, a computer for the head of a family and, most importantly, employment. Support and mutual assistance are the two most important priorities of present-day Protestantism mentioned by all those who were polled.

In June 2016, we attended a service in honor of St. Trinity, organized in a private house on the outskirts of the city of Adygheisk that houses the biggest Baptist Adyghe community. The service was attended by 15 people (mostly Adyghe); 5 of them were men, others were women, including 3 girls, aged between 15 and 20. The service was conducted in Russian; at the end all those present, with the exception of two or three people, prayed together in the Adyghe language. The

<sup>8</sup> PMA—2017.

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>11</sup> See: I.L. Babich, *Polevye materialy avtora*, Adyghea, 2016 (hereinafter PMA—2016).



services in this church are attended by Adyghe from the neighboring auls (Gabukay, Ponezhukay, Assokolay); on the whole, several scores of Adyghe participate in the activities of the Baptist community of Adygheisk.<sup>12</sup>

In the 2000-2010s, the Adyghe, mainly urban dwellers, appeared in all of the Protestant communities. People, who live in auls, are much more aware of public opinion and are afraid of condemnation by their neighbors, relatives, etc. In the last few years, the Adyghe became members of the Maykop Church Nadezhda of the Adyghe eparchy of Evangelical Christians (with the total number of 1,000 members; there are 200 permanent members among them and about 25 Adyghe); the Maykop Bethany Pentecostal Church (5 Adyghe women among the members); the Maykop Church of the Adventists (1 Adyghe woman in the community), and the Maykop community of the Jehovah's Witnesses.<sup>13</sup> There are Adyghe in aul religious communities: in Koshekhabl, for example, there are members of the Jehovah's Witnesses and Baptists.<sup>14</sup> There are Adyghe from Maykop in the community of the so-called Sabbatarian Pentecostals, who arrived in Khanskaya from Tajikistan.<sup>15</sup> There are relatives of the heads of the Republic of Adyghea among local Protestants<sup>16</sup> and Adyghe among the heads of the local communities of Pentecostals, Charismatics, etc.<sup>17</sup> According to members of the local intelligentsia, who are atheists, about 100 Adyghe (who lived in Adyghea) attended in the early 2010s, and continue to attend Protestant communities in Maykop.<sup>18</sup>

Here is a story of an Adyghe Baptist: "I was born in the Jerokay aul; enlisted in the military, and lived for a while in Astrakhan, where I started attending an Orthodox Church. I was baptized there but felt that there was no true faith in the church. Later, I lived in Adygheisk, where my elder brother had been attending a Baptist church for some time. In 2007, I came there too."<sup>19</sup>

Another Adyghe, a member of the community of Pentecostals, told his story: "I lived in Yablonovskiy; in the early 1990s, when I was 15-17, there were no moral foundations: there was no Islam—my father was a member of the Communist Party, while my mother had never been an active Muslim. Islam was confined to burial rites. The Adyghe Habze moral code had been devalued. At fourteen, I had entered a secondary technical school and dropped out of it fairly soon. At 17, I started using dope; life was going on and on without much meaning. For about ten years I lived in Maykop, Krasnodar and other places. Gradually, I became aware that men of my age embraced Islam, thus upgrading their status. Having adopted Islam, they started saying 'I am a Muslim, while all Russians are swine.' I did not like this sort of religion, since I liked all people. At some point in time, I realized that I was slipping into an abyss; I tried and failed to stop spiraling downward. It was at that time that I learned that a man, whom I knew in Yablonovskiy as a drug addict, abandoned drugs, married, and was living a normal life. I asked him how he had managed it. He told me about Christ and invited me to his church. It was in 2002. One Sunday, in Krasnodar, I attended a service, during which people were called to repent. I repented, in front of everyone, confessing my drug abuse. I went out after the service and felt free from my drug addiction. From that day on, I never used drugs or alcohol. I never had to resort to special cures to rid myself of these habits. This was 15 years ago. I regularly attended this church and became the local pastor. I have already baptized more than 130 people, and some of them were the Adyghe people."

<sup>12</sup> See: I.L. Babich, *Polevye materialy avtora*, Adyghea, 2009 (hereinafter PMA—2009); PMA—2016.

<sup>13</sup> PMA—2016.

<sup>14</sup> PMA—2009.

<sup>15</sup> PMA—2016.

<sup>16</sup> PMA—2009.

<sup>17</sup> PMA—2016.

<sup>18</sup> PMA—2009.

<sup>19</sup> PMA—2016.

## Orthodoxy of the Adyghe

Despite the absence of obvious national conflicts in the republic, the Adyghe people are convinced that during the Caucasian War of the 19th-century, the Russian Empire was guilty of Adyghe genocide. Orthodoxy, therefore, is associated with Russia, which explains the Adyghe preference for Protestantism. The number of Orthodox Adyghe is much smaller than the reciprocal number of Adyghe followers of Protestantism. Father Sergiy, the dean of the Orthodox Church in the village of Khanskaya, told us that in the five years of his service, he had baptized about 10 Adyghe.<sup>20</sup> There are Orthodox Adyghe among the republic's leaders.<sup>21</sup> Orthodox Adyghe describe their spiritual experience on the website of Baptized Adyghe on the Internet. In Kabardino-Balkaria, one of the Orthodox priests is a Kabardian; so far, there are no Adyghe priests in Adyghea, yet, there is an Adyghe among the monks of the Optina Pustyn (an Orthodox monastery). Some of the Adyghe people, who had never been baptized, ask Orthodox priests to bless their home or an apartment, or to read the prayer of St. Ephraim. Sometimes, Adyghe apply with similar requests to the priest of the Armenian Apostolic Church of Maykop.<sup>22</sup> To avoid criticism and reproaches people go to Krasnodar to put candles in an Orthodox Church.<sup>23</sup>

An Orthodox priest told us that, when invited to bless the homes of such Adyghe, "I enter the house and see prayers in Arabic. During the procedure I have to paint crosses. I paint small barely noticeable crosses. As a rule, these are the houses of 'non-practicing Muslims'."<sup>24</sup>

An Adyghe from Ulyap described his path to Orthodoxy: "Since a very early age, I was interested in God but I was dead set against Orthodoxy. Adyghe, as a people, do not like Orthodoxy; I, too, did not like it. My parents were Soviet people through and through and were Muslims by birth. My grans, one from Ulyap, the other from Pshizo, were deeply religious folks and observed all of the Muslim rites. Later, I attended the cathedral mosque in Maykop for a couple of years. I learned the fundamentals of Islam and prayers in Arabic. It was in the 2000s. I practically accepted all of the dogmas of Islam. I attended the mosque for several years running and met nice guys there. However, it was a period of foreign missionaries, who preached 'pure Islam' with obvious elements of aggression. I finally realized that Islam contained aggressive elements.

"It goes without saying that there are certain elements of spirituality in Islam, yet after a while, you find yourself in a dead end because Islam is a highly formalized religion. Later, I realized it had developed from Christianity, from the Old Testament and that there was no God in Islam because Muhammad was not a God. I joined the Eastern teachings, practiced in Adyghea unofficially. Later, I joined the Pentecostals. I found them highly attractive. Later, however, I left them as well: the traditional religions did not attract me. Still later, I joined the Orthodoxy."<sup>25</sup>

## The Way Christian Adyghe Treat Ethnic Culture

I have already written that those of the Adyghe people who joined Protestant communities are convinced that the Adyghe culture and the Adyghe Habze moral code lost its significance in the contemporary Adyghe society and, in fact, had been practically extinguished in the 1990s. This explains

<sup>20</sup> PMA—2017.

<sup>21</sup> PMA—2009.

<sup>22</sup> PMA—2017.

<sup>23</sup> PMA—2016.

<sup>24</sup> PMA—2017.

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem.

why people started looking for new ideologies. Today, the Adyghe society is living through a period of active social and economic differentiation; the traditional moral norms can no longer keep the Adyghe together. The Adyghe elite minces no words: “Adyghe Habze is for the poor.” People from different social groups form communities with very different morals.

Practicing Muslims, for example, revised or even renounced the Adyghe traditions and based their new Islamic ideology on this precept: they are Muslims, rather than Adyghe. Christians do not abandon their Adyghe identity and values: the majority has successfully combined what remained of the Adyghe culture with Christian ideology, with the exception of several elements of the Adyghe etiquette.

An Adyghe Pentecostal told us his story: “There are certain rules of the Adyghe Habze that remain very much alive: we respect the elders and cherish family values; many others have become anachronisms, such as a choice of a future occupation for a child by the object that is picked up, etc. I attend Adyghe burials that follow Muslim rites. While the mullah prays in Arabic, I say my prayers out aloud. I meet my relatives, who are Muslims, yet I have an Adyghe foundation and Adyghe self-consciousness. If I manage to convert an Adyghe into my faith and cure him of drug addiction I feel very much satisfied.”<sup>26</sup>

Another Adyghe, a Baptist, added: “Today, much in the etiquette of the relationships between men and women, husband and wife, look strange. According to the Adyghe rules of behavior, a woman should walk slightly behind her man; a man should go on her right side, since the right side is considered to be more prestigious. Many other traditions, such as paying kalym for the bride, bride kidnapping, etc., look strange to me. As soon as I started attending the Baptist community, I stopped observing or approving these traditions.”<sup>27</sup>

Overall, the Adyghe Christians believe that when anybody starts attending a Christian community, his national identity gradually loses its significance even if at first their ethnic roots remain fairly strong.<sup>28</sup> As time goes on, the baptized Adyghe become involved in communication with the members of their communities, irrespective of their ethnic origins, rather than with the Adyghe people. In fact, the communication with the members of any of the communities among themselves, within the Republic of Adyghea or even the Krasnodar Territory, is an important communication circle for all believers. For example, Russian Baptists in different settlements of Adyghea invariably glad to greet highly communicative Adyghe R., member of the Baptist church in Adygheisk.<sup>29</sup>

## Protestantism and Islam

I have already written that the Protestant Adyghe reject the nominal nature of contemporary Islam (as it is preached and practiced in the Adyghe Republic) and the fact that the majority of the local imams and mullahs are poorly educated and do not know Arabic.<sup>30</sup> In their sermons, the Baptist Adyghe criticize the Islamic lifestyle and Islamic ideology.<sup>31</sup>

Here is what one of them had to say about Islam: “Today, there is a strong youth movement in Islam. People become Muslims and start cutting the heads off with the words Allah Akbar. Many

<sup>26</sup> PMA—2017.

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>28</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>30</sup> PMA—2016.

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem.

people leave Islam. This is not Islam at all. The Muslim Adyghe have no God, they follow the wrong road that does not lead to Christ.”<sup>32</sup>

We polled Adyghe neophytes who said that in most cases relatives, friends, neighbors, and the Adyghe village community as a whole did not approve their conversion into a different religion. Sometimes, friends stop communicating with converts. When one of two close Muslim friends started frequenting the house of worship of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the other was at first interested in what was going on there. Having visited, along with her friend, one of the meetings, she stopped all sorts of communication with her.<sup>33</sup> Man and wife, Baptists from the aul of Jerokay, told us that “the relatives rejected us.”<sup>34</sup> “Kinship” is a fairly high obstacle on the road toward Protestant communities.<sup>35</sup>

One of the polled Adyghe told us that his relatives had stopped greeting him when he abandoned the Muslim community to become a Christian. On the whole, Adyghe look at such behavior of their relatives as a stain on the reputation of the clan.<sup>36</sup>

Another recently converted Adyghe Pentecostal said the following: “When I met Ingush J. in my Yablonovskiy settlement, who was my schoolmate and a friend, and told him that I had adopted Christianity he started talking with indignation about betrayal of the faith of the ancestors. We were friends, now we rarely see each other. I invited him to my place but he did not come. I have no brothers or sisters but there are many first and second cousins. The majority refused to accept me; I communicate with my Muslim relatives because I follow the Adyghe basic principles and the Adyghe identity. Once, when my uncle fell ill and was hospitalized in the intensive care unit, my relatives asked me to come to the hospital to pray for him. I did that and all ended well.”<sup>37</sup>

Adyghe Baptist R. told us how his relatives from Adygheisk had responded to his conversion: “They brought me into a big hall and started talking harshly: ‘Christ is the God of Russians.’ My uncle went even further: ‘If you start talking about Baptists I’ll kill you.’ My relatives stopped talking to me. Recently, I was not invited to the marriage ceremony of my nephew Aslan. I married a Russian woman and had to move from the aul to Krasnodar.”<sup>38</sup>

Sometimes, Adyghe ask state structures to help them extract their relatives from Protestant communities. The ombudsman of the Republic of Adyghea received a complaint from a man in the aul Enem whose wife had started visiting one of the Protestant churches. Through the common efforts of the administration of the Takhtamukai District, the Prosecutor’s Office, and a special investigative agent the wife was returned to the family.<sup>39</sup>

There is another highly significant fact: Protestants with many years of church attendance behind them ask (either themselves before their death, or it was done by their relatives after these Protestants’ death) to bury them at their local Adyghe (that is, Muslim) cemetery. Pastor S. of one of the Baptist churches told us that in 2016 when Adyghe R., a Baptist, had died, his relatives managed to persuade the imam to let them bury him at the local cemetery according to the Muslim tradition.<sup>40</sup> There is information of a different kind. The Regnum website offers the following story. Adyghe B. Gubjokov, the imam of the village of Sernovodskoe (Stavropol Territory), did not allow the relatives of a woman, member of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, to bury her at the local cemetery according to the

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>33</sup> PMA—2009.

<sup>34</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>35</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>36</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>37</sup> PMA—2017.

<sup>38</sup> PMA—2016.

<sup>39</sup> PMA—2017.

<sup>40</sup> PMA—2016.

Muslim tradition. “Having joined the sect,” he argued, “she turned away from the Most High and abandoned the righteous path, therefore I did not allow her relatives to bury her next to Muslims as is customary. I suggested she should be buried somewhere else.”<sup>41</sup>

Muslims have no warm feelings toward Christianity. Nurbi Emizh who for a long time had filled the post of Mufti of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Adyghea and the Krasnodar Territory was convinced that “young Adyghees join sects for money ... and trust me, these sects do nothing good to Russia.”<sup>42</sup> It seems that Adyghees are driven to Protestant communities by the crisis of the ideology of mountain peoples and of their own identity.

## Lifestyle of Christian Adyghees

On the whole, Protestants live in fairly isolated communities; they keep within their own circle and marry within their communities. An Adyghe from the Yablonovskiy settlement married a woman from the Pentecostal community, who was a Lakh from Daghestan. In another case, having been disappointed with Islam, an Adyghe had spent many years in the quest for the right faith that he found in Christian Orthodoxy. With many friends in all sorts of communities (Muslim, Protestant and Eastern) that he had attended for some time he invariably pointed out that it had been easier to make friends with members of some faith groups than with members of others. It is easier to befriend followers of Eastern teachings since the Eastern<sup>43</sup> religions are much more peaceful by nature; it is much harder to make friends with Muslims (there is an element of aggressiveness in Islam, which explains why the Muslims on the whole are harsher and much more intolerant).<sup>44</sup>

One of the members of the Pentecostal community has been engaged for seven years now in helping drug and alcohol addicts. He and his family live in a remote household in the Krasnodar Territory together with 20-30 socially unadjusted people. He said that about 70 of the total number of 850 who had stayed in his center returned to normal life. All of them were baptized and became Pentecostals. There was a certain number of Adyghe Muslims; those who were not ready to change the faith did not stay; others became baptized, were cured of their bad habits, set up families and lived normal and happy lives. This happened, for example, to Circassian Z. from a Muslim family in Karachaevo-Cherkessia. Recently, he married a parishioner of a Pentecostal church.<sup>45</sup>

## *Conclusion*

Rather than creating a symbiosis of two traditional religions—Islam and Orthodoxy—in Adyghea, the religious renaissance of the 1990s has turned the republic into a cultural-religious patchwork

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<sup>41</sup> “Imam otkazal v pokhoronakh stavropolskoy iegovistki po musulmanskim oby chayam,” available at [<https://regnum.ru/news/accidents/2224988.html>], 9 January, 2017.

<sup>42</sup> PMA—2009. Interview with Mufti of the Republic of Adyghea and Krasnodar Territory Nurbi Mossovich Emizh, 21 October, 2009, Maykop.

<sup>43</sup> See: S. Lyausheva, V. Nekhai, R. Khunagov, B. Shkhachemukova, “The Traditional Adyghe Culture in the Context of Globalization: Social Integration as a Factor of Defusing Ethnic Tension in the Caucasus,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3, 2016, pp. 113-121; S.B. Filatov, R.N. Lunkin, “Respublika Adyghea. Osobennosti istoricheskogo razvitiia religii,” in: *Religiozno-obshchestvennaia zhizn' rossiiskikh regionov*, Moscow, 2014, pp. 7-32.

<sup>44</sup> PMA—2017.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*.

of two historical and other religions, Protestantism in its different forms in the first place. The autochthonous peoples of the Northern Caucasus are looking for their ways in this religious melee. This has been amply confirmed by the emergence of the Christian community in Adyghea, a new phenomenon in the life of this mountain people and an obvious evidence of the weakening of the national factors in social life.

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