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information in Social Sciences  
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**G. Stankevich,**  
political scientist  
**POLITICAL ISLAM**  
**AND CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA**

The common world trends of Islam politicization to a large extent were displayed in contemporary Russian society. It is necessary to discuss the issue of Muslim population in the Russian Federation to comprehend them in detail. There are no exact numbers of Muslims living on the territory of the RF. All researchers, sociologists, demographers and historians, who study the problems of dissemination of Islam in Russia, agree with this conclusion. There exist different appraisals of it. According to the official population census in 1998, twelve million Muslims lived in Russia (the data of the all-Russian population census of 2001 were not made public). According to census of 2002, the number of Muslims accounted for 14.5 million people (leaving aside legal and illegal migration).

The total number of people professing Islam on the territory of contemporary Russia makes not less than 20 million people, thinks expert Yu.M. Kabishanov. V.V. Putin mentioned this number of Muslims. According to well-known scientist A.V. Malashenko, the number of Muslims in Russia exceeded 15 million people in 1997 and increased to 18 million people by 2007. The share of Orthodox and

Muslim believers in Russia was changing to the benefit of the latter constantly: it was 16:1 in 1926, while it became 10:1 in 1999.

Islam has restored its position lost for the Soviet power years. This process is named as “Islamic renaissance”. The rise of the number of mosques is an indirect evidence of the number of Muslims.

By October 1917, thirty thousand mosques functioned on the territory of the Russian Empire. About 12 thousand mosques were closed and demolished, 87% of mukhtasibats were liquidated and up to 90% of mullahs were deprived of a chance of public worship. The Islamic spiritual elite (from 20 to 50 thousand people) was liquidated for the years of the terror of Stalin regime.

In the RSFSR remained only 416 officially registered mosques in 1948, and the number of mosques was reduced to 311 by 1968. However, thousands mosques and mullahs functioned without registration, and the authorities closed their yes to it. For instance, in 1980, according to G. Mikhailov, the head of the department of the Council of Ministers of the RF for relations with religious organizations, 335 imams and mullahs had official permit for divine service on the territory of RSFSR, while 1245 imams and mullahs were engaged in unregistered worship. In 1997, there were 3.5 thousand mosques in Russia, according to mufti S.M. Abubakarov, while over 5 thousand mosques functioned by the end of 1994, notes expert in the Caucasus V. Bobrovnikov.

By 1 January 1991, in Russia there were registered 870 mosques, in 1995 – five thousand mosques, while in 2000 – over seven thousand mosques. According to the Ministry of Justice of the RF, by 1 January 2000 out of 17 427 registered religious organizations the number of Muslim organizations accounted for 3098 (18% comparing with 14% in 1990), including 51 religious Muslim center, 2933 parishes and communities, 114 education institutions. Over 800 people were

students in higher and high Muslim education institutions in Arabic countries (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Qatar, Turkey and others).

Leaving aside the North Caucasus, the most mosques function in Tatarstan – over 700 (by the beginning of 1997) and in Bashkortostan – about 490. And further: Orenburgskaya region – 75 mosques and religious associations, Ulyanovskaya region – 50, Samarskaya – 41, Sverdlovskaya – 38, Chelyabinskaya – 36, Nijegorodskaya, Penzenskaya and Tyumenskaya – 35 each, Permskaya – 33.

Islam has been spread in the North Caucasus, in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Udmurtia, Chuvashia and Republic Marij El, Siberia, in Ulyanovsk, Samara, Astrakhan, Perm, Nizhni Novgorod, Ekaterinburg regions, in the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg.

In general, they speak about two Muslim areas – Tatar-Bashkir and North Caucasian areas. The Tatars – the biggest Muslim ethnus (5.5 million people) live in compact settlements in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan as well as in some regions of the Volga Basin, South Ural and Siberia. The Chechens represent the most numerous Muslim people in the North Caucasus. According to the unofficial data, they number 1.3 million people, including 800 thousand people in Chechnya itself. The total number of Muslims in the North Caucasian region makes about 6 million people.

The Muslims in Russia represent a poly-ethnic and multi-cultural conglomerate (38 indigenous peoples of Russia professing Islam). Each of two big areas, according to A. Malashenko, has its own traditions, history and is marked by different relations with the central power. The peak of crisis relations of Tatars with the central power took place for the XVI–XVIII centuries, while the Caucasian peoples keep in their memory the wars of the XIX, XX and even XXI centuries.

The North Caucasus sticks to its traditions to the greatest extent comparing with any region in the European part of Russia. Islam enjoys

greater influence in its eastern part – Dagestan, Ingushetia and Chechnya, while the western part is marked by lesser influence of Islam.

There exist in Russia two relatively weakly connected Muslim communities. The renaissance of Islam in Russia, publicized in numerous printed sources, is not a process, specific exactly for Islam. All confessions represented in Russia went through the religious boom since the end of the 1980s-the beginning of the 1990s. The problem of personal self-identification of most citizens of Russia was caused by the crisis of the Soviet society resulted in disintegration of the Soviet Union and destabilization of all spheres of social life. The search for new world outlook orientations pre-supposed as one of the alternatives also the religious response to the fixed questions. The collapse of the foundations of the Soviet society and formation of a new society without definite ideological orientations allowed religion to become one of the factors having impact on the political processes going on in contemporary Russia.

The deeply rooted Islamic tradition in the common occurrence of Muslim peoples was one of the factors promoting Islam coming to the political arena of contemporary Russia. T.S. Saidbayev, a prominent expert in Islam, made the following remark: “Owing to objective reasons the Islamic religious influence was definitely stronger than in other regions of the country. Besides, in terms of social psychology there was consolidated an image of Islam as “an ever-lasting attribute” of national life, as a keeper of national values...Inobservance of religious rites... is perceived as an apostasy from behests of ancestors, the disrespect of the nation and its culture”.

The specific realization by Islam of its regulative function is one of the reasons of penetration of Islam in public consciousness of Muslim peoples. Unlike other religions, Islam is based not only on

moral directions. Shariat is the most important component of Islam in social sphere. At the same time, thanks to the greatest development of “civil-legal” part of shariat (family and succession law) the ancient practice of its usage in Muslim communities resulted in extraordinary fixation of Islamic ideas in every day and family tradition, which determines primary socialization of the individual. The justice of the key daily norms determining the foundations of the family and the kin is proved for Muslims by social life itself.

The situation in Russia for the 1990s can not help influencing self-identification of Muslims by religious reason (at certain stage promoted by the following factors: the crisis of civil self-identification after disintegration of the Soviet Union; the acute economic crisis, connected in public consciousness with indoctrination of pro-western liberal models of social development; the general rise of the role of Islam in international policy, proved by economic well-being of a number of Islamic countries as well as by “successes” of radical Muslim organizations in the struggle against the West).

At the same time, for the beginning of the 1990s the state itself stimulated the rise of confessional activities. Following adoption of some new laws on freedom of conscious many confessional associations intensified their activities. The first legislative act in this field became the law of the USSR in 1990 “On Freedom of Conscious and Religious Organizations”. On 25 October 1990 the law “On Freedom of Religion” was adopted in RSFSR. In 1993 the Russian Constitution in its article 28 proclaimed the principle of conscience and religion.

For instance, the changes in the state and political order of the country essentially influenced the sphere of state-confessional relations and the legal bases of activities of religious organizations in Dagestan. The law “On Freedom of Conscious and Religious Organizations”

adopted on 5 May 1991 by the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Dagestan played a decisive role in liberation of religion from “state dictate”.

The unjustified restrictions for cultural activities of religious organizations were repealed, the procedure of registration of religious organizations was simplified, and the religious organizations received the right of legal entity and the right for missionary and charitable activities. For a short time, the law allowed to re-create the former extended religious infrastructure, to involve religious organizations in public-political life of the republic. By 1 July 1995, in Dagestan there were 1270 mosques (comparing with 27 mosques in 1986), including over 850 registered ones. In December 1997, the Peoples Assembly of the RD adopted the law “On Freedom of Conscience, Religion and Religious Organizations”, which fixed democratic rights and freedoms of citizens of Dagestan in this field; this law further promoted creation of legal, ideological and public conditions for normal activities of religious, including Muslim, organizations in the republic. The religious organizations played a great role in life of Dagestan’s society. Representatives of various confessions started to make public statements on urgent issues of social-economic life in the republic both in the parliament and in mass media. Since the end of the 1980s, many religious organizations made a rather valuable contribution to the process of consolidation of civil peace in Dagestan, participated in charitable actions, took part in various conferences and initiated proposals supported by society. The religious situation in the RD, i.e. existence, characteristic and intensity of religious activities, dynamics and direction of their changes are determined by the factors of poly-ethnicity, poly-religiousness, poly-confessional and poly-cultural situation in society of Dagestan.

For the last 15 years, the rapid process of religious renaissance, particularly of Islam, took place, and the religious situation was changed in terms of its quantity and quality appraisal. For the period of 1986, the Spiritual Department of Muslims of the North Caucasus, 27 mosques, 5 Orthodox churches, 4 synagogues, 2 evangelist Christian societies, one society of Seventh-day Adventists and a Sufi brotherhood functioned in Dagestan.

According to the data of the Committee of the Government of the Republic of Dagestan for Religious Affairs on 1 March 2003, the following religious organizations carried out their activities in the RD: the Spiritual Department of Muslims of Dagestan, 1638 mosques (the rise of their numbers since 1986 made up 60 times!), 16 Islamic higher education institutions with 49 branches, 131 medreces, 327 maktabs with the total number of 15 630 students, including – 4200 students (26.87%) in maktabs, 5700 students (36.47%) in medreces, 5730 students (36.66%) – in higher education institutions, over 30000 Sufi of Nakshbandi, Shazili and Kadiri tarikats and 18 Muslim foundations. Over 95000 residents of Dagestan made hadj and umra, while about 1200 people were students in foreign Muslim education institutions. The representatives of religious-political trend of Islam – wahhabism carried out their underground activities.

The official roster of Principal Department of the Federal Registration Service contains 657 religious organizations, including 634 Islamic organizations, 8 Orthodox organizations, 1 Catholic organization, 5 Judaic organizations, 1 Armenian-Apostolic organization etc.

Dagestan was always considered to be a complicate republic in terms of its ethnic-confessional structure, since representatives of almost all religious confessions live and carry out their activities in the republic: Muslim, Christian, Judaic. Just influence of the confessional

factor on public consciousness and, consequently, on political culture conditioned emergence in Dagestan of parties and movements of different religious-political orientations. Since the end of the 1980s, the process of the ethnic and religious, mainly Islamic, identification of people took place in Dagestan.

The process of perception by Muslims of their religious identity demanded its fixing in the political and other spheres. Politicization of Islam was going on at different levels and in various forms. On the one side, the attempts were made to incorporate Islam into the political macro-system by means of creation of Muslim public-political organizations as a kind of attempt to form a new “official Islam”, on the other side, there was going on the spontaneous politicization, including radicalization, of Islam within small social groups.

The following general trends characterize the contemporary religious situation in the Republic of Dagestan: the constant rigid competition among religious organizations and associations in the struggle for influence on the population and for extension of their parishes; the religious organizations and associations freely and without any control on the part of the state organs fulfill their functions in their milieu and in society, freely propagate their religion; the level of public prestige and of actual role of religion and its organizations in public republican processes has been raised; actually the reserve for the rapid further rise of the level of religiousness of the population in Dagestan has been exhausted to match its rise for the 1990s, while the tempos of growth of religious communities of most confessions, except Protestants (Fifties, Jehovah’s Witnesses), were stabilized. The specific religious situation in the RD is characterized by the rapid rise of politicization of Islam, use of its authority and moral force for political aims, *inter alia*, by religious-political extremists. As far back, as in 1914, well-known expert in Islam academician V.V. Bartold stressed

that religious slogans were used mainly only as a means for achievement of quite definite political aims.

In the beginning of the 1990s, the so-called religious-political organizations appeared on the territory of post-Soviet Russia for the first time in Dagestan. In the past time, religion sometimes was used for political aims, and it is worth recalling the cooperation for the 1920s between the Socialist group of Dagestan and popular sheikh Ali-Gadji Akushinsky. In October 1990 brothers Ilyas and Bagauddin Kebedov founded the Islamic Party of Renaissance of Dagestan, which proclaimed the return to genuine Islam meaning eradication of display of people's religiousness – worship to saints-sheikhs, the implicit obedience of murids to the will of Sufi preceptor, the actually excessive expenses on certain rites – circumcision, wedding etc., mechanical memorization of Koran texts without comprehension of the sense. In the perspective, the IPR aims at creation in Dagestan of the Muslim state.

In the same year a group of intellectuals headed by Abdurashid Saidov founded the Islamic Party of Dagestan (IPD); its ideology combined Islamic renaissance in the republic with the ideal of creating a democratic society in Dagestan. The party supported the idea of close cooperation between the believers and the secular intellectuals.

In the religious sphere IPD cooperated with the traditional clergy criticizing wahhabism and expressing sympathy with people's traditions in Islam. For the period of 1991-1994, the party repeatedly criticized the ruling republican nomenclature. In 1993, the tension emerged between Saidov and the traditionalists, who expressed loyalty to the ruling regime.

The second extraordinary congress of the party, held in January 1994, elected Surakat Asiyatilov (at present, the chairman of a committee of the People's Assembly of the RD) to the post of the

leader of the party. The party adopted the course to uniting all Muslims of the republic based on humane principles irrespective of nationality. Seven years later, the Islamic Party of Russia (IPR), headed by M. Radjabov, a businessman of Dagestan, was established. Many residents of Dagestan joined the party.

The authorities were concerned about creation of IPR due to its political direction, secular slogans and involvement of Muslims of the Russian Federation and Dagestan in the sphere of interests and actions of public-political formations.

On the eve of elections to the State Duma in 2003 actually all parties and movements possessed programs and positions in the field of state-confessional relations; therefore due to rigid rivalry the loss of IPR at the elections was pre-determined. In the republic itself the activities of adepts of IPR directed to politicization of Muslim umma were disliked by the official clergy in Dagestan, despite the appeals of IPR to correlate religious and secular laws in order to achieve peace and consent in society.

The examples of activities of the republican religious-political organizations show the difficulties in the process of adaptation of traditional notions and institutions to the contemporary social, political and economic development of Dagestan.

The description of the most significant public-political phenomenon in the North Caucasus, which by right may be considered Islam (“Islamic factor”), shows primarily the process of its self-realization, i.e. the forces and actions being the incarnation of this factor in dynamic of the shaping political process. It seems reasonable first of all to determine the characteristic of the group affiliation in the North Caucasus, which makes it possible to form local group aggregations as the initial subjects of political relations.

According to authoritative expert A. Malashenko, Islam in the North Caucasus is one of the main factors shaping local identity and having impact on the world outlook of an individual and the ethnic society. Recognizing the cultural variety of ethnoses in the North Caucasus, one should take into account their common ethnicity, the complicated mixture of mentality and culture, which not only characterizes any people but also unites them and distinguishes from all other communities. The recognition of this common ethnicity allows us to discuss the North-Caucasian identity and general influence of Islam on it.

From the beginning, Islamic identity was marked by reciprocal action and “rivalry” with ethnic identity, and this rivalry did not reveal the winner. For the Soviet times, the power perceived both identities as a unique entity, which sometimes was reduced to identification of ethnic, language or simply Soviet traditions with Islamic traditions. However, since the 1970s in the North Caucasus many unavailing efforts were taken to separate popular traditions from religious rites and even to set off against each other. And the attempts to replace these rites by artificially created Soviet rites failed as well.

Although the Soviet power was opposing official Islam in terms of registered mosques and imams, as well as destruction of religious sphere of life, it is not correct to compare it with the events concerning Orthodoxy. As R. Gainutdin mentioned, Islam does not demand existence of a mosque, and any educated Muslim may become imam. The priest and in certain cases the bishop is needed for worship by all means, and the Christian sacrament may be performed only in the church. Therefore for Muslims the closed mosques and arrested imams meant the need to organize an underground mosque, while for Orthodox believers liquidation of the church and the arrest of the priest

(and especially – of the bishop, since only the bishop may assign new priests) was a religious catastrophe.

The authorities did not close unofficial mosques, while at the local level they allocated premises for them or paid salaries to Muslim clergymen. On the one side, this fact was explained, as marked R. Gainutdin, by the decision of the CPSU and the Soviet state, which correctly appraised the religious level of Muslims and the attitude of the population to Islam and did not dare to take steps, which might cause open dissatisfaction of Muslims due to the actions of the authorities. On the other side, this explanation seems to be not sufficient. For instance, the Soviet state decided to start collectivization despite discontent and periodic mutinies of peasants. It is evident that not only the fear of “Islamic response” did keep the authorities from liquidation of unofficial Islamic structures.

The influence of Islam on formation of identity of the North-Caucasian society increased essentially for the 1990s. It was mostly characteristic for Chechens, Ingushis, ethnoses of Dagestan as well as for Karachais and Balkars. For various expert appraisals, the number of those, who considered themselves as believers for the initial post-Soviet period in Dagestan, varied from 81% to 95%. The index of religiousness in 1995 made 97% of Chechens, 95% – of Ingushis and 88% – of Karachais. At the same time, the ethnic identity did not lose its significance, which was reflected in its close connection with religious identity: “the Chechen is primarily a Chechen-Muslim, since the Chechen identity at present is inconceivable outside the context of Islamic tradition. This consideration is correct for other ethnoses in the North Caucasus”, concludes A. Malashenko.

At present, the renaissance in the North Caucasus of traditional social institutions demonstrates inclination of the North-Caucasian structures for the past. All restoring custom, traditions, festivities

usually are marked by their religious character determined by the synthesis of Orthodoxy or Islam with the local beliefs. However, against this background Islam stands out at least for its greater social and political engagement.

Most researchers note that actually from the beginning of religious renaissance, started just before disintegration of the Soviet Union and collapse of the Communist ideology, Islam became not only a part of environment in the North Caucasus but to a larger extent acquired instrumental features becoming the key factor of political relations' dynamic in the region. The local ethnic elites particularly in the subjects with the prevailing or great share of Muslims started actively to use "Islamic factor" to ensure dominance of their clannish ethnic entities. For this sake, they repeatedly attracted to take part in regional, city and district elections the Muslim authoritative representatives, who, in their turn, organized propagandist support of local candidates and got a chance to create a rather influential support for the leadership of their republics.

Hence, it means that applying to Islam of certain groups actually signifies use of "their own" Islam, which was claimed as "genuine" one. Exactly therefore most social, political, economic and ethnic contradictions, culminated in war in Chechnya, to a greater or lesser extent have religious shade. The latter, in its turn, is determined not so much by inter-religious opposition between Orthodoxy and Islam as primarily by the internal Islamic dysfunction, which is pre-conditioned by complexity, heterogeneity and discrepancy of traditional Islam in the North Caucasus.

Most ethnoses of the North Caucasus profess the prevailing form of Islam of Sunni trend. The spread of the second in terms of significance trend of Islam – Shiite is limited with the southern districts of Dagestan, where live about 80 thousand Azerbaijani Shiites.

Historically, in the North Caucasus there have consolidated two mazhab (Sunni theological-legal schools) – khanifism and shafiism, which are considered as more liberal trends comparing with two others – Khanbalism and malikism. Shafiism is spread mainly among Chechens, Ingushis and some peoples of Dagestan. Khanifism is professed by ethnoses of the western and central parts of the North Caucasus as well as by Kumyks and Nogais.

On the one side, membership in mazhab is not a significant factor with essential impact on perception by various ethnoses of Islam, on the other side, there is an opinion that the distinctions among Caucasian khanafits and shafiits are of great significance. For instance, the fundamentalist (“wahhabi”) ideas more easily penetrate the shafiit than the khanafit environment, which, *inter alia*, is explained by closeness of shafiism to khanbalit trend as the ideological foundation of wahhabism as well as by the fact that in the east of the Caucasus Islam has more deeply incorporated into the people’s consciousness, essentially determining their behavior stereotypes, while in the western part of the North Caucasus (Adygs, Karachais, Balkars and Nogais) the ethnic moral codes have greater significance.

One should agree with the point of view of those secular scientists, experts in religion, who think that the religious-political movements and parties do not limit themselves with incorporation in their programs of ideological formulas, such as “Muslim culture”, “Islamic originality”, “traditions” etc. In the propaganda activities these ideological formulas freely grow in the fanatic belief in salvation and renaissance of Dagestan only by means of shariat and sunna. From this point of view, religion and politics are not the compatible phenomena. But there exists also the point of view expressed by S.N. Sultanmagomedov, pro-rector of the North-Caucasian Islamic M. Arif University (Makhachkala). Setting his exaggerated hopes and

aspirations on religious-spiritual enlightenment, he writes that renaissance of morality and preservation of peace and content in society are possible to be achieved only through spiritual enlightenment of the people, which will save society from the vices of the mankind, from all possible stresses and troubles on the part of extremists, will reduce the number of people in hospitals and orphanages, will be a guarantee of bringing into a healthy state of the nation and the people as a whole. In the context of politicization of Islam the author shares the views of Z. Arukhov, who considered that in the milieu of the religious population there appeared adepts of the so-called “pure Islam”, who in their propaganda activities stressed the significance of social and political elements, tried to propose to the representatives of the middle class, oriented to democracy, human rights and civil society, its own perception of perspectives of development of society in Dagestan.

Sharing the view of Z. Arukhov, it is necessary to say that some organizations of political Islam proposed to support the ideological leaders, who lacked official religious education but made comments based on dubious interpretation of Islamic norms and principles. At the same time, they did not take into account the circumstance that it was impossible to build genuine civil society in Dagestan without considering the type, characteristic and culture of peoples of Dagestan. Thus, politicization of Islam became the seamy side of religious liberalization, accompanied by contradictions between tarikatists (Sufi) and the so-called wahhabies (Salafits).

The official clergy in Dagestan criticized the missionary activities of adepts of wahhaby trend in Islam (originated in Arabia in the middle of the XVII century on the basis of teaching of Mukhammed ibn Abd Al-Wahhab). In their turn, wahhabies considered adepts of traditional Sunni Islam as apostates of “genuine” Islam of the Prophet and four faithful caliphs. The wahhaby propaganda did not stop at this

stage, and therefore in Chechnya and Dagestan the followers of wahhabism claimed for installation of the shariat form of governance and repeal of the secular laws imagined, to their mind, by the human will. The penetration of foreign Islam in its very dangerous extremist form to Russian Muslim regions started to acquire a particular significance and urgency due to the emerging threat to the national security, unity and territorial integrity of Russia. Some experts think that the root of all evil is “inside” Islamic regions of Russia. For instance, S. Markedonov tries to prove that criticism of the republican authorities in Dagestan by wahhabies is connected with un settlement of many, particularly social-economic, issues, while mass abuse of power by republican officials, corruption, social differentiation and, consequently, a high level of unemployment, lack of transparency of the power and its lack of sensitiveness to the population’s needs were the reason of enlargement of groups of salafits. And further the conclusion is made, which allows to regard wahhabies almost as volunteers of civil society in a separate republic: salafits propose a kind of model of Islam, where there is no place for clans, tapes, virds, ethnicity. This model was forming the universal project, which may be claimed in the poly-ethnic and fragmented country, such as Dagestan.

Many experts in religious problems and even state officials consider that it is necessary to know and to take good sense of religious extremism. The positive features are cited in the analytical reference of the government’s committee for religious affairs: rationalism and accessibility of wahhaby doctrine; its ability to translate the protest against traditional forms of social organization. It should be noted that wahhaby ideology proclaims the ideas of spiritual egalitarianism, propagates equality of believers to Allah, which, in its turn, is correlated in their teaching with the appeals for social equality and justice. However, these good sides of wahhabism and diversity of its

displays, which attract sympathy of many analytics, are discredited in the eyes of the public circles and laymen-believers by the methods of armed forceful establishment of “Islamic order”.

There are different views on the reasons of religious extremism, which consist in two mutually exclusive approaches – of external and internal character. According to sociologist Z. Abdulagatov, the clergy and the authorities are inclined more to the determined role of the external influence: foreign Muslim education abroad, missionary activities, activities of foreign non-governmental organizations, economic interests of transnational companies, geopolitical interests of separate states and other matters... There is another point of view that our misfortunes connected with extremism are determined mainly by internal reasons ... Up to present, the state in the name of leaders of different levels did not recognize in public the significance of solving social-economic problems in the struggle against religious extremism.

The practice of the state-confessional relations turns out to be more diverse than theoretic provisions and declarations. The principal role in ensuring the rights and freedoms of citizens and, finally, of their security belongs to the state. For instance, the State Council of RD, the People's Assembly of RD and the Government of RD adopted several statements, which condemned the actions of religious-political extremists aimed at destabilization of public-political situation in Dagestan and in the North Caucasus. The specific measures were proposed for waging struggle against religious-political extremism, for liquidation of international bandits' formations on the part of Chechnya and Dagestan in August-September 1999.

On 16 September 1999, the People's Assembly of RD adopted the law “On Prohibition of Wahhaby and Other Extremist Activities on the Territory of the Republic of Dagestan”. The law forbids creation and functioning of wahhaby organizations and groups or associations,

forbids activities of religious missions and their branches, of education institutions and physical persons propagating ideas of wahhabism. Various displays of Islamic factor shall be regarded with great attention analyzing its reasons and predicting its consequences.

However, the impact of the Islamic factor, despite its activities, has not resulted in significant ideological split of the whole society of Dagestan but destabilized to some extent only the religious community of the country. The regional basic values characterized by a great number of ideological and spiritual-moral priorities were reflected in this situation.

Thus, the external reasons had a great impact on the degree and forms of politicization, along the internal reasons in Russia.

The combination of internal and external factors resulted in transformation of political Islamic radicalism from potential to actual threat to security of the Russian Federation. While the attempt to create an Islamic state on the territory of the Chechen Republic to a large extent was the consequence of external “Islamization” of the separatist conflict at a rather late stage, the events in villages Karamakh and Chabanmakh demonstrate a chance of emergence of internal reasons of Islamic radicalization. As D. Makhanov writes, the residents of these villages decided to come forward against the dominating, in their minds, corrupted authorities in the republican structures; they intended to create on the territory of their villages “a genuine Islamic order”. Although the residents of these villages, according to this expert, were not radicals, the similar change of the principals of public order means the exit of this small part of territory of the Russian Federation out of its legal sphere, which may be interpreted as “covered separatism”. It should be stressed that the events in these villages of Dagestan acquired not religious but political characteristic, since they were the result of the conflict related to the existing practice of power’s authority.

Thus, the analysis of emergence of radicalism in Islam gives a chance to define it primarily as a political phenomenon. Political radicalism in Islam has, in essence, not a religious origin. The reason of its origin is not at all the supposition that Islam does not accept the principles of organization of the contemporary society.

*“Politicheskaya religiya: Teoriya i metodologiya issledovaniya problemy”, Stavropol, 2010, p. 81–96.*

**Alan Jioyev,**

political scientist (the RAGS under  
the President of the RF)

## **EXTREMISM AND SECURITY IN THE NORTH-CAUCASIAN REGION**

Against the background of the last decade, the significance of the North-Caucasian region (NC) in the contemporary geopolitical picture of the world grows more and more. For the period of millenniums, owing to its particular geo-strategic situation in the joint of European-Asian civilizations the Caucasus always attracted attention of various states being subject to great influence of different cultures and religions. Under contemporary geopolitical conditions the main re-division of the world is realized as an establishment of the control over natural resources, geo-strategic and military-sea routes; therefore the big world powers urge towards achievement of their principal strategic aim, which consists in pushing Russia to the north-east part of Eurasia far away from one of the main communication points of accesses to the center of world resources – the Mediterranean-Black Sea-Caucasian-Caspian region. Their nearest aims are as follows – to make uncompetitive the Russian main gas and oil pipelines and to lay round Russia their transportation routes, which deliver cheap raw resources

from Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Iran to Europe and America. Therefore the internal political instability in NC and in the Trans-Caucasus to a large extent is advantageous to a number of state and inter-state entities, pursuing exclusively their national (political and economic) interests.

At the same time, the following mid-term tasks are being achieved: to prevent renaissance of Russia to the level of super-power; to undermine its influence in former Soviet republics; to reduce its geo-strategic space to the limits of its borders and to promote separatism in different Russian regions, including NC, decreasing in this way its prestige and image in the world community; to transform it into a natural resources' addition to the developed countries of the world; to enforce their own influence on the processes, going on in the region, having received economic and political dividends. In these circumstances, of particularly dangerous becomes the practice of amalgamation of self-consciousness of the peoples with religious fanaticism. In this connection, under conditions of NC the greatest threat to integrity of Russia comes from Dagestani-Chechen extremist Islamic organizations of wahhaby type. The spread of wahhabism in the NC region is advantageous for the strategic interests of the USA and Saudi Arabia. The already tested "Near East" scenario is being applied in NC. Up to the present time, the spread of wahhabism was realized through Saudi religious foundations and organizations – "al-Kharamei" (Two Sacred Places Foundation), company "Benevolence", League of Protection of Mother and Child, "Lashkar Taiba" and others.

For the last decade, in the Russian Federation (RF) and particularly in NC there took place the inter-national and internal confessional conflicts, which had very negative influence on the social-political situation in the country and which were appraised as a tense situation. The role and the significance of the religious component of

public consciousness of the population in the region rose considerably, and the apprehension of appropriateness of existence of religion and its institutions in society increased definitely.

The new religious situation in the RF and the trend of its development should attract greater attention to the whole complex of impact of the religious factor on the internal political security of Russia. A special significance acquires the following circumstance: at present, Russia lacks a thoughtful political conception relating to the community of religious organizations in Russia and particularly in NC. A great concern is being caused by the negative trends connected with the rise of religious extremism, terrorism and narcotics' trade as well as by potential conflicts, which may be caused by territorial, ethnic and social contradictions. The militarization of the region presents a threat to its security. Since the beginning of democratic reforms the scale of influence, role and significance of religions in society increased resulting in creation of the situation when religion became a significant factor of public development in contemporary Russia, particularly in NC.

In the RF just NC (as a unique entity in terms of ethnic composition and culture) is the most complicated region from the point of view of its social-economic and political situation as well as state governance and ensuring national security. It is characterized by poly-ethnicity, poly-confessional structure, overpopulation, problems of peoples-victims of repression under conditions of artificially determined and repeatedly changed borders, which turn out to become permanent military conflicts. The social-political situation in the region was deteriorated due to the negative influence of wahhaby ideology, which started its dissemination since the 1980s. The religious-political extremism is characterized by the urge towards rapid solving of complicated problems irrespective of "the price", which must be paid

for it. This is the source of the forceful methods of struggle. It denies use of dialogue, content, consensus, mutual understanding. The extreme display of religious-political extremism is terrorism, which is the complex of particularly ferocious forms and methods of political violence. For the last decade the religious-political extremism more often applied the terror as a means of achievement of its aims. The extremist display is characterized by the protests: dissatisfaction with the political regime, the social inequality, the position in society of certain social strata, ethnic, racial and confessional groups. But the problem may be solved, if the state purposefully is in charge of making amends for faults.

The factors giving rise to religious-political extremism in Russia are named by experts to be the social-economic crisis, the mass unemployment, the rapid fall of level of living of the population, the weakening of the state power and discredit of its institutions, the disintegration of the former system of values, legal nihilism and political ambitions of religious leaders.

Some experts think violation of the rights of ethnic and religious minorities by officials as well as activities of foreign religious and political centers promote religious-political extremism. The problem of religious-political extremism is aggravated by dynamic of development and by contemporary internal political situation in the region marked by extreme instability. The internal conflicts in the republic of NC represent a real threat to Russia. The religious centers, official circles, special services and non-governmental organizations of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Arabic countries of the Persian Gulf used wahhabism in the political and economic situation in NC to realize their aims.

The dissemination of wahhaby ideas is one of the main sources of the spread of political terrorism. The activities of wahhabies are marked on the territory of Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria,

Karachaev-Cherkessia, in Stavropol kray. The financial support is given to wahhaby groups and dissemination of printed and video materials is realized on the basis of the underground system; and by support of corrupted officials wahhaby emissaries penetrate in the government structures. The process is going on to replace the loyal representatives of the clergy and to replace them by the young imams trained abroad. The wahhabies are engaged in active recruitment of new adepts from the youth.

The NC and the Middle Asia (MA) became the components of the so-called wahhaby crescent with the center of oil and gas reserves in the Caspian Basin. The specific financial, political and geopolitical interests became the reasons of the wahhaby “march to the north”. Wahhaby expansion in the republics of NC is aimed at the same targets. From the strategic point of view, Dagestan is of great significance, since its territory is adjacent to the Caspian oil fields. The military assault of Khattab and Basayev against Dagestan was arranged for the same purpose. But, unlike situation in Chechnya, the separatist ambitions did not exist, and therefore the terrorist failed to enjoy an expected support. In winter of 1999-2000, this circumstance helped the Russian authorities to take measures for the sake of ousting the Chechen fighters from Dagestan and to liquidate the main part of bands on the Chechen territory. Wahhabism tries to influence the public-political processes both in the subjects of the RF and in Russia as a whole. The Russian mass media promote this process, forming in Russian and international public opinion the comprehension about confessional substance of the Chechen conflict.

It is particularly important to distinguish Islamic fundamentalism from religious extremism and terrorism.

The first one, like any other religious fundamentalism comes forward for religious education, compliance with every day religious traditions.

The second trend aims at spreading by force the religious model of the state, of religious rules of behavior in society and family.

Thus, the attempt to incorporate and to disseminate “political Islam” in NC is a strong destabilizing factor. The role of power structures in the region attracts attention of the extremist wahhaby organizations; they claim for this role, since they are connected with illegal military bands in Chechnya and coordinated from the united center, represented by “fighting jamaats” network in the NC as a whole. Due to wahhabys’ actions the traditional clergy and ordinary Muslims gradually started to see the danger of their activities and render all assistance to the law enforcement bodies in the struggle against this trend of Islam.

The majority of the Caucasian population does not support the idea of separation from Russia. For instance, in Dagestan the Muslim community consecutively and closely maintains reciprocal relations with the authorities sending their clergymen to the most distant mountainous villages to propagate traditional Islam. The same form of religious propaganda exists in Karachaevo-Cherkessia. Nevertheless, the attestation of imams showed that only some of elderly priests have adequate educational level to oppose propaganda of extremist religious trends.

The radical Muslim clergy, supporting “pure” Islam, enjoys great influence. The intellectual qualities of some Muslims having received training in Muslim countries represent the ideological basis of consolidation of similar feelings. Their dissatisfaction with the policy of the Federal Center in the Caucasus and actions of the regional authorities is strengthened by the critical attitude to the local Islamic

practice, which differs greatly from foreign canons. The members of such groups represent the potential nutrient medium for recruitment of military bands' fighters.

The opposition movements gained a rather great influence in Muslim communities of the region. Their emergence was the result of competition among separate groups of believers, united by spiritual leaders, with the aim to get influence on the political elite of the region. Such contradictions, which may have ethnic characteristic, often incite religious leaders to maintain contacts with moderate fundamentalists. Thus, the growing of extremism in the religious sphere represents a significant threat to the national security in NC; therefore the purposeful activities of the state and public institutions are the must for elimination of this danger. Up to the present time, there are no mass disturbances for ethnic reasons, although the situation in the sphere of inter-national relations in NC may be characterized as complicated and heterogeneous. The extremist actions are taken for attainment of originally determined purposes in the political, ethnic-national, economic, religious and other spheres of public life, including appeals for forceful overthrow of the constitutional order of the RF.

The lack of compromises is characteristic for displays of extremism in the religious sphere. Such extremism does not make compromises with the opposing party and negates the tactic of dialogue. The urge towards the victory in the counteraction of social groups, the struggle against certain defined political groups, connected often with the aim of seizure of power by means of force using religious slogans, determine the essence of extremism in the religious sphere. Consequently, it is possible to qualify as extremism the activities of the religious associations in the case, when their activities are as follows: they are carried out in the form of illegal extremist actions aimed at the forceful overthrow of the constitutional order and

integrity of the RF; they consist in the seizure or acquirement of power authorities; they aim at formation of illegal armed detachments; they consist of terrorist acts; they provoke racial, national or religious discord etc.

Against the background of new geopolitical picture of the XXI century, Russia confronts the challenge of creating new models of counteraction against extremism irrespective of its religious, national or social ideological cover. Thus, the denial of publicity for radicalism should become the most significant strategic device of counteraction against extremism in the religious sphere. An important direction of political-legal counteraction against extremist activities of religious associations is education and enlightenment of citizens relating to cultural and religious multitude and unity of the people in the country and in the world, concerning history of intolerance, genocide and other crimes, which were brought to the people by extremism. The education process of the young and of the older people should contain precise and detailed information on history of the world genocides, anti-Semitic pogroms and Stalin repressions, but it should not allow to transform the collective trauma of the past into a subject of sacral significance and to nourish the ideas of revenge and “correction of the past”.

At present, extremism lives on not only the past but also new myths and speculations. One of them is as follows: the deliberately apocalyptic appraisal of life and events for the last years for the sake of struggle for power. The clear and unambiguous articulation of aims and tasks of the state policy in NC is the needed condition of the weighed and balanced policy in this region. Of great significance is the strategy of the state impact, including legal prosecution of extremism, particularly in its forms, which should be convicted by law.

A significant ideological and political threat to national security of Russia presents the politicized Islamic fundamentalism in the form

of wahhabism, since it applies armed struggle and terrorism for achievement of its aims. It is necessary to stop activities of religious missions, of their branches and of educational institutions, of charitable and other foundations, of military-sportive camps, of individuals propagating ideas of wahhabism or other extremist teachings.

A rather great role in intensification of work of law enforcement bodies directed to counteraction against terrorism and religious extremism was played by creation and realization of the legal basis for prohibition of extremist organizations on the territory of the RF “On Counteraction against Extremist Activities”. Thus, the main challenge made by wahhabism is laid not so much in the religious as in the social-political sphere.

Wahhabism in NC has a definite mobilizing ideology and is based on the support of international Islamist organizations and other external forces, which render it a great financial assistance and give it support in the field of cadres and propaganda. Under present conditions, the Islamic extremism is a destabilizing factor aimed at aggravation of inter-religious and internal religious relations, at the split of the Muslim society in Russia, at promotion of national separatism and deterioration of mutual relations between the regional and federal powers.

“*Vestnik Severo-Osetinskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta im. K.X. Khetagurova*”, Vladikavkaz, 2010, N 3, p. 24–29.

**Diana Chelpanova,**  
political scientist (ISEGI of UNTs of RAS)  
**THE PROTEST'S ACTIVITY OF THE POPULATION  
IN THE NORTH CAUCASUS**

The instability of the North-Caucasian region demonstrates existence of a number of problems, including particularly economic

backwardness, corruption, inevitably giving ethnic shade to the land and cadres issues, problem of refugees and forced migrants, political tension, terrorism, kidnapping and assassination of peaceful citizens. The population, ignored for a long time by the authorities, intensifies its protest's activity and tries to let the leadership know about existing contradictions by means of meetings, pickets, strikes and even by blocking highways.

From the methodological point of view, the author has chosen the concept of relative deprivation, which perceives the causes of protests as a subjective sense of dissatisfaction in relation to the present. It is possible to speak about deprivation, if the subject lacks a determined level of social wellbeing but wishes to have it, comparing his position relating to this level with the position of other subjects, as well as regards possession of this level of wellbeing as a real and feasible level. Thus, the protest comes forward as an expression of dissatisfaction with some or other situation concerning the subject or subjects. It should be noted that the extreme form of the protest is the revolution and that the authorities should not forget about it when they try to keep silent about it, to suppress the civil initiative. It is easier to solve any problem at the initial stage than to change it to the category of a long-term antagonism, promoting the rise of protest feelings, which often are not predictable.

On the basis of data provided by the territorial organs of the federal executive power in the SFD and the NCFD and 10 Internet sites, there was formed the data base on protest's actions for the period on the territory of the republics in the North-Caucasian Federal District of 2009 and the first half of 2010.

The two factors were used as a basis of classification of actions – the social-economic and the political reasons. The social-economic characteristic of protest's activity characterizes the causes of

dissatisfaction connected with everyday, financial and ecological problems. The political characteristic of the protests reflects dissatisfaction with activities of individual officials, of the separate political institution or with politics as a whole at different levels. At the same time, it is not possible to see the difference between the social-economic and political characteristic of the protest, since often the first protest acquires the form of the second one and vice versa.

The analysis of protest's activity of the population in the North-Caucasian Federal District for the period of 2009-2010 showed that Dagestan occupies the first place in terms of number of protest's actions, North Ossetia-Alania – the second place, while Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachaevo-Cherkessia divide the third place.

**Dagestan.** For the period of 2009 – January–May 2010, about 8000 people took part in over 50 social-economic actions against electric energy cut off in Makhachkala and about 27 000 people participated in political actions against kidnapping of people and unlawful actions of officials of the law enforcement bodies. The terrorist activities of illegal bandits' formations were going on side by side with the rise of the protests' activities. Dagestan occupies the second place in terms of the number of terrorist acts among the republics of the NCFD (430 registered acts for the mentioned period). The protests' actions are marked by certain features. Together with peaceful forms (meetings and pickets) more radical (forceful) forms of protests were used (40 cases of blockage of local and federal routes, over 5 cases of seizure of electric power substations), which demonstrated the protracted characteristic of unsolved problems.

**North Ossetia-Alania.** The dominant social-economic characteristic of the population's protests' activities distinguishes the republic from the other subjects of the district. About 14000 people took part in over 25 social-economic actions, while less than 500

people participated in political protests' actions. The longest large-scaled action of protests was directed against poisonous effluents of "Elektrozink" plant. One should mention the activities of the regional branch of the CPRF, which periodically organized protest meetings against mass unemployment, rise of prices for goods and services, low level of incomes of the population. The low level of terrorist activities (10 cases – in 2009 and 3 cases for the period from January to May of 2010) and the political stability demonstrate a low level of tension in the republic.

**Kabardino-Balkaria.** In the republic about 2000 people took part in 7 social-economic actions of protest, while about 10000 people participated in 9 political protest's actions. The protests were mainly directed against "unjust" (to the mind of Balkars) settlement of land issues in the course of determination of the municipal administrative borders, of the territories between villages for the benefit of Kabardins and in case of nomination of representatives of the Kabardin ethnos to various official posts. The protests' activities were also directed against terrorism and kidnapping. It was not accidental, since for the period of 2009 there were registered 46 terrorist acts, while in the period from January to May of 2010 – already 43. The statistics shows the increase of tension in the republic.

**Karachayev-Cherkessia.** For 2009-2010 period in the republic, over 3000 people participated in 10 social-economic actions, while about 4000 people took part in 12 political actions of protest. The protests were directed mainly against kidnapping of peaceful citizens, infringement of interests of the Cherkessian people relating to the cadres policy in the republic. The level of the terrorist activity in Karachayev-Cherkessia is the lowest comparing with other republics in the NCFD, testifying to a more stable situation.

**Chechnya.** There is no official opposition in the republic, as it is known; however, the unofficial opposition is being formed by the Chechen underground, which is fulfilled by those, who do not agree with the policy, carried out in the republic and who are ready to express it openly. In Chechnya not less than 500 people participated in 3 social-economic actions of protest, and over 2000 people took part in 4 political actions of protest against kidnapping and assassination of peaceful citizens, unlawful activities of law enforcement bodies and terrorism. However, much more meetings took place outside the territory of Chechnya (particularly, against kidnapping and assassination human rights activist N. Estemirova) than in the republic itself. Thus, a small number of protest actions for the analyzed period suggests an idea of someone either about the blocking of information or of the cruelty of the political regime. Unlike the protest activities, the terrorist acts continue to be committed: 245 cases for 2009 and 77 cases for January–May of 2010.

**Ingushetia.** In the republic about 500 people participated in 9 political actions of protest mainly against kidnapping, while less than 500 people took part in 7 social-economic actions. In spite of recognition by the president of Ingushetia of the official opposition, the trend to close information about it is evident, which makes it impossible actually to appraise the situation. At the same time, the republic occupies the first place in terms of the terrorist activities. For the period of 2009, there were registered 430 terrorist acts, and 141 terrorist acts took place from January to May of 2010.

Thus, in the republics of the NCFD there exist many problems, which did not appear instantly but were accumulated for a long time, finally changing for the problems of the category of the prolonged unsolved problems of Russia, and which are used by various political forces. At the same time, there exists a politically non-engaged part of

the society, which upholds its rights and defends its interests. It is necessary to separate these two categories of the population, since representatives of one of them are interested in tension of the situation in the republic, while the representatives of the other category come forward as pathfinders in building civil society. As a result, due to numerous unsolved problems the protest's activity of the population in the republics of the North-Caucasian Federal District is growing.

*“Fundamentalnye problemy prostranstvennogo razvitiya Uuga Rossii: Mezhdistsiplinarny sintez”, R-na-Donu, 2010, p. 345–348.*

**Z. Amirova, A. Magomeddaev,**

political scientists (Makhachkala)

**THE POLITICAL ISLAM IN DAGESTAN:**

**THE EXTERNAL INFLUENCE ROLE**

In 1986 there were 27 mosques at the territory of Dagestan but as of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2003 according to data of Committee of Dagestan Government there are 1679 mosques with 2400 imams and muezzins, 16 Islamic institutions with 52 affiliates, 141 madrasah, 324 maktabs where 15630 students receive training. Among them there are 4300 persons in maktabs, 5400 – in madrasah and 5930 – in the institutions; there are more than 30000 of Sufis of nakshbandiiskogo, shaliziiskogo and kadiriiskogo tariqat. More than 150 thousands of the Dagestani made a hajj and umrah, about 120 students study in the foreign Islamic institutions. The hundreds of the young graduates of the foreign Islamic institutions have already returned in the republic.

During 90-ss one can observe a new upsurge in the activity of the extremist terrorist organizations and movements holding religious-ethnic position and achieving mainly their ideological and moral

principle triumph. Those trends and organizations were a source of radicalism and extremism which like extreme left revolutionaries try to assume the right to act as the single true exponent of the people interests and expectations. A factor of the external integration is also the important reason together with the other reasons of Islamism (a set of socio-economic and political prerequisites and terms and conditions). Because of the events in the Northern Caucasus one observed the support for the Islamists from the side, mainly, of the non-governmental religious-political organizations in some Arabian countries.

The Islam radicalization in the Northern Caucasus is associated in the national and foreign oriental political science with the beginning of 90-ss of XX century for the influence of the external factors (first of all, the radical Islamic organizations in the Moslem countries). To our mind one could observe the external influences in Dagestan in the second half of 80-ss; some experts name this data as the middle of 70-ss when the leader and founder of “Islamic jamaat”, Mohammed Bagaudin, “had the access to some embassies of the Arabian countries where he had got literature being interested for him”. The known candidate of the historical sciences, M. Roshin, pointed out correctly that the first center of the Northern-Caucasus Islamic fundamentalism emerged in Dagestan where it began spreading all over the whole region from. By the middle of 90-ss Dagestan was the ideological center of fundamentalism but Chechnya became a firing ground very quickly”.

The wide-ranging financial external influence in Dagestan falls on 1989–1995. As the Dagestani expert of Islamism, Z.S. Arukhov, noted “the Islamist organizations based on religion appeared just during this period, the mosques were being built owing the foreign financial funds, the educational-propagandistic centers were opened in Makhachkala and Kizilyurt, one conducted media and publishing

operations, many foreign delegations and some functionaries came in the republic having familiarization, missionary and educational purposes" allowing the Arabian (and not only) Islamists to establish contacts with the leaders of the Dagestani Islamist structures, to share experience of the work and also to influence on the ideological-political orientation of the Dagestani Moslems as far as it goes.

On 13 May 1989 the Islamists from Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and the republic of the Northern Caucasus held so-called rally of the Moslems "where they occupied the Religious board of Moslems of the Northern Caucasus. Later on they have shown their worth in the villages of Agvali of Tsumadinskogo, Erpeli of Buinakskogo, Kayakent of Kayakentskogo districts and in the town Khasavyurt. Just they initiated some unauthorized meetings of the church people at the central square of Makhachkala". At the beginning of 90-ss a mass and slightly-controlled outflow of the Dagestani youth abroad – to study in the Islamic institutions. The representatives themselves of the foreign Islamic organizations "chose" the school-leavers during that period.

In the middle of 90-ss the Dagestani Islamists announced "competition" among the students ("til'mizov" of the local madrasah. They were recommended by their teachers. The chosen school-leavers were sent to the Moslem institutions of Saudi Arabia, Tunis, Egypt, Malaysia and etc.

"Sometimes the Wahhabite madrasah took on a form of a paramilitary camp where the training was combined with a serious physical and military training following from that jihad inevitably takes on a form of the armed struggle", – A. Yarlykapov writes.

The Religious board of the Moslems of Dagestan tried in its turn to send "its school-leavers mainly in Syria and in Turkey.

Many imams of Dagestan and especially the representatives of the Religious board of the Moslems of Dagestan thought that the graduates of the Islamic institutions of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Egypt and the other Moslem countries promote strengthening the Islamist position of Dagestan. R. Gainutdin, the leader of the Religious board of the Moslems of Dagestan held the same point of view. Some teachers-Dagestani of the Islamic institution named by Shafii treated the activity of the Arabian teachers with the great distrust but the leadership of the institute had to be patient with their presence because of the great financing from the charitable organizations where the teachers-Arabs were from.

*“Geopolitika, gosudarstvennaya bezopastnost’, mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya”, S-Pb, 2010, p. 2–23.*

**Elmira Muratova,**  
candidate of political sciences  
(V.I. Vernadsky Tavrichesky National University)  
**TEACHING ISLAM IN THE CRIMEA**

The traditional education system of the Crimean Tatars consisted of two types of education institutions: the secondary (mektebs) and high (medreces) schools. It is hardly possible to reconstruct a complete and authentic picture of functioning of mektebs in the Crimea for several centuries of history of the Crimean khanate. Usually the mektebs were kept and financed by the Muslim communities. Not only representatives of the local Muslim clergy but also members of their families occupied the posts of teachers. As a rule, the wives and daughters of the mullahs were engaged in education of girls at school.

Teaching in the mektebs was allowed for both the Hadjis – the people, who had gone on a pilgrimage to the sacred Islamic places, and

Sokhts – students of medreces, and the adequately educated members of local Muslim communities. Often teaching took place in mosques or in the houses of mullahs, which were not properly accommodated for it.

The Islamic high education institutions – medreces – were the places used for training of the clergy members, the teachers for mektebs and educated Muslims as a whole. Medreces appeared in the Crimea long time ago. Probably, they were founded in the peninsula in time of the Golden Horde. The spread of the Muslim culture and education was started actually after adoption of Islam as a state religion in the regions ruled by the khanate.

The restoration of Islamic education became possible from the moment of return of the Crimean Tatars to their Motherland in the end of the 1980s. One of the significant problems of Islamic renaissance in the contemporary Crimea became a great shortage of qualified imams, who would be able to read Koran, to cite khadises, to orient Muslims according to Islamic original sources. In the beginning of the 1990s, the representatives of the older generation of the Crimean Tatars assumed the functions of imams in the Muslim communities. Most of them lacked special spiritual education, and their perception of Islam was limited with the knowledge given to them by their parents and relatives. For this reason, they had to make way to the young and energetic imams, who got Islamic education.

The imams of the young generation were educated primarily abroad in universities of Muslim countries. Since the beginning of the 1990s, some Crimean Tatars started to go abroad for studies in Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and other states of the Islamic world. The majority of Crimean Tatars received education in the theological department of Turkish universities. Out of 50 people, left for Turkey to get education, 20 persons came back, while 10 of them started their religious activities as muftis, teachers and imams, according to

A. Ismailov, the deputy mufti of the Crimea. Some young people did not graduate from theological department of the universities and chose other professions. A part of those, who received theological education, got a job in Turkey or, having returned home, are engaged in the activities, which have not been marked in their diplomas.

Those, who studied in Islamic universities of Arabic countries, usually went there by means of their personal contacts and under the private agreement with the receiving party, which had nothing to do with the leadership of the Spiritual Department of Muslims of the Crimea (SDMC). The SDMC has no information about them and their destiny. The sojourn of young people abroad and education in Arabic universities excites apprehension that they might become influenced by different “radical” trends, which hinders the Spiritual Department to invite them to be involved in the activities related to Islamic renaissance in the Crimea.

As a whole, the leadership of SDMC came to the conclusion that the external channel of receiving Islamic education by Crimean Tatars was inefficient. And the alternative to it became the idea of creating on the territory of the Crimea the Muslim education institutions, which would train the cadres according to the national traditions and with due account of the regional Islamic specificity.

At present, the formation of the secondary and the high Islamic education achieved some successes in the Crimea. The secondary (Sunday and Koran study) schools function at a number of mosques and provide for people of different age the basic knowledge of Islam and of the Arabic language. They master reading of Koran and the basics of cult service. Some Sunday schools were created with the support of association “Alraid”. For the 2009, on the territory of the Crimea there functioned 23 Muslim schools directed by imams of local Muslim communities. The Koran schools coordinated by the Turkish religious

organizations carry out their function at some mosques. The Sunday and Koran schools provide for the same size of knowledge. The difference consists in the citizenship of the teachers: the Turkish teachers work in the Koran schools. They are mainly the representatives of the Department for Religious Affairs of Turkey (Diyanet). They perform functions of imams, side by side with local imams, in a number of settlements. Apart from Diyanet, the Turkish religious community “Suleimanie” arranged some Koran schools and continues to give financial support to them.

The medreces and the schools of khafises represent the Muslim education institutions at the middle level.

There are different appraisals of the number of medreces, which carry out their function on the territory of the peninsula. For instance, mufti E. Ablayev mentioned 6 medreces in his statement at the IV Curultai of Muslims of the Crimea. At the same time, the representative of the Maijilis of the Crimean Tatars in the Muftiate A. Alchikov thinks that this was an exaggerated number. According to him, not all education institutions might be regarded as medreces, since actually they were rather Koran schools than the religious education institutions of the higher status.

The activities of the Crimean medreces are officially kept under control of SDMC. The Deputy Mufti A. Ismailov is in charge of the spiritual education; however, the representatives of the Turkish religious organizations actually keep under their control the education process in medreces. The textbooks, used in the medreces, are written by Turkish authors, including O. Topbasha, who is the head of private religious foundation “Aziz Makhmud Khyudai”, which coordinates the work of this medreces. The teachers’ staff of the medreces consists of two parts: one half – the Crimean Tatars, who have received theological education in Turkey, the other half – the Turkish professors.

The other education institutions, which originally functioned as medreces, further changed their status. For instance, medrece “Kurman”, located in Krasnogvardeisk district, was transformed in 2007 and became a khafiz school. At the initial stage education in this medrece was based on the same principles like in Azov medrece and functioned under patronage of religious foundation “Aziz Makhmud Khyudai”. Medrece “Seit-Settar”, which started its work in 1993 in Simferopol, later stopped to function as a medrece and was made an ordinary Koran school. The other education institution, which functioned in Simferopol since 2003, is actually a Koran school, although it is named as a Higher Islamic medrece. Its students study religious disciplines and at the same time are students of the secular education institutions. The school functions with the support of Turkish religious community “Suleimanie”.

The khafiz school was opened in December 2002 in Simferopol with the support of the World Organization for Koran Education and the All-Ukrainian Association of Public Organizations “Alraid”. The Spiritual Department of Muslims of the Crimea is the official founder of the school. The education institution is a boarding-school for the boys from 13 to 18 years old. The conditions for admittance to the school are as follows: the obligatory attendance of a general school, application of the parents and recommendation of the muftiyat or the imam of the local Muslim community, Ukrainian citizenship. It is preferable for the applicants to read Arabic; however, most new students, according to the director of the school S. Arifov, start to study Arabic from the beginning. The special attention in the selection of the school-leavers is paid to their successes in the general school and to the probable existence of adepts of radical trends among their relatives. The nationality of young boys is not taken into account. Although the

majority of students of the school consist of the Crimean Tatars, the Tatars of Kazan, Arabs, Uzbeks and Slaves also study at this school.

The curriculum of the school is calculated for 3 years. For the whole period of education the students learn by heart the text of Koran and master the basics of the Muslim law.

The teaching is marked by use of efficient methods of leaning by heart 1–2 pages of Koran every day, while most capable students – up to 5 pages of this text. The teaching is arranged in this way: all students are divided into small groups, and the teacher of each group loudly reads Koran, while the students repeat this text. The process goes on up to the time when the students start to reproduce the text without mistakes.

The staff of the school's teachers consists of citizens of various countries, Including Arabic countries. Unlike other Islamic education institutions of the Crimea, teaching in the school is arranged in Russian. The teachers, graduated from the Islamic university in Saudi Arabia, the shariat department of Jinan University in Lebanon, the department of the Arabic language and literature of Zarka University in Jordan, the khafiz school in Jordan as well as the graduates of the school itself.

Leaving the school, the graduates receive the diplomas analogues to the diplomas issued by the Crimean medreces. In all diplomas as the profession is mentioned “imam-khatib, the teacher of the Islamic subjects”, while in the diplomas of those, who has learnt by heart the whole text of Koran, the word “khafiz” is added. Although the school has a license, its diplomas are recognized, as a rule, only by Muslim structures of the Crimea, for instance, by muftiyat or other Islamic education institutions. Outside Ukraine the diplomas of the school are recognized by its sponsor – the World Organization for Teaching Koran and by the universities, which have concluded agreements with “Alraid” about further studies of the school's graduates.

These agreements were concluded with some universities of Jordan and Yemen. And 8 graduates of the school study in these universities. Their study is financed either by the recipient university or by a private sponsor, assumes the obligation to cover the expenses according to the recommendation of association “Alraid”. Three graduates of the khafiz school continued to work there. Others do not work by profession, although some of them unofficially teach in mosques of the Crimea.

The director of the school S. Arifov is concerned about the financial difficulties and of the troubles of the students, which are caused by the excessive education burden for the students, since they have to combine the study in the khafiz school with the studies in the general education school. Not all students endure such burden: some of them leave the school themselves, others are sent down due to lagging behind. Some students may be discharged for “unworthy” behavior, for instance, smoking or watching “obscene” magazines.

One other problem, which is confronted by the students due to their inadequate knowledge of the Arabic language, is as follows: it prevents them to understand the sense of the learnt texts of Koran. Even the most capable graduates, citing by heart Koran, are hardly able to clarify the sense of this text.

As S. Arifov thinks, the other painful problem is a rather low level of religiousness of the Crimean Tatars, who are not in a hurry to send their children to his school. Responding to the appeals to study the Islamic holy text, they often pragmatically say that their children after graduating from this school will hardly be able to get a prestige work and the adequate salary. As a result, the number of those, who wish to enter the school, is not big, the competition among aspirants is small and the level of the graduates is not high.

There is no higher education Islamic institution in the Crimea, although the idea of its creation is being discussed periodically. For instance, in the course of the World Congress of Crimean Tatars, held in May 2009, Deputy Chairman of Majilis R. Chubarov expressed the idea of creation of an Islamic university on the basis of Zindjirli medrece in Bakhcisarai. This initiative is supported by the leadership of muftiyat of the Crimea.

At present, the only Islamic higher education institution functions in Ukraine – the Islamic University of the Spiritual Department of Muslims of Ukraine (SDMU). It was established in Kiev in 1993 and consists of two departments with different status – the “valuable” department of shariat and basics of religion and the “partially acting” department of pedagogy and oriental linguistics. Teaching of Islamic subjects is based in this department on the materials provided by the Association of Islamic Charitable Projects. The list of recommended for the students contains the long list of works, ascribed to Lebanese sheikh Abdallah al-Kharari al-Khabashi (1910-2008). The materials published by SDMU newspaper “Minaret” provide a great help for the education process. Due to significant discords between SDMC and SDMU, the education of Crimean Tatars in this education institution is not welcomed.

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Summing up the review of the present process of Islamic education in Crimea, it is possible to make some conclusions and generalizations. First of all, it should be noted that the activities of Islamic education institutions are characterized by the lack of their coordination and regulation according to the united standard. The absence of connections between various sections of Muslim education and un conformity of their actions has a great negative impact on the

attempts to arrange structuring of the hierarchy of the Islamic education institutions.

Realizing the complexity of the situation, the Spiritual Department of Muslims of the Crimea took the initiative of putting in order Islamic education in the peninsula and drafted the project for the planned development and standardization of spiritual education-enlightenment process. The project provided for the three-level education system with the main stages – the secondary, the high and the high special education. To the mind of the authors of the project, standardization of the Muslim education system in the Crimea should promote the rise of its efficiency.

The dominance of Turkish religious organizations is the evident feature of the Muslim education institutions in the Crimea. The leaders of the Crimean Tatars definitely prefer the “Turkish” education model and regard it as the most efficient model, which promotes renaissance of “traditional Islam for Crimea”. The term “traditional Islam for Crimea”, despite its non-scientific characteristic, has been fixed in the propaganda vocabulary of the leaders of the Crimean Tatars, who share a rather ambiguous perception about specifics of the Islamic religious complex. Up to the present time, it is impossible to say to what extent the education system with the evident Sufi component, incorporated today in the Crimea by private Turkish foundations, corresponds to the education traditions of the Crimean Tatars. This theme is a subject to a separate profound study.

Nevertheless, it is impossible to negate the fact that the economic dependence of SDMC on religious foreign organizations limits its abilities to keep under control the functioning of education institutions, to invite self-dependently the teachers and to determine the curriculum. At present, muftiyat is not a sponsor of any Islamic education institution functioning in the Crimea.

Finally, as one of the difficulties endured by the Islamic education centers in the sphere of teaching process the author should stress the lack of the text books of new generation, written with due account of traditions of the Crimean Tatars and the specifics of their mentality.

Teaching Islam in the secular education institutions of the Crimea. It is hardly possible to say that teaching disciplines related to Islam in the secular education institutions of the Crimea is a widely spread practice. The students receive general information about Islam in the course “religious knowledge”, which is included in the curriculum of all higher education institutions of the peninsula. The professors of the humanitarian departments of the Crimean higher education institutions include information about history of Islam in their lectures devoted to the history of Asian and African countries or in the lectures devoted to the oriental history. The author himself reads the course “Islamic world in contemporary politics” in the philosophical department of V.I. Vernadsky Tavrichesky National University. This course is addressed to the students-political scientists of 5 years studies. In the same department professor A. Tsvetkov reads the course “Islamic fundamentalism”, where the main attention is devoted to perception of this phenomenon from the philosophical point of view. The course “Islam” is lectured in the department of the Crimean Tatars and eastern philology of the TNU for the students, who study the Arabic language and literature. The list of subjects includes the classical knowledge of Islam, history of origin of Islam, the main stages of biography of Prophet Muhammad, the trends in Islam etc.

The program of educating specialists in the Arabic language and literature is provided in the Crimea only in one higher education institution – in the TNU in the department of the Crimean Tatars and eastern philology. The Arabic language is studied by students of 3-5

courses in the Crimean Engineers-Pedagogical University in the department of the Crimean Tatars and Turkish philology.

The described general contours of Islamic education in the Crimea have a long history. The formation of the contemporary system of Islamic education goes on under complicated conditions of repatriation of the Crimean Tatars, which has an evident impact on this process and to some extent explains its chaotic and thoughtless characteristic. Probably, as soon as the other essential problems of the Crimean Tatars will be solved the process of the Islamic education will attract the intent attention of national leaders and will get a new impulse for its development.

*“Izuchenie prepodavaniya Islama v Evrazii”,  
M., 2010, p. 288–310.*

**Gusein Bakhar Vagif,**  
political scientist (Azerbaijan)  
**AZERBAIJAN IN THE SPHERE  
OF WORLD DIPLOMACY**

The Yalta-Potsdam system, being a result of the Second World War and the basis of the contemporary world, was formed like a bipolar system constructed on the balance of two contradictory systems. The sphere of two opposing poles was determined even if formally. However, the world socialist system was doomed to retreat in this confrontation. The collapse of the Soviet Union as a moving force and locomotive of socialism determined the fall of the socialist system as a pole, and in this way the political map of the world, forming after the Second World War, was renewed, while the Yalta-Potsdam system became history.

In time of the Soviet Union the notion “the Region of the Caspian Sea” was not used in the political lexicon. For this period these territories were designated by the term “Caspian”. At present, “the Region of the Caspian Sea” in the broad sense means the historic-geographic territory of five Caspian states: Azerbaijan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran. The term “the Basin of the Caspian Sea” is also used by diplomatic lexicon.

After disintegration of the USSR the determination of specific geographic borders of the region is of great significance among the emerged numerous problems. Thus, Russia is a Caspian country. Should its whole territory be regarded as a part of this region, it will stretch from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean. If Iran is included in it, the borders of the region will cover the territory from the Persian Gulf to the Arabia Peninsula, which is totally unacceptable. On the other side, the Iranian oil of the Persian Gulf and the oil of West Siberia in Russia can not be regarded as the oil of this region. Mainly the Caspian territories of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and of three other countries may be included here. Some researchers include Uzbekistan in this region, which may be regarded as an objective meaning.

The difficulty of the geopolitical research of this region is explained by the fact that this region is not a united geopolitical space. The Caspian Sea divides actually the region into two sub-regions: the Trans-Caucasus and the Middle Asia, or the Central Asia (conditionally).

However, the borders of the Trans-Caucasus extend to the shore of the Black Sea. The Trans-Caucasus itself is not considered as a united geographic space, since it, in turn, is divided into the North and the South Caucasus.

Unlike the Trans-Caucasus, from the geographic point of view it is impossible to divide the Middle Asia. The Middle Asia consists

mainly of sand deserts, while its southern part is encircled by high mountains. Since Asia can not be divided like the Trans-Caucasus, this territory is perceived as a united space. Consequently, the notion “the Caspian region” should include as a whole the territories of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan and the Caspian territories of Russia and Iran.

The comprehension of the geopolitical position of the region should be realized after definition of the geographic borders of the Caspian region. It should be added that owing to the close geographic location of two other Caucasian states (Georgia and Armenia) it is impossible to separate these states from the regional processes. The serious interest displayed by the developed countries of the West to the region shows that the energy resources of the Caspian region will play a rather significant role in the world oil market.

The South-East Asia is one of the three big world economic centers. Owing to the economic development of Japan which comes forward as a moving force of this economic center, its needs in energy increase every day. Japan is located near the borders of Russia which possesses big energy resources. But due to the territorial disputes between two countries Japan turned to the Near East and the Caspian region.

The emergence of the projects, connected with the Eastern route as a variant of shipment of hydrocarbons of the Caspian Sea in the XXI century is connected primarily with the efforts exerted by Japan. According to these projects, which were subject to significant discussion, the shipment of oil from Kazakhstan and of gas from Turkmenistan via the territory of China to the Korean Peninsula was supposed to be realized in the perspective. As a result of implementation of this project in the XXI century, the region will be connected with the vast Asian-Pacific region. On the other side, there

has emerged between Tokyo and Beijing such mutual belief that Japan decided to connect its energy system with continental China.

At present, a kind of competition goes on between Pakistan and India in the Caspian region. The political elite of Pakistan extends its influence in Muslim countries, which have won their independence, and intends to acquire the support in solving the Kashmir problem. On the other side, as it is known, Pakistan is the second state (following Turkey), which recognized the state independence of Azerbaijan. Obviously, this factor determines for Azerbaijan the role of Pakistan as an ally of the USA.

The disintegration of the USSR radically changed the geopolitical situation in the Caspian region. Following the collapse of the dominant position of the Soviet Union preventing foreign forces for seventy years to come to the region, four new actors appeared along the banks of the Caspian Sea: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and the Russian Federation. However, these states as a result of collapse of “the common family” became subject to negative processes characteristic for the whole post-Soviet space. The situation in these republics is marked by the decrease of productivity of labor, of the level of living, while chauvinism and religious fanaticism gains in strength in some countries. The false democratic reforms arranged according to western models without due account of national specifics complicated the situation.

The leaders of the Caspian states saw the exit out of the deep economic crisis situation in the export of hydrocarbon raw resources of the region and in getting big foreign financial assistance. One of the stimulating conditions primarily was the need of western states and Japan in the energy resources of the region and the place of the region in world politics. It was not accidental that the energy factor played a direct role in all global projects connected with the region. The cold

winter in 2009, the painful consequences of the world crisis, “the gas war” between Ukraine and Russia promoted the start of various projects connected with “Blue Stream” to Europe. The first among them was Nabucco project and the second – the list of proposals made by Russia for gas shipment to Eurasia along the bottom of the Black Sea.

The wide purposeful advertising campaign was started to attract western investors to development of energy resources of the Caspian region. The mass media disseminated the following information: the Caspian region possesses a vast potential and for the next decade will become an important actor in the world oil market; in the nearest future the countries of the Caspian Basin will be transformed into an important rival for the oil exporting countries, precisely for OPEC; according to the last scientific indications received by means of satellites, the reserves of the Caspian Basin exceed the prognosis of the Soviet geologists by 3–4 times.

The propaganda coincides with the geopolitical interests of the world forces in the region. Just for this reason, the numerous transnational oil corporations started to penetrate into the region: 24 oil contracts were concluded, including “the Contract of the Age”, and big foreign investments were made in economy of Azerbaijan. Over 30 states of the world simultaneously increased their activities in the Caspian Basin. A rare coincidence occurred in the world policy – the coincidence of two geographic axes: North (Russia) – South (the Near and Middle East countries, including Pakistan and Afghanistan, and East (Japan, CPR, some countries of Asia) – West (EU, USA, Canada) in one point. The crossing of these axes in the Caspian region and the rapid internationalization of the region revealed the whole complex of problems, which did not exist beforehand.

All big states of the world took part in the geopolitical rivalry process in this region: Russia, the USA, Turkey, Iran, England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Saudi Arabia and others.

The aims and tasks of the state policy in the Caspian region were elaborated by American experts. The political organizations and foundations, representing in this sphere the left wing, for instance “Heritage” foundation, publish articles and reports under the title “New Great Game”, prepare the public opinion of the USA for adoption of the new strategic division. The representatives of “Heritage” foundation consider that the USA should ensure for all interested parties a free and equal access to the oil reserves of the Central Asia and the Caucasus. Thus, the development of new independent republics will be secured by the budgetary income of the oil transit. And the new more significant obstacles will be created to hinder the efforts of Russia to renew its imperial policy in the region, according to the conclusion of “Heritage” experts.

In order to ensure the above mentioned task the American Administration used all means to protect functioning of economic and political systems of the Caspian states. The programs of rendering assistance to state governance, various measures, grants and financial support given to Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia were directed to achievement of this aim. A. Kohen, a leading expert of the foundation considered that the main task of the USA, acting jointly with England, Germany and France, consisted in preventing de facto and de jure the restoration of the power of Moscow in the south of the CIS.

However, there are the circles, which express milder views. Some principle positions were formulated in the report of the Senate sub-committee on economic policy, export and trade development under the Senate commission of the USA for international relations.

First, the USA abandoned its dream about democracy in the republics of the South Caucasus and the Central Asia; it was declared in public that the authoritarian regime was formed in these states for the period of their self-dependent development. At the same time, it was said in the report that this fact could not become a hindrance to cooperation with various states, including the USA.

Second, it was officially admitted that the pipeline of the system of the Caspian pipeline consortium was the only real alternative for transportation of the extracted resources.

Third, despite availability of the USA adequate forces for interference in the regional processes (as was tested in September 1997 by the joint exercise of the detachments of the USA army and the Central Battalion), the option of such development is hardly probable, since it may lead to the deterioration or to the full aggravation of relations with Russia.

The above discussed issues resemble the problems, elaborated by American experts: the principles of division of the Caspian territory, the appraisal of its oil and gas capacity, the regional cooperation, participation in the anti-terrorist campaign etc. The views of Russian and American experts on the status of the Caspian Sea coincide: the Caspian Sea is “an inter-continental pond”, and the norms of international sea law were never applied to it. The status was determined by the agreement between Russia and Iran in 1921 and the USSR and Iran in 1940. The fact that the agreement of 1921 lost effect and the emergence of new independent states may not result in the change of the legal status of the sea. The actual status of the Caspian Sea remains in force up to addition to it of a new modification or adoption of a new status according to the rules fixed by international law. In reality, this position indirectly gives support to Azerbaijan.

The agreement “On the Fair Division of the Caspian Sea”, signed in July 1998 concerning delimitation of the northern part of the bottom of the Caspian Sea between Russia and Kazakhstan is regarded by jurists as the greatest strategic mistake, since in this way Russia, being guided by international consortiums, refused to disagree with the projects on development of the Caspian hydrocarbon resources. Other experts consider that this position was the most optimal variant in the created desperate situation, since its reckoning among other coastal states created the conditions for keeping free navigation; thus, the united standards of nature conservation and the agreed norms of fishery were ensured jointly with preservation of self-dependence in the sphere of oil extraction within their sectors.

At present, Russia, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan occupy the united position concerning the status of the Caspian Sea: the sea bottom is divided in the middle, while the water area is provided for common use. The position of Turkmenistan gradually approaches the position of Russia. At the same time, Ashgabad made the proposal to allot the 20-miles zone in the center of the Caspian Sea for free navigation. Thus, the four post-Soviet states insist that the Caspian water area is a sea. Iran claims for the 20% division of the sea among all parties (condominium) and considers that determination of the legal status of the questionable space should be based on the recognition of the Caspian water area as a lake.

Should the Caspian water area be considered as a sea, the share of each state will be determined by the length of its borders, i.e. the share of Kazakhstan will make 28%, the share of Russia – 20%, of Turkmenistan – 19%, of Azerbaijan – 21%, while the share of Iran will be 12%, according to the line Gasan Gasangulu – Astara. Many people in Iran regard that 50% of the Caspian Sea should belong to Iran and

that the former post-Soviet republics as legal successors may get only 50% of the sea.

Iran is dissatisfied most of all by the oil extraction in the Caspian Sea; and the USA with great pleasure often touch upon this sore place of Iran. For instance, S. Mann, special advisor for Caspian affairs of the State Secretary of the USA in the course of his visit to Kazakhstan declared that the development of the Caspian Sea shelf was needed before taking final decision on determination of the status of the Caspian Basin. It should be recalled that in April 2002 at the summit, held in Ashgabad, the USA participated in it as the sixth actor. Proclaiming the Caspian Sea as a zone of its vital interests, the USA included the whole Caspian Sea-Black Sea Basin in its sphere of responsibility in the Persian Gulf.

The observers noted that the USA tried to use the contradiction between Azerbaijan and Iran, which relates not only to distribution of resources. It is caused also by the fact that a rather great share of residents of Iran consists of Azerbaijanis. Therefore the Caspian region resembles an oasis, where the development was held back in an artificial way. It should be mentioned also that a part of the report of the UN Commissioner for Human Rights is devoted to violation of the rights of southern Azerbaijanis.

The summit of the heads of Caspian states was held in Ashgabad on 23–24 April 2002. The presidents of Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan took part in it. The main subject of discussion was the determination of legal status of the Caspian Sea. The reports of analysts on the results of the summit are contradictory. Some of them regard that the aim set by the participants was not achieved, since the declaration devoted to the results of the summit was not signed. Others hold the opinion that the main aim was achieved: all presidents expressed their solidarity concerning regulation of the problem and

agreed to convene such meetings in the future. The issues of the legal status of the Caspian Sea, the unity the Caspian “Five” in the form of the structure like OVES, the disarmament in the Caspian Sea, the perspectives of the region – all remain urgent issues.

The communication systems are of great significance for economic growth of the region’s states, particularly in Azerbaijan. The number of such systems is growing every year, and new projects are being implemented. The communication lines, which are laid through the territory of Azerbaijan, successfully compete with the other analogous systems. The purposeful activities of diplomacy of Azerbaijan, on the one side, and the geopolitical reality, on the other side, contribute to the success of Azerbaijan.

*“Voprosy natsionalnyh i federativnyh otnosheniy”, M., 2010, p. 114–123.*

**R. Sharipov,**  
cand. of sciences (philosophy)  
**THE PROBLEM OF ETHNO-POLITICAL  
PROCESSES IN THE POST-SOVIET  
CENTRAL ASIA**

The events of the end of XX and the first decade of XXI centuries are the indicative example of that the ethnic realities having made the geo-politicians cardinally to change their views at the world picture are one of the most important instruments in the “collision of civilizations” developing before the eyes of the world community (S. Huntington). There were many attempts to take away the international policy from the ethnic sphere during XIX–XX centuries, to shut the eyes to the problems being constantly accumulated in the interethnic relations, to solve them for the account

of complex policy of checks and balances in the form of numerous alliances of “title” states-empires striving for the world dividing according to watersheds of their economic interest zones at any rate. However, as the experience of the First World War showed the there is a very serious danger in the ethnic conflicts which can suddenly destroy the harmonious geopolitical systems but their tasks were the interest serving of “successful” (first of all, the European) nations having progressed on the way of “civilization” and “progress” also for the account for a development as the colonial empires. The hard lesson was Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman and the Russian Empire’s disintegration for the community of “progressive” states. The Second World War, the epoch of the postwar perturbations in the South-East Asia, colonial domination release of Africa and India, the drama of “Iron Curtain” and “cold war” are the realities of not too distant past. And, perhaps, the world community came to conclusion only by the end of XX century that a future development of the international relations will be a jump into the sea of the new shocks, wars and geopolitical cataclysms without considered scientifically substantiated ethnic policy.

The last drama of the past century was a swift disintegration of the Warsaw block and the finale of which was the USSR disintegration according to lines of demarcation of the national republics. The ethnic factor being used by V.I. Lenin, his associates and successors for achieving their purposes to disintegrate “the old world” in the one sixth part of the planet in 70 years of the Soviet government and the communist ideology was the reason for the disintegration of the first state of the workers and peasants. “The manned ethnicity” coming to a decorative national façade in the soviet enclaves and fifteen variants of the slogan “Workers of the world, unite!” on the emblem of the USSR turned out to be the decade of the dramatic shocks for peoples – the inhabitants of the post-soviet area.

According to the expert, Syzdykova, “... the countries of Central Asia became the agenda of a new “big play” where not only the great states are involved in but also the regional “centers of a force” of the middle level. If in XIX- at the beginning of XX century the Russian and the Britain empires were the main players then now they are the Russian Federation, USA, China, Turkey, Iran, India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and, of course, the European countries to a varying degree”. Today it’s universally admitted that the post-soviet Central Asia is the zone of the interethnic tension. And the history of the national formation during 20–30-ss of the past century is the main reason for that in future like in near past this region can be a seat of inter-confessional and interethnic cataclysm (more catastrophic in comparison with the beginning and the middle of 90-ss) threatening a stability all over the Eurasian post-soviet area. Many modern experts of CA agree that at the present the international and the ethnic lines don’t coincide in the region as they were in many respects artificially and voluntarily formed. “During the soviet period the embryonic nations-states were formed based on a combination of ethno-language principles for economic practicability. However, in reality their boundaries were artificial to a great extent. For example, Bukhara and Samarkand where  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the citizens are the Tajik (for the moment of a demarcation) were included in Uzbekistan but the Fergana valley with the Uzbek population was divided between Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Thereby, one prepared the ground for potential conflicts which were especially pronounced in the Fergana valley. The ethnic confrontations in the Fergana valley are associated, first of all, with the water resource problem. The conflict between the Tajik of Isfarinskogo area Hujandskoy oblast of Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz of Batkenskogo of Oshskoy oblast in Kyrgyzstan gave rise to the serious disagreements between two neighboring republics in 1988. So, the problems on water

use and water distribution together with the territorial problems have the serious effect on the international relations and cause numerous conflicts.

At the beginning of 90-ss of XX century when there emerged the situation over the post-soviet area according to a type “live as you like but I am not here” just Central Asia and Transcaucasia felt badly a void of forsakenness on the side of “elder brother” – Russia. If the Baltic countries have quickly refused from the soviet heritage took the take of integration into the European communities without any qualms and spur of the moment, having clearly defined their civilized and ethno-cultural preferences then their eastern and the southern colleagues of “sovereignty parade” turned to be in the grave situation. The region according to the soviet ideology entered directly socialism from feudalism at once having jumped the whole socioeconomic formation was notable for a very discrepancy of their development: on the one hand the experts note pro-communist orthodoxy but on the other hand – patriarchal-feudal and even ancestral-tribal relations almost in a state of nature continue to be developed. Industrialization was artificial during the Soviet government not taking into consideration the interests of the republics themselves but according to Center’s diktat. Nobody gained own national personnel potential in the sphere of production during the Soviet Government in Central Asia – the workplaces in the sphere associated with a high qualification and technologies were preferably taken by the representatives of the Russian and the Russian-language population – product of “special-purpose labor migration”, personnel policy conducted by the party leadership of Moscow.

The outflow of brainpower and skilled workers – the Russians, the Ukrainians, the Byelorussians, the Tatars and etc.- to the “historical homeland” inevitably followed after the USSR disintegration brought to the industrial collapse in the new independent republics of Central

Asia and together with super-tension of the ethnic field gave a picture of a system crisis being spread the region being fluctuated during 90-ss. No doubt that just common people experienced severities of the crisis in Central Asia – equally the “titular” and “non-titular”, however, the representatives of the clannish top having seized power in the republics sensed a degree of their “forlornness” to the full.

The governments of the new independent states having revealed themselves on the world map found themselves at the crossroads of their life; it concerned not only a choice of a development path but purely biological-evolutional conditions: “to be or not to be?” Under these conditions the political elites in Central Asia were launched a historical challenge against each group of the leaders met in its own way. But as a whole, the political transformation of central-Asian elite resulted in the common and the concrete enough trends. Just ethnic map became the main dominant in the political regimes developing in Central Asia during the post-soviet period. Many experts describe the regimes formed in the given region as ethnocratic. The majority of the experts associate the phenomenon itself of ethno-nationalism with the accelerated process of the national consolidation when the ethno-genesis processes relatively the young national “ethnic” groups are in unfinished state, when the national self-consciousness transformation takes a form of exaggerated nationalism and national chauvinism.

So, one can explain “extremes” in ethno-policy of the states in Central Asia as a consequence of “growing pains”. Just from this point of view one can explain obvious or secret policy of the ruling regimes in Central Asia pursued at the end of 80-ss of XX century for “ejection” of the Russian-speaking part of the population, struggle for “nation purity”, personnel policy in the sphere of nation-building when “titular” citizens are given preferences in appointment to the key posts in the state to the prejudice of the national minorities. The trend to nation-

building according to Unitarianism model is directly associated with a phenomenon of ethnocracia in the most republics of the given region. For example, according to Constitution of Kyrgyzstan dated 5 May 1993 it's declared as "sovereign, unitary, democratic republic built on the principles of legal, secular state". The Constitution of Tajikistan echoes it word by word. Whether or no the vast majority of the region state declares the unitarity of their state system except Uzbekistan which even if formally but confirms the sovereignty of the republic Karakalpakstan up to the right for its leaving "based on general referendum of the people of Karakalpakstan".

By the beginning of the third millennium the picture of "rebel Asia" became more or less clear. The main development paths of all the post-soviet republics of Central Asia were defined at the background of a relative stabilization of the situation in the region.

The variant of a development according to "bananas republic" (by analogy with Latin American countries of the first half of the past century) having all the necessary attributes – a strict authoritarian regime, depressive economy concentrating on raw materials sphere, a low standard of life for the vast majority of the population and the dependence on policy of the major world powers (first of all, on USA, more and more paving the way for the region developing). One can rate Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to this type, of course, taking into consideration the concrete differences in their path of development. For example, for Turkmenistan it's a neutrality hardly being proclaimed and finding a way around between USA and Russia associated with heavy stocks of strategically important hydrocarbon resources, besides, – political instability because of Turkmenbashi's death. As for ethno-policy such states are characterized with differences from the Russians and the Russian-language communities' "forcing out" to playing to the gallery with them in dependence of the external economic situation.

Steadily progressive path of development clearly defined by Kazakhstan's Government – integration into the international community and not unfounded claims to a leadership in the region, a rapid growth of gross domestic product taking the lead over the Russian indexes. Thereat, the rapid paces of economic growth and the country potential combine strict enough authoritarian trends being typical for the regime of Nazarbaev and a consistent though not being declared course for derussification of the socio-political and cultural life of the country (adoption of the Cyrillic alphabet, personnel policy and etc.) As a whole, the regime being typical for Kazakhstan can be characterized as “educated authoritarianism” with ethnic tint. One observes a restrained policy approving a deviation from the pro-Russian course more clearly what is evidence of increasing ambitions of our Asiatic neighbor and its attempts to position itself as a new super state.

Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan can be related to the republics “not finding their position”. The political processes there aren't legalized because of high instability of the general situation. The ethnic conflict factor prevails. The negative moments become stronger because of the active interference of Afghanistan and the other Islamic countries into the internal political situation in the given republics, geopolitical claim increasing of China closely observing the situation of “noisy” neighbors and USA's interference in their internal affairs performing the variants of “orange” and other “color” revolutions in the regions (as it is problematic).

As a whole one can note that in spite of the above-mentioned relative stabilization in the region Central Asia will be the center of interethnic tension and the object of close attention from the party of both “old” and emerging “new” world states during near decade. The ethnic and confessional problems (mainly associated with aggressive Islamism seeking in the northern regions) are associated with the

economic interests of rapidly developing countries of Asia (China, India, Pakistan and others) being drawn towards expansion in the given region of CIS. Central Asia is also a traditional goalpost in the foreign policy of Turkey which in spite of its integration in Europe and NATO continues pretending to a geopolitical dominance in the zone of the primary living of the Turkic ethnoses.

In this situation Russia faces a very difficult choice. On the one hand, the Russian Federation as the state-leader in the structure of CIS and the official legal successor of USSR can't but pretend to a traditional dominance in Central Asia; it follows from the logic of the Russian foreign policy development during several last centuries. "Supervision" policy continuation the restless "junior brothers" is dictated also by strategic reasons and the needs of the national security – it can't be another situation when the countries of NATO headed by USA are aiming for the Russian borders trying to "bar" it both west and east. On the other hand, one should also take into account that the Russian Federation left its hold of the situation in Central Asia to a great extent because of the political mistakes in the foreign-policy course of the Russian leaders in 1990-ss. Almost demonstrative indifference to a lot of "junior brothers" left to their fate, indifference to fates of the Russian and the Russian-language communities left out Russia brought to miserable results. Both our traditional and newly emerged competitors rushed in the niche left vacant and began pretending to a leadership in the region. And now one should take into account a factor of the other forces when trying to build up the new relationship with the south-eastern neighbors.

As a whole one should acknowledge that Russia came to the original deadlock having oriented at the West in the foreign policy for years. Russia, nevertheless, didn't become a part of Europe having westernized somehow the economic life and the public institutions. We

ignored the appeals from the East (in particular, from Nazarbaev) to implement so-called Eurasian project together. Now, having disappointed in the pro-western policy (what was inevitable) we face with the situation when “one is sick and tired to wait” for us and the states of USA try to demonstrate their independence on the foreign-policy course of Russia in a varying degree.

*“Problemy vostokovedeniya,  
M., 2010, N 3 (49), p. 63–66.*

**Parag Khanna,**

political scientist (the USA)

## **KAZAKHSTAN: A LOT OF PIPELINES BRING IN GOOD FORTUNE**

Many centuries ago the countries received the geopolitical advantages at the expense of trade routes, while at present the control over the gas and oil pipelines ensures incomes and political connections. The aggregate oil reserves in the Caspian Basin are estimated in the sum exceeding 200 billion barrels (comparing with 600 billion barrels of explored and blocked-out reserves in the Persian Gulf), attaching great importance to the whole region as an alternative source of oil for the West and the East. Like Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan became an energy storeroom, and therefore all superpowers try to get it for themselves. Kazakhstan located on the vast territory of fruitless steppes, formerly easily conquered by Chinghiz khan in his time, is the biggest country of the world, which has no exit to the ocean. Since the time of getting independence Kazakhstan used its geography and geology as blessings and started to write its annals of success. At present, it can not even be compared with its weaker southern

neighbors. Like Turkey, Kazakhstan is a significant state, which ensures transit from the East to the West. Receiving advantage thanks to stable relations with all parties (this strategy is called in Kazakhstan as a “many-vector” strategy), Kazakhstan urges towards a longer possible period of time in the future, when it will not show preference to anybody. The most prominent foreign minister of Kazakhstan Kasym-Jomart Tokayev is an expert in the Chinese affairs. He opposes the impudent diplomatic approach used by Americans, which differs to their disadvantage from the thorough Europeans and well-manned Chinese. The Turkic word “Kazakh” means “free”, and today Kazakhstan does not wish either to go back to the time when it tried to ingratiate itself with Russia or to agree to appearance of the Chinese hegemony or of the military bases of the USA.

The new ”Big Game” concerns not so much the territorial expansion as the access to the production oil wells and to pipelines, laid in the outside direction from them, as well the control over them. The pipelines, like optic cables, are the integral parts of almost invisible infrastructure of globalization, the set of new lines on the map, which prove the bonds of friendship. The private companies assumed the leading role in formulation of interests of the West in Kazakhstan, like in Azerbaijan. They purchase the controlling block of shares of the firms, which possess the biggest national – Tengiz and Kashgan – deposits. Like in the case of the Trans-Caucasian oil pipeline Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, summoned to go round Russia and Iran, the routes of oil pipelines, which are preferred by the USA, Europe and China to be seen in new Kazakhstan, should completely avoid Russia. “A lot of pipelines bring in good fortune” – such patches were pasted on the bumpers of the cars in the streets of Alma-Ata as far back as in time of Clinton Administration. At present, new tankers are placed in line in the port of Aktau on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea in order to ship

the oil of Kazakhstan to Baku, where it will be put in the flow Baku-Ceyhan and further to Europe. At the same time, Kazakhstan in order to increase the size of its trade with the West made the proposal to construct the shipping canal between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea

Russia considers itself as a protector of Kazakhstan. It keeps its rights for Baikonur – the big space-vehicle launching site of the former USSR. However, for Kazakhstan it becomes only one of the players in the Central Asian check plate. A Kazakh diplomat told the author that for more than a century the Kazakhs resisted to the Russian “protection”. Kazakhstan cooperates with NATO within the framework of program “Partnership for Peace” to protect tankers navigating to Baku to prevent Russian dominance in the Caspian Sea. At the same time, Kazakhstan is a rather rich country; and the West will hardly be able by means of corruption to receive its consent for location on its territory of military bases, since their existence may undermine the connections with Russia and China. Although Kazakhstan and Russia (in the name of “Gasprom”) signed the agreement on combining their gas pipelines, the relations concerning the existing pipelines become darkened by the same problem, which Russia confronts in pumping oil through Ukraine: Russian “Transneft” blocks extension of the Kazakh network exactly till the time of its re-nationalization under the Russian control.

However, the close energy ties with Russia are not maintained any more to the disadvantage of relations with the more significant client of Kazakhstan – the PRC. For the Chinese colossus, striving for the energy resources of the Caspian Basin, ensuring shipment of resources is not a transport problem but a diplomatic challenge, since the question is the region, where sovereignty is a very painful issue. Unlike American energy companies, the oil corporations of China get

public support of the government and do not need to look for shareholders. The perspective to get control over the situation along its border avoiding the Strait of Malacca is very alluring for the PRC.

The former border fortress of Russia in Tyan Shan mountains and the present biggest city of Kazakhstan – Alma-Ata represents the most cosmopolite city of the region. The office of the Chinese National Petrol Company(CNPC) is situated in the guarded residence in the center of the city and functions as “the second embassy” of the PRC. Jointly with the authorities of Kazakhstan it elaborates the energy contracts, which only later are made public. For a short period of time, China gave the financial support to the construction of long pipeline Atasu-Alashankow, which pumps the Kazakh oil to the western energy network of China. At the ceremony of its commission in the end of 2005 president N. Nazarbayev declared that the pipeline is destined to consolidate the strategic partnership between Kazakhstan and the PRC. Company “Sinopek” fixed some big places near deposit Tengiz for exploration works concerning new oil fields; at the same time, the negotiations were started with this company on construction of the trans-border pipeline to pump the natural gas to the Chinese pipeline West-East, with the length of 4000 km from Tarim in Sinkiang, to Shanghai.

However, the reticent position of Kazakhstan, which did not want to refuse from its control over its pipelines, resulted in intensification of financial activities of the Chinese diplomacy, which aimed at extension of its participation in the agreements on division of production. For the last century in time of policy of “open doors” China confronted the sense of such mercantilism, when western countries succeeded to conclude the contracts on the concession infrastructure, while Chinese considered these insulting agreements as an occupation. As the reciprocal dependence grew between the key suppliers of energy

in the region (Russia, Iran and the Central Asia) and the consumers (Europe and the PRC), the danger of conflicts between them was rising.

The skillful policy of balance between the interests of the West and China may be carried out by Kazakhstan further as long as it continues its policy of oil deliveries, but the friction increases every month. For instance, when in 2005 the Chinese National Petrol Company acquired “PetroKazakhstan” and paid the price, which essentially succeeded the market price, the USA and Russia gave support to the decision of the government of Kazakhstan to declare the company to be its strategic property, to re-divide its oil refineries and oil extraction enterprises and to postpone its sale. The nationalization practice, which for many decades hindered the West in Arabic countries, may in future turn out to become a weapon directed against the PRC. The Chinese confront a rather complicated task: to remain the attractive partners for the Kazakhs, who are clever enough to avoid the dominance of China, which, in its turn, is rather experienced in incorporation of its dominance.

Some experts assert that the expansion of China is justified, since for the XIX and the XX centuries China actually ceded a part of its territory to Russia and Mongolia (having concluded “unequal treaties”). M. Auezov, a former ambassador of Kazakhstan in the PRC asserts that for three centuries China invariably had “the wish to extend its territory”. However, even without any aggressive acts China claims already for the resources of Kazakhstan. For development of its oil resources in Sinkyang China is able to pump out annually up to two billion cubic meters of water from Irtysh and Ili; since one of these rivers flows into already exhausted lake Balkhash in Kazakhstan, such actions may transform this lake into a territory like the disappeared Aral Sea.

Although the majority of the Kazakhs live in the south-eastern part of the country near the Chinese border, Nazarbayev moved the capital to Astana, to the northern steppe in order to reduce the Russian pride and to avoid the Chinese arrogance, as well as to fix its own pride, expressed by the new city full of pathos in pyramids, towers and stadiums. However, it was unable to hinder the Chinese demographic diplomacy, personified by the Chinese and Uighur traders, who build in Kazakhstan almost permanent settlements. According to the unofficial data, the number of migrants attains 300 million people against the background of 15 million local residents. One may see more and more billboards in Chinese, which resembles the rise of the number of Chinese restaurants for feeding the growing Diaspora. Thousands of workers occupied in the derricks live in the settlements protected by the fence, and their status resembles the extraterritorial status of migrant workers in Arabic countries.

The gradual seizure of Kazakhstan by China goes on just in time, when the country transforms itself into the genuine Kazakh nation overcoming the ethnic and language dissociation. Like Ukraine, Kazakhstan is divided by the demographic axis – to the Russian speaking and to the indigenous population, but the proposed by Nazarbayev program of Kazakhsification and the high level of birth rate in the Kazakh families allowed them to become the fixed majority in their own country. The knowledge of the Kazakh language became the unwritten rule to belong to the upper echelons of the power, mentioned a representative of the opposition in the parliament. At present, the names of many streets in Alma-Ata are written with the addition in Turkic “koshesy”, having replaced Russian “prospect”.

For the last ten years, the share of ethnic Russians fell down to 20%, since many Russians left for Russia, although many of them returned to Kazakhstan. In summer time in the evenings young Kazakh

and Russian people spend time together in café and restaurants easily communicating by means of mixture of the Russian and the Kazakh languages. In Alma-Ata even the relic of the Soviet Union – the central circus was restored, causing warm reminiscences.

Kazakhstan has a chance for self-realization, while many other countries of the Second World may only dream about it. The main factor of it is the social-political stability. From the economic point of view, Kazakhstan surpasses the other countries of the Central Asia, taken together, while the cost of its energy resources is estimated as 9 \$ trillion. Despite the rapid growth of oil extraction and the corresponding profits and the frightful level of corruption, the diversification of the Kazakh economy goes on, insuring it against volatility of the world energy market.

Following ambitious plans of semi-authoritarian “Asian tigers”, Kazakhstan created the special economic zones and information-technological parks, having changed the plants of biological arms production for food produce factories. The country has plans of using its great uranium deposits for nuclear energy production. The new regional airports and wide highways restore the ties on the vast territory of the continental steppe. On the territory of Tyan Shan mountainous meadows there appear winter sports resorts, which may be soon frequented by Europeans, if the Alpine ski traces lack snow due to the global warming.

Kazakhstan transforms itself into a country, where the people become the consumers-individualists replacing the screws of the Soviet system. At present, the main sector of economy and of labor force belongs to the private sector, while private banks acquire financial resources in the stock exchange in London. The state assistance rendered to small enterprises and to the privatized farms, the subsidies to the agricultural sector, as well as high salaries in the state sector

promote higher level of living both in cities and in the rural districts. The level of poverty has been reduced, the level of unemployment is the lowest in the region, and labor migrants come to the country. New houses (both for individuals and for a great number of tenants) are built in Alma-Ata and Astana; professionals go regularly to get jobs in the international energy and consultative companies. As mentioned young specialists, who are employed in the international companies and joint ventures, after some period of training and temporary work in Europe many Kazakh young specialists adopt the western style of living in Kazakhstan.

The government of Kazakhstan acquired the adequate self-reliance and at present in the course of negotiations more often uses the forceful style and threat of expropriation as well as of the raise of corporate taxes with the aim of increasing its control over the energy assets. The existence of reliable partners' relations with international companies and institutions only partially explains the secret of success of Kazakhstan. The Turkish construction companies employ the increasing number of Kazakhs, while foreign experts played a significant role in transforming the former Soviet academy into the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economy and Prognostication (KIMEP), which became the leader in training business cadres and attracts the best students from all neighboring countries.

Kazakhstan takes the lead over Russia in carrying out the reform of the Central Bank and invested more than \$ 4 billion, received from petroleum profits, in the state investment foundation with a rather transparent management. Pragmatism displayed by Nazarbayev covers even internal aspects of national security. In time of disintegration of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan in terms of its nuclear capacity exceeded France, Great Britain and the PRC, taken together. However, for many decades having been a victim of the Soviet nuclear tests (it should be

recalled that the radioactive radiation resulted in appearance of a lot of deformities among stillborn babies), Kazakhstan started to cooperate with the USA for the sake of return of all nuclear materials to Russia. At present, Kazakhstan comes out in favor of the proposal to endow the whole Central Asia with the status of the territory, which is free of nuclear weapons. Russia watches attentively Kazakhstan and is imbued with respect to it. Probably Kazakhstan will become a model for Russia itself.

Kazakhstan has made the transition from directed to market economy, and the Soviet officials have been replaced by adepts of independence; but will the country be able to pass from authoritarian rule to the real elections? Kazakhstan is rich enough to permit itself to install democracy, but Nazarbayev is a leader of the Soviet type and an adherent to Turkic traditions of paternalism; he prefers the Horde, which is obedient to him. For the last years, he dispersed the Party of Democratic Choice, forced his main adversaries to leave the country and imprisoned the opposition leaders, showing that he would rest the lifelong president. At the same time, Nazarbayev does not keep aloof from benevolence: in some or other form he inculcates democracy upon nomadic peoples. He is the sole leader, who was not thrown down by coup d'etat, revolution or assassination. He will rather nominate instead of himself a technocrat-patriot and will not proclaim one of his daughters as a successor, predicted with conviction a political analyst in Alma-Ata.

Nazarbayev is a powerful leader, who is able to lead the country actually in any direction by his will. But since at the same time he is ambitious and rational, he is subject to a possible external influence. Although America talks about democracy in the Central Asia, it is interested to a larger extent in realization of Nazarbayev's strategic aspirations than in the support given to the opposition. The European

Union possesses the devices to exert influence upon Nazarbayev which are connected with his striving for legitimacy but it takes its time over. Nazarbayev not only urges towards elaboration of the plan of actions for Kazakhstan within the framework of the European neighborhood policy but also makes no secret of his desire to become the head of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In both cases the European Union enhances its reputation. The more queer architecture is cultivated by Nazarbayev in Astana, for instance, in the course of building the fluorescent tower with gigantic golden ball on the top of it, the more often Europeans make hints that his variant of democracy does not correspond to the European perceptions. Ensuring the petrol flows from Kazakhstan and affirming in it the western values – are two totally different problems, and both of them shall be solved with due account of the Kazakh specificity.

*P. Khanna, "Vtoroy mir", M., 2010, p. 124–133.*

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