

Geopolitical Role and Population Development of The Republic of Kazakhstan: Recent Development and Prospects

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Master Thesis

Presented work/study represents in the Czech context less traditional theme – a study inter-related issues of geopolitical changes and population development. In the case of vast, sparse populated and heterogenous country as Kazakhstan with the important geopolitical position is such orientation more understandable.

In advance I would critically stressed some quoted theoretists of geopolitics. If to mention classics then the author should started with or parafrase Mackinder. The reference on general Haushofer, when his theoretical concepts prepared nazi expansion, I can consider as inappropriate. Especially when there are many more relevant concepts and explicitly formulated geopolitical doctrines and activities (from Z. Brzezinski to A. Dugin). The statements and concepts of the latter one I have to point out. Alexander Dugin considers "the eastern and northern shores of the Caspian (the territories of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan) as a Russian territory and Central Asia as whole as well, we should evaluate as dangerous, as the traditional expression of Russian imperial (geo)politics. It should be perceived as a crucial issue of Kazakhstani geopolitics and oriented it to more independent and diversified foreign policy activities.

Analogically can hardly be adequate Buchanan theory concerning threath of the erosion (white) american culture and civilization. Its validity holds especially for the most attractive countries with highly positive migratory balance. This not the case of Kazakhstan now.

Citations are used too extensively (see Chesnais, page 16) and non-critically instead of a real discussion of the demographic issue/problems in the context of the Kazakhstan development.

Some statements are mistaken (in Mediterranean countries (Italy, Spain) death-rate is not two-three times higher than birth-rate (not speaking about strong regional differences and the change of the tendency in the last period). Mentioned alternatives of demographic development are disputable, not speaking about there are not demographic in nature.

The part concerning theoretical concepts of geopolitical importance of population and demographic development are relatively extensively treated in the contrast with real examples.

Which separatism is a threat for the republic – when the only one we could consider as serious – Russian one

Mentioned strategic priorities presented by president are vague – the are suitable for majority states or nations. There are too much (political) proclamations and less facts and analysis. Some statetments and quotations of the work reminds communist propaganda here and there

(page 30) especially in comparison with the development reality (see graph on the 31st page). The plan is to increase the share of manufacturing industries, but the reality is opposite.

Why did not the author analyse the development of natural movement in Kazakhstan, immigration is only one (and not stable) factor of development. Where is a chapter/paragraph concerning population policy and the expenditures on it.

Chapter on demographic issue and developmet is only descriptive, not speaking that tables and graph are more illustrative then sets of figures within the text.

One the most exciting event in Kazakhszan recent history – transfer of the capital could be treated more extensively, when it represents the main geopolitical act within the country, especially when we related it with the question why decrease of population has been continuing in those middle and northern regions.

What is reason of the urbanization´s decrease? Why is Astana a good example of population diversification, when total population of Akmola region has decreased? Geopolitical reasons for transfer are obvious, but what about economic and population effects?

Definitely, the real development of Kazakhstan is in sharp contrast with political proclamations, even if some remarks of positive changes are observed. A real research study should reflect such process. The university student should use primary statistical sources, instead of agency ones. Less journalist expressions and more research-oriented approach and valuable findings should upgrage the work on higher level. Comparison of Kazakh and Russian authors/researchers – theoretics and of practitioners (ie. politicians) as well should be a valuable enrichment of the work.

Some examples of terminology and grammatic imperfections (f.e. conglomerations vs agglomerations), useless typing errors (brunch instead branch), quantitative and qualitative characteristics, static and dynamical; in some cases there are lost words , page 25 Internal ...?

- no exit but entry (page 32)

- correct name is Vidal de la Blache, not Blanche (page 14)

- mistaken figures in tab. 2 (page 47) – column 2006 year

Evidently nobody has corrected grammar and figures - the elementary condition of such work/study.

The study evoques questions why the Kazakhstan government has not implemented an effective population policy (not only based on migration´s stimulation) according to good examples (Scandinavian countries and France)? Especially when financial sources are available how grandiose building of new towns, satellites and monumental state buildings can document. Why well educated people (Russians) still have been leaving Kazakhstan (with the exception of Astana and Almaty)?

Even the work should written in more analytical manner/way, the author has fulfilled some basic requierments placed on magister thesis, so I can recommed to accept it, if the author will correct main errors and imperfections.

Prague, May of 20th

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