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CONTENTS

Vladimir Putin. Russia: The Nationalities Question	4
Leokadia Drobizheva. Russian Identity and Tolerance of Interethnic Relations: Experience of Twenty Years of Reforms.....	17
A. Khabutdinov. Muslim Educational Tradition in Nizhni-Novgorod Region.....	27
F. Kuliyeu. On Religious Identity of the Peoples of the North Caucasus under Conditions of Globalization	38
V. Nikerov. From Fukushima to Libya: Politicization of Pipeline Rivalry on the Caspian Energy Scene	44
A. Klimenko. Destabilizing Factors in Relations between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan	49
Khakim Abdullo Rakhnamo. Islam in Higher Education Institutions of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan	52
Nurlan Abdulov. Processes of Regionalization, Integration and Institutionalization in Central Asia	65
“For Many Years We Lived in One State”	76

Vladimir Putin,

Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation

RUSSIA: THE NATIONALITIES QUESTION

The nationalities question is of a fundamental character for Russia, with the multitude of its languages, traditions, ethnoses and cultures, without any exaggeration. Any responsible political or public figure should realize full well that civil and interethnic accord is one of the principal conditions of the very existence of our country. We can see what is going on in the world, what serious risks are threatening it. A reality of today is the growth of interethnic and interconfessional tension. Nationalism and religious intolerance become the ideological basis for the most radical groupings and currents which undermine and destroy the state and split society.

The gigantic migration flows – there are grounds to believe that they will grow – are already called a new “great transmigration of people” capable to change the life pattern of entire continents. Millions of are leaving their regions suffering from hunger and chronic conflicts, poverty and social backwardness in search of better life.

The most advanced and successful countries, which were proud of their tolerance in the past, have now come across the “exacerbation of the nationalities question.” Today, one after another, they announce failure of their attempts to integrate the element of alien culture in their

society and ensure harmonious interaction of various cultures, religions and ethnic groups without conflicts.

The “melting pot” of assimilation does not work properly and is unable to deal with the growing migration flow. “Multiculturalism” denying integration through assimilation has become a reflection of this process in politics. It overemphasizes “the right of a minority to distinguish itself” and, along with this, it does not balance this right with civil, behavioral and cultural duties with regard to the indigenous population and society as a whole.

There are closed national-religious communities in many countries which refuse not only to assimilate, but even to adapt themselves to the life pattern of the states they live in. There are whole neighborhoods, living quarters, even whole towns where several generations of alien people live on social benefits and do not know the language of the country of residence. Growing xenophobia among the indigenous population and attempts to protect their interests, jobs and social benefits from the “alien competitors” are the reaction to this model of behavior. People are shocked by aggressive pressure on their traditions and habitual life pattern and are seriously concerned over the danger to lose their national and state identity.

Respectable European political figures begin to talk of failure of the “multicultural project.” To preserve their positions they play the “national card,” that is, go over to the field of those whom they used to consider outcasts and radicals. The extreme forces become stronger, claiming state power. In essence, proposals are put forward to compel to assimilation against the background of “closeness” and the tightening of migration laws. Bearers of another culture should either “be dissolved in the majority” or remain a separate national minority, true, with various rights and guarantees. In actual fact, they will find themselves deprived of the opportunity to have a successful career.

I shall be quite frank, a citizen placed in such conditions can hardly be loyal to the country he now lives in.

The “failure of the multicultural project” is due to the crisis of the very model of a “national state” – a state historically built on the basis of ethnic identity. This is a serious challenge which Europe and other regions of the world, for that matter, will have to confront.

Russia as a “Historical State”

Despite an outward similarity, our situation is principally different. Our nationalities and migration problems are directly connected with the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. and, in essence, historically greater Russia, which took shape in the 18th century. This was inevitably followed by the deterioration of the state, social and economic institutions and a great development gap in the post-Soviet area.

Having proclaimed sovereignty twenty years ago the then deputies to the parliament of the RSFSR in their struggle with the “Union Center” started the process of creating national states, even within the Russian Federation itself. In turn, the “Union Center” was engaged in backstage game with Russian autonomous entities, in an attempt to bring pressure to bear on its opponents, promising them to raise their “national-state status.” At present the participants in these processes shift the blame on to one another. However, one thing is clear: their actions inevitably led to disintegration and separatism. And they had neither courage, nor responsibility, nor political will to protect consistently the territorial integrity of their Motherland. The initiators of “sovereignty projects” did not realize the consequences which might ensue, but there were many people, here and abroad, who quickly understood this. And the consequences followed quite soon.

After the disintegration of the country we found ourselves on the brink, and in some cases even beyond the boundary, of a civil war which broke out on the ethnic ground. We were able to extinguish the flames of fratricidal conflicts at a very great price paid in human lives and material wealth. However, this does not mean that the problem has been resolved and removed. But even during that period, when the state as the institution has become considerably weaker, Russia did not disappear. The events which happened were described by the outstanding Russian historian of the 19th century Vasily Klyuchevsky conformably to the first Russian Troubled Time in the early 17th century. He wrote that when the political fasteners of social order had broken down, the country had been saved by the moral strength and will of the people. Incidentally, our holiday on November 4 – Day of People’s Unity – which some people superficially call “Day of Victory over the Polish Invader,” is actually “Day of Victory over Ourselves,” over internal enmity and squabbles, when the social sections and ethnic groups recognized themselves as a single entity, single people. Now we have the right to regard this holiday as the Day of Birth of Our Civil Nation.

Historically, Russia is not an ethnic state and not the American “melting pot,” in which almost all are migrants. Russia emerged and developed over the centuries as a multinational state, a state in which the process of mutual adaptation, interpenetration and mixing of peoples at the family, friendly and work level was constantly going on. Hundreds of ethnoses lived on their land side by side with the Russians. The development of vast territories was a common task of many peoples inhabiting Russia. Suffice it to say that ethnic Ukrainians live on the area stretching from the Carpathian Mountains to Kamchatka, just as ethnic Tatars, Jews and Byelorussians.

One of the earliest Russian philosophical-religious works called “The Word about Law and Godsend” rejects the theory of the “chosen people” and propagates the idea of equality of all before God. And “The Story of Time” described the multinational character of the ancient Russian state, emphasizing the fact that all people inhabiting Rus spoke their own languages. The Russian philosopher Ivan Ilyin wrote about the special character of Russian statehood as follows: “...Not to eradicate, suppress or enslave alien blood, not to strangle another, alien life, but give all a new, fresh breath and a great Motherland... To save all, reconcile all, give the right and opportunity to all to pray and work their own way, and draw the best of them in state and cultural construction.”

The Russian people and Russian culture are the pivot and fastener of this unique civilization. All and sundry provocateurs and enemies of ours will do everything possible to destroy this foundation to the tune of false talk of the right of Russians to self-determination, “racial purity,” and the need “to complete the cause of 1991 and finally crush the empire burdening the Russian people.” In other words, to force our people to destroy their own Motherland with their own hands.

I am deeply convinced that the attempts to preach the ideas of building a Russian “national,” mono-ethnic state contradict our entire thousand-year-long history. Moreover, it is the shortest route to the destruction of the Russian people and Russian statehood, and any viable, sovereign statehood on this earth of ours, for that matter. When some people raise hue and cry “Enough to feed the Caucasus!” be sure that tomorrow we shall hear the calls “Enough to feed Siberia, the Far East, the Urals, the Volga region and Moscow area!”... Those who are responsible for the disintegration of the Soviet Union acted according to those slogans. As to the notorious self-determination, the calls for which were used by political figures of different trends and shades –

from Vladimir Lenin to Woodrow Wilson – the Russian people have long since become self-determined. The self-determination of the Russian people is poly-ethnic civilization cemented by the Russian cultural nucleus. This choice has been reaffirmed time and again at various plebiscites and referendums, and also by blood and the thousand-year-long history.

The Single Cultural Code

The Russian experience of state development is unique. We are a multinational society, but at the same time we are one single people. This makes our country multidimensional and complex, and at the same time it gives great opportunities for development in various fields. However, when a multinational society falls victim to the bacilli of nationalism, it becomes weak and vulnerable. We should realize that connivance to attempts to fan up national enmity and hatred for people of alien culture can have far-reaching consequences.

Civil peace and interethnic accord cannot be something unchangeable, created once and for all. On the contrary, it is in constant dynamics, it's a dialogue. It is a result of painstaking work of the state and society demanding well-thought-out solutions and wise policy capable to ensure "unity in diversity." It will be necessary not only to observe mutual obligations, but also to find mutual values. It is impossible to make people rally close together. Likewise, it is impossible to live only on the basis of calculating benefits and expenditures. Such calculations work only up to the moment of a crisis. Then they begin to act in reverse direction. But we are sure that we shall be able to ensure a harmonious development of polycultural community based on our culture, history and our type of identity.

One could remember that many citizens of the U.S.S.R., who have found themselves abroad, identified themselves as Russians. They

did it irrespective of their ethnic origin. It is indicative that that ethnic Russians have never and nowhere formed any stable national diasporas, although their number could be quite great. This is because our identity has another cultural code.

The Russian people are a state-forming people by the fact of the existence of Russia. The great mission of Russians is to unite and strengthen civilization. They do this by their language, culture, “worldwide kind-heartedness,” in the words of Dostoyevsky, they band together Russian Armenians, Russian Azerbaijanis, Russian Germans, Russian Tatars, etc... This has been taking place in a special state-civilization in which the principle of “one’s own – alien” is determined by common culture and common values. Such civilizational identity is based on the preservation of the Russian cultural dominant idea whose bearers are not only ethnic Russians, but also all bearers of this identity, irrespective of their nationality. This is the cultural code which has been put to a serious test in recent years and which has been attacked many times in an attempt to break and smash it. Nevertheless, it withstood all trials and tribulations, and we must strengthen and cherish it.

A great role in doing this should be played by education. The choice of an educational program, the versatile character of education is, undoubtedly, our major achievement. But educational programs should be based on hard and fast values and fundamental knowledge of the surrounding world. The primary task of education is to give everybody the necessary volume of humanitarian knowledge which forms the foundation of the people’s self-identity. Primarily, this concerns the greater role of such subjects as the Russian language, Russian literature and Russian history in the education process. Naturally, this should be in the context of the entire wealth of national traditions and cultures.

In the 1920s there was a movement at certain leading American universities aimed at more thorough study of the western cultural canon. Each respectable student should have to read 100 books from a specially formed list. At some universities this tradition exists to this day. Our nation has always been a reading nation. Let us carry out a surveillance poll among our cultural authorities and compile a list of 100 books which every school graduate in our country should read. And one of the graduate exams should be a composition on subjects from these books. Or let us organize Olympiads and contests for our young people at which they would be able to demonstrate their knowledge and world outlook.

State policy in the sphere of culture should put forward proper demands and use appropriate instruments. We mean TV, cinema, the Internet and mass culture as a whole, which form public consciousness and behavioral standards and rules. Just remember how Hollywood has formed the consciousness of several generations. There is much to learn from the Americans in this respect. I will emphasize that there is no encroachment of the freedom of creation or attempts to reintroduce censorship or “official ideology.” The point is that the state should, and has the right to, direct its efforts and resources to tackling urgent social tasks, including those forming world outlook strengthening the nation.

In our country, where a civil war is still going on in the minds of many people, where the past is extremely politicized and “ideologized,” a course of “subtle” cultural therapy is necessary. A proper cultural policy should be carried on at all levels, from school to historical archives, which would form such understanding of the historical process in which a representative of each ethnos, just as a descendant of a “red commissar” or a “White-guard officer,” could see his or her place as the heir of the contradictory, tragic, but great history of Russia – “one for everybody.” We need a strategy of nationalities

policy based on civil patriotism. Any person living in our country should not forget his or her faith and ethnic origin. But, above all, this person should be a citizen of Russia and be proud of it. No one has the right to place national or religious distinctions above the laws of the state. However, these laws should take into account national and religious distinctive features. I think that it would be necessary to set up a special unit within the system of federal bodies of power in charge of national development, interethnic relations and ethnic interaction. At present these problems are dealt with by the Ministry of regional development, unfortunately, they are pushed to the background, but this situation should be rectified. This should not be an ordinary department, but one directly connected with the President and the head of government and it should have definite responsible powers. Nationalities policy should not be devised and implemented in closed offices. National and public associations should take part in its discussion and formation.

Of course, we hope that traditional confessions of Russia will take an active part in such a dialogue. Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Judaism, despite all their distinctions and differences, are based on common moral, ethical and spiritual values: mercy, mutual assistance, truth, justice, respect for old folk, the ideals of family and work. These values cannot be replaced, but should be enriched and strengthened. The state and society should welcome and support the participation of the traditional confessions of Russia in the educational system, social sphere and in the armed forces. Undoubtedly, the secular character of our state should be preserved.

Nationalities Policy and the Role of Strong Institutions

Systemic problems facing society often find a way out in the form of interethnic tension. One should always remember that there is direct dependence between unresolved socio-economic problems, shortcomings of the law-enforcement system, inefficiency of state power, corruption and conflicts on national grounds. Looking back on the history of all interethnic conflicts we shall see everywhere the acute reaction to the absence of justice, irresponsible attitude and negligence of certain representatives of state power, inequality in the eyes of the law, and corruption in courts.

When we hear people speak of infringements of the rights of Russians on historically Russian territories, it means that state bodies do not fulfill their direct tasks properly – they do not protect the life, rights and security of citizens. Inasmuch as the majority of these citizens are Russians, a possibility arises to use the bugaboo of “national suppression of Russians,” and turn the well-founded public protest into the most primitive and vulgar form of interethnic disorders. And at the same time raise the voice against “Russian fascism.” One should realize full well the risks and threats of the situation fraught with the danger of becoming a national conflict. It is necessary to assess in the strictest way the actions or inaction of the law-enforcement agencies and bodies of power which have led to interethnic tension.

There are not too many recipes to improve such situations. It is necessary to study the essence of the problem and circumstances, and resolve mutual differences in each concrete case bearing on the “nationalities question.” This process should go in public, if there are no specific circumstances, because the absence of information gives ground for rumors aggravating the situation. In this connection it is very important for the mass media to display high professionalism, tact

and responsibility. But there cannot be any dialogue in the situation of disorder and violence. No one should hope for being able to force the authorities to take any decision with the help of pogroms. Our law-enforcement agencies and police have time and again demonstrated their ability to nip in the bud such illegal actions.

We must develop our democratic multiparty system. At present we are elaborating decisions aimed at simplifying and liberalizing the registration and activity of political parties and introducing electivity of the heads of regions. But we must avoid the possibilities of creating regional parties, including in the national republics. This will be a direct path to separatism. This also concerns the elections of the heads of regions. Those who will rely on the nationalist and separatist forces and circles should be eliminated from the electoral process.

Migration Problem and Our Integration Project

Today our citizens are worried, even irritated, by mass migration, both from outside and inside. Would not the creation of the Eurasian Union lead to increased migration flows and hence, to a great number of the problems involved in it? We have to state our position honestly and clearly.

First, it is evident that we have to improve the migration policy of our state. Illegal immigration cannot be excluded completely, but it can and must be minimized. For this purpose we should increase and improve the police functions and the powers of the migration services. However, a simple mechanical toughening of migration policy will not give the desired result. In many countries such measures only lead to an increase of illegal migration. The criterion of migration policy lies not in its strictness, but in its effectiveness. In this connection we should pursue a differentiated policy toward legal migration, both permanent and temporary. This presupposes definite priorities and regimes of

favorable attitude to certain persons and phenomena in migration policy, depending on skills, competence, competitiveness and cultural and behavioral compatibility. Such “positive selection” and competition for the quality of migration exists all over the world. It goes without saying that such migrants better integrate in receiving society.

Secondly, internal migration is rapidly developing in our country; people travel to other parts of the Russian Federation and to big cities to study, and live and work. And they are full-fledged citizens of Russia. At the same time, whoever comes to regions with other cultural and historical traditions should respect local customs and habits, the customs and habits of the Russian people, for one, as well as those of all other peoples of Russia. Inadequate, aggressive, defiant, insulting behavior should be properly rebuffed by the authorities, who are often inactive or negligent in this respect today. Criminal responsibility should be introduced for violation of the migration and registration rules. The latter, as well as the sanctions for their violation should be stricter. Naturally, the constitutional rights of citizens to choose their place of residence freely should not be infringed.

Thirdly, the legal system (courts and effective law-enforcement agencies) should be strengthened. This is principally important not only for immigration from abroad, but also for domestic migration, particularly that from the regions of the North Caucasus. Inability or corruption of courts and the police will always lead to public discontent and radicalization of society. On the other hand, “black-market” and criminalized economy among migrants will grow. We should not allow the emergence of closed separate national enclaves, which live not by generally accepted laws, but “by codes of the underworld.” This breeds ethnic criminality. The latter is not only a legal problem, but also one of state security requiring proper attitude and treatment.

Fourthly, there is the problem of civilized integration and socialization of migrants. Here we have to return to the problems of education. The high quality and attractiveness of education is a powerful factor of the behavior of migrants, an impetus to their integration in society, whereas the low quality of education always causes greater isolation and closeness of migrant communities. It is important for us to enable migrants, and all those wishing to live and work in Russia, for that matter, to adapt themselves to our society. The elementary demand put to them should be their readiness to acquaint themselves with our culture and learn the language. From next year an exam on the Russian language, Russian history and Russian literature and the basics of our state and law should be introduced. Our state, just as other civilized countries, is ready to compile and present to migrants the necessary educational programs. In some cases, there should be compulsory additional professional training at the expense of employers.

Finally, integration in the post-Soviet area is a real alternative to uncontrolled migration flows. Among the objective reasons for mass migration is great inequality in development and living conditions. Naturally, it would be logical to reduce this inequality in order to minimize migrant flows. There are no objective obstacles to implement this logic here, in our country. And one of the major tasks of Eurasian integration will be to create for millions of people an opportunity to live and develop in a worthy manner. From this point of view, the tasks which we pose in our country (the creation of a new economy with effective employment, professional communities, even development of productive forces and social infrastructure all over our territory) and the tasks of Eurasian integration are the key instrument with whose help it would be possible to direct migration flows into the right channel. On the one hand, to send them to places where they will cause the least

social tension, or not at all, and on the other, to create conditions for people to live and feel comfortably at home, the opportunity which many of them do not have now. There are no, and cannot be, simple solutions in nationalities problem. Its elements are scattered in all spheres of life of the state and society – economy, social service, education, political system and foreign policy. We should build such a model of the state and civilizational community which would be harmonious and attractive to all who consider Russia their Motherland.

We see the directions of the work ahead of us. We realize that we have historical experience, which other states do not. We have a powerful foundation in our mentality, culture and identity, which other nations do not have. We shall strengthen our “historical state,” which we inherited from our ancestors, the state-civilization capable to solve organically the task of integration of various ethnoses and confessions. We have lived together for many centuries, we scored victory in the most terrible war together. And we will continue to live together. And I will say to those who would like or attempt to separate us: “You will not succeed.”

www.premier.gov.ru January 23, 2012.

Leokadia Drobizheva,

D. Sc. (Hist.) (Institute of Archeology RAS)

**RUSSIAN IDENTITY AND TOLERANCE
OF INTERETHNIC RELATIONS: EXPERIENCE
OF TWENTY YEARS OF REFORMS**

The formation of the joint identity of citizens in all countries is considered the necessary condition for the preservation of the integrity of a state and maintenance of accord in society. This article examines the change of the essence of identities in Russia and tolerance of

interethnic relations of the Russians and people of other nationalities during the twenty years of reforms.

All common processes going on in Russia and other countries notwithstanding, we had special conditions for the past twenty years. The older and middle generations have lost the country they lived in; its area, structure, the system of relations, customs and habits and the way of life, as well as the ethnic composition of the population have changed. The Russian citizens live in a state, whose image was quite different for most of them twenty years ago.

In the first years of new Russia many people took themselves for “citizens of the U.S.S.R.” In 1992, when we carried out surveillance polls in our capital Moscow, only a quarter of respondents identified themselves as Russian citizens. This was quite understandable. In contrast to peoples of the Union republics, who considered themselves Soviet people, but at the same time associated themselves with their republic – Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and all the more so Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, etc., who lived in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) seldom identified themselves as Russian citizens. It was under Boris Yeltsin, largely due to his political confrontation with Mikhail Gorbachev, that the formation of the Russian nation began. It proceeded in the same vein as in other Soviet republics and was based on contraposition. Russia has appeared as a state which nobody wanted and expected. The authors of the Byelovezhsky project thought it would be the CIS. Politicians overseas were also worried over the appearance of a new independent state – the Russian Federation. It was not for nothing that George Bush went to Ukraine for talks with Leonid Kravchuk, fearing that the U.S.S.R., which had nuclear weapon, might repeat the fate of Yugoslavia. The painful emergence of the Russian Federation as a result of the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. influenced not only the establishment of

Russian identity, but also its character, ideas about it, and the attitude of Russians toward others, or “aliens.” Naturally, when the former state identity was destroyed in human consciousness, ethnic, regional and confessional identity came to replace it.

Research work carried out at the Institute of Sociology RAS under the direction of Vladimir Yadov has shown that in the 1990s and in the early 2000th ethnic identity prevailed in people’s minds. The same was true in similar research in the republics of North Ossetia (Alania), Tatarstan, Tyva and Sakha (Yakutia). But Russian identity was historically restored quickly enough. In 2002, 63 percent of the population revealed it. About the same figures were obtained in other surveillance polls carried out by the Institute of Sociology RAS jointly with the University of North Carolina (U.S.A.). In 2006 sixty-five percent of people identified themselves as citizens of Russia.

In 2011 about 95 percent of those polled determined their identity as “citizens of Russia.”

Table 1

With whom people are connected to a greater extent

With citizens of Russia	72%
With fellow-countrymen	60%
With people having similar outlook	52%
With people of the same nationality	51%
With people of the same faith	42%
With people of similar trade or profession	40%

In 2011 Russian identity has come to the fore, and the feeling of “strong bonds” with citizens of Russia increased twofold. At present Russians are close to inhabitants of Britain or Germany in the strength of their ties with their country.

Table 2

	2004	2011
Feeling strong ties with citizens of Russia	31%	72%
Feeling strong ties with people by outlook	54%	52%
Feeling strong ties with people by trade or profession	53%	42%
Feeling strong ties with people by nationality	47%	51%
Feeling strong ties with those living in the same town or village	30%	60%

Greater attention is paid to comparing Russian identity with ethnic, regional and local identity, inasmuch as they reflect the integration processes going on in the country. Identification by nationality has prevailed over state identification.

Revealing their understanding of Russian identity, respondents speak, more often than not, of their state, the place of Russia in the world, its civilization, history and achievements in science and culture. The concept of ethnicity is disclosed through the origin of the parents, the language, customs and habits and confession.

Recent research has established that the most important factor for identification is the state (it accounts for 60 to 75 percent of respondents). Among other consolidating factors, 20 to 35 percent of respondents name “responsibility for the fate of the country,” “human ties,” historical past, native land, the language and culture. Up to 10 percent of respondents named customs and habits and features of the national character. This is only natural, because Russians often take Russian identity as state identity. This was why it became a mass phenomenon so rapidly.

The essence of the ideas about Russian identity depends on the concrete regional situations. Some people associate themselves with the state, others with their civil duty and obligations before their fellow-

countrymen. In the first instance Russian identity is more like identity with state community, as national-state and political identity, in another instance as civil identity. There is no rigid wall between them. Civil society is only being formed in our country, and historical tradition emphasizes people's perceptions toward loyalty to the state rather than civil solidarity.

Research carried out by the Levada-Center in the 1990s gave ground to speak of negative identity of our fellow-citizens. We know about high social differentiation and political disunity. However, it is evident that there are values and requirements of people in society which cement its members. One of them is the country you were born and live in. The Motherland is the value for most people. The idea about it is usually emotionally tinted and forms the very component of identity which is called patriotism (we have in mind true patriotism, but not jingoism).

The question "What idea today could inspire people and rally them together in the name of common goals?" (respondents were offered a choice of three answers out of eleven variants), the greatest number (42 percent) was received by "the idea of unity of the peoples of Russia for the sake of its revival as a great power". The ideas of "return to socialist ideals," "unity of the Slav peoples," "solution of global problems facing mankind," "law-abiding state" collected from 13 to 38 percent of answers.

The results of the poll do not give ground to interpret the striving of Russians to "the revival of their great power" as aggressive, chauvinistic sentiments. The view of a "special historic mission of Russia" is shared by not more than nine percent of those polled. The view that "man has only one Motherland and he should not abandon it" is shared by half of respondents (52 percent).

What place should a majority take in the poly-ethnic area of the country? On the one hand, the older generation still harbor previous ideas about the standards in the country where each person is a “reliable comrade and friend,” part of the younger and middle generations entertain the ideas about the humanitarian values of tolerance declared by democracy. On the other hand, part of Russians feel offended for the loss of their former status of the “elder brother.”

During the past twenty years soreness has not left people’s consciousness. It received additional feed in the form of feelings of other European peoples in the countries which had a considerable and rapid influx of people of different cultures. In these years Russia has become the world’s third country, after the United States and Germany, in the influx of immigrants. This has been taking place against the backdrop of a considerable change in the ethnic composition of the population. In the U.S.S.R. Russians accounted for 51 percent of the population, whereas in the Russian Federation this figure is 80 percent. Besides, we are living through the consequences of the Chechen crisis (billions of rubles are spent on economic rehabilitation of Chechnya, and this is the reason for meetings under the slogan “Stop feeding the Caucasus!”) Among the threats which cause the greatest fear, the respondents put to second place (after terrorism) “the drawing of Russia in the prolonged conflict in the Caucasus.”

Russian identity was formed as one aimed at solidarity and lower social and political differentiation. The authorities and the most active section of society, which were liberally oriented, hoped to foster such identity. Although there has been the experience of British identity, which softened the post-colonial situation, but did not save it from the Northern Ireland conflict, and London incidents of the summer of 2001, and the experience of the French political nation, which did not help avert the unrest in poor, socially unreliable districts, still hopes did not

disappear and the enthusiasm of different political forces in the formation of the Russian political nation did not abate.

Sociological research, including that on the projects of “20 Years of Reforms” and “Civil, Regional and Ethnic Identity and Problems of Integration in Russian Society,” has shown that the problems of interethnic relations still exist.

Ethnopolitical sentiments of those who consider themselves “more Russians than people of their own nationality” are not distinguished by greater loyalty. Sixty-eight percent of them responded that they feel irritation or dislike toward representatives of other nationalities. More often than not, the latter are those who have come from the North Caucasian or Central Asian republics. Sixty-one percent would approve the methods of Stalin’s past or the present period of France under Nicolas Sarkozy, that is, compulsory eviction of certain nationalities from a town or village they live in.

Thus, Russian identity, while reflecting the formation of a political and civil nation in the country, includes, just like in old democratic countries, ideas and standards which do not always accord with civil ideas.

In the conditions when populist politicians added the politicization of the ethnic factor to the objective situation in the country, people’s ideas about multinationality as a historical specific feature of this country changed. “Is the fact that Russia is inhabited by people of different nationalities a benefit for its development or a problem?” respondents were asked. Sixteen percent answered that it was a benefit, 41 percent said “both,” and 28 percent believed that it was “rather a problem.”

During the past twenty years the question as to whether Russia is a common home for all nationalities living in it has not lost its acuteness. The idea that all people inhabiting Russia should have equal

rights continues to be one of the most widespread, but it is losing support with every passing year. In the 1990s this was the view of the evident majority (64–65%), in 2001 – 61%, and in 2011 – 47% of all respondents.

The share of people who believe that “Russia is a multinational country, but the Russians as a majority should have more rights” has increased twofold from 1995 to 2011 – from 14 to 31 percent, and along with those who consider that “Russia should be a state of Russians” they comprise 45% (25% in 1995). Open support of the idea of Russian exclusiveness comes mainly from young people and poorly educated Russians. In the capital Moscow and in St. Petersburg there are many “soft nationalists” (40 percent against 30–32 percent in other towns) who maintain that Russians as the majority responsible for the state of affairs in the country should have more rights than other peoples living there.

During the past twenty years readiness for maintaining contacts with people of another nationality has not changed for the better. Negative attitudes to various forms of contacts fluctuated between 22 and 43 percent in 1994, and 29 and 47 percent in 2011.

Dislike on ethnical ground is explained by respondents by the fact that people of another culture behave as “masters of this land.” This was said by 63 percent of respondents. Another argument is differences “in behavior of people and their way of life” (39%), and only one-fifth of respondents explain it by rivalry in obtaining prestigious jobs. This is quite understandable, because most migrants of another culture take up jobs which local people do not claim.

Russian identity which became confident and strong enough, cementing the Russian political nation, is definitely an important result of the past two decades, however, this identity has an imprint of painful experience of changes and negativism of phobias and rueful feelings.

Half of all respondents admitted that there were clashes in their locality on grounds of national dislike and maintained that since the year 2000 interethnic relations have deteriorated.

However, these relations should not be overdramatized. This was said by President Dmitri Medvedev at a meeting of the Presidium of the State Council on February 11, 2011. Various research centers confirm that the share of nationally prejudiced people in interethnic contacts fluctuates within the 30% limit for several years. Eighty-nine percent of those polled maintain that “violence in interethnic and interconfessional disputes is impermissible, but 44 percent state that “violence is permissible if justice is violated with regard to my people,” and 41 percent agreed that “all means are good and acceptable to protect the interests of my people.” These sentiments are more widespread among Russians than among other nationalities (43% and 34% respectively).

This is the new situation of the 2000s. In the 1990s such sentiments could more often be felt among non-Russians. These replies of Russians are quite in line with the actualization of ethnic-national self-consciousness among them and are largely a reaction to the rapid flow of migrants of alien culture. In this respect Russians are not different from citizens of other European countries in similar situation.

Quite a few socially deprived sections of the population come out for a radical solution of “nationality problems.” Such position is characteristic of many people living in the capital Moscow and in St. Petersburg – 63 percent (as compared with 33–38% among people living in other towns).

What are the reasons for such sentiments? It can hardly be asserted that a sufficiently large group of young people or other residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg are confirmed xenophobes. For 85 percent of the 18–25-year-old people consider it impermissible to use violence in interethnic disputes. About 15 percent have negative

interethnic orientations. But the feeling of losses for the past 15–20 years among them is keener than among people of older generations. This means that young people are greatly dissatisfied with the present life and react more sharply to corruption and social injustice.

It should be said that the share of people thinking and feeling that “they have lost much during the past 15 to 20 years” (70%) is twice as big as that of those who do not think and feel this among those who are irritated by and dislike representatives of alien nationalities. We mean not only losses in the living standards (35% think and feel this), but also the loss of security (35%), growing corruption in the country (32%), and, what is very important for each person, the loss of confidence in the morrow (43%).

Our main conclusion is that the growing Russian identity combined with ethnic identity integrates people, but this does not remove discontent with the existing system of the distribution of resources, self-identification of people against injustice, corruption and lawlessness. Symbolic statements about and calls for “unity of the Russian nation,” tolerance in interethnic relations, love for the Motherland, etc. should not be at variance with what people see in reality. Otherwise, state and civil identity will not save us from enmity toward “others,” or “aliens.” Society and the powers that be should exert every effort to achieve the situation in which all citizens of Russia will feel it their common home.

*“Vestnik Instituta Kennana v Rossii,”
Moscow, 2011, issue 20, pp. 22–32.*

A. Khabutdinov

MUSLIM EDUCATIONAL TRADITION IN NIZHNI-NOVGOROD REGION

A considerable part of the Muslim population of Russia live in two regions – the North Caucasus, which is included in the Southern Federal District, and in the Volga – Ural region, which is included in the Volga Federal District. There are about two million Muslims living mainly in the republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan in the Volga Federal District and forming a little over half of the entire population. The administrative center of the Volga Federal District is the city of Nizhni Novgorod. The situation in the Nizhni Novgorod Muslim community has considerable influence on the public sentiments of all Muslims living in the Volga area.

The Volga Federal District includes the republics of Bashkortostan, Mari El, Mordovia, Tatarstan, Udmurtia and Chuvashia, and also Kirov, Nizhni Novgorod, Orenburg, Penza, Samara, Saratov and Ulyanovsk regions, as well as Perm Territory. The very name of the District shows the significance of the Volga River as the geographical and economic dominant of the region. It holds one of the most important places in the Russian Federation by three key indices: the number of population (including five non-Russian peoples numbering more than one million), the share of industrial output in the country's economy, and the number of Muslims. Its share of industrial production in the economy of Russia comprises 23.9 percent, the highest index (the Central Federal District comes second).

The population of the VFD accounts for 22.1 percent of the total number of the citizens of Russia. There are Russians (more than 70 percent), Tatars, Bashkirs, Chuvash, Udmurts, Mordva, Mari, Komi-Permyaks, as well as representatives of other nationalities and ethnic groups.

The majority of the VFD population is Orthodox Christians (from 70 to 75 percent), and more than 20 percent are Muslims. The latter comprise about 40 percent of all Muslims in the Russian Federation. A distinctive feature of VFD is the presence of traditional compact districts of the rural Tatar population in all its parts, as well as urban Muslim (mostly Tatar) communities united in Spiritual boards.

According to the All-Russia population census of 2002, of the two million Tatars and about 19,000 Kryashens (Kryashens, or christened Tatars, are an ethno-confessional group of Volga Tatars believing in Christ) living in the Republic of Tatarstan, two million 14 thousand speak the Tatar language

In all, four million 63,000 ethnic Tatars live in VFD, and four million 355,000 speak Tatar. According to the same census, in Bashkortostan, where 900,000 Tatars live, one million 396,000 people speak Tatar; of one million 221,000 Bashkirs, one million 56,000 speak the Bashkir language. On the whole, one-seventh of the entire VFD population and the absolute majority of Muslims living there speak the Tatar language.

In 1988 the Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod had one jameh mosque and two prayer houses. The present picture is quite different. In 2006 there were 59 mosques per 50,000 Tatar Muslims.

In the revival process of religious education in Nizhni Novgorod and its region great attention has been paid to education at mektebs. At the Sunday school attached to the Nizhni Novgorod jameh mosque children and adults of different nationalities have been studying since 1991. In the early 1990s the number of its pupils reached forty. Inasmuch as there are no Tatar schools in Nizhni Novgorod region, the Sunday schools, where pupils study the native language and religion of their ancestors, function mainly at mosques. Many Tatars born in Nizhni Novgorod region now live in big towns and their children come

to the birthplace of their parents during summer holidays. In view of this, summer schools for children were opened in Rybushkino and Safajai in 1994, catering for 700 pupils.

The opening of new mosques inevitably demanded the training of new imams. The point is that there was only one person, Umar-hazrat Idrisov, chairman of the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod region, who had professional Muslim education. This was why the question of training new imams was put on the agenda immediately after the setting up of the Spiritual Board in 1993.

On October 29, 1994, the “Mahinur” madrasah was ceremoniously opened in Nizhni Novgorod, close to the cathedral mosque. The opening ceremony was attended by the Chairman of the Council of muftis of Russia Ravil-hazrat Gainuddin and the Chairman of the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod region Umar-hazrat Idrisov.

The “Mahinur” madrasah is a non-governmental professional religious educational institution. It was founded and sponsored by the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod region. Since its opening more than two hundred persons have received education there and become “imam-hatyb” and “teacher of the foundations of Islam.” About 140 of them now work as teachers and imams in mektebs and madrasahs, or continue studies at higher Islamic educational institutions in Moscow and Kazan. The “Mahinur” graduates now head Muslim parishes in Nizhni Novgorod and the region, as well as in Krasnoyarsk, Moscow, Yaroslavl, Kazan and in the Chechen Republic.

At the beginning teachers from secular educational institutions of Nizhni Novgorod and also instructors from foreign countries worked at the “Mahinpur” madrasah. Inasmuch as Muslim educational traditions among the Tatars were broken in the late 1920s, it was necessary to invite non-Russian citizens to teaching at the madrasah during the

initial period, which involved certain dangers. The point is that the active use of foreign teachers could lead to the establishment of control over the madrasah on the part of foreign foundations. Besides, some teachers had quite radical ideas. The popularization of these ideas among students has led to closing down a number of Muslim educational institutions, including the “Yoldyz” madrasah in Naberezhniye Chelny (Tatarstan) and “Furkan” in Buguruslan (Orenburg region). Another important aspect should be mentioned. In the 1980s–1990s a number of madrasahs were opened in the Soviet Central Asian republics, whose students and teachers could not find a common language with the authorities of the newly-independent states. In those years a civil war flared up in Tajikistan and there were bloody clashes in the Ferghana Valley. Some of the fighters who took part in the hostilities and suffered defeat moved to Russia later, where they tried to get teaching jobs at madrasahs. In the 1990s the Chairman of the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod region Umar-hazrat Idrisov, in contrast to many muftis in other regions, refused to give work as teachers at the “Mahinur” madrasah to emigrants from Central Asian countries and transfer control over it to foreign foundations.

The leading role in the revival of Muslim education in the Volga region belongs to Nurullah Ismailov, who graduated from the Tashkent Islamic Imam al-Buhari Institute in 1987. He was one of the best Koran readers and preachers. There were several people from Turkey who made a valuable contribution to the revival of Muslim education at mektebs and madrasahs and fulfilled the duty of imams and muezzins.

Thirty percent of teachers at Islamic educational institutions are people up to 30 years of age, 50 percent – from 30 to 50, and 20 percent – from 50 to 60. Twenty-five percent of all teachers have a higher

religious education, another quarter – a secondary religious education, and a half has a higher special secular education.

The following subjects are taught at the “Mahinur” madrasah: Islamic upbringing and education, Islamic faith, interpretation of the Koran, foundations of sermon, life of Prophet Mohammed, history of prophets, history of Islam, history of caliphate, Russian language, Tatar language, English language, world literature, psychology, foundations of economics, records management and accounting, political science, informatics, and physical culture and sport.

The “Mahinur” madrasah trains professional imams and teachers for old and new mosques, madrasahs and mektebs. Its teachers travel to rural districts of the region where they arrange courses for upgrading imams.

Among the pupils of this madrasah are not only Tatars from Nizhni Novgorod and the region, but also Tajiks, Uzbeks, Chechens and representatives of other peoples. The madrasah has become popular and gained respect in many regions of Russia, and its graduates now work as imams in many places of the country.

The branch of the “Mahinur” madrasah opened in the village of Medyany in 2001. It was named “Medina” and had special courses for upgrading imams and teachers of Sunday and general schools. One of the tasks of the courses was to prepare instructors for secondary schools teaching the subject of “Religions of Russia” and having knowledge of the history of world religions.

The opening of the madrasah in Nizhni Novgorod was preceded by painstaking work for the construction of an Islamic complex and preparations for the teaching process. The basic means for building the complex came from private donations of Nizhni Novgorod Muslims. Noticeable assistance was also given by the city and regional administration. This complex is an example to follow for Russian

Muslims. Apart from the madrasah and mosque, it includes a museum, club, polyclinic, and other objects. In other words, the village of Medyani is now a new model of Tatar Muslim rural settlement, being a combination of religious educational center and objects of the social infrastructure and agricultural production. In 2005 the “Medina” madrasah was transformed into an independent self-sufficient educational establishment.

The Spiritual Board of Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod region pays much attention to the quality of training religious personnel and raising their “competitiveness.” Its imams, including graduates from the “Mahinur” madrasah, continue education at secular institutions of higher learning of Russia: the Institute of Asian and African Countries at Moscow State University, at Moscow State Linguistic University (studying the Arab language), at Nizhni Novgorod State University, and at the Volga-Vyatka Academy of State Service.

Since 1999 the “Mahinur” madrasah, jointly with the Nizhni Novgorod State University, has been working on the “Islamic Studies” program, within whose framework about 500 people do research in this field. Hundreds of students have received additional education and have been given special certificates. Students of the Nizhni Novgorod State University receive annual stipends from the Foundation of Support of Islamic Culture, Science and Education.

In September 2005 the “Comprehensive program of supporting the sphere of religious education for 2005–2015” began to be implemented. In accordance with this program, the Council of Muftis of Russia, nine Nizhni Novgorod residents have been enrolled in the best universities of Russia: two in the St. Petersburg State University, two in the Moscow State Linguistic University and five in the Nizhni Novgorod State University. In 2005 the Nizhni Novgorod State University introduced a special program to study Russian regions by

students sent to the university by Muslim spiritual boards of Russia. Instructors at the “Mahinur” madrasah teach religious disciplines within the framework of this program.

In 2002 the first group of students taught to become qualified imams was formed at the Institute of Asian and African Countries of Moscow University. Ildar Nurimanov, a representative of the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod region graduated from it with flying colors and continued studies at the master courses.

In 2005 the Nizhni Novgorod Islamic Institute named after Husain Faizkhanov received a license for work. This non-governmental educational institution of higher professional learning combines religious and secular education. Among its founders are the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod region and the Regional National-cultural Autonomy of Nizhni Novgorod Tatars. The Nizhni Novgorod Islamic Institute works in close contact with the Nizhni Novgorod State University. A resolution of the third “Faizkhanov Readings” in 2007 envisaged the creation of a system of continuous Muslim education and an infrastructure at the Nizhni Novgorod Islamic Institute and its turning into a full-fledged center of a higher education for Muslims of the Volga Federal District. At present the Nizhni Novgorod Islamic Institute named after Husain Faizkhanov functions as a research center. Its associates have prepared and published books and study aids about the role of Islam in the modern world, Tatar philosophical thought, the history of Islam in the Volga-Ural area, Sufism, etc. In 2009 a reference book and dictionary entitled “Islam in the Volga Federal District” was published, dealing with the history of the development and the present situation of the Muslim communities in the region.

Islamic educational institutions in the region receive quite a few study aids. A considerable part of them has been compiled and issued

by the “Medina” Publishers. Among them are “The Holy Koran,” “Canons of Religious Practice,” “Family and Marriage Relations,” “Funeral Rite in Islam,” etc.

In 1999 Damir-hazrat Mukhetdinov became the head of the “Mahinur” madrasah. He was a graduate of the Institute of the Arab language at the “Umm al-Kura” University in Mecca. One of his first initiatives was the creation of a library at the madrasah, which today boasts about 20,000 books. The library collection includes reprinted publications of the 19th century, books in the Arab, Farsi and Tatar languages, literature on philosophy, history, political science, art history, audio and visual aids, and feature films. The library is open to all.

In the past decade a “nucleus” of working imams has taken shape in Nizhni Novgorod. It includes Damir-hazrat Mukhetdinov, first deputy chairman of the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod region and rector of the Nizhni Novgorod Islamic Institute named after Husain Faizhanov, Abdulbari-hazrat Muslimov, director of the “Mahinur” madrasah, and Ahmet-hazrat Abdullin, imam of the cathedral mosque and teacher at the “Ikhsan” mekteb. These imams read sermons at the city mosques every Friday. And Friday sermons at the cathedral mosque and at the “Tauba” mosque are read by the chairman of the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod region Gayaz-hazrat Zakirov.

In the past decade Nizhni Novgorod and the region served as an example of the well-thought-out combination of religious and secular education. According to the data of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tatarstan, more than two thousand school pupils of Nizhni Novgorod region study their native Tatar language at thirty rural schools. Tuition in junior forms is conducted in the Tatar language and in senior forms it is studied as an independent subject. Eighty-two

percent of Tatars living in Nizhni Novgorod region speak Tatar fluently.

At the same time it should be admitted that the numerical strength of the Tatar population in the region continues to dwindle, which is an exceptional case in the Volga Federal District. On the whole, Nizhni Novgorod region is living through a demographic crisis. In 1989–2002 its population decreased from three million 719,000 to three million 524,000, which is typical of most regions with the Russian population. According to the data of the Federal Statistical Service in Nizhni Novgorod region, mortality rate exceeded birth rate by 2.3 times, including in urban settlements by 2.1 times and in rural districts by three times in the first six months of 2006. The absolute losses in the numerical strength of the region's population in just one period between January and June 2006 comprised 17,130. At the same time the number of people in the Muslim republics of the Russian Federation constantly grows. In the Republic of Tatarstan it increased from three million 641,000 in 1989 to three million 779,000 in 2002, with the growing Tatar community by 250,000 people.

The ethnic composition of the Muslim population of Nizhni Novgorod and the region has considerably changed in the past several years. For example, there are now about 15,000 Azerbaijanis (according to official figures), but by experts' estimates their number reaches 30–40,000. According to the data of the migration service, during the first six months of 2005 about 25,000 migrants arrived in the region, 70 percent of whom are Azerbaijanis. By experts' estimates, in 2010 the number of Muslims in the region (Tatars, Uzbeks, Azerbaijanis, Tajiks, and others) reaches 300,000 to 500,000. As to the number of the Russian and Tatar population of the region, it steadily decreases.

In 2005 a migration center was set up at the Regional national-cultural autonomy of Tatars living in Nizhni Novgorod region and the Spiritual Board of Muslims. Among its tasks is assistance to Muslims arriving in Nizhni Novgorod and the region from other places, as well as the protection of local Muslims from undesirable influence from abroad. In view of the exacerbation of the situation in the North Caucasus and in some Central Asian countries, as well as the growing influence of radical Muslim groupings, it was necessary to step up preventive work among the newly-arrived migrants.

Since the 1990s Nizhni Novgorod has been turned into a center of Russian Islamic studies. The encyclopedic dictionary “Islam in the European East” notes that during the 1980s – 1990s Islamic research was successfully developing in academic and university centers of Kazan, Ufa, Makhachkala and Nizhni Novgorod, along with Moscow and St. Petersburg.

In 1995 a permanent methodological seminar on the history of Islamic civilization began to function at “Mahinur” madrasah. A great role in turning Nizhni Novgorod into one of the centers of Russian Islamic studies was played by Sergei Senyutkin. He was engaged in thorough research of problems of intercivilization dialogue, the history of the Tatar population in Nizhni Novgorod and the region, and the history of rural Tatar settlements there. After his death his colleagues continued his work embracing the entire Volgo-Ural region, European Russia, and West Siberia.

In 2005 the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Nizhni Novgorod and the region, jointly with the Nizhni Novgorod State University began to publish the quarterly almanac “Islam in the Modern World: Interstate and International Political Aspects.” It pays special attention to the situation in the Volga region, the North Caucasus, Central Asia and the

Middle East, that is, the regions where active interethnic and inter-confessional contacts are taking place.

The “Medina” Publishing House is an important center of this kind in Nizhni Novgorod, which has become the first all-Russia Muslim media holding. It prints eleven periodicals:

“Medina al-Islam” – a monthly newspaper of Russian Muslims.

“Minaret” – a quarterly on Islamic problems.

“Mavlid an-Nabii” – annual culturological almanac.

“Ramazanovskiye Readings” – annual theological collection.

“Islam in Nizhni Novgorod and the Region” – annual educational journal devoted to the history of Muslims in the region.

“Islam in the Modern World: Interstate and International Political Aspects” – a quarterly almanac.

“Forums of Russian Muslims” – annual academic analytical bulletin.

“Hajj of Russian Muslims” – a quarterly almanac.

“Faizkhanov Readings” – collection of material of annual conference.

“Modern Problems and Development Prospects of Islamic and Turkic Studies” – collection of material of annual conference of young scholars of Islam and the Orient.

“Islam in the Russian Federation” – encyclopedic dictionary of 12 volumes; so far three volumes have come off the press devoted to Nizhni Novgorod and the region, Moscow and St.-Petersburg. Another volume is about to be ready – “Islam in the Urals.”

In conclusion, it should be said that Muslim educational tradition in Nizhni Novgorod and the region existed in the 18th–21st century, demonstrating continuity and stability. During the past decade Nizhni Novgorod has become one of the most rapidly developing centers of

Russian Muslim community in the spheres of book publishing, science and education.

“Izucheniye prepodavaniya Islama v Evrazii”,
Moscow, 2010, pp. 124–161.

F. Kuliyev,

Cand. Sc. (Hist.) (the North Caucasian Academy
of State Service, Pyatigorsk)

**ON RELIGIOUS IDENTITY OF THE PEOPLES
OF THE NORTH CAUCASUS UNDER CONDITIONS
OF GLOBALIZATION**

The contemporary geopolitical situation in the world made of identity's formation the problem of today, which endures rather big changes and acquires many shades. Depending on the object's identification it is possible to define different types of identity: ethnic, religious, confessional and national (state). The formation of identity represents in the Russian Federation an urgent problem, since the Russian identity is extremely differentiated and unsteady. Comprehending and suffering their adherence to the crossing multitude of them, individuals, social groups and societies become the carriers of a complicated plural identity. The problem of the crisis or “the loss” of identity is subject to discussion more often.

The sphere of contemporary contradictions and problems connected with the North Caucasus is rooted directly in the outcome of social-cultural transformations endured by the region for the XX century. Identity is formed and changed under the influence of social conditions as a result of group's mutual action. The individual may perceive himself as a member of many groups immediately, may change his identity and the preference in hierarchy of identities

depending on specific situation and circumstances. Only biological and anthropological identities (race, age and gender) remain unchanged. In this connection A.V. Baranov notes that social groups and individuals display in their behavior many forms of identity – ethnic, gender and age, religious, political, cultural, territorial etc. The identity forms, being mutually connected, often are put one over the other, increasing the sense of originality.

At the same time, the epoch of globalization is marked by the distinctive feature – unification, when the reverse processes gain in strength: people return to their roots and start to value above all their ethnic and cultural identity and assign primary importance to identity's keeping. The influence of globalization and the pressure of mass culture lead to the situation, when the peoples in the North Caucasus become afraid of loss of their ethnic identity. Therefore they see salvation in the search for the connection with their small “Motherland”, with local and regional roots. The peoples of the North Caucasus have their own perception of ethnic identity, which differs essentially from “German” conception of nation (by blood) and the “French” (by citizenship) conception of nation. As the central point of “Caucasian” identity there comes forward the native land regarded as a holy place irrespective of its geo-economic or geopolitical value.

The ethnic identity is in close reciprocal action with religious identity, which transforms into one of many and often contradictory to each other identities and which easily is getting on with them in an individual human being exactly owing to the force of its virtual nature.

The renaissance of religiousness represents one of the forms of the return of individual to the mass of people. Since religious identity possesses a rather great mobilization capacity, while groups of the main Russian confessions live in compact settlements, it is not a complicated task to foresee the lines of probable polarization and disintegration. For

the first years after disintegration of the USSR, the work carried out to maintain relations with confessions lacked initiative, and the center did not keep under its control the processes going on in the regions with Muslim population. It seems that the line of separation among regions and republics of Russia is represented by an invisible boundary, which divides Russian citizens. Evidently, it may be only the factor of disintegration of the Russian state. As long as the government will not comprehend adequately the specificity of processes going on in the regions, where people traditionally profess Islam, and will not take the corresponding actions, the development of ethnic-confessional identity in these regions will go on just in this direction.

The religious identity is a concentrated expression of the individual's attitude, quintessence of vital problems of his "course of life" determined by his cultural competence and values' trend. At the same time, it becomes a display of hopes and illusions in the world of social relations, including ideals of social construction of the world and the state of inter-cultural and inter-civilization's contacts, which fell to these peoples' lot. The positive formation of ethnic-confessional identity in various parts of the planet is hindered everywhere by the modernization's impulse personifying a dynamic leitmotiv of globalization's processes.

Analyzing the role of Islam in the North Caucasus, the scientific community stressed existence of three models: the first model is represented by the peoples of Dagestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia, where deep-rooted Islam has rather great influence; the second model is represented by Karachai-Cherchessia and Kabardino-Balkaria, where its influence is essential but not sufficient to have a significant impact on the social-cultural and political situation; the third model includes Adygeya, partially North Ossetia and Abkhazia, where the religious situation is characterized as follows: the people regard themselves as

Muslim believers but lack good acquaintance with Islam or do not know its teaching well or do not know it at all, perform partially or do not perform at all the main part of religious directions, orient to “mundane” way of life as a whole.

In this connection, the education and cultural practice based on the known values, becomes a significant means for the struggle against hatred and intolerance, for overcoming the barriers created by the efforts of certain political forces urging towards utilization of cultural and religious ignorance for achievement of personal political aims.

The Russian Federation as a poly-ethnic state unites various ethnic-cultural types, where social-political life in each of them, despite their specifics, is determined by general identity of the state. In Russia, like in the whole world, the region becomes a significant factor of political process, where national and transnational forces confront local demands. The regions as subjects of political relations under conditions of globalization of the world play a more substantial role in inter-state processes. Among the reasons making urgent in contemporary circumstances the identity of Russia one should stress, on the one side, the urge towards all-civil and all-national identification priorities and, on the other side, the preservation of its cultural originality. The regional peculiarity shaped within the state is unable to undermine the national interests of the country and its identity. The plurality, which is characteristic to identity, according to S. Huntington, represents a product of self-identification, of understanding the fact that possession of special qualities as a human being, who distinguishes me from you and us from them, may not and should not pass to the phase of self-generation aimed at historic and political alienation and territorial disintegration of the state.

Russia characterized by a long history of cultural variety in terms of religions and religious outlook, languages, definite ethnic groups and

intensive migration processes regards cultural variety as a resource to an even greater degree. In this context, the North Caucasus is a specific region of Russia. This region demonstrates the exclusive diversity of ethnic groups: proper ethnic, ethnic-linguistic, ethnic-regional, clannish etc. The peoples speaking the languages of some big groups (Indo-European, Turkic, Kartvel and North Caucasian groups) live on its territory. The largest world confessions are widely spread in the Caucasus.

Russia is marked by its unique experience in the long and tolerant coexistence of various cultures and confessions. For the time being, it has not been adequately comprehended and converted into social technologies. The specific feature of Russia in terms of variety and diversity of its cultures, i.e. the dual identity inherent in Russian civilization was taken into account by its history. For the historic period, the bilingual and multilingual culture created the Russian common character. In contemporary circumstances the dual identity should not be forgotten and should be constantly taken into account in current political practice. G.S. Kiselyov correctly asserts that Russians have double identity, i.e. feel themselves being simultaneously the citizens of the multinational state and the representatives of the certain people and religion. Such double identification is the indispensable condition of the sustainable existence of any multinational state.

Under conditions of cultures and civilizations opposition, the double identity is the “protective” basis for prevention of “washing out” the territorial integrity. The researchers and journalists should overcome the citizens’ perceptions forming degeneration of the unsustainable national identification’s consciousness, while in case of use of other cultures, aggressively advancing under conditions of globalizing world, they should overcome its dependence on other civilizations and cultures. Of great danger is not only the self-

renunciation of values of national culture, but also the thoughtless infatuation with global culture. Global culture is not neutral. It issues from different centers – “gates of globalization”, which accumulate huge resources coming forward as translators of information flows and cultures.

The identification of contemporary Russia should go on in the channel of its unique history and culture. No state can exist without knowledge by its citizens of its history and respect to the notions, such as discipline, honesty, moral principles and cultural values.

Under contemporary conditions, the natural way for Russia consists in cultivation of double identity: cultural-ethnic (religious) and all-civil, political. They should not break or oppose each other, but should supplement the failing aspects going well together with each other. The state should display a constant readiness to make big expenses for education and by means of new education programs to improve quality characteristics of the new generation and to win it over to its side in terms of politics. The role of new technological instruments of identity’s construction is as follows: mass media and Internet should determine the state’s priorities in the all-civil sphere.

The identification’s adherence is conditioned by the historic past. The identification’s parameters are formed for the long time, and just their succession defines the historic sustainability.

In order to form the realistic perception of perspectives of the North Caucasus it is needed, first, to be able to define the constants in the social-historic development of the region for the whole period of its being a part of Russia, second, to be able to allot in the current situation the basic public processes, which will determine the future for the long-term perspective. The way to their positive realization by political practice is assured not so much by the governance of the territories or of the population, as by the governance of basic social processes going

on in the region. And just such processes are going on at present in economy, ethnic-demographic structure and culture of the North Caucasus. The separate solutions for solving these problems do not exist, and they are not simply mutually connected but are mutually conditioned. The long-term, targeted and consecutive policy of complex regional modernization is a must.

Thus, the ethnic and religious identity is the dominant factor of the processes of constructing identity in the North Caucasus, while their intensity and direction are determined by historic and cultural pre-conditions within the framework of political process.

*“De Caucaso: istoriko-etnograficheski almanah”,
Karachayevsk, 2010, pp. 65–70.*

V. Nikerov,

Political analyst (Ulyanovsk)

FROM FUKUSHIMA TO LIBYA: POLITICIZATION OF PIPELINE RIVALRY ON THE CASPIAN ENERGY SCENE

A vivid example of the politicization of energy projects, which turn from business plans to propaganda serials, is provided by the “Nabucco” gas pipeline project. Many people regard it as an “idée fixe” of American and European politicians.

The present round of politicization is developing in the context of the growing demand for natural gas after the man-triggered disaster at the Japanese “Fukushima” nuclear power plant and refusal of many European countries to continue the development of nuclear power production.

“Nabucco” vs the “Southern Flow” is one of the most bitter and prolonged battles in the war for the fuel-and-power future of Europe,

which exerts considerable influence on the countries of the Caspian Sea region. However, the present “Nabucco – Southern Flow” confrontation is developing in the new conditions precipitated by natural and man-induced cataclysms in Japan and the “Arab Spring” of 2011.

The chain of interconnected events in the spring and summer of 2011 caused a new and active phase of the rivalry of the two projects. The “Fukushima” disaster provoked a rise in the demand for natural gas in the world as a safer fuel. The civil war in Libya was responsible for the collapse of the local oil-and-gas industry. To boot, the government of Germany issued a statement at the end of May 2011 about the forthcoming closure of nuclear power plants in the country, which also boosted the demand for natural gas. According to the head of the Russian gas monopoly “Gazprom” Alexei Miller, a record-high demand for natural gas has been registered in Europe due to the developments in the Middle East, North Africa and Japan. In April “Gazprom” increased the volume of its gas deliveries to Europe by more than 21 percent, as compared with April of 2010.

This situation led the western mass media and analytical circles to assertions about the beginning of the “golden age” of natural gas. Two influential publications – “The Financial Times” and “The Wall Street Journal” printed articles about the “golden age” of natural gas all over the world. International fuel-and-energy research institutions spoke of this in the same vein. By experts’ estimates at the International Energy Agency, the world consumption of natural gas can grow by more than fifty percent within the next twenty-five years.

This gave an additional impetus to gas pipeline rivalry in the Caspian region.

The “Nabucco” gas pipeline system: from European business idea to bitter politicization. Initially, this project had a purely business foundation. Participants in the consortium regarded it as a means for

getting new gas deliveries from the Caspian region and the Middle East. According to the “Nabucco” idea, the 3,900-kilometer-long pipeline should have brought Caspian and then Middle East gas, via Turkey, to Austria. The pipeline would bypass Russia and deliver gas through Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary to the distribution center near Vienna.

But soon political matters began to dominate the project, and business considerations were pushed to the background. The “Nabucco” project is now viewed as an additional instrument in the struggle against Russian fuel-and-energy policy in Central and Eastern Europe. The European supporters of this project are encouraged by the United States, claiming that “Nabucco” is a symbol of European solidarity, a new “Maginot Line” in the face of Russian domination in the sphere of gas deliveries to the European Union. It was also said that the European Union should oppose Russian oil and gas, which came to replace the Cossack squadrons of the 19th century and tank divisions of the 20th century, as the instruments of political control over Europe.

However, observers who visited Brussels in the autumn of 2010 made a conclusion that there was still much confusion around this pipeline in Europe. First of all, because there are not enough volumes of gas for deliveries. But the obvious absence of the resource base does not stop the supporters of the “Nabucco” project, who continue to promote it.

Suffice it to recall the Baku – Tbilisi – Ceyhan oil pipeline. There were many skeptics in Russia and outside it concerning the pipeline. The project was nicknamed “geopolitical fantasy” and “pipeline to nowhere”. Nevertheless, the Baku – Ceyhan oil pipeline was laid out and became a geopolitical triumph of the West in the Caspian basin. This means that it is too early to make geopolitical conclusions before final results are thoroughly analyzed.

Turkmen keys to “Nabucco”: **Caspian blow at Russian fuel-and-energy domination.** The absence of sufficient resource base for “Nabucco” in Azerbaijan forced the European Union to turn to Turkmenistan. In recent years Ashkhabad has considerably increased its influence in the Caspian region as one of the major producers of gas. The Turkmen gas deposits are viewed by Europeans as the main source for filling the new gas pipeline. When a big delegation of fuel-and-energy experts from Russia was in Brussels in May 2011 to discuss the future of gas relations between the Russian Federation and the European Union, the latter’s chief executive in the fuel-and-energy field Gunther Ettinger said that Europe’s energy future would be based on gas from Central Asia.

If Azerbaijan becomes the country which will start “Nabucco” with the initial volume of natural gas, the further prospects of the pipeline and its capacity will depend on Turkmenistan. The latter favors the diversification of export routes, but it has not joined the project officially. Ashkhabad would like to sell its gas on Turkmenistan’s border, which means that the “Nabucco” managers will have to take upon themselves the transportation of gas across the Caspian Sea, which is now torn by political and territorial disputes. At present Turkmenistan not only expressed the desire to sell its gas to Europe, but also takes certain measures in this direction. In November 2010 the vice premier of Turkmenistan’s government Baimurad Hojamuhamedov said at the “Oil and Gas of Turkmenistan – 2010” conference that within the next five years his country would be able to deliver to Europe up to 40 billion cubic meters of gas annually. Besides, Turkmenistan also announced its desire to open a Trans-Caspian route for exporting gas jointly with Azerbaijan. Apart from that, Turkmenistan is building a domestic “East – West” gas pipeline with an

annual capacity of thirty billion cubic meters of gas to deliver gas from the rich eastern deposits to the Caspian Sea in the west.

Turkmenistan claims that the laying out of a pipeline on the sea bottom requires only an agreement between the parties concerned through whose sea sectors these pipelines will pass. This means that any two countries out of the five states having access to the Caspian Sea can lay out underwater pipelines by mutual agreement. This view was expressed by the President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdymuhamedov at the third summit of the Caspian states in Baku on November 18, 2010. Thus, Ashkhabad gave it to understand that the laying out of a pipeline in the national sectors of Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan is an internal matter of these two countries, but not a common Caspian problem.

This is also in line with the interests of Azerbaijan, which supports the “Nabucco” project. It is ready not only to supply its fuel-and-energy resources to European markets, but also to give its communication lines for the export of Turkmen natural gas to Europe.

Thus, the southern fuel-and-energy corridor to deliver Azerbaijani and Central Asian oil and gas to Europe bypassing Russia can become a reality. So far it is not only Azerbaijan’s fuel-and-energy resources are delivered to world markets, but also oil from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. According to Azerbaijan’s state statistical committee, 860,400 tons of Turkmen oil were delivered to Europe by pipelines by November 1, 2010.

* * *

Today we see the intensive phase of one of the sharpest geopolitical confrontations in the Caspian-Caucasian region: the “Nabucco” gas pipeline project supported by the European Union and the “Southern Flow” supported by Russia. The present round of the

confrontation is developing in the context of the growing demand for natural gas after the man-triggered catastrophes in Japan and plans not to use nuclear power in Europe, especially in Germany. Rivalry between “Nabucco” and “Southern Flow” is a result of mutual interdependence and the depletion of fuel-and-energy resources in the modern world.

Kaspiisky region: politika, ekonomikz, kultura,”,
Astrakhan 2011, No 3, pp. 101–107.

A. Klimenko,

Cand.Sc. (Military) (IFE of RAS)

**DESTABILIZING FACTORS IN RELATIONS
BETWEEN KYRGYZSTAN AND UZBEKISTAN**

The situation in Central Asia from the point of view of ensuring stability and security remains very complicated. The territorial and other related inter-state contradictions started to appear after disintegration of the USSR and at present are far away from being solved.

The demarcation of borders is one of the main knots of contradictions in relations between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. According to different data, from 70 to 100 disputed pieces of land exist along the perimeter of Uzbek-Kyrgyz border lengthly of 1300 km. Today, only the parts of the border in mountain ridges and valleys without essential differences remain having been delimited. In particular, the disputes were caused by the parts of the boundaries along such water routes, as channels, rivers and water basins, where not only issues of territorial demarcation but also of water-economic settlement existed.

The most acute disputes are caused by some parts of Fergana valley. At present, 75 questioned pieces of land in the south of Kyrgyzstan gradually are turned out to become subject to influence of Uzbekistan, according to data of Public Foundation “For International Tolerance”. Besides, two Uzbek enclaves with population from 40 to 50 thousands exist on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. In its turn, the Kyrgyz enclave with 600 settlers exists in Uzbekistan. These enclaves lack a direct access to the territory of their states creating big difficulties for their population. The parties repeatedly tried to solve this problem, but they have substantially different approaches to its solving.

The Uzbek leaders tried to conclude an agreement with their Kyrgyz colleagues on the exchange of the territories. However, the Kyrgyz party considers the proposed options as unacceptable, since realization of these options would almost completely separate two districts (Leilek and Batken districts) from the other territory of the state. The decision of this question is complicated by discovery in one enclave (Sokh enclave) of oil fields, as well as by recent attempts of both parties to seize the enclave by force. Uzbekistan possesses much grater military forces and increases its military contingent on the boundary with Kyrgyzstan and in enclave Sokh.

For the recent period a new factor, which may have an impact on solving this problem, emerged in spring of 2005 in the course of “colored revolution” in Kyrgyzstan. The total number of Uzbek citizens in Kyrgyzstan accounts for 700 thousand people. The Uzbek Diaspora is settled mainly just in the rebellious Osh and Dzhelalabad regions in the south of the country. Its representatives use corrupted local officials to occupy the key posts in some branches of economy (trade, agricultural production and the sphere of service) and in local governing bodies.

The leaders of new, recently appeared organizations, started to raise demands on the obligatory Uzbek quota in the parliament and executive state organs, on the legislative act to fix the posts of the governor of Osh region and the mayor of the city of Osh for the persons of Uzbek nationality. Therefore from the start of troubles they took actions to aggravate the situation for achievement of their objectives. With due account of the claims of Tashkent for some territorial parts of Kyrgyzstan as well as nationalist feelings in Uzbek Diaspora and the analogous feelings of the group of extremists of residents in Kyrgyzstan, these circumstances may become a great problem for regional security and stability. It was completely proved in the course of disturbances in May and June of 2010 in the cities of Osh and Dzhelalabad, which resulted in 2000 victims and wounded persons and about 100 thousand refugees of Uzbek nationality.

The second significant knot of inter-state contradictions between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan is connected with different views on spread of terrorism in the region and ways and means of struggle against it. The assault of fighters of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan to the south of Kyrgyzstan in 1999 aggravated gravely the relations between Tashkent and Bishkek. In time of the events in Batken the president of Uzbekistan accused Bishkek of promoting the situation, when bandits freely crossed the boundary of Kyrgyzstan earlier and for two years freely several times left Tajikistan and through Kyrgyzstan entered Uzbekistan. As a result, bandits arranged their attacks, brought tons of explosive materials to Kokand, Andijan and Namangan through the territory of Kyrgyzstan, as marked the president of Uzbekistan.

The Kyrgyz authorities, on their side, declared that repressive actions of Tashkent against religious figures and Islamic organizations in the beginning and in the middle of the 1990s provoked a strong

reaction and contributed to formation of the armed opposition conducting military actions, and Tashkent had to struggle against them.

At the same time, it should be said that the leadership of Uzbekistan often applies forced methods carrying out anti-terrorist activities contrary to meaning of neighbors. For instance, the Uzbek servicemen mined a part of territory of Kyrgyzstan and gorges around enclaves Sokh and Shakhimardan, which resulted in human victims among local residents and delivered great damage to cattle-breeding. Only thanks to persistent demands of Kyrgyzstan and international organizations the Uzbek specialist arranged works of mine clearing. The Uzbek party ignored the claim for payment of material compensation for the suffered damage.

In addition to the mentioned difficulties, there exist problems between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in the sphere of economic reciprocal action, including joint usage of water resources of the region.

“Mirovye derzhavy v Tsentralnoy Azii”,
M., 2011, pp. 95–98.

Khakim Abdullo Rakhnamo,

Cand. Sc. (Pol.) (Tajikistan)

**ISLAM in HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
of UZBEKISTAN, TAJIKISTAN AND KYRGYZSTAN**

A wide range of questions connected with teaching and research of Islam in Central Asia attracts a great interest of academic community both in the region itself and outside its boundaries. For the last years, a great number of scientific studies, conferences and projects were devoted to research of these problems. As the comparative analysis of the contents of the research in this sphere demonstrates, the complex of the corresponding problems is subject to study in three main

foreshortened forms: (1) teaching and study of Islam as a religious doctrine and a discipline in religious education institutions; (2) teaching and study of basics of Islam as a special subject in the general education schools; (3) teaching and study of Islam in the secular higher education institutions.

The three directions of study and teaching of Islam in the states of Central Asia are at the stage of consolidation and confront numerous methodological, methodical, political-legal, material-technical and other problems. The presented article is devoted to one of the most important aspects of this process, namely, study of Islam in higher education institutions of post-Soviet Central Asia. The author took into account the significant circumstance mentioned below. The methods, approaches and contents of the subjects of the Islamic and Islamic research sphere are inseparably linked with formation of the world outlook positions of students not only in terms of their attitude to Islam as a religion but also of the whole system of moral values. Consequently, teaching of Islam in secular higher education institutions is of scientific-enlightenment significance but also has a substantial impact on formation of ideological and public positions of students.

At the same time, a thorough study of problems related to teaching Islam in secular schools of Central Asia is summoned to promote discovering and comprehension of the vital problems, which, to the author's mind, should lead to arrangement and consolidation of internal professional contacts in this field, to perfection of education methods and, finally, to formation of the contemporary and efficient research of Islam.

The presented material is based on the results of the field research in three republics of Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan), including the data collected in the course of meetings with the leadership of the main higher education institutions of these

republics and with professors teaching the subjects connected with Islamic subject-matter. The author studied a wide range of literature, including 200 text-books, programs and handbooks used in thirty higher education institutions of Central Asia. Teaching of Islam in each of three republics is marked by separate specifics, and at the same time the situation in this sphere at the regional level has common features conditioned by similarity of the survived problems of ideological, political and financial nature. At present, teaching and studies of Islam in secular higher educational institutions in Central Asia is carried out within the framework of the following subjects and lectures:

- general introductive religious subjects;
- general humanitarian subjects partially covering Islamic subject-matter;
- special courses devoted to separate aspects of Islam, which are included in programs of students' formation and preparation for non-Islamic and non-theological professions;
- Islamic subjects included in the program of preparation for Islamic special studies;
- religious subjects, which are taught in theological departments.

Teaching of introductory religious subjects is the most disseminated form of teaching Islam in secular higher education institutions in Central Asia. The subjects “History of Religions”, “Study of Religions” and “World Religions” are some of such typical subjects. Today, the students of humanitarian professions in most higher education institutions of the region, including the students, who study “Philosophy”, “Philology”, “Sociology”, “Jurisprudence”, “History”, “Oriental Studies”, “Psychology” and “Journalism”.

The higher education institutions in Tajikistan contain the subject “History of Religion” for 36 academic hours. This course is lectured for one semester 2 hours per week. This course is a short introduction to

studies of religion, and it is summoned to give students the short information about different religions of the world – Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Zoroastrianism etc. Acquaintance of students with Islam is lectured for 10 academic hours. This course is obligatory in the Tajik National University for students, who study “Philosophy”, “Psychology”, “Sociology” and “Political Science”, while it is optional for choice for students, who study “Philology”, “Journalism”, “History” and “Jurisprudence”. Since the academic year of 2007/08 students may study “Ethics” of “Geography” instead of religious subjects. In some Tajik higher education institutions the lectures’ course of relatively similar contents is marked in curriculum as “Study of Religion”.

In the higher education institutions of Uzbekistan the introductory religious subject is usually called “Study of Religion and Foundations of Spirituality” and is obligatory for students of all specialties. The course of 57 academic hours is lectured for students of the second year according to the programs composed on the basis of the type program recommended by the ministry of higher and general special education of Uzbekistan. The program includes a wide range of items, such as “Early Forms of Religion”, “National Religions”, “Zoroastrianism”, “Buddhism”, “Christianity”, “Islam”, “Religious Extremism and Fundamentalism” and “Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations”. According to this education program, 50% of hours fixed for this subject are used to describe a short history of Islam, its founding sources and main trends. A special accent is made on the mystic-ascetic trend of Islam – Sufism as well as Sharia and Muslim ethic.

In the higher education institutions of Uzbekistan, side by side with the subject “Study of Religion”, the obligatory special course “Spiritual-Enlightenment Basis for the Struggle against Religious Extremism and Terrorism” is lectured. This short course (14 academic

hours) was included in the curriculum in 2009. It is based on the program worked out by the ministry of education of Uzbekistan. According to this program, the course's aim is equipping students with modern knowledge of reactionary essence of terrorism and religious extremism as well as educating the youth in the spirit of loyalty to national idea. The theme, such as "Reciprocal relations of State, Religion and Religious Organizations in Uzbekistan", "Place and Role of Islam in Central Asian Region", "Essence of Religious Extremism and Terrorism as a Threat to Stability of Society" and "International Political-Legal Foundations of Struggle against Religious Extremism and Terrorism" are studied within the framework of this course.

Teaching of introductory religious subjects in the higher school of Kyrgyzstan is marked by greater flexibility, which is proved by a multitude of names and variety in substance of similar courses in various higher education institutions of the republic. For instance, in Jusup Balasagyn Kyrgyz National University the students of humanitarian specialties attend course "Study of Religion" (40 academic hours). According to its program, worked out by the religious study of this institution, the aim of the course consists in giving students extensive knowledge of theory and history of religion and free-thinking so that everyone of them might orient in the existing variety of religious views, in history of free-thinking and atheism and in accordance with his views would form his attitude to religion and free-thinking. Within the framework of this course, Islam occupies 4 lectures and 2 seminars, which provide the students with basic knowledge of Koran, main Islamic trends (Sunni and Shiite), faith dogmas, rites and ethic of Islam, Sharia and main schools of Muslim law (mazhabah), Islamic "sects", relative combination of national and religious elements in culture of peoples of Kyrgyzstan.

In some higher education institutions of Kyrgyzstan the courses with roughly the same contents are taught under the titles “Foundations of World Religions”, “History of Religions” (Batken State University), “History of World Religions” (Osh Humanitarian-Pedagogic Institute) in the size from 36 to 54 hours.

In total, teaching of Islam within the framework of religious subjects is the most spread and accessible form of receiving basis information on Islam by students of most specialties of secular higher education institutions in post-Soviet Central Asia.

Within the framework of general humanitarian subjects, Islamic and Islamic study themes are contained in the courses of the world and national history and philosophy. A certain number of hours are allocated for study of history of Islam, Islamic period in national history as well as Muslim philosophy. For instance, within the framework of the course “Philosophy for Higher School” worked out by the chair of philosophy headed by Professor S. Navruzov of Tajik State University, out of 72 hours of the general course 4 hours are devoted to Islamic philosophy. This course contains a short review of the following themes: “Philosophy in Muslim East”, “Mutakallims and Mutasilits” and “Philosophic views of al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avitsenna), Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and other Islamic Schools of Philosophy”.

The program “History of Kyrgyz Philosophy” worked out in Kyrgyz National University devotes 4 hours (out of 36 hours) to study of Islamic philosophy. The Islamic themes are included within the framework of the part of this course “Social-Philosophic Thinking in the Middle-Ages: the Social-Cultural Premises of Social-Philosophic Thinking of Kyrgyz”. It covers such themes, as “Specifics of Dissemination of Islam in Kyrgyzstan”, “Arabic-Muslim Philosophy (Falsafa)”, “Muslim Theology” and “Sufism”. Within the framework of

4 study hours it is possible to present only a schematic characteristic of Muslim philosophy. However, this course and similar courses are introductory lectures mainly for students of non-philosophic specialties.

The students of the higher education institutions in Central Asia receive knowledge about Islam also by attending special courses included in the education program for various non-Islamic studies and non-theological humanitarian specialties, for instance, “Philosophy”, “Oriental Study”, “Sociology”, “Political Analysis” and “Jurisprudence”.

In this connection, it is worth mentioning the situation in the higher education institutions of Kyrgyzstan, where the curriculum of these specialties contains 1-2 similar courses. For instance, students of some humanitarian specialties of the American University in Central Asia (Bishkek) attend lectures of the special course “Political Islam” worked out by D.Sc.(Phil)Tim Epkenhans, who is director of the Academy of OSCE located in Bishkek. This program covers many subjects connected with history and contemporary situation of political Islam. The following themes are contained in this special course: “Origin of Political Islam: Answer of Intellectuals and Religious Figures of the Near East to Challenges of Colonialism and Dominance of the West in XIX Century”, “First Muslim Groups: Muslim Brothers, al-jama’at al-Islamia and Salafi Movement”, “Islamic Revolution in Iran and its Roots”, “Islam in post-Soviet Central Asia: civil war in Tajikistan and its Consequences”, “Contemporary Movements of Islamic Radicalism: Hizb at-Tahrir and its Ideology”.

The same situation is seen in the higher education institutions of Tajikistan. For instance, in 1998 the subject “Foundations of Muslim Law” was included in the study plan of the law and the historic departments of the Tajik State University. It includes the following subjects: “Doctrinal Foundations of Muslim Law”, “Correlation of

Notions Sharia and Fikh”, “Classical and Contemporary Islamic Law”, “Muslim Criminal Law”, “Muslim Family Law”, “Muslim Processional and International Law”. This subject is obligatory (the form of account – the examination) for students-jurists, while for the students of the department of history in specialty “International Relations” this course is fixed as the course by choice.

In the same higher educational institution the specialty “Political Science” includes subject “World Religion and Politics” (54 academic hours, including 24 hours devoted to Islam and contemporary processes in Islamic world) and “Islam and Political Processes”. The latter course considers in detail the themes connected with history and political role of Islam in contemporary world, inter alia, as follows: “Conception of Islamic State”, “Islam and Globalization”, “Modernization and Political Islam”, “Islam and Secularism”, “Islam and Democracy” and “Regional Extremism in Central Asia”.

In the Russian-Tajik Slavonic University, the students receiving education in specialty “International Relations” should attend lectures of the course “Islamic Factor in International Policy and in Policy of the Russian Federation”, while the students of the same specialty in the Tajik State University study the subject “Islamic Factor in International Relations”.

In Uzbekistan such courses are included in the study plans of humanitarian specialties. The course “Muslim Law” (36 hours) is included in study plans of Tashkent State Juridical Institute and of University of World Economy and Diplomacy. The program of the course contains the themes, such as “Sources of Muslim Law”, “Schools of Muslim Law” (mashhabs), “System of Muslim Law and its Institutions”, “Muslim Civil Law”, “Questions of Family-Marriage Relations and Succession in Muslim Law”, “Crime and Punishment in Muslim Law”, “Muslim Judicial System”, “Role of Muslim Law in

Contemporary World”. The subjects of similar contents are educated also in Tashkent State Islamic University (“Islamic Law”) and in Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies (“Foundations of Islamic Law”).

The above described forms of teaching concern the introductory themes, which precedes a more thorough study of Islam by the students specializing in Oriental and Islamic studies. The most vivid example in this connection is represented by the courses elaborated by various chairs of the Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies, which was established yet in 1918 and is the largest regional center of Oriental studies numbering about 30 chairs. Just this education and research center was the first one in Central Asia to provide training of specialists in Islam.

The subjects directly devoted to Islam are included in programs for specialty “Oriental Study” and are incorporated in a number of higher education institutions of Tajikistan, including Academician B.Gafurov Khudzhan State University. The same profound form of teaching the subjects related to Islam is practiced by Tashkent State Islamic University (founded in 1999) and by Islamic Institute of Tajikistan (established in 2007). These two new higher education institutions occupy a special place in the system of secular higher education system in Central Asia, since they train not only specialists in Islamic studies but also religious figures for internal needs of their own countries. In this context, the status of these higher education institutions coming forward simultaneously as secular and religious higher education institutions remains undetermined, while programs, norms and standards of both of them is at the stage of formation.

Finally, it is worth mentioning teaching of Islam by theological departments of some institutes and universities in Central Asia. It should be noted that the phenomenon of “theological department” and

corresponding specialty “theology” represents a modern phenomenon in secular system of higher education in the region and, consequently, is perceived by public circles quite differently. Nevertheless, as it is shown by the experience of some higher education institutions in Kyrgyzstan, the specialty “Theology” gradually wins its place in this sphere of higher education in Central Asia.

In this connection, a special interest is attracted to the state qualification of baccalaureate in specialty “Theology”. The standard of the degree contains the detailed description of demands to the level of the graduates’ education. The main distinction of specialty “Theology” standard from the standards for religious study specialties is as follows: Islam is studied in education of specialists-theologians not only from the point of view of scientific but also theological positions, and this factor remains the main obstacle for its incorporation in other higher education institutions of the states in Central Asia.

At present, one of the leading theological departments in Central Asia functions in the Osh State University. The department training specialists according to a thorough program of study of Islam was established in 1993 with financial and methodical assistance of Turkish enlightenment organization “Dianet”. The students study both general humanitarian subjects and attend the religious courses, which are taught only in religious education institutions in Central Asia.

Today, one of the leading theological departments in Central Asia functions in the Osh State University. The department training specialists on the thorough program for study of Islam was founded in 1993 with financial and methodical assistance of the Turkish enlightenment organization “Diyamet”. Side by side with the general courses devoted to humanitarian subjects, its students attend the courses, which are taught only in religious higher education institutions of Central Asia. To evaluate the substance and direction of such courses

it is worth considering as an example the program of the course “Kalam” (Muslim Theology)”. The lectures are arranged at the sixth semester in size of 72 academic hours (52 hours – lectures, 20 hours – seminars and 14 hours – work on ones’ own). The first modulus of the program foresees consideration of the category’s notions, such as iman (faith), kufr (lack of faith), shirk (polytheism), irtidad (apostasy), nifak (hypocrisy), kabira (grave sin), sifat (Allah attributes). The second modulus includes such themes as “Definition, aim and science’s problems of kalam”, “Faith in Prophets and Angels”, “History of the Creation of the World”, “Schools of Muslim Law (mazkhab)”, “Trends in Islam”. Four hours of lectures and two hours of seminars are fixed for mastering each theme.

As was said above, at present, the system of teaching Islam in the higher education institutions of Central Asia endures a not easy transitional period, which engenders a lot of complicated solvable problems. They are conditioned by some factors, while the most significant of them is the change of ideological priorities at the general state level, the transformation of methodological directions and pedagogic approaches in the regional high school, as well as deterioration of the material-technical basis of higher education. The study of the situation in this sphere makes it possible to evaluate the present specifics of teaching Islam in the higher education institutions of the region and to define more precisely the circle of problems confronted by them.

Alternative approaches to Islam: “scientific” or “theological”?

In terms of methodology the most urgent is the problematic choice of approach to Islam. As it is known, the Soviet study of religion as a whole and of Islam in particular was guided by the materialist

approach to religion regarding it as a product of history, the result of human imagination and a vestige of the past. The contents of contemporary education programs and text books used in the higher education institutions of the republics in Central Asia demonstrates that mainly Marxist view relating to the subject remains in them. This methodological conservatism is explained by the fact that the disciplines of religious study are within the competence of the higher education institutions' chairs, which formerly were the chairs of scientific atheism, and that most authors of programs on religion's study and study of Islam are the professors of the old formation sharing the Marxist positions. At the same time, the adepts of Marxist school strive not for publicizing their views, often changing the definition "Marxist" for "scientific". The debate in terms of ideology and methodology are arranged periodically by professors in the higher education circles and demonstrate ideological trend inherent in approach to religion as a social phenomenon. Taking into account the substantial changes in political and ideological situation in Central Asia, one should admit that the materialist approach to appraisal of religion often confronts rigid opposition not only on the part of students but also of academic circles, the cultural elite and political figures. The critics of "scientific" approach accuse its adepts of the incorrect definition of "scientific" meaning, which implies the same Marxist approach to religion.

In 2008, in Tajikistan, where religious figures have a significant influence on political and ideological atmosphere, the dispute on approaches to evaluation of religion turned out to become a very acute national discussion. In the course of the debate the ministry of education created a special commission, and representatives of Muslim clergy, who participated in its work, including well-known religious-political leader of Tajikistan – Khodzhi Akbar Turadzhozoda. Exactly

he subjected to rigid criticism the so called “scientific” approach to Islam and its Marxist essence. To his mind, the authors of education programs and textbooks on Islam should deviate from Marxist approach and stand up for positions of believers. In his words, students of general schools and of higher education institutions should study Islam as a religious doctrine and base themselves on Islamic sources and not on Soviet atheistic and western literature of Islamic study.

Further, Khodzhi Akbar Turandzhonzoda sent his public letter to the republic’s minister of education and to the state advisor of the president of Tajikistan for ideological affairs, where he criticized the authors of education programs and textbooks for study of Islam and asked the ministry to take urgent measures for correction of the situation. However, the proposals made by Khodzhi Akbar Turandzhonzoda at the meeting of the commission and his views expressed in the letter to the ministry of education caused very negative reaction of “scientific” approach supporters, who declared that teaching and study of Islam as a faith contradicted scientific principles and do not correspond to the secular character of education in Tajikistan.

The comparative analysis of the contents of some education programs and textbooks for higher education institutions of the region shows that some their authors keep their adherence to the materialistic approach to religion and continue to teach religion’s study subjects from the position of Marxist methodology, that they often replace the terms -”materialist” by “scientific” and the term “atheism” by the term “free thinking”.

As an example it is possible to cite the program of the course “History of Free Thinking” used in the National University of Kyrgyzstan for 48 lecture hours and 48 hours in seminars. The contents and the list of recommended literature is almost identical with the program in Soviet times of the course “Scientific Atheism”. The

students are proposed to read the books on scientific atheism, including works of classics of Marxism-Leninism. The students should read the works on scientific atheism written by well-known authors in Soviet epoch.

As it is shown by practice, the comprehension of Islam is being formed in societies of Central Asia under the influence of theology. Thus, conservatism in teaching Islam in the higher education institutions inevitably starts to be in contradiction with the perception of Islam by society, while the search for new methodological approaches for evaluation of Islam remains one of the main problems, which confront those, who take part in the process of disseminating knowledge about Islam.

“Izuchenie prepodavaniya Islama v Evrazii”,
M., 2010, pp. 236–251.

Nurlan Abdulov,
political analyst (RANHIGS)
**PROCESSES OF REGIONALIZATION,
INTEGRATION AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION
IN CENTRAL ASIA**

The trend to regionalization in the contemporary world development coincides with development of globalization processes. Regionalization may be considered both as a display of general integration processes (leading in perspective to globalization) and as a protection’s reaction of the countries being behind (protecting their economy and its positive dynamics from one of globalization’s direction).

There are two different types and one sub-type of regionalization in contemporary practice: the renaissance (rebirth) of regional powers,

formation of regional (integration) groups and emergence of “triangles of development”. The emergence and existence of a regional power originally supposes a considerable inequality of economic might of adjacent states, which allows this power to impose its will on small countries by peaceful political, economic and diplomatic methods. The sustainability of such entities is explained by existence of external threats, formation of mutually profitable economic cooperation, by existence of elements of common economy and by reciprocal supplementation. The regionalism of the second type is more efficient, since the unity raises the relative equality of potentials of the participating states, creates a more stable legal basis for cooperation and promotes an easier refusal by the participants from a part of sovereignty for the benefit of transnational bodies.

Central Asia as a definition is firmly incorporated in the contemporary lexicon of the science of international relations and politics’ research. In geopolitical context, it is known that five post-Soviet republics are united within the given regional framework. The historic collisions in Central Asia, transformation of former administrative borders into state borders, creation of a new geopolitical situation has an effect on the contemporary notion “Central Asia”. The decision on the united term “Central Asia” comprising five post-Soviet republics was taken at the meeting of the leaders of former Soviet Middle Asia and Kazakhstan, held in Tashkent in 1993. It seemed that this decision was caused by the political attempts to define the geopolitical basis of the region’s countries. The external borders of the countries in the Central-Asian region on the perimeter of borders with China, Afghanistan and Iran were drawn in the period of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union and in many respects coincide with natural mountain ridges and rivers. These borders (except the Kazakh-

Russian border) were received by the states in Central Asia as a heritage of the epoch of geopolitical rivalry of the powers.

There exist different views on the processes of the region's formation in Central Asia. Some researchers deny existence of the signs composing the region, while others are inclined to see a wider regional framework. At the same time, such discussion was a reaction to the challenges appeared before the countries of Central Asia for the post-Soviet period and to the search for a non-traditional response to them. To a large extent the contemporary geopolitics in Central Asia is based on the criteria worked out before disintegration of the USSR. Most researchers in terms of methodology both in the post-Soviet space and outside its borders stick to the parameters determined by western researchers. In the global matrix of regions with various criteria, geographic, ethnic-confessional, geo-economic etc., Central Asia is positioned as a region and sometimes as a sub-region (within the framework of CIS or "New Eurasia", as defined by some American researchers). Such determination of groups is always a relative division. The question only is, in what context it is considered. The dissimilar characteristic of new notions was comprehended at the level of political elites in countries of Central Asia. From the middle of the 1990s, big states of Central Asia were looking for an optimal formula of mutual action with regional neighbors and the external environment seeing the conceptual indetermination of new geopolitical constructions.

The cultural-civilization's factors of region's emergence are rather substantial, since they are able to have a certain impact on formation of the regional identity. In this aspect Central Asia seems to be a zone of not only cross geopolitical and geo-economic interests but also a space for cultural-civilization's competition. According to some Chinese researchers, China is unable to have a great influence on the region's countries partially because culture and the political model of

the PRC is not so alluring for elites of the countries of Central Asia, and they mention also the fact of the Russian dominance in Central Asia for one-and-a-half century, the spread of the Russian language, of Russian mass media, the absence of barriers between elites of the region's countries and Russia, as well as the specifics in style of thinking.

The cultural-civilization's dominant is one of the main factors in the strategy of Turkey and Iran relating to post-Soviet Central Asia. With due account of the contemporary situation in the countries of Central Asia, the cultural-historic pivot of their relations with southern neighbors is not dominant. Taking into account the development trends of the Muslim world and its potential, as well as internal tendencies in the countries of Central Asia, it is quite possible to foresee consolidation of factors, which draw the region together with the Islamic world. At the same time, most researchers mention a rather great spread of western values among city dwellers and the youth. They may be regarded as western in a relative sense, since the Soviet-Russian sub-culture, which was dominant for a long period of time and had influence on some generations, including the present elites of Central Asia, seems to represent mainly transitional, although great influence of European cultural-civilization's environment.

The lack of understanding of the complex situation in Central Asia, its cultural-civilization's aspects was the cause of the erroneous western strategy in the region's countries. The American policy was based on the supposition that the countries of Central Asia, having attained independence, would urge towards American standards of democracy.

The attempts made for schematic presentation of dynamics of changing geopolitical processes in Central Asia caused emergence of various conceptions of the region's formation. As a whole, they were not in full directed to different targets, but it was evident that they

represented an attempt to change the geopolitical structure of the vast space of the Central Eurasia.

The new trends in international relations in “vast space” of East Asia, such as the intensified activities of the U.S. and its allies in the Middle East, the new “western” strategy of the PRC, the rising role of India and Pakistan promoted formation of a new geopolitical region and, consequently, of the new sub-system of international relations – Central-Eastern Asia. Central-Eastern Asia represents the united political-strategic space from the Caspian region to the Pacific coast of China, considers A. Bogaturov.

The first factor as a basis of the construction, mentioned by A. Bogaturov, following disintegration of the USSR, is composed of ethnic-demographic, geographic and political-strategic “bond” Pakistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan-Uzbekistan, which was consolidated and in this way conditioned the complicated reciprocal dependence in the sphere of security between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. At the same time, the mutual dependence between Pakistan and Afghanistan was further strengthened. The security of former Soviet Middle Asia depends on solving the Afghan-Pakistani problem (“Duran” line) and the Indo-Pakistani problem (Kashmir).

The second factor is composed of the intensified activities of Beijing on its western and north-western borders. For the 1990s, the PRC started a large-scaled campaign aimed at creation of the multilateral structure of cooperation in the form of ShOS.

The third factor is the military presence of the U.S. in Central Asia.

The fourth factor is the change of the foreign policy priorities of Moscow, its “European trend” and increased attention to problems of economic cooperation and security in Eastern Eurasia. Like

re-integration of Eastern Europe with its western neighbors and emergence of the Central-Eastern Europe, Central-Eastern Asia is the outcome of “drawing up” of two “old” regions.

A. Bogaturov named the region as Great Central Asia, including southern neighbors of Central Asia (Iran and Afghanistan), partially supporting the American conception of Great Central Asia. The essence of the latter consists in the extension of geopolitical, economic and cultural limitations of Central Asia at the expense of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The conception of Great Central Asia, made public in March 2005, did not become a valuable alternative to other conceptions of region’s formation in Central Asia.

The most significant objectives in the sphere of external relations of the countries of Central Asia after acquiring independence are as follows: creation of favorable climate in the sphere of foreign policy and economy and formation of the foundations of stable and safe development on the international arena.

For the 1990s, the geopolitical trends in Central Asia demonstrated the growing interest of the great powers and big countries in the regional situation. On the one side, the interest was stipulated by the rise of energy resources’ deliveries from Central Asia to the world market and, on the other side, it was conditioned by problems of international security. The group of active players in the region, namely, Russia, the U.S., the PRC, Turkey and Iran was supplemented by Pakistan, India and a group of countries, actually or potentially related to transportation routes from Central Asia to the external markets, as well as interested in new markets and concerned about problems of regional stability. The problems of regional stability and security in Central Asia connected, inter alia, with untraditional threatening challenges became the key problems in signing of various inter-state agreements and creation of international organizations.

Various countries demonstrated alternative models of development and options of solving appearing problems. Nevertheless, to the mind of most experts, Russia kept the key positions in the region. There were economic, political, cultural and other reasons for this conclusion. Since the period of getting independence the countries of Central Asia and Russia participated in activities of many bilateral and multilateral structures. At the same time, the diversity and a large specter of international organizations in CIS and in Central Asia, in particular, demonstrate different functional directions of the latter and washed away platforms, which, if not alternative, at least were very complicated.

The integration models on the Islamic foundations were not supported by the region's countries. The same attitude was displayed to the ideas of Turkic unity. Due to objective economic and geopolitical reasons Turkey would not be able to assume the role of the integrator. The enter of the countries of Central Asia in the Organization of Economic Cooperation (OEC) and further practice of this structure functioning showed weak economic reciprocal connections of the region's states with the states-founders of OEC (Iran, Turkey and Pakistan). The PRC as a leading player in Central Asia turned out to be involved in the multilateral process, which initially concerned safety of the border zone and regulation of territorial disputes and further, as it is known, the activities within the framework of the structure, such as ShOS.

The U.S. presence in the region was soon marked after disintegration of the USSR, first as a politico-economic player and after 11 September 2001 – as a military actor. The activities of the U.S. were not limited with protection of the interests of American energy companies and problems of nuclear security. The most important task of the U.S. in Central Asia, like in other regions of the former Union,

consisted in preventing emergence of potentially unfriendly to Washington coalitions, in neutralizing probable imperial Russian ambitions, in detaining Iran and, as far as possible, China. The military presence of the U.S. in Central Asia attached a new impulse to a discussion by American politicians and analysts about the role of the U.S. in the region. According to experts of the Institute for National Strategic Research, the U.S. might play three probable strategic roles in Central Asia: the restrict partner, the leader and the manager in the sphere of security. The first role was tested by the U.S. in the period of Clinton Administration. He refuted the strategy of the previous Administration and Talbot doctrine. According to some American analysts, the U.S. should chose for itself the role of “manager for security affairs”, to avoid transformation in “the leader” and to carry out its policy taking into account the interests of Russia, China and Iran.

The creation of the strategic barrier in the post-Soviet space is one of the most significant aims of Washington, Legvold thinks. This barrier should include the key republics, such as Belarus, Ukraine, Baltic countries, as well as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The consolidation of these countries’ ties with NATO in various forms and at different levels should become an instrument for realization of such strategy. The U.S. should be prudent in its relation with Russia, since Washington confronts in this case the double task. On one side, the U.S. should not permit dominance of Russia in this space or creation of the alliance between Moscow, Beijing and Tehran, and, on the other side, Washington is in need of cooperation with Russia to prevent destabilization of Eurasia. Thus, the U.S. and Russia will keep balance of their relations on the brink of partnership-rivalry.

The role of the U.S. is reduced to maintenance of “geopolitical pluralism” in Eurasia and to prevention of Russian dominance in the

geopolitical space of the region, to the mind of American geo-strategist Z. Bzhezinski. The primary interest of the U.S. is as follows: to ensure the situation, when neither power is able to keep the given geopolitical space under its control, while the world community would have an unimpeded financial-economic access to it. As is known, as a result of some changes and of technological progress the significance of certain geopolitical factors characteristic for traditional geopolitics and of some forms of communications was reduced, while the role of military factors became subject to transformation. Nevertheless, the geopolitical pluralism will become a sustainable reality when the circuit of oil pipelines and transport routes connects the region directly with big centers of the world economic activities via the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Sea as well as by land.

The conception of geopolitical pluralism contains the challenges for Russia, the PRC and Iran, which promotes rapprochement of positions and views of Russia, China and Iran on a number of problems of international security with key significance for the region of Central Asia. Russia is a dominant actor in the region, and the policy of Moscow is based on this fact, according to British expert R. Allison. The vulnerability of the countries of Central Asia resembles the vulnerability of the countries of the third world for the period of “cold war”, according to him.

The attachment to the regional dominant force, which is Russia, ensures at least the partial participation of the countries of Central Asia in various structures of CIS. This circumstance has led to regionalism supported by the regional dominant force. At the same time, the regional dominant forces avoid assuming great liabilities in the organizations, which reduce their freedom of actions. The activities of the Anti-terrorist Center of CIS turned out to be not efficient, since the responsibility for security in Central Asia was divided among

Moscow, western states and China. As another aspect of the closeness of the dominant force was the policy of balance, which may have a positive impact on the regional cooperation for security affairs. The multilateral approach used by Moscow is quite adequate, since it covers bilateral relations of Russia with countries of Central Asia, to the mind of R. Allison.

In this case, it is logical that some leaders of countries in Central Asia prefer the defense structures and bilateral agreements instead of multilateral structures or joint military structures without participation of the principal centers of force. The states of Central Asia cherish faint hopes for regional structures, which are characterized by weak institutionalized basis and may become short-lived. It is possible to agree with the meaning that the cooperation of the region's states is marked by greater attention to the issues of internal security than to traditional forms of external defense. In this context, the main question for the leaders of countries in Central Asia consists in security of their own regimes, to the mind of Allison.

* * *

Thus, the region of Central Asia became a cross-road in the geopolitical and civilizations' zone. In essence, the global competition became a reflection and projection of these relations at the regional level. The researchers in the countries of Central Asia as "patriots" of the region often raise the question on regional community and look for the formula of the space's integrity.

The regional integration processes are complicated and diverse. The integration defined as "the whole complex of the efforts exerted by the mankind and directed to mutual supplementation of economies and on application of reciprocal achievements as well as the passage in perspective to the world economy is marked by the contradictory

characteristic”, Y. Gavrilov notes. The contradictions are caused by essential difficulties connected with adaptation to new realities under conditions of integration’s construction.

The integration’s construction in the post-Soviet space will be more efficient, if it will be based on a number of principles, Russian political analyst A.N. Mikhailenko considers.

The first principle – the principle of strategic partnership means that the states carrying out their policy should proceed not from daily wishes but should see the future and take orientation to the long-term national interests.

The second principle – the principle of systematic approach regarding regional and sub-regional integration entities as elements of the global system characterized by efficiency, which depends a lot on political coordination in various spheres of cooperation of the integrating countries.

The third principle – the principle of transparence, which means close mutual action of the state and society with due account of its point of view in order to comply with the laws and the established order of administrative actions.

The fourth principle is the principle of versatility, which consists in ability of accommodation to the changing circumstances, to settlement of the emerging issues in the course of integration’s development. The important principle of integration activities consists also in combination but not opposition of processes in the field of governance and self-organization, optimization of their reciprocal action at the different stages of formation and development of integration.

Central Asia, unquestionably, has the capacity for becoming a regional entity. In this context, Central Asia is not only the roster of five countries but a complex of historic-cultural, political-geographic

and social-economic conditions, which determine both the similarity and the differentiation of development potentials.

*“ENDISI: Analiticheskiy Byulleten”,
M., 2011, N 1, pp. 90–102.*

“FOR MANY YEARS WE LIVED IN ONE STATE”

For Russia, Central Asia (CA) is a strategic region. And it is so not only because it has an impact on keeping stability and security of its southern boundaries. The economic capacity, the mineral wealth and labor resources of CA are of great significance for the RF. Finally, it is impossible to ignore the fact that for many decades we lived in one state: first – in Russia and further – in the USSR. The recently published monograph “Russia in Central Asia” (Almaty, 2010), written by D.Sc.(Ec.), Corresponding Member of RAS G.I. Chufrin, is devoted to the most important problems of development of Russia’s relations with the CA countries for the period after disintegration of the USSR. The author marks out three large groups of problems. The group, connected with problems of regional security, is devoted to non-traditional threats to security: religious extremism, terrorism, narcotics business and illegal migration. Beyond question is the author’s assertion that the main reason of emergence of these threats is as follows: economic instability in the region’s countries, the high threshold of poverty and the critical level of social stratification of the population. The author marks out the other very significant problem, which threatens stability in CA – the permanent disagreements among the region’s states.

Considering the struggle against these threats, G. Chufrin pays special attention to the struggle against terrorism and narcotics business. The significant work is carried out in these two directions not

only in CA countries but also within the framework of their bilateral and multilateral reciprocal action with regional and international centers of influence – Russia, the U.S.A., China, NATO member-states. Pointing out that this cooperation is closely interwoven with rivalry and antagonism of the biggest actors in the region, G. Chufirin in detail considers American and Russian military-political and strategic interests in CA as well as the measures taken by these countries for consolidation of their positions. The author analyzes plans of Washington for dislocation of its own mobile forces in the region, for establishment of its control over military contingents of Caspian and Central Asian states and for rendering different military and military-technical assistance. At the same time, he makes the quite appropriate conclusion that in case of realization of these plans “the almost insuperable damage would have been caused to national interests of Russia in the sphere of regional and global security due to the inevitable loss by Moscow of its influence in CA”.

The Organization of Treaty on Collective Security (ODKB) is one of the main instruments of Russia for carrying out its policy in the region. Writing about aims and tasks of this organization, the author considers that its further evolution will be influenced not only by external but also by internal factors “conditioned by the existing contradictions among members of ODKB”. It is stressed that, despite all disagreements between Russia and the U.S.A. relating to the appraisal of the wished perspectives of the situation’s development in post-Soviet CA, these countries can not help maintaining cooperation on the issues of security. Primarily, it is connected with the situation in Afghanistan and probable destabilization in the whole region. The correct remark is made that owing to the impact of endogenous and exogenous factors in contemporary international political situation and existence of crisis phenomena in the world economy, which relate to

strategic interests of both countries, the conditions may appear for more efficient but although limited Russian-American reciprocal action.

The second group of problems concerns economic mutual action of Russia and CA countries. The author mentions two tendencies in the trade-financial cooperation with the region: the substantial growth of trade turnover for 2000-2008 and of its growth tempos, which take the lead over other CIS countries. The bilateral mutual cooperation remains the main form of economic cooperation of Russia with CA countries. As far as multilateral cooperation is concerned, it was and is skidding for almost two decades. And it should be pointed out that implementation of most projects (infrastructure, hydro-energy and others) is possible only on the multilateral basis. The monograph contains an attempt to analyze this situation by example of activities of the Eurasian Economic Community (EvrAzES) and the Customs Union of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, being in the process of creation on its basis.

The problem of regulating migration flows from CA to Russia, which is important for all countries of the region, is considered in the monograph. To G. Chufirin's mind, to the long-term economic interests of Russia "a mass reduction of the number of labor migrants from CA countries does not correspond". Besides, the return to the Motherland of great masses of labor migrants may result in destabilization of the social-political situation in these countries, which will have a significant effect on Russian political interests and security interests.

Finally, "the way of solving the problems of labor migration from CA republics and the role of Russia in this process to a substantive extent will depend on its authority and influence in the Central Asian region", the author considers. The water-economic problem in the region became one of the most complicated, and it periodically causes a significant tension in the inter-state relations. The

water management problem can not be solved self-dependently not by a single state in CA. Russia actually may render assistance to these states in overcoming discords on water problems.

The monograph contains proposals on overcoming this crisis by rendering to them financial and technical assistance by means of change for resources' care. Considering the problems of cooperation in the sphere of transportation and communications, the author makes the main accent on the analysis of pipelines' infrastructure and contemporary tendencies of its diversification coming over to the side of Asian countries – China, Iran and via Azerbaijan to Europe.

Of particular interest is the chapter devoted to the economic cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan. It contains extensive information on bilateral economic cooperation between our countries in all main spheres: financial-banking and investment, scientific-technical, mutual trade, atomic energy, technical-energy complex and agriculture. The third group of problems contains the analysis of reciprocal action of Russia and CA countries within the framework of the Shanghai Organization of Cooperation (ShOS). The growing Chinese influence in CA in rather great detail is subject to consideration just in this part of monograph. Actually, the question is the intersecting national interests of Russia and China in the region. The cooperation in the framework of this organization is carried out more efficiently in the sphere of security, since interests of all countries of the region coincide here: the preservation of stability in Afghanistan, the struggle against extremism and narcotics trade. The countries succeeded to create the international legal basis of cooperation in the struggle against terrorism and to start military training for the sake of anti-terrorist activities.

At the same time, the CA state-members of ShOS have a complicated attitude to the initiative of the RF directed to consolidation of the military integral part of ShOS activities. It is connected with their

wish “to keep a maximum of a free maneuverability for ensuring their national security”. In this context, the CA countries support China. At the same time, all members of ShOS support the position of Russia in the struggle against terrorism, narcotics traffic and trans-border crime, as well as the need to maintain dialogue and close reciprocal action with other interested international organizations and states. The cooperation in economic sphere goes on with much less speed confronting grater difficulties within the framework of this organization. The author expresses the view that successful implementation in good time of the agreed program of multilateral trade-economic cooperation would have a positive influence on the economic situation in all member-states of ShOS.

The conclusions of G. Chufrin on the potentialities of development of economic mutual action within the framework of the organization attract attention of readers.

First, in spite of existing difficulties, in a number of spheres ShOS possesses a really unique capacity of multilateral cooperation. It concerns energy, transportation, some industries and agriculture.

Second, there is an urgent need to decide questions connected with the character of relations between ShOS and EvrAzES. The lack of this decision has a certain impact on mutual relations of Russia and the countries of the region and on their relations with China.

Third, the need has been outlined to make a correction in position of Russia on multilateral projects with due account of the increased external financial activities of the PRC under conditions of the world economic crisis.

And, finally, fourth, the cooperation within the framework of ShOS should promote not only general acceleration of tempos of economic growth of member-states and structural reforms of national economics, but also realization of common large-scaled programs.

G.I. Chufrin in his monograph actually covered the whole specter of problems existing in relations of Russia with CA countries. These problems are very urgent not only for these countries but also for other states, which have significant political-strategic and economic interests in the region. One of the merits of the monograph is the consideration of probable options of solving these problems.

*The review was prepared by Elena Kuzmina, Cand. Sc.(Pol.),
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