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**THE WORLD ON THE THRESHOLD
OF NEW EPOCH**

Today the world is facing new radical changes, which surpass the changes in 1917 and 1991. There are neither the language to describe them nor alternative ideas to replace them.

The last time in history when the situation in Europe somehow resembled what we have today was in the 16th–17th centuries. At that time, after more than 1,000 years of Christianity, a radical change began in the ideology and economy of feudalism. It was a very difficult time and God forbid if it happens again. To avoid this tragedy it will be necessary to offer new ideas, which have not yet been found.

What is the essence of the changes taking place before our eyes?

The main problem of our epoch is that the mechanism, which ensured the economic development of humanity for several hundred years, has run out of steam.

The present development model, which is called “scientific-technological progress,” came into being in the 17th–18th centuries in Western Europe after the “value revolution” of the 16th–17th centuries, which lifted the ban on usury, which had been in force for over one thousand years. Of course, just as any Bible ban, it had not been strictly observed, but on the whole loan interest was not used in the system of

economic relations. Where it was legally used – in the republics of Venice or Genoa, it rather played the role of insurance payment. Production processes were built on the craft, or guild, principle under which the volumes, technologies and range of manufacture were strictly limited.

One of the main economic principles of today is the priority growth of financing innovations. To invest means in the production of habitual goods and services and the elaboration of new ones has a positive meaning only if the markets of goods and services constantly expand. On the one hand, the latter should ensure sales of traditional goods, which become cheaper steadily, and on the other, give the “technological metropolitan country” additional incomes compensating expenditures on innovation products.

Accordingly, the development of the so-called technological zones began in the 18th century.

Britain was the first such technological zone. The second zone was Germany, which included Austro-Hungary, part of Italy, Northern and Eastern Europe, as well as Russia.

The third zone was created by the United States of America after liberation from British colonial domination. Its growth rates especially accelerated after the Civil War of 1861–1865.

The fourth zone was created by Japan in the early 20th century.

By the beginning of the 20th century there were only five or six really independent states in Europe which had self-sufficient economy: the Russian Empire, Germany, Austro-Hungary, France, Britain and, perhaps, Spain. All other countries had to join them as satellites, or “junior partners”.

World War I did not resolve the basic economic contradictions or reduce fight for new markets or repartition of old ones. To achieve this World War II was necessary, after which only two of the five

technological zones re-emerged. The German and Japanese zones simply ceased to exist at the time, while Britain renounced claims for its own zone even before the end of the war, having allowed the United States to trade directly with the British colonies, bypassing London.

At first the United States developed quite successfully, gaining and developing new markets, produced bombs and conquered outer space. But further on problems with the sale of goods began.

By the mid-20th century the volume and capacity of the markets which should be controlled by a country in order to ensure the development of a self-sufficient and advanced economy amounted to about 500 million people. At the time there were only two really independent states – leaders of big associations or groups of countries – the United States and the U.S.S.R. China and India had no consumer markets as the term is now understood, their economies were of a largely natural character. However, the world economy continued to develop and by the end of the third quarter of the 20th century the volume and capacities of markets necessary for the normal development of a self-sufficient economy reached the figure of one billion people. And now it became clear that only one independent state could remain in the world.

Contrary to a widespread view, there were more chances for the Soviet Union to become the winner. Of course, neither of the two superpowers could avoid crisis. But inasmuch as the volume and capacity of the markets in the Soviet zone were much smaller than in the American, the crisis in our zone began earlier, namely, in the early 1960s. However, thanks to the planned Soviet economy, disproportions were compensated to a certain extent, so the crisis developed rather slowly. By the late 1970s we were at the zero rates of economic development. But in the United States the crisis began to develop quite rapidly. The default of 1971 was followed by the defeat in the Vietnam

war, then came the oil crisis of 1973–1974, a sharp rise of the prices of oil, followed by inflation, which was accompanied by stagnation, a drop in production and a high level of unemployment.

The Soviet Union entered in the negotiations with the United States on strategic arms which somewhat softened the acute budget problems of America. The West was in a deep oil crisis and the Soviet Union began to supply it with oil and gas.

Meanwhile the U.S. leadership has found a way out of the situation. It was necessary to launch a new “technological wave”. which was impossible to achieve during a slump without war. And inasmuch as there could be no enlargement of markets, it was necessary to imitate it. The financial authorities of the United States began to stimulate the demand, which was the real essence of “Reaganomics”.

The goal was reached and the new “technological wave” was launched. The U.S.S.R. disintegrated as both a technological zone and as a separate country. Theoretically speaking, a stop should have been made at the moment. Assets and markets received as a result of the disintegration of the “enemy” should have been used for “closing the gaps of debts” formed during the decade of “Reaganomics”. However, the Clinton administration sponsored by Wall Street, instead of “turning off the tap”, used the assets received as securities for new debts. As a result, Clinton’s “golden age” was replaced with permanent crises of the 2000s. And today it can safely be said that the present crisis is the reincarnation of the crisis of the 1970s, a regular crisis of the fall of the effectiveness of capital. Previously this fall took place within the framework of the competition of several technological zones, but today it happens within the framework of just one technological zone. But the essence of the phenomenon remains the same.

There is another subtle specificity. The previous two crises took place in the situation of the more or less natural accumulation of debts,

with the only exception of the crisis of the early 1930s. At the time the horror of the “Great” depression was largely due to the fall of private demand after the 1920s, when it was somehow stimulated by the credit mechanism. At present the period of the massive stimulation of demand by the “Reaganomics” mechanism is coming to an end. This is why there will be not a slow decay (as was the case of the 1980s), but a very great and deep fall.

Still worse, the mechanism of scientific-technical progress, which determined humankind’s progress for several centuries, begins to fail. It has become exhausted almost completely.

This is why Russia is facing serious problems connected with writing off great debts and, accordingly, the collapse of the entire world financial system. This means that we shall have to search for a new development model in extremely difficult socio-political conditions.

In the latter half of the 1980s Mikhail Gorbachev announced that the U.S.S.R. would not present its former basic “red” values to the world and switched over to “general human” values. Having renounced the Soviet system of globalization Mikhail Gorbachev brought us to the system of globalization of the Western” project, inasmuch as there was no other project.

Our country knows the history of three projects of world importance: Christianity (which has disintegrated into several projects), Islam and Communism.

In the 16th century, after the catastrophic “gold” crisis, which was due to the sharp drop of the price of gold, which played the role of the single denominator of cost, and the subsequent destruction of the system of the natural feudal economy, a new, capitalist global project began to develop in Europe. Reformation was its ideological basis. This project deviated from the Biblical system of values and refused from

one of its dogmas, namely, a ban on usury, inasmuch as the economic base of the Capitalist global project was loan interest.

Another phenomenon of humankind – the so-called technological society is connected with loan interest. Not a single state or civilization, which does not approve loan interest, could have created such society. The only exception was the Soviet Union.

The Capitalist global project as such does not exist today. Serious changes in its economic foundation, which essentially transformed the basic values, took place in the 19th century. This was connected with the fact that the dogmatic structure of the Capitalist project was unstable and required serious changes: either the further renunciation of Biblical values (the new capitalist states were largely Christian) or return to a ban on usury. It is indicative that both ideas were realized.

Both were born at the end of the 18th century. The first of them was the foundation of the mechanism of financial capital and then a new global project.

Without going too far into details, it can be said that today the single measure of cost is the U.S. dollar and its birthplace is the Federal Reserve of the United States – a private enterprise owned by the biggest investment banks of Wall Street. The entire world financial system with its institutions, such as the World Monetary Fund, World Bank, and many others see their main task in the preservation of the monopoly of the Federal Reserve on money emission.

Naturally, this project, which actively developed in the 19th and 20th centuries, thrived exclusively thanks to loan interest. Its main development stages were the creation of the first private state bank (with the monopoly right of money emission) in Britain in the middle of the 19th century, the creation of the Federal Reserve of the United States in the early 20th century, the Bretton-Woods agreements of 1944,

abolition of pegging dollar to gold in 1973, and, lastly, the disintegration of the U.S.S.R and the end of the “Soviet Red project” in 1991. And the name “Capitalist global project” was changed to the “Western global project for the sake of convenience.

The basic system of values in the “Western” project, as compared to the “Capitalist” project, has changed rather seriously. Major changes have taken place in the economy, inasmuch as the basic wealth began to be created not in the material sphere, not in production or at the expense of natural resource royalty, but by the unbridled multiplication of purely financial assets. Such model resulted in that the share of financial values, which comprised less than half of all assets of humanity in the 19th century, amounts to more than 99 percent today. The volume of financial futures of oil, for example, exceeds the volume of physical oil (as expressed in cost) by hundreds and thousands of times.

Such method of creating assets by the “printing press” in the conditions of the already existing technological civilization has caused the phenomenon of “hyper-consumption.” The development of the system of consumer credit on the basis of the emission of the dollar made it possible to increase sharply the living standards of a big section of the population within the bounds of the “Western” project. At the same time, it reduced the desire and will to fight for the realization of the project values, inasmuch as fighting inevitably lowers the living standards. Before the disintegration of the world socialist system the rank-and-file supporters of the “Western” project were rallied together by the presence of the threat from the outside. After its disappearance they relaxed their muscles. As a result, one of the main directions of the struggle between the projects – demographic – proved lost for the “Western” project for good.

Besides, the change of the basic method of production has not only seriously changed the psychology of the project elite, but also sharply narrowed down its managerial part: today the main project decisions in the “Western” project are actually taken by a small group of people, not more than several dozen persons.

And now let us go back to another idea – a ban on usury. In the 18th century, practically simultaneously with the emergence of the idea of financial capitalism, socialist-utopians put forward ideas which later became the basis for the development of the “Red” project. From the point of view of Biblical dogmas, it was an attempt to bring back the ban on usury (in the form of the socialization of the means of production). However, its ideology had an important specific feature – a serious bent toward the social sphere, a powerful development of social technologies.

A weak spot of the “Red” project was the almost complete absence of a mystical component, which was not too noticeable at first due to a contrast with the Capitalist and “Western” projects. However, when opponents began to borrow social technologies from the “Red” project, this drawback began to play an ever greater role.

The “Red” project, which developed in the Soviet Union in a sufficiently well-pronounced “communist” form, has lost, but not disappeared completely; it assumed a latent form. A sharp drop of the living standards in the countries of the “Western” project after the inevitable and rapid global economic crisis will definitely cause a powerful renaissance of socialist ideas.

Apart from that, due to the problem of the dollar as the only measure of cost, mankind (at least for some time) will objectively be forced to examine quite seriously the possibility of returning to life and everyday practice the Biblical dogma of a ban on usury. This variant is supported by another circumstance.

The point is that beyond the boundaries of Europe another project based on the Biblical value system appeared in the seventh century – the Islamic one. It had actively been developing for almost one thousand years, but its transition to the imperial stage within the framework of the Ottoman Empire had practically led to its freezing. It was only in the 20th century that the attempts of the “Western” and “Red” projects to play the “Islamic card” in their interests led to the revival of the Islamic global project in a new version. A no small role in its revival was played by the dynamic demographic development as a result of which the population of the Muslim countries grew rapidly.

The main feature of the Islamic project is its strong ideological element. This is due to the fact that standards and rules of everyday life contained in the Koran make practically any person connected with the project its active proponent. This feature distinguishes it essentially from all other global projects.

However, one should remember the phenomenon of “technological civilization.” The main problem of the Islamic project, which is striving for control over Europe and searching a country, which could be the basis of transfer to a hierarchic stage, is the complete impossibility to build a technological structure on its own foundation. It cannot use the experience of the Capitalist and “Western” projects because loan interest is categorically forbidden in Islam. For this reason it may be possible that the penetration of Islam in Europe will have a socialist tint, which will inevitably be correlated with the upsurge of such desires and sentiments in the conditions of the acute economic crisis.

And now a few words about China which is at crossroads today. It is not yet known what development road it will choose. Will it lift the fallen banner of the “Red” project, that is, go along the international project path, or will it remain within the framework of a purely national

empire which will not be bothered much by the world processes that do not touch directly on the national interests of ethnic Chinese and their vassals. There are many things showing that communism in its classical form is not the goal of China. It can fully adapt capitalist instruments to its interests, while retaining communist attributes for softening transformations and their effect.

So far there is an impression that China is not interested in creating its own global project either on the “Red” or any other basis (for example, a Buddhist-Confucian basis), thereby restricting its own opportunities to control the world.

In the early 1990s the United States behaved in full conformity with the basic project principles. It actively propagated its values as “the only genuine and universal in the world” and stated that it will force them “by hook or by crook” on all humanity. We shall not talk now about how such position answer the Biblical principles (although one of the interpretations of the Tower of Babel legend asserts that the “tower” of American economy should crumble due to the same reason as that of Babel). However, the fact remains that the attempt to build a global “Tower of Babel” on American design and drawings and to force the values of the “Western” project on the world has not succeeded. And what then was the reaction of the American authorities?

In my view they began a backward movement. If one remembers the policy of President George Bush, Jr. one could clearly see the attempts to change the economic model. Roughly speaking, President Bush (openly or not) examined the question of return to the Capitalist project, way out of the economic crisis through return to the basic Christian values (in contrast to liberalism and political correctness), isolationism, and removal of the burden of supporting the world financial system by the American budget. In other words, the heart of the matter was the U.S. withdrawal from the “Western” project.

This course was continued by President Bush's successor Barack Obama. In his speech at the opening of the 64th session of the UN General Assembly in September 2009 he said that in his view the interests of states and peoples had more in common now than ever before in human history. He emphasized that the world should go in a new direction. A new era of cooperation should begin based on mutual interests and mutual respect, and work for this purpose should start right away. (These words echo in some way the thesis of Mikhail Gorbachev's the new doctrine of "balance of interests" which should replace "the balance of forces".) President Barack Obama admitted that many people in the world began to look at America with skepticism and mistrust, and that the policy of the former U.S. administration, which acted unilaterally, gave rise to "reflexive anti-Americanism".

What should the coming "era of world charity" be like, according to President Obama's view? Democracy cannot be brought in to any country from outside. Each country will follow its own path in accordance with its people's culture and history. America has often been too selective in its propaganda of democracy. In other words, the United States actually renounces its position of the leader of the "Western" project and does not want to force its principles on the world (which has not prevented it to take part in the military aggression against Libya, or, to be more exact, to initiate this aggression).

Conclusions are simple enough. First, if the United States does not renounce its role of the leader of the "Western" project (regardless of whether it has the resources to continue this policy or not), this project has come to an end. This means that sooner or later (with due account of the present world economic crisis, it will be sooner) the disintegration of the technological zone of the United States will begin, that is, the entire system of the international division of labor built on American demand expressed in the dollar. One can endlessly argue

about the consequences of this, but the simplest thing would be to remember Russia in the 1990s where the hardest technological degradation was a consequence of not only openly anti-state policy of “liberal-reformers,” but also the entirely objective factors – the destruction of its own system of the division of labor with the loss of a greater part of sales markets. This prospect awaits the United States and the entire world in the nearest future.

Secondly, the United States refuses to force its value base on the world, which leaves the latter in a deep ideological vacuum. For two decades already people were being told that the socialist ideas were wrong and harmful (this was accompanied by extensive illustrating material specially prepared for the occasion). What has been done to religious ideas by the supporters of “human rights” and “political correctness” needs no words to describe. The U.S.S.R./Russia could renounce the basic ideas referring to the presence of the alternative (the “Western” project), whereas today the situation is entirely different: there is no alternative at all. This is extremely dangerous and fraught with serious problems. In the first place, there will be the disintegration of the world into numerous clusters hostile to one another.

Thirdly, it should be borne in mind that the United States is a complex society consisting of bearers of quite different ideologies. Today all of them are under strict control, which is only natural, inasmuch as the high living standard is ensured precisely by the domination of the ideology of the “Western” global project. But as we all know on the example of the U.S.S.R., he who says “A” (that is, renounces the domination of one’s own ideology in the world) will have to say “B” (that is, to renounce it in domestic life). This means that in not so distant future the United States may have to plunge into the abyss of the harshest ideological debates and battles, which will hardly contribute to the way out of the economic crisis very soon.

To tell the truth, debates and battles have already been going on. In the United States, the European Union, and in Russia meetings are held which the authorities are trying to curb in one way or another. The powers that be are well aware of the development of the situation: there is information in the Internet about how the U.S. army and police are trained using dummies of American cities, and in Russia the variants of a rise in taxes, including on the real estate and luxury, are seriously discussed. All this shows that the authorities realize full well the negative aspects of the nearest future. Here are some examples of how they understand it.

First, their attitude to meetings. Despite attempts to turn them into manifestations against the authorities, in actual fact they are not directed against them, on the contrary, they appeal to them. Society, or to be more exact, its more energetic section (the “middle class,” in the main) tries to explain to power that it should change its policy. But the authorities react to this in a peculiar way: they think of various methods to preserve the existing system by all means possible.

The point is that there has been no situation when the ruling elite received such enormous financial and other benefits (both in total volume and in relative share), practically bearing no responsibility for its activity. Of course, nobody in the elite, and those close to it, wishes to part with this “happiness.” The problem is that any new socio-political system will inevitably presuppose a much greater personal responsibility.

And this may be very dangerous. These people do not like to, and cannot, work properly simply because their status and incomes never depended on the quality of their work as managers and politicians for many decades, in contrast to, say the 1960s – 1970s, to say nothing of earlier times. Naturally, we also mean definite social functions which are supposed to be performed by representatives of the elite, not

necessarily the ruling elite in the government. The very idea of such responsibility was fully eliminated within the framework of the “liberal revolution,” beginning from the late 1960s. We still feel, and suffer from, the consequences of this.

These people, from both the Russian and world elites, cannot afford to take upon themselves responsibility simply because they do not understand what it means. Nor they wish to invite to power those who understand it. They fear that they will look miserable against clever, knowledgeable, honest and decent people. But the elites do realize that the negative phenomena of the present life will multiply. Refusing from a constructive dialogue with society they inevitably prepare the grounds for a destructive dialogue. And the latter will inevitably take place, along with the worsening of the economic situation.

Russia is not the worse variant in this respect. There is no “middle class” as an instrument of stabilization of socio-political life. Well, we might return to the 1990s with the narrow class of oligarchs and the very poor population. The authorities do not fear such a turn of events because they have already lived through this situation, and there was no revolt. True, almost all had free housing at the time, inherited from Soviet power, whereas today there are quite a few problems in this sphere. Tomorrow, when taxes on real estate are raised, there will be more problems.

Naturally, tax could be introduced so that the poor would have no problems, but who could hope that our authorities would not do this as foolish as possible, as they often do... This has always been the case, all the more so since our parliamentarians are in the habit of bearing no responsibility. The rich could lobby loopholes for themselves, whereas the poor, those who have no regular big incomes, but live in flats received in Soviet times, will have to pay full amount – rent, communal

services, repairs, etc. – much more in order to ensure the elite enough money for preserving their customary living standard.

The situation is not too good in the West either. To preserve the “middle class” in its present state is not possible any longer because in the past decades it existed mainly thanks to greater debts. It should be borne in mind that the growth of the debt of households before the current crisis (that is, prior to the autumn of 2008) amounted to about ten percent a year, or \$1.5 trillion.

Today Barack Obama has sharply increased the budget deficit with the same aim in view – to stimulate private demand. However, this will not last long and the level of demand will have to be established corresponding to the real incomes of households. These incomes are generally known. If today’s inflation and the purchasing power of the dollar are really evaluated, it will appear that average wages and salaries now are similar to those in the late 1950s, and the incomes of households are the same as in the first half of the 1960s (difference is due to an increase in the average number of working persons in one family).

But by modern yardsticks, life in the early 1960s is far from the living standard of the “middle class.” Then again, these calculations are just only for the present-day incomes, but the latter will begin to drop along with a drop of demand. Thus, the situation will only become worse. It would be expedient to remember now that one of the definitions of the “middle class” is people with typical consumer behavior (naturally, ensured by corresponding incomes). But they consume not only commodities and services, but also the behavior of the powers that be, that is, the authorities formed by the present-day elite. If the pattern of consumption among the greater part of the population changes, power will become extremely unpopular.

Thus it turns out that the elites of practically all countries are facing serious problems. They are trying to explain, each to its society, and promise that “what goes around comes around,” but nobody believes them, neither the elites themselves nor society which comes out to meetings.

There are three variants of the development of the situation. Or two, to be more exact, but with a transition period which can become rather long. The first variant: the elite puts forward a leader from its ranks who changes the situation, the “rules of the game,” and the socio-political model, preserving part of the elite and losing some of its members. The second variant: society removes the elite, and an “anti-elite” comes to power (as it was the case of Russia in October 1917). There is also an intermediate variant: the elite purges itself of potential “napoleons” and masters the outbreak of society. Such situation is unstable, we know this only too well from our own history, mainly, the period between February and October 1917. Apparently, this situation may be the lot of the United States.

It will be impossible to preserve the situation according to the previous “rules of the game,” it will be necessary to introduce a strictly centralized management of the economy and the state. And a sharp change of the rules requires serious pretexts. In creating them on purpose, the elites will stop at nothing.

In general, purposeful work to create a “safety cushion” for the elites has been going on for quite some time. The main vector determining the development of modern liberal society is reliance on the “middle class.” Representatives of this class are constantly being told that all and sundry traditional values are not worth a tuppence, inasmuch as they are not compensated by growing incomes. It is clear why this is done. It is one of the means to preserve power. In this way the elite explains to people that the only value in this world of ours is

money. And it is the elite that provides money to people. Consequently, the elite should be protected and cherished.

It is from this that the destruction of the family takes place through juvenile technologies and constant propaganda of homosexuality, the destruction of religion and the church, education and national culture (genuine culture, but not its imitation for supporting the tourist industry), and the development of the so-called multiculturalism.

Of course, people are averse to this, however, the constant growth of the living standard and the greater monitoring on the part of the special services due to the rapid development of information technologies made it possible to keep the situation under control. And here a terrible thing happened – the beginning of the “acute” stage of the crisis caused a drop in the living standard of the “middle class.” Of course, the process has just started, but what has taken place already demonstrated to the modern “Western” elite that its position is under threat. All technologies of managing and controlling society began to fail. It is one thing to control a small number of the discontented, but to encounter mass meetings is quite another matter. Naturally, the elites have rallied together, they became united by understanding that uncontrolled developments should not be allowed. Otherwise they may lose power forever. Thus, they should force the still existing “middle class” to rally around the elite or, to be more exact, around the state which it still controls so far. It is necessary to make people fear something greater and more terrible than the loss of money. Inasmuch as fear for impending poverty is quite strong, it cannot be conquered by something ordinary. What is necessary is real horror.

I was sure that soon something would take place which would fill people with horror. And such event did take place. I have in mind the massacre in Norway perpetrated by Breivick. This mass killing

knocked out people so much that most of them did not even notice a great many inconsistencies and discrepancies accompanying the official version of the train of events. Nevertheless, a terrorist act ideally answers the aims of the elite. The press emphasizes in every way possible the traditionalist convictions of the mass murderer. Horror should come from the traditional society – the “middle class” should be pushed into the embrace of a liberal state and liberal elites, but not in the direction of traditional values. This is why the mass media controlled by the elite are silent about rapes of school girls committed by groups of people from southern countries in Norway, although such cases are registered more and more frequently. This is why the mass media do not speak about growing drug addiction and falling birth rate – they have different tasks to fulfill. But the mass murder perpetrated by a man who allegedly supports traditional values... this is precisely what the elite and the powers that be need.

It is difficult to say whether similar actions will be undertaken in the future, but in any case, the present-day “western” elite will not achieve its aim because economic slump will be too strong and deep. True, the elite does not believe in it so far. But it can provoke a mass interethnic conflict which will sharply raise traditional values in society. Unfortunately, this will be accompanied with a very strong exacerbation of the situation, which could only be compared with our Civil war. And the main question is whether European society will be able to understand who the real paymaster of the massacre in Norway was. This question remains unanswered. Perhaps, it will never understand it... After all, education and culture are destroyed for a definite purpose.

How will the situation develop further? New prophets are not to be seen so far, and so one can only choose from what projects are available. Inasmuch as the forthcoming economic crisis will cause a

sharp deterioration of the living standards in all western countries (now they are considerably higher due to the phenomenon of hyper-consumption connected with the dollar emission), the concept of “lucre” will be replaced in many respects by “justice.” This means the revival of the “Red” project and still greater importance and strengthening of the Islamic project. We cannot predict the train of events in the United States, but as to Europe, there is only one problem, namely, the ability of the socialist idea to assimilate the Islamic population there, or whether Europe will join the Islamic world. It should be borne in mind that up to now Islam could only be assimilated within the framework of the development of the socialist ideas. In this connection, one can believe that the “Red” project may achieve great success precisely in Europe.

There is another reason why the “Red” project should acquire a special significance in the near future. We have already mentioned the fact that the loan interest allowed in the 16th century created a new phenomenon in human history – “technological society.” The accelerated technical progress of the past centuries, which has sharply reduced mortality rate and allowed to increase the numerical strength of mankind, was caused precisely by this phenomenon. It is not excluded that the condition *sine qua non* for this phenomenon is the simultaneous presence of loan interest and the Biblical system of values. Even Japan and China develop their technologies at the expense of western countries – investors and consumers of the commodities they produce. Nothing can be said about Islam in this respect, because all attempts to create technological civilization on the internal basis of the Islamic peoples proved futile.

At the same time mankind is not ready today to renounce technological achievements. All the more important is the fact that there was one exception from this strict rule. I have already mentioned

that technological civilization was built in the U.S.S.R., a state where loan interest was banned no less strictly than in Islamic countries. This unique experience of the “Red” project should be in demand inasmuch as the forthcoming crisis of the uniform measure of cost will cause temporary refusal from using loan interest. This is connected with the fact that the destruction of the uniform emission dollar area will take place gradually. At the first stage the world may be divided into several emission currency zones: the U.S. dollar (which will be issued not by a private source but the Federal Reserve), the euro and the yuan.

Since all markets should be global, such system will be less profitable, and will, sooner or later, continue to disintegrate. As a result, certain states in order to protect their sovereignty will begin strictly to limit the rights of private subjects to pocket a profit. This will inevitably lead to legislative or ideological ban on the private use of loan interest.

Returning to the earlier subject, it should be noted that the powerful expansion of the Islamic project in Europe in the forthcoming decades will run into three serious obstacles. The first will be the dying “Western” project. The battle between them will be merciless and uncompromising. The second will be on the part of national states within the framework of the European Union. Here the pressure of the “Islamic” global project will be weaker because national projects will be unable to oppose the global project for a long time. The third subject of resistance will be the reviving “Red” project, and here the relations between them will be very complicated. On the one hand, the “Red” project can assimilate the Islamic population of Europe (just as it was the case of the U.S.S.R.), and in this sense it poses the greatest danger to the “Islamic” project. On the other, some of its features should be supported, inasmuch as they should ensure the preservation of technological civilization in Europe. As a result of these processes a

new global project may emerge in Europe, a symbiosis of Islam and socialism, which could be termed “Islamic socialism”.

The situation in Russia will differ from the European one by the more developed principles and mechanisms of the “Red” project. And this poses a grave danger to the “Western” project, inasmuch as the above-mentioned developments in Europe may proceed in Russia much faster, and thus seriously accelerate the final disintegration of the “Western” global project.

It is not accidental that the “Western” project has concentrated considerable efforts for the rapid destruction of the relics of the “Red” project in Russia, its hired managers began to push through, in an aggressive manner, Russia’s entry in the World Trade Organization, and destroy the state system of pensions, health protection and education. The purpose of these actions is quite clear. For a millennium Russia has been exclusively a project country, which simply cannot exist without a great idea. The destruction of the “Red” project has left it in an ideological vacuum for the first time in history: and there are no project values to be seen for Russia so far. To impose the values of the “Western” project upon our people was not possible. However, Russia still has a certain defense, technical and educational potential, and the adherents of the “Western” project do not wish to let some other global project capture Russian territory. Consequently, Russia should be turned into a desert inhabited by aggressive tribes incapable to constructive activity. Until the “Western” project was uniform and indivisible Russia could be fought with at the technological level. But now that it began to falter, more decisive and harsh measures should be applied, and this is what we see today.

Theoretically, after the disintegration of the “Western” project another development path is possible. This is renunciation of the

remaining Biblical dogmas. However, new dogmas will have to be formulated for projects of this scope.

In any case, the inevitable disintegration of the “Western” project will lead to a complex process of the struggle between the already existing global projects in an attempt to increase one’s influence, or simply to revive. At the first stage there will evidently be two main projects – “Islamic” and “Red.” The former due to its evident might, and the latter – as a guarantor of the preservation of “technological civilization.” If Russia wishes to play a certain role in the world in the forthcoming decades, or simply to continue its existence as a state, it is vitally important for it to revive the mechanisms and technologies left from the time of socialism and try to create a new Russian project ideology.

Thus, the present situation offers us unique possibilities. Why “us”? The point is that western society is strictly totalitarian. Any attempts to engage in anything, which is not approved by official ideology, are virtually banned. True, this done in a much softer way than was the case of the U.S.S.R. People are deprived of the opportunity to go up the career ladder. Even if a school pupil begins to think and talk of something contradicting official dogmas he will hardly succeed in getting a good education. At the same time there are various institutions and mechanisms for controlling the situation, and free thinking, in particular, and they had been functioning for several centuries.

The present situation, which is distinguished by recurring economic and financial crises, popular uprisings, terrorist acts, ideological and political vacillations, etc. insistently demands radical changes. So the West decided to evolve new ideology and “renovate capitalism.” Will it be possible to renovate it?

Expansion of the markets is impossible any longer. Consequently, the further division of labor is not possible either within the framework of the existing economic model. Hence, the conclusion that modern capitalism has come to an end. The present crisis is the crisis of its end. It has no resources for further development. The world cannot develop in the grip of capitalist ideology.

But this is not the gravest tragedy. In Europe alone two basic models of economic development have changed during the past two millennia. So what if another change will take place?

It seems to us that today the key thing is search for a new mechanism and a new language to describe this new development. He who will be able to cope with this task will become the champion of civilization for the next 200 to 300 years. From the above-said it follows that this can only be done beyond the bounds of the western world.

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THE ISLAMIC TANGLE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF RUSSIA

Historical experience shows that religion has a powerful ideological potential capable to promote social, economic, political, ethnic-national, socio-cultural and other conflicts. Under certain conditions religion can easily acquire radical and even extremist forms. This fact is of special significance for the North Caucasus because its confessional variety is one of the crucial factors determining this region as an important geopolitical area of the Russian Federation.

Various branches of Christianity – Orthodox Christianity, Catholicism and Protestantism, as well as Judaism and Buddhism have existed side by side with Sunna and Shia Islam for many centuries. This situation has become much more complex in our days, which is shown by rapid religious revival in the region, which began during the period of *perestroika* in the latter half of the 1980s. During these years hundreds of Orthodox Christian and Armenian-Gregorian churches, synagogues, and Roman Catholic churches were built and thousands of parishes and communities were registered. Many religious traditions and Orthodox and Islamic festivals were revived, and hundreds of religious schools of various types were opened, including Orthodox Christian seminaries and Islamic universities. Apart from that, periodic publications of religious content appeared, and quite a few people began to observe religious rites and rituals regularly, and clergymen take an active part in public life, thus having an influence on political processes.

Islam is of principal importance in the North Caucasus. This theme has been thoroughly discussed here and abroad in religious, political, historical, sociological and philosophical works devoted to various problems of the modern world – from socio-economic development to extremism and terrorism. In this article we shall dwell on the aspects directly bearing on the specific features of the North Caucasus as an internal geopolitical region of the Russian Federation.

The place and role of Islam in the North Caucasian geopolitical area. In the Middle Ages and New time Islam was a very important factor in the spiritual development of the peoples of the region. It has played, and continues to play, the key role in the formation of the socio-cultural and civilization image of the Caucasian peoples. Islam, just as any other religion, becomes especially important during the critical periods of the historical development of some or

other countries and peoples. Besides, as historical experience shows, religion can easily take radical and extremist forms during such periods. In this context, it is important that the North Caucasus is part of the so-called Muslim North, which, in its turn, is part of a much broader Muslim world.

According to the available data, at present there are from 12 to 15 million, or about 12 to 15 percent of the population of the Russian Federation, who are Muslims. A considerable part of them lives in the North Caucasus. The overwhelming majority of the population of Azerbaijan are Muslims, about 30 percent of the people of Abkhazia are also Muslims, as well as part of Ossetians, most people of Adjara and about half a million of Azerbaijanis living in Georgia. This shows that the religious boundaries of the North Caucasus are far beyond the borders of the Russian Federation, in the Trans-Caucasus, and further on to the Middle East.

The revival of Islam and its ideological, political and social activation are of a global character and embrace many countries of the world. Naturally, the central place in this process is taken by the countries of the Middle East, which is reflected, directly and indirectly, in the state of affairs in the Caucasus. This is shown by the fact that after the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. many representatives of the peoples of the newly-emerged post-Soviet states, as well as Muslim republics within the Russian Federation, began to respond to currents and trends coming from the Islamic world.

The influence of the Middle East countries on the situation in the Muslim republics of the North Caucasus and Azerbaijan tends to grow, and it is also felt in the relations of the Russian Federation with the Caucasus and the rest of the Islamic world. Consequently, the internal and external threats to national security are intertwined and form a complex tangle. This is why one can agree with analysts who regard

Islam as one of the most crucial factors determining the geopolitical situation in the southern direction and posing the problem of ensuring the national security of Russia.

This trend acquired an ever greater significance for the foreign-policy strategy of Russia against the backdrop of the further aggravation of the social, economic, political, and, accordingly, geopolitical situation in the region. Naturally, the two Chechen wars were a major stumbling block in this direction. The Islamic component of the foreign-policy course of certain Muslim countries toward Russia is now causing definite apprehension among certain scholars, researchers, political circles and state power bodies of the Russian Federation. Naturally, the processes going on in Russian Islam, and also in the Muslim communities of Azerbaijan and the Trans-Caucasia as a whole have been in the field of vision not only of the foreign-policy ministries and departments of Muslim countries, but also among representatives of religious circles, outstanding religious figures and theologians of the Muslim East, who are interested in spreading their influence on the Russian Islamic community.

In other words, Russian Islam has not avoided the general world tendencies. The latter half of the last century was marked by the steadily growing politicization of Islam and the emergence and formation of the ideology of Islamic fundamentalism. For the first time the growth of radical ideas in Islam of the Soviet period began to be traced during the war in Afghanistan. The collapse of communism and the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. have given rise to an outburst of Islamic radicalism practically all over the Muslim North. Just as in the rest of the Islamic world, radicalism in the North Caucasus has taken the form of different variants of politicized fundamentalism. Its adherents and supporters have found a broad financial and intellectual support on the part of numerous foreign Islamic organizations behind

which stood the geopolitical interests of various states of the Islamic world and western powers. In the conditions of political instability in certain districts of the North Caucasus, the followers of radical Islam have turned into the factor of instability and aggression toward other peoples. As Alexei Malashenko justly noted, “in the conditions of the aggravating conflict situation and tense relations between Moscow and the North Caucasus, the radicalization of Islamic ideology, politicization of Islam, and purposeful appeal to it by local radically-minded persons definitely make it a factor of destabilization. Ethnic separatism sponges on Islam. And last, but not least, North Caucasian Islam can become a lever of bringing pressure to bear on Russia by foreign communities, both Muslim and Western.”

One can single out several trends or channels of outside influence of the Muslim countries of the Middle and Near East on the socio-political and spiritual situation in the Caucasus as a whole, and in the North Caucasus in particular. This is, above all, the broader ties of the Islamic clergy between regions along the line of spiritual, educational and cultural exchanges. For the entire post-Soviet period a constant growth of contacts in these spheres has been observed. The training of priests from among Russian citizens at educational institutions of Muslim countries and the work of teachers from these countries at schools and universities in Azerbaijan and in the North Caucasus merit positive attention. In the 1980s the Islamic educational institutions founded with direct participation or material assistance of representatives of foreign Muslim countries, including the leading Islamic universities Al-Azhar (Egypt), Az-Zeituna (Tunisia), and others played an important role in training Muslim priests from among citizens of Russia and Azerbaijan. Quite a few Russian priests who have received Islamic education in Muslim countries of the East have

taken important and influential positions in religious organizations of the region.

International Muslim organizations functioning at both governmental and non-governmental levels play an important role in this sphere. A multitude of charity, educational, cultural and other organizations have been set up in the North Caucasus and in Muslim national republics and other regions of the Russian Federation with their assistance.

Their aim, as they officially claim, is to spread the ideas and principles of Islam among the inhabitants of a given region. A no small role has been played in this respect by the branches of international Islamic humanitarian organizations, like the World Islamic Charity organization with its headquarters in Kuwait, which is engaged in rendering material and moral assistance to Muslims and their organizations, publishing business, financing of construction of mosques, organization of international Islamic forums, etc.; the Moscow branch of the charity organization “International Humanitarian appeal,” and others. They render humanitarian assistance to people suffering from poverty and disease, natural disasters, social and ethnic conflicts, etc.

During the 1990s Muslim charity, educational, cultural and political organizations were set up in the Caucasus. In those years the activity of such Islamic organizations as the International Islamic Organization “Salvation,” “Benevolence International Foundation,” “Jamaat Yihya At-Turas Al-Islami,” “Lashkar Taiba,” “Al-Hairiya,” “Al-Haramein,” “Qatar,” “Ikraa,” Ibrahim ben Ibrahim,” and others, financed and directed by Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Kuwait, stepped up their activity. These organizations were distinguished by practically open propaganda of pan-Islamic ideas of uniting all Muslims of the region for ousting Russia from the North Caucasus, creating an Islamic

state in the region, and establishing close ties of Azerbaijan and North Caucasus with such Muslim countries as Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran, Jordan, Pakistan, etc.

Yet, the scope and character of the influence of external factors on the radicalization of Islam in the Muslim regions of Russia seem rather exaggerated in a number of cases, inasmuch as the main factors determining the real situation in this sphere are those of socio-economic, political, spiritual and ideological character. In this respect faith is not the principal factor, but one of them. Nevertheless, one cannot but admit the evident fact that in the conditions of a new geopolitical situation in the world in general, and in the Caucasian – Middle East region in particular, politicized, or political, Islam poses a serious threat to the national security of Russia; this Islam is viewed by many Russian and foreign scholars and analysts as, perhaps, the principal conflictogenic factor in the North Caucasus. Special danger is posed by a merger of ethnic separatist tendencies and religious fundamentalism.

Islam is the second largest world religion in the number of believers. According to some estimates, their number reaches from 1.2 to 1.5 billion people in various countries at present. As Professor Georgy Mirsky, an outstanding Russian scholar of the Arab East, writes, “Islam can be called the strongest and most viable religion of our time. Not a single religion has so many adepts who are passionately and sincerely devoted to their faith. Islam for them is the foundation of their very life and measure of everything. It draws more and more adherents, and there are many cases of conversion to Islam, which is in sharp contrast with practically negligible number of people who converted to other religions from Islam. Simplicity and coherence of this religion, its ability to give believers a wholesome and

understandable picture of the world, society and universe make Islam so attractive to new adepts.”

The correct understanding of the place and role of Islam at both the global and national levels is impossible without renouncing its negative interpretations and assessments, which have become widespread in the West, as well in Russian society, in the past several decades. The central place in critical remarks concerning Islam is taken by ideas about the forthcoming global Islamic revolution and the impending “Islamic threat” to the rest of the “civilized world.” The Muslims regard their religion as highly tolerant and spiritual, moral and humane, whereas their opponents characterize it as narrow-minded, fanatical, radical, and distinguished by extremism and terrorism.

In this case, as K. Gadjiyev noted, one can trace the trend to comprehend Islam not as a deep-going spiritual tradition, but as an ideological form of claims of some or other grouping to power and influence in one or another country, or even in the entire world. A definite part of the Western and our political and intellectual elite tends to identify one of the many trends of fundamentalism in Islam with Islam as a whole, with the ideology of war, political fundamentalism and terrorism. Thus, definite stereotypes in the assessment of Islam emerge, which cause fear of and mistrust toward the Islamic world as a world full of hatred to everything Western, especially American, and terrorists and fanatics. This is, in essence, the widespread phenomenon of Islamic phobia. And it shows that there is no adequate understanding, both in the West and in our country, of the role to be played by the Islamic tradition in the process of ideological and value modernization of the Muslim world.

Islamic phobia has become especially widespread after the events of September 9, 2001. Unfortunately, Russia joined that campaign. Some Russian political circles, part of academic community, and

especially journalists and other representatives of the mass media regard adherence of the North Caucasian peoples to Muslim faith as the foundation of the ideas about the ethnic purity of the North Caucasus, its belonging to another civilization area. The conviction became current that in the South of Russia radical Islam has turned into the main ideological form of anti-Russian separatism and terrorism. Regarding Islam as a threat to the national security of Russia, one perceives it in a very negative light. In doing so one tends to forget that Islam is not an alien element of Russian spiritual culture and that the Muslim population in its overwhelming majority has served Russia with courage and devotion over the centuries of Russian history. More than that, the Muslim peoples living in Russia do not, and cannot, imagine themselves outside the Russian Federation. This was confirmed in the course of the five-day war in August 2008, in which the overwhelming majority of the Muslim population of the North Caucasus approved and supported the military action of Russia against the aggressor and recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. It should be borne in mind that apart from official Russian poly-ethnicity there is also poly-confessionality, which is connected with serious problems on whose solution depend vitality and prospects of Russian statehood.

Naturally, this article does not have the aim to whitewash and justify all aspects of Islam. In the Koran, just as in the Bible, one can find justification of both war and peace, both charity and cruelty. In this context it would be expedient to remind the reader that Islam is an Abrahamic religion, which is connected, in one way or another, with the Judaic-Christian tradition. In actual fact, a danger is hidden not in Islam or the Koran, but in their wrong interpretations by some of other radical currents pursuing their own specific interests. It is important to take into account that the multitude of ethno-national, territorial and

political contradictions, conflicts and changes, which have shattered the socio-political life of the Caucasian and Middle Eastern regions are founded not on these or other religions, but, above all, on the internal factors of the socio-economic, political, ideological and other character.

This is why, in assessing the real place and role of Islam in the Caucasus and Russia as a whole it is necessary to renounce a number of current ideological points of view of the problem.

First, Islam should not be regarded as exceptionally negative factor in the life of the Caucasian peoples, which allegedly contributes to destabilization and tends to radicalize the separatist sentiments and movements in the region. Although it should be admitted that certain fundamentalist ideas are indeed used by definite radical and extremist groupings for their purely political purposes. Numerous actions manifesting religious intolerance, justification of terrorism by the slogans of jihad, and much else demand a thorough analysis of the nature of modern radicalism, its causes and the character of its connection with religion in general, and with Islam in particular.

Secondly, it would be incorrect to characterize Islam as an exceptionally cultural-confessional and spiritual phenomenon, which is not connected with politics and is oriented exclusively to peace, welfare and stability in society. In contrast to Christianity, there is no strict division in Islam into the spiritual and secular, Islam is distinguished by a great social and political orientation.

This article also deals with the view that there exists a big Islamic arc of instability, which includes the great region of the Middle East, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Kashmir and the former Soviet republics of Central Asia. The Caucasus in the southern part of Russia as a whole is part of this arc, along the border between the Islamic and non-Islamic worlds. One cannot overlook the fact that most of conflicts and extreme situations begin on the territory of traditional Islam. The merger of

Islamic fundamentalism in its Wahhabi variant with ethnic separatism presents a grave danger for state unity.

Islam is a supranational religion. Classical Islam does not recognize nations and national bounds, inasmuch as all believers, no matter of what nationality they belong to, are regarded members of the uniform Muslim umma, or community. Similarly, just as there are no Hellenes, Judaists, or Romans, but there are Christian believers, there are no Arabs, Persians or Turks in Islam, but there are Muslim believers. But Islam is not uniform. It is split into two big branches – Shia and Sunna, and contradictions between them are sometimes as sharp as those between the Muslims and adherents to various denominations of Christianity. There are many currents, sects, trends and branches of Islam.

On this issue one can agree with K. Gadjiyev who wrote that “Islam is not a monolithic and stagnant phenomenon, it is changing to adapt itself to the requirements of the present development of the world. It is characterized by the absence of the institution of the official church and clergy as such in the Western sense of the word, and consequently, the obligatory dogmatized regimentation, as is the case of the most important denominations of Christianity. People who received religious education and knowledge have the right to interpret and comment the Koran. Islam is democratic in that it allows the existence of different assessments and positions, although it is rather suspicious of the concept of political democracy, seeing in it an attempt to elevate the power of man to the detriment of the authority of God.

As is known, world religions, by virtue of their universal character, are to abolish ethnic, linguistic, political and other differences between peoples, and in our day Islam is often used as the most important element of national self-consciousness. He has played, and continues to play, the key role in the life of many peoples of the

region and the formation of their socio-cultural and civilization image. As the American expert A. Smith noted, in the modern world the ancient religious idea of selectness was universalized in accordance with the specific doctrines of nationalism, which proclaim that each people has their own genuine identity, original culture, language, etc.

In this connection it would be interesting to know that in February 2008 the Archbishop of Canterbury R. Williams spoke about the need to study Islamic laws and even the inevitability of adopting the Sharia laws for the Muslim population of Britain. According to him, the “legalization of the Sharia laws would make it possible to avoid the situation in which representatives of the Islamic diaspora resolve disputed issues in a particular order on the basis of their personal ideas of law. Archbishop Williams was subjected to severe criticism on the part of many political figures for his views on the subject.

However, his idea was supported by the then premier Harold Brown, who said, among other things, that the introduction of the Sharia laws in the United Kingdom would be simply inevitable. In accordance with the data of news agencies, British policemen will study the Koran and the Sharia laws in order to combat extremism and terrorism more effectively.

The above-said does not mean that the Sharia standards and principles should be introduced in the Muslim republics of the Russian Federation. But harsh, biased criticism and total refusal of them in the regions inhabited by Islamic people for whom Islam is the key element of national consciousness will hardly be wise.

It is also necessary to take into account the complex character and ambiguousness of the status, role and significance of Islam in the Caucasus. It serves as a certain integral spiritual component of the ethnic cultures of the local people. Moreover, quite a few local analysts justly believe that in the new conditions Islam could prove an

influential force uniting the Muslim citizens of Russia. It can safely be said that in a number of national republics of the North Caucasus, primarily in Dagestan, Ingushetia and Chechnya, Islam has served as one of the major factors which kept hotheads from crossing the last borderline, which could be fraught with unpredictable, even tragic, consequences for all peoples of these republics. Islamic values can in principle make an important contribution to the improvement of the social climate. As it was noted by the Chairman of the government of the Russian Federation D. Medvedev at a meeting with the muftis and heads of government of the North Caucasian republics, “the North Caucasus is a unique region of Russia from the point of view of the national and cultural diversity, in which traditional Islam helps foster world outlook based on ethical values among young people.” It can justly be asserted that traditional Islam comes out as a restraining factor preventing the spreading of narrow nationalism, ethnic separatism, and various forms of Islamic fundamentalism.

At the same time one cannot deny the evident fact that in certain conditions religion may provoke contradictions and conflicts. For instance, the concept of “jihad” in Islam has several meanings, including a call for perfection of society not only through an armed struggle, but also through sermon, admonition, good example, and behavior based on lofty moral principles. The Koran says, among other things, that it is permissible to kill those who kill you, for the sake of the cause of Allah, but do not overstep the limits of the allowable, because Allah does not like those who do it.

True, such attitude to religion is also typical of Christianity. In this connection, along with many admonishments about the need for peaceful solution of contradictions arising between individuals and whole nations, suffice it to recall the words of Jesus Christ cited in the

Gospel: “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace...but a sword.”

Contradictions, conflicts and wars break up not only between adherents of different confessions, but also between representatives of different currents and trends within the framework of one and the same religion. This is shown by the fact that some radical currents of Islam, including the radical wing of Wahhabis regard the Muslims who adhere to other views apostates and wage a bitter struggle against them, just as against Christians. Islam comes out as one of the major elements of nationalism, and instrument of the struggle for power. This is demonstrated by the fact that Islamic ideas were being used by various ethnic groups, regional clans and political parties in their struggle for property and power in the post-Soviet area.

Supporters of Islam take part in creating institutions of civic society in the Islamic world. Moreover, those coming out for modernization recognize the original values of democracy, human rights, pluralism and civic society as ones fully in line with Islam. Their main task is to make the interpretations of a sacred text correspond to modern realities, and to find the means of applying the basic Islamic principles to new situations.

However, it is to be recognized that political Islam of a fundamentalist nature is used in the interests of the most radical and extremist forces in Muslim countries themselves, and in the rest of the world, including Russia, and primarily the North Caucasus. Its representatives have become initiators of intra-elitist and interclan struggle, a factor which seriously destabilizes the social and political situation in the national republics of the North Caucasus. Maintaining close ties with religious figures of many countries in the Middle East, the leaders of certain Wahhabi organizations have made a serious

contribution to the religious and theoretical substantiation of the Chechen conflict.

In this context one cannot but note the attempts of certain fundamentalist groups to work out and realize their version of the export of Islamic revolution. All post-Soviet Muslim republics, including those of the North Caucasus and Azerbaijan, have become the objects of such export. The projects of ousting Russia from the Caucasus, creating a uniform Islamic state on the territory of these national republics and expanding this state at the expense of other Russian territories seem absolutely fantastic, yet they do exist. In an interview to the “Al-Qaf” newspaper in April 1998, the notorious leader of the Chechen separatists Hattab said” We shall plunge Russia in such a state in which present-day Chechnya is. We shall not calm down until the black victorious banner of jihad is hoisted over the tallest tower of the Kremlin.”

Essential features and basic trends of political Islam. In assessing Islam, its teaching is often described as conservative and unable to develop in the new socio-economic, political and cultural conditions. Researchers and scholars are right in emphasizing the need to determine the essence of the very terms “Islam,” “Salafism”, “Islamism”, “Political Islam”, “Islamic fundamentalism”, “Wahhabism”, etc. Quite often, these notions are used as synonyms. Besides, the fact is that a purely ideological approach overwhelms a scientific one. For example, certain journalists and analysts call Islam a “form of religious extremism, ideology of evil, violence and murder,” and the newspaper “Rossiskaya Gazeta” branded Wahhabism as “an absolute, death-dealing evil.” The institutionalized clergy is striving to convince the central and local authorities that the Salafites are no Muslims. For their part, the Salafites also take irreconcilable positions

refusing to discuss doctrinal problems with the traditionalist Muslims regarding them as apostates who distort real Islam.

One cannot but pay attention to the indefinite character and vague aspects of these concepts. Quite often, practically any political current appealing to Islam can be identified and brought close to Islamism and fundamentalism. Indeed, Islam is the most politicized religion which claims to be ideal for social organization. This is why it is widely used by various forces for achieving their political aims. This is clearly seen in political Islam or Islamism, which is supposed to have gathered various socio-political currents regarding Islam as the foundation of their ideology.

The fundamentalists are the adherents of any ideology or religion who appeal to its initial basic principles or fundamental tenets. In this sense fundamentalism is not alien to many ideological-political currents in which part of the most ideology-driven figures comes out for the “purity” of principles and values and return to the “sources..” The specific feature of the present situation lies in that radicalism and radical minorities are playing greater role in socio-political processes.

Islam is not a monolithic and stagnant religious system. It transforms in accordance with the changes going on at global, regional and national levels. During its entire history it has developed dynamically, demonstrating an ability to adapt itself, more or less successfully, to the changing socio-economic, socio-cultural, political, geopolitical and other conditions. Given a great variety of methods and programs, Islam is the principal or the only source of power. The main slogan of the Islamists is “God is our Goal, the Prophet is our Leader, the Koran is our Constitution, Jihad is our Road, and death in the name of God is our supreme desire.” Here Islam comes out as a means to achieve concrete political aims, as a result of which it acquires the status of an original political ideology. As noted by the leader of the

Islamic revolution in Iran Ayatolla Homeini, “Islam is a political-religious teaching in which religious service and prayer are added to politics, and politics is added to religious service and prayer.” And he based his words on the fact that “there are more political instructions than religious ones in Islam.”

The term “political Islam” is neutral *per se*, inasmuch as Islamist movements can be regarded as “conservative” and “progressive” at the same time. The term is a collective noun to denote the most varied Islamic groupings adhering to different positions, but criticizing the official clergy, whose representatives can be “conservative” in one questions, and “progressive” in others.

Some scholars and researchers characterize Islamic fundamentalism as traditionalism, others oppose traditionalism to fundamentalism. On the whole, political Islam and fundamentalism are interpreted as a platform for the restoration of initial Islam by way of turning to the experience “as-salaf as-salihun,” which was why it acquired the name “Salafism.

Its adherents offer their own forms, ways and means to solve the problems of modernization, overcome its shortcomings and negative consequences, naturally, by using the ideas, principles and premises of initial Islam.

In this sense, one can agree with the scholar of the Arab East R. Landa who maintains that “fundamentalists are modernizers and guardians of Islam at one and the same time. They would like to use the achievements of Western technology, but without the culture and social standards of the West.” The authors who maintain that “each Islamist is Muslim, but not each Muslim is Islamist” are quite correct.

An analysis of the real state of affairs shows that there are moderate and radical currents of left and right wing in modern Islamic fundamentalism. In some Islamic organizations there are groupings

using peaceful, legal methods of work, as well as secret groupings resorting to violent methods of struggle and terror.

Wahhabism is one of the key currents of political Islam. It is true that in Wahhabism, Salafism and other currents of fundamentalism jihad is presented as a sacred war against the infidels, including the Muslims who are regarded by Wahhabi and Salafi dignitaries as apostates. At the same time Wahhabism should not be interpreted as solely aggressive and negative. After all, it is the state religion of Saudi Arabia, which is not an aggressive state threatening any other country. In this connection it would be indicative to remember an episode during the state visit of President Putin to Saudi Arabia in February 2007. The governor of Riyadh province, Prince Salman ben Abdel Aziz, brother of the Saudi King, said, among other things, that true Islam and Wahhabism have nothing to do with terrorism as people in the West think. The Prince introduced one person of his retinue to President Putin and said that he was a descendant of Abdel Wahhab and at present heads the reconstruction department of the Saudi capital. "If Wahhabism is the same as terrorism, then here is a terrorist standing beside you." President Putin answered jokingly: "He is a good terrorist. He does not destroy, but builds." And he added: "Terrorists distort the principles of Islam, and we are well aware of it." By the way, the leadership of Saudi Arabia is one of the initiators of stepping up the struggle against terrorism in the Arab world.

Evidently, contradictions in political Islam have been caused by a whole range of problems based on the deep changes in society which engendered greater confrontation between the traditional and the modern. Islam is used as a means to achieve political aims determined by the concrete interests of political struggle. In this sense, Islam acquires specific features of an original political ideology whose basic

values are social justice, stronger morality, the preservation of Islamic culture, and efficient and honest governance of society.

“Priority natsionalnoi bezopasnosti Rossiiskoi Federatsii na Severnom Kavkaze,” Moscow, 2011, pp. 86–106.

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**THE ISLAMIC FACTOR IN POST-SOVIET
CULTURE OF DAGESTAN (1992–2006)**

The real liberty of conscience for the post-Soviet period in the space of the former union state resulted in emergence of religious traditions. It was marked by construction of mosques, medrese and appearance of Islamic higher education institutions and by a chance of interested people in cities and villages to attend religious courses and to study Arabic. Islam gained in its influence on art.

Renaissance of Islamic traditions, rise of interest of people in religious studies influenced the development of all components of cultural process. The religious feasts were celebrated in clubs, libraries and museums, while the religious world-look became subject to scientific studies based on the objective approach and not the Marxist-Leninist ideology. The religious motives more vividly marked the works of writers, painters and artists in Dagestan. The TV and Radio stations arranged Islamic talks. Religious publications were published.

The works of vanguard painters in Dagestan was marked by influence of Islam. The works of painter Ibragim Supyanov were characterized by folk and religious influence. The painting “Zikr” as a symbol of Islamic culture was made in the way of the rite’s technique: the paints were put on the canvas by the bare-footed painter. The works of painter Apandi Magomedov created for the 1990s synthesized the

experience achieved by cloth painting (with characteristic pre-Islamic and Islamic symbols) and the modern experiments in painting. The works of the painter for the period of 15 years show his consecutive and more profound mastering of Islamic ritual. The peak of the process was achieved in the cycle of paintings conditionally named “Mavlid”. The drawings of young painter Gamid Baliyev are marked by perfect technique. His work “Destiny – Shamil” shows the historic figure. The works of the painter are characterized by a deep morality and religiousness. Under the ascendancy of changes in the country, the attitude of Rasul Gamzatov, the people’s poet of Dagestan, like of most representatives of creative intellectuals, to religion was marked by changes. The positive religious motives appeared in his poems. Dargin poet R.Rashidov in his works “Song and Moan of Earth” and “About my Time” proclaimed his new attitude to reality. According to the world-outlook of readers for the 1990s characterized by restoration of religion, on the basis of principles of agitation poetry, the poet created a poem “Balga”(“Best Wishes”). The poet speaks in his works about renaissance of “holy” religion, about social injustice in the new society, misery and immorality of behavior of people under conditions of market economy.

Some changes marked the activities of institutions in charge of cultural enlightenment. For the sake of rehabilitation of the image of imam Shamil in the context of new appraisals of the Caucasian war of the first half of the XIX century the Dagestani Museum of Arts started renovation of Franz Rubo panorama dedicated to the assault of aul Ahulgo. In 1997 on the eve of Imam Shamil jubilee, according to the program of the corresponding events, the museum arranged two expositions on the Caucasian war. The museum’s officials were awarded the medals for participation in events dedicated to 200 years of

imam Shamil. The expositions dedicated to imam and the events of the Caucasian war were arranged in most branches of the museum.

In connection with re-islamization, 48 club-houses were given to mosques, since formerly, for the first years of the Soviet power they had been expropriated from Islamic communities. The transfer of the club-houses to the mosques in most cases was made by decisions of the village meetings. In some cases, like in the Ahvah district, it was done by the court's decision, and the premises were given back to the former owners. The clubs got premises in offices of the local administration, and in some cases new houses were erected for the clubs. The transfer of club-houses to the Islamic communities was arranged mainly from 1992 to 1995.

For the studied period of time more people in Dagestan started to profess Islam. Religion started to play greater role, and it became necessary to create a new structure of relations between the clergy and the cultural institutions. Under these conditions of greater authority of religion it was significant to avoid transformation of state cultural institutions into formal structures existing for their own means. The events in August-September 1999 showed the urgent matter of systemic ideological enlightenment of the rural population.

The theme of reciprocal relations between the spheres of culture and religion was one of the most urgent problems in the spiritual life of society. Religion should not oppose development of secular and the measures providing the population with useful leisure-time. Politicization of Islam and the trend to establishment of religious control over spiritual sphere of public life caused anxiety. The shaped situation was a consequence of the lower prestige of cultural institutions and the authority of this sphere of public activities. It was particularly dangerous against the background of the negative rising influence of radical religious representatives. Quite often the houses of

culture were unable to compete with more vigorous forms of religious culture. The events of 1999 showed an example of consequences of direct incorporation of alien ideology. The events of the last decade convincingly showed the outcome of underestimation of the spiritual-enlightenment factor in life of rural communities. At the same time, there are many examples, which show that the cultural policy in rural districts is determined not by the authorities but by the religious leaders.

The ban imposed by some representatives of the clergy had a negative influence on cultural activities, attendance of performances, clubs, libraries and schools. The reality was characterized by closing culture's institutions and reduction of students in general schools in some villages. The local authorities often ignored this situation. The opposition of religious fanatics to culture resulted in disruption of planned arrangements (in most distant small settlements).

However, all this does not mean that the activities of the state cultural-enlightenment centers rigidly confronted the official traditional clergy. Vice versa, the attempts were made to look for the means to draw nearer religion and cultural spheres of society. In connection with the growing influence of religion on moral education of the youth the institutions of culture arranged parties-meetings with clergymen.

While for the Soviet period of history of Dagestan the festivities and meetings in clubs were aimed at education of diligence, collectivism, mutual assistance and creative attitude to work, for the post-Soviet period other aims were pursued at the same time. For instance, in connection with wide spread of original Muslim religious traditions in society of Dagestan, the Muslim clergy intensified its activities, and religious feasts ("Uraza Bairam", "Kurban Bairam", "Christmas" and others) were arranged in clubs of Dagestan.

Or the years of reforms, hundreds of mosques were restored or constructed and the network of Muslim education institutions was arranged. While up to 1985 only 27 mosques officially functioned in Dagestan, by the end of 1996 there were 1600 mosques, 600 schools at mosques (mektebs), 25 medreces and 11 Islamic higher education institutions. And 2200 imams, mullahs and alims rendered service in mosques and Muslim education institutions. Besides, teaching of Arabic and Arabic literature was arranged in some higher, in high special and general education institutions of Dagestan. Over one thousand young men were educated in various Muslim countries.

By 2006, the system of Islamic education in the republic was contained of 19 Islamic higher education institutions (about 2300 students), 14 branches of higher education institutions (about 250 students), 113 medreces (about 3000 students) and 94 maktabas (over 700 students). Thus, 6250 people participated in the education process. Many professors of Islamic higher education institutions, side by side with religious education, had received secular education in higher education institutions of Dagestan and abroad. Some professors of Muslim education institutions had scientific degree and status. And 9 out of 19 Islamic higher education institutions had acting license of the ministry of education of the RF. Not a single Islamic Higher education institution had the state accreditation.

A great number of citizens of Dagestan were educated abroad in Islamic education institutions. According to various estimations, the number of people educated abroad accounted for one thousand: Syria (256 people), Egypt (185), Turkey (140), Pakistan (96), Saudi Arabia (59), as well as others in Iran, Jordan, Tunisia and other countries.

The religious publications played a special role in mass media of the post-Soviet history of Dagestan. The emergence of new type of publications in the republic was the caused by objective situation's

changes started in life of the Soviet society in the middle of the 1980s and is the result of the direct return of peoples of Dagestan to the faith of their ancestors for the first time after the long period of atheistic education. The first religious newspapers “Islamic News” and “Call of Islam” were registered in October 1990. They were followed by the other publications: in August 1991 – newspaper “Put Islama” (“The Way to Islam”), in February 1992 – newspaper “Khikmat” (“Wisdom”), in 1994 – newspapers “Prozrenie” (“Insight”), “Arrayatul Islamiya” (“Banner of Islam”), “Modjahed” (“Fighter for Faith”) and magazine “Musulmanskaya tsivilizatsiya” (“Muslim Civilization”), in January, February and November 1995 – correspondingly newspapers “Islam”, “Assalam” (“Peace and Well-being”) and “Shariah”, in August 1996 – newspaper “Nurl Islam” (“Light of Islam”). Since August 1997 newspaper “Caliph” started to be published. The corner-stone of the Islamic press was enlightenment of the honest, respectable and law-abiding member of society. One of the shortcomings of religious mass media was the fact that they preferred religious propaganda and did not pay necessary attention to religious enlightenment. But despite this fact, the significance of religion in life of the peoples of Dagestan let religious newspapers stay in center of society’s attention.

The religious press contributed greatly to the cause of counteraction against religious extremism in the republic, to exposure of aggressive essence of wahhabism aimed at the split of integrity of Russia, although some Islamic newspapers with the connivance of state authorities promoted, nevertheless, formation of ideology of wahhabism and other extremist trends of Islam in Dagestan. In August-September 1999, almost all publication means of mass information of Dagestan disapproved assault of fighters from Chechnya, wahhabism and religious extremism. The journalists’ collectives of newspapers and

magazines of Dagestan were seized by wave of patriotism. In their publications they raised the patriotic spirit of the people of Dagestan.

In parallel with the study of the Arabic language and Islamic faith, there was raised the interest to religious publications issued in Dagestan before 1917 and in other countries in Arabic and in languages of peoples of Dagestan. Since the great majority of the population of Dagestan does not master the Arabic graphic, for the last time the texts with the Arabic graphic were translated to the contemporary alphabets of the languages of Dagestan and published in various books, magazines and newspapers, side by side with many works published before 1917. For instance, in 1993 the collection of texts (376 pages) “Paihamarny elu bulan” was published in the Kumyk language (transliteration and comments were made by G.M.-R.Orazayev). The second volume was published in 1997. There were published many works of Abusufyan, son of Akai from N.Kazanishcha, the book “Mavlidly” was published in 10 thousand copies (transliteration made by S.Khaibullayev). The book consisted mainly of ods about Prophet Mukhammed and some religious figures. In 2006 the collection of mavlids in the Kumyl language was published twice (transliteration by G.M.R.Orazayev).

The realization of peace-making and enlightenment potential of religion by means of institutions of culture should be carried out with good consideration to prevent dissemination of ideas of Islamic extremism. For the post-Soviet period a lot was done for religious propaganda in society. It was a significant shortcoming that the atheist propaganda is not being carried out. The dissemination of religious ideas should be correlated with popularization of the atheist world-outlook in order to prevent the fault into one of the sides. Religion may and should oppose negative features in life of society, but at the same time the religious figures should cooperate with scientific, cultural and

education institutions of the republic in order by common efforts to raise the level of culture in society of Dagestan.

*“Dagestanskiy vostokovedcheskyy sbornik”,
Makhachkala, 2011, pp. 57–66.*

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**STRATEGIC APPROACHES
TO DE-POLITICIZATION
OF “CIRCASSIAN QUESTION”**

For study of the de-politicization strategies of “the Circassian question” it is possible to single out two approaches.

The first approach is presented in declarations and publications of representatives of the opposition’s Adyg public organizations and of experts, who express the same point of view. To their mind, the Circassian question from the beginning was raised as a political problem, and therefore the attempts to de-politicize it are doomed to failure.

The second approach reflects the reaction of the official Russian structures and political analysts and experts, who support the government; this approach aims at de-politicization of this question and exclusion of unpredictability of further development of the situation and the risks connected with social and state security. To their mind, the problem connected with “the Circassian question” may be regarded from the point of view of humanitarian aspects of the problem without obligatory politicization.

Just in the way of the second approach it is quite lawful to raise the question about “strategies of de-politicization of the Circassian

question”. Given the multitude of approaches to the Adyg question and different accents in the definition of its essence for all Circassian organizations, the most urgent and problematic are the following its aspects:

- the official acknowledgement of the character and consequences of military actions of the Russian Empire in the course of the Caucasian war (CW) of the XIX century as a genocide of Adygs (Circassians);

- the questions connected with repatriation of Adygs and provided for them preferences, which correspond to the moral and material damage for the years forced-voluntary resettlement;

- the establishment on the territory of the RF of the united “Adyg” subject.

The above mentioned questions have acquired at present the political meaning connected with radicalization and escalation of tension of the public-political situation in the Caucasian region (CR) coincided with increased external impact alien to strategic interests of Russia.

The Caucasian war and its results became the ideological framework of the contemporary “Circassian question”, and its history should be described since the 1980s-1990s. The crisis of the Soviet state and ideological basis of its existence, gradual democratization, restructure, “parade of sovereignties”, disappearance of community “Soviet people”, the further need to define its own identity and its place in the world – in all these factors one should look for “beginning” of the Circassian problem.

For the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s the Adyg movements started to proclaim their existence. Their emergence on the historic arena was connected with perceiving by Adygs living in various countries of their ethnic, cultural and language unity. The idea of repatriation and unification of the nation in their historic Motherland

becomes for many Adygs an attractive national idea. The International Circassian Association (ICA) and member-organizations express this idea. The ICA as its main tasks regards as follows: study and solving common problems of Adyg-Circassian peoples of different countries of the world; keeping the native language and culture: restoration of the genuine history of Adygs; ensuring freedom of religion; keeping national identity and establishment of friendly relations with Adygs of various countries of the world; rendering assistance to Circassians wishing to come back to their historic Motherland etc. The first president of the ICA Yu.Kalmykov in his report pointed out that the Association “is not occupied with political problems” and that its activities are directed only to the rebirth of the Adyg people. The questions of establishment of “the Adyg” subject of Russia were not raised. He spoke also about impossibility of infringement of any other national interests to please only aspirations of Adygs in multinational republics Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachai-Circassia and Adygeya.

In view of the mentioned directions the key point of “the Circassian question” – the need of official acknowledgement of genocide was put in the agenda in connection with the need of creation of the sanctioned basis for adoption of laws on citizenship and repatriation. For the 1990s the powers of the Kabardino-Balkaria Republic and of the Adygeya Republic recognized the fact of genocide the Circassian people. As the starting point for intensification of activities of Adyg public organizations in this direction was the widely cited Appeal of the President of the RF B.Yeltsin to peoples of the Caucasus in connection with the 130 years date of termination of the Caucasian war (1994), which contains the moral appraisal of the results of the CW and admits its tragic consequences. Further there were sent many appeals to the central and local authorities, to European organizations with proposals to make their appraisals of the

consequences of the CW and to recognize genocide. At the same time, the open discussion of the theme in the spirit of democratic principles supported by B. Yeltsin was reduced for the period of escalation of the Chechen conflict.

The West also paid its interest to “the Circassian question”. The General Secretary of the ICA took the floor at the 53 session of the UN Commission on Human Rights. In 1998 T. Kazanoko, the representative of the ICA raised the question on genocide of Circassians and the problem of repatriation of the Circassian Diaspora at the IV session of the UN Commission on Human Rights.

In 1997 the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) adopted special resolution on situation of the Circassian people, which recognized the fact genocide of the Circassian people, asked Russia to make its acknowledgement and to satisfy the demands of the Adygs. The date of 6 October 2010 was declared by UN as “the national Circassian day”. The declaration of the Secretary General on this matter contained the assertion on allegedly existed in the XIX century of the all-Circassian statehood and on the justified present demands of the Circassians to rebirth it. For the period of 2007–2008, three conferences and some seminars took place in the USA devoted to the theme of “Circassian genocide”. The parliamentarians of Georgia recognized the genocide of the Adyg people after the conference on this matter. As a result of these discussions in some cases there were pronounced declarations about justified pretensions of Adyg public organizations and either direct or indirect incrimination of Russia of neglecting justified demands of minorities, Adygs in particular.

In this “war of conferences” started by the West to some extent Russia lets its opponents have advantage. On 24 March 2011 the conference took place in MGIMO “The Circassian question: historic memory, historiographic discourse, political strategies”; the conference

discussed the historic components of the “Circassian question” and contemporary realities. In June 2011 the discussion was arranged by the Public Chamber of the RF on the theme “Separated Peoples: Legal Status and Trans-border Cooperation”. In this case the concrete measures of assistance to the Circassian people were discussed. The dialog was not quite constructive, but some hope exists that the proposals of representatives of the Adyg public associations will be analyzed by the corresponding structures. In October 2011 the round table was held in the Southern Federal University; it discussed the theme “Urgent measures for arrangement of counteractions against use of the so-called “Circassian question” to escalate tension in the South of Russia on the eve of the Olympic Games in Sochy in 2014”. Thus, the federal power by means of various structures demonstrates its interest in solving the Circassian problem.

The specter of key points of “the Circassian question” and consequently of different variants of de-politicization may be classified minimum by four positions. The radical-nationalist wing of the Adyg public organizations, for instance, “Cherkessian Congresses” of Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachai-Circassia and Adygeya, “Molodezhny Adyge Khase” of Karachai-Circassia put uncompromised demands of recognition of genocide, full freedom of self-identification, free repatriation, restoration of the ethnic Circassian statehood, refusal from holding the Winter Olympic Games in Sochy in 2014 etc. This uncompromised program of preservation of Adyg identification and unity foresees, with its admittance by the Russian party, the complete de-politicization of “the Circassian question” for the RF, since it will be realized on the way of separatism and, consequently, outside political, social, economic and cultural sphere of Russia.

There exists the opposing position, which refutes the truth of demands raised by the Adyg public organizations based on the far-

fetched problems. Within the framework of this approach all opposing views are misapprehended painfully, and the people with different opinion are easily considered as dissidents, marginal persons and separatists.

The less radical variants of the developing situation are placed between the two above mentioned extreme points of view. The question is the Circassian moderate-national and official positions. There are different styles of raising political problems. If the political problems are considered as the issues of life or death and are evaluated at the unattainable moral height, they become the issues of little use.

At the same time, the productive response to the challenge posed by “the Circassian question” is impossible without a compromise. The dialogue is possible only between moderate parties ready to make concessions. For instance, the CIA and the World Adyg Brotherhood may be considered as the moderate wing of the Adyg public organizations. Some political analysts and experts consider the CIA as a semi-governmental organization financed by the authorities. Actually, the question on financial assistance rendered to any Adyg public organization may cause negative remarks on the part of opponents. But the appraisal of the activities of the Association and the Brotherhood from the point of view of the program directions, the ability for dialogue and demonstrated pliancy shows that these two organizations are quite comparable. These organizations are being guided by quite pragmatic considerations in fulfillment of their tasks. They do not fix unrealizable aims determining achievement of the claimed result even at the expense of destabilization of the public-political situation.

Under the existing situation of elaboration of strategic directions in de-politicization of “the Circassian question” on the basis of an efficient public response to the Adyg challenge the federal authorities may take the following steps described further.

The tragic consequences of the Caucasian war for Adygs should be recognized and not hushed up without polemics with the radicalized part of the Circassian movement on the issue of applicability of definition “genocide” to the outcome of the war. The views expressed by some leaders of “the Circassian Congress” that the RF is the successor of the Russian Empire and, consequently, should be responsible for its “crimes” do not stand up to criticism.

It is necessary to bring to public consciousness the truth that contemporary Russia was built by efforts, hard time and victories of all nationalities living in it. It is extremely important to educate the young generation of all regions of the country in respectful attitude to another (not alien) culture on the basis of teaching the corresponding subjects, to arrange a public dialogue with moderate Adyg organizations drawing them in public processes of the state scale. In the RF the concern for public welfare and observance of the citizens’ rights includes the observance of interests related to preservation of national originality and culture. Therefore the dialogue is possible and preferable in the sphere of protection of civil rights of Adygs but not in providing preferences for someone by the state, which torments itself over the complex of guilt. Opposing the artificially created and acute aspects of “the Circassian question”, it is significant to remember that the Circassians have the right to keep their cultural identity and to participate in taking administrative decisions concerning territorial changes of Adygs settlement.

The proposals of the Adyg public organizations on the alleviated repatriation of Adygs to their Motherland should be considered. The objective review of historic events and the wish to help people are quite sufficient to realize the resettlement of any number of Circassians to their historic country of origin. (However, there are not so many Circassians, who wish to come to Russia, as it is often said).

Russia should come forward as a “peacemaker”, impartial arbiter in regulation of disputes and differences between Kabardins and Balkars, between Circassians and Karachais with comprehension that the majority of the Adyg population lack perception either of “the Circassian question”, or of “the Grats Circassia”.

The artificially constructed problems incorporated in the space of Internet are widely discussed in the West as the urgent problems of every member of the Circassian ethnic community. In this respect, the West tries to occupy the place of the leader in the sphere of “protection of human rights and interests” of Circassians-citizens of Russia and Circasians – not citizens of Russia, who have the common Motherland I Russia. This situation with not single meaning excludes a chance for ignoring the Circassian question: “rehabilitation” in the eyes of the Adygs for the inattention (deliberate or accidental) revealed in the course of presentation of history of Sochy to the IOC. The presentation lacked any mention on the Circassians, who lived before the CW on the shore of the Black Sea. This event turned out to create despondency in the minds of thinking Adyg public circles. The Adygs, like all Russians, who are interested in history and sport, will be thankful for the respected attitude to their history and deserving attention to their history and worthy presentation of the Circassian cultural heritage at the Olympic Games in 2014.

In conclusion, it should be said that the genuine de-politicization of such question may realized by means of democratic de-politicization, if all points of “the Circassian question” will be pronounced as a point of view, which is subject to a free discussion. Only the genuine democratization will let de-politicize this great multitude of identities on the territory of Russia.

*“Nauchnaya mysl Kavkaza”,
Rostov-na-Donu, 2012, N 2, ,pp. 109–113.*

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THE SOURCES OF “THE KAZAKH MIRACLE”

For the period of disintegration of the USSR in Kazakhstan there existed already the forceful presidential power headed by Nursultan Nazarbayev. The former member of the Political Bureau of the CC of the CPSU possessed a great experience of party and state governing, was marked by outstanding intellect and volitional qualities. In contrast to the Byelorussian economy, in Kazakhstan the raw resources industries prevailed in economy and provided its main contribution to the needs of the whole Union. Nazarbayev disapproved liquidation of the USSR, but for the period after its disintegration he did not lose heart. Not the opposing democrats but the people known by him very well, the representatives of the former state bureaucracy and the upper part of Kazakh clans were supporting him.

For the initial period of time, Nazarbayev tested different directions of reforming. Grigory Yavlinsky, invited to Alma-Ata, and some western experts, including officials of IMF, gave him pieces of advice. However, the most started actions failed and the economic production decreased, while inflation was rising.

There were many people, including citizens of Kazakhstan, who intended to take part in privatization of enterprises. But where could they take the needed for it financial resources? And they had not the slightest wish to sell raw resources at low prices or to carry out the public sale against pledge, like in Russia, not very onerous for the initially determined circle of favorite participants. The option of giving concessions to the western capital suggested itself. Nazarbayev was aware of the history of Soviet NEP. The foreign experience also testified to a probable success of such way. It derived inspiration especially from the recent example of the prime-minister of Singapore

of the resolute character Le Kuan Yu, who was not afraid of opening wide the doors for transnational corporations, which let for a short period transform the low rated colony into one of the leading industrial countries of the world.

The process of transfer of industrial enterprises to foreign firms' governance started in 1993. From various countries there were selected and let participate in privatization the foreign companies, which were ready to make big investments and in a short time to arrange efficient exploitation of the received financial means. The largest in the republic Karaganda metallurgical plant was sold to the international group Lakshmi Mittal – “Mittal Steel”. Evidently, there were talks about “sale of national riches”. But Nazarbayev and his propaganda apparatus convinced that under the existed conditions there were no other ways: it was stressed that the enterprises remain in the country, the foreigners pay rather great taxes, the industrial production was rising and new jobs were created.

By 1996 Kazakhstan succeeded to get much more foreign investments in its economy then Russia. At the same time, the world low-interest credits' market was opened to Nazarbayev. The government of the country received rather big charges for the opening of big credits, but these financial means were not stolen and enlarged the incomes of the state budget.

It was more difficult to deal with enterprisers of the engineering works and light industries, which formerly worked for the needs of the whole Soviet Union and therefore were not interesting for western investors. The government chose the way of gradual transformation and braking up into smaller units these industries, which let develop middle and small business in the needs of the market of Kazakhstan. By 2000 the private sector of national economy made 75% of production. National business was developing in the sphere of services, finances,

telecommunications and innovation technology. By 2003 in the republic there were 10 big private holdings.

The rise of world prices for oil and almost all kinds of resources and metals increased the tempos of economic development of Kazakhstan accounting from 1998 to 2005 in average 10%. The inflation was reduced after introduction of national currency-tenge. The world talk started about “small Kazakh economic miracle”.

Despite a great share of foreign and national private capital, the state did not abandon economy and sometimes raised its presence. At the expense of incomes got by realization of oil, the National fund was created; its size exceeds \$ 30 billion and jointly with the golden reserves accounts for \$ 63 billion. In contrast with the Russian stabilization fund, from the beginning one part of it started to be used for investments in national economy, in manufacturing industry, particularly in machine building enterprises (20% of annual increase). The construction sites appeared everywhere in the republic. The state assumed responsibility for development of transport infrastructure: aviation, railways and oil and gas pipelines.

The appearance of the new capital – Astana – became the stimulus for construction of roads and airways as well as the contemporary airport. The quite modern banks system as a model for neighboring countries was created from the null. Some of the rapidly rising Kazakh banks started to arrange their successful activities in CIS countries, including Russia. For the 20 years the GNP per capita rose by 15 times and made in 2011 the size of \$ 9 thousand.

For the beginning of the 1990s, the mass exit of citizens to permanent settlement in other countries characterized the situation in the republic. The population of Kazakhstan was reduced by 2 million people at that time. At present, practically there are no Kazakhs in Russia and Europe among gastarbeiters. On the contrary, many Uzbeks,

Kyrgyz and Tajiks leave for Kazakhstan to get work. For the last years, the population constantly increases and attains 16 million people at present. The Chairmanship of Kazakhstan in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe symbolized the rising authority of Kazakhstan.

Jonathan Aiken a former member of the parliament has written a book about Nazarbayev and praises the president for construction of “efficient socialism”. The prominent Russian historian Roy Medvedev in his article “Kazakh Model” (magazine “Eurasia”) expresses the other point of view: “With due account of the social component the social Kazakh model may be characterized as the social-democratic model”. Nazarbayev himself said: “We are going on the way of creation of foundations of “people’s capitalism”. Which meaning is closer to the reality?

Let us start the appraisal of the point of view of R.Medvedev. It is possible to speak about democracy in Kazakhstan using the adjective “managed”. Adhering to the motto “first economy and further politics”, Nazarbayev holds the view that it is better to move to democracy slower according to the level of Kazakh culture. He thinks that for the beginning it is necessary to form economically self-sufficient members of society, who are able to make a deliberate choice, and later to give them full freedom. The adept of “enlightened authoritarian rule” considered as an unforgettable lesson the wrong haste in this matter, to his mind, of Gorbachev and Yeltsin in Russia.

For more than twenty years Nazarbayev had stayed as the governor of the republic. In 2007 the highest legislative organ provided him with the right to participate in presidential elections the unrestrained numbers of time. The ruling party “Nur Otan” and the successes of his policy systematically ensure the convincing victory at the elections (95.5% of votes at the elections in April 2012). The one-

party parliament actually exists in the country. The rigid vertical state governance has been built in the country: the representatives of the ruling party occupy all key posts in the government, ministries and local authorities. Even the rectors of the largest universities are nominated and dismissed by the president. Various points of view, including the following, should be cited: It is possible to talk for a long time about the role of one person in history, but it is difficult to overestimate the significance of Nazarbayev for the country. It is sufficient to compare him, for instance with Gorbachev, and to think about the possible way of development of the USSR, which, like the PRC today, could painlessly realize transition from rigid socialism to the market relations, if the reins of government turned out to be taken by some other leader”.

It is not correct to compare completely the Kazakh economic model with capitalism. It is the mixed economy with elements of socialism characterized by planned macro-economic regulators and by preservation by the state of key factors in economy. It is not accidental that Nazarbayev in his speeches makes the call to creation of “the socially oriented mixed market economy based on the correlation of competing self-regulation of production and the regulation of main parameters of development on the part of the state”.

In 1994 the government of Kazakhstan prepared the first economic anti-crisis program, including the course for diversification and modernization. But the special role of planning was stressed since 1997, when Nazarbayev made public the strategy “Kazakhstan-2030”, and within the framework of this strategy there created five years programs of development, the ten years indicative plan and the programs of industries’ development.

No policy and no reforms avoid collisions, and every strong power causes some opposition. Ten years ago the prime-minister of

those times Akezhan Kazheldin had the intention to occupy the presidential post. The acute fight of the opposing parties took place. As a result, Kazheldin was prosecuted and had to emigrate. The businessmen protected by him for the time of his governing quickly raised their riches and claimed for oil and other most tasty morsels. But these spheres had been occupied by other clans and other people, including members of the close circle of Nazarbayev, for instance, his son-in-law billionaire Timur Kulibayev, who kept under his control “Kazakhtransoil”, which was in charge of development and transportation of oil. As a result of such conflicts various groups of opposition to the regime were formed.

The other (now the former) son-in-law of the president – Rikhat Aliyev with the paternalistic assistance occupied the post of deputy foreign minister of Kazakhstan. But he regarded this post as a small gift, and like the fisherman in the Pushkin tale about the golden fish asked the father-in-law to let him occupy his post. He was ‘exiled’ as the ambassador to Austria, where he asked for political asylum and joined the group of “fighters against tyranny”.

Obviously, corruption exists in Kazakhstan, which possesses rich raw resources. In its time the “Kazakhgate” case of the American citizen Games Giffen, former adviser to Nazarbayev, caused a great scandal. But the leadership of the republic is engaged in the fight against this evil, which does not assume such wide scale like in Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and other neighboring countries, including Russia, where, as it is known, minimum one trillion rubles disappears in the process of state purchases. In Kazakhstan there are five billionaires with common wealth of \$ 12 billion, which is less than the riches of only Russian billionaire – Victor Vekselberg, occupying only the 10th place in the rating of “the golden hundred”, cited in May issue of 2012 of Russian edition of “Forbs”. The mixed planned-market

model of economy functions in Kazakhstan as a denominator of its successful development.

“Why all was done anyhow?”, Moscow, 2012, pp. 342–347.

L. Manyakin,

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**THE COMPLEX INTERESTS OF RUSSIA
IN CENTRAL ASIA FOR THE BEGINNING
OF THE XXI CENTURY**

Central Asia (CA) as a regional space long since attracted attention of various international actors to one or other extent, which differed in connection with the level of involvement of the actors in the affairs of the region and directly depended on needs, interests and further also on the aims of the certain subject of international relations. At the same time, the complex interlacing of interests of various actors of the international arena for certain periods of time was supplemented by activities of the Central Asian region (CAR) as an actor of international relations and of its components as self-dependent subjects of international law with appliance of the means, which would have led to contentment of the needs.

Unlike European, Asian and other actors, Russia always had geographic closeness with the region, and, to the mind of some researchers and international institutions, a part of its territory was a segment of Central Asia. At any rate, the views of the theoreticians on this issue were not significant for the center in case of taking decisions either by the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union or the Russian Federation. Since new times, Russia irrespective of wishes of its leaders was always involved in the affairs of the region, and at the same time, like any actor, had its own particular objective needs of development

related to Central Asia. This policy assumed various forms and contents, was named differently in various historic descriptions (for instance, “Big Game”, colonization, commanding-administrative system, “New Big Game” and others), but it is evident that Russia is still interested in the region, and is more influential comparing with other interested actors. Lately, due to the increased attention of researchers to Central Asia, it should be stressed that for a long time the interest of Russia has acquired the form of the whole complex. In order to prevent substitution of notions and semantic confusion in the present regional study it is necessary to make definitions of the main elements of the studied sub-system of international relations. To the mind of the author and of many other scientists, involved in the studies of problems of the contemporary system of international relations the region of Central Asia includes five republics, which formerly were part and parcel of the USSR and represented two economic regions of the vast country (the Middle Eastern region and the region – Kazakhstan): Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). It should be mentioned that the notions Central Asia and the Central Asian region are often considered to be synonyms and identical in terms of the regional study. However, the disputes about interpretation of these notions are still going on in various research schools.

The perception of the wishes, of the need to get and achieve certain advantage, of the reality challenges results in emergence of interests displayed by the actor of international relations, and the subjective form of expression of the needs is subject to research presented in the present study. According to A.B.Logunov, an expert in security problems, the satisfaction of specific needs formulated as the interest supposes appliance of certain means being preferable for achievement of the result, certain ways (devices and technologies) of appliance these means and existence of conditions, which may be

applied by the first two components of the triad for the sake of achievement of the aim. All elements of the above structure lead to the result, which is achieved in the process of the work carried out by executive persons, bodies and systems defined by the actor. The author regards the notion of “complex of interests” as a group of separate types of interest, which are applied by the subject as the whole, where the borders among various types of strivings are often effaced, but at the same time this notion comes forward as the aggregate of separate processes inherent in elements of the similar system.

The present study is concentrated to the beginning of the XXI century, i.e. one of the most dynamic epochs of history; besides, according to some researchers, the world became the one-polar entity for the first time since the Roman Empire, while others think that it keeps in itself a multitude of poles and centers of force. At any rate, in one or other conception the Russian Federation occupies its place of the world power. At the same time, comparing the period of time since disintegration of the Soviet Union up to the present time it is possible to see a certain acceleration of development and a new quality of functioning of the whole system of international relations for the beginning of the XXI century and particularly after events of 11 September 2001. Although this system always was characterized by contradictory trends and variety of events, just the present period of its evolution, to the mind of some scientists, including scholar of the Orient A.M.Khazanov, was marked by the transition to a new qualitative stage of development comparing with recent period of time.

Therefore the study of interests of Russia at this stage in the region, characterized by various schools and trends in radically different ways (from “black hole” to one of the most perspective regions of the world), is of great significance, taking into account such factors as primarily determined advantages of some subjects, as

emerging activities of new actors in the geopolitical struggle, and, certainly, as the invigorated struggle of the countries of Central Asia separately and jointly for their place on the international arena. The situation in the region is aggravated not only by these subject-subject connections but becomes more tense due to many internal and external factors; as a result, both the RF and Central Asian countries are interested in the prevention at the present time of emergence of a new hotbed of tension or “second Afghanistan” in the region, particularly due to foreign policy of some actors after the terrorist acts of 2001 in the U.S.A., transformation and modification of some elements of international relations, events in Kyrgyzstan, as well as waves of dissatisfaction overwhelmed the world and resulted in unexpected changes in some countries of the world.

For the XXI century Russia in the development of its relations with countries of the region pursues the individual policy with each of them, but at the same time, despite the differences these vectors are reduced to the common denominator, which is expressed in the defined similar approaches to the whole system of Central Asia. It is worth noting the meaning of A.F. Klimenko, a senior researcher of the IFE of RAS, which is as follows: the priority of the foreign policy of the RF is – the CIS, and further the priorities are washed away: Europe, the United States, China and India. In its turn, It would be more convenient for Russia to carry out its policy in other directions not only preserving solid ties with the region’s republics, undermined by disintegration of the united space in 1991, but also regarding them as its rear and not as a lumber, like it was considered in certain circles of the highest leadership of the Soviet Union.

It is necessary to mention two factors apart from the naturally determined impact of internal and external new challenges to security of Central Asia and Russia itself. Obviously, involvement and

participation in the affairs of the region for a long time is one of the reasons of existence just of the complex of interests; in the beginning of the XXI century one of the main characteristics is continuity and at the same time constant need in modification and renovation of the priorities. Second, it should be mentioned the fact that many separate aspirations and development of some spheres of cooperation as inseparable components of the complex and systemic approach of Russia to the region, got a great impulse due to the fact that these niches might have been occupied by some other actor in case of emergence of similar chances after disintegration of the bipolar system, which, to the mind of some researchers, actually occurred in some cases, while guiding directions for actions were selected and the strategic lines in relation to the new formed countries were created. It should be stressed that the presented study, being guided by one of the classifications of development of the Central Asian vector of Russian foreign policy, considers the third and the fourth stages, discussed in the study, i.e. the governing period of V.V.Putin since 2000 and further of D.A.Medvedev since 2008, correspondingly.

One should characterize the state of intersection of interests of various actors in the region, where the RF tries to realize its aspirations. The Central Asian region, being permeated with lines of conflicts, ethnoses, religions, administrative constructions, clans and groups, elites and different movements, may be called “a pot”, which easily blows in case of overheating. At the same time, it should be mentioned that these problems were formed and, chiefly, emerged all on the agenda not at the same time in connection with proclamation of publicity, disintegration of the USSR or some other event or phenomenon. It was a long process of formation of the specific regional picture. In addition to the said, to the mind of researcher K.S.Gadjiyev, the Central Asian region may be characterized as a Turkic-Muslim

social-cultural and national-historic-cultural area of the East. At the same time, he notes that sharing the point of view of some experts that Russia is a regional power just the Central Asian region in this case is one of urgent direction, where it is possible to uphold this status.

The CAR is marked by the specific feature mentioned by V.A.Kondratiyev and Z.Sh.Khamidov, namely: although for some time the peoples of the CAR were under the dominion of external conquerors, further for some years and decades the directing impact of the external factor was neutralized by the local society. For the XXI century, the region was marked by intersection and counter-opposition among external interests of different quality: first, the single superpower, the world powers (the RF and the PRC), regional actors (Iran, Turkey, India and Pakistan); second, national states, international organizations (first of all EU, ShOS, NATO and ODKB) and non-government's organs (TNC, NGO, fundamentalist organizations); thirdly, the interests of such actors differ in significance and influence on society: from a single interest to a complex of interests, from one person to the state organs. At the same time, it should be mentioned that all these actors have their own conceptions, strategies, and some actors have their (often mutually excluding) geopolitical traditions. If you transfer one of ideas of Yu.M.Lotman to regional studies, it might be possible to say that the region is characterized by failure to converge between the codes of the speaker and the listener of any subject taken as an example.

The complex of interests of the Russian Federation in the CAR comprises expression of such needs as follows: economic, political, energy, humanitarian, geopolitical, strategic, block of security interests, ecological, transport, water supply and distribution, ethnic-demographic, integration, investments, struggle against three evils (terrorism, separatism and extremism) and, to the mind of some

researchers, against four evils (the mentioned three evils plus narcotic traffic).

Some comments should be made about these notions and their reciprocal action as elements of the complex system. For instance, investment, integration, transport and water use interests may be earmarked as the separate and as the components of such key blocks as economic, energy interests and ensuring security. In its turn, the integration block is one of the most worked out directions and yields to nothing in its depth and extension of economic interests, but at the same time one may see integration ideas in each of the above mentioned aspirations.

Many researchers identify strategic interests with geo-strategic ones, but this study is devoted to strategic interests, which directly are arranged with reciprocal actions of the geopolitical block and are defined as the long-term plan for achievement of specific aim in future with participation of military executive systems. In the author's opinion, two main components should be mentioned in the political part for the attainment of by the RF of its advantage, namely, the political systems and the political cultures of the states in Central Asia and the region as a whole and the social-political development of these subjects. The so called "four evils" may be included in any interest, first of all, in the strategic, the ethnic-demographic sphere and the block of ensuring security. But they attract special attention due to the attempts to regulate them at the highest level, where take part not only the RF and the republic of the CAR and China, implemented in the Shanghai convention on struggle against terrorism, separatism and extremism adopted on 15 July 2001. Review of the state of security demands the explanation that it refers mainly to two levels: national and regional, which correlate with each other. Obviously, the division of interests to the above mentioned groups is conditional, and sometimes

in terms of theory one may not see separations between them, and in practice the activities of the executive systems aimed at achievement of aims of satisfaction of some types of needs concerns the other level. At the same time, some interest are formulated only relating one state, while other interest concern a certain group of countries and some interests relate only to the whole region. It is out of question to identify the typical interests, but all forms of expression of the own needs concern to some or other degree the whole entity of Central Asia.

It is worth mentioning the fact that only Kazakhstan has the boundary with the RF, and the communications function via it with the other part of Central Asia. This circumstance was mentioned not once in studies of different orientation to prove the thesis about the fact the republic served as “an umbrella” first against the imperial, second – of the Soviet and further against the Russian influence, that the real independence received all countries of the CAR, except Kazakhstan etc. To the mind of senior researcher of IFE of RAS A.F. Klimenko, Central Asia is Kazakhstan first of all, and the existence of the complicated system of formulation of requests and of the structure of its realization is determined by the geopolitical aspirations directed to restoration on the new principles of some state entity: either on the federation principles or on the confederation principles, but it is the restoration, since at present the economic and military potential play the primary role. Describing another aspect of the question it is possible mention the words, expressed by permanent ideologist of the Democratic Party of the U.S.A. Z.Brzezinski in one of his works: Uzbekistan ...represents the main obstacle in any type of the renovated Russian control over the region. Its independence is needed for survival of other Central Asian states, and it is less than others susceptible to the Russian pressure.

It should be said that intensity of the pressure on the region and involvement varied in the course of realization of interests of the RF depending on consolidation or weakening of position of the Russian power in Central Asia. Comparing positions of the RF and the U.S.A. researcher of the CAR A.A. Kazantsev remarked that for the post-Soviet period in the years of 1991–1994, 1999–2001 and 2004–2008 the influence of Russia was growing, while in the years of 1995–1998, 2001–2003 the influence of the U.S.A. increased. This assertion demonstrates an adequate form of expression and realization by Russia of its interests for some periods of time; and in connection with consolidation by the RF of its positions and the undulating change of influence in the CAR it is possible to make the conclusion that in certain cases some measures were taken, namely, the appliance of a tested algorithm of actions, weakening and strengthening of modernization of various systems and changed quality of elaboration of methods for achievement of the set aims. Therefore it is necessary to characterize at least the main (due to the vast subject of research), to the mind of the author, components defining the complex approach of the RF to the Central Asian Region in the beginning of the XXI century. One of the most important interests is the urgent present direction of the Russian foreign policy: ensuring various types of security.

In view of Kazakh scientist K.L. Syroezhkin, the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 marked the beginning not only of the new phase in competition for political dominance in Central Asia. He thinks that the main thing is that it is too early to make the review of the results, which is determined by the concern not only in the region but also in the RF and in the PRC in connection with the further exit of coalition forces from Afghanistan. Obviously, these aspects have an impact on activities of Russia in the region; but some other facts are taken into

account in the course of formation and realization of interests of the RF in this block.

First, Central Asia is surrounded by a number of states possessing nuclear arms – Russia itself, China, India and Pakistan, as well as Iran with its nuclear program. At the same time, the countries of the region on the basis of formerly adopted documents on 8 September 2006 signed in Semipalatinsk (in 2007 renamed as Semey) the treaty about the zone free from nuclear arms in Central Asia.

Second, whole range of problems based on the deep changes in society which engendered greater confrontation between the traditional and the modern. Islam is used as a means to achieve political aims determined by the concrete interests of political struggle. In this sense, Islam acquires specific features of an original political ideology whose basic values are social justice, stronger morality, the preservation of Islamic culture, and efficient and honest governance of society.

“Prioritety natsionalnoi bezopasnosti Rossiiskoi Federatsii na Severnom Kavkaze,” Moscow, 2011, pp. 86–106.

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