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Geopolitics of Population: How the Demographic Processes Are Shaping National Power¹

Abstract

Population parameters are becoming more crucial as the most important factors of national security and geopolitical power of the state. In this context, the demographic component acts as one of the most important factors determining the geopolitical situation of the state. Relying on the above facts, we propose to highlight 11 demographic factors and processes that influence on the geopolitical situation of the state: 1. Overall population size; 2. Birth Rate; 3. Death Rate; 4. Population Quality; 5. Population Age Structure; 6. Ethnic and Religious Diversity; 7. Population Gender Structure; 8. Population Family Structure; 9. Population Density; 10. Population Displacement Types; 11. Migration Processes. We want to offer a new direction, which will take into account the demographics of the geopolitical aspects - *geopolitics of population* or *strategic demography*.

Introduction

Demographic component acts as one of the most important factors determining the geopolitical situation of the state. It is precisely population that is the main driving mechanism of socio-economic and technological development, the source of military-strategic power and the foundation of integrity of the state. The

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significance of demographic factors has been noted by the greatest minds in history as an effective measure of state consolidation and well-being.

Population as a factor of economic prosperity and national power in the works of the greatest minds in history

An entwinement of social, economic and demographic facts has been noted as early as by the greatest minds in history as an effective measure of state consolidation and well-being.

The first example of the use of demographic politics goes far back to the history of Middle East. Shumerian king *Ur-Namme* a code of laws more than two thousand years before Christ among which there were laws containing economic measures of promoting family among population. The king of Eshnunna named *Bilalama* also made a couple of laws in the middle of the twentieth century before Christ that regulated legal norms, property rights and family legislation.

Similar laws and rules based of family values, marriage morals and preciousness of children were found in such cultural monuments as *Lipit-Ishtar* Code of King Isin who rules around one thousand nine hundred years B.C. and in Ancient Indian text titled Tradition of Manu created around one thousand five hundred years B.C. In the eighteenth century B.C. a well-known state leader, the king of Babylon *Hammurapi* combined previous ideas of Eastern state rulers and suggested a set of measures for strengthening marriage morals and regulation of family relations. Apart from family and marriage, strengthening countries pay a lot of attention to the increase of birth rate.

The ancient Greek historian *Herodotus* gives evidence that in Iran of fifth and sixth centuries, men with a lot of children were deeply respected and valued. *Talmud*, a great monument of Jewish religion orders the authority of state to make a young man married as soon as he becomes twenty years old. *Sparta* had a complete system of natural selection of future citizens which actually became a prototype of modern eugenics ideas. When a child was born the Council of Elders estimated his or her health. Moreover, an issue of population distribution has been brought up. Such idea

was first stipulated by a great Chinese philosopher *Confucius* and his disciples. Later, thanks to two ancient Greek philosophers *Plato* and *Aristotel* a problem of population size which is still actual has been brought up.

The Roman Empire paid a great attention to population growth measures which needed the growth of warrior and labor power for its economic development and military strengthening and policy of expansion as well. For these reasons, the Roman emperor *Julius Caesar* was the first to use economic measures for stimulation of birth rate. He started to distribute state lands among large families having three or more children. The emperor *August* continued this politics having published a code of laws «*Lex Julia et Papia-Poppea*» aimed at the rise of number of marriages and creation of privileges for families with children. Finally the emperor *Trajan* approved a system of family aid in monetary and natural type.

As a result of high death rate in Medieval Europe, a politics focused on recovery and further growth of population has been formed. As a result, the works of such prominent thinkers as *Thomas Aquinas* and *Niccolo Machiavelli* had the ideas on population growth. *Thomas Aquinas* thought that growth of manual workers will lead to a state wealth. A well-known thinker *Thomas More* described an ideal state in his work *Utopia* suggesting his model of population regulation. In his well-known tract *On Republic* the French thinker *Jean Boden* wrote that we should not be afraid to have too many citizens as there is no such treasure and power as people. Another philosopher, *Tommazo Campanella* in his work *Sun City* paid a lot of attention to population health and quality of future children.

In our opinion, apart from the obvious connection of social and economic processes with demographic factors, there is close and direct dependence of geopolitical situation and viability of a state on size, type and structure of its population. While analysing the essence of connection between geopolitics and demography we paid attention to constant ability of population to not only control certain territories, but in case of positive demographic dynamics, also expand its habitat and colonize empty and underpopulated lands. This characteristic of human community became the basis of the theory of “*living space*”.

Demography and Geopolitics. The relationship between demographic and geopolitical processes

The implementation of military expansion in order to increase living space and thus eliminate the problem of overpopulation has been proposed as early as in the Middle Ages. In 1095, *Pope Urban the Second* in his words of severance to the knights of the Crusade, called for the land of "infidels" in the East to be taken and the "surplus" population in Western Europe to settle there².

This aspect of population was studied in detail by the founder of geopolitics, the German scientist *Friedrich Ratzel* (1844-1904). Ratzel saw a state as a living organism, with characteristic stages of birth, development and death that take place in natural environment called "*living space*".

Sebastien de Vauban who lived in the seventeenth century in his book "*The project of the royal tithe*" successfully proved the idea that "*the greatness of kings is measured by the number of their subjects*" meaning that kings' greatness depends on the number of citizens that make up the power, wealth and well-being of a country.

The term "*geopolitics*" (from the Greek geo-land, and politics - government affairs) first appeared in works of Swedish sociologist and political scientist *Rudolf Kjellén* (1864-1922). In his main work "*The state as a form of life*" (1916), the scientist used the word geopolitics meaning "*the science on a state as a geographic organism embodied in space*" and, therefore, continued the idea of "*German organicism*" started by Ratzel.

The theory of demographic impulses anticipated the term "*passionarity*" invented by the Soviet anthropologist *Lev Gumilev* (1912-1992). Moreover, Kjellén divided the population of Europe into "young" and "old" ethnic groups, although such a division had previously been proposed by *Fedor Dostoevsky*³. *Kjellén*

² Popov A.Y. Modern malthusianism. M.: MGIMO, 1960. p.12.

³ Ibid, p. 24.

suggested Germans and Russians as young ethnic groups and English and French – as the old ones.

Thus, a vast majority of scientists who founded the school of geopolitics and proposed geopolitical models fundamental for global politics, paid special attention to the demographic factor. In addition to military victories, the success of territorial expansion of a certain state directly depends on the demographics of the indigenous population.

For example, one of the history's greatest military theorists *Carl von Clausewitz* believed that war was not just a "continuation of politics with other means", and thus developed basic methods of modern offensive operations. His theoretical developments were widely used in combat during the First and Second World Wars. His postulate of "*absolute war*" that is, to the absolute destruction of an enemy became the keynote of the wars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries⁴. Due to a significant progress of military science in the second half of the twentieth century, the main source of victory today is rather depletion of human resources, falling morale of population, the destruction of infrastructure and routine life of citizens. As history shows standard elimination of armed forces of the opponent does not always lead to his final defeat.

It is also necessary to add that in the course of modern simulations of nuclear war variants, the value of heavy equipment on the ground and in the air has been reduced as such equipment can easily fail if it is situated within a wide radius of a nuclear explosion. The latest military developments in electromagnetic fields manipulation only enhance this weakness of use of heavy equipment. Therefore, the key role in possible large scale and local armed conflicts of the future belongs to infantry formations. Just as in ancient times, main requirements for a modern soldier are very high: physical and weapon training, mobility and tactical competence, qualification and material status, the ability to solve combat missions in extreme

⁴ Liddell Hart B.H. Strategy of indirect action. — M.: IL, 1957. p. 194.

conditions, which again is a consequence of the same quality parameters of population.

In addition to social and economic sides of demographic processes, population parameters become more and more important as factors of national security and geopolitical power of a state. In this context, the demographic component acts as one of the most important factors determining the geopolitical situation of a state. It is the population that acts as the main driving force of social, economic and technological development, the source of military power and the basis for state integrity.

If we examine such term as a state, we can see that this definition is based on the mandatory presence of three components: territory, population and management. Among these three, population is a key element, as it is not only a carrier and a source of national identity, but as a nation, population gathers separated territories into a single, integrated system, that is a state.

Thus, the above mentioned historical and contemporary views of scientists on population increase reflect a fundamental value of the demographic factor, both for internal processes of social and economic development, and for strengthening of the geopolitical status of a state.

Having these facts as the basis we can suggest 11 demographic factors and processes that can influence geopolitical position of any country.

Geopolitical aspects of demographic and migration processes

1. Overall population size. Significant size of population allows a state to be granted a status of a player on an international political field due to the fact that population is an important resource of basic industries manpower as well as military and mobilization reserve. Moreover, when we examine China and India we can see a good example of a political weight of an enormous population size when most countries of the world are afraid of the possibility of using such resource against them. Therefore, we can state that population size is one of the main factors influencing an international status of a country. Thus, the scientists of the

International Academy of Future Studies suggest the following classification of a geopolitical status of a country depending on its population size (Table 1.)

Table 1.

Influence of Population Size on International Political Status of a Country

COUNTRY STATUS	RATING	CHARACTERISTICS	POPULATION SIZE (MLN.)	ANALOGUE
HYPERPOWER	8-10	No less than 5% of the current Earth population	More than 1000	India, China
			500-1000	
			300-500	The USA
SUPERPOWER	5-7	From 2 to 5% of the current Earth population	200-300	Indonesia
			150-200	Brazil
			120-150	Russia, Japan, etc
REGIONAL POWER	2-4	From 0,5 to 2% of the current Earth population	80-120	
			50-80	Egypt, Iran
			30-80	Germany, Ukraine
SMALL STATE	1	Less than 0,5 % of the current Earth population	Less than 30	Syria Cameroon, etc

Source: Global Rating of Integrated Power of the 100 Leading Countries of the World. – M.: International Academy of Future Studies, 2008 – page 16.

2. Birth Rate. Birth rate is a key demographic process which influences not only the dynamics of population size but also trends of demographic growth on the whole. Birth rate size at different periods of time predetermines future changes of birth cohorts among population. Strong interrelation of birth rates and age structures led to a birth of a so-called ‘demographic wave’ phenomenon. For example, current low birth rates in developed countries will lead to the fact that in 16 years these countries will face significant decrease of able-bodied population due to a negative impact of a ‘demographic wave’. There is also a reverse effect causing an economy rise following the increase of able-bodied population, growth of population purchasing power, creation of new working places, growth of investments into construction of cheap accommodation which as a rule is caused by

a baby-boom of preceding decades. On the contrary, significant decrease in birth rate produces a devastating effect on certain areas of social life and economy of a country.

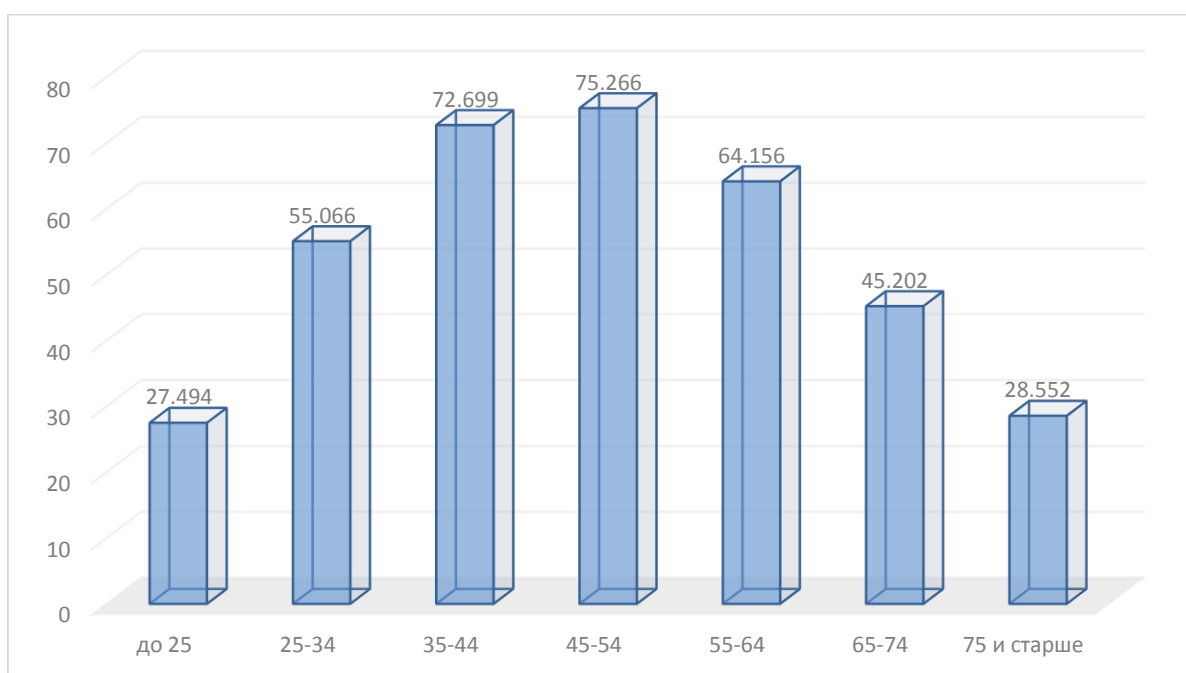
3. Death Rate. High unnatural death rate is caused mostly by drug addiction, alcoholism, high suicide rates, lack of goals in life, mind illnesses and different deviations. Such situation allows us to draw a conclusion on a low vital capacity of the country on the whole and of low level of national identity. For example, a peak of death rate in Russia in the beginning of the 1990-s is explained by many scientists as a loss of national identity, state ideology, life routine that no doubt have followed the demise of the Soviet Union.

4. Population Quality. Apart from population size we can name population quality as an even more important factor of a demographic state of a country. Nowadays population quality is a complex integral factor including quality characteristics of health, education, professional qualification, and others. *Natalya Rimashevskaya*, a famous Russian demographer, thinks that population quality factor should examine not only physical characteristics of health but also psychological and social characteristics of it that are no less important. Also examination of intellectual potential and of spiritual and moral preferences of a nation should be carried out as well⁵. We think that examination of such characteristics may allow us to analyze a demographic potential of a country under examination on a more detailed level.

5. Population Age Structure. A number of able-bodied, young population has a large impact on economic growth factors of a country. In case of equation of demand and supply on labor market young educated population becomes the most important factor of social and economic growth in main spheres. Moreover a number of population of military age is important for bringing up to strength of Armed Forces. And, as the experience of Israel, the USA, Canada and Australia shows a gender does not play such a big role as before.

⁵ Ogonyok magazine – official site at <http://www.ogoniok.com/4906/16/>.

In order to examine an impact of an age structure on an economic sphere of a country we have looked through the data of research institutes and the Congress of the USA. The results of such examination allow us to draw a conclusion that an optimal age structure of population needed for economic growth and growth of consumption is situated within 35-54 age limit (Picture 2). Expenses of elderly people are considerably lower than those of able-bodied population which allows us to draw a conclusion of long-term geopolitical dividends of countries having young population.



Picture 2. Average Annual Costs on Goods and Services in Accordance with Cohorts of Age Groups in the USA, 2005 (in thousand \$)⁶.

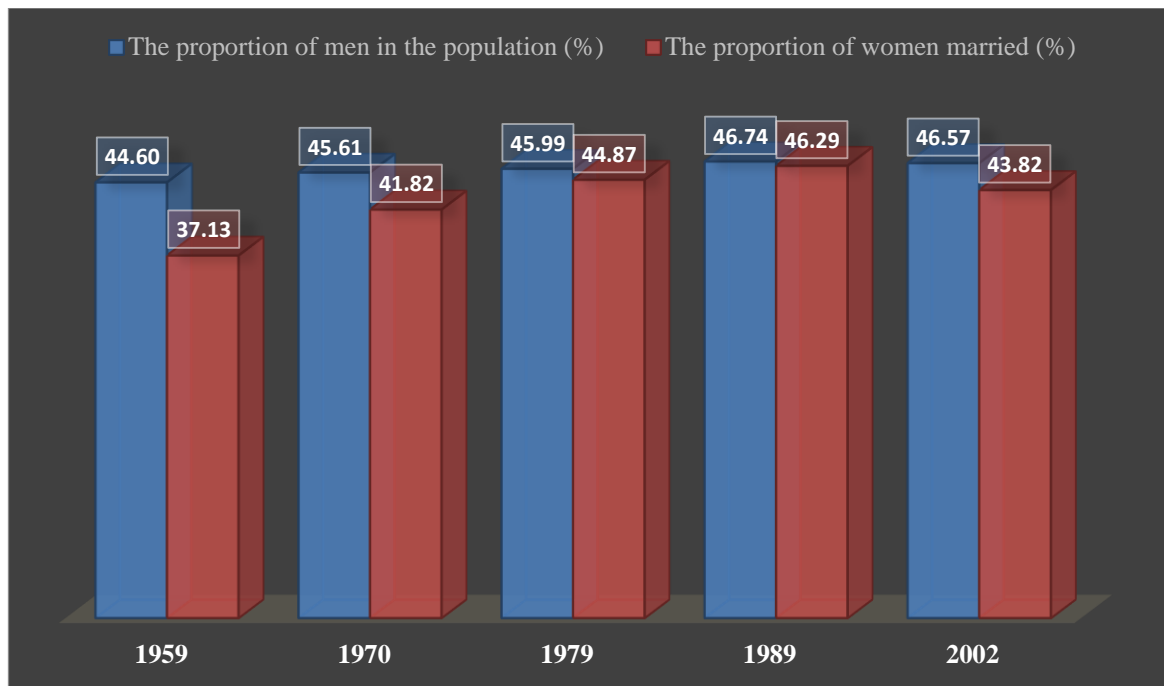
On the contrary, intensive processes of population ageing and reduction of able-bodied population have a reverse effect on economic growth tendencies. Most countries with ageing population face a problem of budgetary shortfall for paying pensions, tax levy reduction, growth of costs in the spheres of social and medical services for elderly people. Thus, ageing population has a very negative effect on geopolitical and economic potentials of a country.

⁶ Source: <http://www.newstrategist.com>

6. Ethnic and Religious Diversity. We think that mono-national countries have a higher index of geopolitical power and internal security. As a rule in such countries (Germany, Italy, Japan, China, and others) centripetal tendencies are very strong and internal separatism tendencies are weak. Such tendency has been noted as recently as by *Vladimir Lenin* who stated that a mono-national country is more effective and stable from the economic and political point of view in comparison with a country which is not heterogenic on a national level⁷. Recent cases of separatism in Spain, France, Belgium, India, Russia and other multinational or binational countries prove this point of view one more time.

7. Population Gender Structure. Global history shows us that many great military and state leaders tried to increase a number of born boys by all possible means. This was made for a greater number of soldiers in the future which could enhance a military power of a country. Nowadays this tendency has not changed a lot. On the contrary, many countries have faced a significant gender disproportion after murderous wars of the 20th century. For example, Russia had a catastrophic decrease in number of men after the 2nd World War. Only in 1959 the quantity of men in the USSR has reached the lowest rate of 44.6 %. We should state that such situation has a very negative effect on social life of a country. We have analyzed the dynamics of changes in the quantity of men and in the quantity of married women (Picture 3).

7 V.I. Lenin. Complete works, Vol. 25.M.:Priboy. Pp. 259-360.



Picture 3. Correlation of Dynamics of Change in Quantity of Men and Quantity of Married Women between 1959 and 2002

We can see that a low quantity of men of course had a negative effect on a family structure of the country. According to Russian population census in 2002 a share of Russian men was only 46,6 % remaining extremely low. Russian population census in 2002 showed that on every hundred women there are only 87 men. Such situation stimulated negative changes in population gender structure and disrupted demographic and social potential of Russia. It has made a search of marriage partner and creation of family very difficult damaging social welfare of the country.

8. Population Family Structure. Such demographic structure can serve as a powerful indicator of a social health and presence of spiritual and moral values in society. For example, a divorce rate among population, growth of number of single-parent families, marriage rate reduction and growth of concubinages shows a decay of family and marriage values, loss of life goals and behavior models. Transfer to material values of life is typical for postindustrial countries of Western Europe and North America where a special term '*serial polygamy*' has been introduced to describe a fast growth of after-divorce marriages among population⁸.

⁸ V.M. Medkov, Demography: Textbook. Rostov-on-Don: «Phoenix», 2002. Page 69.

9. Population Density. Population density factors do not only show economic territory development but also can be a vulnerability factor of external military threat. As a matter of fact, population density shows a level of sovereignty of a country according to different parts of its territory. In order to prove such correlation we have made the analysis basing on population density figures of administrative territories of Iraq (muhafazas) and figures of war losses of the army of the USA during the war in Iraq (Table 2.).

Table 2.

Correlation of the USA War Losses and Density and Population Size Factors on the Territory of Iraq Throughout 2003-2010: Correlation Analysis

Muhafaza	Population	Density	The USA war losses (2003-2010)	Correlation: Density \ losses	Correlation: Population \ losses
Anbar	1205892	8,7	1310	r=0,68	r=0,64
Babil	1193838	184,6	212		
Bagdad	6073269	8274,2	1401		
Basra	2565893	134,6	154		
Wasit	1022461	59,6	46		
Dhi Qar	1437345	111,4	98		
Diyala	1268558	66,5	262		
Quadisiyah	949528	116,5	43		
Karbala	710274	141,1	38		
Maysan	785068	48,8	26		
Muthanna	568314	11,0	7		
Najaf	959427	33,3	32		
Ninawa	2650536	73,8	248		
Salah-ad-Din	1063878	40,6	423		
Tamim/Kirkuk	89094	8,7	102		
Arbil	1463843	101,2	2		

Calculated on the basis of: <http://icasualties.org/Iraq/ByProvince.aspx>;

<http://www.statoids.com/uiq.html>

We should pay attention that Pearson correlation coefficient turned out to be higher in the analysis of correlation between war losses and population density showing the level of 0.68. Such correlation rate tells us that such connection of these factors confirms our statements.

10. Population Displacement Types. Types of population displacement can influence not only infrastructure and density of social and economic connections in this or that area but can also be a viable tool of geopolitical security promotion in this area, especially in case of border territories. Border territories should be densely displaced, populated and have tight connections between settlements. Quality of territory development and width of settlement system can also be a very important parameter of territory sovereignty.

11. Migration Processes. Nowadays migration processes play an important part not only in the context of the use of cheap labor force. Recent events in Kosovo, France and Denmark have shown us that uncontrolled international migration of people who are very different both in culture and language can cause ethnical and confessional problems and destabilize a society.

History knows a lot of examples when ethnic migration became a significant power of geopolitics and threatened territorial integrity of host country.

Mexican Texas of the first half of the nineteenth century can be one of such examples. After the economic crisis took place the United States in 1819, different fortune-seekers, merchants and broke American landlords who needed the growth of their lands in order to strengthen their positions in the Union and who wanted to create new slave states in the west of the United States, all these people started to pay attention to underpopulated, rich with natural resources and climatically beneficial lands of Texas.

A hostile takeover of Texas in June 1819 was unsuccessful. The Missouri compromise in 1820 and the Monroe doctrine in 1823 actually made legitimate a territory and slave expansion of the United States to the south and forced the Mexican government of Augustine the First to adopt a law on colonization in 1823. In fact this law made Catholic foreigners equal with native citizens of Mexico if they

bought land there and also provided such foreigners with additional rights, benefits and privileges. As a result a number of American immigrants to Texas has quickly grown, especially there were many immigrants from southern and south-western regions of the United States. This has promoted a further colonization of Mexico. Texan lands were extremely cheap and official figures show that since 1824 till 1835 around 5 thousand immigrants bought more than 26 thousand acres of land. A number of American colonists continued to constantly grow and finally they gained a full control of Texas. In the middle of the thirties there already were 30 thousand American colonists against three and a half thousand native Mexicans living in Texas.

On the fifth of September, 1836 a plebiscite was held in order to include an independent Republic of Texas into the United States of America. The majority of voters approved this idea. After a round of military and diplomatic conflicts and efforts of Mexico to return control over Texas the government of the USA continued the process of acquiring Texas stimulating the growth of immigrants and ethnic communities in this region. In this way in the second half of the thirties a number of American immigrants has increased twice. In 1839 and 1840 England and France have recognized the independence of Texas. And, finally in 1845 after a nationwide referendum where more than four and a half thousand people voted mostly ethnic Americans there was a peaceful annexation of Texas. Soon California, New Mexico, Arizona and Florida followed it⁹.

In the twenties-thirties of the twentieth century the Germans have actively started to make settlements in Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. By the year 1938, the number of German settlers has grown up to 3.3 million people that is a strong majority of the local population. Without the consent of Czechoslovakia but with implied consent of France, England and Italy, on 30 September 1938 the Munich

⁹ V.N. Arkhangelsky, A.E. Ivanova, and others, Strategy of Demographic Development of Russia. – M.: TsSP, 2005. – pp. 98-99.

agreement was signed which stated that industrially developed Sudetenland territories inhabited by Sudeten Germans are to be transferred to Germany¹⁰.

A similar precedent took place in the north of Cyprus in 1974. The government of Turkey has used political conflict within Greece and a grown number of Turks in the ethnical structure of Northern Cyprus and brought troops there having declared this part of territory Turkish Federative State of Cyprus which in 1983 became Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. As a result of such operation called Attila Operation, Turkey got a third of the Cyprus territories¹¹.

An example of Serbian area Kosovo is still of current interest. Cultural and historic facts tell us that Kosovo territory has been a center of Serbian culture and national identity since the sixth century. Mass migration of the Albanians supported by the Ottoman Empire started to grow during the Turkish-Austrian war of 1683-1699 after which a significant part of Serbians had to leave their lands.

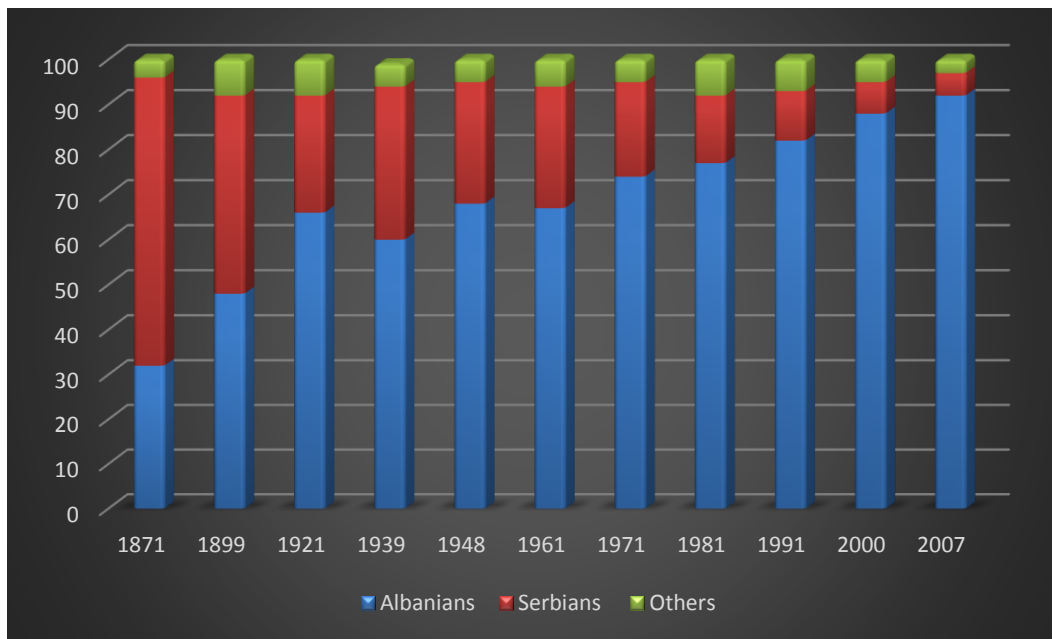
Afterwards a speed of Albanian settlement in Kosovo continued to rise and by the end of the Second World War the population of Kosovo consisted of 68.5 percent of Albanians and 23.6 percent of Serbians¹². After the end of war and Tito's rise of power migration of the Albanians became even stronger. Tito accepted 4 hundred thousand of Albanian refugees and resettled 2 hundred thousand of Serbians from Kosovo and Metohija to other regions of Yugoslavia¹³. Such political decision and also demographic explosion of Albanians where one medium family had 6-9 people lead to the fact that by the end of eighties there were less than 20% of Serbians in the region (Picture 4).

10 Natalya Narotchnitskaya's official site - <http://www.narotchnitskaia.ru/cgi-bin/main.cgi?item=1r250r040405221938>

11 Same.

12 Kosovo: International Aspects of the Crisis / Under ed. Of D.Trenin and E.Stepanova; Moscow Center of Karnegy. - M.: Gendalf, June 1999. - p. 91.

13 A Balkan Person in the Age of Crisis and Ethnopolitical Conflicts of the 20th Century. StPete.: Aleteya, 2002. - 480 p.



Picture 4. Ethnic Structure Dynamics of Kosovo Population in 1871-2007 (in %)

A considerable disbalance in ethnic structure of Kosovo and other regions of Yugoslavia lead to an acute ethnic and confessional conflict and disintegration of the country. On 17 February 2008 the Albanian separatists of the Republic of Kosovo unilaterally declared their independence. Currently, less than 5% of Serbians live in Kosovo.

We suppose that pro-Russian sentiments and the results of the referendum in the Crimea in 2014 are caused not only by political but also ethnic factors. Because since second part of 1930s Russian population began to reach 50% and according to the Ukraine's census in 2001 from 2 024 056 peoples of the Crimea a 58.3% were Russian and 24.3% were Ukrainians.

All the described examples show us geopolitical aspects of demographic and migration processes and the importance of their monitoring and control from the side of state and society.

A rather close connection between demographics and geopolitics can be seen through the existence of such scientific fields as *military and political demography*. Military demography explores the role of a demographic factor in military art and

military economics in their quantitative and qualitative aspects¹⁴. Political demography studies the specifics of demographic trends, causes and socio-economic impact of demographic dynamics in different countries of the world.

Therefore, we consider it rational to offer a new demographic discipline that is *geopolitics of population* or a *strategic demography*, which will take into account geopolitical aspects of demographic processes and their role in the context of sustainability and sovereignty of a state. This new discipline will study population factors in various countries of the world. The subjects will be demographic, ethnic and migration processes which have a direct and indirect impact on geopolitical situation and the change of foreign policy status of a certain state.

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¹⁴ Demographic encyclopaedic vocabulary/Main.edit. Valentey D.I. M.:Soviet encyclopaedia - 1985