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COLOR REVOLUTIONS AND HYBRID WARS

When discussing “hybrid wars” and “color revolutions”, these concepts are confused quite often. Moreover, the trend has appeared to combine all known forms, methods and technologies of warfare under one “umbrella” brand – the concept of hybrid wars after the appearance of the term “hybrid war” or “hybrid warfare” in a broad scientific discourse.

Properly speaking, “hybrid wars» – are not exactly wars, although have much in common with wars. “Color revolutions» are not quite revolutions in the full sense, moreover – they are not revolutions at all.

The subject of hybrid wars and color revolutions continue to gain more popularity in the modern world. It is not a coincidence: the world civilization has faced with fundamentally new tools to form a new political reality at the present stage of development that are extremely effective in the crisis of the unipolar world, but represent exceptional danger to the modern nation-states.

Correlation of Notions

“Hybrid wars” and “color revolutions” are relatively new phenomena, and restraining mechanisms and restrictive rules of the international law have not been established yet for them.

The modern world is changing so fast that new phenomena appear each year, with no direct analogues in the world history, which should be identified and described.

The concept of “hybrid warfare” is a kind of superstructure over the traditional, information, psychological, network, proxy wars and the colored revolutions, that have appeared earlier and therefore have been more investigated.

There are many similarities between the hybrid wars and the color revolutions: both of these phenomena are observed on the phenomenological level, and on the technological one. Both terms have recently been written exclusively in quotes, since there was no special terminology to describe them precisely. Finally, both concepts are synthetic structures, based on the notions of “war” and “revolution” with adjectives that change their meaning.

The terms “hybrid wars” and “color revolutions” mean the objective, real-world phenomena, and these phenomena are increasingly spreading in the modern world, influencing the global political process, dynamics and transformation of the system of international relations. The presence of the terms “war” and “revolution” in the titles indicate their high social danger, and this assessment is correct.

None of the fundamentally new phenomena occurs in a vacuum, but it is always the result of the evolutionary process, and is based on earlier and primitive forms, transmit their distinctive features and technological solutions to the new phenomena. Hybrid wars and color revolutions have made this evolutionary leap in the late 20th century

of wars and the “velvet revolution” of the past. Just the new phenomena are able to overcome the technological, military-strategic, civilizational barriers that the previous forms can not overcome. The phase transition from one political reality to another one is like the transition to hybrid warfare. They are qualitatively new concept in terms of content and greater than compound of the modern forms and methods of armed struggle. The same can be said about color revolutions after the events of “Arab spring”, the crisis years of 2013–2015 in Ukraine and the “umbrella revolution” in Hong Kong .

The Points of Conjugation

It is necessary to compare hybrid wars and color revolutions to identify their similarities and differences, their unifying communication, in order to determine their relationship exactly. First, it is necessary to define the essence of hybrid wars, because there are different opinions, contradicting each other. There is no precise and unambiguous definition of hybrid warfare. For the first time this term was used by the US think tanks such as RAND Corporation, Stanford University, and others. Hybrid wars suggest the combined use of strategies that are specific to different types of the modern wars – traditional, information, ideological, economic, for defeat of enemy forces and facilities, achievements military and strategic superiority over them, and peace enforcement under the terms of the winner. Hybrid wars can be conducted both in the traditional form (assuming the availability of the front line, the rear, and actions of the regular army) and in the network-centric, where the front line is missing. Operations of the information war can be crucial to force the enemy to surrender in a hybrid war. And the combat operations of the armed forces can play an auxiliary role for organizers of information warfare, providing PR materials, that are required for information attacks onto

the conscious and subconscious mind of the enemy with the purpose of hidden control over his behavior.

It is this picture was observed during the second war in Iraq, where the US troops have been a certain conveyor for the production of PR News and “soap operas” about the war; in operations in Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and now – in the civil war in Ukraine. The aim of hybrid warfare is still a classic traditional purpose of the war – military defeat, destruction and capitulation of enemies. This is important, otherwise the concept of hybrid warfare is eroded and becomes of a speculative color. This is the main difference between hybrid wars and color revolutions. The main and the only purpose of a color revolution is the organization of a coup d'etat, and nothing else, as opposed to a hybrid war. Color revolutions are the technologies of coups in artificially created conditions of instability; Pressure on the government is some form of political blackmail, and the youth protest movement, organized by a special network is a tool for blackmail. A color revolution ends after the success of a coup. In practice, color revolutions develop into the armed rebellion, or combined with military intervention, quite often, but the use of military forces in color revolutions is rather exception than the rule. Color revolutions create conditions for interference of foreign countries into internal affairs of a country which becomes a victim of a color revolution, for a military intervention, military rebellions, civil wars. Ukraine is an example of such a situation.

Thus, the significant differences prevent full integration of the modern hybrid wars, which became a new form and content of today's armed conflicts, and the color revolutions, that became a tool for organizing coups and a forced dismantling of political regimes. The color revolution can not be regarded as one of the phases of the hybrid war, although its technology can be used in the hybrid war in strict

conformity with the purposes. The hybrid war is a sequence of military operations, and the color revolution is a technology. However, there is something that unites them: the color revolution quite often become a prelude to the hybrid war, creating the necessary conditions for transition of the conflict into a military phase. Current Ukraine can be an example of such developments. The following sequence of events is implemented often enough: color revolution (an incident – protest – maidan) – armed rebellion – civil war – hybrid warfare. The color revolution is the trigger for the hybrid war, and its technology can be used in order to provoke an armed conflict.

Color Revolution Through the Prism of Hybrid Warfare

The color revolution is one of the most destructive and the least explored phenomenon of global politics in the contemporary political reality. Today, technological schemes and devices of the forced dismantling of political regimes in countries with unstable forms of democracy (built on the western patterns) or in states of the eastern type (where a democratic form of government is often absent in principle), are correlated to them.

Dismantling the statehood and loss of sovereignty that accompanies the coup, are issued for the process of democratization, modernization, liberalization or “initiation to European culture”, and least – for an act of “soft power.”

A direct consequence of color revolutions, in addition to performing their primary (and only) task – coup d'etat – is an immersion of the country into a political chaos that the Americans like to call “controlled” transition of the country under external management (for example – the appointment of foreigners – “legionnaires” for the key positions in the Cabinet of Ministers of

Ukraine today), as well as the civil war and genocide of civilians and military intervention.

The further fate of these states are sad: people, economy, natural resources become consumables for initiation of color revolutions in other countries, for provoking new international conflicts, in which new actors – states – instigators, ruled by puppets of Washington, have a special role.

Quite often, the country-instigators (such as Georgia in the Russian-Georgian-South Ossetian conflict in 2008, Ukraine in the civil war in the Donbass or some of the Baltic countries, providing their territories to place the striking forces of NATO) receive both the status of the main ally outside NATO, and billions in loans for the purchase of new weapons and military equipment from the United States. It should be recognized that the majority of these riots is an extremely effective tool to transform the political situation in the world, which is unstable and unbalanced today and its state is called the “crisis of the unipolar world.”

Quite often the bearers of true democracy are the forces with which the United States – the source and the main organizer of the riots – are struggling with all possible means (including the military). Gulf monarchies (Saudi Arabia and Qatar), rigid authoritarian states, where democracy is absent at all, were bearers of democratic values in the color revolutions of the “Arab Spring”. The main driving force of “democratization” of the society have become “Muslim Brotherhood” in Egypt, Islamists in Libya and Syria, presented by a wide range of terrorist organizations – from the cells of the Syrian “Al-Qaeda” and “Taliban” to “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS).”

Neo-Nazis have become the vanguard of the “democratization” of the Ukrainian society and its “dedication to the European values,” the United States raised a whole generation of them for 20 years

of “independence” of the country that have passed since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is not difficult to see a single technology that applied consistently to different countries both liberal-democratic and authoritarian type. However, a number of politicians and scientists continues to consider the revolution at the phenomenological level as a social phenomenon which nature is related to the process of modernization of traditional societies, providing an abrupt transition to a modern lifestyle.

If “color revolution” is an objective phenomenon, associated with the peculiarities of the historical process at the present stage of human civilization, then it is useless to counteract it, as any social phenomenon can not be eliminated from the society, but the level of social danger can be controlled by minimizing costs and maximizing quality of the design.

It is not clear why the scripts and schemes of coups d'etat have become the most effective tool for resolution of objective contradictions in the last decade, in the era of enlightened democracy and global democratic society. After all, their sole aim is the violent seizure and retention of power by any means, unleashing of terror against its own civilian population (for example – Ukraine).

In general, a phenomenological approach leads to the actual justification of the organizers and executors of color revolutions, the criminals responsible for the destruction of the state, for the civilian casualties, for genocide, ethnic cleansing and war crimes like committed by the Armed Forces of Ukraine and numerous “volunteer” punitive battalion in the Donbass region.

There is every reason to doubt that color revolutions are the modern form of true revolutions like the Cuban or Nicaraguan. Almost all of them are made of the same “democratic template” (as it is called

in the UK), from the “velvet” in Eastern Europe and ending with euromaidan in Ukraine and the “umbrella” in Hong Kong.

All the talk of democratization and soft power, transit or drift of democratic values look like the cover (in the language of spies), and that is what they are. Their strength lies in the following: coups provide a guaranteed result with strict observance of the technological cycle. These technologies work like a clock and give failures only in the rarest of cases, and that make them highly efficient tool and therefore the most dangerous one for dismantling of modern political regimes. Today it is in the hands of North Americans – the direct authors and developers of these technologies. Only they are able to apply this tool in such a way as not to disrupt the process cycle.

However, any technology involves the repetition of the same sequence of elementary operations. And organizational technology involves multiple alternation of the same sequence of steps or phases. Color revolutions are no exception: their development always passes through six key steps in a single process chain.

The main ability to organize systematic counteraction is the following: actions and tactics can always be calculated for many steps ahead if use the same technology. The control point of the process can be accurately calculated if signs of preparation for the rebellion are identified and operation stages are determined in due time: the enemy will definitely come there, following the requirements and logic of the process, and he will be vulnerable to pre-planned and prepared counterattack at this point.

Color revolutions and hybrid wars evolve along different trajectories in terms of evolution, which proves the different nature of these phenomena. Color revolutions tend to develop a scheme of impact on political processes in which the use of direct military force becomes unnecessary and even harmful in achieving the ultimate goal – the

organization of a coup d'etat under the cover of mass protests. Hybrid wars are looking for new formats, models and niches of applications for directarmed forces. Perhaps this is an example of how classical instruments of political influence – hard and soft power – trying to adapt to the new political reality, to the new environment, which is not friendly and pliable either for purely “soft” or for a purely “hard” technologies. Evolution of rigid methods of influence is on the way of hybridization. Hybrid wars implements some of these techniques in the toolset of political influence, combining them with “hard” instruments (“smart power” appears so), and reject a part of them, producing “antidote” to them. Evolution of “soft” methods, which include the classic schemes and technologies of color revolutions, follows the path of “hanging” new “gadgets” to the classic scheme, used in the “velvet revolutions” in Eastern Europe. These are service functions that involve broader use of hard power, such as the technology of “controlled chaos”. A compulsory element of a color revolution scenario of the latest version – for example, in Ukraine in 2013–2014 – was the sniper shooting of activists of the Maidan and just civilians in order to increase the level of aggressiveness of the crowd. This is a typical example of the use of hard power tools, implemented in a “soft” structure of the scenarios of color revolutions.

Technologies of hybrid wars and color revolutions intersect each other on the field of the gadgets: information wars (operations and tools of information-psychological war) and technologies of controlled chaos. Both of them are used successfully and effectively in hybrid wars, and in color revolutions, but for different purposes. Recently, there was a tendency for the further complication of terminology: many experts began to talk about a hybrid “chaos-war”, while continuing to design essence and mixing different concepts. Such an increase of terminological base is not justified in many respects. The content of

it requires a careful clarification and specification, relying on the methodological apparatus of political, military, and other related sciences.

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QUALITATIVE CHARACTERISTIC OF THE ISLAMIC RENAISSANCE

The essence of the revival of Islam is determined by qualitative criteria (philosophical and theological analysis, establishment of the scientific basis and possible directions of development of Islamic theology in accordance with the requirements of the time, the study of changes in the outlook of a Muslim, his attitude towards Islam, the disclosure of the nature of sharia as the legal system, which is a subject to temporary changes and etc.) rather than quantitative one (increase in the number of Muslim communities, madrasas, mosques and so on.)

The question of quantitative measurement of Islamic Renaissance is of great importance for the future of Islam in Russia. Dagestan researcher M. Yahyaev said: “Formal signs of Islamic Renaissance are restoration of old and rapid construction of new mosques, expansion of the system of Islamic education, development of a network of Islamic organizations, a sharp intensification of Muslim religious leaders, in addition to a significant quantitative increase in the number of practicing Muslims”.

Nowadays the society raises questions, requiring qualitative analysis of this phenomenon. The two sides are complementary in the revival of Islam and are distinctive features of Islamic Renaissance that meet common social and cultural space of our time, the general nature

of its development. The logic of Islamic Renaissance summed up to the line, when the analysis of concerted action quantitative measurement as well as the interaction between religious institutions and government bodies become relevant. The more significant is the social impact of this or that phenomenon (Islamic renaissance is such a significant phenomenon), the more difficult to take into account all aspects of special individual human response to changing situations.

“You can not step twice into the same river,” – said the ancient Greeks. William James continued the thought, that none of the past state could be restored and be identical to what it has been earlier.

On the basis of this conclusion, the internal qualitative certainty of the revival of Islam is that traditional Islam with the modern Islam determined the basic direction of Islamic thought in the 21 century. This dialectic compound helps to restore Islam in the environment, adapted to the current political and social conditions, and has generated a lot controversial issues and problems. Islamic renaissance is characterized by a very high levels of internal tension, therefore the forces that motivate and restrain it, have enormous social potential.

Today, Islam is in the core of the Muslim worldview. Those religious ideas of Islam attract the most attention, that try to revive the Islamic traditionalism, that the most essence of the problem is transferred into the depths of the human being, in his experience of the new religious outlook, which is related to irreversible and inevitable global changes in all spheres of social existence.

No wonder that the modern Islamic worldview tends to significance and importance: it looks for fundamental bases, roots and historically stable images of Islamic religious consciousness, avoids the arbitrariness of thoughts and deeds. The Islamic worldview beware of the substitution of the true Islam. However, this does not protect from contrived imitation of the past, from reflexive thinking, focusing on

ancient religious traditions, from a hopeless optimistic perception of life.

The process of the revival of Islam has occurred as a kind of “negation of the negation” after decades of persecution and totalitarian dependence. At the same time, wholesale rejection of the values of the former system is fraught with threats of political and cultural extremism, carrying only destructive program. At the same time, there was an understanding that return to the values, traditions and lifestyles of the past may result in non-recognition of current realities, the negation of the necessity of modernization processes in the society.

Danger of extremist fundamentalist opposition has appeared as a result of this position of denial. Its essence is the creation of social structures based on chauvinism, religious intolerance and unjustified, hatred toward anything alien. The international community has repeatedly seen the extremist manifestations of aggressive reaction to anything that could not fit into the narrow framework of world perception of politicized religious groups.

The following conclusions were made on the basis of observation and analysis of the destructive manifestations on religious grounds in the society, and especially among the youth.

Firstly, one of the causes of destructive manifestations in the religiously motivated society is that a huge number of people has accepted the idea of the Islamic renaissance, but not aware of their true meaning. They just get used to manipulate the terms without understanding the essence of the doctrine, without knowing place and time of revival of the doctrine. Such people can be defined as “ignorant,” “laymen” and so on.

Secondly, there is the phenomenon of globalization of the modern world with all the typical symptoms and not only for ordinary believers, but also for members of the clergy. Some people believe that

it should not be understood and comprehended. They are engaged in the description of this phenomenon, but not in the context of historical processes, nature, culture, society, personal experiences, but other people's texts, thoughts, images.

Third, there are shortcomings in the field of Islamic education, including the sphere of church-state cooperation through education. Our Islamic educational institutions require significant increase in the quality of education as well as scientific and methodological basis of existing Islamic universities in the country, as well as raising the level of training in secular universities.

Fourth, the social values are deformed and their perception as the most delicate, volatile and unpredictable elements of social life changed. It is known that national traditions, common ideas, interaction rules of small and large social groups are fixed in the system of social values and orientations.

Any revival of outdated social culture introduces something new and unknown. This is a dialectical view on the development of any system, and it becomes more stable as a result of the gradual solution of the internal contradictions, that is inherent in it.

The existence of Islamic renaissance in the Russian socio-cultural space today is interesting. It is necessary to present an objective picture of Islamic revival and examine, using modern scientific generalizations and logic of this phenomenon, which develops directly in front of our eyes.

Thus, it is necessary to introduce Islamic renaissance as a process, caused by the objective circumstances, and – at the same time – to criticize its expansionist aspirations to destroy all other forms of spiritual life, including already existing, to give a qualitative characteristic of Islamic revival.

Different interpretations of the concept of “Renaissance” prove that the researchers have not reached a generally accepted definition of it as a scientific category yet, and the frequent use of the term is explained by its vague meaning that satisfies different social needs.

“Renaissance” is proclaimed as the Programme of Action in public life, as the criterion social, political, historical, religious events and phenomena; it is used as a symbol to denote public actions. The term gets situational, arbitrary value and interpretation. As a result, the frequent use of the term “renaissance” leads to the fragmentation of its semantic structure.

The accuracy of the definition of “renaissance” is achieved through the allocation of various special kinds of rebirth: to describe the state of the whole system, the structure of separate subsystems, and finally, processes and relationships.

Meaning of “renaissance” in any socio-cultural space implies a process of purposeful detection of important features of socio-economic and spiritual life of past ages (interacting constructively with innovations), which are necessary to ensure viability of a person, a family, social groups and society as a whole today.

This formulation of the term “Renaissance” covers a variety of changes in the relationship between people in almost all areas of social life. It is important to understand how it works to identify and select the useful, necessary, appropriate one, and to reject something, that should be opposed. Then the problem can be solved or a “modus vivendi” will be proposed to enable co-existence or, at least, peace and dialogical relationship between fundamentalism and modernism temporarily.

The Russian Islamic society “... religious, whether conventional or unconventional, constructive or destructive, has been transferred into

the category of respectable social items, and the religion has acquired a new niche”.

There are many nuances of religious ideas among the different peoples of Russia, practicing Islam. As Islam is reviving in Russia in a secular society, then some forms of Islamic religious thought have a meaning of subrogation and are undeveloped for religious consciousness. Fully developed Islamic religious consciousness can not help but interest in what is reviving today in Islam from the past, what innovations are introduced into the reviving Islam and how all this combined in the public consciousness?

The problem of dialectical negation in the revival of Islam should be described more complete, and so many images and shades of this unique phenomenon should be understood and accepted as they are projected onto the public life and form the value orientations and the actual behavior of people. It is important to understand the psychology of fundamentalists and modernists in this case. One can not say that the revival of Islam means the same as the new Islam, the new Islamic worldview. Innovations in Islam have appeared in the world of globalization. Fundamentalists can not format their outlook completely in accordance with the old, archaic type of Islam, even though they are passionate about old religious truth and looking for ways to return to the bosom of the Caliphate the new Islamic worldview . M. Yahyaev pointed out that supporters of fundamentalist Islam (the Salafis, Wahhabis), preach a return to the reality of the “golden age” of Islam (the period associated with the life and work of the Prophet Muhammad and the four “righteous” caliphs) and the introduction of Sharia law in public life .

This phenomenon is quite the opposite of the modernization of Islam. Supporters of modernism consider that the modernization of Islam, is quite a reasonable compromise between religious dogmas

and the modern world, aimed at re-encoding of culture and connected with the approval of a new world order. They try to make an innovative shift in the Muslim consciousness, combining religious experience with modern scientific mind.

According to the E. Shils about traditionalism, Islam can be called the traditionalist ideology because it is based on a sacred tradition – the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. Aspiration to remain faithful to the principles helps the development of traditionalist consciousness.

Modern fundamentalists believe that their return to the past of Islam looks bold and defiant after so many years of disbelief, hence their aspirations to the past, an escape from modern realities to the bosom of the Caliphate.

At the same time, they lack the initiative, devoid of creative energy, unable to get rid of the variability that is inherent to modern people, although frightening themselves and others with immorality of the modern world. They have to stay at the crossroads between traditional Islam and the realities of the modern culture, with a forked consciousness and worldview. Islamic fundamentalists are deprived of religious integrity and seek a return to its medieval orthodoxy. They try to look into the past and find there the answers to questions, posed by the modern life. They are spiritually deprives themselves by these searches in the past and escape from themselves and their time, they can not find a firm foothold for further creative progress.

The old, outdated, created by people, belonging to the previous eras, can be experienced only in the reflective-conscious way. Therefore, Islam that has been established directly, naively and consistently, now has to be approved consciously, philosophically, with reflection, with stylization. On the other hand, fundamentalists have rather organized and developed philosophical culture. This is a

conscious act of them – their return to the integrity of Islam and the Islamic primitivism. Fundamentalists are not inherent gullibility in the experiences and thoughts. Just a new, modern, first seen or created can be experienced directly with credulity.

As for the specifics of existence of Islam in the North Caucasus republics, the mixed Islam prevalent there in which religious and legal requirements, and spiritual and moral norms embodied in the Quran, mixed with the local spiritual substrate of diverse cultures.

Merging led to the emergence of local, regional forms, based on the generally accepted Islamic principles. Exactly this Islam, that we call traditional, provides a more or less stable functioning of the Muslim society in the North Caucasus republics, adjusting its spiritual and social life.

The ratio of the contents of traditional Islam and regional Islam for the qualitative analysis of the phenomenon of Islamic Renaissance has great scientific and practical and methodological significance, both in terms of determining the approach to the study of this phenomenon as a whole, and in terms of the application of the results to the study of regional processes of its revival as a private .

Concept of that the various ideological trends and religious structure in the Muslim world, united within an overall religious system – Islam, were in difficult relationships and interdependence in the course of historical development, is the fundamental idea in the development of such an approach. This is the main point to understand the mechanism of the revival of Islam as a religious system.

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**FROM THE “FATHER OF ALL TURKMEN” TO
“PATRONS” – WHAT HAS CHANGED?**

Turkmenistan is the most closed country in the territory of the former Soviet Union since obtaining the status of the independent state. Leaders of Turkmenistan have developed an ideological basis for the self-isolation, proclaiming neutrality from the first days of the republic's sovereignty, and the United Nations confirmed it in 1995. Turkmenistan – is a country outside any blocks, coalitions, alliances, without friends and enemies. All major friends and enemies are inside the country and are determined by their relation to the president.

Turkmenistan is the unique state, which combines the features of socialism, eastern khanate and a modern state with the resource potential.

The nomenclature, led by Saparmurat Niyazov, has established not an authoritarian regime, but a classic totalitarian dictatorship of a personal type, a unique one in the former Soviet space. This dictatorship is inferior only to the DPRK Juche regime in control over the society.

A comprehensive studying of the causes of these changes in the political system of Turkmenistan is extremely difficult due to the closed nature of the country. Experts believe, that replacement of the Soviet

totalitarianism on a specific Turkmen one has been caused by a number of factors. The almost complete lack of democratic traditions, the scarcity and isolation of social groups, where the beginnings of the civil society could have arisen – all this is the result of an archaic way of the Turkmen society. Saparmurat Niyazov and his circle managed to maintain and strengthen the dominant position in the state and society, suppressing all potential rivals from other regional and clan groupings due to the high degree of consolidation of the ruling elite and personal qualities of Niyazov.

Totalitarian ideology has provided the monopoly and control over the society, the search for and elimination of any dissent. There is a continuous brainwashing of the population for the sacralization of authorities and mobilization of the community for the fulfillment of the tasks, established by the supreme authority.

Creation of the democratic constitutional state has been declared the main goal immediately after gaining the independence in the early years of Niyazov, which corresponded to the spirit of the times. The concept of the “Turkmen model” has been oriented towards a gradual transition from the Soviet system to democracy, and the state had to play the first and leading role in this process. Ideology, based on the local context, proclaimed the thesis of national classless society of a new type, having no analogues in the contemporary world.

The process of identification of Saparmurat Niyazov's personality with the supreme authority has passed quickly enough. December 1991 – The law on the protection of honor and dignity of the President, October 1993 – awarding the title “Father of all Turkmen” – “Turkmenbashi”, January 1994 – a referendum to extend the powers of Turkmenbashi until 2002 and the abolition of the presidential elections in 1997, April 1994 – The introduction of the annual oath of loyalty to Turkmenbashi , December 1999 – The announcement

of Turkmenbashi as president for life. The cult of “Turkmenbashi” was materially embodied in the architectural and sculptural gigantism. It has also covered the president's family since the mid 1990. A number of organizational measures have been taken for the establishment of an absolute Saparmurat Niyazov's personality cult. In the early 1990s all the disgruntled officials were removed from their posts, all power structures were cleaned. Replacement of the heads of security agencies has been held annually. Threat to Saparmurat Niyazov's power was completely eliminated from this side.

The organization of power by clan affiliation in regions was a threat to “the ideological and political unity” of the Turkmen society. Saparmurat Niyazov began to appoint representatives of other clans to the regional power structures. A law was passed, that forbade collaboration of relatives or fellow countrymen belonging to the same tribe in the same state structure. Such a policy minimized the strengthening of regional elites.

The regime systematically destroyed environment of the national intelligentsia. The Academy of Sciences and the majority of departmental institutes were closed, almost all creative unions eliminated, massive cuts medical staff and teachers were carried out. All well-known writers, journalists, artists, architects, doctors, teachers were forced to leave the country. The rest were destined to serve the regime under the control of the ideologues of the Office of the President and the National Security Committee.

A few protest actions were stopped immediately. Public penances of dissenters were broadcast repeatedly on TV. Afterwards, any hint of opposition received an immediate response of the authorities – from the prohibition to leave the country and to the arrests, deprivation of property, dismissal relatives.

The transition to the Latin alphabet in 1995, and total de-Russification of the education system have resulted in a complete isolation of the young generation from the intellectual baggage of the USSR. Saparmurat Niyazov transferred schools in the 9-year education, higher education institutions – for 2-year-old in order to reduce the time and cost of training for the younger generation.

All media were unified, internet access was banned, broadcasting of foreign, primarily Russian, television channels were limited, foreign radio stations were silenced.

Religious policy is focused on obedience to the state. Sunni branch of Islam, professed by the absolute majority in Turkmenistan has never posed a threat to the authorities. However, Saparmurat Niyazov's personality cult was in need of a more robust ideological basis. Ethnic nationalism became its complementary components. The thesis of the exclusivity of the Turkmen people has become the main thing in the nationalist doctrine. Turkmenbashi himself was a historical researcher, writing “Rukhnama” – a monumental work, which began to study in schools and universities and in the media to quote. “Rukhnama” covers almost all aspects of life of the Turkmen people , and requires “correct” norms of behavior of the individual in all spheres of public and private life. Its concept is still religious in nature: some of its postulates have been borrowed from the Koran and are the basis for the approval of personal power of Turkmenbashi.

Huge revenues from gas exports allowed to provide Turkmen citizens with free gas, water, electricity and salt, encouraging them to adopt a new society. But it was a poor compensation for unemployment and low living standards, especially in rural areas.

The triumph of the cult of personality and nationalism put the non-titular mainly Russian-speaking population in a difficult position. In the very beginning, the Declaration of a state of law and national

equality inspired optimism in the national minorities. However, it turned out that the words of “one nation” meant general “Turkmenization” of the local society.

The sudden death of Turkmenbashi in 2006 and Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov's rise to power brought a modification of the regime and its ideology, but the Turkmen “thaw” was short-lived. The ruling elite staked on continuity in the state ideology for the sake of “peace in society” because it feared that any change would lead the country to ruin. Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov did not reconfigure the system of government. He spent the constant rotation in the upper echelons of power and the immediate environment, so that there were no groups, capable to arrange a coup.

Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov could not afford a sharp disassembly of the cult of Turkmenbashi in such conditions. It was necessary to create his own image, which would be different from the former leader in the favorable direction. The transformation took place in a strictly defined sequence: the image of the president-reformer, promising fundamental transformation, revered elders and ancestors, and denied the most grotesque features of the former regime at the same time, was introduced into the social consciousness .

Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov was sworn on the Koran and Rukhnama during the inauguration ceremony. The mention of Turkmenbashi as well as references to his teachings became the symbolic signal for the generation that grew up in the spirit of the ideology of the former president of Turkmenistan. The cult of “Rukhnama” was kept the first years of the new presidency, but the emphasis was placed on the book itself, but not on the personality of the former president. Since 2008, the regular reading of “Rukhnama” on television were stopped, its studying was the inclusion of the subject

“Social Studies” along with the works of Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov.

At the same time, the most odious ideological “innovations” of the first president were eliminated: the names of months, accepted throughout the world, were returned, the name of Turkmenbashi was replaced by the word “president” in the oath of loyalty, a 12-year course of study at the school and a 5-year in higher education were returned, the Academy of Sciences, opera, ballet, district hospitals were restored.

During 2007, Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov's ideologues worked on a new ideological doctrine, suggesting abandon a number of old dogmas and to strengthen the image of the new leader of the country. In January 2008, Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov gave a new ideological concept of “Epoch of the Great Revival.” The President has identified a gradual transition to market relations as the main instrument to achieve these goals.

Incumbent President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov received about 97% of the vote in the 2012 presidential election.

Until 2008, the ruling and the only political force was the Democratic Party, founded in 1991 by President Niyazov. President Berdymukhamedov has repeatedly pointed out the need to change the one-party system. Changes to the Constitution have been introduced, providing for the creation of new parties. In August 2012 the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs was established by direct recommendation of the President, and therefore it can not be called an opposition one.

Alternative Majlis elections were held in Turkmenistan in December 2013. The right to nominate candidates was received by trade unions of Turkmenistan, the Women's Union, Youth Organization named after Makhtumkuli and initiative groups of citizens, in addition to the two official parties. Foreign observers

from the European Union, the CIS and the OSCE recognized the elections as competitive, transparent, open and ensured the free expression of the will of citizens.

The presence of several political organizations does not guarantee the existence of freedom and pluralism in a country where the opposition has no influence, and new political organizations and institutions of government are under the strict government control. All real opposition organizations have long driven out of Turkmenistan, or its members are in prison. Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov is the fifth of the world's 23 worst dictators on the version of “the Foreign Policy.”

Nowadays, the replacement of Niyazov's personality cult by Berdymukhamedov's personality cult is one of the main objectives of the Turkmen ideologues. If the first president – Turkmenbashi Niyazov – considered the “father of the people”, the new president is officially called Arkadag – “Patron”. Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov writes books, like his predecessor – Niyazov. Attempts are made on canonization his family and ancestors. Portraits of the president in the frame of flowers and flags are placed everywhere. All citizens support and endorse the course of the president. They should think in this way and can not be different.

There is no independent media in Turkmenistan, all official reporters carefully select topics for articles, freelance correspondents of foreign publications are under supervision almost round the clock. The Turkmen society gets one-sided and embellished information for more than 20 years of existence of independent Turkmenistan.

The real socio-economic situation in Turkmenistan is poor. Lowering yields of grain, which causes a rise in prices for bread and leads to an increase in the cost of other products. Attempts of the authorities to streamline the implementation of the system of fuels and

lubricants have caused the opposite effect, and have provoked shortages and rising prices for food, fuel and consumer goods.

Social unemployment benefits are not paid practically as the Turkmen authorities have concealed the existence of this social phenomenon. The problems such as drug addiction, corruption, religious extremism are the basis for the concerns of the authorities as a threat to national security.

According to the UN Office for Drug Control, there are 400 drug addicts per 100 thousand population. The real figure is higher on order and it achieves almost 4000 people. There is no problems with finding drugs – border with Afghanistan is nearby. All kinds of drug trafficking routes are worked out through the whole country. Drug couriers cross the border of 800 km almost unhindered.

As for the problem of corruption, the organization “Transparency International” has put Turkmenistan onto 170 place out of 174 in its latest report.

Increased activity of various religious extremist organizations is another threat to the country. There are Islamist groups that have already begun underground work, as well as mass agitation among the population in Turkmenistan. However, according to experts, they will be a serious threat to the regime in 10–15 years – when the sufficient number of unemployed, and uneducated young people who easily fall under the influence of the latter-day spiritual mentors.

The political system of Turkmenistan is relatively stable due to the tribal division of society. The current head of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, is building the ethnocratic society. His policy is aimed to the elimination of all non-Turkmen diaspora in the country. Turkmen authorities see them as a “fifth column”. In addition, Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov has a policy of “tribal nationalism” and divides all Turkmens in the “clean” and “dirty”. This division

exacerbated the political situation in the country and caused a reduction in the economic performance.

Today, representatives of the Akhal-Teke clan stand on the top level of the national hierarchy. Tekke was the previous President Niyazov and ethnic Tekke is the current President Berdymukhamedov. Tekins control 3/4 top government posts and they are 90% of the security forces.

The growing discontent and distrust of the regime of Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov becomes clearly defined, although the Turkmen society is not ready to protest at the moment. These moods can acquire a mass character in the future, and the Turkmen opposition or other destructive forces will be able to use them to gain power in the country.

At the same time, the civil war in Tajikistan, the events in Kyrgyzstan, revolutions in the Middle East and Ukrainian coup will further strengthen the view of Turkmenistan leaders of the need to continue the isolationist policy.

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**EASTERN POLICY OF RUSSIA IN THE LATE 20 –
EARLY 21 CENTURIES**

Global bi-polar structure of international relations gave way to unipolar after the “Cold War” and the collapse of the USSR. The United

States, one of the two superpowers, that were the basis of this structure from 1945 to 1991, have retained their position and began to play a decisive role in the international arena. Russia has been forced to reckon with this factor. In addition, Russia is in a deep and protracted political and economic crisis.

Russian industrial economy has been almost completely destroyed by the beginning of the 1990s, unable to adapt to new, primarily financial and political, conditions of the reproduction. Russia's GDP was only \$330 billion in middle of the 1990s, which was two times less GNP of Canada and was comparable with the level of GDP of Hong Kong, Taiwan and Turkey.

Taking into account the above facts, Foreign Policy of Russia should have been planned in accordance with the limited financial and economic capabilities, based on a thorough analysis of global and regional international relations. According to the concept of James Rosenau, five factors play decisive role in shaping foreign policy: personality, status, government, society and international system.

The personal factor has always played an extremely important role in the foreign policy of the USSR (Russia). General Secretary of the CPSU, Gorbachev put forward the concept of the new thinking, the essence of which was that the Soviet Union renounced the confrontation with the United States. Up to the end of 1993 Moscow's foreign policy was characterized by the pro-Western orientation, which was due to expectations of assistance from the United States and its allies, and hopes for Russia's integration into the West political and economic structures. The personification of the pro-Western course in Moscow in those years was then Foreign Minister Kozyrev.

The Russian government has been focused exclusively on the West without taking into account Asia and Africa. However, it soon became apparent that the West is not going to take Russia as an equal in

their political, economic and military structures. Russia has not found allies in the West and lost old contacts in the East. Supporters of the pro-Western foreign policy, led by Kozyrev, lost their influence in the Kremlin finally .

In January 1996, Yevgeny Primakov, a prominent scientist-orientalist, academician, was appointed the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. He declined one-sided and the pro-Western foreign policy and made it more balanced. Primakov expressed his negative attitude to the plans of NATO expansion during a press conference on February 10, 1996 in Helsinki.

Some time later, in Moscow, he emphasized in an interview on March 6, 1996, that Russia's foreign policy was in a more active, effective protection of interests. He also noted that some power was going to dominate, referring to the United States. Russia would be neither enemy nor close ally of the West, and had to seek civilized partnership, based on equality, protecting its own interests .

These statements indicated the new emphasis in the foreign policy of Russia, about the intentions of the new minister to restore the international dignity of Russia. The United States' ambitions were to be the only force in the region that was capable, according to Brzezinski, “bear the burden of responsibility for stability and peace,” to become a new political reality in the Middle East at the turn of the XXI century. The evidence is not only numerous statements by official actors from Washington regarding the alleged “vital interests” of the US in the Middle East and, in particular, in the Persian Gulf, but also the permanent presence of the U.S. and NATO in the region, its transformation into “the U.S. military protected zone” after the U.S. and NATO war against Iraq in 1991, according to the same Brzezinski. Numerous opportunities and risks for Russia were opened in the Middle East after the end of the “cold war.” Moscow did everything possible,

seeking to expand its role in the region and has achieved some success in certain ways.

Thus, the process of normalization of relations between Russia and Israel was completed with the restoration of diplomatic relations in October 1991. They were suspended in 1967, and so it was a serious mistake of the Soviet leadership, because Israel losses were insignificant, and the Soviet Union interests suffered considerably, as the latter have been deprived of access to one of the parties to the Middle East conflict for many years. In addition, anti-Israeli course has resonated inside the Soviet Union quite noticeably, becoming one of the causes of mass emigration of Jews and making the Arab-Israeli problem in some degree of “internal problem” of the USSR.

Russia has its own geopolitical interests in the Middle East and found the determination to pursue a policy of returning to this important region and to build relations with these countries without any ideological layers in accordance with the realities of the modern world.

Callers and inconsiderate actions of the U.S. and NATO, aimed at establishing the world domination of Washington, put Russia in the face of challenges and threats in Europe, CIS and the Middle East. The events in Iraq (War of 1991 and 2003), Iran and Afghanistan (the invasion of NATO troops in 2001), the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 are examples. Russia has faced real threats, related to the spread of Islamic terrorism and extremism (two wars in Chechnya, terrorist attacks in Moscow, Beslan, etc.), with the problems of drug trafficking and refugees.

President Putin said in the interview with “Paris Match” in June 2000: “Today we are witnessing the creation of an extremist international along the so-called arc of instability stretching from the Philippines to Kosovo. That is very dangerous, especially for Europe, because it has a large Muslim population. ...the International Islamic

Front, has as its goal to create an Islamic Caliphate, an Islamic United States, to include several countries and some former Soviet republics in Central Asia which you have mentioned and parts of the modern territory of the Russian Federation. ...Russia is on the frontline in the fight against international terrorism. “The great danger lies in the possibility that external sponsors, such as Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, can actively promote and support the extremist Muslim forces in Russia.”

The Russian Federation policy in the Middle East has been greatly intensified after the appointment of Primakov as foreign minister. Primakov tried to assume the role of mediator between Israel, Lebanese militants and Syria, when the new Lebanese crisis erupted. He used it for strengthening relations of Russia and France with the Arab world, and though his mission has failed. Moscow believed, that Netanyahu braked the Madrid peace process to the point, when serious tensions between Israel and the Arabs and between Washington and Arabs appeared.

The West refused to consider Russia as a full participant in the Middle East peace process. This position remained a risk to maintain a high degree of regional tensions. The position of Russia enjoyed the support of Syria, Iraq and PLO leader Yasser Arafat. They feared that they would lose a reliable source to counter pressure from Washington and Jerusalem without Moscow's participation.

At the same time, Russia's policy in the Middle East irritated the West and Israel. Russian diplomacy has sought to maintain a balance, developing relations equally with the two polar forces of the Middle East – the Arab world and Israel. Russia has significant potential in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. It could contribute by becoming the co-chairs with the United States at the peace conference, and

participating in the multilateral negotiations, where the issues of disarmament, security, the environment in the region were discussed.

July 10, 2000, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov presented the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, which said that Russia would seek stabilization of the situation in the Middle East, including the Persian Gulf and North Africa, taking into account the impact of the situation in the region on the situation in the world. A priority for Russia in the context announced recovery and strengthening of the position, especially economic ones, in this rich and important area of the world 8.

Russia has clearly indicated its position during the war of the US and Britain against Iraq in 2003, joining France and Germany in the criticism of the aggressive policy of the US. Moscow hinted that it could veto in the UN, but it decided to avoid a sharp confrontation with the United States in reality. Therefore, when the March 20, 2003 the United States and Britain invaded Iraq without UN approval, Russian President Putin has officially criticized the invasion as a violation of international law and the UN Charter, but unofficially made it clear that Russia would not use the veto in the UN.

Special mention should be on the relations between Russia and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

One of the major projects of economic cooperation of Russia with the countries of Asia is the construction of a nuclear power plant in Bushehr (Iran) in accordance with the Russian-Iranian agreement dated August 25, 1992. In recent years, the Western press is full of reports that Iran has been creating nuclear bomb. This issue is discussed by the Russian and US diplomats in Moscow . Russia has requested documentary evidence, which the Americans were not able to present. IAEA inspectors checked the appropriate Iranian objects thoroughly, but also did not find any evidence. Iran fulfills its obligations in the

area of non-production and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Iranian issue is constantly discussed in the Russian-American dialogue. Russia cooperates with Iran in all areas, except relating to the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

U.S. follow the Iran's external relations carefully, expressing its displeasure over some Iranian contacts. Russia has no information on the existence of Iran's national program for the creation of these weapons. Iran denies the existence of such a program. It is a party to a treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is also open for IAEA inspection .

The main directions of trade and economic cooperation between Russia and Iran is energy, including nuclear power as well as oil and gas, chemical industry, transport.

In December 1991 the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was proclaimed. Many believed that the CIS was not a viable education initially. Unlike the EU, the CIS countries are in the vast Eurasian space, at different levels of socio-cultural development, have different cultures and values, and, particularly, different political regimes. Reasons for joining the CIS were all different, too.

However, the integration process began to gain momentum in the early 1990s, despite the existence of a large number of destabilizing factors. Summit of the CIS leaders was held in Bishkek on September 9, 1992. The meeting proved that active and productive search of ways to solve internal problems were not based on the confrontation, but on the balance of national interests of each one. The meeting in Bishkek demonstrated the increased goodwill and understanding when discussing complex controversial issues.

The future of the planet depends largely on the prevailing situation in Asia. The nuclear powers are situated in the neighborhood in this vast region, where two-thirds of the world's arsenals of conventional weapons are concentrated. From 10 to 12 million people are in the military. Half a million army of one superpower has appeared several times in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, the other superpower has introduced many thousands army to Mongolia and Afghanistan. This confrontation has led to the the creation of an extensive military infrastructure.

Despite promises of Washington, the latest war in Iraq has not made the world safer, has not helped to eliminate terrorism and to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In contrast, the Palestinian settlement grasped collapse, the war on terrorism was unsuccessful. According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, terrorist groups are now more than 3 years ago in the world.

The Pentagon released a report that Russian intelligence allegedly passed on information about Hussein US troop movements during the operation “Shock and Awe” in March 2003.

Russia's position on Iran and the invitation of Hamas leaders to Moscow exposed to extremely sharp criticism in Washington. The Israeli leadership has acceded to this criticism.

Common Interests as the Basis of Russian-Islamic Convergence

The beginning of the present stage of strengthening Russia's relations with the Muslim countries is associated with a ten-day visit of the President of Russia in the countries of South East and Central Asia in August 2003, and Putin's subsequent participation in the session of the organization “Islamic Conference” in Malaysia in October of the same year. Cooperation of Russia with the Muslim countries is

motivated by common goals of global and regional issues, as well as the interest of each party in mutual support and partnership in dealing with their own foreign and domestic tasks. The fight against terrorism and the dialogue between civilizations are allocated among other important issues at the global level for Russia and member countries of OIC. The threat of terrorism is relevant for Russia, and for the Muslim countries themselves, which have become the scene of bloody terrorist attacks. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Russian President Vladimir Putin initiated political and economic return of Russia to the Middle East. As a result, comprehensive arms markets in Algeria, Syria, Iran have been opened. Moreover, a large proportion of the interest comes from the energy companies (Gazprom, Lukoil, Rosneft), which were also aimed at expanding operations in the Middle East closely with the state and its support. Moreover, tough competition of large TNCs have been carried for access to energy resources in the region. Putin's Middle East policy during his second term should be considered successful as a whole.

The main directions of the Middle East policy of Russia in the first decade of the twenty-first century are:

1. Increasing cooperation in the military-technical sphere.
2. Emphasis on protecting the interests of Russian companies (primarily fuel and energy market of the Middle East).
3. Strengthening of its economic and cultural presence in Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt.

Moscow policy in the Greater Middle East moves from strategy to tactics. It returns to the region in the political, economic and humanitarian sense. At the same time, Russia does not play quite an active role in the Mideast peace process, despite the rich historical experience with the countries of the Middle East. The U.S. and the EU play a key mediating role in the Middle East so far, and the process

of Israeli-Palestinian peace dialogue has been deadlocked. At the present time any foreign policy strategy should include public diplomacy, that becomes an integral part of the implementation of the long-term foreign policy. Ways of formation of Russian public diplomacy strategy have to become the subject of extensive discussions with experts, analytical centers, representatives of business, non-governmental organizations, the mass information.

The support and confidence of the Arab-Muslim region are extremely important because of its enormous influence, exerted on Russian Muslims. Religious radicalism and separatism in the Caucasus are sponsored by organizations, operating in the territory of a number of states in the Middle East. Now the problem of Wahhabism has become urgent in the Volga region.

Culture could become one of the most effective tools of the Russian public diplomacy in the Middle East. Russia should expand image policy by investing in long-term educational and cultural programs. The youth has grown over the last 20 years in the Middle East, which is focused more on the Western countries, rather than Russia. It is necessary to expand the system of scholarships and student exchange programs, available to everyone.

This approach should first be applied to Syria, because it is the only country in the region that has remained truly allied relations with Russia so far. The continued success of promoting a positive image of our country in the Middle East will depend on how Russia is perceived in Syria.

Thus, there is the almost complete absence of the mechanisms of public diplomacy, and Russia is greatly inferior to the influence of European countries as well as China in this sphere, which will inevitably lead to a weakening of its positions in all other spheres. In this regard, the need arises in developing a strategy of public

diplomacy, which should be based on the historical component of the relations and cooperation in the military-technical sphere.

* * *

The Central Asian countries are crucial for Russia, which is determined by the following factors:

- The presence of significant reserves of natural resources in their territory.
- Reasons of national security, because it is from the south come the main threat to Russia.

The priority partner of Russia in Central Asia is exactly Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan was the first CIS country, concluded with Russia Treaty on “Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance” in May 1992. Kazakhstan and Russia are the guarantors of stability in the Central Asian region, interact actively in the political sphere, adhering to the international agenda on key issues and applying great efforts for the revitalization of regional organizations such as CIS, SCO and CSTO.

Law enforcement agencies and security services of Russia and Kazakhstan are successfully cooperating with each other in the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking. Russia is the main partner in foreign trade of Kazakhstan and can not do without natural resources of Kazakhstan. Both countries are closely related to defense industry. Finally, the share of Russian-speaking population in Kazakhstan is still great.

Relations between Russia and Uzbekistan undergo periods of cooling and warming. This is due to the absence of a common border that allows Uzbekistan to pursue a policy of balancing between the West and Russia. The main task of Russia is to engage Uzbekistan

in joint trade and economic, military, scientific and technical projects in order to eliminate “Western aspirations” of Tashkent.

Military and political cooperation between Russia, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan has a high degree of development. Russian military base are located in the territory of two Central Asian republics.

Tajikistan is still the southern outpost of Russia in the CIS. It is important for Russia in the fight against the proliferation of radical Islam and eliminating the supply of drugs from Afghanistan, and Tajikistan needs economic assistance and political support of Russia on the world stage. But recently Tajikistan started to move closer to Iran, which worsened relations with Russia. Moscow should actively involve the Central Asian republic into the SCO, CSTO and CIS, as well as to deepen bilateral cooperation in the economic sphere, in order to prevent output of Tajikistan from the orbit of Russian influence .

It is important to strengthen Russia's military presence in Kyrgyzstan. Agreements have been reached on the establishment of mobile military units within the CSTO to respond quickly to potential threats, and that is very important in the strategic plan. Russian-Kyrgyz relations complicate internal political conflicts also resulting from the “Tulip Revolution”, which broken out with the filing of the West. In addition, Russia is concerned about the activities of extremist group “Hizb ut-Tahrir”, seeking to seize power in Kyrgyzstan. Thus, Russia can maintain close ties with Kyrgyzstan only by rendering the economic and political support, as well as through joint confronting the threat posed by radical Islamic groups.

The most complex relationships in the region have been established between Russia and Turkmenistan. During the presidency of Saparmurat Niyazov, the country has shown little interest in a strong partnership with Russia. The situation changed when Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov came to power, but not much. Ashgabat is

a competitor of Moscow in the natural gas market, and the fight for access to Turkmen gas (unfolded between the West (“Nabucco”) and Russia (Caspian gas pipeline)) follows from the situation. Russia can achieve a thaw in relations with Turkmenistan and decrease the chances of success of the West, if it will make concessions in the issue of gas prices.

There are problems that insufficient attention is paid to the Central Asian direction. The most important task for Russia is to develop effective cooperative security in the region in view of its national interests, as well as the development of general scientific and theoretical basis of national security and docking of the regional system with the corresponding systems of neighboring countries. Strengthening security without considering the interests of neighbors can lead to instability and mutual distrust.

The internal processes of renewal of the political elites in the republics of Central Asia require special attention. While Russia has opportunities to support pro-Russian sentiments in the elite areas of public and political life of the countries of Central Asia. Until recently, the Central Asian leaders felt their close to Moscow in personal contacts, cultural, historical, political, geopolitical and economic ties.

But now a new generation of politicians is growing, new elites are formed in the Central Asia, which are not connected with the historical memory of the former Soviet space. The Russian language is losing its importance. Therefore it is extremely important for Russia not only to maintain the presence of the business, but also increase cultural expansion in the region.

In recent years, bilateral cooperation is limited to inter-state relations in the raw material orientation, despite the obvious intensification of Russian-Central Asian cooperation in the oil and gas sector. The prevalence of narrowly focused interests of Russia and

several Central Asian countries prevents the establishment of mutually beneficial multilateral cooperation.

At the same time, countries in the region seek to reduce its dependence on Russia for export of hydrocarbons and look for alternative ways to transport oil and gas to the world market. At this time, heads of Central Asian regimes, and consequently their countries have attempted to consolidate their efforts in the framework of regional projects with Russia, and under her leadership, in spite of the sharp disagreements and contradictions, and in some cases even personal dislike for each other.

“Arab Spring” and the Position of Russia

Obviously, the “Arab Spring” has significant implications for all humankind. Hence, the current boom of interest in these events. A historian – orientalist shall answer five questions: what, where, when, how and why? The main one is the question “why?”. Answer to that question turns any historical work in an analytical study.

So the first question is: what are the reasons of the revolutionary events in the Arab world? There are three points of view on this issue.

The first point of view for explaining this situation is a conspiracy theory. Of course, it is absolutely unsuitable for explaining the “Arab Spring.” The second one is that the socio-economic factors underlie the Arab revolutions. A third view is that the current Arab Spring is the development of Islamist movements, the continuation of the Islamic revolution in Iran, events in Algeria in the 1990s of the last century, the victory of Hamas in the Palestinian elections. Supporters of this view argue that the entire Middle East region will follow the path of Iran.

Probably all three of these factors are not paramount, but secondary importance. The demographic factor is crucial. The

peculiarity of the Arab countries is that the majority of their population (unlike Europe) are young people.

Previously, the class structures, political parties, armies, clergy of those countries were purpose of studying, but the most important factor – the generational structure of the population – has been overlooked. There is the fourth power, which organize themselves neither in batches, nor in mosques but on the Internet – it is the educated youth. The special services monitored the situation in parties and mosques, while young people have been communicating with each other through “Facebook” and “Twitter”.

Of course, the socio-economic factors have played a huge role. A great many unresolved social problems have accumulated: a huge unemployment, poverty, disease and huge class differentiation and polarization of society.

In Libya, unemployed is 30% of the working population, although the average annual income per capita exceeds \$ 13 thousand. In Algeria, the unemployment rate is 12% on average, but there are areas where it is higher, especially among young people (50%) that provokes emigration among young people, including illegal, in the EU countries.

Cairo is incredibly overpopulated. The housing stock is designed for 3 million people only, and its population has exceeded 8 million. Housing is expensive, and its price is increasing continuously. Many homeless people spend the night right on the sidewalks, especially a lot of people are placed near the mosque. Hundreds of thousands of Egyptians have left for other Arab countries in search of work for their families, despairing to find a job at home.

In Lebanon, it is incredibly difficult to get a job, especially for people of intellectual professions. It is necessary to pass a special exam to get a good place. Therefore, multimillion Lebanese diaspora lives in

other countries. As for Syria, there is a popular joke that a young person gets two diplomas after graduation: an expert and an unemployed. At the same time, unemployment benefits are not available.

Totalitarian eastern rulers believe that population is a consumable item, which is worthless. Constant high praises and flattery convince these totalitarian rulers in their own genius and uniqueness that can sublimate into despotism and sadism. Khomeini sent thousands of almost unarmed men into battle during the Iran-Iraq war.

Violence contains a significant moment of self-affirmation. A sadistic act of violence corresponds to the communication needs of a normal person. Violence on citizens is the only way to prove his power to himself. Muammar Gaddafi was the ruler of this type .

The dictators are in power for 30-40 years, and it is practically impossible to replace them, which causes outrage among the educated part of Arab society. There is no mechanism for peaceful and legitimate transfer of power to new political forces in the region, that correspond to modern realities. The structure of Arab societies has nothing in common with the European way of life, but this fact is overlooked in the Russian and Western publications. The principle of family and clan forms a powerful regional structures that play a huge role in the political and economic life. Thus, the concept of balance of the state and society (which implies the principle of protection of the rights of the individual, and which is traditional for western philosophy) works completely differently in the Arab world, where the supreme power provides a balance of power between the powerful clans and tribes. Religious conflicts between different directions of Islam have almost the same intensity in the modern Middle East, which had been in Europe during the religious wars.

The United States decided to intervene in the events in Libya. The UN Security Council authorized the Western countries to carry out

a number of air military operations over Libya, according to a resolution adopted in 1973. the West military intervention was legal and necessary because there are situations that require intervention. Pol Pot killed third of the population in Cambodia. If Vietnam had not intervened, Pol Pot would have killed another third. Idi Amin gave people to be eaten by crocodiles and did other crimes in Uganda. If Tanzania had not intervened, he would have continued to do so. Tutsis and Hutus slaughtered each other in Rwanda. As there was no intervention, then 1.5 million people have been hammered with hoes. Saakashvili shelled Tskhinvali. If Russia had not intervened, he would have forced thousands of Ossetians through the Roki Tunnel in North Ossetia.

However, France, Britain and their allies, causing air strikes against the regular army and air defenses in Libya, have put themselves in a quandary. The ground operation on Libyan territory were prohibited under UN Security Council resolutions. Only the air strikes were ineffective. Russia's position on the Libyan issue has caused bewilderment. Once the European Union has recognized the power of Gaddafi as illegitimate, it became clear that his power would fall sooner or later. It would be advantageous for Russia to take an active part in aiding the rebels. Instead, on the one hand, Russia has blocked a Western military operation, and on the other – immediately criticized it.

President Putin called the UN Security Council resolution “defective and flawed”, adopted at the non-resistance of Russia and China, and allies military operation compared with the crusade.

Moscow called on all States to comply strictly the requirements of UN Security Council resolutions 1970 and 1973, and to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Libya. Experts predict that Russia is likely to lose contracts both on the development of gas fields and the construction of infrastructure, due to the change of power in Libya.

Sharp differences have emerged between Russia and the West over the conflict in Syria as well. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov accused Western powers, supported the strengthening of pressure on the regime of B. Assad, in carrying out destructive policy, that undermines the process of national reconciliation.

The fire of the civil war have been raging in Syria since the spring of 2011 and until today. The cruel actions of Assad's regime in suppressing the uprising have led to internationalization of the conflict. Russia and China took a tough stance against the possibility of foreign intervention in Syria from the beginning. In 2012, Moscow and Beijing used the right of veto in the UN Security Council twice. Russia opposes sanctions. Moscow's offer to remove from Syria and to destroy all chemical weapons stockpiles, backed by the international community, became a significant step forward in resolving the crisis. Russia's position on Libya and its sharply polar approach to Syria reflect a lack of system in Russia's policy in the Middle East. While the Western powers' coalition bombing Libya, the internal conflicts have been intensified in other countries of the Middle East, the situation has been aggravated in Syria and Yemen.

The riots took away thousands of casualties among the protesters in these countries. In Bahrain, the Saudi army troops helped quell the opposition. The authorities of Algeria, Morocco and Jordan have taken into account the lessons of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, and quickly began negotiations with the opposition, the monarchs of the Gulf states promise new workplaces and social reforms.

However aggravation of the situation in Syria and Yemen, the entry of Saudi troops in Bahrain demonstrate a new dangerous trend in Muslim countries – the aggravation of strife within Islam. Longtime contradictions exist between Sunnis (who make up 90% of Muslims) and Shiites (remaining 10%). Sunnis dominated in North Africa, the

Arabian Peninsula and Turkey, Shiites – Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Yemen, Bahrain.

The most unpleasant scenario will be for the West if the destabilization spill over from Yemen to neighboring oil monarchies and the eastern province of Saudi Arabia, where many Shiites live, and it will cause a new round of aggravation in Lebanon. Now the contradictions within Islam are useful for Iran, because it can give the anti-European and anti-American direction for Shiite protests. This position of Tehran is easily explained: while the West is engaged in Libya, it is not engaged in Iran.

Algerian scenario could be repeated in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Syria. Arab revolutions may have been provoked by the Sunni monarchies of the Persian Gulf and led to the strengthening of the Islamic factor in the Middle East. Islamist parties banned under previous regimes in Egypt and in the post-revolution countries of Middle East are the most organized political force.

Certainly, there are grounds for fearing that the new situation created by the revolution in the Arab countries, can be used by Islamists to rearrange their forces and to seize power later. As a result, the radicalization of the population, chaos, economic recession, jump in oil prices, uncontrolled wave of migration will be expected in these countries. Euphoria prevails in the Western media today. The overwhelming majority of experts in the West prefer to ignore the fact that fighters against dictators may seek not for democracy, but only to the government, and the establishment of an Islamic forms of state system a la Iran.

Ignorant crowds are carriers of repression out of revenge. They paid little attention to the dignity of other social strata and groups that make up the actual majority in aggregate, as they were convinced groundlessly that they are the majority in society. Tyranny of the

leaders, who came to power as a result of the uprising, is perceived by the masses as the necessity to suppress their “oppressors”. Reaction of the Soviet people on the repression of the Stalin era can be an example.

Those leaders who came to power after the victory of the uprising, are not professionals. They see people as a unity, and do not realize or do not wish to take into account the different layers and groups whose desires and interests are often inconsistent.

In summary, only three scenarios are possible in the post-revolutionary Middle East, in fact.

The first scenario is the least likely. Arab liberals come to power for a long time, and build a democratic society.

The second scenario is more likely. Pseudo-democrats will come to power, will spend some reforms and will mimic the Democrats, under pressure from the West, building a pseudo democratic regimes.

Finally, the third scenario is the most likely: Islamic extremists will take advantage of the situation in the region, will hold a large-scale recruitment of supporters and try to impose Islamic regimes everywhere. Chaos and civil war of Algeria and the Somali patterns are inevitable in this scenario.

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