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**IMAGES OF RUSSIA AND THE WORLD
WITHOUT IDEOLOGY**

How They Determine International Relations

It is wrong to imagine that after the Cold war ideology has had no influence on politics, correlation of forces at the regional and global levels, and international relations as a whole. It is the character and forms of such influence that have changed, but it has not disappeared. Moreover, ideological confrontation, purposeful introduction and spreading of one's own, often tinged, images, along with distortion of other images, have become elements of foreign-policy practices.

Liberalism, conservatism and socialism still exist and are preserved, as the three basic ideologies. However, in the present conditions they are not manifested independently, they experience mutual influence, are in the process of convergence, in other words, they have become component parts of an ideological model inherent in various countries. In order to comprehend present-day Russia (this can be related to other states, too) one should proceed not only from the

essence of ideology, but also from the determining correlation between the various parts of an ideological model.

The policy of persons or groups of persons adhering to one or another ideology has not always corresponded to its essence.

False liberalism

Proceeding from these general considerations, I would like to present ideas and images characterizing today's Russia. In the Soviet Union the policy and practices of the authorities contradicted the essence of socialism in many respects. This is a just and widespread view of many people living in Russia and elsewhere. But can we regard those who came to rule the country after the collapse of the Soviet Union as liberals?

Professor Boris Milner, the science editor of the Russian translation of the well-known book by Douglas North "Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance," told me about his meeting with the author, Nobel Prize winner and the founder of the theory of institutionalism. According to Professor Milner, Douglas North speaking about the economic situation in Russia reduced it to the need for resolving three tasks: to master new mechanisms and learn how to deal with changes; to overcome negative consequences of old errors, and preserve the valuable heritage of the past. However, this triad has not been laid in the foundation of the transfer of Russia to market economy. The process of democratization after the collapse of the Soviet Union cannot be viewed outside the context of the economic policy pursued by those who have come to power as a result of this momentous change. Many of these people propagandized "socialism with a human face" during the Gorbachev *perestroika*. In other words, there was a possibility to democratize socialism. But having come to power, they placed at the focal point the liquidation of everything

which was in any way connected with the image of the U.S.S.R. I want to emphasize this point – in a number of cases the main task was to destroy the mechanisms of scientific-technical and economic achievements, which could help mobilize resources for tackling many problems of modernization.

In the early 1990s these pseudo-liberals called for the state to withdraw from economic life. As a result, a group of persons emerged who appropriated the country's riches and its economic potential in the course of the so-called privatization and claimed power in Russia. As a consequence, the Russian economy lost more during the 1990s than it had lost in the years of World War II. All this should be known to those who praise the persons who headed Russia during its transition to market economy and proclaimed democratization.

The policy of pseudo-liberals suffered complete fiasco. They brought the country to the default of 1998, which developed into an economic crisis close to the brink of utter collapse. The shooting of the Russian parliament in 1993 can rightly be considered a major political failure. After the bankruptcy of the pseudo-liberals Russia took a course to the development of market economy with the broad participation of the state in the economy. This has given birth to an image of Russia in the West as a country which is pushing private enterprise to the background.

Such notion does not correspond to reality. The development of private enterprise has been, and remains, in the interests of Russia, and the policy of the authorities is directed to this end. However, it cannot be ignored that private entrepreneurs then and now are far from fulfilling their functions and duties properly. In these conditions budgetary financing of projects becomes more important. But it should be admitted that it proved inadequate and insufficient for investing in innovative industries and extremely important projects in the sphere of

education and health service. These difficulties have aggravated after the 2008–2009 crisis.

Another image of Russia created by those who are hostile to it or are not informed well enough about what is going on there is connected with the idea that the Russian authorities are striving for an authoritarian regime. As if the country is facing a choice – liberalism or authoritarianism. In the middle of the first decade of this century there was a certain revival of liberal ideas. A whole range of demands is presented to the powers that be – independence of courts, struggle against all-permissiveness of the official apparatus, corruption, and election rigging, subordination to law by all – from top to bottom. These ideas are put forward and supported by the Russian ruling elite, broad public and political parties with different views. Certain emphasis on the liberal principles has become more noticeable than before in statements and actions of the Russian leadership. However, in my view, this does not mean that Russia is going to switch over to the positions of neoliberalism, which contains principles incompatible with Russian reality.

The well-known representative of neoliberalism, the Austrian scholar Friedrich-August von Hayek noted that freedom in economic activity is the main condition of a rapid and well-balanced economic growth, and free competition should ensure the creation of new industries and technologies. This is really so. But can we believe that the market mechanism alone is capable by itself ensure a balanced economic growth, and the low level of competition in our country is enough for achieving technological progress? The point is that without state interference in the Russian economy it would be impossible either to improve the market mechanism or achieve a level of competition necessary for a higher scientific-technological progress.

One of the basic principles of neoliberalism is that it is the free play of the economic forces, but not government planning that ensures social justice. But this conclusion cannot withstand the pressure of reality not only in Russia, but in other countries, too, where the government has introduced progressive taxation contributing to the redistribution of incomes in favor of the poor. As to Russia, it would be impossible to overcome its lag in the population's living standards behind the advanced western countries without indicative planning (of course, it should not be directive).

We should not detach ourselves from other contradictions of neoliberalism. Despite the restraining position of Vladimir Putin, the neoliberals are coming out for a radical reduction of the role of the state as the owner in the economy, and insist on the maximal privatization of the most important strategic enterprises and companies. Among them are "Rosneft," VTB, "Rus-Gidro," "Aeroflot," "Transneft," and others. Of course, there are serious drawbacks in the functioning of a whole number of state-owned companies, which should be eliminated. The privatization of big companies should be carried out, there can be no doubt of this, but gradually, and, what is more important, without harm to the process of concentration and centralization of production. This is why calls for urgently privatizing state-owned enterprises and deprive them of the possibility to acquire shares of private companies will only bring harm to the country's economy. Moreover, such calls can also be heard in the government.

Neoliberals in Russia insist on commercialization of health service, educational institutions, scientific research establishments, including those working in fundamental sciences. Denationalization in all these spheres is regarded as the only necessary development path. In essence, neoliberals ignore the acute need to raise the living standards of the Russian population and curtail inequality in incomes.

According to the data cited in the *Global Wealth Report*, the richest persons in Russia, that is one percent, accounted for 71 percent of all personal assets by October 2012. This is twice as much as in the United States, Europe and China, and four times as much as in Japan. Ninety-six Russian billionaires own 30 percent of all personal assets of Russian citizens. This index is 15 times higher than the general world index. Instead of taking the course to the broader use of the Russian natural wealth for social needs, some people suggest that all state superprofits from the export of oil, gas, etc. should be kept in foreign securities. To justify this position they put forward two arguments: the need to save the means for the event of oil prices falling down, and to cover as soon as possible the budget deficit, including at the expense of reducing the allocations on social needs.

Naturally, the dynamics of the world prices of oil and the budget deficit should always be kept in mind. These prices have indeed become lower, but they are far from downfall. As to the budget deficit, it is not too big, and many countries successfully advance having a much bigger budget deficit than Russia.

Restriction of state power and identification of this restriction with political freedom are absolutely incompatible with the democratization of our society. The Russian right-wing elements are coming out for transferring a number of state functions to a social level. This process is indeed necessary, but it should not be associated or accompanied with the weakening of the structures of power. If this happens, the democratization process will bog down and turn into chaos.

In essence, the position defended by those in Russia who do not wish victory of neoliberalism is in many respects like that of the West, where, despite the high and low tides of Keynesian ideas, state interference in the economy has remained almost immutable, passing

through the multitude of economic theories. The trend of returning to the ideas of non-interference of the state in the economy aggravated the economic crisis in the West in 2008–2009. President Obama has introduced radical changes in the tax code and offered state measures to combat the crisis of the bank system, improve the housing market, and reorganize the health protection system mainly in the interests of the middle class and the poor.

Inviolable sovereignty

And now I would like to dwell on certain universal ideas, which, as it seems to me, shatter international relations. Naturally, mutual understanding between states largely depends on the correlation of two categories – values and interests. I don't mean identical understanding of, or attitude to, universal human values, but the way of achieving it. The United States, as it has been shown by a whole range of events in the past years, is bent on forcing democratic values on other countries. Russia maintains that the democratization of public life and the state structure are categories characterizing the internal evolutionary process of different countries with due account of their historical, civilizational and socio-economic specific features. Experience shows that drawing closer the positions of Russia and the United States on this question is, unfortunately, a difficult task. It does not tolerate hasty decisions and requires considerable time. Meanwhile, it is impossible to go along without the interaction of the two countries in strengthening international stability and security in the world. Their interests coincide in this sphere. The understanding of the limits of the impact of globalization processes on state sovereignty is no less important.

Indeed, one may observe how members of integration associations renounce part of their sovereignty, delegating it to a supranational level. However, would it be just to think that state

sovereignty does not exist any longer in the globalized world, which opens the way to interference in the internal affairs of a state?

The introduction of the term “failed state” in legal parlance does not mean that interference in the internal affairs of other countries can take place without a decision of the UN Security Council, all the more so, military measures can be taken for the purpose. Correct understanding of democracy and sovereignty of states is not a tribute to theoretical constructions. This is a requirement of present international politics, and attitude to it largely determines the development of the global situation.

Speaking of ideas and images in the modern world it is impossible to bypass the problem of the growing influence of Islamism going far beyond the boundaries of the Middle East. Likewise, it is impossible not to touch the problem of the inter-Islamic struggle between the Sunnites and Shi'ites, which also determines interstate relations, which turn sometimes into armed interference. I do not think that this shows the expansion of religious ideas in world politics. Characteristically, the “Arab spring”, which increased the strength of the Islamists, has not gone beyond regional bounds and has not become part of policy at a global level. All the more so, it would be incorrect to reduce international relations in the modern world to the struggle between religions or even between civilizations.

* * *

From the above-said one can draw a conclusion that with the end of the Cold war the confrontation of ideas and images has not gone into the past. It continues, assuming various forms and manifesting itself in various world situations, but it has lost its ideological foundation, which used to be the main factor determining the development of the situation in the world.

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THE DECLINE OF EUROPE

AND PROSPECTS OF RUSSIA

(Democracy – not the Aim, but a Means)

“Social paradise”

The 20th century Europe was the most advanced and comfortable region of all times and peoples. But it paid dearly for its mature civilization. The payment included two super-sanguinary revolutions – the French Revolution of 1783 and the Russian October Revolution of 1917, two world wars, several civil wars, including the Russian and Spanish wars, and communism, fascism and Nazism as experiments in social engineering.

After the end of World War II, which resulted, among other things, in the curtailment of the territory of Western Europe almost by half, the leaders of the West European ruling class have come together for some secret meeting where they decided that Europe would not survive another big war or revolution.

The above-mentioned leaders have drawn practical lessons from this fundamental conclusion. They set up NATO in order to accommodate the age-old antagonists, Germany and France by incorporating them both in the structures of this military-political alliance spearheaded against the U.S.S.R. Some time later the European community was formed, a real project of genius designed to seal the new Franco-German closeness through economic integration. In essence, Western Europe took a course to the creation of a socially-oriented state. On the example of the Soviet Union with its indisputable achievements in the protection of working people's rights, West European politicians began to introduce these rights and guarantees in

their own countries. The duration of workday was reduced everywhere, the right to strike was guaranteed, a decent minimal wage was introduced, unemployment benefits were noticeably increased, retirement age was lowered, and pensions were established at a level, which was enough for a decent life. In the most advanced countries workers were granted paid sick-leave, maternity leaves, child maintenance bonuses, and free medical aid. Subsidies for buying medicinal drugs were also introduced. The employer's right to fire a worker was radically reduced. The growth or labor productivity in Western Europe lagged behind the real incomes of the working people (wages plus privileges).

Parallel with these guarantees, the public and semi-public sector connected with them, that is, the state health service, state education and other services rendered by the state, broadened noticeably. Thus, the dream of the Russian proletariat – to live decently without great strain at work and without fear of being fired – became reality in Western Europe.

West European working people did not even realize that they owed all these benefits and rights of “socialist paradise” mainly to the Soviet Union, which, by the very fact of its existence, made the western ruling class agree to enormous concessions to working people, absolutely unthinkable before. Everything would have been perfectly all right, if not for a little trifle. Capitalism as a system functions through the drawing of profit. If there is no profit, the system begins to fail. However, profit cannot be drawn from the thin air. It appears in the process of the exploitation of hired labor. Consequently, inasmuch as the exploitation of West European working people in the new conditions have ceased to bring the desired profit, capitalism in the West was doomed to gradual systematic failure.

Using broad rights and under the protection of the trade unions of their countries, West European working people were working less and worse. Naturally, despite periodic complaints and spontaneous protest actions, they were quite satisfied with their life, perhaps, without luxury, but with reasonable comfort. In this respect it can be stated that the social experiment carried out by the founding fathers of modern Western Europe was crowned with success.

Meanwhile, the problem of the gradual reduction of the production potential of West European countries was gradually taking a turn for the worse due to the mass reduction of birth rate.

There is nothing surprising in this phenomenon. The growing prosperity, educational and cultural level and opportunities for rest and leisure, as a rule, lead to a drop in birth rate. This is quite natural. In our case there is another circumstance which has played a major role. To give birth to a child, to bring him up and educate is an enormously difficult and responsible work. And the main burden of it is on the mother's shoulders. While losing habits and skills of serious labor, the West European working classes have gradually been losing the desire to have children.

In other words, West European capitalism on the basis of its own labor resources could not ensure expanded reproduction and the drawing of profit.

Crisis

Beginning from the 1950s, West European countries began to import labor resources from their former colonies, and also from Turkey and Yugoslavia, on a growing scale. Often migration flows completely changed their direction. In the 1950s – 1960s Italy supplied its redundant labor resources, whereas some time later it became a country of mass migration itself. After the falling down of the iron

curtain and the inclusion of the former Soviet bloc countries first in the European Union and then in Schengen, mass migration of labor resources from the east of Europe to the west began. Migration flows from China were added to the process.

The shrinking West European workforce moved to highly-paid, highly-protected and the most prestigious sectors of the economy. These losses were compensated at the expense of the inflow of labor resources from the south and from the east. Immigrants from countries which were not EU members worked at factories and plants, built houses, swept streets, and served public catering establishments. They did this for scanty remuneration and without the right to protest.

It would seem that West European capitalists have at long last solved the age-old dilemma of the capitalist system by having achieved the situation in which the wolves are full and the sheep are whole. Their own working people are satisfied and do not strike, and work is being done and profit made. Oh, *sancta simplicitas*!

It is not possible to preserve inner barriers and support isolated subsystems within the framework of one and the same system, sufficiently compact and open as the present West European democratic state, that is, one subsystem for one's own, and another for alien people, one for the citizens, and another for the immigrants.

Along with the creation of the legal foundations of a socially-oriented state in Western Europe a political and psychological superstructure adequate to it was created. If marginal non-systemic parties and sentiments are ignored, there has been an unprecedented restructuring of the political landscape. The left, or to be more exact, near-to-left ideas and sentiments have become prevalent. The doctrine of social responsibility and social justice has become the official slogan not only of traditional social-democratic parties and trade unions, but

also of political organizations which have traditionally been considered right-wing, for instance, the Christian democrats.

Social peace and tranquility have to be paid for. The West European societies have paid for the reality of social peace in life by the figment of social peace in the heads. Just to think of it... the values are widespread in Western Europe now, which used to be common on socialist propaganda some time ago. Everybody has the right to decent, worthy life, the socially unprotected and weak should be helped, the state should redistribute wealth from the rich and successful in favor of the weak and unsuccessful, etc. Naturally, the establishment and public support of these values evoke great admiration. However, the balance between the rights and obligations should be properly established and ensured, otherwise society ceases to function as it should.

Finally, immigrants themselves do not intend to reconcile with their downtrodden and inferior position. They have come to the West not in order to live better than at home in their own countries. They have come in order to live in the same way as the indigenous people live and enjoy similar social rights and guarantees.

The classics of Marxism were right when they pointed out that capitalism lived up to this day. For the period of life of a whole generation the system based on drawing the cheap labor resources from the south and the east brought superprofits to West European capitalists. But this system was doomed from the very beginning. Gradually, immigrants increasingly gain the same volume of social rights and guarantees for themselves as the local population. Besides, they demand additional rights, just as any organized minority, primarily, the right to religious, cultural and everyday-life identity. And it turns out that modern democratic Britain, the homeland of the Magna Carta (1215) and the Habeas Corpus (1679), allows the use of the Sharia norms as a source of law.

The drawing of workforce en masse from poor countries helped West European states to cope with the deficit of labor resources, but it did not solve the main problem, namely, that of giving them agreeable wages and real rights so that working people would be satisfied, and at the same time to ensure competitiveness of production and gain the necessary profit. But our West European friends had one moiré trump card.

As is known, capital, just as the proletariat, has no old country. When capital cannot gain a high profit rate in the zone of its existence, it looks for other places of operation. That was a case of postwar Western Europe. Losing profit at home, its capital headed for other countries. First, to relatively civilized Latin America, then to Southeast Asian countries, and after the downfall of the Berlin Wall to East Europe, and lastly, naturally, to China and India. Capital has resorted to this well-tested means many times in its history. This time, too, this step has been quite effective.

Large-scale relatively modern industries have been developed in Latin America and Asia. Given cheap workforce and close proximity of natural resources West European capital began to gain super-profits. Industrial goods produced there were sold all over the world, including the historical Motherland, and filling also the capacious markets of Mexico, Brazil, Indonesia, India, China, and other giants of the Third World. It would seem all were quite satisfied and happy.

But tough luck! The goods produced in the Third World, be it branches and affiliations of West European companies or industries created by Chinese themselves with the help of copied western technologies, when they get to Western Europe, they got the upper hand easily over similar goods produced in Western Europe itself. Be it cars, vacuum cleaners, TV sets, computers, housewares, toys, or clothing.

Indeed, the goods produced in Western Europe are of a better quality, but due to the higher cost of workforce and the bureaucratic character of the labor market these goods are much more expensive than their Chinese analogues, although the latter are somewhat inferior in quality, but quite acceptable. Thus, the West European producer loses to its competitors from the Third World on its own ground.

We observe, for the umpteenth time already, the amazing bifurcation of proletarian consciousness. On the one hand, West European working people protest and organize manifestations demanding that their governments protect the local producer from dishonest competition on the part of China. But on the other, coming to shops and supermarkets the very same working people purchase Chinese goods because they are cheaper. It would seem that if one fine day all people stop buying Chinese goods and begin to purchase one's own, good-quality and nice-looking goods produced in their own country with due observance of numerous laws on labor and nature protection, and the problem of competition would be solved once and for all. But this does not happen because the purse has no home country either. Thus, the operation on transferring industries from Western Europe to the Third World initially planned with a view to supporting West European business and helping it gain a high profit rate collapses before our very eyes.

West European governments and big entrepreneurs have completely lost control over the process, to which they largely contributed for several decades already. Powerful industry which have taken shape in China, India, Turkey and other eastern and southern countries has created insurmountable competition for the traditional industrial countries of Western Europe. At present industry in these countries, especially light and heavy ones, is on its last legs. High-tech branches still hold on, but become weaker with every passing day.

The total degradation of the industrial base in Western Europe, meaning the deindustrialization of a huge region, which used to be the “workshop of the world,” combined with the zero surplus and rapid ageing of the population and influx of immigrants, leads to a systemic crisis of entire West European civilization. This is a crisis which cannot be resolved within the framework of the model of a socially-oriented state, which has taken shape in Europe.

What we witness in Greece, Italy and Spain today is the “moment of truth,” which has been postponed for quite some time, but which has now arrived. The tragedy of West Europeans is that in order to find a way out from this crisis they have to live through a very difficult revolution in their heads. We feel sorry for the poor West European working people. They have been given enormous social benefits. They have become used to high wages and salaries, prolonged vacations, free medical care, early retirement, high pensions, etc.

But to afford all this nations should produce, otherwise a huge bubble will gradually appear, which can be preserved for some time at the expense of credits. But sooner or later this bubble will burst. This is precisely what happened in Greece before our very eyes.

Regretfully, our West European friends have only one way out of the general crisis in Europe – through dismantling the socially-oriented state system, because it ceased to function properly. The overwhelming part of the population receives from the state more than it gives. In order to come out of the crisis the West Europeans have to live within their means, as they used to in the past.

Now let us try to see what this crisis means to Russia and what it should do in this situation.

Consequences for us

First of all, it should be admitted that we observe the present-day economic and financial troubles in the Old World with slight malevolence. We have suffered from inferiority complex in the face of well-to-do and comfortable Western Europe for quite a long time.

In its history Russia had to suffer from injustice coming from Western Europe many times. Nevertheless, we must get rid of malevolence. Despite all and sundry headaches and injuries, this part of the world continues to remain for us an anchor hold of civilization and the main source of modernization resource. This was the case of the time of Ivan III and Peter the Great. The situation remains the same today, too. Western Europe is the first trade partner of Russia, the first place of destination for most Russians, the first source of capital for investments in Russia, etc.

No matter how we position ourselves as an autonomous center of force – which is quite legitimate, – Russia still remains an inalienable part of “Greater Europe.” All specific features of our national history notwithstanding, Russia has formed and developed in the channel of the general western and common Christian historical process. And in their general world outlook and perception the Russians are Europeans.

The crisis in Europe is not something accidental or isolated. This is a systemic crisis inherent in a highly developed capitalist society at a definite stage. It is inevitably conditioned by the desire of late capitalism to reconcile the irreconcilable – social peace, economic growth and super-high profit.

The October revolution of 1917 wrested Russia from the general historical process. But in the 1990s we again plopped down in the midst of it through shock and chaos. We nearly drowned, but managed somehow to emerge to the surface. And now we are drifting with the historical stream along with fellow-companions in the chosen model of

socio-economic development. We are moving in the same direction as the West Europeans, but with a certain time lag. The aim is the formation of a socially-oriented state carrying a heavy load of obligations to its citizens and solving the growing problem of the deficit of labor resources through the mass drawing of workforce from abroad.

So far, thank God, our population is not too pampered, it is used to be satisfied with a little. We are still far from the European level of the way of life and social expectations. But the trend does exist, and history is moving fast. If special correcting measures are not taken, we shall come across a similar crisis of imbalance in some twenty to twenty-five years. To boot, it will be augmented by the brutality of all historical manifestations typical of Russia and a still more dramatic problem of depopulation.

Incidentally, the United States is going along the same way, with a greater time lag. There is no large-scale deindustrialization, and the natural growth of the population is quite adequate. Immigration is taken in its stride. In other words, society is functioning all right. Nevertheless, there are visible signs of the West European “disease.” And the coming of a systemic crisis is a question of time. In this situation one should draw lessons from the West European experience, analyze one’s own position, and take measures for the radical improvement of the situation and its trends. Otherwise, it may be too late.

What do the present historical changes have in store for us? Can we believe that the changes in the world will gradually lead us to the formation of a universal community of kindness and justice? And accordingly, do we need to become concerned with our own security, or will historical process take care of everything?

National security in the interior of good and evil

Undoubtedly, historical process with all its ups and downs leads to gradual improvement of welfare, prosperity and comfort. Previously, hundreds of thousands died from hunger annually, whereas now their number dropped to tens of thousands. Where average life span was 25 years before, it now reaches 50 or 60. Where several decades ago one bicycle was to several villages, now there are cheap scooters and motorcycles in almost every family, to say nothing of mobile phones, which are a common thing in the remotest villages and the poorest families.

It's a fact that the socio-economic indices, including those dealing with such vital aspects as provision with drinking water, sewage facilities, fresh food products, professional medical aid, telephone communications, etc., are steadily improving even in the farthest and most backward corners of the world.

However, material progress is one thing, and assertion of the good and kindness in human relations is another. It should be admitted that relations between people, and hence, between states gradually become more tolerant and human, at least in Western Europe.

Unfortunately, there are still too many expressions of cruelty and evil in the modern world, and they must not be ignored. Leaving aside the hope for the ultimate triumph of the good and kindness in the word, it becomes evident that the state can ensure its national security in two ways: through increasing of its own strength with all its components – both hard and soft, and through entering into alliances with stronger partners whose protection can safely be accepted.

At the present historical stage neither Russia nor other main international actors are ready to consider the option according to which Russia could become a junior partner of another, stronger state, of the

Austro-Hungary type under the German Empire, or Britain under the United States.

This means that we have to rely on our own forces in order to take a worthy place in the modern world and protect ourselves from any emergencies. Much has been said and written on this subject. But there is another one, which should well be mentioned in conclusion. It is the only instrument, which, despite its insufficiency and inferiority, can open the prospect of overcoming the systemic crisis threatening Russia. It is the subject of the role and tasks of the modern Russia state.

The state and democracy

Any state should act in three directions. First, to protect its population and territory from outside threats. Secondly, to ensure economic growth and the minimal level of prosperity. Thirdly, to maintain law and order and assert the value of human life. The state should not be too strong and aggressive because in that case it will trample upon civil society and human personality. At the same time it should not be too weak and amorphous, because in that case chaos, crime and suppression of human personality will be inevitable. The state should find its place somewhere in between.

For Western Europe, inasmuch as NATO still exists and provides security guarantees to all its members, the center of gravity in the activity of the state has shifted to second and third directions. For us the situation is about the same, although we have to take care of our outside security ourselves. But the main challenge which all states in the Old World, including Russia, come across remains unchanged – to pull their countries out of the deepest systemic crisis.

If our states cope with this task, it can be asserted that European civilization has a future. If not, the internal processes of depopulation,

deindustrialization and socio-political disintegration, and the loss of a significant role in world development, will become inevitable.

Of course, abstractedly, any state is an evil, because it suppresses the individual. But people have not been able so far to live without the state. Wherever it is absent, it is replaced by such a form of social organization as a gang.

There is no other way out from a crisis, which struck European civilization, than the strengthening of the state. Its success in coping with this situation will be evaluated by the future generations by its efficiency in overcoming this crisis. Whether this state is maturely democratic or slightly authoritarian is of little importance from the point of view of historical process and human destinies. Naturally, a democratic form of rule is preferable, especially when there are no serious internal crises and threats from outside. But let us not forget that democracy is only a form of the organization of the political system of a state, which has been identified most often with free elections. Democracy *per se* does not solve any problem – it does not increase production, combat crime, take care of the sick, or look after children. Everything depends on what essence we lend to this form.

Here is a vivid example taken from the recent past concerning “free elections.” The United States insisted on holding free elections on the territory of the Palestinian Autonomy in 2006, although practically everybody realized at the time that victory in the elections would be won by HAMAS. And this was precisely what happened. Democracy seemed to have triumphed. But the Palestinian Autonomy has become divided into two enclaves – the West Bank ruled by FATH and the Gaza Sector ruled by HAMAS. Much blood has been spilt. The peace process has been blocked. A question arises as to whether it was worthwhile to claim free democratic elections so insistently.

Or take Iraq. After the nine years of American occupation it is now a free democratic country and free democratic elections take place there. It's all good and well. Previously Iraq was ruled by a fierce dictator who cruelly suppressed his people, used chemical weapon against the Kurdish minority, killed Shia Muslims en masse, waged wars with his neighbors, and threatened the entire region. Yes, all this was true. Yet, women in Baghdad could wear short skirts and go about bareheaded, and the Christian minority numbering almost 1.5 million people felt safe in their churches and at home. Now there are only 500,000 Christians left in Iraq. We know about the present situation concerning women and religious minorities in Iraq. We also know that the position of women and religious minorities is among the main indicators of the civilizational maturity of any society. What will be the end of the “Arab spring” and the fate of democracy in the Arab countries, who have made a breakthrough to “free elections,” is a big question.

* * *

What kind of a state does Russia need after the chaotic dismantling of the Soviet Union and the rather hasty formation of the present Russian statehood in the 1990s?

I think we need a state of the Li Kuang Yeo type, with certain modifications, of course, because we are not Chinese. A strong and effective state capable to cope with socio-economic problems and protect its citizens from terrorists and other criminals, and from financial-economic vicissitudes.

I wish the same to all West European states.

“*Rossiya v globalnoi politike*”,
Moscow, 2012, No 3, May-June.

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**PROBLEMS OF FEDERALISM IN THE CONTEXT
OF ETHNOPOLITICAL PROCESS IN THE SOUTH
OF RUSSIA: POLITICAL & LEGAL ASPECTS**

Close attention to the ethnonational problems in political literature shows that ethnicity is continues to be a characteristic feature of political processes in Russian society. The period of the depoliticization of ethnicity during the past decades of the existence of the Soviet Union changed during the *perestroika* and years of reforms into ethnic renaissance and the rapid intrusion of ethnic interests and ambitions in the sphere of public politics. The degradation of the economic and cultural ties engendered by the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the growing political disintegration and social tension continue to dominate Russian public life and increase political consolidation on the basis of ethnocultural values, that is, politicization of ethnicity. Various national public and political organizations and associations take an active part in political processes and come out in the interests of ethnic groups.

The periods of the depoliticization of ethnicity existed in the first decade of this century. After the measures undertaken by President Putin to restore and improve governance and management of the country in the beginning of the first decade of this century, a short period of stabilization in ethnopolitical processes has set in. Another period of the depoliticization of ethnicity took place in the middle of the past decade. It was connected with a range of measures

implemented on the initiative of President Putin after the tragic events in Beslan in 2004. That period was aptly called “ethnopolitical time-out,” and it gave a chance to adopt major decisions aimed at changing national-state relations, which has not been fully used. In 2007 a new period of the repoliticization of ethnicity began, which continues to this day.

The problems of the depoliticization and repoliticization of ethnicity are of major importance for the South Russian macroregion. In this connection the role and share of the political component of ethnic processes in the North Caucasus evoke special interest in the context of the territorial structure of the Russian state, inasmuch as the subject of national-state construction is of exceptional importance for the problems of security and progress of the country. Today it becomes increasingly clear that the existing type of the federation, including ethnicity as a source of political subjectness, is conflictogenic. And ways to overcome this situation are not clear as yet. The idea of dividing Russia into gubernias (provinces) widely popularized in the 1990s finds few supporters today even among those who recognize the need to “depart” from the existing type of federalism. The most widespread point of view is that “it is too early to be concerned with this. What should be done is to change principally the country’s development and to understand what federalism, innovative climate, economics and budget relations really mean.”

However, the conflictogenic nature of the existing national-territorial structure of the country constantly provokes, and will continue to provoke, conflicts and tension. A case in point is the territorial dispute between Chechnya and Ingushetia which began at the level of the political elites of these two republics at the end of summer in 2012, and turned into an acute ethnopolitical collision. The federal

authorities were unable to react to the confrontation between the two republics properly.

Agreeing with many experts and authors on the point that it is “not the proper time” to deal with the radical national-state restructuring, inasmuch as Russia, and especially its southern regions, is now “on the crest of the wave” of the repoliticization of ethnicity, we should note that the task of depoliticizing ethnicity and its “switching over” from the political and legal sphere to the socio-cultural one is very urgent. Without its solution any stabilization of interethnic relations in the South of Russia is impossible. This should lower social tension by reducing the ethnic components of political subjectness with due observance of the rights of ethnic minorities and their opportunities to choose freely cultural development and forms of self-determination within the borders of the Russian state. A reform of the state-territorial structure of Russia, in which ethnicity would remain one of the features of the country’s territorial structure, but would not be a source of political and legal subjectness, could be the instrument of the realization of such program.

According to the political-legal doctrine, federation is a complex unified state with states-members or state formations as its components. A state-federation as a socio-state system with two levels of governance of one and the same territory, and governance at each level is guaranteed autonomy at least in one sphere of activity.

One of the most urgent and debatable questions of the theory of territorial organization of state power is the divisibility of sovereignty. This problem is of principal importance for solution of the problem of correlation between different methods of decentralization of state power, as well as for determination of the theoretical-legal status of federation.

Whether we recognize the divisibility of sovereignty or not, in the case of a federal state we deal with the division of political power “vertically.”

The modern theory of the state and law believes that in the classification of the forms of the territorial structure of power the decisive elements will be the parameters of centralization / decentralization, namely, the sum total of stable relations between the central and regional bodies of state power. However, from the point of view of an analysis of historical material, the popular thesis affirming the priority of this classification scheme is counter-empirical. Its binary logic allows us to choose only one of the two, rejecting other possible variants. Meanwhile, modern Russia cannot be described either as a federation or a unitary state.

Certain legal experts suggest that along with federative and unitary states the so-called “states with autonomous units” should be classified as a new form of state structure. Unitary state can include autonomous units included in it. But the main concept is that there are only two forms of state structure: federal and unitary state. However, as we see a state with autonomous units in it differs from both these types.

The concept of the state with autonomous units can be regarded as the foundation of the project of the reorganization of the state-territorial structure of the Russian Federation which could be directed to the depoliticization of ethnicity and would contribute to lowering tension in interethnic relations.

Modern Russia is largely a federal state. The territorial units of Russia include republics, territories and regions. Moreover, there are also autonomies – autonomous regions and autonomous *okrugs*. These units have different legal status. As it is justly noted in special literature, the republics as units of the Russian Federation are national-territorial units by their status with the indivisible rights of the

autonomy, that is, definite political and legal independence with certain conditional features of statehood. The national republics within the Russian Federation are a kind of ethnocultural enclaves, autonomous “islands in the “sea” of the administrative unitary state.

The principle of federalism is one of the foundations of the constitutional structure of Russia. Its Constitution delimitates the subjects to be managed and regulated by the Federation and its parts. It should be said that federalism is to be examined not only, and not so much, from formal legal positions, as from realistic positions as a phenomenon actually existing in our life. The essence of this phenomenon lies not in formal legal features of federalism in one or another state-legal association or alliance of states, but in their practical implementation.

Ambiguity in such questions, in the problems of the national-territorial organization and structure of the state, and discrepancy between the *de jure* and *de facto* state of affairs is an extremely negative, even dangerous, phenomenon. The point is not the constantly increasing claims of representatives of one or another ethnos to the country’s leadership on the pretext of inequality of the statuses of some or other ethnic groups, right up to exotic proposals, for example, to create a “Russian republic” within Russia, or transform Stavropol Territory into the Russian Republic within the North Caucasian Federal region. The very ambiguity of the legal parameters of national-territorial units creates conditions for ethnic aggregation, for the creation of an ethnos as an independent subject of political process with its own political interests, which is especially noticeable in the North Caucasus. Ethnicity as a political-legal factor gives rise to social tension and provokes conflicts.

It should be stated that the legal fuzziness of the state-territorial structure of Russia serves as a powerful factor of the politicization of

ethnicity. Getting rid of such conflictogenic phenomena demands the gradual transformation of the modern national-territorial structure. Theoretically, it can be achieved through the creation of actual federative structure with consecutive delimitation of the competence of the federal and regional bodies of power. Or it can be done in the form of official recognition of republics not as parts of the federation, but as territories with a special status – autonomous units.

We think that the realization of the first variant is unfeasible at present. Strict observance of the principles of federalism in public life is directly connected with the leveling of the competence of various subjects of the federation, that is, factual transformation of national-territorial units within the Russian Federation into purely territorial ones, with the elimination of national specificity from the sphere of state politics.

The fate of the project of transfer from federative structure of the state to the state with autonomous units seems different. The point is that autonomation is a rather flexible instrument of organization of political area, making it possible to vary quite broadly the limits of internal self-government of national territories, with due account of their concrete specificity – from political to national-cultural autonomy. In actual fact, it is revival on a new basis of the widely criticized idea of autonomation, but with due account of the 20th century experience. It was due to the realization of the plan of autonomation in the construction of the U.S.S.R. that the Soviet Union existed much longer after the failure of the Soviet economic project became seen and felt by people all around. And the legal form of the collapse of the Soviet project was the disintegration of the unified (federative) state.

In this connection it should be noted that the states with special political-territorial parts – autonomous units – are not rare in the modern world. There are autonomous districts in the PRC (Tiber, Inner

Mongolia, Xinjiang-Uighur, Guangxi-Zhuang, Ningxia-Hui), Ukraine (Autonomous Republic of the Crimea), Israel (Palestine Autonomy), and many other states. Usually, these states are regarded as unitary, although sometimes political autonomy has essential features of statehood: it has the right to adopt legislation on local questions, form parliament, etc. For example, the parliament of Scotland (which is part of Great Britain as political autonomy) issues laws on economic questions, finances and taxes in the region, public security, and some other problems. However, autonomies may and may not have considerable political rights, and may not even be forms of state-territorial organization at all. The choice of a scheme of self-determination in this case depends on concrete circumstances.

Thus, transfer from a federative state to the model of a state with political and/or administrative autonomies will contribute to the elimination of a whole number of reasons for national tension through the establishment of more precise and at the same time more flexible schemes of the territorial organization of power more adaptable to concrete ethnic and cultural circumstances. Besides, the implementation of this program may create prerequisites for repoliticization of ethnicity, being the first step on the way to the elimination of the component of ethnicity and realization of ethnic self-determination in the form of cultural autonomy. There are two obstacles on the road of the implementation of this reform: the ideological, when ethnicity and political subjectness have firmly been entrenched in the minds of the ethnopolitical elites, and the legal connected with its inconsistency with the premises of the Constitutions of the Russian Federation. To overcome the former is much more difficult, and only after that would it be possible to tackle the legal aspect of the project.

*“Nauchnaya mysl Kavkaza”,
Rostov-on-Don, 2012, No 4, pp. 54–59.*

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ETHNIC FACTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAM IN MODERN INGUSHETIA

Throughout the entire history of mankind the correlation of the two opposite phenomena – religion and nationalism – has always been one of the most controversial problems of social relations. The religious and legal base of Islam has contained much material on it. During the period when the Arab East was living through intertribal wars and dissension, the emergence of Islam contributed to uniting fragmentary society in a single community. When the Muslim community began to deviate from the fundamental principles of its religion, local nationalism began to prevail. This was seen especially clearly in Turkey and the countries of the Arab East in the latter half of the 20th century. Society and power in these states were unable to harmonize the principles of religion and modernization of the state structure. At the same time, despite predominance of Turkish and Arab nationalism, religion continued to play a considerable role in the outlook of the peoples of these countries.

This problem is especially timely for the regions of Russia where Islam and traditions of nationalism have been playing a significant role in relations between different social groups. Ingushetia is a vivid example in this context. The outlook of its population is formed on the basis of the intertwining of traditionalism and Islamic dogmatism. Sometimes it is characterized by an extremely contradictory character, which is expressed in the form of nationalism and religious radicalism. On the other hand, the trend aimed at a harmonious combination of traditional and Islamic cultures becomes increasingly popular. However, here, too, one can find elements of nationalism in questions of interethnic nature. Thus, one of the main problems at different levels of social relations is that of combining religious principles with local culture.

From the time of the adoption of Islam the ethnic factor has been playing a significant role in the religious culture of the Ingush people. It was largely connected with the fact that Islam has not become so widespread and popular here as, say, in Dagestan, due to certain objective reasons. Because the population in Ingushetia did not receive such fundamental knowledge about Islam, their ethnic and religious identity began to turn into a certain national feature. This trend contributed to the spreading of all and sundry myths and superstitions, which became especially strong among the local population in Soviet times. It is the generation educated in the spirit of atheism that brought Islam to its traditional interpretation and understanding. As a result, the synthesis of the idea of the superiority of the Ingush nation and the “special Islamic path” began to take shape of moderate nationalism. Against this background Salafite ideas became widespread, which differed from Sufi ideas. In this situation mobilization campaign to protect the ethnocultural image of Islam began, which entered into contradiction with its fundamental principles. For the first time since the spreading of Islam a threat to stability of popular Islam has arisen. Previously, contradictions emerged between different tariqats, whereas now the spreading of Salafite ideas in Ingushetia has contributed to the weakening of the positions of the Sufi trends. As a consequence, ideological struggle for influence on popular masses has begun.

It should be noted that this confrontation has manifested itself in various forms. The actions of representatives of the radical wing of Salafites and Sufis have engendered the atmosphere of alienation, mistrust and fear in society, they divided people into “our own” and “alien.” At the same time there are groups of Muslims who adhere to Sufism and Salafism and who understand the need to search for a compromise on the basis of uniting factors. In their views and outlook, the representatives of the Nakshband tariqat of Sufism are closer to

Salafites. The attractiveness of the latter in Ingushetia lied in their cohesion on the basis of Muslim fraternity which is characteristic of society adhering to the precepts of the Koran and sayings of Prophet Mohammed. Representatives of Sufism, while recognizing these arguments, try to bring religious rites closer to ethnocultural traditions. The intertwining of Sufi rites and certain traits of national character led to the situation in which the individual is restricted in the formation of his views and made dependent on the views and moods of the majority. In these conditions the ethnic factor begins to prevail over the fundamental essence of Islam. Most people perform their religious duties being guided not by their convictions, but by the traditions widespread in this medium.

Members of a certain part of Ingush society show a tendency toward protective nationalism. This is connected with the increasing popularization of Salafite ideas threatening the way of life of the category of the population which is trying to oppose Salafism with the innovated form of Ingush etiquette. However, propaganda of the revival of the cultural traditions some of which contradict Islamic principles only enhances disunity in Ingush society. At the same time, one cannot deny a harmonious combination of certain ethical standards with the Sharia principles, such as “sabar,” “wrath,” “envy,” “generosity.”

In the Ingush etiquette (“Ezdel”) the notion “sabar” means a moral principle and moral quality characterizing a just and well-founded attitude to the interests, convictions, faith and habits in human relations and behavior. The Ingush people believe that it is necessary and commendable to restrain one’s wrathful feelings and exclude obscenities and swearwords, threats and insults from their language, and regarded the use of the above-mentioned words and feelings a manifestation of weakness.

The Ingush “Ezdel” condemns envy as a feeling and trait of a character unworthy of man, as a potential source of evil for people around and the man himself. The ideal variant of the way of life, according to Ezdel, is not to be envious, and always be pleased with what the man has. Only such man can really be happy. The Ingush Ezdel regards generosity as a moral quality characterizing man’s readiness to share with others what he has. Generosity shown to guests, help to widows, orphans and the poor were regarded especially commendable.

Thus, the development of Islam in present-day Ingushetia is connected with a whole range of contradictions disuniting Ingush society. The main problem of relations between all members and groups of Ingush society is the absence of a constructive approach to searching for ways capable to harmonize national self-consciousness. In this context the potential of Islam and the ethnic culture of the Ingush people have possibilities to regulate public relations on the basis of a regimented categorical apparatus representing a synthesis of religious-cultural specificities of the region. The leading role in regulating these social relations should belong to the state as a party interested in harmonization and stability of relations in society.

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**A SMALL NATION IN DIFFERENT ETHNIC
SURROUNDING IN THE POST-SOVIET AREA
(on the example of the Crimean Tatars)**

Sense of self, or the social unconscious of a small nation in a foreign ethnic surrounding in the post-Soviet area differs

from precedents in other regions of the planet. The differences which we shall describe below are specific not only of the Crimean Tatars, but many of them are typical of all Tatars.

In the “landscape and ethnos” system, the people and the entire natural medium surrounding them – all Tatars (Kazan, Crimean, Astrakhan, Siberian, and others) are characterized by three specific features. First, they live on their own land historically, while the other people living on the same land are historically alien for the given landscape. Secondly, the Tatars as an ethnos are not the masters of the land on which they live everywhere. Thirdly, numerically the Tatars are never stronger than other nations living on the same land. From this follows three major consequences.

The culture of Tatars is nowhere dominating (except Tatarstan in the Russian Federation), everywhere it is marginal.

The inner medium of Tatars is local economically, socially and politically, and its potentials for the intensive development of personality are limited.

Hopes for changing this situation are illusory. In other words, the Tatars are in a position of a diaspora, with only one exception, namely, that they live on historically their own land. This specific feature gives rise to the feeling of inequality, even certain suppression and insult, on the one hand, and on the other, the struggle of the Tatars for their rights does not go beyond the boundaries of civilization, although these diasporas might well use force in the struggle for their rights and turn to Islamic fundamentalism in the course of it. However, expectations of an armed struggle and resorts to terrorism are not justified, luckily, and fundamentalist ideas do not have mass response among the Tatar people.

The reasons for this phenomenon can be found, among other things, in the organic inclusion of Tatars in the life of the social medium they live in. Ethnos is usually a closed system, but in this case

it is open to the surrounding medium and the latter is not alien and hostile to this ethnos. From the point of view of mentality and culture the surrounding medium is not only “understandable,” it is its “own” in this case. In the age of globalization a considerable part of the diasporas of small ethnic groups will evidently be in similar position, living through unexpected and sharp changes in their life.

The origin of diasporas in our day is different, just as the meaning of the notion itself. The Crimean Tatars can be called a “diaspora of cataclysm,” although with the already mentioned principal difference: original and rooted in their countries. R. Brubaker writes that the *diasporas of cataclysm*, in contrast to the already known historical or labor diasporas, come into being suddenly, as a result of a sharp change of the political system, contrary to people’s wishes. They are more compact, as compared with labor diasporas, which tend to be scattered over the area and *weakly rooted in the countries receiving them*.

The Crimean Tatar ethnos as a single whole has formed as a result of a cataclysm – forced deportation. The formation of the ethnos itself took place all of a sudden, historically, within the time required for the change of two demographic generations. Three sub-ethnic groups – coastal, mountain and steppe – had substantial differences in culture and the language. In their Motherland they had just started the process of an intensive cultural synthesis, whose final result would have had to be a unified ethnos with culture greatly surpassing the culture of the initial sub-ethnic groups. Their deportation to Central Asia had greatly speeded up this slow process. The synthesis of sub-ethnic groups, which takes several decades, sometimes even centuries, in natural conditions, began there and then by the forcible mixing of representatives of all sub-ethnic groups. This had taken place in the extreme conditions, on the verge of physical extinction in the special

camps for forcibly displaced persons. Moreover, they were deprived not only of the possibility to develop their national culture, but also of the fundamental civil rights. Later, when new generations had come into being in a foreign land, they were in demand to take part in the industrial development of the region they lived in. This development was initiated not by the need for the industrial progress of the region but by government pressure of the U.S.S.R. – the heir of the Russian Empire, which was largely alien to Central Asia. This demand separated the deported people from the local agriculture, where they had to come into contacts with the culturally close Turkic population, and forcibly integrated them in the Russian-speaking medium oriented to the state-empire. All this resulted in the loss of many elements of national identity and their replacement with elements of Russian culture and Russian national identity.

The three Crimean Turkic sub-ethnic groups deported to Central Asia, who had been engaged predominantly in agriculture in their Motherland, were not characterized by a high educational level and involvement in Russian culture. The unified ethnos of Crimean Tatars after the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. returned to its Motherland not as a rural but an urban population, having lost much of its national cultural identity. The new generations had already a secondary and higher technical education, were Russian-speaking urban dwellers with Russian cultural traits. This metamorphosis was not accidental.

For the titular nations in the Union and Autonomous republics of the U.S.R.R., including the Crimean Tatars before their deportation, vertical mobility was facilitated by national identity. In Central Asia vertical mobility at the expense of national preferences (privileges) for Crimean Tatars was completely excluded. Career for them was open only due to their own personal professionalism and the high quality of the workforce, which made it possible to change trade

and skill repeatedly during life time. This situation existed during the period of two generations, that is, people borne between 1946 and 1986. As a result, orientation to secondary and higher education became quite stable in the families of Crimean Tatars. It had been traditional in Russia and the U.S.S.R. mainly for the Jewish national minority. In turn, the possibility of vertical mobility due to knowledge contributed to the growth of general culture, and the latter influenced the character of political struggle – emphasis on non-violent, Gandhi's methods.

This value orientation remained unchanged after the collapse of the Soviet Union and return to the Motherland, despite many changes in almost all spheres of life and difficulties to receive education and find a job. This orientation, the reasons for it and its consequences continue to exist in the social unconsciousness of the ethnos. Despite the noticeable revival of national culture during the past twenty years, this tendency, which strengthened in exile, remains the same today, too. School graduates have to take the test in the Russian language everywhere. 1 Parents send their children to Russian schools just as twenty years ago. 2 Tatar musicians complain about their fellow-compatriots' love of low-grade Russian and Tatar pop music. 3 Crimean Tatar publications express indignation with the profanation of their own history.

The viability of the heritage of deportation has been expressed, among other things, in the latest programmatic documents of political organizations. Thus, the Program "Milli Firkä" of a political organization of the Crimean Tatars created in the 21st century states that young people increasingly lose interest in national life, culture and the native language, preferring participation in more successful and promising socio-cultural projects. Quite a few young people without a clear idea about their future and being subjected to hidden, and sometimes open national discrimination, refuse from their national

identity hoping to take a worthy place in society in accordance with their capabilities, talent and energy, as a rule, outside the boundaries of the Crimea.

What will the further development of this ethnos be like? This problem gives rise to various phobias within the ethnos and outside it concerning manifestations of interethnic and interconfessional confrontation. These phobias are fanned up by events and tendencies both in the post-Soviet area and in the Muslim world as a whole.

On the one hand, it is evident that non-violent methods proved successful for Crimean Tatars, perhaps, only in the conditions of the collapse of the Soviet regime, and also the initial instability of regimes in a number of the post-Soviet states, including Ukraine, and on the other, it becomes increasingly evident that the realization of the aims of the Crimean Tatars as a result of the former methods of struggle is principally impossible. If this is so, would it be possible to see in the Crimea the use of forcible methods of struggle, such as terrorist ones, including Islamic? Could there be armed methods of struggle used? Are the phobias of the Slav population in the Crimea and outside it justified?

In Central Asia the source of terrorism, armed struggle, nationalism and fundamentalism lies in the population “becoming younger,” worsening education, growing unemployment and corruption, etc. The wars and rivalry between clans touch all sections of the population, the social lifts are practically absent, contrast between town and countryside is extremely sharp, the extremist underground is active, energy, water and food resources are scarce, on the contrary drug addiction and drug trafficking are thriving.

There are no such detonators in the Crimea, on the contrary, there are stoppers of extremism connected with the history and nature.

The Crimea is not like the North Caucasus, guerilla fight is impossible there due to the natural conditions. Mass terrorism is not feasible either, inasmuch as it means not only a simple confrontation with the central authorities in Kiev, but does not exclude other, seemingly improbable consequences. Although the Crimea is not Ossetia, the best pretext for the protection of fellow-compatriots the government of the Russian Federation could hardly think of. Lastly, as long as the Crimean Tatars are in a definite minority among the local population of the peninsula (at least for forty more years) the memory of deportation will live on. Due to these very reasons the secular Crimean Tatar organizations and the official Muftiate of the Crimea will wage a relentless struggle against the Wahhabi fundamentalists, and the Crimean Tatars' struggle for their rights will continue along the legal channel.

Notes

1. Among Crimean Tatar school graduates, who planned to pass independent tests in 2011, there was nobody to choose the national language for the test. Ninety-seven percent of them pointed to the Russian language as their native tongue.

2. According to the “Novy region” news agency, which referred to the Crimean Tatar weekly newspaper

det, there were only 320 children in the new scholastic year who were sent to study at the Crimean Tatar language school.

3. The *Avdet* weekly has published a letter from musician Emil Memetov complaining about music his ensemble has to play on listeners' requests. Most pieces are trite and low-grade. He says the tastes of general public become more and more primitive.

4. Certain newspapers and magazines express indignation with the fact that there are cafes and restaurants which have been given

“sacred names” – for instance, the name of the Crimean khan, his dynasty, his residence, or his council.

Av “*Strany Vostoka: sotsialno-politicheskiye, sotsialno-ekonomicheskiye i sotsiokulturniye problemy v kontekste globalizatsii*,” Moscow, 2012, pp. 49–63.

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**ETHNOPOLITICAL CONFLICTS: THEIR FEATURES
IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC AND WAYS
TO RESOLVE THEM**

The modern epoch can rightly be called the epoch of conflicts. As is known, conflict is one of the types of social interaction of individuals, social communities and social institutions in which actions of one side coming across a counteraction of the other side obstructs the realization of its aims and interests. A new branch of social science has emerged – conflictology studying the problems of the origin, development, regulation and resolving of various conflict situations in society.

In the center of attention of this branch of science is the study of ethnic conflicts. Hardly a country could be mentioned that has not known interethnic contradictions and conflicts, whether direct or indirect. They are manifested on the territory of the former U.S.S.R., thus disproving the theoretical premise dominant at the time of the crisis-free development of Soviet society.

It is written in the textbook on political regionalization by Professor N. Medvedev that on the territory of the former Soviet Union there are more than one hundred potential seats of conflicts aimed at redivision of power in some newly-independent states, or a change of their national-state structure. In Kyrgyzstan alone, according to

information from the Chairman of the State Committee on national security of the republic, there are 147 seats of interethnic strife, which can grow into an open conflict.

The formation of mononational states in the conditions of a change of political regimes, socio-economic systems and principles of governance inevitably gives rise to various conflicts, including ethnic ones. This has been the case of the former U.S.S.R. The Central Asian region is no exception. State construction in it was based on the ethnic principle, a policy was implemented aimed at the priority development of the titular nation and its greater share in the general structure of the population. The representatives of the non-indigenous nations regarded these changes as a threat to their ethnocultural security, which placed them in the situation of sharp ethnic deadadaptation.

The ways and forms of resolving interethnic conflicts and relations in any state largely depend on the character of the political system existing there. In this respect the Central Asian republics of the former U.S.S.R. present a far from simple picture. They greatly differ from one another from the point of view of their political systems. They have mainly taken the path of “enlightened authoritarianism.” True, as far as enlightenment is concerned, there is a slight imbalance or inconsistency, as for authoritarianism there is no problem at all, for there is more than enough of it.

Let us examine the political system established in Kyrgyzstan. What ways and forms of resolving interethnic conflicts does its political system prefer to use?

The formation of the statehood of the Kyrgyz Republic and its new political system has taken place through the revival of the semi-feudal system of social relations. A Kyrgyz clan is a regional grouping, relying on which and acting in its interests, one or another politician takes part in political struggle and claims his share of power and the

distribution of resources. Certain analysts say that the revival of clan connections and nationalism has been prompted by the natural feelings of human revival, a desire to acquire social comfort in the conditions of a “wild market,” destruction of traditional economic relations, and political and social instability in the post-Soviet area.

During the 2005 – 2012 period serious changes took place in the Kyrgyz Republic – the “tulip revolution on March 24, 2005, the political coup on April 7, 2010, a heavy interethnic conflict in the south of the republic in June 2010, and the elections of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

An analysis of the events leads on to the following conclusions concerning the reasons of the 2010 conflict:

Social tension in the region and insecurity of the country’s citizens, absence of housing, unemployment, socio-economic lag of the south of Kyrgyzstan, and personnel leapfrog as a result of the coup on April 7, 2010;

Inactivity of the authorities in preventing separatist tendencies among Uzbeks, as well as protest meetings and pickets. The Mayor of the city of Osh M. Myrzakhmatov wrote that his letter containing a warning about the possibility of a revolt in the south of the republic was not answered by the head of the Provisional government Rosa Otunbayeva;

Actions of informal organizations headed by the Uzbek leaders K. Batyrov, I. Abdurasulov, and others, which fanned interethnic disturbances. It should be borne in mind that the main demand of these leaders was the creation of Uzbek autonomy;

Absence of official and objective information. Eyewitnesses assert that national TV channels broadcast football matches instead of truthful information about the situation in the south of the republic;

Belated and slow reaction of the official authorities to information coming to them from different sources. Representatives of the Provisional government arrived to the scene of events eight hours later after the conflict flared up;

The phenomenon of “mob psychology,” and actions of instigators and various criminals. It is known that inscriptions “SOS” and “UZBEKZONE” in giant letters and in special paints appeared on walls of houses. It has been confirmed that the paints were imported from abroad;

Unpreparedness of the special services for emergency developments, inexperience of highly-placed officials in practically all government bodies, and the lack of information at the disposal of representatives of central power, and also uncoordinated actions of military commanders.

In the article “The Drama of Power in Bishkek” the political analyst E. Troitsky wrote that in the event of a repetition of the crises in the republic there could be two scenarios of the development of the situation: inertia and crisis.

The latter may be characterized by the following features:

The actual violation of the territorial integrity of Kyrgyzstan with the loss of control by Bishkek over the southern regions of Osh, Jalalabad and Batken; escalation of seizures of lands and houses by representatives of the “lumpen proletariat” and the criminal world; actual loss of Bishkek’s ability to pursue foreign policy; economic collapse; escalation of interethnic tension, above all, between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks; sliding down of the country to a civil war due to social, clan-religious and interethnic contradictions.

In order to resolve the interethnic conflict between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the south of the country in June 2010, the Provisional government introduced curfew in Osh and Jalalabad regions, adopted a

decree on partial mobilization in the Kyrgyz Republic, and sent government troops to the zone of the conflict. However, these measures proved inadequate for putting down the clashes between these ethnic groups. In view of continuing disorders the Kyrgyz Republic has officially asked Russia to dispatch its troops to the zone of the Osh conflict as a “third force.” However, Russia did not want to interfere in this internal conflict. Its assistance was confined to economic measures only.

Certain member-countries of the Islamic Conference Organization have responded to the call of the Kyrgyz Republic by allotting it financial assistance to a sum of about \$3.3 million.

To investigate the reasons and circumstances of the interethnic tragedy of June 2010 the government of the Kyrgyz Republic has set up a special National Commission. However, it proved unable to answer all questions in its report.

The problem of providing housing space to all who suffered in the tragedy was very difficult. A special government commission was set up in charge of the restoration and development of the cities of Osh and Jalalabad.

Simultaneously the republican authorities carry on actions for reconciliation between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. The elders of both ethnic groups gather for joint meetings to discuss the situation and search for ways of its improvement. Clergymen were especially active during the Muslim holiday Ramadan arranging joint prayers of Kyrgyz and Uzbeks at mosques. The Islamic factor is, perhaps, the most powerful instrument of influence on people in the country. However, so far reconciliation measures have an impact mainly on the older generation. And it should be admitted that young people nowadays do not obey and listen to old men as before. This is why it is necessary to reconcile young men, first of all, those who actively participated in the

interethnic conflict. The press reported that several Uzbek leaders staying in Moscow met with Uzbek financial and industrial tycoons and asked them to help promote and protect the interests of the Uzbek population in the southern regions of Kyrgyzstan. On the money granted by them a two-hour TV documentary about the June 2010 events has been made, and a photo album has been printed containing 200 pictures of horrific crimes perpetrated by Kyrgyzs. This album is distributed in western countries, and 25,000 additional copies of it have been ordered in Turkey. Uzbek activists from the south of Kyrgyzstan have appealed to the leaders of the Uzbek diasporas in Moscow, St. Petersburg, as well as those in Britain, France and Canada for assistance in their struggle against Kyrgyz domination. Part of the money collected was used for sending young Uzbek men to Pakistan for training in combat operations.

The well-known Russian scholar T. Stefanenko in his works on ethnic psychology emphasizes the importance of mutual exchanges of information between various ethnic groups with the necessary observance of the conditions contributing to a change of the situation for the better. This method is known as the information way of resolving conflicts. This is why it is necessary to carry on profound sociological studies of the concrete interethnic situation. Search prognostication is also necessary at the present development stage of interethnic relations. The need for the creation of a system of operational information on the ethnopolitical situation is quite urgent in the Kyrgyz Republic. The elaboration of computerizing bases of knowledge and means of analyzing ethnopolitical conflicts is absolutely necessary.

Among our practical recommendations the following ones should be heeded and taken first:

Creation of a bank of information dealing with the ethnic situation in various regions;

Information should include a list of regions and municipal units (towns and rural districts) in which there have been local interethnic conflicts;

Statistical data about the socio-economic, demographic, migration and criminogenic situation in conflict regions (districts) in dynamics for the past three years;

Standard legal documents of the bodies of power of districts (administrations, internal security departments, prosecutor's offices) on the problems of migration and interethnic relations;

Documents of ethnic public organizations (charters and rules, plans of work, decisions, applications, etc.);

Materials of the local mass media (district newspapers, radio, aids, etc.) on ethnic subjects;

Results of sociological surveillance on interethnic relations (polls and focus-groups);

Monitoring of the Internet materials

Expert assessments of the dynamics of the level of tension at pre-conflict and post-conflict stages.

The main premise is the need for the development of democratic processes in the country, which ensure equal rights to people of different nationality and equal living conditions irrespective of faith, nationality or the language.

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WHITHER CENTRAL ASIA: CHANGING ROLES OF GLOBAL PLAYERS IN PERSPECTIVE UP TO 2020

This article analyzes the policy of the world actors (Russia, the U.S.A., China, the EU and India) and the major development trends of the international situation in the region of Central Asia. Priority attention to the policies of these countries can be explained by the fact that their ambiguity creates certain instability in the region. The author of this article uses analytical methods worked out by the U.S. National Intelligence Council. Among the basic factors analyzed in the article are the driving forces of regional development, regional risks, the probable evolution of the policies of the key global actors toward Central Asian countries, main scenarios of the evolution of the situation in the region. The four scenarios at the end of the article may induce experts to revise their earlier ideas about the means, aims and prospects of the regional policy of Russia, and other key global actors.

***Keywords:** Central Asia, development scenarios, Russia, the United States, China, the European Union, threats and challenges to security.*

Due to a high degree of uncertainty in Central Asia, unpredicted and unexpected events may take place defying even the boldest forecasts, above all, negative ones. This is especially important in the conditions when uncertainty has sharply increased in the entire system of international relations. However, the question about the development prospects in this situation acquires especial timeliness, particularly in the regional policy of Russia. In this article we shall try to analyze the development prospects of the situation in the region up to 2020. Main attention will be paid to the problems of regional policy of the key

global players involved in the region, because their tendency either to interact rather effectively, for example, during the stepping up of the global war against terrorism after the acts of terror in New York and Washington, or, on the contrary, to oppose one another (for example, in the period of “color revolutions” in the post-Soviet area, creates the greatest regional uncertainty.

In accordance with the methods of the scenario analysis evolved by the U.S. National Intelligence Council (Mapping the global future..., 2004), we shall briefly review the “drivers” which will determine the situation in the international region for medium-term and long-term period (up to 2020). Special attention will be paid to regional risks. Then we shall turn to the possible evolution of the Central Asian policies of the key global actors. In conclusion we shall formulate the main scenarios of the evolution of the situation in the region from the point of view of policies pursued by big world powers drawn in the new “Big game.”

A rather uncertain situation will persist in the entire Central Asia, as well as in individual countries of the region. Inasmuch as an effective development model has not emerged in most of these countries, there will be a great threat of the emergence of “failed states,” which are unable to control their own territory properly (this is especially important for small, weakly developed countries having practically no hydrocarbon resources of their own, such as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan). The threat of exacerbation of various conflicts and challenges to security (domestic and interstate conflicts, terrorism, religious extremism, drug trafficking, uncontrolled migration, etc.) will always be present in Central Asia at our time.

In the conditions of abject poverty, constant conflicts and weakness of government and state bodies, drug trafficking from Afghanistan to Europe via Central Asia remains an important

international factor as before. To boot, the social and cultural crisis of national identification going on in most post-Soviet states will continue, and this results in the growing demand for narcotic drugs, especially among young people. In these conditions organized international crime is one of the major threats to security of the Central Asian countries. The ecological and climatic situation in the world, especially in connection with the forthcoming global warming, is truly alarming. This will deal another blow at the water balance of the region, which has been in a critical state for a long period.

The development of all and sundry extremist movements aimed against westernized globalization will continue in the Islamic world, which definitely influence Central Asia. The initiative in the implementation of Islamic solidarity, including in the most extremist forms, will as before be taken upon themselves by non-state and non-governmental players (political and religious social movements, Islamic foundations, the mass media, various religious networks, including terrorist ones). At the same time not a single state of the Islamic world, including Turkey, can be considered as one of the key non-regional players in the Central Asian arena. Such player, consolidating against itself the entire world community, can only be an extremist Islamic state. For example, a player of this type could emerge in the main part of Pakistan (in Punjab), but not in its tribal Pashtun outskirts, if the radical Islamists connected with “Taliban” come to power.

The demographic situation in Central Asia (except Kazakhstan), as well as in countries to the south of it (Afghanistan, Pakistan, India) will remain explosive, because the uncontrolled growth of the population continues there to this day. This will increase all the basic domestic and international contradictions. This is all the more important in connection with the depopulation of the European part of the post-Soviet area, and further on in the west, in the EU countries,

where the growing masses of migrants from Central and South Asia (Afghanistan and the tribal part of Pakistan) continue to flow to. The latter will head for Europe, including via Central Asia and Russia. Kazakhstan, one of the richest countries of Central Asia with a low birth rate, will also become a subject of stronger pressure of South Asian migrants.

In connection with the global tendency to the exhaustion of the key resources (above all, hydrocarbon ones) the interest of the major world consumers of raw materials (primarily China, the countries of the European Union and India) will continue to grow, although there will be fluctuations depending on the growth rates of the global economy. In view of this, the key world players will continue their attempts to realize transport and energy-transport projects (for example, the “Nabucco, trans-Caspian pipelines, trans-Afghan gas pipeline, etc.).

However, in the conditions of an ambiguous situation in the world economy in connection with the global crisis it is hard to predict a stable growth of the raw-material producing countries (except oil- and gas-producers). Thus, definite prospects for serious and stable sources of export incomes exist only in Kazakhstan with its oil deposits, and Turkmenistan (to a lesser degree) with its gas resources. All other countries of the region, including even Uzbekistan with its big resources of hydrocarbons for domestic consumption, continue to suffer from constant fluctuations in demand for and prices of raw materials.

A change in the correlation of world forces will continue to 2020, and it has especially intensified in the situation of the global crisis. The key factor in this will be the diminishing possibilities of the United States and the growing potential of China and India. The change of the correlation of the forces of the key global actors will provoke a further growth of global uncertainty. In this connection Central Asia with its “central important position” in Eurasia will remain a trump card in the

global strategic game, and the “old” (Russia, the United States, the European Union) and the “new” (China, India) key global players will retain their interest in this region.

Russia in the foreseeable future will be one of the most important players in the region of Central Asia due to its cultural and historical ties, military-political influence and certain socio-economic connections, for example, labor migration from this region. This migration will continue to increase due to a great number of factors. However, the possibilities of Russian control over the transportation routes of energy resources from the region have practically been exhausted after the commissioning of the Chinese oil- and gas-pipelines. The many-vector concept has been implemented in all projects and the latest connection of Central Asia with Russia through the oil and gas infrastructure created in Soviet time has ceased to be a monopoly. The sooner Russia ends the “conceptual interval” in its foreign economic policy and find new economic priorities in the region, the better, even if it does it at the expense of the policy of the global “energy superpower.”

Attention should also be turned to the fact that strategically speaking, Russia will have to maneuver to a greater extent between other players, which have more purely economic interests in regional policy, above all concerning China and the European Union. In this context it would be advisable to pay attention to the gradual change of the balance of forces between Russia and China as partners in the SCO by virtue of the purely economic factor (it would also be useful to debunking certain myths about Russian-Chinese strategic partnership). In order to avoid turning into a junior partner of China (not only in Central Asia, but on one's own eastern territories) Russia will have to balance the growing influence of China with the help of resources of the European Union, the United States, Japan, India, and others during

the period of up to 2020. The same can be said about another player – the United States which is using predominantly military-political instruments of influence in the region, and which will also have to balance actively between other players. However, both Russia and the United States by virtue of their great role in military-political respect will retain their role of important arbiters in a number of key strategic matters in the region. The former superpower (Russia) and the superpower which can lose such status by 2020 (the United States) will inevitably switch over in their Central Asian policy to the strategy used by the Central Asian states themselves due to a shortage of resources, that is, many-vector balancing.

The United States has no resources to spend for a short-term or a long-term period on such a far-off region as Central Asia. In this context one can forecast a long-term tendency to alleviating strong pressure on the Central Asia and other post-Soviet states (as it was the case of the period of American support of the “color revolutions” at the time of President Bush when American policy was largely determined by the neo-conservatives). However, the Afghan problem and the problems of the struggle against global terrorism tie American interests to this region for a long-term period. Even in case of the complete withdrawal of the American forces the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan will continue to receive American military aid, even to a greater extent. Otherwise, destabilization of the situation in South Asia will acquire the character of a global “black hole.” In such situation provision of supplies to Afghanistan via the northern route will remain an important task for a long-term period. In connection with a shortage of its own resources the United States will have to maneuver and use other key players in Central Asia.

Already now the Obama administration expresses readiness to establish long-term relations of mutually advantageous cooperation

with China, India and Russia, even to a certain detriment to its old Euro-Atlantic partners and Japan. This can be seen by the rhetoric of the U.S. administration and by the number of President Obama's meetings with foreign partners (the European press complaints about the fact that the U.S. President meets European leaders less frequently), and also by the real foreign-policy steps like the "resetting" of relations with Russia or global partnership with China. However, the U.S. partnership with such old allies as the European Union countries, Japan, South Korea, Turkey and Israel will, naturally, continue to exist, including in solving the Central Asian problems. The point is only an increase of the share of foreign political maneuvering.

In view of a shortage of resources in the United States one can expect the increasing role of the European Union which may, probably, become the main western player in Central Asia. There is certain inertia of the "Europeanization" processes, that is, the spreading of European standards and values to the areas adjacent to Europe. Central Asia will remain an object of the policy of Europeanization at the level of states, and at the level of societies, because it welcomes the various forms of cooperation with the European Union, despite a host of differences of cultures and the system of values. However, these differences, along with the presence of stable connections of the foreign policy of the European Union with the "European standards and value systems" will remain the main obstacle to the regional influence of the "United Europe."

On the whole, one can forecast the expansion of programs like "Eastern partnership" on to Central Asia. The European Union may become the main regional rival of Russia and China. The establishment of "United Europe" as a global political player and close attention to the problems of energy security (the European Union will increasingly depend on energy supplies from outside) will enhance this rivalry. This

will give rise to further rivalry between the European Union and Russia at a geopolitical level and in the competition of the “soft forces.” The internal split of Europe on the question of a policy toward Russia will hardly be overcome completely, because it is connected with the long-term foreign-policy traditions and the interests of individual European states.

The growth of the Indian economy, its greater interest in Central Asian resources, as well as strategic rivalry with Pakistan will draw India to Central Asia as before. However, taking into account the great domestic socio-economic problems of India, the existence of the conflict with Pakistan and its old ally China, the absence of land routes to Central Asia apart from the territories of Pakistan and the PRC, Indian economic influence in the region will never be compared either with Chinese or European.

The main changes in the historical destiny of Central Asia can be connected with China. In long-term perspective Central Asia can be found in the sphere of Chinese hegemony, although the latter will be softened by the influence of Russia and competition on the part of the European Union, the United States and India. As certain Russian political researchers and analysts noted, a single Central Asian and East Asian region could form, and the geopolitical connections of Central Asia with the Islamic world and the post-Soviet and Euro-Atlantic areas will become weaker.

One can assume that in short- and medium-term perspective there will be broader and more active rivalry for influence on the region between China and the European Union, in which the main instruments will be the economic potential and a “softer force.” India will gradually join this rivalry, although, as we believe, Indian influence in the region in the foreseeable future will not be compared either with Chinese, or even with European. Russia and the United States with their

predominantly military-political instruments of regional influence will play the role of the balancing forces and main arbiters, closer to China (in the case of Russia) or to the European Union (in the case of the United States), and equally favorably disposed to India.

This new configuration which, under the influence of the global crisis can emerge within the next few years up to 2020, will retain the old many-vector and uncertain situation in Central Asia after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. But it will be much more definite than during the period between 1991 and 2008. Consequently, the global economic crisis should exert the decisive influence on the situation in Central Asia due to the more rapid change in the correlation of the global forces.

China is one of the few (along with India) economies which could better adapt itself to the world crisis. Already in 2009 China took second place in the world in the GDP volume, having outstripped Japan. The growth of the technological potential of China is even more important. It should be borne in mind that, if the EU economy is viewed as a single whole, China seriously yields to this quasi-state structure. Suffice it to recall the strength of Germany's economy, which is the world's biggest exporter after China, and German export commodities are highly technological, in contrast to Chinese. The Chinese economy can surpass both the U.S. and EU economies, but this may happen after 2020. True, it should be noted that there are stoppers of growth, as it were, in China, which can start "working" at any time. They include a very bad ecological situation, growing social inequality and socio-economic contradictions within Chinese society, high corruption within the government and party apparatus, separatist tendencies in national outskirts, etc. More important was that already by 2010 the cost of Chinese workforce grew considerably due to the changed demographic situation and a shortage of workers, their better organization and

growing demands, as well as the attempts by the state to overcome socio-economic disproportions. As a result, the profitableness of enterprises is diminishing. This is why world investors may begin to look for another country in place of China, like, say, Indonesia or India. China will have to tackle the task of transferring from export-oriented growth to growth oriented to domestic demand. So far this is done at the expense of massive state capital investments in the infrastructure and new technologies, but this situation cannot last long. The country will have to develop domestic markets, that is, increase considerably the population's incomes, and the profitableness of enterprises. As a result of this growth rates may seriously slow down.

China's political influence in the developing countries (Asia, Africa, Latin America) will continue to 2020 bolstered up by Chinese capital investments, mass purchases of raw materials and the growing "soft force." Central Asia is not specially singled out by the Chinese leadership in this respect. Naturally, there are definite strategic considerations connected with the use of transport possibilities and resources of Central Asia for creating an alternative to the supply lines through the Pacific and Indian oceans. There is also such important regional circumstance connected with the problem as separatism and Islamic extremism, as well as the development prospects of Xinjiang, one of the most backward regions of China. However, so far Central Asia is not a zone where Chinese resources flow on favorable terms. This is due to the fact that to invest resources in Central Asia is not in the interests of the most advanced maritime regions of China. After the departure of Jiang Jiemin from office and the weakening of the Shanghai ruling clan, their political positions slightly wavered, although they continue to determine the economic development of China. In these conditions China's regional hegemony can only be a result of weakness of its main rivals in influence on Central Asia

(Russia, the European Union, the United States and India) which either do not have enough interest or enough resources for preventing the potential Chinese hegemony. In this connection it could be viewed as one of the possible scenarios of the development of the situation.

The style of China's foreign policy aimed at effective and pragmatic cooperation with all players and elaborated by its entire millennial geopolitical tradition and rich culture can also seriously soften this future hegemony. The point is whether China will pursue such policy, which does not infringe the interests of other players inside and outside the region also in the case when its influence becomes close to rule. The historical experience of the expansion of Chinese emperors in Central Asia (above all, the Han and Tang dynasties) shows that the initial "soft" policy turned after some time into harsh Sinicization. Of course, China changes in the course of history, and its leaders may not repeat the errors of the old imperial governments in the future.

The above-mentioned considerations and circumstances make it possible to outline several basic scenarios of the development of the situation in the region.

Scenario 1. Concert of powers. The two major groups of powers opposing each other and involved in the new "Big game" (Russia and China, on the one hand, and the U.S.A. and EU countries, on the other) at first place their confrontation into stricter boundaries, and then create mechanisms of interaction on the pattern of the "concert of powers" in the 19th century. This creates the foundation for minimization of conflicts between non-regional forces in Central Asia. Accordingly, risks at the regional level begin to diminish because the states of Central Asia themselves are drawn in the process of positive interaction. The growing regional risks, with which neither the regional states nor big non-regional players can cope each individually, speak in favor of the realization of this scenario. Besides, the main opposing

forces of the preceding round of the new “Big game” (Russia and the U.S.A.) in the situation of the global economic crisis have fewer free resources and pursue a policy much softer and directed to multilateral cooperation, that is, they did not create the foundation for continuing the new “Big game” like Russia and the United States.

Scenario 2. Loss of interest in the region on the part of big world players. In the conditions of the continuing instability in the world economy all the key world powers are concentrated on their own problems or other world regions which are far from Central Asia. However, the scenario of stopping the new “Big game” will give little benefit to the region. For it means that the countries of the region will remain face to face with the growing regional risks. The following considerations speak in favor of the realization of this scenario. Already now the interest of the United States in Central Asia is largely determined by the problem of Afghanistan. After the construction of Chinese pipelines Russia is losing interest in the region, whose economic opportunities for it have greatly diminished. It is only the migration processes and security problems that remain, perhaps, the motives of interest. Proof of this is Moscow’s recent refusal to take part, at Bishkek’s request, in the operations to stop and prevent anti-Uzbek pogroms. China is investing in Africa and other far-off regions of the world much more money than in Central Asia. The European Union is, perhaps, the biggest partner of Central Asia at present.

Scenario 3 Continuation of the “Big game.” In place of the “exhausted” players of the preceding rounds of the new “Big game” come new players – the European Union and China. And their rivalry is bolstered up by the old rivalry of Russia and the United States, and their economic resources are augmented, accordingly, by Russia (in the case of China) and the United States (in the case of the European Union). In this instance, the countries of the region will have to

maneuver between the opposing coalitions. On the one hand, they will have an opportunity to use this rivalry in their interests further on, receiving aid from both sides and using this rivalry for influence on the region in order to get more foreign aid. On the other hand, this rivalry will not create an opportunity for creating effective mechanisms of interaction of non-regional players for opposing the growing risks.

The real character of this scenario is confirmed by the continuing ideological confrontation (western democracy – non-western (non) democracy along the line Russia – China – coalition of the U.S.A. – EU.

Scenario 4. Regional hegemony of China. In the conditions of the growing global influence of China, the latter takes upon itself full responsibility for the situation in the region. The United States, interested as it is, in “throwing off the chest” the load of maintaining stability in Afghanistan, agrees with this. The European Union deprived of political support of the United States likewise refuses to expand “Eastern partnership” to the region. The European Union’s interests in this situation are confined to the South Caucasus, and the borders between potential spheres of influence pass along the Caspian basin. The project discussed now is the construction of the Nabucco, and nothing is mentioned about the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline. Russia within partnership with China is forced to welcome expansion of Chinese influence. However, it has negative consequences from the point of view of Russian national interests. China continues to adhere to its trend of ousting Moscow from the region, going beyond the boundaries of the economic sphere, where this process is taking place at present. And in this process Russia is increasingly becoming a “junior partner” of China.

In conclusion, it can be stated that from the point of view of the national interests of Russia the first scenario is the most promising.

Scenario 2 presupposes an increase of regional risks in close proximity to the Russian borders. Scenario 3 envisages a great spending of Russian resources on the confrontation with the West from which China will gain more benefits (for example, the building of Chinese pipelines and cessation of Russian control over regional energy resources) than Russia. Scenario 4 presupposes refusal from the status of a great regional power in favor of the role of a junior partner of Beijing.

The above-mentioned prospects cause certain apprehensions in the Russian and world expert and political community and force them to re-examine the earlier ideas about the means, aims and prospects of the regional policy of Russia, as well as other key global actors.

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