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НАУЧНЫЙ ДИАЛОГ

ENGLISH EDITION

Science, Research,
Analytics

Consulting
Projects

Digital Technologies
and Solutions

Publishing
and Media activities

Education
and Training

Humanitarian
communications

*The art of dialogue
and confidence*





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Aim and Scope

The purpose of the journal is to create a scientific discussion platform for peer discussion of problems and for the development of optimal solutions in the field of international cooperation, joint research, and publication of its results. Foreign scientists and experts are invited to publish and review the materials submitted for consideration.

The scientific concept involves the publication of scientific papers, including research insights and scholarly results, discussion articles and reviews, in the field of political science, sociology, world economy, cultural studies. The substantive and thematic profile of the journal includes topics reflecting international and regional processes, political, economic, social, cultural aspects of international relations, interstate and intercultural communications, international security and sustainable development

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Vitaly V. NAUMKIN,
Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences,
Editor-in-chief of the journal
«Russia & World: Scientific Dialogue»

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF FORWARD

Dear readers!

The main content of the 1st issue of the 2023 journal presented to you is devoted to communicative regimes in the various countries of the post-Soviet space: Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus and Azerbaijan. It also presents the results of research on the theory and history of international relations and world politics.

The issue opens with a series of four articles on international relations in the context of global and regional processes.

Komleva V.V. presented the results of monitoring the friendliness of communication regimes in the post-Soviet countries and the rating of the friendliness of these countries for 2022. The article on the monitoring results for 2022 is preceded by an introductory speech by the director of the National Communications Development Research Institution (NIIRC) V.I. Gasumyanov «Time to synchronise our watches». Such monitoring is carried out in accordance with the concept of communication regimes elaborated by the NIIRC in 2020, and since then 14 countries have been regularly monitored. And since then regular monitoring has been conducted in 14 countries. Over a period of three years, research methodologies have been improved, the number of interested experts has been expanded and research sites have been established in foreign countries. Over the years, the Institute has held dozens of scientific discussions, the materials of which have been published on the pages of this journal. In 2022, the group of friendly communication regimes includes 8 countries, relatively friendly – 2 countries and unfriendly – 4 countries.

Arshakyan G.M. and Safaryan A.V. presented the results of their research on the nature and dynamics of Russian-Turkish relations in the post-Soviet period. The authors state that “the Turkic-speaking countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia are interested in cooperation between Russia and Turkey in this large region”. Both Turkey and Russia are important actors influencing the countries of the region, while preserving their traditional zones of influence. Russia, with the assistance of Turkey and Iran, can effectively promote the processes of pacification, security and stability in the South Caucasus.

A.A. Khidirbegishvili, A.A. Khotivishvili, I.P. Goryunov addressed current issues of Russian-Georgian humanitarian relations. One of them is the issue of historical memory of Russia and Georgia. The authors noted that our ancestors left us a huge legacy of positive examples of common history and shared past. But for the last 30 years the West has been trying through all means to impose its own values, to erase common historical past of Russia and Georgia, to break ties between the two states. And if historical memory of their mutual relations is still alive among the generation over 50 years old, the youth is losing it. They have little understanding of Russia, its values, population, culture and educational programmes.

The article by T.V. Marmontova, A.T. Tajibayev, I.M. Shamsiyeva, L.S. Mahmuthodjayeva, S.B. Kozhirova is devoted to cooperation between Russia and Central Asian countries and the opportunities and constraints in building their joint future. Using Rapid Foresight tools (forecasting, design, programming and projection), the authors draw conclusions about the importance of Russia's position as a regional player in Central Asian foreign policy. The paper argues that Russia's position is still strong, but not uncontroversial. The authors

draw attention to the zone of frontier communicativeness formed by the Kazakhstan-Russia border, a unique resource that can be exploited in the future.

R.N. Huseynov, A.B. Krylov, R.B. Mobili presented the results of a study of the conditions and factors in the development of inter-country communications between Azerbaijan and Russia. The authors drew attention to the reasons for complementarity between the peoples of Russia and Azerbaijan. Without this, it is difficult to build sustainable communication between the people of both countries in modern conditions. The authors offered the results of their research on the reasons for the interest in the Russian language, education and culture in post-Soviet countries, which are discussed in Azerbaijani society. It is important to identify «the clichés replicated in the media space, social networks, which bring negativity into relations between our countries». This will facilitate the identification of mechanisms to influence the «identified irritants» and to develop approaches that help to reduce the negative background and to create positive trends in the interests of the societies of both countries.

The «Changing Society» section is represented by articles on communication regimes in different post-Soviet countries.

D.S. Ayvazyan, A.B. Krylov, G.A. Poghosyan and V.V. Krivopuskov devoted their article to the friendliness of Armenia's communications regime, from the perspective of media and societal attitudes. The authors note the traditionally positive attitude of Armenian society towards Russia and Russians, especially taking into account the fact that Russia currently hosts the largest Armenian diaspora, which maintains ties with their relatives in Armenia. At the same time, the authors also note the appearance of a recent negative trend, anti-Russian moods, which can be traced in media materials, which are not promptly counteracted by the Armenian authorities, and the pro-Russian information resources have limited influence. This complicates bilateral relations, which have become more difficult to maintain in the face of information opposition from Western media resources. The authors propose measures to form a more stable information background for bilateral relations between Russia and Armenia.

G.D. Dzhunushalieva, P.I. Dyatlenko, A.V. Kulikovskiy, A.B. Moldokeeva addressed the role of Russia in the media and public space of modern Kyrgyzstan. The authors present a common trend in post-Soviet states: the formerly unified socio-cultural space is gradually losing its unity, and each republic of the former Soviet state has now defined its own foreign policy guidelines and vectors of further development. The authors note similar processes in post-Soviet countries: the influence of non-profit organisations, anti-Russian trends and changes in attitudes towards the Russian language and culture. The positive role of the media resource RT is noted. At the same time, 40-50 percent of Kyrgyzstan's population speaks Russian, but this is mostly the older generation. The authors propose Russia to change existing trends, taking into account the ever-increasing US funding of various programmes for the youth in Kyrgyzstan. The authors propose to strengthen the research potential of scientific cooperation between the two countries by expanding research topics in favour of topics from our common past that show the positive interaction between our peoples.

N.P. Gribin presented an article on the communication regime in the Republic of Belarus, its state, challenges and threats. The author's analysis of national and foreign informational and communicational resources relevant to the Belarusian society gave him grounds to point out priority areas, to increase the level of counteraction to informational and psychological attacks against Russia and the Republic of Belarus by unfriendly countries.

The history of international relations and foreign policy is the subject of A.V. Taigildin's article on the processes in the evolution of the US Democratic Party in the 1840s and 1850s. The author paid special attention to the «Young America» movement, which originated among young and ambitious politicians, who promoted infrastructure development and the idea of expanding borders. This idea was later referred to as «the idea of predestination».

The editorial board of the journal hopes that the materials of the issue will arouse your interest and that you yourself will become one of our authors in the future.

Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences Vitaly Naumkin



Vladislav I. GASUMYANOV,
Director of the National Communications Development
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It's Time to Synchronize Our Watches

Introductory word

Anyone who is not with Me is against Me,
and anyone who does not gather with Me scatters
The Gospel of Matthew. Mt. 12:30

Dear readers!

The events of 2022, developing with the participation of Russia and around Russia, proved once again the global role of our country and its key influence on world processes. The world is divided into supporters and opponents of Russia, into allies, partners and enemies of Russia; those who, together with Russia, strive for a new world order and those who cling to old, obsolete models. The world is Russian-centric. Russia is being voted on in the UN, Russia is being talked about in NATO, Russia is being discussed at all international venues. The world is splitting into those who want to "cancel Russia", those who want to stand next to Russia and be with Russia, and even those who want to cancel canceling Russia. The special military operation carried out by Russia in Ukraine exposed the true interests and vital principles of the countries and split the world even more. Against the backdrop of such a split, the positions of our neighbors acquire special significance.

There are different methods of international relations analyzing, but an analysis of the communication regimes formed in different countries allows a deeper and more subtle understanding of the attitude towards Russia and towards Russians, because communications arise not only at the state level, they are regulated not only by laws, but also by historically established practices. The subjects of communication regimes are not only political elites, but also citizens of each country. The rating of friendliness of communication modes eloquently shows the true face of each country, and the monitoring results give a true picture of the attitude towards Russia and Russians, and also allow predicting their development.

The friendliness rating is a landmark both for Russia and for other countries. For Russia, this is an opportunity to evaluate and reconsider the prospects, system and directions of relations with its neighbors. For neighbors - a reason to think, decide on priorities and to synchronize our watches.

Time cannot be turned back. What you do today will not only resonate in the future, but will determine it. Russia has been and remains the system - forming state of the Eurasian space and the main subject of global processes. Right now Russia with its allies and partners is laying the foundations for future relations and a new world order. And for each country it is important what place it will take in the new coordinate system.

Historically, Russia's relations with its partners were built as paternalistic systems, while European countries and the United States built colonial systems. Surprisingly, both models are reproduced in modern conditions. There is an opinion that Russia needs to get rid of paternalism and build relations with its neighbors on more rational principles, since "children have grown up" and become independent. But we still live as one family in the neighborhood, although in different houses. And problems in one house cannot leave the whole family indifferent. This becomes clear when countries turn to Russia for assistance in resolving both internal and external conflicts (Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan). Russia also turns to its neighbors in difficult times, so today it is very important to understand what system countries want to be in. Right now the foundations of the future are being laid, and it makes sense for everyone to think not about their situational role, but about their strategic place in the new world order.

Despite the unprecedented efforts of the "collective West" to create an aggressive environment around Russia, we see an increase in friendliness among strategically significant partners. These partners are not focused on the situational factor; they evaluate past experience and competently build dialogue and cooperation with Russia. The countries of Central Asia and the South Caucasus have not forgotten the Soviet projects that gave rise to the progressive development of their territories and peoples. Our neighbors have not forgotten Russia's help during the formation of their statehood and gaining international subjectivity. Russia generously shared its technologies and innovations, its resources, providing them on unprecedented favorable terms and leaving its industrial, scientific and technical production and energy systems on the territories of the new states. Russia has supported national education systems by investing resources in the training of personnel and the development of universities and schools. These countries still see their economic and political prospects in relations with Russia, building up trade, economic and investment cooperation and strengthening their international competitiveness. Belarus remains faithful to Union relations, maintaining independence in decisions and in determining national priorities. Partially recognized states understand that their statehood is possible only with the support of Russia.

Russia also helped European countries. It is well known that it was precisely at the expense of Russian energy resources and Russian metals that Germany created its technological and industrial superiority, Italy created its automotive industry, and France developed nuclear energy at the expense of Russian uranium.

Our allies from far abroad, the countries of Africa and Latin America, have not forgotten the support of the USSR during the years of the anti-colonial struggle and remember well the sad history and real face of their colonial "partnership" with European countries and the USA. But today they speak to the world on an equal footing. China, India, Iran, Arab and other countries, together with Russia, are building a new multipolar world based on the principles of equality and justice.

Why is Russia so attractive? Russia has always been attractive for its spirituality, culture, and desire to help and create a just world. Material values were not the main goal of the Russians. Nor did Russia think in terms of cultural superiority, hegemonism, and colonialism. We did not have slaves and did not humiliate peoples. Russia contributed to the development of the political and economic dignity of other countries. And today Russia offers a model of world order where there are no privileged and outcast, where there is no first, second and third worlds, where dialogue is possible on an equal footing, where countries make decisions based on the interests of their people, and not under fear of sanctions, poverty and international isolation.

Against this background, it is sad to look at small countries with large complexes hostile to Russia. They jump into the last car of the outgoing train, which is rolling towards a cliff. Some of them voluntarily, others under pressure joined the aggressive, anti-Russian, Russophobic environment. But it is not the governments that determine the prospective relations, but the peoples. Monitoring of communication regimes shows that the peoples and elites of these countries are not unanimous in their opinion, and imposing the opinion of political elites on their people causes internal resistance. Most of the inhabitants of the Baltic countries, despite the hostility of their elites, continue to treat Russia and Russians with warmth. They are not afraid to take part in protests against "decommunization", which involves the destruction of everything Russian in the memory of generations and the denigration of the achievements of their own people in previous historical periods.

The elites, which the "collective West" uses for its own purposes, are interested in inciting hostility between peoples. But when this "collective West" again builds business relations with Russia (and this will inevitably happen), then the used resource of enmity will turn out to be unnecessary. This will lead to the international political marginalization of small hostile countries. What about the Baltic countries, which are members of the EU system, this will happen even earlier. The EU members themselves no longer trust each other and have less and less confidence in the effectiveness of their multilateral integration, having begun to strengthen their positions with bilateral agreements. In 2019, Germany and France signed a cooperation and integration agreement. In 2021, France and Italy signed an agreement on enhanced bilateral cooperation, Spain and Portugal signed a new friendship and cooperation agreement. In 2022, Italy and Spain began work on an enhanced cooperation agreement. In January 2023, Spain and France signed a friendship treaty. However, with Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia such an agreement among the leaders of the EU is not observed.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the Friendliness Rating makes it possible for each country to see its place in the international system, analyze its positions, draw conclusions and decide whether to focus on the outgoing leaders or stand next to Russia and those who will determine the contours of the new world order on principles of justice, good neighborliness and equality for everyone.

INTERNATIONAL, GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PROCESSES

International relations

In 2022, the group of friendly communication regimes included 8 countries, relatively friendly – 2 countries and unfriendly – 4 countries. In the group of friendly countries, fluctuating communication regimes (Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan) are identified, periodically making conflicting decisions regarding communications with Russia and Russians. At the same time, internal prerequisites for hostility have not matured in these countries, even if the ruling political elites decide to strengthen communications with countries hostile to Russia. The vector of change will also depend on Russia's ability to choose the right communication strategies in dealing with fluctuating regimes.

V. V. Komleva

Dynamics of Friendliness of Communication Regimes of Neighboring Countries (Based on the Results of Annual Monitoring)

The Turkic-speaking countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia are interested in cooperation between Russia and Turkey. In the South Caucasus region, Turkey has become an important actor with significant influence over Georgia and its close ally Azerbaijan.

G. M. Arshakyan, A. V. Safaryan

On the Issue of the Nature and Dynamics of the Development of Russian-Turkish Relations in the Post-Soviet Period

The Georgia State Strategy on Civil Equality and Integration for 2021-2030 states that native language textbooks for non-Georgian-speaking students "prevent the identification of students from ethnic minorities with Georgia as their homeland." The task was set to accelerate the development and further implementation of Georgian textbooks in the native language for non-Georgian-speaking minorities.

Khidirbegishvili A.A., Khotivrishvili A.A., Goryunov I.P.

Socio-Political Factors of Humanitarian Communication between Georgia and Russia

Russia plays an important role in the foreign policy of Central Asia. Now Russia's position is not undisputed, but still strong. On the part of Kazakhstan, the diversification of geo-economic development tracks is manifested in order to regulate and contain negative trends.

Marmontova T.V., Tazhibayev A.T., Shamsieva I.M., Makhmutkhojaeva L.S., Kozhirova S.B.

Central Asia-Russia: Opportunities and Limitations in Building a Joint Future (Foresight Analysis)

Without revealing the true reasons for a good relationship between our peoples, it will not be possible to build a stable joint communication regime. It is necessary to investigate the pragmatic reasons for the interest in the Russian language, education and culture in the post-Soviet countries, discarding the idealistic views developed only by Russian scientific centers. It is necessary to understand what trends and clichés, replicated in the media space, social networks, bring a negative to the relations between our countries.

Huseynov R.N., Krylov A.B., Mobili R.B.

Conditions and Factors for the Development of Inter-country Communications between Azerbaijan and Russia

Dynamics of Friendliness of Communication Regimes of Neighboring Countries (Based on the Results of Annual Monitoring)

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Abstract. The article contains the results of monitoring the friendliness of communication regimes in the post-Soviet countries and an analysis of the friendliness rating of these countries for 2022. The author identifies a number of trends: the strengthening of the polarization of friendly and unfriendly communication regimes; strengthening state control over information content and communication channels; reducing the subjectivity of civil society institutions as actors of communication regimes; increased pressure on the Orthodox Church. Fluctuating type of communication regimes are revealed, in which, according to the author, one should expect changes in the conditions of communications with Russia. It spoken about critically significant factor in the successful promotion of Russia's interests – the development of special communication strategies for intercountry interactions. The author argues that the phenomenon of "post-Soviet" is alive and is used by different countries either to build up friendly communications or to increase hostility towards Russia.

Keywords: communication regime, friendly countries, post-Soviet space, near abroad, friendliness rating, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Estonia

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Introduction

The dynamics of the communication regimes of foreign countries is a significant indicator of the development of relations with the Russian Federation. Established rules, regulations and conditions of communication either promote or hinder friendship and good neighborliness. It is in the communication regimes that the degree of friendliness towards Russia and Russians is manifested.

The concept of communication regimes was developed by scientists of the National Communications Development Research Institution (hereinafter NCDRI) in 2020 and since then 14 countries have been regularly monitored. Research methods are being improved, the range of interested experts is being expanded and research sites are being established in foreign countries. Over the years NCDRI has held dozens of scientific discussions, the materials of which were published in this journal (1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11), it also published scientific articles and reports (12; 13; 14; 15; 16; 17; 18; 19). This article contains the results of the monitoring in 2022 and describes a number of trends in the development of the communication regimes of neighboring countries.

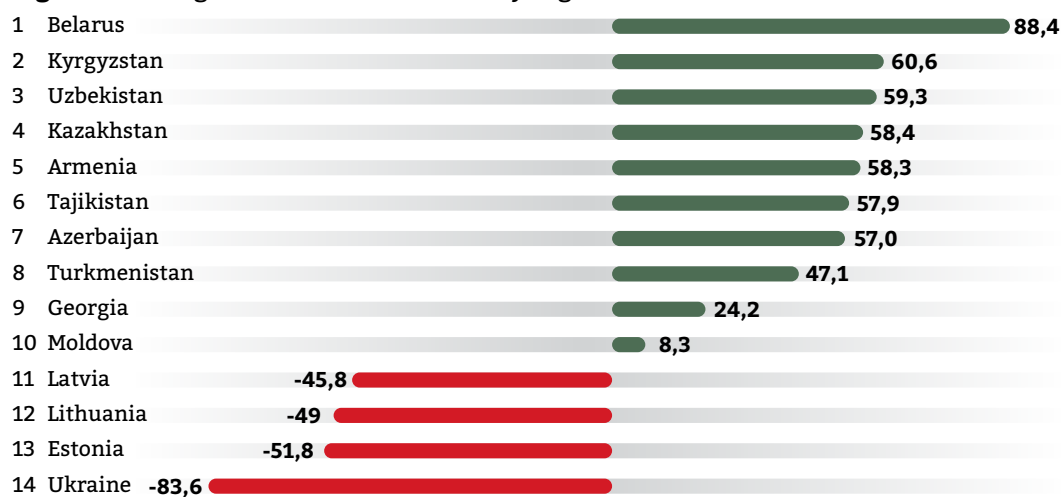
Materials and Methods

The communication regime is considered in 10 communication groups: foreign policy communications (including Russia's status as a partner state, ally in political and economic relations); civil communications (including attitude towards Russia, towards Russians (with Russians), rights of the Russian-speaking population); communications in the field of education (including in Russian); communications in the field of science (including in Russian); communications in the field of culture; media communications; communications of civil society institutions (including non-profit institutions); freedom of movement; other forms of communication (including religious, youth, etc.).

In each communication group, indicators of friendly communication regimes (total 68 indicators for 10 communication groups) were allocated. All indicators were ranked according to their degree of importance (the most significant, important and least important for determining the friendliness of communication regimes). Weights are assigned to the indicators according to the degree of their importance.

Monitoring consisted of six stages: 1) collecting empirical information on 68 indicators, analyzing the data obtained and the country context. Compilation of the rating 1 on the basis of the consensus assessment of NCDRI experts; 2) conducting interviews with experts in the field of international cooperation, representatives of international organizations, international units in the authorities, scientific, educational, cultural, religious, etc. organizations. Compilation of rating 2 based on consensus assessment; 3) Conducting a series of scientific discussions with representatives of foreign countries (the communication regimes of which were evaluated) to discuss ratings 1 and 2, the assessments



Figure 1. Rating of friendliness of country regimes – 2022

Source: Developed by The National Communications Development Research Institution NICRUS.RU

received, conclusions and clarification of issues; 4) The survey of experts from foreign countries (the sample of experts is not random, according to a given quota (for each country) and criteria for the selection of experts. The sample of foreign experts was 173 people. Russian - 50 people. Based on the survey, rating 3 was compiled; 5) Based on the method of the sum of countries' places in the ratings 1, 2, 3 the integral rating of the friendliness of the communication regimes has been compiled. The rating for each country can vary from -100 to 100, reflecting the degree of unfriendliness/friendliness of the communication regime.

Sample of countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

The empirical basis of the research was as follows: normative legal acts creating conditions and regulating ten types of communications in each country; state strategic documents, speeches, statements of heads of states; current practices (decisions and actions) of participants in communications; current and reproducing traditions, customs, habitual patterns and narratives; country media reports that allow to assess attitudes towards Russia and Russians; statistics; results of expert interviews and opinion polls.

Results

Based on the results of the monitoring, the rating of friendliness of communication regimes of neighboring countries was compiled (Figure 1).

Three groups of countries were identified according to the degree of friendliness of their communication regimes. Table 1 illustrates these countries and shows the dynamics of friendliness compared to 2021.

Table 1. Rating of friendliness of communication regimes of foreign countries (on the results of monitoring in 2022)

Place	Countries	Rating score (max 100) 2022	Rating score (max 100) 2021	Dynamics
Friendly communication regimes				
1.	Belarus	88,4 (1)	70,6 (2)	▲
2.	Kyrgyzstan	60,6 (2)	58,1 (4)	▲
3.	Uzbekistan	59,3 (3)	48,1 (7)	▲
4.	Kazakhstan	58,4 (4)	71,0 (1)	▼
5.	Armenia	58,3 (5)	61,7 (3)	▼
6.	Tajikistan	57,9 (6)	55,1 (6)	▲
7.	Azerbaijan	57,0 (7)	57,7 (5)	▼
8.	Turkmenistan	47,1 (8)	14,5 (8)	▲
Relatively friendly communication regimes				
9.	Georgia	24,2 (9)	4,4 (10)	▲
10.	Moldova	8,3 (10)	5,3 (9)	▲
Unfriendly communication regimes				
11.	Latvia	-45,8 (11)	-29,0 (12)	▼
12.	Lithuania	-49,0 (12)	-47,1 (14)	▼
13.	Estonia	-51,8 (13)	-10,7 (11)	▼
14.	Ukraine	-83,6 (14)	-43,8 (13)	▼

Source: Developed by The National Communications Development Research Institution NICRUS.RU

Belarus became the leader of the friendliness rating in 2022, having received high scores in all types of communications and confirmed the status of the Union state. The friendliness of foreign-policy communications and dialogue with Russia were especially evident at critical moments - in the context of increasing Western anti-Russian sanctions, the Special military operation, information war and the rise of Russophobia.

The second place was taken by Kyrgyzstan, which ranked fourth in 2021. The score of Kyrgyzstan's friendliness has not changed significantly (58.1 in 2021, 60.6 in 2022), but in the overall rating Kyrgyzstan moved to higher positions, partly due to the decline in the quantitative indicators of a number of other countries.

Uzbekistan improved its position in 2022, rising from seventh position to third. First of all, by improving the conditions and intensity of economic communications, and increasing communications in the sphere of culture. We note in particular the political will of the country's leadership to strengthen friendly relations with Russia, which other actors of the communication regime of Uzbekistan are guided by.

Kazakhstan ranked fourth. In 2022, experts gave lower scores for the foreign policy communications group. In general, we consider the communication regime of Kazakhstan

to be a fluctuating one. In such regimes there are contradictory decisions and contradictory conditions for developing communications with Russia. Fluctuating regimes are likely to review the principles and norms of country communication regimes in 2023.

In 2022, friendliness of communication regime of Armenia declined, and the country ranked fifth compared to the third place in 2021. Experts gave the lowest scores compared to 2021 for the group of foreign policy communications. Like Kazakhstan's, Armenia's communication regime is fluctuating. The factor of fluctuations and inconsistencies in the communication of Armenia with Russia in many respects was deepening of relations and consultations with foreign political attractors, not friendly to Russia. At the same time, within Armenia itself, the preconditions for an escalation of unfriendliness (especially in the economic and humanitarian sectors) are not mature yet. There is a lack of consensus and even a split of political elites concerning the strategy and tactics of relations with Russia. Pushing Armenia to become more unfriendly to the conditions and principles of communication with Russia is likely to lead to an increase in the communication gap between the authorities and society, destabilization of the country, loss of the ability of the authorities to maintain the stability of the socio-political system.

The positions of Tajikistan in 2022 remained the same. The country ranks sixth in the rating. Despite the fact that a number of experts noted some decline in friendliness in the group of foreign-policy communications, in general, norms and rules of communication have not changed significantly, and in the field of education have strengthened.

The seventh place was taken by Azerbaijan, which ranked fifth in 2021. The rating downgrade is due to scores for the foreign policy communications group. However, strengthening of economic ties of Azerbaijan with Russia, preservation of communications in the field of science, education and culture, youth communications were noted. At the same time, there was a cultural and historical, civilizational break with Russia, strengthening integration with Turkey and foreign policy alliance with NATO countries.

Turkmenistan took eighth place, maintaining its position in the rating of friendly communication regimes, but increasing it in numerical terms. First of all due to higher scores in the groups of economic, cultural and foreign policy communications, compared to 2021. It should be noted that Turkmenistan remains the most difficult country to monitor communication regimes. This is actually the feature of the communication regime itself. There are no data and documents that are important for analysis in the public domain. It is difficult to find experts from the country. However, the changes that have taken place in the past year give hope not only to better access to data, but also to better political, economic, cultural and other communication, as well as to a positive dynamic of friendliness in relations with the Russian Federation.

Georgia rose from tenth place to ninth place, receiving higher scores in the group of economic communications. The lowest scores of experts were given concerning foreign policy communications, which, as in the previous year, remain unfriendly. Diplomatic relations between the two countries have not been restored, which makes it very difficult to build communications in all spheres.

Moldova took the tenth place, closing the group of relatively friendly communication regimes and almost reaching the threshold of unfriendliness. The results of the monitoring in 2021 and 2022 show a consistent movement of Moldova according to the Baltic scenario of alienation from Russia, growth of hostility and preferences for radical anti-Russian forces.

The group of unfriendly communication regimes included Ukraine, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, whose hostility increased compared to 2021. Ukraine took the first place among unfriendly countries. No institutional forms of communication are possible, except for civic interpersonal communication (which is also very difficult). Estonia ranks second among unfriendly countries. Estonia regards Russia as a threat in its actions, policies and official documents. Lithuania ranks third in the rating of unfriendly countries. In 2022, it escalated anti-Russian hostile rhetoric and adopted a number of unfriendly documents, recognizing Russia as a state that «supports and carries out terrorism». Latvia ranks fourth among unfriendly countries. Russia is considered «the main threat to national security». The Baltic States have consistently restricted and prohibited any communication with Russia, discriminated against the population for their nationality and language, increased hostility against Russia and Russians, cultivating Russophobia, using pressure and criminal prosecution of citizens for public disagreement with the position of the ruling elite.

Discussion

Interpretation of the results obtained during the annual monitoring reveals some trends in the development of friendly and unfriendly communication regimes of neighboring countries.

Phenomenon of the “Post-Soviet”

The phenomenon of «post-Soviet» continues to live and influence the decisions and actions of political and social forces of the former republics of the USSR. Paradoxically, it is the “post-Soviet” that is one of the key factors determining the internal strength and international status of these countries. They either continue to struggle with the «post-Soviet heritage», articulating the problems of “oppression” of peoples and their identity, «forced annexation», strengthening the unfriendliness, or rely on the “post-Soviet” speaking about the established national economic relations and security system, maintaining friendly communications, appealing to historical ties for the implementation of new economic and social projects. In any case, the «post-Soviet» continues to bring political, ideological, economic dividends and benefits to the former republics of the USSR.

Communication Gap Between Authorities and Society

The results of expert surveys and analysis of public processes in neighboring countries show a gap (in some countries - a significant gap) between the position of authorities and

the attitude of the population towards Russia and Russians. Societies have proved more sensible than their political elites. The intensification of unfriendly and hostile rhetoric on the part of the political elite, in most cases, does not cause an increase in the unfriendliness among the population of these countries. The socio-psychological experiment of erasing from people's memories their family stories, personal impressions, memorable events, family ties and identities is not easy to carry out. People resist even in those societies where this experiment has entered the stage of its "blossoming" (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) and even more where this experiment on people is in the initial stage (Moldova).

Civil Society under Political Pressure

Unlike political regimes, communication regimes have many more actors. This allows building inter-country communications at the level of non-political, non-state dialogues. In 2022, the practice of limiting the activity of non-political actors by political institutions became more frequent.

Non-State actors of communication regimes (public organizations and movements, self-organizing communities, institutions of civil journalism, etc.), whose growth of subjectivity we recorded in 2021, now, more and more often, are being turned into objects and instruments of political power (or political opposition) as well as business, which is connected with power or wants to gain it. This is done by changing the rules of communication, strengthening the control of the authorities over information content and information channels, the activities of civil institutions and applying severe sanctions to «violators» (up to criminal prosecution or destruction). In this context, civil society institutions (even those whose activities were initially non-political) are increasingly embedded in political constructs and interests.

Increasing Polarization and Division

In 2022, the polarization between friendly and unfriendly communication regimes increased. It is likely to continue in 2023. In unfriendly countries censorship of information content is likely to increase, radical groups of communicators will receive preferences and leave the legal field, securitization of identity, which we have identified in a number of country communication regimes as early as 2021 (4), will continue.

Undoubtedly, special military operation being conducted in Ukraine has become the factor of the polarization of the countries' communication regimes. Media coverage of special military operation demonstrates the degree of friendliness or hostility towards Russia and allows us to predict what political, humanitarian and economic vectors political elites will choose for their countries.

Small countries with no strong economic potential and no decisive weight in international relations have to balance between Russia and the "collective West", whose investments are quite significant in the post-Soviet countries. The exception in this matter is Belarus, which despite its border with the EU and NATO countries, has retained pragmatism and remained

true to its alliance with Russia. The opposite exceptions are the countries of the Baltic States, the communication regimes of which has become completely anti-Russian and so hostile that it will soon become marginal even among "their own" countries of the "collective West".

In the future, the successful completion of special military operation will be a factor of consolidation of the countries around Russia and its allies, and the return of dialogues with the EU will affect the position of the Baltic countries, whose degree of autonomy and role is determined in the EU.

Political Pressure on Orthodoxy

Civilizational confrontation has intensified and religious division is being provoked. The debate about the subjects of dialogue and the clash of civilizations has moved from the realm of theoretical reasoning to that of practical solutions. Political institutions have become increasingly subjective in these processes, establishing norms, rules, principles and conditions for civilizational, cultural and religious dialogue. In some cases, new rules and principles provoke conflict, while in others they create conditions for peaceful coexistence. In unfriendly and relatively friendly countries, pressure has increased on the clergy of the churches of the Russian Orthodox Church in order to turn them into tools for solving the political tasks of the Western-oriented elites. In the perspective of the strengthening of division in Orthodoxy (in the Baltic countries, in Moldova, in Ukraine), bans on the Russian Orthodox Church will not only complicate the dialogue of religions and cultures, but can also provoke «religious wars», which tend to turn into protracted civil wars.

On Independence and Autonomy

The communication regimes of neighboring countries are largely determined by external factors. Firstly, they are oriented towards the strong one. Distancing or approaching Russia will depend on the success of the consolidation of non-Western countries, the results of the special military operation, Russia's economic power and the impact of Russian humanitarian policy abroad. In accordance with it, and depending on it, the norms, principles and priorities of communication with Russia will change in the coming years.

Secondly, the post-Soviet countries are not self-sufficient in terms of producing high-quality information content and financing competitive media. Let's be frank - restriction or prohibition of Russian and Russian-language media will inevitably lead to strengthening of other foreign media in the country's information space. The choice is small: if not Russian, then Western media (primarily the US). After a while, serious Arab media and growing Chinese and Turkish media will be interested. A popular proverb «sacred place is not empty» very appropriately characterizes ongoing processes. Modern media is primarily a business, and if the state is unable to support and finance them, then the media and their investors will maintain the state. Not all post-Soviet countries are able to create and finance large-scale media competing with Russian or Western media. From this point of view the choice of media partners is the choice of the degree of their independence.

Thirdly, the states under consideration are of great geo-economic importance as transit corridors for Russia and other countries. They are objectively linked to neighboring countries and are part of regional subsystems. This connection makes them inevitably dependent on each other, including Russia. In the context of diversifying the economic communications of major players, small countries that are included in these chains suffer or benefit from changing the rules and conditions. At present, in the context of diversification of Russia's economic communications, great opportunities have been opened for friendly countries to increase their international subjectivity, their economic potential, to expand their geo-economic opportunities and get the most advantageous projects and the best conditions for the realization of their economic interests.

Fluctuating Regimes

The friendliness of communication regimes in countries with fluctuating political vectors and fluctuating political discourse (e.g., Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan) is largely maintained by homeostasis. This is possible for some time, provided there is no dynamics in the legal framework. But with more frequent political fluctuations, the regulatory framework of the communication regime is likely to change in the near future. Changes in the legal and regulatory framework will also affect the degree of friendliness, as we see in the example of Moldova (as an example of increasing unfriendliness) or in the case of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan (as an example of growing friendliness). In the coming year, fluctuating types of communication are likely to alter the way information, communication, non-governmental organizations and humanitarian dialogues operate. The marker of the movement towards friendliness or hostility will be the policy towards the Russian language, Russian media and Russian business.

Integration Communication Formats

The CIS, EAEU, SCO and CSTO formats played an important role in the development of communications in 2022. The summits and forums held have become dialogue platforms for multilateral and bilateral discussions on political, economic and humanitarian issues. The year 2022 gave rise to large economic, geo-economic, humanitarian projects with the participation of Russia in Central Asia, the South Caucasus, the Caspian region, Belarus. Global communication in the BRICS format is developing. These projects will determine future relations with Russia and Russia's relations with partners. Despite the fact that political elites of neighboring countries are building new dialogues with foreign countries, including those unfriendly to Russia, close ties with Russia are more profitable. Cooperation with it remains an important factor in the political autonomy and socio-economic development of the post-Soviet countries.

Other integration formats, such as the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), the Organization of Islamic States (OIC) influence the conditions and principles of communication with Russia. Within the framework of these formats, their own agenda is

formed, their own dialogues are built, and their own projects are initiated. Looking at the situation from the point of view of the leaders of these formats (primarily Turkey) suggests that they, like Russia, claim a systemically important role in the regions of the post-Soviet space. This factor should not be underestimated.

Conclusions

In 2022, the group of friendly communication regimes included 8 countries, relatively friendly – 2 countries and unfriendly – 4 countries. In the group of friendly countries, fluctuating communication regimes (Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan) have been identified, which periodically make contradictory decisions regarding communications with Russia and Russians. At the same time, in these countries the internal preconditions of unfriendliness have not matured, even if ruling political elites decide to strengthen communications with the countries hostile to Russia. The vector of change will also depend on Russia's ability to choose the right communication strategies in relations with fluctuating regimes.

The main trends of 2022 are:

- polarization of friendly and unfriendly communication regimes: worsening of conditions for the development of communications (including prohibition) in unfriendly regimes (Ukraine, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia) and improvement of communication conditions in a number of friendly regimes, which were previously quite restrained (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan);
- improvement of conditions for the development of economic communications in a number of friendly countries (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) and relatively friendly countries (Georgia);
- strengthening State control over information content and communication channels, including social networks, in neighboring countries;
- reducing subjectivity of civil society institutions as actors of communication regimes. Civil society institutions are increasingly integrated into the system of political interests of elites (ruling or opposition);
- religious institutions, which in 2022 remained the channels of friendly communication even in unfriendly countries, are under pressure from the authorities and are forced to make political choices. Russian Orthodox Church, whose communications are restricted or prohibited, is under heavy pressure in unfriendly regimes;
- efforts and special projects and programs will now be required in a number of countries where the concept of friendliness (homeostasis mechanism) was previously replicated by inertia (Kazakhstan);
- the monopolization by Turkey of the «Turkic world» and the attempt to capitalize this concept leads to an increase in its influence in Central Asia and the Caucasus, which affects the change of directions and principles of priority communications of a number of countries in the field of culture;

● in our view, the development of communication strategies between countries is becoming a critical factor in the success of Russia's interests abroad and the development of a system of reliable foreign partners and allies.

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Contribution of the author

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On the Issue of the Nature and Dynamics of the Development of Russian-Turkish Relations in the Post-Soviet Period

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Abstract. The article examines the development of Russian-Turkish relations over the past 30 years, the main aspects of geopolitical relations and, in particular, the conflicts in the South Caucasus and adjacent regions. The authors believe that the key ones are the two Karabakh wars, the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict and the five-day Georgian-South Ossetian war, as well as the Ukrainian crisis, the Libyan and Syrian conflicts, in which Moscow and Ankara have different interests. The new configuration of forces in the South Caucasus will largely depend on the outcome of the resolution of these conflicts. The authors identify the main patterns in the development of bilateral Russian-Turkish relations, which are characterized by a combination of confrontation, competition and cooperation. The article was based on the results of a scientific discussion held at the National Communications Development Research Institution (NIIRC), Moscow, Russia in 2022.

Keywords: Russia, Turkey, South Caucasus, Central Asia, geopolitical rivalry, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Abkhazia

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Introduction

After the Soviet Union collapsed, the whole area of Great Eurasia suffered certain transformations, which introduced new features into the relations between the region's countries. The collapse of the USSR made the former soviet republics independent, turned them into new actors on the international arena, capable of formulating their interests

and approaches. Over the last 30 years the interests of the newly-established states became outlined with more precision and predictability. Their political role in regional and international affairs in general became more intense.

Under these circumstances Russian-Turkish relations gained a substantial development. Bearing the stamp of the previous centuries, these relations however, conceived new realities that attracted attention of scholars from various countries. The present article aims to study, analyze and evaluate the dynamics and the logic that have been driving the development of Russian-Turkish relations in the recent thirty post-soviet years. This research is important as a way to understand what is to be expected in their prospective development and what new realities may develop in the regions, which aspects or these relations are of confrontational and competitive nature and which are rather of cooperative nature.

After the year 1991 the independent Russia was passing through a stage of dramatic changes in political and economic sphere, that were to determine its status in the contemporary world. Having ceased to be a superpower, Russia made attempts to reinforce its positions, trying to articulate and promote its national interests, first and foremost, among the neighboring states (8; 19). With this regard, an important issue to address is the current outcome of the 30-year-long development process, in which Russia, defending its interests, developed its relations with traditionally competitive states, the Republic of Turkey being among the Southern ones. Europe gave its consent to Turkey's pretensions with respect to its expansion towards soviet South Caucasus and Central Asia (4:347; 11:5), where the Turkic republics of the above-mentioned regions were willing to develop amicable relations, based on linguistic and ethno-cultural unity on the one part (28:6), and Turkey, that was seeking an opportunity to expand its influence, casting a glance over the West, as the European Union had set a veto on its aspirations in the Western direction, on the other. Against this background the relations between Turkey and Russia became more wide-reaching and versatile.

Materials and Methods

While creating this article the authors studied materials provided by both Russian and Turkish official sources, they analyzed the primary inferences made in the publications by Russian, Turkish, Armenian and other foreign scholars, who have been researching separate stages and full chapters of the theme under scrutiny over the last thirty years. The present study was done by using comparative and empirical methods, as well as the systemic analysis method. The monographs and articles by Russian-speaking, English-speaking and Turkish-speaking authors were studied in the original.



Results

Controversies Regarding the Issue of Conflicts and their Establishment

The differences in interests between Russia and Turkey in what concerns the issue of Nagorno Karabakh, Georgian Abkhazian and Georgian-Ossetian conflicts began to manifest themselves clearly in 1991 and 1992. It became evident that Turkey pretended to increase its presence in the South Caucasus, endeavoring to fill the vacuum that appeared after the Soviet Union collapsed (22:2). Russia had all necessary resources and managed to prevent Turkish interference in the above-mentioned conflicts. Thus, when Turkey tried to deploy its troops on the border with Armenia and punish it for expansion in the Karabakh conflict zone, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the President of the Russian Federation Gennady Burbulis and Commander-in-Chief of the CIS Troops Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov made it absolutely clear to Turkey that its actions could lead to World War III (20:64; 26:203). It had a deterrent effect and forced the official Ankara to refrain from implementing punitive measures against Armenia. Since the OSCE Minsk Group was formed in March 1992, Turkish diplomacy tried at all costs to intensify its presence in the process of political normalization of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, aiming to expand its presence in the South Caucasus by supporting Azerbaijan in every possible way (7; 21). Between the 1990s and 2020 it failed to implement the plan, as Armenian diplomacy was convinced that Turkey could not be an objective intermediary, being biased while defending and promoting Azerbidzhan's interests. In the course of the Abkhaz conflict, Turkey was trying to defend Georgia's interests, nevertheless it had its own strategies, which aimed to create large Abkhazian communities of kinsmen residing in Turkey (10; 12; 16). Turkey did not resort to military intervention while handling the issue, having in mind the influence of Russia on the one hand, and trying to benefit from its active neutrality and become more efficient in its endeavors to participate in regional affairs on the other.

Rather indicative is Turkey's position in what refers to the August 2008 Georgian-South Ossetian, which may appear to be different from all other positions, even those of other allies. Turkey did not support the position of Europe with respect to that war (24; 27). It is now obvious that it was the Georgian side that started the war in order to expel the Russians from South Ossetia, however a differently directed development of events caused great international tension, and Europe made attempts to become actively engaged in overcoming the consequences of the war.

By maintaining its neutral status and using intensively its political, diplomatic and military arsenal while dealing with the region's states, Turkey managed to obtain benefits in its relations with Russia, simultaneously gaining increasing strength in term of its presence in Georgia (and across the South Caucasus).

For example, at the end of 2007, the free trade agreement between Turkey and Georgia came into force, which made it possible for Turkey to become Georgia's largest trading partner. Therefore, in 2011, the trade turnover between the two countries went beyond \$1.5

billion. Georgia had never achieved such an index in economic relations with any other country¹. In the period between 2000 and 2011 Turkey invested in Georgia \$1.4 billion, which made up 16% of the total foreign direct investments in Georgia². Georgia became the first former soviet republic to allow Turkey gain dominance over Russia in terms of priority in economic partnership (13:28). As a result, Turkish-Georgian relations gained great momentum during Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili's presidency, and it was him, who gave the name of "golden age" to this period in Turkish-Georgian bilateral relations (25:21). Ankara's aspirations were then clearly articulated by Turkish Prime Minister R. T. Erdogan: "America is our ally, and the Russian Federation is an important neighbour. The Russian Federation is our number one trading partner. We get 2/3 of our energy from the Russian Federation. We are acting in accordance with our national interests. We cannot ignore the Russian Federation" (9).

The current conflict in Libya is provoked by the confrontation between the Government of National Accord (PNC), located in Tripoli, and the House of Representatives of Libya, being located in Tobruk, and supported by the Libyan National Army (LNA), led by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar³. Russian and Turkish positions did not coincide during the Libyan crisis of 2014. They supported different sides of the conflict, providing them military-technical and diplomatic patronage.

Since the moment of escalation in the Libyan conflict, Russia has been unofficially providing military support to Marshal Khalifa Haftar's⁴ LNA forces, seeking to strengthen its geopolitical influence in the regions controlled by the LNA, on the one hand, but it continues its dialogue with the NTC, reluctant to lose the possibility to promote their mutual cooperation in the future and to lose a chance to sign large-scale agreements when Libya starts getting reconstructed on the other hand. At the same time, Moscow claims to play an important role in the possible settlement of the Libyan conflict.

Meanwhile, the Turkish Republic, which aspires to play a dominant role in the region and seeks to revive the "former greatness" of the Ottoman Empire, actively supports the Government of National Accord of Libya (1:24). Thus, at the end of November 2019, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Faiz Saraj, the head of the UN, recognized the Government of National Accord of Libya, signed a memorandum on military cooperation and mutual understanding on delimitation of the maritime jurisdiction areas. However, Russia and Turkey did not clash directly in this sphere either, being entirely possible the use of confidential diplomatic channels to keep the process under control.

1 Cecire M. Zero Problems 2.0: Turkey as a Caucasus Power. World Politics Review, 20.09.2012. Available from: <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/12354/zero-problems-2-0-turkey-as-a-caucasus-power>.

2 Archvadze I. The Georgian market in the shadow of the Turkish economy, 13.02.2012. Available from: http://georgiamonitor.org/detail.php?ID=3348&sphrase_id=245212.

3 Bocharov I. Prospects for the settlement of the Libyan conflict, 04.05.2021. Available from: https://globalaffairs.ru/articles/livijya-konflikt/#_ftn17.

4 Erdogan announced 2 thousand fighters of the Wagner PMCs in Libya, 25.12.2019. Available from: <https://www.interfax.ru/world/689392>; Putin – about the mercenaries of the Wagner PMCs in Libya: "They do not represent the interests of the Russian state", 13.01.2020, Available from: <https://www.rline.tv/news/2020-01-13-putin-o-naemnikakh-chvk-vagner-v-livii-oni-ne-predstavlyayut-interesov-rossiyskogo-gosudarstva/>.

Another significant challenge in the Russian-Turkish relations is the “Syrian conflict”. In the Syrian confrontation, Russia supported Bashar al-Assad and asserted its right to be present in the Syrian Arab Republic⁵. Moscow’s interests in Syria, and in the Middle East in general, are of a strategic nature, since instability in this region may pose a threat to another region which is of no less importance for Russia both strategically and in terms of national security. What is meant here is the South Caucasus, which might make a way for any threat to penetrate easily into one of the points of Islamic radicalism in Russia located in the North Caucasus (2:112).

Turkey used to support and keeps doing so with regard to the opposition political organizations, providing them political financial and military aid⁶. There are even subsidiary offices of these organizations in Turkey⁷ (31), Turkey even proclaims itself the patron of its Muslim compatriots, having sheltered more than 2 million Syrian refugees⁸.

Turkey is concerned about the escalation of the Kurdish issue provoked by the Syrian crisis, which is considered a serious threat to Ankara both domestically and internationally⁹. In the domestic Syrian conflict, Ankara conducted an anti-Assad policy, seriously supporting the opposition forces which fought against the Assad regime, including the Islamic State terrorist group (ISIL), and held a diplomatic and propaganda struggle against the official Damascus¹⁰.

An important issue, however, is the fact that Russia and Turkey, as well as the Islamic Republic of Iran, demonstrated common strategy in handling the struggle against the Islamic State terrorist group, which constituted a ground for creation of a trilateral Russia-Turkey-Iran framework for conflict solving at the presidential level¹¹. This framework appeared to be the most viable of all in terms of advancing the stabilization process in Syria. Let us recall that the Geneva framework, created for this purpose, failed to show any significant results and did not last long, as well as the Astana framework, although it did enjoy some successes. Then, despite all the differences in policies, Russia, Turkey and Iran

5 Meeting with military officers of the Russian Armed Forces, 17.03.2016, Available from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/51526>; Ramani S. Russia’s Strategy in Libya, 07.04.2020. Available from: <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/russias-strategy-libya>.

6 Syria rebels said to receive missiles via Turkey, Hurriyet, 01.08.2012. Available from: <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/syria-rebels-said-to-receive-missiles-via-turkey-26899>; Erdogan: Turkey, FSA close to capturing Syria’s Al-Bab, 12.02.2017. Available from: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/politics/erdogan-turkey-fsa-close-to-capturing-syria-s-al-bab/748823>.

7 The main groups of the Syrian opposition. Dossier, 06.01.2015. Available from: <https://tass.ru/info/848044>.

8 “Our country has been home to the highest number of refugees for the past 7 years”, said Erdoğan, 20.06.2022. Available from: <https://www.tcgb.gov.tr/en/news/542/138450/-our-country-has-been-home-to-the-highest-number-of-refugees-for-the-past-7-years->; The Mediterranean Sea should become a symbol of hope for refugees and migrants, 07.04.2017. Available from: <https://news.un.org/ru/story/2017/04/1302881>.

9 Markedonov S. Russian-Turkish relations and security problems in the Caucasus region, 30.05.2016. URL: <http://www.globalaffairs.ru/valday/Rossiiskoturetskie-otnosheniya-i-problemy-bezopasnosti-Kavkazskogo-regiona-18188>.

10 Brooker P. S. Russia vs. Turkey: Competition for Influence, 12.12.2015. Available from: <http://www.valuewalk.com/2015/12/russia-vs-turkey-competition-for-influence/>.

11 Andreeva A. “To end the presence of terrorists in Syria”. What Putin, Erdogan and Raisi agreed on, 1907-2022. Available from: <https://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2022/07/19/15153638.shtml>.

assumed the responsibility for ending hostilities and boosting the peace process in Syria. The armed forces of Russia and Turkey were never directly engaged in the confrontation, discounting the fact that a Russian military aircraft was once downed by Turkey¹², and that of the murder of the Russian ambassador to Turkey¹³, which, however, did not lead to a dramatic deterioration in their bilateral relations.

Finally, the issue of Ukraine. Turkey did not recognize the reunification of Crimea with Russia¹⁴ (14:169). Turkey considers itself to have the right to patronize the Crimean Tatars as its compatriots. Turkey supported and keeps supporting Ukraine on the international arena (17). Russian – Turkish interests have also clashed in the recent year, in the course of the special military operation in Ukraine. During this year, Turkey has increased the supply of UAVs¹⁵ to Ukraine and provides it comprehensive support¹⁶. Turkey condemned Russia’s actions in Ukraine, nevertheless, it did not join the global sanctions of the Western world¹⁷. It is worth noting, that Turkey’s policy in handling this issue is quite well received in the Western world, since the official Ankara has not been touched by its sanctions. The authors believe that Russia paid heed to Turkey’s position with regard to the Ukrainian crisis, at the same time it considers a success the fact that Turkey did not open a new front against Russia, but instead it became sort of a channel to realize various economic and political communications¹⁸.

Turkey’s Competing Strategies

By impeding Turkey to become a full-fledged member of the European Union, the global West actually pushed Turkey to head to the East seeking to increase its influence and presence. Neo-Ottomanism, being the ideological basis of the new Turkish advance, encourages official Ankara to expand to all countries and among those peoples which once used to be part of the Ottoman Empire (30:118). What is more, Turkey is realizing its potential for integration with Azerbaijan and the Turkic states of Central Asia within the framework of the “Big Turan” ideology. It is here, that the competitive interests of Turkey

12 Skorobogaty P. A Russian bomber was shot down in Syria, 24.11.2015. Available from: <http://expert.ru/2015/11/24/turetskie-pvo-sbili-voennyj-samolet/>; Shaheen K., Walker S., Putin condemns Turkey after Russian warplane downed near Syria border, The Guardian, 24.11.2015. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/24/turkey-shoots-down-jet-near-border-with-syria>.

13 Vashchenko V. The Russian ambassador was assassinated in Ankara, 19.12.2016. Available from: <https://www.gazeta.ru/social/2016/12/19/10437899.shtml>.

14 The UN Resolution Against Russia’s Ukraine Annexations: How Didi the Middle East Vote? 18.10.2022. Available from: <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/un-resolution-against-russias-ukraine-annexations-how-did-middle-east-vote>.

15 Unmanned aerial vehicles.

16 Topju E. Bayraktar: what is the role of Turkish drones in the war in Ukraine, 09.03.2022. Available from: <https://www.dw.com/ru/bayraktar-kakova-rol-tureckih-bespilotnikov-v-vojne-v-ukraine/a-61054407>.

17 Banerjee B. Turkey on Russia-Ukraine crisis, 31.05.2022. Available from: <https://thekootneeti.in/2022/05/31/turkey-on-russia-ukraine-crisis/>.

18 Putin highlighted the successful cooperation between Russia and Turkey on Syria and Libya, 29.09.2021. Available from: <https://tass.ru/politika/12534529>.

and Russia objectively converge. Back in the early 90s, Turkey, following the instructions of the United States, began to develop its Eurasian project, with a view to rapprochement with the countries of the South Caucasus, the Turkic-speaking peoples residing in the territorial entities of the Russian Federation in the North Caucasus, the Volga region and the Turkic states of Central Asia (6). The Turkish ideology of Eurasianism implied a consolidation of all the members of the vast expanses of Eurasia under Turkish leadership. At that time, Russia, having lost the cold war, was considered to have little resources to prevent and even less to resist the process (18).

Turkey's activities in the zones being traditionally under Russian influence were a step-by-step advancement. For example, official Ankara considered it acceptable to cooperate with Russia in creating a framework for comprehensive cooperation in the South Caucasus. Back in 2008, Turkey proposed to create a "Platform for Stability and Cooperation in the Caucasus" participating the three widely recognized republics of the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), along with Turkey and Russia (15; 29). It is hard to believe that Ankara did not understand it. At that time, that framework did not find significant response. However, after Armenia's defeat in the 44-day war in 2020 after the ceasefire brokered by President Vladimir Putin was announced, the possibility to establish new relations became more realistic. In compliance with the agreement between Russia and Turkey, in the immediate vicinity of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, in the city of Aghdam, there was deployed a monitoring center, where Russian and Turkish military personnel were represented in equal parts¹⁹.

According to the authors this new step symbolized the idea, that against the background of the new realities, Russia gave it consent to Turkey's expansion of to the South Caucasus. It is worth pointing out, however, that Azerbaijan, which has strategic alliance with Russia, excellent relations with Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, is in no hurry to become a member of the CSTO, which announced in the Shusha Declaration on allied relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey²⁰. Under these circumstances, having excellent relations with Georgia and proclaiming the concept of "one nation – two states" with Azerbaijan as leverage, Turkey is carefully but consistently taking steps to finally settle its relations with Armenia so that Armenia, neither objectively nor subjectively, could prevent its integration with Azerbaijan.

The Turkic-speaking republics of Central Asia are consistently, step by step, go towards extension and deepening of multifaceted cooperation with Turkey. Having started with linguistic and cultural cooperation, they now cooperate on a wide range of issues, including defense and security areas²¹. One cannot but imagine how the first President of

¹⁹ There opened a Russian-Turkish monitoring center in Karabakh, 30.01.2021. Available from: <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/10584995>.

²⁰ Tashjian Y. "Shushi Declaration" and its Implications on the South Caucasus and Beyond, 29.06.2021. Available from: <https://armenianweekly.com/2021/06/29/shushi-declaration-and-its-implications-on-the-south-caucasus-and-beyond>.

²¹ Turkic states should develop common security concept, Erdoğan says, Daily Sabah, 11.11.2022. Available from: <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/turkic-states-should-develop-common-security-concept-erdogan-says>; Subbotin I. Erdogan is encouraged to create a Turkish military block, 12.01.2022. Available from: https://www.ng.ru/world/2022-01-12/1_8343_turkey.html.

Kazakhstan (maybe other leaders of the Central Asian states as well) managed (in formal or informal circumstances) to persuade the prominent figures of Russian political elite to extend a hand of cooperation to the leaders of Turkey and expand this cooperation to the Turkic-speaking republics. In this context, Russia, especially during the presidency of Vladimir Putin, faces the need to find an adequate pattern for peaceful coexistence.

Cooperation in the Name of Peaceful Coexistence

Throughout the entire post-Soviet period, and during the last 10-20 years in particular, Russia has positioned itself as a Eurasian power. It assumed leadership in the course of Eurasian integration, being positive that the potential of its influence and attractiveness were absolutely sufficient to consolidate some of the post-Soviet countries around it. Supporters of Eurasian integration (who have long been following the development of the process) confirm that from the very beginning of the confrontation between the Western world and Russia, Russia has been seriously reflecting on the issue of how to develop the process of economic integration to make it possible to find a chain of new opportunities to ensure economic development and, at the same time, to safeguard an atmosphere of peaceful coexistence and security in the Greater Eurasia region (3).

Since Russia itself is positive that it can become the axis and locomotive of the new phase of Eurasian integration, it will continue developing its relations with Azerbaijan and with Central Asian countries expecting them to be inspired by the appealingness of becoming part of the great Eurasian partnership. And here, again, taking into consideration the prospective cooperation with China, Iran, Turkey, Egypt and other countries, Russia seriously casts its glance at Turkey.

Russia considers a political success the fact that Turkey did not directly join the sanctions imposed by the Western world. In 2021, the volume of economic cooperation between Russia and Turkey preponderated \$33 billion²². Russia is building a nuclear power plant in Turkey at its own expense (23:42). Importantly, Turkey is developing a project to build another nuclear power plant near Sinop with the help of Russia²³.

Assisted by Russia, Turkey is building a giant gas hub, pretending to become the main gas supplier in Southern Europe. This is a strategic issue for a large group of EU countries. Turkey's role in this issue is really becoming highly-demanded, as there obviously arise difficulties in direct communication between Russia and the EU²⁴. While maintaining partnership relations with Ukraine and military-political alliance with the United States and the EU, Turkey consistently pushes forward its mediation role in resolving various

²² Trade between Russia and Turkey in 2021 r., 12.02.2022. Available from: <https://russian-trade.com/reports-and-reviews/2022-02/torgovlya-mezhdu-rossiy-i-turtsiy-v-2021-g/>.

²³ Demidov A. Putin and Erdogan have discussed the Project of building another atomic power station on the coast of the Black Sea, 29.09.2022. Available from: <https://www.gazeta.ru/politics/news/2022/09/29/18674965.shtml?ysclid=lakxqpc6a745131527>.

²⁴ Telephone conversation With the President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan, 11.12.2022. Available from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/70064>; Putin claimed that the gas hub in Turkey is a realistic and quickly realizable project. URL: <https://www.interfax.ru/business/870424>

problems arising between Russia and Ukraine. The agreement between Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia achieved on November, 9, 2020, proclaimed the end of the Second Karabakh War. It was also envisaged to create a Russian-Turkish joint military observation mission in Aghdam, immediately adjacent to the conflict zone.

Therefore, the authors consider Russia to have given its consent to a parallel Turkish-Russian military presence in Azerbaijan. It is very important that in order to support economic development in the South Caucasus, Russia does cooperate with Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran within the "3+3" framework²⁵. Although Georgia has not yet accepted the proposal to cooperate within the above-mentioned framework, this framework seems adequate in what regards the use of multilateral cooperation to strengthen regional security and stability. In the South Caucasus, in the same manner as in Syria, the trilateral framework proposed by the presidents of Russia, Turkey and Iran appears to be highly efficient and keeps paying off.

As for the Turkic world, Russia, seeking to safeguard its security and internal stability without setting Turkey apart in handling these processes, is looking for new forms of cooperation with the Turkic world. Both confrontation with the Western world and the ongoing cooperation as part of the plan to establish a large Eurasian partnership in the foreseeable future, will push Russia and Turkey to maintain the established relations at the current level and find mutually agreeable solutions to all the issues mentioned here.

The authors are positive, that Russia and Turkey will keep demonstrating signs of confrontation, competition and cooperation in their policy, therefore, the political course of both larger and smaller countries of the region, while being part of the processes involving these two major actors, should set their political course in consonance with the logic of these realities.

Conclusions

During the post-Soviet period, Russia and Turkey have gained extensive experience in developing a common attitude to political and ethnic conflicts. It is worth pointing out, that in the course of these conflicts, relations between Russia and Turkey, even faced with confrontation, never went below a certain reasonable level. On all occasions, there operated military-political and diplomatic channels of communication, incentivizing the parties to give consideration to each other's fundamental interests.

We can hardly dispute the position stated by Armenian orientologists, who, like many previous authors, claim that in the course of their history, Russian-Turkish relations have passed through various periods of "ebb and flow" (5:36), which on each occasion left their mark on the political and economic processes in the region.

The Turkic-speaking countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia are interested in cooperation between Russia and Turkey in this large region. In the South Caucasus

²⁵ Diplomats of the "3+3" format countries discussed countering common challenges in the region, 10.12.2021. Available from: <https://tass.ru/politika/13171839>.

region, Turkey has become an important actor bearing substantial influence on its close allies Azerbaijan and Georgia. Russia seeks to play such a role in this region that, would help preserve its traditional areas of influence on the one hand, and promote, together with Turkey and Iran, pacification, security-building and stability in the South Caucasus, on the other hand. Against this background, the factor of particular importance is the constructiveness to be demonstrated by the South Caucasus countries, including Armenia, whose role is determined by their unwillingness to fall out of the proclaimed regional processes. The increasingly strong positions Russia has in the neighboring regions, especially in the Black Sea region and in the Middle East, which pose risks to Turkey's plans to become a regional leader, provoked Ankara to make another attempt to reconsider the issue regarding its influence in the South Caucasus, and take part in the military aggression, Azerbaijan implemented against Artsakh (the unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh Republic) in September 2020. As a result of the 44-day Artsakh war, Moscow, on the one hand, strengthened its military presence in the region by deploying a peacekeeping mission in the conflict zone and establishing its control over strategically important regional communication centers, and on the other hand it did not resist Ankara's entering the region, in fact Moscow established a dialogue with Ankara and recognized its interests in the South Caucasus, which used to be a vitally important area of Russian interests.

A significant novelty in Russian-Turkish relations was that Turkey, despite its membership in NATO and close relations with the United States, both in the Syrian conflict and in the Karabakh conflict, displayed willingness to cooperate with Russian military forces. In Syria, this cooperation manifested itself in joint patrols and coordinated operations, and in the Karabakh conflict it was implemented in joint monitoring of post-conflict settlement.

Despite the proxy wars led by Ankara and Moscow in conflict zones in different regions, Russia and Turkey do not pass to direct confrontation, given the difficulties in international cooperation and deep bilateral multi-vector trade and economic relations, the key role belonging to energy cooperation. This fact determines the current nature of Russian-Turkish relations, which are competitive and cooperative simultaneously.

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The authors contributed equally to this article.

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Socio-Political Factors of Humanitarian Communication between Georgia and Russia

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Abstract. The article considers the factors shaping the specifics of cooperation between Russia and Georgia in the humanitarian sphere. The authors state a decrease in the intensity of scientific, educational, and cultural communication. The impossibility of a final civilizational break is noted due to the commonality of the historical past, religion and culture. The key problem identified is the impossibility of building full-scale humanitarian cooperation due to the lack of diplomatic relations and the presence in Russia of a visa regime to Georgia. The pragmatic position of the Georgian ruling elite towards Russia, as well as the growth of the tourist flow of Russians to Georgia, are positive factors for the further development of cooperation in the humanitarian sphere. The authors conclude that in the absence of a political dialogue at the highest level, the impetus for the development of humanitarian cooperation can be given by organizations of the non-profit sector and diasporas of Georgians in Russia and Russians in Georgia. The article was based on the results of a scientific discussion held at the National Communications Development Research Institution (NIIRC), Moscow, Russia in 2022.

Keywords: Georgia, Russia, humanitarian cooperation, educational cooperation, communication mode, historical memory, friendliness, good neighborliness

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Introduction

In 2022, the National Research Institute for the Communications Development (NIIRC) monitored the communication regimes of neighboring countries. According to its results, Georgia entered the group of “relatively friendly” countries, that is, those that are on the verge of unfriendliness. At the same time, the country has risen one position in the Friendliness Rating compared to 2021, which was due to the development of Georgian-Russian economic relations and the position of the ruling party of Georgia regarding the inadmissibility of interrupting economic relations with Russia, which contribute to the implementation of Georgia’s economic interests. The ruling party also spoke out against the proposal to ban Russian citizens from entering Georgia. Russian tourists make up a large share of tourists and generate income for the country’s tourism industry. These decisions, against the backdrop of diplomatic relations severed in 2008, political tensions, Georgia’s Euro-Atlantic commitment, are assessed by experts as the ability of modern Georgia to rely on rational principles of relations with Russia and not follow the emotional path of the Baltic countries (1, 3, 4, 5). But how are the humanitarian communications between Georgia and Russia, which form the basis of relations between peoples, developing? This issue was discussed at the scientific discussion organized by NIIRC. The most informative and interesting positions of the round table participants are reflected in the article.

Materials and Methods

Author’s materials are based on extensive empirical data. To analyze the situation and argue their positions, the authors used: legal acts regulating Georgian-Russian relations; state strategic documents, texts of speeches, statements of heads of state; current practices (decisions and actions) of the participants in the Georgian-Russian humanitarian cooperation. Statistical data, materials of Georgian and Russian mass media are analyzed. The authors used the methods of content analysis, event analysis, statistical analysis, participant observation, deductive and inductive logic.

Results

Conditions and Features of the Development of Russian-Georgian Humanitarian Communications (A. A. Khidirbegishvili)

Russian-Georgian humanitarian cooperation over the past decades has often been determined by the political situation and the goals of those forces that came to power in Georgia in a particular period of time. The “progressive” Georgian intelligentsia in the post-Soviet

years of illusory independence promoted pro-American ideas and values and considered itself European. As for the traditional Georgian intelligentsia, which has great merits in science and art, its representatives, who did not emigrate to Moscow, St. Petersburg and other Russian cities, never lost ties with the Russian world and the Georgian diaspora in Russia.

Today, the country's ruling political elite is implementing a more rational foreign policy course. The government, the ruling party and the parliamentary majority have indignantly rejected the introduction of visas for Russians, warn of responsibility for insulting Russian tourists and criticize Western diplomats, politicians and political scientists who are intervening in Georgia's internal affairs. This is largely due to the fact that Russian citizens who entered Georgia after the start of the Special Military Operation in Ukraine registered a business for 711 legal entities, while 9,789 Russian citizens registered as individual entrepreneurs. From March 1 to October 12, 2,585 citizens of the Russian Federation have bought 2,964 apartments in Georgia with a total area of 189,084 sq.m; 252 citizens of the Russian Federation bought 249 land plots with an area of 37.9 hectares; 53 citizens of the Russian Federation purchased a plot without buildings and structures, 199 – with buildings or structures). From January to August, 977 Russian citizens were employed in Georgia, the amount on the accounts of Russian citizens in Georgian banks increased by \$1.2 billion. About a million Russian tourists visited Georgia during the season (more than 200 thousand per month). These are jobs and about three billion dollars that came to the state treasury from tourism, to the private sector, thanks to which the hotel and restaurant business revived, this is income for Georgian agricultural producers and winemakers, tour operators, drivers, guides and service workers. Today, the Georgian authorities have abandoned anti-Russian rhetoric and avoid the term "occupation", which is actively criticized by opposition representatives in order to gain support from the most radical part of society. On the other hand, pro-American sentiments are still strong within the ruling elite. The current Minister of Education and Science of Georgia has been teaching at leading universities in America for twenty years. He continues to lecture in the United States, has close professional ties with professors at Harvard, Princeton, Pennsylvania, Yale, Columbia, Chicago, New York universities, as well as with scientists from Brown, Cornell and Johns Hopkins Universities.

Despite the balanced position of today's authorities, the years of anti-Russian propaganda and the transformation of the national education system are bearing fruit. During the years of Georgia's independence, there was a devaluation of the academic system of education, tested over the years – if formal lessons were held in schools, then by teachers who had been trained and received certificates from the Soros Foundation, and from falsified textbooks. Instead of good lectures at institutes, there are presentations, rallies and exchange programs under the patronage of the US Embassy (1, 2). The representatives of the younger generation were easily impressed: "Russia and the Russians are the historical enemies and occupiers of Georgia". There is no opportunity to get acquainted with an alternative point of view due to the following circumstances:

The youth of Georgia do not know the Russian language, the study of which was prudently withdrawn from the programs for higher and secondary educational institutions,

and Russia's assistance in supporting the Russian language in Georgia was spent inefficiently (6, 7). There are only 11 Russian-language schools now throughout Georgia, and it is possible to study Russian in 45 sectors of Georgian schools. In 2020–2022, not a single new Russian-speaking private educational institution passed authorization. As of November 2022, the number of students in Russian-language schools is 16,042, of which 1,820 students arrived from Ukraine after February 24, 2022. Georgian youth, who come out with posters and stickers offensive to the Russian president, do not know Russia and Russians, because as far as they can remember, they cannot visit Moscow and St. Petersburg to see the sights – a strict visa regime, there is no direct flight;

There is virtually no more Russian-language journalism in Georgia. There are no Russian-language media in the country – Georgian printed and electronic publications in Russian, respectively, Georgia and Russia do not have a common information space (as Russian scientific circles now put it, "friendliness of country communication regimes"). Several Georgian publications, which have a selectively translated Internet version into Russian, are the result of the work of the last remaining translators in Georgia, and not journalists. And these bilingual publications, with the exception of GRUZINFORM, are notable for their anti-Russian editorial policy. Meanwhile, anti-Russian propaganda in Russian is spreading in Georgia, and not only with American or European grants, but with the money of fugitive representatives of the Russian opposition through local branches of the anti-Russian non-profit sector;

Everything Russian in the late 2000s was equated by the regime with treason and punished as treason and espionage. "Pro-Russian" sounded like a sentence; citizens suspected of this "terrible sin", advocating the settlement of traditional Russian-Georgian relations and for dialogue with the Russian leadership, were shunned like lepers. And although the new government has unblocked Russian TV channels and lifted the ban on Russian stage in the public space, the ingrained animal fear of being suspected of being "pro-Russian" is still the norm in Georgia, because they are encouraged by the US Embassy, which has managed to consolidate around itself the anti-Russian part of the Georgian establishment, radical political parties and is in constant contact with former and current Western politicians, officials and diplomats, advisers and experts

Despite all this, Georgia has a lot of work to do with the Russian Federation, and this is not only the organization of summit meetings and the restoration of diplomatic relations, not only the expansion of economic and trade relations, but also the restoration and expansion of humanitarian and cultural cooperation, joint projects in the sphere of common past and historical memory.

The Policy of Historical Memory of Georgia (A. A. Khotivrishvili)

Historical memory is now one of the topical and debatable problems in social knowledge. Interest in this topic is due to the fact that for the full development of any society, it is necessary to think about the issues of preserving and passing on to future generations the experience, accumulated values, behavior patterns, elements of the national cultural

heritage. We consider historical memory as a special, constantly developing socio-cultural phenomenon; a set of knowledge, opinions, assessments, beliefs and ideas about events, phenomena and processes of the past, formed through specific socio-cultural actions and practices.

Among the main axioms of life is the statement: the history of each new generation does not begin with a “blank slate”, but with a legacy, good or bad, that its ancestors left to it. The study of such heritage is associated with the concept of historical memory as one of the most important socio-cultural phenomena of the existence of a person and society and as a factor that determines not only their present, but also the near and even distant future (2). The future of peoples is determined, first of all, by the experience accumulated earlier. It is impossible to cross out the past.

The importance of addressing the problem of historical memory increases in the situation of large-scale information wars, which in recent years have been waged with maximum intensity and bitterness. There is a clash of traditional images of the past with new ones that are being formed at the present time, places of memory and commemorative practices are being transformed, those that have been formed over a long period are deformed or even completely destroyed.

From the end of the 20th to the beginning of the 21st century, the process of virtualization of historical memory has been actively unfolding in the world, due to the emergence and rapid spread of new ways of commemorating the past. The consequence of this is the transformation of traditional means of storing and reproducing historical memory, the emergence of a huge number of electronic resources, the purpose of which is to update and retransmit knowledge about the past. But these resources are filled with content depending on the memory policy adopted in the country.

Diplomatic relations between Russia and Georgia were established at the end of the 15th century, when ambassadors of the same faith Iveria (Georgia) arrived at the court of Ivan III, who delivered a letter from the Kakhetian king Alexander I. The key treaty in the history of the two states is the Treaty of St. and the supreme power of the Russian Empire with the united East Georgian kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti (otherwise the Kartli-Kakheti kingdom, Eastern Georgia) about the transition of Georgia under the protectorate of Russia. It was concluded on July 24 (August 4), 1783 in the Georgievsk fortress (Northern Caucasus). Under Tsarist Russia and under the USSR, an immense number of people from Georgia took an active part in the creation and development of the general well-being of the country. In other words, our ancestors gave us a huge heritage in the form of a common history and a common past, but what did we manage to preserve and what do we have today?

For 30 years, the West has been trying with all its possibilities to impose its own values, to erase the common historical past of Russia and Georgia, to break the connection between the states. The question arises: who is the culprit of what is happening? Naturally, we ourselves. Endless unresolvable conflicts, lack of diplomatic relations, migration problems, transport problems, etc. give the representatives of the Western countries an opportunity to carry out their plan to interrupt good-neighbourly relations between Russia and Georgia. Although trade turnover between the countries has increased in recent years, it is too early

to talk about any serious breakthroughs. There are no large-scale investments at the level of the two states; there are no large joint projects.

The younger generation of Georgians and Russians has no contacts. Unfortunately, the thread that connected our ancestors has been broken. The youth of Georgia has no idea about Russia, about the values of the country, about the population, about culture, about programs in the field of education. They are under the influence of Western media, and it can be considered that they are in an information vacuum. We should think about how to interest the young generation of the two countries in restoring and strengthening ties that have existed for centuries.

In Georgia, historical memory has been preserved among those who are over 50 years old. These are people who were born in the Soviet Union, formed as individuals and specialists, were friends and honored the culture and traditions of peoples. After the collapse of the USSR, it is difficult for them to find themselves and adapt to the values that are relevant in Georgian society. Western values are alien to them, they want to visit Russia as before, without any restrictions, to cooperate in various fields, but, unfortunately, they are deprived of such an opportunity. The existence of a visa regime unilaterally creates restrictions for Georgians when visiting Russia. Georgia, for its part, since 2012 has been providing Russian citizens with an opportunity to stay in Georgia for 300 days without visas, without any restrictions. Why not reconsider the possibility of easing the visa regime for Georgian citizens?

Summing up, we note that today the “Brain washing” program in Georgia has been excellently implemented by the West. It is difficult to talk about the preservation of historical memory between the two states with so many problems. But given modern realities, the possibility of restoring lost connections is realistic.

Policy on the Russian Language and Russian-language Education (I. P. Goryunov)

According to the results of the annual monitoring of the friendliness of country communication regimes, conducted by the National Research Institute for the Development of Communications in 2022, Georgia was among the countries whose communication regime towards Russia can be determined as “relatively friendly”. The results of the monitoring were confirmed by the opinion of representatives of the expert community of Russia and Georgia, obtained during a round table organized by the National Research Institute for the Development of Communications in December 2022 ¹.

Regular negative public assessments of Russia’s activities in the international arena by representatives of the Georgian establishment, together with the lack of diplomatic relations between states and the course for accession to the European Union and NATO enshrined in the country’s Constitution, do not allow a more positive assessment of

¹ The experts discussed the results of the study of Georgia’s communication regime. National Research Institute for the Communications Development: official website. Available from: http://nicrus.ru/1912_resultatissledovaniya

Georgia's communication regime. However, the majority of the population does not have a hostile attitude towards Russians, which creates favorable conditions, for example, for tourism.

Russians remain one of the largest national minorities, their number is about 1% of the total population of the country. The intensification of the use of the Russian language in 2022 was due to a historical maximum in the number of Russians visiting Georgia: according to official data, over the past year the number of tourists from Russia has increased five times and exceeded 1.5 million. In addition, more than 112 thousand of them remained in the country, which is four times the number of Russians in Georgia (according to the latest population census). This is a permanent factor in the pressure of the opposition on the ruling party: representatives of the most radical political forces constantly criticize the country's leadership for being too kind on Russians and the Russian language, and Western NGOs publicly call for the introduction of a visa regime for Russian residents.

The right of representatives of national minorities to receive education in their native language is legislated. In 2022, there were about 300 non-Georgian-language public schools in Georgia (14% of the total number of schools in the country), 52,000 children studied in them (10% of the total). However, three-quarters of these schools are located in villages and are either Armenian or Azeri (5). The number of schools available to Russian-speaking residents of Georgia, who mostly live in Tbilisi and other large cities, is much smaller both in percentage and in quantity. The situation is the same with teachers of non-Georgian schools. In 2022, the number of Russian-speaking teachers is slightly more than 1 thousand people (16.9% of the total number of non-Georgian teachers and less than 1% of the total number of teachers in the country). In the future, for Russian relocators in Georgia, this may increase the shortage of places in Russian-speaking schools and hinder the observance of the educational rights of the Russian-speaking population. There is also a shortage of teachers in subjects related to the social sciences: by law, these disciplines must be taught in the Georgian language, and there is a catastrophic shortage of such specialists in Russian-language schools. There is no consistency in professional development programs for Russian-speaking teachers. The State Strategy of Georgia on Civil Equality and Integration for 2021–2030 states that native language textbooks for non-Georgian-speaking students “prevent the identification of students from ethnic minorities with Georgia as their homeland”. The task was set to accelerate the development and further implementation of Georgian textbooks in the native language for non-Georgian-speaking minorities. Their content may pose a serious threat to further educational communication, as Russian-speaking students in Georgian schools may cease to associate themselves with Russia and cease to identify themselves as part of the Russian world (6).

The situation is more complicated in the field of higher education. The state program “1+4” has been implemented for more than 10 years: within the framework of the Strategy for Civil Equality and Integration for Youth from Ethnic Minorities, a special preferential policy has been developed, providing for enrollment in a higher educational institution for a chosen specialty after passing the “Educational program for training in the Georgian language”. Over 10 years, by 2022, the number of program participants from among non-

Georgian schoolchildren has more than quadrupled and exceeded 1,000 people. In the future, this program will attract more and more non-Georgian-speaking schoolchildren in Georgia, which may reduce the interest of Russian-speaking youth in obtaining higher education in Russia (7).

Thus, educational opportunities for Russian-speaking residents of Georgia are legally fixed, but the state policy is aimed at attracting non-Georgian-speaking students to receive higher education in the state language. In addition, the publication by Georgia of its own textbooks in the Russian language may lead to the distancing of Russian-speaking youth from Russia, its culture and history, which poses a threat to the implementation of Russian humanitarian policy abroad.

Conclusions

Among the socio-political factors that determine the specifics of Russian-Georgian humanitarian communications, we especially note the lack of diplomatic relations, territorial claims, the Euro-Atlantic vector of Georgia and, as a result, the creation of a negative image of Russia by the presidential authorities, a unilateral visa regime, an unfriendly policy of historical memory towards Russia. Positive factors include the absence of a negative attitude towards Russians from the majority of society, the preservation of Orthodoxy, the pragmatic approach of the ruling elite to the issue of building economic relations with Russia and the inadmissibility of discrimination against Russians and Russian-speaking citizens of Georgia on a national basis.

On the other hand, the number of Russian-speaking schools, in the presence of a consistently high demand for secondary education in Russian, is declining every year, and there is a catastrophic shortage of competent Russian-speaking teachers. The strategic documents of Georgia recognize as one of the threats the use by national minorities of textbooks in their native language, printed outside of Georgia, a course has been taken to prepare Georgian textbooks on the languages of national minorities.

The actual absence of Russian-language journalism in the country is stated. The solution to this problem is seen in expanding the presence of Russian media in the information space of Georgia, considering the possibility of opening representative offices. In other words, there are few conditions and actors for the development of Georgian-Russian humanitarian communications. Contacts remain between the Orthodox Church, compatriots, and compatriots. But they practically do not involve young people, on whom relations between Russia and Georgia will depend in the future.

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The authors contributed equally to this article.

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Central Asia – Russia: Opportunities and Limitations in Building a Joint Future (Foresight Analysis)

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Abstract: Central Asia now plays an important geopolitical role in the balance of power in Eurasia. Russia's role in the region is evolving, but it remains one of the leading ones. The pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine have shifted the situation out of homeostasis. So it is now important to address the issue of security, support for small and medium-sized businesses, and the preservation and development of cultural and humanitarian links. Based on the Foresight procedure this article draws conclusions about the way forward for multilateral relations in the “Central Asia-Russia” format on the basis of the outcome documents announced by the Heads of the Central Asian States and the Russian Federation after their meeting. Using the rapid Foresight tools (anticipation, design, programming and projection), conclusions are drawn about the important position of the Russian Federation as a regional actor in the external policies of the Central Asian States. Its current position is strong, but not uncontroversial. The thesis of the interpenetration of the Russian and Central Asian economies has also been elaborated, since the backbone of

low-diversification economies are energy and energy-transit. At the same time, one cannot ignore the powerful resource of soft power. The vast area of frontier communicativeness formed by the Kazakhstan-Russian border is a unique resource that can be exploited in the future. The article was based on the results of a scientific discussion held at the National Communications Development Research Institute (NIIRC), Moscow, Russia in 2022.

Keywords: foresight studies, Central Asia, Russia, image, future, multilateralism, international relations

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Introduction

In October 2022, Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, organized a real marathon of high-level summits, the decisions of which have an impact on the political situation in Eurasia. This marathon ended with the summit “Central Asia-Russia”.

The main purpose of the meeting of the heads of six states was to discuss the prospects for multilateral cooperation in the region in a situation of global instability and increasing external pressure. The presidents came to the conclusion that it is important to join forces in such matters as:

- Security. The situation in the region is determined by the level of stability and security in each of the states. The security of Central Asia and Russia is in the area of responsibility of such organizations as the CIS, SCO, CSTO and CICA. In addition, countries are considering different aspects of security within the framework of bilateral relations, focusing on the development of new ways to counter threats, on the development of preventive diplomacy, in order to level the hybrid and informational triggers that are often used to provoke conflict. In addition, the countries of the region need to pay attention to the borders, the unsettledness of which is a cause for tension..

- Support for small and medium businesses and the launch of joint ventures. For the region, an important factor in maintaining financial and economic stability will be the preservation and development of trade and economic ties. Work is important to remove trade barriers and reduce protectionist measures. We should also not forget about intra-regional activity.

- Attention to cultural and humanitarian cooperation, which, as a part of the development of second track diplomacy, will help to effectively resist attempts at disengagement¹.

From the point of view of system analysis, it is important how the initiatives of the heads of state can be integrated into the current political situation. Taking into account the

¹ Central Asia–Russia Summit: what the presidents of the six countries talked about. Available from: https://www.inform.kz/ru/sammit-central-naya-aziya-rossiya-o-chem-govorili-prezidenty-shesti-stran_a3990740 (accessed: 27.12.2022).

great variability of the situation and the fact that decisions are made for a short period of time, it is important to use expert assessments for analysis, one of the varieties of which is foresight as a tool for assessing the strategic directions of socio-economic and innovative development that can have an impact on society in the medium and long term².

The purpose of this article is to show the possibilities and limitations in building a joint future for the countries of Central Asia and the Russian Federation.

Achieving this goal involves the analysis of expert assessments in the context of general intellectual search based on the basic functions of Rapid Foresight (forecasting, designing, programming and projection), as a result of which it is possible to develop practice-oriented recommendations to government bodies, on the basis of which it is possible to form a common agenda for the region Central Asia as a territory of prosperity, prosperity and peace.

Materials and Methods

This article is based on the results of a foresight session conducted on the Rapid Foresight technique, a foresight technique developed by the RE-ENGINEERING FUTURES group. The peculiarity of this method is that it makes it possible to achieve a representative result faster than using classical foresight techniques (1).

The foresight session was held on November 24, 2022, the session was organized by the Eurasian Monitoring Center for Analytical Research, Astana International University. The session was attended by scientists from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. The discussion touched upon a wide range of problems that characterize the situation in Central Asia.

The topical problems of the region were: internal problems and contradictions, such as problems with water, issues of cross-border cooperation. The public outcry related to how the perception of the Russian Federation as the largest regional player is changing is important.

Predicting the future, the experts concluded that there is a high probability of destabilization associated with both internal factors and growing geopolitical pressure. At the same time, a positive scenario for the development of the Central Asian countries and the Russian Federation is possible provided that relations are depoliticized. The diplomacy of the second track will be the tool that will allow you to form positive trends.

Also, in the analytical processing of the results, data obtained in the course of work within the framework of program-targeted funding of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan BR10965282 “Kazakhstan-Russian border: historical context and new geopolitical reality” related to the analysis of the current situation in the

² What is foresight? Available from: <https://foresight.hse.ru/whatforesight#:~:text=> (accessed: 27.12.2022).

Kazakh-Russian border area were used. In particular, when modeling the future, the results of public opinion polls that were made in 2021-2022 were taken into account. Polls show that residents of the border regions of Kazakhstan are quite positive and want to continue interacting with Russia.

Results

The foresight session was based on the formation of development tracks. The main attention was paid to scenario forecasting of the transition from the current situation to the desired future through the development of a package of recommendations and initiatives that can be used by the relevant bodies and structures.

Analytical work was built through segmentation and objectification of the multilateral interaction between the Russian Federation and the Central Asian republics. The assessment was carried out in a multidimensional coordinate system, taking into account the impact on the region of the conflict in Ukraine, the risks of internal destabilization, the impact of disproportions in social and economic development. We consider the result of the session to be a scientifically based forecast of how the situation in Central Asia will develop, in a situation of changes, "continued present" and "probable future".

The analysis began with an assessment of the CA+Russia cooperation model. Interaction takes place both in a bilateral format (Russia, Central Asian countries) and within the framework of existing multilateral formats (EAEU, CSTO, SCO, etc.). The model is not stable. Destructive tendencies are due to the influence of centrifugal tendencies and the reaction of the republics to Russia's foreign policy. An analysis of the information field, conducted by the experts of the CAI "Eurasian Monitoring" in October-November 2022, showed that the perception of Russia's foreign policy has ceased to be only positive. This conclusion was made after evaluating the reaction of readers of news aggregator channels in Telegram ("For you Bake", "Ne-Khabar"). In preparation for the foresight session, CAI Eurasian Monitoring experts assessed the information resources of the Kazakhstani segment of the Internet in order to understand how the understanding of the role of Russia as one of the significant players in determining the geopolitical situation is being formed. Based on this, it is worth recommending that the bodies and structures of Russia intensify their policy in the region in order to maintain the status quo. At the same time, direct propaganda methods cease to be effective; on the contrary, they cause rejection, especially among younger age groups focused on network methods of influence. It is important to form programs within the framework of track two diplomacy that will work systematically, avoiding pain zones and triggers, such as reactions to mobilization, relocation, support/non-support for NWO, sanctions policies, etc.

There are difficulties with ideas about the future in relations between the countries of Central Asia and Russia. A positive scenario is possible in the formation of models of interaction on an equal position. This requires an analysis of the corridor of opportunities associated with Russia's withdrawal from the conflict with the West. The acute phase of

the conflict increases the risk of increased sanctions and an increase in the negative impact of the conflict itself on the region. The forecast of experts on this issue is neutral or restrained pessimistic. The conducted foresight session suggests that the influence of the Russian Federation in the region will at best remain at the same level or will gradually weaken and Russia will be replaced by other players.

Another problem that was analyzed by experts is related to how the image of the Russian Federation is being formed in the information space of Central Asia, it is necessary to understand how the image of a neighboring state is formed.

According to V.L.Bozadzhiev, the image is formed through the perception by the societies of the Central Asian countries of political institutions, the head of state, the army, elites, political consciousness and mentality, foreign policy and much more (2:438-439). The image of the country is created as a construct of three components: compliance of the political leader of the nation with common values, awareness of the status of the country, understanding of the role played by the country in the international arena (3:20).

An image is a certain filter through which an understanding of what is happening in a neighboring country occurs. The media are crucial, and they shape the image, doing it sporadically. Under the conditions of the information revolution, the control of this process is practically impossible (4). In October-November 2022, a media content analysis was carried out. We studied mainly electronic media, the content of news aggregators. The analysis showed that Russia is perceived through such information frames as the economy (tenge stability due to the large inflow of rubles; real estate prices; business relocation and risks of secondary sanctions); social processes (relocation, attitude towards Russians, reaction of Kazakhstanis); security policy (the situation at the border, the process of transition itself, accounting for foreign citizens). The beginning of the mobilization became a serious informational reason for the increase in the number of publications about Russia. There are clear differences in assessments: Russia is assessed differently in the Russian-language and Kazakh-language media. Kazakhstani media, published in the state language, are critical of the northern neighbor. Media published in Russian are more neutral, but the tone of publications is far from complimentary. The image of Russia is ambiguous: one Russia is a neighboring country, towards which the population of Central Asia has a positive or neutral attitude; the other Russia is a belligerent country with an aggressive foreign policy that causes a negative attitude not only from public opinion leaders, but also from ordinary citizens. Those who leave their reactions in Telegram react negatively to the line of Russia's foreign policy, which concerns its conflict with the countries of the West. Accordingly, if it is important for Russia to maintain its influence in the region, serious efforts are required to form a positive image. For the countries of Central Asia, an attempt to "lock in on itself" will become a big reputational risk, reacting negatively to cooperation in the CA-RF format. The foreign policy of Kazakhstan is built on a multi-vector approach, which is based on equal cooperation with all the main actors of international relations.

In connection with the sanctions pressure, there is an obvious risk that secondary sanctions will be applied to the trading partners of the Russian Federation, which are located in Central Asia. Consider supplies: now we have to rebuild logistics, because of the

withdrawal of Western companies from Central Asia from the Russian Federation, it was necessary to change the logistics supply chains. The problem is that the EU is the largest importer, since Kazakhstan's oil is imported by Europe, and on the other hand, Russia is also a significant trading partner.

It is known that the North-South project is being carried out across the Caspian Sea. Prospects for cooperation are possible, but, on the other hand, the Asian market will also demand discounts on raw materials, including hydrocarbons and uranium. This is a consequence of the fact that Europe has set the bar for oil prices (5:110). This is unprofitable for both Kazakhstan and Russia. Since Kazakhstan has to look for workarounds, and for Russia its status in the region is reduced.

The main thing in building long-term plans is to rely on an assessment of the information field of Kazakhstan and take into account how the image of the Russian Federation is being formed as the largest player in Central Asia in the media.

When preparing scenarios for the future, it is necessary to pay attention to the policies of important players. Countries such as the United States, China and the EU countries, when building their policy in Central Asia, first of all, as is typical for all states, solve problems.

The general trend has also affected the Russian language, now it is popular only in Bishkek and in several other cities. Alas, Russian diplomats do not see this as a problem.

Compare with the USA. United States public diplomacy is more developed in Kyrgyzstan. And this should be taken into account when thinking about what will happen in the relations between our countries in 5 or even 20 years. The dynamics of changes in the global agenda, perhaps they will be cardinal, will force us to reconsider relations, but it is difficult to predict exactly how.

Strategic proposals are needed to develop a plan for public authorities to develop relations between Russia and Central Asia. We need special mechanisms of interaction that can strengthen existing and sustainable forms of activity. This plan should take into account the peculiarities of the region and provide new opportunities for the countries of Central Asia. It is especially important to take into account such initiatives as "One Belt – One Road" and logistics and transport projects, such as "Greater Eurasia".

Establishing joint ventures for Russia and the countries of Central Asia will help their relationship in the future. Thus, Russia is trying to use the countries of this region for import substitution, which should have a positive effect on the economies of the Central Asian countries. In general, over the past five years, trade has doubled.

It is especially important to change financial instruments, which will allow to exclude political factors from the economy. In particular, in the energy sector, the Russian Federation is ready to provide practical assistance in restoring the unified energy system of Central Asia, and this, of course, will increase the energy security of all countries in the region.

The introduction of digital technologies, the construction of nuclear power plants – all this is the creation of new types of cooperation in the field of generating capacities. The discussion of the development of the transport corridor of Greater Eurasia deserves special attention. These are primarily such corridors as East-West and North-South. It is very important to understand each of these projects and their goals.

The scientific and educational community is faced with the task of effectively developing international integration through new forms of cooperation. And information interaction plays a significant role in the process of international scientific and educational integration. The main topics for discussion are such issues as personnel for the school and the science of vocational training, scientific cooperation, humanitarian projects, general educational programs, the study of the Russian language, the exchange of information between preschool and secondary education systems. The main goal is to develop the dialogue between our countries in the cultural and humanitarian spheres.

Long-term cooperation between the countries of Central Asia and the Russian Federation in the field of higher education, the launch of new educational projects, the improvement of the functioning of existing ones can have a significant impact in raising the international rating of universities and scientific organizations, will enhance international cooperation between the countries of Central Asia and Russia and will allow for a constructive dialogue between representatives of education, science and business.

According to the experts who took part in the foresight session, our countries have a high peacekeeping potential, and it is important to focus on development in this area. For intellectual dialogue, a digital platform for discussions about a shared future is very important.

The experts came to the conclusion that in order to improve relations between Central Asia and Russia, first of all, an intellectual dialogue is needed, similar to that carried out within the framework of the project "Kazakhstan-Russian border, historical aspect and geopolitical reality".

The future is unclear today; everything will be clear when the results of the activities of both regional and global players are determined. If the current system of international relations holds, the reorganization of the geopolitical structure of Greater Eurasia will make it possible to move towards a full-scale strengthening of the role of non-traditional players for this region.

Conclusions

Russia's position in foreign policy in Central Asia is very important. This position is currently not indisputable, but is still strong. On the part of Kazakhstan, there is a diversification of geo-economic development tracks in order to regulate and contain negative trends. Western diplomacy in Kyrgyzstan is more successful than Russian diplomacy. But do not forget that the economies of Central Asia and Russia are interconnected. These are mainly backbone parts of low-diversified economies: energy and energy transit. There is a significant growth in industry and trade. In a situation of geopolitical uncertainty, the Russian Federation definitely needs to use the situation to open new supply chains that are necessary as part of the development of import substitution projects. And it is important for the Central Asian states not to fall under all sorts of sanctions. It is important to correctly assess the situation and show some pragmatism.

We should not forget about soft power. The significant potential of communications due to the Kazakh-Russian border is a unique resource that can and should be used. Based on the study, 80% of the population of the border zone with Russia is positively disposed towards the development of relations. But, on the other hand, there are also violations of the information space, there is a stratification of the image of Russia and its foreign policy. Russia is perceived as neutral in the eyes of most people, although there is a growing tendency in Kazakh society to view Russia's foreign policy in Central Asia negatively. When planning the future of Russia, it is important to take into account the opinion of its "neighbors" and reconsider how it presents itself. At the same time, it should be understood that Russia cannot unambiguously define the information field. It is important to take into account modern trends in the formation of images in the public mind.

Expert communication and the possibility of public diplomacy through contacts with intellectuals and scientists will make it possible to influence centrifugal tendencies and create new effective platforms for dialogue. It is intellectuals and scientists who can become the engines of ideas of peace and creation.

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Conditions and Factors for the Development of Inter-country Communications between Azerbaijan and Russia

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Abstract. In recent years, the priorities in relations between the countries of the post-Soviet region have been changing rapidly. In this situation, it is very important to see the trends and mindsets of the societies of our countries, including those expressed in the media and social networks. In this context, relations between Azerbaijan and Russia, or more precisely between our societies, are in many ways friendly. In Azerbaijan society, the attitude towards the Russian language, culture and education is consistently good. There is a growing interest in education in Russian, which is significant against the backdrop of not only popularity, but also restrictions on Russian-language education in some countries in the post-Soviet space. However, the external factor in the South Caucasus has a great influence on the Azerbaijan political discourse and leads to the spread of phenomena that are contrary to Russian national interests and can be considered by Russia as threats. The study used materials from some media, the results of personal observations and conclusions from numerous public events.

Keywords: Communication regime, Republic of Azerbaijan, political regime, information sovereignty, information space, media sphere

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Introduction

Over the past 30 years after the collapse of the USSR, the media space and social processes in the post-Soviet countries were considered as a possible basis for creating a renewed general cultural and linguistic space based on the Russian language and culture, based on the experience of the former Soviet period. However, the changing geopolitical situation, the exit of many countries from the post-Soviet sphere, and even direct military conflicts between many states lead to the idea that Russia should give priority to the formation of bilateral relations in the aforementioned areas. Some of the participants in the discussion noted a problem in Russia's desire to create a common cultural space after the collapse of the USSR, from which some countries constantly fall out or they change their attitude towards Russian culture, language and education. It is important to identify the underlying causes of likes and dislikes for the Russian heritage in some post-Soviet countries, and after that to form a common cultural space based on new realities.

Without revealing the true reasons for a good relationship between our peoples, it will not be possible to build a stable joint communication regime. It is necessary to investigate the pragmatic reasons for the interest in the Russian language, education and culture in the post-Soviet countries, discarding the idealistic views developed only by Russian scientific centers.

It is necessary to understand what trends and clichés, replicated in the media space, social networks, bring a negative to the relations between our countries. After that, it is necessary to try to find mechanisms for influencing the identified irritants, develop sustainable approaches that can weaken this negative background, and propose new positive trends that meet the needs of the societies of both states.

Materials and Methods

In the article, its authors used different methodological approaches, which, in the course of scientific discussion, made it possible to single out the most promising: systemic, problem-chronological and structural-functional approaches, and a comparative historical method. This made it possible to analyze the state of the Azerbaijani information space and identify the main features of the state of the communication regimes of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation in modern geopolitical conditions. The authors widely used materials from Azerbaijani and Russian media.

Results

Pluses and Minuses of the Dynamics of Intercountry Communication between Russia and Azerbaijan. The most Priority Areas of Cooperation (R.N.Huseynov)

Azerbaijani-Russian relations for the post-Soviet space are in many ways an example of mutual understanding, pragmatism and avoidance of mutual claims. Although in the early years of independence in the 1990s, our relations were slightly overshadowed by Russia's support for Armenia in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, Moscow and Baku managed to overcome these problems and prevent the negative from spreading to other areas of relations. In particular, it was possible to maintain and develop in Azerbaijan a positive attitude towards Russian culture, language and education. The Russian community of Azerbaijan, which is larger in number than the rest of the Russian population of Georgia, Armenia, Dagestan, Chechnya and a number of Caucasian regions, actively participates in the socio-political, cultural, economic life of the Azerbaijani state and society¹.

There is no xenophobia or negative attitude towards Russians or other peoples in Azerbaijan. Despite the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, about 30,000 Armenians live in Baku, Ganja, Sumgayit and other cities². Whereas the entire Azerbaijani population was expelled from Armenia - about 300,000 people, plus about 700,000 people from Karabakh and neighboring regions during the period of occupation of Azerbaijani lands. After the Patriotic War of 2020, Azerbaijan liberated its territories. This war became Patriotic, because not only the military, but also volunteers - Azerbaijanis, Russians, Lezgins, Talysh, Jews, Ukrainians and other peoples of multinational Azerbaijan participated in it and gave their lives.

The balanced and relatively neutral position of Russia during the 2020 war and after it made it possible to significantly improve the attitude towards Russian policy in Azerbaijan and strengthen the position of the Russian Federation in the South Caucasus region. But at the same time, there are several factors that continue to be an irritant in Azerbaijani-Russian relations. Let's try to review them briefly.

If we make an indicator of friendliness towards Russia in Azerbaijan, we get a scale: from positive to negative³. The best attitude is to the Russian language, culture and education. Restrainedly positive or relatively neutral attitude towards the policy of President Vladimir Putin towards Azerbaijan. Some negative attitude towards the rhetoric and policy of the Russian Foreign Ministry. A negative attitude was expressed towards the actions of the Russian peacekeeping contingent in Karabakh, the position of the Russian Defense Ministry on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, as well as the military actions of the Russian

Federation in Ukraine (monitoring results are shown in the table below). Here, in the line of the most negative attitude, one can enter the information policy of some Russian media, especially TV and NGOs in relation to Azerbaijan and the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. That is, from positive to neutral to negative, the scale looks like this (Table 1):

Table 1. Indicator of friendliness to Russia in Azerbaijan

Russian language, culture and education	+++
President Vladimir Putin position	+ -
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation	-
Russian peacekeeping contingent, Ministry of Defense, Media and NGOs	---

Source: compiled by the author

Against this background, common research projects between Azerbaijani and Russian specialists and scientists stand apart. In general, there is a lot of general scientific research, activities and publications. There are some problems in cooperation and understanding of new challenges of historical science in such areas as Oriental studies, Caucasian studies and Turkic studies. Unfortunately, a significant part of Russian researchers and scientific centers in these disciplines, according to the author, adhere to Eurocentric concepts imposed on Russia from outside in the 18th-20th centuries. At the same time, there are a considerable number of Russian scientists who are actively involved in the formation of a new view of history, ethno-political processes and the role of Russia in the Muslim East, the Caucasus and the Turkic world⁴. However, according to the author, all this is not yet very supported by academic science in the Russian Federation.

Our Center for the History of the Caucasus has been cooperating for over 8 years with orientologists, researchers of the Caucasus, Turkologists, archaeologists, ethnographers, culturologists and specialists in other fields from Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Armenia and European countries. One of the goals of this dialogue is to form a discussion platform for discussing the causes of conflict, the origins of which are in historical concepts that have developed over the past 2-3 centuries. The projects are carried out with the support of UNESCO, a number of expeditions have been organized by

¹ "İnzibati – ərazi bölgüsü, əhalinin sayı və tərkibi" // Azərbaycan Respublikası Dövlət Statistika Komitəsi. URL: https://www.stat.gov.az/source/demography/az/001_11-12.xls.

² Deputy Head of Azerbaijan: Armenians are appropriating our history, <url>. Pravda.ru - 06.04.2016. Available from: <https://www.pravda.ru/world/1297509-karabakh/>

³ The author's opinion.

⁴ "Conference on Karabakh with participation of Armenians opened in Baku", Sputnik-Azerbaijan -14.03.2017. Available from: <https://az.sputniknews.ru/20170314/baku-mezhdunarodnaja-konferencija-po-karabahu-409359623.html>; "Strengthening the dialogue of civilizations". "Caspian", the newspaper - 27.12.2019, <https://kaspiy.az/ukreplyaya-dialog-civilizacii>; "In Search of the Sun" held a number of events in Azerbaijan. New Era" - 30.07.2019, <https://novayaepoxa.com/v-poiskakh-solnca-provela-ryad-meropri/307777/>

state, scientific and non-governmental organizations, international conferences have been organized, a number of articles and collections have been published⁵.

At the same time, there is a dialogue between Azerbaijani and Armenian experts, scientists, journalists and NGOs in order to develop peacekeeping initiatives, discuss the causes of the conflict, its historical and ideological background and ways out of the situation (9)⁶.

The Azerbaijani side is interested in developing cooperation with Russian colleagues in these areas, primarily with the National Research Institute for the Communications Development and other research centers of the Russian Federation.

Russian-Azerbaijani Relations in the Context of Information Wars (A.B.Krylov)

The long conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia is accompanied by a fierce information and propaganda confrontation, which has a great influence on the coverage of the topic of Russian-Azerbaijani relations.

After the collapse of the USSR, the information background in Russia was much more favorable for Armenia than for Azerbaijan. Pro-Armenian politicians occupied important government posts and had a great influence on Russian policy in the South Caucasus. The negative perception of Azerbaijan during the First Karabakh War (1992-1994) was also promoted by the nationalist and anti-Russian policy of its then president A. Elchibey.

Thanks to Baku's many years of efforts, an Azerbaijani lobby was created to counterbalance the traditionally strong Armenian influence in Russia. It includes both representatives of the Azerbaijani diaspora and Russian businessmen, experts, journalists, cultural figures, and others representing different nationalities. The large-scale information and propaganda activity of Baku and the local Azerbaijani lobby contributed to a change in the information background and public sentiment in Russia in a direction favorable to Azerbaijan. The importance of Armenia as a key ally of Russia in the Caucasus was gradually devalued, it was increasingly viewed as one of the post-Soviet countries, not as problematic as Georgia or Ukraine, but standing on a par with others, including Azerbaijan⁷.

5 Meeting of International Working Group 'In Search of the Sun'. Available from: <https://unesco.spb.ru/reporting-event-of-the-international-working-group-in-search-of-the-sun/>; Final Report (In Russian). Available from: <https://unesco.spb.ru/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/FinalReport.pdf>; Reporting Event of the International Working Group "In Search of the Sun". Available from: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zsLg1N6UyauORM1tT5I9BTrXnLajVQOV/view> ; UNESCO-nun "Günəşin axtarışında" beynəlxalq işçi qrupun 2018-19-cu illərdə yekun fəaliyyət hesabatı. Available from: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Mbyv2TEVLR09VOE_jHk8oPhc_YSvecl1AW44-n7wlqM/edit#slide=id.p1

6 Huseynov P. "Brief history and background of the Karabakh conflict". Council of State Support of NGOs under the President of Azerbaijan, Baku, 2015. Publishing house "QHT NƏŞRİYYATI" 65 C. Available from: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7BEevnub_DNdnJ3R0cwZnFUYWw/view?resourcekey=0-eNCxWgrMbP9dHW27az1DSg

7 Krylov A. B. The goal of the campaign of Turkey and Azerbaijan against Armenia is the maximum deterioration of Russian-Armenian relations. 01.09.2020. Available from: <https://yerkramas.org/article/173834/celyu-kampanii-turcii-i-azerbajdzhana-protiv-armenii-yavlyaetsya-maksimalnoe-uxudshenie-rossijsko-armyanskix-otnoshenij>

For Azerbaijan, the demand for the return of the territories lost after the First Karabakh War turned into a national idea, which first made it possible to overcome the defeatist syndrome, and then consolidate society and ensure military revenge in the 44-day Second Karabakh War in 2020. Thanks to an active information and propaganda policy, Baku managed to limit the influence of the Armenian lobby in the international arena, to achieve unconditional support for military actions from the Azerbaijani society, including even political opponents of I. Aliyev, who previously harshly criticized the ruling regime for corruption, repression, etc. The head of the leading opposition party, the Popular Front of Azerbaijan, A. Karimli, the leader of the Republican Alternative opposition party, I. Mammadov, and almost all opposition politicians, activists, human rights activists, etc., declared their unconditional support for a military solution to the Karabakh problem. As representatives of the opposition emphasized, in a war any politician who criticizes the authorities will become the object of harassment by the state and the whole society and, thus, will completely lose the support of the electorate⁸. According to the Azerbaijani political scientist A. Yunusov (now a political emigrant), such a unification of society during any war is normal: "in peacetime, you can be objective, but when war comes, the mosaic of colors disappears and a black and white picture remains 'friend or foe'. This is especially true in ethnic conflicts"⁹. In Armenia, the situation was the opposite: a sharp confrontation between the current government and the opposition split society and weakened the country's position in the international arena (5).

Azerbaijani authorities announced the end of the Karabakh conflict by returning the entire disputed territory under the control of Baku¹⁰. Yerevan refused to carry out the delimitation and demarcation of the border, as this would mean abandoning the requirement for a special status for the Armenian-populated territories of Nagorno-Karabakh, which should be determined through negotiations under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group. According to the Armenian leadership, the provision of the Armistice Agreement of November 9, 2020 on the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from Nagorno-Karabakh does not apply to the Defense Army of the People's Karabakh Republic, which "in parallel with the activities of the Russian peacekeeping contingent, must improve the defense resources we have in order to have opportunity to ensure long-term peace in the region"¹¹.

Baku, not recognizing Karabakh as a special territory, insists on the complete demilitarization and liquidation of all armed formations not controlled by the Azerbaijani authorities, which should be carried out by the Russian peacekeeping contingent¹². At

8 The Karabakh war forced Azerbaijan to forget about other problems. What is this fraught with? BBC, 29.10.2020. Available from: <https://www.bbc.com/russian/news-54718730>

9 Ibid.

10 Aliyev announced the end of the Karabakh conflict. 24.09.2021. Available from: <https://ria.ru/20210924/karabakh-1751549770.html>

11 The President of Nagorno-Karabakh held a meeting of the Military Council of the Defense Army. 29.01.2022 Available from: <https://ru.armeniasputnik.am/20220129/prezident-nagornogo-karabakha-provel-zasedanie-voennogo-soveta-armii-oborony-38105855.html>

12 "Б": Russian peacekeepers will have to disarm Armenian militants in Karabakh. December 28, 2020. Available from: <https://news.rambler.ru/world/45521276-rossiyskim-mirotvortsam-pridetsya-razoruzhit-armyanskix-boevikov-v-karabahe/>

the same time, the parties to the conflict interpret in their favor the 4th paragraph of the ceasefire agreement of November 9, 2020, according to which “the peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation is being deployed in parallel with the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces”¹³.

More than two years have passed since the end of the 44-day war, but the level of hostility of the conflicting parties has not decreased. A high level of tension remains both on the line of delimitation of the zone of responsibility of the Russian peacekeeping contingent, and on the border between Azerbaijan and Armenia. So far, the situation is developing towards a new military confrontation, and not a peaceful settlement along the path that was outlined in the Armistice Agreement of November 9, 2020.

The desire of the parties to solve the set tasks with the help of Russia comes into conflict with the desire of the Russian leadership to maintain the neutral position of the mediator, which contributes to the settlement of the conflict by peaceful means. The goal of Russia's policy is to stabilize the situation in the region, however, under the current conditions, it is subject to sharp criticism both in the information space of Azerbaijan and in Armenia¹⁴.

The most radical anti-Russian propaganda in Azerbaijan is carried out by pro-Western parties (People's Front, Musavat, etc.) and NGOs, which call for breaking off relations with Russia and solving the problems of the South Caucasus with the help of the collective West. At the same time, they accuse President Ilham Aliyev that in 2020 he “returned the Russian occupation army to the territory of Azerbaijan”¹⁵.

Ethnic Factor in the Formation of Worldview, Value and Cultural Meanings of Post-Soviet Societies (R.B.Mobili)

Intercountry communication (and the development of its norms and rules), as well as globalism, is now considered as an actual concept that determines the current stage of civilization development, and problems that exist and continuously arise in the course of human development. For ethnic groups that are in conditions of transitivity, the transition from tradition to modernity, the idea and practice of recognizing the equality and equivalence of all cultures and civilizations, nations and ethnic groups are significant.

Considering the inconsistency of the processes of globalization and regionalization, we note that the main factor in preserving the subjectivity and identity of the Udins is their own ethnic group. Thanks to the ethnic group, the individual chooses a model of his subjective image, forms of identification. It allows him to perceive the worldview, value and cultural meanings of his ethnic group as significant components of his own being. The

¹³ Statement by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and the President of the Russian Federation. November 10, 2020. Available from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/64384>

¹⁴ The Russian Foreign Ministry responded point by point to the criticism coming from Baku and Yerevan. 11.08.2022 Available from: <https://rusarminfo.ru/2022/08/11/mid-rossii-po-punktam-otvetil-na-zvuchashhuyu-iz-baku-i-erevana-kritiku/>

¹⁵ An anti-Russian rally was held in Baku: “Down with the occupation troops”. 07.10.2022. Available from: <https://news.am/rus/news/724014.html>

subjective manifestation of identification is the involvement of a person in real life, native culture, norms of linguistic communication, his participation in various events, formation, citizenship and public opinion.

The study of the modern life of the Udins as representatives of a small ethnic group shows that, living in a transitional environment, they are among the first to feel the crisis of the social system, the presence of risks, tensions, threats and conflicts in multinational post-Soviet societies, including Russian-Azerbaijani cultural relations. . Now in various countries of the CIS and the world there are about 12 thousand Udins, there are just over 3.5 thousand in the Russian Federation (2:373). During the crisis and the collapse of the USSR, a significant part of them were forced to move to the CIS countries and other countries of the world. Today, the Udins are compact, about 4 thousand people, live in their historical homeland, in the multinational village of Nij in the Gabala region of the Republic of Azerbaijan (6:211).

Modern life is very dynamic, reality is rapidly transforming, goals and values, motives and incentives, people's behavior are constantly changing. Today, adaptation to the rapidly changing reality, socio-cultural, spiritual and moral spheres is significant for every Udin. The comprehension of the surrounding world by the Udins, as well as by all national and ethnic groups, largely occurs not on the basis of specific realities, events, which would contribute to active personal self-realization, but as a result of the influence of the media, mass culture, primitive standards and stereotypes.

The development of the information society, the dominance of the Internet, a variety of technologies are constantly changing the nature of socialization and identification. They speed up the processes of “appropriation” of information, understanding of the environment, the sphere of social relations, connections and meanings. The uniqueness of the Udins' perception of everyday life lies in the fact that in his inner world several positions seem to oppose: firstly, deep antiquity, the past; secondly, the present, quickly “fluid” realities; thirdly, the future, the unknown “tomorrow”, which is filled with fears or even closed. Therefore, everyone has to spontaneously, with the help of rules, cash, communication and dialogue, master the continuously changing space of life, cultural standards and moral norms. In transitive societies, adaptation to reality occurs spontaneously and in a deeply individualized form, because they continuously reproduce the imbalance between vertical and horizontal communications.

Modernity destroys the social essence of ethnic groups, undermines rootedness, connection with history, alienates, “overturns”, “turns” space and time, making their objective characteristics unnecessary. Udins, like representatives of any ethnic group, strive to preserve their identity, essential features, and immanent foundations. Finding themselves in conditions of transition, loss of their former roots, they try to overcome their marginality, to acquire a new social essence. Moving along the path of a new emerging identity, they have to constantly realign their strategy and tactics in accordance with the rules of the market. For the Udins, an appeal to the past, its ancient history, the experience of past generations, social memory is necessary for “genuine” being in the conditions of “elusive” modernity. It is important for the construction of a new identity, self-identification and the implementation of goals, the formation of guidelines for the future.

Today, the development by each ethnic group of various forms of time (past, present, future) is more important than ever, it is a necessary condition for rooting in everyday life, the continuity of social life and the identification process. In close contact with representatives of other cultures, Udins gain not only the experience of interethnic and intercivilizational dialogue and solidarity, respect for other beliefs and traditions, but also an understanding of their own “I”, their identity (3:108).

In the constantly changing conditions of modernity, the paradoxical nature of being is one of the important features of the adaptation of the individual to the environment, the formation of identity. The public consciousness is demoralized, often people are not able to understand reality. For the ethnophore, the continuously changing everyday life turns into an environment with different types of alienation. Under these conditions, a person's own activity acquires significance, aimed at identifying with the constantly changing structures of society, mastering historical traditions and social qualities, and forming one's own responsibility. A rapidly changing reality puts a person in front of a difficult choice. He is faced with the need to form his own “life world”, to determine the purpose and meaning of life, to realize his place and role in society.

Conclusions

Cross-country communication between Russia and Azerbaijan, the acceleration of the pace of social dynamics give each person real opportunities for adaptation and integration, the opportunity to find the meaning of life. A person of the post-Soviet society strives to identify himself with his ethnic community, to adapt to reality on the basis of the conditions of its existence, to understand the meanings of his history, the peculiarities of his native culture, traditions and attitudes (7:151). Representatives of the same nationality, confession feel closer to each other, opposing themselves to “strangers”, that is, others. On the basis of their “native” history, language, culture, values, traditions, customs, they acquire their selfhood, identity, “define” the boundaries of their being.

In the context of Russia's acute conflict with the collective West, the US/NATO/EU-funded pro-Western political forces in Azerbaijan and Armenia are relays of foreign propaganda and come up with a common set of radical anti-Russian slogans.

The Azerbaijani side is interested in developing cooperation with Russian colleagues, primarily with the National Research Institute for the Communications Development and other research centers of the Russian Federation.

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CHANGING SOCIETY

Social Structure,
Social Institutions
and Processes
Political sociology

The vast majority of Armenian society traditionally treats Russia and Russians well. Today, the largest Armenian diaspora, comparable to the population of the republic, lives in Russia. Armenian labor migrants in Russia keep close ties with relatives at home and regularly send substantial financial assistance to their families in Armenia. However, recently in Armenia, following the global trend to blame Russia for everything, publications have also begun to appear aimed at strengthening anti-Russian sentiments. [...] In the context of an acute conflict with N. Pashinyan, the media controlled by the former presidents sharply criticize his policies and are not interested in highlighting positive trends in Armenian-Russian relations. As a result, at present, most of the Armenian media deliberately hush up the good in bilateral relations or present them in the most negative light.

Ayvazyan D.S., Krylov A.B., Poghosyan G.A., Krivopuskov V.V.

The Friendliness of Armenia's Communication Regime: Towards the Question of Media and Public Attitudes

During the 30 years of independence, each of the republics of the post-Soviet space first began national formation based on their ideas about the future of the state and nation. This process began with the conceptualization of the national idea, the strengthening and further development of the state language, it's positioning in the regional and global system of international relations. The once unified socio-cultural space is gradually losing its unity, and each republic of the former Soviet state has now determined for itself foreign policy guidelines and vectors of development.

Dzhunushalieva G.D., Dyatlenko P.I., Kulikovskiy A.V., Moldokeeva A.B.

Russia in the Media and Public Space of Modern Kyrgyzstan

It is important to note that the ongoing weakening of the "security belt" along the perimeter of the borders of the Russian Federation in situation of a special military operation in Ukraine, which has become an existential clash between our country and the "collective West", especially sharply raises the question of the socio-political situation in the Republic of Belarus and its prospects, including the influence of opposing national and foreign information and communication resources.

Gribin N.P.

Communication Regime in Belarus: State, Challenges and Threats

The Friendliness of Armenia's Communication Regime: Towards the Question of Media and Public Attitudes

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the issue of friendliness as a category of the current state of the communication regimes of the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation. The orientation of the friendliness of the Armenian communication regime is largely determined by the sharp contradictions between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the continuing tension in the Karabakh conflict zone, and the instability of the internal political situation. The confrontation of various political forces and the large role of the external factor have a great influence on the Armenian political discourse and favor the emergence of trends that are contrary to Russian national interests and can be considered by Russia as threats. The article analyzes the features of the news materials presented by the information and information-analytical agencies of Armenia in Russian. Information occasions, the emotional tone of information messages are studied, it is assessed how fully the Russian-language content reflects the events in the life of Armenian society and, in particular, the trends in the development of relations between Armenia and Russia. It is concluded that the potential for more detailed news coverage in Russian of Russian-Armenian relations, the results of cooperation between Russia and Armenia has not yet been revealed. The article was based on the results of a scientific discussion held at the National Communications Development Research Institution (NIIRC), Moscow, Russia in 2022.

Keywords: Communication regime, Republic of Armenia, political regime, information sovereignty, information space, media sphere

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Introduction

The friendliness of the country's communication regime in relation to another country is expressed in the presence of legal, political and socio-cultural conditions for the non-conflict development of various types of intercountry communications and the exchange of information between state and non-state actors. Friendliness contributes to the development of relations based on friendship and good neighborliness. Friendliness implies relations between countries based on mutual respect, mutual interests and values of peaceful coexistence in a multipolar world. In the first rating of friendliness of communication regimes of neighboring countries published by NIIRK, as of the end of 2021, Armenia is among the five most friendly communication regimes to Russia (1).

The fragmentation of the world communication order and the acute confrontation on the world stage increase the relevance of the analysis of the friendliness of the communication regimes of neighboring countries in (4). For three decades, Armenia has continued to be Russia's ally in the strategically important Caucasus region. For Armenia, Russia is the main guarantor of national security in the region, which continues to be one of the "hot spots" on the political map of the world. In a difficult situation for the entire South Caucasus, Armenia plays an important stabilizing role. Armenia's memberships in the collective security organization and its close ties with Russia have become an obstacle to the arrival in the region of those destructive external forces that could destabilize the situation in the vast territories of Asia and North Africa. At the same time, the ongoing conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, tension in the Karabakh conflict zone and destructive activity in the US/NATO/EU region have a negative impact on the friendliness of the communication regime of Armenia towards the Russian Federation (2).

The public opinion of the Armenian society is traditionally positively oriented towards Russia as the main strategic partner, security guarantor and friendly state (3.5). Armenian-Russian relations had deep cultural and historical roots, based on the experience of positive cooperation over many centuries. And even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, friendly relations between our countries have been preserved, as evidenced by the joining of the independent Republic of Armenia to the CIS, the CSTO and the EAEU, created by Russia. However, after the so-called "velvet revolution" of 2018, the main goal of the political agenda of the new leadership of the republic was to change the geopolitical vector of Armenia. To achieve this goal, public organizations

financed by various Western funds, private media, Internet resources and social networks were involved. These attempts were especially intensified after Russia launched a special military operation in Ukraine. The information war launched by the West on an unprecedented scale against the Russian Federation is gradually penetrating the Armenian society. The desire to reformat the public consciousness in Armenia is becoming threatening. Therefore, regular research of public opinion and analysis of current trends is important. The results of sociological surveys and studies presented in the article serve as the basis for analyzing the impact of the information field and the media sphere on the public sentiments in Armenia (G.A.Poghosyan).

The political crisis in Armenia in the spring of 2018, which erupted after the implementation of the constitutional reform in Armenia in 2015 (as a result of the reform, Armenia switched from a presidential to a parliamentary form of government) and led to the coming to power in Armenia of a new Prime Minister N.Pashinyan, 44 – the daytime Karabakh war in the fall of 2020, early parliamentary elections in Armenia in June 2021, the crisis in resolving the conflict over the status of Nagorno-Karabakh and border disputes between Armenia and Azerbaijan contributed to qualitative changes in the socio-political discourse and public sentiment in Armenia in the context of the crisis, exacerbated the question of what will be the further development of Armenia's foreign policy ties, what could be effective crisis response measures within the framework of allied relations between Russia and Armenia. In the current conditions, it is relevant to assess the characteristics of the media in Armenia as one of the key subjects of the communication regime in the context of Russian-Armenian relations and the public opinion of the population of Armenia towards Russia.

Materials and Methods

The authors used different methodological approaches and methods for their research. The exchange of methods during the scientific discussion made it possible to identify the most effective and promising ones, which include systemic, problem-chronological and structural-functional approaches, as well as a comparative historical method. They made it possible to analyze the state of the Armenian information space and identify the main features of the communication regimes of the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in modern geopolitical conditions. Discourse analysis of news of information and information-analytical agencies was also used. The empirical base of the study was news reports from information and information-analytical agencies of Armenia and Russia, the results of public opinion polls, the results of an analysis of the communication regime, and materials on the impact of the politically oriented media sphere on social consciousness.

Results

The Specifics of Presenting Information in the Russian-Language Information and Information-Analytical Agencies of Armenia (D.S.Ayvazyan)

Information and information-analytical agencies operating in Armenia (panarmenian.net, news.am, Armenpress, etc.) produce news materials both in Armenian and in Russian, English and other foreign languages. The Armenian diaspora lives in various countries of the world, in Armenia there are higher educational institutions teaching in Russian, English, French; tourism, which is important for Armenia, is developed, there are many Russian companies in Armenia (airlines, companies in the field of mobile communications, telecommunications, energy, etc.); therefore, for the development of Armenia's external relations, it is not enough to release news only in the Armenian language. Russian-language news agencies and media in Armenia also inform the Russian-speaking population of Armenia about the situation in the country (12:41–42).

Russian informative agencies news materials, as a rule, are sufficient for understanding the life in various spheres of Armenian society, Armenia's cooperation with the outside world, interaction with Russia, etc. and contain both textual material and photo and video materials. The tone of news reports in Russian, as a rule, is neutral – first of all, we see the willingness to convey facts. However, the same piece of news can be presented in Armenian in more detail than in Russian and English. News reports in Russian relating to business exhibitions, conferences, round tables and other meetings often reflect the opinions, speeches of selected speakers, but not all of them, therefore, it is necessary to contact several news agencies in order to form a holistic view of a particular event.

As a rule, news about the life of the Armenian diaspora in Russia, events dedicated to Armenian culture held in Russia (art exhibitions, film screenings, lectures, etc.) are presented on various information resources in Russia. But more detailed coverage by news agencies of Armenia in the news in Russian of Russian-Armenian relations and the results of cooperation between Russia and Armenia is needed.

Russian-Armenian Relations in the Context of Information Wars (A.B.Krylov)

The acute conflict with the collective West determines the information background in the international arena that is unfavorable for Russia. In Armenia, the situation is also complicated by the sharp confrontation between the current government and the opposition, who use the topic of Russian-Armenian relations for their own opportunistic purposes.

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opposition, that use the topic of Russian-Armenian relations for their own opportunistic purposes.

During the period of the third President of the Republic of Armenia S. Sargsyan (2008–2018), the information background was unfavorable for Russia. S. Sargsyan was not an opponent of Russia, but for ideological reasons, the information policy of emphasized distancing from Russia was designed to provide support for the collective West, plans to carry out constitutional reform and remain in power after the end of the second presidential term (5).

The change of power in Armenia in May 2018 further worsened the information background of Russian-Armenian relations. In most Russian media, the removal of S. Sargsyan was (and continues to be) assessed as another “color revolution” carried out in the interests of the United States. N. Pashinyan had a “pro-Western” reputation, but after coming to power, he announced his intention to maintain allied relations with Russia. Some of his actions in the international arena directly contradicted the policy of the “collective West” (support for Russia’s position at the sessions of the UN General Assembly and its policy in Syria, recognition of the election results in the Republic of Belarus in 2020) (4).

Initially, the course towards developing relations with Russia was positively assessed by the media supporting the Prime Minister (TV channels Public Television of Armenia, New Armenia, Haykakan Zhamanak, etc.), as well as by many media that could be classified as neutral (Shant TV channels, AR, newspapers Aravot, Arka, Armenpress, Arminfo, De Facto, Novosti-Armenia, etc.)¹. As a result, the information background in Armenia after N. Pashinyan came to power became more favorable for the development of bilateral relations. The situation changed after the 44-day war in 2020, after which most of the media associated with the government tried to shift the blame for the military defeat and the current problems of Armenia from their own leadership to Russia and the CSTO (6).

After the change of power in Armenia in 2018, most of the information resources ended up in the hands of the opposition, and this had a great impact on the coverage of Russian-Armenian relations. Now S. Sargsyan continues to control most of the Armenian media (TV channels Armenia, ATV, ARMNEWS, information resources of the Republican Party of Armenia, etc.). Another large segment of the Armenian media is controlled by the former President R. Kocharyan (TV channels TV 5, Second Armenian TV channel, Yerkir Media, Kenton; newspapers and Internet publications Hayots Ashkhar, Golos Armenii, Grapank, 168 Zham, 7OR.AM, Armenia Today, Lragir, Panorama, etc.). Some of the media had an openly anti-Russian orientation, the most illustrative example here is the Lragir². However, most of the pro-Kocharyan media covered the topic of Russian-Armenian relations in a more neutral spirit than in an anti-Russian one³.

¹ The media field of Armenian-Russian relations at the stage of recovery. 04.09.2020. Available from: <https://eadaily.com/ru/news/2020/09/04/informpole-armyano-rossiyskih-otnosheniy-na-etape-ozdorovleniya-intervyu> Checked 30.01.2023.

² Who is behind the anti-Russian propaganda “Lragir.am” and what does Pashinyan and the Soros Foundation have to do with it? 26.03.2021. Available from: <https://verelq.am/ru/node/83864> Checked 30.01.2023.

³ The information field of Armenian-Russian relations at the stage of recovery. 04.09.2020.

In the situation of an acute conflict with N. Pashinyan, the media controlled by the former presidents sharply criticize his policies and are not interested in highlighting positive trends in Armenian-Russian relations. As a result, now most of the Armenian media deliberately hush up the positive aspects of bilateral relations or present them in a negative way (4).

The Russian media is dominated by materials with a negative assessment of the policy of the government of N. Pashinyan (4). At the same time, speeches by well-known Russian media figures of Armenian origin are being replicated in Russia and Armenia with calls for Pashinyan to resign, for the people and the army to overthrow the “rogue”, etc. (4). This causes a negative reaction in the Armenian society, makes it possible for Russia’s opponents to speculate on the topic of the Kremlin’s “information war” against N. Pashinyan, the “anti-Armenian and pro-Turkish nature” of the policy of the Russian Federation⁴.

On the attitude of Armenians towards Russia from the point of view of public opinion (G.A.Poghosyan)

For three decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the people of Armenia and the political leadership of the republic have shown devotion to traditional friendly relations with the Russian Federation. Armenia was one of the first to join the new post-Soviet entity – the CIS, and then, as part of the five former Soviet republics, became part of the CSTO, and then, in 2015, became a full member of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

Armenia, with its political course, strategic priorities and geopolitical orientation, considered a long-term partnership with the Russian Federation as obligatory for itself. Moreover, the vast majority of the Armenian people (about 75–80% according to various sociological surveys) have always treated Russia as a friendly country and Russians as a brotherly people (8, p.284). Russia is now home to the largest Armenian diaspora in the world, comparable in size to the population of Armenia itself (2:157).

Russia is Armenia’s largest economic partner. In the field of energy and security, it is Russia that is the only and reliable strategic ally of Armenia. In the cultural, historical and humanitarian spheres, traditional Armenian-Russian relations are unparalleled. In a word, despite the tragic collapse of the Soviet system, the Armenian people and the political elite of the country, until recently, fully and completely maintained close cooperation with Russia.

At the same time, Armenia, like many post-Soviet republics, sought to develop international relations with other countries, in particular with the European Union, the United States, China, etc. Cooperation between Armenia and Europe was especially developed when Russia itself showed an open interest in developing partnership relations with the EU and NATO. Until 2014, Armenia pursued a multidirectional foreign policy.

Available from: <https://eadaily.com/ru/news/2020/09/04/informpole-armyano-rossiyskih-otnosheniy-na-etape-ozdorovleniya-intervyu> Checked 30.01.2023.

⁴ Putin was accused of playing a double game in the Karabakh conflict and betraying Armenia. 12.11.2020. Available from: <https://wek.ru/putina-obvinili-v-dvojnoj-igre-v-karabaxskom-konflikte-i-predatelstve-armenii> Checked 30.01.2023.

However, the deterioration of relations between Russia and the collective West, followed by open confrontation, made maneuvering between the two geopolitical centers problematic. Especially for Armenia, which has close ties with the huge Armenian diaspora all over the world, therefore maintaining friendly relations with Western countries is not only a geopolitical issue for it, but necessary to maintain ties with the Armenian diaspora. The movement towards a multipolar world order (about which so much is said) presupposes the development of precisely multidirectional international relations.

Sociological studies conducted in Armenia over 30 years testified to the presence in the public consciousness of several value constants that form the basis of national identity. Among these constants, one of the first places is occupied by the character and modality of relations with historical neighbors. Russia in this system of relations has always acted as a friendly country, a reliable strategic partner and a guarantor of security. Relations between the Armenian and Russian peoples have historically been completely trusting and friendly⁵.

Sociological surveys of public opinion give a clear picture of the attitude of the population towards its neighbors. Here are some survey results. So, in the research of the American organization IRI⁶ in 2021–2022 the vast majority of Armenians named Russia as the most important political partner (57%), economic partner (61%) and partner for Armenia's security (64%). In situation with the war in Ukraine, according to the same study (IRI, June 2022); the majority (68%) of those surveyed are against sanctions against Russia. Among older people and those living in rural areas, those who are against sanctions are even more numerous. The greatest responsibility for the war in Ukraine, according to respondents, lies with the United States (17%), all parties to the conflict (16%), V. Zelensky (14%), NATO (10%), President V. V. Putin (8%). We also present the results of a representative nationwide survey of 1500 respondents, conducted under our leadership by the Armenian Sociological Association in July–August 2022 in Armenia. To the question with which countries Armenia should maintain and deepen friendly and partnership relations, the following answers were received: with Russia (59.4%), with Iran (32.7%), with France (25.2%), with the USA (23.0%), with Georgia (14.3%), with China (13.4%), with Germany (6.6%), with the European Union (5.4%) and others – is perceived as a friendly country with which Armenia must maintain and develop its relations. In Armenia, only Turkey and Azerbaijan appear as enemy states in all public opinion polls. Thus, in the 2021 study, the absolute majority of the adult population of Armenia (80%–90%) indicated Turkey as the greatest threat, and 77% indicated Azerbaijan⁷.

It is impossible not to notice that in social networks and in some media, the anti-Russian discourse in Armenia has clearly intensified lately. Following the global trend to

blame Russia for everything, publications aimed at strengthening anti-Russian sentiments have also become more frequent in Armenia. Anti-Russian statements and accusations began to be thrown into the public discourse more often. For this, any event in the country is used for speculation against Russia. The close partnership relations between Russia and Turkey do not escape the zealous attention of the Armenians, and are used by our common adversaries to inflame the conflict in the Armenian-Russian relations. There is a risk of an increase in anti-Russian sentiment, since some local media do not miss the opportunity to spread compromising evidence and “black PR” against our strategic partner. There is a massive attack on public opinion; maximum attempts are being made to present Russia and its political leadership in an unseemly light. In a word, active work is underway to reformat the public consciousness of Armenians. Of course, in many ways it is artificial and not easy to implement, because the vast majority of Armenian society is traditionally positive towards Russia and Russians, and the rating of President V. Putin is consistently high in Armenia.

Results

Most of the Armenian society is traditionally positive towards Russia and the Russians. Now in Russia there is the largest Armenian diaspora, which is comparable to the population of the republic. Armenian labor migrants in Russia maintain close ties with relatives back home and regularly send substantial financial assistance to their families in Armenia. However, recently, following the global trend to blame Russia for everything, publications have also begun to appear in Armenia aimed at strengthening anti-Russian sentiments. Anti-Russian statements and accusations began to be thrown into the public discourse more often. The close partnership between Russia and Turkey does not escape the zealous attention of the Armenians and is used by our common adversaries to stir up tension in the Armenian-Russian relations. In social networks and in some media, anti-Russian discourse has recently been increasing. Some local media do not miss the opportunity to spread compromising information about our strategic partner. There is a massive attack on public opinion; attempts are being made to present Russia and its political leadership in an unseemly light. Active work is being carried out openly to reformat the public consciousness of Armenians. Social consciousness in the conditions of the apathy of the population and the helplessness of the political opposition can become a convenient environment for such a reformatting. It is noticeable that on the part of the Armenian authorities there is no fast counteraction to anti-Russian stuffing and various actions of pro-Western civil society. The unambiguously pro-Russian orientation is supported by the Armenian diaspora in Russia. But unlike the Armenian diaspora in the West, it is less organized, does not have solid funds and has no experience in political activity. Therefore, its influence on the civil society of Armenia is weakly felt and its voice in the political discourse of Armenia is almost not heard.

Armenia is characterized by the functioning of information and information-analytical agencies in several languages – in addition to the state Armenian, in Russian, English and other foreign languages. This is due to the openness of the country, the vast

⁵ “Armenia-Russia: friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance”. Available from: <https://armenpress.am/rus/news/1080146.html?fbclid=IwAR10ultlo7mRBpLpW78KPyM8KUH-DZe5t1UDLefKdr2fkeRjZJuH-JxEZKM>. Checked 30.01.2023.

⁶ www.iri.org Access to the information resource is restricted on the basis of Federal Law № 149-FZ of July 27, 2006 “On Information, Information Technologies and Information Protection”

⁷ www.iri.org Access to the information resource is restricted on the basis of Federal Law № 149-FZ of July 27, 2006 “On Information, Information Technologies and Information Protection”; Public Opinion Study on Corruption in Armenia; Public Opinion Study on Corruption in Armenia. Available from: <https://www.crrc.am> CRR_C_Armenia_Turkey_Public_Opinion_Survey_Eng_2015. Checked 30.01.2023.

Armenian diaspora in various countries of the world. The Russian-language news content of information and information-analytical agencies in Armenia traditionally occupies an important place in the news materials of the agencies, however, there is potential for more detailed coverage in Russian of events in various spheres of life in Armenia, the agenda of Russian-Armenian relations, the results of cooperation between Russia and Armenia, discussions on topical issues of Russian-Armenian relations.

Social consciousness in the conditions of the apathy of the population and the helplessness of the political opposition can become a convenient environment for reformatting. There is no active opposition from the Armenian authorities to anti-Russian stuffing and various actions of a pro-Western society. Unambiguously pro-Russian orientation is supported by the Armenian diaspora in Russia. But unlike the Armenian diaspora in the West, it is less organized, does not have solid funds and has no experience in political activity. Therefore, its influence on the civil society of Armenia is weakly and its voice in the political discourse of Armenia is not heard.

The information resources of the political forces advocating an alliance with Russia (the Reformist Party, the Constitutional Right Union party, the Strong Armenia with Russia for a New Union movement, etc.) have limited influence. Their financial capabilities are incomparable with the massive support that supporters of breaking off relations with Russia receive from the collective West. As a result, the media coverage of the topic of Russian-Armenian relations does not correspond to their allied character and becomes an obstacle to the development of bilateral relations.

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Russia in the Media and Public Space of Modern Kyrgyzstan

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Abstract. The article was prepared on the materials of a scientific discussion held by the National Communications Development Research Institution, dedicated to the study of the communication regime in Kyrgyzstan. The authors examine the decline in the level of knowledge of the Russian language and interest in the Russian-language media, talk about the need to develop cooperation between the Kyrgyz and Russian media and civil society institutions, and develop the infrastructure of Russian schools, especially in rural areas. The question is raised about changing approaches to the choice of an event series to preserve the common historical memory of peoples. Noting the great positive significance of cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Russia for the development of Kyrgyz society, the authors talk about important problems: the development of an anti-Russian infrastructure in Kazakhstan (supported by Western investors) and its impact on public opinion, especially Kyrgyz youth. The article was based on the results of a scientific discussion held at the National Communications Development Research Institution (NIIRC), Moscow, Russia in 2022.

Keywords: Communication regime, Republic of Kyrgyzstan, political regime, information sovereignty, information space, media sphere

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Introduction

During the 30 years of Independence each of the post-soviet republics initially set to forming their national identity, proceeding from their concept regarding the future prospects of the state and the nation. This process started with conceptualizing the national idea, reinforcing and further developing the official language, establishing their status in the regional and the global system of international relations. The social and cultural context formerly unique, loses its unity, and by the current moment each of the former soviet republics has established its geopolitical milestones and the vectors for their further development.

Migration processes provoked by economic and political changes have brought about changes in the community of the post-soviet republics. Various non-commercial funds have actively entered into the process of social and political reorientation of the local communities with a view to getting rid of “harsh” soviet heritage. First and foremost, it was concerned with the university education system, since tertiary education institutions are to educate prospective members of national political elite. Highly efficient instruments were employed to involve local communities into organization and implementation of various grassroots initiatives. Special attention was paid to mass information propagation channels and to creation of internet-based mass media, to act as alternative sources as opposed to the government-owned mass media.

Materials and Methods

The authors applied various methodological approaches and methods for their research work. Concept exchange in the course of scholarly discussion made it possible to single out the most efficient and promising ones, which include the following: systematization method, historical-genetic procedure and statistical method.

The function of the empirical basis was accomplished by the information provided by the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation mass media as well as electronic media, non-commercial organizations’ websites.

Results

Regarding conservation of social and cultural unity potential (G.D.Junushalieva)

Over the past decades the national community has seen several generations, which have a vague idea of what the soviet era was, being their notion based on the stories told by

the senior generation. They mainly consist of stereotypical clichés, their essence depending on what exactly they were narrated. It would be positive if told by nostalgic parents and grandparents or negative if the narrator was possibly prosecuted in the Soviet times for this or that reason (civil war, political repressions, the Great Patriotic War, larceny, etc.). Such a heterogeneous social medium appears to be a rewarding area for applying political technologies and public opinion manipulation. Images of a super evil-doer and a super-hero begin to get generated in the media space, which are to demonstrate what the societies were liberated of. The effect of such manipulation, if not quick, turns out to be prolonged and stable.

The attempts to reduce the political and economic influence of the Russian Federation yield fruit. In the Republic of Kirgizstan there have grown several generations of young people, who got university education in eastern, middle-eastern and far-eastern countries. When returning to their motherland they become propagators of the ideologies and concepts that they absorbed. They currently occupy top and middle ranking leadership posts in public institutions.

State policy regarding the development of the official language in the Republic yields fruit. For example, bilingualism, which was common in Kirgizstan in the late Soviet period, according to our reckoning, has lost its positions. Nowadays the young aimed at personal fulfilment speak three or four languages, which might not include Russian language. Among the most common languages in Kirgizstan today are English, Turkish, Arabic, Chinese, German. Russian language is increasingly losing its position, and its range of application narrows down (in some regions, for instance, people do not speak Russian language at all).

Mass media took active part in estranging Kirgizstan community from Russia. In the political game the dissident mass media defending national ideas raise the question of a historic trauma, inflicted to the national pride and independence. Seems demonstrative the example, provided by a former employee of “Azattyk” agency in Bishkek (“Radio Svoboda” subsidiary office)¹. From the very beginning the of their existence they broadcast in Kirgiz language. Journalists, who created texts, when they had to use borrowed words searched meaningful equivalents but not in Kirgiz language itself, but in Turkic language sources or in Sinzyan Kirgiz language. What makes this case notable? It is the fact that those printed or verbalized texts were hardly understandable by the general public, as the borrowed words from Russian language (although they were borrowed by Russian language from European ones) were substituted with words from other scarcely sources. In the thirty years Kirgiz language has grown much stronger, and such occurrences are rather perceived as jokes.

Russian educational environment includes projects, providing dialogue-based and project-based spaces to maintain and preserve historically formed social and cultural unity. One of these projects is the one carried out by Altay State University, called “The Turkic

¹ The Ministry of Culture of Kyrgyzstan appealed to the court to stop Radio Svoboda broadcasting. Available from: <https://rg.ru/2023/01/24/ministerstvo-kultury-kirgizii-obratilos-v-sud-chtoby-prekratit-veshchanie-radio-azattyk-svoboda-chem-mozhet-byt-obuslovljeno-takoe-reshenie-minkulta.html>

World of the Greater Altai: unity and diversity in history and modernity”. This project aims to recover collaboration in scientific and research areas as well as student mobility².

In 2021 and in 2022 National Research Institute for the Development of Communications published friendliness rankings of the neighboring countries’ communicational regimes (4). I suppose Kirgizstan entered the top five most friendly countries among the post-Soviet republics due to the fact that it preserved certain potential of social and cultural unity. But I believe it will soon exhaust its supply.

From my point of view, it is of utmost importance to estimate the level of communication friendliness demonstrated by the regimes of post-Soviet states. Such researches might help to adjust the information strategy in the regional foreign policy of the Russian Federation, to establish the guidelines for working with media channels and institutions in order to increase loyalty to the image of the Russian Federation as a state.

Ways to Enhance Russia’s Presence (P.I. Dyatlenko)

Firstly, the fact to consider is the existing specific situation in Kirgizstan’s information ecosystem, which abounds with western and private pro-western media, social networks and messengers, which form a single network structure.

To my mind, to create a more balanced information ecosystem we need to expand cooperation between Russian and Kirgizstan mass media, move on to regular collaboration between Russian companies and those mass media, social networks, messengers, create and promote media which support Eurasian integration.

Secondly, to understand the reason why the cooperation level between Russian and Kirgiz non-commercial organizations is insufficient, we need to estimate the total number of Russian and pro-Russian civil society organizations in the republic, the amount of funding and lack of interaction within the same network infrastructure. A noticeable fact is that there are very few non-commercial companies in the republic that are related to Russia, they have insignificant budget, which is incomparable with that of the non-commercial organizations representing other global and regional players (1:45–48).

In such a situation it seems reasonable to increase the presence of Russian non-commercial organizations in the republic and largely expand contacts between Russian civil society organizations and Kirgizstan non-commercial organizations, which are ready to foster cooperation between both countries. Kirgizstan might become a Central Asian space for Russian civil society organizations and their interaction with all post-Soviet Central Asian countries.

Thirdly, I suggest paying special attention to youth communications. To enhance successful, stable and long-term development of relations between our countries we need

² The international project “The Turkic World of the Greater Altai”, realized in the scientific and educational Center of Altaic Studies and Turkology “Big Altai” AltSU with the support of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation summed up the results of the outgoing year at the final press conference in the press center of MIA “Rossia segodnya”. Available from: <https://www.asu.ru/science/news/press/47168/>

to work with various youth groups in our republic. For example, young businessmen, rural youth, persons with disabilities³, religious young people, and others. I should point out, that various groups of Kirgizstan young people have long been systematically attended by other external players (West, Turkey, Arab countries, China, etc.).

Fourth, when studying communications, we should single out as a separate direction international contacts between clergy and various religious congregations. This aspect is highly important in the context of growing interest to religion in our social communities.

Fifth, while analyzing various official documents we should keep in mind the fact, that due to social and cultural peculiarities, there is a substantial gap between a subscribed document and its practical implementation. The factor of importance for a successful and efficient implementation of the subscribed treaties is the choice of particular executives and the general condition of relations between the states.

Sixth, while arranging activities to maintain and preserve common historical memory we should not reduce the whole joint activity in this field to the Great Patriotic war, that is no longer of particular relevance for post-soviet generations of young people.

I consider appropriate to expand the thematic range by adding promising and interesting themes from our common past, which demonstrate positive sides of contacts between our people. By way of illustration, I might name the themes related with the history of studying Central Asian peoples and territories by Russian scholars, the participation of the USSR in Afghan civil war between 1979 and 1989.

In conclusion I would like to point out that the power in the republic gradually oases to the generation that actively communicates through social networks and messengers. This process significantly increases the influence that social networks and messengers exercise upon the society and the political circles in Kirgizstan.

Specific Features of Work Realized by Russian Mass Media in Kirgizstan Against the Background of Technological Innovations (A.I.Kulikovskiy)

In the whole course of its development Kirgizstan's journalism has been transforming under the influence of a number of factors. During the soviet period the branches to develop were electronic mass media, including radio ("Kirgiz radios") and television ("KTRK"). Despite the popularity of these mass communication media, the press remained an equally popular way of obtaining information, being regularly published a number of popular newspapers ("Soviet Kirgizia", "Vecherny Frunze" and others). In 1937 there appeared the first news provider on the territory of Kirgizstan, "KirTAG" (currently "Kabar"), which formed part of the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS) until 1992, the one I previously positioned as a prototype of contemporary news provider, Sputnik. Today TASS keeps operating in Russia as a local state funded news provider (bearing the former name since 2014, previously known as ITAR-TASS).

³ persons (students) with disabilities

Close contacts between Kirgizstan and Russia have perdured in the post-soviet era for a variety of reasons, the main ones being those of common past history and geographical location. Despite a number of difficulties and controversies that arose between some of the former USSR member countries in the last 20 years, Kirgizstan and Russia keep maintaining exceptionally close friendly relations (1). Today the Sputnik is news provider broadcast in Kirgizstan, as well as a subsidiary office of the inter-state TV channel "Mir". Sputnik representative office is one of the most popular network information sources in Kirgizstan, which tends to be ranked among the top five most popular online information sources in the country. "In Kirgizstan there operate representative offices of well-known Russian newspapers: "Rossiyskaya gazeta", "Moskovsky Komsomolets", "Argumenty y Fakty" (2).

A significant feature to be highlighted is that Russia uses both soviet and international experience. For example, the TV channel Russia Today makes a response to American colleagues from CNN, Sputnik concept resembles that of TASS. Therefore, the approach adopted by Russia in creating media resources for international broadcasting, including Kirgizstan, may be estimated as balanced. Russia has rich experience in developing international broadcasting, accumulated during approximately one hundred years, which produces positive effect on creation and promotion of mass communication media of the type under scrutiny.

Editorial policy adopted by Russian mass communication media in Kirgizstan is rather obvious and reasonable, being that of propagation of positive image of Russia. In general, this is proper to any Russian international broadcast organizations of mass communication media, which have news offices abroad. Special attention is paid to Russian and international events, nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the majority of stories are dedicated to Kirgizstan, as the audience's interest tends to be provoked by local news and high-quality presentation of materials. The information is provided in two languages, in accordance with the country's legislation for mass communications media.

Russia actively assimilates new technologies, modern editorials are fully completed and equipped with all necessary devices, which makes them highly competitive on international media marketplace. Russian mass media are widely represented in various countries, including post-soviet space and are often qualified by local mass media as successful. For example, during the celebration of Sputnik Kirgizstan news provider's fifth anniversary in 2019 in Kirgizstan, the guests highlighted high level of their equipment and the agency's financial state⁴. An important fact to mention is that this agency is one of the key mass media organizations in Kirgizstan, despite being an international organization. The personnel are represented by local high-ranking professionals, which is also considered a positive factor.

Technological factor has always played a defining part in the development of journalism. People, intended to create information product, have always faced the need to transmit information as fast as possible. This is the way, the internet replaced

⁴ We are happy for every new reader – an interview with the head of Sputnik Kyrgyzstan. Available from: <https://ru.sputnik.kg/20191011/kyrgyzstan-elena-chermenina-informagentstvo-intervyu-1045938413.html>

postal services. The need to visualize information made popular such technological innovations as photographs, cinema, television. Today while preparing information content in order to gain maximum visual expression journalists use all the possible multimedia potential.

Science and technologies have largely contributed to the life of humankind, but there are also potential threats to consider (3). Introduction of technological innovations digital technologies, and artificial intelligence potential, automatic information processing systems, systems for automatic creation of news content may lead within the nearest 5 or 10 years to a decrease in the number of journalists, disappearance of certain genres from their professional scene. The work on preparing information content that is possible to do without a journalist will become common practice in order to curtail the editorial's expenses, to simplify procession and preparation of information. For example, while in Russian mass media the weather forecast is still presented by journalists, in large North American mass media this process does not require a journalist.

However, the need for journalists, capable of working with analytical, fictional content and creating columns will hardly reduce in the nearest future. It will hardly become possible to fully introduce artificial intelligence and automatic systems. The creativity aspect will become the chief criterion for keeping a journalist in his work place. With this background, Kirgizstan is going to require facilities to train such journalists, that will become the main condition for preserving the country's information sovereignty. What is more, a contemporary Kirgiz journalist is to be competitive. The journalist must be literally a cross-functional professional in the sphere of mass media and be able to turn their hand to anything, including text creation, photographing, surfing the internet, filming and even desktop publishing. The more the journalist can do, the more valuable they are. Today the question of training field-specific professionals is not relevant, because the employer can always choose the journalist who possesses more skills and competences. Due to the fact that the experience Russia possesses in training journalists to work in the contemporary information ecosystem substantially exceeds the one of Kazakhstan, it is of utmost importance to develop collaboration with Russia.

Specific Features of Work Realized by Russian Mass Media in Kirgizstan Against the Background of Technological Innovations⁵ (A.B.Moldokeeva)

According to the data, provided by the Republic of Kirgizstan National Statistical Committee, the country currently disposes of 1800 institutions, registered as mass communication media. That being the case, between 2015 and 2022 their number increased by 12%. In Kirgizstan there operate 177 television and radio broadcasting companies (51 of them being located in Bishkek)⁶.

⁵ Based on the data of the Kyrgyz media and with their consent

⁶ Mass media and book publishing: facts and figures. Available from: <http://www.stat.kg/ru/news/sredstva-massovoj-informacii-i-knigoizdanie-cifry-i-fakty/>

Figure 1. Distribution of schools by language of instruction in 2010-2020s

The number of Kyrgyz-speaking schools significantly prevails over the rest

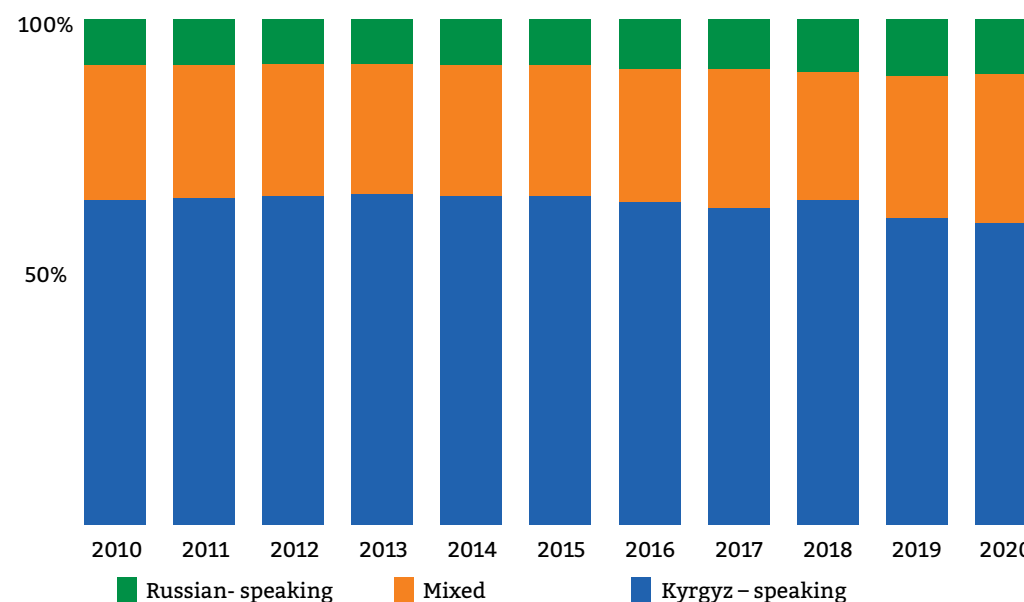


Diagram: Zarina Zholdoshova

Source: National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic

Source: Native language or the future: why Kyrgyz schools teach poorly in both Russian and Kyrgyz⁷.

In November, 2018 a social research-study was carried out (by the Information and Analytical center of Moscow State University) in order to estimate the level of popularity of Russian television in Kazakhstan and Kirgizstan. Results: In the Republic of Kirgizstan the channels to become the first best in terms of "information awareness with respect to TV programs" were the Russian "First channel" and the national "KTRK", each having 89% of spectators. As for the news releases on TV and political disputes, the distribution of viewing figures was the following: Russian "First Channel" – 27.8%, national "KTRK" – 24.3%, "Russia – 1" – 18.1%, "Russia – 24" – 11%. These figures allowed drawing quite an optimistic conclusion: "Russian TV remains the most popular in Kirgizstan. And it is the case despite the increasing criticism with respect to the content quality and a strongest competence posed by the internet"⁸.

⁷ Native language or the future: why do schools in Kyrgyzstan teach poorly both in Russian and in Kyrgyz. URL: <http://mediaplov.asia/ru/news/12302-rodnoy-yazyk-ili-budushshee-pochemu-shkoly-kyrgyzstana-ploho-uchat-i-na-russkom-i-na-kyrgyzskom>

⁸ The USA-Kirgizstan: the information expansion strategy. Available from: <https://stanradar.com/news/full/51058-ssha-kyrgyzstan-strategiya-informatsionnoj-ekspansii-.html>

Figure 2. In Bishkek and Chui region students choose Russian more often. Russian is more often chosen by students in Bishkek and Chui region.

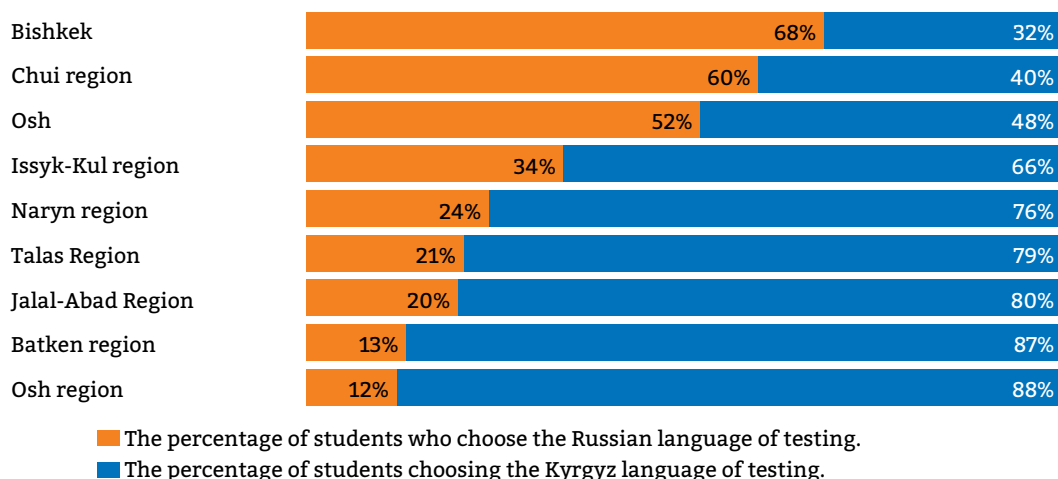


Diagram: Zarina Zholdoshova

Source: National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic

Source: Native language or the future: why Kyrgyz schools teach poorly in both Russian and Kyrgyz⁹.

There is no more up-to-date information regarding the popularity of Russian television in the republic. Quite possibly, the picture has changed. Especially bearing in mind the fact that the scope of Russian language use is steadily narrowing. According to the data provided by opinion polls, the proportion of Russian speaking population in Kirgizstan is approximately 40–50% of the total number of 6.7 million people living on its territory. Russian language is mainly spoken in the capital and in Chui region, neighboring the capital. In the other six regions vast majority of local population communicate in Kirgiz language¹⁰.

The data regarding Russian language schools demonstrate that there are almost 2300 schools in Kirgizstan, only one tenth of them using Russian as the language of instruction. Another one third of schools deliver classes in two or three languages, dividing children into groups with different tuition languages (Figure 1).

From 2010 to 2020, there were 99 more schools in Kyrgyzstan. The number of Kyrgyz-speaking educational institutions has decreased, while Russian-speaking and mixed, on the contrary, has increased. However, Kyrgyz-language schools still prevail.

The language to take the exam required for university entrance, the national republic test (ORT), can be either Russian or Kirgiz, at the discretion of the students. In Bishkek and

⁹ Native language or the future: why do schools in Kyrgyzstan teach poorly both in Russian and in Kyrgyz. Available from: <http://mediaplov.asia/ru/news/12302-rodnoy-yazyk-ili-budushshee-pochemu-shkoly-kyrgyzstana-ploho-uchat-i-na-russkom-i-na-kyrgyzskom>

¹⁰ Russian Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan fears that there might be a reduction in Russian language coverage in the republic. Available from: <https://tass.ru/politika/13016651>

in Chui region children usually prefer Russian language, in the other regions prevailing Kirgiz language. In 2020 61% of students preferred Kirgiz as the master language for their national republic test (figure 2).

Labor migrants mainly travel to Russia, the majority of them being descendants from the southern regions of the country. By the end of 2019 the number of Kirgizstan citizens living in Russia amounted to 1.5 million, more than 260 thousand of them being originally from Batken region, another 200 thousand coming from Osh and the same number from Jalal-Abad region accordingly. Only 52% of people leaving for Russia are fluent in Russian language¹¹. There are no teachers for children: the regions lack accomplished instructors.

Staff shortage is an acute problem not only in Osh, but rather in the remote schools of the region.

More importantly, what we need is not only Russian language teachers, but also instructors on the other subjects, who might deliver classes in Russian language¹².

Between 2005 and 2010 the number of school students, who chose Russian as the major studying language, was annually increasing by 5-6 thousand people, according to the calculations made as part of the research work, financed by “Soros-Kirgizstan” foundation¹³. However new schools and classes capable of satisfying this demand even if they were established in the region, appeared in too small a number to be sufficient. Therefore, over the course of time a significant part of Kirgizstan population will cease understanding what is being broadcast by Russian Channels.

Meanwhile the competence on the part of internet recourses increasingly grows¹⁴:

1. “Kaktus media” – over 4 million sessionizations;
2. “24.kg” – 3,2 million sessionizations;
3. “AKIpress” – 2,4 million sessionizations;
4. “Sputnik Kirgizstan” – 889,5 thousand sessionizations;
5. “Kloop media” – 501,3 thousand sessionizations;
6. “Vecherniy Bishkek” – 363,8 thousand sessionizations;
7. “Azzatyk media” – 490,5 thousand sessionizations;
8. “Vesti.kg” – 177,9 thousand sessionizations;

¹¹ Does anyone still need Russian language in Kirgizstan? Available from: https://www.tuz.kg/news/2357_komy_to_v_kyrgyzstane_eshe_nyjen_rysskiy_iazyk.html

¹² The number of Russian speaking citizens is decreasing in Kyrgyzstan – Lyubov Riksieva (head of the methodical association of teachers of Russian schools in Osh). Interview with the Russkaya gazeta: Available from: <https://rg.ru/2016/11/03/v-kirgizii-sokrashchaetsia-kolichestvo-grazhdan-vladeishchih-russkim-iazykom.html>

¹³ Language policy in the sphere of education: social demand and the prospects of multi-lingual education on the South of Kirgizstan/ Policy brief based on the results of a study in schools in the south of Kyrgyzstan. Available from: https://soros.kg/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/policy_brief_center_social_integration.pdf. The foundations of “Otkrytoe obshestvo” and “Sodeystvie”, established by George Soros have been recognized as foreign non-commercial organizations, unwelcome on the territory of Russia.

¹⁴ According to Similarweb data for October, 2022. Available from: <https://www.similarweb.com/ru/website/kabar.kg/competitors/>

9. "Economist" – 206 thousand sessionizations;
10. "Bulak.kg" – 80,1 thousand sessionizations.

It is worth mentioning that the top five online news providers include three blatantly pro-European mass media ("Kaktus media", "24.kg", "Kloop media"), the generally neutral "AKIpress" and only one Russian "Sputnik Kirgizstan". The second five mainly include pro-European mass media ("Azzatyk media", "Vesti.kg", "Economist", "Bulak.kg"), only "Vecherniy Bishkek" posting sometimes Russia-friendly content. Therefore, Kirgizstan audience covered by pro-European electronic mass media is approximately three times as large as that covered by Russian mass media or mass media demonstrating themselves relatively Russia-friendly.

According to the data provided by M-Vector consulting company, 92% of Kirgiz users prefer reading news content in social nets, rather than obtaining news form mass media official websites (for example, Facebook). Then follows the number of subscribers current as on November, 15, 2022¹⁵:

1. "Azzatyk media" – 365 558 (in Russian language), 442 656 (in Kirgiz language). Total – 808 214;
2. "Kloop media" – 167 000 (Russian), 57 000 (Kirgiz). Total – 224 000;
3. "Kaktus media" – 218 000;
4. "AKIpress" – 148 048;
5. "Sputnik Kirgizstan" – 130 000 (Russian), 471 (Kirgiz). Total – 130 471;
6. "24.kg" – 115 119;
7. "Vecherniy Bishkek" – 52 000;
8. "Vesti.kg" – 28 655;
9. "Economist" – 24 000;
10. "Bulak.kg" – 2500.

Here as well the pro-European mass media dominate.

The reason for such a disequilibrium is trivial: European donors spend large sums on financing local information resources (a more detailed analysis follows later), including salaries for the journalists, purchasing up-to-date equipment, as well as organizing various training sessions both in Kirgizstan and abroad, which makes an important factor. It is usually there, that the journalists are instructed to hold anti-Russian information work¹⁶.

In October this year the United States Agency for international Development (USAID) completed the five-year project "Cultivating Media Independence Initiative (Media-K)". Under the auspices of this project there were financed twelve mass media and non-governmental organizations in Kirgizstan ("NTS", "TV1KG", "Kloop.media", "Cactus.Media", "Political Clinic", "Salam Radio", "24.kg", "Govori TV", "Maral TV", "Elgezit", "Liubimy TV" and NGO "Institute of Media Policy") for a total amount of 10 million 650 thousand US dollars¹⁷.

The majority of pro-European mass media (the circle of grant recipients is almost identical) still keep connected to the NED grants, the National Endowment for Democracy

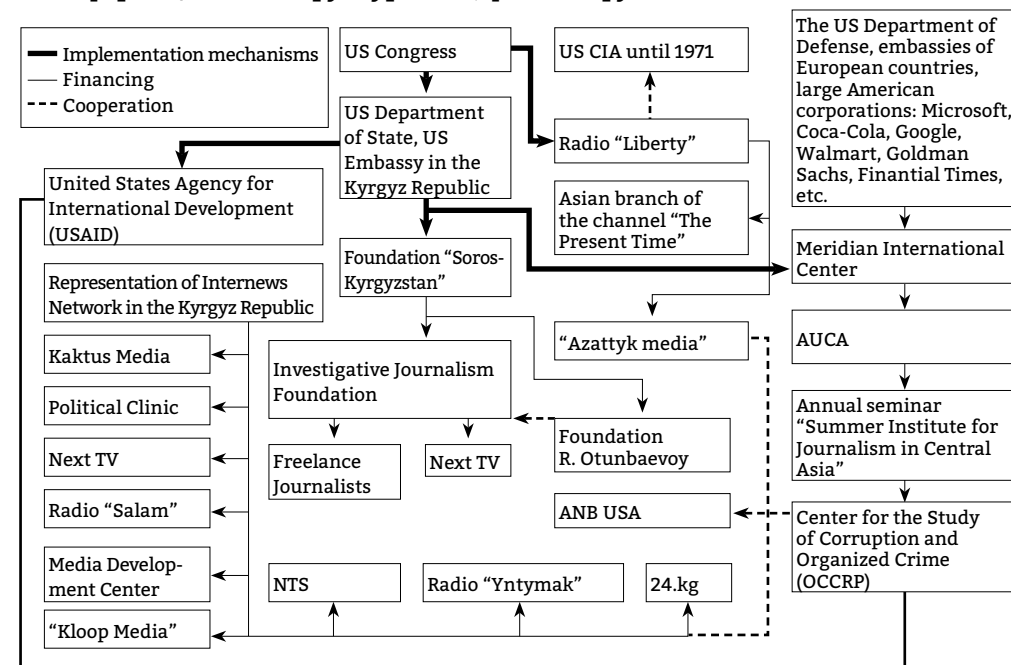
¹⁵ The USA-Kirgizstan: the information expansion strategy. Available from: <https://stanradar.com/news/full/51058-ssha-kyrgyzstan-strategiya-informatsionnoj-ekspansii-.html>

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Projects of the USA Agency for International Development. Available from: <https://www.usaid.gov>

Figure 3. Country integrated strategy

Информационная структура в КР, финансируемая США



foundation. In 2021, according to the NED accounts, the foundation funded in Kirgizstan such media companies as: "Economist" – \$58,000, "Kloop Media" – \$565,900, "Media Space" – \$48,800, "Center for Media Development" – \$94,000, "Institute of Media Policy" – \$48,000, "Ginomix Media" – \$110,000¹⁸.

In May this year the US Congress approved the budget proposed by the US State Department for 2023. In accordance with this budget, the NED intends to spend 300 million dollars on "democratic changes", including Central Asian countries. Having approved the Budget, the US Congress permitted the NED to implement political plans regarding Russia, China and Iran, acting through Central Asian region. Each year the NED realizes the so-called "Eurasia" program, which embraces almost all post-soviet countries, such as Azerbaijan, Armenia Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The foundation intends to support intensively the "civil society" and mass media in these countries¹⁹.

Some more economical data: in 2023 the United States Congress will provide the main donor, the US Agency for international Development (USAID) grants of 21 million US dollars to support pro-European NGO and mass media in Kirgizstan²⁰.

¹⁸ The USA Will soon set their foot into Kirgizstan's "door" via mass media. Available from: <https://stanradar.com/news/full/51204-ssha-v-skorom-vremeni-prosunut-svoju-nogu-v-dver-kyrgyzstana-cherez-smi.html>

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Projects of the USA Agency for International Development. Available from: <https://www.usaid.gov>

The US Congress approved funding of another institution for 2023, that is the United States Agency for Global Media – USAGM. This organization joins together several large networks, including “Golos Ameriki”, “Nastoyashee vremya”, “Radio Svoboda”, “Radio Svobodnaya Asia”, Marti radio and television (propaganda against Cuban authorities), as well as Arabic radio company Sawa and Alhurra TV channel. In Central Asia the USAGM has deployed an entire network of national services Radio Svoboda – Azattyk (Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan), Ozodi (Tajikistan), Ozodlik (Uzbekistan) and Azattyk (Turkmenistan). The USAGM is planning to spend 2 million 26 thousand dollars of the budget on financing Kirgiz company “Radio Svoboda” – “Azzalyk Media”²¹.

The following year 2023 is not going to be easy for Kirgizstan, neither will it be for the other Central Asian states. This year the USA has commenced to implement the long-term Project “Integrated Country Strategy” (figure 3)²².

To sum up, foreign countries purposefully create conditions in Kirgizstan that would provoke humanitarian rupture of its relations with Russia, which is to be given special consideration, having in mind the geographical position of Kirgizstan, its membership in a number of integration communities, and its close economic and historical ties with Russia.

Conclusion

Despite the dynamic of influence, European countries exercise over Kirgizstan’s social and media space, Russia remains its key actor and is seen by the majority of Kirgiz people through the spectacle of good neighborly relations. However, Kirgizstan being a friendly and close country to Russia is currently overcoming difficult social processes. Social and humanitarian structure of the society is being transformed, both influenced by foreign actors and by force of natural processes, such as demographic ones, increasing openness and accessibility of different information resulting from digitalization of communication process, growing number of Kirgizstan’s economic partners, etc. Quite a controversial way is developing the policy in the sphere of historical memory, the level of knowledge of Russian language is decreasing, attempts are implemented to replace Russian language as the language of business communication at the level of public institutions. Russian mass media and national Russia-friendly mass media, are being gradually replaced by anti-Russian mass media, supported by European organizations.

The purposeful efforts of European organizations in Kirgizstan information ecosystem, narrowed sphere of use of Russian language and decrease in the number of Russian speaking people who can understand information broadcast by Russian-speaking media, the increasing role of social networks in shaping public opinion in Kyrgyzstan, especially among young people, as well as the intensive work the European NGOs hold among Kyrgyz people – all these factors create prerequisites to a decrease in the role of Russia in shaping public

²¹ The USA–Kirgizstan: the information expansion strategy. Available from: <https://stanradar.com/news/full/51058-ssha-kyrgyzstan-strategiya-informatsionnoj-ekspansii-.html>

²² Ibid.

opinion in Kyrgyzstan and to creation of media and public infrastructure broadcasting anti-Russian content. At the same time, Kyrgyzstan, both at the level of National government and at the level of general public, is interested in developing good-neighborly relations with Russia, therefore we would like the institutions, in charge of developing good-neighborly relations, to take into consideration the problems described in the article.

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Communication Regime in Belarus: State, Challenges and Threats

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the results of the study of the information and communication sphere in the Republic of Belarus, the role, place and importance of national and foreign information and communication resources. The state, challenges and threats to the national security of the Republic, the tools for conducting the information war of the Western countries against the Belarusian state are considered. Examples of the information impact of opposition channels in Telegram, Twitter, You Tube on the authorities in Belarus with the aim of removing A.G. Lukashenko from the post of the President of the Republic are given. Comparisons were made between the effectiveness and popularity of state-owned media and foreign private information resources. Priority areas of the research are identified and presented, the results should be used to strengthen counteraction to information and psychological attacks against Russia and Belarus.

Keywords: country communication regimes, information and psychological impact, information space, national security

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Introduction

It is impossible to forget the two years ago events in the Republic of Belarus, which became the result of an acute political crisis. It was provoked by a number of leading Western countries on the model of the “color revolutions” that had been repeatedly stamped earlier in various parts of the world. Information and communication resources played the main role in organizing the coup aimed at forcibly changing the existing system in the country, separating Belarus from allied ties with Russia and including it in the orbit of influence of the West. They were intended to become an instrument of destructive influence on the mindset

of the country’s population. Lies, slander, fraud, falsification and provocations served as tools for information and psychological attacks to form an appropriate understanding of the events and processes taking place in the republic, both in the world and in Belarus itself. There is no doubt that from the point of view of international law, the deliberate deformation of the real picture of what is happening in the target countries for the organizers of the “Maidans”, as was the case in Belarus, means interference in the internal affairs of states and undermining their sovereignty.

It would be a mistake to believe that today the information attacks of the enemies of Belarus are weakened or a thing of the past. Today, the force of destabilizing information and psychological pressure on the population of the country not only remains, but becomes permanent, being updated with the latest information technologies.

The real basis for such actions is obvious: Belarus, as a reliable strategic ally of the Russian Federation, is under the constant attention of the West, dissatisfied with the Belarusian socio-political and economic reality, as well as the independent foreign policy of the state.

The emerging difficult situation in the Belarusian information and communication sphere and its permanent adverse socio-political impact have become an important permanent factor taken into account in the state’s activities to ensure national security. This gives this area a special significance and actualizes the need for its comprehensive in-depth study, both in academic and practical terms. This is the aim of this article.

Since the methodology for conducting subversive information operations against Belarus is fully used by Western “partners” and in the Russian Federation, the past and present situation, processes and atmosphere in the Belarusian information and communication environment deserve close attention in order to learn lessons, the results of which can be taken into account and used to improve ensuring information and national security of the Russian Federation. This is especially important in the context of the ongoing Special Military Operation in Ukraine, which is characterized not only by the armed confrontation between Russia and the consolidated West, which intends to destroy our country, but also by an unprecedented information and psychological struggle that has acquired the features of an independent front.

Materials and Methods

The author used the methodology and concepts for studying communication regimes, developed by the scientists of the National Research Institute for the Communications Development (hereinafter referred to as NIIRK) and presented in scientific publications (3, 4, 5, 6, 7). The empirical base of the study was: legal acts of the Republic of Belarus, a report to the Security Council of the Russian Federation in November 2019, current practices of

communication participants, materials from print and electronic media, news agencies of the Republic of Belarus, Russian media, and statistical data. Both the works of Russian and Belarusian scientists were analyzed (2, 9, 12, 10, 13, 14).

Results

Currently, Belarus has a developed national information space¹, having specific features and objectively entering the global information space.

Today, the information space of the republic consists of: print media, news agencies, electronic media, television, radio broadcasting and media publishing forums.

Print mass-media. According to the Ministry of Communications and Informatization of the Republic of Belarus, more than 700 newspapers, about 300 magazines, 33 bulletins and catalogs, 2 almanacs are now published in the republic. These publications have different forms of ownership.

Print media are published mainly in Belarusian and Russian. The most influential are the newspapers “SB. Belarus today” and “Respublika”. Popular media also include the Russian newspapers Komsomolskaya Pravda and Arguments and Facts.

In total, more than 4 thousand foreign print media from Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, the USA, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, France, the Netherlands, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia are distributed in the country. In addition, 37 online publications are registered, 7 of which are private.

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Information agencies. Currently, there are 9 news agencies accredited in the country, five of them are private. The largest state news agency is the Belarusian Telegraph Agency (BelTA), which has a correspondent network in all regions of the republic. This agency serves as the main source of official information and news of the country and the world. BelTA publishes up to 250 information materials online on its own Internet portal every day.

In Minsk, along with Belarusian news agencies, there are also representative offices of the Russian news agencies TASS and Prime, as well as correspondents of the world's leading agencies Reuters, Associated Press and Sinhua.

Electronic media. Belarus broadcasts 131 radio programs and 96 TV programs. Of these, 27 radio programs and 53 TV programs are private. A significant number of radio programs is explained by the fact that most of them are regional radio, the founders of which are local authorities.

¹ A generally accepted scientific definition of the concept of “national information space” has not yet been developed. Most researchers understand by this term the totality of national information resources and the information structure of the country, as well as foreign media represented in the media space of the state.

About 30 radio stations broadcast in the FM band, including Radio-FM, Radio Unistar (Belarusian-German project), Europe Plus and others.

For a foreign audience interested in events in Belarus, the programs of the radio station “Belarus” are designed, conducted in Belarusian, Russian, English, German, Polish, French and Chinese.

Television. In the Republic of Belarus there are national channels “Belarus 1”, “Belarus 2” (youth), “Belarus 3” (socio-cultural), “Belarus 5” (sports), “National Television” (ONT), “Capital Television” (STV).

Since September 2015, the regional TV channel “Belarus 4” has been launched, which serves as a platform for all regions of the country.

The first and only international satellite channel in Belarus is “Belarus 24”, which began broadcasting in 2005 (then it was called “Belarus TV”). Today, the channel operates 24 hours a day for 270 million viewers in 100 countries. The content is based on news and analytics about the most important events in the country and the world, interesting TV projects and high-quality films. Many programs are about the Belarusian Republic, primarily about its history, culture, main attractions, tourist destinations, Belarusian cuisine, famous brands and prominent people.

“Belarus 24” can be watched by viewers in Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa and North America. Broadcasting is carried out in Belarusian and Russian. An online broadcast is organized for Internet users.

More than 200 foreign TV channels are rebroadcast on the territory of Belarus.

Since 2015, the country has made a complete transition from analogue to digital television broadcasting, which is available to almost 100% of the population of Belarus.

Media and publishing forums. These include:

- International specialized exhibition “CMI y Belarus”;
- Belarusian International Media Forum “Partnership for the Future”;
- Forum of young journalists;
- Minsk International Book Fair.

The legal basis for the activities of the media in Belarus is:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Belarus;
- Law of the Republic of Belarus “On information, informatization and protection of information” dated November 10, 2008 № 453-Z (with amendments and additions);
- Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Telecommunications” dated July 19, 2005 № 45-3;
- Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Postal Communication” dated December 15, 2003 № 258-Z;
- Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Mass Media” dated 06.08.2008 № 2/1524 (as amended and supplemented);
- Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus “On measures to improve the use of the national segment of the Internet” dated February 1, 2010 № 60;
- Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus “On the public administration body in the field of digital development and informatization issues” dated 07.04.2022 № 136;

- Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus "On some issues of the Ministry of Communications and Informatization of the Republic of Belarus" dated 31.07.2006 № 979;

- Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus "On approval of the Regulations on the Ministry of Communications and Informatization of the Republic of Belarus and amendments to some resolutions of the Government of the Republic of Belarus" dated March 17, 2004 № 302;

- Resolution of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus "On the Concept of Information Security of the Republic of Belarus" dated March 18, 2019 № 1;

- Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus, "On the State Program "Digital Development of Belarus for 2021-2025" dated 02.02.2021 № 66.

The Republican body for the state regulation and management of activities in the field of communications and informatization is the Ministry of Communications and Informatization of the Republic of Belarus.

The main tasks of the Ministry are:

- development and implementation of a unified state policy in the field of communications and informatization and creation of conditions for the development of structures of all forms of ownership operating in the information field;

- development and implementation of programs for the development of communications and informatization in the Republic of Belarus;

- coordination of activities of legal entities, regardless of ownership, and individual entrepreneurs in the field of communications and informatization in order to meet the needs of state bodies, legal entities and individuals in communications services and obtaining information, creating conditions for this through the development of information systems and (or) networks that ensure the formation and processing of information resources and the provision of documentary information to users;

- formation and implementation of policy in the field of planning, distribution and efficient use of the radio frequency spectrum of civilian radio electronic equipment.

The main goals of the Ministry of Communications and Informatization are:

- creating favorable conditions for the functioning and development of the country's communication regime, maintaining an atmosphere of partnership between participants in information and communication activities based on respect for the principles and traditions of the functioning of the mass media in the Republic of Belarus;

- formation of the national identity of the Belarusian people, the formation of patriotism, devotion to the fatherland and pride in their homeland, popularization of the national idea and humanistic goals of the state, assistance in strengthening its internal stability, the mood of society for creative activity in their country;

- development of equal mutually beneficial interstate relations with other countries in the national interests of the Republic of Belarus in the field of economy, politics, diplomacy, science, culture and sports based on pragmatism, respect for the independence and sovereignty of states, strengthening allied relations with the Russian Federation and constructive interaction with states in the CSTO and SCO;

- countering external destructive information and psychological impact on the population of Belarus, violation of international law and national legislation, the emergence and development of negative moods of certain categories of the country's inhabitants;

- organization of conferences, seminars, "round tables" and other public events involving a wide range of foreign participants in the interests of developing the communication regime in the country and fruitful interaction with the communication regimes of other states;

- creating a positive image of the Republic of Belarus in the eyes of the world community as a peace-loving state, sincerely striving to develop good-neighborly, equal, mutually beneficial relations with other countries and strengthen common European security

The Belarusian communication regime functions on the basis of the principles developed by theory (3, 4, 6, 7) and confirmed by practice (2, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16):

- legitimacy (media functions in accordance with Belarusian legislation and taking into account the norms of international law);

- planning (consistency, purposefulness and logical sequence of disseminated information, relevant and at the same time designed for the future with foresight of the future);

- tolerance for different views and opinions about ongoing events and processes at home and in the world;

- timely dissemination of versatile information;

- adaptability (immediate adequate response to events in the information space and the situation in the country or on the international arena in order to change the emphasis in accordance with the ongoing events and, if necessary, topics in outreach activities);

- efficiency (selection of information in order to meet the needs of users and achieve a positive synergistic socio-political impact on the audience at home and abroad);

- objectivity (accurate unbiased presentation of facts, events, phenomena, trends and processes in the country and on the world stage);

- continuity (uninterrupted dissemination of information in any conditions and situations in the country and the world);

- competence (involvement in the work in the information and communication sphere of specialists with professional competencies for working in the media field, knowledge of the essence and specifics of the functioning of country and international communications, having broad erudition and horizons, capable of independent continuous education and improving their professional level);

- responsibility (discipline control of information and communication workers, personal responsibility for the quality of their work, truthful presentation of information).

In addition to the principles that are the basis for the functioning of the information and communication system, the communication regime of the Republic of Belarus, as a set of factors that determine the activities of a number of state and non-governmental structures, national and foreign mass media involved in the information and humanitarian space, has its own characteristic features and features unique to that state. They determine the content of the disseminated information and its tone.

The first thing that has the greatest influence on the formation of the communication regime is the Treaty on the Establishment of the Union State of Russia and Belarus, which entered into force on January 20, 2000. According to this agreement, Belarus has a special status of relations with the Russian Federation. This status, in addition to synchronizing policy in international affairs, maintaining close relations in the economic and military spheres, as well as in the field of education, science and culture, implies the coordination of actions in information policy. It is aimed, among other things, at developing a favorable communication regime designed to strengthen Belarusian-Russian interethnic and interfaith relations, intercultural and interregional interaction, as well as international communications.

During the period of the Russia Special Military Operation, the awareness of the common threat to their national security by both allied states certainly contributed to the further deepening of the integration of the two fraternal peoples.

The second feature that determines the communication regime of Belarus is the geopolitical position of the country as a central European state bordering four countries hostile to the Russian Federation, three of which are members of NATO, and with regard to the fourth, Russia is conducting a Special Military Operation for demilitarization and denazification of the political regime established there. This geographical position of the country creates additional difficulties for the Belarusian leadership in pursuing foreign and domestic policy.

The third feature that determines the content and essence of the communication regime in Belarus is associated with the emergence of the Eastern Partnership program. In accordance with this program, the leading Western European states, in coordination of their plans with the United States, or rather under their control, are pursuing a consistent policy of drawing the Eastern European post-Soviet republics into the orbit of their influence. The events in Belarus in the summer-autumn of 2020 were evidence of the implementation of such plans. It is also obvious that the opponents of Belarus, as a state allied with Russia, intend to intensify political, economic, ideological and psychological pressure against the republic in order to break the resistance of the Belarusian authorities to the West, include the country in their sphere of influence, push it onto the "Ukrainian trajectory" of development and thus create another advantageous springboard for a possible armed invasion of the territory of the Russian Federation. Such insidious calculations categorically contradict the national interests of both the country and the Belarusian people.

The fourth feature is connected with the shortage in the republic of a number of the most important natural resources, primarily fuel and energy, necessary for the normal functioning of the economy, the military-industrial complex and the social sphere. This entails an objective dependence of the country on imports; the severity of the problem is solved mainly through supplies from Russia.

The fifth feature, which determines the content and essence of the communication regime in Belarus, is generated by the specific socio-political formation existing in the country, combining the features of state capitalism with market methods of management and elements of socialist orders in social life. The obvious inconsistency of these two components

entails ideological dissonance in the information and communication space, encourages the formation and development of disparate positions and diverging interests in society.

And finally, one cannot ignore the "multi-vector policy" proclaimed by the leadership of the Belarusian state, which in a certain period led to "specific relations" with Western "partners" and distancing from the Russian Federation. Such a policy opened the doors to the republic for foreign "well-wishers" not only with business projects, but also with ideas alien to the Belarusian people and pseudo-universal values. The consequence of such a policy, among other things, was a significant increase in business and other ties of Belarusian citizens with the West, where they found themselves under the close tutelage of dubious organizations and special services. After returning to their homeland, a large part of them were saturated with the spirit, as it seemed to them, of "western paradise". Recently, due to sanctions imposed on Belarus, as well as adjustments by the country's foreign policy course, contacts with the West have decreased and most of the former "partners" have turned away from the republic, but their media (and not only) influence on the situation in Belarus, on the creation of an appropriate social political climate remain high.

Over time, and especially with the accumulation of experience in effective hostile actions during the period of destabilization of the situation in the country after the last presidential elections, stable semantic blocks began to form in the media space of the West, which today are widely used to have a destructive impact on the Belarusian society. They can be formulated as follows:

- saturation of broad sections of the country's population with tendentious, pseudo-truthful information designed to deform the prevailing worldview in society, transform traditional national values in favor of outwardly attractive, and in fact demagogic Western-style democratic postulates, the formation of public opinion that is in conflict with official ideological guidelines and government propaganda;
- increase in the number of citizens who are dissatisfied and critical of the Belarusian authorities and encourage them to mass manifestations and rallies in violation of the existing rules for their holding, to protest unauthorized actions and antisocial behavior with an increase in aggressiveness and manifestation of force in accordance with the proposed scenarios;
- building up, uniting and consolidating anti-government opposition forces, attracting new supporters and sympathizers to them, nominating and popularizing representatives of the radical opposition, instilling in protesters the need to overthrow the "last European dictator" Lukashenko and replace him with a hyped opposition leader and his team, allegedly able to lead the country to prosperity and well-being of citizens;
- organizing, synchronizing and coordinating anti-Belarusian propaganda campaigns in the West, actions of disobedience of the country's inhabitants to the legitimate demands of employees of allegedly anti-people law enforcement agencies, dissemination of laconic, effectively formulated anti-government slogans and political demands;
- conviction of the Belarusian public that only the West understands and shares the aspirations of the citizens of Belarus, supports its "fair" political demands, approves the choice of European civilization and the desire for genuine democracy and freedom, as if infringed by the authoritarian regime;

● political, economic, ideological and psychological pressure on the leadership of the republic.

An analysis of materials on the actions of Belarus' opponents in the information and communication space allows us to conclude that these intentions predetermined the setting by the West of long-term information and psychological tasks, the most aggressive of which are the following:

- discrediting and destruction of traditional national and ideological values, denial of the socio-economic, technological, scientific and cultural achievements of the country, a positive assessment of its past, the formation of dissatisfaction with the existing socio-political order in the country;
- compromising state institutions, provoking a "crisis of confidence" in the political leadership of the country and personally in the president of the republic, A. G. Lukashenko;
- exclusion from the information space of the country of state nationally oriented information and communication resources that form patriotic public opinion and self-identification of the Belarusian people;
- formation of protest online communities and involvement of individual bloggers in the dissemination of deliberately distorted or false information;
- the creation of alternative "democratic" public authorities, consisting of representatives of the irreconcilable anti-regime opposition;
- diverting public attention to secondary socio-political topics that are beneficial for the organizers of the "color revolution";
- Support for Western-oriented Belarusian journalists who annually receive millions of dollars from USAID, NED, the European Commission and the European Union;
- holding courses and seminars for the pro-Western indoctrination of Belarusian media workers and bloggers, organizing stationary ideological training of journalists in the interests of the West (in Minsk, in accordance with the German-Belarusian project, the International Educational Center named after Johannes Rau operates).

A special place in the hostile anti-Belarusian propaganda of the West is occupied by NGOs. This was clearly stated by the Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation S. E. Naryshkin. According to him, the United States "played a key role in preparing anti-government protests in Belarus, although in public space Washington is trying to keep a low profile". According to S. E. Naryshkin,

In 2019 and early 2020, the United States, through non-governmental organizations, allocated about \$20 million to organize anti-government protests [...] These funds were used to form a network of "independent bloggers" and information accounts on social networks, and to train activists to hold street actions. The most promising of them were trained abroad, in particular, in Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine, where they were trained by experienced American instructors².

² The head of the SVR accused the United States of preparing protests in Belarus. Available from: <https://tass.ru/politika/9471673>

In total, over the period from 2008 to 2019, Western countries, according to their own data, spent \$128 million to finance the programs of "democratization" of the Republic³.

A very significant contribution to the formation and incitement of protest sentiments in Belarusian society is made by non-profit organizations engaged by the West, funded through a chain of intermediaries by the USAID agency⁴. Among the mediators, the most famous are the International Republican Institute (IRI) of John McCain, the Eurasia Foundation (EF) of A. Aslund the former adviser to E. Gaidar, the Open Community Institute of J. Soros. Their cooperation with Belarusian recipients is based on a scheme similar to the Ukrainian "domaidan" scheme of influencing public sentiment.

Since pro-Western non-profit organizations are deprived of the opportunity to carry out extensive work on the territory of Belarus, and many of them are banned by the authorities, a number of organizations are based in Lithuania. Among them, the most prominent role is played by the European Humanities University, which trains new personnel for the Belarusian opposition. However, some pro-Western think tanks, such as the Foundation. L. Sapegi and Belarus Security Blog (BSBlog) continue to disseminate "objective" information on Belarusian territory⁵.

Belarusian non-profit organizations specializing mainly in anti-government information activities include the Internet portal of the Belarusian opposition "Charter-97", the newspapers "Narodnaya Volya" and "Belorussky Partizan", radio station "Radio Racyja", as well as the TV channel Belsat TV, which have mixed Polish-American funding⁶.

In general, the effectiveness of Western and national pro-Western non-profit organizations in Belarus are relatively low, but their influence on the formation of oppositional moods in society cannot be underestimated. Thus, it has been noted that de facto it, in a number of cases, is reflected in some political attitudes of the ruling Belarusian circles, which periodically intercept the slogans of their political opponents on the "national question" and Russian-Belarusian relations⁷.

The long-term subversive role of a considerable number of non-profit organizations has prompted the Belarusian leadership to start drafting a law on foreign agents, according to which it is supposed to consider as foreign agents organizations funded by the West and engaged in political activities and propaganda of ideas that are contrary to Belarusian law.

The following actively participate in the organization and implementation of information and psychological attacks against Belarus: dissident Belarusian network communities, some of which were created in advance and were in "conservation" until the "X" hour; protest groups from among the inhabitants of the country, embedded in national social networks and the local blogosphere; engaged non-profit organizations and foundations financed from abroad; foreign and national "independent" mass media;

³ Available from: <https://jamestown.org/program/the-growing-importance-of-belarus-on-natos-baltic-flank/>

⁴ USAID projects in the Republic of Belarus. Available from: <https://www.usaid.gov/belarus>

⁵ Belarus Security Blog. Available from: <https://bsblog.info>

⁶ Report to the Security Council of the Russian Federation in November 2019. Available from: <http://www.scrf.gov.ru>

⁷ Ibid.

editorial offices of Belarusian opposition websites in Poland and the Czech Republic; foreign “free” radio stations, primarily CNN (USA) and BBC (UK), as well as the Belarusian office of Radio Svoboda, located in Prague, where Belarusian oppositionists find a source of income, a platform for self-organization, an opportunity for one’s own presentation and spreading their views (15).

Since the virtual audience in the world has grown dramatically, for information and psychological intervention in Belarus, the Internet and social networks are actively used, which have been turned into a platform for organizing and accompanying protests in the country. With the spread of mobile Internet and Wi-Fi, the number of users of the messenger program has increased for exchanging messages in various formats (text, sound signals, video, photos, graphics) in real time between groups of oppositionists and all users who thus find themselves in the sphere of targeted negative information.

On the Internet, the number of users of which in Belarus with a population of 9 million has reached 12 million (individuals and legal entities), under the pretext of the diversity of opinions and pluralism of assessments of socio-political world events that are mandatory for democratic states, materials of terrorist and extremist organizations are posted, appeals to protests against local authorities, riots and resistance to law enforcement agencies. Social networks popularize a criminal lifestyle, the consumption of narcotic and psychotropic substances, cultivate violence, money-grubbing, sexual promiscuity, gender-based molestation and legal nihilism, impose a distorted view of historical facts and events taking place in Belarus and Russia, discredit national heroes and, conversely, criminals are heroized. The main object of such information and psychological attacks is young people, who are more prone to manipulation due to insufficient life experience, unstable worldview and susceptibility to quick external spectacular radical decisions and ill-considered actions. At the same time, the processing of the youth audience is pursued by a secret plan – “cultivating a new generation of experts and analysts, including influencers, who would defend the positions of Western countries, explain to the population their advantages, and give forecasts favorable to the West” (15)

The anonymity of materials distributed on the Internet, which is ensured by the use of special information and communication technologies, contributes to the violation of the order and traditions that exist in the country’s communication regime. For the unhindered and safe promotion of their information and propaganda, special software has been developed in the United States that makes it possible to turn oppositionists and cyber activists into “invisible” for the country’s law enforcement agencies seeking to identify them (1).

According to a number of Russian researchers, today the Internet is a key element in the mobilization of protests of citizens in any country, which largely determines their ideological content, time frame and organizational capabilities (11).

The telegram channel NEXTA (from the Belarusian word “nekhta” – in Russian someone) is positioning itself as the mouthpiece of the opposition movement in Belarus, created in 2018 on the basis of You Tube. The most famous publication of this news service was the publication of pseudo-sensational materials about the facts of corruption in Belarus

and the demonstration of the widely advertised documentary film “Lukashenko: Criminal Materials”, which the official Belarusian authorities qualified as extremist. According to the Ukrainian branch of the corporation BBC, the film was watched by about three million people⁸.

After the presidential elections in Belarus and the protests that began, NEXTA, in addition to its information function, moved into the role of a permanent coordinator of the opposition movement. Calls for financial assistance to protesters regularly appear on the channel, the coordinates of the deployment of police units in the settlements of the republic are posted, personal data on employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are disclosed (more than one thousand such messages were published until September 2020), instructions for organizing protest actions are set out, appeals appear to attack police officers⁹.

At the end of August 2020, NEXTA unveiled the “Strategy” of the protest movement in Belarus with the pretentious name “Victory Plan”. The key provisions of the “Strategy” are

the removal of A. G. Lukashenko from the post of the President of the Republic, the holding of new presidential elections, the release of all political prisoners, the prosecution of intelligence officers involved in the abuse of their official position when detaining protesters during demonstrations¹⁰.

Within a few days of the August 2020 events in Belarus, the popularity of the telegram channel increased rapidly and by September the number of its subscribers reached 2.5 million, and 530 thousand views occurred on You Tube. NEXTA releases several thousand messages per hour and has become one of the six most popular telegram channels in the world, becoming at the same time the world’s largest Russian-speaking foreign telegram channel¹¹.

The founders of the channel claim that its activities are financed exclusively by funds from advertising and donations from individuals. In fact, there is a lot of evidence that the secret sponsors of NEXTA are foreign human rights and pro-government, especially Polish and Lithuanian organizations, as well as Western intelligence services, as was stated by the director of the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation S.E.Naryshkin¹².

To maintain uninterrupted communication between the organizers and activists of the protests, Western experts have developed a function on the Twitter platform that allows messages to be transmitted via the local mobile network in case the Internet is

⁸ What is Belarusian Telegram Channal NEXTA. Available from: <https://jamestown.org/program>

⁹ Available from: https://t.me/nexta_tv/3851. 8 апреля 2022 года (The Supreme Court of Belarus recognized the Nexta, Nexta Live and Luxta telegram channels as a “terrorist organization” and banned their activities in the country)..

¹⁰ Available from: https://t.me/nexta_tv/3852 (The Supreme Court of Belarus recognized the Nexta, Nexta Live and Luxta telegram channels as a “terrorist organization” and banned their activities in the country).

¹¹ Telegram Analitics.tdstat.com

¹² The head of the SVR accused the United States of preparing protests in Belarus. Available from: <https://tass.ru/politika/9471673>

blocked in the country. "Anti-virus" programs have also been created, which are supplied to participants in protest actions, making it possible to convey specially prepared information to addressees.

In order to ensure the personal safety of pro-Western oppositionists, special mobile technologies are used that allow them to be warned of danger by pressing one button (1).

It must be admitted that the propaganda onslaught of the consolidated West on Belarus, which has been massively carried out for a long time, has led to undesirable and very disturbing consequences. They were reflected in the strengthening of nationalist tendencies among the Belarusian intelligentsia, creating the prerequisites for the adoption of the liberal ideas of European and American pseudo-well-wishers, pushing "progressive-minded" people to democratic reforms along the lines of the West.

The openness of the information space of Belarus contributed to the success of the perception of false information, since in every modern democratic state, in the conditions of scientific and technological progress, there are no interstate borders for world information flows that are widely and freely distributed in the global information network. The pervasive ability of any information is explained by the lack of highly effective mechanisms for effectively counteracting external information expansion and the technical literacy of the country's population, which overwhelmingly owns the latest computer technology and has appropriate mobile devices.

Considering the current information and communication situation in the Republic of Belarus, we have to admit that state-owned media are inferior in popularity to Western media and private information resources, which are often critical of the current government. The national media and local network communities pay insufficient attention to the patriotic part of the Belarusian population and supporters of the incumbent president of the country (there are a majority in Belarus), as well as their actions during the past acute political crisis and in the subsequent period. At the same time, the country information space is still filled with constantly imposed and systematically updated negative information about the situation in the country, its order and the President of the Republic A.G.Lukashenko, about the alleged harmfulness of Belarus maintaining political, economic and military relations with the Russian Federation and, all the more, their strengthening, entailing the international isolation of the state and increased sanctions pressure on it.

This can be explained by the fact that the Belarusian authorities pay more attention to the development of the technical side of the media, and less to the ideological and patriotic education of society.

It would be unfair to believe that the Republic of Belarus has not taken measures, including regulatory ones, to protect the country's information space from external harmful effects. Thus, the Law of the Republic of Belarus "On Mass Media" as amended in 2018 provided:

- obligatory registration in Belarus of foreign media distributing their products in Belarus with a change in form or content;

- obtaining permission to distribute foreign media products on the territory of Belarus without changing the form and content (including rebroadcasting of foreign TV channels in cable networks);

- a ban on financing the media from foreign sources (with the exception of cases where they participate in the statutory fund of the editorial office with a share of foreign investment up to 20%)¹³.

Violation of the law entails criminal, administrative, civil and other liability.

It is important to note that the weakening of the "security belt" along the perimeter of the borders of the Russian Federation due to the Special Military Operation in Ukraine, which has become an existential clash between our country and the collective West, sharply raises the question of the socio-political situation in the Republic of Belarus and its prospect, under the influence of opposing some national and foreign information and communication resources. And not only its future as a sovereign subject of international law, but also the prospects for allied relations with Russia, the fate of multilateral multidisciplinary cooperation in the CSTO and SCO formats depend on how the country withstands the test that has fallen on it.

Conclusions

The analysis of materials on the role, place and significance of national and foreign information and communication resources of Belarus provides a basis for identifying priority areas of scientific research, the results of which can be used to strengthen the counteraction to information and psychological attacks by the enemies of Russia and the Republic of Belarus and can contribute to enhancing national security. These areas include:

- identification and study of information and communication structures and associations (subjects of communication) operating abroad and on the territory of Russia and Belarus to the detriment of their national interests;

- identification of the formation mechanism, the functioning of elements of country communication regimes unfriendly to Russia and Belarus, the establishment of organizers, sponsors, patrons, active performers of hostile information and psychological actions; revealing the true intentions of the enemies of our countries for use in propaganda work, debunking the image of Western opponents for our peoples;

- determination of types, essential features, forms and methods, technical and technological characteristics, scale of activity and geography of the impact of communication tools used for destructive information and psychological processing of the population of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus;

- development and implementation of a technology for continuous monitoring of information flows in the communication space of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus in order to identify publications dangerous for the national interests of our countries and neutralize them online;

¹³ Identification of the Law of the Republic of Belarus "On Mass Media" dated 06.08.2008 №. 2/1524 (with amendments and additions).

- identification of political, economic, military, social, cultural and other objects (areas) within the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus that are of great interest to our ill-wishers, the development of effective measures designed to reduce the vulnerability of Russian and Belarusian virtual audiences from the negative impact of hostile propaganda; assessment of the likely degree of destructive impact; determining the possibility of effective neutralization of hostile propaganda;

- development of a model of the world communication order based on the formation of an optimal international legal framework for the civilized regulation of country communication regimes at the global and regional levels in the interests of developing good-neighbourly international relations and maintaining a system of equal security for all states

Of course, these areas of scientific research do not cover the whole range of problems of paramount importance for the study of the communication regime of the Republic of Belarus, however, in our opinion, they can be considered as proposals for a full-scale scientific development of the phenomenon under consideration.

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HISTORICAL RETROSPECTIVE AND MODERNITY

History of International
Relations and Foreign
Policy

RUSSIA & WORLD: SCIENTIFIC DIALOGUE

РОССИЯ
И МИР
НАУЧНЫЙ ДИАЛОГ

Throughout the history of the United States parties have played a huge role in their political life. They expressed not only the interests of certain segments of the population, but also consolidated the authorities, performing the function of deterrence and counterbalance in politics. As A.Schlesinger Jr. noted, the parties produced ideas, tried to regulate internal conflicts with the help of compromises, were a career lift for many ambitious people, and involved the masses in political life, making them the Americanized immigrants

Taigildin A.V.

Evolution of the US Democratic Party in the 1830s-1840s

Evolution of the US Democratic Party in the 1830s-1840s

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Abstract: The article focuses on the history of the Democratic Party during the bipartisan Democrat-Whig system. It shows how the nationwide issues of tariffs, slavery and expansion influenced the formation of sectional factions. Having progressed from a small-scale factional struggle, by the end of the period under review the party consisted of two major factions divided geographically by North-South. Particular attention is paid to the "Young America" movement, which originated with young and ambitious politicians who promoted infrastructure development and the idea of expanding borders. This idea came to be known as the "idea of predestination". Although the movement died out in the 1840s, the Predestination idea became the ideological basis for the invasion of Texas, California and other Mexican territories, as well as for the justification of the spread of slavery. The article examines how the controversy over the extension of slavery to the newly acquired territories caused a division of political forces in the country. "The Wilmot Proviso", which prohibited slavery in these territories, provoked protests from southern politicians, who not only began voting against the amendment in a single section, but began preparations for a convention that would decide the Southern states' secession from the United States.

Keywords: USA, XIX century, Democratic Party, "Young America", "Wilmot Proviso"

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Introduction

Throughout the history of the United States parties have played a huge role in political life. They not only expressed the interests of certain segments of the population, but also consolidated power, while performing the function of counterweights in politics. As A Schlesinger Jr. noted, the parties developed ideas, tried to regulate internal conflicts through compromises, were a career lift for many ambitious people, involved the masses in political life, Americanized immigrants (12:373–374).

When considering the development of the Party as a whole, all this is true. However, if we begin to analyze individual provisions and relate them to various stages of American

history, we can find counterexamples. In the historical period we are considering, the American two-party system did not contribute to the consolidation of American society. This was especially noticeable in the example of the relationship between the North and the South. French political thinker Alexis de Tocqueville drew attention to the existence of parties that are dangerous for the future of the country. He emphasized that their rivalry is more like a confrontation between nations (11:158). Local interests were more important than national ones and more often rallied Americans along the North-South sectional lines, which eventually resulted in a party crisis and a split in the Democratic Party and in the formation of a sectional Republican Party.

Materials and Methods

The methodological basis of the study was the principle of historicism, which requires consideration of an event in its development; the principle of objectivity, which requires consideration of the interrelationships of various aspects of a historical event or phenomenon and their dependence on the action of a wide range of factors; the principle of scientific character, which implies the use of scientific methods of cognition and evidence-based conclusions.

Special-historical methods used in the study: historical-genetic method; historical-biographical method; comparative method. Documents of the Democratic Party, materials of the Congress, works of John O'Sullivan, J. N. Polk, Alexis de Tocqueville served as the source base for the study. Historiography is represented by the works of both domestic and foreign authors.

Results

The development of the Democratic Party before the Civil War coincides with the period that V. V. Sogrin called the second liberal-democratic transformation (10:100). This period is divided into two stages. The first stage is the Jacksonian democracy of the 1820s–1840s. The second stage is the 1850–1860s, the period of the conflict. Since the development of the Democratic Party is closely connected with the general political transformation, such a periodization generally suits it. However, if we take the factional struggle as a basis, then the splits of the party will turn out to be the key points. We can highlight several key events of the party split:

1. 1830 – E. Jackson and D. Calhoun broke up over a dispute over states' rights. D. Calhoun leaves the party;
2. 1843 – distribution of votes for a new tariff law on a geographical basis;
3. 1848 split over slavery and the "Wilmot Amendment". Van Buren's departure from the party;

4. 1854 – the formation of the Republican Party. The north wing of the Democrats sustains losses.

During the presidency of James Monroe in 1817–1825, the one-party system of the Democratic-Republican Party was established in the United States. There was an opinion that the parties as a political institution have outlived their usefulness, and this period received an eloquent name – “the era of good agreement” (1:16). But from the 1820s, a two-party “Whig Democrat” system began to take shape. According to the American historian Robert Rimini, this was the result of a change in the nature of politics. People began to see politics as a job where you can make a career. In an emerging democracy, the most effective way to advance in politics is to win elections. Special organizations began to appear in the localities to attract voters (8:133).

However, neither the transformation of politics into a profession, nor the urgent need for votes could simply lead to the transformation of the political system. Actually, if we look more broadly, this is the transformation itself. Since the beginning of the 19th century, the electoral circle has gradually expanded as it became important for politicians to attract the farmers of the northeast and northwest and the southern planters. The process of expanding the electorate accelerated after the abolition of the property qualification, and by the time of the election of Andrew Jackson in 1829, the property qualification remained in three of the 24 states.

Therefore, almost all party activity is now focused on attracting a mass of voters. The political system and parties transformed into a new system, and in 1825, after the collapse of the Democratic-Republican Party, the Democratic Party was formed.

In the South, however, the formation of the party system was slower than in the northeastern states. It is believed that this was due to the nature of political life in this region. Due to the fact that the main political events unfolded at the county level and not at the state level, there was no need for a strong party machine. And only from the 1830s did strong parties finally form here (1:65).

K.V.Minayar-Beloruchev singled out the following factors for creating a strong Democratic Party: 1. The Democrats were able to create a national party much earlier than their opponents; 2. Democrats quickly managed to rally all the factions in different parts of the country. This happened during the presidency of Andrew Jackson, when those who disagreed with his position on some issues left the party and joined the opposition (5:39).

Considering the party-political system of this period, it must be borne in mind that the parties did not have well-developed ideologies and clearly formulated programs. Before each election, party programs were developed for a new candidate. It cannot be said that the parties did not have an ideological base at all. The Democrats championed liberalism, equality of opportunity, and democracy. From this ideology flowed, for example, the fight against the national bank, the fight against tariffs, criticism of infrastructure financing at the federal level. For Democrats, government intervention in the economy was the destruction of equal opportunity for all. They believed that each state should decide for itself the problem of building roads if it needed them, the average American should not suffer because of economic interests that do not concern him. The state should help such

Americans, but not directly, but indirectly. Such assistance included the expansion of land to the west and the reduction in the price of land.

Politically, the Democratic Party advocated the active participation of Americans in government.

K.V.Minayar-Beloruchev took the geographic division as the basis for systematizing the ideas of democrats on socio-economic issues. He wrote that the southern branch of the Democratic Party was not as pro-tariff as the northern branch; that Pennsylvania and South Carolina were rivals on this issue, since the point of view of the first was similar to that of the Northern Whigs, and the second sought the abolition of trade duties. The researcher noted that the Democratic Party did not unanimously accept the State Bank, but disagreed on the issue of what should be the basis of the US financial system. The southern wing of the Democrats advocated the reduction and even the complete elimination of issuing banking powers and leaving only gold and silver as a permanent “hard” currency. The northern wing, especially the northwestern states, advocated the idea of inflationary emission, excluding in it the financial control of the government. The West Wing wanted to transfer public lands to the states for the purpose of acquiring them by local residents. The eastern wing of the Democrats was a supporter of the state sale of land (5:39).

The Democratic Party dominated during the Jacksonian Democracy. The main electoral base of the Democrats was the middle and lower strata of the population and the agrarian “peripheral” states. The Democrats were supported by slave owners, Western farmers, the commercial and financial bourgeoisie associated with the planters, and the urban petty bourgeois population (2:135).

In the 1830s, the main issue in US policy was the problem of the distribution of rights and opportunities for different groups of the population in the political and socio-economic spheres (10:130). Within the Democratic Party, this problem was realized in the struggle of factions: northern (leader – Martin Van Buren) and southern (leader – John Calhoun). Most of the pro-slavery Democrats were surrounded by J. Calhoun, Vice President of the United States. In 1830, the first split in the Democratic Party occurred when J. Calhoun and part of the southerners left the party due to disagreements with President Jackson over the rights of the states, which Calhoun defended.

Northern faction leader Van Buren sought to unite southerners and northerners by creating a cross-sectional party alliance, and hoped to avoid regional tensions in the country in this way. Thanks to this, the Democrats managed to connect different segments of the population with the help of common political and economic interests. Thus, the farmers of the North were committed to their individual freedoms and advocated the need to protect themselves from banks in the same way as the farmers of the South and West. And the merchants of New York were interested in the cotton that the planters of the South sold to them.

There were also small factions in the Democratic Party, in addition to the two largest factions. For example, Locofocos and Tammany Hall. Both factions were active in New York, the first from 1835 to the mid-1840s, the second throughout the entire period under consideration. Tammany Hall was the Democratic Party’s most powerful and enduring

institution. As a protest against Tammany Hall's attempts to influence the nomination of candidates, Lokofokos, led by writer-editor William Leggett, was formed from veterans of the Labor Party union and Democrats. Lokofokos approved the policies of Jackson and Van Buren and supported the ideas of free trade, wider circulation of money, and legal protection of trade unions. The faction opposed state banks and paper money. After the election of Van Buren, Lokofokos disappeared from the stage. However, these factions did not have a strong influence on the general party line.

Since 1845, the Young America faction has been very influential. Led by Stephen Douglas, James K. Polk, and Franklin Pierce, this faction was reformist and promoted trade, technology, and internationalism.

The economic policy of "Young America" was to support the "market revolution" and encourage capitalism; they talked about the need for a modern infrastructure of railways, highways, harbors, canals and telegraphs, believed that only free trade could lead to an improvement in the internal economic situation of the country, and saw moderate tariffs as a necessary source of state revenue. They supported an independent treasury as a way to the material well-being of all Americans, and not as a way to deprive the prosperous part of the Whigs of special privileges.

The Democratic Review, owned by John O'Sullivan, was the loudest voice of both "Young America" and the Democratic Party as a whole. O'Sullivan, in his Manifesto, published in the magazine, came forward as the author of a new theory – the "idea of predestination" for Americans, who allegedly carry a special, unique mission received from God. In modern historiography, the authorship of the idea is disputed (9:241). The Democrats already had the idea of expanding new territories, but O'Sullivan took it out of the party program. In 1845, a dispute arose over the annexation of Texas, some politicians agitated against the annexation of a new territory. At this point, the "idea of predestination" appeared. O'Sullivan spoke out against the agitators and gave the Manifesto a high pathetic character. In his essay, he spoke disparagingly of all territories that are not part of the United States. All this, O'Sullivan believed, was simply "a geographical place, nothing more than a combination of coasts, plains, mountains, valleys, forests and rivers"; after joining the United States, the territories become "part of the homeland" and cause "a thrill of patriotism in American hearts" (17:289). For the accession of Texas and other territories to the United States, according to the author of the Manifesto, the existence of American colonists on them and their desire to join the United States was enough. The arguments of other countries were not taken into account: "What could be more ridiculous than the indignation of Mexico at the violation of its rights by the annexation of Texas?" asked O'Sullivan (17:290). Thus, those who accepted the "idea of predestination" had no regard for the sovereignty of other countries. Thus, O'Sullivan and S. Douglas sought the annexation of Cuba from Spain in the midst of the Mexican War (19:102–103).

In 1840, President Van Buren attempted to withdraw federal funds from private banks to overcome the effects of the crisis of 1837. After that, another regrouping of forces in the Democratic Party took place: the southern wing was strengthened by J. Calhoun and the radical defenders of the rights of the states who returned with him, and the northern,

in the face of big business, seeing a serious threat in the actions of Van Buren, now often began to unite with the Whigs to block presidential projects. The decisive word on the eve of the next elections remained with the southern faction.

In 1840, the Democratic Party adopts the first national political platform:

- constitutionalism (resolution 1);
- liberalism in the economy and free trading (resolutions 4, 9);
- non-intervention of the federal government in the financing of the transport system (resolutions 2, 3);
- fight against the US Bank (Resolution 6);
- state autonomy (resolutions 3, 4, 6, 7);
- ban on public discussion of the issue of slavery (Resolution 7) (14).

The main idea of this document was the principle of non-interference of the federal government in the economic life of the country. Therefore, many residents of the states blamed the Democrats in general and the Van Buren administration in particular for the difficult economic situation and the inability to improve the situation. This caused many voters to leave for the Whigs.

The party acquires a regional character in the second half of the 1840s due to the aggravation of the issue of slavery. From that time on, conventions began to play a large role, turning from simple congresses for the approval of presidential candidates into a place of political battles (4:26). The northern faction was in favor of a ban on the spread of slavery outside the South, the southern was in pro-slave positions. The southern faction was beginning to gain political influence, but the issue of slavery is only a consequence, in fact, the cause was the economic difficulties that the planters experienced in the 1840s. The price of cotton fell, the problem of land development arose, the solution of which was beneficial not only to the planters, but also to the slave-owning states as a whole, since with the expansion of slaveholding and the creation of slave-owning states, the influence of these states in Congress would increase. But although power completely passed into the hands of the Whigs, from that moment on, southern planters began to strengthen their political positions. This was not least due to the disarray in the Whig party after the death of H. Harrison. The new president, J. Tyler, although a member of the Whig party, had serious disagreements with them over the State Bank, which Henry Clay intended to restore. Mr. Clay was furious because he was counting on the full support of the president, who was not a directly elected president (he replaced the deceased Harrison). J. Tyler himself was not against the State Bank, but believed that it should not act independently on the territory of the entire Union. In the end, he proposed his plan for the State Bank, but the Whigs protested, and the government resigned. In addition, President Tyler was a strong supporter of states' rights and slavery. This brought him closer to D. Calhoun and strengthened the position of slave owners in the Democratic Party. Already in 1842, in the elections to the 28th Congress, they again received the majority of seats in the House of Representatives. However, in 1843 there was a serious split in the party due to the new tariff law – they voted for it already on a geographical basis. Southern Democrats championed free trade. Northern Democrats, especially from Pennsylvania and New York, advocated higher tariffs (5:80–81).

More acute was the problem of expansion and annexation of Texas. Martin Van Buren feared a debate on the Texas issue and the issue of slavery, as this could cause a split between northern and southern Democrats.

The debate of the Democratic Party over expansion stalled at the May 27–30, 1844 convention in Baltimore. Van Buren once again tried to maintain the balance of power, and this was the reason for his defeat (6:149). Northern Democrats did not support him, preferring L. Kass, R. M. Johnson and J. Buchanan (16:167). But there was no unity in the southern democrat camp itself. D. Calhoun was a strong politician, but he led only one part of the radical southerners. Opposition to him arose in Mississippi, where by this time the economic center of the South had moved. Local planters were closely connected with northern industrialists and built economic relationships based on support and concessions to each other (2:145). But the Democrats got out of the situation by nominating James Polk, who was not a politician of national scale. J. Polk was not among the politicians considered as presidential candidates, but he had serious advantages. First, he was from Tennessee, a border state, so he was at home among both Southern and Western Democrats. Secondly, without hesitation, he supported the annexation. Thirdly, he was a close friend of Andrew Jackson and John Calhoun. Fourthly, J. Polk never opposed himself to Van Buren, and, therefore, to the Democrats of the northeastern states (5:124 125). The candidacy of J. Polk satisfied the southerners to a greater extent.

The convention showed that Van Buren and the Northeastern Democrats had lost control of the party. At the same time, the alliance of the Democrats of the northwestern and southern states, led by the southerners, strengthened. The Democrats made mutual concessions on the issue of expansion: the representatives of the northwestern states supported the annexation of Texas, and the southerners supported the annexation of Oregon. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the Democrats won the election of 1844 largely due to the slogans for the annexation of Texas and California (13:160).

Along with this, the Whig Democrats' two-party system was undermined by discussions of the annexation of Texas, as it strengthened Southern slaveholders and upset the balance of power. Again there is a division of parties along geographical lines, and there is a danger of a split in society into North and South. It should be noted that during this period radical measures were not taken seriously by either the majority of the Democrats or the majority of the Whigs. Only two states, Massachusetts (North) and South Carolina (South), had politicians who called for secession. This problem was solved after the nomination of J. Polk for the presidency.

One of the most important tasks set by President Polk for his government was the annexation of California. His foreign policy towards Mexico was particularly aggressive. Polk ruled out the use of military force to annex Mexican territories, while the governments of previous presidents, Jackson and Tyler, tried to resolve this issue mainly by diplomatic pressure on the neighbor (in view of various international and domestic political reasons).

Southerners gave the president massive support. They became the most ardent followers of the aggressive US foreign policy in the South. The political influence of the planters of the South and their economic well-being, especially those who produced cotton and sugar,

directly depended on the formation of new states and the spread of slavery to them. Some industrialists and merchants of the North also supported this policy, as they were closely connected with the economy of the South. In their midst, in 1846–1847, ultra-expansionists stood out, headed by prominent politicians: K. Cushing, L. Cass, S. Douglas, and others, who insisted on the annexation of Mexican lands up to the complete annexation of Mexico. They received the support of J. Dallas and Buchanan, the US Vice President and Secretary of State, as well as some other members of the government, and had a great influence on the President.

The commercial and industrial circles of the Northeast, partly land speculators and farmers, not without reason, believed that most of the annexed land would fall into the hands of the southerners. The planters will create new slave-owning states here and push back both industrialists and farmers from the economic development of the land.

The policy of President Polk was also criticized by D. Calhoun's supporters. Even at the very beginning, D. Calhoun voted against the war with Mexico (15:654). The Calhounists believed that a further war would lead to an increase in the influence of the central government, infringement of the rights of the states, and an increase in tariffs and taxes. In addition, D. Calhoun himself did not give up hope of being elected to the presidency when he was nominated by the candidate for this post from the Democratic Party, and did not want to lose potential voters in the North.

The result of these processes was an amendment introduced by Pennsylvania Democratic Congressman D. Wilmot. On August 8, 1846, he proposed the Wilmot Amendment, according to which new territories could enter the Union only if slavery was prohibited. The amendment was outraged by President James N. Polk, who called it "harmful and stupid", writing in his diary that he did not understand "what the question of slavery has to do with peace with Mexico..." (18:138). The planters also expressed widespread dissatisfaction with the amendment. The votes in the House of Representatives and the Senate were divided geographically (3:97). The South was thus able to reject the "Wilmot Amendment".

The reaction to the "Wilmot Amendment" was very significant. The struggle that unfolded around the amendment revealed the true goals that pursued in the war with Mexico, both the majority of the Whigs and the majority of the Democrats. This led to two important consequences for both the Democratic Party and the President. The first is the formation of the left wing of the Democratic Party with the leader M. Van Buren, who decided to consistently fight against the pro-slave direction. Second, the Whig opposition party grew stronger; she defeated the Democrats in the 1846 elections to Congress and took control of its lower house. In addition, the abolitionist movement expanded, which meant a further disengagement of forces in the country. The Democratic Party split along geographical lines: Southern Democrats voted against the amendment, Northern Democrats voted in favor. In 1850, the question of the status in which to accept new territories into the States was resolved by compromise. However, according to some researchers, it was then that the northerners were forced to take a tough stance, defending their interests (7:93). The South, in turn, also rallied, thus uniting a number of large states. In 1848, as a result of the war with Mexico, Texas, Upper California and New Mexico, the northern part of the states of Sonora, Coahuila and Tamaulipas, the territories of modern Nevada, California, Utah, Arizona, New

Mexico, parts of Texas, Wyoming and Colorado, were annexed to the United States. The planters wanted to expand slavery into these new territories.

During the next election, the split in the Democratic Party, provoked by the “Wilmot Amendment”, was already evident. The party’s National Convention, which met in Baltimore in May 1848, left New York’s conservative wing to protest against the slave owners, which was only to the benefit of the Southerners. The Wilmot Amendment was rejected by the convention delegates, but the issue of slavery remained open, although some radicals tried to defend the right to non-interference in the issue of the spread of slavery. The delegates did not succumb to the pressure, and the direction of the convention as a whole was moderate. L. Kass was selected as a candidate for president, and W. Butler of Kentucky for vice president. At the same time, a significant number of slave-owning Democrats voted for the slave-owning Whig, General Z. Taylor, who suited them more than Kass (2:164).

Further, the dispute over the entry of California into the Union as a free state escalated, which worsened the position of southerners in the Senate of Congress, since it created a ratio of slave and free states of 15 to 16. Southerners began to talk about secession in case of violation of their rights. This question was discussed at a whole series of preparatory congresses and conferences. Southerners were getting ready for a general convention to be held in Nashville, Tennessee. Perhaps this was the first time they had so carefully prepared for the meeting, and although the convention was not successful, the very fact of its holding speaks of a common problem for the South and the need to solve it together. The secessionist movement began on April 19, 1849, in Tennessee, where the Democratic convention met. The delegates to the convention championed the rights of the states and tried to develop a plan of action if a law prohibiting the movement of their property was passed.

Conclusions

In this way, by the 1850s, the Democratic Party had evolved from a party based on the broad democratic masses in the 1830s, to a party controlled by its southern wing. The turning point after which the party became a pro-slave party was 1844. The growing economic contradictions between the South and the North, the growth of the regional and political self-consciousness of the South became the cause of the secessionist movement of 1850. The reason for the congress was the dispute over the newly acquired lands. On June 4, 1850, representatives of some of the slave states finally met in Nashville to protest the “Wilmot Amendment” and obtain the right to move with their property (i. e. slaves) to the territories recently taken from Mexico.

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The cover design is based on the work of Wassily Wasilyevich Kandinsky (1866, Moscow - 1944, Neuilly-sur-Seine). Russian artist was one of the founders of abstractionism, later he was a theorist of fine arts. He became a professional artist at the age of 30 and had a huge impact on the development of world culture. He participated in exhibitions of the art association "Jack of Diamonds", in Munich he became one of the founders of the "Blue Rider" group; was engaged in teaching activities in Moscow and Berlin; was a theorist of the Bauhaus school. The creative heritage of Wassily Kandinsky continues to inspire artists, designers, architects around the world. In June 2017, the "Painting with White Lines", which until 1974 could be seen by visitors to the Tretyakov Gallery, was sold at Sotheby's for \$42 million.

