

# NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBALIZATION ISSUES IN KYRGYZSTAN

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As a human-being is the component of the social and biological beginning, he has common social and biological features. We may single out them according to their territorial, ethnic, demographical and cultural features. Distinguishing feature of ethnic community is that they have biological as well as social elements. Ethnic community implies a group of people who speak the same language, who share a common culture and who have ethnic identity. In our post-Soviet countries there are several conceptions explaining nature and natural phenomenon of the development of ethnic communities (conceptions of L. N. Gumilov, V. Bromlei and others).

The first historical type of ethnic communities was tribe in the primitive society, in which relatives were defined according to their blood. The next type is ethnicity itself. This form appeared in the class differentiation society, in which the ties of territory replaced ties of blood, thus cultural and economic community was formed. The highest form of ethnic community is nation. Nation was formed in the industrial period as a result of combination of relative and non-relative groups. Nation is a community that has a historical fate. These days in social life we can observe the globalization tendency. Information technology advancement has brought changes in ethnic social structure owing to constant development of communication between people, as a result, a new picture of global ethnicity is being formed. As a result, post-national type of ethnicities is the one that describes regional civilization groups. This brings super and mega-ethnicities.

At the same time, dialectic common, private and individuality, according to dual category try to maintain independence. This tendency can be observed in Kyrgyzstan who

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gained independence not long ago (1991). Before describing the national policy of Kyrgyzstan let us give a piece of information about its history.

Kyrgyzstan is one of the Central Asian countries. It is located in the center of Central Asia. It borders with such countries as Tajikistan, China, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. It's a mountainous country (90% is occupied by mountains). Territory-198.5 square km, population-about 5 million, more than 80 ethnicities, national title- Kyrgyz. Kyrgyz people are among the first settlers in Central Asia. By their ethnic name and genetic origin, Kyrgyz people are part of Turkic nations, one of the Turkic nations. At first Kyrgyz, like all other nations of the world, existed in tribes. Approximately in 16th century the nationalization process came to an end in the territory of the present Kyrgyzstan. During the Soviet Government (1917-1991), totally changed, illiteracy eliminated, production, agriculture, science and culture developed. In 1991 it gained its Independence and became a sovereign state. Now it is building a democratic, civil society.

As we all know there are some theories all over the world concerning nation. Among them the widespread ones in post-soviet society are the followings:

- Marx-Lenin conception of nation (K. Marx, F. Engels, O. Bauer, K. Kautsky, V. I. Lenin, I. V. Stalin).
- The theory of biogeographical ethnicity (L. N. Gumilov and others).
- The etatic theory of nation (French "*etat*" synonym to "state" in English) (M. Vebber, G. Gellner and others).
- Cultural-civilizational theory of ethnic community, (P. Sorokin, N. Danilovsky, A. Toynbee and others).

In the above mentioned multinational Soviet Union the issue of nation came into effect based on the Marx-Lenin theory. According to the founders of this theory, Marx and Engels, all ethnic communities appeared out of necessity of society development. Exactly speaking, if in the primitive society tribes appeared, in feudal society people (form of the ethnic group which is to be considered as pre-nation) appeared, in capitalism and socialism nation was founded.

Lenin developed Marxist theory (1870-1924). He analyzed the views of those preceding him Marxists (K. Marx, F. Engels, Bauer, Kautsky and others). He founded the development

tendencies during the period of capitalism and socialism. In his opinion there were two tendencies during capitalism concerning the issue of nation (first, rise in national life and national movement, war against national exploitation, foundation of national states; second, strengthening of international relationships, elimination of national borders, foundation of capital, economic life, politics, science and international integration). There were also two tendencies in socialism period (the prosperity of nations and the assimilation of them (V. I. Lenin Poln. Sobr. Soch. T 24-25).

Later I. V. Stalin continued his work on the theory of nation issue. In his work "Marxism and an issue of nation", written in 1913 he said that nation is a group of people who have the same language, territory, economic life and psychological features (V. I. Stalin Soch. M. 1954 T.2. S. 296). This definition of nation was kept in humanitarian subjects of socialistic community for many years. As a result many scientists noted correctly in 1960-80's at the conference on the issue of nation that Stalin identified four features of nation, but he did not mention other four important factors such as national character, national consciousness, national self-consciousness and national identification. The research of ethnic elements in the structure of nation was not supported then.

In order to apply the Marxism theory into practice, "the prosperity of every nation and their further integration" policy was led, and it was confirmed that a new international society emerged which was called the Soviet people. As a result, similarity of nations were observed in the nations' economy, social-political, spiritual, even family life matters were somehow assimilated.

During the Soviet period in USSR, including Kyrgyzstan, there were imperialistic characteristics like economic centralism and political unitary, lack of civil rights, assimilation tendencies in national-cultural field. Chauvinism existed in power, for this reason, the principle of international equality had not been brought into effect.

As scientific researches and empirical observations showed, for many decades (about 70 years) in all Soviet countries, including Kyrgyzstan, the russification process was under way. That policy certainly had positive effects such as adoption of Russian culture with the help of which people could have a closer eye on European civilization, preparation of teachers and intensification of economy by attracting Russian specialists. Yet, it had drawbacks at the same time. Exactly speaking it denationalized some little nations that had not gone through industrial level of social development. As a result, russification process led to disappearance, and further to its ethnic similarity and identity. For instance, in Kyrgyzstan the clothes, the

dishes of different nations were assimilated, unified and Russian was used as an international language. Customs and traditions were considered as old things. Those who tried to revive them were blamed as nationalists, or people who thought only about themselves.

In Frunze (present Bishkek), the capital city of Kyrgyzstan, there was only one Kyrgyz school. Russian became the main language at Universities, at schools leaving Kyrgyz language as the one, which is used in everyday life of people in villages. Besides, they used the process of elimination of religion as a cover; with this they destroyed national customs. For instance “Nooruz” was said to be a religious holiday, weddings were celebrated according to such called “*Komsomolduk Toi*” but not according to traditions. Knowledge of Russian was an indicator of civilization, and was considered to be the language of pursuing a career. Following the disintegration of USSR, Soviet states got their sovereignty. At that moment, most of the nations’ languages were under threat of turning into dead language, like Latin. All this, as scientists mentioned justly, led to forgetting their national values.

Of course, Kyrgyzstan has about 80 representatives of different nations, and it has been trying to create conditions to them for their further development, at the same time it has been trying to keep the Kyrgyz nation as its national title. Kyrgyzstan is heading towards globalization, but during the Soviet times it hardly lost its identification following the internationalization process. On the verge of 21<sup>st</sup> century the international relations have strengthened, economic, social-political and spiritual achievements have become the common property of all mankind. People all over the world started to feel that they have one and the same destiny.

Because of urbanization, mobilization, the process of migration and the development of mass media, one can observe more similarities than differences. Differences are observed not only in clothes, dishes, but also in cultural and behavioral stereotypes. Despite the formation of countries (Western, Eastern, America, France, USSR) many ethnicities (Kyrgyzstan inclusive) are losing their values under the influence of a stronger or dominating culture. As scientific researches and empirical observations showed, there is a big influence from the West that changes moral, behavioral qualities. From one side, learning of languages that are requested in daily life, (English, German, French, Chinese and others) seems to decrease the value of native language. As a result, if in Soviet times people who spoke Russian dominated over those who spoke Kyrgyz, now there are more people who speak other languages better than Kyrgyz. Of course, in order to tackle this problem, government declared the Kyrgyz language an official language in 1989. It was declared, but we can see very little changes. In the

period of globalization under this objective tendency, ethnicities, Kyrgyz people inclusive, is trying to maintain its identification. For this reason the Kyrgyz people, being the title nation of Kyrgyzstan, are trying to spread their language, traditions and customs, and doing their best for its advancement. This kind of work is proved to be right psychologically. Every person in the system of community wants to be by himself. Just like this, a nation, being a part of humankind, doesn’t want to be absorbed by other nations, to be mixed up or just to disappear.

A question may arise concerning Kyrgyz people whether they can maintain their identity. As history showed, Kyrgyz people are decisive and have a strong will, open to experiments and innovations, mobile, able to adapt to a new community. The formation of Kyrgyz nation is polyethnic, so its culture has been enriched by neighboring countries for several centuries. By nature, Kyrgyz people strive for a good education, show respect for elder people, tolerant, generous, respectful and altruistic.

At the same time, they have negative Soviet qualities like non-initiativeness and they expect everything should be done by government. They are trying to master in commerce, finance. One of the past qualities is tribalism. Tribalism is showing a negative effect on consolidation of nations. There is a mutual understanding between 80 ethnicities living in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyz people should develop their positive sides and eliminate negative ones, thus they may maintain their identification in the course of universal globalization. We think that the principle of American manager “Global thinking, self-trying” will fit here. For this reason, in the present society all the problems can be tackled by social justice. The following principles should be kept: the equality of all nations, sovereignty of different nations in solving problems. Kyrgyzstan follows rights established by UN on national culture and development of languages, interaction by their will, kindness and trust.