

Artículo de investigación

The Indicators of Modern Social Development in the People's Republic of China

Показатели современного социального развития в Китайской Народной Республике
Los indicadores del desarrollo social moderno en la República Popular de China

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Written by:

E.M. Tileubergenov⁹⁷

ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6584-3103

https://elibrary.ru/author_profile.asp?id=1007299

S.I. Pelevin⁹⁸

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-3415-752X

https://elibrary.ru/author_profile.asp?id=835057

K.R. Nessipbaeva⁹⁹

ORCID ID: 0000-0001-8379-8262

https://elibrary.ru/author_profile.asp?id=1032525

A.M. Vasiliev¹⁰⁰

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-4399-1540

https://elibrary.ru/author_profile.asp?id=717298

Аннотация

Национальная политика прошла большой, зигзагообразный путь развития в Китае. За 60 лет существования Китайской Народной Республики при решении этнического вопроса созданы формы, обеспечивающие сохранение и укрепление территориальной целостности страны (в местах проживания не китайского населения зоны национальной автономии), улучшение международных отношений, развитие в национальных регионах экономики и культуры. При решении КНР этнического вопроса были допущены ошибки, просчеты, что очень негативно отразилось на национальных отношениях, общей стабильности в стране. Однако эти ошибки преодолены, и последние годы являются очень конструктивным периодом в развитии народного строительства. И хотя опыт КНР в решении этнического вопроса не безупречен, в нем имеется много положительного. В то же время наблюдается проявление сепаратизма в таких регионах, как Тибет, Синьцзян, Внутренняя Монголия. Действия сепаратистских сил в Китае и за его пределами расцениваются как серьезная опасность, угрожающая единству

Abstract

The national policy passed a big, zigzag way of development in China. In 60 years of existence of the People's Republic of China during the solution of an ethnic question the forms which provided preservation and strengthening of territorial integrity of the country (in the places of residence of the non Chinese population areas of national autonomy are created), improvement of the international relations, development in national regions of economy and culture were found. During the decision of the People's Republic of China of an ethnic question also mistakes, miscalculations were made that very negatively was reflected in the national relations, the general stability in the country. However these mistakes are overcome, and the last years is very constructive period in development of national construction. And though experience of the People's Republic of China in the solution of an ethnic question is not irreproachable, in it is available much positive. At the same time it is observed manifestations of separatism in such regions as Tibet, Xinjiang, the Inner Mongolia. Actions of separatist forces in China and beyond its limits are regarded as the serious danger threatening to unity of the state and unity of

⁹⁷ Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Almaty, Kazakhstan. mtrushin@mail.ru

⁹⁸ Armavir State Pedagogical University, Armavir, Russia.

⁹⁹ Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

¹⁰⁰ Kuban State University, Krasnodar, Russia.

государства и единства национальностей, способных дестабилизировать ситуацию. Наряду с этими проблемами в статье рассматриваются вопросы историографии и источниковедения этой проблемы.

Ключевые слова: политика, нация, этнический вопрос, этническое меньшинство, национальное большинство, социальное развитие.

nationalities capable to destabilize a situation. Along with these problems in article questions of a historiography and a source study of this problem are considered.

Keywords: policy, nation, ethnic question, ethnic minority, national majority, social development.

Resumen

La política nacional aprobó una gran forma de desarrollo en zigzag en China. En los 60 años de existencia de la República Popular China durante la solución de una cuestión étnica, se crean las formas que brindaron la preservación y el fortalecimiento de la integridad territorial del país (en los lugares de residencia de las poblaciones no chinas de autonomía nacional), Se encontraron mejoras en las relaciones internacionales, el desarrollo en las regiones nacionales de economía y cultura. Durante la decisión de la República Popular China sobre una cuestión étnica, también se cometieron errores de cálculo que se reflejaron muy negativamente en las relaciones nacionales, la estabilidad general en el país. Sin embargo, estos errores se superan y los últimos años son un período muy constructivo en el desarrollo de la construcción nacional. Y aunque la experiencia de la República Popular de China en la solución de una cuestión étnica no es irreprochable, está disponible de manera muy positiva. Al mismo tiempo, se observan manifestaciones de separatismo en regiones como el Tíbet, Xinjiang, la Mongolia Interior. Las acciones de las fuerzas separatistas en China y más allá de sus límites se consideran el peligro grave que amenaza la unidad del estado y la unidad de las nacionalidades capaces de desestabilizar una situación. Junto con estos problemas en el artículo se consideran las preguntas de una historiografía y un estudio de origen de este problema.

Palabras clave: política, nación, cuestión étnica, minoría étnica, mayoría nacional, desarrollo social.

Introduction

The relevance of the research is related to the fact that great attention is paid to the modern national policies of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation in terms of their ever-increasing role in the world.

China is one of the largest multinational states in the world where 55 non-Han nationalities are registered (in fact, they are even more, since the official list hasn't included a number of small ethnics). The international development of China was difficult at all historical stages. It was particularly complex in the 20th century.

The territorial of the research includes the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (IMAR). The relevance of the research subject is also due to the noticeably increasing role and place of these regions as potential zones of ethnic separatism conflicts. These regions are a fruitful ground for national unrest that can easily break out at the earliest opportunity. The main reasons of that include the historical basis (own state in

the past, difficult history of integration into China, anti-Beijing revolts), confessional distinctions with the Han, external support of separatists, economic requirements of the regions, the number of indigenous people and their general mentality (ethnic mobility).

XUAR and IMAR are of particular importance for Beijing because these regions are rich with natural resources and provide the growing needs of China for oil and gas. Mao Zedong told that China will agree to give Beijing rather than Xinjiang.

Presently, ethnic and religious conflicts around the world are generally the provocative factors that can lead to the clash of civilizations. In fact, such conflicts are always a consequence of separatist movements' activities.

Gaining own statehood by the people of Central Asia reanimated hopes for gaining the same status by the Uyghurs – the leading ethnic minority from those living in the territory of

Xinjiang. The difficult history of relationship between the Uyghur Muslims and the Han, the influence of religious promotion of radical Islam coming from abroad, including from forces of international terrorism, led to the essential intensification of the Uyghur separatism in 1990.

Nationalist elements, violent methods of establishing the independent state "East Turkestan" in the territory of XUAR began to pose a serious threat to the social political stability in the Northwest of the country and even to the most territorial integrity of China.

The mass riots which have arisen on an ethnic basis in June, 2009 in the administrative center of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the city of Urumqi, reminded China of the most vexed issue of the Uyghur separatism again.

The events in Urumqi showed that the national policy of neighboring China is not so great.

The events in neighboring China, which is a member of The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as well Kazakhstan, the general problems of foreign policy, especially in the safety field, are of particular importance for Kazakhstan. If the conflict is not resolved, it is possible that the uncontrollable mass of people will rush to fertile Kazakhstan lands. Our border guards cannot hold them. Afterwards, according to some conventions, Kazakhstan will have to organize refugee camps. To ensure our own wellbeing and safety it is necessary to prioritize the stability of the neighbors.

The disorder, chaos and genocide that occurred are not at all favorable to the neighbors of the Celestial Empire. Besides, the main commodity turnover between Kazakhstan and China is carried out through Urumqi.

The historiography of national problems

The historiography of the subject is based on the chronological principle. The works on theoretical questions of the national policies in the studied regions are considered separately. The national policy issues of the People's Republic of China became an object of studying of a number of Russian, Chinese and Kazakhstani authors as well as authors from other countries.

Soviet historiography. The Soviet scientists paid special attention to the national problems of China in the 1930s with regard to the revolutionary events in this country. The detailed

research of G.S. Kara-Murza (Kara-Murza, 1934) became the first work, which is completely devoted to the analysis of the national situation in China. The author identified several features characterizing the national structure of the country:

- 1) "the extreme variety" of large, average-sized and small ethnic groups.
- 2) "China is a state with the uniform national center" that enabled the Han to live compactly in the central region of the country, whereas non-Han nationalities were distributed on the periphery.
- 3) Ethnic minorities. Here G.S. Kara-Murza noted that small ethnic groups lived together with the Chinese, both in the national areas and out of their borders. According to the author, the national situation in China at the beginning of the XX century was characterized by a difficult situation with ethnic minorities, the development of the Han colonization, including the Northeast of the country. Dividing non-Han people to the revolutionary and reactionary, G.S. Kara-Murza claimed that the first had to create their own state to get rid of the Chinese operation.

In the middle of the XX century the interest in studying the national policy of China is connected with formation of the People's Republic of China. A.G. Yakovlev's (Yakovlev, 1959) research was published in 1959. In his work the author in details analyzed the activities of the Communist Party of China (CPC) for maintaining regional national autonomy, a measure aimed at the development of a social, economic and cultural level of non-Han nationalities. He provided some data on the position of ethnic minorities in Inner Mongolia such as the Mongols in particular. A.G. Yakovlev commended the activities of the Communist Party of China in the solution of ethnic questions, namely, a guarantee of the rights and freedoms to ethnic minorities.

In the same year K.F. Kotov's work (Kotov, 1962) was published. As well as A.G. Yakovlev he gave appreciation to the activities of the Communist Party of China in the solution of ethnic questions in the People's Republic of China.

Opposite assessment can be seen in T.R. Rakhimov's (Rakhimov, 1968) work where the

author declared that regional national autonomy "... in fact, is only a screen for covering the policy of violent assimilation". T.R. Rakhimov provided a number of examples characterizing the situation in the national areas during "the Cultural Revolution" and showed features of the course towards the merge of nationalities, identified the repressions conducted by the country leaders concerning the intellectuals and workers representing the non-Han. From the point of view of the author, "the national policy of Maoists is anti-Marxist, anti-socialist."

A detailed analysis of the activities of the Communist Party of China in the field of the national policy is provided in A.A. Moskalyov's work (Moskalev, 1994). The author identified three main periods in the development of the theory and practice of national construction:

- 1) 1949-1956, the period of realization of the principles adopted in the program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). This stage is characterized by the organization of the institute of regional national autonomy, by the first social and economic transformations directed to the reduction of gap between the non-Han and the Chinese, by establishing the network of national schools, etc.
- 2) 1957-1977, the period of "destruction". At that time there was the withdrawal of the management of the Communist Party of China from earlier achieved results in the national policy.
- 3) 1978-till present. This stage is characterized by the return to the principles of national construction of the 1950s and "further development of its main manifestations and directions". Studying regional national autonomy in the People's Republic of China, A.A. Moskalyov came to the conclusion that, despite all the shortcomings, "the unified nature of this system" acted as a strong base for "strengthening the territorial integrity of China".

T.V. Lazareva's work (Lazareva, 2010) contained the data on the legislative regulation of regional national autonomy in the Northeast of China.

T.V. Lazareva, studying the issues of staff construction in the People's Republic of China among non-Han nationalities, used regional acts

to reflect the process of nationalization of personnel in XUAR. She noted that the work on preparation and use of national personnel in the district was quite successful, though the tension in the social sphere was still observed. In the mid-nineties the share of personnel workers of non-Han nationalities was 58.6% of all personnel workers of the national district, whereas a share of the Uyghurs was only 40.7%, despite numerical superiority of representatives of the Uyghur nationality in the region.

A brief review of the position of ethnic minorities since the period of government of the Han dynasty before the formation of the People's Republic of China is given in V.G. Buldakova's work (Buldakova, 2006). The work also provides data that the national policy of the country was implemented under the direction of the Communist Party of China since 1949. The article mainly concerns the issues of national development till 1978. As for the period investigated by us, the author put emphasis on the policies in the fields of education and culture of ethnic minority. She reflected the dynamics of organizing national schools and cultural institutions, especially concerning the problem of preservation of small nationalities' languages. V.G. Buldakova came to the conclusion that in 1980s the state achieved noticeable success on the way of forming the national policy.

A. Kuteleva conducted research on the demographic situation in the national areas (Kuteleva, 2009). Considering social and demographic characteristics of non-Han nationalities on the basis of the state program "China's one child-policy", the author came to the conclusion that the country's population was inevitably growing old proving the negative consequences of this policy. General information about implementing the state "China's one child-policy" is given in the regions of non-Han nationalities population.

Russian historiography. Among Russian authors the national policy issues of the People's Republic of China were touched upon by I.F. Popova (Popova, n.d.). The author analyzed the role of the country's national policy in the solution of national problems and gave assessment to the results of the Communist Party's of China activities in this area. In general, the author drew a conclusion about the success of the national policy which allowed ethnic minorities to preserve their languages and traditional culture. Nevertheless, there are also some critical remarks in the work. In particular, I.F. Popova paid attention to considerable

discontent and separatist sentiments in XUAR; according to the author, this is a symptom of a difficult social situation in places of compact accommodation of the representatives of the given nationality.

V.S. Kuznetsov dealt with the issues of the influence of religion on ethnic problems (Kuznetsov, 1973). According to the author, ordinary consciousness and public behavior of this or that ethnos develops under the influence of religion. Both the official position of the country's leaders and the position of religion on this and other matters are presented in the article; a common ground of two approaches is given. The "one-child policy" of strict control over the birth rate in the country was dictated by economic needs, in compliance with which it is allowed to have only one child. Regulation of birth rate contradicts traditional Muslim mentality.

The policy of the Communist Party of China to improve the national policy of the People's Republic of China, the choice of a new way of development and other important points was covered by L. Delusin (Delusin, 2003). In the article, a number of the major problems which presently the leadership of China are faced with are highlighted. In particular, it is possible to understand the reason of national confrontations, difficulties associated with them and the obstacles in the country's modernization. Having made the detailed analysis of the national policy, the author concluded that, despite the significant progress, the situation is not as smooth as it seems in the Celestial Empire.

V.O. Namzhilova (Namzhilova, 2011) presented data on the results of social and economic policies of the Chinese leaders in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region with the emphasis on economic development. The author paid attention to the dependence of the district's economic development on the expansion of foreign economic activities. The service sector and transport infrastructure are developing actively in the autonomy to attract investments in local economy. Despite a large role of foreign trade, the local government makes efforts for economic diversification. For successful economic growth, as V.O. Namzhilova claims, it is necessary to reconstruct the complex of industrial enterprises built in the 1950-1960s to expand their production capacities. Also, it is required "... to promote the development of resources and economy of means... to connect scientific and technical education with economy." It should be noted that the main

recommendations made by the author replicate the program documents of the Communist Party of China.

The analysis of ethnic oppositions is provided in V.G. Gelbras's researches (Gelbras, 2010). Addressing pages of history, the author sees the fear of the Uyghurs to lose their original culture and history as one of the main reasons of social problems and discontent. The arrival of the Han in XUAR, the gap in the economic situation between indigenous people and the Han are one of the major destabilizing factors, according to the author.

Chinese historiography. In Chinese historiography the interpretation of national problems of the country is considered entirely under the influence of the official ideology. As a rule, the study of the national policy of the Communist Party of China by Chinese authors is based on the following pattern. In the beginning a statement about national equality is presented (usually materials of the constitution, in which equality of all nationalities is proclaimed, are used; any forms of discrimination on ethnic sign are forbidden) (Everything about China, 2009).

Then the problem of unity of nationalities is characterized. Here scientists support the significance of the ethnic unity course, that is, ethnic minorities shouldn't be separated from the Han, and the latter – from the non-Han. This formula promotes the idea that all the people of China are interdependent and their successful development is impossible beyond communication with each other. Therefore, the government eliminates all forms of the Han chauvinism and local nationalism (nationalism of non-Han people).

Chinese historiography pays special attention to the issue of functioning of the regional national autonomy institute. "It is one of the main political orientations and an important component of the political system of the People's Republic of China", the vice-chairman of the state Committee on Ethnic Matters at the State Council of the People's Republic of China, At Jinghua, said. According to the Chinese authors, regional national autonomy is a specific form of realization of the rights of ethnic minorities in China.

Due to the economic growth and the development of the social sphere in the areas of national autonomy, Chinese authors come to the conclusion about the success of the national policy today. Ethnic questions, according to them, "... are mainly associated with intensifying

economic and cultural construction in the regions of ethnic minorities" (Lolin and Hawke, 2003).

For the last 20 years in the People's Republic of China there was a considerable amount of works devoted to various aspects of life of non-Han nationalities of Northeast China. For example, in the manual of Dong Guoyao (Goyao, 1997) the ethnography of the Inner Mongolia's ethnic minorities was most deeply studied. In this book the ethnogenesis and the main milestones of the ethnic history of Mongols of China was traced. The works of such Chinese authors as Zhao Huasheng (Huasheng, 2005), Pan Zhiping (Zhiping, 2003) and Xia Ishan (Ishan, 2001) are devoted to the cooperation of China with the Central Asian states, including fight against "three evils" within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. In Chinese historiography many questions of the national policy of the Communist Party of China in the Northeast of China are raised. Nevertheless, it does not deal with a comprehensive study of the problem but rather follows the line of the Party.

Western historiography is presented by several works raising the questions of the national policy of the Communist Party of China in the Northern regions of the country. H.G. Schwartz (Schwarz, 1984) prepared a historical and ethnographic review of nationalities of Northern China.

Among the works of Western authors it is necessary to note the monograph by M. Dillon (Dillon, 2004). Scientists in detail analyze the policy of the leadership of the People's Republic of China in solving the Islamic question (Syroezhkin, 2012). It is noted that the approaches to the Islamic problem underwent essential changes within 50 years of existence of the People's Republic of China (Shaymordanova, 1998). At the beginning, the country leaders tried to dissolve Muslims in the mass of the Chinese citizens politically and economically, afterwards in the 1970s, as the scientists noted (Khafizova & Basen, 2007) the changes in the relation of the country's leaders to religion could be noticed. Authors came to the conclusion that the Islamic factor plays an important role not only in the domestic policy but also in the geopolitical bases of the country. The position of Islam in the People's Republic of China to some extent is reflected in the attitudes of the Islamic states towards the People's Republic of China.

Sources

On the given stage we consider necessary to note the following groups of sources on the problem:

1. The acts of the People's Republic of China such as the Constitution, valid laws and decrees, laws defining the mechanisms and principles of implementing the national policy, regulating the system of regional national autonomy and affirming the political rights of the ethnic minorities. In particular, the texts of the constitutional acts of 1949, 1954, 1975, 1978 and 1982, in which the course of the Chinese leaders in the field of the national policy in the corresponding timeframes was defined. In "The basic Principles of Implementing Local National Autonomy in the People's Republic of China" (1952) and "The Law on Regional National Autonomy" (1984, edited in 2001) (The Law on Regional National Autonomy, 2001) the rights of the local governments of the autonomous regions of China were affirmed. These statutory acts were supplemented with the provisions of "The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Organization of Local Meetings of National Representatives and the Local National Governments of Various Ranks" which in details regulates all questions connected with the activities of local authorities in the national areas. "The Law on Marriage" (1981) can be noted as well.
2. The Materials of the congresses of the Communist Party of China (XII congress, 1982; XIII congress, 1987; XIV congress, 1992; XV congress, 1997; XVI congress, 2002; XVII congress, 2007).

The VIII congress (1956) set the basic course of the Chinese leaders in the national policy. In particular, these materials include the reports of the General Secretaries of the Communist Party of China to the congresses and the program speeches of Deng Xiaoping (The Construction of Socialism with the Chinese Specifics, 2002 and Jiang Zemin (the XII National Congress of the Communist Party of China. Beijing, 1982; XIII National Congress of the Communist Party of China, 1988; the materials of the reports of Jiang Zemin to XIV XV, XVI congresses of the Communist Party of China (Report of Jiang Zemin at the XVI All-Chinese Congress of the CPC, 2002).

3. The official publications of the Press Service of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, the "white books", explaining the official position of the country's leaders on various issues

("History and Development of Xinjiang"; "the National Defense of China"; "The Policy and Practice of China Concerning the Ethnic Minorities"; "Religion and Freedom of Worship in China).

4. The statistic data (Official website of the State Administration of Statistics of China) presenting considerable material concerning the national policy of the People's Republic of China. It is possible note "The Chinese Statistical Yearbook. Recently, the People's Republic of China began to publish special statistical collections of the national areas. Studying the demographic situation in the national areas, national structure and any changes in this sphere are possible to be found in the above-stated source.
5. The materials of the mass media of the People's Republic of China promoting the national policy in the People's Republic of China: a newspaper *Rénmín Ribào*, magazines "China Reconstructs", "Beijing Review" and others. Also we used the materials of Xinhua News Agency, the electronic newspaper "Rénmín Ribào Online" (People's Daily – on-line, n.d.), "Nèi Měnggǔ Ribào" ("The daily newspaper of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region").

Methodology and theory

Research Before addressing the specific practical contents and the features of the ethnic question, it is necessary to consider some theoretical aspects as an introduction. Analyzing various sources on this subject, it is possible to mention the methodology of the Chinese national policy. The concept of "uniform multinational China" or "the uniform Chinese nation" developed by Chinese scientists in the 1970s and concretized in the 1980s is the cornerstone of many studies on the modern history of China. In this concept two tendencies are accurately traced. The first one is the aspiration to construct a scientific model of the formation of "uniform multinational China" supporting the statement that modern China was formed as a result of a long and difficult process of historical development. This leads to the conclusion about the development of Chinese borders throughout its history, which makes it possible to understand the formation of the state as a long and contradictory historical process.

The second tendency which prevailed in the 1970s - the early 1980s, but was gradually

changed by Chinese historians since the end of the 1990s, is based on the mistaken belief that since ancient times China has always existed and developed as a uniform multinational state (Moskalev, 1994). Within this concept the development of country's borders is denied, the territories of dwelling of any people connected with the Han are perceived as the territories of China. This approach also enabled to clarify a number of historical questions and led to the reevaluation of many public phenomena such as the overestimated assessment of the role of the individual in history. Despite the proof of the obvious oppression, the assimilation of small peoples was represented positively and the role of China in the world history was obviously exaggerated. The presented historical events are in many respects subordinated to momentary problems of the foreign policy or to the internal political course.

Studying the history of nationalities living on both sides of Chinese borders – the Tajiks, the Uyghurs, the Mongols, the Orochen, the Zunghar, the Kazakhs, the Kyrgyz and others, it is possible to note that these peoples in the past were completely under the power or in the sphere of the Chinese Emperor's influence, and the territories of their accommodation were subsequently lost for China (Yakovlev, 1959). Such geographical areas as the Amur River basin, Sakhalin Island, the territories to the South and to the East from Lake Balkhash, Pamir, the South of Kazakhstan and many others are considered to be violently torn away from China. This concept is aimed at raising the national consciousness of the Chinese, promoting the idea of unity, strengthening and reviving the country. Such an approach recognizes the status of the nation for all the people living in the territory of the People's Republic of China; however, at the same time, the concept of the Chinese nation joins all ethnic groups, despite differences in languages, cultures and mentalities. Their role in the history of China is minimal, since they contributed only to the formation process of the uniform and multinational Chinese state. Therefore, the minorities' right for national self-determination is not admitted, the principle of a federal state system is criticized and denied, and the only option for the development of China is the national and state construction based on the principle of regional-national autonomy, which will be covered further.

It is possible to note that the collision of globalist and local interests at various levels was the main tendency in the end of the XX century. At the same time, "a national idea" acts at all levels of

this collision. Thus, throughout the XX century the concept of national superiority, the creation of a uniform world order under a national idea were repeatedly put forth. Sometimes such claims were justified by the corresponding mythology, religious tradition or pseudoscientific arguments. On the other hand, these were opposed to the ideas of national patriotism, protection of national and state independence.

In peace conditions the dominating powers seek to "fight for national interests" which are considered as something invariable and firm ("Great Britain has no permanent enemies or friends, only interests"). At the same time, the real policy assumes certain flexibility in the interpretation of such interests, as it makes the basis for establishing a certain balance of forces as the prerequisites to prevent the world conflicts. At the local level in many regions of the world the conflicts during which each of the parties declares the protection of the "lawful" national interests (Zhukov & Krasnova, 1997) don't cease.

Here the relativistic theory of nations is of special interest. The theory arises as an opposition to various forms of radical nationalism which categorically supports only one's own point of view. In terms of the global problems the relativistic theory of nations allows proving the multipolarity of the modern world and presenting the theoretical arguments in favor of the policy of cultural diversity protection. It helps develop rules of the interstate and interethnic relations; the violation of these rules leads to the infringement of parties' interests and aggravation of conflict situations. At the level of a certain country the relativistic theory of nations helps realize the expediency of cultural and ethnic pluralism as civic consciousness bases. In any case, it opposes the practice of imposing cultural or political domination of a single ethnic cultural group of the population.

The most widespread and standard aspect in defining a nation mainly concerns its consideration as a historically developed community of people. A nation is a historically developed community living, as a rule, in a state and having own national interests perceived as the goals of protecting ethnic traditions (Zdravomyslov, 1997). History, state and national interests are inseparably connected in this definition. In modern politics this connection is perceived as something axiomatic, not subjected to doubt or argument. From this standpoint a nation can be defined as a

component of modern mankind which specifics consist in language and culture, in the area of historical dwelling, in a real contribution to the formation of modern community of people inhabiting the Earth.

The central category of the relativistic theory of nations concerns the concept of national consciousness, that is, people's understanding of themselves as some community differing from others. The feeling of national self-determination has never existed only as the perception of own people or own national life. It always corresponds definitely to the perception of other nations: the Russians only can be seen as the Russians because there are the Germans, the French, the Americans and other national ethnic groups to which they constantly correlate themselves. It means that the historical load of national consciousness decreases, whereas the component connected with the comparison of peoples with each other increases.

The relativistic theory considers the formation of ethnic groups and nations from different angles. Some nations developed as political, while the others – as cultural communities. Some nations were formed in relative isolation, whereas the others were established in continuous interaction with other people or even on the basis of the assimilation of migration waves. The formation of nations was due to religious rigorism or to the increased tolerance to pagans.

The historical definitions of a nation connected with the emphasis on ethnic origin or on a historical being of a nation were valid in the XIX century and even in the early XX century. But at the end of the XX century the situation in the world changed dramatically. Nowadays no nation can exist as an isolated autonomous community. "We, mankind, live in the world where all nations are aware of other national communities and not only know but also live taking into account that there are other communities, there are other ethnic groups" (China in history today, 2003). Communication between ethnic groups and national communities – state and non-state – makes a basis for actual national relations.

Considering the structure of modern national consciousness, it must be kept in mind that its specific forms are some kind of objective reality. They are not composed and developed in the history of the culture of these people randomly. It is what Durkheim called social facts. This thesis is crucial for understanding the value and resource aspects of ethno-national conflicts.

Thus, let us suppose that in the Ossetian-Ingush conflict such an objective and material factor as the territory had paramount value. But the conflict was due to the fact that the Ossetians and the Ingushs had different ideas about this territory, about the right of settling and possession. These ideas are also a component of "national consciousness", thus, making social facts. They definitely structure the corresponding forms of national or ethnic consciousness.

According to the point of view suggested here, one of the main issues of national policy is not the question of what a nation and national interests are, and how the image of a nation is created in the consciousness of this and other communities. A nation or an ethnic group represents a phenomenon of collective consciousness in E. Durkheim's terminology. In the same way, it is necessary to note that the formula "imagined communities" offered by B. Anderson can be interpreted in two ways: first, in the sense that nations do not actually exist, but there is only "an idea" of them; second, "imagination" itself (as a set of symbols, images and myths motivating people's behavior) is a reality which is no less important than economic or biogenetic characteristics. B. Anderson treated this formula in the second sense. From the point of view of the correlation between an individual and society – the most important for the sociological analysis – a nation or an ethnic group is something bigger than a set of certain individuals; in many respects the concept of a nation or ethnic group coincides with the concept of the main community, within which the activity cycle of an individual is carried out. In the social space an individual realizes himself/herself through culture provided by this community and mastered by an individual. As a rule, the idea of a nation becomes sacral in individual consciousness and. Moreover, belonging to a nation "gives sense" to individual existence since a normal person seeks to go beyond "I" and to connect spiritually to some "We" (Kryukov, 1976).

Such a way of self-identification is due to the fact that an individual does not choose a nation. It is given with birth, the ability to speak and the cultural area which determines a course of life and universal standards of socialization. National life gets into individual consciousness together with the speech, with the assimilation of the ability to communicate with people. An individual begins to speak not an abstract language and not Esperanto but a native language, which is mastered unnoticeably. Only after an individual masters a language and many

other skills and patterns of behavior, he/she learns that there are people who do not understand his/her language and whose language is inaccessible to his/her understanding without special efforts and intermediaries. An individual acquires a language as some natural reality such as the abilities to breathe, walk or satisfy natural needs. It probably leads to an illusion of natural belonging to an ethnic community, the national whole and the idea of naturalness of the nation.

In modern special literature there are two approaches to the analysis of national policy and to the problem of relations between nations both within a country and on the international scene: "idealistic" and "modernist" (or constructivist) ones (Zdravomyslov, 1997). The first approach emphasizes the ethnic component of nations and states, unites a number of objectivistic concepts claiming that nations are, in essence, communities developing historically on the basis of objectively set properties of biological, geopolitical or cultural character. Owing to it, national movements and states are urged "to express and consider" the objective interests of nations. According to this point of view, an obligation of the state is to satisfy national requirements and interests by means of national policy. If the state does it well, then the nation develops, whereas if it is negative, then "national interests are not considered."

The second approach is based on the idea of political origin of nations. In most details it is presented in E. Gellner's and B. Anderson's works. According to this approach, nations are created as a result of political actions; they are, in fact, the products of either national movements or activities of the state. The government forms and creates national interests, using for this purpose certain ethnic, linguistic, geopolitical prerequisites. A special role in the course of nations' creation is played by historical knowledge which creates the legend of a nation's origin getting the state support and being introduced into the system of all stages of education. The state creates the nation, but it is not formed as a result of the reflection of objectively set interests of the people: "... not national movements are generated by the interests of a nation, but nations are a product of national movements and nationalisms".

E. Smith identifies two main models or trajectories of nations' education: "civil territorial" and "ethno-genealogical" ones. He introduces the concept of "a potential nation" into the modern scientific lexicon, defining a community which seeks for the state status and

sovereignty, and through these steps – for full participation in the modern world politics.

The most important element of national consciousness which is formed at higher levels of the development of the corresponding national and ethnic communities is the idea of national interests (Tuguz, 2005). The idea concerning the knowledge of interests means that the given community has several prospects of further development; their choice is made during political struggle. To put it differently, as soon as someone is bold enough to proclaim these interests, opposite political force immediately forms other vision of the same "national interests". Between these poles the political field is formed, that is, space of struggle for power, authority, influence and support. Such political opposition results in the fact that a winning party has an opportunity to interpret national interests at a state level.

The relativistic theory of nations overcomes the extremes of objectivistic and subjectivist interpretations of the concept of a nation and considers nations not separately from each other but in the context of their mutual perception and interrelations. Nations, as well as their interests, are not absolute constants which are necessary to take into account. These are some kind of "variables" which are shown differently in various social political contexts.

In Chinese ethnography there is a theory of assimilation suggested by Jian Bozan in the 1960s (Buldakova, 2006). According to this theory, advanced peoples conquering less developed peoples, lead not only to the progress of the first ones but also to gradual assimilation. If conquerors are weaker than the conquered people both in civilizational and in spiritual aspects, then the conquered people will inevitably dissolve in the winning ethnos. It is possible to confirm this theory through the following examples:

- 1) the Russian conquest of Siberia. The Siberian people were on a primitive stage of development, they had an opportunity of fast transition to more civilized forms of activity, but, at the same time, many of them completely assimilated with the Russians;
- 2) the history of the conquest of China by Manchurians whose fourteen dynasties were in power in the country, but which so far almost completely identified themselves with the Han.

Another Chinese theory puts the state national policy into dependence on nationality of the country's leader. If a representative of the titular nation is in power, he/she pursues the policy of preservation of small ethnic groups (Lenin's national policy of the right of each people for existence and self-determination). If a representative of a non-dominating nation comes to power, small peoples are doomed to discrimination. I.V. Stalin's national policy is can be such an example.

Both theories are rather disputable. It is impossible to claim that during more than three hundred years that passed since the Russian conquest of Siberia, all indigenous people of this extensive region assimilated with the Russians. 150 thousand Evenks, Evens, Selkups, Dolgans, Yukaghirs and other indigenous ethnic groups living in modern Siberia prove that.

However, the theory of assimilation of "weak" people with more developed ones is quite valid in terms of the historical development of China. Ancient traditions of imperial China served as the main reasons for the steady consolidation of the Chinese ethnos and rather successful acculturation or full assimilation of other ethnic groups in his territory (Popova, n.d.).

Most of Chinese ethnologists support the theory of assimilation. Thus, according to the specialists of the Institute of Nationalities of the Province of Heilongjiang, the historical process and market economy will inevitably lead to the dissolution of the small peoples in the Chinese nation.

The program suggested by a famous modern public intellectual of nationalist sense, Wang Xiaodong, seeks to transform China to a superstate of the XX century due to the transformation of nationalism into the leading ideology. In the People's Republic of China up to the middle of the 1990s there was a taboo that affected the scientific discussion of nationalism problems; after refusing this taboo the discussion of the nationalism problems has not become absolutely academic in essence, it is rather possible to call it "a dispute on values". Modern Chinese writers try to study not so much nationalism as the intellectual or political movement; they rather seek to answer such a question as, "Is nationalism beneficial or evil for China?"

As Wang Xiaodong's doctrine was formulated, he said, "To China destiny bequeathed to be a great country" (Nanjing, November, 2008). "Racism on a wrong side" became a starting point

of his reflections. He believed that the attitudes of Chinese intellectuals in the 1980s who looked to the West for the country's future and salvation denigrated China. According to Wang Xiaodong, Chinese liberals speaking about future celebration of universal human rights represent "reverse racism".

Wang Xiaodong sees the future as the arena of opposition of nations. He mentioned bombings of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade by NATO aircrafts in 1999 as one of examples which is considered as an intended attempt to humiliate China. The appeal to nationalism as to the force which can rally the Chinese in the face of a foreign threat and make Celestial Empire a great power again becomes the only way for China to survive under the given circumstances. He absolutely rejects globalization and calls it "a plot of the USA" aimed at preventing China from gaining power.

Wang Xiaodong criticizes the modern regime in the People's Republic of China and specifies that further decomposition of bureaucracy due to corruption can lead the country to collapse similar to that which occurred in Yugoslavia or the USSR. The title of the book "Unhappy China", one of authors of which is Wang Xiaodong, is rather eloquent. It contains the English-language map of East Asia where instead of China there are several independent states: the actual People's Republic of China, East Turkestan, Inner Mongolia, Hong Kong, Manchuria, Taiwan and Tibet.

China is a great power in terms of territory sizes, the population number and the high rates of economic growth. "There is no doubt that we are a great power. Of course, it is an honor to be the citizens of a great country, but besides the citizens of a great country also have duties or even destiny to become the world leaders", Wang Xiaodong concluded. According to him, "To make a contribution to humanity's development, to have the status of the world leader is a heavenly command for our nation". And at the same time, he expresses great confidence about the current state of Chinese nationalism, saying that it has a strong basis in Chinese society. "China is the only home for the Chinese, therefore, we have to trust in the country and in the nation", in such a way he formulates a quintessence of modern Chinese nationalism.

Another theory, the so-called formula of "the step of capital cities", has been developed by a Russian poet and thinker, V. Khlebnikov. It consists in the fact that the new, the so-called

"affiliated" regional capitals (capital cities of regions and republics that are part of a large union or state) arise at a certain distance from the capital of the whole country (union). According to V. Khlebnikov, this distance is approximately 1,000 km.

Having generalized extensive historical data connected mainly with the disintegration of imperial states, V. Patrakov in the book "The Birth of Capital Cities: from the Past to the Future" introduced a specification: in 70% of cases capital cities arise at a distance of "the step of capitals" (SC) that is $0.5n \cdot 1.000$ where n is any integer. Therefore, new capitals arise in most cases at a distance that equals approximately 500, 1000, 1500, 2000, 2500, 3000 km, etc. It should be noticed that it concerns only new capital cities. Cities that once were capitals of sovereign states and were included in the structure of other states by annexation can become capital cities again, but they do not necessarily have to be located at a SC distance from the imperial capital. But if a former capital city is located at a SC distance from the imperial capital, there is a high probability of its separation.

The author of the theory gives the collapse of the USSR as an example. From the 14 capital cities of the federal republics only 4 were the affiliated capitals of Moscow located at a SC distance from it: Alma-Ata – 3,099 km (3 SCs), Frunze – 2,986 km (3 SCs), Ashgabat – 2,508 km (2.5 SCs), Dushanbe – 2,987 km (3 SCs). Thus, the SC hypothesis can prove the collapse of the USSR on the break nodal points. It can be noted that the majority of the capitals of new states also appeared within the step of capitals theory in the XX century: Dili (East Timor), Sukhumi and Tskhinvali.

The author of the concept has designated break points in the People's Republic of China: Macau – 1,985 km (2 SCs) from Beijing, Hong Kong – 1,973 km (2 SCs), Lhasa (the Tibet Autonomous Region) – 2,558 km (2.5 SCs), Nanning (the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region) – 2,046 km (2 SCs), Urumqi (the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region) – 2,409 km (2.5 SCs), Kunming (Yunnan) – 2,084 km (2 SCs), Wuhan (Hubei) – 1,056 km (1 SCs), Fuzhou (Fujian) – 1,559 km (1.5 SCs), Harbin (Heilongjiang) – 1,056 km (1 SCs), Chengdu (Sichuan) – 1,516 km (1.5 SCs), Chongqing – 1,455 km (1.5 SCs), Shanghai – 1,069 km (1 SCs) (Patriakov, 2008).

It should be noted that "the step of capitals" concept shows only a theoretical scheme of the disintegration of this or that state. Particular

ethnopolitical, economic and cultural realities have to be introduced to the scheme. Provocative factors include ethnic and religious conflicts which can result in the clash of civilizations and emerging separatist movements. Thus, in the People's Republic of China the national autonomous areas which possessed the statehood in the past and were not mainly inhabited by the Chinese ethnos professing other religious values have a high probability of separation. It concerns XUAR, Tibet and Guangxi, as well as Hong Kong and Macau, which only recently joined the People's Republic of China, and presently have the status of special autonomous zones. The probability of separation of provinces and municipalities from Beijing is less, but it should be noted that in the territory of these provinces during centuries-old history of China there existed independent states. In particular, only in the XX century Sichuan declared independence three times (in 1911, 1915 and 1921).

Summing up the results, it is possible to conclude that today in the People's Republic of China the national tendency of assimilation of small peoples is considered. At the official level in the People's Republic of China the doctrine of the Chinese nation is actively supported, priority attention is paid to the formation of "the state consciousness" of citizens (the state identity) with simultaneous orientation to the second plan of ethnic consciousness. The theory of assimilation of small peoples implies a silent process; however, its results are not only realized by the country's authorities but by ethnic minorities as well. The results of understanding this process by ethnic minorities quite often results in national unrest and interethnic conflicts in the country undermining the country's national policy. F. Engels was right claiming that "people oppressing other people cannot be free. Force that is necessary for suppressors will eventually turn against themselves. While Russian soldiers are in Poland, the Russian people can achieve neither political nor social release. ... Independence of Poland and revolution in Russia are interrelated."

Conclusions

China is a huge country where there was historically high economic inequality between regions. The problem of elimination of regional disproportions is of particular importance in the light of the solution of complex national problems as the areas of national autonomy located in the depth of the country are among economically undeveloped regions. Developing these regions is not only a purely economic task

but also and social one that is associated with maintaining the country's territorial integrity. Despite a relatively low proportion in the population of the country, small peoples play an important geopolitical role as they live in sparsely populated areas along the extended borders of China.

China became one of the defining factors of global economic development and an influential force in East and Central Asia and on the Korean peninsula. Having its own political position, China actively supports its national interests and strives to reach the level of a global political force capable to influence the establishment of a new world order.

The country's leaders seek the ways to promote the national policy as an issue of strategic importance without undermining the interests of all ethnic minorities. These ways have not been clearly defined so far, but the first steps in this area have already been taken. The country's government is fully aware that supporting national interests and national prosperity depend on national stability and interethnic concord.

Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that the data do not contain any conflict of interest.

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