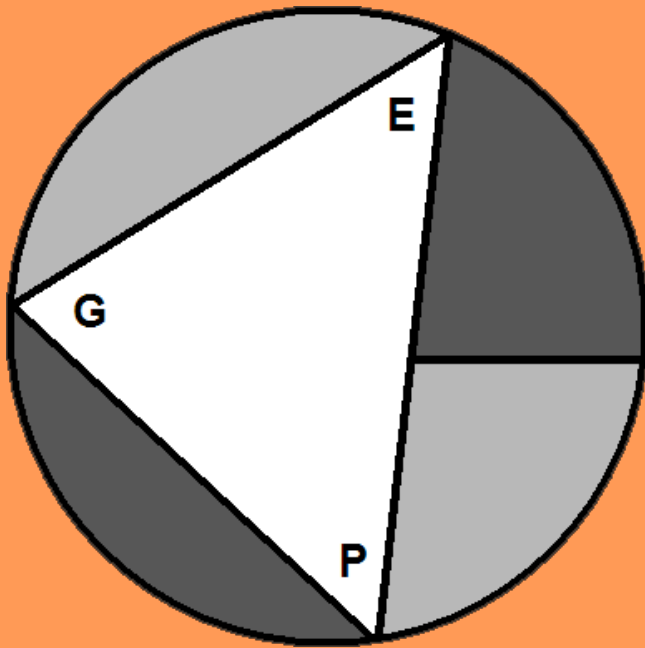


Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics



Vol.6 No.2

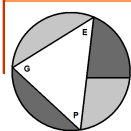
Autumn 2018

Special issue on
7th anniversary
Association for
the Study of
EthnoGeoPolitics

A publication of Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics

Amsterdam The Netherlands

Print ISSN: 2214-3211 Online ISSN: 2352-3654



Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics

A publication of Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics (EGP)

Kinkerstraat 73c, 1053 DG Amsterdam, Netherlands (Servet Sahin, treasurer)

Bank account NL83 INGB 0752 458760 (BIC: INGBNL2A) T. a. o. Servet Sahin, Amsterdam

Website: www.ethnogeopolitics.org Email: info@ethnogeopolitics.org

Registered at the Dutch Chamber of Commerce, Nr. 53597257

Brill Typeface: www.brill.com/brill-typeface Print ISSN: 2214-3211 Online ISSN: 2352-3654

Publication date: 10 December 2018 (online edition)

Scope

The aim of Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics (EGP) is to further the study of and teaching on the cultural, social, ethnic and (geo-)political characteristics, processes and developments in different areas of the world, at universities, institutes and colleges in and outside the Netherlands. The association's peer-reviewed and open-access journal *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics* and our new publishing house *EGxPress* are above all intended to elicit analytic debate by allowing scholars to air their views, perspectives and research findings—with critical responses from others who may hold a different view or research approach. One can submit manuscripts—main articles (peer-reviewed), critical responses (published peer-reviews), short articles and/or book reviews—to info@ethnogeopolitics.org. We charge no fees for any of the submitted and/or published manuscripts. At www.ethnogeopolitics.org one can find information about the association's foundation, founding (editorial) board members, aims, activities and publications—and particularly the freely downloadable copies of the journal's issues.

Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief & Chairperson EGP: Dr. Babak Rezvani, Universities of Amsterdam, Nijmegen

Executive Editor & Secretary EGP: Caspar ten Dam, University of Leiden

Senior Editor: Dr. Jason E. Strakes, Politics & Security Programme OSCE Academy Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Advisory Editor & Webmaster EGP: Jaroen Schut, University of Groningen

Associate Editors:

Servet Sahin, Free University of Amsterdam & Treasurer EGP

Dr. Oybek N. Makhmudov, University of Uzbekistan, Tashkent, Uzbekistan (Russian section board)

Dr. Marat Ilyasov, University of St Andrews, United Kingdom (Ibid)

Assistant Editors:

Dr. Arnav Anjaria, Political Science and International Relations, Amity University, Noida, India

Prof. Jia Haitao, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Jinan University, China

Dr. Rodolfo Valentino, Director European Institute of Studies on Migration, Social Inclusion and Intercultural Learning (IEM), European branch, Bonn, Germany (Spanish section board)

Dulce Maria Gonzalez Ramirez, MA Indigenous Development, University of Winnipeg, Canada (Ibid)

Recommendation and Advisory Committee:

Prof. Jacek Czaputowicz, Institute of European Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland

Dr. Olivier M. Ribbelink, T.M.C. Asser Institute International and European Law, The Hague

Dr. Françoise Companjen, Intercultural Management and Conflict, VU University of Amsterdam

Dr. James M. Dorsey, S. Rajaratnam School International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Prof. John Clark, President International University of Central Asia, Tokmok, Kyrgyzstan

Steven Pelletier, Department of English Language & Literature, University of Michigan

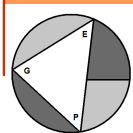
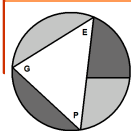


Table of Contents

Page 5	<i>Editorial</i> The Age of EthnoGeoPolitics Babak Rezvani
Page 9	<i>Special Article</i> EthnoGeoPolitica y su Fórum (EthnoGeoPolitics and its Forum) Babak Rezvani & Dulce Gonzalez
Page 12	<i>Special Article</i> Этногеополитика наука или новая идеология? (Ethnogeopolitics: a science or a new ideology?) Марат Ильясов (Marat Iliysov)
Page 14	<i>Celebratory Contribution</i> The comic book <i>The Expert: A strange academic world we live in!</i> to celebrate the 7th anniversary of our association—A Teaser Caspar ten Dam
Page 23	<i>Dorsey's Column</i> Middle Eastern Black Swans dot China's Belt and Road James M. Dorsey
Page 29	<i>Guest Column</i> Regarding my Letter of Protest to the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece Dionysios Bastas
Page 37	<i>Editorial Response</i> Caspar ten Dam
Page 38	<i>Book Review</i> The Tribes of Albania: History, Society and Culture Caspar ten Dam



* * * Call and Guidelines for Contributions * * *

Since recently our journal is also ready to receive manuscripts in Russian, German, Spanish and other non-English languages (though all require English abstracts). The Editorial Board does not apply a strict wordlimit, but we prefer full-fledged research articles of no more than 10,000 words. We also welcome short analytical articles, book reviews, review essays, and opinion pieces. We charge no fees for any of the submitted and/or published manuscripts. We provide Open Access in accordance with our Creative Common License policy which can be consulted on our website.

Regular contributors may get a guaranteed space in future issues of our journal, with a recognisable header like 'Dorsey's Column' for James M. Dorsey's contributions. It does not necessarily mean that we approve of everything that these contributors may say. The contributors themselves are responsible and accountable for their statements.

Furthermore, we welcome contributions for special issues on common themes, like the one on Human Security in our Winter 2015 issue. The association EthnoGeoPolitics is willing to (re)publish through our new publishing house *EGxPress* special issues in book form—and publish monographs and other major manuscripts in book form as well.

Research essays—particularly so-called 'Main Articles'—undergo rigorous peer-review from at least two peer-reviewers. Extensive (book) review essays that have undergone such review as well, are also considered Main Articles.

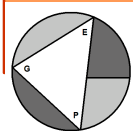
We welcome and publish open comments i.e. critical responses—particularly those of peer-reviewers—in order to encourage feedback and debate. These responses can be anonymous if their authors wish so. Still, we encourage them to publicise their names with their contributions, as the latter will thus become better citable, referable and indexical as sources and publications.

Of course we at the Editorial Board decide whether or not to publish (excerpts from) peer-reviewers' comments, based on considerations of utility and usefulness for ongoing debate. Thus the absence of published peer-reviews and comments does not mean that these do not exist; thus some peer-reviews are not published because their comments have been addressed by the author in his or her contribution. To reiterate, Main Articles have undergone generally two or more peer-reviews.

The Editorial Board may publish some of the later comments on published contributions as critical responses (maximum 3,000 words) in one or more subsequent issues of the journal. Extensive critical responses with source references may be published as full-fledged, separate research articles.

For each submitted manuscript, please supply your full name, academic and/or other professional titles and affiliations, address(es) and other contact details, as well as your research specialisms and any major publications. Please submit these details with your manuscripts at www.ethnogeopolitics.org/contact-2, or to info@ethnogeopolitics.org.

See for more details on the submission process of manuscripts www.ethnogeopolitics.org/publications. We thus welcome your contributions, ranging from articles to transparent reviews and comments on these articles.



Editorial

The Age of EthnoGeoPolitics

Babak Rezvani

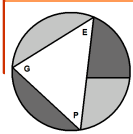
What is ethnogeopolitics and how old is it? These are questions that we encounter a lot. The Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics is seven years, almost eight years, old, and our journal is five years, almost six years old. In this jubilee number I want to express my gratefulness to our readers, authors, editors, and benevolent followers on behalf of the full governing board of Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics and editorial board of our journal entitled *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics*.

Ethnogeopolitics could be regarded as an old practice as there is evidence of its practice throughout history. The practice of ethnogeopolitical policies requires certain studies, and reflection. The Soviet Nationalities Policy, and its resulting hierarchic ethnoterritorial system as well as its intensive engagement with linguistic, religious and generally ethnic affairs, has generated a precedence of ethnogeopolitics since early Bolshevik rule in the Soviet Union. However, ethnogeopolitics is older than that; the Tsarist Russian, the Ottoman and different Iranian empires had policies which could be regarded as ethnogeopolitical.

For example, the Russian Empire encouraged Russian Cossacks to settle in its frontier regions. Nowadays after the evacuation of villages, there are a lot of Cossack settlements in the North Caucasus as there are a lot of Circassian settlements in the Middle East and the Balkans. The system of religious minorities' legal segregation and autonomy is often regarded as an Ottoman policy called the *Millet System*. That was also the case in the Iranian Safavid Empire, which had its precedence even in pre-Islamic times during the Sasanid Empire. A similar system is preserved even after the Iranian constitutional revolution until now.

Another ethnogeopolitical policy formed the often forced migrations of populations for security or even economic reasons. Examples are the aforementioned Circassian and Georgian and Armenian migrations to the Ottoman and Safavid empires. The population exchange between Turkey and Greece could also be regarded as such an ethnogeopolitically motivated policy. However, one should be cautious not to combine ethnogeopolitics always with negative connotations, as for example subsidizing jobs in a scarcely populated area is also such an ethnogeopolitical policy. As in geopolitics in general one has to make a distinction between ethnogeopolitics of scholars and practitioners (See e.g. Ó Tuathail 2006: 8).

In addition, although blurred at times, one has to make a distinction between the ethnogeopolitical practice and the study of ethnogeopolitics which is often reflective and critical of such ethnogeopolitical policies and their consequences (See e.g. Mamadouh 1998; 2009)



Mark Bassin refers (2009) to a certain discourse as “Ethno-Geopolitics” prevalent among the Russian ultranationalists such as Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and his associates. Perhaps it is superfluous to mention that they write the concept with a hyphen (ethno-geopolitics, этно-геополитика), whereas our Association does not and often capitalize each component (ethnogeopolitics or EthnoGeoPolitics). Yet their current of thought cannot be ruled out, as they often claim precedent in the works of the Soviet academic Lev Gumilev, and also owing to the fact that their current of thought is influenced by the practice in the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation.

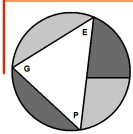
In brief, Mark Bassin’s article (2009) is certainly an important and informative source for studying ethnogeopolitics and Lev Gumilev’s and of Zhirinovskiy’s and his associates’ works are also appealing material for geopolitical studies. However, these, and in fact no other, currents of thoughts or discourses should not get the prerogative to exclusively claim the (sub)discipline of ethnogeopolitics for themselves.

There is still a vibrant debate about definitions and natures of geopolitics. In international relations and political economy, however, the concept geopolitics is often loosely used. Virginie Mamadouh’s categorization (1998: 239, see Table 1; 2009) is still authoritative in political geographical circles. As ethnogeopolitics considers multiple scales, levels of analysis and actors, it is close to the categories of the French ‘subversive’ school of *Géopolitique Interne et Extern* and ‘Critical Geopolitics’ both of which are often considered as progressive and even emancipatory types of geopolitics. According to Mamadouh (1998: 244-246; 2009) Critical Geopolitics is often post-structuralist. Although, ethnogeopolitics similar to critical geopolitics has often a reflective character, it is not necessarily post-structuralist.

All in all, it is difficult to assign a year as the beginning of ethnogeopolitics as a discipline or multidisciplinary field of studies. My own paper in which I used the term is from the early 1990s. However, the term may have been used even earlier by other authors, as it is not very far-fetched to imagine the relevance of ethnicity and cultural factors in geopolitics.

The German political geographer Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904) has two major works which are worth to mention in these regards: *Völkerkunde*—which could be translated as knowledge about peoples, or perhaps even nationology—and *Anthropogeografie*. This latter term is apparently first used by L. F. Kämtz in 1842 and established later by Ratzel (Heucke 2006; see also Penk 1912). Even though Ratzel’s conception of the relation between peoples and geography might have been very different than the current perspectives within human geography and anthropology, and certainly many of his statements cannot be confirmed, still, his choice for the titles of these works as well as the name of the subdiscipline ‘political anthropology’ indicate certain academic antiquity of the relation between peoples, their cultures and their political environments.

Our journal and association have paid attention to social issues at the global level. In addition to political, economic and geostrategic factors we have also paid attention to cultural factors in our studies. We have paid attention to ethnic studies; not only ethnolinguistic groups, but also to all collective social actors such as castes, ethnoreligious



groups and indigenous peoples. Although, we do acknowledge the utility of large N quantitative studies, we have paid attention to case studies and acknowledge the importance and even inevitability of area studies for political science and other disciplines related to geopolitics.

The quality of argument is the main criterion for accepting articles in our journal. Although, our journal does not rule out conventional academic papers, we also encourage other types of papers. Usually, academic journals only accept papers of certain conventional style and length. Such papers could be published in several conventional journals.

However, our journal may also accept, and even appreciate non-conventional types of articles provided that these are informative and contribute to (theoretical and empirical) debate. In practice, such articles may turn out to be good, thought-provoking and attractive reading material. We, however, do not necessarily endorse the authors' points of views and perspectives; to us only the quality of articles matters.

We certainly encourage articles and other materials such as movies, databases etc. that are innovative either in style or in theory. Our journal *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics* is now developed into a multilingual journal in order to reach more audiences. It publishes and welcomes articles written in English, Russian and Spanish. Soon we may initiate publishing—also in other languages such as Persian and German.

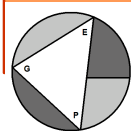
We will have a section called the Development of Ethnogeopolitics that intends to report and discuss about ethnogeopolitically interesting (theoretical) issues. We welcome everyone's contribution, even as post-published comments on already published papers. These contributions could be of any length and dependent on their status will be either peer-reviewed (Main Article) or not. The so-called main articles in *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics* are always peer-reviewed as a rule. *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics* is a free-access journal and charges authors no fees. It intends to produce diverse papers and articles related to ethnogeopolitics—broadly understood—and in addition to scholarly (scientific) papers, and intends to provide diverse types of reading material for a rather broad audience.

Babak Rezvani, Editor-in-Chief, Chairman of Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics
rezvani@ethnogeopolitics.org October 2018

References—Bibliography

Bassin, M (2009). The Emergence of Ethno-Geopolitics in Post-Soviet Russia. *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, Vol. 50 No. 2, pp. 131–149.

Heucke, Clemens (2006). 'Anthropogeographie', in: *Der Neue Pauly*, Herausgegeben von: Hubert Cancik, Helmuth Schneider (Antike), Manfred Landfester (Rezeptions- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte. München, First published online in 2006) http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_dnp_e123660.



Mamadouh, V. D. (1998). Geopolitics in the Nineties: One Flag, Many Meanings. *GeoJournal*, Vol.46 No.4, pp. 237–253.

Mamadouh, V. D. (2009). *Geopolitics in the 2000s*. Online available at: hwww.exploringgeopolitics.org/publication_mamadouh_virginie_geopolitics_in_the_2000s_geostrategy_goeconomics_post_structuralistic_subversive_feminist_neo_marxist_political_geography/ (Accessed 23 March 2015).

Ó Tuathail, G. (2006). General introduction: Thinking Critically about Geopolitics. In G. Ó Tuathail, S. Dalby, and P. Routledge, (eds). *The Geopolitics Reader*, Second Edition, pp. 1-14. London: Routledge.

Penck, A (1912). *Anthropogeographie: Die geographische Verbreitung des Menschen von Friedrich Ratzel, Herausgegeben von Prof. Dr. Albrecht Penck*. Stuttgart: Verlag von J. Engelhorn's Nachf.

NB: do you have any comments on the editorial? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or through the contact form at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.

(Advertisement)

The Arab Spring Effect on Turkey's Role, Decision-making and Foreign Policy

Fadi Elhusseini

This book analyses Turkey's role in the Arab world and investigates the effects of the Arab Spring on Turkish foreign policy, decision-making and its role. Particular attention is focused on widespread terms such as strategic depth, neo-Ottomans and the Turkish Model. It also provides incisive discussions of the key tenets of the Turkish official responses to Arab revolts and narrates the advantages and challenges that come to forge any potential regional role for Turkey.

Fadi Elhusseini is a Senior Fellow at the Centre on Governance at the University of Ottawa, Canada. He is a political and media consultant

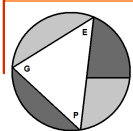
and an advisory board member of the New Arab Foundation. He received a BA in Economics and Political Science from Cairo University, Egypt and an MA in International Commerce from Lecce, Italy. He obtained his PhD in International Studies at the University of Sunderland, UK. His research interests include Arab and Islamic studies, the Middle East peace process, Turkish and Middle Eastern studies and theories of international relations. His publications include contributions to Turkish Foreign Policy in the New Millennium and Turkish Studies from Different Perspectives.



ISBN 978-1-5275-0661-9
Hardback 196pp
£61.99 UK
\$99.95 US

20% Discount available
Order online at our website
www.cambridgescholars.com
Discount Code: arabspring20

Our books are also sold worldwide
on Amazon, Blackwell and Ingram
www.cambridgescholars.com
orders@cambridgescholars.com



Special Article

EtnoGeoPolitica y su Fórum (EthnoGeoPolitics and its Forum)

Babak Rezvani & Dulce Gonzalez

Abstract in English of a translation in Spanish of Rezvani's first Editorial in *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics*, 1(1): 4-6) *Ethnogeopolitics is a new concept, indicating an emerging multidisciplinary field of research. Its definition and scope of study depends much on those of related (sub-) disciplines, particularly those of geopolitics. There is no general consensus on the definitions of geopolitics and ethnopolitics, and hence ethnogeopolitics also cannot be easily or non-controversially defined. In order to be able to define ethnogeopolitics as an academic field, one has to define what is politics, and political science, ethnicity, ethnopolitics and geopolitics.*

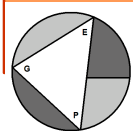
Los que formamos parte de esta editorial con una formación en la academia, encontrarnos en esta asociación llamada EtnoGeoPolitica fue una buena oportunidad, especialmente debido a la inercia del ámbito académico en lo que concierne a este campo. Tratamos de ofrecer una nueva perspectiva en relación al estudio y quizás a la solución de desafíos globales.

Etnogeopolítica es un nuevo concepto, indicando que es un campo emergente multidisciplinario de investigación. Su definición y su alcance de estudio depende mucho de disciplinas y subdisciplinas relacionadas. Al no haber un consenso general sobre las definiciones de geopolítica y etnopolítica, por consiguiente, definir etnogeopolítica también resulta controversial o complicado. Entonces, con la intención de poder establecerlo como un campo académico, tenemos que definir qué es política, la ciencia política, etnicidad, etnopolítica y geopolítica.

Por un lado, la ciencia política es un campo muy extenso y sus concepciones teóricas en relación a etnicidad también varían. Asimismo, la etnopolítica, como cualquier otro campo académico, es dinámica y está sujeta a cambios y al desarrollo conceptual y metodológico. Una mejor comprensión de este campo solo puede evolucionar a medida que pasa el tiempo.

Por otro lado, la definición de geopolítica es aún menos clara, pues sus enfoques pueden ser puramente académicos, como la geopolítica crítica o políticas en relación que delinean y orientar la política exterior de un país y las formas en que persigue y salvaguarda su interés y seguridad nacional.

La geopolítica no sólo se enfoca en la estrategia militar, la economía y los recursos naturales, también en la cultura y el enfoque en éste último puede ser llamado etnogeopolítica. En un sentido estricto, el concepto como tal es la confluencia de etnicidad y geopolítica. En otras palabras, cuando la etnicidad y la identidad étnica, así como los atributos culturales de las personas importan, afectan la política exterior y la seguridad de uno o más países. Entonces, la unión de estas disciplinas son una buena herramienta para entender y explicar conflictos étnicos, guerras civiles y asuntos políticos transnacionales.



La etnogeopolítica también puede ser definida en un sentido amplio englobando todos sus elementos y lo que cada uno contiene: comprende etnogeografía, etnopolítica y geopolítica, así como estudios étnicos, geografía y ciencias políticas en general. Todas estas disciplinas y subdisciplinas son extensas y profundas, de la misma forma que sus definiciones y alcances varían de acuerdo a las diferentes escuelas y los diferentes académicos.

Podría decirse que la diferencia entre geopolítica y etnogeopolítica radica en el hecho de que el segundo concepto se acerca a la geopolítica a nivel de los pueblos. Los estados y los regímenes globales son fundamentales para los enfoques tradicionales de geopolítica; sin embargo, en etnogeopolítica, los pueblos y los estados interactúan estrechamente entre sí, resultando la dialéctica entre ellos lo que constituye el núcleo. Éste campo se puede delinear de esta manera, aunque el consenso de definición puede seguir siendo difícil de alcanzar, como en otras disciplinas y subdisciplinas científicas sociales. Al final, su alcance y enfoque dependerán en gran medida del diálogo, el discurso y, por lo tanto, del desarrollo académico en curso.

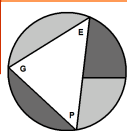
Es importante mencionar que, el nombre de nuestra asociación fue elegido ya que éste campo emergente y prometedor no está determinado a causa de la negligencia y los recortes financieros en la academia, especialmente en los Países Bajos. Por tal motivo, nuestra revista puede ser un foro para los hallazgos, el diálogo y el debate, pues también alentamos y publicamos reseñas críticas y comentarios libres o abiertos.

La intención es romper con las prácticas dominantes de las revistas científicas, adaptándonos a la apertura para que seamos una revista transparente. Para esto, solicitamos a los comentaristas y revisores nos permitan publicar sus nombres con sus contribuciones. Creemos que un sistema de comentarios abierto es el mejor instrumento ya que favorece a la transparencia y mejora la calidad de las respuestas críticas y revisiones, contribuyendo positivamente el desarrollo científico.

El formato de nuestra revista muestra a los contribuyentes cómo presentar sus artículos, anuncios, revisiones y comentarios abiertos (como respuestas críticas) y cómo citar fuentes. Los artículos de investigación y ensayos no necesariamente tienen que haber sido publicados recientemente; sin embargo, antes de ser publicados, son sometidos a rigurosas revisiones por pares y tienen que ser útiles y conducentes al diálogo estrecho de ésta y otras disciplinas relacionadas.

Por último, pero no menos importante, debo señalar que hemos notado que ciertas regiones geográficas del mundo reciben menos atención que otras. África y América Latina reciben mucha atención de académicos en Europa y Estados Unidos. También el sur, el este y el sudeste de Asia reciben una atención justa de académicos del Reino Unido, los Países Bajos y otros países. Sin embargo, Eurasia Central—es decir, el Cáucaso, Asia Central y la meseta iraní—no recibe suficiente atención y las instalaciones para estudiarla son muy escasas.

De manera similar, la diversidad de pueblos originarios de América del Norte tiene una posición marginal, incluso en los EE. UU. y Canadá. Aun cuando nuestra asociación cubre oficialmente el estudio de etnogeopolítica en cualquier parte del mundo y no excluimos el



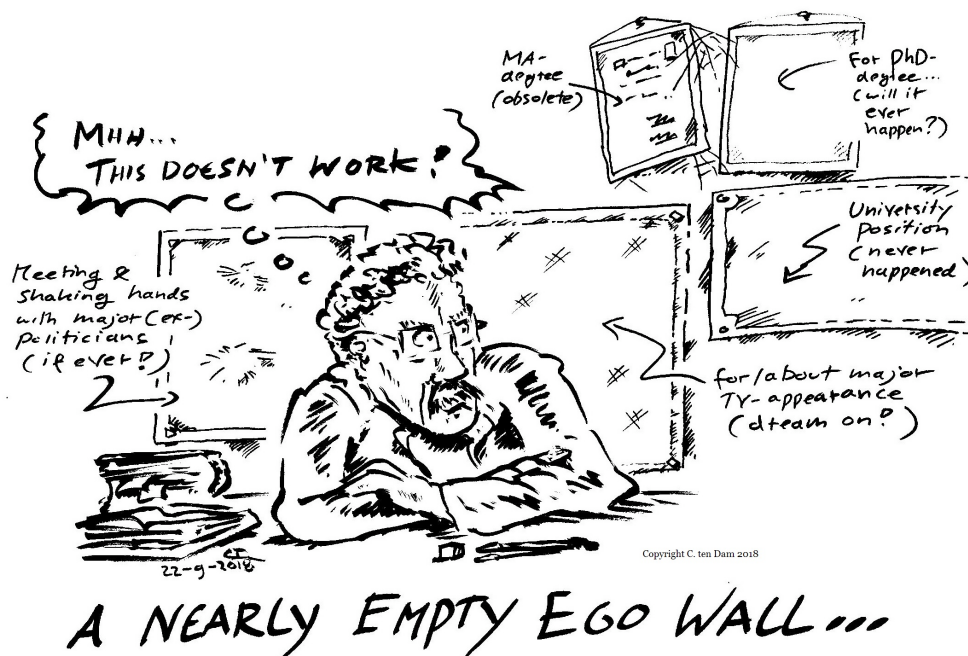
estudio de otras regiones, fomentamos especialmente la investigación y la difusión sobre Eurasia Central y la “América Nativa”.

Para concluir, siendo parte del objetivo del Foro, agradecemos los comentarios y contribuciones por parte de académicos, pensadores, profesionales, legisladores o tomadores de decisiones para que el diálogo entre ellos y nosotros no sólo se convierta en una valiosa adición a las publicaciones, sino que contribuya al desarrollo posterior de este campo.

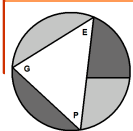
NB: Babak Rezvani formalmente recibió su grado de doctorado (PhD) el 12 de febrero de 2013, en la Universidad de Amsterdam, por su tesis en “Conflicto Etno-territorial y Coexistencia en el Cáucaso, Asia central y Fereydan”. Ver el comentario de la página 8.

Babak Rezavni, Editor en jefe y Dulce Gonzalez, Editor asociado Mayo 2018

Do you have any comments on Gonzalez’s (co-)translation of Rezvani’s editorial in our journal’s Maiden issue back in 2013? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or through the contact from at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.



Advertisement: an “Expert” cartoon by Caspar ten Dam; see www.ctdamconsultancy.com



Special Article

Этногеополитика наука или новая идеология? (Ethnogeopolitics: a science or a new ideology?)

Марат Ильясов (Marat Ilyasov)

Abstract in English The article considers the place of Ethnogeopolitics in the modern world. Drawing on some historical analogies, it warns about possible attempts of some politicians and states to use Ethnogeopolitics as a background for building new ideologies. The article supports and encourages an exclusively scientific usage of this emerging (sub)discipline, inviting the wide range of opinions which do not oppose scholarly ethics.

Вопрос поставленный в заголовок этой статьи имеет большую подоплеку и значение. Он демонстрирует огромный потенциал данной субдисциплины и в тоже время ставит под сомнение само ее существование.

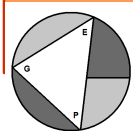
Прислушиваясь к совету Резвани о содействии развитию этногеополитики (Rezvani 2018a), в этой статье предлагаются альтернативные разнообразные взгляды на эту новую дисциплину. (См. Также Bassin 2009, Mamadouh 1998, Rezvani 2013, Rezvani 2018b, Резвани И. Ильясов [Rezvani and Ilyasov] 2017).

В иной формулировке это вопрос о функциях Этногеополитики сегодня. Несомненно, Этногеополитику можно и нужно изучать как науку об этносах, их географическом положении, и политической направленности. Наш журнал и небольшое академическое сообщество, которое он объединяет, не сомневается—Этногеополитика должна существовать как наука. Мы не хотим наполнять ее никаким иным смыслом и не собираемся поддерживать никакие другие подходы. Если это инструмент, то он используется исключительно в целях исследования.

Так же как и другие теории международных отношений, которые стараются абстрагироваться от эмоциональности в исследованиях войны и мира, Этногеополитика не имеет и не должна служить политическим целям той или иной страны, системы, или режима.

Попытки поставить ее на службу, тем не менее, очевидны. Такие попытки не новы и не исключительны. И другие дисциплины тоже подвергались похожим атакам со стороны определенных политических элит. Вспомнить хотя бы первоначальные этапы развития Геополитики, которая дала базисное основание существованию Этногеополитики.

Первые исследования в геополитической сфере были оценены политическими структурами нацистской Германии не за их научные достижения. Геополитика была воспринята как идеология, которая позволяет успешно оправдать хищнические или



даже античеловеческие намерения, что в последствии и было сделано. Стоит ли говорить о том насколько пострадала репутация этой дисциплины и сколько усилий пришлось приложить научному сообществу для ее реабилитации.

Этногеополитика подвергается той же опасности. Деление мира на цивилизации, которые некоторыми идеологами воспринимаются как конкурирующие, так же как и навешивание ярлыков на эти цивилизации (например скрытая цивилизация), толкают Этногеополитику в ту же сторону расовой нетерпимости, как и политическое руководство межвоенной Германии.

Именно поэтому наш журнал “Форум Этногеополитики” старается избежать аффилиации с политическими силами той или иной страны и выступает за предоставление платформы для всех видов дебатов, которые следуют принципам, соответствующим научной этике. Мы выступаем за возможно широкий спектр мнений и дебатов, которые приносят конструктивное развитие этой сравнительно новой субдисциплины.

Признавая право на существование всех возможных мнений, мы, тем не менее, поддерживаем научный подход к исследованиям, что в будущем позволит избежать этой интересной и интригующей субдисциплине обвинений в псевдонаучности.

Marat Ilyasov, one of the Associate Editors of our journal, is a Research Associate at the School of International Relations, University of St Andrews, United Kingdom. mi29@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Источники

Bassin, M (2009). The Emergence of Ethno-Geopolitics in Post-Soviet Russia. *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, Vol.50 No.2, pp. 131–149.

Mamadouh, V. D. (1998). Geopolitics in the Nineties: One Flag, Many Meanings. *GeoJournal*, Vol.46 No.4, pp. 237–253.

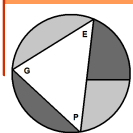
Rezvani, B. (2013). EthnoGeoPolitics and its Forum. *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics*, Vol.1 No.1, pp.4-6.

Rezvani, B. (2018a). Situating Ethnogeopolitics and Reflecting upon its Developments. *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics*, Vol.6 No.1, p.8.

Rezvani, B. (2018b). The Age of EthnoGeoPolitics. *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics*, Vol.6 No.2, pp.5-8.

Резвани, Б. И М. Ильясов (Rezvani, B, & M. Ilyasov), ‘Этногеополитика и Форум Этногеополитики [Etnogeopolitka i Forum Etnogeopolitka, in Russian: EthnoGeoPolitics and its Forum]’. *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics*, Vol.5 No.2 (2017), pp.7-8.

NB: do you have any comments on Ilyasov’s article? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or through the contact form at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.



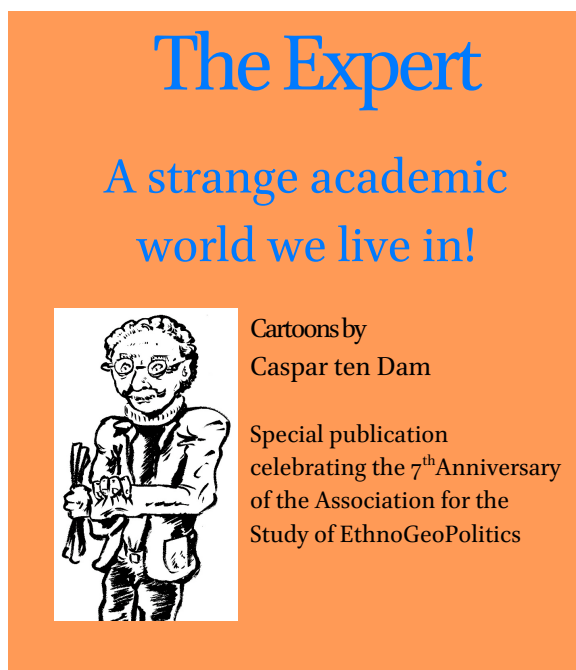
Celebratory Contribution

The comic book *The Expert: A strange academic world we live in!* to celebrate the 7th anniversary of our association—A Teaser

Caspar ten Dam

Introduction

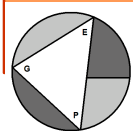
Soon, hopefully before coming Christmas, my comic book *The Expert: A strange academic world we live in!* will appear to celebrate the 7th anniversary of our Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics. This comic book contains a selection of my Expert cartoons from 2015 and 2016 (some of which already appeared in our journal) and other cartoons and illustrations of mine as well. This upcoming publication also intends to kickstart our publishing house, *EGxPress Publishers*.



As a teaser, this contribution presents the Introduction and the first cartoons in part I of the *The Expert*; soon details will be announced on our website www.ethnogeopolitics.org and in the next issue(s) of our journal on how to order one or more hardbacks a/o e-books of the book for reasonable prices—even for cash-strapped, impoverished, struggling scholars among us.

The book should help to alleviate the work- and research-related stress of many a well-funded scholar as well, for so far the typically dark and sarcastic humor in it is appreciated and

hits home. Any well-funded purchaser of the book could also give it as a present (or a whole bunch of copies as presents) to their poorly funded colleagues—though it should not serve as a poor substitute of well-served praise, publication, prize, degree, position, tenure, pay rise, grant, sabbatical, pension or all of the above to any of them.



My Expert Cartoon and other Cartoons and Illustrations

Caspar ten Dam

THE EXPERT™



In recent years, I have once more—after a hiatus of many years during which I drew little if anything—been producing cartoons and other illustrations, also for customers and clients. Thus I have been experimenting with new cartoons, such as the one about the “[Terrorism] Expert” (loosely yet certainly not exclusively based on my character and experiences), some examples of which have been reproduced in the more recent issues of our journal *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics* of which I am the executive editor.

I have decided, with hearty agreement from the other founding members of the Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics (EGP), to select and bundle my cartoons on The Expert which I drew during the years 2015 and 2016 into a publication that now lies before you. Some of these selected cartoons already have been reproduced in multiple issues of our journal.

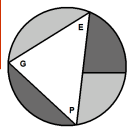
In fact, this publication has not just come out to celebrate the association's 7th anniversary, but also to kickstart the association's publishing house *EGxPress* which is mainly intended to publish works in the field of ethnogeopolitics that are analytical in nature and grounded in (social) science.

Still, I believe it is wise and healthy to publish at times some ‘less serious’, more ‘light-footed’ works that also poke fun at the academic world that we, or at least many of us, (have to) live in. The typically (self-)deprecating, arguably peculiar (if only because of the prominent background presence of the two Ufonauts, who for some mysterious reason have disappeared from the scene of my more recent Expert cartoons from 2017 onwards), indeed often dark and sarcastic, humor is mine. If the humor and ‘punch lines’ are not to your liking I hereby apologise in advance—and advise, indeed urge, you not to look at read these cartoons any further, and spend your time on other (better?) things.

This publication also includes some Appendices that show some other illustrative works of mine, like the first pages of my experimental, wordless, quickly drawn and thus storyboard-like cartoon story “The Encounter” which is currently half-finished (around 40 pages out of the planned 60). See for examples of these and other cartoons and illustrations www.ctdamconsultancy.com and <https://stripkunst.wordpress.com>.

Actually, most of the Expert and Encounter drawings, and other recent illustrations of mine, I have made—and still am making—at the Leiden DrawClub, of which I became a member in the Spring of 2015 (www.facebook.com/groups/drawclubleiden).

This drawclub regularly meets at monday evenings at the Grandcafé de Burcht in Leiden, the



Netherlands, to make drawings and paintings there with fellow artists. Both professionals and amateurs are and can become members. Since then, I have been making drawings far more frequently than I used to do for a long time.

Caspar ten Dam August 2018

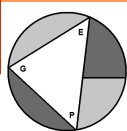
NB: In any private, small-scale use of these cartoons and illustrations, my authorship ("Copyright C. ten Dam") must stay visible in reproductions. For any commercial, large-scale use, my prior permission is required.



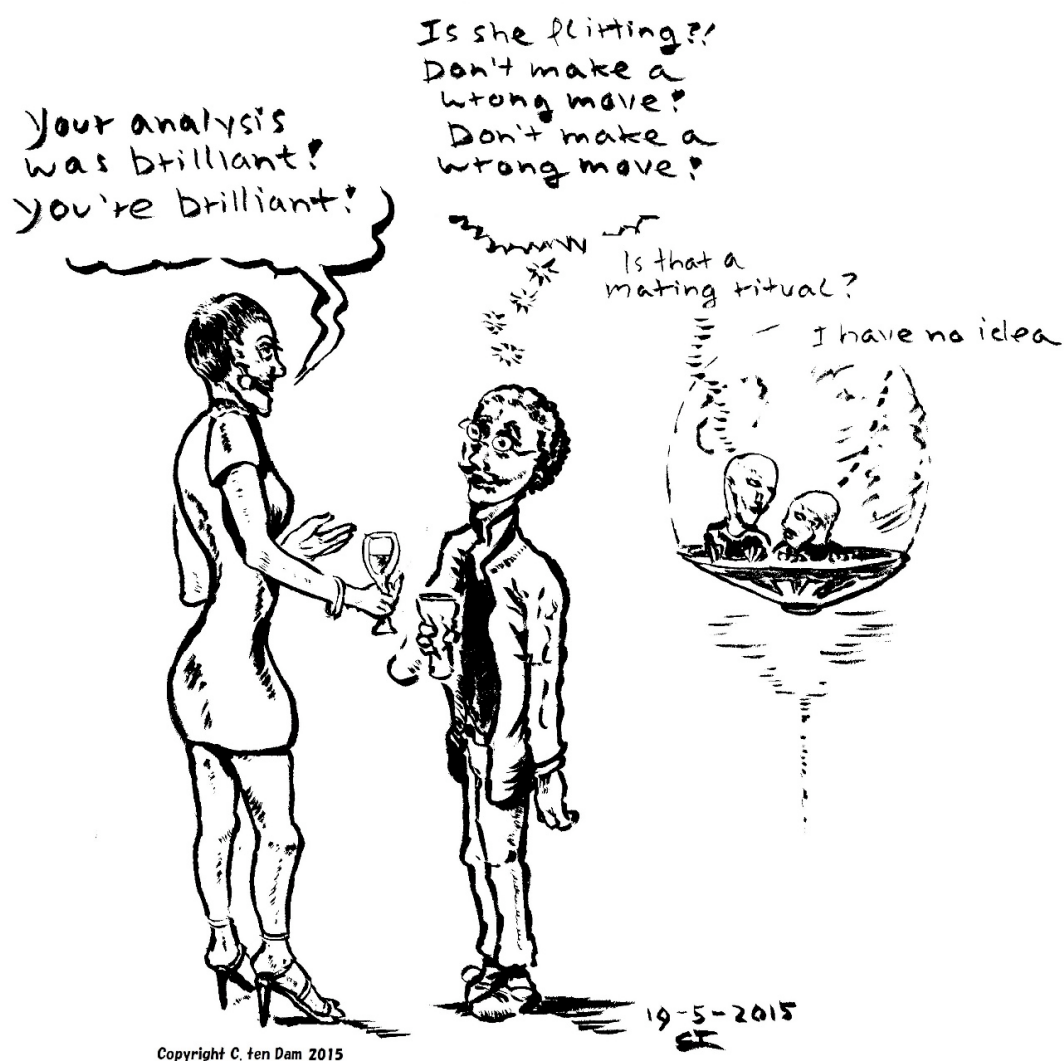
Me drawing an Expert cartoon at Leiden DrawClub, August 2016

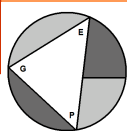


Me explaining how I make my drawings during Art Route Leiden, September 2016

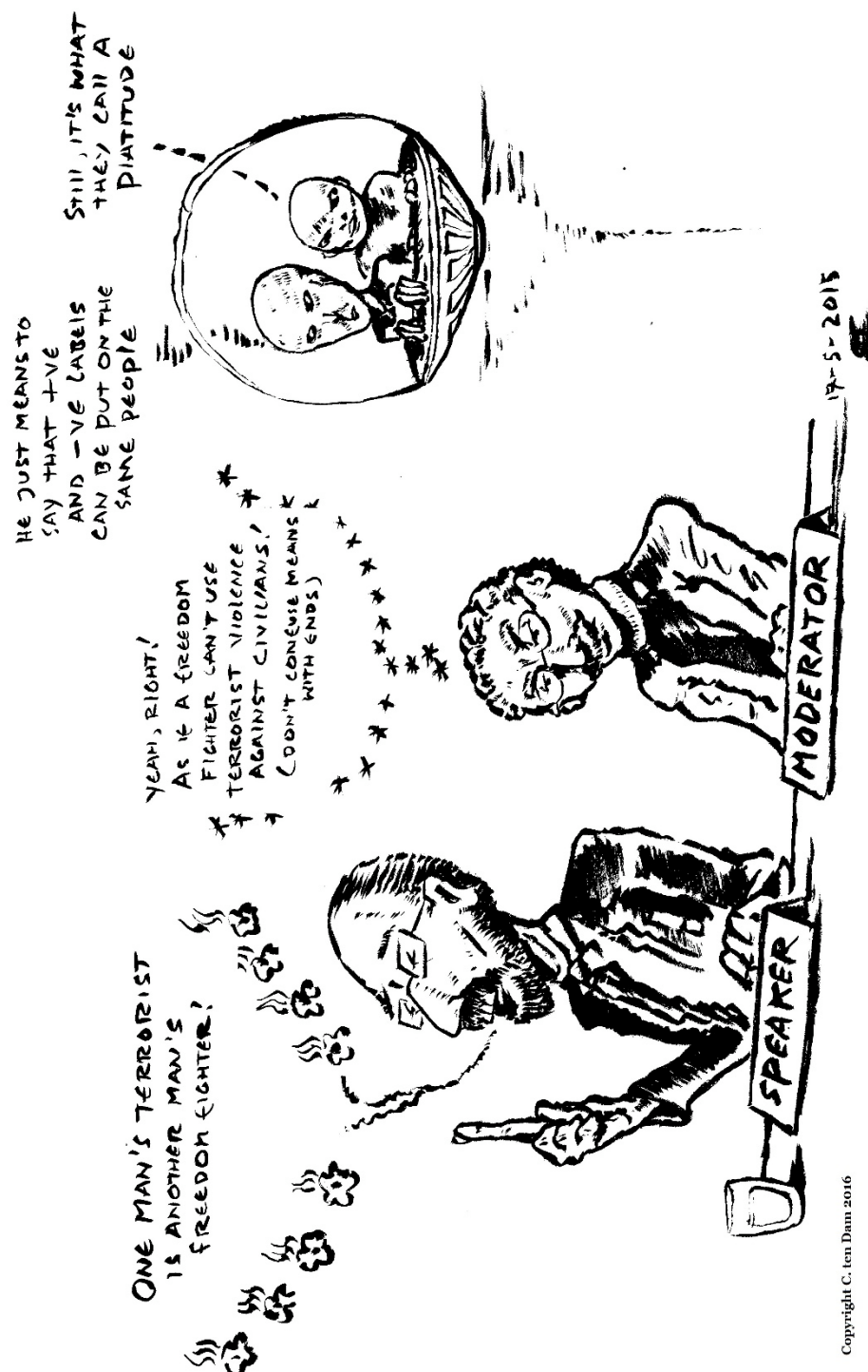
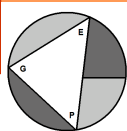


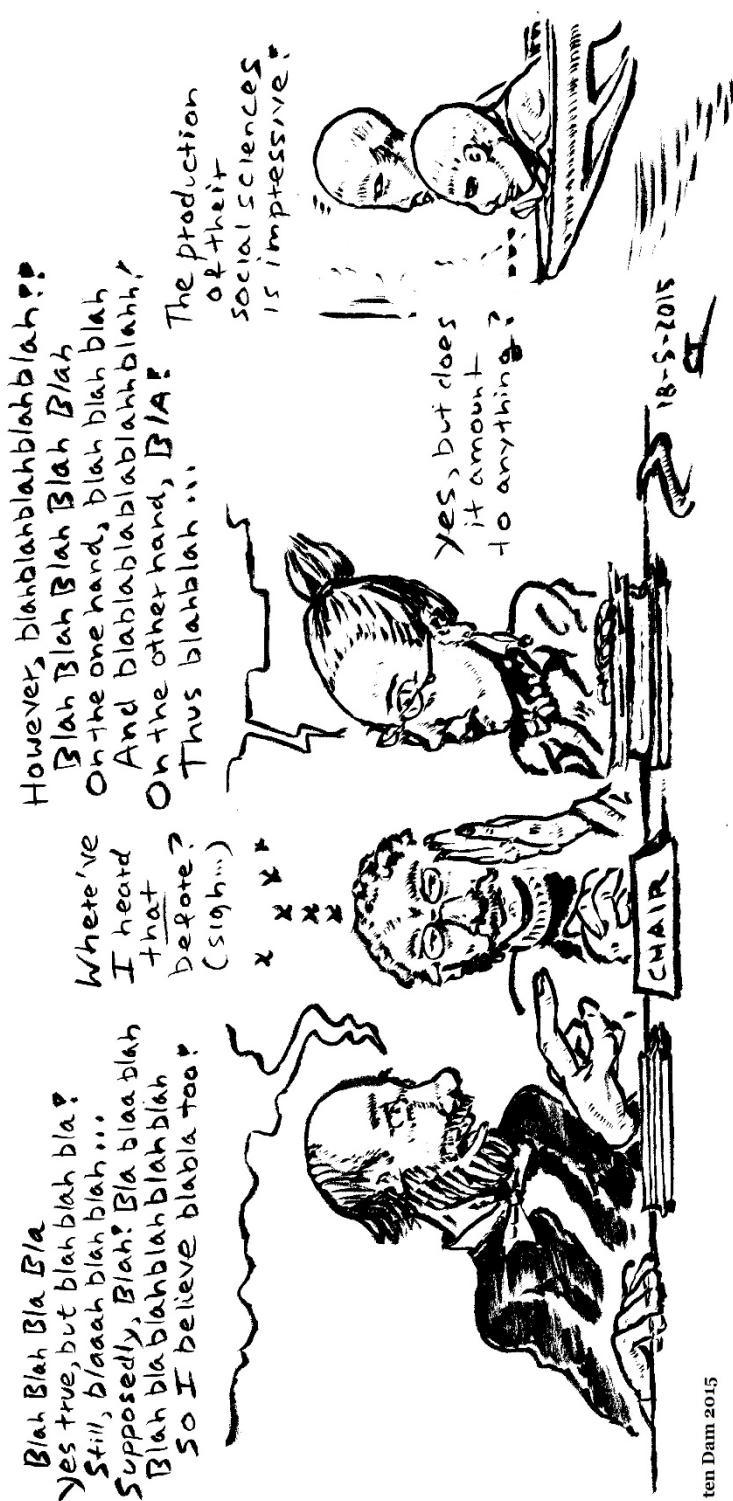
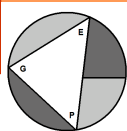
Selections of cartoons shown in 'Part I The Expert Cartoons, 2015–2016' of *The Expert* (EGxPress, forthcoming)



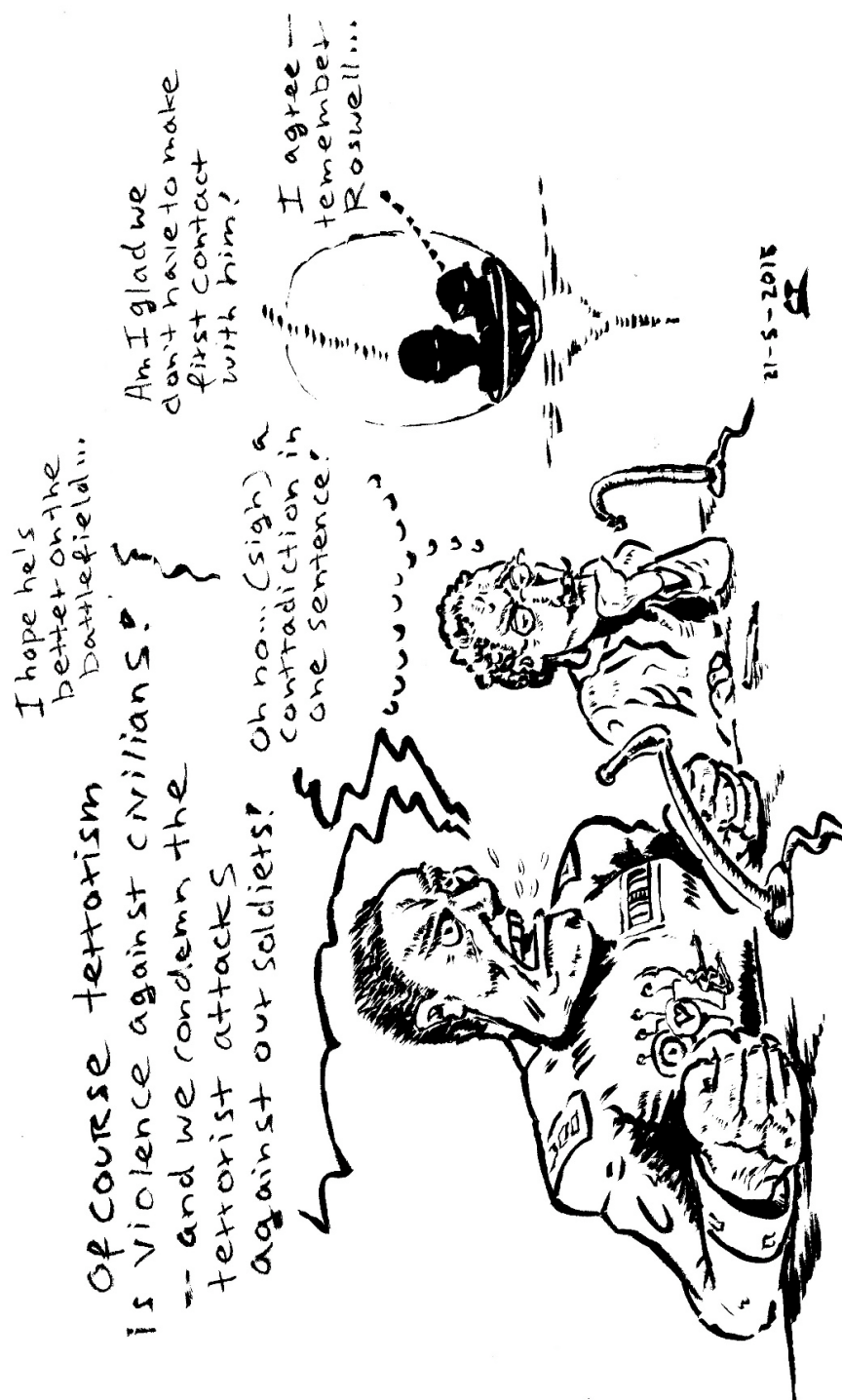
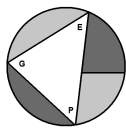


Copyright C. ten Dam 2015

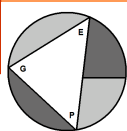




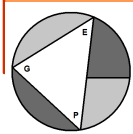
Copyright C. ten Dam 2015



Copyright C. ten Dam 2015



End of the Teaser from *The Expert* (EGxPress, forthcoming)!



Dorsey's Column

Middle Eastern Black Swans dot China's Belt and Road

James M. Dorsey

Edited remarks at the RSIS Book Launch ¹ of China and the Middle East: Venturing into the Maelstrom (Palgrave 2018), 20 September 2018. ² A podcast version of this story is available at <https://soundcloud.com/user-153425019/middle-eastern-black-swans-dot-chinas-belt-and-road>.

Introduction

If any one part of the world has forced China to throw its long-standing foreign and defense policy principles out the window and increasingly adopt attitudes associated with a global power, it is the greater Middle East, a region that stretches from the Atlantic coast of Africa to north-western China, a swath of land populated by the Arab, Turkic and Persian worlds.

It was a series of incidents in 2011 during the popular Arab revolts that drove home the fact that China would not be able to protect with its existing foreign and defense policy kit its mushrooming Diaspora and exponentially expanding foreign investments. Within a matter of a few years, the latter investments would be grouped as the infrastructure and connectivity-driven Belt and Road initiative linking the Eurasian landmass to the People's Republic.

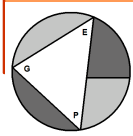
Policy principles of non-interference in the domestic affairs of others, an economically-driven win-win approach as a sort of magic wand for problem solution, and no foreign military interventions or bases needed reinterpretation if not being dumped on the dustbin of history.

The incidents included China's approach to the revolt in Libya as it was happening when it deviated from its policy of non-interference by establishing parallel relations with the opposition National Council. The outreach to Libyan leader Col. Moammar Qadhafi's opponents did not save it from being identified with the *ancien regime* once the opposition gained power. On the contrary, the Council made clear that China would be low on the totem pole because of its past support for the Qadhafi regime.

The price for supporting autocratic rule in the greater Middle East meant that overseas Chinese nationals and assets became potential targets. To ensure the safety and security of its nationals in Libya, China was forced to evacuate 35,000 people, its most major foreign rescue operation. The evacuation was the first of similar operations in Syria, Iraq and Yemen.

The evacuations did not stop militants in Egypt's Sinai from kidnapping 25 Chinese nationals, and radicals in South Sudan from taking several Chinese hostages. The kidnappings sparked significant criticism on Chinese social media of the government's seeming inability to protect its nationals and investments.

With Uyghurs from China's strategic north-western province of Xinjiang joining militant jihadists in Syria, and two Uyghur knife attacks in Xinjiang itself in the cities of Hotam and



Kashgar, the limits of China's traditional foreign and defense policy meshed with its increasingly repressive domestic approach towards the ethnic Turkic people.

Finally, the greater Middle East's expectations were driven home in a brutal encounter between Arab businessmen and ethnic Chinese scholars and former officials in which the Arabs took the Chinese to task for wanting to benefit from Middle Eastern resources and trade relations without taking on political and geopolitical responsibilities they associated with a rising superpower.

China's continuing foreign and defense policy challenges

Add to all of this that in subsequent years it was becoming increasingly difficult for China to remain on the sidelines of the Middle East's multiple conflicts and rivalries. This was particularly true with President Donald J. Trump's coming to office.

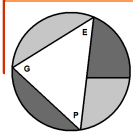
The greater Middle East's problems escalated with Mr. Trump's abandonment of any pretense of impartiality in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; his heating up of the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran by withdrawing from the 2015 international agreement curbing Iran's nuclear program; and his toying with attempting to change the regime in Tehran that encouraged Saudi Arabia to step up Saudi support for Pakistani militants in the province of Baluchistan; the likely return of Uyghur jihadists in Syria to Central and South Asia that has prompted the establishment of Chinese military outposts in Tajikistan and Afghanistan; consequent consideration of direct military intervention in a possible Syrian-Russian assault on Idlib, the last rebel-held stronghold in Syria; and finally the potential fallout of China's brutal crackdown in Xinjiang.

Already, the events in 2011 and since coupled with the mushrooming of Belt and Road-related investments has led to the creation of the country's first foreign military base in Djibouti and the likely establishment of similar facilities in its string of pearls, the network of ports in the Indian Ocean and beyond.

China's potential policy dilemmas in the greater Middle East were enhanced by the fact that it does not really have a Middle East policy that goes beyond its shaky, traditional foreign and defense policy principles and economics. That was evident when China in January 2016 on the eve of President Xi Jinping's visit to the Middle East, the first by a Chinese head of state in seven years, issued its first Middle East-related policy white paper that fundamentally contained no new thinking and amounted to a reiteration of a win-win-based approach to the region.

Moreover, with China dependent on the US security umbrella in the Gulf, Beijing sees itself as competitively cooperating with the United States in the Middle East. That is true despite the US-Chinese trade war; differences over the Iranian nuclear agreement, which the United States has abandoned and China wants to salvage; and Mr. Trump's partisan Middle East policy.

China shares with the United States in general and even more so with the Trump administration a fundamental policy principle: stability rather than equitable political



reform. China's principle of non-interference is little more than another label for the US equivalent of long-standing support of autocracy in the Middle East in a bid to maintain stability.

In some ways China is learning the lesson, despite recent developments in Xinjiang, that US President George W. Bush and Susan Rice, his national security advisor and subsequent secretary of state, learnt on 9/11. Within a matter of weeks after the Al Qaeda attacks on New York and Washington DC, Bush and Rice suggested that the United States was co-responsible for the attacks because of its support for autocracy that had fueled anti-American and anti-Western sentiment. It was why Bush launched his ill-conceived democracy initiative.

China, as a result of its political, economic and commercial approach towards the Belt and Road, is starting to have a similar experience. Chinese overseas outposts and assets have become targets, particularly in Pakistan but also in Central Asia.

The kidnappings in 2011 in the Sinai and South Sudan were the beginning. Uyghurs joined groups like the Islamic State and Al Qaeda not because they were pan-Islamist jihadists but because they wanted to get experience they could later apply in their militant struggle against the Chinese.

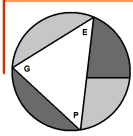
Beyond profiling themselves in fighting in Syria, Uyghurs have trained with Malhama Tactical, a jihadist-for-profit outfit reminiscent of Blackwater, the Western private military company created by Erik Prince. Moreover, Anti-Chinese sentiment in countries like Kazakhstan and Tajikistan is on the rise.

Iranians are grateful for Chinese support not only in the current battle over the nuclear accord but also in the previous round of international and US sanctions. They feel however that last time round they were taken for a ride in terms of high Chinese interest rates for project finance, the quality of goods delivered, and a perceived Chinese laxity in adhering to deadlines.

China's failure to take note of the potential success and fallout of people's power at home and abroad

Resentment of the fallout of the Belt and Road investment taps into the broader threat involved in supporting stability by backing autocratic regimes. That is nowhere truer than in the greater Middle East, a region that is in a period of volatile, often bloody and brutal transition. It is a transition that started with the 2011 Arab revolts and has been prolonged by a powerful Saudi-United Arab Emirates-led counterrevolution. Transitions take anywhere from a quarter to half a century. In other words, the Middle East is just at the beginning of its present transition.

China, like the United States did for decades, ignores the rumblings just below the surface even if the global trend is toward more authoritarian, more autocratic rule. Thus 9/11 was the result of the United States and the West failing to put their ear to the ground and to take note of those rumblings.



Of course, current rumblings may never explode. But the lesson of the people's power movement in the Philippines in 1986, the video in late 2010 of a fruit and vegetable vendor in Tunisia who set himself alight that sparked the Arab revolts, months of street and online protests in Morocco in the last year, the mass protests in Jordan earlier this year against a draft tax bill that have now restarted because of the legislation's resurrection, and the current protests in the Iraqi city of Basra, potentially are the writing on the wall. All it takes is a black swan.

Said *Financial Times* columnist Jamil Anderlini in September 2018: "China is at risk of inadvertently embarking on its own colonial adventure in Pakistan—the biggest recipient of BRI investment and once the East India Company's old stamping ground... Pakistan is now virtually a client state of China. Many within the country worry openly that its reliance on Beijing is already turning it into a colony of its huge neighbour. The risks that the relationship could turn problematic are greatly increased by Beijing's ignorance of how China is perceived abroad and its reluctance to study history through a non-ideological lens... It is easy to envisage a scenario in which militant attacks on Chinese projects overwhelm the Pakistani military and China decides to openly deploy the People's Liberation Army to protect its people and assets. That is how 'win-win' investment projects can quickly become the foundations of empire." ³

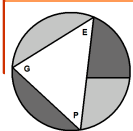
The Chinese crackdown in Xinjiang could just be a black swan on multiple fronts given the fact that its fallout is felt far beyond China's borders. For starters, the wall of Western and Muslim silence is cracking with potentially serious consequences for China as well as the Islamic world.

What is happening in Xinjiang is fundamentally different from past incidents including protests against a novel by Salman Rushdie and Ayatollah Khomeini's *fatwa* ordering his killing; the 2006 Muslim boycott of Danish products because of controversial Danish cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed; and the more recent protests sparked by the burning of a *Qur'an* by a Florida evangelist. The Chinese campaign in Xinjiang challenges fundamentals of the Islamic faith itself.

The earlier incidents were sparked by protests, primarily among South Asians in either Birmingham or Pakistan. September this year has seen the first of Xinjiang-related anti-Chinese protests in Bangladesh and India. The first critical article on Xinjiang in the Pakistani press was published in the same month as well.

Malaysia is the first Muslim country to speak out with condemnations by a senior figure in Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad's political party as well as the country's likely next head of government, Anwar Ibrahim.

Consideration in Washington DC of Xinjiang-related sanctions by the Trump Administration, coupled with United Nations reporting on the crackdown and a German and Swedish ban on deportations of Uyghurs, puts the issue on the map and increases pressure on Muslim nations, particularly those like Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan that claim to speak on behalf of Islam.



This together with the fact that Chinese support for autocratic or authoritarian rule creates a potential opportunity to export its model of the surveillance state, the most extreme example of which is on display in Xinjiang, constitutes risks and involves potential black swans. To be sure, Pakistan can hardly be described as a liberal society, but it is also not exactly an authoritarian state—yet Pakistan is China's first export target. And others closer to home could follow.

Conclusion: additional geopolitical challenges in Eurasia and the greater Middle East

If all of this is more than enough to digest, factor in the geopolitics of Eurasia, certainly as this relates to the greater Middle East. The Chinese-backed Russian-Iranian-Turkish alliance is brittle at best, witness differences over the possible battle for Idlib and the post-war presence of Iran in Syria.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Iran, and to a lesser degree Israel, are players in what is a 21st century Great Game. That is particularly true in the Caucasus and Central Asia as well as Pakistan and as it relates to port diplomacy in Pakistan's Gwadar and the Indian-backed Iranian port of Chabahar. Add to this the fact that if Saudi Arabia is the world's swing oil producer, Iran is Eurasia's swing gas producer with the potential to co-shape the supercontinent's future energy architecture.

And finally, there are multiple ways that China risks being sucked into the Saudi-Iranian rivalry not least if the United States and Saudi Arabia decide to take plans off the drawing board and initiate a campaign to destabilize Iran by stirring unrest among its Baloch, Kurdish, Iranian Arab and Azeri minorities.

The long and short of this is that the Great Game in Eurasia remains largely undecided and that change in China's foreign and defense policy is already a fact. The question is how all of this will affect China and how potential obstacles on the Belt and Road will play out.

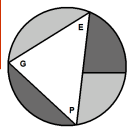
Dr. James M. Dorsey is a senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, co-director of the University of Würzburg's Institute for Fan Culture, and co-host of the New Books in Middle Eastern Studies podcast. James is the author of The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer blog, a book with the same title as well as Comparative Political Transitions between Southeast Asia and the Middle East and North Africa co-authored with Dr. Teresita Cruz-Del Rosario, Shifting Sands, Essays on Sports and Politics in the Middle East and North Africa and China and the Middle East: Venturing into the Maelstrom. jmdorsey@questfze.com

An earlier version of the article appeared at <https://mideastsoccer.blogspot.com/2018/09/middle-eastern-black-swans-dot-chinas.html>

Endnotes—Sources

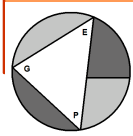
1. www.rsis.edu.sg/event/rsis-book-launch-by-dr-james-dorsey-senior-fellow-rsis/#.W8DfcWdlK70.
2. www.palgrave.com/us/book/9783319643540.
3. Jamil Anderlini, 'China is at risk of becoming a colonialist power', *Financial Times* 19 September 2018, www.ft.com/content/186743b8-bb25-11e8-94b2-17176fbf93f5.

NB: do you have any comments on James Dorsey's article? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or through the contact form at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.



(Advertisement)





Guest Column

Regarding my Letter of Protest to the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece

Dionysios Bastas

Introduction

On May 9th each year, people who believe in it, celebrate the “Day of Europe”. Not surprisingly, to people who are dismayed by all this “process”, that “celebration” is simply irrelevant and not something worth their attention. After all, the very notion of this “celebration” is already problematic. The terms “Europe” and “EU/European Union” are often used as if they are referring to the exact same thing, but Europe is one thing, the EU is another. For some unexplained reason there seems to be a complete lack of understanding or lack of willingness to acknowledge the difference between a continent and a badly executed political plan.

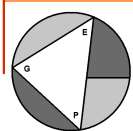
But what happens when matters of Faith get mixed with politics? What happens when “officials” (—Bishops—) whose main purpose of existence should be that of providing a path to Spiritual Growth and understanding of Greek Orthodox Christian Dogma and Service to the Lord and fellow human beings, decide to promote EU “ideals”? Then it should be expected, that some people will take notice.

The following text is an English version of a letter of protest sent to the “Holy Synod of the Church of Greece”, when the Church released on May 9th 2018 an official statement, to announce its delight about the celebration of the “Day of Europe—9th of May 1950”. As anyone ever engaged in translation might tell you, when you translate a body of text from a “source language” to a “target language” you cannot really translate “word for word” but you have to translate in such a way that you will convey the meaning of the “source text” to the “target text”. Eventually you have to recreate the original thoughts and ideas in a new linguistic environment.

Although I am not a professional translator, since the original Greek letter of protest was created by me, I believe I can do what is needed in order not only to accurately transit its contents from one language to another, but also to provide a “kick-off” point for further dialogue and critique of ideas, as is after all the goal of the journal in your hands.

Please be mindful enough to remember, that the text itself is one of protest, from an active member of the Church, who accepts the Dogma of the Greek Orthodox Christian Church and the teachings of the Holy Bible, towards high ranking Church officials, who according to the writer's viewpoint are misrepresenting and mishandling the Truth of the Gospel and Patristic tradition.¹

It is not a neutrally-oriented academic text. It is a letter of protest against the plague of double standards that we have to face in everyday aspects of our life. It is also a text, based on



the idea of Free Will, as a Gift of God, that can only be freely expressed in a Democratic Society that shares common values, which can be safeguarded by means of National Sovereignty. I would be glad to receive any comments and sincerely hope this effort was worth your time. With out any further due ...

TO Holy Synod of the Church of Greece

Letter of Protest

This letter of protest is sent to you, with the sole purpose of expressing my outrage and astonishment, after studying the statement you released under the title “TO THE PEOPLE—STATEMENT FOR THE DAY OF EUROPE 09TH OF MAY 1950”.

First and foremost, astonishment on how the Holy Synod appears to operate with double standards on when and how it express itself, on matters really concerning the Greek society or matters that the Holy Synod would wish to concern the “flock of Christ”.

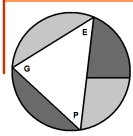
With big astonishment and difficulty to comprehend, I read in your statement what is supposedly the correlation between the Church of Christ or its mission concerning the Salvation of our immortal Soul, and the “Celebration” for the establishment of a political entity like that of the European Union, whose secular direction is more than obvious.

With even bigger astonishment, on how the Holy Synod can be evidently absent, when in a historically Christian society like ours, its very own foundation, the nuclear family (—the only type of family Blessed by the Lord Himself—), is under direct challenge by human laws that equate it with other types of “families”. In this manner the parents of a nuclear family are situated on the same level with those who wish to call themselves “parents” but live in a way totally incompatible with the way of life that is derived from the Orthodox tradition.

Most likely the Holy Synod, does not see a reason for an official statement there, but rushes to produce one for the modern Babylon of the EU, to pay lip service and tribute to “...the rulers of the age...”.

The Holy Synod appears to be uncaring, for what has been labeled as “...partial loss of National Sovereignty...” (—during a statement made by a previous PM on Kastelorizo island—), on a dark day for modern Greek history. Meanwhile the Holy Synod will not miss a chance to “glorify” the Ultra-State of Brussels.

The Holy Synod, hiding behind the masquerade of “...not participating in politics...” is provokingly absent from any form of public dialogue, about the transformation that minorities, not only ethnic or religious but also ideological minorities, impose upon the Greek society. At the same time, the Holy Synod is almost hedonistically tempted with the idea of European political integration, a goal that can be achieved only through totalitarianism.



And if all the above were reasons for astonishment, let us move forward to the outrageous claims in your statement and at the same moment, let us demolish their ideological foundation.

If the Holy Synod wishes to release “political texts”, rooted at least on some (—fictitious—) historical base, in order to avoid shaming itself, it would be prudent, to search for somebody that can properly research historical sources, since contrary to your claim, it was not Rober Souman and the “Anthrax and Coal European Community” that played the role of “harbinger” for the E.U but the “Committee of European Economic Cooperation” (CEECE) formed in July 1947.

The CEECE had been created on the pretext of distributing the “Marshall Plan” with the intention of mitigating any influence the Soviets might have gained on the Western countries of the European continent. So it seems that the first “spark” that ignited the fire, was not conceived in the ministry of Foreign Affairs in France but in an office tasked with long term strategy located in Washington DC.

In the text released by the Holy Synod, there is the mention of “...68 years...” in which the European continent (... a different entity than that of the EU ...) is enjoying peace and the claim that this is “...one of the goals of the Union...”.

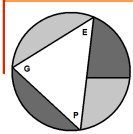
I will not spare much thought on the hypothesis that peace is an outcome of the very existence of this EU. The reality is that the historical aggressor of the continent (—Germany and all its previous forms—) has been divided with a wall in the very heart of Berlin, with no military means of its own and with both of her historical adversaries (France and the UK) having achieved the status of “nuclear power”. Thus, I am unable to comprehend who would be the instigator of a new war. Perhaps you meant Belgium ... ??

Now if one is determined to find out the causes of a situation, it is required that one evaluates the results, and if one has decided to investigate the goals, one needs to pay attention to the honors that are awarded, the mentality that is praised and the “mindset” that is cultivated.

In the EU one of the greatest awards that an individual can attain, is the “Charlemagne Prize”. This is reserved for citizens that promote the “European vision”. If the Holy Synod honestly accepts that the “cultural follower” of mass murderer Charlemagne have in mind the Biblical “...and Peace upon the Earth...” then I should have to bow down to your naivety, but in deep sorrow, I will have to realize that since the days of the ruination of the Tower of Babel we have realized nothing.

Our Lord Jesus, the incarnate Logos (word of God/divine will) amidst humanity’s history, is calling us to be united in the veneration of the One, Truly Living, Triune God. Not to merge again, and serve totalitarianistic embodiments of any given era. The goal of the EU is unification, not peace. That was just a means to an end. A carrot after a whip.

The Holy Synod, takes for granted that the “...European Unification attempt, popped out of the horrific residues of WW2...”. Since you have decided to delve in history (—and not Ecclesiastical history may I add—), maybe you would find it rather interesting to expand to



economic institutions' history.

It would then become rather apparent that certain groups, that provided the financial backbone for the Third Reich's military "behemoth", the "lubricant" for its moving parts and the "oil" for its motor, were either not tried in the Nuremburg trials or either tried and so lightly penalized, that within a decade and a half (at the utmost) they were again in the center of what later we came to know as the "European economy". If that horror the world has witnessed is not to be repeated, why do we still celebrate for the same grave robbers of Nation's wealth, is beyond me.

The Holy Synod mentions in its statement, "...the financial prosperity of various countries on the European continent...", as if this is a direct outcome of the very existence of this EU. Of course this claim is misleading at best. There are plenty of factors that this prosperity can be attributed to. Some of these factors are the usage of innovating technology, the mindset and workmanship of the citizen-resident of many of these countries and the values that have been generally accepted at the core of societies not long past. Values like conservation of Identity, Tradition and Social Cohesion.

And let us not forget, the conscious political decision, "transmitted" to us from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, for redistribution of wealth and rights as a "safeguard" and an "antidote" against the other ideological adversary of the Cold War era. This reality has changed with the failure of the Soviet regime and there was no reason for the oligarchs to keep pretending they cared. And that is how we found ourselves, having sold our souls to the "free market economy" for the highest bidder.

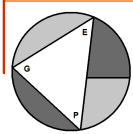
Nonetheless, the historical causes for this past materialistic prosperity had almost nothing to do with the existence of the EU. Neither with the armies of unelected "commissars" that play the role of the modern "blood-sucking" leeches, attached to the bodies of the peoples of today's "Europe".

Now concerning the so called "...solidarity..." of the EU that the Holy Synod speaks of. It is fraudulent, to say the least, to present a union as one of solidarity, when members of this "union" are to be blamed for the devastation, eradication and erasure of whole States from the face of the earth (Former Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya and the list is ever growing).

By the way, the financial groups that back up the E.U and in return are backed up by the E.U, are always very swift to "...divide up his clothes by casting lots..." in regards with the countries that are getting dismantled in the Balkans, the Middle East and elsewhere. Whether this is natural resources, the "reconstruction" or the "modernization" of the ruins the "coalitions" leave behind, it does not matter—business is good.

It would also be really near-sighted to expect that when the various armies of the countries of the EU become one single "Euro Army", we can expect anything less. Especially if we pay attention to the manuals of many modern army-groups that are full of "new speak" like "impose peace"—against whom remains to be seen.

By the way, nothing is "...free of charge..." in the context of the EU. The money spent on



various projects, simply “pave the way” for the political subjugation of the “member states” who are treated more as “assets” in an inventory, and for the acceptance of EU “regulations” as superior to the National Constitutions.

Regarding the so-called “...borrowing...” of funds to our country. Are we talking about Samaritans of the EU, who probably did this only out of the goodness of their heart? It seems that the Holy Synod is residing within a fish tank and has never heard of the term “economic hit man”, nor has heard anything about the super-profits that were achieved by the German financial elite due to this “borrowing”.

Really conservative calculations by economists, estimate these profits to be over one hundred (100) billion Euros (or 340,75 billion Drachmas if that would make it easier to grasp the size of the figure). It is obvious that the Holy Synod has failed to remember a saying, right out of Ancient Homeric Tradition “...beware of Greeks bearing gifts...”.

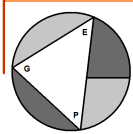
Let me inform you, in case you did not know, that according to the admission of many of “Europe’s” officials, there had to be a decision between “saving” the “Euro” currency or the Greek financial system (—the Greek people that is—). In the end, for the sake of money we know which “Iphigeneia” was sacrificed and who still venerates a “Golden Calf”. Where their worship is addressed, they know nothing of mercy or righteousness, they only know judgment and crisis.

Contrary to the Holy Synod’s claim, it is by no means true that “...the only thing our borrowers have demanded, is the modernization of our state and ways of conduct...”. Unless in some dictionary, that I am thankfully unaware of, the word “modernization” would be explained as not be allowed to pass a law, without the consensus of the EU’s so-called “troika”.

Maybe “modernization” means any income of the state to be in the hands of an “independent authority institution” (—independent from who may I ask, since independent is usually turned out to be unaccountable for one’s action...—). Maybe “modernization” means the reservation of public and private assets, maybe “modernization” means the exploitation of my country’s airports, from a German company (—directly linked to the German public sector—) that has received loans from Greek banks, in order to invest! Loans from the very same banks that have been “bailed out” with money from the Greek tax payer. Any of the above, that were part of what our “borrowers” demanded, cannot be called “modernization” but perversion.

The Holy Synod, also supposes the “...success...” of the European Unification to come. I would suggest to reexamine that, if and when ever the process “bears fruit”. As far as I know, in the last years, Iceland has switched to “Full Astern”, Great Britain slowly but surely waves its goodbyes, many countries deny to sacrifice their means of economic national sovereignty (—their national currency that is—) in favor of the new German Mark.

In the end the people of Europe, whenever they have been asked about more or less EU, whether it was the EU Constitution, the EU currency or any other “EU” themed matter, they have chosen in favor of the Nation State, for which their forefathers have had paid there dues



in blood. It seems that the Holy Synod has never heard of that old Greek proverb which says that “...a groom's beard is only shaved, just before the wedding...”.²

One more aspect that should have been taken in consideration by the Holy Synod is that of the geography of the EU in contrast with that of the European continent. The latter ends somewhere in the Ural Mountains, the former is simply used in conducting foreplay with the Neo-Nazi usurpers in Ukraine.

I wonder, since when and for whose benefit is it such a joyous event, that capitals and merchandise are moved “...uninhibited by national borders and tariffs...” like the Holy Synod triumphantly boasts. The national borders, are an achievement of each country's people and for the safeguarding of these borders, our forefathers, have perished in the hands of other people who dreamed of the abolition of national borders and the emergence of Empires.

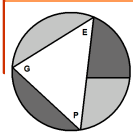
The tariffs were (—and are becoming again—) the means to protect your own country's productivity and your own country's poor people. Which countries' economies were favored within the context of the EU and which countries' economies were damaged? What benefit was it for our country to export cotton (—without tariffs—) to the “Central Powers” and import (—without tariffs—) cars. From these very same countries that were naming us “corrupt” it has turned out, that it has been their cars that had “corrupted” OS installed in order to showcase better performances.

The adoption of the “EURO” currency, was simply a crime. As the average commoner saw in one night their purchasing power reduced to 1/3 of what it used to be with the Drachma, we were late to realize that by losing our currency we had also lost the ability to choose what “current to ride”—to determine ourselves what course suited our needs and interests. By losing the ability to regulate our money, we also lost the ability to regulate our laws and policy directions.

In regard with the Holy Synod's claims about the EU being synonymous with international law and democracy. I will have to pass commenting on that, because I do not know if anyone can stand such ridiculous claims. In Catalonia, they still feel what suppression means, because they had the nerve to organize a referendum! No one was surprised to see the EU siding with the Former PM of Spain (—the same person today under charges of corruption—) under the pretense “...of not intervening in internal matters of Spain...”.

Has it ever occurred to anybody, that if the EU wants a certain law passed, or certain measures taken this “non-intervention” goes down the drain? After all, this must be what the common grounds are between the EU and the Holy Synod, they are both dwelling on “double standards”. It seems both of these “institutions” have fallen to the state of being political institutions of self-serving men, and probably nothing more.

Entitled to asylum are refugees. Refugees only, not anybody who illegally decides to cross a border. International law, that the EU is supposedly so imbued with, is very clear on who gets to be treated as a refugee and under what circumstances.



Charity and Alms, as a realization of the Gospel, are a personal choice of each and everyone of us individually. It cannot be downgraded to the level of obligatory state policy. If it comes to that, it is not charity anymore. Then it is coercion that robs us of the very heavenly reward for loving our fellow human, loving not just in theory but in real life, as preached in the Gospel. I am very surprised to see our Holy Synod not to be able to make basic distinctions like these.

The culture that we today “import” from Europe, has only adopted the shape and the color of Ancient Greek civilization, but not its spirit. In the best case scenario, it gave birth to “Javers”³ that never got to understand their fellow “miserable” beings, and in vain tried to “school” him using methodologies and rules that would leave even Prokroustis⁴ in shock and awe.

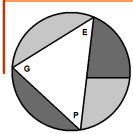
In a way, Western Christianity was engulfed by a Pope’s pride or sidetracked by endless “reformations”. It would not correct its course because it would not correct its bearings. It would not act properly because it would not Worship properly. In that very way, the culture that was produced within that context, never saw the Light but was simply “enlightened” through distorting lenses and prisms, and lead to other kinds of “deities” and “altars”. Why is it then, my shepherds, that today we come to copy them? Have we not seen enough of their results, have we not tested enough of their bitterness? At what point have we lost our trajectory?

In this very same statement, the Holy synod, has expressed its concern about the demographic problems, of both the EU and our country. How gracious! But have no fear, the bright minds of Brussels are here with a solution! We “import” cheap labor, from the very countries “we” helped to destroy, again and again, then we distribute them to every bit of the continent and later we call them “Europeans”. The mere fact that they do not have any notion of the idea of “citizen” and no kinship with any of the values that supposedly are the “backbone” of the European “ideals”, does not seem to bother anyone. Of course at the time of Noah, everybody was predicting sunshine.

Naturally, while everybody is encouraged to “join the club”, regardless of who is who, or who wants what, for some unknown reason, we are under the illusion, that the “newcomers” will respect rules that they disagree with, mindsets alien to them and “social contracts” with which they are not willing to compromise. “...Those whom God wishes to destroy, he first makes mad...” wrote Euripides centuries ago, and remains relevant. In stark contrast the Holy Synod wrote “Towards the People” in favor of the E.U.

The problems through history were not created by the People, or the manifestation of their will, which is, still to this day, the Nation State. The historical problems were caused by the all-consuming empires, whether they had existed (Ottoman Empire, Persian Empire etc.) or whether they are trying to materialize (neo-Ottoman, EU etc.).

Today, in this World, whose restoration we are awaiting, when the time for it is to be, and by whom is entitled to do it, we simply witness the same, badly written, badly played “act”. The Germanic “machine”, or whatever economic interest is pulling its strings this time, is once



again trying to establish an empire. In our age, this effort is carried out, under the banner of the “free market economy” but historically, every time Germany rose, its people saw their guts spilled to the ground So no matter how bad things are today, no matter how ethically downgraded our era is, please, my shepherds, do not jump in the mud. There are no diamonds to be discovered there. Only omnivorous swine. You will bring nothing back with you. You will only be left down there with them.

My shepherds, throughout the text, I “hammered” you with words, but if you are not hear to transmit Truth and work for the Salvation of our Souls, perhaps you are “unworthy laborers in the vineyard” and not only without use like “salt that has lost its taste” but also detrimental, in the same way Ion Dragoumis deemed the State of his era for the wellbeing of the homeland.

Surely, I am the last in line that can pass judgment upon your shoulders; after all, each and every one of us that has boarded the “Ark” that even “...the gates of Hell shall not prevail against...”, we know our personal unworthiness, but we also know who will be our common Judge at the End of Time.

Anyhow, I can still ask, raising my voice to the wind for the world to hear, if not even the Hypocrites and the Pharisees have not glorified the Roman conquerors of their era, like you do with our time's overlords, the mere fact that you surpass those religious officials, what does that make of you? And I can also ask, the poor soul that was tasked to be the author of your statement, in what dungeon of which embassy has he been flogged, because there is no other logical explanation for that text.

Deeply annoyed and bitter by your actions,

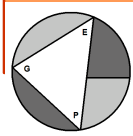
Dionysios Bastas

Dionysios Bastas is a Graduate at the Theological University of Athens. bastasion@yandex.ru

Endnotes

1. Patristic Tradition: the Theology of the followers of the Apostles, the Fathers (Pateres Πατέρες) of the Church.
2. “...a groom’s beard is only shaved, just before the wedding...”: the meaning of this old Greek saying is similar to the notion that a football game is not over until the final whistle. The 1999 UEFA Champions League Final between Manchester United and Bayern Munich was a fine example of that.
3. Javers: peoples similar to the primary antagonist of Victor Hugo’s 1862 novel *Les Misérables*, tragic legalists that give spawn to other tragedies.
4. Prokroustis: mythical bandit from ancient Greek era: in order to allow for pass through his territory, he had to exact his toll; he would lay his victims on a wooden bed; whoever was taller than the bed, his extremities would be cut down to match the length of the bed; whoever was shorter than the bed would be stretched to the match the length of the bed—most of the times both scenarios would lead to a painful death.

NB: do you have any comments on Dionysios Bastas’ article? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or through the contact form at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.



Editorial Note

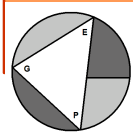
The author's contribution is (thought-)provoking, fierce and consequently replete with (very) strong statements containing sharp, combustible language about e.g. the European Union and Germany and their role in Greece's still ongoing socio-economic (debt) crisis. These statements and observations may seem excessive and even shocking and insulting to at least some of our readers. These statements and observations certainly do not represent the viewpoint or unconditional backing of the Editorial Board or any of its members. These are and remain the responsibility of the author.

Still, the author's strong statements and observations are understandable and thought-provoking, given the harsh role by the EU in general and Germany in particular in the imposition of disruptive, indeed devastating austerity measures in Greece. We at the Editorial Board, in particular the editor-in-chief and the executive editor, are of the opinion that the widespread anger about these measures among Greek citizens across all classes and walks of life (which tends to be underestimated and even neglected outside Greece) needs to be heard—preferably with a bang, and not a whisper.

Thus a fiery pamphlet or opinion piece like the author's can have its uses, to say the least. That is one reason why we have decided to publish the author's Letter of Protest with the newly added Introduction and explanatory notes. A more general reason to publish it is the consideration that one of the primary objectives of our journal is to engender (academic) debate about controversial issues that fall directly or indirectly within the field of ethnogeopolitics.

We wish to see more of this debate, to 'fire it up' more forcefully and frequently in and through our journal, so to speak. Thus our journal intends to welcome more 'Dionysian' contributions next to the more 'Apollonian' ones—and hopefully engender a fruitful interchange and mix of the two.

- Caspar ten Dam, Executive Editor



Book Review

The Tribes of Albania: History, Society and Culture

Caspar ten Dam

Robert Elsie, *The Tribes of Albania: History, Society and Culture* London/New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015, 368 pages. ISBN: 978-1-78453-401-1 (hardback) / 978-0-85773-932-2 (e-book)

In Honour and Memory of Dr Robert Elsie (1950 – 2017)

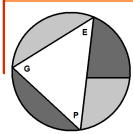
This book review will form part of a broader review essay on several of Robert's Elsie last works on the Albanians, which the peer-reviewed journal Iran and the Caucasus (Brill) intends to publish sometime next year. At the same time, this book review—and perhaps (parts of) the broader review essay as well—will form part of an extensive research note (preliminary) titled 'What We Know about Albanian Tribes', focused on Elsie's Tribes of Albania, (some of) his related works and other sources. The latter manuscript is already near completion and earmarked for one of the next issues of our journal; perhaps it will come out as early as the forthcoming Winter 2018 issue.

NB: citations and other references from the book under review are indicated only by the relevant page numbers of that work, e.g. '(p. 1)', '(p. 100)', etcetera.

The Tribes of Albania: History, Society and Culture forms a remarkable, insightful and sorely needed addition to the field of ethnic studies in general and the oft-neglected field of Albanian studies particular. Indeed, it should help to overcome the “glaring lack of knowledge and scholarly information about the tribes of northern Albania”.¹ This is all the more important once one realises that particularly the region of Northern Albania has contained, like Montenegro, one of the few truly tribal societies on the European subcontinent that survived more or less intact at least up to the mid-twentieth century.

For decades, Dr Robert Elsie has been one of the most prominent specialists on Albanian poetry and literature. His untimely death in late 2017 leaves a gaping hole in the mentioned disciplines for years and even decades to come, that few if any non-native scholars would ever be able to fill given his in-depth knowledge and vaunted mastery of the Albanian language.

As a prolific writer, editor, translator and interpreter, he has in more recent years broadened his studies and publications—and translations, editorships and republications of other works—to Albanian politics and society as well, including the history, structure and saliency of the clans or tribes among the Albanians. His *Tribes of Albania* concerns one of his very last sovereign works of his own before his death; thus this work deserves a highly positive if



occasionally critical review and (re)appraisal, even though the work in question already has come out several years ago, in praise and commemoration of this highly productive scholar.

The book under review primarily deals with the “about 70” (p. 10) mostly ethnic-Albanian tribes in northern Albania who mostly speak the Gheg-dialect (as opposed to the Tosk-dialect spoken mainly in southern Albania), because most of these have been historically concentrated and most salient in that region, even to this day. Still, other Albanian(ised) tribes—and smaller clans, sub-clans and large families however delineated and defined—in other Albanian-inhabited lands in South-Eastern Europe in the Balkans are described in Elsie’s *Tribes of Albania* as well, notably (in) Montenegro, Kosovo and FYR (Former Yugoslav Republic of) Macedonia. Apart from his *Tribes of Albania*, recent studies on Albanian clans or tribes, sub-clans and other kinship groups in and beyond Albania are few and far in between, and typically partial or limited in breadth and scale.

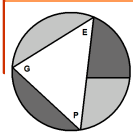
Elsie prefers to translate the primary Albanian patrilineal kinship-group concept of *fis* as ‘tribe’, though he acknowledges that the term also generally is, and can be, translated as ‘clan’ (p. 3; see also p. 5, note 6).² Few if any scholars identify separate Albanian terms for ‘clan’ and ‘tribe’, and rather translate the single Albanian term *fis* as both ‘clan’ and ‘tribe’ (and occasionally just ‘kin’)—and consequently apply the latter English terms interchangeably.³

Elsie himself circumscribes the *fis* or tribe in the strict sense, and in “the northern Albanian context”, as “a patrilineal kin group, i.e. a tribe in which all male members regarded themselves as being of common descent” (pp. 3-4). For each tribe he considers to be or have been as such in the strict sense, he defines the *fis* as a “community that is aware of common blood ties and of a common history reaching back to one [mythical, purported or factual, provable] male ancestor” (e.g. p. 20). Tribes in the broader sense are deemed “ethnographic regions with a distinct history and identity that are not strictly tribes but are often regarded as such” (p. 5; see also his note 6). Apparently, at least according to Elsie, there were and are no (ethnic-)Albanian matrilineal tribes to speak of.

Another major, originally Ottoman concept is *bajrak* (banner, standard), which is also often translated as ‘clan’ or ‘tribe’. Yet actually it “was more of a political[-military] entity, usually entailing a specific geographical territory” (p. 4) headed by a hereditary *bajraktar* (standard bearer) that may concern one or multiple *fis* or part of a *fis*. With the *bajrak-fis* “constructions and constellations sometimes being fluid” (Ibid), major explorers like Karl Steinmetz (?–1910), Baron Franz Nopcsa (1877–1933) and Franz Seiner (1874–1929) circumscribe and apply these terms markedly differently from each other.

Commendably Elsie himself applies a broad concept of the tribe “so as to cover not only the *fis* and the *bajrak*, but also some ethnographic regions of northern Albania with a distinct history and identity that are not strictly tribes but are often regarded as such” (p. 5). True, eventually practically each of these clans came to be called a *bajrak* whereby the *bajraktar* became a hereditary post for the (leading) sub-clan or extended family within the clan concerned, which generally functioned well into the early 20th century.

Elsie’s *Tribes of Albania* distinguishes and describes altogether 74 discrete tribes (rather than



“69 different tribes” according to the book cover), including semi-tribes and sub-tribes, in eleven separate chapters covering distinct areas within Northern Albania, and occasionally bordering areas in Southern Albania within the state of Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo, FYR Macedonia and Greece as well.

For each distinguished (sub-)tribe, Elsie seeks to describe, as succinctly yet at the same time as exhaustively as possible, its historical, demographic and cultural characteristics under at least some of the following sections and headings: Location of Tribal Territory; Population; Tribal Legendry, Ancestry and History; Travel Impressions (by foreign visitors); and (domestic, native) Figures of Note. The characteristics of the better-known and/or documented tribes are described under all or most of these sections and headings, the lesser-known and/or documented ones only under some of them.

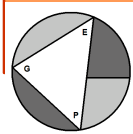
The reviewer counts 77 tribes as actually distinguished and discussed by Elsie, also counting and adding separately the three overarching composite tribes encompassing multiple discrete tribes each: the Mirdita, Mati and Dibra.⁴ For most of the tribes, Elsie consults, refers to and often extensively cites from a relatively limited yet authoritative set of individual and collective sources, which include amongst others:

- the 1671(-2) ecclesiastical report(s) by Pietro Stefano Gaspari, “the apostolic visitor to Albania .. who travelled through the region in 1671–2” (e.g. p. 19);
- the 1688 map of the Venetian cartographer Francesco Maria Coronelli;
- the 1689 map of the Italian cartographer Giacomo Cantelli da Vignola;
- the 1866 and 1868 reports by Emile de Wiet, the French consul at the time in Shkodra (Alb: Shkodër), ‘capital’ and largest town in Northern Albania;
- the 1916-1918 Albanian census reports by the Austrian journalist and scholar Franz Seiner (1874–1929), rapporteur of “the first reliable census taken in Albania in 1918 under Austrian-Hungarian administration” (e.g. p. 19);
- the travel reports, field researches and/or analytical treatises on the Albanians by the Austrian diplomat and scholar Johann Georg von Hahn (1811–1869); the Hungarian-born scholar Baron Franz Nopcsa (1877–1933); the Austrian engineer Karl Steinmetz (?–1910); and the British writer Mary Edith Durham (1863–1944), all of whom frequently travelled through the region in the mid-19th, late 19th and/or early 20th centuries.

More contestable perhaps is the rather rigid dividing line that Elsie applies between the non-Albanian outsiders described in the ‘Travel Impressions’ section for most of the identified tribes, and the often famous, well-known, significant native sons (and sisters) of many of these tribes described in the ‘Figures of Note’ section for these tribes.

In *Tribes of Albania*, Elsie does hardly mention or elaborate on any impressions, ideas and judgments these native Figures of Note might have had about the histories, cultures and traditions of their own tribes, other Albanian tribes or Albanians in general, including particular characteristics like blood-feuds and other manifestations of honour-codes in their customary *Kanun* (lit. law, rule, rod) law.

In contrast, the Travel Impressions of generally Victorian and post-Victorian visitors from the



West contain plenty of such often prejudiced, one-sided and blinkered if knowledgeable ideas and judgments on such actual or perceived traits of Albanian tribes or Albanians in general. Elsie does show in some of his other (edited) works some critical views by natives themselves on their own traditions and societies, particularly those by post-WWII and younger generations of Albanian writers. Yet such inward-oriented views by natives are virtually absent in Elsie's *Tribes of Albania*.

Therefore, many of the political, religious, military a/o literary Figures of Note described in Elsie's book may actually have had expressed positive, negative or ambiguous, conflicted viewpoints about their own histories, cultures and traditions—apart from their own 'modern' national(ist) aspirations that are more easily apparent to the outside world then and now. Indeed major native figures may have harbored such views, including those from large, powerful or otherwise well-known predominantly Catholic tribes in northern Albania like the Kelmendi, Shala, Shllaku, Nikaj and Mirdita (composite), and predominantly Muslim tribes like the Krasniqja, Mati (composite) and Luma. Think of:

Prekë Cali (1878–1945) of Kelmendi, Mehmet Shpendi (1851–1915) of Shala; Bernardin Palaj (1894–1946) of Shllaku; Ndoc Nikaj (1864–1951) of Nikaj; Ambroz Marlaskaj (1884–1939) of the Kushnени tribe within the composite Mirdita tribe; Haxhi Zeka (1832–1902) of Krasniqja; Ahmet Zogu (1895–1961) of the Zogolli family within the composite Mati tribe; and Muharrem Bajaraktari (1896–1989) of Luma.

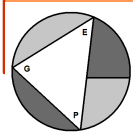
Still, Elsie refers to none or hardly any of these viewpoints by these historical figures in his book (even though all of them are mentioned, cited and/or discussed in his book)—nor do most other available sources for that matter.

The many old and new sources, descriptions, factual details and insights that Elsie does use, refer to and cite in his *Tribes of Albania* largely concord with, confirm and enrich the reviewer's own research findings on Albanian traditional honour, blood-revenge and hospitality codes within their customary *Kanun* laws, kinship groups and other cultural characteristics.

Thus most of the “about 70 northern Albanian tribes” (p. 10) adhered to the honour-centric *Kanun* codes for many decades or even centuries until at least the early 20th century. This adherence may explain the endemic blood-feuds—and often closely related raiding and pillaging, though these often emanated from extreme poverty rather than any other reason—within between many of these tribes at the time.

Incidentally, this honour-bound culture may account for their numerous rebellions against Ottoman, Austrian-Hungarian, Serbian and other conquerors and overlords as well. Rightly or wrongly, “these codes have been linked to ... Albanian blood-feuding (*gjakmarrje*). Whether the kanuns were responsible for institutionalising revenge and promoting the widespread vendettas that caused the extinction of a good portion of the male population a century ago, or whether they simply reflected an already existing tribal mentality, is open to debate” (pp. 9-10).

Whether caused by the *Kanun* honour-codes, wider tribal culture or any other reasons, intra-



and inter-tribal blood-feuds seem certainly to have been quite prevalent among some of the large, powerful and/or otherwise well-known tribes like the Shala and Nikaj, both Catholic tribes who were each other's "hereditary enemies" (p. 151). Whether such feuds have been prevalent among small, marginal and/or otherwise less(er)-known tribes like the Bobi and Gimaj in the Shkodra district, appears to be generally unknown. For none of the 23 'minor tribes' Elsie identifies, he has been able or ready to describe their degree of (blood-)feuding.

The overall extent of blood-feuding in past and present appears to be checkered and partially obtuse. As far as the reviewer has been able to deduce and present in a table of his own ⁵, among the 77 tribes (also counting the three composite tribes) distinguished by Elsie, according to Elsie's sources just 4 are or have been fully, mostly or likely characterised by blood-feuding to this day or have been so until fairly recently; 18 are partially or uncertainly characterised by blood-feuding; and just one (sub-)tribe—the Kryezezi—explicitly is hardly ever or never characterised by blood-feuding.

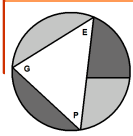
At least according to Karl Steinmetz during a visit in August 1905, the Kryezezi tribe "is the most peaceloving of all the Catholic tribes of northern Albania" (p. 200; quote from Steinmetz 1908, p. 5). ⁶ About as many as 54 tribes it remains unknown or unmentioned in Elsie's book whether they have ever been involved in blood-feuds amongst themselves, against other tribes or against non-Albanian outsiders.

Generally, up-to-date, extensive and exhaustive field research on the (non-)existence and (non-)vitality of tribes or clans among Albanians remains sorely needed. Indeed it is rather telling and worrying that Franz Seiner's 1918 census arguably contains the last exhaustive and reliable demographic study of ethnic-Albanian and other kinship groups in Albania and the larger region inhabited by Albanians to this day.⁷ Even Elsie's *Tribes of Albania* does not fully succeed in determining and clarifying the precise fate of all known Albanian tribes.⁸

Therefore, one must take issue with Elsie's sweeping statement that—due to poverty and instability (collapse of the communist regime in 1990, temporary collapse of the Albanian state in 1997, etc.) and consequent migration to the cities and depopulation in the home regions—the remaining tribes that still had survived Enver Hoxha's Stalinist rule "have been scattered" and that Albanian "tribal identity nowadays involves little more than an awareness of the origin of their families" (p. 11).⁹

The reviewer hesitates to question Elsie's overall assessment of the apparent demise of the Albanian tribal system, given his nearly unique expertise on all matters Albanian. Still one must ask the following: even if poverty, instability (including state collapse and warfare) and consequent migration to cities in and beyond Albania do account for many a tribe's demise, does these and any other factors account for the actual demise of all or even most tribes?

After textual analysis of Elsie's book, the reviewer has found that of 57 of the 77 tribes including the composite tribes distinguished by Elsie ¹⁰, it remains unknown or unmentioned in Elsie's book whether they still exist and function today or when they ceased to exist and function. Perhaps many of these 57 tribes are alive and even thriving today after all—the lack of clarity on their current fate and status makes this at least theoretically possible.



Consequently, one cannot really be sure at this stage that the reviewer's counting of just 5 fully, mostly or likely surviving tribes and 11 partially or uncertainly surviving tribes to this day after carefully going through Elsie's text, presents a true picture and confirmation of Elsie's bleak assessment of the general state of Albanian tribal configuration in and beyond Albania.

Robert Elsie's *The Tribes of Albania: History, Society and Culture* forms a crucial, arguably ground-breaking addition to the field of ethnic studies in general and of Albanian studies particular. Nevertheless, given the limitations described above, even Elsie's comprehensive work does not fully succeed in filling all major, perhaps permanent gaps in knowledge on the Albanians.

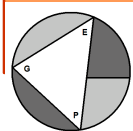
Thus even if some of the better-known (ethnic-)Albanian tribes were and are known for frequent, endemic blood-feuds within the tribe a/o with other tribes based on *Kanun* honour-codes, the extent to which blood-feuds and other tribal norms are still practised by any surviving Albanian kinship and other groups today remains largely unknown. At best such knowledge is known among a small group of experts only, who so far have been unable to disseminate their knowledge to the wider academic community, let alone the general public.

More generally, even Elsie's book does not truly resolve the sad given that the known data on the numbers, denominations, saliencies, other characteristics or even existence of Albanian kinship groups in the recent and more distant past, still remain outdated, fragmented and maybe lost forever to this day.

The data that has survived remains contested and confusing given the triple translations of *fis* as 'tribe', 'clan' or 'kin' by and among scholars in Albanian studies over the last decades and even centuries. As most of the 74 discrete tribes identified and described by Elsie do concur with and occur in Franz Seiner's 1918 classification of 65 discrete tribes (see esp. Seiner 1922, pp. 102, 108-112) ¹¹, we can at least surmise that most Albanian tribes were alive and kicking by the end of WWI.

Yet more often than not Elsie does not specify what precisely (appears to have) happened to these tribes after that world war—and what happened to them specifically after WWII and the establishment of Enver Hoxha's Stalinist regime in Albania which lasted till the early 1990s. Therefore to what extent did any of these tribes or clans manage to survive all these periods full of turmoil, warfare and repression—that of the Communist dictatorship in Albania most of all?

Perhaps Elsie could have added for each identified tribe in his *Tribes of Albania* a section titled like 'Extant Saliency (to this day or last known date or period)' on which sufficient information can be given about the latter. Such a section would have helped to consistently specify the degree of vibrancy and longevity of each tribe on which there is enough reliable data to do so, and whether it has survived partially or wholly intact to this day—at least as a cultural entity if it has moved or scattered away from its ancestral homeland or traditional area of geographic concentration.

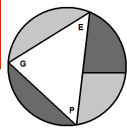


A concluding section at the end of the book would also have helped to summarise the main characteristics, histories and saliencies of the identified Albanian tribes in and beyond Northern Albania for far as these can be deduced from available sources (including some of Elsie's other works)—preferably ending with a 'to-do list' of required additional research. Such research Elsie unfortunately will no longer be able to do himself, given his untimely death.

Caspar ten Dam is a conflict analyst and researcher on e.g. Chechen and Albanian insurgencies at the Institute of History of Leiden University, the Netherlands. c.t.ten.dam@umail.leidenuniv.nl He is also an independent scholar with his own research company CT Dam Consultancy (www.ctdamconsultancy.com).

Endnotes—References

1. Citation from http://books.elsie.de/bo86_tribes-of-albania (last acc. 4-11-2018). The reviewer once did approach Elsie on the subject of such sorely lacking research on the Albanians; at the time he responded as follows: "I am currently working on a book about the Mountain Tribes of Northern Albania It should be, in your words, the first "systematic nationwide research on Albanian clan-culture" " (email-communication, 20-07-2013).
2. In note 6 of his Introduction, Elsie writes: "One can also speak of Albanian 'clans' instead of 'tribes'. We regard these two terms as largely synonymous and interchangeable here in the Balkan context" (p. 329).
3. There appear to be no separate Albanian terms for 'tribe', 'clan' or 'kin', apart perhaps from e.g. *gjin(i)* being translated as 'kinship group(s)'; yet *gjini* it is more often translated as 'gender' and *gjin* as 'male/clan(nish) (sur)name'.
4. See the reviewer's table 'Major Characteristics of Albanian Tribes in Elsie's Tribes of Albania (2015)' at www.ctdamconsultancy.com/other-projects/; see [robertelsietribesalbaniafeatureslist2018](#).
5. Ibid. This table shows separate columns on e.g. saliency of blood-feuds and miscellaneous facts.
6. See Karl Steinmetz, *Von der Adria zum Schwarzen Drin* (From the Adriatic to the Black Drin) Sarajevo: Daniel A. Kajon, 1908.
7. See Franz Seiner, *Ergebnisse der Volkszählung in Albanien in dem von Österr.-Ungarischen Truppen 1916-1918 besetzten Gebiete*, mit Anhang *Die Gliederung der Albanischen Stämme* (Results of the Census in Albania in the Areas Occupied by Austro-Hungarian Troops in 1916-1918, with annex Classification of the Albanian Tribes), Vol. 13 in: Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, *Schriften der Balkankommission—Linguistische Abteilung* (Academy of Science in Vienna, Reports/Documents of the Balkans Commission—Linguistic Department) Vienna/Leipzig: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1922.
8. Elsie admits as much: his book is "admittedly, a motley collection of information and texts with many lacunae of which the author is painfully aware" (p. 12).
9. Elsie observes that the "old clan or tribal structures ... don't really exist anymore anyway. I believe one could speak of extended family loyalties (which are strong among Albanians), but I doubt very much if these have anything to do with the old clans or tribes. People in northern Albania and in Kosovo do have a vague sense of "belonging" to a tribe—Kelmendi, Krasniqi, Gashi, Berisha, Thaci, Shala etc.—but I do not think it amounts to much more. The infighting between the tribes one hundred years ago no longer exists, as far as I know" (email



-communication, 21-07-2013). “Also be aware that the Kosovo Albanians with clan names (Berisha, Gashi, Krasniqi, Thaci, Kelmendi, Shala etc.) are not living on Tradition tribal land. They are descendants who emigrated to Kosovo from the northern Albanian mountains long ago, many of them to escape feuding. So there are not really any clan territories in Kosovo” (email-communication, 22-07-2013).

10. See note 4.
11. See note 7.

(Advertisement)



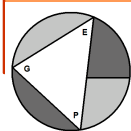
After nearly ten years since its inception, the new owner of the Mayflower Bookshop in Leiden (www.themayflowerbookshop.nl) decided to move the nicest bookstore in town from its original premise at Hogewoerd 107 to Breestraat 65 during 2015 in order to expand its size and repository. During late 2016, the bookshop moved again, to the current address Breestraat 142.



Breestraat 142, Leiden, the Netherlands (© Mayflower 2016)



Often book presentations, lectures and poetry recitals held



(Advertisement)

Now second, revised Dutch edition:

Military intelligence scandal uncovered in Dutch book



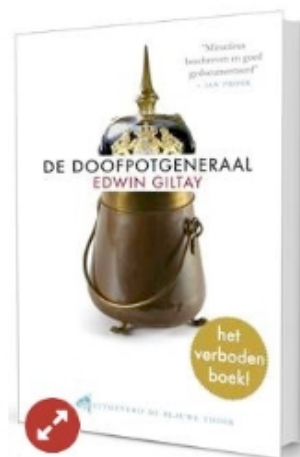
A general sporting three stars on his uniform, commissioning a private spy to nose around in a commercial company. And this is not just anyone: it's the general's own wife. A tribal war within the Dutch Military Intelligence Service, with unsuspecting citizens being victimized. One would expect such a *modus operandi* in North Korea, not in the Low Countries. However, this is what author Edwin F. Giltay experienced — he vividly describes the saga in *The Cover-up General* (Dutch: *De doofpotgeneraal*).

In his book Mr Giltay depicts the rather transparent conduct of secret service agents infiltrating at the internet provider where he was assigned. Initially a spook tried to recruit Mr Giltay as a military analyst. At the same time however, she herself was being monitored. At the root of this tug-of-war within the Military Intelligence Service was the infamous film roll of Srebrenica depicting war crimes, which was misdeveloped by the Dutch Armed Forces. The recruiting officer intended to make public the footage on the film wasn't at all lost — information that would no doubt have undermined the standing of a certain triple-star general.

The Cover-up General delineates this espionage scandal fervently. Mr Giltay recounts the absurd consequences in great detail.

In November 2014, *The Cover-up General* was published in Amsterdam. One year after publication — when it was already sold out — the book was banned. A judge prohibited Edwin F. Giltay to reprint, distribute and even promote his book. The censorship verdict was front page news in the Balkans, and met with anger and disbelief everywhere.

However, the verdict was resolutely overturned on 12 April 2016. A second, revised edition of *The Cover-up General* by Blauwe Tijger Publishing returned on the market in September 2016.



€19.50 including delivery in the Netherlands and Belgium

De doofpotgeneraal
Edwin Giltay
Epilogue Hans Laroes

Book banned: 21 December 2015
Ban lifted: 12 April 2016
Second, revised edition including eight new chapters published in September 2016 by Blauwe Tijger

Paperback with flaps
263 pages



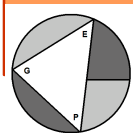
'A good observation of a sad struggle within the army command'
Nieuwe Revu, opinion weekly

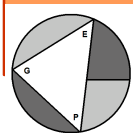


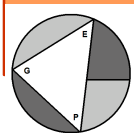
'The secret services torn apart, the government unmasked'
Hebbar, book review site

'The Court rules the accuracy by which Edwin Giltay wrote the book, is not in doubt'
Court of Appeal The Hague

www.thecoverupgeneral.com







Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics

A publication of Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics

Amsterdam The Netherlands

Print ISSN: 2214-3211 Online ISSN: 2352-3654