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RUSSIA IN THE CHANGING WORLD

Much of what has been going on in this world of ours cannot be placed within either a liberal or an antiliberal framework. The world is now in a state of madness.

First. What is taking place around Russia? It is the rapid redistribution of forces, the swiftest in mankind's history. Plus, a political and information revolution. Everything is changing so rapidly that people are unable to catch up with events and understand what's going on. But, as is known, human beings are able to adapt themselves almost to everything, and therefore we do not see any noticeable features of mass stress so far, nevertheless they are accumulating. The habitual and traditional axioms with which we have been used to explain everything around us lose ground and disappear. New explanations and new theories come to the fore which we see in the mass media and the scientific publications. But they do not work, as a rule. The volume of information becomes ten times bigger every decade. People are unable either to explain what is happening, or to cope with this volume. In this situation they are forced to follow not so much the arguments of reason as emotions.

It seems to me that the age of reason, the Age of Enlightenment which gave birth to Europe, begins to recede into the background. And

now it is emotions that begin to rule the world. Religion, or something like it, is coming to the scene through the back door. People grab the simplest explanations in an attempt to understand the current situation. In short, this process might be termed “re-ideologization of international relations.” Unable to explain in a coherent manner what is taking place around them, people and countries draw explanations from the past, trying to apply old liberal or antiliberal theories to the present time.

One of the most evident traits of ideologization is the exacerbation of the struggle between democracy and authoritarianism. Although it does not explain anything, nevertheless, everybody talks of the threat of authoritarianism and collapse and weakening of democracy.

Old economic recipes evolved during the past two hundred years do not work. We see how countries are trying to cope with the economic crisis, which has now turned into a prolonged economic slump and stagnation, with the help of opposite methods: by the Keynesian methods, that is, by supporting demand at the expense of the budget, and by monetarist methods restricting state activities. It is quite evident that the elites do not know what to do and act “each in its own way,” often guided by one’s own selfish political aims. Luckily, results have not been catastrophic so far, because reason got the upper hand. Nevertheless, it is clearly seen that old classical recipes do not help any longer.

Of course, the most important thing to be always remembered is the existence of such global problems as the climate change and the state of the environment. True, certain positive shifts do take place, especially in Europe. Culture and the way of life now take greater care of the environment and energy saving. However, the real figures show that the amount of harmful discharges increases and more and more

risky phenomena accumulate in nature, which result in the aggravation of the ecological crisis and climatic anomalies. Observations show that never before have there been so many floods, tsunamis and other natural disasters bringing death and destruction to mankind. I do not mean that we shall perish. But the fact is that this problem is not being tackled properly. Evidently, our society has neither strength nor will to take the necessary measures. Even the ecological convention – the Kyoto Protocol – has actually expired. The European states, which have assumed all obligations according to the Protocol, are unable to fulfill them practically alone. The Protocol has actually been made null and void by the United States, China, India, and Russia, to boot, although our country has also signed corresponding documents in its time.

Mankind is not yet ready to offer any alternative way of life to itself. The wellbeing of a considerable part of mankind has been growing at a rate unprecedented for even the past century. Economic growth was negligible in the 19th century. In the 20th century it amounted to two or three percent, on average, a year. From the 1980s the economy grew, on average, by four to five percent a year. This increase has now slowed down, but it continues by about 3.5 to four percent. People want to consume more, eat more and tastier, drive better cars, and live in more comfortable homes. Consumption is now the main aim and criterion of human progress. Perhaps, there is no alternative to this paradigm. This is accompanied with the unprecedented redistribution of consumption. Some fifteen years later a greater part of the world middle class will live in Asia. Just imagine what energy and climate changes this will entail. In fifteen years about forty percent of the world middle class will live in Europe and the United States. The boundless growth of consumption will bring mankind to the dangerous point of no return for the state of energy resources and climate.

Another great change taking place before our very eyes, for which mankind is not yet ready, is its mass ageing. For centuries, right up to the 20th century (of course, we know of great old men who reached the age of 70 or 80), people lived up to the age of thirty – fifty, on average. At present, due to positive changes in the quality of life: better working conditions, better nourishment, better health protection, the number of elderly people is growing, even in Africa. The first negative consequence of this is the problem of social security of the retired people. In our country the pension system was calculated for the population which could not live up to be 55–60. In the advanced countries normal longevity is about 80, and it will grow. It is clear that this will lead to major social changes, especially in the well-developed part of the world. By 2050, there will only be 57 percent of Europeans in the able-bodied age.

Meanwhile, pension systems will continue to collapse because not a single democratic or semi-democratic country will dare raise the retirement age, except Italy's Premier Mario Monti who was bold enough to raise it to 66 for men and gradually to the same age for women.

The world has become really global and as a result of this advanced countries have come across an unprecedented competition which will inevitably lead to a decline in the living standards in Europe, at least by 20 to 25 percent. The problem is that the European economy is distinguished by a very low competitiveness because business and the middle class in Indonesia, China and other countries of Asia and the Pacific are ready to work for less money with the same, or even higher, efficiency. This, naturally, will lead to the transformation, weakening and partial withering away of a socially-oriented state. Of course, there will be no catastrophe, but we shall see that within the next ten to

fifteen years advanced countries, and our European neighbors among them, will live through hard times.

People realize full well that natural resources can be depleted, and they are prepared for the need to be thrifty in using them. However, a shortage of fresh water has not yet become a phenomenon of mass consciousness, and it is not properly understood by all. Everybody pays attention primarily to the districts of Central Asia and the Middle East, but the entire developing Asia is the region of a great shortage of water, including India, China and most Asian countries where drinking water is in short supply due to pollution of the environment and the use of enormous quantity of water for industrial and agricultural needs. Production of food is falling in many regions of the world due to a shortage of water. Drinking water becomes a vital resource of the earth for which people are really at war.

The next problem is a threat of the real reduction of the hydrocarbon production necessary for energy generation. It is quite evident that their simple replacement with the now fashionable shale gas or alternative sources of energy will not lead to a reduction of the deficit of energy resources. Quite often they become the cause of political and economic struggle in the world.

The world has now become really global and requires a genuinely world government. Since the time of the great French enlighteners of the 18th century, liberals have always been dreaming of world government and universal reason. Conservatives have always been searching for Judeo-Masonic, American or communist conspiracies or secret governments. There is no secret government, and governance as such is deteriorating. All of them proved wrong. World government is simply necessary, but there is none. All institutions – from G8 to G20 – become weak or simply turn into places of pleasant but empty talks.

It seems to me that the main contradiction facing mankind in our time is the contradiction between globalization of the world and deglobalization of government. International institutions become weaker. National states are trying to take something into their own hands, but they have also become weak and could not cope with the problems even within their own countries, because information, part of the economy, politics and sovereignty has slipped from under their control. This contradiction can be solved somehow, but this has not yet been realized properly.

If we take all problems and contradictions facing mankind, there would not have been a situation in human history which could look more like a prewar situation. In this sense, the situation of 1914 was simply ridiculous. The year 1939 evidently looked like a prewar year because a time bomb had unfortunately been placed under European politics in the form of the Versailles Treaty. The situation in 1914 brought about war quite accidentally. At present the situation looks much more as a prewar one, but there will be no war, although there are many people who would wish a war, which could write off all unresolved problems.

But mankind has not got wise, and it hardly will. However, nuclear weapon does exist, and mankind, which does not believe in otherworldly hell, is aware of the fact that there will be hell on this earth of ours, if it goes too far and overstep the definite boundary. Mankind already saw this hell in Japan in 1945. This is why all countries, especially big and nuclear, even those using armed force, realize full well that there is a definite barrier which should not be crossed. Nuclear weapon is a guarantee of the future life of humankind.

Intellectuals, politicians, left-wing forces now speak with concern of the crisis of democracy in the world. This concern is close to panic in Europe. But they are wrong. Democracy is winning, but in a

very special way. Never before has mankind been so open. Never before have the popular masses been able to influence the world so effectively. This is due primarily to a revolution in information which renders the previous control over the population impossible. The wave of democratization is sweeping over all countries, except, perhaps, North Korea. Incidentally, this wave has not missed Russia either, and it is becoming ever stronger. Why then are there people claiming that democracy is in a crisis?

The point is that new democracies are not necessarily turning pro-western, as say, the countries of Central and East Europe, which have been offered very advantageous conditions for joining the community of developed democratic states. India is not a pro-Western democracy. And the states of the Arab East are very far from pro-Western trends. They are dominated by anti-Western and anti-Israeli sentiments accumulated over the past several decades. Democracy there should rather be taken for opposition to tyranny and despotism of the local rulers.

Secondly, Western democracy itself will have to drift to its state in about the 1950s. At that time society was not as democratic as in later years. In other words, the West will move toward authoritarian democracy and certain closeness of society. This is taking place already now. In France it may look like de Gaulle regime. In Germany and in the United States many democratic freedoms may be curtailed to the level of the 1950s – 1960s. This is caused by the changed conditions, and history knows of such cases.

Russia cannot be a democratic country, if we take into account its development level – social, economic, political, as well as its history. To become democratic we must overcome the terrible trauma of communism, when faith and dignity were destroyed, where the best members of society were killed, where certain people who became the

country's leaders thought and decided for us. And we still feel all this. We must overcome this heritage and become stronger in order to become more democratic.

At present, an interesting discussion is going on in the world. It turns out that democracy is not the end of history, and there are other variants. Besides, each country has many development ways. Democracy is not always equal to progress, just as authoritarianism is not always regress. There are quite a few African authoritarian states which evoke horror in us. But we also know of the example of Ukraine. It entered 1991 with the per capita GDP twice as big as that of Belarus. And now this index is two times lower than Belorussian. Authoritarian China is developing much faster than much more democratic India where the government system is less effective. And democratic Bangladesh is simply on the verge of human catastrophe.

The position of Russia in the present-day world is quite favorable so far. Consumption of raw materials and energy is growing all over the globe, and this plays into our hands. There is a shortage of food products in the world, and we can increase their output 2.5 times over within the next five years. The shortage of water in countries close to our borders is also to our advantage. Strong China, too, can be used by us for maneuvering in political games. Our old rivals become weaker. This fact is also playing into our hands. Our diplomacy is harsh and capable to work in the conditions of geopolitics. And finally, nobody and nothing threatens us. This is a magnificent feeling for Russia which had been formed on the idea of opposition to an external threat. This had been our national idea for a thousand years. During that period we had always defended ourselves from the outside enemy. And all of a sudden there is nobody and nothing to threaten us. This can even be regarded as a challenge to identity. Yet, problems are accumulating...

The main problem is that Russia has heaved aback. We do not know where to move to. We are lucky to have much money, that is, high incomes from selling our oil and gas. Of course, the economy is growing little by little due to high-tech import, but we produce very little. The ruling grouping enjoy high oil and gas incomes, the intelligentsia and the creative middle class get bits and pieces of this wealth, crave more and protest, as to plain people, they also have “crumbles of this festive cake.” But they are much bigger than those they used to get in the 20th century. So everybody is more or less satisfied. But this is very dangerous, because it is impermissible to ease off in the present world. The drift should end, and the sooner the better. We need a new goal, well-substantiated and agreed-on by the ruling elites. We must realize what we are and what we want to be. From my point of view, the most important spheres to develop are education, culture, science and research and advanced development processes. There are good brains and well-educated people in our country. Nevertheless, we are still a country which exports oil, gas, clever persons and money. If we continue to proceed along this road, there may be two types of development. The first: we cease to be a great power and become a satellite not of Europe but China. This is not a catastrophe, but a great misfortune. This is a variant, provided the oil prices remain high, and we shall not start producing anything worthwhile. If the oil prices fall down, which is quite possible, there will be another variant of development – harsh authoritarian rule, total control over resources, rationing, etc. Accordingly, the remainder of money will fly abroad, and people will follow it. By this scenario we shall have a chance to avoid a catastrophe, but everything may end very sadly.

Nevertheless, I am an optimist. We have many times extricated ourselves from an impasse and catastrophe. However, if we fail to

evolve the single, agreed-on aim of movement forward within the next three to five years and do not start to realize it firmly and consistently, I am afraid we shall live by the first scenario, in the best case, and in the worst – by the second.

Discussion

Anton Inyushev, journalist from Penza region:

In your review there are more questions than answers. We do not know where mankind is moving to. Ideologies begin to revive and emotions begin to dominate reason. Will not new leaders come who will suppress our emotions and adapt old ideologies? Will not a new Hitler emerge who will fight for purity of the Arian race, or a new Stalin who will raise our country with the help of new collectivization?

Sergei Karaganov:

In the modern information world the emergence of new totalitarian regimes and totalitarian ideologies is hardly possible. However, a certain movement in this direction, strengthening of mass racist sentiments, and the emergence of the new “left” elements are possible. I think this is one of the threats which we shall have to fight. When I spoke of the inevitability of a certain drift to authoritarian democracy, I proceeded from the fact that democracy in its pure form is unable to fight such totalitarian ideologies. Harsher methods of struggle should be used for the purpose. I don’t expect either Hitler or Stalin. However, we should remember that communism was imported to us after a democratic revolution in February 1917. And Hitler came to power in a genuinely democratic manner. This is why I believe that in the present, much more complex world the strengthening of certain authoritarian components without the abolition of democratic institutions and procedures will be an answer to the threats you mention.

Veli Mehtiyev, member of the Political Council of the Republican party of Russia, Dagestan:

You said that rationalism in politics now gives place to emotions and, perhaps, superfluous religiousness, and this may lead to a certain unbalance of the world forces. There will not be a big war, but local conflicts are possible, which will rock “the boat” of world politics.

Another thing. You mentioned China. The Chinese dragon, Asian tigers, the center of force is shifting to Asia. What shall Russia expect? Will it become an Asian satellite, or will it preserve its identity? Because there is no development in ideas, just regress. What is your vision of the future?

Sergei Karaganov:

If we dangle in an ice-hole like a piece of shit we shall become satellites. If we muster strength, courage and resolution, we shall remain proud and independent. China is not going to conquer us. It needs us as a rear in its confrontation with the United States. But if we continue to weaken, there will be a process of what is called “Finlandization,” that is, the slow process of adjustment.

Now about conflicts. A series of wars in the Greater Middle East, which is quite close to our Caucasus, is absolute inevitability. I shall cite three reasons. Modern Muslim countries are unable to compete with the West effectively. Due to various reasons, the Islamic world is lagging behind the West. To boot, the information expansion of western values causes great irritation in the Islamic world. Another reason: the retreat of secular regimes in Muslim countries which have gone through the “Arab spring.” Secular regimes collapse one after another, and this process will continue. They will be replaced by traditionalist regimes hostile to any modernization. And the third reason: errors committed by the United States, first and foremost, when it violated the balance between the Shi’ites and Sunnites, or to be more exact, between Saudi

Arabia and Iran. When the United States invaded Iraq, it strengthened Iran. Simultaneously, the process of the systematic transfer of money to the Sunna monarchies of the Persian Gulf was going on. In turn, they financed their ideological allies in Egypt, Syria and other countries. Thus a series of conflicts began and no end to them is seen. But there is a certain positive change in this process. When the war in Iraq was coming to an end, many experts feared that the terrorist international numbering tens of thousands of men would sweep over our Caucasus. This did not happen, instead they came to Syria and plunged the country into a civil war which is supported by external forces. I repeat that the situation demands that we should keep balance in order to protect ourselves. This is why we do not want to spoil relations with Iran, inasmuch as it was quite neutral during the Chechen war. And it does not exert any destabilizing influence on our southern regions, including the Caucasus, and on Central Asia. This is why we are trying to keep balance. Old-time diplomacy is quite effective. Of course, we understand that we slightly differ from our European friends concerning Iran and Syria. But we should admit that they take erroneous steps sometimes. After all, it's human to err.

Olga Zakharova, deputy editor-in-chief of the newspaper "Orlovsky vestnik," Oryol region:

Your story is rather pessimistic, but very instructive. Your statement that a democratization process is going on in Russia at present is pleasant to hear. How could you characterize the political regime under which we live now?

Sergei Karaganov:

We live under a soft authoritarian regime, or managed democracy. It is an enlightened, but not modernized regime. It used to be modernized before 2006, but then it ceased to be such. However, the educational level is rising, people become more active, access to

information is broadening. We have a soft, humane enough form of authoritarianism with certain elements of democracy. The present-day regime is worried by the events of last winter and realizes that there will be social unrest caused by unresolved social problems. Therefore its leader has decided to tighten up screws. But I am not greatly disturbed, although it's not to my liking. Such is life.

Aleksei Andreyev, director of the editorial board of the newspaper "Severnaya Pravda," Kostroma:

Thinking in the global world is changing toward ecological protection, especially after the disaster at the Fukushima nuclear power plant in Japan. We are facing this problem in our Kostroma region. A nuclear power plant is about to be built here, but the population is categorically against it, as it was shown by the recent referendum. Yet many political leaders speak for the construction of the plant. What is the chief reason for building it, a shortage of energy or anything else?

Sergei Karaganov:

This is an important problem for the whole of mankind. Nuclear energy production is the safest ecologically, yet dangerous enough. True, energy generation by wind power plants is the safest, but is very costly to build and maintain. I know that Kostroma region is situated far from regions suffering from floods, earthquakes, or other natural disasters. Besides, present-day nuclear reactors are more reliable. But the problem of safety should always be put to the fore.

Silvy Kofmann, editor-in-chief of the newspaper "Le Monde" (France):

You said that the world is moving in the direction of authoritarian democracy, and that this movement will weaken democracy in western societies. I see this problem in a different light. It seems to me that democracy is far from ideal, but we don't see any alternative to it so far, we have not found it. I agree with your view on

the cataclysms taking place in the world. If we take the “Arab spring,” a power struggle is going on between different Muslim forces in Egypt and Indonesia. These are not revolutionary forces, but they have come to power as a result of democratic elections. The liberal and democratic forces are also fighting one another. We observe this in Egypt today. Everything is very complicated, because the forces of the old regime unite with the liberal and democratic forces in certain cases. And we do not know the result. But I think that the drive for democracy still exists and scores success.

Look at China. It is a classical example of the authoritarian regime. But its middle class, which becomes more numerous thanks to economic growth, is waging a struggle for the values which, in my view, are democratic enough. We don’t know as yet who will win. Perhaps, the stable authoritarian regime in China will get the upper hand. And it may be that in some ten to twenty years we shall see a democratic society there.

At present democracy is in a rather chaotic state. President Obama spoke about it several weeks ago. He said that democracy may not be pleasant to all. But western societies are open. We have major problems: those of management in Washington, and those between the administration and the Congress. There are problems in the European Union, too. But we don’t want less democracy, on the contrary, we want more of it. Certain institutions should adapt themselves to the great variety of the world.

I think that we do not put to doubt this very model. But authoritarian democracy is simply a mixed metaphor. At the time of de Gaulle there was democracy in France. Of course, de Gaulle was a very strong man. We rebuilt our society and our economy, and he was the man of his time. And when the events of 1968 were taking place in France..., you may call them revolution, people expressed the desire to

get rid of his strong arm. And he left in a democratic way. A referendum was organized on the reduction of powers of the local authorities and the Senate. The problem did not touch the President directly. However, France said “No” on the question of referendum, and that was enough for de Gaulle to leave the presidential palace. We had presidential elections and elected the next president. If this is authoritarian democracy, it’s good. But it was a strong presidential regime. This is what I wanted to say.

Sergei Karaganov:

What you’ve just said was an excellent illustration to what I have said. I spoke about the re-ideologization of the world. Silvy was defending democracy. Moreover, I said something what Silvy obviously missed to hear, namely, that democracy is winning all over the world, but the West is losing. This is the first thing.

Secondly, I did not say that democracy would die. Even China is becoming more democratic. If, God forbid, China becomes a democracy there will be one-and-a-half billion people free from strict control, and nobody knows what will happen then. We don’t need such situation. These billion and a half people have a strong tradition of rebellions and domestic wars.

Nevertheless, I say that democracy with such broad freedoms as those with which Europe entered this century should be restricted a little bit. That’s all. Some regulating mechanisms should be switched on. I am sure the Europeans will not reject democracy. Simply, there should be stricter and more effective management, which means that it may be necessary to resort to certain non-democratic procedures.

Previously, it was unthinkable to increase the retirement age by almost ten years in Italy. But many people realize that it is necessary to agree with restrictions.

This is why there will be another form of democracy. It will be more authoritarian, more Gaullist, more Thatcherite. Just remember how mass strikes of coal workers were suppressed in Thatcher's time. It is unthinkable now, but soon it may become possible again. Because it will be impossible to combat such unemployment and such drop in living standards by other means.

I will not agree with Silvy concerning the problem of the re-ideologization of our views on the world, especially of our European friends. They assess the developments in the Arab East as democratization. As to me, I think this is Islamization and degradation. What is going on there is the Islamic radicalization of the social order, the introduction of the Sharia law, etc. On the other hand, the liberal intelligentsia is losing positions, and the secular state, which existed in both Egypt and Syria, has collapsed. This is very bad for civilization.

I repeat: democracy, people's rights and ability to influence the natural and social environment are increasing and broadening. Democracy is mankind's future. But we live in a global world where everything is very complex.

Elena Nemirovskaya:

In one way or another, democratization is a process going on everywhere. But this does not mean that Russia, or China, or African countries should necessarily follow the western model of democracy. National specific features exist in all countries and in different parts of the world, including Europe. One of the most important aspects of it is that a law-abiding state is built through democratization, irrespective of what we say about the crisis of democracy in Europe where independent judiciary exists and works effectively. The rights of the minorities and freedom of the press are observed there. And there is also a legal opposition which is needed by the winning party in order to legitimize the election results and correct the policy of the ruling party.

Sergei Karaganov:

People need well-being and freedom. Democracy is one of the means, one of the instruments to ensure this. What Elena said about judiciary is very important. There cannot be anything without it. Russia badly needs a judicial reform. One of the main problems of Russia is that property here has not been legitimate enough up to now. After all, the entire political struggle is waged ultimately for property, because it is not legitimate. In France after the revolution property was redistributed and became legitimate.

We must overcome ourselves and realize that we are the victorious people. We got rid of the Tatar-Mongolian yoke, we conquered the Polish invaders, we conquered the great French army of Napoleon, we conquered the Nazi Wehrmacht of Hitler, and finally we conquered communism. Now what we have to do are just trifles, but they are very important trifles.

“Obshchaya tetrad’. Vestnik Moskovskoi shkoly politicheskikh issledovaniy,” Moscow, 2012, No 4, pp. 8–21.

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**REGIONAL SPECIFICS OF MODERN RELIGIOUS
“RENAISSANCE” IN THE SOUTH: CONFLICT OR
DIALOGUE**

The differentiation of the population by confession is a mechanism of the actualization of socio-political risks connected with the religious revival in the South of Russia. The dividing potential of religion for countries and regions with a polyconfessional population

has been demonstrated by conflicts in the “hot spots” from Kosovo to Sudan. There has been no such situation in the South of Russia so far, but certain dangerous prerequisites for it can be observed.

The Orthodox Christian believers in the South of Russia number nearly 17million, Muslims – six million, and Buddhists – 200,000. The people of these faiths have been living in this macroregion for centuries. During the post-Soviet period affiliation to any concrete confession has become an inalienable and significant part of socio-cultural identification. Part of the population adheres to non-traditional faiths in the region. These data are relative, inasmuch as many people are adherents of scientific realism (materialism), or spontaneous materialism, and more often than not identify themselves with one or another confession by ethnic features.

During the post-Soviet period the growth of national identity was accompanied with the revival of religious identity – this cultural pivot of any civilization. Islam was such religion for most mountain peoples, and Orthodox Christianity – for the Russian population. Despite numerous statements of the clergy about the peaceable character of world religions, the actualization of confessional affiliation of the population of the southern macroregion has not only failed to contribute to society’s consolidation, but on the contrary exacerbated cultural differences and created the inertia of cultural dissociation.

The main contradiction in relations between the traditional confessions of the South of Russia stems from the role which is played by one or another religion in the life of the population. In the Muslim Northeast Caucasus religion has been persistently introduced and strengthened in the life of society for the past twenty years. A whole generation has grown whose world outlook is based entirely on religion. As a result, a socio-cultural gap between Muslims, on the one hand, and Orthodox Christians and Buddhists, on the other, has been

widening; it is based on a clash between secular society and society in which religion is playing the main role.

Russia is a country with a considerably large Muslim population. Experts of the National Intelligence Committee of the United States regard it a factor capable to destabilize the situation in a foreseeable future. The role of Islam as an element of modern North Caucasian culture lies in that it is ousting the dominating secular values in Russian society. It is especially typical of the republics of the Northeast Caucasus. By now Chechnya, Dagestan and Ingushetia, after the mass exodus of the Russian population, have turned into purely Muslim regions. The absence of intensive intercultural contacts and actions after the outflow of the Russian population from the North Caucasian republics has considerably reduced the possibilities for the full-fledged socialization of local young people. All this creates a ground for the emergence of various stereotypes, phobias and speculations.

The broad introduction of religious practices in the public life of the North Caucasian republics has been accompanied with the lowering of loyalty to the Federal government, ousting of general Russian identity, as well as archaic social relations, and growing violence. The greater influence of religion is directly connected with the increasing number of supporters of radical ideas and regular replenishment of the terrorist underground.

Change of ethno-confessional borders in the South of Russia and interethnic conflicts. During the post-Soviet period the areas of residence of peoples believing in Islam, Orthodox Christianity and Buddhism have changed due to mass migrations in the South of Russia within the bounds of the South and North Caucasian federal areas (about 300 municipal units having more than 5,800 religious organizations). The new configuration of the ethno-confessional

borders in the South of Russia now differs from the ethno-confessional landscape in the early 1990s, let alone one hundred years ago.

The changes of the ethno-confessional landscape of the South of Russia that have occurred during the post-Soviet period can be characterized as an expansion of the area of Islam at the expense of the territories of Orthodox Christianity and Buddhism, which took shape during the past two centuries. These changes are especially clearly seen and felt in rural districts. Such situation is fraught with conflicts, especially those of identity due to a complex socio-cultural and civilizational identity of people in the South. Contacts between representatives of the two ethnocultural spheres – Islamic and Orthodox Christian – create tension which is manifested in occasional conflicts.

In the territories characterized by noticeable changes of the ethno-confessional composition conflicts flare up much more frequently than in other regions. However, interethnic conflicts have rarely a religious tint. Moreover, local clergymen of different faiths take part jointly in their settlement. The real reasons for these phenomena are hidden in different value orientations and the way of life of migrants and indigenous residents. Ethno-economic rivalry in rural districts also creates a general negative background. Nevertheless, confessional affiliation is an essential identity characteristic, although it is not openly declared by participants in a conflict.

An analysis of interethnic conflicts in this ethnocultural border region (2000 – 2010) has shown that there was no religious component in them. Of much greater significance was a considerable socio-cultural distance between migrants and indigenous residents increased by the loss of common ideology and identity. One of the triggers of conflicts is a violation by migrants of the standards of behavior accepted by the community of indigenous people. Mobilization of the sides of a conflict takes place mainly on the community principle, rarely by the ethnical

one (“locals – representatives of the North Caucasus”). For example, the attitude to migrants was quite clearly expressed in calls for eviction of all natives of the North Caucasus, but Muslims were not mentioned (Salsk, 2006, Stavropol, 2007).

The point is the growing civilizatory distance between people from plains and those from mountains. Religion is a powerful factor of identity, but it is not necessarily expressed in rites; it bolsters up spontaneous ethnocultural dissociation, although is rarely manifested in interethnic conflicts.

Today there are two levels in ethno-confessional relations: at the upper level – a constructive dialogue between representatives of religious confessions, between religious leaders and the authorities; at the lower level – the increasing influence of religion and ethno-confessional dissociation.

Confessional conflicts often develop as intra-confessional, and also between traditional confessions and new religious movements. Intra-confessional conflicts in the South of Russia develop mainly in the Muslim medium. There is a host of contradictions, which are difficult to resolve: between adherents to different *mazhabs*, sheikhs, ethnic leaders, radicals and law-abiding citizens. The growing number of conflicts raises socio-political tension in society.

Without diminishing the role of the Islamic component of identity in the North Caucasus, it should be noted that most people regard ethnic identity more important. The development of religious institutions of Islam in the region is taking place mainly within the bounds of various ethnic groups. This tendency is not absolute, but it increases religious differences as such. In multinational Dagestan representatives of the titular ethnic groups (Kumyk, Lak, Darghin, Lezghin, Nogai) do not like that most key posts in the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Dagestan are held by representatives of just one ethnos –

Avar. On the whole, “traditional” religions could not serve as the basis of identity for most people. Confessional identity only complements ethnic identity.

At the same time neo-Islamic identity (neo-Wahhabi trend) is rapidly spreading in this macroregion. The ideology of radical Islam is popularized with the help of modern social technologies and it answers the sentiments and aspirations of part of North Caucasian young people. This is a radical social protest in the conditions of the absence of real political alternatives.

Young people adhering to radical ideas oppose representatives of “traditional” Islam. But in conflicts among the urban young people the religious subject has not been present as yet.

Results of Islamic renaissance in the North Caucasus.

Religious renaissance is taking place in the South of Russia in a heterogeneous form, as a result of which this macroregion has turned into a mosaic of religiousness and secularism. Religious revival is the most active in the Northeast Caucasus. This conclusion is based on the per capita number of Islamic institutions. Dagestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia are now ahead of their own pre-revolutionary indices.

For example, the Republic of Dagestan with a population of 2.9 million has 2,500 mosques, whereas in Rostov region with an Orthodox Christian population of four million there are 260 churches. This means that in Dagestan there is one mosque per one thousand people, whereas in a “Russian” territory in the South one Orthodox Christian church is per 10 to 15 thousand people.

The Dagestani rural settlement of Dylym has built a mosque for 5,000 people, whereas its population numbers only 7,500. The most interesting thing is that this is the tenth mosque functioning in the settlement.

The Republic of Dagestan is first among all republics and regions of Russia with Muslim population in the number of people taking hajj. Uzbekistan, which is an independent state with the titular Muslim population ten times bigger than that of Dagestan, sends half as many pilgrims to Mecca annually than Dagestan.

Thus, we have heterogeneous processes of religious revival in the republics of the North Caucasus with the titular Islamic population. A new sociocultural split has emerged in the North Caucasus between societies in which Islam is playing a system-forming role, and societies preserving the secular foundations of life. This forms a serious conflict potential in the ethno-confessional sphere.

In contrast to the Russian Orthodox Church oriented to the high hierarchy of the state and church, Islam has no single center of attraction and is politically dependent on regional leaders.

Factually, from the very beginning of the post-Soviet period the political elite of the North Caucasian republics and leaders of “traditional” Islam have established close and mutually beneficial ties. The “traditional” nature of some or other Muslim spiritual leaders was often determined by their affiliation to official Islamic structures, as well as support they received from the authorities.

A considerable role in the development of the situation in the North Caucasus according to an unfavorable scenario has been played by the Federal authorities who placed stakes on supporting traditional Islam as against radical Islam. As a result of this policy Islamic values and the Islamic way of life have become widely popular in the North Caucasus, and the local population (first and foremost young people) has become susceptible to propaganda of radical ideas.

During the past decade representatives of the authorities and the academic community have time and again pointed to the unfavorable socio-economic situation, particularly unemployment, as one of the

main causes of the tumultuous religious revival. Of course, there is certain connection between the socio-economic situation of the population and the level of religiousness. But it is tied not so much with unemployment as with the non-competitiveness of a considerable part of the able-bodied population (young people, first of all).

The lower quality of labor resources is a general Russian problem. But in the North Caucasus this problem has reached a simply critical level during the post-Soviet period as compared with the general Russian level. This clash with objective social problems and the absence of clear prospects for North Caucasian young people have taken the form of a specific intellectual and psychological reaction: a young people's counter-culture is being created on the basis of Islam. The radical ideas typical of it cannot be properly combined with the actual social agenda. And this situation is used by the ideologists of radical Islam to their advantage.

There is a threat of marginalization of a considerable part of the population of certain regions of Russia which are geostrategically important. One of the alarming signals of the situation is the rapid growth of criminal activity which is due to the fact that the new generation of young people has no positive social program and aims. This can be explained, to a certain degree, by the fact that in the crisis years of the present reforms the North Caucasian population has discarded everything that was not connected with the task of survival. In these conditions there were no incentives for the development of human capital.

The ideologists of radical Islam exploit frustrated expectations of contemporary people. Islamist propaganda creates aesthetically attractive image of religiously motivated violence and has simple aims for perception. No matter how absurd and unfeasible these aims could be, they become an effective instrument, especially when society and

the powers that be have no clear development priorities understood and shared by a majority of the population.

The system-forming role of Islam in the North Caucasian republics is not the chief characteristic of the region, but a result of the spontaneous and directed religious revival. Twenty years ago manifestations of religiousness were not going beyond the personal or family boundaries, and religiousness as such was relatively moderate. Today, manifestations of Islamic culture have become an encouraged practice. However, the scope of the cultural transformations in post-Soviet years should not be exaggerated, just as the cultural gap between “religious” and “secular” territories of the South of Russia. First, the population of the republics has largely been urbanized. Secondly, the factor of global cultural exchanges, the growing scope of information and the development of technical means of communications exert a considerable influence. Thirdly, Islamic culture and ideology (including their radical trends) are spread and perceived as a modern intellectual fashion and become part of modern mass culture. Indicative in this respect is that the culture of young people in the North Caucasus (as can be seen from various materials in the Internet) is a fusion of post-modernist and traditional cultures where religion is presented as a modern brand.

The spreading of Islamic radicalism and extremism in the North Caucasus is a result of urbanization, and radicals and extremists themselves are socially mobilized sections of the population with greater opportunities and higher expectations which can be realized for political aims by using means and methods which are not acceptable for illiterate peasants.

Indicative in this respect is the example of the latest Chechen emigration which is concentrated not in Islamic countries, but mostly in Europe. Why do “devout Muslims” feel better in countries dominated

by secular culture? In actual fact, they are more modern than they consider themselves to be. They have a relatively high educational level and quite normally integrate in contemporary society. They will hardly feel better in more religious countries, like, say, Afghanistan or Saudi Arabia. Actually, it means that the civilizatory identity of North Caucasian Muslims is dual: they are both Muslims and Europeans in a broad sense of the word simultaneously.

Ways and means to lower the influence of the religious factor on security in the South of Russia. The growing influence of Islam on all spheres of life of North Caucasian society causes concern among representatives of the authorities and the expert community. Sometimes it leads to rejecting all attempts to regulate the religious sphere.

However, to apply prohibitive and restricting measures to traditional Islam would be a crude mistake. The point is to make a clear distinction between the sphere of competence of religion and the secular authorities and revive secular values.

The main tasks of state policy in the sphere of religious relations at the present stage can be formulated as follows:

a) depoliticization of religion, restriction of support of religiousness on the part of the authorities, reduced participation of religious figures in official state functions;

b) protection and strengthening of secular values on a countrywide scale, as well as in the North Caucasus;

c) revival of public interest in science and support of scientific world outlook;

d) placing religious subjects to the periphery of the mass media activity;

In other words, there should be serious changes in the relations between the state and religion. The main aim of these changes is to achieve consolidation of society not on the basis of limiting religious freedom, but

by protecting the values of civil secular society and the state. It is necessary not to allow interference of religious figures of any confession with state affairs, problems of land, the school, or electoral matters.

It is also necessary to renounce the thesis that morality is only connected with religiousness and promulgate secular values more actively.

The reform of the state-confessional relations in the North Caucasus will require considerable resources. The main one of them is the high degree of loyalty of North Caucasian societies. Today many people believe that promotion of secular values in the Islamic societies of the North Caucasus is not possible. Meanwhile, we can offer several theses and arguments which could be used in political and ideological work in the North Caucasian region:

Islam has not become a viable alternative to globalization and modernization. Not a single project (global jihad, mass Islamic resistance, Islamic state structure, etc.) has been realized. An Islamic alternative has never been implemented;

Radical slogans are short-lived, they rapidly vanish in public consciousness. Where is now the stubbornness and perseverance expected from Muslims in the ideology of Islamist projects? Numerous examples all over the world show that people get tired very soon of radical slogans. Not a single ideology, not a single propaganda campaign can force people to forget their vital interests;

Religiousness is exaggerated. The way of life taking shape on the basis of a uniform educational, cultural and political area forms similar attitude to religion and similar characteristics of religious behavior among representatives of the main traditional confessions, thus leveling the conflict potential of religious differences. Russian citizens adhering to traditional confessions (Muslims, Orthodox Christians and Buddhists) are characterized by different levels of religiousness. Their religiousness is confined to the formal (rite) aspect;

Considerable part of the Soviet population (*this concerns mainly representatives of middle and older age groups*). Prolonged existence within the framework of one state – the U.S.S.R. – exerted considerable influence on Muslim peoples. This can be seen in comparing Islamic communities of the North Caucasus (or Central Asia) with Muslim communities in the Middle East. For instance, in most cases post-Soviet Muslims do not deem it necessary to observe religious rites or religious restrictions or bans regularly.

In our view, it is necessary to affirm secular values in the sphere of education, politics, the mass media, and way of life constantly and consistently. This task seems the most important to us. The point is that cultural factors, in contrast to socio-economic ones, can exert a more profound influence on society's life and determine its development for a long time. In recent years we have come across the very first results of Islamic renaissance in the South of Russia; the mechanism of cultural inertia has been started, and prolonged efforts will be required to overcome the existing situation.

*“Problemy sotsialno-ekonomicheskogo
i etnopoliticheskogo razvitiya yuzhnogo makroregiona,”
Rostov-on-Don, 2012, pp. 444–452.*

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**MUSLIMS OF THE URALS-VOLGA AREA
IN EARLY 21st CENTURY**

The traditional characteristics of Russian Islam have regional specific features according to which one can single out Islam in the North Caucasus, Islam in the Volga area, Islam in the Southern Urals

and in the Trans-Urals. Each of these regions is influenced by Central Asian and Middle East countries, and, naturally, by the present events of the “Arab spring.” This is why it is quite important to reveal the factors of risk in the development of the Russian umma, including in the regions of compact settlement of ethnic Muslims – Tatars, Bashkirs, and other peoples.

Modern Islam in the Urals-Volga area is characterized by several specific features determined by the historical and cultural development of the region. The “Tatar” Volga area is distinguished by a high public and political activity of Muslim associations and their leaders, the positioning of Islam as the alternative to the common national idea, and the Muslim elite as the ideological opposition, trends of modernizing Islam, innovations in the development sphere of the Muslim economy, culture and education, and close contacts with foreign Islamic foundations and organizations. Islam in the Southern Urals and the Trans-Urals is characterized by a low level of socio-cultural mobility of Muslims, stable difference between “rural” and “urban” Islam, the orientation of the clergy and its leaders to the state and the ostentatious loyalty to the high and regional authorities. The latter can largely be explained by the economic weakness of Muslim organizations. All this put together creates the image of local Islam – moderate, non-politicized and non-ambitious, which does not answer the desires and claims of modern believers, which conditioned, in a way, the non-acceptance by young Muslims of the so-called traditional Islam and its radicalization.

Among the common specific features in all these regions are the existence of several spiritual centers and rivalry of high representatives of the clergy for the sphere of influence.

These features are especially noticeable in towns of Bashkortostan, and in Orenburg, Chelyabinsk and Kurgan region. Each

of these regions is poly-confessional with the domination of Russian Orthodox Christianity and Islam.

Islam and Spiritual Centers in the Republic of Bashkortostan

Muslims in Bashkortostan are united by three spiritual centers in Ufa: the Spiritual Center of Muslims of the Republic of Bashkortostan (SCM RB) in charge of 427 Muslim associations and four madrasahs. Its chairman and mufti since 1992 is Nurmuhamet Nigmatullin, member of the Council of Muftis of Russia. The Central Spiritual Board of Muslims of Russia (CSBM), set up in September 1788 and registered at the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in October 2000. Its chairman and supreme mufti is Talgat Tajuddin. It is in charge of over twenty regional spiritual boards in different parts of the Russian Federation. The regional Spiritual Board of Muslims of the Republic of Bashkortostan as part of CSBM. Its chairman and mufti is Muhammad Tajuddinov. It is in charge of 392 Muslim parishes and an Islamic University.

In all, there are nearly a thousand Muslim religious associations in the republic, 94.2 percent of which are in rural districts and only 5.8 percent in 17 towns of the republic. There are also five Muslim educational institutions: Islamic University (Ufa), Sultanova madrasah (Ufa), “Galiya” madrasah (Ufa), “Nur al-Islam” madrasah (Oktyabrsky), and “Nur al-Iman” madrasah (Sterlitamak).

Islam and Spiritual Centers in Chelyabinsk Region

More than 70 Muslim communities have been registered in Chelyabinsk region. According to sociological data, 13 percent of people living in the Southern Urals (425,000) are Muslims. Ethnic Muslims – Tatars, Bashkirs, Kazakhs – comprise 13.3 percent of the

regional population. There are 69 mosques in Chelyabinsk region and nine Muslim communities uniting from three to five thousand believers.

Until recently Muslims of Chelyabinsk region have been in the sphere of interests of two spiritual boards – the Central Spiritual Board of Muslims of Russia (chairman T. Tajuddin) and the Spiritual Board of Muslims of the Asian Part of Russia (Chairman N. Ashirov).

In 2007 – 2010 the Islamic organizations under the Council of Muftis of Russia (CMR – R. Gainuddin) tried to spread their influence on Muslims of Chelyabinsk region. In the past two years two communities were set up by the Spiritual Board of Muslims of the Asian Part of Russia, three communities by the Spiritual Board of Muslims of the “Association of Mosques of Russia,” and one community by the Spiritual Board of Muslims of the European Part of Russia.

The interests of different spiritual boards of Muslims coincide. This is also true of Bashkortostan and Orenburg region. Yet, there is a tendency of the division of the Russian Islamic area and the formation within the bounds of Russia of a new Muslim spiritual center which will have nothing in common with the Central Spiritual Board of Muslims and local realities, a kind of an Islamic holding.

Islam Turning Ethnic

Rivalry and confrontation between the Central Spiritual Board of Muslims and its regional and local opponents is complemented by confrontation on ethnic grounds between “Russian-speaking” and “Tatar-speaking” Muslims and Muslim migrants of Central Asian and Middle Eastern origin. The Tatar community regards mosques as the Tatar national spiritual centers, ignoring the supranational character of Islam.

There is also a noticeable increase in the number of “Russian” Muslims among young people. The imam of one of the mosques in Yekaterinburg says that in the congregation of his mosque young Russians account for 40 percent on Fridays. In St. Petersburg three or more Russians adopt Islam every Friday. There are cases of Muslims changing their religious identity. Quite a few Tatars and Bashkirs adopt Protestantism. In Bashkortostan 33 percent of Protestant communities include Bashkir and Tatar believers.

Bashkirs in Quest for Means of Spiritual Mobilization

During the 1990s the Bashkir intelligentsia realized that Bashkirs were “bad Muslims”, just as two hundred years ago, and that Islam would hardly become a means of mobilization of Bashkir spirituality and revival of ethnicity. All the more so since Islam has always been, and now is, such means for the Tatar nation which has successfully integrated Islam and Muslim tradition in the sovereignization process of Tatarstan. This was why a search for the roots of Bashkir identity in more ancient, pre-Islamic layers of spiritual culture and ancient Turkic beliefs was not accidental.

“Bashkir Islam” is somehow combined with elements of traditional pre-Islamic beliefs.

Intervention of Radical Ideologies in the Medium of Russian Muslims

The repartition of the Islamic area of the Urals is taking place in the conditions of the real danger of the mass distribution of radical and extremist ideologies in the Muslim medium. In many regions of the Ural area and in such big cities as Yekaterinburg, Chelyabinsk, Orenburg, etc. criminal actions were started on the fact of the activity

of “Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami” and other radical organizations in 2005 – 2008.

Manifestations of Islamic extremism have also been registered in the Volga and South Urals area, as well as in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan.

The “Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami” organization was set up in 1953 by Takiuddin an-Nabahoni al-Falastini (1909–1979) who was a member of the “Moslem Brotherhood.” After his death in December 1979 the organization was headed by Palestinian Abd al-Qadim Zalum (1925 – 2003) under whose guidance the organization stepped up its activity in the former Soviet republics of Central Asia, mainly in the regions noted for their interethnic and inter-religious contradictions. After his death the movement was headed by Ata ibn Halil ibn Ahmad ibn Abdulkadir Hatib Rashta, nicknamed “Ata,” or “al Rushta,” who supported the terrorist Hezbollah” movement in 2006 and proclaimed jihad against the United States, Israel, the European Union and Russia. Under his leadership the organization has acquired a more aggressive character. Its activity is quite widespread in most Muslim countries (Iran, Iraq, Algeria, Sudan, Yemen, Pakistan and Afghanistan), however, its anti-government sentiments have caused a very cautious attitude to it on the part of the official authorities. This required its leaders going underground. The main aim of the organization is the creation of a universal Caliphate. Among its methods is work with imams and people, as well as cyber-jihad, armed jihad, etc. Admitting successes of “Hizb ut-Tahrir” in Central Asia, experts state its ability to adapt itself to any political circumstances using contradictions between the East and the West, a secular state and an Islamic state, communism and capitalism, liberal values and Islamic values, etc. The organization is waging an effective propaganda activity using modern information resources and social technologies. Using the Internet for contacts with

members of the organization in the countries which have banned it, the “Hizb ut-Tahrir” leaders ably manipulate the mass consciousness of various social groups in marginal, critical and warped societies. Turning to Islam the organization shamelessly distorts the canons of the Koran, the language of the Prophet, and the very concept and essence of jihad.

“Hizb ut-Tahrir” distributes extremist literature and its extremist and terrorist ideas through mosque imams.

The religious-extremist “Hizb ut-Tahrir” organization has been banned in many Arab states, as well as in Germany, Turkey, Russia, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Its activity has been outlawed in a number of Asian and European countries. The U.S. Department of State has characterized “Hizb ut-Tahrir al Islami” as a “transnational extremist organization trying to overthrow the government of the Central Asian countries.”

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization also refers “Hizb ut-Tahrir” to especially dangerous terrorist structures.

In Russia “Hizb ut-Tahrir al Islami” was considered a criminal organization in 1999. In May 2001 the CIS Anti-terrorist Center assessed it as an “international terrorist organization presenting a potential threat to the security not only of the Russian Federation, but of all CIS countries.” The Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation described this organization as “the most radical and sealed-off extremist structure planned and financed by foreign centers and aiming at stage-by-stage Islamization of Russia and its neighbors.” The Supreme Court of the Russian Federation banned the activity of “Hizb ut-Tahrir al Islami” as a terrorist organization on the country’s territory.

As shown by ten-year practical experience, the measures to stem its activity have had little effect so far. At present members of this

organization hold mass meetings openly, give interviews, arrange pickets and use the organization's symbols.

“Hizb ut-Tahrir al Islami” members continue to recruit people ready for forcible change of the constitutional system of the Russian Federation and violent seizure of power. Such situation calls for non-standard approach and non-standard decisions.

Apart from “Hizb ut-Tahrir al Islami” there are other Islamic radical currents widespread in the Southern Urals. The ideology of fundamentalist Islam has become widespread among considerable part of the Muslim population of the region (especially young people). Unofficial forms of associations of believers (jamaats) are created for the study and propaganda of fundamentalist ideas among Muslims and recruitment of new supporters. There are jamaats in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Chelyabinsk region. Their participants represent young people's groups united by the ideas of “jihad against the infidels,” the Turkish religious extremist sect “Nurjular,” the “Tablig” movement, and Wahhabi and Salafite groups of fighters for pure Islam. As a result, young Muslim believers form a negative attitude to the official clergy and “hypocritical” imams, and even to mosques.

There are many other organizational forms of associations of Muslims, which should not be identified with extremism. For one, there are quite a few such groups in Bashkortostan practicing pre-Islamic cults. However, representatives of extremist communities are using every opportunity to draw rank-and-file believers to their side and propagate radical ideologies among Muslims.

Reasons for Stepping up Radical Trends

From the point of view of experts and analysts, the growing number and greater activity of extremist communities can be explained by the following factors:

- general religious illiteracy of believers;
- judicial illiteracy of society as a whole;
- study of Muslim clergy and young believers at Islamic centers abroad – in Middle East countries;
- missionary activity of emissaries of foreign extremist organizations from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and other countries, which help Muslim communities to build mosques, in the study process, and also give assistance to private persons;
- growing migration of people from Central Asian countries (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) and from the North Caucasus, where the influence of fundamentalists have grown markedly in the past decade;
- the worsening of the social and economic situation in several regions of Russia;
- weak control over the situation in Muslim parishes on the part of city and district administrations and their heads;
- successful use of methods of totalitarian destructive organizations in drawing people in extremist groups;
- actions of certain human rights organizations and activists who render legal and financial assistance to participants in terrorist and extremist organizations.

The role of religion in the system of education and upbringing of young people is an important problem. It should be based on the constitutional principle of the secular character of the Russian state. In the view of experts, the introduction of the ABC's of religion in school curricula can lead to growing tension in religiously-mixed populated centers. Besides, priests are often unable to teach the theory of religions due to absence of adequate pedagogical or higher humanitarian education.

The repartition of the Islamic area of Russia and the intervention of extremist ideologies reflect the general trend of the formation of “new Islam” in Russia, confrontation between traditional Islam represented by the older generation and “new Muslims” who do not know the Koran and Sunna and have chosen Islam as the ideology of protest against the worsening economic and social situation. The Russian umma subjected to radical ideas is integrated in the anti-Russian opposition.

*“Rossiya i Arabsky mir: istoriya i sovremennost,”
Ufa, 2012, pp. 32–40.*

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**MOBILIZATION POTENTIAL OF ISLAM
YESTERDAY AND TODAY**

The tendency to view the post-Soviet area as a field of ethno-confessional tension, which is now in the habit of Russian and foreign historiography, has all prerequisites to become a tradition, inasmuch as the train of events on the vast territories of the former U.S.S.R. gives all grounds to believe that intra- and interstate relations of new political figures on the map are far from harmonization. Researchers and experts are unanimous in the opinion that Islam rapidly spreading in the post-Soviet area has one of the highest proneness to conflict. There is the need for greater attention to these processes and the monitoring of their quantitative and qualitative components, which is especially important in examining the forms and trends of Islam, which has favorable conditions for entrenching itself in the ideological vacuum formed after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The Russian Federation, just as other states with regions inhabited by predominantly Muslim

population, is now part of general world processes and is also facing the threat of “transnational Islamist terrorism.” The Russian historical realities of the middle and end of the 1990s added the definition “Chechen” to the words “Islamic radicalism.” Loud warnings were heard and apprehensions expressed that the entire North Caucasus should be regarded as one of the non-Russian ethnic peripheries, moreover, as a periphery of the Middle East and the Islamic world.

The growing ethno-confessional tension in the country and adjacent territories, along with the present evolution of Islam itself, has evoked great interest in it on the part of the special services of the Russian Federation and the CIS countries. It has now become habitual to study Islam in the context of a “conflictological analysis of terrorism as a socially dangerous phenomenon.” This tendency has appeared due to serious reasons. As one of the most authoritative experts of Islamic fundamentalism in Russia, Georgy Mirsky aptly noted, “while disagreeing with the definition of Islam as “religion of enmity and hatred, one cannot ignore the indisputable fact that most acts of international terror recently have been committed by Muslims...”

In the attempts to reevaluate the phenomenon and actions connected with it, the history of mutual relations of power and Islam has also been revised, which entailed the working out of new periodization of their development. Alternative variants were suggested for the Islamic renaissance of the period between 1989 and 1999. Chechnya was given a special place, because its official Islamization, in the view of many authors, combined with the military and political opposition to the federal forces exerted a special influence not only on all Muslims in Russia, but also on the entire post-Soviet Muslim umma. A special place has now been given over to Dagestan, Chechnya’s neighbor, confirming the priority of the North Caucasian region in the

Islamic discourse for the Russian Federation as part of the post-Soviet area.

It is firmly believed that Islam is a destabilizing factor of the ethnopolitical processes going on in the North Caucasian region, moreover, it is the catalyst of its powerful conflictogenic potential. An especially harsh position on this problem has been taken by our foreign colleagues, who directly state that Russia itself has contributed to the emergence and consolidation of Islamic radicalism on its own territory. Many Russian experts also agree with the idea that Islamism in the North Caucasus has gained ground and many supporters due to a difficult socio-economic situation there, where the political situation is permanently unstable and has been aggravated by the 10-year-long Chechen conflict.

All efforts, intellectual included, have been devoted to fighting fundamentalists in the North Caucasus, whereas in the rest of Russia, where the situation is calm, radical Islamists (Wahhabi) were able to unfold energetic activity. This concerns Muslim communities in the Volga-Urals area. According to the data of 2007, the radicals took up to 80 percent of the Islamic mass media under their control. Earlier there have been reports about prevention of several terrorist acts on the territory of Tatarstan, and several groups of extremists have been smashed. At a meeting of the State Council of Tatarstan it was admitted that the problem of spreading Wahhabi ideology reached a critical level.

The view is widespread that the Chechen Republic in the North Caucasus is a traditional Islamic region contaminated with “extremist socially dangerous ideas,” which penetrated it through young Chechens who have received religious education abroad. One of the essential factors of destabilization and prolonged crisis in Chechnya is the policy

of Islamization pursued in the republic since the late 1980s, which has a strong influence on public schools.

The socio-economic situation in Chechnya did not allow young Chechens to receive full-fledged school education. Thus, the educational and ideological vacuum was filled by Islamist propaganda. The mobilization potential of Islam in Chechnya during its confrontation with the Federal authorities grew immensely. In the late 1980s – early 1990s hundreds of mosques were built, numerous religious educational establishments were opened, and an independent spiritual board began to function. In other words, the process of Islamization of Chechnya proceeded at a very rapid pace.

The religious (Islamic) idea was called for complementing and strengthening the national (ethnic) idea, even for replacing it, if necessary.

At the same time, the ethnic factor is quite strong, but in today's Chechnya one can observe processes which became a consequence of its young leader Ramzan Kadyrov having unexpectedly begun to incorporate Islam in public and political life of the Chechen Republic. There are three reasons for appeal to Islam on the part of his team: “the growing prestige and popularity of the leader among the Chechen people,” “his growing prestige as a Muslim in the Middle East and among international organizations working in Chechnya,” “interception of Islam from the radical opposition.” The second reason is, perhaps, the strongest.

Islam in Chechnya has been, and still remains, a political instrument with all its pros and cons. Its influence on politics is determined by the requirements and interests of the political elites.

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Moscow, 2012, issue 4(19), pp. 145–155.

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SPECIFIC FEATURES AND PROBLEMS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF KAZAKHSTAN

One of the major tasks facing modern society on our planet is that of survival of state formations, ethnic groups and individuals. This task is doubly important for such states as Kazakhstan, which is still in the process of state and national construction. Our country has faced, and is still facing, several tasks to tackle simultaneously, which the most advanced countries had much more time for solving. Today globalization compacts and speeds up developments, thus complicating the tasks of state construction. The “new world order” also renders the process more difficult, regardless of what project is going to be implemented within the framework of this “order” – neoconservative or multilateral suggesting the even distribution of competence between the United States and its allies, in conjunction with the project of “greater democracy.”

As to the problem of state structures, there is a more difficult situation, as many researchers and experts admit. First of all, it is noted that the resource potential of a state decreases, which cannot be said about the tasks facing it. Moreover, the survival of a state, which, according to an apt remark of Nikolai Berdiayev, exists not for making life a paradise, but for not turning it into a hell, depends on how its citizens are consolidated, and on how its political and social system is optimized and is managed. This is why in the conditions of the lower resource potential of states the problems of a dialogue of cultures, types of rationality, institutionalized fixation of common foundations in the cultures of the biggest ethnic groups of Kazakhstan – Kazakhs and

Russians – and the problems of consolidation and formation of new identity and the new basic system of values seem very important.

Dialogue of Cultures in Kazakhstan as an Effective Instrument of State Construction

In the modern world in the conditions of globalization the need for mutual responsibility of citizens of a state is very great. Most countries proclaim the protection and support of national culture and cultural heritage a priority direction of their domestic policy. Culture is regarded as an effective instrument of national construction, as a means to achieve such crucial strategic aims as national unity and national identity. The well-known American political analyst of Polish origin Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote in one of his works that cultural supremacy was an underestimated aspect of the American global might. But this concerns the United States as a superpower. In the situation of our poly-ethnic state, in our view, attention should be paid to the ethnic component of the problem of culture.

After the October revolution of 1917 historical justice has been restored by the legal establishment of Kazakhstan's borders within the U.S.S.R.

After the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. our country has found itself in a unique historical situation, when there was the need for the legal confirmation of events post factum. We had to solve the problem of our own state construction. One of the major acts in this sphere was work on and adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 1993.

As is known, in the 20th century the geopolitical map of the world changed greatly: many new states came into being, which gained independence as a result of the national-liberation struggle, “velvet revolutions,” disintegration of certain states, etc. The list of these new

states included our state twenty years ago. Since then sovereignty (from the legal point of view) has acquired real features, namely, the form of state structure was chosen by our people – presidential republic. New bodies of legislative, judicial, and executive power were formed. However, the process of sovereignization will become real if the specific features of Kazakhstan’s cultural development are taken into account and the paradigm of its own development, including cultural development, is correctly created. Evidently, the institution of a state is not only a means of protecting the natural-material resources for maintaining the normal life of its people. It is also a means of preserving cultural identity, that is, full-fledged cultural development for the peoples who have gained the opportunity to build a separate state of their own.

As to Kazakhstan, it has also been drawn in the world process of transferring cultures from the local level to the integrated one. Of course, along with general specific features of this process, there have been specificities of its own in Kazakhstan. This process began in the 19th century and has been passing through several stages to this day. The first stage was connected with the development of the new means of communications and was rather difficult for Kazakh culture, inasmuch as it had entered in a broad contact with western culture through Russian culture. This was reflected, first and foremost, in Kazakh poetry of the 19th century, which was called “*zar-zaman*” – “poetry of grief.”

The second stage connected with the U.S.S.R. was characterized by both negative and positive traits. First, the established borders of Kazakhstan within the structure of the U.S.S.R., which became the state borders of sovereign Kazakhstan. Secondly, a policy was pursued in the changing world aimed at supporting national cultures. Best representatives of Russian culture took part in the implementation of

this policy in Kazakhstan. However, along with this, Kazakhstan had been turned into a place of exile of not only individual persons, but whole peoples. This is why the problem of interrelations of cultures is especially important for Kazakhstan.

This problem remains one of the most crucial during the third, post-Soviet, stage. Kazakhstan remains a poly-ethnic state in which cultures of many different peoples exist and interact. Along with fears that the original features of the peoples inhabiting Kazakhstan can be lost (including the Kazakhs themselves), there are positive aspects in the interaction of these cultures. As is known, human history knows of examples of the emergence of brilliant cultures with a maximally great number of the components forming them, provided these cultures are open and ready to interact and borrow.

The problems of cultural development in post-Soviet states (and, of course, in Kazakhstan) have acquired a special character. In Europe various supra-national alliances are set up, whereas the post-Soviet states build national state models, on the one hand, and on the other, they have to adapt themselves to the conditions of globalization, which requires a high level of economic, scientific and educational development. It is necessary to note that integration tendencies have emerged in the post-Soviet area recently.

We have already mentioned that at present the globalization processes provoke waves of nationalism everywhere, on the one hand, and on the other, increase the role of people's joint efforts in resolving various tasks. This is why in such poly-ethnic countries as Kazakhstan, where the indigenous ethnos is not the biggest numerically, a model of multiculturalism, which is today subjected to criticism from all sides, has no alternative in poly-ethnic communities, in our view. This model should be characterized, above all, by the polyphony of the cultures of

the peoples whose representatives now live on the territory of modern Kazakhstan.

Speaking of the polyphony of cultures, it should be noted that the beautiful sounds of cultures are only possible, in our view, when the community of destiny is properly perceived, which boils down not only to the past and present joint experience, but also to the common aim, that is, the well-being of each person irrespective of his or her nationality.

Perception of the community of destiny will be promoted by the unifying idea, such as the idea of civil society, the Kazakh national idea, the Eurasian idea, and the idea of “ecological revival.” I think that at the present stage the idea of universal human values has the greatest potential, which is connected with modern socio-cultural realities of Kazakhstan.

In the present-day world each person refers himself or herself to a definite type of culture, and this is very important because any culture is based on a cognitive attitude to the world. As many researchers assert, each culture “thinks” in its own way, has “its own mentality,” which determines its originality and its attitude to other cultures. In other words, each culture has a special type of rationality. The concept of cultural-historical types by N. Danilevsky and O. Spengler’s premises on the morphology of culture have pinpointed the problem of a big difference of the types of rationality which form the foundation of different cultures. If cultures cannot be brought together and compared, then it will only be possible to perceive the rationality of another culture through complete renunciation of one’s own culture. This is a very serious and difficult question, and for resolving it the term ‘dialogue of cultures’ has been introduced. In order to organize and promote such dialogue in our country it will be necessary to investigate the general foundations in the cultures of the Kazakh and Russian

ethnic groups. For this purpose it will be necessary, first and foremost, to investigate the types of rationality forming the foundation of these cultures. The type of rationality is determined by a cognitive attitude to the world which forms the basic values of culture, which are largely similar among Kazakhs and Russians. It would be expedient to regard these values in the context of universal strategy of research, that is, to reveal what is identical, or points of coincidence. It should be noted that the term “rationality” is used in this investigation (just as in many other investigations) as a characteristic of mental and practical actions of man, which does not coincide with the “ideal” perception of rationality. The timeliness of the subject of rationality in this aspect and in the context of the specificities of the modern civilizatory development becomes immeasurably greater. The theme of rationality presents problems of all basic spheres of modern philosophical thinking. The timeliness of this theme is also conditioned by understanding the need to return to it the role of a major cultural value based on perception of the sense bearing of not only human actions and soul’s intentions, but also natural phenomena taken in their unity.

Common Grounds in Cultures of the Main Culture-Forming Ethnic Groups in Kazakhstan

In the modern world the individual has many identities, the most important of which is ethnic identity as one of the forms of social identity. The concept of ethnos presupposes the existence of homogeneous functional and static characteristics which distinguish this group from other groups having different parameters of the same characteristics. There is no generally accepted definition of ethnos, but the most widespread is “ethnos is an ethnosocial organism,” or “biosocial organism.” In our view, the latter is more correct.

In order to reveal common foundations in the cultures of the Russian and Kazakh ethnic groups it is necessary to examine the concept of “community” in the Russian and Kazakh ethnosocial organization. The Kazakh historian Zh. Artybayev justly believes that ethnosocial organization is a community connected by ties of genealogical, economic, territorial and political relations. Nomadic society is based on various types of connections expressed in the mutual relations and behavior of people, as well as in a series of invisible knots of an integration character. The most essential forms of these connections are ethnic ones, whose pivot is family and sub-ethnic, economic, social, political, administrative and cultural relations.

The concept of “community” has been introduced in scientific parlance by our economists in the early 20th century in connection with the study of the specific features of land tenure of Kazakh people. At the time researchers invariably emphasized the direct connection between economic activity and the family. Certain researchers claim that in the Russian ethnosocial organization community is regarded, above all, as an economic unit, and in Kazakh – as ethnic one.

In our view, the most important aspect is that community in both ethnosocial organizations is a collective of life, which played a major role in the history of both ethnic groups.

Kazakhstan’s culture today is represented by the cultures of the two biggest ethnic groups inhabiting our republic – Kazakh and Russian. Not one of them is dominating. The Kazakh language is spoken by half the republic’s population. And the Russian language spoken by another half is not the national language of Kazakhstan.

Thus, the cultures of the two biggest ethnic groups in our republic form a single whole. These two ethnic groups have values, which seem similar to us: predominance of spiritual-ethical foundations over material ones; collective forms of labor democracy (community,

team); orientation to reasonable sufficiency and self-restraint; ideal of righteous labor; idea of the Earth and Nature as the gift of God to all living beings.

The affinity of civilizatory values of the two basic culture-forming ethnic groups of Kazakhstan can be a good resource for joint progress of our people at present and in the future.

The above-said allows us to make the conclusion that there are no “cultural splits” in Kazakhstan. And it should be noted that the potential of cultural dialogue in Kazakhstan in the conditions of the incomplete transition period in our republic’s history largely depends on the responsibility of the political and economic elites for the vector of spiritual and cultural development and the formation of the basic values of society.

Problems of Consolidation and Formation of New Identity in Kazakhstan

In the modern world the state remains, as before, the main guarantor of the social rights and security of its citizens. But challenges and demands of the development of modern civilization (anthropogenic singularity, problems of the “post-human being”, “new world order”) contribute to a decrease of the resource potential of a state in the sphere of ensuring its main functions. The sphere of ensuring the social rights and guarantees of social security has a great conflict potential. And fewer possibilities of the state in this sphere (due to the above-mentioned factors) make it ever more vulnerable. This is why the survival of states and individuals living in them is a very important task.

The state construction of our republic and consolidation of its citizens become more complex and depend, in our view, on the following factors: ethnic, social and confessional heterogeneity of the

population; socio-economic situation of the population; independence and passionarity of the population and its energy; the role of the elites as producers of society's basic values; formation of new basic values.

Kazakhstan is a poly-ethnic state, just as many states of the world. The socio-economic well-being of its population is a very important factor influencing the consolidation of society and state construction. Transition to market relations has contributed to the stratification of society, and globalization has enhanced the division into "subjects and "objects" of globalization at the level of states and at the level of individuals.

One of the main factors determining the socio-economic well-being of the population is the problem of the distribution of social wealth in state construction and consolidation of society. This is why the responsibility of the elites for the preservation and development of democratic institutions is growing in these conditions.

The next major factor influencing state construction and society's consolidation is the emergence of conditions for the formation of new identity after the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. Identity should be regarded not as a feature initially inherent in the individual, but as a feature formed in the process of social; interaction.

After the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. social relations in all post-Soviet republics have changed, and conditions have emerged for the formation of new identity. In Kazakhstan the formation process of new identity has not taken place so far, but its variants in the form of the "Kazakhstan nation," or "Kazakh nation" cause serious arguments among researchers and the general public.

New approaches to the problem are also necessary for Russia, which should combine the principle of civic nation with the concept of group identity.

The problems of nationalism are examined in the context of the formation problems of national identity. There are two forms of nationalism – civil (France) and ethnic (Israel, Germany). In the conditions of Kazakhstan civil nationalism presupposes recognition of the existence of the “Kazakhstan nation,” which does not exist in reality. But what does exist is the Kazakh nation and national minorities which are citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Accordingly, ethnic nationalism presupposes recognition of the Kazakh nation. Nationalism is regarded as the inevitable objective phenomenon, a product of post-industrial society. Not long ago our President used for the first time the term “Kazakhstan nation,” which is connected, in our view, with the tasks of uniting the Kazakhstan people in the conditions of the need for solving a whole range of modernization tasks.

A new system of basic values, new ethics of responsibility and unity should become the important foundation of consolidation of all citizens of Kazakhstan. The problems of the socio-cultural progress of our country include the crucial problem of a dialogue of cultures and socio-cultural consolidation. Another aspect of socio-cultural consolidation – national – is connected with the process of the formation of new identity in Kazakhstan. Of course, the formation process of new identity demands that representatives of the ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan give part of their resource to the country they live in. It is important to reach consensus in how big this “part” be, however, it is necessary to reach an agreement.

The systematic, well-substantiated and scientifically-based solution of the problems of socio-cultural development will help successfully solve a whole range of modernization tasks vital for our republic.

“Voprosy filosofii,” Moscow, 2013, No 3, pp. 58–67.

**L. Khoperskaya,
MONITORING OF THE ETHNO-POLITICAL
SITUATION IN THE CIS COUNTRIES.
KYRGYZSTAN**

The annual report of the Network of Ethnological Monitoring for 2009 made the conclusion that the world financial crisis did not bring about “essential collisions in the socio-political spheres of most post-Soviet states. Tension has increased in individual cases, particularly in Kyrgyzstan. It could be asserted that during the period of revolutionary changes in that country high tension acquired a systemic character there.

The noticeable manifestations of the crisis of power and its relations with citizens were expressed in the inability of the central authorities to control the regional elites, and in the actual merger of state administrative bodies and law-enforcement agencies with organized crime. The conflict between the president and parliament was augmented by inner-parliamentary confrontation, and apart from that a constant struggle was going on between the opposition and the authorities. Ethnic tension was also on an increase in the republic.

In June 2010 a new Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic was adopted at a referendum. It proclaimed, among other things, the status of the “titular nation”, and ethnocentric nationalism with a tint of aggressive anti-Uzbek and anti-Russian feelings.

The medium and resources. After the overthrow of President K. Bakiyev a harsh struggle began for control over drug trafficking and drug trade, as well as for material and power resources. In the past two years the volumes of drug production and trafficking have grown considerably, and today Kyrgyzstan can be compared with Afghanistan in this respect. The incomes from drug production and trafficking are estimated at \$20 billion.

Seizure of land and water resources is also a source of constant conflicts between representatives of the titular nation and migrants, which acquire an inter-ethnic character.

Demography and migration. Mass migration from the Kyrgyz Republic grew noticeably in 2010–2011. It concerns mainly representatives of national minorities. According to certain data, the number of residents of the Kyrgyz Republic who left the country for good reached 548,000 in 2010. They included mostly Russian-speaking people and Uzbeks. In the nine months of 2011 the number of migrants amounted to 37, 365.

Economy and social sphere. First of all, it should be noted that the direct economic damage caused by the April revolution and the inter-ethnic conflict in the South of the republic, summer of 2010, amounted to one billion 56 million som in that part of the republic alone.

The post-revolutionary period was also characterized by speedy and illegitimate nationalization. The provisional government decreed the nationalization of forty companies without any legal basis. In all, more than five hundred objects, above all, mining and processing enterprises, were nationalized. The investment losses comprised approximately \$1 billion. The volumes of foreign investments decreased by fifty percent, and new investments projects were suspended at both the republican and regional levels.

The main instrument of property redistribution in the Kyrgyz Republic were forcible takeovers of property belonging quite often to foreign entrepreneurs from Kazakhstan and Russia, including the owners of boarding houses and rest & recreation centers on Lake Issyk Kul.

Special mention should be made of property redistribution of Uzbek owners. Their belongings were openly confiscated and turned over to the state, or arbitrarily appropriated by representatives of the powers that be.

Property redistribution and nationalization policy have shocked the business community and investors who began to withdraw their capital from Kyrgyzstan. Naturally, this increased the budget deficit considerably. In 2011 the total foreign debt of the Kyrgyz Republic comprised \$3 billion 325 million, or 55 percent of the GDP, and basic inflation was 17.6 percent.

Power, the state, politics. One of the most acute post-revolutionary problems was that of ethnic representation. The political elite demands that representatives of the “non-titular” ethnic groups be deprived of all types of political activity. Speeches and statements in Russian (which is still considered the official language) are negatively received.

In 2010–2011 two variants of the state concept of nationalities policy began to be evolved and discussed. The first was based on the idea of a civic poly-ethnic nation.

The other, put forward by the Ata-Zhurt party, had an openly nationalistic character. It emphasized the special role of the “titular nation” in the Kyrgyz Republic. This variant declared the purposeful development of the Kyrgyz nation as the integrating and consolidating nucleus of Kyrgyz society and as the basic element of nationalities policy.

Education, culture, the mass media. Quite a few public organizations, the mass media and the Internet give numerous examples of violations of human rights on the ethnic principle, especially in the sphere of legal procedures, unlawful arrests, torture, and raider-related crime. Human rights organizations voice concern over the policy of genocide against the Uzbek population and negligence of the authorities with regard to manifestations of nationalism. On the contrary, the authorities crack down on human rights activists and the independent

press which raise their voice against these manifestations and inactivity of the powers that be.

According to some local experts, nationalism has become an idea ardently supported by the state and government, which means “to take away everything from the aliens” and distribute it among “our own.”

Contacts and stereotypes. According to the conclusions made by the special representative of the OSCE on the basis of many interviews with local people, 750 eyewitness accounts, documents, photos and video recordings, the situation in Kyrgyzstan is characterized as “political fanaticism with numerous cases of ethnic abuse with tragic consequences.”

The head of the State Committee for national security of the Kyrgyz Republic, Sh. Atakhanov, reported at the end of December 2011 that there were 147 seats of interethnic tension, 29 of which require urgent reaction.

Foreign conditions. The position of Kyrgyzstan in the sphere of “many-vector policy” and the presence of foreign military bases on the country’s territory in the post-revolutionary period has not changed. In the first “revolutionary days” the temporary President R. Otunbayeva asked the leadership of Russia for support, but at the same time stated that the “new leaders of the country would prolong the treaty with the United States on the lease of the “Manas” military base. At present the base serves as a transit center and will continue to function up to the year 2014. Strategic military projects started with Russia have not materialized. Yet, during her visit to the United States Rosa Otunbayeva was awarded the international woman’s prize for valor and discussed the question on the opening of an American military training center in the south of the Kyrgyz Republic.

An important consequence of the “many-vector policy” was the fact that Islamization of the country has ceased to be under control.

Islamic countries increase their influence in the Kyrgyz Republic through the opening of Islamic centers, creation of Islamic foundation and associations, and construction of mosques and prayer houses. Turkey is especially active in this respect. Foreign organizations finance nine Islamic higher educational institutions and about 60 madrasahs. The number of people supporting the ideas and program of the “Hizb-ut-Tahrir” party exceeds 100,000. In their work with the population they use the tactic of missionaries, tackle everyday-life and social problems, and distribute money for food, etc., as well as help with getting interest-free credits. At the same time they try to penetrate governmental bodies, drawing government officials, businessmen, parliamentarians, etc. in their ranks. Thus they prepare foundations for the creation of an Islamic state.

A special field is the development of Islamic bank system. In June 2011 the share of Islamic financing from all bank credit resources of the republic amounted to five percent, and it is planned to increase it to 10–12 percent by 2015. The task is to draw investments to Kyrgyzstan’s economy from the rich countries of the Arabian Peninsula, Malaysia, and other states of the Muslim world.

The nationalistically-minded local elite is dissatisfied with the assessments of international experts of the June events in the South of the Kyrgyz Republic. It also criticizes the Russian leaders V. Putin and D. Medvedev, the Russian Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, as well as some Russian journalists and experts for their attitude to certain developments in the republic.

As to the further development of the situation in Kyrgyzstan, it can be determined by the following factors:

Contradictions are growing between the president with rather limited powers by the new Constitution, the incapable parliament, the

corrupt government, and the gangs of criminals controlling drug production and trafficking.

People have a great many arms on their hands, and political leaders boast their own armed units ready to support them at any moment.

The South of the Kyrgyz Republic is virtually self-governed.

The military presence of the United States is expanding; more military training centers are set up in the South of the republic.

Turkey is engaged in an active religious expansion, and also creates a military educational institution with a considerable ideological tint.

There are no prospects for a constructive dialogue with the Uzbek community, because no real Uzbek leader is in sight, who could agree to talks with the Kyrgyz side, which, in its turn, searches for and sees “Uzbek traces” in every negative phenomenon.

The Kyrgyz authorities are unable to give the Russian Federation firm guarantees to fulfill their obligations as a strategic partner.

“Etnopoliticheskaya situatsiya v Rossii i sopredelnykh gosudarstvakh v 2011 g.” Moscow, 2012, pp. 587–595.

THE ROLES AND ACTORS WILL CHANGE IN THE GLOBAL “KABUKI THEATER”

(Conversation which Dina Malysheva,

D. Sc. (Hist.), had with Corresponding

Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences

Vitaly Naumkin,

Director of the Institute

for Oriental Studies RAS)

D. Malysheva. Many experts, here and in the West, predict a shift of the centers of global dynamics from Europe and the Atlantic

region to Asia and the Pacific basin within the next decade, where China and India continue to develop successfully, while the United States will retain its role of a world power capable to interfere with events in any part of the globe. What place will Russia take in this geopolitical situation and what will its prospects be like in the rapidly changing world?

V. Naumkin. It is difficult not to agree with these forecasts, taking into account the dynamic developments we observe today and learning the assessments given by experts. However, the crisis phenomena in the financial-economic situation in the West (both the European Union and the United States) are of a global character. Some states suffer more, others less from them, but the global system as such remains the same. Nobody is ready yet to throw a challenge to the dollar. Even the ex-premier of Malaysia and the creator of the “Malaysian miracle” Mahathir bin Mohammad, whom I met recently in Kuala Lumpur, said to me that no country would “dare ignore the U.S. dollar in the near future, because it would be restrained by fear of the collapse of the American economy, which would be fraught with a catastrophe for all economies of the world.” And it was precisely Mahathir who tried at one time to introduce the gold dinar as the accounting unit in all foreign trade transactions. The wave of technological innovations comes from the West as before. High labor productivity, low energy intensity of production, high ecological requirements, etc. are justly connected with the West. Finally, it is because of this that we are striving to modernize ourselves by integration in this community, despite all serious political differences between us, and our justified dissatisfaction with our partners’ failure to take our interests into account.

Besides the fact that the dynamically developing Asian countries encounter similar ills as the West (“financial bubbles” are a chronic

disease), they have their own specific problems. For instance, China is facing the problem of the ageing of the population caused by its many-year “one child” policy. The resource of cheap labor force of the landless peasantry is not limitless. Apart from that, the inevitable growth of production cost at the expense of the increasing requirements of the population will also change the conditions favorable for this growth. Of course, the unique labor ethics of the Chinese people, their exceptional discipline and industriousness are the inexhaustible wealth which will help the country move ahead. As to rapidly developing India, I have always been struck by the enormous gap between the highly educated dynamic elite and the countless masses of the population submerged in abominable poverty.

As to the United States, it will continue to force its values everywhere due to its enormous military superiority and irresistible Messiahship. It will continue to meddle into events in various regions of the world, including with the use of force. At the same time it should be examined whether abandonment of brazen interventionism proclaimed by President Obama will be real and consistent. I think that the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan did not go down the drain.

The suggested simplified variant of the geopolitical alignment of forces with strictly prescribed roles should be revised due to the high unpredictability of the future of this world of ours. The roles and actors in the global “Kabuki Theater” will definitely be changed. I think that our country will soon take part in such plays, of which we don’t even dream now.

D. Malysheva. On December 15, 2012, the first stage of a referendum took place in Egypt on the new version of the Constitution which gave President Muhammed Mursi unlimited powers, which caused mass protests in Cairo. Can we regard these events as a harbinger of new revolutionary upheavals in Egypt and the Middle

East? And what other countries of the region shall proceed with the “Arab spring?”

V. Naumkin. The referendum has shown that the greater part of the country’s population continues to support the “Muslim Brothers” and President Mursi who was in a hurry to take upon himself additional powers. Apparently, he decided to demonstrate his power, to sound out his enemies, and also to increase the credit of society’s trust in the pragmatically-minded Islamists who sided with him .

There is no need to overestimate the strength of street resistance on the part of the secular, liberal and left-wing forces, and there are no signs of new serious revolutionary upheavals to be feared in the near future. Along with many other analysts I doubt the ability of the “Muslim Brothers” to tackle complex socio-economic problems facing the country. The point is not only their inexperience or the absence of reliable sources of outside assistance, which could lift off tension and satisfy, if partly and for a short time, the everyday needs of the 85-million population of Egypt. Much more serious counterbalance for Mursi and the “Brothers” is represented by the military and judicial corporations. Will the “Brothers” be able to put them under control, or at least to neutralize them?

The “Muslim Brothers” is a sluggish and clumsy bureaucratic organization. It lacks the necessary drive and initiative. Its leaders use “Stalinist” methods.

I’d like to mention the Salafite party “An-Nur,” which has quite a few capable and energetic young members. If it gets rid of Salafite dogmas, which cause revulsion among many people, and steps on the path of natural evolution, I think that it might take great masses of people by surprise.

Incidentally, the question remains whether the Egyptian and other Islamists, who came to power through elections, agree to peaceful

transfer of power in case of losing the next elections. For by conviction of their ideologists, their power is given to them by God, but not by people's will.

Now, about the continuation of the “Arab spring,” or Arab awakening. Incidentally, the term “post-Arab awakening” is now current in political parlance. In my latest works I have tried to show that what we observe in the Arab East could be termed “eternal spring.” I mean that the region has regularly entered into periods of revolutions, coups, revolts, wars, mass protest movements, etc. during the past decades since the time of colonial domination. After World War II there have been three main rival forces as leaders – secular nationalists, Islamists and Marxists. The struggle between them continued with varying success, and those who were defeated suffered heavy losses. Today good luck was on the side of the Islamists. But will it last long? Who knows... However, religiousness of the population in the region is the anchor which keeps its civilizatory identity afloat and in opposition to the more powerful global force. It is not for nothing that during one of the brainstorming sessions in Turkey at which I was present, one of the advisers of the head of the Turkish government said, while explaining why the European model did not fit the Islamic world, referred to the not-too-distant colonial past and “over-secularism” of European civilization.

D. Malysheva. The latest developments in Egypt have marked a divide between the Islamists and supporters of secular orientation. Simultaneously, religious rivalry has been growing in the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf region, which is interpreted by certain experts as the Sunna-Shia confrontation supported by Iran, on one side, and Saudi Arabia on the other. There are also differences between radical and moderate Islamists. What are the reasons for these splits in the Muslim world?

V. Naumkin. We witness an exacerbation of inter-religious and intra-religious struggle in the Middle East. For example, a mass exodus of Christians has taken place in Iraq as a result of persecutions on the part of radical Islamists. Christians are discriminated against in other countries, too. Subconsciously, people committing acts of aggression against the Christian minority retaliate for discrimination against Muslims in Europe, as they think. To a degree, the Christians of the Middle East have fallen victim to the rhetoric of the former U.S. President George Bush, Jr. who declared the “global war against terrorism” a Crusade.”

Now, a few words about intra-Islamic rivalry. The Shi'ites account for only ten percent of all Muslims. And there are very few countries with the Shia population. As a rule, the elites, states and parties waging political struggle are using religious identity for political purposes. The confrontation between Iran and Saudi Arabia is of a geopolitical, not a religious, character. It is the struggle for influence, for the leading positions in the region. A great role is played by outside influence, the interests of global actors, and their relations with each of the two regional powers. Control over energy resources also takes a prominent place among the factors generating conflicts in the region.

D. Malysheva. For two years already the drama of Syria has been going on inspired by both internal and external forces. Western countries are very insistent, just as they were during the events in Libya. Is there any strategic continuity between the developments in these two countries?

V. Naumkin. The Syrian drama is simply horrible. A beautiful country inhabited by warm-hearted, well-educated people, a country with ancient monuments exceptionally important for world civilization, has been living in peace and accord with its neighbors for centuries. The civil war going on there has forced huge masses of people to flee

their Motherland. But it is not only the ruling regime of Basar Asad to blame for the deplorable situation. Religious radicals sponsoring militant units fighting the authorities and direct military support of them from abroad only aggravate the situation and bring hardships and suffering to innocent civilians.

Some of our foreign partners are ready to repeat the Libyan scenario in Syria without understanding that the latter is a quite different country. Sad as it is, Syria will never become what it used to be. With all our just criticism of the opposition, we should admit that the ruling regime missed the chance for the timely implementation of the reforms long overdue.

D. Malysheva. How would you characterize the situation around Iran? What developments can we expect in connection with its nuclear problem? What position toward Iran will the United States and Israel take and do you think a missile strike against Iran possible? What can Russia do to prevent such a negative scenario to develop?

V. Naumkin. The situation around Iran is extremely tense. The regular round of the negotiations of the “Six” with representatives of that country on its nuclear program in Kazakhstan has ended without any result. But the process will be continued. Is there a possibility of direct bilateral negotiations on this problem between the U.S.A. and Iran? In my view, this cannot be excluded, although Iran puts forward a number of preliminary conditions.

As to our attitude to the problem, it seems to me that periodically putting forward initiatives to overcome the deadlock would be a reasonable strategy, just as maintaining the relations of cooperation with Tehran and a constant dialogue with Washington on this problem.

D. Malysheva. How would you assess the present Russian-Turkish relations in the light of differences on the Syrian problem and

Turkey's refusal to participate in the construction of the "Yuzhny potok" gas pipeline initiated by Russia?

V. Naumkin. Russian-Turkish relations are developing steadily, despite the existing differences. Each side is interested in maintaining active cooperation in all spheres. Differences, mutual suspicions and "bad memories" in the history of our relations have always been, but our humanitarian and economic ties, millions of tourists, thousands of mixed marriages, hundreds of contracts and joint projects, deliveries and transit of energy resources, etc. outweigh any differences, all the more so since the actions of one side do not create a direct threat to the interests of national security of the other side. Russian-Turkish relations have not been worsened in any way even by Turkey's membership in NATO. We are convinced of our ability to resolve any problems through a political dialogue.

Sever – Yug – Rossiya: Yearbook of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, Moscow, 2013, pp 8–14.

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