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SOCIAL INSECURITY AND MIGRATORY PROCESSES IN CENTRAL ASIA

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The destruction of the USSR, renunciation of Soviet values (including the system of *state* social protection) and new policies of the independent states have led to the replacement of the regulated system of security in the new states of the Central Asia with a new situation. Its characteristic features: absence of real state guarantees (“a policy of discharge”), decrease in the achieved standards in all areas of life-support, commercialization of social services, renunciation of the justified mechanisms of social and personal security, instability and loss of confidence in the future. In addition, it is necessary to add economic decay, as well as political and interethnic tension in the new states.

All of this could not but take its toll on the standards of living and feelings of people, and, finally, has led to a splash in migration from the Central Asia. According to different estimations, from 3 up to 5 million people have left Central Asia since the end of the 1980s.

This migration is caused by a number of factors that, nevertheless, can be reduced to a common denominator - the problem of insecurity understood in a broad sense of this word. It is the decreasing standard of living and social security, unemployment, low pay levels, zones of conflict, deterioration of the environment, interethnic tension, and finally, the problematic character of the future. Depending on the reasons (forms of instability), it is possible to distinguish conditionally the different types of migration (though, at times, they are closely connected): ecological migration, ethnic migration, labor migration, migration from zones of conflict and others.

New policy of nationalities and ethnic migration

Certainly, the most widespread and newest phenomenon in the post-Soviet space became *ethnic migration*.

Strictly speaking, ethnic migration existed in the USSR too, for example, the deportation of peoples in the period of Stalinist repressions, or migration of Slavs (and others) to Central Asia in the 1950s-60s. Stalin's deportation of peoples, in contradistinction to all subsequent migrations, had violent and administrative characters. As to migration in the 1950s-60s, it also had essential differences with migration of the 1990s. *First*, it was internal migration. *Second*, though it had an ethnic Slavic character (mainly involving natives of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus), it was essentially labor migration, caused by state policy and aimed at developing the productive forces of the Central Asian region. For the Soviet government it was cheaper and faster to transport qualified personnel from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus to Central Asia, rather than to train locals. These qualified labor resources were necessary for large-scale industrialization, apartment construction, and development of "virgin lands." *Third*, it was migration from economically advanced regions to less advanced ones.

Present ethnic migration, first of all, is caused by conflicts between the identities of ethnic minorities and the identities of the new national states. Ethnic migration from Central Asia is a set of migratory streams, where people with common ethnic self-identifications dominate. Alienating themselves from a given society and alienated by it, and sensing a threat to their ethnocultural security, they are forced to move from one state to another to avoid this threat.¹

The new realities in the countries of the CIS have generated new types of problems which have arisen in the face of various ethnic groups—not only in the face of peoples rather recently migrating to Central Asia (Russians and others), but also in the face of indigenous peoples. The nation-state delimitation in Central Asia which was carried out in the 1920s-30s, when administrative borders were drawn without taking into account the borders of ethnic areas, has generated ethnic

¹ Панарин С. *Центральная Азия: этническая миграция и политические субъекты воздействия на миграционную ситуацию*. – Государство и антропоток. 2002. – <http://www.antropotok.archipelag.ru/text/ad44.htm>

enclaves in territories of national republics: Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, Tajiks and Kazakhs in Uzbekistan, etc. But all this was within the framework of one country. After the disintegration of the USSR, these peoples who for centuries lived on their “own” territories suddenly became inhabitants of “foreign” states where they—native residents—became ethnic minorities, and other native residents became the ruling nation. There was also a change in status for other national groups, who in the new states began to feel uncomfortable and unsafe. Changed social statuses of various ethnic groups became one of the reasons for ethnic migration.²

After the formation of the independent Central Asian states—whose policy began to be based on the dominance of the *national idea* connected with the right of self-determination and the open prioritization of the development of *titular nationalities*—the sphere of the rights, freedom and opportunities for ethnic minorities have been narrowed. In other words, the essence of ethnic processes in post-Soviet Central Asia is a tendency towards the formation of *mono-ethnic* states, on the basis of which lies *ethnocentrism* or the *titular ethnicization* of these societies.³

How is this manifested?

First of all, the proportion of titular ethnic groups is increasing, while the proportion of other ethnic groups is decreasing. In Tajikistan the proportion of the titular population has increased from 62.3% in 1989 to 89% in 2000; in Uzbekistan, from 71.4% in 1989 to 77.6% in 2002; in

² The ethnic character of migration is manifested not only by the ethnic composition of migrants, but also by the reasons for migration. During the sociological survey of Kyrgyzstan's Russian population, which was carried out in 1992, interethnic problems took the first place among the reasons for the Russian population's departure. In particular, 56% of respondents noted a deterioration of interethnic relations; 29% cited the creation of the laws restraining the rights of Russians; 19%, the infringement of national dignity; 15%, the disintegration of the USSR. Factors such as an unstable economic situation (14 %), danger of unemployment (7 %), growth of prices (6 %) and housing problems (4 %) as the reasons of migration were of secondary importance. — См.: Савоскул С. С. *Русские нового зарубежья: Выбор судьбы*. М., 2001, с. 397.

³ Some scholars note that in multi-national states, nationalism often is a tool to construct a unified nation from a heterogeneous society. — See: Parekh Bh. *Ethniccentricity of the Nationalist Discourse*. — Nations and Nationalism. Vol. 1. Part 1, 1995, p. 35.

Kazakhstan, from 40.1% in 1989 to 53.4% in 1999; in Kyrgyzstan, from 52.4 % in 1989 to 65.7 % in 2000; in Turkmenistan, from 72% in 1989 to 77% in 1995. If one takes into account the high rate of growth among indigenous peoples of the region, as well as the migration of ethnic minorities, it is possible to foresee the further deepening of this tendency.

Titular ethnicization is also manifested in the unequal representation of non-titular ethnic groups in power structures. As S. Panarin writes, "an ideal of nationalism is **having one's own authority in one's own state**. Usually it is understood as the concurrence of ethnic borders with political ones, and the ethnocultural affinity of rulers with the main mass of people".⁴ For example, although Kazakhs make up 53.4% of the total population of Kazakhstan, their proportion in the leadership of the country is 85%. Russians, who compose 30% of the population, fill only 8% of governmental positions. Among ambassadors, who present the interests of the country abroad, there are no Slavs.⁵ In the recent parliament of Kyrgyzstan, among 59 members there was one Kazakh, two Uzbeks, two Karachaevs, and seven Russians.⁶ According to the results of a sociological survey carried out by the Kyrgyz Academy of Sciences among delegates of parliament and leaders of national-cultural centers, 100% of Azerbaijanis, 100% of Georgians, 81.8% of Germans, 77.8% of Karachaevs, 75% of Turks, 75% of Uygurs, and 54.9% of Slavs feel inadequately represented in power organs.⁷ In the parliament of Tajikistan, there are no Russian members⁸, and the Constitution of Turkmenistan, explicitly states that the president of the country can be only Turkmen.

⁴ Панарин С. Национально-культурное возрождение в республиках и территориальная целостность России. - Евразия. Люди и мифы. М., 2003, с. 439. См. также: Gellner E. Nations and Nationalism. Oxford UP. 1990, p. 58-62.

⁵ Karin E., Chebotarev A. *The Policy of Kazakhization in State and Government Institutions in Kazakhstan*. – The Nationalities Question in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Middle East Studies Series, N 51, Tokyo: IDE-JETRO. 2002, p. 81-82.

⁶ Степина Е. *Национальные меньшинства Кыргызстана: грани проблематики*. - Этнический мир. № 12. Бишкек. 2001, с. 21.

⁷ Элебаева А., Омуралиев Н. *Межэтнические отношения в Кыргызстане: динамика и тенденция развития*. - Центральная Азия и Кавказ, № 15. Стокгольм. 1998.

⁸ <http://www.rusedina.org>

Summing up the processes of “indigenization” of the organs of power and management in Central Asia, G. Goldin writes that the non-titular “population does not have a sufficiently full opportunity to express and protect their interests through the state structures. In fact, it is excluded from the process of passing political decisions”.⁹

Ethnocentrism is manifested also in the language situation. It is known that in all post-Soviet Central Asian countries, the languages of titular ethnoses are accepted as state languages. At the same time, most members of non-titular groups don't know these languages. In Kazakhstan, according to a 1989 census, the percentage of non-Kazakhs who could speak fluent Kazakh was as follows: Russians – 0.8%, Germans – 0.7%, Ukrainians – 0.6%, Byelorussians – 0.4%, Poles – 0.4%, Koreans – 1.1%. Even among Turkic-speaking peoples, knowledge of Kazakh was not much better. For example, only 5.8% of Uzbeks and 6.6% of Tatars could speak Kazakh fluently. At the same time, 72.8% of the population of Kazakhstan could speak fluent Russian, and among Kazakhs – 64.1%.¹⁰ According to the data of experts, less than 5% of Russians in Uzbekistan know Uzbek.¹¹

The introduction of state languages has effected reductions of Russian language hours at schools and the withdrawal of Russian textbooks from libraries.¹² In Kazakhstan the number of schools with training in Russian was reduced by 60%, and in Turkmenistan by 71%.¹³ In Tajikistan the textbooks at Russian-speaking schools have not been updated for more than 10 years.¹⁴

⁹ Гольдин Г. *Международная миграция: зарубежный опыт и Россия*. – Автореферат дисс. канд. полит. наук. М., 1998.

¹⁰ Masanov N. *Perceptions of Ethnic and All-National Identity in Kazakhstan*. - The Nationalities Question in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Middle East Studies Series, N 51, Tokyo: IDE-JETRO. 2002, p. 34-35.

¹¹ Schlyter B. *Language Policy in Independent Uzbekistan*. Stockholm: Forum for Central Asian Studies. 1997.

¹² Катагощина И. Т. *Кризис идентичности как фактор миграционных процессов на постсоветском пространстве*. – Восток, 2001, № 6, с. 79.

¹³ Независимая газета. 2000. 30.09.

¹⁴ *Тенденции бедности и благосостояния в Таджикистане в 90-х годах*. Аналитический доклад. Душанбе, 2002, UNICEF, с. 27.

The introduction of state languages in the newly independent states has not changed the actual status of Russian as the language of interethnic communication. But the requirement of knowing the language of titular nations in order to get state positions has led to the indigenization of state structures. State language has thus become a tool of an ethnocentric policy. "Knowledge of the state language becomes the principle that divides society into 'us' and 'them'".¹⁵

Ethnocentrism is manifested also in the conception and policy of the unconditional right of titular ethnic groups for dominance in a given state. Although Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Turkmen, Tajiks and Kyrgyz lived together in Central Asia for centuries, today the new state ideology in all new (established in the 20th century) Central Asian states is based on the above-mentioned idea of the "historical right" of each titular ethnos over a given territory.

Discussing President Nazarbaev's idea of a new state ideology of Kazakhstan about the "integrating role of Kazakh culture" for all of that country's peoples, Kazakh scholar N. Masanov writes: "In this way, an ideology has been firmly reinforced in the social consciousness of Kazakhs, according to which Kazakhs as the indigenous ethnos have the unconditional right to political domination in the territory of Kazakhstan. Their language is to become the state language, and Kazakh culture is to play the integrating role for 'all ethnic groups in the country'. Consequently, representatives of the Kazakh ethnos have a 'natural' and 'historic' right to occupy the country's top government posts and to receive preferential treatment with respect to higher education, career advancement, and study of their culture and history".¹⁶ Japanese scholar Natsuko Oka, who lived for many years in Kazakhstan, writes: "History is being mobilized to support the idea that only Kazakhs have rights to claim the status of an indigenous people in Kazakhstan".¹⁷

¹⁵ Karin E., Chebotarev A. *The Policy of Kazakhization in State and Government Institutions in Kazakhstan*, p. 88.

¹⁶ Masanov N. *Perceptions of Ethnic and All-National Identity in Kazakhstan*, p. 25.

¹⁷ Oka N. 2002 *Nationalities Policy in Kazakhstan: Interviewing Political and Cultural Elites*. - The Nationalities Question in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Middle East Studies Series, N 51, Tokyo: IDE-JETRO, p. 111.

The ethnocentrism is manifested also in the dominant role of culture (traditions, religion, values, style of behavior, historic heroes, etc.) of titular ethnoses in a given state. E. Karin and A. Chebotarev write that “the citizens of Kazakhstan, representing more than one hundred nationalities, are being presented with a national patriotic ideology of the revival and self-identification of the Kazakhs. At the same time, it is quite clear, the history and spiritual values of the republic’s other peoples, which under Kazakhstan’s constitution are supposed to enjoy equal rights with Kazakhs, are ignored”.¹⁸ As Kyrgyz scholars write on the situation in Kyrgyzstan, “The sovereignty in the republic was interpreted by a certain part of the indigenous population, first of all, as sovereignty of the titular nation and the creation of priorities for it in all spheres of life”.¹⁹

Ethnocentrism is manifested in the content of state policy on national revival. But the theme of revival has different meanings for the titular nation and for ethnic minorities. For titular nations, this question became key in the formation of new state policies. National revival for a titular ethnos is considered by Central Asian authorities as the revival of past power and past roles (like those found in the times of the Great Silk Road, the Samanid and Timurid dynasties, etc.), serving as a *bridge from a Great Past to a Great Future* for these ethnoses. “A characteristic feature of ethnocentric thinking,” writes A. Kusainov, “is an orientation to a past which assumes the image of a ‘bright future’”.²⁰ The past becomes a form of legitimization for pretensions on “a worthy place in a world civilization”.²¹ Moreover, the past becomes even more actual than the present.

¹⁸ Karin E., Chebotarev A. *The Policy of Kazakhization in State and Government Institutions in Kazakhstan*, p. 73-74.

¹⁹ Элебаева А., Омуралиев Н. *Межэтнические отношения в Кыргызстане: динамика и тенденция развития*.

²⁰ Кусаинов А. А. *Исторический процесс сквозь призму этноцентризма – Россия и Восток: проблемы взаимодействия*. Материалы конференции. Волгоград, 2003, с. 86.

²¹ From the point of view of contemporary paradigms that are based on the humanistic understanding of prospects of world civilization, such statements, constantly declared by

Because of the principle value of the past in modern political-ideological constructions of the Central Asian states, it has become an arena of contestation between them. Their common historic past has become an apple of discord. The same states from the medieval history of Central Asia have become a subject of discussion among peoples-neighbors concerning their ethnic belonging. The same fate has befallen great Central Asian thinkers and statesmen. Similar fights have taken place concerning nomadic and settled-urbanized pasts, the antiquity of this or that nation, the role of this or that nation in the ethnogenesis and ethnic history of the region, etc. Today, even heads of states are involved in the justification of the fact that great civilizations of the past are the heritage of this or that people. Ethnocentrist models of the history of Central Asia have become basic elements of new state ideologies.

Of course, the national revivals of small ethnic groups do not share the ambitious goals of those of titular nations. Moreover, it has a different content.

Titular nations and indigenous peoples and such migrant peoples as Russians did not confront such problems as the loss of native languages and customs. It is thus easy to understand that the term “national revival” for ethnic minorities was quite unique and was different from the “national revivals” of Central Asian titular nations and Russians.²² If the national revival of titular nations is considered to be a *political* key, the national revival of ethnic minorities is considered to be a *cultural* key—the revival of national cultures, languages, customs and traditions. It has found reflection even in the names of most of the national organizations—*national-cultural* centers.

The activities of the national cultural centers were actually reduced to mechanistic reproductions of ethnographic pictures—traditional celebrations, concerts of folk songs and dances, etc. Unfortunately, expression of the real interests of diasporas, protection of

leaders of the Central Asian states, look rather strange. Any nation and any state has the right to “a worthy place in a world civilization”, and not just those that had a “great past”.

²² In the USSR, Russians were never an ethnic minority in the national republics in the strict sense of the word.

their rights, forecasting of extreme situations, programs on the economic and spiritual development of ethnos and many other things - these major concerns remain outside of the framework of these centers.

Speaking on the national revival of ethnic minorities, we noted that it has been reduced to culture. In a wider sense, revival implies the gamut of ethnicity, including a political component. But nowadays we cannot say that the political consciousness and political activity of the minorities in Central Asia are developed. Only recently have the leaderships of some ethnic associations come to realize the necessity of deviating from purely cultural paradigms in their activities.

The confinement of national centers to the cultural realm cannot be viewed as a self-contained problem. The reality is that these organizations express the *cultural needs* of their diasporas because they cannot really protect their *political rights*. Given the strengthening ethnocentrism throughout post-Soviet Central Asia, political activism in the ethnic sphere is not an easy option.

In these conditions, a problem of choice has arisen before the ethnic minorities in the countries of Central Asia: to immigrate or to adapt to the new situation. Many people have chosen the first way, and in the late 80s and throughout the 90s, mass migration from the region was overwhelming.

Let's examine the official statistics in Uzbekistan. If, in the 80s, the annual population decrease as a result of emigration was around 50,000 people, in the 90s it was around 80,000-90,000 people. Almost all Germans, Crimean Tatars, Jews, and Turks-Meskhetians left the country. In addition, strong migration is observed among Russians, Byelorussians, Ukrainians, and other minorities.²³ In total, from 1989-1999 1,400,000 people left Uzbekistan, while 571,000 people moved into the country. The negative balance is 829,000 people.²⁴

²³ Ата-Мирзаев О., Гентшке В., Муртазаева Р. *Узбекистан многонациональный: историко-демографический аспект*. Ташкент, 1998, с. 73-75.

²⁴ Ата-Мирзаев О., Гентшке В., Муртазаева Р., Салиев А. *Историко-демографические очерки урбанизации Узбекистана*. Ташкент, 2002, с. 84.

A high level of emigration can also be observed in Kazakhstan. From 1989 to 1999 the population of the country decreased from 16,199,154 to 14,953,131. The population of Russians declined by from 6,062,019 to 4,479,618 people; the population of Ukrainians – from 875,691 to 547,052; the population of Germans – from 946,855 to 353,441; the population of Tatars – from 320,747 to 248,952; the population of Byelorussians – from 177,938 to 111,926; the population of Azerbaijanis – from 88,951 to 78,295; the population of Poles – from 59,354 to 47,297; the population of Chechens – from 49,053 to 31,799; the population of Bashkirs – from 40,949 to 23,224; the population of Moldovans – from 32,361 to 19,458; the population of Mordovians – from 29,162 to 16,147; the population of Armenians – from 18,469 to 14,758; the population of Greeks – from 46,267 to 12,703; the population of Bulgarians – from 10,228 to 6,915, etc.²⁵

From 1990 to 2000 more than 300,000 Russians left Kyrgyzstan. From 1989 to 1997, the number of Germans in Kyrgyzstan decreased from 101,300 to 17,300; Ukrainians - from 108,000 to 70,900; Tatars - from 70,100 to 53,200; Koreans - from 18,400 to 17,800. Increase are observed only among indigenous Central Asian peoples: Kyrgyzs, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kazakhs, etc.²⁶

In 1989, 389,000 Russians lived in Tajikistan. According to official Tajik sources, 320,000 Russians live in country, but unofficial sources give another figure – 68,000.²⁷

Although the high wave of emigration from Central Asia has decreased, many Russian-speakers are still considering leaving. New state nationalities policies could play a decisive role in decreasing the tendency towards migration. These policies should include democratic and humanitarian principles, and shifts from ethnocentrism to an expansion of minority rights. The working-out of a comprehensive *state*

²⁵ Краткие итоги переписи населения 1999 года по Республике Казахстан (национальный состав). – Алматы, 2000.

²⁶ Элебаева А., Омуралиев Н. *Межэтнические отношения в Кыргызстане: динамика и тенденция развития*. - Центральная Азия и Кавказ, № 15. Стокгольм. 1998.

²⁷ <http://www.rusedina.org>

program on ethnic minorities would become an important component of a new policy for each of the Central Asian governments.

Ecological migration

Ecological migration has become one of the new forms of migration, caused by the increasing deterioration of ecological conditions—catastrophic in a number of places. Discussion centers around the Aral sea, the Fergana valley, the Semipalatinsk, the rivers of Kyrgyzstan, etc.

The situation which has developed in the Aral region can only be called catastrophic. The ground and water quality and stability of the ecosystem were fully changed. The volume of water in the sea has decreased by four times, and the area by two times. The dried-up bottom of the sea has turned to a 38,000 km² salt desert. The advancing desert already has swallowed up about 2 million hectares of arable lands, and has led to the degradation of pastures, woods, gardens and vineyards. The efficiency of pastures has been halved. Many kinds of a fish and animals have been lost. The toxicity of the environment has increased. From the dried-up sea-bottom, dust storms carry into the atmosphere more than 100 million tons of sand, dust, salts, sulfates, chlorides, etc., all of which is carried by the storms for thousands of kilometers, accumulating on fields, pastures and settlements. Today, the zone of delivery is more than 250,000 km². In this area, different sorts of disease (tuberculosis, hepatitis, anemia, dysfunction of thyroid gland, cancer, asthma, etc.) have developed. In the former Soviet Union, the Aral region has the highest death rate among children and mothers. Tens thousand people have remained jobless.

From 1990 to 2002 in Karakalpakstan, 273,100 people or about 20% of the population have changed their place of living, including 84,300 people who have left the republic.²⁸ The number of ecological migrants in the 1990s, by some calculations, from the Uzbek territory of the Aral region to Kazakhstan is composed of about 30,000 people; to Turkmenistan, about 4,000; to other areas of Uzbekistan, about 20,000, making a total of more than 50,000 people. Certainly, it is not always

²⁸ Аширбеков А. Экологические и социально-экономические аспекты Южного Приаралья. - Вести Каракалпакстана, 2002, № 43 (16679).

easy to draw an exact line of demarcation between ecological and other causes of migration, for example, economic migration from zones of ecological danger. All the same, according to a sociological survey which was carried out in 1995-1998, a quarter of the migrants from the Aral region named dissatisfaction with the environmental condition as the main reason for migration.

U. Ashirbekov, director of the Nukus branch of the International Foundation for Saving the Aral's executive committee, notes, "The further deterioration of the situation, probably, will lead to the creation of real preconditions that will require the removal of the entire population in the Aral region (and not only Karakalpakstan) from familiar places to the oases of Central Asia that are already overpopulated and fraught with possible social conflicts...".²⁹ In Kazakhstan the government is already raising the question of the state program of resettling people from the Aral region.

Today, a major problem in the interrelation of the countries of the Central Asia is conflicts on water resources that also can provoke migratory processes. The fact is that the basic waterways of Central Asia (the Syr-Darya and Amu-Darya) originate in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, while the main consumers of these water resources are Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

In this scenario, tension in the relations between neighbors can be seen in connection with the Toktogul reservoir, the main source of irrigation water in the Fergana valley and the southern areas of Kazakhstan. The volume of the storage lake is 19 billion km³ of waters while in recent years its actual volume has not exceed 10 billion km³. As a result, the republics next to Kyrgyzstan receive much less water than in former years, leading to lower yields of cotton, rice and other crops. And when water will reach the critical point of 9 billion km³, hydroelectric power station turbines will stop. For the Fergana valley, home to millions people connected to irrigation agriculture, this spells catastrophe.

What is the reason for this situation?

First, in recent years Central Asia has been struck by drought.

²⁹ Там же.

Second, the fact is that Kyrgyzstan depends on Uzbekistan for deliveries of gas and combustible-lubricating materials, and Kazakhstan for coal and black oil. According to agreements between the three countries, these energy deliveries should prevent the need to discharge water from the Toktogul reservoir in the winter months. However, in recent years Uzbekistan has periodically cut off gas in the winter, and Kazakhstan has broken deliveries of coal and black oil. Coal mines in Kazakhstan, for example, have privatized. Furthermore, the hydroelectric power with which Bishkek paid for fuel is not needed by owners of coal mines. In these conditions Kyrgyzstan has begun to operate the turbines of Toktogul's hydroelectric power station in the wintertime in order to produce additional electric power. Consequently, the water level behind the reservoir's dam has lowered to critical marks.

And third, operation of the Toktogul hydrocomplex, constructed during Soviet times for the needs of the entire region, becomes more and more burdensome for small Kyrgyzstan. For example, Kyrgyzstan consumes less than 20% of the water which goes through its hydraulic engineering constructions. Therefore, the republic raises the question of payment for water, provoking sharp responses on the part of its neighbors.

During Soviet times all of these questions were solved automatically, by redistribution of financial resources and by centralized management of the hydro-energetic complex. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, such management has been completely lost.

Nowdays all countries of the region throw accusations at each other. In addition, the constant decrease in the consumption of irrigation water in the Fergana valley and the southern areas of Kazakhstan generates the real threats of interstate conflict and new waves of migration.³⁰

³⁰ See Yu. Razgulyaev's articles:

<http://pravda.ru/cis/2001/08/20/30878.html>, <http://pravda.ru/cis/2001/09/10/31624.html>,

<http://pravda.ru/economics/2001/11/21/34064.html>,

<http://pravda.ru/cis/2002/02/19/37275.html>,

<http://pravda.ru/cis/2002/02/01/36466/html>, <http://pravda.ru/main/2002/03/28/38963.htm>

Conflict zones and migration

From the end of the 1980s, migration from zones of conflicts appeared for the first time since World War II. Some of these conflicts are the result of interethnic strife, and others, civil strife. As a rule, in all of these cases we are dealing with forced migration—the result of direct threats to life.

So, in May 1989 in the Fergana province there were fights between Uzbeks and Turks-Meschetians, which turned into pogroms resulting in 112 deaths; 1011 victims of trauma and mutilation; the wounding of 137 soldiers and 110 policemen; and the burning or plundering of 757 houses, 27 state objects, and 275 cars. With the help of Moscow, in a short span of time more than 70,000 Turks-Meschetians were evacuated from Uzbekistan. Being the first interethnic conflict in Central Asia, which entailed a great number of human lives, the conflict generated an atmosphere of fear and has provoked migration of representatives of some other ethnic minorities from Uzbekistan.³¹

In 1990 there was a clash between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in the Osh area of Kyrgyzstan. A consequence of this conflict was the outflow of Uzbeks from Kyrgyzstan and Kyrgyzs from Uzbekistan, and also outflow of the Russian-speaking population. And in 1989-1990 there were clashes between the Tajiks of the Isfarin district of Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz of the Batken district of Kyrgyzstan.

The longest and bloodiest armed opposition was the civil war in Tajikistan (1992-1997). As military actions escalated, the number of refugees to Uzbekistan grew. While in 1989 net-migration from Tajikistan to Uzbekistan equaled -153 people, in 1992 net-migration was 11,420 people. From 1989 to 1998, the official net-migration was

³¹ Зиямов Ш. *Межнациональные отношения и межэтнические конфликты в Центральной Азии*. - International Journal of Central Asian Studies. Vol. 8. Seoul: IACD & IACAS, 2003, с. 153-154; Осипов А. Г. *Ферганские события 1989 г.* - Ферганская долина: этничность, этнические процессы, этнические конфликты. М., 2004, с. 164-202.

32,090.³² Migration from Tajikistan to other nearby countries also took place.

Labor migration

Central Asia is a region with a surplus of labor resources. During the Soviet period, the region faced a shortage of a qualified work force that, prompting migration here from other regions of the USSR. The years of independence for the countries of Central Asia have become a most complicated transition period, accompanied by sharp decreases in incomes and standards of living, alongside increases in unemployment, inflation and prices for goods and services.

According to the World Bank, on the cusp of the 21st century, 27% of the population in Uzbekistan, 35% of the population in Kazakhstan, 40% of the population in Kyrgyzstan and more than 80% of the population in Tajikistan lived in absolute poverty.

In many sectors of the economy there was a decrease in employment. In 1999, in relation to 1991, the employment level decreased: in industry—in Uzbekistan to 7%, in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to 49%, in Kazakhstan to 55.5%; in construction—in Uzbekistan to 6%; in Kyrgyzstan to 66%; in Tajikistan to 71%; in Kazakhstan to 82%; in transport and communication—in Uzbekistan to 7%, in Kyrgyzstan to 30%, in Kazakhstan to 43%, in Tajikistan to 57%; in science and scientific service—in Uzbekistan to 50%, in Kazakhstan to 76%, in Kyrgyzstan to 80%, in Tajikistan to 81%.³³ In comparison with the Soviet period, the incomes of the population have sharply fallen. According to the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development, the average income in 2003 in Uzbekistan was 40 US dollars; in Kyrgyzstan, 55; and in Kazakhstan, 120.³⁴

The most difficult situation can be found in Tajikistan which is among the world's 20 poorest countries. In 2001 80.8 % of the country's

³² Alikhan Aman. Population Migration in Uzbekistan (1989-1998). UNHCR, Tashkent, 2000, p. 78.

³³ Фридман Л. Структурные сдвиги в экономике Центральной Азии. – «Россия XXI», № 5, 2001.

³⁴ ЕБРР. Стратегия страны: Узбекистан, март 2003. – <http://www.ebrd.org>

population lived on the sum of 8.5 US dollars or lower for each family member per month. Of this amount, 86.5% is expended on food—US \$7.30 or lower. Since January, 1, 2001, the minimum monthly established has been set at 3 somoni or US \$1.63, and the average monthly salary in 2003 was lower than US \$7.00; it is necessary to note that just in 1995 this was 17 times lower.³⁵ Despite the scant salaries, these are not paid in time. Each year, Tajiks are owed tens of millions of somoni in unpaid wages.

A high birth rate growth and a high proportion of youth, accompanied by the closing of many industrial enterprises as well as a financial crisis have made the problem of employment and unemployment one of the most serious in Central Asia. And this problem is one of the reasons for migratory streams.

If in the first half of the 90s, migration from the Central Asia could be designated in general as ethnic migration, in recent years, the representatives of titular nations have also left their motherlands, seeking permanent residence elsewhere.

For example, in Uzbekistan their number already makes up 7-8% of the total number of migrants. According to Uzbekistan's Migration Policy Project, developed under an agreement with the OSCE, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection and the Center of Effective Economic Policy of Uzbekistan, the country has a negative balance of migration with practically all of the countries of the CIS, as well as those further abroad. Annually 25-30 thousand specialists with higher and specialized educations leave the country, and the entire emigratory potential is composed of 1 million persons.³⁶

In Tajikistan, employment of the population from 1989 to 2000 has fallen by 11.5%. The level of official unemployment today is 3-3.5 %.³⁷ However, taking into account informal unemployment and so-

³⁵ Таджикистан: стратегия развития. – ICG. Report N 51 – Asia. Osh – Brussels, 2003, p. i.

³⁶ Касымов А. Разрабатывается концепция миграционной политики Узбекистана, 2004 - <http://www.tribune-uz.info/society/?id1=1755>

³⁷ Тенденции бедности и благосостояния в Таджикистане в 90-х годах. Аналитический доклад. Душанбе, 2002, UNICEF, с. 9-10.

called temporary employment, this level, according to expert estimations, is more than 30%.

In Tajikistan labor migration is of a quite impressive scale. According to different estimations, from 0.5 up to 1.5 million Tajiks—out of 6 million total—have left the country for jobs in Russia, Kazakhstan and other countries. In airports and train stations special information centers for departing labor migrants have even been opened. Every leaving person receives an “Information notebook for the labor migrant”, published through the support of the OSCE and the government. Meetings explaining the problems and requirements of labor migration abroad are periodically conducted with high school students. Thus, it can be assumed that after school they will be compelled to search for work outside of the country.³⁸ In Russia even unqualified Tajik workers receive 10-20 times more than the highest professionals with higher educations in Tajikistan.

In 2002 official bank transfers from Russia to Tajikistan conducted by Tajik workers reached 80 million dollars. Taking into account non-bank transfers, according to experts, raises this sum to about 600 million dollars—three times the state budget.³⁹ Such large-scale migration is considered to be a factor for decreasing the country's insecurity.

According to the Immigration Office of Kyrgyzstan, in 2003 the number of labor migrants from Kyrgyzstan to Russia was around 300,000 persons; to Kazakhstan, around 50,000.

Conclusion

In recent years the wave of migration from the countries of Central Asia—especially to permanent places of residence—has decreased. Nevertheless, the migratory potential of the countries of Central Asia until now is made up of several million persons, an impressive size. High demographic growth and high proportions of youth, deficient land and water resources, low levels of employment and

³⁸ <http://www.tribune-uz.info/society/?id1=665>

³⁹ Таджикистан: стратегия развития. – ICG. Report N 51 – Asia. Osh – Brussels, 2003, с. 28.

salary, interethnic problems that have not been completely solved, ecological conditions—all of this still creates the basis for new waves of migration.

An effective solution to the given questions is possible only in conditions of interstate cooperation. For example, the Fergana valley is divided between Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, and its problems essentially cannot be solved within the framework of one state. The problem of the Aral Sea, as well as the problem of water resources in general, also has a regional character. One can say the same thing about illegal labor migration within a region which until now has not been regulated and has a spontaneous character. The problem of ethnic enclaves in the territories of neighboring countries also should be solved at an interstate level. Thus, problems existing nowadays in the region—the sources of migration—can be solved only by means of integration and cooperation, processes which until now have had no dynamic development. Despite numerous declarations on the necessity of regional integration and cooperation, in real practice mutual claims and accusations, one-sided decisions to the detriment of the interests of neighbor states, struggles for regional leadership and direct collisions are more the norm, rather than the exception.