

Lost people

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In Tadzhikistan mountains in the complete isolation several hundred people, who desire to have in common with the contemporary civilization, nothing lives.



The large part of the year the valley Of zaravshana they are hidden after the impervious crossings. In these sad edges even kerosine lamp - present miracle of technology (photos of the author)

Twenty eighth March of 1970 the crash of helicopters woke the inhabitants of the mountain gorges of northern Tadzhikistan. More than thousand years no one disturbed these people: sogdiytsy, the descendants of ancient eastern- Iranian people, were covered in the inaccessible mountains in the beginning OF THE VIII century, breaking practically all contacts with the external peace. And now in the valley Of zeravshana remained about two hundred people, who as before live in their wild microcosm, unwillingly admitting into it strangers...

"you mad, yes? Where you will go? Why you will go? You want so that in the snow of zamerz entirely and spring to you they would find, yes?" - pot-bellied traffic cop on to block signal post on the departure from Dushanbe from all forces depicted sincere preoccupation as my fate, in the mind estimating, how much from me to strip for a voluntary attempt at the suicide in the mountains. Only yesterday in Dushanbe stood the sticky heat, the sun provocatively viselo in the cloudless sky, and hence, from the valley, magnificently were examined the snowy tops of mountains. However, cyclone with the wind and the shower at night arrived flying. But rain in the valley - snow-storm in the mountains....

Through the crossings

The higher into the mountains, the thicker the snow was. Anzobskiy crossing, it seemed, it took vengeance upon us for the fact that we dared to climb up to its icy bald spot, where even on foot it is not possible to pass - the around continuous slippery stone, covered with snow. To three meters in front of anything not it was evidently - only wall from the falling white flakes. From the snow cloud unexpectedly appeared first someones rear bumper, then some people with the heavy bags after the arms. Three young fellows with the enormous blue- red striped bags for some reason drew the attention of our driver. Pritormoziv, it by gestures invited them into the machine. Two climbed up to the rear seat, one - into the baggage carrier: together with me and my conductor us became six in the close "field". I felt itself uncomfortably in the cab with three unknowns, but to object did not laugh: to the right - precipice, to the left - cliff, to go even more accurate four hours, around snow-storm and height is almost three five hundred... For two hundred it is meter to the block signal post before the entrance in Ayni trinity it efficient caught portmanteaus it dived into the bushes. Driver winked to me: "as you think, what they into bag- that had?" If us would stop any patrol, how much years I did obtain for the fact that in my machine did go the undoubted drug smugglers?

Seven mornings. Cold, dampness and dead silence to tens of kilometers all around. The silhouettes of my satellites loom somewhere higher. After climbing to tiny ploshchadochku, I sat down, it were pressed into the lump, removed the promokshiye gloves and attempted by respiration to warm its fingers.

Conductor pulled off hood, removed cap and wiped face by it. "give to move further, and that let us freeze", it rose, it unceremonious turned itself to me by back, it threw far away for the arms canvas bag and went, without doubting, that also I will meander after...

Masters and the guests

Them there were six. In the dim light of moon undersized people in the dressing gowns, that stood before me, produced strange impression. In the depth Of the zeravshanskoy valley, where besides snow, wind, ice and stones, it seemed, nothing not there was nothing, they appeared as if to inoplanetyane. Three women, two men and child looked at me with the curiosity.

In the deaf gorges small people lives by the subsistence economy. This is pay for the uncontrolled freedom. (photos of the author)



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Affably smiling, they muttered: "Gudart! Gudart!" (to zvok - sogdiyskom adverb - this a kind of the invitation). Men transferred our things into the house, wholly built from the clay and the cobblestones. All removed foot-wear in threshold, and I tried not tax to form, which to stand into some noses on the clay floor of the right through frozen through hut is very cold. But to the floor here threw the armful of motley flap blankets, carpets, tolstennye pillows, flooded "small stove". One of the women brought china teapot with the green tea and dish from shun - by thin, almost transparent flat cakes, greased by the tasty relative of khnishda - by sheep oil of thick amber color. On the kitchen (first I was accepted it for the storeroom) specially for us was prepared supper. Women, deftly handling by semicircular knives, cut the large pieces of test to the flat noodles. In the smoky, completely black already boiler gurgled the fat, the long tapes of noodles there threw, then in the boiler disappeared spicy seasonings, garlic, carrot, fresh goats meat. House was filled by exquisite smell. Someone brought kerosine lamp and hung up it into the hook in order to divide with us meal, was assembled entire village - eleven person...

In the unhurried conversation, transferring to each other of basin with the food and pialy with the tea, we conducted two hours. No one intended to sleep - here, similarly, they always lay down late. The inhabitants of village spoke about in something their, without bothering to us by questions. Apparently, in this there was the special manifestation of time of the mountaineers: guest arrived - it it is necessary to warm, to feed, to give to him the possibility to rest. Then it will describe about itself itself.

I sat in the angle, resting by back on the convenient, wide, thick pillow. The equipment was folded on the trestle-bed, moreover even under the durable aluminum support someone thoughtful placed soft blanket. I reached from the trunk camera - and everything as upon command they were wrapped up to me. After using moment, I asked conductor to finally present me and to ask permission to photograph.

Request caused the confusion: the most old man respected among those being present nodded to me by head, but rest began to move aside further into the shadow. 4 gestures it became to request all to remain on the spot: allegedly, do not turn to me attention, I am not here. But it was not there... Two arose, they smiled smushchenno and, having slightly bowed to me, they left accomodation. It did not have time 4 and

by eye to blink, as another person six zasobiralis' on the houses. Old man openly chuckled himself must by me. In order to preserve face, it was necessary for me to press from itself the similarity of smile. Conductor alarming cast looks to my side. 4 by gesture quieted it, according to the experience knowing that in similar situations it is better not to insist.

Hermits

Village was called Biddev, and in it as everywhere in the gorge, not there it was neither electricity nor gas nor water pipe. Not there was school, kindergarten and mail. Instead of this: kerosine lamp or splinter, and that it is simple light from the center, they heat by dry manure, water - from the wells (where they there is), and it is more frequent - from the stream or the waterfall. Only in the one- only village there is the generator, which works on the holidays: solyarka here is very expensive. Mail substitute marches downward, into the valley, where there is a market and it is possible to learn news. I saw sufficiently wild places, but these were in essence of the zone either of military actions or economic catastrophes. Here I observed the example to the self-insulation of the entire people, which consciously returned to the medieval structure, the way of life, the culture.

Only two hundred people live today in the delta Of yagnob river (therefore them still are called yagnobtsy), in four villages, forgotten in the gorges in the territory into 150 square kilometers. From one village to another - almost the day of way, and some of them - this is the pair of the clay huts, in which live three or four people. In the gorge Of bidonrosak I found only 14 inhabitants, who were covered after the crossings impervious from November through March. I attempted to understand: why these people forewent the possibility to give formation to children, to obtain medical aid, and instead of this settled at height four and more of thousand it was meter, where even to breathe difficultly.



Memory about the luster of ancient Sogda store only the frescoes Of pendzhikenta, but the fire of center and the old books - the same as hundreds years ago. (photos of the author)

Back into the bright future

Inoyatullo Of atovoloyev it filled tiny pialu by green tea. The snow inaudibly fell after the window. Snowdrift grew almost to the window-sill itself, which is not surprising: small house itself Inoyatullo was entire hearth two meters height together with the flat roof, folded of the plates of sandstone. But snow all fell and fell in the dead silence, which neither 4 nor someone another of that being present did not dare to destroy. Finally old man pronounced: "I remember the surname of aircraft commander. Malakhov there was surname. It was Russian. Other pilots were Tadzhiks. They said that some glacier goes directly to our village. We did not believe. Our Pskon stood at this place thousands years, and any avalanches or there were other misfortunes here not - the wise ancestors, whom they knew how to construct house in the mountains, selected place for the village. Helicopter stood week here. People, which arrived flying on it, walked through the houses and persuaded us to fly away with them ". Inoyatullo of umolk it for long looked into the window, and snow all fell and fell in the deaf silence of mountains.

Old man on the name Saidakhmat continued the story: "we lived by themselves. They disturbed no one, and no one climbed to us. Sometimes someone got down into the valley, to the lower people in order to sell cattle, to exchange our good oil for the textile and kerosene, to listen to, about which gossip the

people there, below. Usually these were the alarming news: everywhere war, robberies and generally restless life. This strengthened in us thought, what better than in Zeravshane, nowhere can be our life - these are prayer, work, family. We did not know alcohol, tobacco and narcotics. We knew neither tractors nor helicopters. This is why our women so were frightened by their crash. My Zebo frightened very strongly. To death...

... people from the helicopter walked from house to house entire week. They said, what happy life will be in the "kolkhoz". That this such, we did not know. One of those people said, that he is "Communist" and that him call the "member of district committee comrade Gyasov". He indicated that soon on the entire earth will begin the "communism". Which all will be good, better than in to paradise. It showed to us red book with the bald person on the cover even he indicated that this "Lenin". To us was nevertheless...

We did not talk with them. This was amusingly: they by hours something shouted, but we did not answer, as if they spoke with stones. We simply milked goats and was prepared food. I hoped that the strangers will sit down into their iron helicopter and will fly away into the valley, and we will stab the pair of sheep and will finish celebrating their withdrawal, and all will be glad, as wise old men they made a fool strangers. By what we themselves were fools...

Finally they began to be angered. Someone of them said something about the "enemies of people". I remember well, as father it changed in the person and whispered, which, probably it is necessary to the period to leave into another village, to its brother. It then described that it heard history about the "enemies of people" on the market, years 30 back: they planted some mullah into the prison on ten years and even they forbade to it to write letters home, because it was this "enemy himself". People explained to father that mullah most likely executed the new rulers of Tadzhikistan - "Bolsheviks".

On the eighth day the soldiers arrived. Seven people. They have the automata. They were evil, because to them they did not give helicopter as to people Of malakhova, and they dispatch to us on foot through three crossings. Soldiers did not begin to persuade us. They simply were dug in into the houses, thing was sufficient and they dragged into the helicopter. People ran after them, attempting to take away belongings, but on their street they caught and they threw into the terribly roaring iron machine. Dogs howled, children cried. Women shouted from the fear. One of my sisters, Zebo, suddenly obmyakla fell to me to the hands, when helicopter began to be torn off from the earth. Its face is turning blue, and it died in me on the hands. In the kolkhoz they then said that the heart was torn in it. So we began life at the new place from the digging of the first grave. To the new year we buried 700 people, of them 400 - children".



In the kolkhoz

Inoyatullo poured to me tea and continued: "we did not have a right to leave kolkhoz. They immediately took away our children into kindergarten under the pretext of the concern about the working parents. Then they were sent into the Soviet school, where pioneers and Komsomol members made of them.

Prayer was under the ban. Not there were mosques. All our sacred books (one it was 600 years) drowned in Yagnobe of vertoletchiki. They said to us that these books - "survival of feudalism", and were scolded, which there not there was not word in Russian. One-two we had time to hide. Here by this - 190 years, and the second is still older... "

I concern ancient, that reek tlenom of the pages of the large book in the leather binding. The covered with Arab band yellow paper shelestit in the hands. Someone sewed these scattered pages by ox veins so that all to the united would be reached to the following generations. But then whose- that another hand with disgust threw this priceless book into the river - so, as in Munich once the books flung into the bonfires...

Everything, that they made with this people, was completely normal from a Soviet point of view: however, they evicted hundreds of thousands of Lithuanians into Siberia, one-and-a-half million Chechens with ingushami into Kazakhstan and many million still where are further - into Karakumy, for the Urals, for the polar circle... You will think, they moved five thousand wild mountaineers into the valley. From the averages it is age-long yes immediately into socialism - it bang! They made the good matter! These cranks and bus did not see in the life, entire work made with hands or on the horses, but here on you - tractors, bulldozers... They because of their own backwardness do not only understand the happiness of their! They lived into some khibarakh from the clay, without the water pipe, without the gas, and in the kolkhoz - hot water and gas stoves. By the way so that someone would not decide to return to the mountains, to its primitive cabins, those just in case exploded. By dynamite. Explosive they did not be sorry - only dust flew.

Inoyatullo continued: "no one counted never, how many sogdiytsev they took away to the fields, where we worked on the elbow in the water, into which with tons threw the fertilizers. The people fell into this water and sank at the heat. My wife of Zarin several months before death was paralyzed. Russian doctors did not take from us money for the treatment, but they not could to us soak. When I buried wife, then it left to the native land, into the mountains, and Allah returned to me forces. Allah akbar!" All sat in the room of mansions repeated the sacred words, by hands washing the bearded persons.

Collective farm life divided people on those, who were borne to the kolkhoz and already in it. Children, who appeared themselves to the light in the valley, in majority their there and remained, after becoming accustomed to electricity and free medicine, after serving in the Soviet Army and after learning Russian. The same, whom they brought into the "cotton paradise" on the helicopters, so remained soul in the mountains, hoping that it is sometimes there returned. Among the sogdiyskoy community in the kolkhoz circulated the legend about three yagnobtsakh, which ran out into the mountains also of the found there only ruins ancient villages. Allegedly after them were sent helicopters, and in the mountains the war of three brave mountaineers, armed only by ancient guns, began against the entire military aviation OF THE USSR. There was another legend against the delegations of yagnobtsev, which reached Moscow, "to Suslov himself". And Suslov allegedly confirmed: to remain on the spot "to the singular solution OF TSK". Most likely, all this - fabrication THE KGB, which wanted to force mountaineers to forego any thought about the repatriation...

Return

And immediately after reconstruction the machine, which retained in the fear people, began to give failures. Yagnobtsy zasobiralis' home. Of course not all. But several ten left there, from where they exported them under the muzzles of the automata of 20 long years ago. They built new clay houses on the spot of the destroyed villages, dug up new wells, they began to rozhat' the children, for whom, as before, were cut out the toys from the wood of mountain wood and they appointed by their motley rags of homespun material.

Mosque exists in each village, and mullah teaches children certificate according to two surviving books. In this case after the ancient zoroastriyskimi sanctuaries also they care. In each settlement there is an elder, who tracks after order and observance of ancient traditions. On any important occasion the Council of Elders, which in these places and the police, and law court, is gathered. Several years ago one of the inhabitants of village killed in quarrel of three. Killer they did not give out to the authorities: with it they entered much more severe. Entire its property was transmitted to the relatives of those killed, and itself it was banished from the community. Where it now - no one knows.



"here there are no cursed cotton pour on, here only clean mountains. Our children do not smoke cigarette, they do not drink vodka, do not look films about the people, which they saw in half and they eat (obviously, recollection about some film of horrors). Here there is no automobiles, motors, gasoline, here only pure air and pure water. Our ancestors thus lived. We want so that everything thus would remain. You say that we do not give formation to children. But in order to obtain formation, children must be sent into the valley. By what they are returned? They will not become druggies or by the drug smugglers, who increasingly more frequently dart about here?" ...

... through several days on the Tadjik- Uzbek boundary the heavy Major of the boundary service of Tadjikistan questioned me, that I made in the republic. I honestly acknowledged in the fact that it was in Zeravshane, including in the village of Pskon.

"Pskon? Never about similar it heard ".