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**ADAT, SHARIAH AND RUSSIAN LAW  
IN THE MODERN NORTH CAUCASUS:  
RESULTS AND PROSPECTS**

From the late 1980s there has been growing interest in two traditional legal systems: common law (*adat*) and Shariah in the North Caucasus. Along with the well-known abortive experiments in the introduction of Shariah law – the Kadar zone in Daghestan, “Chechen Republic of Ichkeria” and “Imarat Kavkaz” – there are examples of the gradual and successful expansion of the sphere of using Muslim and common law in various *jamaats*: from young people’s (Salaphite) to Sufi ones. Attempts to broaden the sphere of using common law have been especially successful in Daghestan.

At the same time it should be admitted that the forecasts concerning the spreading of Shariah law over the entire North Caucasus are too far-fetched. There are too few specialists well-versed in Shariah law in the region, and therefore it is used in a narrow sphere.

Shariah law is broadly used in the court practices in Daghestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia.

In the period between the two Chechen wars the authorities of “Ichkeria” discredited Shariah law, when they publicly shot people in

the central square of the capital Grozny. The present-day authorities in Daghestan and Chechnya are rather cautious with regard to using Shariah law in everyday life.

In some Daghestani and Chechen villages and settlements there are units of the so-called Shariah guard (young men of 20 to 30 years of age) which are in charge of maintaining public law and order. Along with Shariah tribunals, Muslims of the North Caucasus have Russian so-called people's and public arbitration courts, and their chairmen are often members of rural and district administrations.

Despite the fact that supporters of the introduction of Shariah law and representatives of the Muslim religious elite wish to restrict, if not altogether ban, the use of Russian and traditional (adat) law, most believers do not have a clear understanding of the limits and distinguishing features of adat and Shariah. The modern legal situation in the North Caucasus (especially in its western part) has a secular character, which can be explained by the successes of Soviet modernization in the region. Nevertheless, Shariah and traditional law rival with each other in this part of the Russian Caucasus. Shariah can become a real competitor of secular law in the North-West Caucasus. This is shown by the experience of the 20-year-long revival of Islam in this part of the region. Re-Islamization of Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachay-Cherkessia, and Adygea began when young people started to set up well-knit and strong youth Islamic *jamaats*. They became islands of the gradual revival of traditions of Muslim law where the Shariah standards were introduced. It should be noted that these youth *jamaats* had more literate, more knowledgeable people who introduced and used Shariah legal standards. But it should also be admitted that most Muslims regarded these norms as something alien and preferred to turn to secular law. Suffice it to mention that quite a few Muslims in

Kabardino-Balkaria actively oppose the practice of wearing head scurf by girls and praying five times a day.

Ultimately, the marginal position of young Islamic intellectuals has led them to the ranks of religious extremists, and many of them became active supporters of armed jihad.

On the whole, an analysis of the situation in the North-West Caucasus shows that Shariah and common law are not serious rivals of secular law.

Sharia law will compete with secular law with relative success in the North-East Caucasus largely due to departure of the state from various spheres of life of North Caucasian society. For example, the indefinite legal status of pastures and ploughed plots of land in most North Caucasian republics, and unlawful seizure of land for building houses are a serious challenge to local administrations. In connection with increasing migration from the mountains to valleys in Daghestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia and Kabardino-Balkaria, the number of land conflicts will be growing, and their solution, in the conditions of the absence of clear-cut laws regulating land relations, will be based on Shariah and traditional Islamic mediation. The wider use of Shariah and adat can also be explained by systemic problems which are not tackled by the Russian state in the region, namely, total corruption and graft of the legal system, insufficiency and inadequate quality of government services, ineffective activity of the state authorities, and the absence of clear-cut nationalities and religious policy combined with glaring islamophobia.

Another factor, which should be taken into account, is the growing attractiveness of “traditional” legal and Shariah practices and their wider use by criminal groupings for their purposes. These groupings have accumulated a wealth of experience in using general instability and attractive ideas and slogans for achieving their aims.

That was the case of de facto independence of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, as well as modern Daghestan and Ingushetia. Criminal rivalry and dishonest competition are often disguised by the slogans of jihad and struggle against the infidels and hypocrites, according to the generally accepted norms of Shariah.

It is evident that the role of Shariah as an ideological factor of the radical Islamic groupings will be growing in the North Caucasus. At the same time, terrorization of the peaceful civil population under the pretext of establishing the Shariah rule by the extremists led many groups of the population to disillusionment, loss of trust in Muslim law, and the conclusion that complete turning to Shariah will inevitably result in the worsening of their situation. This concerns, above all, the secular intelligentsia (doctors, teachers, college and university instructors, cultural workers, and others), as well as representatives of small-size and medium-size business. In other words, the extremists' turn to Shariah only undermines the prestige of Muslim law among many sections of North Caucasian society.

Judging by the present situation and its prospects for the future, the republics of North-West Caucasus will hardly have Shariah as a serious and independent actor in the legal sphere, in contrast to the North-East Caucasus. It will be restricted by secular law and traditional law used by nationalists. The partial use of standards and practices of Muslim law will remain the lot of marginal groups: few *jamaats* of young people and settlers from republics of the North-East Caucasus. On the one hand, it creates a favorable situation for the preservation of the secular character of law and society, and on the other, it marginalizes Islamic young people who feel their alienation from society. This circumstance may contribute to greater closeness of Muslim young people in their *jamaats* and their further radicalization.

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*“Islam v multikulturnom mire: Musulmanskiye dvizheniya i mekhanizmy vosproizvodstva ideologii Islama v soveremennom informatsionnom prostranstve,” – Kazan, 2014, pp. 367–377.*

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### **SPECIFIC FEATURES OF POLITICIZATION OF ISLAM IN MODERN DAGHESTAN**

The process of politicization of Islam in Russia coincided with Muslim revival in the world. Politicization of religion does not show that the population becomes more religious. It testifies to religion becoming more energetic to penetrate politics, ideology, and government spheres.

Followers of Islam live in many parts of the Russian Federation, and their number is growing with every passing year. According to expert estimates, there are from 12 to 20 Muslims in Russia (8 to 12 percent of the country's population). By 1930 their number may exceed 30 million. As pointed out by many experts and researchers, the reasons for politicization of Islam in Russia are the same as in the rest of the world, however, this process has certain specificities in this country.

Re-Islamization in the Republic of Daghestan began in the 1990s. Islamic revival was expressed, first of all, in the growing number of mosques, which are the basis of the spreading of Islam.



An important reason for the growing influence of Islam in Daghestan was the organization of religious education of Muslims: special literature began to be printed and distributed, madrasahs were opened, spiritual-educational, charity and other Muslim public organizations were set up. The urgent need for well-educated Muslim clergy has led to many young men going abroad to receive special religious education.

A great many young people from Muslim regions of Russia have studied at religious educational institutions in Saudi Arabia, which fact is connected with the spreading of Wahhabi ideology (which is state Islamic religion there).

Some experts believe that today's politicization of confessional structures is a process parallel to "syncretization" of the religious sphere. Such politicization is connected, paradoxically as it might seem, with the activity of large religious associations representing world religions.

The religious situation in Daghestan is characterized by the following specific features: religious organizations and associations propagate their faith without any control of the state, which results in the increasing role of religion; the prestige of religious associations in public life is increasing, which leads to their bitter struggle for influence on the population and, accordingly, the growth of the Muslim community.

In our view, politicization of Islam can be interpreted as the process of the active inclusion of the Islamic factor in the sphere of socio-political life of a region or the entire country. We suggest to single out two stages of politicization of Islam in Daghestan, which are connected with the similar process in Russia and are conditioned by the same domestic and outside reasons.

The first stage (1991–2000) was connected with the revival of religion in the country, the growing number of believers and mosques and religious educational institutions.

The second stage (from 2000 until now) is characterized by the growth of radical tendencies, and increase of illegal methods of struggle aimed at forcible seizure of political power.

The ummah of Daghestan is now at a stage of an intra-confessional split between traditionalists and fundamentalists. This split is taking place in three directions: ideological, political and canonic. This can be explained by the fact that Muslims do not find an adequate place for themselves in socio-political life with their problems and aspirations, and are driven to the periphery of public life. Socialization and politicization of Islam are taking place, thus provoking its radicalization. The latter can be subdivided into two main trends: moderately radical and ultra-radical. Most ultra-radicals have no ideological doctrines of their own, and their destructive activity is based on theories of foreign theoreticians of extremism. Ultra-radical ideology is spread through sermons of missionaries, young men who have studied at Islamic educational institutions abroad, corresponding literature published by foreign foundations, and also through the Internet. Ideology has now become determined by local intransigent radicals, attracting young people to their ranks, that is, neo-Wahhabi ideas are spread primarily among young people.

Extremists borrow the experience of international terrorists, improve and adapt their methods to their own reality, go underground, if necessary, plant their representatives in the bodies of power and special services, and use the tactic of guerilla warfare in cities. Prevention of the further spreading of radical Islam can only be achieved by correct spiritual and moral education of the younger generation. Quite a few people believe that in order to stop bloodshed

in Daghestan it will be necessary to start a dialogue with people in the underground, which could help return them to peaceful life. One such attempt to bring these people back to a life of peace undertaken by the government was the setting up of a Commission for help in the adaptation of these people to peaceful life in accordance with a decree by the President of the Republic of Daghestan M. Magomedov of November 2, 2010. <sup>1</sup> However, the activity of this commission has not given any tangible results so far. We believe that its work should be made more effective.

A weighty ideological reason for the fight against the missionaries preaching “purity of Islam” should be scientific knowledge about the latter. We think that there should be a dialogue between all public organizations and the authorities, and, above all, between themselves. An attempt of such a dialogue was made at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of peoples of Daghestan, which was held in December 2010. Another attempt took place in April 2012, at a meeting of representatives of the clergy, which called on all believers for tolerance, justice and observance of human rights.

Opposition of one part of society to another, which is growing with every passing day, cannot bring peace and stability. An important problem of today is the creation of a mechanism for a peaceful solution of intra-confessional problems, and adaptation to peaceful life of former radicals.

An analysis of the present socio-political and religious situation shows the lack of prospects for a confrontational approach to resolving socio-political and confessional problems. This is why the role of tolerance as a factor of their regulation is growing. The process of establishing an intra-confessional dialogue is difficult and contradictory. The peaceful process is often disrupted by both ultra-radicals and representatives of the special services.

In order to overcome religious-political terrorism and extremism it is necessary to exercise a comprehensive approach regulating prohibitive and preventive measures, improving the legal basis, increasing the struggle against financial terrorism, and strengthening the activity of the special services., as well as propaganda and ideological work among the population. It is also necessary to improve the legislative regulation of the activity of religious associations in all spheres of their functioning. At present mutual tolerance, dialogue between the state and the clergy, cooperation, elimination of religious fanaticism and extremism, creation of an atmosphere of tolerance, equality of all confessions, and just attitude of the state toward them acquire special socio-political significance.

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## Notes

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*“Vlast,” Moscow, 2014, No 8, pp. 84–87.*

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**KABARDINO-BALKARIAN REPUBLIC**  
**(Monitoring of Ethno-political situation)**

Ethno-demographic situation. Kabardino-Balkaria is a poly-ethnic and poly-confessional republic in the North Caucasus. Ethnic relations in it are characterized by relative stability, although there are problems of an ethno-political and ethno-confessional nature.

The territory of the republic can geographically be divided into three zones: rolling plain, piedmont and mountain.

Russians live in two districts (historically Cossack settlements) and in towns. Their number is going down.

Kabardians live in flat land districts, and Balkarians – in piedmont and mountain parts of the republic.

Armenians, Koreans, Azerbaijanis, Chechens, Georgians and Tatars also live in towns.

According to the All-Russia population census of 2010, the number of the population in the republic amounted to 859,939. Kabardians predominate (490,400, or 57.2 percent), then come Russians (193,200, or 22.5 percent), third place is taken by Balkarians (108,500, or 12.7 percent).

The urban population comprises 58.5 percent, rural population – 41.5 percent. Young people take up 31 percent of the total population of the republic.

Migration processes are a serious problem having an impact on the demographic situation and the socio-economic development in the republic, as well as interethnic relations.

The unemployment level in the republic has been rather high for a long time now. By the end of 2012 the number of the registered unemployed reached 8,900 people.

According to surveillance polls, a great many young people are dissatisfied with the living standards in the republic and the lack of jobs, express the desire to emigrate, and do leave the native land for other countries. For example, in 2012 the number of those who left the republic was 6,194.

Migration processes in the republic during the past decade (and the entire post-Soviet period as a whole) have led to a change in the ethnic composition of the population of the republic and are a factor of increasing negative tendencies in the interethnic sphere.

The land problem as a source of inter-communal discord. This is one of the most difficult and controversial problems in Kabardino-Balkaria, which has become the main factor of interethnic and ethnopolitical tension in the past few years.

Ethnic representation in the bodies of power and civil society. This is one of the basic factors determining the ethnopolitical situation and the character of interethnic relations in Kabardino-Balkaria.

On the whole, the policy of the government bodies of the republic is aimed at ensuring the necessary and just representation of people of the three main nationalities in the republic in the supreme bodies of power. The head of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic (1991–2011 – President) was Kabardian, and the head of the government – Kabardian (in 2005–2011 – Russians). The chairman of parliament – Balkarian, his first deputy – Kabardian, two other deputies – Kabardian and Russian. Among the deputies of the republican parliament are Kabardians, Balkarians, Russians, as well as one Ossetian, one Ukrainian and one German.

There are 776 public organizations officially registered in the republic: six regional sections of political parties; 461 public associations, including 16 young people's organizations; several dozen

public organizations of ethnic character, among them Adyge, Circassian, Russian, etc.

There are also one national-cultural autonomy in the republic (Jewish) and 16 national cultural centers of national minorities, among them Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, and some others. In 2012 it was decided to open a Club of Friendship of the peoples in the republic, which was aimed at strengthening interethnic community and cooperation between the peoples living there.

Active migration processes (including labor migration) contribute to the setting up of non-governmental commercial organizations and national cultural centers. They are functioning not only in the republican capital Nalchik, but also in other parts of the country.

There is a host of various councils and other consultative bodies in which representatives of public associations and non-governmental organizations are taking an active part. Their activity is aimed at preservation of interethnic stability and development of civil society in the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic.

Religious situation. Islam, Christianity and Judaism have peacefully coexisted in Kabardino-Balkaria for many centuries. Inter-confessional meetings take place at the level of contacts between the Muslim and Russian Orthodox clergy, and the rabbi of Kabardino-Balkaria. Exchange of views and recognition of each religion contribute to the strengthening of peace, tranquility and tolerance.

Orthodoxy, Islam and Judaism strive for dialogue, without interfering in one another's affairs and without criticizing one another.

There are 178 religious organizations, including 125 Muslim ones registered in the republic. The Muslim organizations are united in a Spiritual Board of Muslims. Apart from that, a North Caucasian Islamic university with a student body of 147 has been functioning in

the republic. Its curriculum includes 23 religious and 12 secular subjects. Besides, a madrasah is open at the university and there are also courses for the studies of imams. A North Caucasian Islamic center is under construction in Nalchik.

Ineffectiveness of the republican government bodies along with reigning corruption and the clan system cause dissatisfaction of the population and form the basis of various contradictions accumulating in an explosive protest potential, which is often manifested in Islamic extremism. This especially concerns young people many of whom join extremist units and underground groups. Most of them are young men of 17 to 35 years of age, unemployed, from poor families, and with insufficient education. So-called pure Islam is for them the most understandable interpretation of the outer world and helps them adapt themselves to the changing conditions of life. According to polls, a definite part of young people does not regard participants in the bandit underground as political criminals, but see in their actions a just struggle for social justice and financial interests.

In the past decade in the conditions of the loss of ideology in Russian society the significance of religion has grown and there have been noticeable changes in culture, spiritual development, and public life in Kabardino-Balkaria. The growing tendencies of Islamization in republican society and broad distribution of radical-extremist ideology have a great impact on the population.

Religiousness has become a socially important factor in the youth medium. The number of school pupils and students believing in pure Islam, who render help to the bandit underground is growing.

Young adepts of pure Islam take up and imbibe the components of the world Muslim system (harsher Islamic standards, hajj, Arab religious literature, etc.).



Against the backdrop of the re-Islamization of the population the prestige of traditional Islam among young people is falling down. This is largely due to poor theological education of most imams who use the obsolete forms and methods of work and a shortage of well-educated Muslim clergy, who are able to oppose ideologically the supporters of radical religious trends.

Propaganda of Islamic appeal has resulted in the growth of the number of adepts of radical Islam. Some people of Slav origin have become very active in propagating extremist Islamic ideology. It should be noted in this connection that the positions of the Russian Orthodox Church are rather weak in the republic. Most priests are well-advanced in years and incapable to work actively.

Summary & recommendations. A positively-minded part of the republican population, including young people, is characterized by inactivity and absence of desire to participate in opposing extremist manifestations, especially in the conditions of ideological vacuum.

The scientific and creative intelligentsia is not active enough in public life. The sixteen youth public organizations set up by the federal and republican bodies of power do not work properly. There are no mass youth organizations, especially in rural districts, capable to represent the interests of the younger generation at various government bodies. This leads to the growing aggressiveness of young people and increases their protest potential.

Immaturity of civil society in the republic largely predetermines the further growth of negative tendencies in the confessional and inter-confessional, as well as religious spheres.

We suggest the following measures to make government policy in the sphere of culture more effective and strengthen the spiritual unity of the people of the Russian Federation, including in the sphere of religion:

To create ideology which would unite all the people and help consolidate Russian society and overcome the crisis of spiritual culture and alienation of the younger generation from the cultural heritage of Russia;

To strengthen the role of state control over social processes, particularly in the sphere of young people, and evolve a more adequate policy toward young people in line with modern time within the framework of ensuring spiritual and national security of Russia;

To organize a general monitoring system of the ethno-political, religious, demographic and economic situation of the peoples of the Russian Federation (in regions), as well as the upbringing and education of patriotically-minded citizens of Russia;

To create an effective system of social mobility of young Russian citizens which could help eliminate difference between declared equality of rights and opportunities for general and professional self-realization of young people.

*“Etnopoliticheskaya situatsiya v Rossii i sopredelnykh gosudarstvakh v 2013 godu,” Moscow, 2014, pp. 496–502.*

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**TAJIKISTAN: SOCIO-CULTURAL CODE  
OF THE EPOCH AND POPULAR ISLAM**

The end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century marked the end of the epoch of the domination of secularism with all its benefits and shortcomings. We now live in the post-secular epoch, which puts to doubt practically all key socio-cultural and political concepts of the grand program of modernization, inseparably linked with the concept of secularism. The idea expressed by J. Habermas that the West European development

road, whose specific rationalism was recognized some time ago as the model for the rest of the world, is viewed today as the exception rather than the rule, that is, some “deviant route,” finds an ever greater number of supporters.

Nevertheless, the tendency of critical attitude to certain aspects of a modernistic project materialized in the 20<sup>th</sup> century does not at all mean that mankind renounces everything what was created in the preceding epoch. This tendency only shows refusal from the desire to present any one theory of “social engineering” evolved in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as an incontestable dogma. The errors and catastrophic events of the past century, for one, the phenomenon of the so-called secular fundamentalism meaning the attempts to establish strict control over any expressions and symbols, which might have some religious context, have led to realization of the need for more cautious attitude to traditional social mechanisms and connections, and evolved such concept as social ecology. Such changes in the socio-cultural code of the epoch have brought to life cardinal changes in the perception of the phenomenon of mutual determination of culture and politics and significance of each of these two sense-making components for a stable development of society and as a factor structuring the behavior, way of thinking and methods of reflection of people. Modern socio-cultural reality is represented by the intertwining of different realities and the highest level of tension of their common existence.

The events taking place in post-Soviet Central Asia during the past several decades give a wealth of food for thought about the two traditions, competing and sometimes conflicting in the socio-cultural and political area: secularism, which was actively introduced in the region in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the religious Islamic tradition, which is older than the previous one by more than a thousand years.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century was a time of great trials and tribulations for the Tajik people. They lived through powerful socio-political collisions and the bitterest and swiftest breaking of the socio-political system twice in a short century. The “tectonic fault” passed along the line of the crossing of these two traditions.

The first rift took place under the onslaught of the Bolsheviks who had introduced secular ideas and destroyed the “old world” built on the foundation of Shariah – the Muslim legal system, in the region.

The second rift was connected with the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The public discourse of all former republics of Central Asia was exploded by the thorny problems of how to use the richest cultural heritage of the past and the indisputably great achievements of the Soviet epoch. How to withstand and create their “image” in the period of enormous changes in the Muslim world connected with inner socio-political reasons, on the one hand, and on the other, with the broadening and deepening of the globalization process, which has brought the possibility of building social information networks, stable presence in the information area, and political propaganda of the ideas of reviving the caliphate.

The 1990s were the time of the bitter civil confrontation for Tajikistan, which was connected with a search for the road to renovate society and principles of building an independent state (secularism or Shariah). In 1992 the clashes of positions caused a civil war which ended in June 1997 by signing a peace treaty, which took into account the interests of the warring sides, determined, in essence, the further socio-political development of the country, and influenced the life of the entire region.

One of the clauses of the peace treaty sealed the political legitimization of the Party of Islamic revival of Tajikistan (PIRT) and its participation in the country’s development. It was not possible to ignore

the active position and the growing social significance of the Ismailian community, whose leader, Imam Aga Khan, exerted a great influence on the course of peaceful settlement in Tajikistan.

The Constitution of the young republic expressed the will of the people – to build Tajikistan as a democratic secular state with full-fledged and equal representation of citizens believing in Islam, including the functioning of religious parties.

Up to now Tajikistan is the only country of the region where two Muslim confessions are represented (Sunnism of hanafite trend and Ismailism) and where there is an actively functioning religious party which has a legitimate right to be represented in parliament and publish its newspapers, journals, etc.

In the Muslim world the dethronement of the concept of secularism is connected, above all, with such essential change of the socio-cultural code and political landscape as removal of Islam from private family-clan sphere, where its positions have actually not suffered from the realization of the secular modernization process, despite spectacular transformations of social reality, to the public area, to the very center of social discourse.

We should specially emphasize the fact that this article leaves aside another large stratum of the republic, namely, secularly-oriented citizens, which does not at all mean its absence in reality.

The composition of the Islamic community of Tajikistan today is far from simple and demonstrates a considerable range of positions and views on the development of society and the state. An analysis of this community makes it possible to single out four basic strata:

1. Shuron ulamo (Council of Sheikhs-ul-Islam, or Council of Islamic scholars of Tajikistan), which consists of religious functionaries with a classical Muslim education. The main task of this Council is propaganda of Muslim values and formation on this basis of tolerant

attitude of believers toward social and economic problems of life. In essence, the Council is functioning as a bridge between government bodies and Muslim community. But due to one of the existing rules of Sunnism, namely, avoidance of too close connections with power, the sphere of its public influence remains rather narrow.

2. PIRT which was organized in 1990 has a membership of about 40,000 and branches in all districts of the country. The party is involved in all political actions and functions, including parliamentary and presidential elections, and can be regarded as part of a “soft” opposition to the government, striving to preserve a well-balanced position on a number of the key issues of the development of Tajikistan and the entire region.

It should also be noted that in all its documents and in practical activity PIRT, working in the atmosphere of bi-confessionalism, is basing its activity on a certain concept of Islam as the center. Although most party publications are dominated by materials of Sunni character, they do not emphasize differences between hanafite and Ismailian doctrines in the ritual sphere. The Muslim community of Tajikistan in its publications and speeches and statements of its representatives emphasizes the principles common for these two confessions.

The leadership of PIRT has taken steps recently to strengthen their positions in the CIS countries where there are many labor migrants from Tajikistan.

3. Authoritative religious leaders in the districts of the republic. There are many such persons of different age, educational level, and social influence. Their activity should be centered around influence on the daily behavior of urban and rural inhabitants, which does not exclude the possibility of discussions on doctrinal questions.

4. Young people’s groupings. As a rule, they are headed by men who have formed their world outlook at various religious educational

centers abroad (from al-Azkhar to semi-legal courses in Pakistan). Some of these people have been influenced by various banned Islamist groups (“Khizb ut-Tahrir-i-Islami,” “Tablig-i jamiat-i Islami,” and others). It would be wrong not to mention another segment of Muslim young people’s sub-culture of Tajikistan. These are people striving to protect the identity of the Tajiks as true Muslims within the framework of a national, secularly-oriented state, recognizing Muslim ideals. In this sense their positions merge with the principles of PIRT.

The above-mentioned segments of the Muslim community of Tajikistan are struggling for broadening their sphere of influence. However, our picture will be incomplete if we do not mention the new forms of activity within the Muslim community of Tajikistan. We mean the role of women as active members of the Muslim community. There are two groups – activists of PIRT and those of the Ismailite community.

As far as PIRT is concerned, the number of its women-members reaches fifty percent. This figure represents a new social phenomenon in the republic, and it can be explained by a whole range of consequences of the civil war in the country. Among them is the mass labor migration of men, which has destroyed the customary pattern of family-and-clan life.

There is another important aspect of the problem. In the changed socio-economic conditions, especially connected with the mass labor migration of men, women lose their status in the communal coordinate system. No wife of labor migrants can know of her status at each moment of her life, for each second it can change and bring her down to the position of a divorced woman or widow.

Such changes force woman brought up traditionally as a daughter, wife and mother to assume the role of the breadwinner in the family. Tajik traditional culture does not prepare women to such trials.

Their work at PIRT bodies and various bodies of the Ismailite community lends women the real status of persons taking part in activity aimed at improving the situation in the community.

Today, active women-members of the Muslim community of Tajikistan who are ardently supporting the principle of returning to the religious construction of society and the state, do not want to be isolated in their homes, they realize full well the significance of their public activity for the development of society.

Active women-members of the Ismailite community call for the right to choose inherent in secularism, but at the same time they clearly show their confessional identity.

The new form of socialization of women bearing different Islamic traditions make them realize the possibility of their self-realization and personal responsibility for social changes at a local level, and also gives them the feeling of belonging to the global general Muslim phenomenon.

Thus, Tajikistan has made an important step along the road of forming a civil society with full-fledged representation of different types of world outlook.

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## **DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION IN UZBEKISTAN**

The political situation in Uzbekistan is becoming more tense due to a number of factors. It is characterized, among other things, by the growing political and intra-clan struggle prior to the parliamentary and presidential elections, as well as the stepping up of separatist sentiments in the Autonomous Republic of Karakalpakia. Apart from that, Tashkent is faced with a difficult choice of foreign political priorities due to the growing confrontation between its main partners in the international arena – Russia and the United States.

Despite the fact that after the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. the republic still has a considerable production potential, its leadership has been unable to overcome serious economic problems so far. Due to a shortage of resources the government cannot rehabilitate many

enterprises ruined during the past decades. At the same time foreign companies have a very cautious attitude to investing in the Uzbek economy because of the unreliable bank and financial systems of the country. As a result, despite a considerable manpower potential, Uzbekistan's economy is unable to provide enough jobs to a considerable number of the able-bodied population. Hence, the low living standards of the overwhelming mass of people and a high level of labor migration, mainly to Russia. According to the data of the World Bank for 2013, Uzbekistan held 126<sup>th</sup> place among 190 countries in the GDP per capita level.<sup>1</sup> The Karakalpak Autonomous Republic is the country's poorest region; it was part of Uzbekistan since 1936.<sup>2</sup>

The republic occupies one-third of Uzbekistan's territory and its population is 1,500,000 (the total population of Uzbekistan is 29 million). More than 85 percent of Karakalpakia's territory is taken by deserts, one of them – Aralkum – has formed on the bottom of the dried Aral Sea. The republic is situated in a zone of an ecological catastrophe and the living standards of its population are considerably lower than in the rest of Uzbekistan, and its social problems are especially acute. A shortage of water is felt almost always there, and many districts have no water, gas and electricity supply.

In early June this year an appeal of a little-known political movement called “Alga Karakalpakstan” (“Forward, Karakalpakstan!”) appeared in the Internet, which called for secession of the autonomous republic from Uzbekistan. The appeal of the new movement pointed to numerous violations of human rights committed by the ruling regime of Uzbekistan and it did not exclude a possibility of the republic joining Russia, which was described as “a guarantor of stability and sovereignty.” (It should be noted that Karakalpakia has no common border with Russia).

It seems that in the conditions of the growing Russian-Ukrainian crisis harping on the question of the Karakalpakian autonomy joining Russia can seriously worsen relations between Moscow and Tashkent. In this connection, it cannot be excluded that the rumors and talks on the subject have a definitely provocative character. The Tashkent authorities received this with a tint of mistrust and assessed the report about the emergence of a new movement as an attempt of certain outside forces to destabilize the situation in Uzbekistan. Commenting on the situation the official site of the Uzbek special services UzMetronom emphasized that “the traditional champions of democracy like to develop it wherever there are rich deposits of oil and gas.” (There are both in Ustyrt Plateau in Karakalpakia).<sup>3</sup>

Most experts do not consider the threat of separatism in Karakalpakia real, all the more so since the future of this autonomous republic is largely connected with the development of oil and gas deposits, which can improve its economic situation. Nevertheless, they do not exclude the possibility of stepping up the struggle for the secession of the autonomy after the change of power in Tashkent.

One of the factors destabilizing the domestic political situation in Uzbekistan is the corruption scandal connected with the family of President Islam Karimov, namely, with his elder daughter Gulnara. The point is that profitable sectors of the Uzbek economy have been under her control and control of persons close to her, and incomes from these sectors have been transferred abroad with the help of “illegal” schemes, in which foreign companies took part. As a result, according to the data of the Council of national security of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the country’s economy has lost about \$2 billion.

After these facts have become known and law cases have been started in Switzerland, France and Sweden on money laundering by Gulnara Karimova, the Council of national security has initiated the

arrest of her businesses and accounts.<sup>4</sup> According to information, she either has been placed under house arrest, or fled abroad.

The main blow has been dealt at the surrounding of the President's daughter. In 2013, her business partner and cousin A. Abdullayev, who owned large business in Ferghana Valley, including a big oil refinery, was also arrested. In June – July this year, other persons close to Gulnara Karimova, including her boyfriend, singer R. Madumarov, were arrested and sentenced to prison terms. According to certain information, the law-enforcement agencies of Uzbekistan have brought to justice about 200 people connected with the financial machinations of the daughter of the President of Uzbekistan.<sup>5</sup>

It is indicative that in contrast to European legal practices, Uzbek justice does not consider the daughter of the President a witness or accused, the entire blame is laid on people close to her. Thus, in the view of numerous observers, the anti-corruption campaign unfolded in Uzbekistan has largely been aimed at diverting the attention of foreign investors and European law-enforcement agencies from the family of the President of Uzbekistan.

Some experts maintain that Islam Karimov should complete the process of protection of his capital and the family before September of this year, when the election campaign begins in the country. By the presidential elections in March 2015, Islam Karimov should be clear from all suspicions and accusations that he covers the criminal cases of his children or contributes to corruption in the higher echelons of power.<sup>6</sup> In the view of other observers, the Uzbek authorities have acquired a good opportunity to make a reshuffle in these echelons and distract public attention from more serious problems in Uzbek society.<sup>7</sup>

It is known that in December 2014 there should be parliamentary elections and on March 22, 2015, presidential elections in Uzbekistan. Islam Karimov, who is now 76, has been standing at the head of the

republic since 1991. He was reelected in 2000 and 2007, however, the question of his taking part in the elections of 2015 is still open. Observers do not exclude the fact that the President is looking for a successor at present and examines different variants of transfer of power to him. This is shown, if indirectly, by certain amendments in the Constitution of the republic initiated by Karimov, which envisage reduction of some powers of the President and their transfer to the prime minister and parliament

The amendments to the Constitution proposed by Karimov this year envisage the preservation of foreign and defense policy, as well as the special services under jurisdiction of the President. The economy and social sphere will be transferred under full control of the head of the cabinet of ministers. Parliament will control the activity of the cabinet and the executive power bodies.<sup>8</sup>

In the view of A. Knyazev, an expert on Central Asian affairs, the role of political parties may noticeably grow along with the greater role of parliament in Uzbekistan. He maintains that inasmuch as political parties in Uzbekistan are not parties of the “leader type,” that is, they have not been created to support any concrete political figure, the country has a chance to form a real parliamentary multiparty system. At present there is a number of parties most of which are oriented to the existing power. Among them the People’s democratic party of Uzbekistan, the Social-democratic party, Liberal-democratic party, Democratic party, and the Public association “Ecological movement.”

Participation of opposition movements in elections has been rendered difficult by the fact that most of their leaders have emigrated. Among them are M. Salikh, the leader of the first officially registered opposition party “Freedom” (“Erk”), who is now in Turkey as political emigrant; B. Choriyev, the founder of the social movement

“Bardamlik,” who is now living in the United States, from where he directs acts of civil disobedience; human rights activist M. Tajibayeva, who created the “Civil Society” movement and is now trying to consolidate forces for opposing the existing authorities from France.<sup>9</sup>

In the view of analysts, in these conditions the leaders of clans – Samarkand, Tashkent, Ferghana, Khorezm and Karakalpak – will come to the fore. The Tashkent and Samarkand clans have the strongest positions. The most influential representative of the latter is the incumbent premier Sh. Mirziyayev, who has held this post since February 2003. The Tashkent clan is represented by the first deputy premier and minister of finance R. Azimov, who is in charge of the financial-economic sphere and is of pro-Western orientation. Among the possible claimants of presidency is the head of the National security service R. Inoyatov, who is one of the most influential persons in the republic at present. Just as Islam Karimov, he positions himself as a post-clan politician.

A possibility of destabilization of the domestic political situation can be the main factor due to which Islam Karimov, who has become the trusted national leader, may stay at the head of the country despite his venerable age. Although, according to the present Constitution of Uzbekistan, one person has no right to hold the post of president more than twice in succession, it may be possible to use the precedent of 2007, when the first term of Karimov’s presidency, due to a change in the Constitution, was “slashed to zero” (at that time amendments were adopted which prolonged the presidential term of office from five to seven years). In December 2010 more amendments were made to the republican Constitution according to which the presidential term of office was again reduced to five years. Experts believe that the very fact of this change of the Constitution may give Islam Karimov the reason for taking part in the elections, just as was the case of 2007. It cannot be

excluded that the unlimited term of office of President I. Karimov may be introduced, on the example of Kazakhstan.

Growing tension between the elites against the backdrop of the low living standards of the population, and the exacerbation of social problems create the ground for the strengthening of protest sentiments, which is, as is known, a factor used by the United States for creating centers of instability. It is indicative that according to the rating of stability in Central Asian countries published in the U.S. journal "Foreign Policy," it is precisely Uzbekistan, which used to be regarded as the regional leader in the sphere of national security, that experts referred to a group of states with a very high degree of threat of destabilization. Uzbekistan holds 48<sup>th</sup> place in this respect, being ahead of Tajikistan (55<sup>th</sup> place), Kyrgyzstan (58<sup>th</sup> place), Turkmenistan (78<sup>th</sup> place) and Kazakhstan (11<sup>th</sup> place).<sup>10</sup>

In these conditions Tashkent is trying to do everything possible in order to get support of the three main forces whose influence determines the geopolitical situation in Central Asia – Russia, China and the United States. Tashkent's foreign policy has long become more pro-Western than that of other Central Asian countries. In this connection it was no surprise that Uzbekistan suspended its membership of CSTO, which was followed by the opening of the NATO mission in Tashkent in May 2014. The Pentagon duly assessed the consent of the republican authorities to make this step and did not reduce assistance to Uzbekistan in the sphere of security protection, as it had been done with regard to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. While doing this, American business is in no hurry to invest in the Uzbek economy. According to the data of the economic adviser of the USAID organization, American companies have invested more than \$10 billion in Azerbaijan, over \$16 billion in Kazakhstan, whereas only \$500 million in Uzbekistan.<sup>11</sup> In these conditions Tashkent cannot

ignore the importance of its relations with Russia, which is a big economic partner of Uzbekistan to date. The Russian Federation intends to broaden its economic presence in the republic. In mid-January 2014 a plan of measures was endorsed at a meeting of the intergovernmental Uzbek-Russian committee on the implementation of the Program of economic cooperation for 2013–2017.

In trade turnover the Russian Federation holds first place among the trade partners of Uzbekistan: its share in the republic's foreign trade amounted to 30 percent in 2013, or about \$7 billion. There are 902 enterprises with Russian financing functioning in the republic, and 489 enterprises with Uzbek capital working on Russian territory. The total volume of direct Russian investments in the Uzbek economy in 2008–2013 exceeded \$6 billion.<sup>12</sup> The positions of Russian companies in the oil-and-gas branch, which is becoming the key industry in the republic (Uzbekistan holds third place in gas extraction in the CIS, coming next to Russia and Turkmenistan, and eighth place in the world).

The Russian “Gazprom” Company is developing three gas deposits in the Karakalpak Autonomous Republic. The “Lukoil” Company, which has invested more than \$1 billion in the implementation of two agreements on products sharing is one of the major investors in Uzbekistan. The company's investment program for the next five years amounts to \$5 billion. “Lukoil” is actively working on gas deposits, taking part in geological prospecting in Khauzak, Shady, Kungrad and Kandym, where about 18.5 billion cubic meters of gas have been extracted. Apart from that, “Lukoil” is part of a consortium of investors which is engaged in seismic work on the territory of the Aral block.

It should be borne in mind that the labor migrants from Uzbekistan working in Russia are making a great financial contribution



to the Uzbek economy. Uzbek people are the leaders among the labor migrants from the CIS countries, as far as their personal money transfers back home are concerned: in 2013 alone they transferred to Uzbekistan from Russia about \$7.9 billion.

Nevertheless, as the Ukrainian crisis has shown, the degree of economic interaction with Russia is no guarantee from destabilization of the situation in the CIS countries, in which certain forces in the United States and other states are interested. In these conditions close interaction of the Russian Federation with the People's Republic of China, which has growing interests of its own in Central Asia and, in essence, the division of the spheres of influence between Moscow and Beijing in Central Asia, becomes a factor of opposition to Washington's attempts to create seats of instability in the region. One of the consequences of the Ukrainian crisis was the turning of China into a major geopolitical ally of Russia in Central Asia.

Moscow has properly assessed Beijing's support of its position on Ukraine. Alliance with Russia is quite important for China not only for the realization of its economic interests. Beijing relies on Moscow's support in the Asia-Pacific region, where tension is growing. Experts note China's concern over the new military policy of Japan, particularly, its statement on the possibility to use its armed forces outside the country's boundaries, and also emphasize the legitimate character of joint military exercises carried on by Russia and China in this connection.

Evidently, Beijing will act in Central Asia proceeding from its own interests, which now lie mostly in the economic sphere. It is the known fact that Chinese influence on the regional economy is growing rapidly. Uzbekistan is no exception in this respect. Already now the volume of Chinese investments in the Uzbek economy considerably exceed that of Russian investments: in 2012 Beijing and Tashkent

signed a package of documents envisaging the implementation of thirty investment projects to a total sum of over \$5.3 billion, and in 2013 agreements were signed on drawing \$7.7 billion from China, including bank credits to a sum of \$6.1 billion, direct investments of Chinese companies amounting to \$1.3 billion, and state grants reaching \$0.3 billion.<sup>13</sup>

China is the second biggest trade partner of Uzbekistan (trade turnover of the two countries comprised \$5.3 billion in 2013). The trans-Asian gas pipeline Turkmenistan – Uzbekistan – Kazakhstan – China passes through the territory of the republic (the third section of this pipeline was commissioned in June 2014). Negotiations are underway on building the fourth section which will make China the main importer of Uzbek gas: it is planned that with the commissioning of this section of the pipeline the supply of Uzbek gas to China will grow to 25 billion cubic meters a year (at present China and Russia import about the same volume of Uzbek gas – about 10 billion cubic meters each).

Apart from that, Uzbekistan comes second after Kazakhstan in exporting uranium to China. According to the latest agreements signed with the Guangdong nuclear-energy company of China, the latter plans to purchase low-enriched uranium in Uzbekistan to a sum of \$800 million.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, neither Russia nor China which have serious economic interests in Uzbekistan, are interested in a destabilization of the domestic political situation in that country. As to the United States, its relations with Uzbekistan will be determined by the degree of loyalty and manageability of those who will come to power in Tashkent.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> <http://uzbekistan.polpred.com/?ns=4>
- <sup>2</sup> Prior to that Karakalpakia was part of Kyrgyz and Kazakh republics, as well as the RSFSR. In December 1990 a Declaration on state sovereignty was signed at the republican Supreme Soviet, which envisaged complete independence on the basis of the results of an all-republican referendum. However, in 1993 President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan succeeded in persuading the local political elite to sign an interstate treaty for a term of twenty years on Karakalpakia entering the Republic of Uzbekistan. The document contained a clause proclaiming the right of the autonomy to secede from Uzbekistan through referendum. At present one-third of the republican population is Karakalpak, one-third – Uzbeks, and one-third – other nationalities (Kazakhs, Russians, Ukrainians, Koreans). <http://lenta.ru/articles/2014/06/10/karakalpakstan>
- <sup>3</sup> <http://lenta.ru/articles/2014/06/10/karakalpakstan>
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.news-asia.ru/view/6514>
- <sup>5</sup> <http://www.zamondosh.com/2014/07/16-terra-group-prime-media-gamma.html>
- <sup>6</sup> <http://www.zamondosh.com/2014/07/16-terra-group-prime-media-gamma.htm>
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.news-asia.ru/view/uz/6761>
- <sup>8</sup> [http://total/kz/politics/2014/03/18/president\\_uzbekistana\\_predlozhil...](http://total/kz/politics/2014/03/18/president_uzbekistana_predlozhil...)
- <sup>9</sup> <http://www.fergananews.com/articles/8038>
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> <http://www.12news/2014/07/21>
- <sup>12</sup> <http://www.zamondosh.com/2014/07/16-politicheskaya-situatsiya-v-uzbekistane.html>
- <sup>13</sup> <http://mfa.uz/ru/press/new/2014/05/1909/>
- <sup>14</sup> <http://noviyvek.uz/novosti/kitay-k-2022-g-zakupit-v-uzbekistane-uran-na-800-mln.html>

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### **HYDRORESOURCES AS A FACTOR OF GEOPOLITICS IN SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA**

“Water wars” have recently become one of the main subjects in political literature. In the view of many analysts, water will be the main cause for interstate conflicts this century, just as oil and gas were the pretexts for wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The well-known Indian scientist and author of the book “Averting Asian Water Wars” Brahma Chellaney wrote that wars in the past had mostly been caused by rivalry for land, whereas wars of today are for the sources of energy. But battles of tomorrow will be waged for water. And this prospect is nowhere more real than in Asia.<sup>1</sup>

Today, water resources for economic development come second after oil and gas. Meanwhile, out of all water existing on this earth of ours 97 percent cannot be used without applying rich and energy-intensive technologies for desalinization of sea and ocean water. More than two-thirds of the total volume of fresh water is represented by ice in the polar regions and glaciers, and thirty percent is underground water. It is only 0.3 percent of all fresh water that is technically available for use.

According to the UNESCO report “Water in a Changing World” about 700 million people in 43 countries have water resources at their disposal in a volume lower than the minimal human requirement.<sup>2</sup> By 2025 this figure may rise up to three billion, inasmuch as the need for water will be growing in China, India and African countries below the Sahara desert. About 540 million people in North China live under a constant shortage of water. A human being needs twenty liters of water a day as a minimum. However, 1.1 billion people in the developing countries of the world use not more than five liters of water a day.<sup>3</sup>

The global climate changes and increased deglaciation in recent years have aggravated the problem. Ecological consequences of these processes are felt already today: on the one hand, these are catastrophic floods (for example the great flood in Pakistan in the summer of 2010 which brought great suffering to over two million people), and on the other – depletion of water reserves of rivers and droughts connected with it.

The problems of the use of water are manifested with greater urgency when water streams are shared by several states simultaneously. In such cases the states possessing them, become monopolists, as it were, and are able to regulate and use water flows as they think fit – for irrigation, construction of hydrotechnical projects, etc.

As a consequence, such situations may cause an exacerbation of relations and even conflicts between states: those in the lower reaches come out against the unjust distribution of water resources.

In March 2012 the U.S. National Intelligence published a report on the state of affairs with fresh water resources in different parts of the world. Its conclusions boiled down to an admission that within the next ten years there would hardly be full-fledged water wars, but shortage of water would be growing and, accordingly, the risk of wars would be greater. The most vulnerable regions of the world will be South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa.<sup>4</sup>

In actual fact, water wars are being waged already now. In any case, the problem of the distribution of water resources is an important component of many international armed conflicts.<sup>5</sup>

The prolonged and bloody India-Pakistan conflict around Kashmir has a direct relation to water. The sources of practically all rivers flowing on Pakistani territory, including the biggest water artery of the country – the Indus – are in Kashmir, and many of them in the territory controlled by India. A whole system of irrigation channels has been created in British India, which allowed people to use the Indus water for agricultural needs. After 1947 this irrigation system became divided between India and Pakistan, namely, between the Indian state of Punjab and Pakistan's province of the same name. In the very first year of independence of the two states, in the spring of 1948, India demonstrated the effectiveness of the "water weapon" to its neighbor

by damming out water supply to channels on Pakistan's territory (more details of the division of water resources between India and Pakistan can be found below).

Interstate problems connected with the use of trans-boundary water reservoirs and water streams are complex enough, nevertheless, there is no uniform code of laws regulating relations between countries situated in the upper reaches and lower reaches of water streams. The two main international conventions – the Convention on the protection and use of trans-boundary water streams and international lakes of the European Economic Commission of the UN of 1992 (further on – Convention of 1992) and the Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigation Uses of International Watercourses adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1997 (further on – Convention of 1997) have a whole number of reservations. The Convention of 1992 is a document of regional importance (56 European and CIS countries are members of the European Economic Commission. The Convention of 1997 comes into force if it is ratified by at least 35 countries, but to date it has only been ratified by 12 states, and there are no prospects of seeing the growing number of its signatories, inasmuch as it was closed for signing in 2008.<sup>6</sup>

Apart from that, the two conventions set only general rules touching mainly on ecological problems and, to a lesser degree, the problems of managing water resources. Besides, they are of a recommendatory character and do not contain any mechanism of solving international disputes. Thus, there is no uniform legal basis for settling disputes on the rules of using trans-boundary water courses. Neither are there international bodies which would be able to have any tangible influence on the problems of trans-boundary water conflicts.

Accordingly, water disputes can only be settled on the basis of national legislation, as well as bilateral and multilateral agreements on

each concrete water basin. There are more than 260 near-boundary water basins and hundreds of near-to-border reservoirs in the world, but the number of international bilateral and multilateral treaties and agreements exceed 300.

In reality, the states-monopolists controlling the sources of international rivers are de facto guided by the Harmon doctrine named after the U.S. Attorney General Judson Harmon who put forward the idea about the absolute territorial sovereignty in 1895. According to this well-known doctrine, each national state has the right to use the waters of international rivers flowing in its territory as it deems fit, without paying attention to consequences for other states and without entering into consultations with it.

However, the paradox of the situation is that one and the same state can be in a position of the monopolist controlling the upper part of the basin of one river, and in a position of a country situated in the lower reaches of another river and suffering from actions of the state controlling its upper part. This is the case of India, which controls the upper reaches of the Indus River and a greater part of the basin of the Ganges River, and thus is able to bring pressure to bear on the countries situated in the lower reaches of these rivers – Pakistan and Bangladesh, respectively. Whereas India itself is dependent on China in terms of its actions in the upper reaches of the main tributary of the Ganges – the Brahmaputra.

Asia is inhabited by about 60 percent of the world's population, which is inadequately supplied with fresh water, and this is why the water problem is especially acute there. This article examines two neighboring regions – Central Asia and South Asia, where these problems have been exacerbating interstate relations for decades.

Naturally, we shall also deal with certain problems connected with the state, which is not part of these two regions, but holds a special

position with regard to them. It is China. Its unique position is due to the fact that the Plateau of Tibet belonging to China is one of the biggest reservoirs of surface fresh water. China comes out as an “upper” country with regard to all neighboring states, and in its water management policy it is de facto guided by the Harmon doctrine. As a rule, it either ignores the interests of the countries lying in the lower reaches of water streams, or solves all related problems on a bilateral basis, even if the given water stream flows on the territory of three or more countries. And the fate of over three billion people living in this part of the world depends on how the problems of the use of water are solved.

Finally, the above-mentioned economic, social, ecological and political-legal problems are especially acute and fraught with serious complications in the future, taking into account the fact that three states of the region – China, India and Pakistan – possess nuclear weapon.

### **The Rogun Hydropower Plant and Problems of Relations between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan**

From the point of view of the distribution of hydrocarbon and water resources the five countries of Central Asia can be divided into two groups: those rich in hydrocarbons but short of water (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) and those without hydrocarbon resources of their own, but having rich water resources (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan). The “upper” countries are interested in using rivers for hydro-energy purposes, and the “lower” countries – for irrigation.

In Soviet time centralized planning made it possible to eliminate disbalance in relations: in exchange for free access of the “lower” countries to hydro-resources, the “upper” countries received hydrocarbon fuel at reduced tariffs. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and a break-up of the former economic ties this



disbalance became especially pronounced: the “upper” countries had to buy hydrocarbon fuel, whereas the “lower” countries get water free of charge as previously.

These problems became especially acute in relations between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. They were strained enough without water dispute. The President of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmon always suspects the President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov of intentions to destabilize the regime in his country. Although the two countries are members of the same interstate bodies and regional organizations (CIS, SCO, CSTO, EurAsEC), there is a strict visa regime between them, transport connections are hampered, and part of the Tajik-Uzbek border is mined on the Uzbek side.

Their relations have especially aggravated after Tajikistan has announced plans to build the Rogun hydropower plant on the Vakhsh River, one of the main sources of the Amudarya, and also a series of hydropower plants on the tributaries of the Amudarya – the Pyandzh and the Zeravshan.

The Rogun project was started back in 1976. After the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. the contract on building the hydropower plant was given over to the Russian company “Rusal” on the basis of a intergovernmental agreement between Tajikistan and Russia. In 2005, Tajikistan’s parliament denounced the agreement with the Russian Federation on further construction, and then accused the Russian company of inaction. Along with this, the company’s offer to purchase a Tajik aluminum plant at which it wished to use the energy of the plant was turned down.<sup>7</sup>

The main reason for a break-up of the contract was that according to the first draft project, it was planned to build an earth-fill dam 285-meter-high. The contract was broken after “Rusal” refused to

fulfill the demand of the Tajik side to complete the construction of the dam up to the height of 325 meters.

The 40-meter increase of the dam's height created a direct threat to Uzbekistan's agriculture (primarily cotton growing), which largely depends on summer irrigation using the Amudarya water. Taking into account the planned surface area of the formed reservoir, the volume of water in it with a dam of such height will increase by about three cubic kilometers, which is equal to the average run-off of the Vakhsh River in fifty days. Thus, Tajikistan will have additional levers for manipulating the run-off and political blackmail.

President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov gave more impressive figures. In October 2010, while explaining the reasons why Uzbekistan opposed the construction of the Rogun hydropower plant, he stated that the filling process of the reservoir might take eight years, thus the people of Uzbekistan would have to live without water for eight years. "What will our agricultural workers have to do all these years?" These words of Uzbekistan's President were cited by the information agency "Kazakhstan Today."<sup>8</sup>

Most political and economic analysts agree that the dispute about the expediency to build the Rogun hydropower plant will hardly be settled on a bilateral basis. Tajikistan cites numerous reasons "for," believing that the plant construction is in line with its national interests and rejects all accusations that it poses a threat to Uzbekistan. Whereas Uzbekistan cites as many reasons "against," emphasizing the need for water to irrigate fields on its territory, as well as possible ecological consequences connected, among other things, with the fact that the construction area is seismically unsafe and the collapse of the dam as a result of an earthquake may lead to a catastrophe with many casualties and irreparable economic losses.

Since it does not seem possible to settle this question on a bilateral basis, experts of the World Bank were invited to help solve it at the end of 2011, and the main work on the construction of the dam was suspended. However, as one expert noted, no matter what conclusion was made by the World Bank – pro-Uzbek or pro-Tajik, another side would not agree with it. This is why, in his view, the final document would have a very vague character, which would allow each side to interpret it in its favor.<sup>9</sup>

Confirmation of this view was provided by a new exacerbation of relations between the two countries in March 2012, when Uzbekistan unilaterally stopped gas supply to Tajikistan. In turn, the latter accused the Uzbek authorities of “consciously provoking social tension in Tajikistan,” having reminded of the “transport blockade,” including the delay of cargo shipment for the Rogun construction project, stoppage of electricity supply to Tajikistan from Turkmenistan, and refusal to clear mines along the Uzbek-Tajik border and reopen the border-crossing points.

Relations between other Central Asian countries concerning the problem of the use of water are not so hostile as Uzbek-Tajik ones, however, there are quite a few controversial aspects. For example, after the exceptionally cold winter of 2007 – 2008, when the water level in Kyrgyzstan’s biggest Toktogul reservoir dropped by half, Bishkek sharply reduced the run-off of water to the territories of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. This led to a conflict between the authorities of these countries, who demanded to reduce the run-off in winter time and increase it in summer. Conflict has reached such stage that Tashkent began to threaten Bishkek with cutting off gas supply. It is feared that the construction of the Kambaratin hydropower plant on the Naryn River in Kyrgyzstan, which is one of the main sources of the Syrdarya River, can lead to a big shortage of water and irreversible ecological

consequences in the lower reaches of the river in Ferghana Valley and in Kazakhstan.

The exacerbation of the water problem is also due to the general political instability in the region, and the situation in Afghanistan. Among the factors contributing to the aggravation of the problem are also irrational methods of agricultural development, when considerable volumes of water are simply wasted or returned to stream flows and reservoirs full of harmful substances used in agriculture. It is also necessary to take into account great corruption accompanying the construction of hydro-installations. The situation becomes more complex due to the fact that of all Central Asian countries it is only Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan that have joined the water Convention of 1992.<sup>10</sup>

### **India-Pakistan Dispute over the Use of Water in the Upper Reaches of the Indus**

The India-Pakistan conflict on the Kashmir issue has been the longest of all interstate conflicts, in which the problems of water play a no small role. Most rivers feeding the main water artery of Pakistan – the Indus River – originate in Kashmir.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century the province of Punjab (unified prior to the India-Pakistan conflict) had a ramified network of canals and dams enabling the country to use the water of five tributaries of the Indus for land irrigation. Two of these tributaries, just as the Indus itself, cross the lands of the former principedom of Jammu and Kashmir. After the events of 1947–1948 a number of major dams built on three tributaries of the Indus were on the territory of the Indian part of Punjab. In the spring of 1948 the government of the Indian state of Punjab shut off water supply of channels irrigating fields in the Pakistani province of Punjab. The conflict was solved peacefully, but it

was vividly shown to Pakistan that it greatly depended on its neighbor as far as the use of water was concerned.<sup>11</sup>

In 1960 a treaty was signed on division of the water resources of the Indus by India and Pakistan, with mediation of the World Bank. According to the treaty, India received the right to use water of three tributaries of the Indus, and Pakistan – two tributaries and the Indus itself.<sup>12</sup>

In literature about the problem of using the water of trans-boundary streams the India-Pakistan treaty of 1960 is often viewed as a good example: both parties observed it even in the period of open armed conflicts. However, in recent time voices have been heard in India demanding to revise it because it has become unfit to the changed reality.

It should be noted that in the six decades of independence the per capita provision of fresh water in India and Pakistan has sharply dropped: in India from 5,000 cubic meters a year to 1,800 cubic meters and in Pakistan from 5,600 cubic meters to 1,200 cubic meters. It should be mentioned that the index of 1,000 cubic meters is universally considered critical, after which there is acute shortage of water.

Against the backdrop of the diminishing hydro-resources and the threat of chronic shortage of water to Pakistan, the plans of building a hydro-installation complex Baglihar on the Chinab River in the Indian part of Jammu and Kashmir have caused serious anxiety in Pakistan. This is only one of a whole series of hydro-projects to be built in Jammu and Kashmir, nine of which should be put up on the Chinab River used by Pakistan under the 1960 treaty.<sup>13</sup>

Bilateral negotiations between India and Pakistan on the Baglihar construction plans early this century were fruitless, and in 2005

Pakistan turned to the World Bank for mediation. However, the problem is still unresolved.<sup>14</sup>

Another major project also started by India in the basin of one of the rivers given over to Pakistan includes the construction of the Tulbul system of dams and flood-gates for improving the shipping conditions on Wular Lake fed by waters of the Jhelum River. Work on the project was started in 1984, but it was suspended in 1986 due to Pakistan's objections. India announced that it did not wish to continue endless fruitless discussions and intended to apply to international arbitration.<sup>15</sup>

Recently, in connection with the forthcoming withdrawal of the western coalition forces from Afghanistan and the beginning of active interaction and rivalry of world powers and neighboring states for the spheres of influence in postwar Afghanistan, a new aspect has emerged in the range of problems of the India-Pakistan dispute on sharing the water reserves of the Indus River. One of the main tributaries of the latter – the Kabul River – originates in Afghanistan, and at first glance has no connection at all with the India-Pakistan water dispute. However, India in postwar years has clearly defined its interests in Afghanistan and actually competes with China for the right to be considered the main foreign investor in that country's economy. One of the projects started by Afghanistan with financial and technical support of India is the construction of a hydro-installation on the Kabul River, which will be able to influence the volumes of the Indus water run-off and have a negative impact on Pakistan's economy.<sup>17</sup>

The problems of the use of water in the Indus basin are important not only for India-Pakistan relations, but they are also a source of exacerbation of domestic problems in both countries. In India there is the constant friction between the states of Punjab and Haryana. The problem is more difficult for Pakistan, inasmuch as its entire territory lies in the Indus basin, and the life of practically each citizen of the

country depends on this river. The central authorities of Pakistan have always given all preferences to two provinces – Sind and Punjab which have been in constant rivalry for the spheres of influence. Naturally, this cause displeasure and irritation of inhabitants of other provinces who begin to put forward their demands to the government, right up to openly separatist ones, as the case has been of the most economically backward province of Balochistan.

### **Chinese Plans to Turn Tibetan Rivers and the Reaction of India and Bangladesh**

In the Indus basin India is the “upper” country, as it were, capable to dictate its conditions to the “lower” country – Pakistan, but when the basin of the Ganges River is concerned, India is in a dual situation. On the one hand, it controls a greater part of the river basin and is the “upper” country with regard to Bangladesh situated in the Ganges delta. The Farakka Barrage built in the early 1970s in the state of West Bengal in less than twenty kilometers from the border with Bangladesh was meant for removing silt and sediments in the Hoogly River (one of the main arms of the Ganges in its delta) with a view to improving the navigation conditions in the port of Calcutta. However, this dam has reduced the flow of river water to Bangladesh, thus giving access of salt sea water to stream flows and agricultural plots in lowlands near the seashore, which caused natural discontent of the Bangladesh authorities.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, one of the biggest tributaries of the Ganges – the Brahmaputra – takes its origin from the other side of the Himalayas on the Tibetan Plateau, thus both India and Bangladesh are dependent on the economic activity of China, as far as water resource management of this river is concerned.

In recent years China has begun the active implementation of the water transfer project from south to north (the “South – North” project). It envisages the construction of a network of channels – Eastern, Central and Western along which part of the run-off of the Yangze, Huaihe, Huanghe and Haihe rivers will be transferred in the northern direction for irrigating lands in Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous district. The total length of channels will be 1,300 kilometers, and up to fifty million cubic meters of water will be pumped along them annually.

China, being a natural monopolist, is not party to any international convention (at a General Assembly session it voted against the Convention of 1997), as well as to any regional multilateral agreements on the use of resources of trans-boundary streams. For example, China does not take part on a permanent basis in the work of the Commission on the Mekong River set up in 1995 by Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

China prefers to settle all problems with its neighbors exclusively on a bilateral basis. Incidentally, there is no agreement between India and China on sharing trans-boundary stream flows.<sup>19</sup> This fact by itself causes poorly concealed discontent of India. Brahma Chellaney and the Carnegie Center expert Ashley J. Tellis write that China’s unique status as a source of the trans-boundary rivers flowing across the biggest number of countries in the world, as well as all its disputes for water with almost all states situated along the course of these rivers have serious consequences for its main neighbor in the south-west – India.<sup>20</sup>

In November 2010, China officially announced the beginning of work on spanning the Brahmaputra River in Shannan district of Tibetan Autonomous region some 30 kilometers away from the border with India. The dam to be built should become the foundation for the erection of a hydropower plant of 510 megawatt capacity. The Indian press reported that there would be more than just the hydropower plant



(that would be the lesser evil, inasmuch as the water used for electricity would return to the river). There was talk of the possibility to use the Brahmaputra water for filling the western channel, the most problematic and expensive one within the framework of the “South – North” project, and China’s plans to turn off 200 cubic meters of water annually.<sup>21</sup>

At the beginning of 2013 the Indian press reported that in addition to the dam already being built China intends to erect another three dams on Brahmaputra River, which aggravated previous water disputes.<sup>22</sup>

Bangladesh has also expressed concern over China’s plans. However, its former representative at the UN mission in Geneva Harun-ur-Rashid noted that according to reports, China did the same to India what the latter had done with its trans-boundary rivers to Bangladesh. China did not consider it necessary to consult, discuss or sit at a negotiation table with India on the question of the suggested transfer of waters from the Tibetan Plateau. And he added: “There should not be one rule for India and China, and another for India and Bangladesh.”<sup>23</sup>

The Chinese official position is that there will be no transfer of water of the Brahmaputra, inasmuch as it is fraught with unpredicted ecological consequences and can harm bilateral relations. Hence, Chinese authors do not deny the fact that there are plans of spectacular construction of hydro-installations in the upper reaches of the Brahmaputra River.

As noted by certain authors, China should be worried over possible ecological consequences of such grand projects as the “North – South” no less than the countries situated in the lower reaches of the river.<sup>24</sup> All the more so since the negative ecological consequences of such big project as the “Three Gorges” (“Sangxia”) on the Yangzi River are felt already now. According to China’s Ministry of land

resources, the number of landslides in the vicinity of the project has grown by 70 percent after water reached its maximum level in 2010. One million four thousand people had to be moved to other places from the construction district, and another one hundred thousand will have to be resettled within the next three to five years. Apart from that, hydrologists warn about the danger of cascade rockfalls, inasmuch as the hydroelectric complex is in a seismically dangerous district.<sup>25</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The above-said emphasizes the need to work out universal rules, which should be mutually acceptable and binding for both the “upper” and the “lower” countries. These rules should be evolved on a multilateral basis. The position of China is the main stumbling block in this respect, because it is a natural monopolist and the “upper” country with regard to all its neighbors without exception, preferring to resolve all issues on a bilateral basis and from the position of force.

Apart from the above-mentioned problems of China’s relations with its neighbors, it should be noted that there are spectacular plans of the transfer of waters of trans-boundary rivers for the needs of hydro-energy, oil, and other industries, irrigated agriculture, and cattle breeding in Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous District, which may have negative consequences for China’s neighbors in the north-east and north – Kazakhstan and Russia.

These plans touch such rivers as the Ili and the Black Irtysh on the territory of China, Kazakhstan and Russia.

Due to the changed bed of the Black Irtysh River Russia is short of over two cubic kilometers of water a year, which will have a bad effect on Omsk, Kurgan and Tyumen regions of the Russian Federation. According to pessimistic forecasts, the bed of the Irtysh River in the territory of Kazakhstan may become a chain of bogs and

stagnant-water lakes by 2020. This will have catastrophic consequences for the economy and ecology not only of Kazakhstan, but also the Russian regions of West Siberia.

There is a multilateral format within whose framework this problem could be solved with due account of the interests of all parties concerned. This is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). All countries mentioned here are either full-fledged members of this organization, or have the observer status as India and Pakistan.

Recently, the critics of SCO have time and again spoken about its weakening potential, claiming that it is necessary only for China in order to establish its domination in Central Asia.<sup>26</sup> However, if SCO had included the question of evolving a convention on the use of water in Asia in its agenda, it could have given a fresh impetus and new meaning to its existence. In the future, this convention could be joined by ASEAN countries, which have serious differences with China on the problem of sharing the hydro-resources of the Mekong River. Such regional convention could subsequently become the foundation for a legally binding world convention.

India and Pakistan joining SCO as full-fledged members should not turn this organization into an arena of a new confrontation. On the country, it should contribute to the watering-down of the existing problems between them, including in the sphere of the use of water.

This is why it is only coordination of efforts of all parties concerned that will prevent the gloomy forecasts about “water wars” to come true.

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## **MIGRATION FROM CENTRAL ASIA TO RUSSIA: MODEL OF A NEW WORLD ORDER**

Migration of a large number of people from Central Asia to Russia has become a surprise to experts and politicians. In Soviet times, the reluctance of the Uzbeks, Tajiks and Kyrgyz to change their place

of residence was considered as innate and incorrigible cultural characteristics, their devotion to the family, community and the hot climate. All these considerations have been refuted, when millions of migrants from these regions moved to Russian cities in a couple of decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Discussions about migration from Central Asia to Russia revolve around the following subject: is this movement good or bad? Excessive politicization of these discussions and ideological preferences prevent to review the current events in the temporal and spatial perspective. The processes discussed in this article will be considered in a historical sequence, by stages, and their circumstances, practices and identities will be classified accordingly .

## **Two Post-Soviet waves**

Migration from Central Asia to Russia intensified greatly in the 1990s. The states, which have emerged from the former Soviet republics, have bolstered up their legitimacy by the ideas of national revival and liberation of the titular nation. The large-scale migration of peoples from their countries has become an inevitable consequence of such ideological shift. Russians (as well as Tatars, Chechens, Ingush) were leaving for Russia, Ukrainians (and Crimean Tatars) – for Ukraine, Germans – for Germany, Jews (even Bukharan Jews) – for Israel. Among the contributing factors were the severe economic crisis that gripped all post-Soviet countries and political instability, which was particularly acute in Tajikistan, when a civil war began there.

Migration of the non-titular population from Central Asia to Russia has begun long before the collapse of the U.S.S.R. The number of those leaving exceeded the number of those arriving in the 1970–1980.<sup>1</sup> A sharp increase in the number of the former was registered in 1990, just before the collapse of the Soviet Union, and its peak was reached in 1994. Then, the scale has gradually decreased, although the

trend has continued throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Between two and 2.5 million people left Central Asia in the 1990s.

Migration from Central Asia to Russia (and other countries) in the 1990s had a number of specific features.

First, migration was ethnically oriented. Representatives of non-titular nationalities expressed the desire to live in “their” state and spoke of oppression on ethnic grounds in a “foreign” one as the reason for emigration. Even if a person has not had connections with his historical motherland and has never experienced real discrimination, the discursive coercion influenced his decision to emigrate<sup>2</sup>.

Secondly, highly-qualified specialists migrated to their historical homeland. Their migration led to disappointment caused by having to live in provincial Russian cities and reduced their social status.

Thirdly, people leaving for permanent residence in Russia received Russian citizenship and no intent to return.

Fourthly, the receiving state does not provide special programs for assimilation and integration of ethnic Russians. The new settlers were dissolved among the local population without creating ethnic diasporas. In general, the migration of the 1990s did not attract public attention, it was not considered a political issue that required control and regulation.

New migration trends from Central Asia to Russia emerged in the late 1990s – early 2000s. Representatives of the titular nation acceded to the ongoing flow of non-titular population. Undoubtedly, there was a direct connection between these two processes. Mass migration of people from one region to another led to the creation of an entire infrastructure – the emergence of border crossings, distribution of necessary information, exchange of experience, and support organizations in the new environment. The first settlers of “titular” nationalities used friendship and kinship ties with representatives of

“non-titular” communities, who had left earlier. They set up businesses together in Russia, helped in search of work and housing, acted as guarantors and witnesses in contacts with the police, etc. Migration of the first wave in the 1990s promoted a second one in the 2000s, in some way. The second wave of migration has a certain history. “The problem of overpopulation” because of the rapid demographic growth in Central Asia was formulated in the 1970s – 1980s. It was proposed to solve the problem by gradual resettlement of the surplus rural population from Central Asia to Russia, where there was a demographic decline. This relocation was temporary at the beginning – the hiring of workers on a rotation basis, and the conscription of young people from Central Asia to military construction teams. Attempts were made to plan the relocation of people from Central Asia to Russia and create conditions for permanent family residence in the 1980s, but they have failed<sup>3</sup>.

The crisis of the early 1990s devalued the idea of controlled migration of labor, because there was no need for it due to economic downturn. Russia's economic recovery, while reducing the population, has created a situation of shortages in the Russian labor market, which became apparent in the mid-2000s. Labor force was drawn, above all, from the former Soviet republics which have preserved visa-free entry to Russia, and had common culture, habits and communication skills, including the knowledge and use of the Russian language.

Residents from the poorest states in Central Asia – Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, which did not have their own raw materials industries – were the first. Political instability led to a deep economic decline in both countries. Residents of Uzbekistan have begun to migrate a little later, as there was a sufficient resource base, but a great overpopulation. The situation in Kazakhstan was similar to the situation in Russia: its growing economy, based on raw materials, has attracted new labor reserves. As for Turkmenistan, its economic growth was based on its



own raw materials and its own labor. About 4.5 million people from Central Asian countries were registered in Russia in the fall of 2013, according to the official data of the Migration Service of the Russian Federation. Approximately four million of them were classified as “titular” nationalities<sup>4</sup>.

Migration of the 2000s, as compared to the 1990s, had several important features.

First, migration was motivated by economic reasons and was most often associated with a search of income.

Secondly, the economic nature of migration determines the basic social characteristics of migrants. They are mainly rural residents or residents of small towns, a low-skilled labor force, those who cannot find a well-paid job in their country, and they are mainly men of working age.

There were diverse strategies and motivations of labor migrants, and earnings abroad became part of their everyday life and an element of their social status. The proportion of the middle class representatives, who went abroad to opening their own businesses, has increased. In addition, the proportion of women, some of whom went to work, and some simply followed their husbands and potential mates, has also increased. The list of countries for migration has become longer. Among other motives for migration were social mobility, better skills and education, and broader social relations<sup>5</sup>.

Thirdly, migrants were not going to stay for permanent residence generally. The majority of migrants from Central Asia retain their citizenship, and their earnings are sent to members of their families left behind. Even those who lived mostly in Russia and rarely came to visit their families in their motherland, considered their stay in this country as temporary, preserved strong bonds with their relatives, and were going to return home sooner or later.

Fourthly, it follows from the above, that assimilation and integration into Russian society was not a strategic objective for the majority of people from Central Asia. A significant proportion of migrants have entered the communities or national groups, organized on kinship, clannishness or ethnic principles. These communities have created an infrastructure of trust, care, services, and leisure activities.

## **Post-colonialism and Globalism**

Why has migration from Central Asia to Russia become an important element of life strategies of a significant part of the Central Asian population? The collapse of the Soviet system has led to the dismantling of the old social and economic policies that kept the population in various constraints – registration of residence, on the one hand, and investments in unprofitable production, on the other. A sharp decline in the living standards, uncertain life prospects and recurring political upheavals have induced many people to seek a safe and prosperous life outside their native country. Unemployment, low wages and salaries and pensions are forcing people to look for new labor markets, where even small incomes are much higher than the ones existing in their country.

It turns out that the scale, range and frequency of migration are growing in the post-Soviet area, as well as around the world, after a careful study of the growth of population mobility in Central Asia. In addition, there is a direct connection between mobility and the present development stage of capitalism, which is sometimes called globalization and sometimes – post-industrialism, or post-modernity. From this point of view, the situation in Central Asia looks not as a reflection of the disastrous state of affairs in other countries that have gained independence recently. Local movements are not only a survival strategy, but also an impetus for the distribution and collection of

people, capital, information, and skills in new social configurations. These configurations do not depend on the characteristics of a particular country directly, but they obey more extensive regularities.

What additional explanations can be found for the resettlement of a large number of people from Central Asia? This process can be described as the inertia of connections and interdependencies between Central Asia and Russia, which have been formed and strengthened during at least one and a half centuries of existence within a single state. Usually, these relationships are characterized as imperial or colonial, if one wants to emphasize inequality<sup>6</sup>. It is generally accepted that the collapse of all empires is inevitable, and they will be replaced by liberated nations. However, much is still unclear in this simple teleological scheme, which prevails in the post-Soviet countries today. One of the most controversial questions is the following: if an empire has disappeared completely or taken a new form, where will nations perform their former functions of its outskirts, giving their resources to the former metropolitan country and receiving protection and control in return. In this case, mass migration from Central Asia to Moscow, St. Petersburg and other parts of Russia looks like a post-imperial situation with the turnover of manpower, money, skills, information, etc. This migration fixes a division of labor, hierarchy, interdependence between the old center and outskirts in a new way.

There is another explanation for this migration. Its considerable part consists of rural residents, traveling to work abroad. In other words, this is a classical process of proletarianization of the agrarian society of Central Asia. In Soviet times, people in rural areas gradually became transformed into agricultural workers, and the private sector, their traditional relationships and perception of the world remained as a compensation for forced labor, as it were. The standard version of capitalist development, accompanied by the ruin of the peasantry, its

impoverishment and resettlement in towns and cities has become inevitable after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the peasants were turned into employees subjected to exploitation. In other words, the above situation was not degradation, but the change of the socio-economic order, entering into a completely new form of social interaction.

Proletarianization is not a subject for discussion as emigrants in their countries who are sometimes considered as traitors to the nation, or victims, or income earners, in accordance with certain national views. In countries of immigration, they are considered either outsiders, potentially threatening the way of life of the local population, or victims of circumstances. The emphasis on the fact that they have left or arrived becomes more important than the social essence of migration<sup>7</sup>. One of the specific features of this phenomenon is that the class character of migration is not limited to countries and regions, but has a supranational scope. Migration goes beyond the post-Soviet area, spreading to new areas of global capitalism and fitting into the world order.

Another meaning of migration is the development and assignment of global space, infrastructure and technology zone, communications and transport. The ease of travel to the other end of the world and access to new benefits provokes people to migrate. As soon as new technologies and infrastructures come to Central Asia, the corresponding habits are formed among the inhabitants of the region and the need for mobility arises, which is perceived not only as a necessity, but as a pleasure.

Finally, I propose to use the term “migrations of peoples” for the interpretation of contemporary migrations. Although the analogies between very different historical epochs seem quite risky, it is important to point out the continuity and cyclical movements, on the

one hand, and the gradual change of cultures, languages and even genetic characteristics, on the other. It is important to see this perspective, since new mass mixing and hybridization have taken place, new cultural styles and preferences have emerged, and new communities and identities have formed.

Marriages between locals and migrants, children of migrants who are born and grow up in a different country and speak the local language, mixing of musical and culinary cultures that become ordinary in the country of temporary residence – all these are features of such transformations. They take the form of global tendencies, which become noticeable after some time. However, we feel that this process is inevitable, along with the emergence of completely new cultural forms that become strong and acquire their own logic.

### **Migrants and illegal**

The paradox of the current era is that migration is growing all the time, so societies and countries have to create more and more legal, political, social, cultural and other regulations to control the mobility of the population. Migration is becoming an important characteristic of post-modern society, but it does not change the social system, which remains hierarchical and antagonistic. The “migrant” status is taken into consideration in the social and material position of an individual.

The most obvious is the post-imperialist or postcolonial situation. The former differences between the “center” and “outskirts” are still present in it. However, their real territorial value in the past has now been lost. Parts of the formerly unified empire need one another, as far as resources, finances, military matters, technologies, and ideas are concerned, in order to maintain their own legitimate existence. Disproportion of interdependence has not decreased, but, on the contrary, become much greater. Soviet citizenship served not only as a

tool of colonization and Russification, but also as a contribution to modernization and emancipation. Nowadays the absence of common citizenship and the sustainable legal status of migrants have become part of a new strategy for domination of the Russian center over the Central Asian outskirts. The “migrant” status has become a new means of colonization instead of the previous definitions of “stranger” and “national minority”. The position of migrants, worsened as it is by the negative definition “illegal”, is the lot of most people from Central Asia and serves as a means of overexploitation, separating the local population of the “center” from people from the “outskirts.” The opportunity to become a citizen of Russia does exist, but it requires considerable efforts to overcome all and sundry obstacles, and persistent confirmation of loyalty to the country of residence.

Proletarianization of the rural population of Central Asia is not just migration from the countryside to the city, but also from one country to another. Migrants are doubly exploited: as employees and as foreigners. The combination of the two social roles prevents them to realize the class character of these relations. Migrants working in Russia and creating surplus value are considered as “migrant laborers” who are not entitled to vote in election, allegedly prevent the economy to develop, distort the labor market by low earnings, and increase criminality, in short, create many “problems” and “threats.” The question of their own social rights as a priority is rarely discussed. Even the local left-wing parties are not ready to accept them properly. Migrants are not considered as a separate social group of exploited people when they return to Central Asia with their earnings. At home they are regarded businessmen who have done some business abroad, and they keep up the image of rural rich people, members of the community and supporters of the traditional way of life<sup>8</sup>.

It is not only villagers that participate in migration process, but also representatives of business, educated urban young people, as well as figures of culture and science. Educated migrants from Central Asia often get high-status positions in a new society, but they also get into the category of “problematic persons” along with together with “migrant laborers.”

Access to the infrastructure and mobile technologies also creates differentiation and hierarchy which are associated with knowledge, skills, mental and physical abilities, and, especially, with the presence of the necessary financial means and “contacts.” An important factor is the number of intermediaries between the person and means of mobility.

A potential migrant chooses between adhering to strategies of individual existence and joining a network organization, depending on the availability of funds and skills. Each person is determined by his position in the hierarchy, his duties and obligations, and strict limits are imposed on any manifestation of independence within the given network organization. The network organization helps migrants financially at the early stages, protects them, guides their actions, and also guarantees and confirms the usual order of relationships between the older and younger, men and women, beginners and followers. Technologies and infrastructure of globalization turn out to be the way to produce and strengthen local practices and beliefs for many migrants. The network organization immediately defines a set of rights and duties, symbols and identities, defining a social niche for a person, and thus he or she is already doomed to be “migrant.”

Migrants are included in a special category of people. “Migrant” is one who has features of a “stranger”<sup>9</sup>. His physical appearance, faith, religious practices, cultural and everyday habits – everything about him or her is alien and strange for the local population. Migrants from

Central Asia with European or Mongolian features are regarded “black” in the eyes of many people, especially nationalists. Cultures of Central Asia are considered primitive, archaic or feudal, although they have been largely modernized in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union during more than a century and a half. Central Asian Islam looks like part of the “global threat,” in the opinion of both conservatives and liberals, although it is still emerging from the era of Soviet atheism.

The collapse of the Soviet Union coincided with the advent of a new era of global transformation, to be more precise, the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. was part of this process, its results and one of the conditions. Cross-border movement of people in the former Soviet Union is not just a temporary reaction to difficulties and not a result of ill will, or management's errors, but the necessary and inevitable consequence of changes in the configuration areas of temporalities, technologies of social hierarchies and views. Acceptance of this fact does not mean the need to abandon discussion of opportunities for the development of processes and attempts to influence them. However, the horizon of events and forecasts should be submitted more extensively, without limitation, to momentary desires and interests.

## Notes

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- <sup>4</sup> Information concerning foreign citizens in the territory of the Russian Federation, in the context of sex and age (as of November 13, 2013). <http://www.fms.gov.ru/about/statistics/data/details/54891/>
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