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CENTRAL ASIA  
AND  
THE CAUCASUS

Journal of Social and Political Studies

6 (42)  
2006

CA&CC Press®  
SWEDEN

+

## FOUNDED AND PUBLISHED BY

INSTITUTE  
FOR CENTRAL ASIAN AND  
CAUCASIAN STUDIES

Registration number: 620720-0459  
State Administration for  
Patents and Registration of Sweden

INSTITUTE OF  
STRATEGIC STUDIES OF  
THE CAUCASUS

Registration number: M-770  
Ministry of Justice of  
Azerbaijan Republic

## PUBLISHING HOUSE

CA&CC Press®. SWEDEN

Registration number: 969713-2695

Journal registration number: 23 614  
State Administration for Patents and Registration of Sweden

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WEB ADDRESS:  
<http://www.ca-c.org>

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**CENTRAL ASIA AND THE CAUCASUS**  
**Journal of Social and Political Studies**  
**No. 6(42), 2006**

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

**Central Asia and the Caucasus**

- Political Parties and Civil Society
- Fifteen Years of Independence: the Central Asian and  
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- China's Policy in Central Eurasia: Specifics and Prospects

**ENERGY PROJECTS AND  
ENERGY POLICY****ENERGY SECURITY  
IN THE INTERRELATIONS AMONG  
THE EU, RF, UKRAINE,  
AND CENTRAL ASIA****Sergey TOLSTOV**

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In the last few years, energy transit and long-term energy supply issues have come to the fore on the international scene. The reasons are obvious: Europe and North America are consuming increasingly larger amounts of energy, while the prospect of oil, natural gas and, in the more distant future, coal (non-renewable energy sources) shortages looms all the more ominously.

Everything related to international security (military security in particular) is highly structuralized within the system of international relations. However, Europe's energy security, which is currently being discussed, has demonstrated a classic example of the inability of the

state and corporate egotism to come to terms with each other in order to balance their highly varied interests.

Seen as a possibility, disrupted energy supply and the resultant energy deficit as a whole have already created different behavior patterns in the energy suppliers and consumers. In the European context, successful agreements in this sphere are limited to bilateral contracts among the EU structures, European energy distributors, and the energy supplier-companies, of which Russia's Gazprom is the largest.

More often than not the very complicated and fairly contradictory positions of the sides involved in the multisided process obscure the real

content of the European energy security issue and delay long-term and mutually acceptable decisions. The newly formulated norms of obligatory and strict abidance by the rules of diversification and “free market” in the oil and gas trade have added to the political tension. Given the worst scenario, energy supply might develop into a sphere of bitter rivalry over short-term economic or political advantages. Political interests do not necessarily bring huge profits.

In the European context, the compatibility of the EU’s and Russia’s long-term energy strat-

egies remains the key issue of the related discussions. The Central Asian countries and Ukraine have an important, but relatively autonomous, role to play in the European energy balance. At the same time, the very fact that the energy security issue belongs to the power and influence context of international relations means that other international political and economic actors intend to increase their presence in European oil and gas trade. The United States has its sights set on becoming involved as one of the sides in oil and gas trade and transit contracts and agreements.

## Different Energy Strategies

The widely differing interests of the United States, EU, and Russia prompt them to take different strategic approaches. Unlike the European states, America’s energy strategy in the post World War II period developed as a global one: the United States sought control over the energy resources of the Persian Gulf and the Caribbean Sea. The latest forecasts of the looming global energy deficit have forced American energy companies to implement projects that recently looked like science fiction: gas deliveries from South America, North Africa, and the Barents Sea. They have already concentrated on large-scale domestic and international gas projects, including deep-water offshore fields, pipelines in Alaska and the Mackenzie Delta (Canada), and sea terminals to receive the imported liquefied gas the country will use in ever-growing quantities.

The U.S.’s dependence on imported oil will increase;<sup>1</sup> American government experts are convinced that long-term stability of the world energy markets, their manageability, security and reliability will remain Washington’s main strategic task. In fact, the U.S. is striving to retain its control over them. This makes guaranteed access to the constantly growing natural gas supplies designed to cover the greater part of the expected growth in energy consumption over the next 30 years especially important.

Today, the Middle East remains America’s main supplier of energy resources. The Caspian, a relatively more stable region in the political respect, has not yet become an alternative to Arabian oil and gas. According to the U.S. government assessments for 2004, it potentially contains about 186 billion barrels of oil (32 billion of proven reserves): in the Gulf area proven oil reserves amount to 674 billion barrels. The same applies to gas. The total (proven and potential) gas reserves of Kazakhstan, Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Iran in the Caspian Basin are assessed at 15,848 tcm; the Gulf’s proven reserves amount to 54,420 tcm.<sup>2</sup>

Russian experts are convinced that the Caspian’s energy importance was grossly overstated and that it was the region’s military-political role that attracted Washington. The American energy companies, however, displayed their interest in the Caspian’s oil and gas resources as soon as the Soviet

<sup>1</sup> See: EIA Releases *Annual Energy Outlook 2006*, Full Report, available at [<http://www.eia.doe.gov/neic/press/press267.html>], 9 October, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> See: *EIA Annual Energy Review 2004*, available at [<http://www.eia.doe.gov/aer/>], 9 October, 2006.



Union disintegrated: they were obviously seeking new promising sources of energy. The Clinton Administration actively supported the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project at a time when European business and political circles had not yet developed an interest in the Caspian and Central Asia. America is pursuing numerous goals to achieve the most extensive possible strategic control over Central Asia through its economic, political and military (since 2001) presence. It supplies the United States with tools of pressure in the Gulf zone (Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia). Washington has good prospects for influencing Russia's policy and the policy of regional states by involving American companies in oil and gas extraction and transport. This is not all: America's presence in the Caspian Basin spells its direct involvement in oil and gas deliveries to the EU countries.

The forecasted rivalry over the energy resources in the region bordering on Russia, China, and India is developing into a four- or even five-sided process. Early in the 1990s, it was thought that sooner or later Turkey and Russia would clash in Central Asia.

Reality proved much more complicated than that: there is a precarious Russia-China balance that hinges on their joint opposition to the American presence. To diversify its foreign policy approaches, the United States is relying on its active presence in Georgia and Azerbaijan and is placing its stakes on Kazakhstan, which is indispensable for Central Asian stability and gradually moving toward using the America-controlled oil pipelines. This has already isolated Armenia, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, which are no longer able to actively cooperate with Russia.

The EU tends to look at the Caucasian and Central Asian states as separate geographical units. The European security strategy "A Secure Europe in a Better World" says, in part: "We should now take a stronger and more active interest in the problems of the Southern Caucasus, which will in due course also be a neighboring region."<sup>3</sup>

NATO looks at the Black Sea Basin as part of Europe and the Mediterranean eastern fringe. Despite the fact that earlier prospects of economic association of the Caspian and the EU, as an integrated inter-state alliance, were objectively good, its governing structures have not yet developed a more or less clear South Caucasian and Central Asian strategy.

The forecasts of the European energy strategy for the next 20 years predict bitter rivalry over energy sources (non-renewable resources such as coal, oil, and gas in particular). It was surmised that by 2020 the world would need 65 percent more energy than in 1995 (the demand for non-renewable resources would grow by 95 percent). The "politically unstable" Mid-Eastern oil will play a much greater role in the world energy supply. According to the published forecasts, in 2010-2020 its share in world consumption of non-renewable resources will grow from 30 to 60 percent. In 2020, the share of imported oil in Western Europe's balance of energy consumption will increase from 53 to 85 percent; the figures for gas are 35 and 60 percent.<sup>4</sup>

The correlation between the energy requirements and import of energy fuels in Europe as a whole (Norway, Russia, and Azerbaijan included) is much worse than in the United States, Canada, and Mexico (NAFTA members). In 1995, the European countries imported 16.3 percent of the total amount of energy fuels they used—the corresponding figure for the NAFTA members was 10 percent. Early in the current decade, the EU imported about half of the energy it used; by 2030 the share is expected to reach 70 percent.<sup>5</sup>

The worldwide energy crises caused by the bouts of tension in the Middle East forced the Europeans to place their stakes on Russia's closer integration into the European energy supply system. The

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<sup>3</sup> *A Secure Europe in a Better World—European Security Strategy*, Approved by the European Council held in Brussels on 12 December, 2003 and drafted under the responsibilities of the EU High Representative Javier Solana. Brussels, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> See: *Basis of an Energy Strategy for Europe*, Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly. Committee on Science and Technology, Doc. 8653, 21 February, 2000, pp 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

decision was prompted by the fairly favorable past experience of economic cooperation with the Soviet Union and positive assessments of the political and economic processes now underway in the RF. Until recently, Russia was seen as a more predictable and reliable partner than most of the OPEC members and a source of energy fuels in case of possible irregularities in oil deliveries from the Gulf and North Africa.

In 2004-2005 the situation changed: the skyrocketing oil prices, for which the war on Iraq was partly responsible and from which American energy giants hugely profited, delivered a heavy blow to the European economies. The increase in oil prices was followed by a symmetrical increase in gas prices. The top leaders of Russia, in turn, readily accepted the rules of the game suggested by the George W. Bush Administration: both countries needed higher energy fuel prices. Russia profited from them to a great extent: it used petro-dollars to pay part of its foreign debt, while Gazprom and other Russian companies stepped up their activities in Europe.

In December 2005, President Putin made an important statement: Russia had developed into an energy superpower determined to become a "global energy leader" and a guarantor of energy security for Europe and North America. He also declared that the country would look at its fuel and energy complex and fuel export as a priority. In December 2005, the "gas war" with Ukraine provided a context in which the West translated the Russian president's statements as a threat of economic pressure. The American press launched a campaign of criticism against Russia to prepare the public for possible moves against the energy diktat of the Kremlin.

The episode that followed deserves close attention: the gas conflict between Russia and Ukraine should be described as a local "energy war," a prelude to tougher energy competition and, possibly, to a new phase of interstate relations. The situation, in fact, was much more complicated than it looked at first glance.

## The Gas Conflict between Russia and Ukraine

In Ukraine and in Europe, energy security is mostly a political issue; only a few Ukrainian publications demonstrated a more serious approach. This is true of several articles in the *Natsional'nyi interes* (National Interests) journal, which appeared in 2005 and which classified the main Ukrainian political groups by their approaches to the energy transit and gas trade issues.<sup>6</sup>

With a certain degree of generalization, we can say that there were three more or less clearly expressed positions on the Ukrainian political scene: neo-conservative, liberal, and administrative-regulatory.

The neo-conservative approach was represented by former premier Iulia Timoshenko and her supporters who were convinced that oil and gas trade should be maximally liberalized to allow the consumer companies to dictate prices; the consortium that managed Ukraine's gas transport system was to be transformed into a prototype of the first European futures and spot exchange. The neo-conservatives looked at Russia's direct involvement in the EU gas market as threatening the new structure's stability and security. Although in opposition, Iulia Timoshenko displayed a lot of enthusiasm over the U.S. State Department's readiness to stand alongside Ukraine if it demanded annulment of the gas agreements with the RF of 4 January, 2006.

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<sup>6</sup> See: A. Starostin, "Ukhod ot 'neftianoy finliandizatsii'," *Natsional'nyi interes*, No. 1, 2005, pp. 33-35; L. Gusak, "Gazovyi balans Ukrainy-2006—prognoz," *Natsional'nyi interes*, No. 4, 2005, pp. 35-40; A. Starostin, "Iuri Boiko: vozvrat epokhi gazovoy poliarizatsii," *Natsional'nyi interes*, No. 4, 2005, pp. 46-49.

The cabinet of Iuri Ekhanurov demonstrated a liberal approach: the ministers agreed that gas prices should be related to the fuel-and-energy equivalent. For this reason, gas was not regarded as an exchange commodity: as a monopolist, the seller could adjust gas prices to oil price fluctuations. The state was to remain the gas transit monopolist; there were also vague plans to invite Germany and Turkmenistan to join the future gas transportation consortium.

It was Viktor Ianukovich's first cabinet (November 2003-January 2005) that supported the administrative-regulatory approach; the neo-conservatives and liberals dismissed it as pro-Russian and comprador.

Those who supported it were convinced that Ukraine should seek compromises with Russia to become a long-term partner of Gazprom and Rosneft as a transit country. This role would ensure acceptable prices in the form of long-term intergovernmental agreements and direct gas supplies under fixed prices as payment for transit. At the same time, there was the conviction that Ukraine should pursue its own, maximally independent, policies by shopping for fuel in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan to diversify its sources. Much was done to put the Odessa-Brody oil pipeline into operation and extend it to Plock and Gdansk. Current Minister of Fuel and Energy of Ukraine Iuri Boyko and heads of the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (A. Kinakh, prime minister in 2002-2004 and secretary of the Council of National Security and Defense between September 2005 and June 2006 among them) supported this approach.

The conflict among the three trends proved to be protracted and disruptive; the 2005 ill-devised attempt to revise the Ukrainian-Russian gas transit agreements ended with Gazprom's monopoly on Central Asian gas deliveries. The Ukrainian economy faced another price shock and possible social unrest. The "big policies" echo directly affected the parliamentary election results and split the Orange Coalition then in power.

In 2005 and 2006, Ukraine was busy pursuing certain foreign policy aims; it completely rejected the maneuvering tactics typical of Leonid Kuchma's presidency. However, the Orange leaders, in power since 2005, failed to achieve positive results in any of the priority areas. When talking about their intention to apply for EU membership, the cabinets of Ekhanurov and Timoshenko deliberately burned their bridges in the East. Their intention to alter Ukraine's non-bloc status caused a systemic crisis in its relationships with Russia. Under these conditions, Moscow interpreted Ukraine's invitation to revise the gas transit prices as a bluff that permitted it to ignore the earlier agreements.

In 2005, the Ukrainian leaders did not indulge in publicly announcing their intentions. The random statements that came from the top allow us to conclude that the country had invited the EU to join the Ukrainian transportation consortium (or to replace it with a new project that would oppose Russia's energy strategy). The Timoshenko cabinet planned to set up an alternative company (trade house) to buy and transport Central Asian gas to the EU countries; at least, early in 2005 Poland and Germany were invited to join. The Ukrainian government was busy discussing a new scheme of gas transits without preliminary discussions with Russia. It threatened to set up an alliance of gas users and transit operators (the EU, Ukraine, and Poland) determined to impose their price policies.

The Timoshenko government demanded in harsh terms that the intermediary RosUkrEnergo A.G. company be removed from the scheme of Turkmen gas export, in which it was involved under the 2003-2004 agreements. There were plans to increase the volume of Turkmen gas export to Ukraine between 2007 and 2008 to 60 bcm a year.

The national Naftogaz Ukrainy company repeatedly stated that it intended to set up an alliance of transit and gas-user countries. There were plans to enlarge the format of the idling Ukrainian-Russian gas transport consortium by means of certain European companies, German in particular, and to enlist Central Asian state oil and gas companies. During President Iushchenko's visit to Turkmenistan on 22-23 March, 2005, the Ukrainian side invited Turkmenistan to join the planned consortium of Ukraine, Russia, and Kazakhstan to export Central Asian gas to Europe.

The Ukrainian idea of a tripartite cooperation model with Russia (gas supplier), Ukraine (transit operator), and the EU (gas user) contained at least two projects oriented toward buyers and producers. The Central Asian Consortium was expected to build a gas pipeline and transport Turkmen gas along the Caspian shore. The already discussed route from Aleksandrov Gai (Russia)-Novopskov (Lugansk Region)-Uzhgorod was expected to pump the gas further. A certain European consortium made up of Ukraine, Russia, and Germany was to become the Asian Consortium's partner together with the planned Novopskov-Uzhgorod pipeline; Gazprom would have played a much lesser role in this multisided structure.

According to unconfirmed information, during the gas conflict with the Russian Federation the Ukrainian cabinet voiced its approval of the planned gas pipelines from Central Asia and Azerbaijan to Europe bypassing Russia along the Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey-Europe route. The EU energy departments were rumored to have promised to allot financial assistance to the project for branching the pipeline off to Moldova and Ukraine.<sup>7</sup> It is doubtful, though, that the "southern route," if realized, would improve the prospects of Ukraine's energy security, since transit across its territory would be diminished: indeed, the future of the Odessa-Brody oil pipeline with its obvious European orientation is vague, even though it has been formally supported, at least since 2003, by the European Commission.

The energy conflict between Russia and Ukraine continued to mount throughout the fall of 2005: in August, at the talks with RF Minister of Industry and Energy V. Khristenko, Ukraine (represented by Minister of Fuel and Energy of Ukraine I. Plachkov) agreed to a gradual price rise accompanied by higher transit prices. According to the Ukrainian government's press service, "the price of Turkmen gas and its transit across Russia remained unresolved because the transit price in Russia is equal to the transit price in Ukraine."<sup>8</sup>

A series of protracted discussions and mutual accusations worsened the situation; it was still more aggravated by Premier's Ekhanurov's failed visit to Moscow in December 2005 when Gazprom quoted a new price for Ukraine (\$220-230 per tcm), which the premier rejected. There was no agreement on new transit prices either. On 31 December, 2005 Naftogaz Ukrainy declined President Putin's latest peace initiative: he invited the sides to sign an interim agreement to be able to continue talking and postpone the price rise until April 2006.

Ukraine lost the three-day "gas war" that followed. After a short conflict the Ukrainian government agreed on almost all of Russia's conditions, which proved worse than Gazprom's summer and fall offers. The Agreement on Relations in the Gas Sphere signed on 4 January, 2006 set the price of \$230 per tcm and confirmed the rights of RosUkrEnergo as sole gas supplier to Ukraine. The transit price raised to \$1.6 per tcm was to remain unchanged for the next five years and be unrelated to gas prices for Ukraine. On top of this, Ukraine lost its contracts with Turkmenistan, an alternative gas supplier. This spelt a strategic defeat.

Gazprom scored a tactical victory: it detached gas prices from transit rates. Under the new agreement, Ukraine is unable to revise the transit rates and transit conditions for the next five years. We should bear in mind, however, that Ukraine itself rejected barter payments, which allowed it to preserve the gas supply balance irrespective of gas and transit prices.

Seen in the formally legal context, the situation is a strange one: all gas agreements in force before 2006 were annulled without official notification. According to the Ukrainian press, a package of seven documents, mainly of confidential nature, was signed together with the published contract.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See: "Geoekonomicheskie itogi 'bol'shoy gazovoy voyny,'" *Memorandum Instituta natsional'noy strategii*, 21 February, 2006, available at [<http://www.lenta.ru/articles/2006/02/20/memorandum/>].

<sup>8</sup> "Ukraina neozhidanno soglasilas' s poetapnym povysheniem tsen na rossiyskiy gaz," 23 August, 2005, available at [<http://www.korrespondent.net/main/128909>].

<sup>9</sup> See: Iu. Mostovaia, A. Eremenko, "Sovershite vy massu otkrytiy (inogda ne zhelaia togo)," *Zerkalo nedeli*, No. 4 (583), 4-10 February, 2006; "Naftogaz podpisal v Moskve sem' soglasheniy s RosUkrEnergo i Gazpromom, a ne odno. Kak okazalos'," *Interfax-Ukraina*, 6 February, 2006.

To sum up the efforts of the two Ukrainian cabinets (Timoshenko and Ekhanurov), we can say that they were not aiming at tapping to the greatest degree possible the country's relative advantages as a transit country to ensure stable gas supplies. They aimed, and failed, at using the country's transit operator status to restructure the entire European energy trade system, a task that Ukraine could not tackle single-handedly. Its European partners, meanwhile, were caught unprepared. Kiev's attempts to launch its own game on the European energy market in the winter of 2006 destroyed the country's energy supply system and caused economic havoc. Ukraine lost the battle for Turkmen gas transit and an Asian Consortium to Gazprom. Saparmurat Niyazov opted for political stability at home; Naftogaz Ukrainy's gas debts to Turkmenistan served as a pretext for cutting down alternative Russian gas supplies to Ukraine in 2006. The Turkmenistan government, meanwhile, reached an agreement with Gazprom on higher gas prices (\$65 and, starting in 2007, \$100 per tcm).

While being obviously concerned about the January "gas war," the EU countries rejected the Ukrainian and Moldovan requests to interfere and demand that Gazprom freeze gas prices for Ukraine. France and Germany were the clearest in their refusal; Austria refused to interfere; Poland kept silent; and Italy accused Ukraine of stealing the gas intended for the EU.

The U.S. administration tried to establish its control over the gas discussion. After a short delay, in January 2006, U.S. State Secretary Condoleezza Rice announced that her country supported Ukraine. According to the commentaries that came from Washington, America expected that Kiev would resist Russia much longer and much more consistently—it planned to rally Moldova, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Turkey against Gazprom. Support was half-hearted.<sup>10</sup>

The problem of revising the 4 January, 2006 agreements remained suspended until August 2006 when Viktor Ianukovich was appointed prime minister. The United States repeatedly confirmed its willingness to support Kiev in the event it decided to revise the agreement. The U.S. placed its stakes on Iulia Timoshenko who, if elected premier, would set the ball rolling. The Americans were convinced that this should be done in summer rather than in the winter. In the context of another gradually encroaching cold war between the RF and the U.S., the revived gas conflict would have created a suitable background at the St. Petersburg G-8 summit devoted to energy security issues (July 2006). It was expected that on the eve, the U.S. would try to put pressure on the Russian leaders to force them to abandon the scheme of long-term bilateral agreements with EU distributors devised by Gazprom.

The domestic political context of the American plan also deserves special investigation, since President Iushchenko publicly supported the compromise. This means that if the agreement were revised, Iulia Timoshenko would gain more political weight and would be able to insist on revoking the constitutional amendments to pave the road toward the presidency. Some members of Iushchenko's team, former minister of economics A. Iatseniuk among them, supported the idea of inviting the U.S. to control the Ukrainian gas transportation system.<sup>11</sup>

In one of his first statements as prime minister, Viktor Ianukovich warned that his cabinet did not intend to revise the gas agreements with Russia: it merely intended to return to the pre-2005 practice of state agreements.<sup>12</sup>

The cabinet described settlement with Russia as a priority. While never rejecting the European course, the cabinet stressed that Ukraine should tap its transit potential threatened by Russia's new main pipelines being laid along the Baltic and Black seabed and across Belarus. Much was done to

<sup>10</sup> See: *Kommersant*, No. 94, 29 May, 2006.

<sup>11</sup> See: "Ukraina khochet privilech' SShA v partnery po gazu," 2 August, 2006, available at [<http://www.oilru.com/news/32766/>].

<sup>12</sup> See: "Novyi prem'er-ministr Ukrainy Viktor Ianukovich zaiavil, chto ne sobiraetsia peresmatrivat' gazovye soglashenia s Rossiei," 11 August, 2006, available at [<http://www.oilru.com/news/32915/>].



fully tap the capacities of the underloaded Ukrainian transit oil pipelines being used at less than half of their capacities.

This was meant to create strategic partnership between Gazprom and Naftogaz Ukrainy, the state company responsible for European transit yet losing its leading role of a gas trader on the domestic gas market. Under these conditions, any irregularity in gas deliveries to Europe or even talks about cutting them down are disastrous for the reputation of the Ukrainian cabinet and the company. On the other hand, the cabinet confirmed its intention to retain state monopoly on the transit gas pipelines, which under skilful management could remain reliable even if serviced by the state monopoly.

The EU energy directorate will have direct access to information about the terms and volumes of gas transit across Ukraine. The memorandum On Mutual Understanding on Cooperation in the Energy Sphere the EU and Ukraine signed in Brussels on 14 September, 2006 presupposed that the gas pipelines at the Ukraine's borders would be fitted with measuring equipment to allow the European Commission, which funded the project, to control oil and gas transit. European Commissioner Benito Ferrero-Waldner described the Memorandum as a concrete step toward greater transparency, reliability, and security of energy supplies and transit to the EU.

According to anonymous information from the RF government, during his first visit to Russia Premier Yanukovich asked President Putin and Premier Fradkov to replace RosUkrEnergo, an intermediary imposed on Ukraine by Gazprom, with Gazprom or a JV with Naftogaz Ukrainy. Moscow refused because, as certain Russian bureaucrats explained, it was fundamentally important for Russia not to let Gazprom sell gas directly to Ukraine to be bogged down in haggling. RUE is involved in numerous schemes, they said, and there was no time to reorient them.<sup>13</sup>

## Interests and Contradictions

Early in 2006, under the impact of the gas dispute between Russia and Ukraine the international discussion about gas deliveries from Russia and their reliability flared up once more. Freed from purely speculative theses, the EU concerns can be boiled down to the following three fundamental issues:

1. Stable gas deliveries to Europe threatened by the rapprochement of Russia and China.
2. Monopoly diktat of high gas prices ensured by Russia's control over the Central Asian pipeline system.
3. Gazprom's wider involvement in the ownership of European gas distribution and other companies infiltrated by Russian capital which grows on high oil and gas prices.

European experts and politicians were concerned that Russia's greater financial and economic might may, in the future, strengthen its political position, thus undermining the Atlantic's solidarity position. The European Commission invited Russia to sign a framework agreement with the EU under which Gazprom would sell gas only at the EU borders, while the EU gas companies would be free to sell it across Europe without territorial restrictions. At the May 2006 Russia-EU summit, however, the European Commission retreated somewhat from its harsh demands. Moscow, in turn,

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<sup>13</sup> See: A. Bekker, T. Ivzhenko, "RosUkrEnergo poterpit ubytki v politicheskikh tseliakh," *Vedomosti*, 28 September, 2006.

guaranteed uninterrupted energy supplies to the EU for the long term, but refused to retreat on issues of investment freedom and the movement of capital; it demanded that discriminatory restrictions be lifted.

Soon after that the Russian side took measures to monopolize transit: on 5 July, 2006, the RF State Duma passed the Law on Gas Export, which gave Gazprom (as the owner) and its subsidiary companies exclusive rights to the use of gas pipelines. In other words, whereas in the past the EU insisted on the reorganization of Russia's domestic market, today the RF government has placed its stakes on restoring the state's absolute control over the Russian sector of gas extraction and transportation. The law contradicts the European Energy Charter, which insists on the contract use of transport mainlines; this can be described as an attempt to establish Gazprom's monopoly over the transportation of Central Asian gas to Europe. Significantly, at first the draft was aimed at excluding competition among Russian suppliers abroad, which might push down gas export prices.<sup>14</sup>

The Russian government's harsh and very obvious measures designed to limit the interests of foreign investors (together with the Kremlin's obvious influence on Gazprom and other Russian state monopolies) forced the European Commission to look for alternative sources of oil and gas, an area in which the United States outstripped the EU long ago. The first American projects in Azerbaijan and Turkey are underway, while the Nabucco gas pipeline from Iran and Central Asia across Turkey to Southern Europe, which the EU has been discussing for a long time, has not yet passed the technical examination stage.

By interfering in the Russia-Europe gas polemics, the U.S. is pursuing its own interests. The George W. Bush Administration took into account the negative context created by the Russia-Ukraine "gas war" as well as Russia's tainted image in Europe, while consistently promoting the gas transportation system in the Southern Caucasus to oppose Russia's plans in the Baltic Basin. America's Caspian strategy presupposes that the Central Asian countries will join the Turkish transit route (as opposed to Russia's route): there is a strategy to bypass Iran across Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey.

In the south, oil transit is treated as a priority. On 16 June, 2006, with the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline officially commissioned, the long talks between Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan finally produced an agreement on moving Kazakhstani oil across the Caspian to make the new pipeline profitable.

The South Caucasian gas pipeline (Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum) commissioned in 2006 is of local importance; it runs parallel to the BTC oil pipeline to bring gas to Georgia and to exclude Iran from the gas-related scheme. This explains the enthusiasm with which the Georgian leaders are rupturing all contacts with Russia.

In its statement of 22 June, 2006, the U.S. State Department described the South Caucasian gas pipeline as a project of strategic importance and an embodiment of the East-West contacts. This meant that the new line would move Azeri gas to Greece, Italy, and the Danube Basin. Matthew Bryza, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Southeastern Europe and Central Asia, pointed out that the new pipelines would diversify the energy fuel markets in Europe and ensure reliable supply of oil and natural gas to the continent.<sup>15</sup>

Large energy concerns, Texaco and Chevron among them, which intend to invest at least \$5 billion in the gas pipeline, have already displayed an interest in the main pipeline to Turkey sup-

<sup>14</sup> See: "Monopolia na eksport gaza: otkrytogo konflikta ne poluchilos'," 5 July, 2006, available at [<http://www.news.central.kz/archive/hind.chem.oilgas/200607/06023144.text>].

<sup>15</sup> See: "Matthew Bryza: Truboprovody BTC and SCP sozdaiut infrastrukturu novogo pokolenia dlia eksporta uglevodorodov iz Azerbajjana," 5 July, 2006, available at [<http://www.news.central.kz/archive/hind.chem.oilgas/200607/06023144.text>].

ported by U.S. Vice President Cheney. The project is intended to achieve Russia's geopolitical containment.<sup>16</sup>

It is expected that the line will cross the territories of American allies (all interested sides will be allowed to join). At the stage of preliminary consultations, it was suggested that gas-liquefying capacities should be set up at Poti and Batumi, two Georgian ports, to ensure further transportation across the Black Sea and Ukraine.

America, Poland, and the Baltic countries are resolved to undermine the North European gas pipeline laid along the Baltic seabed and designed as an exclusive and independent energy source for Germany. So far the opponents have been working hard to discredit Russia by accusing Moscow of hegemony and imperial ambitions, which the Russian leaders frequently displayed.

Poland and the Baltic countries, the most ardent opponents of the new pipeline, are actively criticizing Russia's energy policy in the EU. Polish President Lech Kaczyński, the most pro-American leader among the EU heads of state, came forward with a plan to set up a European Energy Union (a so-called Energy NATO) to neutralize the independent energy policies of certain countries (Germany, France, and Italy) and to give American energy companies a greater share in the energy deliveries to Europe. Poland insisted on coordinated energy policies of all the countries involved. The Polish project presupposed that Energy Union members would compensate for the ruptured energy supplies to one of them under the joint and several liability principle. The key points of the European Energy Strategy were approved on 8 March, 2006, but the European Commission concluded that a completely integrated energy policy was premature: the EU members could not agree on potential diversification routes.

Poland's desire to diminish its dependence on Russian energy fuel deliveries and the fact that the EU proved unprepared to create an integrated energy policy placed the energy issue in the center of Polish Premier Jarosław Kaczyński's visit to the United States in September 2006. Poland tried to exchange its support of Washington's plans to move gas across Turkey for much larger funding for itself in connection with an American anti-missile base that was to appear on its territory.

The Americans' willingness to regulate energy supplies and control them betrays their desire to place the European economy under its control for a long time to come. Channeling energy resources and staging crises will serve the purpose and keep the euro exchange rate in check. The U.S. is out to weaken the EU-Russia strategic link, which, some time in the future, would prove instrumental in the EU's foreign policies and boost its international status.

So far the European leaders are treating Gazprom's expansion and America's intention to ensure Europe's energy security with caution and responding with maneuvering. The ownership and control issues remain the key ones, urging Europe to seek diversity. It was in this context that an alternative project for a gas pipeline (with a total cost of \$2 billion) to connect the Caspian and Central Europe was presented in March 2006; an international consortium of five European companies was set up; and a one-thousand-kilometer-long stretch of pipeline from Georgia and Ukraine was to be laid along the Black Sea bed.<sup>17</sup>

Even if the U.S.-supported project (Iran-Turkey-the Balkans-Western Europe) or the European alternative are implemented, neither would diminish Russia's share in the EU gas deliveries. To accomplish this Iranian gas would be needed. The EU plans to diversify gas supplies (the pipelines from Asia included) will hardly create a real alternative to Russian deliveries in the near future. The Russian Federation will continue as the key (even if not the monopoly) supplier. Old Europe prefers to go

<sup>16</sup> See: J. Bielecki, J. Przybylski, "Gazociąg z Azji za tarczę?" *Rzeczpospolita*, 4 September, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> See: "Ukraina, Gruzia i ES khotiat postroit' gazoprovod za \$2 milliarda," 17 March, 2006, available at [<http://www.korrespondent.net/main/148306>].



on talking to Moscow in an attempt to convince it to join the European Energy Charter, which would allow European and American companies to compete for access to Central Asian resources, thus driving Gazprom out and preventing Chinese infiltration.

Any successful solution should take at least two factors into account: involving Ukraine in Europe's energy policies as the key transit operator responsible for over 85 percent of deliveries of Russian and Central Asian gas and putting an end to Gazprom's monopoly on gas transit in Central Asia.

Viktor Ianukovich and his cabinet obviously intend to join the EU-initiated game (as long as it does not threaten the country's main economic interests). After the Kiev talks with André Mernier, Secretary General of the Energy Charter, Minister of Fuel and Energy of Ukraine Iuri Boyko announced that since his country had paid off its gas debt to Turkmenistan and had signed contracts with Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan on 58 bcm of gas, it had no intentions of buying gas from Russia in 2007.<sup>18</sup>

In other words, the government will exploit the country's transit potential to the full; it will guarantee gas supplies to Europe and will return, as far as it can, to the individual agreements with Central Asian countries practiced in 2000-2005. Ukraine finds those Energy Charter provisions formally profitable that speak of the freedom of energy transit along the main pipelines and dispute-settling mechanisms.

At the same time, since gas in Ukraine is cheaper than in the neighboring states, it might find itself vulnerable if Russia loses control over the Central Asian energy resources to the U.S. and EU, or if the RF and China gain control over them. Today the gas-related rivalry is dangerous for Ukraine's economy: if Russia permitted free gas transit along its pipelines, the European and American companies would be able to buy gas from the Central Asian states at a price Ukraine would find unaffordable. Central Asian gas prices will grow to reach the Russian and North African level, therefore, it is unlikely that the Ukrainian companies will be able to compete with the European traders: financial problems and a general shortage of energy resources might leave the country's industry in the cold. Ukraine will probably earn more money than before as a gas transit operator, but not enough to compensate for the upturned price balance.

Russia's adherence to the Energy Charter would allow the European companies to achieve somewhat lower prices on Russian and Turkmen gas or, at least, contain them. There is another possibility: once on the market, American companies, which normally stick to their own policies and seek maximum profit, may start "buying for a rise." We cannot exclude the possibility that American transnational companies might try to gain control over the transit gas pipeline systems in Ukraine, Poland, and Slovakia. This will bring Europe to the brink of another fierce "gas war" for financial and economic control over gas resources as well as distribution and transit systems. This will push the RF-EU contradictions to the side.

Russia's influence in Central Asia is as strong as ever. The 21 September, 2006 Protocol of Intent on the Key Cooperation Principles in the sphere of natural gas transportation and deliveries that involved Gazprom, the Uzbekneftegaz State Holding, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources of Kazakhstan and the KazMunayGaz state company were intended to supply the south of Kazakhstan with Uzbek gas through Gazprom as an intermediary. While the local countries profited from the extremely favorable conditions of mutual compensation schemes, Gazprom confirmed its central role—it has no intention of abandoning control over the region's gas transportation system.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> See: "Ukraina otkazalas' zakupat' rossiyskiy gaz," 6 October, 2006, available at [<http://www.korrespondent.net/main/166433>].

<sup>19</sup> See: "'Gazprom' meniaet uslovia postavki gaza v strany SNG," 22 September 2006, available at [[http://www.ibk.ru/news/\\_gazprom\\_menyaet\\_usloviya\\_postavki\\_gaza\\_v\\_strani\\_sng-23386/](http://www.ibk.ru/news/_gazprom_menyaet_usloviya_postavki_gaza_v_strani_sng-23386/)].

If Gazprom extends its control over gas transportation systems in Belarus, Russia is unlikely to become more yielding when talking to the EU. On the other hand, neither the EU nor the U.S. has enough resources to accomplish a regime change in Russia or force Moscow to abandon its efforts to become the gas-transportation monopolist on the former Soviet territory. There is not much sense in upbraiding Russia for its efforts to set up a “gas OPEC:” the United States and Europe have accepted the oil OPEC for over thirty years now. In other words, a mutually acceptable solution should be sought elsewhere.

Today, the relations among America, the EU, and Russia permit several alternatives:

1. The EU and Russia agree on long-term gas deliveries based on the mechanism of price agreements. Convinced by the EU, Russia recognizes the rights of investors working at individual gas fields and introduces a mutually acceptable gas transit regime across Russian territory in exchange for the possibility of investing in EU gas-distributing companies.
2. The United States brings the EU onto its side in implementing the “southern gas transportation route” to contain Russia and put political pressure on its leaders. In this case, America will consolidate its position in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan to prevent, in particular, energy deliveries to China. If realized, this alternative (the Caspian strategy) might lead to a regime change in Turkmenistan, destabilization in Uzbekistan, and further isolation of Iran.
3. The EU, Russia, Ukraine and the Central Asian countries reach mutually acceptable agreements as to the game rules on the gas market together with adequate balancing mechanisms. The sides might come to an agreement on gas prices, gas transit, ownership rights to gas transit systems, and protection of investor rights. A gas-transportation consortium might prove instrumental in realizing a much more balanced and undiscriminating regime, which will allow the sides to enter cartel agreements on delivery volumes and transit control over the consortium’s territory.

In view of the position President Putin has already outlined, Russia will probably never accept the Energy Charter in full. At the same time, an additional agreement between the EU, RF, and Ukraine is possible. If implemented, it would relieve tension and open the road to compromises. Russia agrees, at least at the official level, that there are no alternatives to collective multisided approaches to world problems, be they in the economy, environmental protection, the social sphere, or world politics.<sup>20</sup>

In all other cases, Europe should be prepared to face a new energy conflict, the terms and intensity of which will depend on the level of energy shortage and relations among the United States, the European Union, Russia, and China. Today such relationships depend to an increasing degree on energy consumption and energy prices.

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<sup>20</sup> See: Briefing ministra inostrannykh del Rossii Sergeia Lavrova, 3 October, 2006, available at [<http://g8russia.ru/news/20061004/1264315.html>].

# GAZPROM AS A TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATION AND CENTRAL ASIA

## *Part Two*

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## **Russia's Energy Interests in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan**

Russia is also actively cooperating in the oil and gas industry with Kyrgyzstan. This cooperation is mainly expressed in an agreement between the Kyrgyzstan government and the Russian company Gazprom on the exploration and development of gas fields over a span of 25 years.

At the beginning of 2004, Uzbekistan insisted on entering a new gas contract with Kyrgyzstan, but its conditions were tougher and less advantageous for the latter. The price of gas remained the same—42 dollars per 1,000 cubic meters, but in so doing Uzbekistan insisted on it being paid in full in hard currency, and not 50% in currency and 50% in goods as before. Taking into account its large foreign debt and state budget deficit, this contract was extremely disadvantageous for Kyrgyzstan.

Since there was no other alternative Kyrgyzstan was forced to agree to essentially any conditions Uzbekistan put forward. This situation prompted the Kyrgyz leadership to look for alternative sources of gas supplies. For example, in May 2003, an Agreement on Cooperation in the Gas Sphere between Gazprom and the Kyrgyz Government for twenty-five years was signed. Gas is delivered via the existing major gas pipelines. Apparently, Gazprom is planning to deliver some of the gas it purchases in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to Kyrgyzstan.

According to the same agreement, Gazprom will participate in reconstructing and building major gas pipelines, compressor stations, and other infrastructure facilities in Kyrgyzstan's gas complex. What is more, the agreement presupposes joint operation of the existing gas pipelines with the prospect of transiting gas through Kyrgyzstan to other countries. Gazprom is planning to invest in geological exploration in the republic.

In Kyrgyzstan, Gazprom plans to participate in privatizing this republic's gas-distributing networks (they are currently controlled by the state Kyrgyzgaz company). In so doing, some of the shares might be transferred to Russia for settling Bishkek's foreign debt. What is more, Kyrgyzstan, which is currently supplied with Uzbek gas, is hoping to import gas from other countries as well, relying on Gazprom's help. It should be added that the Russian gas concern is currently engaged in exploring gas fields in Kyrgyzstan itself.

It is known that Gazprom and the PRC have been working on the possibility of delivering Russian gas to China for several years now. One of the issues being discussed at the talks is the export route Russian gas should take. One alternative is for it to pass through Kyrgyzstan.

Gazprom's debut as a gas supplier to Kyrgyzstan helped Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to bring their positions at the talks on delimitation of the state border between the two republics into greater balance with each other. What is more, Uzbekistan's position has become more vulnerable. Signing of the agreement between Gazprom and Kyrgyzstan led in the short term to Tashkent losing a lever of pressure on Bishkek with respect to settling territorial disputes. What is more, if Gazprom delivers gas to Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan might face water supply problems.<sup>1</sup>

There are several reasons why it is more advantageous for Uzbekistan to sell gas previously meant for Kyrgyzstan to Gazprom: Gazprom is a much more reliable partner than Kyrgyzstan, since it always pays for the deliveries of Uzbek gas on time and in full; and the price at which Gazprom buys Uzbek gas is the same as the price Uzbekistan sells it to Kyrgyzstan. Uzbekistan's cooperation with Gazprom is much more important for the republic, since the volume of Uzbek gas deliveries to Kyrgyzstan is insignificant—0.6 bcm annually.

Russia's position in the form of Gazprom as one of the sides of the triangle appears to be the vaguest, since the details of the agreement signed with Kyrgyzstan are not being disclosed. But it is clear that the interests of the Russian gas giant in Kyrgyzstan are not related to gas production. Gazprom has no particular illusions about the amount of gas reserves in Kyrgyzstan. According to Gazprom's data, the proved reserves of natural gas in Kyrgyzstan amount to a total of 5.7 bcm, whereby the assimilation of the republic's gas fields is complicated by the unfriendly geological characteristics and poorly developed infrastructure. In this way, Kyrgyzstan is unable to meet even its medium-term natural gas needs by means of its own fields. They can only be used for emergency purposes in the event that import deliveries are interrupted.

From the technical viewpoint, there is the Ukrainian factor: Bishkek says that Kiev is not repaying its debt, which amounts to approximately 25 million dollars. This amount "accumulated" as early as the end of the 1980s-beginning of the 1990s (when the U.S.S.R. Central Bank introduced clearing accounts), which could interfere with Ukraine joining the WTO. Kyrgyzstan is willing to accept any type of debt settlement, and Ukraine can pay by means of machine-building production for the fuel and energy complex, as well as by means of building services in this sphere.

The same applies to Gazprom's relations with Tajikistan. Gazprom has been carrying out exploration and development of fields in this country under a contract signed in 2003 and is helping local companies to build, reconstruct, and operate gas pipelines, as well as other gas complex infrastructure facilities in the republic. Proven reserves in Tajikistan are insignificant; production amounts to 24 mcm and is consumed in the south of the republic. Domestic demand is largely met by means of import, Uzbek gas is delivered to the northern part of the country (485 mcm). Proven reserves of natural gas and gas condensate in Tajikistan amount to 29.1 bcm and 1.26 million tons, respectively. In so doing, the forecasted gas resources are evaluated at more than 1 tcm, while Tajikistan's own natural gas requirements amount to only 1.2 bcm a year.

In 2004, Russia decided to try something new in Tajikistan, something it tried out in Kyrgyzstan: military bases in exchange for investments. At present, it is unprofitable to develop oil and gas, since

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<sup>1</sup> However, Uzbekistan in no way reacted to the agreement signed between Gazprom and Kyrgyzstan. Taking into account the fact that just six months earlier, in December 2003, an agreement was signed between the Uzbekneftegaz Petrochemical Company and OAO Gazprom on long-term purchases of gas in Uzbekistan for 2003-2012, joint implementation of projects in gas production (development of the Shakhpakhty field), and reconstruction and development of the republic's gas transport system, it can be presumed that the conditions of the agreement signed with Kyrgyzstan were agreed upon in advance with the Uzbek leadership.

these resources lie at great depths. A promising area is still the use of hydropower, of which the country essentially has inexhaustible reserves.

One of the topics also being discussed at the Russian-Kyrgyz talks is the problem of rehabilitating uranium tailing ponds, which, according to specialists, requires at least 50 million dollars. The Russian side expressed its willingness to assist in preparing a technical project for conserving tailing ponds (particularly the one at Kaji-Sai). Russia is also interested in creating a Russian-Kazakh-Kyrgyz joint venture for developing the Zarechnoe uranium field located in the Otrar District of the South Kazakhstan Region, the reserves of which are evaluated at 19,000 tons of uranium.

It is no accident that Kyrgyzstan has been chosen to deliver electric power to Russia: its hydro resources are estimated at 142.5 billion kW/h, and, in terms of its hydropower potential, the republic is ranked third in the CIS. This high index is due to the fact that the country's rivers have an extremely high potential per km of river bed. For example, in terms of specific hydropower capacity, the Naryn River, where a cascade of hydropower stations operates, is superior to Russia's Volga and Angara.

But the export of electric power to Russia is not the end of this project. RAO UES is suggesting that Kyrgyzstan take part in creating a Eurasian energy bridge, that is, a unified energy system for the CIS, and subsequently for Europe and Asia. Several states (France, Germany, South Korea, Iran, China, Turkey, and Japan) have already expressed their support of the idea of creating a unified Eurasian energy system. In order for Kyrgyzstan to be able to participate in this project, its potential hydro resources must be activated, in particular, two hydropower stations must be built on the Naryn River; whereby the capacity of each of them could be raised to 19 billion kW/h, which will require approximately 1.5 billion dollars.

Top priority among the main tasks of Russia's fuel and energy cooperation with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan goes to creating a unified water, as well as fuel and energy balance in Central Asia. These two tasks are closely interrelated, since Kyrgyzstan is participating in the water-energy exchange scheme with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. In this respect, Russia is offering to help Kyrgyzstan and other Central Asian states develop a new conception for an international hydropower consortium and organize the rational management of these types of resources.

Finally, we wonder about Gazprom's true purpose. We have already mentioned that the latter and Beijing have been working for several years now on the possibility of delivering Russian gas to China through Kyrgyzstan. In this respect, it is understandable why Gazprom intends to carry out major modification of Kyrgyzstan's gas transportation infrastructure.

Russia's active stance during the revolution and Askar Akaev's overthrow in 2005, particularly in the inter-Kyrgyz settlement, was motivated not only by its desire to stabilize the situation and prevent escalation of the conflict, but also by its striving to uphold its political, economic, and energy interests in Central Asia, as well as maintain its dominating influence in this region by means of Gazprom.

## Gazprom's Policy in Turkmenistan

Russian companies have begun expanding into the republic's offshore sector, while most of the Western giants and medium-sized companies found the current investment climate in Turkmenistan to be unsatisfactory. Along with the political factor, the main problem to be overcome when carrying out exploration and development in this sector is the underdeveloped petroleum infrastructure and the immense depreciation of the facilities that are available. Azerbaijan has possession of the entire set of

boring installations remaining in the Caspian after the collapse of the U.S.S.R., as well as pipe-lay-derrick barges and assembly sites for building stationary platforms, and Turkmenistan has difficult political relations with this state.

Russian oilmen and gasmen can successfully replace Western investors. The first to achieve success was Gazprom, which signed a long-term contract with Ashghabad in 2003 for the purchase of extremely large amounts of natural gas.

At present, Russian-Turkmen relations look outwardly stable, despite several crises in their recent history. The most significant of them were the events in 2003 associated with the cancellation of Russian-Turkmen citizenship.

Right up until the end of 2003, Russia repeatedly expressed its concern about the discrimination of ethnic Russians in Turkmenistan. In April 2003, Saparmurat Niyazov suddenly decided to abolish the institution of dual citizenship by asking approximately 100,000 ethnic Russians in Turkmenistan either to give up their Russian citizenship, or leave the country. Under pressure from Moscow, President Niyazov used the gas factor to achieve his end.

As a result, on 10 April, 2003, presidents Putin and Niyazov signed two documents in Moscow: an agreement on deliveries of Turkmen gas to Russia for 25 years and a protocol on the abolishment of dual citizenship. Turkmenistan is the largest producer of natural gas in Central Asia and hopes to attract foreign investments of up to 25-26 billion dollars into its oil and gas sector by 2020. Ashghabad is actively making use of this factor in its foreign policy, particularly in its relations with Russia and other CIS countries.

During this time, the Russian Federation will buy Turkmen gas at a fixed price; by 2009, purchases are to be increased to 80 bcm. Fifty percent of the gas to be purchased will be paid in cash and 50% in goods and services for the Turkmenistan gas industry. It is expected that Russia will gain a profit of 300 billion dollars, and Turkmenistan of 200 billion.<sup>2</sup>

The unresolved nature of issues regarding the building of new transnational routes, as well as the signing of an agreement in April 2003 between GTK Turkmenneftegaz and the Russian Gazek-sport company (Gazprom's subsidiary company) brought the problem of modernizing the existing pipeline system into the foreground.

Gazprom is showing an interest in solving this task, since, beginning in 2009, the annual volume of Turkmen gas deliveries to Russia will amount to 70-80 bcm a year. At present, four branches of the Central Asia-Center gas transportation system can pump 40-45 bcm of gas a year through Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, and approximately 70 bcm through Russia. Starting in 2009, contracted deliveries of Central Asian gas will amount to a total of approximately 100 bcm of gas a year, taking into account the 10-12 bcm of gas purchased by Gazprom in Uzbekistan under an agreement signed in December 2002. From this it follows that the capacity of the Central Asian section of the pipeline must be increased by 60 bcm, and of the Russian section by 30 bcm.

A total of 70-80 bcm of Turkmen gas will be purchased a year, and throughout the 25 years the agreement is in effect there are plans to extract approximately 1.6 tcm of gas from the Turkmen fields. From Gazprom's point of view, laying a gas pipeline within the framework of the existing route appears to be economically expedient. In this event, investments in the project will not exceed 2 billion dollars.

But there are objective and subjective difficulties hindering the implementation of these plans. The main Central Asian gas pipeline CAC (Central Asia-Center) cannot pump more than 45 bcm of gas a year (in the section that passes through Uzbekistan). Gazprombank has allotted 100 million

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<sup>2</sup> See: D. Faizullaev, "Turkmenistan: strategii i taktika osvoeniia gazovykh resursov," *Azia i Afrika*, No. 1, 2005, pp. 21-25.



dollars, which should go to expanding the throughput capacity of CAC in Uzbekistan to 55 bcm in the next two years. What is more, a feasibility report is being prepared of a project for building a new gas pipeline branch, which will be laid within the currently operating CAC corridor. Gazprom has no intention of being the sole investor in this project. The company hopes to interest the Ukrainian side in the form of RosUkrEnergo, which is in favor of stable deliveries of Turkmen gas to Ukraine.

The main contradictions are developing around the price of the gas, the form of payment, and the transportation conditions. With respect to the latter, Turkmenistan has already managed to impose rather tough contract conditions on Gazprom: if Gazprom cannot “draw” all the gas to be delivered from this country, it will have to pay an amount equal to the cost of the “undrawn” gas. Gazprom is keeping this in mind and so is stepping up work to increase the throughput capacity of the Central Asian gas pipelines. The Turkmen leadership is insisting that, beginning in 2007, Gazprom make all of its payments in hard currency only.

Russia, like Turkmenistan, gained from the gas crisis at the end of 2004-beginning of 2005. In so doing, Gazprom not only upheld its economic interests, but also made Ashgabad understand beyond any shadow of a doubt who is holding the biggest trump cards. What is more, at this stage, Russia’s out-and-out refusal to transport and purchase Turkmen gas could have extremely serious repercussions for the Turkmenistan economy and, correspondingly, for the ruling regime there.

At present, five production sharing agreements are being executed in the country. Two of them are on dry land: the Nebit-Dag project (operator—Burren Energy) and the Hazar project with the participation of the Mitro Int company, and three are on the shelf: Cheleken (operator—an Emirates company called Dragon Oil), Block-1 (operator—Malaysian Petronas), and Blocks 11, 12 (operator—Danish Maersk Oil). The German Wintershall company is getting ready to explore the shelf, NAK Naftogaz Ukrainy obtained five contract blocks, and ZAO Zarit (a joint venture comprised of MGK Itera, OAO Rosneft, and ZAO Zarubezhneft) is planning to carry out production at three blocks on the Turkmen shelf. All of these companies intend to enter production sharing agreements.

The Turkmen side is supporting another route for the gas pipeline—from Turkmenistan along the east coast of the Caspian through Kazakhstan to Russia. In this case, its length from Turkmenistan to the Russian Federation will be reduced to 700 km, and the cost of the project will amount to no more than 1 billion dollars. But this route will not pass through Uzbekistan, which might not be entirely to Gazprom’s liking due to the large number of contracts between Russia and Uzbekistan.

Russia’s goal is obvious and consists of strengthening the position of its main partner—Turkmenistan—in the energy sector, thus retaining control over the export of Turkmen gas.

In 2004, Russia and Turkmenistan agreed that the latter would sign an important agreement “in the near future” on developing offshore oil fields in the Turkmen sector of the Caspian Sea. This transaction, which is a production sharing agreement, will be entered with the Russian oil consortium ZAO Zarit. The time-limit of the contract is 25 years and concerns the development of four blocks rich in oil and gas in the southern part of the Caspian shelf close to the border with Iran.

The Zarit joint venture was founded in May 2002 in Moscow by Rosneft and the Gazkhinvest company, which belongs to Itera (each of them possesses 37% of Zarit’s shares), as well as the Zarubezhneft company, which owns the other 26% of the shares. The consortium intends to draw Turkmen state companies Turkmenneft and Turkmenneftegaz as well as companies from Iran into cooperating with it.

In this way, the activity of Russian companies in Turkmenistan boils down to Gazprom buying large amounts of blue fuel. What is more, this company managed to “cut off” other serious consumers

of Turkmen gas, for the near future at least, and shelve for the foreseeable future such ambitious projects as building a pipeline to Afghanistan and Pakistan or laying a trans-Iranian gas pipeline with access to Turkey and Europe.

The situation was complicated at the beginning of April 2006 during President Niyazov's visit to China, where an agreement was reached on building a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to the PRC, bypassing Kazakhstan. This demarche by Turkmenbashi looked like a risky attempt at blackmail, primarily of Russia, since this project does not have any realistic substantiation. Turkmenistan will not have enough gas to fill this pipeline even for the Pakistani and Indian markets (if the agreement with Gazprom is not broken). What is more, the military-political and geopolitical risks associated with Afghanistan still retain their significance.

## Gazprom and Foreign Markets

The main goals of Russian policy with respect to the EU consist of the following: preserving the French-German-Russian triumvirate, which has unique significance for Europe; continuing and strengthening the EU countries' energy dependence on Russia; achieving and keeping Russia's support on the part of the key European countries (Germany, France, Italy, and, possibly, Great Britain) as a counterbalance in Russia's relations with the U.S. and the Eastern European countries of the European Union; and drawing up a joint policy in geopolitical areas important to Moscow.

As Russian strategists believe, long-term, large-scale cooperation, which is counted on for decades, between two mutually complimentary economic complexes—Russia and the European Union—could lay the foundation of a new and powerful center of the multipolar world of the 21st century. In their opinion, if events develop favorably, this center could take first place in the world by the middle of this century. Moscow sees the energy resources of Kazakhstan, the Caspian Region, and Central Asia (placed under Russia's control) as a necessary and important addition to this strategy.

Ensuring energy security, which in China is a synonym for oil security, will become a top priority task. It is believed that, relying on the current structure of world oil interests, China should develop its "energy diplomacy," take active part in global and regional organizations aimed at cooperation in the energy industry, and become an effective player on the current and future markets, acquiring a discernible vote in determining oil prices and favorable game rules.

We should take note of the growing shortage of China's energy resources.<sup>3</sup> By 2010, it will satisfy half of its oil requirements by means of import. According to the estimates of specialists, the PRC economy's annual need for oil will grow from 200 million to 400 million tons, that is, essentially double, by 2020. Annual growth rates of crude oil consumption in the country have already reached 6% over ten years with a less than 2% increase in domestic production. The poor diversification of sources of oil import is arousing serious concern among experts with respect to ensuring energy security in China. Today, more than 60% of oil imports are maintained by deliveries from five countries of the Middle East and Africa, and by 2010, the share of this region could grow to 80%.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See: Ph. Andrews-Speed, Xuanli Liao, R. Dannreuther, "The Strategic Implications of China's Energy Needs," *Adephi Paper 34*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 2002, 115 pp.

<sup>4</sup> See: B.D. Cole, *Oil for the Lamps of China—Beijing's 21st-Century Search for Energy*, NDU, Washington, D.C., 2003.



In its Russian policy, China is pursuing a strategic goal—to implement a pipeline project from Eastern Siberia to its Pacific coast. The main problem complicating Russian-Chinese relations at the current stage is the Angarsk-Daqing pipeline.

In March 2006, Russia's energy geostrategy in the Chinese vector became extremely activated: during Vladimir Putin's official visit to the People's Republic of China, a Protocol on Deliveries of Natural Gas from Russia to the PRC was signed. The document set forth the main terms regarding time-limits, volumes, and routes (Western and Eastern) of the gas deliveries, as well as payment conditions. The Rosneft and Gazprom companies signed agreements on oil and gas deliveries and on creating joint ventures with the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation. The matter concerns building two gas systems in Western and Eastern Siberia with delivery volumes of 30-40 bcm each. The new gas pipeline from Russia to China will be built in five years.<sup>5</sup>

Essentially, signing of the memorandum on Gazprom's delivery of gas to the PRC is a serious step toward forming a global world gas market in keeping with Russia's energy geostrategy. This event will have an impact on the development of one of the three main gas markets—the Asia Pacific. One of the reasons is the Russian Federation's search for alternative markets in response to the fact that Europe has been talking a lot recently about the possibility of alternative deliveries of gas and developing alternative types of energy production. Another factor is that Russia must gain access to the Asian market as quickly as possible since there is competition between liquefied natural gas and pipeline gas.

The strategic goal of this breakthrough is Moscow's striving to intensify competition over deliveries of Russian gas in the world, particularly between the Europeans and Asians. Competition between them will ultimately lead to an increase in the cost of blue fuel. Attention is also being paid to the consideration that liquefied natural gas will be used primarily on the coast, whereas the Russian pipeline will run to China's western regions.

Another factor is important for Kazakhstan: the Russian Federation and PRC have reached a preliminary agreement on laying an export pipeline in the PRC to the Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region. This will ensure additional opportunities for Astana in the future, if Moscow and Beijing can be convinced to lay the pipeline through Kazakhstan.

The LUKoil and Gazprom companies, which are closely tied to Russian state structures, have come to the forefront of Russia's energy interests in the Middle East. However, Russian companies found themselves up against tough competition from the largest Western energy corporations. Gazprom did not begin manifesting activity in the Middle Eastern vector until 2004. The concern is primarily interested in Egypt and Libya. The Russian company's main trump card is its wealth of experience in the exploration and production of blue fuel, as well as in building major gas pipelines. In recent years, both of these countries have shown immense interest in developing their gas sectors, and so the appearance of Gazprom here is entirely justified. In Egypt, the production volume of natural gas doubled in just four years, reaching 36 bcm at the end of 2004.

In November 2004, there was a meeting between Gazprom Head Alexey Miller and then Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Russian Federation Rauf Saad, at which the parties discussed the prospects for bilateral cooperation in the oil and gas sphere, as well as projects for the production, transportation, and processing of hydrocarbons. The details of the talks were not revealed, but two weeks later, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov visited Egypt and stated that Gazprom might soon begin working in the country. Alexey Miller's visit to Cairo in March 2005 gave a new boost to cooperation development. The sides decided to cooperate comprehensively in several areas at once, beginning with geological exploration and ending with training Egyptian specialists for the oil and gas business at Russian higher education institutions.

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<sup>5</sup> See: D. Faizullaev, "Rossiisko-kitaiskoe sotrudnichestvo v gazovoi otrasli," *Azia i Afrika*, No. 5, 2006, pp. 14-19.

It is a well-known fact that Zarubezhneftegaz, Gazprom's subsidiary company, is carrying out consultations with the Libyans regarding joint projects. What is more, even before the beginning of the official consultations, Gazprom became a co-investor of the British investment company SOCO, which in the spring of 2004 conceded to Gazprombank 54% of the shares of ODEX Exploration Ltd., which owns several licenses for developing oil and gas fields in Libya.

Israel, which has a shortage of raw minerals, could be another potential partner for Gazprom in the Middle East. Its proven gas reserves are estimated at approximately 45 bcm, and annual production does not exceed 100 mcm. So Gazprom is interested in this country as an importer of blue fuel.

For entirely understandable reasons, Israel does not want its energy industry to depend on fuel deliveries from the Arab countries. So neither Egypt, nor Libya, nor Algeria, nor Qatar (the largest liquefied natural gas exporter in the world) are suitable strategic partners for it. In the interests of energy security, it is having to expand its horizons, whereby the nearest non-Arab exporters are Russia and Norway. Russia has certain advantages, since thanks to the Blue Stream project, Russian gas is already going to Turkey.

The Israeli side offered to lay a gas pipeline from Turkey through the Mediterranean, although the possibility of delivering this fuel in liquefied form from Russia or Turkey has not been excluded. The plans to build an offshore gas pipeline are quite ambitious and do not appear to be entirely in keeping with Israel's real needs. It is possible that Gazprom will not limit itself to Israel, but will look for other potential consumers of Russian gas, Libya, Cyprus, and possibly Syria being theoretical candidates. But here the political factor again insists on its rights, which could complicate movement in this direction. It is highly likely that Israel will nevertheless prefer tanker deliveries of liquefied natural gas.

Syria, which at one time imported oil and gas technology and equipment from the U.S.S.R., might step forward as the concern's potential partner. But as of today, gas production in this country is extremely low, and exploration is being carried out by Western structures.

In the Middle East, Russian companies are coming up against two-fold competition. Western corporations are competing with them as investors, and the producing states of this region as exporters. With respect to gas, Qatar and Algeria are the main exporters. The latter recently began exporting helium manufactured from natural gas, the price of which is constantly rising. But Gazprom also has its trump cards, which are allowing it to methodologically reinforce its presence in this strategically important region for the entire world economy.

## Energy Geopolitics and Gazprom

Several significant events in international power engineering are related to Russia's active policy. One of these is President Putin's statement at the meeting of the Russian Security Council on 22 December, 2005 to the effect that Russia's strategic task is to become a leader in world power engineering and a leading exporter of oil and gas. In keeping with this, a new version of Russia's Energy Strategy until 2020 is being drawn up. The idea of uniting OAO Gazprom, RAO UES, and the Rosenergoatom state concern into a vertically integrated diversified holding company (as the nucleus of a future Eurasian transnational energy and fuel company) has been put forward.

State-civil capitalism is becoming Russia's business ideology, while top managers of state corporations own large sets of shares of the companies they head. In so doing, the tension in the conflict of interests in President Putin's administration is growing along the liberals—power-mongers line (D. Medvedev—I. Sechin, Gazprom—Rosneft), as well as in Russia's business elite.

Attention should be paid to the Russian-Ukrainian “gas war,” which was the first test for Russia’s gas and oil export forces striving for continental domination, which have already been christened “Russia’s energy weapon.” PACE came forward with an initiative to prepare a report on the use of energy resources for resolving political problems. It is also worth noting that one of the topics discussed in Davos was called “The Permissibility of Using Deliveries of Energy Resources as a Political Weapon.”

Two approaches can be traced in the political leadership and executive vertical of the Russian Federation. The first consists of placing the stakes on Russia’s affirmation as a reliable energy partner for leading nations and its “special chair in the elite club.” Vladimir Putin has spoken of this many times, and this same goal was announced as a priority of Russia’s representation in the G-8. The second approach is to use the “energy weapon” for making a new “thrust for influence,” for trying to recapture the ground lost in relations with neighbors, and for recreating a sphere of Russian domination in the post-Soviet space.

An increase in Europe’s energy dependence on foreign deliveries was designated, which became obvious with respect to the uncharacteristically cold winter, increased domestic consumption in Russia and Europe, interruptions in deliveries of Russian gas to Europe, as well as Ukraine’s “withholding” of gas intended for European consumers. Energy security was one of the main topics discussed at the G-8 summit in St. Petersburg.<sup>6</sup>

In the medium term, Europe can see no serious alternative to Russian gas. The hope of finding new fields in Denmark was not justified, supplies in the North Sea are running out, and the prospect of delivering gas from North Africa and implementing LNG projects in Europe is extremely vague.<sup>7</sup>

Gazprom’s plans also speak of much. This company is planning to buy West European gas-distributing companies and, after purchasing the SEG (North-European gas pipeline) project, Gazprom, as political scientists note, might be renamed EuroGazprom without changing its lists of shareholders and managers.

But the series of difficult talks being held between the Russian and Ukrainian leadership, Gazprom, and Naftogaz Ukrainy and the leadership of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan shows that an increase in the role of Russian deliveries will simultaneously raise the significance and cost (both political and strictly economic) of Central Asian gas in Gazprom’s balance for Europe’s energy security.<sup>8</sup>

Gazprom’s purchase conception in Central Asian countries is aimed at diversifying the overall resource base of the Russian concern, as well as export, transit, and internal flows. Russia’s political

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<sup>6</sup> At present, the EU is importing 40% of the gas it consumes, whereby more than 25% of all the gas it imports is of Russian (to be more precise, pseudo-Russian by means of re-exporting Central Asian gas) origin. It is forecast that in the next few years, the demand for gas in the region will grow, in particular due to thermal power stations transferring to this type of energy. An increase in demand under conditions of a reduction in its own production due to the exhaustion of proven reserves of gas will lead to Europe’s dependence on gas imports significantly rising. The forecasted increase in demand in Western Europe until 2025 amounts to an average of 2.4% a year, and by 2025 demand could reach 730 bcm compared with 420 bcm in 2001. The share of import in so doing will increase from 40% to 70%. In this way, objective conditions are being created for reinforcing Gazprom’s presence on the European market. For the future, the volume of Russian gas sales under current long-term agreements is determined at 2,0 tcm, which is approximately 7% of the company’s proven reserves. Gazprom’s annual minimum contract delivery volumes to Europe (without extending the current contracts) will reach 146 bcm by 2008, and the maximum volumes could amount to 178 bcm.

<sup>7</sup> See: I. Tomberg, “Proekt Severo-Evropeiskogo gazoprovoda v geopoliticheskom kontekste,” *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn*, No. 1-2, 2006, pp. 216-224.

<sup>8</sup> Approximately 81% of Gazprom’s proven reserves are in seven gigantic fields: Urengoi, Yamburg, Zapoliarny, Astrakhan, Kharasavei, Bovanenkovskiy, and Stockman. The latter three have still not been developed, the Urengoi has been developed by 60%, and the Astrakhan has limitations for environmental reasons (the local plant cannot cope with the sulfur discharge from the gas). Independent analysts confirm the presence of a systemic problem in the monopoly due to significant exhaustion of the existing reserves. It is forecast that the ratio of production and export growth could create certain difficulties for Gazprom as early as 2006-2007, since there are no serious prerequisites for a significant increase in the rates of its own production.

leadership is objectively compelled to balance its relations with the region's states as best it can, and Gazprom is striving to reinforce its presence, including by means of investing in exploration, production, and the transportation infrastructure.

The cooperation alternative, which Gazprom and Naftogaz agreed upon, essentially envisages creating a certain prototype of a CIS gas market, but its appearance, rules, and the roles of its participants have been determined without taking the Central Asian countries into account. Signing a five-side intergovernmental agreement among Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan would be a safe way to create and develop a CIS gas market, since it would bind these states together with common obligations, guarantees, and concessions. But Russia and Ukraine are striving to limit themselves to bilateral documents only, including with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, which is leading to an obvious imbalance in delivery volumes and transit possibilities.

At the end of 2005, Gazprom established ultimate monopoly over the international transit of Kazakh, Turkmen, and Uzbek gas. In this way, all of KazMunayGaz's blue fuel transit potential will fully depend on Gazprom's need for Turkmen and Uzbek gas. On the whole, the export flow from Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan is limited by the capacity of their own transportation system and of Kazakhstan's. Gazprom can participate in reconstructing a section of the Central Asia-Center major gas pipeline in Uzbekistan. What is more, an increase in the overall capacity of the CAC will largely depend on Turkmenistan's difficult-to-forecast stance with respect to diversifying export gas flows, particularly on the prospects for implementing the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan gas pipeline project and international audit of Turkmen reserves (the Dauletabad field).

In this respect, Kazakhstan's significance as Gazprom's partner is increasing, and when making a decision on modernizing the Central Asia-Center system, KazMunayGaz must be recognized as a strategic transit partner. It is possible to find denouement of the question of expanding the CAC with an increase in the presence of Kazakhstani gas on the European and CIS markets within the framework of KazRosGaz (export quota to the Far Abroad of 50% of the total volume of deliveries and 25% for deliveries to the CIS market).

But the price policy is in need of constant adjustment. Turkmenistan has long been insisting that its gas should be sold to Gazprom at the average European price minus transportation costs and the agent's stipulated equity.<sup>9</sup>

Gazprom has also begun actively setting up a system of bilateral relations with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan (later with Turkmenistan) by forming joint enterprises, which is also creating prerequisites for the active use of this factor by the Kazakh side when problems arise with Tashkent on price issues and with Bishkek on transit within the framework of KyrKazGaz.

As for Georgia the appearance of investors from Kazakhstan in the country fits in with Mikhail Saakashvili's plans, who is still looking more frequently for investment partners not in the U.S., but in the former Soviet republics. Georgia is in dire need of investments for developing its own economy, and Tbilisi is willing to consider any proposals on cooperation.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> In 2005, Gazprom purchased around 19 bcm of gas in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. In 2006, purchases were planned for 25.8 bcm. Gazprom plans to purchase 9 bcm of gas in Uzbekistan in 2006 at 60 dollars per 1,000 cubic meters and a stipulated transit price through Uzbekistan of 1.1 dollars per 1,000 cubic meters 100 km. There are plans in the future to increase the import of gas from Uzbekistan to 17-18 bcm a year by means of developing three gas fields in Uzbekistan—Urga, Kuanysh, and the group of Akchalak fields. The total volume of the company's investments in Uzbekistan is expected to be around 1.5 billion dollars. Beginning in 2007, Gazprom will purchase all the gas intended for export from Turkmenistan. The conditions of a long-term agreement envisage purchasing 60-70 bcm in 2007-2008 and 70-80 bcm in 2009-2010. But Turkmenistan's constant statements on raising prices and the five-year agreement signed with Uzbekistan make it understood that export from Turkmenistan in the next five years will remain at the previous level of up to 36 bcm.

<sup>10</sup> In October 2005, AO Tbilgazi was declared bankrupt by the city court. The enterprise is subsidized by the Tbilisi Mayor's Office, which owns 96% of the AO's shares. AO Tbilgazi's debts for natural gas consumed in past years amounts

It was presumed that Georgia would import up to 2 bcm of blue fuel from Kazakhstan every year for the next ten years. But after the price of gas delivered to Georgia went up, Gazprom prevented Kazakhstan from exporting to Tbilisi via its gas pipelines under an alternative contract. Nevertheless, Kazakhstan Prime Minister D. Akhmetov believes that such deliveries are possible if the price corresponds to the one Russia set for Georgia.<sup>11</sup>

The possible sale to Gazprom of a major pipeline belonging to the International Gas Corporation (100% share of the state) and passing through Georgia to Armenia will allow Tbilisi to replenish its budget (Gazprom is offering between 200 and 300 million dollars) and to reduce the price of gas delivered by the Russian holding company (servicing of the pipeline alone costs up to 8 million dollars a year). The country's leadership will consider this alternative in the event that Gazprom provides certain guarantees, in particular, gas deliveries for 25 years at a low price.<sup>12</sup>

Taking into account the forecasted three-fold increase in the production of Kazakh gas by 2015 from the 2005 level (from 28.7 bcm to 79.4 bcm), the Gazprom leadership must clearly recognize that most of the Kazakhstani raw material will be exported either via its pipelines and with its participation, or bypassing Russia through the Caucasus, as well as to China.

But forming a policy for exporting Kazakhstan's gas largely depends on the prospects for creating new gas-processing capacities, including gas-chemical. In the event of the successful implementation of gas-chemical projects in Tengiz and Karachaganak the expediency of building a gas pipeline to China seems dubious.

As we know, one of the main goals of the Kazakhstani authorities is to gain independent access to the end gas consumers. Of course, the matter primarily concerns Western Europe, but Georgia is also capable of becoming a precursor in this direction. The transportation of gas from Kazakhstan to this republic could be technically carried out only through Russia. Deliveries of Kazakhstani gas to the Georgian market via the KazRosGaz joint venture will make it possible for Kazakhstan to avoid Russia's discontent and opposition, which has its own gas interests in this state. What is more, Astana has serious trade arguments with Gazprom, in particular, contracts for the transit of Central Asian gas, which the Russian concern entered in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. In exchange for the favorable stable transit of these volumes (in 2007, they will amount to approximately 50 bcm), Astana could achieve independent export of gas to Georgia, and possibly to other CIS countries above the KazRosGaz quotas.

In this way, one of the foreign policy tasks is de-politicization of the hydrocarbon export problem and transfer to the adoption of precise and economically calculated strictly business decisions regarding the priority of export routes, which will be pragmatic regardless of the changes in the state strategy of the transit country partners (Russia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Ukraine).

The voluminous Chinese market deserves the keenest attention with respect to possible investment in production of the end product of refining and petrochemistry. The PRC needs Kazakhstan's oil and gas both for domestic consumption and for ensuring the export of valuable end products of refining, including to our republic. If this fact is not kept in mind, China could later become

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to approximately \$5 million to Gazprom alone. Its directors say the reason for Tbilgazi's arduous financial situation is the enormous (up to 60-70%) losses of blue fuel in the gas networks, as well as the low collection of subscriber payments due to the mass falsifications of gas meter indications. Local experts add the company's bad management and internal corruption to these reasons.

<sup>11</sup> In 2005, gas went to the population of Tbilisi for 0.265 lari (\$1 = 1.79 lari) per cm. OAO Gazprom signed a contract to deliver 920 cm of gas to AO Tbilgazi in 2006 at \$110 per 1,000 cm. According to experts' estimates, the new price will reach 0.30-0.35 lari per cm for the capital's consumers.

<sup>12</sup> At present, all gas deliveries to Georgia are carried out via the Makat-Northern Caucasus gas pipeline. Gas consumption by Georgia amounts to 4.7 mcm a day in the summer and up to 7 mcm in the winter. The share of natural gas in Georgia's energy balance amounts to approximately 24%. The country's need for gas in 2006 is estimated at 2.25 bcm.



the same “unfriendly” exporter of fuels and lubricants and other products for Kazakhstan as Russia is.<sup>13</sup>

Our attention is drawn to the fact that to augment the resource base in Kazakhstan, the Chinese are aiming to purchase already proved assets which carry out real production (PetroKazakhstan, Nations Energy). In this respect, their competition both with Russian (LUKoil) and other foreign companies is inevitable, which provides Kazakhstan with much room for maneuver.

It is obvious that coordinated Kazakhstan-Russian policy with respect to hydrocarbon and electric energy export to China (and possibly also under joint projects on the PRC domestic market) would largely promote the development of the economic component of the SCO, which the Chinese side has recently been giving great significance.

The need for and possibility of raising the status of state-private cooperation in individual oil and gas projects to the level of state-inter-corporative partnership across the board, including in national projects (from programs to develop the Caspian’s resources to the domestic fuels and lubricants market) are becoming increasingly obvious.

### *C o n c l u s i o n*

On the whole, Russia is continuing to consistently and expediently move forward in the direction it has chosen by conducting its energy policy with emphasis on the raw material sector.

At the APEC summit in Bangkok, Vladimir Putin positioned the Russian Federation as the main guarantor of energy security in the Asia-Pacific Region. Taking into account its domination in supplying the European states with energy resources and the designated contacts in this sphere with the U.S., this claim to leadership in the APR means a desire to throw open the window of opportunity that appeared as the result of the increased concern by oil importers about the stability of deliveries from traditional—Middle East and Africa—sources. The latest agreements on gas deliveries to the PRC are a new step in this direction. Russia is obviously striving to convert energy potential into greater geopolitical influence.

The Russian Federation is increasing the production of oil and gas with an essentially constant domestic demand, which is raising the question of new sales markets, particularly in the APR. By gaining access to these markets, Moscow will increasingly attract importers by raising the trade and energy dependence of consumers, which will play a certain positive role in bilateral and multilateral relations.<sup>14</sup>

But, when developing its own energy strategy, Russia is coming up against objective difficulties, which will not be that easy to resolve. Until recently, the capacities of Russia’s major pipelines ensured the pumping of 300 million tons of oil a year from Western Siberia in the westerly direction and up to 100 million tons in the southerly and easterly directions. In so doing, the throughput capacity of all the Russian Federation’s export oil pipelines amounted to 200 million tons a year. According to specialists’ estimates, the shortage of capacities (taking into account transit) amounts to no less than 40 million tons of oil a year, and by 2010 will reach 120 million.

As Russian strategists believe, the role of the CIS countries on the world oil market is rapidly increasing and, if all goes well, the leading oil-producing republics of the Commonwealth will be able to ensure 25-27% of the demand of this market by 2010. By this time, the petroleum block on the CIS base will be able to gather allies around it from among independent exporters and, along with OPEC and IEA OECD, become one of the three regulators of the world oil market. But in order to do this,

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<sup>13</sup> The main consumers of Chinese oil refining and petrochemical products at present are Korea, Japan, Taiwan, the U.S., and Saudi Arabia. Russia also belongs to the top ten importers, purchasing 753,000 tons of these products in 2004.

<sup>14</sup> In correspondence with Russia’s Energy Strategy until 2020, there are plans to increase oil production to 445-490 million tons in 2010 and to 450-520 million tons in 2020.

Moscow still has to coordinate the diverse interests of the former Union republics and form a unified energy policy for the alliance being created. What is more, the infrastructure existing within the CIS will have to be reconstructed, particularly with respect to transportation.

At the same time, all the talk about the possibility of Russia occupying a leading position on the world oil markets is still rather hypothetical. As already noted, it became a leader only in terms of the amount of oil it produces and exports. But the enormous export volumes do not allow Moscow to have an influence on oil quotas. By delivering oil almost exclusively to the Western European markets, which are extremely competitive anyway, it is impossible to set prices in other regions. In other words, the fact that Russia's energy resources are not present in the APR countries and the U.S. due to its transportation difficulties is preventing Russia from participating in the formation of world prices.

Russia's goal in Central Asia is to create a unified energy consortium under its direction, but this could have a negative effect on the ability of the Central Asian states to make independent political decisions. Gazprom's subordination of the gas transportation assets of these countries will ensure the Russian Federation full control over the industry, primarily over gas export, which will have several serious consequences. For example, Russia will become its largest importer, whereby it will use Central Asia's supplies both for its domestic purposes, and for re-export. It is possible that the Russian Federation will try to send this gas exclusively to its territory in order to maintain its own fuel and energy balance, and only partially to third countries in order to acquire profit from the transit of insignificant amounts of gas of the Central Asian republics. In so doing, Moscow will try to keep even these volumes to the minimum in order to prevent competition.

Russia's monopoly on the blue fuel market of the Central Asian republics will also have an impact on the European Union, which will be able to obtain Central Asian gas only with Gazprom's intercession. In other words, in the end, the Russian Federation will acquire the opportunity not only to dictate the price of its gas to consumers from CIS countries, but also impose beneficial conditions for it on the transit states of Russian blue fuel (Ukraine and Belarus), which are large importers of this product.

Russia's seizure of the designated gas sectors will lead to gradual ousting of other countries' companies from the region, which are carrying construction and service work as well as delivering gas and other equipment. Over time, Moscow's expansion could also spread to the oil sectors of these republics, that is, Russian companies will be able to squeeze Western oil companies out of the region's states (primarily out of Kazakhstan).

So, Moscow has come to the conclusion that the Russian Federation currently has the unique opportunity to restore its geopolitical influence in Central Asia. By joining the OCAC, Russia has recognized the legitimacy of Central Asian integration. Russia went on to achieve a merging of the OCAC and EurAsEC by essentially taking control over the integration (including energy) processes in the region. This was essentially an attempt to find an answer to China's economic expansion in the region, which means that Russia is also striving to expand its economic trade cooperation with its countries.

With respect to Gazprom's role, two aspects should be noted. First, the company is developing increasingly along the model of a classical transnational company with all the ensuing consequences for its activity on foreign markets. Second, the doctrine of Anatoli Chubais' Liberal Empire, in the spirit of which Gazprom is acting, can be surmised in the concern's policy. At present, the company is one of the most important tools of Russia's global geo-economic strategy.

Kazakhstan is still the Russian Federation's most valuable partner in its geopolitical and geo-strategic priorities in the Central Asian region. It is obvious that in the future Russia will assume an active position with respect to Kazakhstan.

**RELIGION IN SOCIETY****ISLAMIC POLITICAL AND  
LEGAL THOUGHT  
IN SEARCH OF ANSWERS  
TO NEW CHALLENGES**

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**I**t was late in the 20th century that Islam developed into a major issue of contemporary world politics. It left the realm of academic deliberations to be discussed by political scientists, publicists, and journalists. They normally concentrate on several subjects: Islam and international terror-

ism and political extremism inherited from the past as well as several recent ones, namely the Muslim world's future in the context of political changes and the role of Islam in the process. In the final analysis, this is related to the future of Islam under the conditions of accelerating globalization.

**Globalization and  
the Structure of the World as  
Seen by the Shari'a**

Globalization has become a prominent feature of the contemporary world. Seen by itself it is a more or less natural, or even inevitable, process born of the on-going interaction among countries, cultures, and ways of life, as well as vigorous exchanges at the state and personal levels. Like all



other parts of the globe, the Muslim world feels the impact of globalization and its ambiguous influences.

So far, the rich West profits more than the rest of the world from the fact that globalization tends to impose identical rules on all the countries involved in the process. This explains the fact that while many countries (Russia included) are seeking WTO membership, some public associations and movements are regularly protesting against the common standards imposed on the world in the interests of huge monopolies that do nothing for the rest of the world but widen the gap between the economically developed and underdeveloped regions.

In the context of the Shari‘a teaching about the hierarchy of human interests, it can be said that while some states use globalization to live in greater comfort or even luxury, others cannot cope with their everyday needs: the starting positions of the members of international exchange vary greatly. This is the reason that the Islamic legal doctrine insists on taking into account initial positions in full conformity with the principles of justice and law within which the Shari‘a grants privileges to the needy and even temporarily exempts them from certain common duties. In real life, however, generosity of this kind is a rare commodity.

No wonder, the world of Islam produces different, or even opposing, opinions about globalization. Many of the Islamic thinkers are convinced that the West employs globalization to fight Islam and that the Islamic and Western values are worlds apart.<sup>1</sup> This is quite understandable. The West does try to impose its own cultural and moral values, or even political and legal norms, disguised as globalization on all Muslims in total disregard of their traditions. The Muslims’ negative response is natural—it is all the more natural because more likely than not such efforts are interpreted as a direct attack on Islam and its values. When talking about globalization, Muslim lawyers and political scientists never tire of repeating that the Shari‘a rejects any attempts to impose behavioral norms and patterns by force. Its main principle, “there should be no coercion in religion,” says precisely this. These patterns should not be merely stated by the world community—they should be embraced by all its members of their own free will. In the view of the Muslims, the references to the Shari‘a add weight to these opinions.

On the whole, however, neither globalization nor its results can be described solely in negative terms. In fact, many Islamic scholars and politicians have already recognized this. Early in March 1999, I had the chance to listen to Saudi Arabian Minister of Higher Education Imam Muhammad ben Saud at the Islamic University. He said then that its negative results apart, globalization did a lot for education and information processes. It was thanks to globalization that curricula were coordinated and adapted to the international standards to allow Saudi graduates to continue their education in the best universities outside their own country.

International economic exchange is rapidly developing in the globalizing world. The Islamic Fiqh Academy-OIC pointed out that international trade had profited from globalization.<sup>2</sup> Some of the Arabic media have reported that the banking systems of their countries, the Islamic Development Bank among them, use the Internet and other latest technologies to deal with globalization challenges. Muslim law has already approved commercial activities through the Internet.<sup>3</sup>

This should not be taken to mean that the rules and standards obligatory for all should be hailed without reservations: the sphere of cultural and moral values, as well as religion and the legal principles based on it is ill-suited to tolerate coercion. This means that the positive assessment of economic and financial aspects of globalization impacts should not be indiscriminately transferred to

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example: Abdel Azim al-Matani, “Globalization as a New Form of Traditional Rejection of Islam by the West,” *Al Bayan* (Dubai), 26 November, 1999 (in Arabic).

<sup>2</sup> See: *Ash-Shark al-Awsat* (London), 18 October, 1997.

<sup>3</sup> See: *As-Siyasa* (Kuwait), 8 January, 2001; *Al-Watan* (Kuwait), 7 January, 2001; *Ar-Ray al-Amm* (Kuwait), 8 January, 2001; *Al-Iman* (Kuwait), 5 January, 2001.

these sensitive spheres. In view of the above, we should treat globalization not as merely a unifying phenomenon that brings nations together, but also as a phenomenon that takes into account national, cultural, and religious values and distinctions, respects them and involves nations in a dialog and exchange. Any attempts to impose certain standards in these sensitive spheres causes justified objections.

While in the sphere of culture globalization has already produced a lot of dissent, culture itself may suggest the right answers to globalization challenges. In the Muslim world, this role belongs to Islamic political and legal culture. The fundamental norms and principles of the Shari‘a may supply answers to certain specific questions—what is more they can suggest an overall approach to the phenomenon of globalization.

We should admit, at the same time, that Islamic legal science has not offered a clear and detailed conception of globalization, yet my talks with respected Muslim scholars allow me to outline the major trends of their scholarly quest. It is most important to make use of the positive aspects of globalization and minimize its negative effects. To achieve this we should guide ourselves by the widely known general principles of the Islamic legal doctrine (fiqh), which says: “matters are judged by their motives,” “no one has the right to inflict harm or injury to compensate for the injury done,” “regarding all that they [citizens] are in need of with respect to what benefits them.” In their relations with the non-Muslims, Muslims should undoubtedly be guided by Allah’s words quoted in the Koran: “Help you one another in righteousness and piety; but help you not one another in sin and rancour” (The Table Spread, 2).

The choice of right path between what is prohibited and allowed by the Shari‘a is another fundamental principle the Muslims should use when assessing globalization. The Prophet said: “That which is lawful is clear, and that which unlawful likewise, but there are certain doubtful things between the two from which it is well to abstain.”

Seen from the viewpoints outlined above, globalization looks dubious: it is merely reduced to those standards which when specified and applied in the interests of Muslims permit varied assessments. Placed in the Islamic legal context, globalization can be described as a very specific sphere of the Muslims’ everyday existence that presupposes *ijtihad* (a search for rational answers to the questions the Shari‘a did not specify). Globalization is not merely an object of *ijtihad*—it makes its own claims on it. It adds urgency, among other things, to the principle of *fiqh*, which makes it possible to readjust norms every time place, conditions, and time change. It adds weight to such a source of new norms as “exclusive interests” that legalize the novelties the Shari‘a does not ban outright. When it comes to an assessment of how the Muslim world responds to the vast range of achievements of other nations in many spheres (law and the principles of power included), the presumption of permissibility of using everything that is not banned by the Koran or the Prophet’s *Sunnah* can be applied.

To find one’s bearings in the fairly contradictory conditions of globalization, the Muslims should be guided by the following principles of *fiqh*: “incur lesser of the two harms when faced with them both” and “repelling harm takes precedence over procuring benefits.” In this context, globalization is seen as a balancing trick between avoiding damage and acquiring profit. To choose between the two extremes, the Muslim should turn to the original principles, basic values, and aims of the Shari‘a—continuity, moderation and balance, and deliberate avoidance of extremes and of burdening man beyond endurance.

Globalization insists on a dialog with other cultures and axiological systems—this is one of its typical features, which presupposes that civilizations should be involved in cooperation and exchange. The Muslims have acquired the unique chance to introduce the non-Muslim world to Islamic values and goals. These newly acquired possibilities have already become one of the most important trends and a call to follow in the road of Allah, in order not only to borrow the cultural achievements of oth-

ers, but also to familiarize the world with the Islamic civilizational values. It says in the Koran: "Invite all to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best" (Bees, 125).

Some of the non-Islamic countries that have found themselves confronted by the challenges of globalization may profit from certain achievements of Islamic political and legal thought. Russia, which, like the Muslim world, is struggling to join in the worldwide processes while preserving its independence, its latest developments, and highly specific nature, is one such country. Since 2005, when it acquired an OIC observer status, Russia has been paying particular attention to the principles and norms of the Shari'a in the sphere of international relations.

To develop its contacts with the Islamic world and to achieve the best possible cooperation between the federal center and the traditionally Islamic regions inside the country, Russia should take into account the latest achievements of Muslim legal science in international relations. This will promote confidence and mutual understanding between Russia and the Islamic world and positively affect Russia's policies in Central Asia.

We should never lose sight of how Muslim legal principles (which vary from one school to another) interpret Russia's contacts with the Islamic world. Contemporary Muslim law encourages reliance on various schools to find solutions within the Shari'a, its basic principles, values, and aims best suited to realities. In view of this, relations between Russia and the Muslim world can be scrutinized within the conception that divides the world into several sectors, the World of Islam and the World of War in particular. Certain legal trends are aware of the World of Concord (Reconciliation) that includes those non-Muslim states with which the World of Islam has agreements which guarantee mutual security and take account of mutual interests.<sup>4</sup>

Today, Muslim legal science tends to extend the World of Concord conception to the relations between the Muslim and non-Muslim states based on the principles of mutual security and mutual interests.<sup>5</sup> Theoretically we cannot exclude the possibility of applying the World of Concord model to a non-Muslim country that grants a special status to a Muslim region. In this case the region will be treated as the World of Islam, while the non-Muslim state, within which the region that enjoys a special status on the strength of an agreement or according to national laws is found, will be treated as the World of Concord.

An analysis of Muslim legal conceptions reveals the contemporary demands imposed on the World of Concord: Muslims should be guaranteed security and the right to freely perform their religious obligations and promote Islam as well as be involved in peaceful mutually advantageous cooperation with the World of Islam.<sup>6</sup> On the strength of the above, Russia's relations with nearly all the Muslim states can be described as the relations between the World of Concord and the World of Islam.

Certain aspects of such cooperation can be assessed within the Shari'a, which describes peace as the key principle of the relations between the World of Islam and the non-Muslim states.<sup>7</sup> The ties between them should be based on mutual agreement and compromises that would exclude diktat and coercion; all agreements should help attain beneficial goals and ensure strict abidance to the already signed agreements. The Shari'a envisages specific norms that would lead to such agreements and identify their aims: moderation, compromises, risk avoidance, prevention of damages, consultations, heeding expert opinions, etc.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example: Abu al-Hasan al-Mawardi, *Norms of Power and Administration of Religious Affairs*, Beirut, s.a., pp. 175-176; Ibn Rushd, *The Beginning of Ijtihad and the Limits of Achievement*, Cairo, 1983, Part 1, pp. 449-451; Muhammad al-Hatib ash-Shirbini, *Enriching the Needy*, Damascus, s.a, Part 4, pp. 260-265 (all in Arabic).

<sup>5</sup> See: Muhammad Abu Zahra, *International Relations in Islam*, Cairo, 1964, pp. 53-57 (in Arabic).

<sup>6</sup> See: Wahba az-Zuheyli, *International Relations in Islam as Compared with Contemporary International Law*, Beirut, 1981, pp. 103-112 (in Arabic).

<sup>7</sup> See: Abdel Wahhab Hallaf, *Shari'a Politics. Constitutional, Foreign Policy and Financial Foundations of the Islamic State*, Beirut, 1987, pp. 72-79 (in Arabic).

This approach, however, reflects one, albeit widely popular, conception in the Islamic world. There is also a more radical theory that relates the majority of states, Muslim states included, to the world of unfaithfulness. At the same time, some of the most prominent Muslim thinkers believe that today the traditional Shari'a approach is out of place since today's civilization can no longer be regarded as the field on which Islamic and non-Muslim countries stand in opposition.<sup>8</sup>

Russia's foreign policy and its relations with the Muslim world, which recently embarked on the road of fairly radical political reforms, may profit from what contemporary Muslim legal thought says about international relations. For obvious reasons, Muslim legal thought cannot ignore the processes underway in the Muslim world.

## Islam and the Prospects of Political Reforms in the Muslim World

Today most Muslim states are developing in a rather contradictory way in the political and legal sphere where Islamic traditions coexist with universally accepted standards and Western liberal values. We should always bear in mind that politics and the principles of state power functioning form a very specific sphere of interaction (cooperation and competition) between Islamic principles and Western patterns. Islamic thought believes that the most specific feature of this sphere is created by the fact that the traditional Muslim legal doctrine (fiqh) offers no detailed, exact, and unambiguous answers to the vast majority of specific questions. It limits itself to identifying the most general landmarks, such as consultation, fairness, and equality to be realized in different, including borrowed, versions. When applied, these general principles may produce different results. The consultation principle, for example, can be put into practice in the form of a consultative council accountable to the head of state or as representative body with full legislative powers elected by universal suffrage.

Today, Muslim legal postulates are invoked to prove that Western experience of parliamentarism, elections, political pluralism, the division of powers, and even human rights should be tapped. In these spheres, however, the borrowing is limited to outward features, yet the very fact that Islamic legal thought does not issue rigid instructions about the power system in general opens the road to the widest possible reliance on the experience of political democracy.

What is more, today any modernization and democratization project has good prospects in most Muslim states if realized within the Islamic political and legal tradition, or at least with due account of it. The opposite is also true: no political reform stands a chance of survival if it is aimed at setting up formally democratic institutions that go against the grain of Islamic thought. Objectively, the people at the top and the public at large are interested in democratic developments if they are accompanied by political stability and security. This can be done if democratization is realized within the Muslim political and legal traditions, Islamic interpretation of all the changes included.

The strategy of political and legal reforms of the Muslim world should aim at incorporating it into the globalization process together with its Islamic values (legal and political among other things) that are compatible with the universal democratic principles and remolded to fit contemporary reality. This can be achieved if the positive potential of Islamic political and legal thought is tapped in a very active way and if the thinkers are encouraged to work on the problems connected with new realities and Islam's role in the globalizing world.

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<sup>8</sup> See, for example: Yusuf al-Karadawi, *Sovremennye fatwy (izbrannoe)*, Issue 1, Andalus Publishers, Moscow, 2004, pp. 202-205.

We should bear in mind that the use of Islamic arguments is neither a trick nor empty talk. The present state of mind in the Muslim world has made the attitude of the Muslim political and legal doctrine toward the possibility of blending Islamic and Western principles extremely important. The latest works of those Muslim legal scholars and political scientists who share a moderate and balanced attitude toward the Shari'a admit, at least theoretically, that this blend can be achieved. One of the most prominent Muslim thinkers Yusuf al-Karadawi, who has never been caught preaching liberal ideas, believes that Muslim legal thought admits the possibility of a multiparty system and political opposition in Muslim states. He favors the presence of women and non-Muslims in the representative power bodies in Muslim countries and even the involvement of Muslims in parliamentary activities in non-Muslim states. He says that the Shari'a interpreted in conformity with the present reality does not object to borrowing liberal democratic institutions and proceedings.<sup>9</sup>

Typically enough those who share these views and those who reject them appeal to the Shari'a. Recent experience has confirmed, in particular, that the ruling circles of the Muslim countries were prepared to carry out political reforms with Islamic substantiation. These changes, however, cause a lot dissent when it comes to harmonizing them with the Shari'a. The polemics about women's suffrage in Kuwait is one such example. Until the early 21st century, Islamic radicals prevailed over their opponents: they blocked, with the help of the Shari'a, all attempts to grant women the right to vote at parliamentary and local elections. In June 2005, the National Assembly passed a law based on the Shari'a, under which women received the right to vote.

This shows that contradictions and conflicts between the Islamic and Western approaches are not merely possible—they are inevitable. This makes it all the more important to see the limits of their drawing closer or blending. In principle, the political dialog between the West and the Muslim world is still going on, but the limits have not yet been attained.

The above is indispensable for assessing the prospects for and the forms globalization might assume in the Muslim world and the future of the political reforms underway. So far, no one has demonstrated how the objectively needed democratization of the Muslim world can be achieved without disturbing political stability there; how to make the Muslim world part of the globalization process while leaving its Muslim values intact. This can be done in principle, as the experience of legal development of the Muslim world has shown.

Today, the national legal systems of practically every country are gradually acquiring features typical of the mainstream legal developments in the world today. The systems draw closer to the extent that some of their important elements become unified at the regional level—this is the main such trend. Another trend is manifesting itself with increasing clarity: states and regions take their historical, cultural, religious, and civilizational specifics into account in their laws, and these specifics relate to the universal legal standards in different ways.

In this respect, globalization goes beyond the fact that national legal systems of many countries are becoming increasingly similar. Globalization presupposes legal diversity throughout the world, the active involvement of legal cultures in planetary legal development, which results in widely different modes in which universal standards are realized. Unified legal principles in the organization and functioning of state institutions take into account national traditions and are realized in a variety of forms. In the last few decades, Muslim countries have been actively accepting European legal patterns while extending the sphere of the Shari'a.

Contemporary Islamic legal thought pays a lot of attention to these developments; those convinced that the Muslim world can borrow some of the European legal patterns that do not contradict

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<sup>9</sup> See: Yusuf al-Karadawi, *On the Legal Conception of the State in Islam. The Status of the State, Its Specific Features, Nature and Attitude to Democracy, Pluralism, the Role of Women and Non-Muslims*, Cairo, 1997 (in Arabic).



or violate the clearly stated Shari‘a principles are gradually strengthening their position. At the same time, Islamic legal thought is actively pushing forward the idea that the fiqh norms should be codified; it is developing the contemporary ijthad theory that rejects blind submission to the traditional Islamic conception of the inadmissibility of novelties. In other words, Muslim lawyers tend to agree that Muslim law needs to be renovated in order to combine tradition and contemporary developments. They, in fact, have agreed that Muslim law is strongly influenced by European experience.<sup>10</sup>

In principle, national legal systems based on a combination of European and Muslim legal culture are quite viable—this has already been confirmed by practice. Russia should draw its own lessons from this when molding its policies and implementing them.

Some of Russia’s regions are moving toward previously abandoned Shari‘a traditions; there are attempts to tap Muslim legal culture in order to address social and economic problems of various kinds, enable the Muslims to live according to their traditions, or even make some of the Muslim legal provisions part of regional laws (Tatarstan, for example, has recognized, at the republican level, the right of religious organizations to waqf properties). Under certain conditions some of the RF republics may incorporate some of the Muslim legal elements into their legal systems.

Russia’s more active cooperation with the Muslim world, its closer contacts with the OIC, as well as the need to ideologically oppose Islamic extremism (of which I have already written elsewhere) are stimulating the process.

## Moderation as the Priority Trend of Contemporary Islamic Thought

The issues mentioned above cannot be properly discussed outside the trends obvious in the Islamic world today: ideas hold a special place in the Islamic world, in which all deep-cutting changes and important projects of national dimension are scrutinized through the prism of Islamic principles. What is more, devoid of an Islamic foundation they will never take off. This means that all positive solutions for the above-mentioned issues should be sought within Islam.

Today, the Muslim world is torn between two contradictory trends: advancing along the road toward democratization and upsurges of radicalism. How does Islamic thought respond to this? I do not intend to discuss its treatment of terrorism and radicalism here and shall limit myself to pointing to the ambiguous ties between Islam and extremism. Islamic conceptions are often used to substantiate the goals and methods of terrorist activity. Islamic conceptions are often used to substantiate the goals and methods of terrorist activity. At the same time, Islamic principles and values may help to effectively oppose this global threat.<sup>11</sup> So far, those who accuse Islam of global terrorism are shouting much louder than their opponents who, at the global level, remain in the shadows and on the defensive.

Until recent times, balanced Islamic thought did not manifest the necessary dynamism when issues of democratization and political reforms or the possibility of the Muslim world joining the globalization process came up for discussion. In other words, it has not yet supplied the Muslim public with a position that would fit Islamic principles. We cannot help but feel that, at the ideological level, Islam has so far been unable to meet the challenges of our times. No wonder, in the absence of a clear Islam-

<sup>10</sup> See, for example: Yusuf al-Karadawi, *Muslim Law Between Specifics and Renovation*, Cairo, 1986; idem, *Contemporary Ijthad between Abidance and Violation of Strict Rules*, Cairo, 1994; Muhammad Usman Shubeyr, *Legal Interpretation of New Situations in Islam and Its Practical Implementation*, Damascus, 2004; Abdallah Muhammad al-Jabburi, *Muslim Law between Specifics and Renovation*, Amman, 2005 (all in Arabic).

<sup>11</sup> See, for example: L. Sjukijainen, “Islam vs. Islam. On Islamic Alternative to Extremism and Terrorism,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 3 (15), 2002.

ic strategy, most contemporary authors remain reserved, or even pessimistic, about the future of the Islamic civilization. Those who would like to detach it from the world come up with a much clearer message.

There is a widely shared opinion outside the Muslim countries that democracy and traditional Islamic values are incompatible. Islamic extremists share this view for different reasons: they are convinced that the contemporary developments threaten Islam. The global “Islamic project,” or Islamization of mankind, is seen as the only adequate answer.

This leads to a question of fundamental importance: is Islamic ideological potential big enough to finally arrive at a formula that would bring Islamic values and the latest achievements of contemporary civilization together?

When trying to answer this question, we should take account of the fact that Islamic thought abounds in various trends, three of which until recently were considered the main ones. One of them, the traditional trend, justifies conservation of sorts of Muslim society’s present state; another, the fundamentalist trend, insists that the public and state structures should undergo radical changes and return to the literally understood Shari‘a. The modernist approach uses the outwardly Islamic interpretation in an attempt to justify liberal reforms patterned on the West.

Until recently, another of the many trends that interprets the contemporary world along Islamic lines remained lost to the public, which has its attention riveted on the three prominent trends. I have in mind the idea of tapping Islam’s internal potential, which says that reality should be measured against the Shari‘a cornerstones, values, and general principles rather than its petty rules related to minor things and interpreted in a narrow-minded manner.

This is very close to what the Muslim reformers of the turn of the 20th century thought, even though they never got beyond the calls to return to *ijtihad* and never tried to apply the other Shari‘a principles to put their purely Islamic idea of the changing world on firmer ground. It should be added here that since the mid-20th century this position has been limited to the works of those scholars who preferred to concentrate on the immutable principles of the Shari‘a as opposed to its particular, and never consistent, solutions. Just recently, this theoretical construct had absolutely no influence on political and legal practices.

The situation is obviously changing: the formerly ignored trend has come to the fore as the most promising soil on which the strategy of contemporary Islam and the Muslim world will probably grow. It is extremely important for the Islamic states to take it up as part of the official policy on which the national Islamic idea, its conceptual pillars, landmarks, and mechanisms can be placed.

The state structures of Kuwait are actively moving in this direction. The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs has come forward with the Moderate Nation conception<sup>12</sup> based on the interpretation of the Shari‘a described above. The Ministry explained that the time had come to supply the Muslim world with Islamic interpretations and general approaches to the tasks the world and Islam are facing. Moderation that stems from the words of Allah quoted in the Koran: “Thus have We made of you an ummah justly balanced. That you might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves” (The Cow, 143) is the linchpin of the Ministry’s conception. There are also the words of the Prophet Muhammad: “In all affairs the middle way is best.”

This approach explains moderation as a well-balanced approach equally removed from all extremes—from down-to-earth pragmatism and idealism divorced from reality, it rejects obstinate devotion to the outdated as well as striving toward constant changes.

This approach placed moderation in the center of the Shari‘a, the pillars of which became the pillars of the conception: not overburdening man beyond his ability, steadiness, compromises, avoiding damage rather than gaining profit, and eliminating risk. Interpreted in this way, the Shari‘a is seen

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<sup>12</sup> [<http://www.islam.kw.2006-10-17>].

not as a fossilized structure and a collection of trite and immutable solutions that weigh heavily on man. The conception shows that the Shari'a knows how to address certain problems. In the extremely incomparable social, cultural, and political conditions, its methods based on certain values are used differently, but within common aims and principles.

The conception is obviously a compromise between traditionalism, fundamentalism, and modernity. It makes use of the positive sides of each of the trends and skillfully avoids their extremes. In other words, the very idea of moderation is an example of the middle-of-the-road approach that supplements the traditional Islamic thesis about faithful reason with a contemporary thesis about conscious faith.

The basic ideas about moderation as the Islamic way of life, however, are not commonly accepted—they call for further research of contemporary ideas within the Islamic principle of moderation and encouragement of creative Islamic thought. This alone may help overcome religious fanaticism and the attempts to pass any of the Islamic ideas as the only absolutely correct interpretation of the will of the Most High. The conception subjects such claims to scything criticism based on the Koran: “[The things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are:] and saying things about Allah of which you have no knowledge” (The Heights, 33) and “But say not—for any false thing that your tongues may put forth—‘This is lawful, and this is forbidden,’ so as to ascribe false things to Allah. For those who ascribe false things to Allah, will never prosper” (Bees, 116). The conception offers a quote from Muhammad: “Verily god doth not taketh away knowledge from the hands of His servants; by taketh it by taking away the learned; so that when no leaned men remain, the ignorant will be placed at the head of affairs. Causes with be submitted to their decision, they will pass sentence without knowledge, will err themselves, and lead others into error.”

The conception points to the state's special responsibility when it comes to using the Islamic values described above to strengthen national unity and prevent separatism and radicalism, as well as a split inside the Muslim community. The authors insist that the government should resolutely thwart any attempt by those who side with any of the interpretations of Islam to accuse their opponents of faithlessness and to impose their own ideas by force. Dialog and convincing arguments are the only tools to be used; the state can play the key role in coordinating the positions held by various centers of Islamic thought and Muslim thinkers on the most burning issues and bring them together.

The Moderate Nation conception pursues similar aims when it comes to issuing fatwas (decisions on urgent issues within the Shari'a): they should not overburden man; deliver him from excessive toil and searching for the best solution; avoid conflicts whenever possible; insist on the priority of the Shari'a general principles over its specific norms; teach people to act according to its key immutable principles; and emulate its flexibility and ability to take reality into account.

At the same time, the conception confirms the freedom of *ijtihad*, the traditional Islamic idea, and accepts differing opinions within the general Islamic axiological framework. It reproduces the famous principle of *fiqh*, which permits adjusting certain Muslim legal norms to changing times, conditions, and circumstances. This principle, however, is closely related to another one that speaks of the need to preserve those Muslim customs and traditions that do not contradict the clear and unambiguous Shari'a prescriptions.

The conception draws on the principle of religious pluralism to invite the Muslims to enter an active dialog with other faiths and cultures. It blames Islamic fanaticism on Islamic isolation, calls on Islam to open up to the world, and points out that the time has come to use new approaches that would fit the new reality to preach Islam outside the Muslim world.

The authors deemed it necessary to speak about the mosques' educational activities and their task of preaching Islam. They should abandon the old stereotypes and rid themselves of obsolete ideas; they should adjust themselves to current reality, says the conception, so as to be able to comprehend it in conformity with Islamic principles of commensuration of good and evil when it comes to



decision-making; avoiding damage should be preferred to gaining profit; the Shari‘a aims and main principles should be realized with due attention to the meaning of any decision rather than to their formal correspondence to obsolete doctrines. These principles have become part and parcel of the Mosque Charter elaborated in Kuwait. It calls on the Muslims to abandon unthinking devotion to any one of the Islamic legal schools and to embrace pluralism within a wider Islamic context.

The conception is an absolutely practical document: the state has already launched educational programs for the youth and university students; those studying the natural sciences are also invited to take part in seminars to discuss all aspects of moderation as the linchpin of the Islamic world outlook. In order to engage in public polemics with those who profess radical Islamic ideas, the state set up a center designed to promote unbiased ideas about Islam and its political and legal culture outside the Muslim world.

The Ministry’s Islam-oriented strategy designed for the next five years is based on the same idea of moderation: the Ministry is responsible for coordinating Islamic agitation based on this idea and respect for the Shari‘a-based Constitution and state order. The Ministry plans close cooperation with the media, which are expected to promote the idea of moderation as the Islamic way of life.

The conception is far more important than it may look at first glance: it is not limited to the interests of the Muslim community or the narrow tasks of religious policy proper. It has already become an important factor that helps to address many national problems, national security among them: an ad hoc commission has already supplied the government with an anti-extremist strategy<sup>13</sup> based on two major issues—ideological confrontation with extremism and substantiation of the Islamic alternative, as well as active propaganda among young people to prevent radicalization.

The Muslim world has already accepted the moderation principle as the guideline for its global policy. In October 2005, speaking at a meeting of the Gulf Islamic affairs ministers, head of the Saudi delegation pointed out that the authority and influence of Islam in the contemporary world depends on moderation as the Muslim world’s strategic value.

Those who spoke at the III Extraordinary Session of OIC held in Mecca in December 2005 said more or less the same thing. Sabah al-Ahmed al-Jaber as Sabah, who headed the government of Kuwait at that time (he was proclaimed Emir in January 2006), pointed out that true Islam was the religion of moderation and rejection of the extremes; that it respected other faiths and was prepared to enter into a dialog with them. The King of Saudi Arabia, who opened the conference, said: “Bloodshed will never lead us to Islamic unity; the path to it lies through moderation and tolerance.”<sup>14</sup>

The above suggests that the international Muslim community has come to a clear understanding that its chance of joining the worldwide processes as an active member, while preserving Islamic values and enriching world civilization with them, depends on its acceptance of the detailed Islamic substantiation and practical realization of the conception of moderation. Strategic security of the Muslim world and its future also depend on this.

Moderation as a strategic trend of contemporary Islamic thought might provide an answer to the question about reforming Islam.<sup>15</sup> In actual fact, it is not the reforms that are at stake, rather the ability of Islamic thought to stand up to the challenges. This depends on the priorities selected from among a multitude of traditional Islamic political and legal principles to help the Muslims cope with the complexities of contemporary life.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> See: *Al Watan*, Kuwait, 30 November, 2005; 1 December, 2005; 4 December, 2005; 5 December, 2005; 6 December, 2005.

<sup>14</sup> See: *As Siyasa* (Kuwait), 8 December, 2005.

<sup>15</sup> For more detail, see: Z.I. Levin, *Reforma v islame. Byt ili ne byt? Opyt sistemnogo i sotsiokul’turnogo issledovaniia*, Kraft Publishers, Moscow, 2005.

<sup>16</sup> See: Yusuf al-Karadawi, *Legal Muslim Substantiation of Priorities Based on the Koran and Sunnah*, Cairo, 1995 (in Arabic).

The Muslims living in the non-Muslim countries where they comprise a religious minority may find at least some of the provisions discussed above useful. Indeed, within the moderation conception and granted there is a desire to take alien views into account, the problem of Muslim integration into European society, which has recently become aggravated, can be resolved. It seems that the not-yet-forgotten cartoon scandal would have not reached boiling point had the sides involved preached moderation.

Russia, which has been given observer status at the OIC, may profit from the key principles of moderation too: it can borrow from the conception the idea of a dialog inside the Muslim community, unquestionable respect for the constitution demonstrated by all Islamic movements and organizations; the state's special efforts to formulate Islamic views on all the prominent national issues, security and social harmony included. We should never forget that the law on opposing terrorism passed early in 2006 put the corresponding ideology among the threats of terror. It seems that the country as a whole, not only the Muslim community of Russia, will profit if the principles of moderation are consistently applied in all the spheres described above.

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## RELIGIOUS-POLITICAL EXTREMISM IN CENTRAL ASIA: WHY AND HOW IT IS SPREADING

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

**T**here can be no doubt that the most conspicuous event of the last century was the unprecedented revival and spread of extremism and terrorism. Today, the concepts “extrem-

ism” and “terrorism” have become the most commonly used terms in the political vocabulary of most people writing about present-day problems and security. People are writing about ethnic and

religious extremism and terrorism, about political and state terrorism, about domestic and international terrorism, and so on. It would seem that there is nothing more to be said about these phenomena, and we would do well to agree with the opinion that if we look a little more closely at all that has been written, it becomes clear that most publications contain a merely emotional description of events that once took place.<sup>1</sup>

Extremism has many different faces, just as there are many different reasons and sources engendering and feeding it. Religious fundamentalism is often given as the reason for the spread of extremism in today's world. The true meaning of this concept is the striving to adhere to the initial principles of a particular teaching and overcome the deviations that appear during its development. We cannot help but note that today definitions such as "Islamic extremism" and "Islamic terrorism" have become rather widespread. There is an obvious substitution of concepts here, for we are all perfectly well aware that there is in fact no aggression in Islam itself. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the strong emotional load of all the events involving Islam and Muslims is making it difficult to analyze such a complex problem as religious-political extremism and prevents this issue from being dealt with in a calm and level-headed manner.

An analysis of the nature of extremism is leading to the rather simple conclusion that this phenomenon is based on a natural clash of interests and political, economic, social, ethnic, and confessional contradictions. In the event that one of the sides is unable to uphold its interests for one reason or another, it is fully capable of resorting to extreme methods to resolve its political, religious, ethnic, and other problems. In so doing, the problem of extremism forms not for some specific reason or factor, but due to a whole set of problems, each of which is making its negative contribution to the overall terrorist potential.

<sup>1</sup> See: K.L. Syroezhkin, "Obyknovennyi terrorizm," in: *Geopolitika—bezopasnost'—terrorizm*, Collection of articles, ed. by E.A. Vertlib and L.M. Bondarets, Bishkek, 2006, p. 203.

Globalization has added new features to extremism and terrorism: they have become even more widespread and turned into truly international phenomena. What is more, precisely due to economic globalization processes, not only does terrorism have greater technical and financial possibilities, but its social base has also significantly expanded. And it is absolutely no accident that the world has begun talking about "Islamic terrorism." In actual fact, it is paradoxical that terrorism is currently widespread primarily in countries where Islam predominates or coexists with other religions and traditions. But Islam is not the reason for and not the catalyst of terrorism; the root of the problem lies in the difficult sociopolitical situation in these states and their involvement in global and regional conflicts. This applies to most of today's conflicts: Iraq, the Philippines, Somalia, Nigeria, Palestine, Macedonia, Algeria, Tajikistan, Kashmir, the Muslim regions of China, and so on. But terrorism, which is spurred on by religious and national convictions, is in no way the exclusive "property" of the Muslims. It exists among Christians, Jews, and Hindus, as well as in Japan, other countries, and the groups of countries. Radical ideas, as well as terrorist violence, are even preached in some confessional and cultural centers in Western Europe and the U.S., and this is tolerated in the name of encouraging cultural diversity.<sup>2</sup>

Statements that the roots of terrorism lie in a particular religion are beyond criticism for the simple reason that terrorism is a tool that can be used by a particular ideology. Were it otherwise, we would have to accuse not only Islam of "terrorist inclinations," but also Catholicism, since in North Ireland, for example, religion, among other things, is the cause of the disaccord. We must acknowledge that today the Central Asian region is a territory of high terrorist potential. The manifestation of extremism and terrorism has affected all the republics of the region in one way or another during the entire period of their establishment as independent and sovereign states.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See: *Ibid.*, p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> See: N.A. Nazarbajev, *Kriticheskoe desiatiletie*, Almaty, 2003, p. 73.

## Religious-Political Extremism as a Threat to Central Asian Security

Conflicts between secular and extremist forces began in Central Asia (CA) early in the 1990s, and since then many harsh clashes have occurred. After the collapse of the U.S.S.R., some scientists predicted that religious extremism would turn the Central Asian region into one of the most instable in the world, and practice has shown that there is some grain of truth to this statement. There are certain internal prerequisites for the spread of radical ideology in the Central Asian countries. Some experts believe that the extremist movement in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan has been activated by such factors as weak government policy, deterioration of the economic conditions, corruption, the sharp drop in the standard of living, and inefficient state administration.<sup>4</sup> The abrupt transfer to the market economy “reversed” the former moral values. When unemployment and marginalization became the plight of part of the youth, extremist views, appeals, and activity began to gain popularity in the region.<sup>5</sup>

Today, it should be said that there are rather serious long-term threats to security in the CA countries. And, judging by several parameters, it is entirely obvious that the threat of religious-political extremism currently occupies one of the leading places in the system of primary security threats in the region’s states. The viewpoint regarding the threat of religious-political extremism typical of the entire world community, which predominates among the other well-known types of extremism (political, ethnic, and so on), is also inherent in Central Asia. At present, religious-political extremism, including its extreme manifestations in the form of terrorist acts, has become an inalienable factor in the public and political life of several countries of the region.

The following phenomena could be signs that political Islam exists in Central Asia: opposition to secular regimes; relying on the protest potential of the population; registration as a religious party or religious organization; the wide range of legal and illegal action methods used. As a sociopolitical practice, the ideology of political Islam is being used as a tool by specific political forces, as a way of putting pressure on the existing secular policy, and, in this sense, it is a topic for political scientific analysis.<sup>6</sup>

The Islamic religious-political radical formations are the main threats to security in the region’s countries of all the current international, regional, and national extremist organizations. It is their activity, aimed at spreading radical ideology for the purpose of shaking the state foundations and ultimately changing the sociopolitical system of various countries (including by violent methods), that is believed to be one of the most serious threats to CA security. In so doing, it should be noted that, in the multiconfessional environment of Central Asia, a group of religious extremist organizations cannot objectively limit itself exclusively to structures acting in the name of Islam.

Today, the activity of numerous and very different non-traditional religious organizations, such as the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Society for Krishna Consciousness, the Church of Satan, and so on, which are classified as extremist, can be seen in the region’s states with different degrees of dissemination. A clear tendency is noticed toward a quantitative increase in these groups, as well as a qualitative increase in their activity. This group of extremist organizations has not only become alienated from the rest of society, it is also socially dangerous, keeping in mind the initially well-known anti-government and anti-social tendencies in their activity. But these extremist organiza-

<sup>4</sup> See: R. Dviviendi, “Netraditsionnye ugrozy bezopasnosti v Tsentral’noi Azii,” in: *Perspektivy ukrepleniia kazakhstansko-indiiskogo partnerstva*, KISI, Almaty, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> See: M.S. Ashimbaev, *Bezopasnost’ Kazakhstana na sovremennom etape*, KISI, Almaty, 2002, p. 37.

<sup>6</sup> See: I. Mirsayitov, “Osobennosti politicheskogo islama v Tsentral’noi Azii,” *Analytic*, No. 3, 2006.

tions have an extremely limited sphere of activity and, correspondingly, objectively occupy marginal positions without posing a real threat to the national security of the region's countries. In this way, for entirely legitimate reasons, the activity of Islamic groups is currently having an essentially monopolistic influence with respect to the threat of religious-political extremism to the security of the CA states.

As a result of the world community's qualitatively new active struggle against terrorism, which began after 9/11, several of the most dangerous extremist organizations in Central Asia were temporarily forced, proceeding from tactical considerations, to refrain from violent behavior in their activity and go underground. Nevertheless, despite some setbacks, the radical Islamic organizations have essentially not rejected the prospect of carrying out active (including armed) activity in the region.

The most discussed aspect in the factor analysis of the spread in Islamic religious-political extremism in the CA region is the priority ranking and interrelation of the reasons for this phenomenon. The most controversial questions in the expert community are those regarding what factor or group of factors in particular is the key one in the development of this phenomenon; whether they are universal in every case; or whether] each specific case has its own particulars.

A stable approach has currently been elaborated among experts to evaluating the spread of Islamic religious-political extremism in the CA countries, as well as in the post-Soviet space as a whole. This approach, which "claims" a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of Islamic extremism, is based on a study of the internal and external factors that promote the development of this phenomenon. In so doing, the internal factors encouraging the emergence of terrorism and religious extremism are related to the difficult sociopolitical and economic situation that has developed in several CA states, with marginalization and sociocultural degradation of a certain part of the population, whose discontent often transforms into opposition movements. The external prerequisites, on the other hand, for the appearance of terrorism and religious extremism in the CA are related to the fact that the region is next door to the world's existing and potential hotspots, which form the "Islamic arc" of instability: the Caucasus, XUAR, the PRC, Kashmir, and, of course, Afghanistan. There are two opposing views of why extremist ideas and actions have emerged and developed. The first, which mostly represents the official viewpoint, hypertrophies the role of external factors, which mainly focus on the Tajik and Afghan threats. The second relates to the opponents of the ruling elites, whereby the accent is placed on domestic political reasons related to the shrinking of the political field and the banishment of certain political groups beyond its borders into the sphere of illegal activity.<sup>7</sup>

It is also clear that researchers and politicians are resolutely striving for a certain amount of absolutism in a particular reason for the emergence and spread in Central Asia of religious-political extremism. The significance of the socioeconomic factor as the underlying factor in the spread of religious-political extremism is overly exaggerated. Without diminishing the significance of socioeconomic conditions, it should nevertheless be noted that this thesis is not entirely correct. This is shown by the experience of many sufficiently economically prosperous countries of the world community which are still having to deal with the problem of radical groups (Turkey, Saudi Arabia, the West European states, and so on). So, difficult socioeconomic conditions are not always and not everywhere, as is customarily believed, the dominating factor promoting the development of a protest ideology based on Islam.

On the whole, an explanation (usually by identifying a particular socioeconomic, domestic political, or foreign political factor) of the reasons for the appearance of religious-political extremism

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<sup>7</sup> See: E.V. Tukumov, *Religiozno-politicheskiy ekstremizm kak ugroza regional'noi i natsional'noi bezopasnosti stran Tsentral'noi Azii*. Dissertation for doctorate in political science, Almaty, 2004, p. 10.

acting in the name of Islam greatly simplifies the consideration of this very complicated problem. As world practice and the experience of development in the region's countries show, it is essentially impossible to unequivocally define any single factor or group of internal or external factors as the key component.

Despite the similar prerequisites for the development of religious-political extremism in the world community and the existence of a set of universal factors, the scenarios of how radical ideology based on Islam is spread are often very different for each country. Correspondingly, *first*, the phenomenon of Islamic extremism emerged and developed due to a certain symbiosis of internal and external factors, and it is sometimes extremely difficult to identify the most important component. *Second*, different stages in the development and spread of Islamic religious-political extremism are possible for particular reasons in each state.

On the whole, when analyzing the problem of the spread in Islamic religious-political extremism in the 20th and at the beginning of the 21st century, it appears impossible to identify the most important factors that are having a decisive influence on the development of this phenomenon.

## Geopolitical Factors of the Penetration of Religious-Political Extremism into Central Asia

As many researchers justifiably claim, it is so-called big geopolitics that has become the most powerful catalyst for spreading essentially all types of extremism and terrorism in today's world. It should be noted that using the religious factor to achieve geopolitical goals is not something new, it has existed and been actively resorted to by mankind for many centuries.

On the whole, the external conditions for the emergence of terrorism and religious extremism in Central Asia are directly and closely related to its proximity to the world's existing and potential conflict zones, which form the above-mentioned Islamic arc of instability: the Afghan conflict, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Caucasus, and Kashmir. The relation between the spread of radical Islamic organizations in the CA region and regional conflicts is obvious and acts as a type of vicious circle: regional conflicts in the Islamic world serve as a source for developing extremist formations. At the same time, the Islamic radical organizations themselves are the entities most interested in preserving these conflicts. The following conflicts can be identified, which, according to the principle of communicating vessels, are interdependent and interconnected with each other and have the most influence on the situation in Central Asia.

- *First*, the Arab-Israeli and Iraqi conflicts as a factor of global influence on the development of Islamic extremism in the world, including in the CA region (indirectly). Almost all the leading experts on the region, as well as experts on Islam, are of the opinion that the conflict in the Middle East is, for several objective and subjective reasons, one of the leading factors in the activation of Islam in the sociopolitical life of several countries of the region and of the world community as a whole.
- *Second*, the Indo-Pakistani conflict as a regional factor having a significant direct influence on the spread of Islamic extremism in South Asia and Afghanistan. On the whole, these conflicts, both the Arab-Israeli and the Indo-Pakistani, are the most long-term contradictions of present-day life, and there is no reason to believe that they will be settled any time soon. These conflicts, despite their local reasons, have currently acquired a global nature.



- *Third*, the Afghan conflict as a sub-regional factor having the greatest external influence on the spread of radical Islam in post-Soviet Central Asia. Since its appearance in the 1970s and as of today, the Afghan military-political conflict occupies a special place among the external sources of the spread of Islamic religious-political extremism in the region. The Afghan conflict fully demonstrates the fact that Central Asia was and still is a region where the geostrategic interests of different countries clash, and it is Islam, particularly in its radical form, that is the most efficient force capable of ensuring their interests. Bordering directly on Afghanistan, the region's states have experienced all the negative consequences of being a close neighbor throughout this entire conflict.

During the Taliban's rule, Afghanistan has essentially become the world center for training members of terrorist organizations, as well as for the global spread of radical ideology. On the whole, the Taliban's arrival on the political scene and its presence right up until September 2001 had a compound effect on the processes going on in Central Asia related to the spread of the radical ideology of the corresponding organizations. The support the Taliban movement rendered religious extremist organizations in several CA countries (such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan—IMU) greatly assisted their qualitative and quantitative growth. At the same time, these transformations, which are increasing the threat of the appearance of religious-political extremism in the region's states, forced the ruling elites of the CA countries to take a more serious approach to this problem and raise the efficiency of regional security in general.

At present, despite the merely external successful outcome of the antiterrorist operation in Afghanistan and elimination of the problem of direct expansion of radical Islamists in Central Asia, the situation in this country is still extremely difficult, without clear and specifically positive prospects. The current crisis trends in Afghanistan show that the military operation to destroy the terrorist infrastructure on Afghan territory was not brought to its logical conclusion. And so today, all the prerequisites remain in this state for the emergence of new contradictions and conflicts capable of escalating into armed clashes. Radicalization of the military-political situation in Afghanistan and the inability of the ISAF coalition forces under NATO's supervision to control the situation indicate that the extremist threat has not been eliminated, but merely "stuffed," moved to a latent level, which currently complicates the struggle against it. It is obvious that potential aggravation of the situation in Afghanistan with the participation of radical Islamists will remain a stumbling block on the road to stability in the CA countries.

## **Socioeconomic Reasons for the Development of an Extremist Environment in the Region**

It is customary to believe that the acute social, economic, environmental, and other problems existing currently in most CA countries are objectively creating a sufficiently favorable environment for the emergence and spread of radical religious movements in the region. They also graphically show the presence of systemic economic crises in several of the region's states as a legitimate consequence of incomplete Soviet modernization, on the one hand, and failed economic policy, on the other.

As the experience of the countries that have directly encountered the problem of the spread of Islamic religious-political extremism (in particular the Muslim states of the Near and Middle East) shows, there is a close interrelationship between the modernization processes in traditional Islamic

societies and the development of this phenomenon in these countries. This regularity, with the preservation of certain specific aspects, was also manifested in general terms in the Central Asian countries.

During the Soviet era, the CA countries had raw material economies with certain hypertrophied industries (cotton in Uzbekistan, aluminum in Tajikistan, and so on); the region was perceived primarily as a supplier of cheap raw agricultural and mineral material. All of this also largely predetermined peripherality, economic backwardness, and negative consequences in the future. The appearance of serious socioeconomic and environmental crisis phenomena undermining the very foundation of further advancing socioeconomic development of the region's countries is a legitimate consequence of the inefficient economic policy carried out in Central Asia. Socioeconomic problems, along with the spiritual crisis, led in the end to an increase in protest phenomena among the population of the CA states. As a result of the intensified stagnation phenomena in the economy, the drop in standard of living, the increase in unemployment, the high child mortality rate, as well as the serious deterioration in the environment, extremist trends have begun to grow in the regions of the traditional spread of Islam among unregistered churches, and searches have increased to find ways to Islamicize society as a solution to this situation. In this way, the reaction of part of the CA's Muslim population to the socioeconomic crises arising as a result of the modernization processes, as well as attempts to resolve them by means of Islam, was the same as that of the Near and Middle East countries.<sup>8</sup>

In the region's states, as well as in the other countries of the Islamic world, the main social base of radical organizations consists of that part of the population that has been unable to find its place in the dynamically and painfully changing socioeconomic conditions in which most of the CA states now find themselves. In turn, the extreme simplicity of the program precepts and methods for resolving socioeconomic problems offered by the radical Islamic organizations makes them popular among part of the population of the region's countries.

Keeping in mind that Islamic movements in the CA states are essentially protest, their ranks are constantly replenished with socially infringed upon citizens. As the experience of the Near and Middle Eastern countries shows, the Muslim population, which for a long time was in a difficult financial state and, most important, lived in unfair and unequal conditions, is increasingly inclined to think that a state based on religious principles (the Caliphate) will be more economically stable and socially fair for its citizens. The principles of isolationism and autarchy used by certain CA countries are leading to the failure of any development model and promoting socioeconomic stagnation. This is causing a drop in the level of national security in the face of any type of threat, including extremism.

On the whole, the phenomenon of religious-political extremism is a clear indication of the fact that long-preserved destabilizing components (critical state of the economy, intensified social polarization of society, total destitution of most of the population, and so on) in transitional states, to which the CA countries belong, usually lead in the end to political instability and social tension, which in turn give rise to conflict situations, including along the lines of secular power—the Islamic radical opposition.

## Ideological Foundation for the Manifestation of Extremism in Central Asia

In our opinion, the destruction of the religious infrastructure in the region's countries, the struggle against traditional forms of Islam during the Soviet era and the attempts to eradicate it played one of the decisive roles in spreading the radical version of Islam in post-Soviet Central Asia.

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<sup>8</sup> See: D. Kalieva, "Religiozniy ekstremizm kak netraditsionnaya ugroza natsional'noi bezopasnosti," *Kazakhstan-Spektr*, No. 4, 2002, p. 7.

It is quite obvious that under the conditions of tough widespread resistance from the broad masses of the Muslim population in the region's republics, the establishment of the dictatorship of Soviet power, as well as the reorientation of life in the traditional CA societies (with a few exceptions relating to Kazakhstan), which was strictly regulated for centuries by Islamic standards and traditions, were of a primarily forceful and coercive nature. In the mid-1930s, as a result of the mass repressions among the influential groups of the Islamic clergy and campaigns to eradicate religious traditions in everyday life, essentially the entire spiritual elite and system of traditional religious education were wiped out. Within a very short time, the Islamic clergy was almost totally destroyed and madrasahs and mosques torn down. There was serious deformation of the traditional Muslim school and a break in cultural ties with the Islamic world. In this way, by conducting a targeted policy, Islam's influence was effectively neutralized, and religion no longer posed any particular threat to Soviet power and the communist ideology. Traditional Islam was dealt a serious blow; and in so doing, the necessary ground was tilled for re-Islamization into a qualitatively different form with the arrival in the region of non-traditional Islamic trends at the beginning of the 1990s.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, the policy of militant atheism that Soviet power engendered among the Muslim population of the region's countries had also the opposite effect, having a latent, negative nature. It is obvious that the widespread public discontent aroused by the coercive secularization was not completely neutralized—in reality, this protest remained, assuming a latent form for a long time. In the end, the main result of the policy of militant atheism was not the mass rejection by the people of their religious convictions, but the withdrawal of part of the influential clergy underground and the formation of religious structures which were called “parallel” or “alternative Islam” in the countries of the West. It was these religious formations that subsequently became the basis (in the organizational, resource, and intellectual respect) for the movement of supporters of so-called “pure” Islam, as well as for the appearance of several regional religious-political Islamic extremist organizations. The formation of the first Islamic groups in the region with extremist ideological precepts was noted in the 1970s.<sup>10</sup>

On the whole, the policy of militant atheism became the springboard for launching the present-day problem of religious-political extremism in the CA countries. It should be noted that Soviet power's policy aimed at assimilating the CA region was very similar in many ways (particularly with respect to the radical methods for introducing communist ideology) to the activity of today's religious-political organizations striving to implement the idea of building an Islamic Caliphate in the region. The difference lies in the dimensions of their activity, resource possibilities, and other conditions.<sup>11</sup>

In this respect, the liberalization of religious relations that began during perestroika in the U.S.S.R. brought the entire complicated set of contradictions that developed during the Soviet era in the religious sphere out of its latent state. This legitimately led to the appearance of two trends. The Muslim community of regional states had the opportunity to return to normal conditions of religious life, legally carry out all religious rituals and observe traditions, on the one hand, and in a short period of time, the number of mosques multiplied, madrasahs and higher theological learning institutions were opened, religious literature was published in large quantities, and so on, on the other. By the time the U.S.S.R. collapsed, ideal internal and external conditions had developed in Central Asia for re-Islamization.

Under the conditions of the ideological vacuum that formed as a result of the collapse of the communist ideology, so-called non-traditional forms of Islam took the most active part in Islamic

<sup>9</sup> See: S. Olimova, “Religioznye korni terrorizma,” *Kazakhstan-Spektr*, No. 3, 2002, pp. 21-29.

<sup>10</sup> See: S. Akimbekov, “Islam i problemy bezopasnosti Tsentral'noi Azii,” *Kazakhstan-Spektr*, No. 3, 2002, p. 9.

<sup>11</sup> See: Iu. Egorov, “S mechtai o vsemirnom khalifate,” *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 12 April, 2001.

revival—primarily, so-called Koranic or pure Islam. Taking into account that organizations of a chiefly extremist bent are their main entities widespread in the world community (in particular, in the Islamic world), the nature of the expansion of pure Islam assumed a radical form in Central Asia. The conflict that legitimately arose between the two versions of Islam—local, traditional, belonging to the Hanafi theological-legal school as the Islamic madhab, the most liberal and tolerant of religious dissidence, that developed over the centuries and is a synthesis of Islamic provisions and local pre-Islamic traditions and confessions, on the one hand, and the classical, Koranic, so-called pure Islam, on the other, led to the creation of so-called religious conflict groups.

Later it was precisely from the latter that regional extremist organizations formed due to external and internal circumstances. When reasoning the activation of their activity during re-Islamization of the CA region, the emphasis was placed on the need for intervention in order to revive the true Islamic nature of the local Muslim community (in this respect, it is worth keeping in mind that local Islam was defined from the viewpoint of pure Islam as “heretical” and “incorrect”). This applied, for example, to the tradition of honoring the spirits of ancestors (*aruakh*), the problem of the everyday clothing of Muslims (particularly women), education methods, questions of rituals, and so on. It is important to note that the local movement of pure Islam was not originally a monolithic formation, being divided into two main categories. Some of the supporters of this movement understood the slogans calling for preservation of pure Islam to mean ridding the Muslim religion of customs and rituals not inherent in initial Islam, refusing to levy large sums for carrying out various religious rituals, and driving thievish clergy from the mosques. Other fundamentalists went much further. For them the calls to purify Islam of superstition and remove self-seekers from the leadership of religious organizations were only ways to draw the believing masses onto their side. Their main purpose was something else: they wanted to turn the laws of the Shari’a into legal norms binding for the entire population, and ultimately create an Islamic state. The methods of their activity, which were openly extremist in nature, were also in keeping with the set goals.<sup>12</sup>

Several of the following key circumstances had a decisive effect on the further strengthening and spread of extremist religious-political organizations:

- *First*, as a result of the repressive policy carried out in relation to Islam during Soviet rule, there was an objective significant decrease in the role of the traditional local model of this confession in the CA region. One of the main reasons for the weakening of local Islam was the critical shortage among the clergy of qualified members preaching the traditional forms of Islam. As early as the beginning of the 1990s, people began to worry that the acute shortage of qualified clergy members, as well as the policy of openness, might lead to an increase in the number of non-traditional Islamic trends in the region, including radical ones. The low number of qualified clergy members and their illiteracy made it impossible to put up effective religious resistance to the penetration of non-traditional ideologies, including radical ones based on the conception of pure Islam. For example, certification of religious clergymen in Kyrgyzstan usually revealed that a quarter of the imams were not qualified to carry out their duties at all, and almost 60% had to be re-certified.<sup>13</sup> It should be stressed that this is quite typical of most of the CA countries.

On the whole, the collapse of the religious infrastructure that had long developed in the form of the spiritual administrations of Muslims existing in the Soviet Union was an important factor leading to the weakening of traditional Islam in the region. The collapse of this structure, which to one extent or another controlled the religious processes in CA,

<sup>12</sup> See: E.V. Tukumov, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>13</sup> See: A. Krylov, “Religioznaia situatsiia v Kyrgyzstane,” Part II, available at [<http://www.blagovest-info.ru/index.php?ss=2&s=24&id=6799>].

led to the unity of the traditionalists being undermined and favorable conditions being created for the uncontrolled spread of various trends of Islam, including those previously unknown in the region.

- *Second*, during the first years of independence, when extreme shortages of professional Muslim clergy and teachers at learning institutions developed, the need arose for religious training abroad in order to acquire a professional Islamic education. At first, this process was largely chaotic and poorly organized. While some students were sent abroad to study in well-known education Islamic centers, such as Al-Azhar (Egypt), a large number of people in this category from the CA countries ended up in little-known “dubious” learning institutions in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and so on. All of this meant that, in addition to acquiring professional knowledge in Muslim theology, many students also became acquainted with the so-called radical trends of Islam.
- *Third*, by the time various radical Islamic organizations acting under slogans of returning true Islam to the Muslim people of Central Asia actively penetrated the region, a powerful protest base united part of the so-called unofficial clergy, which supported the idea of re-Islamicizing Muslim society in Central Asia within the framework of so-called pure Islam, had formed in the region, primarily in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.
- *Fourth*, political factors (mainly within the framework of secular power-Islam relations), in addition to purely religious reasons, promoted the successful spread of radical ideology in the region. The gist of the problem was that the return of Islamic values could not lead to automatic reinstatement of the rules of conduct in society that existed in the region before the modernization times of the Soviet Union.<sup>14</sup> For example, for the secular political elite of the region’s countries (primarily, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan), the model of a sociopolitical structure with the active and ponderous role of Islam on a legitimate basis came into sharp conflict with the CA states’ interests and own views of their strategic development. So the process of restoring Islam’s previous key political role, which developed naturally under the conditions of independence with support from a certain part of the population, parties, and clergy, was taken under the strict control of the local ruling political elites from the very beginning, which naturally aroused a protest reaction, including in radical form.

## Entities of the Spread in Religious-Political Extremism in Central Asia

It is obvious that in order to form a complete idea of the problem being studied, the main entities of extremist religious-political organizations must be defined.

On the whole, an analysis of the situation shows that several extremist religious-political organizations are currently functioning in the CA region: the Islamic Revival Party of Uzbekistan (IRPU); the Adolat Party (Justice); Islam Lashkarlari (The Warriors of Islam); Tovba (Repentance); Iymonchilar (Believers), or Akramiylar, or Khalifatchilar (Adherers of the Caliphate); the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU); Hizb ut-Tahrir (Liberation Party); the Islamic Movement of Eastern Turke-

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<sup>14</sup> See: S. Akimbekov, “Islam v Kazakhstane,” *Kontinent*, No. 19, 2001, p. 23.

stan (Central Asia); Akramiya (the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan (IRPT)).<sup>15</sup> Other well-known terrorist organizations, such as al-Qa'eda, Islamic Jihad, and so on, are also showing a certain interest in the region.

It seems that a clear distinction should be made among the regional Islamic extremist religious-political organizations with respect to their tactical, motivational, and qualitative parameters. The difficulty of this task lies in the dearth of reliable and objective information, particular about the size of the formations named, their real origin, resource base, interaction with other groups at the local and international level, and so on. There are several principally important common and distinguishing aspects in the nature of the activity of regional Islamic extremist religious-political organizations:

Common aspects:

- the presence of a single strategic goal—seizure of power in the CA countries and building an Islamic state (Caliphate) in the region or, at the initial stage, in a certain part of it (in particular, the Ferghana Valley);
- the presence of a single tactical goal—destabilization of the sociopolitical situation in the region's states. Most of the radical Islamic organizations function in accordance with the same strategic pattern: destabilization of the sociopolitical situation—provocation of mass anti-government demonstrations—overthrow of the country's leadership—formation of an Islamic government (initially, perhaps, together with other opposition forces).

Distinguishing aspects:

- it is important to note the absence of a unified radical movement in the region, and of a coordinated center, which is characteristic of the entire Islamic world. Central Asian extremist Islamic organizations are not only unable to join forces, which essentially would be an important and logical step from the viewpoint of achieving their common strategic goals, but they also treat each other as rivals, competitors for power over the local Muslims (Ummah);
- religious-political extremist groups should be clearly distinguished: some think an Islamic state can be created using non-coercive methods, while others believe this can only be achieved by means of armed action. For example, the main place in the ideology of Hizb ut-Tahrir is occupied by "propaganda work among the Muslim communities," i.e. achieving political goals by means of propaganda, money, opinion, or mobilization of the masses. On the contrary, the Islamic Movement of Turkestan bases its ideological struggle on the conception of the so-called small jihad (*armed struggle against the non-believers*).<sup>16</sup>

Along with this, today we are seeing the penetration into territories contiguous with the Central Asian republics of some religious-extremist and radical political elements calling for overthrowing the existing government, establishing archaic regimes, or autonomizing certain regions of the country. Some religious communities are falling under the influence of missionaries from foreign Islamic centers preaching ideas of religious intolerance.<sup>17</sup>

On the whole, it appears extremely difficult to talk about any specific path of development or unequivocal outcome: it would be expedient to carry out a differential analysis of the development of the situation in the context of the problem being studied. An attempt could be made to forecast the relations in the CA region along the lines of government-opposition-Islamic radical opposition, keep-

<sup>15</sup> See: I. Mirsayitov, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> See: E.V. Tukumov, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> See: *Spetsifika proiavleniy terrorizma i ekstremizma v Tsentral'noi Azii*, Report of the Center of Antiterrorist Programs, available at [<http://www.terrorunet.ru/analitic/64.html>].



ing in mind the rich world experience in the development of this problem and relying on the practice of several countries of the Islamic world. The following main scenarios can be singled out from among the vast variety of development alternatives of the situation:

- *The Algerian-Egyptian scenario*—long-term armed government—radical Islamic opposition conflict entailing many victims among the civilian population. On the whole, the government controls the development of the situation in the country, but this state is characterized by increased instability of the sociopolitical situation;
- *The Turkish-Tunisian scenario*—relatively peaceful coexistence between secular power and the Islamic opposition. Relatively successful attempts by the government to find a peaceful solution to the problem of the radical Islamic opposition using different methods;
- *The Iranian scenario*—carrying out radical reforms by secular power—destabilization of the political situation—arrival in power by means of a state coup of Islamic fundamentalist forces and the building of an Islamic state.<sup>18</sup>

Taking into account the obvious significant similarities in the development of religious-political extremism in the Islamic world, on the one hand, and in the CA region, on the other, it can be presumed that development of the situation could potentially be carried out according to several known scenarios presented in ascending order of their likelihood.

Of course, in order to prevent the import of extremism into the region, there is an extreme and urgent need for legal regulation of the missionary activity of foreign religious preachers. This particularly applies to more precise and intelligent work in carrying out competent experts' examinations of religious literature, particularly that which contains non-classical interpretations of the Scriptures.

Although religious radical organizations have been subjected to immense resource damage that is difficult to compensate, on the whole their very presence is creating a tense situation in Central Asia, which could at any moment escalate into a conflict.

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Summing up the aforesaid, we will note that the socioeconomic problems (increase in the unemployment level, low quality of public health, lack of access to a high-quality education, constant cutback in social government spending, and so on) as a result of the modernization processes, ineffective tough political regimes in several of the region's countries, as well as the weakness of the official Islamic clergy in combination with an appropriate external environment are capable of creating a dangerous aggregate of conditions conducive to the spread of religious-political extremism. These factors, which are raising Muslim society's perceptibility for radical ideology, are identical for all the countries of the Islamic world, and the CA states are no exception. What is more, religious-political extremism cannot be explained by socioeconomic, political, and geopolitical reasons alone.

We are sorry to say that Islam is stereotyped as a factor preventing political stability in the region, and all forms of public activity with an Islamic hue are at times automatically classified as manifestations of fundamentalism or considered doomed to conflict phenomena related to extremism and terrorism. This approach is very characteristic of Western experts, the mass media, and public opinion, which is encouraging an increase in Islamophobia in the world community. It is obvious that it is

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<sup>18</sup> See: E.V. Tukumov, op. cit., p. 14.

extremely wrong to make categorical generalizations and identify Islam, Islamism, and Islamists with extremism and terrorism.<sup>19</sup>

Extremism and terrorism are defined not by the proclaimed ideological doctrines, but on the basis of practical activity, when extremist sallies and terrorist acts become a means for putting pressure on the policy of the current political regimes. Religious-political extremism, which acts in the name of any religion, is an internal product of mankind manifested mainly as the result of the unharmonious socioeconomic, political, and cultural-civilizational development of the world.

In the CA countries, the face of Islam is defined not by religious extremists and terrorists, but first and foremost by moderate Muslims who have a tolerant attitude toward political and social freedoms, as well as to the development of civil and cultural identity. Ignoring this demand leads in theory and practice to placing an equals sign between extremists and moderates, between their ideologies and activity.

The question arises of how an increase in religious-political extremism can be opposed without intensifying a repressive state structure.

For example, the OSCE believes that the absence of democracy in the former Soviet CA republics is making this entire region more vulnerable to extremism. In the words of the organization's leader, Mircea Geoană, "In gagging their opponents, they risk driving them to terrorist organizations and there exists in Central Asia a real danger of extremism, notably Islamic fundamentalism."<sup>20</sup> This is an extremely dubious thesis, but, as usual, the OSCE is capable only of outward criticism, without getting to the gist of the issue and without offering specific effective measure to resolve it.

Nevertheless, many countries have immense practical experience in effective opposition to this threat—primarily, the Near and Middle East states. Their practice will be extremely beneficial to the CA countries, keeping in mind that a whole series of identical features and identical factors giving rise to the appearance of radical movements acting in the name of Islam is inherent in these regions.

All the same, the objective special features of the development and spread of religious-political extremism in some CA countries is making it necessary for them to find their own way to resolve this problem. By way of example, we can give Kazakhstan's current achievements in opposing religious extremism using natural, non-violent, and gentle methods—by means of conscious and rational liberalization of religious relations, which has greatly reduced the open and mass development of extremist trends.

On the whole, the current economic and political conditions in several countries of the region are such that the demand for Islam, including for an alternative radical Islam, will most likely increase in the next decade and in the more distant future. Nevertheless, it is obvious that it is not terrorism itself with its frequently entirely innocent and usually relatively small number of victims that is dangerous for the security of the CA countries (as of any country), but its consequences, which may be entirely different, but unequivocally negative.

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<sup>19</sup> See: E. Tukumov, "Problema religioznogo ekstremizma v stranakh Blizhnego i Srednego Vostoka," *Analytic*, No. 1, 2001, p. 23.

<sup>20</sup> "OSCE Warns of Islamic Militancy," available at [[http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/news/newsid\\_1381000/1381011.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/news/newsid_1381000/1381011.stm)].

## GLOBALIZATION OF MUSLIM CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE CAUCASUS: ISLAMIC CALL AND JIHAD

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Today most researchers of North Caucasian religious-political reality are viewing the role of the international factor in the region's Islamic revival exclusively from the narrow perspective of its financing by the worldwide terrorist international aimed at destabilizing the situation in the Caucasus. However, the circumstances that have brought the problems relating to the North Caucasian Islamic revival to the international level are much more complicated and multifaceted.

Let us begin with the fact that for many centuries, the interpretation and practice of Islam established in the Caucasus developed according to their own scenarios and were very different from those customary throughout the Caliphate as a whole.

First of all, the Muslims of the Caucasus were very isolated from the external Muslim world. Due to the region's remoteness from the political centers of the Caliphate, as well as the inaccessibility of the interior regions of the Caucasus, internal caliphate social, political, military, cultural, and other transformations reached it in the form of weak echoes.

Second, because of the incredible internal strength and tenacity of the local traditional spiritual and ritual-legal cultures, the interpretation and practice of Islam in the Caucasus were strongly influenced by them. For centuries, the Islamic religion had to reconcile itself to living next door to ineradicable paganism in everyday life, the

adats, the everyday behavior of the mountain-dwellers, and their consciousness. This caused the ritual side of Islam to become extremely deformed in the region, while the legal space of the Caucasus was divided between the traditional adat and the Shari'a, a situation that was inconceivable for classical Islam.

This last factor played an enormous role in the victory of czarist, and then Soviet Russia in the Caucasian theater of war. It was precisely due to the heterogeneity, lack of integrity, and fragmentariness of the Islamic consciousness, as well as the interruption of the legal space and the uneven "filling" of the mountain society with Islamic power that the czarist and Soviet authorities were able to split Caucasian society and implement their own political and legal projects in the region.

After the czarist authorities spent decades quietly stifling Islamic political-legal practice and intellectual thought, and after virulent destruction of the latter by Soviet power, the authorities were taken completely by surprise when Islam suddenly erupted in a burst of activity in all areas of life in the region, leading to a so-called Islamic revival.

This phenomenon is extremely complicated and multifaceted, and it is precisely this explosive awakening of Islam in the Caucasus that interests us as we take a look at Islamic globalism in the region's Muslim consciousness.

## Revival of Former Islamic Schools and Trends

Today's Caucasian Muslim community is a very complicated and multifaceted phenomenon, displaying a wide range of internal differences and nuances. The first subgroup of Caucasian Muslims consists of representatives of versions of Islam that in past centuries formed a synthesis of Islamic and local ethnocultural traditions. Most of today's researchers call this version of Islam "traditional."

It is precisely this version of Islam (with some differences) that predominated in the Caucasus until the czarist and Soviet authorities began destroying the Islamic culture. In the Eastern Caucasus—Daghestan, Chechnia, and Ingushetia—the Sufi component was the most characteristic and vibrant element in the triptych of Islamic, ethnic, and Sufi traditions. In the Western Caucasus, on the other hand, where the spiritual and political-legal components of Islam were not as strong, common understanding and a truncated ritual version of this religion were more important and were very much subordinated to the local ethnocultural tradition.

It should be acknowledged that this version was distinguished by its strict adherence to the madhab division of Islam that occurred over time, by its following of only the teachers of its own school, by the aestheticism, contemplation, and humility of Sufism, as well as by giving Islam a strictly limited niche in world outlook and ritual issues, which excluded the active participation of this confession in the sociopolitical transformation of the world.

Alexei Malashenko gives a precise description of the Caucasian Islamic traditionalism that developed in the region during the time of its natural and artificial cultural-political isolation, comparing it with the Islamic schools and trends abroad that managed to retain ways to develop and rejuvenate.

He gives this description using the example of the official Soviet ideology that divided Islam into "foreign" (active, politicized, frequently anti-communist, used as a slogan in the national liberation movement) and "own," "Soviet," widespread among the "old fogies" and "weak women" ... and immersed in the affairs of faith and rejecting the political involvement of religion.<sup>1</sup>

And this is keeping in mind that Islam in the Caucasus, undoubtedly due to its deep penetration (albeit in the syncretic version) into every pore of Caucasian society, remained a regulator of social relations in many places.

This interpretation and practice of Islam has long lost its internal dynamism and mobilization potential, currently representing the feeble and distorted residue of the first wave of Islamization of the region.

This first wave of Islamization that swept the entire world during the predominance of slave-owning and feudal relations began to ebb during the birth and blossoming of capitalism. The Muslims of the first Islamic wave, which spread this religion all over the Caucasus, were not ready to respond to the new challenges of history and lost the initiative in developing viable socioeconomic and socio-political models.

The mobilization and reform efforts of the region's first-wave Muslims reached their peak with the Caucasian war and the creation of the Imamate—an Islamic state based on the Caliphate (it is well worth noting that Imam Shamil held the title of "sovereign of the believers," just like the Islamic caliphs). After this peak subsided, Islamic tradition in the Caucasus underwent repression and destruction, which ultimately sapped its internal strength.

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<sup>1</sup> See: A. Malashenko, "Kakim nam viditsia islam," Institute of Religion and Politics [www.i-r-p.ru], 5 November, 2006.

The current upswing in the Caucasus of the residual manifestations of this version of Islam in no way means that it is capable of prompting a genuine Islamic revival. Islam of the first wave, which began flourishing in the works of the Daghestani murshids and ustazes and came to full fruition in Shamil's Imamate, is in deep regression and suffering a spiritual and creative crisis today as a source of Islamic thought. It is incapable of offering today's Muslims of the region anything other than a return to the pre-revolutionary intellectual and scientific-educational level.

The seeming upswing of this version of Islam in the Caucasus is in no way a tempestuous outburst, nor is it a spurt forward on the path of development, as is often imagined; it is only a return to the spiritual and public positions from which it was at one time forcefully removed by Soviet power.

It is here that many analysts and researchers are falling into a trap. What they are calling an Islamic revival is merely the retrieval by the residual and "petrified" versions of Islam of the first wave of the ground they lost in the past. In actual fact, Islamic revival has not yet begun in the region. Only now, when these versions of first-wave Islam, having largely restored their former positions, have again placed the pre-revolutionary vision of the world and Islam on a pedestal, the time has come to say that these interpretations cannot satisfy the spiritual quest of the Caucasian Muslims of the 21st century.

We have to admit that today's "petrified" interpretations of Islam are in the deepest crisis. They have proven incapable of offering society any viable program for resolving the social, economic, national, political, or at least cultural-moral problems facing Caucasian society today.

A small, but vivid example of this is the struggle against prostitution pompously declared by members of the Daghestani clergy, which they lost and are now keeping tight-lipped about. This is also shown by the complete incapability of the Spiritual Administrations of the Western Caucasus to arouse the interest of the Muslim youth and make it follow them. The consequences of this defeat led to an armed revolt among the Kabardino-Balkarian Muslims against the existing power system and above-mentioned structures; in the past year, one more consequence manifested itself in a series of shootings of imams and employees of the official Spiritual Administrations of the Western and Eastern Caucasus.

The clergy is not undergoing rejuvenation in the Caucasus, on the contrary, conservation and enforcement of all the spiritual posts among specific social and ethnic groups is going on. Such closeness and conservation is preventing the appearance of new ideas and concepts of development, there is no "renewal of blood," rather there is a gradual degeneration of intellectual thought within the framework of the "petrified" interpretations of Islam. But natural and social sciences tell us that closed systems do not last long. In this way, "official Islam" in the Caucasus is gradually slipping into complete stagnation and degradation.

At the same time, young people, who are completely disillusioned by the official clergy and its interpretation of Islam, are filling the ranks of the protest movements and groups in search of fresh ideas and ways to apply their impassioned hearts. The younger generation is looking for freshness, flexibility, and purity in Islam, is striving to overcome "narrow mosque" and "narrow aul" frameworks, as well as expand the boundaries of their own Islamic consciousness to reach the international level. It is for these very reasons that young people are turning increasingly frequently not to the local imams and spiritual leaders, but to the recognized world authorities in search of a way to reach the international, planetary level.

## Beginning of Islamic Reform

Before beginning to analyze this problem, we should note that by Islamic reform we do not mean reconsideration by each subsequent generation of Muslims of the main dogmas and provisions of this

religion aimed at adapting them to the changing reality. When talking of reform, we mean launching the mechanism embedded in Islam of renewal and purification of the mentioned dogmas and provisions from ethnocultural, semi-pagan elements, innovations, and rituals brought in over time and not inherent in classical Islam.

What is more, the mechanism of *ijtihad* (Arabic “*ijtihad*”—“zeal, the application of maximum effort”) should be launched every time Islamic intellectual thought becomes stagnated, thus allowing Islamic law to develop in keeping with the requirements of the times, and not allowing the development of dogmas and fundamental legal provisions. *Ijtihad* describes the process by which an Islamic law expert (*mujtahid*) makes a legal decision by independent interpretation of the legal sources on questions which do not have any specific instructions in the Qur’an and Sunnah of the Prophet. *Ijtihad* endows Islamic law with the ability to remain flexible and not become ossified, but develop and progress in correspondence with the changing historical conditions and social needs.

Most surprising is the fact that the Islamic reform currently gaining momentum in the Caucasus (just as throughout the world) did not arise in the region only today, and was in no way imported by the Arab missionaries of the post-perestroika wave, as is hailed by state propaganda.

Islamic reform was born within the very same “petrified” Islamic schools of the first wave when Islamic thought was going through a period of intense stagnation throughout the whole world. At that time, the Islamic academics in the Caucasus were becoming bogged down in their intellectual activity at the level of avocation of mystical spiritual experience and reinforcement of the concept of *taqlid*—passive and unquestioning following of already developed schools and trends (Arabic “*taqlid*”—“imitation,” “following tradition”).

The powerful process of Islamic renaissance in the Caucasus is beginning against the background of feudalism in the Caucasian free communities, transformation of the former cultural-intellectual centers of Islam into centers of feudal formations, as well as the ever greater subordination of Islamic thought to serving the interests of the powers-that-be and its transition to a position of passive imitation.

Its first representative was undoubtedly Muhammad Ibn Musa al-Kuduki from the Dagh-estani aul of Kudutl (1652-1717). Upon his return from Yemen, where he studied for seven years with a prominent academic, *mujtahid* Salih al-Yamani, al-Kuduki, for the first time in the history of the Caucasus and following the example of his teacher, very severely criticized the opinion of the Islamic academics who declared the closing of the gates of *ijtihad* in the 10th century. In Islamic history, “closing of the gates of *ijtihad*” meant that the Islamic academics were prohibited from making independent judgments based on the Qur’an and Sunnah depending on historical and social conditions, as well as transition to the position of *taqlid*—implicit following of the former schools.

Al-Kuduki relied on the opinion of his mentor in his call to reject the practice of *taqlid* infecting Caucasian Islam and return to the practice of *ijtihad*: “Closing of the gates of *ijtihad* means closing the road to understanding the Qur’an and Sunnah. And closing this road is nothing more than abrogating their truth.”<sup>2</sup>

Ushurmu, a Chechen from the aul of Alda, better known as Sheikh Mansour (1760-1791), can boldly be called a representative of the Islamic reform among the Vainakhs. Like other reformist leaders in Muslim countries, Sheikh Mansour saw the main reasons for the Muslims’ weakness to be their disregard of the “genuine Islamic virtues” and violation of the laws and values of Islam.

Mansour, although he was more of a preacher (later, he became a military commander) than a prominent Islamic academic, was nevertheless the first imam of the Caucasus who expressed

<sup>2</sup> Salih al-Yamani, *Al-Alam ash-Shamih fi tafidili-l-Hakk alia Al-Aba va-l-Mashayih*, Beirut, 1981.



the spirit of the new political and religious orientation of the Northeast region. He understood how pernicious the consequences of disunity among the different tribes were and tried to overcome them on the basis of Islam. Calling for putting an end to the many years of strife and bloody hostilities that gnawed away at the Vainakh community from the inside, Mansour preached unity and forgiveness.

But powerful intellectual transformation of Islamic thought into the revivalist trends laid down by al-Kuduki and a powerful shift in the entire spiritual culture of the mountaineers were needed to attain solidarity among the different-tongued tribes of the Caucasus in the face of the ever-stronger and ever-growing military-political pressure on the ethnic groups of this Russian region and to breathe new life into the petrified contemplative-mystical interpretation of Islam aimed at not taking active part in regulating the sociopolitical processes.

For this to happen, a more profound and authoritative Islamic mind was needed on the scene. This individual and the most vibrant member of the Caucasian movement of reform was sheikh of the Naqshbandiyya tariqat and supreme murshid (Arabic for “mentor”) of the Caucasian imams Muhammad al-Yaragi (died in 1840). Under the conditions of intense feudalism in the mountains al-Yaragi proposed the conception of “free man” justified by the provisions of the Qur’an and Sunnah (and not only by the mountain adats, as was the case in the past); he not only called for religious freedom, but also for individual freedom.<sup>3</sup> Now the idea of freedom in the Caucasian mountains had acquired a new Islamic ring and was aimed primarily at protecting itself from the infringements of the local tribes.

It was at this stage that there was a complete transfer of the center of gravity of Caucasian Islam from the previous Islamic bastions—the shagars, which had already become feudal formations, as well as the Islamic academics involved and frozen in the taqlid and at the level of passive sophistication of their mystic practice—to protest Islamic individuals like sheikh reformer al-Yaragi and Daghestani imam-warriors Gazi Muhammad, Gamzat-bek, and Shamil.

The first Imam of Daghestan and Chechnia Gazi Muhammad carried on al-Yaragi’s cause. His message called *Proving the Apostasy of the Rulers and Judges of Daghestan who Pass Judgment according to the Adats*, compiled in 1828 and distributed throughout Daghestan,<sup>4</sup> took a harsh look at the question of taqfir—accusing an individual or group previously considered Muslims to be non-believers. In so doing, he essentially divided the entire Caucasus into two camps—the camp of true Muslims and the camp of infidels who became non-believers, classifying among the latter those who continued to be guided in their lives by the provisions of the adat, and not the Shari‘a. When developing al-Yaragi’s provisions on prohibiting Muslims from obeying non-Muslim authorities, Gazi Muhammad stated that if Muslims live under non-Muslim law (adat) and do not judge according to the Shari‘a, they are non-believers; and even if they pray, fast, and perform hajj, this will not save them.

Such an uncompromising way of looking at the nature of power and the judicial laws applied, as well as completely prohibiting being guided by the adat was not characteristic of Caucasian societies (particularly during feudalism and passive-mystical Sufism). Issues were raised in this way only in the very first years of Islam’s appearance in Daghestan, and even then by the generation of Muslim-Arabs, the followers of the Prophet Muhammad himself.

It was the mentioned return of the imams of Daghestan and Chechnia to the original provisions of faith enforced in the Qur’an and Sunnah, as well as the claims to ultimate ousting of the adat by Islamic law that drastically distinguished these Islamic leaders of the region from the former

<sup>3</sup> See: A.G. Agaev, *Filosofia sovesti*, Makhachkala, 1995.

<sup>4</sup> See: Photocopy of the manuscript *Proving the Apostasy of the Rulers and Judges of Daghestan who Pass Judgment according to the Adats* by Imam Gazi Muhammad.

representatives of the “petrified” interpretations who were unable to resolve this question. What is more, we should note in particular that Imams Gazi Muhammad and Shamil called for purification and renewal of Islam (Arabic “tajdid), which was characteristic of all the revived movements of the Islamic world.

For example, lieutenant-general of the Russian army Baron Rozen wrote: “Wars with Persia and Turkey stopped our achievements in Nagorny Daghestan, and in 1829, a strong party hostile to us arose there, which acted under the guise of restoring pure Islamism.”<sup>5</sup> It is also worth noting that Imam Gazi Muhammad signed his letters and proclamations “mujaddid,” that is, “revivalist of the faith.”

In the Western Caucasus, on the other hand, the local Islamic academics and imams were unable to gain the necessary status and authority in society to become a driving force of national-cultural history. Here, even during the anti-colonial war, it was not Islamic, but sociopolitical leaders who most often became commanders. It is very characteristic that during the blossoming of the Imamate, it was Imam Shamil’s naibs who became the Islamic heads of the mountain-dwellers of the Western Caucasus, the most well known of whom was Muhammad Amin from the Daghestani aul of Gonod, who led the resistance of the mountain-dwellers for eleven years and made an enormous contribution to the revival of Islamic thought and practice in the Western Caucasus.

In subsequent years, after defeat of the Imamate and incorporation of the Caucasus into the Russian Empire, and then into the Soviet Union, a whole galaxy of Islamic reformers appeared in the Caucasus who relied on the theological and theoretical precepts of such outstanding revivalists and transformers of Islam as Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn al-Kayim, Jamaluddin al-Afgani, and Rashid Rida. The listed people, as well as Ali Kayaev, Muhammad al-Umri from Ukhli, Abd-ur-Rashid Arakansky, and Abu Muhammad from Mokhok, called on the Muslims to study the Qur’an and Sunnah with subsequent adoption of independent decisions in keeping with the demands of the times and rejection of blind adherence to a particular person’s views. Abu Muhammad even wrote a book on the problems of ijihad and taqlid called *Destroying the Obstacles on the Way to Ijtihad*.

In post-Soviet times, the most vibrant revivalists who began to open up the external Islamic world to the Caucasian Muslims were of course Akhmad Qadi Akhtaev and Bagauddin Muhammad. The younger generation of their reform-oriented students and graduates from Islamic higher learning institutions of Arab emigration followed in their footsteps. We will look at the role of this category of young people in this process below.

## Globalization of Consciousness in Islamic Call

A chronological and narrative description of the strengthening and growth in relations between the Caucasian Muslims and Islamic community abroad and the development of their contacts with Islamic academics from the Arab countries is not part of our task. These processes have already been described in sufficient detail in the works of native experts on Islam, such as Alexei Malashenko, Dmitri Makarov, Igor Dobaev, Zagir Arukhev, and others.

In this article, we would like to focus on another aspect—the gradual opening up of the consciousness of the Caucasian Muslims to the boundless cultural-intellectual and active global ex-

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<sup>5</sup> Report by G. Rozen to A. Chernyshev of 8/XI-1834, No. 1024, in: U.S.S.R. Central Military-Historical Archives, General Staff Military-Scientific Archive, f. 6294, sheet 91 rev.

panse throughout the entire Islamic world. This is of particular interest since in the past centuries, this consciousness was characterized by a certain amount of narrowness and isolation from the outside world.

This isolation and the tendency of the religious communities in each region to become enclosed within themselves led to extreme fragmentation of the Islamic space in the Caucasus and of the Muslim consciousness in the region.

For example, if we look closely at the religious communities of the supporters of the “petrified” interpretations of Islam in each of the Caucasian republics, we can see that they are all characterized by their isolation from the outside world. Each community is extremely closed in terms of its national and generic traits, depending on its adherence to a certain sheikh, academic, or spiritual leader. Each of these communities is characterized to a greater or lesser extent by xenophobia, fear, and rejection of any information from the outside world that casts aspersions on their convictions, as well as by the unwillingness of their members to socialize with “outsiders,” or even prohibition of this.

By way of example, such information restrictions and prohibitions on socializing with “outsiders” are even preserved among Caucasian students studying in Arab states. That is, the alienation, isolation, and social taboos on mixing with the representatives of other Islamic trends in these religious communities are so strong that they are practiced even far beyond the homeland.

In almost all the Arab countries, graduates from the “petrified” communities try to keep a social distance from the representatives of other religious groups (even if they come from the same republic). For example, murids of the Daghestani Sufi sheikhs Sirajuddin Huriksky (Tabasarian), Muhammad Muhtar Kiahulaysky (Kumyk), and Said Afandi Chirkeisky (Avar) were allowed to greet each other, shake each other’s hands, and even exchange general niceties, but this was as far as their communication went.

Contacts between Daghestanis and Chechens of the same “petrified” Islamic trends are also very strained, not to mention between ethnic groups that are geographically distant from each other, such as the peoples of the Western and Eastern Caucasus.

The representatives of these Islamic trends make a special effort to keep the maximum possible social distance from the followers of the revival versions of Islam. Once labeled as Wahhabis, there is still a taboo on extensively socializing with the revivalists for all the other members of their community, since in the “petrified” environment there is the belief that Wahhabis inevitably recruit one and all at their very first meeting, enticing them with money and generous promises.

It is also asserted and honestly acknowledged that members of the revival Islamic trends are more convincing and eloquent in discussions than the followers of the “petrified” trends: it is enough to talk to a Wahhabi for an hour or two for his convictions to become ingrained. Due to this, the fathers and the close and spiritual mentors of the young Muslims of the “petrified” Islamic trends strictly teach their wards not to socialize with Wahhabis under any circumstances.

If young people from the “petrified” communities go to study abroad, an effort is made to put them with “approved” students from “their own” circle, from their own religious community. Since the boundary of “petrified” religious fraternities often coincides with national borders, the extreme religious-national conservation and isolation of societies that are sufficiently closed anyway is thus reproduced and preserved.

What is more, students of the “petrified” Islamic trends keep their minds so closed that all information that reaches them from Arabic teachers is carefully filtered as well. No matter how authoritative the latter may be, students are instructed by their older friends as to which teachers are “theirs” and which teachers should not be heeded because they are “outsiders.” What is more, even if students recognize a certain teacher as “theirs,” the degree of his “their-ness” is nevertheless established, that is, the extent to which and precisely what information may be received from him.

For example, most students from the “petrified” communities of the Eastern Caucasus recognize the most prominent Syrian academic of the Shafi‘i madhab, Ramadan Buti, as “theirs.” Most students go to Friday prayer only at his mosque; as for additional lessons in fiqh, the hadith, and interpretation of the Qur’an held in every mosque, they attend only those classes taught by him; if disputes arise, only his books and fatwas are referred to.

But even in this case, many students are still cautious, since compared with the Caucasian Islamic consciousness of the “petrified” communities, Ramadan Buti is much more open to dialog and cooperation with other Islamic trends, including the Salafis, which is categorically unacceptable to the members of the Caucasian “petrified” communities.

The aloof and hostile attitude toward the Russian people as a nation of non-believers formed over the last two centuries is still often encountered in these circles. But this attitude is usually only found in everyday life and does not apply to politics. The attitude toward the Russian state is more than loyal, and in some issues, people are even more devoted to it than to the Islamic institutions and regulations. Members of the “petrified” Islamic trends willingly go to work in various spheres of the state system, such as law-enforcement, local self-government, management, economic, and also official spiritual structures.

The hostility retained in the “petrified” communities at the everyday level toward the Russian people (for the Ingushes, the same applies to the Ossetians), as a non-believing nation, in no way means that their members consider it necessary to convert them to Islam. Russians and Ossetians are still called “giaour” (unfaithful) in these communities, but the need to carry the Islamic call among them according to the canons of classical Islam does not even enter anyone’s head. If someone from this camp does try to convert any of the “giaour,” it will only be to try and convince him to join his own extremely national version of Islam.

For example, if a murid of Avarian Sheikh Said Afandi Chirkeisky calls a Russian to Islam, he will only try to convert him to the Chirkeisky version of the tariqat with obligatory acceptance by the new convert of the entire set of ethnic-everyday and cultural-behavioral standards characteristic of the Avars of this region. That is, the new convert must become one of them in every way.

A vivid example of this type of conversion of a “giaour” to Islam by members of “petrified,” ethnically tinted and intellectually closed communities, when a “giaour” completely accepts the behavioral and cultural standards of the people who have converted him, is Evgeny Mironov’s hero from Vladimir Khotinenko’s film *The Muslim*, who almost entirely became an Afghan mountain-dweller.

When a member of these communities is asked whether the Islamic call must be carried among Russians, his most likely reply will be a bewildered “What for? They are not Muslims...” This response and understanding of Islamic call is absolutely unacceptable for Muslims of the revival wave. What is more, calling members to join “petrified” communities, which boils down to the Muslims of the Caucasus (and throughout the world) having to strive for unity and live like brothers, is met with complete non-acceptance and rejection, since national-vird boundaries between communities are considered mandatory and inviolable.

As for the Islamic communities of the revival wave most frequently called jamaats in the press, the national question, if not completely removed, is largely reduced to naught. In so doing, whereas the “petrified” Islamic communities differ greatly from each other depending on the republic, national affiliation, and even region within a particular republic, the jamaats of revivalist Islam are incredibly similar to each other in all respects and throughout the entire Caucasus.

This similarity is ensured by the fact that the members of these jamaats reject everything that might lead to the division and fragmentation of the Caucasian Islamic space: that is, strict adherence of the region’s Muslims to the Shafi‘i or Hanafi madhabs, the Naqshbandiyya, Qadiriyya, or Shaziliyya tariqats, to academics or sheikhs of only their own nationality or region of residence, to Sufism, or to various juridical schools.

Members of the revival jamaats, at times even in violation of some of the Islamic juridical regulations and scientific-historical traditions, strictly call for being guided only by the provisions of the Qur'an and Sunnah with simultaneous rejection and deposition of all authorities that oppose this call in any way.

The rejection of present and past authorities sometimes goes as far as young revivalists throwing the baby out with the bath water. For example, young Muslims often reject not only the medieval academic followers of the great imams, the founders of the canonical madhabs, Shafi'i and Abu Hanifa, but also the imams themselves, if their viewpoints on certain, sometimes even trivial questions, contradict the revivalists' vision of true Islam in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

In so doing, the practice of applying the provisions of the Qur'an and Sunnah requires that the person applying them has quite a high level of Islamic knowledge, which is necessary for drawing the correct legal conclusions from these sources. But since most young Muslims of the Caucasus do not have such knowledge, they are all guided by the opinions and viewpoints of the older adherents, who have graduated from Islamic learning institutions abroad.

The latter, in turn, are guided exclusively by the opinions and viewpoints of the greatest Islamic academic of the Middle Ages, Ibn Taymiyya, former original representative of the Hanbali madhab, who then went beyond it in his quest and religious-legal practice and called precisely for Muslims to be guided directly by the provisions of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

There is no doubt that this massive rejection by young Muslims of the Shafi'i and Hanafi madhabs traditional for their region, the categorical refusal to follow different tariqat and Sufi schools, as well as the mass reorientation toward academic "non-madhabists," who mainly came from the Hanbali madhab, aroused the wrath of members of the "petrified" Islamic trends, the relatives and fellow tribesmen of the young supporters of revival.

Despite the incredible resistance and obstruction the young revivalists in the Caucasus were subjected to by their fellow tribesmen who stayed with the "petrified" interpretations of Islam, despite all the persecution, repression, and even kidnappings and extrajudicial executions, the young people of the revivalist trends sustained an unlikely strategic victory in this tough standoff, the dimensions of which have not been entirely realized even by many analysts.

During the past 20 years of spontaneous development in the Caucasus of Islamic call in its revival format, a new generation of Muslims has appeared who consider anyone their brother, regardless of national and other differences, providing that he declare the Islamic symbol of faith, adhere to the testaments of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and reject the innovations and ethnocultural stratification of the last few centuries.

A Muslim who adheres to these viewpoints can find a like-minded believer and brother-in-faith not only in any corner of the Caucasus, but also throughout the world. This conversion of large numbers of believers to a unified and single foundation of faith for all characteristic of the first centuries of Islam's existence caused a real revolution in the minds and consciousness of present-day Caucasian Muslims.

In contrast to the members of the "petrified" communities loyal to the Russian state and at the same time indifferent and often disdainful of Russians as a "target" of Islamic call, the revivalist Muslims are of an initially absolutely opposite opinion—they embrace extreme openness to all people wishing to hear about Islam (despite national and community boundaries).

The revivalists not only have a high sense of duty with respect to calling neighboring nations to Islam, but also an entirely different attitude toward newly converted Muslims from the outside ethnic environment. Newly converted Russians, Ossetians, Armenians, and representatives of other ethnoses are accepted in the revivalist jamaats as true brothers, whereby sometimes they are given much more attention and respect, since a new convert who finds himself in an alien national and cultural environment is in need of such support.



Nevertheless, despite all of this, the attitude toward the state as a non-Islamic political institution is more than cautious, to put it mildly. In the revivalist interpretation, the state is a “servant of tagut” (idols, pagan non-Islamic law), due to which the Muslim is not allowed to serve it. And even though at the outset of revivalist call, no one was asked to directly oppose the state, an absolutely indifferent attitude toward it was preached in keeping with the principle: “We don’t bother it, we don’t interfere in its affairs, let it not interfere in ours either,” and zeal in observing the law was also admonished.

It was also the spread of revivalist Islam that “flung open” the consciousness of the Caucasian Muslims and made it not only receptive to the Islamic world, but to the entire Islamic and world scientific heritage as well.

In contrast to the “petrified” versions of Islam of the first wave that are in a deep spiritual and creative crisis, reform and revivalist Islam is becoming actively incorporated into new theoretical spheres, thanks to the powerful revival boost, and is assimilating natural and social scientific disciplines, relying in so doing on the Qur’an and Sunnah. The strong side of revivalist Islam is its scientific and theoretical substantiation of many social, economic, and political provisions applied in practice.

This version of Islam is heralding in a new era—the era of information technology, the transnational economy, and an interpenetrating world. The Caucasians’ embrace of Islam of the new wave, which has been gaining ever greater momentum in recent years, is largely encompassing young people who are obtaining or have already obtained a higher and postgraduate education. This primarily applies to those young people who are not simply looking for answers to the most important questions of life in religion, but also have the potential to renew the “petrified” interpretations. In so doing, revivalist Islam is offering its adepts social and political doctrines distinguished by rationalism and accessibility, as well as those with a clear, almost irrefutable internal logic.

This version of Islam is more dynamic and active. Since it brings Islamic standards into harmony with simple elements of “initial faith,” it is becoming more attractive for regions where religious traditions have been lost or undermined (the Western and Central Caucasus, the southern regions of Daghestan), as well as for traditionally non-Muslim people—Russians, Armenians, Georgians, and so on.

The number of supporters of the revivalist version of Islam in the Caucasus is increasing due to the decrease in citizens’ legal protection, government and bureaucratic arbitrariness, low socioeconomic provision of the population, as well as the total corruption in all the main spheres of citizen service—medicine, education, and law-enforcement (also including official spiritual structures). The members of the revivalist trends are rapidly filling the niche of defenders and expressers of the interests of the impoverished and disadvantaged strata of the population, that is, the main bulk.

In contrast to the “petrified” versions of Islam enclosed within the narrow boundaries of their communities and jealous of contacts with other Islamic trends, the revivalists are largely distinguished by a call for unity with the entire Islamic ummah. They are also calling for the entire Islamic world to join forces to ensure a spiritual-moral, economic, and political renaissance. In this way, revivalist Islam is giving its adepts access to the heritage of the universal Islamic community and drawing them into globalization processes.

It is precisely this incredible openness to the whole Islamic world and striving for unification with the entire ummah that is arousing an understanding and even demand for leaving the narrow community and narrow national framework, and requiring that adepts exert the maximum effort to establish contacts with their fellow brothers in neighboring cities, regions, republics, and countries.

Whereas members of the “petrified” versions can perform hajj or study in foreign countries for decades, in so doing preserving their isolation, Muslim revivalists only have to be in a new city or



region for a few days to find like-minded believers, hold open and sincere talks about the problems of Islamic call in their regions, find common interests, look for ways to help each other, establish contacts, and part the closest of brothers in Islam.

These declared contacts are later used not only by the people who establish them: the latter will actively share these contacts back home, as well as help Muslims who are thousands of kilometers apart to become acquainted with each other. These contacts will help to develop cooperation in Islamic call, acquire an Islamic education, implement competitive Islamic projects, and so on.

In this way, thanks to the general ideology and orientation toward unified provisions of the Qur'an and Sunnah for everyone in the interpretation of academic "non-madhabists" who share similar beliefs, the entire world can be woven into a global network of like-minded Muslim believers who feel a profound sense of unity, fraternity, and mutual support, regardless of national, economic, and age differences, as well as of the thousands of kilometers that divide them.

It stands to reason that this network did not begin forming today: most countries became incorporated into it as early as the mid-20th century, when, after gaining access to European education and the achievements of Western science and technology, Muslims of post-colonial and politically modernizing Islamic states began to coordinate them with the provisions of the Qur'an and Sunnah and advance the revivalist versions of Islam throughout the world.

The Caucasus was drawn into this network later on, during the post-perestroika period, whereby in almost all the republics of the region, the young generation of preachers, who have actively penetrated the cultural-ideological expanse of the Caucasus with their call to Islam, turned out to be under the very keen observation and strict control of the law-enforcement structures. The successful work of the revivalist jamaats to recruit and educate young Muslims could not help but arouse irritation among the official spiritual structures and state power bodies.

By applying the Islamic knowledge they gained abroad, their excellent command of Arabic as well as several other foreign languages, and taking advantage of their sufficiently high level of Russian education, knowledge of the Russian language, command of all computer means of gathering, processing, and exchanging information, as well as organizational technology, the young leaders of revivalist Islam have made an extraordinary breakthrough in Islamic call, educating huge numbers of Muslims, and opening up their minds to the entire Islamic world.

It is enough to name such figures as Musa Mukozhev and Anzor Astemirov, who are the leaders of the rapidly growing Kabardino-Balkarian jamaat. Both of them studied in the Islamic higher learning institutions of Saudi Arabia. Both possess a broad vision of the development prospects of Islamic call in the republic, both use the most effective ways to convert as many people as possible, both are actively engaged in translations from the Arabic, both maintain a rather high-quality electronic resource on the web at [www.islaminkbr.ru](http://www.islaminkbr.ru), both closely cooperate with the nongovernmental Institute of Islamic Studies (whereby A. Astemirov was its deputy director), and both are carrying out scientific research into the urgent problems of the Muslim community. In so doing, they have established very close and extensive contacts with foreign Islamic academics, to whom they turned for theological and judicial conclusions (fatwas) on specific situations.

In Karachaevo-Cherkessia, former student of a Pakistani Islamic higher learning institution Muhammad Karachai Bijiev was one such leader of revivalist Islam. He was a student and associate of prominent Caucasian academic of the revivalist wave Akhmad Qadi Akhtaev, executive secretary of the Islamic Revival Party that functioned throughout the Soviet Union. The scope of his contacts and relations in the Islamic world is shown by the fact that, despite the complaints about him by the law-enforcement bodies of Karachaevo-Cherkessia, Chairman of the Council of Muftis of Russia Ravil Gaynutdin asked M. Bijiev to be his deputy for international affairs.

In Dagestan, the most vibrant young leaders of the revivalist wave were Yasin Rasulov and Abu Zagir Mantaev. The first was a graduate of the Islamic university of Makhachkala, received an

education in Russia (he majored in philology and translation), was the regular author of the religious page in a leading republican weekly, maintained his own information-analytical website [www.yaseen.ru](http://www.yaseen.ru), took a postgraduate course, and wrote his dissertation on religious studies on overcoming the madhab divisions in Islam. What is more, he had magnificent command of the Arabic language and translated fatwas and articles by the leading Islamic academics. He was a member of the presidium of the Union of Muslim Journalists and wrote its code. His translation of a collection of present-day fatwas by prominent Islamic academic Yusuf al-Qaradawi was published in Moscow. Abu Zagir Mantaev graduated from the Diplomatic Academy at the Russian Foreign Ministry and defended his thesis on political science. He studied at an Egyptian university in Al-Azhar, headed the department of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the European Part of Russia for work with young people, taught in the Moscow Cathedral Mosque, and was actively published in academic journals on Islamic and Caucasian studies.

The fact that some of these figures posed an open challenge to the Russian state system, which made them politically outside the law, does not mean we do not recognize their role as Islamic intellectual leaders of the new generation of Caucasian Muslims. The wide range of different spheres of social life encompassed by these young leaders in their Islamic call efforts looks incredible against the background of the isolation of the members of the “petrified” communities and their absorption only in “mosque” affairs.

The influence and potential of the leaders of revivalist Islam grew rapidly, but at this point it transpired that the young leaders, although they had a theological education, did not have the life experience to manage such rapidly growing opportunities and such a large number of followers. What is more, the law-enforcement bodies gave them no room for maneuver. The police and Spiritual Administrations put pressure on them, the number of arrests, detentions, and provocations increased, Chechnia was in a frenzy right next door, and an increasing number of mojahedin—veterans of the combat action—returned from there and “equipped” the young Muslims with new models of behavior: “If you are repressed—answer back. Islam not only permits this, it is also your duty.”

Keeping in mind the Caucasian temperament of the young revivalists, as well as their orientation toward heroic examples of the first generations of Muslims, with sword in hand defending their right to existence, they began to incline all the more toward harsh armed scenarios for upholding their own position.

It was in precisely this way that the most vibrant young members of Daghestani revivalist Islam, Yasin Rasulov and Abu Zagir Mantaev, found themselves in the ranks of the armed Shari‘a jamaat under the supervision of Rasul Makasharipov, who in turn, by his subordination to Rabbani Khalilov, the amir of all Daghestani mojahedin in Chechnia, was a member of the general Caucasian military-political structure headed by Ichkerian President Abdul Halim Sadulaev.

This was also how the leaders of the Kabardino-Balkarian jamaat, Anzor Astemirov and Musa Mukozhev, found themselves at loggerheads with the state, after raising the armed rebellion in Nalchik with the support of Shamil Basaev and the mojahedin of the entire Northern Caucasus subordinate to him.

## Globalization of Consciousness in Islamic Jihad

Historians and Caucasian experts unanimously accept the version that says representatives of the Caucasian gazawat—the imams of Daghestan and Chechnia—were convicted followers of the

Naqshbandiyya tariqat and, correspondingly, put its sociopolitical model into practice. It is believed that this tariqat model differs somewhat from the classical Islamic model in the main provision of the Sufi sheikh who possesses mystical experience and mysterious knowledge, as well as in an army of humble murid novices ready to carry out the sheikh's will, both in improving spiritual practice and in political, military, and other affairs.

It was precisely along this Sufi-tariqat line that the Daghestani official clergy, as well as all the representatives of the Sufi communities, believed themselves to be the spiritual heirs of the imams and supported this version in society. In addition, from the time the Soviet Union collapsed and religious freedom opened up, images of the Imamate and of Imam Shamil himself increasingly acquired an Avarian ethnic hue, since at that moment the most active followers of the tariqat in Daghestan were the Avars, and the Naqshbandis of other nationalities (Kumyks, Darghinians) did not see the sense in entering into competition with the Avars for the right to be called the direct spiritual heirs of the imams.

As a result, a situation developed in which only faithful Avars turned to Caucasian gazawat to maintain inter-communal, inter-tariqat solidarity and mobilization. The memorable and historical places associated with Caucasian gazawat were retained in the national memory, honored, and sublimated by most people in the Avarian regions (from all of the Daghestani regions). Members of the Avarian nation gave hypertrophied attention to building ziyarats (mausoleums) at sites of battles and where gazawat leaders died and were buried, setting up multitudinous portraits of imams along the mountain roads, singing oral folk songs in the form of historical and combat chants, and using the theme of gazawat and the Imamate in every possible theater and amateur national performance.

Whereby this practice of appealing to the heritage of the Imamate and gazawat was used primarily in national and tariqat-communal interests and projects, but in no way to serve the idea of a religious war with non-believers, including with the Russian state. Since the main religious-political players of the "petrified" interpretations of Islam who exploited the topic of gazawat and the Imamate were extremely loyal to the Russian state, they had no intention of withdrawing from it or of creating an Islamic state in the Caucasus, and if they did use this theme to scare the federal center, they only did it sparingly and only for procuring additional privileges.

As far as we know, at the beginning of the first Chechen war, the public consciousness of the Chechens was extremely ideologized not by Islamic, but by archaic-ethnic and national-political symbols and concepts. It was these precepts that provided the ideological justification of the need to wage an independence war.

In this respect, researchers are very interested in how the theme of gazawat was reflected and evolved in the consciousness of the people and in different spheres of spiritual life. The semantic blend of "gazawat-jihad" serves a very convenient indicator for defining the stages and ways to turn the narrow Chechen resistance to the Russian state into a conception of global jihad against all forces of infidelity.

As we know, both terms designate a holy war of the Muslims against the non-believers, but the concepts "fighting campaign," "battle," "combat operation" prevail in the concept of "gazawat," while "jihad" means "the Muslim's daily zeal in all spheres of life"—study, spreading Islam, and of course, in the holy war, which is recognized as the highest degree of commitment.

Historically, the term "gazawat" was used in the Imamate itself and in the context of its history in the holy war waged by the Caucasian mountain-dwellers under the supervision of three imams (as well as before and after that, under the supervision of Sheikh Mansour, Imams Muhammad Haji and Nazhmuddin Gotsinsky).

Ubiquitous use during the first Chechen war precisely of the concept "gazawat" pointed clearly to the fact that the Chechens even took their religious ideological justification of the war from the local post-imamate versions and interpretations of Islam, which, as described above, "became petrified" within the geographical, national-communal, and intellectual borders of the 19th century.

The term “jihad” was not used in the context of the Chechen resistance until later, when ties with Arab emigration gradually expanded. It was the Chechen muhajir diaspora, Arab volunteer preachers and mojahedin, as well as Islamic academics who supported the Chechen resistance with their fatwas and preaching that began extensively using the term “jihad” with respect to the mentioned war. Whereby the term “jihad” was used not in the sense of exclusively Chechen national-political opposition to the Russian state with a slight Islamic “tinge,” but precisely in the sense of full-scale resistance of the Muslims to everything non-Muslim and infidel.

Along with the establishment of ties with Arabic emigration and the powerful development of the Islamic revivalist preaching in the Caucasus, there was also an extensive spread of Islamic knowledge in the Chechen resistance environment. In this way, Chechen gazawat gradually began turning in the consciousness of the resistance fighters into jihad. It was this process, transformation of gazawat into jihad described above as semantically perceived by the Caucasian consciousness, that gives a clear indication of when the narrowly national Chechen resistance begins to turn in the minds of the Muslims into one of the fronts of the global Islamic opposition to the world of infidelity.

The songs of the Chechen gazawat-jihad are worth noting in this respect. During the first war, the works of Imam Pashi Alimsultanov and Timur Mutsuraev, two of the most vibrant singers of the Caucasian jihad, were built mainly on local historical and cultural facts. The main themes were the resistance of the mountain-dwellers under the command of Imam Shamil and Sheikh Mansour, the personalities of naib Baysangur and abrek Zelimhan, the Stalin deportation, praise of the Caucasian adats and traditions of honor, dignity, recalcitrance, mandatory revenge on an offender, playing up of ethnocultural totem insignia of the Caucasian eagles and Chechen wolves, and so on.

Later, general Islamic themes begin to prevail in the songs of Mutsuraev—the history of the Prophets (songs about the Prophets Moses, Solomon, and Jesus), greater attention was given to the mission of the Prophet Muhammad, his associates and righteous caliphs, playing up of the theme of the Jewish yoke over the Islamic ummah, the conception of the liberation of Jerusalem, as well as the world jihad of the entire Islamic ummah until the Day of Judgment.

It was these songs, in addition to the growing Islamic revivalist preaching, that became the fuse which set alight the narrow communal-ethnic consciousness of the young Caucasian Muslims. The young Caucasians listened to these songs first in astonishment, and then with awe and trepidation, imbibing each new passage written by the bard. Jihad songs became so popular among the Caucasian Muslims that they could be heard everywhere—in recording studios of all Caucasian cities, in apartments, cars, coming from cassette and disk players, on computers, at Muslim youth meetings, and even in the Caucasian diaspora in Russian cities.

The Internet, in particular the Caucasian Center, also played an enormous role in the rapid spread of the global vision of Islamic resistance throughout the Caucasus. Its printed matter, photographs, and videos evolved in the general transformation of Chechen gazawat into the universal Caucasian front of world jihad.

Works from the “Reflections of a Mojahed” series prepared under the supervision of former representative of the national Ichkerian resistance Movladi Udugov are also very valuable for our analysis. In them, he shows why the Chechen resistance should turn into a general Islamic jihad, why Chechens, Dagestanians, Ingushes, Cherkessians, and other peoples of the region should become part of the world Islamic front.

Both Saad Minkailov’s commentaries and Udugov’s works were received enthusiastically by the Caucasian Islamic youth, since the Chechens’ prolonged game of national exclusivity aroused great misunderstanding among the revivalist youth sympathizing with the Chechen resistance.

Ultimate transformation of Chechen gazawat into world jihad, the confessions and revelations of the former national leaders of the Chechen resistance about the incorrectness of the idea of national exclusivity and the Chechen national state, Aslan Maskhadov’s transformation from the Chechen

president into the Amir of all Muslims of the Caucasus, substitution of the Chechen wolf on the Ichkerian flag for the Islamic call “Allah Akbar,” the extensive internationalization of the ranks of mojahedin by means of natives from other Caucasian republics and Islamic countries, and the support of Caucasian jihad by the Taliban, the Iraqi mojahedin, as well as many Islamic academics all drastically changed the religious-political landscape of the Northern Caucasus.

After all, along with the internationalization and globalization of the Chechen resistance, the powerful formation of jamaats of revivalist Islam was going on in the neighboring republics of the Caucasus, the main orientation of which was widespread, full-fledged development of the Caucasian Muslim community as part of the world Islamic ummah. And while the national component predominated in the Chechen resistance, the jamaats of the neighboring republics tried to distance themselves from this war in order to be able to preach Islam and inspire their followers with a broad Islamic consciousness in counterbalance to the national consciousness that still long predominated in Chechnia.

But as soon as the Chechen resistance began to be globalized and appeal to the entire Islamic ummah, its unity, mutual assistance, non-separation between Islamic call and jihad, between mojahedin in Chechnia and the young jamaats of the revivalist call in neighboring republics, the two movements began to have many more things in common.

It was at this stage that the ranks of Caucasian jihad and the jamaats of call began to come together. This phenomenon—“unification” of the fighters of jihad and the preachers—is explained in particular by their identical globalizing consciousness; it drastically differs from the internationalization of the Chechen resistance during the first war.

During the first war, a large number of young people who took up arms to participate in gazawat were guided by a desire to help the fraternal Chechen people, as well as to continue Shamil’s cause in building an Imamate in the Caucasus in its previous version of the 19th century. In Chechnia itself, they were under the very strong social-cultural influence of the ideology and practice of Chechen “selectivity” and “exclusivity.” In the last years of the second campaign, entirely different cultural-ideological and sociopolitical conditions developed for uniting the two trends—jihad and call—in the ranks of the mojahedin, just as they did in the Caucasian republics themselves.

First of all, the leaders of jihad themselves assimilated Islamic call and began to carry it out throughout the entire Caucasus, whereby they acted without avoiding hot topics capable of arousing the wrath of the law-enforcement bodies and persecution by them. In particular, such topics were the inseparability in Islam of religion, politics, and war in one’s defense, complete rejection of all secular and other laws not based on the Qur’an and Sunnah, the illegitimacy in the eyes of Muslims of all authorities apart from Islamic, the inadequacy of Islamic call that does not talk about power and war, the uncompromising attitude of Muslims in questions of rejecting all non-Islamic manifestations of life, and so on.

It is entirely natural that the Islamic preachers in other republics of the Caucasus could not allow themselves to be so direct in their call efforts, were forced to keep quiet on many topics, avoid conflicts with the authorities (the police included), and disavow jihad and intentions to build an Islamic state in the Caucasus. In this way, with respect to the credibility, completeness, truthfulness, and depth of Islamic preaching, the representatives of jihad in the eyes of many young Muslims surpassed the preachers trying to conduct peaceful call by avoiding conflicts with the power bodies and law-enforcement system. Ideological unrest began in the revivalist jamaats of the Caucasian republics, and a split was noted between the supporters of jihad and those in favor of preaching only by peaceful means.

Second, the increasingly intensified persecution of the Muslim revivalists by the law-enforcement bodies, the political pressure applied by the power bodies with the help of the Spiritual Administrations, and the increasing number of arrests, kidnappings, torture, and murders led to an increasingly larger number of representatives of the revivalist jamaats realizing the need for an adequate and forceful rebuff. In some cases, the leaders of the jamaats were inclined toward counteraction from a



position of force, while their followers remained true to the tactics of peaceful call, and in other cases, some of the supporters of the peaceful preachers freed themselves from the influence of their commanders and joined the combat groups. But the undeniable fact remains that the growing ideological pressure of the combat jamaats and the intensified forceful persecution by the state split the revivalist jamaats of call and prompted a large number of their followers to take up the cause of implacable jihad.

In this way, in the last years of the second Chechen campaign, not only did subversive combat groups begin to form in the republics neighboring on Chechnia, consisting of veteran mojahedin who had gained fighting experience in the Chechen mountains, but also groups of rear support, material and information provision, as well as communications and supplies, whereby they formed from the number of former supporters of the peaceful development of Islamic call who had no previous combat experience. The next step was the fact that the “blacklisted” members of the mentioned groups took up arms and became full-fledged fighters of the combat jamaats.

The representatives and leaders of the revivalist jamaats (such as Yasin Rasulov and Abu Zagir Mantaev in Daghestan, as well as Musa Mukozhev and Anzor Astemirov in Kabardino-Balkaria) applied their Islamic understanding and wisdom about sociopolitical reality to the cause of jihad and tried to use all their contacts, experience, and authority acquired in previous years to expand jihad.

This ideological and practical blending of the ranks of mojahedin and representatives of the revivalist jamaats of call put the finishing touch to the maturing of the Islamic consciousness in the Caucasus and to the model of a new type of behavior—one that was open to the entire Islamic world oriented toward renewing Islam on the basis of the Qur’an and Sunnah, tough and uncompromising opposition in military-political questions, but open to all the latest scientific and technological developments in the information, propaganda, political, military-subversive and organizational-managerial spheres. The Caucasian front became a full-fledged component of the world Islamic jihad.

Thus, the soft line of revivalist preaching was destroyed with the help of the non-professional and indiscriminate methods of the law-enforcement bodies. It will take the Caucasus many more years to restore the former potential of the moderate and peaceful preachers necessary for the sustainable and milder development of Islam in the region.

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## GEORGIA AND THE GEOPOLITICS OF ORTHODOXY

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The period after the Cold War is marked by an upswing in geopolitical research. In this respect, researchers are particularly singling out

the post-Soviet space, especially Russia, where geopolitics is enjoying immense popularity not only among scientists, but also among politicians.



New approaches and vectors have appeared in geopolitical research, which, although they do not fit into the framework of traditional geopolitics, significantly enhance the opportunity to engage in the global and spatial research of politics. One such vector is the geopolitics of religion which, in turn, is closely related to civilizational geopolitics, since religion is one of the most important components of civilization.

The main idea of the geopolitics of religion is taking into account and using the religious factor during the formation of political unions and blocs, and ultimately gaining or retaining control over a particular space. If we keep in mind the specifics of the Caucasian region, where several world religions come in direct contact with each other, the importance of the geopolitics of religion will become entirely obvious.

## Relevancy of the Geopolitics of Orthodoxy

In the general geopolitics of religion, the geopolitics of Orthodoxy is particularly important for Georgia, since it helps the country to define its place in the Orthodox world and its correlation with the rest of the world. There are several reasons why the geopolitics of Orthodoxy is relevant:

- in most Orthodox states (Rumania, Moldova, Georgia, Belarus, and Ukraine), two aspects coincide: elimination of the communist-atheist regime, under which the freedom of confession was repressed, and liberation of these countries from the dictates of Moscow, which made it possible for them to conduct an independent policy on the international arena. Consequently, identifying the role Orthodoxy could play in forming the policy of these states became relevant;
- several conceptions have already formed within the framework of the geopolitics of Orthodoxy (I am talking in particular about the Russian geopolitics of Orthodoxy). In these conceptions, plans related to Georgia occupy far from the last place. If we also keep in mind that geopolitics is not only a scientific discipline, but also carries a strong ideological charge, it becomes clear that we need good knowledge of the geopolitical conceptions being formed in the countries next door to us;
- the Orthodoxy factor is also actively used in Georgian politics for achieving various goals and, primarily, for justifying foreign policy orientation.

Interest in the geopolitics of Orthodoxy is not only growing in Orthodox states. For example, the possible changes the enlargement of the European Union and increase in the number of Orthodox countries among its members from one to four (Rumania, Bulgaria, and Cyprus have been added to Greece) will bring have become a topic of active discussion. It should be noted that in another five EU countries (Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Slovakia), the Orthodox diaspora represents a significant part of the population.

In the September issue (2004) of the Russian Orthodox Church publication *Tserkovny vestnik* (Ecclesiastical Bulletin), Bishop of Austria and Vienna Illarion (this bishopric belongs to the Moscow Patriarchate) brought up the question of the growing influence of Orthodoxy on the European countries. The bishop also talked about how the Patriarch of Russia could take advantage of this.

Well-known American political scientist Paul Goble, who published an article in America's *United Press International* with the memorable title of "Eye on Eurasia: An Orthodox Christian EU,"<sup>1</sup> im-

<sup>1</sup> For the Georgian translation of the article, see the newspaper *Rezonansi*, 8 October, 2004.

mediately responded to the issues addressed by Bishop Illarion. According to Goble, “the growing influence of Orthodoxy within the EU in turn will open the way for the Russian Orthodox Church to expand its role there as well, both on behalf of its own corporate interests and in order to advance the foreign policy interests of the Russian state.”

## The Geopolitics of Russian Orthodoxy

The geopolitics of Orthodoxy primarily implies Russia, which is once more actively trying to use Orthodoxy for its own political ends. The geopolitics of Russian Orthodoxy can be judged from books published as learning tools on geopolitics and political science (for example, works by A. Dugin and A. Panarin). The attitude toward Orthodoxy is ambiguous in Russian geopolitics: on the one hand, Orthodoxy is considered a factor which can help to restore and maintain Russian’s foothold in certain regions, and on the other, people in Russia are worried that Orthodoxy will turn into a dominating factor in politics, and if this happens, the Russian Federation will have serious problems both within the country and, in particular, on the international arena.

A clear idea of Russian geopolitics can be formed on the basis of the above-mentioned textbooks. For example, in his main work *Osnovy geopolitiki* (The Fundamental Principles of Geopolitics),<sup>2</sup> A. Dugin devoted a separate chapter to the geopolitics of Orthodoxy, although it only sets forth the problems of geopolitics in the Balkan Orthodox states.

A. Panarin looks at the political potential of the “Greek-Orthodox idea” and the practicality of using it for “spiritual reintegration of Eastern Orthodox countries,” as well as the possibility of reviving the idea of a Third Rome.<sup>3</sup>

According to the author, Orthodoxy looks extremely promising as a unifying idea. What is more, revival of the idea of the “Byzantine heritage” will give Russia the opportunity to return to “its Europe” without the Westernization derogatory for a strong state, after solving the task of modernization by retaining its own historical value system.

A. Panarin notes that after declaring the Third Rome theory as its official ideology in the 16th century, Moscow made intensive use of Orthodoxy in its state goals. So in the eyes of the rest of the world, Orthodoxy is essentially not perceived as a world religion and is identified with Russia.

According to A. Panarin, in order to play the role of a unifying force, Orthodoxy must regain its status of a world religion and demarcate the political and religious centers of Orthodoxy. Intent on winning the Ukrainians’ sympathy, A. Panarin suggests giving Kiev the role of center of the Orthodox world; if Ukraine does not wish to reunite with Russia, the latter should at least “spiritually join Kiev.” Again, Moscow is implied as the political center of the Orthodox world.

The “Byzantine heritage” sets the goal of ensuring the unity of the Eastern Slavs and Orthodox nations in general. But Moscow also has the task of preserving the non-Christian peoples within the Russian Federation or of “reintegrating” the former Soviet republics. In order to solve these tasks, several Russian analysts have been turning with increasing frequency to the idea of “Eurasianism,” according to which the nations of the former U.S.S.R., that is, the population of the “Eurasian space,” have, due to their geographic location, common interests and a common geopolitical destiny. This makes their reintegration into a single federal or confederative state inevitable.

<sup>2</sup> See: A. Dugin, *Osnovy geopolitiki. Geopoliticheskoe budushchee Rossii*, ARKTOGELIA-tsentr, Moscow, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> See: A.S. Panarin, *Politologia. Textbook*, Proekt Publishers, Moscow, 1997, pp. 364-385.

The axis of "Eurasianism" is the idea of a union of Slavic and Turkic-speaking peoples. According to the Eurasians' theory, the Russian nation is the "fruit of cooperation" of precisely these two ethnic groups. This thesis aroused the indignation of many Russian nationalists.

Russian analysts, including the same A. Panarin, note that Orthodoxy, which unites the Eastern Slavs, can become theocratic pan-Slavism without any ties with "Eurasianism," thus setting the Russian Federation against both the West and the entire Muslim world, and in the event of Eurasian identification, Russia "will consolidate as a super state in its traditional civilizational area."

The Kosovo crisis of 1999 and the bombing of Serbia by NATO forces became sort of touchstones for the geopolitics of Russian Orthodoxy. In the Russian mass media of that period, it was customary to hear the assertion that the Dayton Agreement of 1995 and the war on Yugoslavia in 1999 were the continuation under new historical conditions of many centuries of opposition between Western Christianity and Orthodoxy.

According to the proposal of Russian politicians and analysts, the conflict in Yugoslavia should have roused the Orthodox world and intensified the neo-Byzantine trends, that is, the unification of Orthodox countries around the Russian Federation and their dissociation from the West.

From this viewpoint, an article by S. Samuilov is worth noting, which analyzes in detail the reaction of the Orthodox states to the bombing of Serbia by NATO forces. The author (often without real reason) tries to show the solidarity of the population of the Orthodox countries with Serbia as opposed to their "pro-Western political elites." "We are not the West," according to S. Samuilov, that is the main thing the Orthodox nations understood during the bombing of Serbia. The war "enhanced the image of Russia in the mass consciousness."<sup>4</sup>

## Georgia in the Russian Geopolitics of Orthodoxy

It should be noted that Russian geopolitics has a negative attitude toward Georgia's state independence and is making plans to reintegrate the republic with the Russian Federation in different forms. We do not know of one work by a Russian geopolitician that talks of a strategic partnership between Moscow and an independent Georgian state or about the importance of such a state for Moscow.

Neo-imperial strivings are particularly characteristic of contemporary Russian geopolitics. A. Dugin reflects on the restoration of the Russian empire, which in terms of dimensions and scope should be several times larger than the "previous version," that is, the Soviet Union. This position will become even clearer if we keep in mind his statement that "the Russians' battle for world supremacy is not over."<sup>5</sup>

When discussing contemporary Caucasian geopolitics, A. Dugin notes: "Orthodox Georgia was more anti-Russian oriented, but even here religious-geopolitical reflection is slowly waking up, and the need for an alliance with Eurasia is becoming clear."<sup>6</sup>

And now let's take a look at how A. Dugin sees the future of a Georgia oriented toward Russia—the former is subjected to the fundamental principles of Dugin's geopolitics of the Caucasus: "The structure of the periphery should be determined not by political, but by ethnocultural differenti-

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<sup>4</sup> S.M. Samuilov, "Posle Yugoslavskoi voiny: razmyshleniia o Rossii, SShA, Zapade v tselom," *U.S., Canada: Economics, Politics, Culture*, No. 3, 2000, p. 80.

<sup>5</sup> A. Dugin, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 808.

ation. Any latitudinal delimitation of the ethnic regions of the Southern Caucasus should be encouraged, while longitudinal integration, on the contrary, reinforced.” As a result, according to A. Dugin, “it is important to tie Abkhazia directly to Russia;” a “united Ossetia” is also being created. In exchange, the remaining part of Orthodox Georgia will gain control over the “Caucasian home.” According to A. Dugin, “Orthodox Georgia could also govern Chechnia, which is in a geopolitical siege;” and what is more, “Daghestan and Ingushetia should also be partially adjoined to Georgia, which could lead to the creation of an autonomous North Caucasian zone, economically developed, but strategically fully under Russian control.” A. Dugin also thinks it possible to create a “Caucasian Federation,” which would include “the three Caucasian CIS republics and internal Russian autonomous formations.”<sup>7</sup>

Nor did A. Panarin like Georgia’s policy with respect to GUAM. He writes: “The designated Kiev-Tashkent-Baku-Tbilisi axis is primarily dangerous for Tbilisi. Should Georgia be deprived of its Russian guarantees by going too far along the path of blocs and politics, its position in the South Caucasian region will immediately become seriously aggravated. And taking into account the logic of Muslim radicalization of the regimes moving away from Russia, it can be said that in the next political generation (in 15-20 years), the non-Muslim states neighboring on Muslim countries will have to deal with regimes that conduct an aggressive policy.”<sup>8</sup>

When reviewing the facts of solidarity between the Orthodox countries and Serbia, S. Samuilov noted that in Georgia “no mass protests took place.” In his words, the Georgian press was anti-Russian and pro-Western. It is difficult to understand the “political weight of the pro-Russian forces.”<sup>9</sup>

According to S. Samuilov, “Russia should place its priorities in its foreign policy on relations with the Orthodox states. After strengthening the Russian-Belorussian alliance, Moscow should strive to establish close ties with Armenia and Serbia.”<sup>10</sup>

Samuilov notes that “as history would have it, Russia does not have a common border with these countries,” and so in its relations with them it needs “transit territories”—Georgia and Bulgaria. Today, the leadership of these Orthodox countries is unequivocally oriented toward the West, and so policy regarding them should be built in such a way that they remain “transit territories” for the Russian Federation for the time being. As Russia becomes stronger and the political elites of Georgia and Bulgaria become disillusioned in the efficiency of the “Western formulas,” it can begin moving from partnership to alliance relations with them.

Not all Russian geopoliticians support the idea of bringing religion into the foreground. For example, V. Ilyin believes that all-Russian theocracy with Orthodoxy is a “fanciful utopia,”<sup>11</sup> while the Empire in its previous form is out of the question. So he believes its restoration is impossible.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, this does not change anything in the Russian Caucasian policy he sets forth. V. Ilyin ironically notes that the Russian Federation should give Armenia and Azerbaijan the opportunity to clarify their relations with each other and enjoy national freedom to their hearts’ content. In his opinion, Russia should equally support both sides. But in V. Ilyin’s words, this tactic is not being successfully carried out with respect to Georgia. “The fight for Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and possibly Ajaria, in which both Georgia and Russia are interested, defines the rates and intervals of Russian-Georgian opposition.” V. Ilyin offers the following solution to the situation: “A solution prompted by my intuition consists in creating dual subordination protectorates.”<sup>13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> A. Dugin, op. cit., p. 352.

<sup>8</sup> A.S. Panarin, *Revansh istorii: rossiiskaia strategicheskaia initsiativa v XXI veke*, Logos, Moscow, 1998, p. 382.

<sup>9</sup> S.M. Samuilov, op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 82-83.

<sup>11</sup> V. Ilyin, *Politologiya: Uchebnik dlia vuzov*, University Book House Publishers, Moscow, 1999, p. 398.

<sup>12</sup> See: Ibid., p. 403.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 407.

As Basily Kobakhidze notes, Russia is trying to use Orthodoxy for its political ends. In his words, as early as Soviet times, there was a special analytical base in Moscow that worked on the geopolitical use of the Orthodoxy factor. The Orthodox ideology developed by this structure was used with respect to the Balkans. Today, Russia is striving to make use of this scheme in Georgia. The Patriarchy disseminated a conception in Moscow according to which there are two poles of civilization in the modern world—Muslim and Western. Both are doomed to perish, and so a third (Orthodox) civilization should be created with its center in Russia. It is the Russian Federation that should rally all the Orthodox states around it and govern them. These countries include Georgia, Bulgaria, and Rumania.<sup>14</sup>

The conclusion can be drawn from the above-mentioned that Russian geopolitics of Orthodoxy serves the cause of restoring a single nation in the post-Soviet expanse, and, consequently, contradicts Georgia's national-state interests.

## Prospects for the Georgian Geopolitics of Orthodoxy

Russian geopolitics does not only operate with Orthodox categories, but uses the religious factor for purely pragmatic purposes—restoring the position of the Russian Federation on the international arena. We should remember this, especially since clear attempts have been seen recently to introduce Russian geopolitical conceptions into mass Georgian consciousness. A. Dugin's book *Osnovy geopolitiki*, dedicated "to all Georgian geopoliticians," was translated into Georgian and published.<sup>15</sup> Acquaintance with this publication is unlikely to convince Georgian readers of the author's good intentions, but, on the other hand, it should help them to understand that the West is the same enemy or friend as Russia.

On Alexander Dugin's Internet site Arktogeia, which presents political studies and information, a special Georgian site has appeared called Arktogeia—Tbilisi, on which members of an ethnopolitical alliance called "Crusaders" functioning in Georgia place their information. The goal of this organization is to promulgate Eurasianism and the struggle against Atlanticism, that is the West.

Certain forces are endowing Orthodoxy with a particular political significance and see it as the main argument in favor of Georgia's "northern orientation." The position of these forces boils down to several theses: Orthodoxy is the foundation of faith in Georgia, the West requires us to reject this faith (sect activity), and the existing power supports them in this. The only salvation is through Georgia's closest alliance with Russia, and this, essentially, means Georgia's rejection of its independence.

The geopolitics of Orthodoxy has not yet become a topic of special scientific research in Georgia, although its problems are attracting the society's attention. On the one hand, certain forces are trying to spread the leading conception of the Russian geopolitics of Orthodoxy, according to which the Russian Federation is the leader of the Orthodox world, and the latter is viewed as the force opposing the West. The Georgian mass media often cite a phrase attributed to well-known American political scientist Zbigniew Brzezinski: "After eradicating communism, Orthodoxy will be the main danger for the West." It should be noted that during Mr. Brzezinski's visit to Tbilisi in September 1999, he was asked whether he had really made such a statement. The political scientist categorically denied it and called it an "idiotic fabrication."<sup>16</sup> But even after publication of the Tbilisi interview with Mr. Brzezinski, some people are stubbornly repeating this "statement by Brzezinski" and commenting on it. This should give toward thoughts on the threat of Georgian independence coming from the West greater plausibility. On the other hand, many are irritated by the fact that "Orthodox solidarity" is being turned into a political argument. They immediately remind everyone of Russia's

<sup>14</sup> See: *Alia*, 7-9 August, 2004.

<sup>15</sup> See: A. Dugin, *Osnovy geopolitiki*, Tbilisi, 1999, 448 pp.

<sup>16</sup> See: *Kviris Palitra*, 20-26 September, 2004.

two-century aggression, as well as the deliberate damage to Shota Rustaveli's fresco in the Cross Monastery, which belongs to the Greek clergy.<sup>17</sup>

Attempts to implant conceptions of the Russian geopolitics of Orthodoxy are arousing a radical response, which is expressed in a critical attitude toward Orthodoxy. The striving for complete identification with the West is arousing the desire in some cases to reform Orthodoxy, which in the form it exists at present is declared to be an obstacle on the path to democracy and Western orientation.

Today, when Georgia is under Russia's powerful pressure, the country's interests can only be ensured by taking the path of so-called Western orientation. But when talking about Orthodoxy, we can take the example of Bulgaria or Rumania. In this way, the vector of Orthodoxy in politics points not only to the north.

Nor should we forget the experience of the past. At one time, Georgia was able to protect its own interests in relations with Orthodox Byzantium, so why can the same thing not be achieved at the beginning of the 21st century? Orthodoxy has always acted as protector of Georgian statehood.

Under these circumstances, we believe it expedient both to study foreign conceptions of geopolitics of Orthodoxy and reflect on this problem in compliance with Georgia's national interests. Otherwise, important political decisions might be based on either foreign interests, or on naïve ideas that inadequately reflect reality. Both alternatives are extremely dangerous for a country faced with the tasks of strengthening its independence and defining its own place in the system of international relations.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example: *Mtavari gazetii*, 15 July, 2004.

## RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN KAZAKHSTAN: POTENTIAL CONFLICTS AND RISK FACTORS

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

The Soviet Union and the communist ideology collapsed leaving a spiritual void in their place to be filled with new public, political, and cul-

tural realities that boosted national awareness and brought about new spiritual values. Post-Soviet society turned to religious values and traditions.



Kazakhstan, as part of the post-Soviet world, has had its share of these developments: today, the local people's increased religious self-awareness amazes no one. Part of Kazakhstani society not only identifies itself by its religious affiliation, it is adjusting its way of life according to religious norms and values.

The religious situation in the republic, however, cannot be described as simple: there are both positive and negative results of the people's increased religiosity, active involvement of foreign missionaries preaching religions previously ab-

sent in the region, as well as the liberal nature of republican legislation. To identify all possible negative developments in the republic's religious spheres, we should trace the origins of the present situation and look into possible repercussions. This alone will allow us to describe the nature of the present potential of religious conflicts in Kazakhstan.

Here I have set myself the task of identifying the potential of religious conflicts in our republic and probing into the risk factors in the development of the religious situation in Kazakhstan.

## The Current State

The many centuries of coexistence between Islam and Orthodox Christianity in Kazakhstan created a balance between the two: each occupies a niche of its own and is involved in a dialog with the other through social cooperation. Hence, stability and religious tolerance were the main outstanding features of the republic's religious context.

There were other numerous factors of historical, cultural, social, and political nature at play: history and similar mentalities created the ethnic and cultural community of the Turks and Slavs who populated the vast forest and steppe zone of Eurasia. Through a comparatively long span of their history, the two groups were involved in close and fairly active cultural contacts. The Muslims and Orthodox Christians shared ideas about the place and role of religion in the life of a state. At that time, there were no conflicts over a secular state coexisting with religion, there was no confrontation between the traditional clergy and power. In fact, at that time, neither the religious teachings of the Hanafi madhab in the Islamic legal system nor Christian Orthodoxy clashed with the state, partly due to their "conciliatory" religious nature. Both are moderately conservative, both know how to reach a compromise with the state. For this reason their followers are always prepared to accept the present-day secular state. As distinct from all sorts of fundamentalist Islamic and Christian trends brought in from the outside and several exotic Oriental faiths, traditional Islam and Orthodox Christianity do not threaten one another, they present no threat to other religions or to the state either.

This explains why religious revival and religious self-awareness, processes which began in the early 1990s, went on without much tension and confrontation. The revived interest in religion was accepted as part of a wider and much more complicated process of ethnic and cultural self-identification, when people turned to the religious sources of their nations, ethnic specifics, culture, and traditions.

It looks as if the situation may change: radical religious communities have arrived on the scene together with non-traditional religious ones; foreign missionaries, and organizations that represent all sorts of confessions and denominations have been allowed to work on a larger scale. The process has passed its peak, but has retained some of its potential.

## Development Dynamics of the Religious Situation and the Nation's Religious Structure

Recently development dynamics have demonstrated a trend toward large-scale structural changes caused by the following factors.

- *First*, the foreign factor (the sum-total of methods and types of foreign interference in the religious situation and the population's religious structure).
- *Second*, loss of control over the developments in the religious sphere when the state stopped paying enough attention to this side of the country's life.

As a result, today there are three times as many religious organizations in Kazakhstan as in 1991; there are twice as many religious confessions there; the entire confessional structure changed beyond recognition in one decade. According to official information, there are 46 confessions in Kazakhstan representing an entire religious spectrum and 3,259 religious associations.<sup>1</sup>

It should be said that despite the fairly threatening shifts in the religious situation and the religious population structure, the situation on the whole remains stable. Today, the negative trends are contained by the stability of confessional relations and the still dominant position of Islam and Orthodox Christianity. This brings people closer together and positively affects religious balance in the republic.

The situation might change for the worse if the state continues ignoring the situation.

On the whole, we have the following religious situation in the republic. The largest confessions are Sunni Islam (Hanafi madhab) and Christianity (Orthodoxy). Over 90 percent of the total population follow these two religions, the share being 70 and 30 percent, respectively. There are two large religious centers—the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Kazakhstan and three eparchies of the Russian Orthodox Church—to administer the two religious communities.

Today there are 1,766 Muslim religious associations in Kazakhstan and 1,643 mosques,<sup>2</sup> and the number is expected to double. It should be said that the SAMK is aware of and works with the mosques registered with the Ministry of Justice, while there is any number of mosques, especially in the countryside, that never want to be registered and prefer to remain known locally. Normally they serve small ethnic groups living in compact groups in small settlements: the Uighur and Dungan mosques in the Almaty Region; and the Uzbek mosques in the Sayram District, South-Kazakhstan Region. There is the opinion that there are twice as many unregistered mosques.

Today, several religious communities and organizations that the SAMK regard as pseudo-Muslim are actively operating in the republic. They all contradict the Hanafi madhab, the official madhab of the Kazakhstani Muslims. The Spiritual Administration describes the following religious organizations as pseudo-Muslim: Ahmadiya, Bahai, the teaching of Ismatulla, Mahdia, Salafi (Wahhabi), Taqfir, the Sufi Qurban-ali trend, and Shi'a.<sup>3</sup>

Russian Orthodoxy is the second largest confession in Kazakhstan. According to official information, there are 221 parishes and 8 monasteries of the ROC in the republic. In 1991, the Holy Synod of the ROC distributed them among three eparchies: Almaty and Semipalatinsk, Shymkent, and the Urals. In 1999, the Almaty and Semipalatinsk eparchy was transformed into the Astana and

<sup>1</sup> See: G. Mukhanbetzhanova, "Religia v kazakhstankom obshchestve," *Kazinform*, 20 May, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> See: Zh. Amerbekova, "Bor'ba za umy," *Megapolis*, 9 January, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> See: *Ibidem*.

Almaty Eparchy, which acquired the Christian Orthodox structures of Astana. For a long time the desire of the local Orthodox Christians and the republic's authorities to unite all Orthodox churches into one Kazakhstani structure was not supported by Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexy II, who visited Kazakhstan in 1995. In May 2003, however, the Synod passed a decision, under which a single Metropolitan territorial structure was set up with Metropolitan Methodius as its head.<sup>4</sup> Today, the position of the ROC in the republic is strong, while its influence is spreading across the republic.

The Roman Catholic Church also strengthened its position: there are over 70 structures of all sorts in the republic, including one Greco-Catholic parish, all of them guided by four Apostolic Administrations. On the whole, there are over 90 Catholic communities and 160 Catholic visiting groups in Kazakhstan, as well as about 15 monastic congregations, including one of the Opus Dei, the fundamentalist Catholic order banned in several countries. There is about one percent of Catholics in Kazakhstan.<sup>5</sup>

Active Western missionaries brought new Protestant churches to Kazakhstan; they broadened their influence and strengthened their position. There are about 1,000 Protestant communities and over 500 Protestant churches in Kazakhstan.<sup>6</sup>

The largest of them, serving over 70 percent of the followers, are found in large cities (Almaty, Karaganda, Shymkent, and others) together with their main republican and regional administrative structures, coordination centers, inter-confessional missions, etc. The Evangelical Christian Baptists, for example, are united into 269 communities and 124 groups according to information supplied by their center.<sup>7</sup> There is information that there is at least one Baptist and one Adventist church in each city; communities of Pentecostals and Evangelical Christians of the Spirit of the Apostles are also widely spread.<sup>8</sup>

The Missouri Synod, a Lutheran association, is busy spreading its influence by rendering wide-scale spiritual and material help to the Lutheran communities and distributing religious books in German, English, and Russian. Since 1991, German missionaries have been actively promoting the New Apostolic Church; there are about 40 communities with about 2,500 members in the country.<sup>9</sup>

There are also small communities of Methodists that owe their existence to foreign, mainly Korean, missionaries. So far they unite about 300 members of various nationalities.

Judaism represented mainly by the Hasidic Habada movement has strengthened its position: there are Judaic communities in all regional centers; there are 24 of them compared with four before 1998 (two in Almaty, one in Shymkent, and one in Kzyl-Orda). The country has 10 synagogues. In December 1999, the Jews set up the Jewish Congress of Kazakhstan, which sees its aim in preserving and promoting Jewish national traditions and customs, as well as the cultural and religious heritage of the local Jews. It has elaborated a program of synagogue building in Astana, Pavlodar, Aktiubinsk, Kustanai, Petropavlovsk, and Ust-Kamenogorsk and is putting it into practice.<sup>10</sup>

The non-traditional Protestant confessions, otherwise known as charismatic, are represented by a large number of organizations: Grace, the Living Vine, Agape, the New Sky, Good News, New Life, and others. New Life, a comparatively recent newcomer to the scene, is the largest; it has already established a New Life Biblical College. Today, there are about 40 communities of about

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<sup>4</sup> See: Ia. Trofimov, "Geopoliticheskie aspekty dinamiki izmeneniia religioznoy situatsii v Respublike Kazakhstan," 22 September, 2003. Spravochno-informatsionny portal "Religiia SMI," available at [<http://www.religare.ru/article6503>].

<sup>5</sup> See: Ibidem.

<sup>6</sup> See: A. Mukhashov, "Religioznaia palitra sovremennogo Kazakhstana (obzor konfessiy)," *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 1 July, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> See: Ia. Trofimov, op. cit.

<sup>8</sup> See: S. Peyrouse, "Christian Proselytism in Kazakhstan," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analysis*, 25 January, 2006, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> See: Ia. Trofimov, op. cit.

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem.

3,500 members in Kazakhstan. The Grace Church in Karaganda runs over 50 branches in all parts of the republic, including its capital, as well as Petropavlovsk, Abay, Sarani, etc., with 7,000 followers, the largest groups found in Almaty and Karaganda. The Grace Church has achieved flexible administration by dividing its flock into cells headed by a leader and comprising from 6 to 10 families each. The cells hold their regular meetings in private flats used for services, Bible reading, and informal talks.<sup>11</sup>

The republic's ethnic Korean population prefers the Pentecostals (the Sun Bok Ym Church), as well as the Union of Christians of the Evangelical Faith, which has communities nearly in all regions. The Divine Church has been active in the republic's north (in the Kustanai, Karaganda, and Kokchetau regions). There are over 20 Presbyterian structures, the most prominent among them being Aksai, Tsentr, the Almaty Regional Presbyterian Church,<sup>12</sup> as well as Grace-Blagodat, Gol'bori, Onsezan, Korë, Mir, Nadezhda, Zion, the First Presbyterian Church, and the Assembly of Presbyterian Churches. They are especially popular with the Korean ethnic minority, which accounts for 80 to 90 percent of the flock. The Grace-Blagodat structure unites 10,000 people. There are several Presbyterian seminaries: the Spiritual Presbyterian Academy in Almaty and the Kazakhstani Evangelical Christian Seminary. The Methodist Church is running its own parishes with fairly large flocks; the Novoapostol'skaia (New Apostolic) Church, a structure independent of the Presbyterians and Methodists, has accumulated a large number of communities (there are about 50 communities with the total membership of about 3,000).<sup>13</sup>

On the whole, the charismatic movements are operating under all sorts of names, such as Agape, New Life, New Sky, Iliya, the Good News, the Charismatic Church of Jesus Christ etc., the New Life, with over 40 communities and 5,000 followers, being the strongest of them. It shows a lot of missionary drive: there are ethnic Kazakh and Uighur communities; and today it is working among the Jews. A large number of Mormon communities are operating in Astana, the country's capital.<sup>14</sup>

The Jehovah's Witnesses, with parishes in nearly every city and town and over a hundred registered communities, are the most successful among other organizations. It is especially strong in the south (Shymkent, Turkestan, Kentau, Lenger, Sary-Agash, Zhetysai and other densely populated areas where Kazakhs and Uzbeks predominate).<sup>15</sup>

The republic's southern part is developing into a seat of non-traditional cults, such as the Bogorodnicheskii Tsentr, White Brotherhood, Sai Baba Awatar, Ivanovites, the tantric cult, the Universal and Jubilant Church, Christadelphians, Mormons, the Church of the Last Testament, the Church of Scientology (Dianetics), Sri Chinmoy, and others.<sup>16</sup>

## Challenge Factors

The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan describes it as a secular state that guarantees its citizens freedom of speech and self-expression. The Constitution does not describe any confession as privileged; it proclaims each one's equality and religious tolerance. In fact, state policy in the religious sphere is fairly liberal: the state guarantees freedom of conscience, equality, religious tolerance, and pluralism. The 1992 Law on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations, which fully

<sup>11</sup> See: Ia. Trofimov, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>13</sup> See: S. Peyrouse, op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>15</sup> See: A. Aubakirov, "Missia vpolnima?" *Megapolis*, 9 January, 2006.

<sup>16</sup> See: Ia. Trofimov, op. cit.

corresponds to international standards, is the cornerstone of religious policy in Kazakhstan. To cover the areas not encompassed by the 1992 law, the republic adopted the Law on Amendments and Addenda to Certain Legal Acts of the RK on Freedom of Conscience. The state made several mistakes in the sphere of education: it removed religious studies from school curricula and disbanded the Committee for Religious Affairs.

The open borders and liberal legislation in the religious sphere have already attracted foreign missionaries and emissaries of all sorts of religious and pseudo-religious organizations. They flock in great numbers to promote, legally or illegally, their faiths and convert the greatest possible numbers to beliefs that have nothing in common with the local culture and mentality.

The poorer, less educated groups are naturally attracted by the financial support and jobs foreign missionaries offer them and their relatives; in fact, the newcomers have already mastered a mechanism for widening their social basis—the number of newly converted is growing steadily. The new confessions prefer local people as community heads: most of the new religious groups (Grace-Blagodat, Agape, New Life, Bahai, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and others) are no longer headed by foreigners living in the country or working from abroad. They are all headed by local people.

We all know that religious proselytism, a fast-moving process underway in the republic, is lavishly funded from abroad; the anti-systemic teachings banned in the West present the greatest danger.

## Main Factors of Religious Conflicts

It was in the latter half of the 1990s that the first signs of religious complications appeared in Kazakhstan, and in other CIS countries for that matter. It became obvious that mounting religious extremism and proselytism are the main destabilization factors. Religious extremism of Muslim fanatics, banned by law and closely monitored by the law-enforcement bodies, is less dangerous than the foreign missionaries who represent all sorts of non-traditional religious institutions, sects, and movements of Christian and Oriental types.

Both groups are undermining the confessional balance in the republic and making it harder to achieve cultural and historical consolidation and challenge the principles of tolerance and confessional harmony. The foreign missionaries, however, are operating within the law across the republic, which makes it easier for them to achieve their aims. There are a few secret organizations, mainly close-knit sects such as the Satanists, involvement in which is a criminal offence, that preferred not to register with the Ministry of Justice.

All highly varied religious and pseudo-religious organizations and movements, the activities of which challenge confessional relations in Kazakhstan, can be divided into two groups of potential threats.

The *first group* includes the radical Muslim organizations hostile to the secular state (Hizb ut-Tahrir and Tablighi Jamaat being two examples), which rely on religious ideology to justify their anti-constitutional activities designed to replace the secular state with an Islamic theocratic one. They are convinced that in Kazakhstan, and elsewhere in Central Asia, secular governance has become outdated and that society steeped in amoral behavior should be saved, while the state steeped in corruption and lawlessness replaced with an Islamic Caliphate through peaceful and non-violent means. To achieve this they are prepared to change the local Muslims' world outlook through preaching and discussions. In this way, they differ radically from the militarized Muslim organizations active in the neighboring Central Asian countries prepared to use force to achieve their aims (the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and its branch in Kyrgyzstan is one such structure).

Each and every one of these organizations has its own ideas about tactics and strategy, but they agree that society and the state should be adjusted to the canons and values of an ideal Islamic society. Nearly all of them are funded from abroad, the money coming through educational and humanitarian foundations and public organizations working from the territory of certain Arabic countries. On many occasions, however, Western countries were found to be involved in such activities to a certain extent: many of the nongovernmental Islamic structures and headquarters of Muslim movements and organizations that form an opposition to the governments of some of the Arab countries operate from their territories. Foreign special services are obviously involved in such activities. Recently, the national security service of Kazakhstan arrested an agent of one such service who was gathering information about the local special services' anti-separatist and anti-criminal activities.<sup>17</sup>

The local people tend to trust the Muslim organizations more than other religious structures—this allows them to openly promote their radical ideas and rely on fairly vast social support. In fact, they try to wipe away the local people's ethnic and civil identity by subjecting national values and traditions to scathing criticism and planting the idea of opposition to power and civil disobedience in their minds.

At the same time, their activities in Kazakhstan are to a great extent influenced by what is going on in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, two neighboring countries, in which the ideological and political disagreement with the authorities reached the point of armed clashes. It is hard to say whether we are dealing with ideology or with a power struggle dressed in ideological garb.

Neither the media nor the expert community can provide a complete picture, since the latter remains convinced that religious extremism in Central Asia is rooted in social and economic conditions. This makes it even harder to formulate an objective opinion of the processes underway in the republic. In Kazakhstan's case, this opinion does not hold water: the conflict between the government and the radical Islamic organizations has nothing to do either with social or with economic factors.

It should be said that recently some experts have finally objected to the commonly accepted idea and voiced the opinion that the conflict was caused by religious and political factors present in the region.<sup>18</sup> In other words, radicalism in Central Asia is mounting not so much because of social and economic difficulties and the repressive policies of the local authorities, it is bred by the conflict potential in the relations among various forces created by religious, ideological, and political contradictions.

Here I have attempted to trace sources of religious extremism other than the common people's social and economic plight: the expert community and the media have already done enough to make this opinion known.

Here are several key versions of the conflict based on the available information.

- *First.* The conflict is rooted in deep-cutting ideological confrontation between those who support the idea of a secular state and those who want to replace it with a theocratic government. In Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, where the authorities failed to reach a compromise with the fundamentalist clergy and its supporters, the conflict developed into a rigid confrontation and clashes. This echoed in Kazakhstan where the local fundamentalists stepped up their activities.
- *Second.* The conflict stems from the split in the ruling groups in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan and a power struggle under the Islamic banner among the regional clans. This version

<sup>17</sup> A. Djaldinov, "KNB upolnomochen zaiavit," *Liter*, 10 October, 2006.

<sup>18</sup> For more detail, see: Sh. Akiner, *Violence in Andijon*, 13 May, 2005: An Independent Analysis, available at [www.silkroadstudies.org/new/inside/publications/0507Akiner.pdf].



looks the most plausible in view of the Soviet legacy of monopolized and extremely centralized nomenklatura power. This makes the very banal power struggle among elites the cause of the trouble; the echo reaches Kazakhstan where each of the conflicting sides is trying to pull the public onto its side.

- *Third.* Geopolitical games of outside forces in the economically most vulnerable and, therefore, most volatile Central Asian counties. Those who side with the idea that foreign countries are pursuing their interests in the region and act as the “outside factor” prefer this version. Foreign counties are testing various methods of destabilization, the religious factor included, to consolidate their strategic presence in the newly independent states. This sends waves of destabilization toward Kazakhstan.

There are several versions to choose from. One thing is clear: the role of the religious factor in the mounting religious radicalism is overstated. The subject itself is being deliberately fanned by the sides resolved to profit from a conflict between the state and religion.

The *second group of challenges* is created not so much by the people’s increased religious awareness and freedom of conscience under conditions of ideological pluralism. It is formed by the active spiritual expansion being carried out by numerous foreign missionary movements and pseudo-religious organizations intent on balancing the highly inordinate nature of their faiths with the latest applied research and strange practices. Many of them are trying to detach their followers from the family, society, and the nation’s cultural and social life; they reject or ignore historical traditions, lifestyle, and customs and cripple the physical and psychological health of our citizens. This not only undermines the traditional religions, it also shatters the pillars of state order.

In most cases, foreign missionaries are represented by Protestant Christian trends funded from abroad.

There is another complication: these missionary movements and organizations not only refuse to accept the historical legitimacy of Islam and Christian Orthodoxy in Kazakhstan. They also reject any compromise with the laws. This is the case of most foreign missions of Protestant persuasion, in particular the Presbyterian churches and Jehovah’s Witnesses, whose numbers and missionary potentialities are greatly strengthened by external financial support.<sup>19</sup> Their numerous communities consider mission as consubstantial with their existence and with the very principle of Christianity.<sup>20</sup> Their aim is a simple one—all Kazakhstani Muslims and Orthodox Christians should become Protestants.

This group of challenges is common throughout the world as a whole; each country is familiar with it. Foreign missionaries preach all sorts of confessions and religious teachings; this destabilizes the religious situation in the country and endangers the state and its people.

We are confronted with the problem of Christian proselytism, that is, a preaching drive designed to covert the local Muslim and Orthodox population en masse to all sorts of Christian, mainly Protestant, faiths.

It should be said that the mounting wave of Christian proselytism in the republic has already had a negative effect in the minds of the newly converted. Here I have in mind social, legal, and psychological effects: the newly converted are developing within the community’s pinching limits unable to arm themselves with ideas of civil duty and patriotism. The missionaries breed absolute indifference to political issues and instruct the flock to keep a distance between themselves and the family. They are taught, instead, to completely submit to the will of their spiritual leaders, the guru (the leader or the founder of the church believed to possess superhuman abilities).

<sup>19</sup> See: S. Peyrouse, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> See: Ibid., p. 9.

The closed sects, many of which are banned in the West (the Jehovah's Witnesses is one of them), have been especially successful in their activities. In fact, the religious prescriptions of the Jehovah's Witnesses cripple people physically and psychologically and deprive them of their national and civil identity. The members "reject any government on earth and everything connected with it: military service, civil service, oath of allegiance, state holidays, and even birthdays."<sup>21</sup> This sect, one of the most aggressive and totalitarian, rejects all other opinions: it is based on the personality cult of its leaders and complete obedience to them.

On the whole, Christian proselytism in Kazakhstan is pursuing all sorts of aims and is constantly readjusting its strategy to the changing realities. French researcher Sebastien Peyrouse has identified the priorities of Christian missionary activity in Kazakhstan in the following way.

- *First*, the missionaries aim at proselytism in their narrow circle, that is, those who have been converted yet need more profound religious education.
- *Second*, those who describe themselves as atheists or claim indifference to religious issues.
- *Third*, Christians of other denominations: Orthodox Christians and, to a lesser extent, Catholics as well as followers of Protestant trends on the decline (Lutherans and Mennonites).
- *Fourth*, the entire Muslim population of Kazakhstan: Kazakhs, Uighurs, Uzbeks, Tartars, and other Muslims are the long-term objectives of the Christian presence in Kazakhstan. The missionaries are convinced that each conversion campaign should increase the number of communities made up of converted Muslims.<sup>22</sup>

To sum up: Christian proselytism in Kazakhstan aims at converting all Christians and all Muslims to Protestant faiths, which is arousing a negative reaction from most Kazakhstanis. The Muslims' reaction to efforts to convert their fellow believers is especially painful. Muslim families are normally very critical of their converted members—people are convinced that by converting, people subject their lives to numerous risks.

The Christian Orthodox population of Kazakhstan is likewise displeased with the foreign missionaries and their activities partly because of the centuries-old rivalry between the Russian Orthodox Church and the West. The Christian missionaries refuse to take these negative responses into account—they simply go on with what they came to do while the movement itself is gaining momentum.

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An analysis of the current trends in Kazakhstan supplies us with a temporary assessment of the existing and potential threats that challenge confessional harmony and tolerance in society and the most common features of the unfolding religious conflicts.

Today, the main destabilizing factors responsible for the conflict-prone situation in the country are religious radicalism, the weakened traditional religious structure, the greater influence of non-traditional faiths and sects, which potentially may lead to religious conflicts, religious and ideological extremism of a-systemic religious and pseudo-religious faiths, and active Christian proselytism which undermines the traditional religious structure and worsens the religious situation.

*Religious radicalism is on the increase among believers.* This all started in the 1990s when society tried to fill in the spiritual and moral void, while all sorts of religious communities, some of them

<sup>21</sup> A. Aubakirov, op. cit.

<sup>22</sup> See: S. Peyrouse, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

in conflict with others, stepped up their activities. The younger had no adequate religious knowledge, mainly because the state ignored the need for religious education. Religious studies were removed from the curricula of educational institutions, while the Committee for Religious Affairs was disbanded late in the 1990s. The state obviously failed to cope with the religious situation and the need to control it.

*Weakened traditional religious structure and increased influence of non-traditional faiths and sects.* Despite the fact that the country's overwhelming majority (90 percent of the total population) are Sunni Muslims or Orthodox Christians, non-traditional faiths, religious communities and organizations have extended their influence. They have rallied about 5 percent of the believers and are becoming more popular. The process is still unpredictable, but in the future the mounting wave might change the republic's confessional picture and produce religious conflicts.

*Mounting possibility of religious conflicts.* Slowly but surely the republic is moving toward religious xenophobia; the level of conflict potential in relations among the followers of traditional religions and non-traditional missionary communities and organizations is mounting. Members of such religious communities exhibit inordinate activity when it comes to religious propaganda among the local people in public places: they distribute printed materials, speak on the radio, and appear in TV programs. This has already caused numerous conflicts between the activists and their "objects" testified by sociological studies conducted in the republic at different times.

*Religious and ideological extremism of a-systemic religious and pseudo-religious faiths.* The Jehovah's Witnesses, the Satanists, and other similar totalitarian sects with a wide network of cells are the most dangerous among other non-traditional faiths. The Sun Bok Ym teaching, Agape, New Life, and others also belong to the same group. They are dangerous because they reject different opinions and rule their communities in an authoritarian way. They concentrate on the autochthonous, mostly Muslim, population and undoubtedly threaten confessional harmony in the republic.

On the one hand, the country obviously needs a legal ban of a-systemic religious institutions (sects and pseudo-religious communities that are banned elsewhere) and, on the other, stricter control over the branches and centers of foreign sects operating in Kazakhstan. The state should use the media to regularly explain to people the dangers of joining such sects.

*Active Christian proselytism undermines the foundations of the traditional religious structure and worsens the religious situation in the republic.* Recently the Christian communities working to convert the Muslim and Christian Orthodox population to Protestant faiths previously absent in the republic have been strengthening their position across the country. They are seriously undermining the religious balance: the very active involvement of foreign missionary charities that fund Christian proselytism inside the country may change the religious situation and the religious structure of the population in a very radical way, creating a potentially conflict-prone situation.

The above is the result of the political and economic interest large powers are exhibiting in Kazakhstan and its Central Asian neighbors; they all have become targets of the expansion of Western values and religions. The widely popularized and the well-oiled mechanism of missionary activities is designed to gradually change the religious situation and the population's religious structure to force the country follow the road in the long-term interests of Western strategists.

Much is being done to detach Kazakhstan, and Central Asia as a whole, from their Muslim neighbors and to decrease the influence religion exerts on the local countries' domestic and foreign policy. The long-term goal, however, is to change the region's entire religious makeup. Kazakhstan, the population of which desires to be Westernized, is the most obvious target: many of the Western states would like to see it a Christian country. Christian missionaries are striving to isolate the Russian-speaking population from neighboring Russia, a predominantly Orthodox Christian country. So far their shared religion is the main obstacle.

On the whole, it should be said that Kazakhstan, like many Western and Oriental countries, is aware of the problem of shadow faiths, but the mentality of the local population diminishes it. In Kazakhstan, the religious factor does not affect public opinion and state policy.

The majority see their religious affiliation as their personal affair and part of cultural life completely detached from the country's political course. The state intends to separate religion from politics, but religion does influence society. The country's leaders are pursuing a balanced, well-substantiated and pragmatic policy in the religious sphere: today any seemingly innocent remark or comment about culture or religion might cause mass protests and violence. This explains why the missionaries of non-traditional faiths and confessions are unable to radically change the social situation in the country. The local governments, however, should pay more attention to such activities, which contradict divine as well as human principles.

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## RELIGION IN THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KYRGYZSTAN

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With the advent of Soviet power, Islam and Christian Orthodoxy in Kyrgyzstan retreated into the background and lost much of their former influence to the extent that, when the Soviet Union collapsed, the Muslim clergy proved incapable of alleviating the contradictions inside the Muslim community and preventing ethnic clashes. In 1989, the Kyrgyz and Tajiks came to blows over land plots—there are still about 70 disputed plots in the village of Uch-Dobo. In 1990, the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks clashed in the Osh Region in the country's south. In both cases, the official Islamic clergy proved impotent in the face of the dramatic events and were unable to normalize the situation.

The Kyrgyz, however, remained devoted to popular Islam and its everyday practices: throughout the Soviet period it was a tool of self-identity and an element of the locals' way of life. The local Muslims continued practicing it on an everyday basis, but on a national clan-dominated scale Islam lost some of its pre-revolutionary importance.

State atheism, the policy consistently pursued across the Soviet Union, left a void in the post-Soviet world rapidly filled with all sorts of radical Islamic ideas and new sects and religious (including totalitarian) organizations. The Soviet Union's demise revived religious feelings in all social groups. It was in the early post-Soviet period that the country acquired scores of new mosques and Orthodox

churches as well as new religious trends. The Koran was translated into the Kyrgyz and Uzbek languages, while the Bible appeared in Kyrgyz translation. Several bookstores in Bishkek sold Islamic and Christian books; the faithful received two periodicals, the national newspaper *Islam madaniyaty* published in Bishkek and *The Muslim*, which appeared in Jalal-Abad.

The republic's newly acquired independence changed the local religious structures: the republic set up the Muftiat and regional spiritual administrations of the Muslims. While in the Soviet past the republic did not have any Islamic educational establishments of its own and used the religious educational institutions in Uzbekistan, today it has 2,000 mosques (compared with less than 40 in 1991), 39 madrasahs, and 7 higher Islamic educational establishments, most of them built on foreign money. About 300 students from Kyrgyzstan are studying at Islamic educational establishments in Egypt, Turkey, Pakistan, Syria, and Kuwait. An Association of Religious Educational Establishments is functioning in Osh.

In the early post-Soviet period, the number of Christian Orthodox parishes rapidly increased to reach a figure of 97 by the mid-1990s. In 1990, the Russian Orthodox Church opened a Spiritual College in Tashkent, which educated enough priests for Kyrgyzstan. The republic's government gave the Christian Orthodox Church land plots in the capital to build new churches and a Church Administrative Center.

According to the State Commission for Religious Affairs, the country is the home of people from 84 ethnic groups and nationalities, 80 percent of whom are Muslims, 16 percent, Orthodox Christians, while 4 percent belong to other confessions. All people who belonged to the so-called Muslim nations were registered as Muslims—the republic's Muslim community consists of Kyrgyz, who comprise more than a half of it, Uzbeks (15 percent), Uighurs, Kazakhs, Tatars, Bashkirs, Tajiks, Azeris, Dungans, Turks, Chechens, Ingushes, Darghinians, and others. All members of the Christian Orthodox nations (Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, and others) were lumped together as Orthodox Christians. Since no previous poll had been conducted, the picture is far removed from reality—it was taken for granted that ethnic and religious affiliations coincided in all cases. A large number of the local people, however, particularly in the fairly Europeanized north, are still indifferent to religion.

In December 1991, the country acquired the Law on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations, which declared the freedom to follow any faith, simplified the procedure of setting up religious alliances and organizations, while the clergy received all the rights, property rights included, the rest of the nation enjoyed under labor and other laws.

This attracted all sorts of religious organizations and sects as well as numerous missionaries to the republic. They flocked from all corners of the world. Today, Kyrgyzstan has several Christian educational centers (the Biblical College, the Educational Presbyterian Center, etc.). Totally unknown religious organizations came to the republic to launch their activities there: by the mid-1990s there were about 900 foreign officially registered missionaries in the country, an even larger number of them acting clandestinely for many years.

Some of the sects banned elsewhere hastened to put down roots in Kyrgyzstan (the Moon's Unification Church, the White Brotherhood and other totalitarian structures). Some religious associations chose to avoid official registration and were registered as secular institutions (the Moon's Church, the Center of Dianetics, etc.).

When the country gained its independence, the new religions began intensely vying with each other to win influence over the hearts and minds of the local people, while the traditional confessions (Islam and Orthodox Christianity) found themselves in a quandary. Islam was attacked from all sides by Islamic radicals lavishly funded from abroad, while the outflow of part of the Slavic population left the Christian Orthodox Church with a considerably diminished community. Between 1992 and 1994, 100,000-110,000 left the country every year; the country has already lost over 400,000 Russian

speakers. The share of the non-autochthonous population dropped from about 50 percent to 25 percent of the total population (about 700,000). As a result, many of the restored and newly built Orthodox churches were closed; by the end of the 1990s, their number was much smaller than at the dawn of independence.

From the very beginning, the two local official religions—Islam and Christian Orthodoxy—found it hard to repel the onslaught of Islamic radicals and numerous sects. While the state was in its atheist phase, they obviously lost the missionary skills and expertise needed to operate among all sorts of social groups. At the same time, the Islamic radicals and sects of all hues and colors accumulated enough experience during the years of persecution and trained enough dedicated missionaries to go on with their openly hostile activities.

When the country became independent, the Islamic radicals, sects and religious organizations plunged into proselytism. The Islamists preferred to work among the autochthonous people who, they believed, followed a distorted and non-orthodox version of Islam and kept away from the Slavic population. They owed their success partly to the very low educational level of the local clergy. A special sitting of the administration of the Bazarkurgan District (Jalal-Abad Region) held early in 2003 pointed out that merely four out of 98 district imams had a special religious education. The others learned Islam on their own and therefore interpreted its canons in their own way; they could tend to the needs of their communities, but proved incapable of opposing the professional Islamic radicals.

As distinct from the Islamists, the sects and religious organizations work with all ethnic and social groups and are especially active among the Kyrgyz.

This is true primarily of the Protestant churches: they have begun publishing their books in Kyrgyz on a large scale and use the local tongue to promote their ideas. In recent years, a growing number of Kyrgyz have been joining all kinds of Protestant churches. Today, there are over 15,000 converted Kyrgyz in the republic.

In the country's north, for example, where all sorts of religious communities are especially active, families divided by religious affiliation are not rare. The Evangelical Christian Baptists and the Jehovah's Witnesses were especially successful; the Bahai built up a large following too.

In their fight against the government the Islamic radicals are skillfully exploiting the division between the country's North and South. The former is a seat of civil opposition that has already produced many prominent activists, heads of media and human rights organizations. The latter, much more Islamic and less developed, rejects secular political parties—it sides with the Islamic opposition. Most of the prominent religious opposition figures came from the South.

Foreign missionaries made the differences between the North and the South even more obvious: foreign Protestant missionaries are especially active in the North and the capital; in recent years, the Kyrgyz in these areas have been showing an interest in Christianity. In the South, where Islamic radicals operate, fundamentalism and Wahhabism are gaining momentum.

The March 2002 official statement of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Kyrgyzstan says that the Christian sects engaged in redividing spheres of influence have worsened the religious situation in the republic. Indeed, in the countryside, those who changed faiths were condemned and expelled from the traditional system of mutual assistance (*yntymak*).

In many places, people insisted on moving the "apostates" away. In the spring of 2002, over 500 villagers of the Suzak District (Jalal-Abad Region) insisted that eight Kyrgyz families, which had become Evangelical Christian Baptists, should be removed from the area. In other places, newly converted people were beaten up or even murdered.

The country's authorities and the heads of the Muslim community are very much concerned with the mounting influence of Islamic radicals and sects. The South is the source of greatest concern in this respect—it is seen as threatening state security. According to M. Imankulov who heads the Ad-



ministration of the National Security Service of the Osh Region, a test of the local clergy's knowledge revealed that most of the local mullahs were ignorant, a quarter of them were unsuited for their posts, while nearly 60 percent had to take the test again. For this reason, he said, the mullahs preferred to stay away from any disputes with those who represented Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami (Liberation Party), Wahhabis, and al-Qa'eda operating in Kyrgyzstan. He is convinced that on many occasions imams of the local mosques not only remain impassive but, having failed to grasp their meaning, encourage radical Islamic ideas.<sup>1</sup>

In the spring of 2003, the Kurultai of the Muslims of Kyrgyzstan gathered in Bishkek (after a seven-year hiatus) for its second congress attended by representatives of the State Commission for Religious Affairs and people from the NSS. The meeting confirmed that the Muslim clergy and the country's Muslims should follow the true canons of Islam as a religion of peace and goodness. At the same time, the head of the Spiritual Administration of the republic's Muslims, Murataly azhy Zhumanov, pointed out that the extremist Islamic trends had increased their influence because some of the imams proved ignorant and unconscientious.<sup>2</sup>

The Kurultai formulated several decisions designed to improve the performance of the Spiritual Administration; they amended its Charter and doubled the Ulema Council membership to thirty. The forum ruled that the Kurultai should be convened once every seven years and agreed that the republic needed more Islamic educational establishments. In the future, the republic will acquire its first ever Islamic University in the republic's history with the right to confer academic degrees.<sup>3</sup>

Radical Islamists came to the republic back in the late 1980s and divided the Muslim community into "moderates" and "genuine believers." The latter favor a return to "pure Islam" by abandoning what they see as "pagan admixtures" and restoring the old moral norms and very modest lifestyle. Their activities funded from abroad created numerous Wahhabi communities in the country's south. In the mid-1990s, the contradictions inside the Muslim community continued mounting: the imams and their followers were locked in increasingly sharp conflicts.

The countries where Wahhabism is the official religion or where radical Islam predominated spared no amount of money to plant the ideas of pure Islam in Kyrgyzstan. In the first decade of independence, the republic acquired 2,500 mosques, which was obviously much more than the 3.5 million Muslims needed: many of them were never used for want of a congregation and clergy.

Today, Hizb ut-Tahrir, an illegal party, dominates the radical Islamic movement of Kyrgyzstan and its Central Asian neighbors with the aim of turning the region into a Caliphate, an Islamic state. The poorest groups in the Osh and Jalal-Abad regions, mostly Uzbeks wishing to address their social problems by means of the Islamic revival, readily embraced these ideas. The party is seen as the only hope for this ethnic minority.

Hizb ut-Tahrir is an international Islamic organization with the full name of Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami. It was set up back in 1953 in Jerusalem. Its founder Taqiuddin an-Nabhani remained its leader until his death in December 1977 when the post went to Palestinian Abdul Qadim Zallum, who lived in Jordan. The party is active in Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, Kuwait, Palestine, Turkey, and Western Europe.<sup>4</sup>

The party brands the governments of all Muslim countries as non-Islamic and explains all the problems of the Muslim ummah by the "absence of Islam in everyday life" and "lack of Muslim governance." Being aware that the Muslim states cannot be united into a "genuinely Islamic state" in the near future, the party favors a Caliphate in one state and its gradual extension.

<sup>1</sup> See: *Deutsche Welle*, 22 April, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>4</sup> See: A. Ignatenko, "Zelenyi internetsional," *NG-religii*, 7 April, 1999.

Formally, the party rejects force as a method of struggle, but it looks at jihad as a “never-ending struggle for strengthening Islam and giving back the Muslims the legal rights of which they were robbed.” The party leaders are convinced that as soon as genuinely Islamic governance (the Caliphate) is set up, the Muslim world and the planet will gradually develop into a kind of confessional community with no social contradictions and division into titular nations and ethnic minorities.

Many countries concerned with the party’s religious extremism and its calls to “never-ending struggle” against the infidels and supporters of traditional Islam have outlawed the party. It has practically no influence in the Arab East and is banned in Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan, the U.S., and Western Europe.

Hizb ut-Tahrir tried to use the void the Soviet Union left behind to achieve its program aims and strengthen its position in the Islamic world. The party came to Central Asia in the early 1990s and entrenched itself in Uzbekistan. Its leaders selected the Ferghana Valley, even then divided among three Central Asian republics, as the best place to set up a “genuinely Islamic state,” and they worked there with special zeal.

The party’s leaders are working hard to legalize their structures as a political party in the Central Asian countries. To avoid any association with terrorism, Hizb ut-Tahrir concentrated on propaganda, leaving terrorism to the numerous groups it controlled. According to the Administration of Internal Affairs of the Osh Region, there are about a dozen small yet highly mobile terrorist groups operating in the Ferghana Valley: Tabligh, Uzun sokol (The Long Beard), Adolat Uushmasi (Society of Justice), Islam Lashkarlari (The Warriors of Islam), Tovba (Repentance) and Nur (The Ray).<sup>5</sup>

Today, Hizb ut-Tahrir has regional branches in the Andijan, Samarkand, Tashkent, and Ferghana regions. According to conservative estimates, there are several thousand Hizb ut-Tahrir members in Central Asia; for better secret performance they are all divided into groups of five.

In Kyrgyzstan, the party has launched an extensive propaganda campaign under the slogan: “Those who can hold arms should fight; those who can’t should use their tongues and their property.” The campaign involved imams of new, mostly illegal, mosques (later in the 1990s, in the Osh Region alone, there were 200 unregistered mosques out of the total 700 newly built ones). The movement airs its ideas in the press with the help of its supporters or the journalists and politicians on its pay-roll who are campaigning for the legalization of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan, as well as through leaflets distributed by activists and printed in huge numbers in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan.

In February 1999, Tashkent lived through several terrorist acts designed to destabilize the situation across the country. The authorities blamed Hizb ut-Tahrir. The resolute measures of the late 1990s drove the radical Islamists to the south of Kyrgyzstan. The movement adjusted its tactics as well: it abandoned its plans to overturn the authorities in the near future through terror for the sake of building up a massive social basis.

At first Hizb ut-Tahrir mainly relied on the members of Adolat, an Uzbek Islamic organization banned in Uzbekistan in March 1992. According to the law-enforcement bodies of Kyrgyzstan, today there are 4,000 members of Hizb ut-Tahrir operating in the country. Its ranks are swelling with young and poorly educated jobless people from the countryside. The party is also courting women: it has already set up structures in Eastern countries to educate and brainwash future female members. The party ideologists expect Central Asian women to return home after taking a study course to proliferate the movement’s ideas by setting up “genuinely Islamic families” in which the children will grow up as fanatics and change society’s mood.

The Islamic radicals have worsened the relations among the Central Asian republics and increased ethnic tension. Several years ago, the state border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan was semi-transparent and left unguarded; it remained practically non-delimited until 1999 when the IMU fighters

<sup>5</sup> See: *Vecherniy Bishkek*, 28 May, 1999.

invaded southern Kyrgyzstan and repeated their raids in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan the following summer.

This forced the Central Asian neighbors to guard their borders, increase the number of customs posts, and station more military to prevent Islamists from crossing their borders and to stem drug and weapon smuggling. The local people suffered because of this: transborder trade, in which the local peasants were involved, was no longer possible. Landmines along the borders became a serious threat—the governments, particularly of Uzbekistan, mined the border area to prevent invasions, causing casualties among the civilians.

\* \* \*

It took Islam a long time to adjust itself to the local specifics of the Kyrgyz until it finally took the form of everyday moderate Islam. The local clergy were mainly tending to the people's everyday needs and kept away from tribal politics.

While Kyrgyzstan remained part of the Russian Empire, religious stability was maintained by strict delimitation of the spheres of influence between the Islamic and Russian Orthodox clergy: the Islamic clergy worked with the locals, while the Christian Orthodox priests concentrated on the people who moved from central Russia.

In the post-imperial period, Islam was used as a political weapon for the first time: the enemies of Soviet power used Islamic slogans, but failed to rally the faithful around them to oppose the unfaithful. The civil war and state atheism weakened the positions of both religions in Kyrgyzstan. Members of all sorts of sects and religions were exiled to Kyrgyzstan, which made the religious situation there even patchier.

An influx of foreign missionaries into independent Kyrgyzstan made the religious situation even more complicated: impoverished people, who could barely survive in the hard social and economic conditions, willingly embraced the new teaching promoted by the rich foreign sects and religious organizations lavish with their money.

As distinct from other confessions, the Islamic radicals are using religion as an ideological truncheon in the hope of replacing the secular governments of Kyrgyzstan and its Central Asian neighbors with an Islamic state.

Their activities are multiplying the religious problems and threatening the country's future and its existence as an independent state. Today, confessional stability is one of the priorities: power and the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Kyrgyzstan should offer an attractive alternative to Islamic radicalism and fundamentalism and make the Muslims realize that Islam should not be used as a political weapon in multi-confessional societies.

The future of the religious situation largely depends on whether official Islam and Christian Orthodoxy adjust to the new conditions, restore their former influence and, working together with secular power, oppose the Islamic radicals and totalitarian sects.

The constantly growing number of sects and religions in Kyrgyzstan, which is a global phenomenon, will obviously prevent Islam and Christian Orthodoxy from regaining their former domination. Therefore, they should enter into a dialog with all acceptable religious organizations and sects to stabilize the religious situation in the republic.

# WAHHABISM AND JADIDISM IN ISLAMIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN DAGHESTAN: PARALLELS AND CONTRADICTIONS

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Effective opposition of religious extremism requires mastering the entire range of conceptual systems appropriate for the situation at hand. And not many of those who write about Islam and its problems miss the opportunity to mention fundamentalism, Salafism, Wahhabism, Jadidism, and other similar concepts. On the one hand, this attention to academics should be hailed since, otherwise, it would be difficult to conceptualize our knowledge; while on the

other, the multitude of different approaches breeds a multitude of different ideas, whereas science should strive for the opposite. A lack of harmony when it comes to concepts and terms undermines our concerted efforts aimed at fighting and defeating religious extremism. There is no agreement—in the academic and religious communities alike—on the interpretations of Jadidism and Wahhabism. This fully applies to the Republic of Daghestan.

## 1. Wahhabism and Jadidism: Common Features

There is the opinion that the concept of “fundamentalism” cannot be applied to Wahhabism and its description, Daghestan being no exception in this case.<sup>1</sup> Both in Russia and the West the term “fundamentalism” is obviously abused.<sup>2</sup> This is very true: the term fails to describe the very essence of Wahhabism: it is too limited to describe Wahhabi specifics. It is indispensable, however, and serves a useful purpose when it comes to identifying its special and particular features. From this point of view, the concept of fundamentalism is indispensable for any discussion of the nature of Wahhabism. It should not be abused, however. V. Naumkin has pointed out that certain authors tend to apply the term to an extremely wide spectrum of religious phenomena: “renovation,”<sup>3</sup> “revisionism,”<sup>4</sup> “mod-

<sup>1</sup> See: E F Kisriev, *Islam i vlast v Daghestane*, Moscow, 2004, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> See: V.V Naumkin, “Islamskiy radikalizm v zerkale novykh kontseptsiy i podkhodov,” *Vostok*, No. 1, 2006, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> See: *Ibidem*.

<sup>4</sup> G. Delanoue, “Nekotorye aspekty vozrozhdeniya islama v Rossii. Musul'manskiy reformizm v araboiazychnykh stranakh (1800-1940),” in: *Islam v tatarskom mire: istoria i sovremennost*, Kazan, 1997, p. 159.

ernism,”<sup>5</sup> “revivalism,” and “traditionalism.” Without going into details, it would be wise to base an analysis of fundamentalist trends in Islamic confessions on the concept of Salafism. It has already been accepted by the academic community as an anchor term used to describe the basic, and shared, content of all Islamic fundamentalist trends. *Islam*, one of the best encyclopedic dictionaries, derives the term “Salafi” from “Salaf,” meaning “ancestors” or “precursors.” Salafi is a blanket term applied to all Muslim religious figures who during their lifetime called on the faithful to imitate the lifestyle and religious convictions of the early Muslim community and the “righteous ancestors” (al-salaf al-salihun). They described all later developments as “bid’ah” (heresy).<sup>6</sup> Salafism, and fundamentalism of all other hues for that matter, means excessive loyalty to the original confessional ideas that force its followers to reject all later changes and reforms touching upon fundamentals and values.

These fairly clear and commonly known statements cause heated debates when it comes to tagging religious trends and prominent figures.

The real problem, however, lies outside general definitions: there is no agreement on how the concept can be used to fit specific definitions. Salafism (and “fundamentalism”) is a multi-faceted and contradictory phenomenon that shows its nature in the fact that Wahhabism and Jadidism, two obviously different Islamic trends, share confessional elements. This permits traditional Islam to identify them as two identical phenomena and criticize them. On the other hand, those who support liberal values approve them for the same reason.

Sh. Marjani, an outstanding follower of Jadidism, described the key propositions of his religious reform in the following way:

1. Taqlid should be completely uprooted.
2. The Muslims should return to the roots of their faith and culture of the time of the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>7</sup>

The Wahhabis are the strictest followers of Salafism and the goals enumerated above. Widely interpreted taqlid means blind devotion to the Koran, Sunnah, and religious authorities: the four imams of the four Sunni madhabs (Abu Hanifah, Ibn Malik, al-Shafii, and Ibn Hanbal). Taqlid is the lynchpin of traditional Islam; Wahhabism and consistent Jadidism reject taqlid—this is where their Salafi nature betrays itself.

Despite their shared views on the two points quoted above they differ on many important things. This should be taken into account in the Caucasus, a potentially unstable region, lest more hotbeds of tension be created. The Wahhabis and the Jadidists mean different things and pursue different aims when they reject taqlid and call on the Muslims to return to the original pillars of their faith. In fact, an objective assessment of the confessional and social nature of both trends does not demand an answer to the question of what they reject (taqlid and novelties), but rather why they reject them and why they insist on returning to the roots. An objective answer to both questions will demonstrate that there are two opposite trends in the development of Islamic consciousness.

The main difference between Wahhabism and Jadidism lies in their treatment of ijtihad.<sup>8</sup> In traditional Islam<sup>9</sup> (in Daghestan, in particular) the clergy believes that both the Wahhabis and Jadidists

<sup>5</sup> S. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Touchstone Books, New York, 1988, p. 112.

<sup>6</sup> See: “As-Salafiya,” in: *Islam. Entsiklopedicheskiy slovar*, Moscow, 1991, p. 204.

<sup>7</sup> See: R.A. Nabiev, *Islam i gosudarstvo*, Kazan, 2002, p. 121.

<sup>8</sup> Ijtihad—zeal and excessive ardour when it comes to identifying and resolving still unresolved problems so that the new solutions were rooted in Islam and supported it (see: “al-Ijtihad,” in: *Islam. Entsiklopedicheskiy slovar*, p. 91).

<sup>9</sup> From the scholarly point of view, the term “traditional Islam” allows numerous interpretations. Here it means Islam that follows the taqlid (the authority of madhab).

support *ijtihad*, something that is regarded as betrayal of true Islam.<sup>10</sup> This is an important, but not the only, distinction between the Wahhabis and Jadidists.

## 2. The Daghestanian Reformers of Islam: Are They Wahhabis or Jadidists?

As late as the early 20th century, the supporters of traditional Islam (*tareqatists*, and those who supported *taqlid*) and those who claimed *ijtihad* were locked in bitter discussions, in the heat of which the Wahhabis and Jadidists were lumped together as supporters of *ijtihad*. In this case, the past will help us sort out the trends present in the Daghestanians' Islamic consciousness.

*Jaridat Daghestan*, a newspaper that appeared between 1913 and 1918, *Bayan al-Hakaik*, published in 1925-1928, as well as the private correspondence of those directly involved in the discussions, followed them step-by-step in great detail.

A letter entitled "A Truthful Answer to My Faithful Brother" by Abd al-Hafiz al-Uhli provided a general assessment of the situation defined by the terms "traditional Islam" (Sufism), Wahhabism, and Jadidism.<sup>11</sup> It touches on the debatable issues related to *ijtihad*, *taqlid*,<sup>12</sup> and *tawassul*.<sup>13</sup> The letter was first mentioned in an article by Ph.D. (Political Science) A. Mantaev.<sup>14</sup>

The author said that there were many harmful (illegal) sects in Islam, but, he continued, "I want to talk about two misdirected sects... The first of them is the Wahhabis."<sup>15</sup> "The second is the group of Jadidists. It is called *Hizb al-jadid*. It was founded by the worst of the heretics, Sheikh Jamalutdin al-Afghani. This group is the most hostile to true Islam and its followers and much more harmful because it leads people further away from the right road in the Islamic world than the first one."<sup>16</sup> The author described Muhammad Abdo as the second dangerous promoter of faithlessness within this most dangerous trend; Rashid Rida was named as the third, and even more dangerous, agitator. A. Mantaev has said that Abd al-Hafiz al-Uhli discerned the hostile nature of the Jadidists in the fact that they did not limit themselves to the ideas of Wahhabism, but also accepted all types of heresies and banned novelties.<sup>17</sup> This means that Jadidism is as unacceptable as Wahhabism.

Some other authors described Rashid Rida in similar terms.<sup>18</sup>

The letter pointed to Ali Kayaev (Zamir Ali) as the person who first introduced harmful ideas into Daghestan: in the early 20th century (1905-1907), he studied at Al-Azhar in Cairo and had close

<sup>10</sup> See: Sh. Mukhidinov, editor of *Assalam*, a newspaper published by the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Daghestan (SAMD), has written that Euro-Islam rests on critical thinking, while *ijtihad* is a random interpretation (refusal to recognize the four imams and random interpretation of the Koran) that has already brought some Muslims, the Wahhabites, to terrorism, extremism, and self-destruction." See "Komu nuzhna modernizatsia islama," *Daghestantsy*, No. 2, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> The letter 34 pages long was written in Arabic around the mid-20th century, according to researchers of the Center of Oriental Studies at the Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnography of the DSC RAS Sh. Shikhaliev and A. Navruzov. The original belongs to Abduragim Abdurakhmanov of the village of Nizhny Jengutai, Daghestan. It has not been published; Sh. Shikhaliev translated it into Russian at my request.

<sup>12</sup> *Taqlid*—devotion to one of the madhabs as opposition to *ijtihad*.

<sup>13</sup> *Tawassul*—recognition of the intercessory role of the Prophet and the righteous men in Sufism.

<sup>14</sup> See: A.A. Mantaev, "Sufism i wahhabizm v Daghestane v kontse 19-nachale 20 veka," *Islamskaia tsivilizatsia*, No. 1, 2005, pp. 143-145.

<sup>15</sup> Abd al-Hafiz al-Uhli, "Dostovernny otvet blagochestivomu bratu," p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> A.A. Mantaev, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>18</sup> Gilbert Delanoue of France believes that Rashid Rid represented a conservative trend in Muhammad Abdo's teaching: (a) he defended Wahhabism; (b) he considered Islam to be a religion and law; (c) he believed that Islam was the most perfect religion (see: G. Delanoue, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-165).



contacts with Rashid Rida. The letter's author believed that he was disseminating heresy in Daghestan on the direct instructions of Rashid Rida. The Daghestanian clergy readily agrees with this and describes Ali Kayaev as the first Wahhabi in Daghestan.<sup>19</sup>

Any precise description of the Salafi movement in Daghestan calls for a much more detailed discussion than mere division into the conservative and progressive trends: each, in its turn, is a very complicated confessional and sociopolitical phenomenon.

We know a lot about the key features of conservative Salafism: strict monotheism, rejection of tawassul, reliance on taqfir, complete rejection of taqlid, and scripturalism<sup>20</sup> as well as literal interpretation of the holy texts.

Integrism is another typical feature of conservative Salafism, which insists that conceptually the secular and the religious cannot be separated.<sup>21</sup> This is typical both of renovationist and conservative Salafism, in which this phenomenon has a diametrically opposite content. Conservative integrism says that Islam should not try to adapt itself to the world (*dunya*). If the world refuses to adapt itself to Islam, it should be forced to do this.<sup>22</sup> This is typical of militant Wahhabism. The conservative Daghestanian Salafis headed by B. Magomedov (who never called themselves Wahhabis) formulated one of their program goals as "the creation of their own armed forces and coordination of the jamaat's militant groups in Chechnia and Daghestan."<sup>23</sup> Progressive Salafism, by contrast, as well as Jadidism, is trying to accommodate religion by providing interpretations of new social phenomena.

The Wahhabi and the Jadidist Salafi can easily remove themselves far from the traditionalist viewpoints when calling on the faithful to embrace the early Muslim values. The Jadidists stress the role of reason in religious deliberations and moral and legal doctrines—they feel that Islam needs a new *ijtihad*. Conservative Salafism (Wahhabism) as a scripturalist trend tends to ignore the role of reason. Jadidism revived and developed the rational content and rational traditions of Islamic conscience rooted in reasoning, logic, and proof.<sup>24</sup> From this it follows that Wahhabism rejects *ijtihad* of all sorts; it rejects in principle the right to pass one's own judgment, which spells the highest degree of irrationality. Wahhabi rigorism betrays itself in a specific form of taqfir-ism. They brand all those who refuse to follow them as unfaithful; by doing this they appropriate the right to inherit their property. Jadidism is completely alien to such practices—a return to the sources is interpreted as the beginning of a new *ijtihad*, a new round of Islamic thought.

Jadidism is not involved in terrorist practices; as distinct from Wahhabism it is prone to accept and develop all progressive social phenomena; it is not opposed to Western culture and values, but it is inclined to find the road to the harmonious coexistence with them.

Despite these obvious distinctions and different positions of Wahhabism and Jadidism, clerics and theologians, as well as academics, tend to lump these trends together. What is more, they tend to mistake one for the other, which should be avoided. When writing about the situation in Daghestan in the late 20th century, E. Kisriev said: "Daghestanian Wahhabism was a new trend that tried to overcome traditional Islam commonly accepted across the republic and shape it into new forms better suited to the rationalist ideas of those who were educated at secular (Soviet) educational establishments. . . . Daghestanian Wahhabism should be described as a reformist, modernist movement in Islam, while

<sup>19</sup> See: Said Afandi Chirkeyskiy, *Sokrovishcha blagodatnykh znaniy*, Moscow, 2003, p. 99; R. Nuridinov, "Wahhabism—virus v islame," *Assalam*, No. 20, 1998.

<sup>20</sup> Scripturalism accepts the Koran and Sunnah as the only sources of knowledge.

<sup>21</sup> See: V.V. Naumkin, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> See: R. As-Said, "Novy vzgliad," *Tarikh*, No. 6, 1998.

<sup>23</sup> "Prichiny mezhdusobits. Podpisano 'Jamaat Daghestana'," *Khalifat*, No. 2, 1998.

<sup>24</sup> Tatar enlightener Gabdennasyr Kursavi was one of the first to develop this principle in Russian Islam. G. Gubaydulin wrote that Kursavi promoted the principles of reasoning (G. Gubaydulin, "K voprosu ob ideologii I. Gasprinskogo," in: *Izvestia vostochnogo fakul'teta Azerbajjanskogo gosuniversiteta*, Baku, 1929, p. 189).

the Daghestanian tareqatists and representatives of the traditional orthodox clergy (professional mullahs and imams) closely connected with the tareqatists who have woken up to oppose the reformist ideas of Wahhabis should be described as fundamentalists.”<sup>25</sup> To make his point he quotes from Huntington’s *The Clash of Civilizations*: “Like fundamentalists in other religions, Islamists are overwhelmingly participants in and products of the processes of modernization.”<sup>26</sup>

This is typical of Western Islamic studies: the Wahhabis are often described as “the Protestants of Islam,” while their ideology is described in positive and rationalist terms. This is a purely formal assessment based on the statements that religion should be purified of all later additions. This is the only outward element that rationalist, modernist, and reformist Jadidism shares with Wahhabism. The two trends see the theological content of the key Islamic texts in different lights and differ in their sociopolitical message.

We should recognize, however, that Wahhabism has developed into an Islamic religious trend with absolutely unpredictable repercussions: its vehement criticism of traditional Islam paved the way to later, much more progressive, movements that had nothing in common with Wahhabism and even contradicted it. A. Vassiliev wrote at one time: “The reformers and Wahhabis frequently joined forces to attack medieval scholastics, albeit from different fronts.”<sup>27</sup>

It seems that the terms “rationalism” and “modernism” are inapplicable to Wahhabism. All fundamental dictionaries describe the term “modernization” as changes to improve the old and adapt it to the new developments.<sup>28</sup> The desire to simplify the Islamic rites, something that the Wahhabis are striving to, can hardly be described as the intention to adapt them to the needs and wishes of contemporary social developments. Confessional and social egalitarianism of the Wahhabis is not a sign of their genuinely democratic nature: the proposed wide use of taqfir speaks of its fairly limited and biased nature. N. Zhdanov and A. Ignatenko, two prominent experts in Oriental studies, have aptly pointed out that the modernists are seeking reform in order to accommodate the Muslim dogmas to contemporary realities by discarding or pushing to the side some propositions and promoting others, while revivalism (or fundamentalism) ... aims at restoring some of the early Islamic institutions.<sup>29</sup>

Did the ideas of Jadidism manifest themselves in Daghestan at any stage of its history? Were all manifestations of Islamic reformism in Daghestan either Salafi (conservative) or even extremist (Wahhabi)? Was Ali Kayaev, the first Daghestanian to graduate from the Islamic University Al-Azhar in Cairo in 1907, the first Wahhabi of Daghestan as he is still described by the local Islamic clergy? If this was so, how were his ideas manifested?

According to Prof. M. Abdullaev and Iu. Medjidov, two prominent Oriental scholars well known in the republic, early in the 17th century another Daghestanian, Magomed Kudutlinskiy, met in Mecca with Sheikh Salih, an ardent supporter of ijthihad. This was how the ideas of Salih of Yemen reached Daghestan and became widely popular.<sup>30</sup> In his still unpublished work *Biografii daghestanskikh uchenykh-arabistov* (Biographies of Daghestanian Arabic Scholars), Ali Kayaev wrote: “Free thinking first reached Daghestan through a book by Yemeni scholar Salih-efendi.”<sup>31</sup>

Salih of Yemen, in turn, is known to follow Ibn Taymiyya, who lived in the 7th century of Hegira, and his disciple Ibn Kayyim; as opponents of Sufism, they peppered their books with

<sup>25</sup> E.F. Kisriev, op. cit., pp. 108-109.

<sup>26</sup> S. Huntington, op. cit., p. 112.

<sup>27</sup> A.M. Vassiliev, *Puritane Islama? Wahhabizm i pervoe gosudarstvo saudidov v Aravii*, Moscow, 1967, pp. 107-109.

<sup>28</sup> See: “Modernizatsia,” in: A.N. Bulyko, *Sovremenny slovar inostrannykh slov*, Moscow, 2005; “Modernizirovat,” in: S.N. Ozhegov, *Slovar russkogo iazyka*, Moscow, 1983.

<sup>29</sup> See: N.V. Zhdanov, A.A. Ignatenko, *Islam na poroge XXI veka*, Moscow, 1989, p. 17.

<sup>30</sup> See: M.A. Abdullaev, Iu.V. Medjidov, *Ali Kayaev*, Makhachkala, 1968, p. 65.

<sup>31</sup> A. Kayaev, *Biografii daghestanskikh uchenykh-arabistov*, p. 4. The Manuscript Collection of the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography, DSC RAS. Record Group 25, Inventory 1, File 1.

such expressions as “crosses” and “slaves of the sheikhs” designed to denigrate the sheikhs and murids.<sup>32</sup>

M. Saidov and M. Abdullaev, two Daghestanian Oriental scholars, have written about the great achievements of the “Kudutlinskiy school,” which produced a large group of prominent academics. While writing about one of them—Bark Qadi of Kakamakhi—Kayaev called him a “supporter of the new roads of religious sciences” and “one of those who first moved against the tareqat teaching and muridism.”<sup>33</sup>

The above suggests that religious free thinking, which rejected tareqat and taqlid, appeared in Daghestan much earlier than the late 20th century (contrary to the opinion widespread in the academic and political community) and not even in the early 20th century (the date supported by the republic’s spiritual leaders and some of the academics, A. Mantaev being one of them), but much earlier, in the 17th century. A. Kayaev, one of the leaders of this trend in Daghestan, was greatly influenced not only by his two years in Cairo alongside Rashid Rida, but also by the works of his compatriots.

Reformism in Daghestan was not shaped solely by Arabic influence. In 1900, two Daghestanians (Abusuf’ian Akaev and Magomedmirza Mavraev) visited Kazan on an invitation from engineer Adilgerey Daitbekov. They came to study the new teaching methods widely used in the Muslim schools. Akaev spent two years studying the teaching experience of the Kazan and Orenburg ulema. In 1902, he opened a two-year school of his own, which used the new methods.<sup>34</sup> Publishing activities initiated by M. Mavraev and I. Gasprinskiy offered even better opportunities for Jadidist propaganda in Daghestan.

The ideas Abusuf’ian Akaev brought back from the Volga shores were approved by Egyptian reformers. In his autobiography Akaev wrote that in 1907 he traveled to Misra (Cairo) and Istanbul to obtain new books. In Cairo he met Rashid Rida and Rafik-beg al Azm, who wrote about the meeting in *Al-Muayyad*, the local newspaper. An article called “Nakhdat ad-tagistaniin” (The Revival of Daghestanis) said in part: “Abusuf’ian-efendi ... is one of the supporters of reform in science and religion... Today, he is an epitome of inborn perspicacity. He burns with a desire to introduce new sciences which would develop his nation intellectually... He was warmly received; he is worthy of meeting the pillars of good reason to receive information from them he could use in his reformist activities.”<sup>35</sup>

In 1887, Saypula-qadi (Bashlarov), another Daghestanian, was exiled to Saratov Gubernia on the suspicion of being involved in an anti-Russian uprising. In 1905, he was employed by a Jadidist madrasah in Ufa where he worked until he could come home in 1909. He enriched his Daghestanian medieval knowledge with the ideas of Muslim revivalism popular in the Volga area as well as European secular science.<sup>36</sup>

A Kumyk writer N. Batyrmurzaev, who is considered a Jadidist in Daghestan, lived in Orenburg where he befriended R. Fakhretdinov, who belonged to the new generation of reformers. The Kumyk writer frequently contributed to the *Vakyt* newspaper; judging by the correspondence of father and son Batyrmurzaev, N. Batyrmurzaev was a close friend of Fakhretdinov.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>33</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>34</sup> See: A. Akaev, *Along the Road of the Prophet*, Vol. 1, Makhachkala, 1992, pp. 6-7 (in the Kumyk language).

<sup>35</sup> “‘Avtobiografia’ Abusuf’iana Akaeva,” *Literaturnoe i nauchnoe nasledie Abusuf’iana Akaeva*, Transl. from the Azerbaijani by G.M.-R. Orazhev; translations from the Arabic by A.R. Shikhsaidov, Makhachkala, 1992, pp. 129-130.

<sup>36</sup> See: Sh. Shikhaliev, “Saypula-qadi. Islam na territorii byvshey rossiyskoy imperii,” *Entsiklopedicheskiy slovar*, Issue 4, Moscow, 2004.

<sup>37</sup> See: S.Kh. Akbiev, *Sviaz vremen i druzhba literatur (nekotorye voprosy razvitiia daghestansko-tatarskikh literaturnykh svyazey)*, Makhachkala, 1985, p. 86.

In fact, Daghestanian scholars cite several dozen names of those Daghestanians they consider Jadidists: at the turn of the 20th century, these Daghestanians were busy opening schools which used “new methods.”<sup>38</sup>

What sort of movement was this? Was it a uniform movement as far as its aims were concerned? The answers can be found in the vast experience of studies of Jadidism accumulated in Tatarstan. According to researchers, the Jadidist activities of the Muslims of Russia developed in several directions:

1. Reform in education.
2. Political reform in Russia to create a constitutional state ruled by law.
3. Reform of some of the Islamic legal norms.<sup>39</sup>

It looks as if all the reformers wanted reform in education: this can be said about Ali Kayayev, Abusu’fian Akaev, Hasan Alkadari, and many of their followers. They all insisted that reform was indispensable to bridge the gap between the Muslims and people in the West. The reform was expected to pursue two aims: to introduce a new phonetic method (*usul al-jadid*) of Koranic instruction and to make secular disciplines and the Russian language part of the curricula of Islamic religious schools.

Was the teaching of mathematics, astronomy, logic, history, geography, chemistry, and other secular disciplines a novelty? Until the 13th century, these sciences were well developed in the Islamic world after all. Many of those branded as Jadidists in Daghestan (N. Batyrmurzaev being one of them) did not belong to the clergy; they belonged to the secular sector of Daghestanian society and approved of novelties. This was quite understandable: being educated in the Islamic cultural context of the turn of the 20th century, which by that time found itself far removed from the rationalist sciences (because secular schools were not developed enough to enjoy authority among the local people),<sup>40</sup> these people had to look for new ways of giving the local Muslims a taste of science. It seems that to become a Jadidist in the full sense of the word a person should become not only a faithful Muslim, but also a cleric with fairly developed religious ideas and religious duties, in the educational system among other things. Only those able consistently to readjust their traditional Islamic world outlook and conduct could be described as Jadidists; otherwise people who drew their secular ideas and materialist values from their personal philosophies could inadvertently be classed as Jadidists, whereas other, more adequate terms should have been used to describe them. I am convinced that this approach is in line with the ideas of V. Iuzeev, a prominent expert in Jadidism in Tatarstan, who believes that Jadidism is “part of theological liberalism” in particular.<sup>41</sup>

Another phenomenon was also typical of Daghestan. In 1883, Hasan of Alkadari, a prominent religious and public figure, philosopher, and poet, built a separate building to house a secular school in his native village, probably with the conviction that secular and religious subjects should not be taught under one roof. Significantly, Prof. A. Shikhsaidov, his great grandson and a prominent Oriental scholar, contrary to tradition, does not consider his ancestor a Jadidist.<sup>42</sup> The school, he argues, was one of the many within the Islamic educational tradition typical of Daghestan.

According to those who study Jadidism in Tatarstan, the Daghestanian reformers were mainly interested in educational activities. This was especially obvious in what two Jadidist spiritual lead-

<sup>38</sup> See: A. Gadjiyev, “Jadidism v Daghestane,” in: *Fundamental’nye i prikladnye voprosy estestvennykh nauk*, Vol. II, Makhachkala, 1994, pp. 131-133.

<sup>39</sup> See: A.V. Malashenko, R.A. Nabiev, A.Iu. Khabutdinov, “Jadidism,” in: *Islam na evropeyskom vostoke. Entsiklopedicheskiy slovar*, Kazakn, 2004.

<sup>40</sup> In 1849, for example, a secular Muslim school was opened in Derbent; because it did not have enough students, it was moved to the town of Temirkhanshur (see: G.I. Guseynov, *Hasan Alkadari*, Makhachkala, 2006, p. 49).

<sup>41</sup> See: G. Bautdinov, “Rossiiskie predtechi Evroislama,” *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 4 February, 2004.

<sup>42</sup> He said this on 5 October, 2006 in a private talk with the author.

ers—A. Kayaev and A. Akaev—were doing. The former was not only well-versed in the natural sciences (astronomy and geography, in particular)—he did not spare any effort to disseminate knowledge through his books *Traktat o novoy astronomii* (Treatise on New Astronomy), *Ekonomicheskaiia geografia mira* (Economic Geography of the World), *Istoria filosofii* (History of Philosophy), and *Fizicheskaiia geografia mira* (Physical Geography of the World). In his writings he relied on the pronouncements of al-Ghazali, an Arab philosopher, who developed the “dual nature of truth” idea: religious truths had nothing in common with scientific truths and found it necessary to object to his statement that mathematical studies led to apostasy. His own life of a highly religious and spiritual person extremely involved in the natural scientific studies is the best confirmation of the above.

Those who could be called Jadidists were actively involved in the political reforms of the early 20th century. Akaev hailed the February revolution of 1917 on which he pinned his hopes for a more democratic public and political life and cultural developments. He approved of the October coup as well. The republican archives contain enough documents testifying to his cooperation with prominent revolutionary-socialists of Daghestan. In one of his articles written in defense of the socialists, he said: “Socialists want fair public relations ... unlike the Sufis they will not consolidate religion, but nor will they destroy it ... there will be no enmity between the socialists and the poor.”<sup>43</sup>

The issues of freedom, social justice and political reforms figured prominently in Kayaev’s activities. He hailed the February 1917 revolution and wrote in his newspaper *Jaridat Daghestan*: “Until that time the peoples of Russia lived under the czar and his henchmen and tolerated the tyrants, who never cared about people. The best people of Russia demanded freedom.”<sup>44</sup> Like A. Akaev, Kayaev was also disappointed in the course of events in Russia in the early 20th century. He wrote: “Freedom means that people should become masters. In fact, only the names of the bosses changed—nothing more... ‘Commissars’ are working very much in the same manner as the ‘bosses’ of the olden times before them.”<sup>45</sup> The active social and political stance of the Daghestanian reformers of Islam who promoted social progress and democracy was another facet of their Jadidist makeup.

When summarizing Ali Kayaev’s multisided public activities, it should be said that he was always guided by his love of freedom and rationality, which he consistently applied in his religious, public, and scientific activities. He stands apart from all the other Daghestanian Jadidists of the turn of the 20th century. It can even be said that he alone insisted on the idea of “absolute ijtihad.” When calling for this, he always insisted that the Koran and the Sunnah should be carefully studied to draw conclusions appropriate for the demands of the time. Naturally enough, he was very critical of Sufism and the Sufis, his contemporaries, whom he accused of resorting to all sorts of tricks to avoid some of the Koranic injunctions; he also spoke a lot about their ignorance. His criticism was rooted in the ideas of many prominent reformers of Islam and his scientific knowledge was so convincing and logical that even today the Daghestanian clergy treat him as an ideological enemy. According to Abd al-Hafiz al-Uhli, “he said that Almighty Allah created the Islamic Shari‘a as a single whole and [that he] is very amazed to see that the people made four Shari‘as out of it. He called for absolute ijtihad. He used to say: ‘What sort of scholars are our contemporaries if they fail to use the Koran and the Prophet’s Sunnah? What is so special about these imams: they are alims and we are alims as well.’”<sup>46</sup>

<sup>43</sup> A. Akaev, “Who are Socialists?” in: *Along the Road of the Prophet*, Vol. 1, p. 22. Later, the author was deeply disappointed in the Bolsheviks whom he called in this article “a huge crowd of socialists.” “At that time, we did not know the socialists’ program. Had I known the program of the socialists and the Soviet government I would have never defended them” (see: G.M.-R. Orazhev, Foreword to the second volume of Akaev’s work, Makhachkala, 1997, p. 8).

<sup>44</sup> *Jaridat Daghestan*, No. 11, 1917.

<sup>45</sup> *Channa Tsuku* newspaper, No. 8, 1917. Quoted from: M.A. Abdullaev, Iu.V. Medjidov, op. cit., pp. 124-125.

<sup>46</sup> Abd al-Hafiz al-Uhli, op. cit., p. 8.



Abd al-Hafiz al-Uhli described three more Daghestanians as Jadidists, that is, as people more harmful to Islam than the Wahhabis.

Ali Kayaev not only rejected taqlid, not only criticized Sufism, he also took issue, to a great extent, with the Islamic dogmas.

- First, it was probably due to the deism of Voltaire and Rousseau and the ideas of Newton, who believed that having created the world God never interfered in its laws, that he accepted the conception of the “divine initial impulse.”
- Second, he accepted Darwin’s theory.
- Third, he rejected the idea of the “end of the world.”
- Fourth, he never believed that five prayers a day (as prescribed by the Shari‘a) were absolutely obligatory.

This all contradicted Islamic dogmas. Akaev’s ideas about how to reform Islam were slightly different. In the very first issue of *Bayan al-Hakaik* (Explanation of Truths) he himself published, he described the aims of such reforms as “purification of the Shari‘a of novelties and fashionable ideas.”<sup>47</sup> “Novelties” stemmed from the excessive efforts of Ibn Taymiyya’s disciples (he himself was recognized as precursor of Wahhabism) “who were carried away with banning tawassul.”<sup>48</sup> Akaev never rejected taqlid and accepted the Sufi values. He interpreted purification of Islam as a struggle against the novelties introduced in traditional Islam. As distinct from the Jadidism of Kayaev, his convictions were limited to enlightenment and the political sphere and never intruded into the sphere of Islamic dogmas. For this reason, the Daghestanian clergy never objected to his religious heritage.

The Daghestanian Islamic reformers of the turn of the 20th century concentrated on humanitarian issues in the sphere of education and their public and political activities. This was where Jadidism and Wahhabism parted ways: “humanism” and “humanity” are not one and the same thing. As distinct from humanism, which is part of philosophical anthropocentrism that directly or indirectly rejects the religious interpretation of the meaning of life as serving God, religious humanity is based on theocentrism. From this it follows that, strictly speaking, religion has no “humanist potential” nor “humanitarian values.” Jadidism, however, had a humanistic aspect related to its educational efforts. The teaching of man is inevitably the heart and soul of educational efforts: Sh. Marjani, one of the most prominent Jadidists, opposed the rigid theocentrism and providentialism of traditional Islam with the enlightenment conception of human nature. The clear educational and anthropocentric nature of his philosophy predetermined his humanism. He condemned the practices of bribe-taking in tax collection and conscription and unfair judges.<sup>49</sup> The same can be said about Akaev and Kayaev: the former insisted that the Daghestanians suffered partly because they had no access to scientific knowledge. His *Book of Morals*<sup>50</sup> spoke of the values shared by all people irrespective of their philosophical approaches. Kayaev was even more explicit in his humanitarian pronouncements: he criticized with equal fervor the czarist government, the clergy, and the post-revolutionary authorities that ignored the needs of the common people and the problems of poverty, education, and freedom.

We can argue with the above saying that Wahhabism is known to be humanistic when it comes to personal relations: it instructs its followers to be kind and prudent, keep their word, demonstrate

<sup>47</sup> *Bayan al-Hakaik*, No. 1, 1925.

<sup>48</sup> A. Akaev, “The State of Hijaz and the Misfortunes of Wahhabism,” *Bayan al-Hakaik*, No. 1, 1925.

<sup>49</sup> See: A.N. Iuzeev, “Zhiznedeiatel’nost Mardjani,” *Ocherki Mardjani o vostochnykh narodakh*, Kazan, 2003, p. 29.

<sup>50</sup> See: A. Akaev, *The Book of Morals*, Temirkhanshura, 1914 (in Kумыk).



patience and absolute honesty, and help the blind. It condemns stinginess, envy, perjury, and cowardice. It instructs its followers to look after slaves, servants, and hired hands.<sup>51</sup> This was inevitably accompanied with promises of heaven (the poor had a much better chance of getting there than the rich). Wahhabi humanity is not genuine humanism for the simple reason that it is limited to the Wahhabi community and left all others, even Muslims, outside. This means that the Wahhabis place their relationship with God higher than their relationship with people—very much in line with religious dogmas. This is where the theocentric nature of religious humanity was shown as opposed to the humanism of the enlightenment, social, and political ideas of Jadidism.

The above assessments (which are not facts at all) point to Jadidism's philosophical duality of sorts: consistent adherence to the Islamic or any other religious doctrines should prevent any of the followers from moving away from strict theocentrism toward a revision of values in favor of the values accepted by mankind and humanistically oriented. This feature is especially obvious in the fairly developed forms of Jadidism. When talking about the relationships between the nation and Islam, the leaders of the national Tatar movement, called the Tatar Public Center (TPC), put the nation ahead of Islam. R. Safin, one of the TPC ideologists, described the nation as a priority. He speaks of Islam as a phenomenon of secondary importance and insists that religion should serve the nation, not vice versa.<sup>52</sup> Islamic theocentrism has nothing in common with this; the same can be said about Wahhabism and its ideology. At the turn of the 20th century, Daghestanian Jadidism did not reach these heights, but it was gradually moving toward them, particularly through the efforts of Ali Kayaev.

### 3. The Changing Destiny of Jadidism in Daghestan

The very circumstances under which Jadidism emerged in Daghestan determined its further development. It was brought in from the outside and planted in already tilled soil (the local people had long been aware of the need to introduce confessional freedom, education, and free activities in the social and political spheres). After spending two years in the Volga area, where he met Gasprinskiy and Rashid Rida, Akaev developed a fresh approach to the life of the Muslims in his native Daghestan. The same applies to Kayaev, who had spent two years in Al-Azhar alongside Rashid Rida and met Gasprinskiy in Cairo in 1907 and to Saypula-qadi (Bashlarov), who likewise spent some years of his life in exile in the Volga area.

The repressions of the 1930s in Russia against all religions (Islam in particular) hit the Jadidists: Akaev and Kayaev both died in labor camps (the former in 1931 after several years in exile, the latter in 1943).

It proved a far from simple task to revive the ideas of these selfless people completely devoted to the ideas of Islamic renovation and enlightenment. First, brought in from outside, Jadidism was not firmly rooted locally; it all depended on what Kayaev, Akaev, and others were doing. No wonder the cruel 1930s easily uprooted it. Second, the Shafii madhab of the Daghestanian Muslims offered no conditions for the development of Jadidism in the republic. In fact the al-Shafii and the Ibn Hanbal madhabs are described as Salafi madhabs. While in the Abu Hanifah madhab legal opinions rest, among other things, on personal opinion (*raya*) and reason, the Shafii madhab rejects personal opinions outright. Third, secular education somewhat devalued the urgency of the Jadidists' enlightenment ideas;

<sup>51</sup> See: A.M. Vassiliev, *op. cit.*

<sup>52</sup> See: R. Safin, "Natsional'noe dvizhenie i religia," *Tatarstan*, No. 4, 1997, pp. 5-11.

in Soviet times, when the Islamic educational system was practically non-existent, the Jadidist ideas were never in demand.

Today there are 14 Islamic universities in Daghestan, 21 branches of higher educational establishments, about 97 madrasahs, and 278 maktabas (mosque schools), at which approximately 14,000 people study. The media spared no efforts to criticize their curricula as being unsuitable for the contemporary secular environment.<sup>53</sup> Many of the graduates can be described as potential victims of the Wahhabism widely accepted in the republic. In fact, Wahhabi ideologists come to Daghestan to look for suitable people in the mosques, madrasahs, and maktabas.

Some of the ideas of Kayaev and Akaev have not lost their pertinence, but the republic's official clergy, who are closely following Islamic educational and religious activities, have monopolized the right to express any religious ideas. There are Wahhabis in Daghestan, but since those who dare to disagree with the official position of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Daghestan are dismissed as Wahhabis, all attempts at promoting progressive thinking among the faithful Daghestanians are cut short.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> See: I.A. Shamov, "Religia ili svetskoe prosveshchenie," *Daghestanskaia pravda*, 8 June, 2001. When writing about one-sided confessional education in the Islamic universities of Daghestan, the author, who is known in the republic as a writer and prominent doctor, says that they lack "everything that makes a member of society an educated person and society itself developed."

<sup>54</sup> For more detail, see: Z.M. Abdulagatov, "Daghestan and Tatarstan: The State/Religion Relationship in the Islamic Context of Russia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (31), 2005.

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## POST-SOVIET RADICALIZATION OF ISLAM IN KYRGYZSTAN: HIZB UT-TAHRIR

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In August 2006, Kyrgyzstan marked 15 years of its independence: a historically short period that upturned the course of history in this republic. The Soviet Union disappeared together with the communist utopia of an atheist state to let religion finally reap the fruits of its opposition to the official Marxist-Leninist ideology. The state loosened its grip on religion somewhat earlier under the impact of perestroika, which brought in democratization and the 1988 ceremonies dedicated to the millennium of Christianity in Russia. Kyrgyzstan, and many of its Central Asian neighbors, inherited a weak economy and spiritual vacuum from the Soviet Union: for seven decades of Soviet rule most people, be they Muslims or Christians, were too frightened to openly demonstrate their devotion. The

socialist system disintegrated to bury the bipolar world of socialism/capitalism confrontation under its debris, the resulting gap being filled with another confrontation: the rich and economically dynamic West and the poor Muslim Southeast.

There is the opinion that religion's new status in society legalized the people's previously hidden devoutness and allowed religion to come out into the open (thus ending the "underground period" of religious activities). People were no longer afraid to discuss their religious convictions; mosque and church attendance as well as religious rites at home were no longer a crime. Atheists and people earlier indifferent to religion developed an interest in it. Islam and Christianity launched wide-scale propaganda campaigns and distributed religious publications in large numbers. As a result, in two years, the number of believers nearly doubled, together with the number of religious associations. By 1991, in Kyrgyzstan 25 churches and parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church and 39 main mosques had received official status; 1,000 more mosques were operating unofficially. By the early 1990s, religion in the republic was represented mainly by Sunni Islam and Orthodox Christianity. In Soviet times, there were underground communities of Baptists, Adventists, Pentecostals, Catholics, and Jehovah's Witnesses operating across the country—Kyrgyzstan being no exception. Today the republic is a multi-confessional country with over 25 religions and religious trends. This is the result of legalization and the resumed activities of some of the religious trends earlier banned and persecuted. Foreign missionaries, who brought absolutely new religions to the republic, have also contributed to the present confessional diversity.

Today there are 44 parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church (including one nunnery); 1,600 mosques (1,042 of them registered); 3 Catholic and 2 Judaic communities; 1 Buddhist community, and 216 Protestant religious facilities (20 missions of newly arrived foreign confessions included). In addition, there are 20 Bahai communities in Kyrgyzstan; about 1,000 foreign missionaries work in the republic. Before 1991 Kyrgyzstan had no religious educational establishments—today there are 7 Islamic institutes and 41 madrasahs.<sup>1</sup>

The higher Islamic educational establishments include among others one university (set up in July 2003 by a decision of the Second Kurultai of the Muslims of Kyrgyzstan) and the Rasul Akram Kyrgyz-Iranian Islamic Institute (before 2002; it was closed down in 2002 on the initiative of its founders); in the same year the Kyrgyz founders opened an independent Islamic institute.

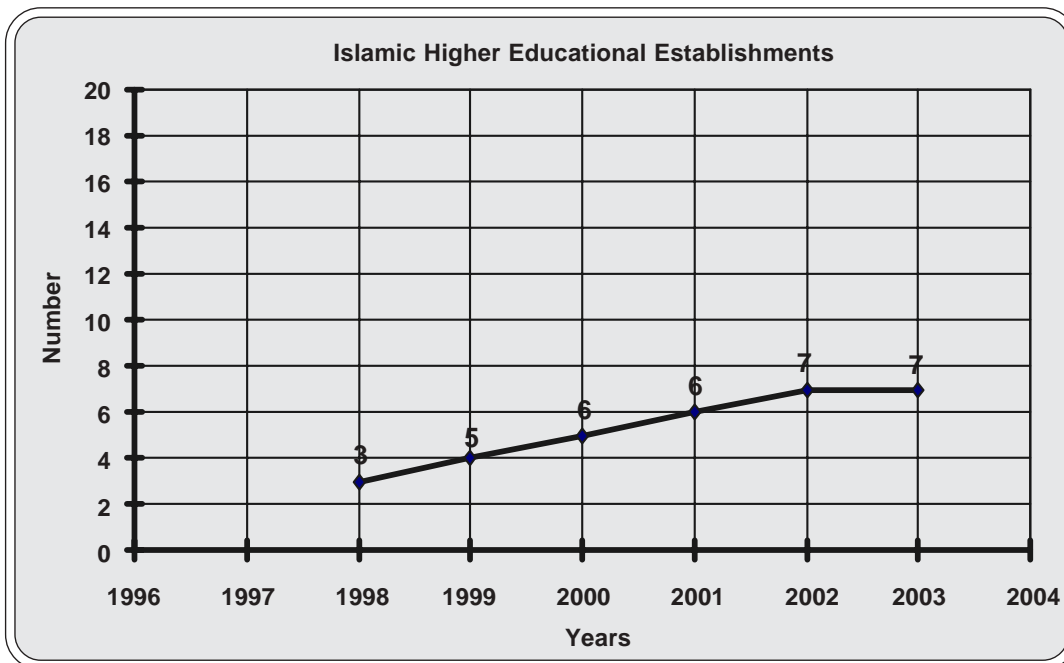
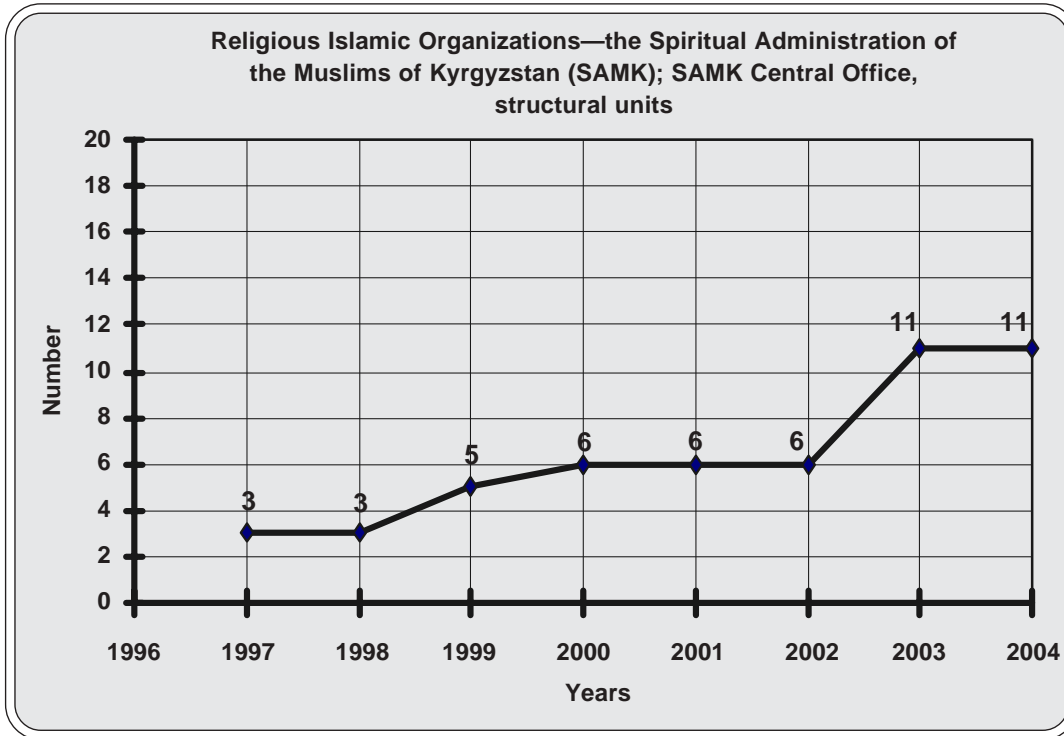
Very soon the newly acquired rights and freedoms created favorable conditions for Islam's natural self-development, free philosophical and religious self-identification, and the propagation of religious ideas. The growing number of Muslim communities and mosques in the republic and across the former Soviet territory was more evidence of an Islamic renaissance. This was especially obvious in the south where the people are more religious than in the north because of the region's geopolitical location and ethnic composition.

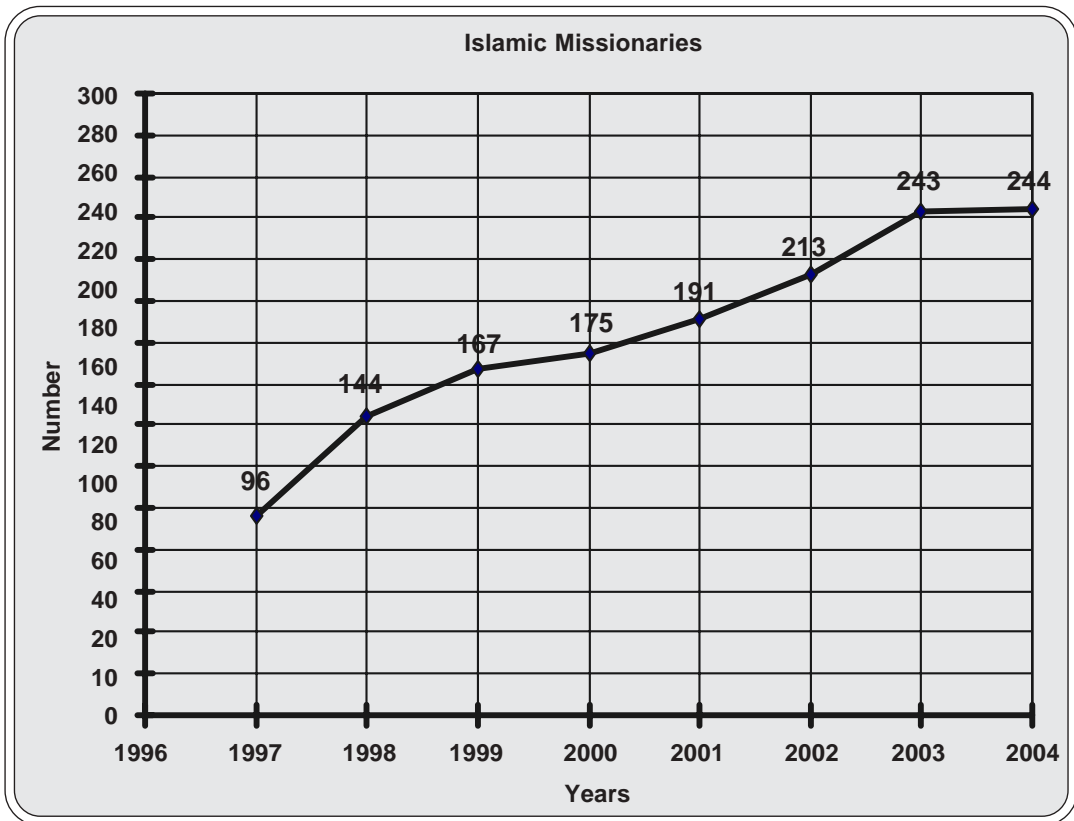
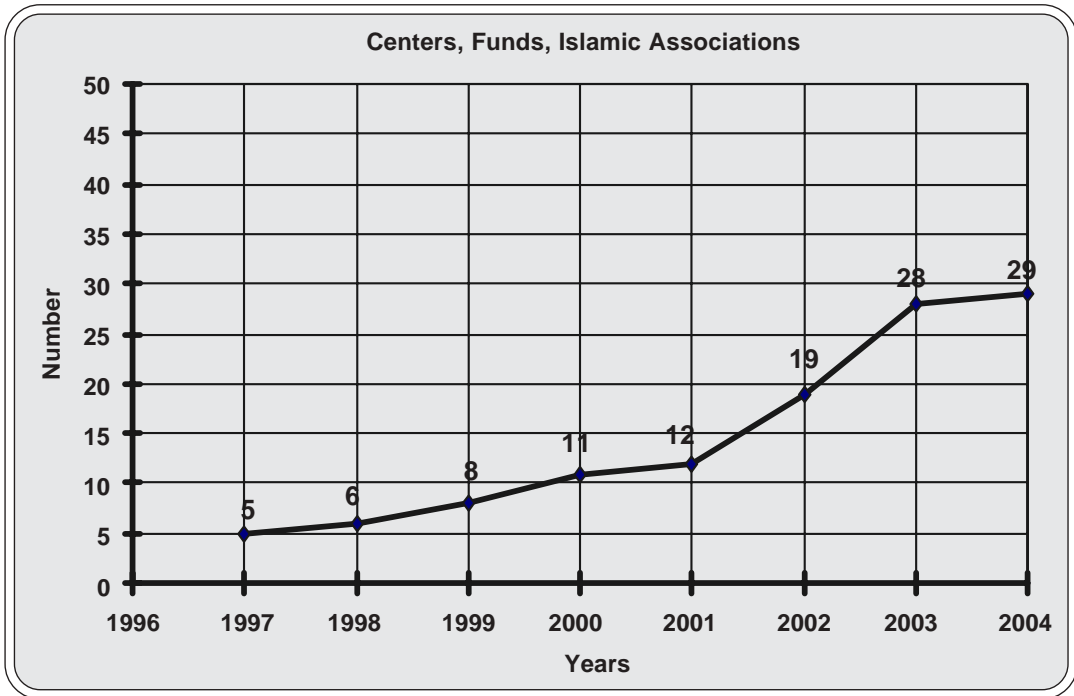
In the last 15 years, the number of mosques in Kyrgyzstan (the nearly 1,000 mosques that functioned unregistered under Soviet power included) increased several times. Most of them (545) are found in the Osh Region (before 1989 there were only 10 registered mosques that functioned between 1943 and 1947). There are 440 mosques in Jalal-Abad; 219 in the Batken; 161 in the Chu; 73 in the Talas; 56 in the Issyk Kul, and 52 in the Naryn regions. Many of them were built on donations from private persons, industrial enterprises and organizations, local religious leaders, foreign Islamic funds operating in the republic, and certain Islamic countries (Turkey and Pakistan). Last year the town of Karabalta received three mosques built on private donations from Saudi Arabia and the UAE; the Issyk Kul Region received about 40 such mosques.<sup>2</sup>

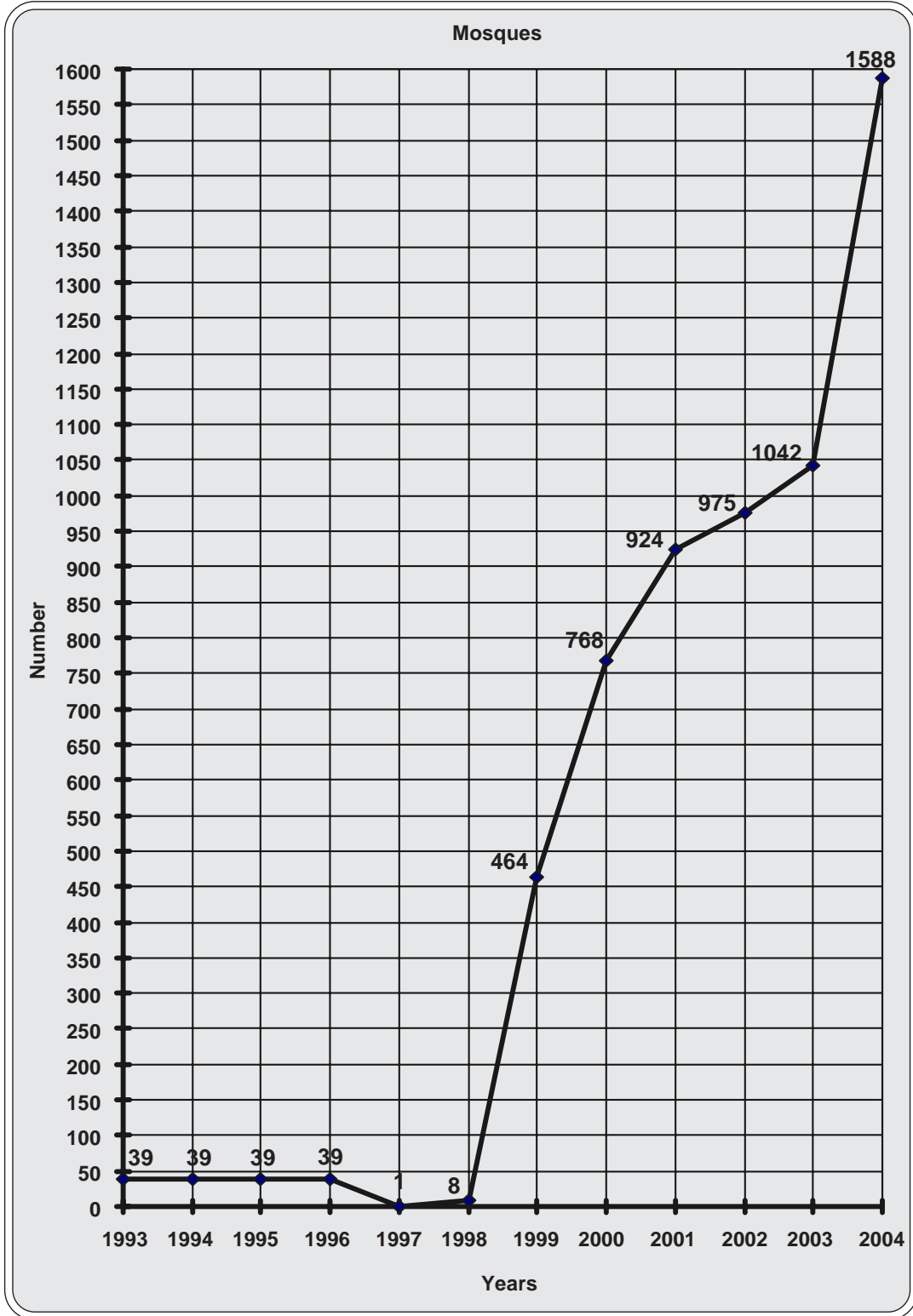
<sup>1</sup> Information dated to 15 April, 2004 was supplied by the Committee for Religious Affairs at the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic.

<sup>2</sup> See: G.A. Seytalieva, "Otdel'nye pokazateli rosta populiarnosti islama v Kyrgyzstane za 2002-2003 gg.," *Materialy mezhdunarodnoy nauchno-prakticheskoy konferentsii "Islam v istorii Kyrgyzskoy gosudarstvennosti"*, Bishkek, 2003, pp. 23-39.

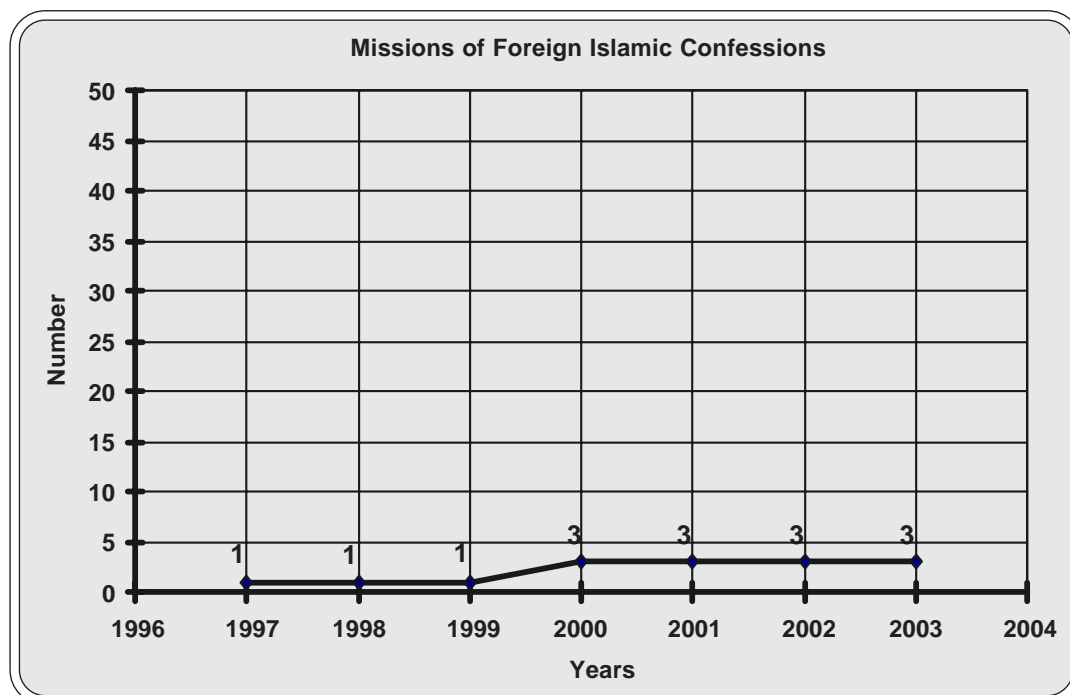
Dynamics of the Number of Islamic Religious Facilities  
in the Kyrgyz Republic between 1996 and 15 April, 2004  
(from the day of registration)











There is concern over the practice of direct monetary donations from abroad into the building and religious activities of mosques and Muslim communities: they make the clerics and the faithful dependent on foreign beneficiaries. In fact, this encourages propaganda of all sorts of religious ideas and madhabs previously absent in the republic. Today the Akromiylar, Wahhabis, and Islam Lashkarlari (the Warriors of Islam) are already operating in the republic. The Hizb ut-Tahrir party is even more visible than the others.<sup>3</sup>

The Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami Party (the Islamic Liberation Party) is a religious-political structure with its headquarters (amirat) either in Western Europe or in Palestine. Some of the amirats are found in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and other Arab countries, as well as in Turkey and several European states. Recently the party opened its amirats in Central Asian countries as well. The party was set up in 1952 in Jerusalem by the judge of a Shari'a court of appeal Taqiuddin an-Nabhani al-Falastini (1909-1979) out of members of the Palestine branch of al-Ihwan al-Muslimin (The Muslim Brotherhood), another fairly popular party. Hizb ut-Tahrir came to Kyrgyzstan in the early 1990s; by that time it had already left its mark in Uzbekistan (in the Tashkent, Namangan, Andijan, and Ferghana regions). Later it appeared in the Sogd Region of Tajikistan; by 1995 it betrayed its presence in the south of Kyrgyzstan. According to Sania Sagnaeva, political analyst of the International Crisis Group, Hizb ut-Tahrir came to Central Asia when the Soviet Union was still alive. She is convinced that the party was driven to Kyrgyzstan by President Karimov's cruel repressions—otherwise Kyrgyzstan would have remained ignorant of the party much longer.<sup>4</sup>

The larger part of the Uzbek members of Hizb ut-Tahrir had to emigrate under pressure of massive persecutions and numerous court proceedings against the party's leaders in Namangan, Fergha-

<sup>3</sup> See: "O religioznoy obstanovke v Kyrgyzskoy Respublike i zadachakh organov vlasti po formirovaniyu gosudarstvennoy politiki v religioznoy sfere," Resolutions of the KR Government of 10 August, 1995, No. 345; of 17 January, 1997, No. 20; of 19 February, 1998, No. 83; of 7 July, 1998, No. 442; of 28 February, 2000, No. 107; of 22 August, 2000, No. 510; of 5 April, 2001, No. 155.

<sup>4</sup> See: O.Sh. Mamaiusupov, K.S. Murzakhalilov, *Islam v Kyrgyzstane: tendentsii razvitiia*, Osh, 2004, p. 7.

na, Andijan, and Margelan. They crossed southern Kyrgyzstan to reach northern Afghanistan; many of them, however, preferred to remain in Kyrgyzstan with the families of their relatives in Osh and Jalal-Abad. Numerous leaflets criticizing the Karimov regime in Uzbek and Arabic that appeared in Kyrgyzstan in the early and middle 1990s confirmed the mainly Uzbek membership of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan. The newcomers, however, did not limit themselves to criticism: they tried to enlist locals, mainly of Uzbek origin, to create the first party cells in southern Kyrgyzstan.

As soon as the state recognized its new ideological opponent, it spared no efforts of the special services, the militia, the public prosecutor's offices, the clergy, and public movements to stem the process. It turned out that the ever-growing numbers of local Muslims were moving onto the party's side, the members of which were calling for bringing down the current constitutional system to set up a Caliphate in the Ferghana Valley. The state and its officials were rapidly losing their authority, especially in the Osh Region: they obviously lacked the perseverance required to stand opposed to the party's activities. It should be said that so far the state has not yet decided on its course of action: there is no agreement between it and the official clergy on how the new phenomenon called Hizb ut-Tahrir, a religious Sunni party, should be described. There are two opinions among the top state officials: it is either a religious party seeking a firmer foundation among the local Muslims, or (according to a much larger group) it is a party exploiting religion to pursue political aims. Each politician, theologian, and statesman describes the party according to their range of knowledge and interests. The clergy and the theologians are more worried than the laymen, probably because they are losing followers to Hizb ut-Tahrir.

Sania Sagnaeva of the ICG believes that Hizb ut-Tahrir protests against the state order: "They encroach on the prerogatives of power; they are afraid of neither courts of justice, nor the militia, nor public prosecutors. Many of them are unemployed and starving—they know nothing about state policies and state institutions." She says that the party members do not watch TV, listen to the radio, or read newspapers—all of this is too expensive for them. At all times the destitute turned to religion for consolation and assistance in removing the rulers.

The party members are prepared to work under all conditions, either in cities or the countryside, to achieve their aim—the Caliphate. According to Solijon Abdukarimov, one of the party members, they prefer to ignore all other religions and confessions: Islam as an ideology will be imposed on those far removed from Islam as a religion to make society completely Islamic. According to the party, "the world will embrace Islam through jihad while the unfaithful (the non-Muslims) who refuse to embrace Islam or to pay tax (jizyan) to demonstrate submission will be fought against." This is especially true of the Western "kiefirs" and those who are fighting the Muslims.

According to the National Security Service of Kyrgyzstan, Hizb ut-Tahrir is especially active in the republic's south with its predominantly Uzbek population: the Karasuui, Aravan, Uzgen, and Nookat districts of the Osh Region and the city of Osh, as well as in the Bazarkurgan and Suzak districts of the Jalal-Abad Region and the city of Jalal-Abad. It was there that the party members who fled Uzbekistan in the mid-1990s under pressure from the Karimov regime settled.

There is the opinion that the bulk of the banned party is made up of ethnic Uzbeks, yet neither the power-related structures, nor the human rights people, nor the public has more or less exact information: everything is based on surmises. According to the law-enforcement structures, there are about 4,000 party members bound by the Koranic oath operating in the republic's south. There is a large group of undecided who still remain outside the party. According to special servicemen, 94 to 96 percent of the party's membership is Uzbek probably because, on the whole, the Uzbeks are more religious than the Kyrgyz.<sup>5</sup>

Religiosity of the Uzbeks notwithstanding, many of them disagree with the official opinion about the party's ethnic composition. Abdumalik Sharipov, who heads the inter-national department of Justice, the Jalal-Abad human rights organization, wants to know why the special services became convinced that the party consisted of Uzbeks. Nobody knows, he argues, how this conviction was formed

<sup>5</sup> See: A.V. Sukhov, "Osobennosti partii 'Hizb ut-Tahrir' v Kyrgyzstane," *Res Publica*, 21 November, 2002.

in the first place: either because of the ethnic affiliation of those detained, or of those about whom the militia had information, or of those who were sentenced by the courts. The human rights activist says that many of the membership cases never reach the courts. At the same time, he agrees that Uzbeks outnumber all other nationalities in the party: the religious factor does affect the ethnoses' attitude to the party, which, we all know, plans to build a Caliphate in the Ferghana Valley. The Uzbeks' social status in Kyrgyzstan is also responsible for the predominantly Uzbek membership: the republic refuses to use the Uzbek youths' intellectual potential.

Rakhmatullo-hojja Kasymov, the kazi of the city of Osh, is convinced that the national composition of any locality affects the party's ethnic composition: the south is populated by Uzbeks, he argues, therefore the local cells are Uzbek-dominated; in the north (the Naryn and Chu regions), where Kyrgyz predominate, there are no Uzbeks in the local cells. The National Security Service agrees with this: the first cells appeared in Kyrgyz-populated areas (Shamaldysay and Tashkumyr of the Jalal-Abad Region) where enlistment has become active. According to the republic's media, there are party members in the Naryn and Chu regions.

Several children of top officials were also enlisted; today the party is seeking larger membership by recruiting the children of civil servants, members of the power-related structures, and businessmen in the hope of attracting more money and gaining patrons from among the decision-makers. The party is active among the power-related structures: the NSS reports that Hizb ut-Tahrir subjects heads of the local militia departments to moral and psychological pressure. Since the absolute majority of the law-enforcement officials (99.9 percent) are Muslims, the party is actively exploiting this fact in an effort to pull the militia to its side. Militiamen admit that it is not easy to oppose the pressure and religious arguments.

Uzbeks, a more religious ethnos than the Kyrgyz, were the first targets of religion-based enlistment efforts. It should be said, however, that the first party members in Kyrgyzstan were Uzbeks from Uzbekistan. For obvious linguistic reasons, they were working among the local Uzbeks. More than that: they argued that in Kyrgyzstan the Uzbeks, as an ethnic minority, had fewer rights and received much less attention from the state than the Kyrgyz. The local Uzbeks driven to the political and social margins eagerly accepted the arguments. In full conformity with its program slogan: "Those who can fight should fight—those who cannot should use their tongues and property," the party launched an extensive propaganda campaign through the imams of new (illegal in the first place) mosques. The party presents its ideas in periodicals acting through likeminded or bribed journalists and politicians who insist that in Kyrgyzstan Hizb ut-Tahrir should be legalized. The party activists are busy printing leaflets in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan in huge numbers and disseminating them in these republics.<sup>6</sup>

However, after a while the party leaders realized that the mono-ethnic composition was precarious. The special services were successful when it came to stemming money flows and closing down printing facilities. The state structures began taking party members to court, thus producing the first religious-political prisoners to be liberated. This could not be done without involving highly placed judges, public prosecutors, civil servants, and officers of the special services, in short, posts mostly filled by Kyrgyz. This suggested the obvious: people from state structures should be enlisted no matter how risky this might be. In the absence of money from abroad printing and dissemination of printed matter became even harder. It was necessary to find money inside the republic, where the Kyrgyz dominated in big business as well. The party moved in this direction: according to the power-related structures, several influential Kyrgyz businessmen have already fallen victim to persuasion and are funding the party without being its members. The situation is under control, and adequate measures will be taken when time comes.

For political considerations, the party needed Kyrgyz members together with influential bureaucrats and wealthy businessmen. With the predominantly Uzbek membership and the predominantly

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<sup>6</sup> See: A. Krylov, "Kyrgyzstan: islamskiy radikalizm ili traditsionnyi islam?" Moscow, 23 September, 2004, available at [<http://www.novopol.ru/article509.html>].

Kyrgyz state administration, the party found itself in a situation where the religious-political Uzbek party stood opposed to the secular state administered by Kyrgyz. The rank-and-file members interpreted this as persecution of the Uzbeks, while the Kyrgyz saw this as an effort by the Uzbeks to set up an Uzbek autonomy with subsequent separation from Kyrgyzstan and joining Uzbekistan.

There is no doubt that the party enjoyed and still enjoys favorable conditions for its activities, and this will probably continue. Today, the party is readjusting its theoretical propositions and is looking for new forms and methods of working in the local conditions. It is banned in all Central Asian countries, many of its members serve terms in prisons, but leaflets and other printed materials are still distributed. The state governed by one ethnic group will hardly change its attitude toward Hizb ut-Tahrir, therefore the party will remain illegal in Kyrgyzstan and in all countries where it has its amirats. The clandestine activities of the outlawed party and its political, religious, and social isolation from the local confessional (also Islamic) environment have made the party intolerant of the rest of the Muslim community, which is reciprocating in the same way. Intolerance of the political system and the confessional milieu is making the party even more radical.

I have already written that the new mosques built on foreign money and the emergence of a uniform religious sphere through education in the newly established religious schools are making Islam more radical and contributing to the party's activities. In turn, Hizb ut-Tahrir will long remain a factor of radicalization and politicization of Islam in Kyrgyzstan. The party might even go on to radicalize the means and methods of its propaganda and anti-state activities. This will trigger another split inside the party's amirats.

On the other hand, the Central Asian amirats will overcome their isolation within certain countries and will move toward closer cooperation among themselves. The most radical wing of Hizb ut-Tahrir might coordinate its actions, if not merge, with the militant opposition abroad—the Islamic Movement of Turkestan.

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## THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF UZBEKISTAN: DEVELOPMENT STAGES AND ITS PRESENT STATE

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**O**n 10 January, 2006, leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) Muhammad Tahir “Faruk” (alias Tahir Yoldosh) issued a video address to all Muslims of Central Asia. He spoke in the Uzbek. In August 2006, after the antiterrorist operation of the law-enforcement

bodies in Osh, in the south of Kyrgyzstan, in which Muhammadrafik Kamalov, imam of the Friday al-Sarahsi mosque in the town of Kara-Suu, was killed, some information agencies and Internet sites (Voice of America, BBC, and Feghana.ru, among others) received audio address by the same person. In September 2006, the same information agencies and sites were treated to another share of his addresses marking the

fifth anniversary of the tragic events of 9/11 in the U.S.

I used these addresses and the recent Central Asian developments to analyze the present state of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, its plans for the future, and its relationship with other religious extremist organizations, such as Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami, Akromiyya, and others.

## IMU Activities: Stage-by-Stage

Events and facts as well as numerous publications and commentaries serve as a starting point for identifying the stages of IMU development.

- *First Stage.* 1988: Radically-minded Muslims and religious leaders first made their presence obvious in Tashkent; it became clear that there was an Islamic opposition movement in Central Asia. At this stage, the theologians and religious leaders resolved to reform Islam united into a group; A. Mirzoev, imam of the Friday mosque in Andijan, was among its leaders; later his followers joined the IMU.
- *Second Stage.* 1990-1991: The first radical religious-political organizations appeared in the CIS (Uzbekistan being no exception). It was at this stage that individual cells appeared, their heads later becoming IMU leaders.
- *Third Stage.* 1992-1996: A united Islamic movement appeared together with structures, a leading group, local cells and branches scattered across Central Asia. It was at this stage that the leaders of Uzbekistan strengthened the state's law-enforcement bodies for the first time for the purpose of fighting the IMU.
- *Fourth Stage.* 1996-2000: The IMU crossed the borders of Uzbekistan to operate in foreign territories. This ended in the first armed clashes across the region (in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan among other places).
- *Fifth Stage.* 2001 until the present: The IMU split into several groups now scattered across the world (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey).

I cannot agree with Yoldosh when he says that the IMU dates back to the first years of Soviet power in Central Asia. At that time, the so-called Basmachi hoisted the banner of Islam to fight the Soviets. Yoldosh has pointed out that the IMU is an old structure and a descendant of "our ancestors." To prove this he describes the following stages:

- I. 1917-1980: Makhfi harakat, an underground movement when, to quote Yoldosh, "the Muslims were readying themselves to rebuff Soviet order."
- II. Late 1980s-early 1990s: Oshkor davat, an open call and open propaganda; the period when Islam was revived across the post-Soviet expanse, including Uzbekistan.

- III. Middle and end of the 1990s. Hijrah harakat—emigration. The IDU first appeared in Tajikistan and then became active in Chechnia and Afghanistan. It was at this stage that it developed into a political movement.
- IV. 1999: The blasts in Tashkent caused a wave of arrests in Uzbekistan; the IMU launched its military offensive in Batken (Kyrgyzstan) and Tashkent.
- V. 2001: The American events of 9/11 ushered in a new stage in IMU activities. It allied with other organizations and movements that stood opposed to the antiterrorist coalition, and fought in Northern Afghanistan. It was at this stage, obviously, that the Islamic Movement of Turkistan took shape.

According to Yoldosh, the IMU “is moving outside the framework of a regional organization.” It has changed its political vector and developed from a regional organization into a structure engaged, together with al-Qa‘eda and the Taliban, in the struggle against “all enemies of Islam” (the U.S., Israel, and Western Europe).

## How the IMU Treats Other Extremist Religious Organizations

The video address mentioned above failed to reach the region’s broad peaceful masses for a very simple reason: as IMU Amir (head) Tahir Yoldosh subjected Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) and other religious organizations operating in the region to scything criticism. After receiving the text, the HT activists were obviously reluctant to expose their shortcomings and failures to the broad masses.

Tahir Yoldosh relies on information obtained from the most authoritative ulema of the Muslim world to go into details about HT’s ideology and criticize it.

Says he: “Our respected Muslims have not yet learned what HT is. What is it indeed? This happened because HT has yet failed to show its true face to the Muslim public of Central Asia.” While in emigration in Afghanistan, Yoldosh talked to many of the most respected ulema of the Ahli Sunna val Jamoa about what HT was doing in Central Asia. He offered his own opinion about the organization.

—HT strikes root where there are no knowledgeable ulema and where Islamic education (davat) has no stronghold. In 1995, when the highly respected imam of the Friday mosque of Andijan Abduvali Mirzoev “disappeared,” the HT activists organized a huge festival to celebrate the removal of their main opponent, one of the main supporters of Ahli Sunna val Jamoa in Central Asia. The IMU Amir is convinced that HT owes its popularity to the absence of respected and competent Muslim theologians and ulema. It should be said in all justice that back in 2004 one of the most respected ulema of Tajikistan, Hoji Aqbar Turajonzodah, warned his compatriots about the harmful nature of HT’s ideology.<sup>1</sup> Mufti of Kyrgyzstan Murataly azhy Zhumanov has written a book about HT in the Kyrgyz language.<sup>2</sup> What is more, Tablighi Jamaat, an organization that has posed itself the aim of providing Islamic education, has become widely popular in Central Asia.

<sup>1</sup> See: H.A. Turajonzodah, “Islam, protivorechashchiy Koranu. Za chto boretsia ‘Hisb ut-Tahrir?’” *NG-religii*, 4 August, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> See: M. Zhumanov, *Hizb ut-Tahrir degen kim?* Bishkek, 2004.



- There are fundamental differences between the aqiyda of HT and the aqiyda of Ahli Sunna val Jamoa with respect to the Islamic canons. As distinct from the latter, the former does not recognize dadzhol (anti-Christ), while the latter insists that there are qabr azoby (eternal tortures in the afterlife for the sins committed on earth), whereas HT rejects this completely, says Yoldosh. “There is another reason why the HT is active in the region: it simplifies the religious canons to adjust them to the unenlightened minds, thus pushing the canons away from Islam,” says Yoldosh and adds: “HT tries to penetrate people’s minds with its own version of Islam.” Turajonzodah, in turn, said that HT’s interpretation was far removed from the genuine Islamic sources, the Koran and the hadith of the Prophet, as well as the best-known commentaries to the Koran.
- There is any number of publications in the Islamic world authored by prominent Muslim scholars completely refuting HT’s ideology. They have not yet reached the ordinary Muslims of Central Asia. Recently a book appeared in Arabic written by Dr. Maani ibn Maadil Juhani that provides a detailed response to HT’s ideology. It analyzed nearly all of HT’s publications and identified the worst, from the point of view of Islam, errors and blunders. I have already written that similar books appeared in the local Central Asian languages as well.
- HT supplies simplified answers of its own to the most burning issues. “HT publishes its own fatwahs, which contradict true Islam. It says that non-Muslims and women can be accepted as members of the Shura (the Islamic parliament). It permits erotic scenes, films, and photos; it also permits kissing women and talking to them. HT went even further: it admits that a non-Muslim can head a Muslim state. Here is the most interesting point: HT rejects jihad as a war against the infidels (kafir), yet accepts involvement in armed struggle on the side of non-Muslims fighting other non-Muslims (qufr against qufr). HT rejects namaz on board a plane. The Koran bans marriages between close relatives while HT permits them. Those who violate the ban run the risk of arrest and ten years in prison,” writes Yoldosh. On the strength of the above, he concludes that HT was instituted to split the Muslims. I would like to compare Yoldosh’s opinion about “the consultative structures of HT’s ideology” with what Turajonzodah wrote: “According to the HT ideologists, Islam does not recognize consultative procedures in social-political order. For example, in his book *Democracy is a Godless System*, the party’s chief ideologist Taqiuddin an-Nabhani describes all consultative structures (the parliament among them) and universal voting as alien to Islamic society.”<sup>3</sup> To my mind, the HT ideologists have become lost in the woods of their statements: some of them reject the parliament as a branch of power, while others permit women and non-Muslims to be elected to it. In Kyrgyzstan, HT even took part in the election process by lobbying its own presidential candidates.

Yoldosh has concluded that HT is a mutant of sorts that relies on Islam and politics to secure its own purely utopian aims. He is convinced that by doing this the party betrays Islam and all organizations that are following the road of true Islam. As if to confirm this, Turajonzodah wrote: “A more profound study of HT’s program and ideological attitudes and its practical activities suggests that it was set up by anti-Islamic circles. Its affluence in some of the Western countries, in which it runs large centers and offices working on a conception of ‘worldwide Islamic Caliphate,’ is proof of this. It has no popular support in the Arab world, especially in the Gulf countries, and has no stand among the Islamic clerics and ordinary Muslims.”<sup>4</sup>

It seems that the IMU leader is criticizing HT from a different viewpoint. HT has developed into the most influential political tool in Central Asia, while the IMU enjoys no respect among the local Muslims. HT’s supporters condemned the 9/11 events in the United States, while the IMU rejoiced over them.

<sup>3</sup> H.A. Turajonzodah, op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem.

HT has stepped up its activities across the post-Soviet expanse; today it runs large analytical, propaganda, and publishing centers in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Russia, and China. It enlists members from among all ethnic groups.<sup>5</sup> Today, “HT’s peaceful methods” of influencing the minds of the common people look much more attractive to the youth than the much harsher radical methods of the IMU. The two organizations will obviously go on competing for the minds of the local people.

The IMU and its Amir do not limit themselves to criticizing HT. In his address, Yoldosh regrets that the Andijan events of 2005 claimed numerous innocent lives. Tashkent and Moscow shifted the blame for these events onto the IMU. In actual fact, says Yoldosh, “IMU had nothing to do with this bloodshed. It sticks to the tactics of jihad as described by the Koran and the Sunnah.” He pointed out: “For this reason we cannot use women, old people, and children as a live shield in our struggle as the activists of the Akromiyya movement did. I would like to say that the IMU had no part to play in the terrorist acts of 2004 in Tashkent and Bukhara. It should seek revenge for those who perished in these bloody events. This is our duty.” He goes on to say: “Those who led peaceful people to the rally and then abandoned them to their fate and those who fired at these people will have to account for this before the nation and Allah.” “We cannot justify those who sought refuge in the West after the bloodshed. They will not be treated as Muslims there; the United States will try to use them for its own purposes.” He also said in his address: “I want to use this opportunity to invite them to join the true Islamic fighters” (i.e. him).

In August 2005, dozens of Muslims rallied together at the Dutch embassy in Tehran mainly to demand a refugee status. All of them insisted that they were “former IMU members.”<sup>6</sup> Yoldosh regretted the action of his former followers and said: “Right after the antiterrorist forces headed by the United States began their combat action in Afghanistan, these people betrayed us (him and his organization.—*I.M.*) by choosing the ‘qufir’ and a conspiracy with the IMU opponents.”

It has become clear that the movement’s original idea in 1999-2000 of fighting the official Tashkent to “set up an Islamic state” ultimately failed. No wonder many of the IMU members gathered up their families and moved away from the IMU camps in Afghanistan using the coalition’s bombs as a plausible pretext.

It looks as if those who supported the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) have opted for the same thing to give Tahir Yoldosh the chance to accuse them of betraying their common interests. The civil war in Tajikistan cost the country thousands of lives; it was for this reason that the IRPT deemed it wise to cast aside the IMU principles and seek an agreement with the authorities. The dialog and the 1997 armistice forced the IMU to move to Afghanistan.

The Andijan tragedy of 13 May, 2005, the events of the spring and fall of 2006 in Kyrgyzstan, as well as clashes between the Taliban and the antiterrorist forces in Afghanistan allowed Yoldosh to stir up another propaganda campaign among the Central Asian Muslims.

Today the IMU is mostly a virtual structure doing its best to lure the Muslims onto its side. Together with the Taliban and al-Qa’eda, it hopes to resume conscription of those willing to fight.

Its efforts to criticize HT and other extremist organizations of the region are nothing but a smoke-screen designed to cover up the IMU restored activities in Central Asia and an effort to patch up the damage inflicted by its crimes.

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<sup>5</sup> See: I. Mirsayitov, “Aktivnosti Hizb ut-Tahrir neobkhodimo protivodeystvovat’ ideologicheskii,” available at [www.ferghana.ru].

<sup>6</sup> I. Mirsayitov, A. Saipov, “Byvshie soratniki Takhira Iuldasheva rasskazyvaiut o tom, cho takoe ‘Islamskoe dvizhenie Uzbekistana’ segodnia,” available at [www.ferghana.ru].

**REGIONAL POLITICS****INTEGRATION PROSPECTS  
IN CENTRAL ASIA****Serik PRIMBETOV**

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**F**or many centuries, the Central Asian region was a connecting link between the East and the West. But in the 15th century, with the advance of water transport, the overland Great Silk Road from Europe to Asia lost its initial significance: the development of shipping put Central Asia (CA) in a difficult position. Its peoples had no outlet to the sea and were obliged to develop on their own.

Today Central Asia has regained its importance and is not only an East-West corridor, but also a promising developing partner for many countries of the world. This is borne out, among

other things, by the active policy of CA states oriented toward close regional cooperation and multilateral international relations. All of this promotes socioeconomic and political development and helps to raise living standards in the countries of the region.

Why have the Central Asian countries chosen integration as a top priority of their development? What has influenced their choice and what kind of results are they reaping today along this road? Many analysts, politicians and economists are currently concerned with these questions, and this article is an attempt to provide some of the answers.

**Integration as a Political Choice**

In most sources, the year 1991 is defined as a turning-point for Central Asia, because that was when its development for the first time passed into the hands of national (instead of Soviet) regional

leaders. However, this did not make things easier for the CA countries, but only added new problems to those inherited from the Soviet past.

After the breakup of the U.S.S.R., the newly independent CA states were faced with even greater difficulties compared to their political and economic dependence on the Soviet Center in Moscow, from which, as it seemed to them at the time, they had to “distance” themselves as soon as possible so as to gain economic independence and political sovereignty. The highly integrated structure of the U.S.S.R. was to some extent useful to the CA republics in economic, social and political terms, although in Soviet times they were not independent because the whole system was oriented toward the Center (Moscow). The development and distribution of the productive forces, the structure of industry, social policy, the production infrastructure and regional development were geared, in the first place, to meet all-Union demands and only then to meet the interests of the Central Asian republics.

The common political and economic space of the disintegrated Soviet Union could not be destroyed right away: this was fraught with disastrous consequences for the newly independent states. Linked together by economic relations, infrastructure communications, social policy and political goals, the CA republics gaining independence were badly in need of a resumption of former relations, because otherwise no sector of their economy could function properly. The new sovereign countries found themselves in a state of total socioeconomic decline. They turned out to be unprepared to pursue their own sovereign policy or to engage in economic relations.

The post-Soviet socioeconomic crisis was not the only problem facing the newly independent CA states: globalization was yet another and no less important factor. With its advance in the second half of the 20th century, one of the main tasks of countries swept by the “tide of decolonization” was, among other things, to devise a correct economic policy ensuring the necessary proportion of openness to the world economy and protectionism. Faced with a similar problem, the CA states were no exception in this process of restructuring their own economy in order to reduce the negative effects of globalization.

Having gained long-awaited political independence, the new sovereign states fell into even more serious economic dependence on post-Soviet regional problems and globalization processes.

As we know, the second half of the 20th century brought the development of regional and other integration groupings such as the European Common Market, ASEAN, and others. Many states created economic unions with due regard for regional economic needs. This trend was only natural, because after World War II many countries and regions of the world had to restore their economy and sociopolitical situation. Thus, the Marshall Plan had a role to play in Europe’s socioeconomic recovery after 1945, and the United Nations got down to political and economic rehabilitation on a global scale.

Nevertheless, at that time (as probably today) the United Nations could not resolve the entire range of problems, especially those affecting certain regions, but was mostly concerned with global issues. That was when the states, given the need to address the “individual” problems of the regions, began to set up regional integration groupings. These groupings became quite popular, because they alone could help new countries entering the world arena to arrange economic cooperation and ensure growth while protecting them from the negative effects of globalization.

In the post-Soviet space, the first organization of this kind was the CIS, which initiated integration processes in Central Asia. But before going over to this association, let us consider the regional problems of Central Asia after the breakup of the U.S.S.R.

## Regional Problems

One of the most pressing problems of post-Soviet Central Asia is that of rational use of water resources. With the collapse of the U.S.S.R., the structure of mutual cooperation between the coun-

tries of the region, formerly regulated by Moscow, ceased to exist; the CA states began to pursue their own policy in every area, including water distribution. Thus, Kyrgyzstan, which used to supply water to most republics of the region, has now considerably reduced its water supplies in Central Asia, and in some cases has fully cut off such supplies (as in the case of Uzbekistan due to lack of coordination between the activities of the two states in controlling reservoirs and regulating storage levels, and also lack of control over water levels in the Syr Darya and Amu Darya rivers and, consequently, in the Aral Sea).

Differences between state and regional authorities over the problems of the Ferghana Valley, which includes part of the territory, population and borders of three CA countries (Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan), are often the cause of ethnic conflicts and failed attempts at joint use of regional water resources.

The Aral Sea also creates many difficulties for Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. The environmental situation here is critical and poses a problem of more than regional proportions. The salt that forms along the dry shores of the Aral Sea rises into the air and settles on agricultural lands in the two countries, worsening the quality of fruits and vegetables and putting at risk the main sector of the CA economy. Moreover, it is carried long distances to other countries.

Add to this the rapid melting of glaciers in the region as a result of global warming and pollution of their surface, a process which in the near future could lead to a shortage of fresh water. Most of Central Asia's freshwater resources are concentrated in its fairly numerous mountain rivers. The rapid melting of glaciers in the CA mountains is not only fraught with disaster for the region, but could also upset the water balance on a global scale. Some CA countries already experience a shortage of fresh water. In its efforts to cope with the consequences of the 1992-1997 civil war, Tajikistan, for example, has put fresh water high on the list of key problems in the context of national rehabilitation.

The second set of regional problems derives, in the main, from the social situation in the CA countries. Poverty is one of the main obstacles to their development. The income of most people living in Central Asia is under two dollars per day. Such a state of affairs provides the setting for the emergence of a whole range of problems, including the spread of religious extremism and terrorism. The situation in which the CA countries found themselves after the breakup of the U.S.S.R. (socio-economic crises and, most important of all, a kind of ideological vacuum) triggered the spread of extremist religious doctrines under the guise of Islam. Today many terrorist and extremist organizations operating in the region recruit young people for terrorist operations in all CA states: from Afghanistan to the borders of Russia and Kazakhstan.

In addition, links between terrorist groups in the region are maintained through the Ferghana Valley, because it is the "hottest spot" in Central Asia, the main source of terrorism and religious extremism, and also the only place where it is possible to cross the borders of three CA states at once. During the breakup of the U.S.S.R. and the formation of new independent states, Central Asia had to lay the basis for the construction of these states. In each process of this kind, it is first of all necessary to "stake out" the territory of the given country, upon whose "endorsement" this country will officially acquire sovereignty. But in the case of the Central Asian states this process turned out to be quite complicated. Since the peoples of the region lived in the single territory of the former Soviet Union (in fact, in a single country), they were so "intermingled" that the process of full ethnic, political and geographical separation became practically impossible. The main area of ethnic strife associated with the demarcation of the borders of the new states was the Ferghana Valley, whose territory became the main conflict zone in the region, both ethnically and politically. In this situation, economic relations between the three new countries whose borders intersect in the Ferghana Valley ran into difficulties as well.

Apart from its convenient geography (short distances between the borders), this area has a mountainous terrain, where militants can hide from the authorities. For example, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) liaises with Tajik militants precisely in this region of Central Asia (during the civil war in Tajikistan, this area was also used by militants).

Because of such ties between terrorists, the Uzbek authorities have now closed the border with Tajikistan; moreover, the Uzbek side controls this stretch of border by laying mines. Mines laid along the Uzbek border result in dozens of casualties every year, and not only among militants, but also among people trying to visit their relatives on the other side of the border. In view of the ethnic mix in the Ferghana Valley, closely located borders, irrational division of territories (during the disintegration of the U.S.S.R., the emergence of Central Asian states and today) and strict border controls, this problem—known as the “exclave problem”—has become a separate area in the work of regional governments.

The Ferghana Valley also serves as the main “base” for drug trafficking. As a result of low living standards and socioeconomic development levels in most CA countries, drug dealing and transit have become one of the most widespread income sources for farmers in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

The only highway built in Soviet times in Tajikistan runs across Uzbek territory, being Tajikistan’s only outlet to foreign markets.

Another socioeconomic problem facing the region is that of migration. Due to lack of prospects for a normal life, CA peoples are obliged to migrate to neighboring states, and this creates numerous social problems for countries hosting illegal immigrants. What makes the situation worse is improper performance of their duties by customs and border officials, who often act illegally, helping migrants to cross the borders of CA states for a fee.

Security problems in Central Asia are not confined to ineffective control over migration and the activities of terrorist groupings. Given that the Caspian countries have not yet resolved the issue of the legal status of the Caspian Sea, the Caspian region remains an unstable zone of Central Asia as well, because it is not only the Caspian states that lay claim to a share of this region’s fuel resources, but also other, world powers that are consumers of these resources. Let us recall that the U.S. has officially declared the Caspian region a zone of its “vital” interests.

The difficulty of resolving all these sets of regional problems lies, among other things, in the absence of sufficiently developed legal frameworks in the CA countries in consequence of the collapse of the integrated Soviet system.

To sum up this review of the problems facing the newly independent Central Asian states, let us emphasize the interrelated format of these difficulties: none of the regional problems of the post-Soviet period can be resolved unilaterally or even bilaterally, through the policies and efforts of one or two countries. The whole range of problems calls for a broader regional approach.

## The Need for Regional Cooperation

A survey of the situation in Central Asia after the breakup of the U.S.S.R. shows that a solution of regional problems and restoration of the socioeconomic basis in each of its individual countries would be a complicated task for any future integration grouping.

Turning back to the CIS (the first attempt at post-Soviet integration), let us examine its specific features and take a look at some of the factors that influenced the development of this grouping.



The new states were clearly reluctant to give up any part, however small, of their newly acquired sovereignty. The countries of the former U.S.S.R., which had long sought political independence, were not prepared to start working together as soon as they gained such independence but were concerned with their own wellbeing, although all of them were aware of the complexities of the new socio-economic situation.

Against the background of distrust for Russia (many believed that it had compelled these states to keep together and to serve, in the first place, the interests of the U.S.S.R.), the problem of possible integration appeared to be even more complicated. Russia, for its part, was not very keen right after the breakup of the U.S.S.R. to engage in close cooperation either, because it could not cope with its own severe economic crisis (just as all the newly independent countries of the region), while some politicians continued to think for a long time that most former Soviet republics had lived at the expense of Russia.

On the whole, economic conditions and political circumstances after the breakup of the U.S.S.R. did not meet the minimally necessary criteria for integration cooperation. Hence the low effectiveness of the CIS. This organization, set up on the eve of major political changes in the region, did not become a strong grouping or provide a basis for full-scale allround cooperation. Nevertheless, it should be noted that integration initiatives first appeared within the framework of this community, making progress with the development of bilateral cooperation between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Using their opportunities, scant as they were at the time, the CA states gradually prepared their governments for possible bilateral and subsequently more extensive contacts with their regional neighbors. With the proliferation of problems which the newly independent states could not resolve on their own for lack of time and economic opportunity, there were new outbursts of political activity aimed at developing integration.

In 1993, one of the first of these initiatives was the Agreement between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan on Deepening Economic Integration for 1994-2000. But the 1994 Treaty on a Common Economic Space (CES) between these two countries was more wide-ranging (in the long term); shortly afterwards it was joined by Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Consequently, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were the founders of Central Asian integration, subsequently continued within the framework of CAEC and CACO, and later within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC).

## **EurAsEC: Results and Prospects of Central Asian Cooperation**

### **Integration Initiatives**

Today the EurAsEC is the main focus of the CA countries' work in the spheres of regional integration and socioeconomic development. But before acquiring its high status this organization embodied the goals, purposes and achievements of three main integration groupings that were its predecessors: *CAEC* (Central Asian Economic Cooperation), formed in 1998 and reorganized into *CACO* (Central Asian Cooperation Organization) on 28 February, 2002, and also the *Customs Union* which was set up in 1995 by Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus and which transferred its powers, successes and problems to the EurAsEC on 10 October, 2000.

CAEC, for its part, was the successor of the Treaty on a Common Economic Space and got its name on 17 July, 1998, by decision of the CES Interstate Council, established in 1994 as the principal body of the CES.

The main result of CAEC's work during the gradual recovery of regional economies was the 1999 Agreement on the Parallel Operation of the Energy Systems of the CA Countries. This agreement was a breakthrough in the development of the integration grouping's energy sphere, because proper energy supply and regulation had ceased with the collapse of the U.S.S.R.

In 2000, the CAEC states formulated and adopted an Integration Development Strategy for the Period Until 2005 and a Program of Priority Actions to Create a Common Economic Space for the Period Until 2002.

However, Central Asian cooperation was not confined to the economic field. By the time of CAEC's reorganization into CACO, its member states had adopted a number of agreements on security policy, the fight against the threat of terrorism and religious extremism, and against drug trafficking in the region. Later on, within the framework of CACO, steps were taken to restore the economy and the social sphere in Afghanistan, and this, for its part, was a crucial factor in ensuring CA security, without which effective economic relations between CA countries are virtually impossible. In this way, an economically oriented organization evolved into a multilateral integration grouping which addressed not only economic problems, but also matters of security, social development and regional policy.

At a meeting of CACO member states in Dushanbe (2002), during which its participants took a decision to restore the Afghan economy, they also discussed matters of rational use of water and energy resources and transport communications. In 2003-2004, CACO activities were increasingly aimed to create a water-and-energy and a transport consortium in order to address the most urgent problems facing the CA countries on the way to further economic integration.

Matters of security and the fight against terrorism were on the daily agenda of CACO staff. At a regular meeting of CACO member states in Dushanbe in 2004, the Central Asian Cooperation Organization was joined by Russia, which was a significant event in CACO's life, because Russia could make the largest contribution to security policy in the Central Asian region. At the same meeting, Afghanistan joined CACO as an observer.

### ***Russia: A Good Partner for the Central Asian States***

The Russian Federation is the most real and profitable partner of the CA states, because, first, the *solution of socioeconomic problems* with Russian involvement in regional integration is considerably facilitated in view of the common social heritage and the interrelated production infrastructure and economic systems of the Russian Federation and the CA countries.

Second, for the same reason of their common Soviet heritage, Russia and the CA states constitute an "*easily integrated*" bloc, seen by many politicians and analysts as a promising approach to regional integration.

Third, *from the standpoint of foreign policy*, relations between Russia and the Central Asian countries are less "mutually repulsive" than those with some other powers of the region, such as China or Turkey. Thus, in their relations with China the CA states should pursue a cautious economic policy, since Beijing could (in case of inadequate restrictions on the part of the Central Asian states) gain full control of their market, something Russia will never do if only because of diplomatic relations and further economic benefits. As regards Turkey, this state like no other has time and again expressed its desire to dominate in the region. A case in point is Turkey's attempt to "reign supreme" in Central Asia based on the idea of the common cultural values of the CA and Turkish peoples, presented as the basis for close relations between Turkey and the CA countries at the time of the political

vacuum created in the region after the breakup of the U.S.S.R. This ideology was rejected by the leaders of the newly independent states, because none of these states was prepared to give up its sovereignty right after its acquisition.

So, Russia—as a strategic partner—is the most promising reference point in the policy of the Central Asian states.

Given this foreign policy situation, integration initiatives of a Eurasian nature were not confined to partnership within CACO (despite distrust of Russia after the breakup of the U.S.S.R.). Parallel to the development of the Central Asian vector of integration and Russia's accession to it, other integration initiatives were launched along Eurasian lines. In 1995, they led to the establishment of a Customs Union (CU), based on the initiative to create a Eurasian Union advanced by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbaev in 1994. As he saw it, such an association could include all the CIS states, but at that time, in 1994, this conception did not meet with support among the other regional leaders, and the Eurasian ideology (as it came to be known later) remained no more than an idea. However, only a year later the situation changed: Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus set up a Customs Union, subsequently joined by Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. In 2000, the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) became the successor of that organization.

In contrast to other regional groupings, the EurAsEC, which acquired international status and became an equal participant in international economic relations and a subject of international law, is an upgraded organization, combining all previous integration efforts toward economic, political and social cooperation.

### ***Eurasian Economic Community***

When the Customs Union was reorganized into the EurAsEC, all agreements signed and ratified earlier within the CU framework passed to the successor organization. Some of them deserve special mention. In particular, great progress was achieved in the social and humanitarian sphere with the adoption and implementation of a program called “Ten Steps to Meet the Needs of Ordinary People.” Today, nationals of the EurAsEC member states do not require visas to move within the Community and are entitled to acquire citizenship in Community states under a simplified procedure. Certificates, academic degrees and various documents on education issued in any Community country are recognized in the territory of all EurAsEC states.

In the Customs Union, the creation of a common customs area is now at the first stage: with the introduction of a free trade regime, the EurAsEC states enjoy significant advantages in trade relations with each other. Internal tariffs for Community goods enable national goods in the EurAsEC to compete with imports.

In the long term, the Community states are planning to create a full-scale Customs Union, a common energy market, and a common economic and customs area, but much remains to be done to achieve these goals. As the EurAsEC Secretary General, Grigory Rapota, said at an informal summit of member states in Sochi on 15-17 August, 2006, a Customs Union can only be created by 2008 because of inadequate political will and an incomplete legal framework. At present, only three countries—Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan—are legally and economically prepared for the establishment of a Customs Union. Although Tajikistan has performed all its legal obligations, it remains outside the framework of possible cooperation because it has no geographical borders with Russia or Belarus, and also because Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have not completed their legal preparations for joining the future Customs Union. In this context, President Emomali Rakhmonov of Tajikistan urged the Kyrgyz and Uzbek sides at the Sochi Summit to complete work on the project as soon as possible. It

should be borne in mind that in view of Uzbekistan’s recent entry into the EurAsEC many of its documents are still at the preparatory stage.

As regards energy cooperation between the EurAsEC countries, G. Rapota noted that the concept of a common energy market was still not ready. Nevertheless, active work is underway to establish a water and energy consortium, which is to be accomplished with the help of the Eurasian Development Bank set up in 2006 by Russia and Kazakhstan. According to G. Rapota, EurAsEC energy projects are to be financed primarily through this new bank. In addition, Uzbekistan’s accession to the Community should be very helpful in resolving the most urgent regional problem: rational distribution and use of water and energy resources.

The EurAsEC Secretary General also mentioned the Community’s achievements in the area of migration policy. He spoke of the work being done to regulate migration processes, protect migrants from arbitrary action by the authorities in the Community countries and, at the same time, to protect the host countries themselves.

G. Rapota noted the high degree of coherence between the EurAsEC countries in matters of accession to the WTO, which is an important factor of further economic integration and development of the Community states.

To summarize the results of the Community’s activity as an integration grouping seeking to promote the socioeconomic development of the Central Asian countries, a conclusion can be drawn on its importance in the post-Soviet space in matters of raising living standards in these countries. On average, ever since CAEC and from 2000 onward the EurAsEC started their intensive activities in the region, the main economic indicators of their member states have registered stable growth (see Figs. 1, 2 and 3).

Figure 1

Gross Domestic Product  
in the EurAsEC Countries  
(% of 1991)

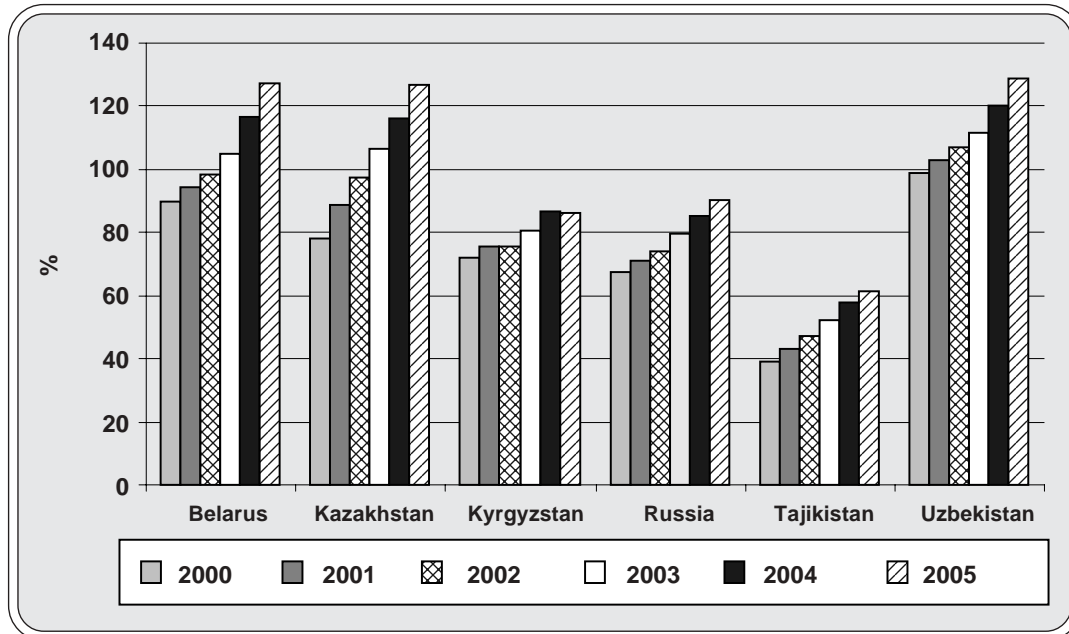


Figure 2

Industrial Production in the EurAsEC Countries (% of 1991)

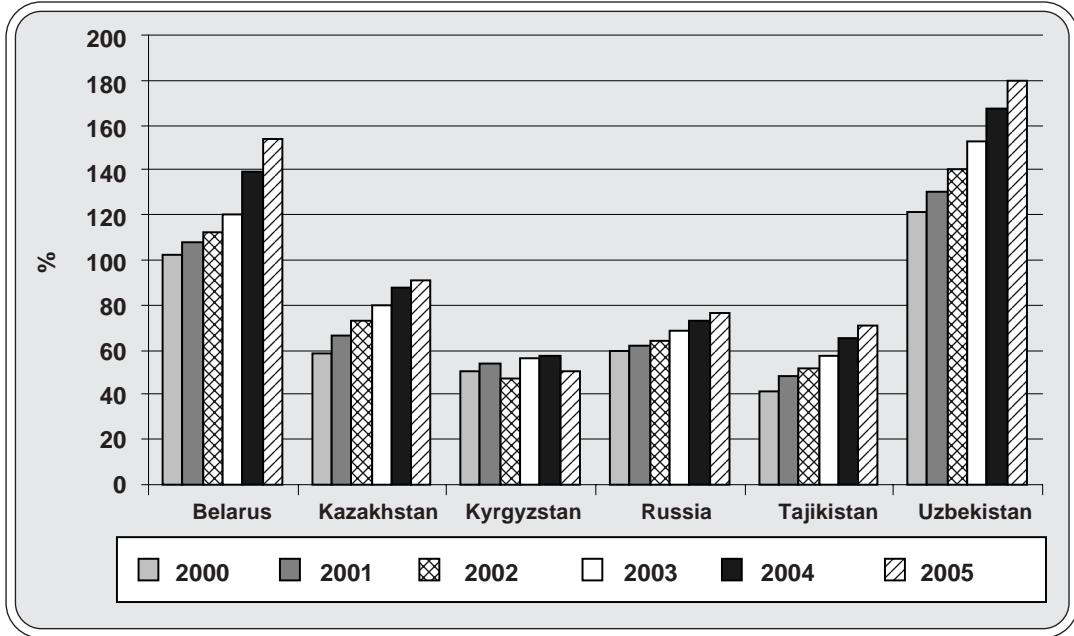
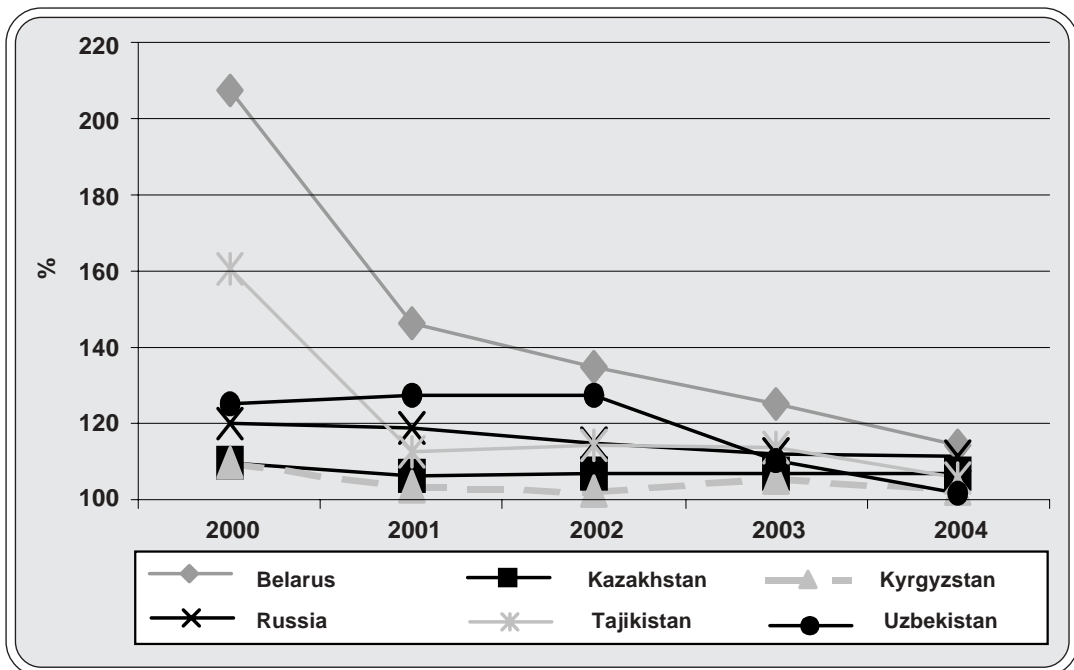


Figure 3

Consumer Price Indexes in the EurAsEC Countries (% of previous year)



## Trends Toward Integration

Needless to say, there are problems of a *general nature* which slow down the development of regional integration. For example, the CA states still have no clear-cut coordinated action plan aimed at developing integration. This problem includes such component factors as significant differences in economic indicators between the CA countries and different economic reference points (different vectors of economic policy). In these circumstances, the Central Asian economies naturally find it difficult to “change tack” and move away from their one-sided (mostly natural resource) orientation.

On the other hand, the political, economic and social influence of international organizations—such as the United Nations, UNDP, OSCE and other world donors of the developing countries—does not always have a positive effect on the implementation of integration initiatives in Central Asia, because the excessive politicization of issues connected with the development of the region’s socioeconomic basis and other related factors “diverts” the actual solution of these problems toward discussion instead of practice.

But the main obstacle to full-scale integration in Central Asia is, of course, the CA states’ unpreparedness (political and legal) to delegate the necessary part of their authority to supranational bodies. This is the main reason why regional integration groupings have been reorganized into more compact organizations compared to the CIS, such as CAEC and the EurAsEC. Another component of this problem is the limited capacity for implementing regional projects due to inadequate harmonization and unification of the CA countries’ legal frameworks.

### ***EurAsEC Peculiarities and the Future of the Central Asian States***

Despite the minuses of the Central Asian countries (political unpreparedness and lack of legal coordination), one should not forget about the progress made in these and other areas owing to the EurAsEC and other regional integration groupings, and also owing to the fairly high effectiveness of the Community’s integration bodies in organizing work and implementing decisions. Experts note the weightiness of the EurAsEC in setting clear-cut goals and tasks, which is due to the adoption of its Priority Areas for 2003-2006 and Subsequent Years, establishment of the institution of observers (Ukraine, Moldova and Armenia), acquisition of international personality under the provisions of the U.N. Charter, improvement of the structure of governing bodies, and upgraded follow-up on decisions taken within the framework of this organization. In the groupings that preceded the EurAsEC, these conditions were lacking, even despite their relative success in regional development.

CACO’s recent integration into the Eurasian Economic Community, which took place simultaneously with Uzbekistan’s accession to the Community on 25 January, 2006, is another excellent example of the EurAsEC’s importance to all CA countries. Uzbek membership will undoubtedly help to resolve many of the region’s main problems. One can say that the EurAsEC is currently the most active, important and forward-looking organization necessary for the further development of the Central Asian states.



## CENTRAL ASIA IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD: CURRENT TRENDS AND PROSPECTS

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### The Central Asian States After the Breakup of the U.S.S.R.

**O**n the threshold of the 21st century, the strategic importance of the new sovereign states of Central Asia, endowed with huge oil, gas, uranium, gold and other mineral reserves, sharply increased.

The newly formed states sought to become independent from Russia and to develop political and economic contacts with other countries on a parity basis. In a short period, they established diplomatic relations with most countries of the world, became members of the United Nations and other international organizations, signed hundreds of interstate treaties and agreements, and entered into highly complex trade and economic relations with over 140 countries.

However, throughout the entire independence period interstate relations in Central Asia have remained very complicated and have developed inconsistently under the simultaneous influence of two opposite trends: integration and disintegration.

The interregional and intersectoral contradictions of what used to be a single national economic complex, earlier compensated from the Union budget, were automatically transformed into interstate contradictions. At some undemarcated and internationally unrecognized sections of the Uzbek-Kyrgyz, Uzbek-Tajik and Uzbek-Kazakh borders, disputes and conflicts flared up and are still simmering today. Ultimately, close neighbors were pulled apart by different models of economic and political reform, competition for foreign investment and leadership in the region, the incompatible regional and international ambitions of their leaders, and their sometimes different positions with respect to the CIS and Russia.

The contradictions were generated by the very geopolitical peculiarities of Central Asia: abundant natural resources in a closed transport space with limited outlets to world markets and a relatively undeveloped network of communications, especially external communications (numerous alternative oil and gas pipelines are still at the project stage); the new states' striving for economic independence and their strong economic and transport ties with Russia; the "artificial" nature of interstate borders; significant human resources (over 60 million people) and labor shortages, which have become particularly severe as a result of the migration of Russian-speaking people; vast water resources in mountain areas and severe water shortages; overpopulation and insufficient living space in the Fergana Valley (up to 500 persons per sq km) coupled with vast unpopulated desert areas.

These contradictions have been sharpened by serious miscalculations in economic policy, growing social discontent, mass unemployment, impoverishment of society, endless disputes between countries over water and land use, an intensifying struggle for redistribution of property, and stepped-up activities of terrorist organizations and drug dealers.

Add to this the image of “hangers-on” gradually cultivated in Russia (before and after the breakup of the U.S.S.R.) with regard to the former Union republics, which had year after year obtained subsidies from the Union and Russian budgets.

After the disintegration of the U.S.S.R., the Central Asian states tried to develop integration at their regional level. The Russian Federation was first an observer and in 2004 became a member of the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO), but the latter did not achieve any impressive successes in the matter of integration. Its goals and purposes were proclaimed, but no timetables were set and the parties’ obligations remained unspecified. The member states developed a strategy and program for Central Asian integration, but there was no action plan indicating concrete performers or setting deadlines. There is good reason to believe that these were more in the nature of letters of intent, because there was no sign of real economic integration between the member countries.

In view of Uzbekistan’s entry into the EurAsEC, there was no longer any reason for the separate existence of CACO (whose other states were also represented in the EurAsEC), since CACO had recently integrated into that organization.<sup>1</sup> That was preceded by Russia’s accession to CACO, which for some reason remained virtually unnoticed. As a result, there were two organizations with the same members and roughly similar objectives playing “on the same field.” Hence the simultaneous decisions on Uzbekistan’s entry into the EurAsEC and on the merger with CACO.

Back in 1999, five EurAsEC member states signed a Treaty on the Customs Union and a Treaty on a Common Economic Space. For a start, it was planned to ensure a free trade regime without any administrative, fiscal or quantitative restrictions in mutual trade, whereupon it would be possible to go over to the second stage: the creation of a Customs Union with a common customs tariff and abolition of customs control at internal borders. It should be noted that the EurAsEC accounts for up to 80% of foreign trade operations with the CIS.

Today it must be admitted not only that customs problems have remained unresolved over the past seven years, but also that the free trade regime is not actually free. At a summit on 23 June, 2006, the EurAsEC heads of state set the time limit (year-end 2006) for the preparation of a legal framework for the Customs Union and coordination of activities in acceding to the WTO. By this time, among other things, Uzbekistan should accede to all the agreements already effective within the EurAsEC (over 70) and should strictly perform all its obligations to its partners (in the first place, it should accede to the actually operating Free Trade Area).

This could possibly somewhat reduce the regional competition for leadership between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Before Tashkent got down to active cooperation with Moscow and Beijing, there were two regional forces in Central Asia: Kazakhstan, which from the very beginning took a largely pro-Russian stand, and Uzbekistan, which made no secret of its pro-Western leanings. Now the confrontation will not be so strong; at the same time, one cannot expect Uzbekistan to acknowledge Kazakhstan’s leadership in the economic sphere, so that there is bound to be continued friction between these two countries.

After suspension of membership for six years, Uzbekistan has returned to the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). This decision has radically changed the current geopolitical situation not only in Central Asia, but also throughout the entire post-Soviet space. For Uzbekistan, this is a long-term strategic move providing it with security guarantees both against possible action by terrorist organizations and groups of militants appearing from time to time on its southern borders and against any possible encroachments on its state sovereignty, given the sharp increase in external pressure on that Central Asian country after the Andijan events.

From now on, four of the five CA states (except Turkmenistan) will be within the CSTO’s zone of influence, and this will in large measure expand Russia’s opportunities to play a more significant role in Central Asia than it did in recent years. The CSTO has turned into the main instrument for

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<sup>1</sup> The Republic of Uzbekistan officially joined the EurAsEC on 25 January, 2006.

ensuring security in Russia's area of responsibility; it has become an active partner of the EurAsEC and the most weighty factor of effective integration processes within the CIS.

In 2006, Russia and Kazakhstan officially founded a Eurasian Development Bank with an authorized capital of \$1.5 billion; Russia's share constitutes \$1 billion (two-thirds of the votes), and Kazakhstan's share, \$500 million (one-third of the votes). Although the Bank was established by these two countries, it is of great importance to all EurAsEC members in terms both of its name and its declared goals. One of the main tasks set before the Bank is to promote the implementation of infrastructural (including transport and energy) projects in the Community. This financial body is designed to promote sustainable development of the EurAsEC economies, to expand mutual trade and encourage direct investment, including investment in the form of a private-public partnership. In the territories of Russia and Kazakhstan, the Bank is exempt from any taxes, charges or duties (with the exception of those which constitute fees for specific services).

The expansion of the EurAsEC in conditions of globalization and growing interdependence in the international community has significantly increased the importance of real integration between the CA countries' economic, financial, productive and human resources for joint solution of regional cross-border problems, regeneration of the Aral Sea, development of intraregional cooperation and confidence building in mutual relations.

The Central Asian states are linked together into an integrated ecological system by the common river basins of Syr Darya and Amu Darya. Their primary task is to work out a single water and energy strategy for Central Asia. Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have 4.3% of the world's proven gas reserves, constituting about 8 trillion cubic meters. There is a common gas pipeline running across these countries (Gazli-Bukhara-Tashkent-Shymkent-Almaty), which makes it possible to supply natural gas to Russia, Ukraine and the countries of Transcaucasia; in the future, export volumes are bound to increase. Turkmen gas supplied to CIS states transits Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, so that its delivery depends on the availability of free space in the Uzbek and Kazakh gas transportation systems. In their supplies of gas to Europe, these countries are dependent on Russia and Ukraine, but they for their part can put pressure on the latter as well.

In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, gas fields are virtually nonexistent or are undeveloped. These countries themselves are gas importers, and supplies of natural fuel from Uzbekistan are vitally important to them.

The need for integration derives from a whole range of urgent economic problems which cannot be resolved by CA countries on their own, inducing them to look for new forms of regional cooperation that would ensure the sustainable development of individual states in the world economy.

The effectiveness of integration is influenced by differing economic interests in the use of common natural resources, "national egoism" in price and tariff setting, numerous remaining administrative restrictions in payment and settlement relations and mutual convertibility of national currencies, and also by significant differences in the pursuit of socioeconomic reforms, liberalization of foreign economic policy, and the role of the state in managing the economic, production and financial activities of enterprises.

## Central Asia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The Central Asian region faces challenging military-political problems: maintaining peace and stability, fighting terrorism and religious extremism, turning the region into a stable security zone, and making joint use of natural and technological resources.

After 11 September, 2001, the struggle for Central Asia assumed global proportions: it entered a new stage associated with closer integration into world economic and geopolitical relations. Strategically speaking, strong powers have clashed in Central Asia. The main actors—the United States and Russia—pursue diametrically opposite goals. In its urge to gain control over the region's abundant energy resources, Washington is doing its utmost to thwart Moscow's attempts to once again rally together the FSU republics.

China too aspires to the role of a key actor in Central Asia. It has been playing its own game in order to exploit existing contradictions both between Russia and the United States and within the CIS, although Beijing had no direct contacts with countries of the region for over 100 years, because they were not subjects of international law and lacked the authority to engage in international relations.

The pattern of interaction between Russia, the U.S. and China in Central Asia is very complicated: rivalry between the "great" powers for influence over "small" nations, their coinciding interests, irreconcilable contradictions, and the development of a common strategy in an increasingly globalizing world.

Whereas in the 1990s it was the U.S. that strengthened its influence in the region, today we are witnessing the arrival of China, Central Asia's great neighbor. It has recently demonstrated not only its growing interest in the region's raw material resources and large markets, but also its obvious aspirations to political and economic influence, primarily through the structures of the Chinese-initiated Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which includes four CA states (Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) and Russia.

In 2005, India, Iran, Mongolia, Pakistan and Afghanistan joined the SCO as observers, which testifies to the emergence of an institutional basis for fundamentally new trends in modern international relations, including trends toward the implementation of economic and energy projects. The SCO is regarded as a major factor in ensuring lasting peace and stability in the region. This organization has all it needs to become a central element in the configuration of a "rising Asia."

Russia's growing attention to the Asian vector of its foreign policy is evident from Russian President Vladimir Putin's participation in the meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State in Shanghai on 15 June, 2006, which was held to mark the fifth anniversary of that organization and which demonstrated its growing political weight. At that meeting, countries with observer status, primarily Iran and Pakistan, expressed their desire to become full members of the SCO. Right after the Shanghai forum, on 17 June, 2006, the leaders of 17 member states of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) met in Almaty, where they emphasized the need to strengthen large-scale trade, economic, scientific, technical and energy cooperation between energy-supplying and consuming countries.

Today the SCO's sphere of activity covers key areas of interstate cooperation, such as ensuring peace, stability and security in the Central Asian region, combating terrorism, separatism, cross-border crime and illegal drug and arms trafficking, developing economic, scientific, technical, educational and cultural cooperation, and resolving illegal migration problems. The SCO states are currently developing 120 economic programs in the field of transportation, energy, environmental protection, the agroindustrial complex and border partnership. The organization has successfully functioning standing bodies such as the SCO Secretariat in Beijing and the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure in Tashkent.

Russian foreign policy shows evidence of a trend toward ever closer relations with China. Russia is obliged to look for points of contact with a country which is capable, if not today then in the near future, of acting as a real "counterweight" to the world's only superpower. This is the reason for interaction between the two states within the framework of the Shanghai Six whose main purpose is to prevent the U.S. from gathering geopolitical strength in Central Asia.

Cooperation with China is important to Russia, among other things, because it helps the latter to uphold its positions in the settlement of major regional conflicts, as in the case of the "aligned" nuclear ambitions of North Korea and Iran. Recently, the "Chinese card" has also been played to put more

pressure on the countries of the European Union, which is trying to prevent Gazprom from gaining access to Chinese gas distribution networks. In this context, Russia is considering the prospects and preparing feasibility studies for investment in a project for developing the gas pipeline infrastructure in order to increase gas exports to China.

Of course, both Beijing and Moscow, whose interests in the SCO largely coincide, hope to expand their opportunities for control over Central Asia, to reduce U.S. influence, and to strengthen their positions in the Asia-Pacific Region (APR).

Europe too has recently shown greater interest in Central Asia. It is quite possible that in time the EU will become a "fourth force" in relations between the major powers in the region.

In the struggle for influence over Central Asia, the main players have been joined by Turkey, Iran, India, Pakistan and Japan, which creates new and unexpected interests and affects the stability of development in the entire region.

Japan has stepped up its activities in Central Asia in an attempt to "win" the region over to its side. In 2004, a mechanism was created for a dialog between the parties (Central Asia Plus Japan). In June 2006, the foreign ministers of Japan, the Central Asian states and Afghanistan met for a regular meeting in Tokyo to discuss a wide range of issues, including terrorism, drugs, energy and the environment, and also matters of improving the road and transportation infrastructure, which are all part of a far-reaching plan to transform the Central Asian region and neighboring countries into a "corridor of peace and stability." Japan is prepared to promote open intraregional cooperation and to provide the CA states with investment, goods and technology, and also with tax and customs privileges for imported equipment. The action plan will also include measures to simplify access to transportation facilities for resource-rich Central Asia (construction of a road to transport natural resources through Afghanistan to India).

So, Central Asia is in the center of a complex pattern of intertwining interests involving Russia, the United States, China, Europe and the Islamic world. All these actors are competing for influence over the Central Asian region, seeking to change the vectors of the CA countries' political and economic orientation toward themselves. At the same time, the U.S. and the EU will pursue their policy in the region through Turkey, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Among other things, the United States will be able to use its political influence in the region to control energy supplies from Central Asia to Europe. Both America and the European Union support the construction of gas pipelines bypassing Russia from the south, but the EU, in contrast to the U.S., is itself in need of gas resources and is Washington's competitor in Central Asia. In this connection, Russia needs a whole set of measures to maintain and increase its influence in the region, for which there is ample opportunity. This factor has a significant impact on the orientation of international economic ties, while an analysis of the latter is important in developing and adjusting Russia's foreign economic strategy as a strategic partner of the CA states.

The SCO's Central Asian members (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) would not like to see Central Asia become an arena of confrontation between the leading world and regional powers; they do not want to be pawns in the political game of other states. They seek to maintain a "fine balance" between their interests and hope to see the SCO turn into an organization which will help them resolve practical security and economic development problems.

The logic of current events confirms the growing interest of Central Asian countries in greater interaction with Russia, both on a bilateral basis and within the EurAsEC framework. The treaties on strategic partnership and allied relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation of 16 June, 2004, and 15 November, 2005, marked a fundamentally new stage in Russian-Central Asian cooperation.

In a situation where Russia has been making serious efforts to restore its influence in Central Asia, it is bound to have "mixed feelings" about China's buildup of its political and economic presence in Central Asia. On the one hand, Russia is aware that it cannot maintain stability in Central Asia



all on its own, and on the other, the SCO enables Russia to control and limit China's CA activities as the latter deepens its involvement in regional processes and strengthens its positions in the region.

Moscow and Beijing have more and more common ground in Central Asia. In these conditions, there are two scenarios for the development of Russian-Chinese relations: either stronger cooperation or stiffer competition. It is extremely important for both countries to restrain competition and develop mutually beneficial cooperation. Tensions in the sphere of trade and economic interaction within the SCO are associated with the problem of leadership. In contrast to the EurAsEC, Russia obviously does not play the title role in the SCO: at the very least, it shares this role with China.

Beijing's membership makes it possible to expand the scope of the organization to a considerable extent: the SCO has an opportunity to extend its influence not only to the territory of China proper, but further on to Southeast and Northeast Asia in the southern direction and to South Asia in the western direction. China is also the largest country of the Asia-Pacific Region, which is valuable for the development of the SCO members' cooperation and openness with the APR. With the advance of globalization and regionalization processes, China can become the main connecting link between the CA countries and the APR.

Beijing's participation in the work of the SCO offers new economic opportunities as well. Given China's rapid development, its SCO membership is a major factor of economic cooperation. On the one hand, it is capable of playing the role of one of the "economic locomotives" in the region as a supplier of commodity, financial and technical resources to Central Asia, and on the other, it can be seen as a vast potential market for Central Asian goods. China is increasing its economic presence in the region through massive financial infusions into the economy of CA countries: in 2006 alone, its investments exceeded \$900 million.<sup>2</sup> The SCO's long-term goal is to create a regional free trade and economic area. At a meeting in Dushanbe on 15 September, 2006, the SCO Council of Heads of Government approved a project to create a transportation corridor from the Caspian Sea to China through the territories of Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Under this plan, Russia is to build a bridge across the Kigach River and to complete the E 40 Highway.

Central Asia has no direct outlet to the sea; without the participation of Russia and China, it would have lost its key importance in "linking together" Europe and the APR. Consequently, in the near future the SCO will become a powerful regulatory and in every way attractive factor in Central, South and Southeast Asia and in the APR as a whole. Moreover, it can become the main stabilizing force in the world and prevent a war against Iran. From the technological standpoint, the SCO can organize cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to create a new "four-party" format: Iran-Russia-IAEA-SCO.

All of this makes it necessary to update Russia's and the CA countries' approaches to SCO activities. Russia and Central Asia with their territorial, multiethnic and historical specific features are in need of a new model for integration into the globalizing world.

## Energy as the Key Component of International Cooperation

The strategic area of cooperation between Russia and the CA states is undoubtedly the most challenging global problem of providing the world economy with energy.

The oil and gas complex of the world economy has been developing against the background of intensifying but as yet insufficiently pronounced competition between the Euro-Atlantic and Asia-Pacific regions.

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<sup>2</sup> See: *Vremia novostei*, 18 September, 2006.



No wonder that the G-8 St. Petersburg Summit in July 2006 defined global energy security as the most important problem of our day. It is quite obvious in this context that this is a sphere in which Russia can act as an equal and truly significant partner of the most developed countries of the world.

The days when energy markets were purely local are long past: these markets (first of oil and then of natural gas) have rapidly developed into regional and global markets.

In recent years, Central Asia has become a prominent player in these markets, moving into the forefront of the struggle for control over oil and natural gas reserves and major transportation routes. Its key states—Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan—are among the top 15 countries in possession of the largest proven hydrocarbon reserves.

Russia is highly interested in maintaining a full-scale presence in the CA energy market, because it is sufficiently dependent on supplies of Central Asian hydrocarbons. By inviting Kazakhstan to take part in the G-8 Summit, Moscow demonstrated that it is well in control of the situation in the zone of its strategic interests and intends to act from the position of a common natural resource potential of Russia and Central Asia.

The implementation of the Russian initiative to set up a Central Asian association of oil and gas exporters, supported by Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, gives these states wider access to foreign markets and, consequently, increases their revenues from energy exports.

The creation of a common energy space within the SCO framework—a regional Energy Club—could become an important element of global energy policy. This club could include both producers of energy materials (Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and SCO-associated Iran, and later, possibly, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan) and consuming countries (China, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and also India and Pakistan).<sup>3</sup>

The major Asian players in the CA gas market are China, India, Japan, South Korea, Pakistan, Turkey, Iran and Azerbaijan. Whereas today the United States and the EU are Russia's main rivals in Central Asia, China will become a dangerous competitor in the near future.

In 2010, the PRC is expected to import up to 80 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas. Gazprom is prepared to increase its supplies to China to 40 bcm, but Beijing is inclined to diversify its gas connections, primarily with CA states.

The interdependence between Russia and the Central Asian countries in matters of gas transit arose after the division of the single gas transportation network and the setting of supply prices. Over the past two years, purchase prices for gas from Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan more than doubled for Gazprom, and this in conditions of relatively small volumes and the existence of "stringent" contracts. At the same time, the "price ambitions" of Russia's southern neighbors, which naturally want to share in the profits from high export prices in Europe and now in Asia as well, go much further.

Given sufficient investment, Turkmenistan can roughly double its current potential. Its proven reserves of natural gas at year-end 2004 totaled 2.9 trillion cubic meters. In 2005, it produced 63 bcm of gas and exported 45.2 bcm. Turkmenistan has concluded an agreement to supply large amounts of gas to Russia up to 2008 while promising to supply an almost equal amount to Ukraine. Many Russian and foreign experts believe that it cannot provide the market with the promised amounts of gas, exaggerating its capabilities in order to push up prices. Since Turkmenistan is ranked as an "unpredictable" state, it is unclear whether it will honor its commitments in building new pipelines or its contractual obligations to supply gas to other countries.

Gas supply prices remain in confusion. Gazprom's relations with Ukraine, Belarus and Turkmenistan at times erupt in open conflicts. Russia and Ukraine are expecting a possible increase in Turkmen gas prices to \$130.<sup>4</sup> The same applies to Belarus.

<sup>3</sup> See: G.I. Karimova. "Predposylki formirovaniya iedinogo energeticheskogo rynka v ramkakh ShOS," *Mir peremen*, No. 4, 2005, p. 155.

<sup>4</sup> See: *Kommersant*, 22 June, 2006.

Turkmenistan's tough stand is in large part inspired by the activities of Gazprom itself, which some time ago pointedly declared it was raising gas prices for the CIS countries to the average European level while insisting on the need to maintain purchase prices in Turkmenistan at the same level as before. In its open conflict with Gazprom, Turkmenistan runs no risk: just as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, it has alternative buyers of gas and oil not only in the CIS, but also in the APR.

Russia's positions in Central Asia so far appear to be secure, because Russian gas business is actively involved in exploration and production in the region and controls the gas transportation system for exports from Central Asia to Europe. Russia has signed contracts for the entire amount of Turkmen and Uzbek gas due for export. Even if Ukraine, Belarus or Georgia buy gas in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan or Kazakhstan, they will in fact be unable to get it delivered without Russian participation. Nevertheless, Russian positions in Central Asia are not what they used to be in the days of the U.S.S.R. The impossibility of political pressure makes it necessary to strengthen market-based economic instruments, to look for compromises, and to make use of old ties and experience of work in the region. In the long run, Russia (like Ukraine) will have to meet the "challenges" of the Central Asian gas suppliers, who are strengthening their positions and who are bound to raise prices and seek independent access to world markets.

On the other hand, Russian influence in the region reduces the growing dependence of CA states on Asian, primarily Chinese, capital. Whereas the northern and north-western vectors of their gas policy were predetermined back in the days of the U.S.S.R., the Asian vector of cooperation in the gas sector has been actively developing in recent years.

Further Russian cooperation with CA countries is of crucial importance for control over gas supplies from the region to Western markets and, consequently, for helping Russia to retain its positions in the European gas market. Otherwise Central Asian gas export pipelines may run not only through Russia to the EU, but also to China, Pakistan and India, competing with Russian gas in these countries.

Russia can strengthen its economic positions in the region by providing large credits or taking part in the modernization of the transportation infrastructure, by using Russian gas pipelines for export transit, promoting Russian companies and businesses in CA states, investing in gas exploration and production, and setting up joint ventures in gas production and transportation.

The Central Asian countries are potential suppliers of gas to China, Japan, South Korea, India and Pakistan. Their competitors in the region could include Iran and Azerbaijan, which have long-term plans to develop offshore gas fields in the Caspian Sea. Iran, which is second only to Russia in terms of gas reserves, can become a supplier to the EU and a dangerous rival of Turkmenistan. And Azerbaijan, given active gas production from Caspian offshore fields, can become a gas exporter in the next few years, while low prices due to shorter transportation routes will turn the country's gas exports into a worthy competitor to Russian, Iranian and Turkmen gas in European markets.

By 2015, Kazakhstan plans to increase its oil production to 150 million tons, and oil exports, to 125 million tons; natural gas production in that country is to go up to 40 bcm, and in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, to 110 bcm. By that time, a significant proportion of this gas will be exported to Asian countries.

Over the longer term, experts are expecting a sharp increase in energy supplies from Russia and Central Asia to China, Japan, Korea and Southeast Asian countries. The share of the APEC states in Russia's trade turnover is expected to increase from 9.5% in 2004 to 35% in 2025.<sup>5</sup> Similar changes will occur in the export structure of Central Asian countries.

Various project options for the construction of new gas pipelines with the participation of CA states, including those bypassing Russia, are currently under consideration. Their routes are to run,

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<sup>5</sup> See: *Strategicheskie orientiry vneshneekonomicheskikh svyazei Rossii v usloviakh globalizatsii*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 2005, p. 118.

for the most part, from Central Asia to Europe through Iran and Turkey bypassing Russia from the south, and also in the Asian direction: to China, India, Pakistan and Japan. One of them is the Trans-Afghan Pipeline, whose construction is supported by the United States. The Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline is designed to export Central Asian (primarily Turkmen) gas to Turkey and then on to Europe. The project for gas transportation from Turkmenistan to Turkey is a direct alternative to the Russian Blue Stream pipeline, which is also designed to supply gas to Turkey along the Black Sea floor. These pipelines are almost equal in capacity and are oriented toward the same markets. Kazakhstan and China are actively working on a project for the construction of a joint oil pipeline to China's Tarim Basin; they are also considering the possibility of building a gas pipeline running in that direction.

Although it is more convenient for Kazakhstan to pipe oil and gas to world markets through Iran, the republic is sufficiently strongly oriented toward Russia. Nevertheless, Kazakhstan is trying to diversify its risks: on the one hand, it is an active member of the SCO, EurAsEC and CSTO, and on the other, it has become a party to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline "patronized" by the United States (in this way, the country is increasingly competing with Russia in the world energy market). Moscow has just started building an oil pipeline to China, and Astana has already completed its own line to that country. Moreover, Kazakhstan plans to build a gas pipeline to China as well. It is indicative that oil and gas pipelines from Kazakhstan are the first ones in China's history "linking" its territory with foreign hydrocarbon reserves.

Let us note that gas pipeline projects routed around Russia with the participation of CA states require significant investment and carry considerable risks. It should be borne in mind that bypass gas pipelines change the balance of power in the region, and this could result in a conflict of interest. Countries find it more advantageous to have a monopoly over "sales areas" than to make their territories available for transit of competing gas. As regards exports to China, these are complicated by the high cost of transportation to the industrially developed eastern regions of that country. Many experts are sure that cooperation with Russia in the gas transportation field is more effective for Kazakhstan. The construction of most gas pipelines is only possible given a predictable policy on the part of Turkmenistan and Iran, a reduction in the opportunities for military conflicts and terrorist acts in Afghanistan, and an easing of tensions in relations between India and Pakistan.

In the next few years, these countries have virtually no real alternative to gas exports through Russia, because the construction of bypass pipelines will take several years, while their full utilization is not guaranteed. The Russian-controlled Central Asia-Center gas transportation system so far remains the only actually existing route for gas exports from CA countries, but in the long term one cannot rule out the construction of bypass gas pipelines. In the future, China has a good chance of becoming a competing destination for the construction of gas pipelines from Central Asia.

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So, the foreign economic policy of the Central Asian states should pursue the following purposes:

- to strengthen national sovereignty and independent development while deepening mutually beneficial economic cooperation based on joint use of the region's water, energy and other natural resources;
- to look for mechanisms of mutually beneficial border trade;
- to attract foreign capital for the construction of the TRACECA common transportation system (restoration of the Great Silk Road) ensuring new access routes to the Middle East and world markets;

- to use Central Asia's intermediate position between Russia and the biggest countries of the world, China and India, and also the region's transit potential to ensure Russia's unimpeded partner relations with China, India, Iran and the APR states;
- to ensure stability in Central Asia based on the principles of strategic partnership both within the region and with neighboring countries (primarily within the framework of the EurAsEC and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization).

## PARLIAMENTARISM IN KAZAKHSTAN: KEY TO THE COUNTRY'S DEMOCRATIZATION

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The parliament, as any country's supreme legislature, is one of the key elements of democracy. It passes laws, represents and harmonizes diverse social interests, identifies political priorities, seeks compromises, distributes the resources that directly affect the nation's everyday activities, and, most important, controls the executive branch.

The parliament and its structures, which allow citizens to take part in political decision-making, thus determining their future, play a decisive role in establishing and consolidating democracy. The parliament is instrumental in establishing the rule of law, protecting human rights, and ensuring transparency of state administration and the fulfillment of international obligations.<sup>1</sup>

There is every reason to believe that during the years of sovereignty, parliamentarism has become an inalienable part of the country's politi-

<sup>1</sup> See: V.E. Usanov, "Razdelenie vlastey kak osnova konstitutsionnogo stroia i ego rol v formirovanii parlamentarizma," *Gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 12, 2005, p. 14.

cal system, something which was absent at the dawn of its independence. Its development was a gradual process that included the quest for a balance of public interests and the checks-and-balances system. It was then that the republic acquired the legal foundation that made the liberal reforms successful.<sup>2</sup>

I am convinced that the parliament as the legislature of our newly independent state should ensure the country's sustainable and dynamic development and progress in all spheres of public life. This can be done only if the parliament uses the entire range of political and legal tools offered by the current constitution.

In 2006, our parliament marked ten years of its functioning—a decade filled with creative and persistent efforts to cement the state's parliamentary principles. The deputies of all three

<sup>2</sup> See: President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nazarbaev's address at the opening of the second session of the parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, available at [[http://www.akorda.kz/page.php?page\\_id=33&lang=1&article\\_id=904](http://www.akorda.kz/page.php?page_id=33&lang=1&article_id=904)].

convocations have done much to give the country the legal basis of its statehood. Today, economic progress, which alone can guarantee social harmony and development together with welfare, social development and environmental protection, is the top priority in the country's

sustainable development. The parliament is moving in this direction by supplying social strategy and market reforms with a badly needed legal foundation: the Republic of Kazakhstan should develop as an independent and modern democratic state.

## Development of Parliamentarism in Kazakhstan and Its Role as the Guarantor of Political Stability

Based on national state and legal traditions, the parliament reflects the Eurasian type of the country's statehood by combining Western and Eastern values. The roots of the highest representative power in Kazakhstan go back to the 1930s: in 1938, the republic elected its first Supreme Soviet, which played the representative and legislative role under the close supervision of the Union and Republican Communist Party structures. Lack of competitiveness and alternative candidates, however, devalued the Supreme Soviet's legitimate value. The history of true parliamentarism in Kazakhstan began in 1991 when the Soviet Union fell apart allowing Kazakhstan to proclaim its independence.<sup>3</sup>

Any analyst should bear in mind an obvious fact: during the past ten years the country has covered a road that has taken many other countries several decades or even centuries to cover. During a very short period, our country moved away from the nominal Soviets of People's Deputies to a professional two-chamber parliament and laid the foundation of a market economy, civil society, and democracy.

This was accomplished thanks to consolidated efforts by all progressive political forces and the harmonized interests of all social groups. The country avoided social tension and political upheavals and achieved steady economic growth and the welfare of its citizens.

Parliamentarism in Kazakhstan is a new phenomenon, yet, contrary to well-wishers' advice of copying or importing an ideal model of parliamentarism, the state is developing it consistently and stage-by-stage, according to its own rules and laws. Success depends on a blend of the present-day state of parliamentarism in Kazakhstan and the history in which it is rooted. Life has shown that in our country parliamentarism should stem from the republic's economic development, social peculiarities, and to a no mean extent from the nation's mentality.

To effectively regulate social relations in the country, the two-chamber parliament of Kazakhstan had to proceed stage-by-stage from the initial conceptions to the legislative, constitutional foundations of its effective development. Today it is a professional structure that has supplied the reforms underway in the country with a legal basis conducive to political stability, civil peace, and national harmony. The parliament has become the legal scene of political openness, while law-making is used to harmonize the political interests of diverse public forces and realize them legally.<sup>4</sup>

Today, Kazakhstan's dynamic development as a country dedicated to democratic values that are no less important than economic success and social welfare is the key political task. We should bear in mind that developed democratic institutions are not merely a necessity, they are economically expedient. A responsible dialog with society produces political dividends. On the other hand, democratic reforms should not be imposed on society in order to avoid destabilization.

<sup>3</sup> See: U.B. Mukhamedjanov, "Desiat let v istorii chelovechestva—mgnovenie," *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 20 January, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> See: S.A. Diachenko, "Zakonotvorcheskaia deiatel'nost parlamenta kak uslovie politicheskoy stabil'nosti obshchestva i ustoychivogo razvitiia gosudarstva," in: *Perspektivy kazakhstanskogo parlamentarizma kak vazhneyshego instituta demokratizatsii i ustoychivogo razvitiia strany*, Astana, 2005, p. 110.

We all know that everywhere in the world parliaments and their effective functioning guarantee political stability. In Kazakhstan, the normative legal basis allows the state to consistently regulate practically all spheres of social relations. Thanks to the parliament's never ending efforts to improve legislation and upgrade the system's efficiency, the system itself reduces social tension and eliminates factors of instability.

It seems that Kazakhstan's parliamentary system is following the right road: the country's political system promptly responds to even insignificant upheavals, which, if they escalate, might fan tension and cause destabilization. I am convinced that the parliament of Kazakhstan is coping successfully with its role of political and legal coordinator of the nationwide social, economic, and political processes. The country's sustainable development has been achieved thanks to the Constitution, which limits the parliament's powers to law-making and adopting laws designed to be effective and stable over the long term. The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, along with its principles, norms, and provisions, allows the parliamentarians to improve the laws and bring the process of law-making to perfection. It is designed to encourage the parliament to do precisely this and to continue improving the country's legal system.

In his Address to the People of Kazakhstan, President Nazarbaev emphasized the need for relying on the Constitution: "I am convinced," said the head of state, "that stability of the Constitution spells social stability. Ill-considered changes will cause chaos. . . . Before changing the Constitution or some of its provisions we should scrutinize what we already have."<sup>5</sup> This means that we should fully tap the potential of our Constitution, which determines, besides other things, the legislative activities designed to achieve sustainable development. I would like to say in this connection that in order for Kazakhstan to become a state ruled by law, more stability in law-making and law enforcement is required. Indeed, can this be achieved if the Constitution, the pillar of social and legal stability, undergoes perpetual changes? This is a purely rhetorical question.

Law and order cannot be achieved without a stable fundamental law, while chaos in all fields, in law-making in particular, disrupts stability and upsets the balance. The world lives according to this principle: if a law contradicts the constitution it is annulled, therefore constitutional laws require a lot of caution and care: any changes affect society and the state. Any revision of the fundamental law imposed by political circumstances leads to a crisis of power and loosens the pillars of the state.

Today, the state can address the key problems of improving its legislative process (better law-making planning; scholarly and expert support; personnel resource provision; relations among the branches of power; closer ties with civil society, as well as introduction of the world's best legislative standards) without changing the fundamental law. There is no need, in the near future at least, to change the Constitution or its law-making sections.

We should concentrate instead on setting up legal frameworks and mechanisms for the gradual political reforms outlined by the head of state: consolidation of our achievements, sustainable economic development, and modernization of state administration. It seems that society is becoming more and more convinced that we should exercise a balanced approach to the entire set of planned political transformations. U. Mukhamedjanov, who heads the Majilis of the Republic of Kazakhstan, was quite right when he said that the parliament should proceed with caution along the road of political changes and that haste should be ruled out.<sup>6</sup> We should avoid, on the other hand, excessive caution and conservatism, which will inevitably end in stagnation.

<sup>5</sup> "Kazakhstan na puti uskorennoy ekonomicheskoy, sotsial'noy i politicheskoy modernizatsii. Poslanie Prezidenta Respubliki Kazakhstan N. Nazarbaeva narodu Kazakhstana. Fevral 2005 goda," available at [[http://www.akorda.kz/page.php?page\\_id=32&lang=1&article\\_id=52](http://www.akorda.kz/page.php?page_id=32&lang=1&article_id=52)].

<sup>6</sup> See: U.B. Mukhamedjanov, "Perspektivy kazakhstanskogo parlamentarizma kak vazhneyshego instituta demokratizatsii i ustoychivogo razvitiya strany," in: *Perspektivy kazakhstanskogo parlamentarizma kak vazhneyshego instituta demokratizatsii i ustoychivogo razvitiya strany*, p. 4.



The parliament of Kazakhstan consists of two chambers: the Senate, or upper chamber, and the Majilis, or lower chamber. The representative bodies of each of the regions, cities with republican status, and the republic's capital elect two senators each at a joint session of their deputies; the president appoints seven senators for the Senate's entire term.

There are 77 deputies in the Majilis; 67 of them are elected in single-member constituencies formed according to the republic's administrative-territorial division with a more or less equal electorate; 10 deputies are elected on the basis of party lists according to the proportional representation system across the country.

Elections to the Majilis are universal, equal, and direct; the deputies are elected by secret ballot. Elections are held no later than two months before the term of the acting parliament expires; the Senate is elected by indirect and secret ballot; half of the senators are elected every three years; and elections are held no later than two months before their term expires. Senators are elected for six, and Majilis deputies for five years.<sup>7</sup>

The parliament works in sessions, each of them consisting of the chambers' joint and separate sittings, chamber bureaus, standing committees, and joint commissions.

The parliament endorses the republican budget and the report by the government and the Auditing Committee that monitors execution of the republican budget and amends it. The parliament can either endorse or decline any government program, or pass a vote of no confidence.

In May 2005, the president signed a Decree on Measures to Further Use the Potential of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, designed to promote the process of stage-by-stage modernization of society and the state and add weight to the republic's parliament. The document was designed to create conditions for more effective functioning of the parliament as a representative and legislative body.<sup>8</sup>

The Decree introduced the practice of appointing ministers of the social-economic bloc after preliminary consultations with the corresponding Majilis and Senate committees and of appointing the heads of the diplomatic missions of the Republic of Kazakhstan after preliminary consultations with Senate's relevant committee. The chairman and two members of the Auditing Committee will be appointed by the head of state after consultations with the corresponding Majilis committee.

The president recommended that the Majilis consult with the Senate before passing judgment on candidates for chairman, deputy chairman, and members of the republican Central Election Commission. It was recommended that the speakers of both chambers appoint appropriate members of the Constitutional Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan after discussions at the plenary meetings of the Majilis and the Senate.

This shows that the parliament is gradually acquiring greater power in the political process; time will show whether its efforts to appoint the right people to the top state posts prove effective. There can be no doubt that there is obvious progress in the right direction. It is equally obvious that the Decree has extended the functions of the legislature as far as staffing many of the state structures is concerned. This will increase the parliament's authority and the mutual responsibility of the deputies and senators, on the one hand, and the central executive bodies, on the other, with respect to the policies pursued by the state. The parliament will be able to exercise even stricter control over budget execution; the same applies to the selection of the members of the Central Executive Committee and the Constitutional Council, the functioning of which will become more public, as well as to the diplomatic corps. Together with administrative reform, this should add efficiency to the state machine.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Arts 49-51).

<sup>8</sup> See: Ukaz Prezidenta Respubliki Kazakhstan "O merakh po dal'neyshemu ispol'zovaniyu potentsiala Konstitutsii Respubliki Kazakhstan," 4 maia 2005 goda No. 1568, available at [<http://www.zakon.kz/our/news/news.asp?id=38928>].

<sup>9</sup> See: E. Turanov, "Novy ukaz," *Kontinent*, No. 10, 2005, p. 17.

## Law-Making as Part of the Political Process

In Kazakhstan, a dynamically developing parliamentary government demands that the relations among the power branches, the role and place of the structures involved in legislation, as well as the continued efficiency and consistency of the entire parliamentary process should receive close attention.

The division of powers practiced all over the world for more efficient political regulation is designed to establish constructive relations between the political forces, public institutions, and state structures. It is also responsible for legislation consistency, starting with the planning stage, choice of political and branch priorities, and identifying the urgency of the laws and ending with the endorsement of a new law and monitoring its efficiency.

We should work harder to tap all the potential of contemporary law-making in order to add more stability to the entire process of improving the social organism with the help of combining state and public regulation, which would create an adequate development vector.

It is common knowledge that the legislative process in its non-formal form starts long before a new law is drafted and sent to the Majilis. The law is born by the realization of the need to legally regulate certain relationships as well as liquidate the lacunae, discrepancies, and contradictions in the current legislation. In other words, from the very beginning, law-making demonstrates an obvious social bias.

The laws initiated by deputies are drafted by executive bodies and experts. The deputies, who represent the interests of their voters and work as members of standing branch committees as well as political factions, are involved in discussing bills. In its turn, the parliament, as a complicated structure with innumerable elements, is tied to all sorts of state and social institutions and public organizations by a multitude of threads. The broad representation that takes shape during law-making creates an efficient mechanism for harmonizing the interests of all the subjects of the political process, and also allows prompt resolving of social contradictions. In 2006, the Chamber of Public Experts began functioning in the Majilis to ensure cooperation between the legislature and civil institutions. It is staffed with members of civil society. The Chamber intends to improve legislation, upgrade legal culture, and deepen democratization.

The deputies of both chambers have realized over time that the more the public is involved in discussions of bills, the more effective these discussions are. This can only add stability and longevity to the new legislation.

The following figures illustrate the parliament's efficiency: during the ten years it has been in action, the parliament has discussed in detail 1,722 bills submitted to it (1,450 of which were initiated by the government; 272, by the deputies, and 1,284 were signed by the president and added to the country's legal basis).<sup>10</sup> The Constitutional Council received 55 applications from the deputies. The Majilis of the first convocation sent about 600 inquiries on problems voiced by their voters to state officials; the Majilis of the second convocation sent 2,400 such inquiries; and the Majilis of the third convocation has already sent over 1,000 inquiries during the first two years of its work.

The parliament amended the constitution to improve the system of checks-and-balances, make the functioning of all branches of power more democratic, and extend citizens' political rights and freedoms. Several extremely important codes were also adopted: the Code of Administrative Offences, the Criminal, Civil, Budget, Land, Tax, Customs Codes, and many other legislative acts.

These, and many other important components of parliamentary activities, allow the state to carry out economic reforms in the most comprehensive and effective manner.

It can be said that excluding the public from the discussion and adoption of key laws would endanger the modernization of state power, economic revival, and social development already underway. The time has come to readjust the laws directly related to continued sustainable development

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<sup>10</sup> According to the Information and Analytical Center of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, available at [www.parlm.kz].

and efficiency of the law-making process. This can be achieved by setting up an institution of parliamentary development under the parliament. This project has been discussed for several years now. This institution can help the deputies to draft laws, organize professional assessment of the bills' social, financial, economic, and legal aspects, and identify the immediate and delayed legal, economic, and social repercussions of the new laws.

*First*, the Kazakhstan's parliamentary deputies should regard the changes in the constitutional laws that regulate the state structure, the mechanisms, and the relations between the branches of power as their priority. This should be done to add efficiency to their efforts.

Today, the parliament has several priorities that are extremely important for the country's future: to assume a worthy place in the world community, Kazakhstan must keep ahead of the course of events. The parliament should take responsibility for this—it is expected to analyze the entire body of laws to identify the gaps, as well as outdated and ineffective norms. The logic of Kazakhstan's entry into the new stage of its development calls for a careful analysis and corresponding reforms of state administration, the political system and, possibly, the Constitution. It is obviously important to identify the priority trends in law-making, strategic trends, and tactical means of effective legal regulation of the social processes.

We should concentrate on more constructive cooperation between the legislative and executive powers: today their cooperation, which is obviously misbalanced, is one of the shortcomings of law-making in the country. It is an open secret that the opponents of the parliament in the executive structures, with whom the parliament has to cooperate for the sake of better law-making, are taking advantage of red tape to delay the bills initiated by the deputies; they took time to issue expert opinions—either negative or positive. I am convinced that many of the fundamentally important bills designed to increase the level of public confidence in the authorities fell victim to these practices. I have in mind the bills On the Protection of Consumer Rights, On Veterans, On the Protection of Motherhood and Childhood, and others that the government rejected. Meanwhile, the parliamentary bills were much more needed, socially important, and more detailed than the bills submitted by the executive branch.

Everyone knows that ministries and departments sometimes try to adjust their bills to their own narrow interests to the detriment of the interests of those who voted for the parliament in the first place. We have to overcome “corporate egoism,” which results in legal disaccords and stagnation of the law-making process; this interferes with the deputies' attempts to contribute to perspective planning, and, in the final analysis, reduces the effectiveness of the country's legislation.

*Second*, and no less important, we should amend the laws of the socioeconomic bloc on time in order to be able to go on with the market reforms while preserving social guarantees. This is not an easy task; the experience of transitional economies has confirmed that the contradictions between capital and the people are the main catalysts of social instability, coups, revolutions, and regress.

In any case, social needs and requirements should be treated as priorities in full conformity with the Constitution, which describes Kazakhstan as a socially oriented state. It seems that we should concentrate on improving the laws designed to protect the most vulnerable population groups, insist on social justice, and encourage each and everyone to realize their potential.

*Third*, for the sake of stability, it is equally important to amend the laws related to national security issues and the state's activities in this sphere. External threats have become more frequent, more dangerous, and less predictable. They call for more effective legal tools to oppose international terrorism, religious extremism, drug trafficking, illegal migration, and other phenomena that not only disrupt peace in the border regions, but are fraught with domestic destabilization.

These are some of the practical tasks the legislative branch is facing today. It seems that an effective approach to them may lead to sustainable and uninterrupted social progress in Kazakhstan. An unbiased analysis of the possible developments inside and outside the country (if the threats and challenges to the country's sustainable development continue) says that a strong government will remain the main condition and guarantor of the country's economic and social progress in the near future. It

seems that the entire range of political reforms and modernization of the political system outlined by the head of state may be realized if a strong government guarantees an advance toward a “full-blooded” democratic system.

## The Parliament’s Involvement in Kazakhstan’s Foreign Policy

By encouraging the dialog between parliamentarians of various countries, parliamentary diplomacy is contributing to the cause of peace and human rights, closer cooperation among nations, and stronger and more dynamic representative institutions of power. A constructive dialog between deputies makes it possible to resolve many of the problems and remove the still surviving cultural, economic, and political barriers—in our highly diverse world, this dialog is one of the bridge-building mechanisms for creating mutual understanding and cooperation between countries and civilizations.

The parliamentarians of Kazakhstan have made an important contribution to developing an independent, democratic, and dynamic state and to its international prestige. Today, the supreme legislature of Kazakhstan is working hard to promote parliamentary cooperation with many countries (the Russian Federation, CIS members, the U.S., China, the EU members) and international organizations.

On 16 November, 2005, the Majilis and the State Duma of Russia synchronously ratified the Treaty on the Kazakhstan-Russia Border—this event being one of the most graphic examples of effective bilateral parliamentary diplomacy.<sup>11</sup>

Earlier, the Kazakhstan’s parliament demonstrated its efficiency by ratifying the border agreements with China, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, which increased mutual trust and developed friendly relations and equal cooperation among the sovereign Central Asian states.

The new laws based on the developed countries’ experience, international conferences, and seminars on the key issues of modern life stem from the parliament’s international activities.

The deputies are maintaining contacts with the U.N., OSCE, NATO, and other structures.

The parliament is focusing its attention on multisided cooperation with important parliamentary associations—the Inter-Parliamentary Union, CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, EurAsEC Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, PACE, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, as well as other similar regional structures.<sup>12</sup>

Harmonization and improvement of national legislations through multisided consultations are important aspects of inter-parliamentary cooperation. The Kazakhstan’s deputies and senators are contributing to the activities of numerous working groups and commissions to harmonize laws in the sphere of trade and economic relations, as well as security within regional organizations.

In the last few years, the parliament of Kazakhstan has discussed the most important international issues within the framework of inter-parliamentary associations and formulated several initiatives that attracted the attention of the international community.

Today, the CIS countries are using over 200 model laws and recommendations, to which the Kazakhstan’s deputies also contributed, 30 of them being drafted by its deputies. The well-oiled mechanism of international contacts allows the parliament of Kazakhstan to tap international parliamentary potential and share their own experience with colleagues from other countries.

<sup>11</sup> According to the Kazakhstan Today News Agency, 17 November, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> See: A.Iu. Volkov, “Mezhparlamentskoe sotrudnichestvo s zarubezhnymi gosudarstvami kak kliuchevoy mekhanizm v oblasti prodvizhenia natsional’nykh interesov v obespechenii ustoychivogo razvitiia Respubliki Kazakhstan,” *Perspektivy kazakhstanskogo parlamentarizma kak vazhneyshego instituta demokratizatsii i ustoychivogo razvitiia strany*, p. 224.

There are 12 groups in the Majilis engaged in cooperation with the parliaments of 40 states—all the interested sides received relevant and complete information about them. Deputies from different countries are discussing economic, political, scientific-technical, and cultural issues; they have already accumulated enough experience in information and expertise exchange in the sphere of law-enforcement and law-making. Nine Kazakhstan's deputies received CIS Medals from the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly; and 35 deputies were awarded diplomas.<sup>13</sup>

In order to widen economic integration with their neighbors, the Kazakhstan's deputies are actively working in the EurAsEC Inter-Parliamentary Assembly: the best results were illustrated by synchronous ratification by the parliaments of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan of the Agreement on a Single Economic Space.

The fact that the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly passed a decision to support the Republic of Kazakhstan as the OSCE chairman in 2009 shows that the country's international prestige is high, the move being backed up by deputies from other countries and representatives of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and PACE.

If realized, this initiative will demonstrate that the international community has recognized Kazakhstan's progress in the democratization sphere. At the same time, OSCE chairmanship will increase the republic's responsibility for further political liberalization, protection of human rights, and preservation of ethnic and religious harmony.

The parliament plays an active role in drafting laws to ensure the republic's WTO membership (national legislation regarding the protection of intellectual property, foreign trade, technical regulation, etc. was brought into harmony with WTO standards).

In this way, the parliament is helping Kazakhstan to integrate into the global political and economic context.

It seems, however, that the potential of inter-parliamentary cooperation has not been fully tapped: this cooperation can be deepened, and involvement in inter-parliamentary structures could be made more active in order to contribute to the international efforts to deal with many of the world problems.

The parliament is doing a lot to contribute to the republic's foreign policy efforts in inter-parliamentary cooperation and has found its place and identified its role in the system of interstate relations. The Kazakhstan's parliamentarians are contributing to the republic's image of a serious and reliable partner.

## The Problems and Prospects of Parliamentarism in Kazakhstan

It should be said that parliamentarism in Kazakhstan has been developing in the context of strengthening the legislative power's political prestige. It seems that in view of the obvious need to fortify statehood, parliamentarism in the republic will develop in the following directions:

- Emphasis on professional law-making carried out in the interests of society;
- Greater role of parliamentary factions that express the interests of the politically aware voters;
- Wider and more efficient control functions within the framework of the Constitution.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See: S.A. Diachenko, "O roli mezhpriamenskikh svyazey v usloviyakh globalizatsii," *Diplomatiicheskiy kur'er*, No. 2, 2006, pp. 253-254.

<sup>14</sup> See: S.K. Shakirbaev, "K voprosu ob ukreplenii roli parlamenta v gosudarstvennom upravlenii Respubliki Kazakhstan," *Analytic*, No. 6, 2005, p. 46.



This will allow the parliament to influence the executive branch from a qualitatively higher level. By the same token, the government and the parliament will achieve better mutual understanding, while the deputy corps' responsibility for the state of affairs in the country will increase.

These developments will take place within the current model of the presidential republic that has proved its efficiency.

The deputy corps will have to work hard to boost the legislature's authority and teach the entire nation (not only the politically aware groups), financial structures, and economically active people to trust the parliament. To cope with these tasks, the parliament should not only work harder on improving the quality of its law-making, but also widen and improve its representative functions, tighten control over law abidance, and work more effectively in the sphere of administration, founding political forecasting, and coordination.<sup>15</sup>

The new format of cooperation between the executive and legislative branches in law-making has become obvious. When their consolidation becomes stronger, we can expect progress in the political and legal reforms now underway in Kazakhstan.

The institution of parliamentarism should be developed within the democratic modernization scheme; the parliament's role in state administration should be strengthened to increase its representative, legislative, and controlling role.

In view of the above, it is equally important to permit every deputy to use his right to initiate legislation: deputies who have numerous connections with the regions and local people, follow definite political principles, and know the situation in the regions better than anyone else should be free to pour this knowledge into bills. Deputies elected by party lists should work on bills that reflect their political principles. This undoubtedly boosts the parliament's political role and allows it to represent the interests of all social strata, as well as guarantee that the badly needed laws will be adopted.

Recently there was a lot of talk in the political, parliamentary, and juridical communities about wider powers for deputy factions representing the political parties in the parliament. It seems that this institution is gaining political weight. Today, the republican political party Otan and the Agrarian-Industrial Union of Workers public association have parliamentary factions; there are also the following deputy groups: Enbek, Auyl, Aymak, Damu, and Otbasyl. At one of the Majilis plenary sittings, a group of deputies initiated bills On Amendments to the Constitutional Law on the Parliament and the Status of its Deputies and On Committees and Commissions of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan related to this issue. I think that the bills should be discussed and adopted.<sup>16</sup>

The State Commission on the Elaboration and Concretization of the Program of Democratic Reforms, set up in 2006 and chaired by President Nazarbaev, pays particular attention to the prospect of practical changes in the parliament. The commission issues recommendations on how to proceed with democratization and which specific problems should be addressed first. The parliament's greater role is one of the priorities.

The commission's working groups suggested that the parliament's powers in the sphere of budget planning and control over budget execution should be extended. Today, the commission is actively discussing certain radical changes in the country's legislature (an increase in its numerical strength to 134 deputies, half of whom would be elected in the one-member constituencies and half by party lists). It is recommended that the number of senators be increased to 68 (three senators from each region, cities with republican status, and the capital) and the president given the right to appoint 20 senators.<sup>17</sup> Time will show how this will work.

<sup>15</sup> See: E. Kononovich, "Politicheskie reformy: k demokratii cherez stabil'nost," *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 7 December, 2004.

<sup>16</sup> See: A. Zholshibekov, "Partiynaiia fraktsiia—status i rol v Parlamente," *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 7 April, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Based on information supplied by the Kazinform Information Agency on 23 August, 2006, available at [<http://www.inform.kz/index.php?lang=rus&select=archive&section=komiss#158925>]



I am convinced that the changes should not be carried out for their own sake or according to the politicians' subjective opinions: they are needed to improve law-making in our country in order to meet the nation's demands and satisfy its requirements. A larger number of deputies should not become an aim in itself—we should aim at achieving the parliament's better performance, as well as the well-being of the country and its citizens. A larger number of deputies or even wider powers have nothing to do with efficiency. The quality of the legislature's performance and the degree of its responsibility are the most important.<sup>18</sup>

During the six months of its functioning, the State Commission made great headway in the sphere of democratic reforms; the road toward wider democracy in Kazakhstan became obvious.

The three convocations worked hard to improve the institution of parliamentary hearings on the most urgent issues of nationwide importance. Together with the cabinet hour, they are an informal method of bringing pressure to bear on the executive branch, even though the decisions are not obligatory—they are merely recommendations.

It seems that this can be changed if the parliament adopts different preparatory procedures and employs better tools: the laws related to legislative procedures should be amended to impart a higher legal status to parliamentary hearings; we should go on with parliamentary hearings devoted to the most painful issues and with circuit sittings of the standing committees, which should listen to what NGOs, public associations, academics, deputies of the local structures, and regional representatives have to say. It is highly advisable to invite experts to discuss bills at working groups; we should think about an institution of parliamentary investigation, which has already proven its efficiency in many countries.

The laws related to the parliament's involvement in cabinet making should be improved; we need a government of the parliamentary majority to tighten the parliament's control over execution of the republican budget; state administration should be decentralized; institutions of local self-government should be formed; and a gradual shift should be made toward electing people to the posts of village and district akims.

The above does not exhaust the entire range of problems related to improving law-making activities in the republic: some of them are old issues; others appear as the social process unfolds. All of them, however, should be carefully analyzed to select the best practical measures for implementing the suggestions or remedying the shortcomings.

We all know that drafting "good" laws borders on an art that requires perfection: the process is underway in all corners of the world. We should pay special attention to the drafting procedure: the language should be absolutely clear, precise, and understandable, while the laws should be absolutely clear to those to whom they relate. Today, we have world experience to rely on, and we should adapt it to the Kazakhstan's realia. The political reforms underway in the republic offer a firm foundation for the country's accelerated democratization.

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At the dawn of its independence, Kazakhstan was confronted with the urgent need to build up the social, economic, and political power and tighten administrative discipline, on the one hand, and with the need to carry out liberal democratic reforms, on the other. Today, we can assess some of the most obvious results.

1. All citizens irrespective of their ethnic origins and religious affiliation enjoy equal rights and freedoms within the republic's legal system. President Nazarbaev has repeatedly stressed that

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<sup>18</sup> See: S. Kari, "Palatochny perepolokh," *Megapolis*, No. 49, 12 December, 2005.

- ethnic and spiritual harmony and cultural pluralism and tolerance are a sine qua non of progress of the nation and the state. This has been achieved.
2. There is a unique and efficient mechanism represented by the People's Assembly that keeps the dialog on national policies and ethnic issues going.
  3. A dialog of cultures is underway in the republic; the state can be described as a poly-cultural structure with society bound together by common values and aims. Cultural integration is obviously rooted in the Kazakhs' centuries-old culture, who at all times have demonstrated tolerance and openness.
  4. The language policy is highly balanced.
  5. The state has achieved spiritual renovation, confessional harmony, and tolerance.

On the whole, the country has moved ahead in many fields because its leaders placed the stakes on gradual democratization and encouraging personal initiative irrespective of ethnic or religious affiliation; the strategy of stronger statehood and modernization ensured economic growth and welfare exclusively through competition.

This has radically changed mass consciousness; on the whole, a revolution has been accomplished in the people's minds, replacing the old stereotypes with new democratic values and a new political and legal culture.

The parliament has played an important role in these processes. Today it is the highest professional power structure with developed traditions of law-making. It aims at setting up a balanced legal basis to continue the reforms in all spheres of life outlined in the Kazakhstan-2030 program and in the president's addresses to the nation.

Broader democracy and a more developed political culture are strengthening the parliament's role in the republic's political life; its composition and control functions are being extended together with the possibilities of the initiation of bills; the cabinet is accountable to the parliament to a much greater degree than before. This is a direct outcome of the development of political parties and other institutions of civil society.<sup>19</sup>

An efficient parliament is the cornerstone of political stability everywhere in the world—Kazakhstan is no exception. I am absolutely convinced that it should concentrate on law-making to provide the country with a lasting legislative system for many years to come. In fact, it is not the number of laws but their impact on society and its sustainable development that speaks of the legislature's efficiency.

When summing up the first decade of Kazakhstan's parliamentarism, it can be said that the parliament with all its merits and demerits has become an inalienable part of the country's political system.<sup>20</sup> The accumulated experience of parliamentary activities is allowing the state to move ahead.

The parliament will remain a consolidating political force able to cope with historic tasks; it is very important to preserve the nation's confidence and move on in the same direction. To accomplish this, we should never lose sight of the country's needs, adjust our parliamentary activities accordingly, and make them more effective and conducive to a better social climate.

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<sup>19</sup> See: M. Kopeev, "Perspektivy razvitiya parlamentarizma: Kazakhstan i zarubezhny opyt," *Liter*, 8 September, 2006.

<sup>20</sup> See: U.B. Mukhamedjanov, "Desiat let v istorii chelovechestva—mgnovenie."

## ETHNIC RELATIONS

**NATIONAL MINORITIES  
IN GEORGIA:  
PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION AND  
LEGAL STATUS****Guram SVANIDZE**

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Georgia has long failed to give its due attention to the problem of national minorities. The academic and legislative aspects of the problem are underdeveloped because of the inadequate conceptual system and lack of definition of the term “national minority.” This topic has always been considered perilous in the political sense and is known to arouse unhealthy restlessness in society.

The official structures justified the delay in ratification of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities, among other things, by the lack of consensus on definition. The Georgian Parliament’s resolution on ratification of the above-mentioned Framework Convention (13 September, 2005, No.1938-II s) was the first attempt to introduce clarity into this issue at the official level. The document gives a definition of minority, but experts expressed their dissatisfaction with the formulation proposed. This criticism boiled down to the fact that the definition was much too narrow: it applied only to compactly residing minorities. The emphasis was essentially placed on Azeris and Armenians densely residing in Lower Kartli and Javakhetia. In addition to everything else, the resolution does not take into account the parameters of “compact residence.” So it was declared that the definition was preliminary and would undergo further polishing.

The delicacy of the topic can partially be explained by the fact that our society has long been in the grips of so-called ethnonational thinking. Today we are going to have to get rid of the understanding of the key term “national minority” “successfully” used by Soviet ideologists. In particular, this concept defined a minority as part of an ethnic nation which has its own statehood, or as an ethnic nation which

lives in a particular country, is a numerically small group, and does not have its own forms of statehood. Equating statehood with an ethnonational community led to the confusion in terminology.<sup>1</sup>

Our experience of talking to members of minority groups has shown that many of them are dissatisfied with the term “minority.” There are various reasons for this attitude. There is a viewpoint that says treatment of all the state’s citizens should be based on the principles of equality. According to this category of people, being defined as a minority insults their sense of civilian dignity. This kind of interpretation is the first sign of civilian patriotism, an approach in which even the theoretical presupposition that Abkhazians and Ossetians living within the autonomies are minorities is a vestige of ethnonational thinking and arouses their protest. For example, only those Ossetians who live beyond the boundaries of the autonomies belong to minorities. The Armenians living in Javakhetia, the Azeries from Lower Kartli, and so on, are not particularly enthusiastic about this term. Expressions such as the following, “There is the Azeri nation, and we are a part of it,” are more characteristic of cases when a more “sincere” form of manifesting the ethnonational mentality exists. Certain governing laws can be traced: the more compactly a minority resides, the closer its geographical ties with its historical homeland (Lower Kartli, Javakhetia), and the more political attributes there are in the self-government regions (Abkhazia and South Ossetia), the less desire the community members have to be considered a minority.

The difficulty of the problem of forming a definition of minority is also due to the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon itself. We can see an entire spectrum of attributes that characterizes the phenomenon of minority. The latter is distinguished by the size and type of settlement (compact or dispersed); and what is more, the history of their migration to Georgia, where there are ethnic political autonomies, differs. The fact that minorities confess different religions is also significant, as well as the extent to which they are internally homogeneous or heterogeneous. It is difficult to overestimate the influence of the historical homeland (or the absence of such), particularly if it is territorially adjacent to the areas of compact settlement of a particular minority. It is symptomatic that the members of the titular nation themselves ended up in certain regions as minorities and encounter problems characteristic of this category of people.

In Georgia, we essentially see three types of problems relating to minorities.

- *First type*—minorities living dispersedly.
- *Second type*—regional. In this case, the traditional problem of retaining and developing the minority’s uniqueness correlates to issues of administrative-territorial structure of the regions where minorities live compactly and represent the majority in that area.
- *Third type*—political; this is related to political autonomy.

Different strategies for protecting the rights and civil integration of minorities are applied to each of these types. For example, institutions of cultural autonomy are applied for regulating the first type of problem; federalization and issues relating to regional status are considered with respect to the second type; and optimization of political relations, as well as the distribution of rights between the center and the autonomies, applies to the third type.

At one time, the complexity of the phenomenon of minorities in Georgia was one of the arguments against adopting a law on minorities, which was one of our country’s obligations when it joined the Council of Europe. In exchange, it was suggested that a set of normative legal acts be drawn up in order to encompass the entire diversity of the problem. It goes without saying that the complexity of the phenomenon requires a special policy regarding minorities, which should be based on a system of laws. Consequently, a definition is needed that would be so universal it could become a starting point for drawing up the mentioned set of normative legal acts.

<sup>1</sup> See: A. Eide, *Peaceful and Constructive Resolution of Situations Involving Minorities*, UN University, Tokyo, 1995.

It should be noted that there are not many states where a definition of the aforementioned phenomenon has been tried out in practice. Even in international documents, it is impossible to find a definition that satisfies everyone.

Since there is no common opinion in international practice on what a minority is, it is understood that local specifics, which differ from country to country, cannot be taken as a point of reference. However, intensive work is going on in this area to find common ground.

When developing our definition, we proceeded from general methodological approaches, from such objective and subjective characteristics as:

- (a) the relative size of the minority group;
- (b) the striving expressed by the group members to preserve and develop their existence and uniqueness.<sup>2</sup>

It stands to reason that the size of a minority group is the most important aspect, since at the domestic level it presupposes the need for the country to adopt measures to protect the minorities living on its territory, due to the weakness of their position. This is even true for more developed democracies.

We also emphasized the individual's free choice to identify himself with a national minority group, and the fact that this choice should not entail any undesirable consequences for the individual (Art 3 of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities, etc.). Individual choice is supplemented with the person's choice "together with other people" (that is, collectively) "to preserve and develop his identity..." which also follows from the provisions of the same article of the Framework Convention.

There are alternative definitions and recommendations of U.N. experts regarding which groups should or should not be included in the definition "minority."<sup>3</sup>

When developing our definition, we relied on these recommendations. In particular, the question of whether to *include* or *not include* those minorities in the concept "minority" that have become a nation and are on the way to self-determination was especially interesting.

As follows from the recommendations, recognition of self-definition itself is a topic of "universal consensus" in each specific case. If we turn to Georgian reality, it can be concluded that due to the lack of "universal consensus," with respect to the separatist claims of the Abkhazians and Ossetians, this recommendation is unacceptable here.

According to the recommendations, it is *not advisable* to include the "indigenous population" in the definition, since special protection is stipulated for them in international law (this implies those groups of the population who lead a traditional way of life, are backward in their development, do not blend into the context of contemporary state institutions, and so on). This situation should not be confused with the autochthony of a particular group of the population. For example, the Abkhazians are viewed as the autochthonous population, and not as indigenous; consequently, they can quite easily be included in the definition.

Another recommendation says that if a particular group dominates in society (even if it is small in size), it does not need minority protection, so it does not apply to it. Admittedly, as a rule, it is not indicated whether or not this applies to the group's status in society as a whole, or in a particular region, or which forms of "domination" are meant—demographic, political, economic, or cultural. For example, Abkhazians, who are in the minority even in the autonomy, occupy a dominating position and, consequently, cannot be classified as a minority within its boundaries. All the same, they are a minority on a national scale.

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<sup>2</sup> See: F. Capotorti, *Study on the Rights of Persons belonging to Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*. U.N., New York, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*; E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.5/1996/WP.1/14.02.1996 (J. Deschenes, F. Capotorti, A. Eide); E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.5/1997/WP.1 (S. Chernichenko). Hereinafter in the text, reference will be given to the document presented by S. Chernichenko.

A prerequisite for forming the definition of national minority is to adopt the following thesis: the language, culture, and historical experience of the titular ethnoses, which is the majority group, play the integrating role. All together, this provides the content of the concepts "dominant group" and "non-dominant group." In this respect, comparing the position of minorities (for example, Abkhazians and Ossetians) with the position of the Francophones in Belgium, as some foreign experts are wont to do, is unacceptable. It is known that despite their relatively small numbers, they are not considered minorities. It is not entirely practical to appeal to this extremely unique experience and, as history shows, it is fraught with grave conflicts.

There is more definiteness (in the sense of inclusion in the definition) regarding the Azeris and Armenians residing compactly in regions of Kvemo Kartli and Javakhetia, respectively. And they can be classified as so-called "regional minorities" (by analogy with "regional languages"). The hypothetical status of a federation constituent or the fact of numerical domination in the region are not arguments for not classifying members of these communities as minorities.

In order to formulate a definition, other special local features had to be kept in mind as well. For example, one of the most important criteria of the status of a minority is its citizenship. Recently, this factor became less pertinent for Georgia, since thousands of people changed their citizenship (mainly Russians), although they are still living in the country. Incidentally, there is no citizenship qualification in the definition given by the group of U.N. experts. The fact is taken into account that minorities *in principle* consist of people living permanently in the territory.

In the legislation of several countries, a temporal qualification is used in the definition of minorities (in Hungary, this is 100 years); how effective it can be is shown by the experience of the Baltic countries, where only those groups were classified as minorities that lived in these countries before the 1940 occupation. Those who arrived after this period were deprived of their citizenship. In Georgia, where there is a different interpretation of history and no critical dates of reference (we cannot take 1801, when Georgia was incorporated into Russia, as a point of reference), it is more expedient to use the concept of "*traditional residence*" in the definition. It takes into account the particular participation of the ethnic group in the country's life, length of time it has lived on its territory, and so on.

It is worth noting the viewpoint that says the "purest" types of national minorities are the Assyrians and Kurd-Yezidis, who do not have their own state formations in their historical land. But this opinion does not consider the fact of national state formations (particularly those contiguous to Georgian territory) as an argument against including certain minority groups in the definition.

It is interesting to determine what the terms "national minorities" and "ethnic minorities" have in common and what distinguishes them. The fact that these concepts have something in common downplays the importance of differentiating them. For this reason, they are either both used in the same context, or only one of them is used. On the other hand, it can be presumed that there are also differences between them.

International law has no guidelines for the use of these terms. Both concepts feature in the title of the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. Inclusion of the term "national minority" was explained by the need to register the group "nationals," that is, state citizens to whom the rights declared in the Declaration apply. As we know, the rights and obligations of stateless persons and foreigners (for example, working migrants) are regulated by special legislation, but it does not define the difference between the concept "ethnic minority" and "national minority."

Only national minorities feature in the name of the Framework Convention.

In the Act on the Protection of Minorities advanced by the Central European Initiatives (18 November, 1994), as well as in the Convention on Ensuring the Rights of Persons Belonging to CIS Minorities (21 October, 1994), Art 1 of these documents interprets "national minority" broadly and encompasses ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities. The concepts "ethnic" and "national" minor-



ities are differentiated here, whereby the first is an attribute in relation to the second, just like linguistic as well as religious features.

An "easy" attitude to these terms is characteristic of countries with developed citizenship institutions, where the interrelation between the categories "citizen affiliation" and "ethnic affiliation" has long been defined, and everyone agrees to the priority of the first. Citizens with a particular ethnic origin, being in the minority, can easily be called both national and ethnic minorities. There are cases when the definition "linguistic minority" is used instead of these two concepts, and the entire problem boils down to regulating the interrelations among linguistic groups. This approach is wider, since a linguistic group can include the members of different ethnic groups.

In those places where vestiges of ethnonational consciousness have to be dealt with, the situation is more complicated, which is expressed in "collisions" between these terms. Ethnicization of political institutions or the tendency toward ethnocratization and politicization of ethnic aspects are alternative dialectic transformations and reciprocal transfer of concepts. Hypertrophied ethnic self-consciousness is opposed to civilian self-consciousness. At the point where these terms "collide," painfully familiar phenomena emerge, such as separatism, irredentism, isolationism, and so on.

The peak of these phenomena were the ethnocratic regimes in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, where "the etatization" of the ethnic groups took place, which subsequently promoted the appearance of apartheid regimes on these territories as the only possible chance of preserving the dominant position of these numerically small ethnic groups.

Such aberrations arise because there is no deep-rooted tradition of statehood. Members of both the titular and non-titular ethnoses should understand that civilian interests, the interests of a civil society, are universal, while the interests of affiliation to an ethnic group are particular.

A stereotype testifies to the pertinence of the ethnic factor in Georgia, in correspondence with which the lingual and the linguistic origin are the same thing. Recently, this trend intensified due to the increase in ethnic self-identification of the population. For example, according to a general population census, 98% of the Georgian respondents pointed out that their native language is Georgian. In the minority group, this index is a little lower, 89.5%. A low variability of these indices was recorded in the regions.

Essentially, a distinction is not made between "native" and "non-native" tongues, but between so-called "first" and "second" languages. Unfortunately, this phenomenon has been little studied, which makes it impossible to calculate the error factor with any degree of statistical probability. For it is certainly doubtful that the stratum of Russian speakers could be leveled out to such a degree in such a short time. It includes not only ethnic Russians, but also the members of other groups, particularly since the census data show that members of ethnic minorities are more inclined to consider their native language Russian than Georgian (this was observed among the Tbilisi Armenians—6.8% stated that Russian is their native language, while 3.8% said it was Georgian). The only exception are the Ossetians living in Tbilisi, 12% of whom said their native language was Georgian.

It can hypothetically be presumed that a similar situation developed in relations between ethnic and religious affiliations. The number of Georgians and members of other ethnic groups (Russians) traditionally confessing Russian Orthodoxy almost coincides with their percentage in the general composition of the population (36,611 Georgians and Russians among a total of 3,666,233 people). It is characteristic that in a society that only recently was considered totally atheist, only 28,000 people said that they were non-believers during the last census. There were absolutely no agnostics among the population.

The slogans calling to fight for purity of faith, which can easily be transformed into chauvinist rhetoric, show a certain interrelation between ethnic and religious affiliations.

Of course, we cannot view ethnicity as something negative, particularly since protection of the rights of national minorities presumes their development and preservation. As already noted, in the

Framework Convention, the accent is placed on free self-determination of the individual, as well as on his choice to have or not to have an ethnic identity. He executes his right collectively (in a group of people), freely, and without pressure from groups whose ethnic identification has already been determined. But this is not where the chain of transfers ends. Further we see an already independent entity—a group (or group of people representing it).<sup>4</sup> The juxtaposition of the rights of the individual against the rights of the group (collective rights) is unacceptable in principle. Individual rights relate to the independence of a particular person. Nevertheless, no one has deprived the group of the right to determine its type of membership. Ethnic minorities or ethnic groups can also claim protection of their rights. The nature of the reciprocal transfer of concepts—antagonistic or non-antagonistic—is another matter.

It is antagonistic when loyalty to an ethnic group (community) goes without saying, and non-antagonistic when collective relations in the community do not hinder the freedom of the individual to choose other social relations. The totalitarianism of an ethnic group is defined by its strict role prescriptions and the status related to it. In this case, we are dealing not with the individual personally, but with the “typical” Armenian, Georgian, Russian, and so on. Participation in these groups is seen as a value in itself, and its value is not subject to analysis (“ethnic boasting” is a manifestation of this precept), and so on.

So, we have two types of entities. Provisionally, these are the individual, who freely makes a choice to participate in the group of his ethnic origin, and the group and its representatives, who also prefer the value of group solidarity to other values. If we are talking about minorities, in the first case, we are dealing with *national*, and in the second, with *ethnic*.

This differentiation is entirely conditional, but we should realize that from it proceeds the understanding that the protection of their rights and integration strategies are different.

The fact that ethnonationalism is still far from extinct in Georgia, and its apotheosis was the rule of Gamsakhurdia, speaks in favor of the existence of the term “ethnic minority.” However, non-dominant ethnic groups suspect the state of serving the interests of the dominant group and not all of the country’s citizens. On the other hand, members of the dominant ethnic group suspect the members of minorities of ethnic egoism, and so on.

While they have rights, ethnic minorities also have obligations, such as preventing phenomena like isolationism, separatism, and irredentism. But neither can the individual be eternally “sovereign.” Apart from rights, he also has obligations. Society cannot accept the individual who breaks social ties and becomes marginalized.

In reality, it is impossible to find an individual who represents only one facet. More often than not he internally feels the intercepting pressure of two origins—civilian and ethnic. The more tolerant these origins are in their precepts, the weaker this intercepting pressure. Raising the limit of tension leads to a break, and the individual must make a choice between his two facets—either join the ethnic group or identify with his civilian affiliation, which should not be confused with assimilation into the dominant ethnic group. This is not excluded in the event of a rise in tension in intercepting pressure, and so on.

Whatever the case, when formulating a definition, we proceed from the priority of human rights and freedoms. The individual freely identifies himself with his civilian affiliation and the rights and obligations related to it; he is endowed with the right to freely develop his particular identities—ethnic, linguistic, religious (1).

What is more,

—keeping in mind the *objective* characteristics of the minority group:

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<sup>4</sup> Individual personally ↔ individual personally together with other individuals personally ↔ group (individuals as members of the group).

- qualitative aspect (2),
  - time and nature of the entity's residence (3),
  - distinctive ethnic (4),
  - linguistic (5),
  - and religious characteristics (6),
  - non-dominant position (7);
- without losing sight of the following factors:
- status of the territory of residence (autonomy) (8),
  - type of settlement (dispersed or compact) (9),
  - existence of traditional ties with the country of residence (10),
  - presence or absence of a state formation in the historical homeland (11);
- keeping in mind *subjective* factors:
- the individual's striving (12)
  - to preserve traits characteristic of the group in community with other people (13),
- the following definition of national minority is proposed:

*National minorities are persons permanently residing on a state's territory, moved by an individual desire or in community with other people to develop and maintain their identity, which is determined by their affiliation with a group that is numerically small compared to the rest of the country's population (regardless of the type of residence and status of the territory where the group lives and the presence or absence of historical homeland), that has distinctive ethnic, linguistic, and religious characteristics, that is not dominant on the territory of the entire country, and that has formed deep-rooted traditional ties with the state of residence.*

The main goal of the formulation of the definition "national minority" is not to define the formal status of a group, but guarantees the equality of the numerically small groups of the population.

When drawing up our definition of national minority, we proceeded from two possibilities, either to make it more general, or, on the contrary, more specific, "targeted," that is, inclusive or exclusive. If necessary, we can limit ourselves to compiling an official list of minorities or, on the contrary, not stipulate the limitations that practical expediency would give rise to.

The experts' recommendations suggest that very small groups not be viewed as minorities. This is done for practical expediency. But in a country where a general population census recorded members of approximately 90 ethnic groups, the inclusive alternative is probably more acceptable. Any list will be discriminative in nature with respect to those minorities that are not included on this list. As practice shows, the small size of a group often presumes its great desire to preserve its identity. In Georgia, there are groups with no more than 100-150 members (Latvians, Lithuanians, and Czechs), but which are expressing a strong need to preserve their identity and, what is more, are actively participating in public life.

We accept the suggestion not to regard communities of people as minorities which do not express a desire to preserve their uniqueness. But even in this case, it should be presumed that they are striving to preserve it.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, is this inclusiveness of the definition of national minority discriminating in relation to those ethnic national communities that are against being considered minorities? As men-

<sup>5</sup> E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.5/1997/WP.1/ Article 7.

tioned above, following the logic of the recommendations and proceeding from reality, they are indeed minorities.

The absence of restricting provisions, expediency, and reasonable limits is the subject of a specific policy and a specific law.

As for “separating” the concepts of “national” and “ethnic” minority, their coexistence is mandatory for fuller self-determination of the individual, which includes interaction of the institutions of citizenship and ethnic origin (interaction of the general and the particular) and their mutual enrichment. Nevertheless, there is the danger of disrupting this balance, and then we will have either separatism of the group or assimilation of its members.

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