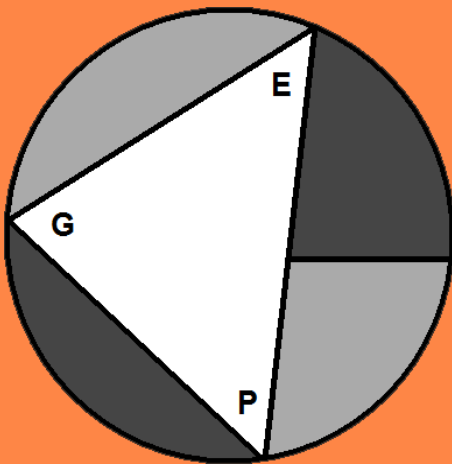


Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics



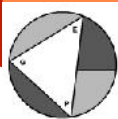
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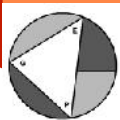
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Scope

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. See www.ethnogeopolitics.org about the association's foundation, founding (editorial) board members, aims, activities and publications—and particularly the freely downloadable copies of the journal's issues and the individual contributions in each issue.



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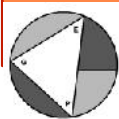
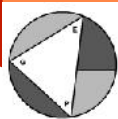
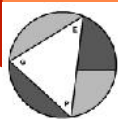


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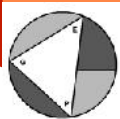
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The Religious Doctrines of the Iraqi Turkmen:
a Focus on the Shia Turkmen

Sheth Jerjis



* * * Call and Guidelines for Contributions * * *

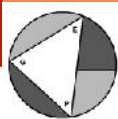
Our journal is ready to receive contributions in Russian, German, Spanish and other non-English languages (though all require English abstracts) as well. We at the Editorial Board do not apply a strict wordlimit, but we prefer full-fledged research articles of no more than 10,000 words. We also welcome 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. Association of EthnoGeoPolitics is willing to (re)publish through our new publishing house *EGxPress* special issues in book form—and publish monographs and other 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 under 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.

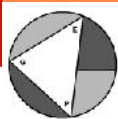
The Editorial Board may publish some of the later comments on published contributions as critical responses (maximum 3,000 words) in one or more subsequent issues of the journal. Extensive critical responses with source references may be published as full-fledged, separate research articles.

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 main articles, critical responses and other manuscripts www.ethnogeopolitics.org/publications.

We thus welcome your contributions, ranging from articles to transparent reviews and comments on these articles.



Editorial

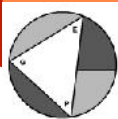
2020: A Time of Health Crises and Ethno-National Wars

Caspar ten Dam & Babak Rezvani

The world in 2020 has faced hard times of endemic health crises (especially the Covid-19 corona pandemic) and wars, e.g. the Lybian, Syrian and Yemeni wars, and most recently the Karabakh war. Owing to several issues relating to the disruptions caused by Covid-19, we also have had a hard time to publish the current issue of our journal.

Therefore, we apologise for the belated appearance of the current issue, which should have come out months ago. We thank the contributors and fellow-editors for their patience. Naturally, the primary reason for this delay (beyond other busy engagements by many editors of this journal) is the one that is affecting us all: the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, which has disrupted our work and private lives—and consequently the functioning of Association EGP and its journal as well.

Indeed, the pandemic has severely affected some of us on the editorial and advisory boards—and current and prospective contributors beyond these boards (lockdown, self-isolation, quarantine, infection etc.). The virus itself has infected or otherwise affected them or their closest families and friends, leading to some fatalities among them. We wish them and their families and friends all the best, and offer our deepest condolences for their suffering and loss.



Originally, the present Editorial would have been about another topic (this one will appear in one of the next issues of our journal). Yet we have decided to give priority to this current editorial communiqué as well as to an additional article about the very recent upsurge of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. First, we decided to write a short editorial about this conflict but then decided to write an article in its own right about the current escalation of the Karabakh conflict (up to late October 2020) due to its immediate nature and impact on the South Caucasus and the wider region.

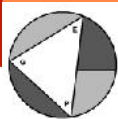
Dr. Babak Rezvani, already has given interviews about the escalated, yet at the same time protracted ‘melted’ Karabakh conflict to different media outlets, in which he discussed the current escalation and fighting in and around Karabakh more analytically. We further invite the audience to read the in-depth analyses by some of our contributors on Karabakh, specifically the ones in the preceding and current issues about the brief flare-up of hostilities in April 2016 (Baghdasaryan 2019), the regional geopolitics in its earlier phases (Rezvani 2013a; Rezvani 2013b), and about sexual violence in ethnic conflicts which may have allegedly happened during particularly the Karabakh War of 1988-1994 (Webster 2020).

We have to add that we as the editorial board of this journal do not necessarily endorse the authors’ views. Hence, these articles reflect their author’s views and our editorial policy is remaining neutral and objective in these matters.

Caspar ten Dam, Executive Editor

Babak Rezvani, Editor in Chief

October 2020



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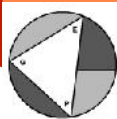
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NB: do you have any comments on the Editorial? Please send these comments or offers to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or through the contactform at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.



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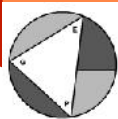


SREBRENICA COMMEMORATION & Marš Mira 2015 - 2018

The photobook *Srebrenica Commemoration & Marš Mira 2015–2018* is available in print for just € 20 (incl. average € 5 postal charges). Eventually it will become available in pdf at www.ethnogeopolitics.org/publications.

This photobook (64 pages, ISBN: 978-90-75568-34-9) shows a selection of photos taken by Fred Rohde of the annual Srebrenica commemoration on 11th of July in The Hague, the Netherlands in the period 2015–2018. It concerns the second book publication of our publishing house *EGxPress Publishers*.

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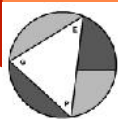
Main Article—Developments in the field

Geography, State and Ethnogeopolitics in the (post) Covid-19 Age of Globalisation

Babak Rezvani & Caspar ten Dam

Abstract *This article deals with the question whether Geopolitics in general and Ethnogeopolitics in particular is still relevant in the age of globalisation. First of all, the age of globalisation is itself a controversial concept. Nevertheless the state of technology has advanced and different places in the world have become increasingly better connected to each other. Geopolitics has not become irrelevant, because geography remains relevant for statecraft, security and international relations by and among state and supra-state actors—as evident from the varying effects of the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic and the measures taken to combat it taken in different countries and regions of the world. These differences are not solely political and cultural, but also geographical and demographical in nature. Thus geography is still socially, economically and politically a relevant factor. Moreover, there are no convincing signs of far-reaching state demise in the modern era and the state is still the main political actor—even though infra-state and supra-state organisations and identities may have become more prominent and influential. Geography and Geopolitics still remain relevant in the “new era” of globalisation.*

Key words: Geography, Geopolitics, Ethnogeopolitics State, Globalisation, Concepts of Control



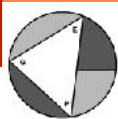
Introduction: Conceptualisations of (Ethno)Geopolitics

In this article, suitable for the section disciplinary development of Ethnogeopolitics as a field of studies, we are going to discuss whether geography, and hence geopolitics and ethnogeopolitics, have become redundant in the current global age. In order to do so we built on and refer to many of our own already published articles which deal with relevant issues in order to offer a good basis for further discussion. Thus we refer to many already discussed concepts and topics in this journal, including those by authors contributing to our section for disciplinary developments of Ethnogeopolitics, and other relevant articles.

As we intend to keep this current article short, one can consult the literature referred to in order to read more in-depth analyses about those issues. As broad this subject may be one can find plenty of interesting reading material. However, it is not part of the scope of this article to give a broad review of available literature and we intend to keep our account as short and succinct as possible.

To be sure, and above all in “international relations and political economy .. the concept geopolitics is often loosely used” (Rezvani 2018: 6). Our preferred conception is “close to the categories of the French ‘subversive’ school of *Géopolitique Interne et Externe* and ‘Critical Geopolitics’ (Ibid: 6; see also Rezvani 2019a: 32).

Consequently our concept of geopolitics is close to our own developed concept of *ethnogeopolitics* referring to “multiple scales, levels of analysis and actors” (Rezvani 2018: 6), including particularly ethnicities in concentrated geographical areas.

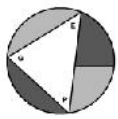


Even so, both geopolitics and ethnogeopolitics, as concepts and fields of discipline and study, are constantly evolving. This is particularly true of ethnogeopolitics. As Babak Rezvani put in the maiden Editorial of our journal, “Ethnogeopolitics, like any other academic field, is dynamic and subject to change and conceptual and methodological development” (Rezvani 2013a: 5).

As Rezvani reiterated in subsequent publications, Ethnogeopolitics is a new concept, indicating an emerging multidisciplinary field of research. Hence, its definition(s) and scopes of study depend much on those of related (sub)disciplines, particularly those of geopolitics (Rezvani 2013a: 4; see also Rezvani & Ilyasov 2017: 7; Ilyasov 2018; Gogsadze 2019; Kaplan 2019; Shahshahani 2019; Rezvani 2019a: 25; Rezvani 2020a: 19-20).¹

Indeed, it would be quite challenging to circumscribe geopolitics and ethnogeopolitics as *observable actions* and thus main concepts according to Caspar ten Dam’s rather strict if logical tripartite conceptualisation of *actions* (main concepts), *actors* (secondary concepts) and *motives* (tertiary concepts) (see Ten Dam 2015a). Even so, the “*why*, [the *who*] and the *how*, will always be more elusive and contestable than the *what*” (Ibid: 10)—one reason why main concepts should generally revolve around the *what* rather than the *who*, *how* or *why*.

Therefore, Ten Dam’s “action-actor-motive trichotomy” (Ten Dam 2015: 8) of the *what*, *who* and *why* may be applicable on (ethno)geopolitics if enough definitional efforts are made along these lines. Ten Dam prefers to classify discernible actions as primary concepts, such as ‘terrorism’ i.e.

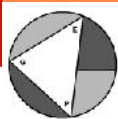


lethal violence against defenseless non-combatants; the actors who commit these acts as secondary concepts such as ‘non-state terrorism’ by e.g. rebels and ‘(semi-)state terrorism’ by e.g. paramilitaries; and apparent drives, motivations and ideologies accounting for these actions as tertiary concepts, such as ‘leftwing terrorism’, ‘rightwing terrorism’, ‘Islamist terrorism’, and so on.

Accordingly, one could lucidly construct *amalgam concepts* referring to jointly occurring actions and drives by discernable actors, such as ‘Islamist non-state terrorism’ by *Al-Qaeda* (‘the Base’ in Arabic) and ‘Islamist quasi/ semi-state terrorism’ by Islamic State or *Daesh* ² when it had a more or less functioning ‘state’ during the few years its self-proclaimed Caliphate existed across a considerable swath of territory in Syria and Iraq.

In line with this reasoning, we need to determine whether geopolitics and ethnogeopolitics as such could best be defined as ‘timeless’ primary action-concepts or rather as ‘fluctuating’ amalgam action-actor-motive concepts that vary across time, place and particular phenomenon studied. Alternatively, these concepts could merely be terms referring to a range of topics and phenomena as areas of research, and not fall within the action-actor-motive trichotomy at all. At any rate, this definitional issue should be a topic of further study and consideration.

Be that as it may, do geopolitics and ethnogeopolitics have their legitimate place in the age of *globalisation*? In other words, are these concepts and (supposed) phenomena relevant in a presumably globalised world? Three conceptual problems should be cleared before this question can be answered. Thus (ethno)geopolitics—defined in



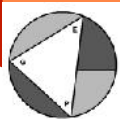
whatever way—is related to the state and geography. It also concerns a geographic focus on statecraft.

Therefore, it is apt to answer the question whether the (*nation-*)*state* and *geography* are relevant and meaningful political concepts in a globalised world or not. Nevertheless, before answering that question, one needs to question whether we are living a globalised world and whether such a labeling as the age or era of globalisation is a meaningful concept. We begin with the latter question first and then will elaborate more on the relevance of state and geography in the present time.

Existence and Saliency of Globalisation

The number of international and even transnational contacts and interactions have undeniably increased since the latter half of the 20th century and they continue to increase in an accelerated pace. Many would say that we are living now and indeed for some time in a new era: the era of globalisation i.e. increased transnational contacts, interactions and often one-sided center-periphery interdependencies across the globe—for so far globalisation is or can ever be precisely defined.

Nevertheless, the same kind of perceptions have existed before. Equally the advent of the discovery voyages in the 15th century, the industrial revolution since the mid-18th century and the era of colonialism since the late 15th century and beyond, could be seen as the advent of globalisation (See also Robinson 2011; Wallerstein 1991a; Wallerstein 1991b). Therefore, from that broad historical perspective, it is dubious to call globalisation a new 20-21st century phenomenon. This type of

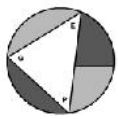


thinking relates to a linear thinking about time and development which is not useful, indeed misleading and erroneous.

Likewise, modernity or the modern—concepts closely tied to that of globalisation—are all too often obliquely identified with ‘dynamic’, ‘democratic’, ‘egalitarian’, ‘secular’, ‘scientific’, ‘industrial’, ‘advanced’ or ‘progressive’—in short ‘Western’ and presumed to be ‘uniquely’ tied to linear industrial and post-industrial revolutions that presumably first occurred in the West. These adjectives do suggest a forward-looking mindset (Ten Dam’s general definition of modernity), yet entail empirical modern regularities in the Western world, not universal modern characteristics across the world (Shils 1968: 7-9; see further for Ten Dam’s general definition of modernity: Ten Dam 2010: esp. 339-340; Ten Dam 2015a: 10).

Every date is a new date and every era is a new era compared to its preceding dates and eras. The economic, political and social realities change as time passes. It would be naïve to think that development of these realities proceed either in linear or circular fashion. It may seem odd, however, many ancient cultures had circular conceptions of time, which were looking better at their agricultural way of life, and this dependence on seasonal situation seems natural and understandable. To many analysts’ dismay, such developments cannot always be predicted exactly, but as evidence shows, it is more probable that these realities’ path of development will proceed towards diverse directions, will retreat again and find their way towards other directions again.

Nevertheless, technology will proceed owing to accumulation of scientific knowledge. However, the same is not true about the dominant

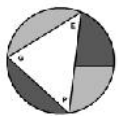


modes of political, social and economic conduct. One reason that our era is called the era of globalisation is because of neo-liberalism's hegemony and prevailing global capitalism. Still, there are no guarantees that this situation remains forever. It depends very much on the balance of power between different political, social and economic actors, and is related to the hegemonies of ideas and ideologies.

Following Bode (1979) and inspired by Gramsci, Van der Pijl (1992: 52) calls such ideologies *beheersconcepties* in Dutch, that is, comprehensive concepts of control (Van der Pijl 1998: 3-4 & 51; see also Overbeek 2004; Robinson 2005). Thus (ethno)geopolitical shifts, climate change and other man-made and/or natural disasters, may engender eras of *different* kinds of globalisation based on *different* political-economic systems than neo-liberal capitalism. Think of redistributive capitalism with extensive welfare states, classical communism or corporatism—historically existent in some form—or a new form of state(-run) capitalism as exemplified in and by China.

Arguably it is more likely that in the near future—given the current rise of populism and the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic—such developments may engender eras of nation-state protectionism, self-reliance and self-isolation which for better or worse would diminish or sever the ties so typical of globalisation as we know it. A regression to an anti-global, non-global or even pre-global world is a distinct possibility.

Nevertheless, as said earlier, the fact is that the number of international contacts and transactions have been increasing since the recent past, i.e. the last few centuries. This development has a lot to do with both the advance of technology and particularly communication technology and



the hegemony of neo-liberalism and global capitalism. These realities do exist and do continue to function, and are undeniable facts at least for now, even given the rise of populism and other anti-globalist trends, no matter in what way we look at them and interpret them.

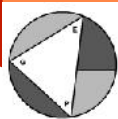
Existence and Saliency of (Nation-)State, Geography and (Ethno)Geopolitics

The second question is whether state and geography, and hence (ethno)geopolitics, have become irrelevant in the new era. The answer is no.

There is no convincing evidence nor indications that the (nation-)state in the modern era is in demise across the globe (barring some regions ridden with conflict). The state, as a political-territorial organisation of a corresponding nation (however defined) or common citizenry composed of multiple nations or ethnicities (however defined), continues to be the main (international) political actor in the contemporary era and it still has or at least presumes to possess sovereignty over all its territory.

One presumes here of course that the state in question is strong and functioning, and not a so-called failed state in which unrest, anarchy and warfare reign supreme (see notion of state in disarray Rezvani 2015: 39-42 ; Rezvani 2013c: 51-54; see also Lake & Rothchild 1996; Lake & Rothchild 1998: 17; Wolff 2006: 74).³

Indeed, one could argue that the “statebuilding process has been rudimentary in many “Third World” countries. These usually are



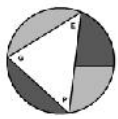
countries which are repeatedly affected by many types of internal conflict. The best remedial strategy would be to strengthen state structures and to encourage good governance and democratisation at the same time” (Rezvani 2013b: 51).

Actually, it is possible and desirable to “lambast the apparently corrosive effects of (neo-)liberal modernisation on the nascent state in the developing world” (Ten Dam 2016: 11; Rezvani 2013b). Yet even (the legitimacy of) the neo-liberal nation-state in the West is under pressure to deal with terrorism, immigration and the resultant rise in xenophobic and populist sentiments.

Thus societal and some political parties’ perception is that the “influx of Muslim refugees, not least owing to the Syrian Conflict, causes tension within most European societies and brings Europe into a situation of an acute security and identity crisis” (Rezvani 2016: 6). Of course, this is not our balanced academic point of view as there is no clear evidence of terrorism or other major security threats emanating from Muslim refugees.

However, this is the picture that the xenophobic or sensationalist media propagate which in turn is used in the discourse of certain politicians in the West. This example shows that geography matters; apparently a conflict in one state affects other states thousands of miles away.

Moreover, states are not the only global and even domestic actors nowadays. They have lost their monopolies in many aspects of decision-making and policy-making vis-à-vis their citizens or subjects (depending on the political systems of the states in question). Non-



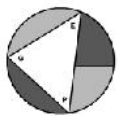
governmental organisations (NGOs) and multinational companies as well as supranational organisations are increasingly playing an important role in domestic and international affairs.

Most states have opened up their markets and cooperated in international fora and organisations—until the rise of the U.S. Trump Administration and its unilateralism, which is perhaps an odd phenomenon but no one can tell anything with certainty about future developments.

Most international organisations are intergovernmental ones which cannot be regarded as detrimental to the states' sovereignty, however. These organisations, in fact, may solidify state's sovereignty as these offer a platform with shared decision-making to different states that are thereby able to defend and safeguard their particular interests and choices.

However, supranational bodies of governance can cause a loss of state sovereignty. The case in point is the European Union (EU). The EU is a supranational entity which imposes its regulations on its member states after unanimous or majority decisions as in its European Council and other decisionmaking bodies. Consequently, votes in these supranational bodies by the member states relinquish parts of their sovereignties on matters covered by the decided regulations.

Nevertheless, it is debatable how effective or significant the European Union's impact on the overall erosion of state sovereignty truly is. Additionally, the EU member states are still free to signs bilateral or multilateral treaties or refrain from these and have their say on



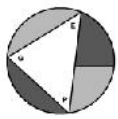
formation of the EU's regulations—with continuing veto powers regarding many of these regulations.

On the other hand, the 2008 and more recent financial crises in Greece, Cyprus, and to various extent also elsewhere in Europe, have shown how compelling the burden of European Union's regulations has become.

Most often, state sovereignty is also challenged, weakened or even obliterated in the significant number of failed states across the world, including to varying degrees Somalia, Libya, Yemen, Afghanistan, DR Congo and arguably also Iraq and Syria (at least until recently). These are countries which are politically chaotic and where the state—for so far it still exists—cannot effectively enforce its monopoly as the sole guarantor of security and order. Most of such failed states are located in Africa.

It is, however, important to note that the European Union is a unique experiment in the world. It only relates to a relatively small part of the world, both geographically and demographically. The paradigm, authority and legitimacy of states' sovereignty is still unchallenged in the largest part of the world.

It is naïve to think that geography has become politically, economically and socially irrelevant in the new era. Its relevance is convincingly argued in Robert D. Kaplan's 2012 book entitled *The Revenge of Geography: What the Maps tell us about Coming Conflict and the Battle against Fate*, which discusses the effects of geography on the security and power of countries. Although a bit physically deterministic in the broad sense of the word, this book brings ample evidence that



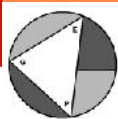
geography is still very relevant in studying state's power, security and international relations.

It is true that technological developments like speedy communications and contacts through computerisation, digitisation, digitalisation, automation and robotics are assumingly making geographical barriers irrelevant. However, this does not mean that it has made geography as such irrelevant.

Moreover technology's homogenising effect on cultures, places and hence societies should not be exaggerated. Even though modern communication technology enables easier interaction worldwide, it does not forbid interaction over shorter distances and hence technological advancement and globalisation may even go hand in hand with traditional (pre-modern) tribal structures as well (e.g. Ten Dam 2019).

Advanced methods and tools of communications such as the internet have made geographical distance less relevant, and advanced vehicles of transportation, military equipment and weaponry have been victorious over rough terrain. Nevertheless, geography is more than distance and terrain alone. Geography also relates to the location of territorial, cultural, ethnic and social entities and identities.

Hence, geography does not only refer to a territory, as space, but also to its cultural and demographic attributes and their combination (e.g. ethnogeographic configurations). It is clear that a place is imbued with meanings ascribed from nature, human intervention and the culture of its inhabitants. Also, the interplay of such attributes to an area of space



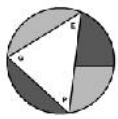
may have an impact on social lives and hence wellbeing of populations inhabiting in different parts of the world.

In this respect it is appropriate to mention ethnogeographic configurations, an abstract concept which is built on many cultural (and in a way also natural) attributes of an area. From Rezvani's research it appears that ethnogeographic configuration—roughly the way demographic pockets of ethno-linguistic and ethno-religious relate to each other spatially—may have an impact on the occurrence and maintenance of conflicts (Rezvani 2013c: 323-327; Rezvani 2015: 48-54, 298-301).

Likewise, Ten Dam's studies since 2010 on *brutalisation* i.e. increasing violations of local and/or international violence-norms, show how certain local cultural factors contribute to the escalation of violent conflict. Such cultural codes are developed in certain areas over a long period of time. In that sense these are geographic as these contribute to the identity-formation of that place and rule the social interactions in that area (to a certain extent).

At any rate, empirical findings indicating the significant yet partial validity of some (cultural) aspects or variables of Ten Dam's Brutalisation theory have already been published (see e.g. Ten Dam 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015a,b,c, 2016, 2017; Ten Dam & Polanski 2015).

Countries, regions, cities and other localities are situated somewhere in the world; and these locations are static, at least at one point in time and during a (lengthy) period of time, and their geographic locations' coordinates cannot be altered as such—barring major upheavals due to

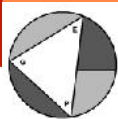


natural or man-made disasters. Think of earthquakes that destroyed cities and even states since ancient times. There also have been cases when landslides destroyed and relocated villages. Nevertheless, such disasters have been rare (if becoming more frequent due to climate change), and only major cities were involved in such total relocations.

Although political entities' territorial contours may change over time and this may change their geographical coordinates and boundaries—one example is Poland—they cannot be bereft of “location” as a concept. Everything has its location; everything has its place in the world.

Location of a country is politically relevant. It compels a country to deal with issues which it otherwise would not have to. For example, countries in the African Sahara have to deal with drought more than countries in Europe ever have to. Or countries like Italy, India and the U.S. with large densely populated cities and valleys interspersed with open plains have had to deal with the Corona COVID-19 outbreak more urgently and less successfully—especially if coupled with open contacts abroad and burdened health care systems at home—than countries like Ireland and New Zealand with small populations and low densities beyond their capitals, helped by surrounding seas, competent governments and well-developed health care systems.

Not only the natural realities but also social and political realities are relevant in this regard: think of U.S. President Trump's erratic responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and his pandering to his base that largely opposes the lockdown measures enacted by both Democratic and Republican governors in their respective states, not realising or caring

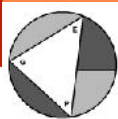


for the risks, which shows that he is not fully aware or blightly ignorant of his country's geography.

Or think of how Central Asian countries, and Iran and India, are facing threats from Salafi/Wahhabi extremist groups owing to their borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan where many of these groups operate from. It is true that Pakistan and Afghanistan are themselves a victim of these extremists, the same as Syria and Iraq were and still are.

However, proximity to such areas of conflict obliges the neighbouring states to act and often coordinate their actions with each other and preferably also with the states that have fallen victims to such extremist groups. This in turn may make the functioning of those states stronger. These examples easily show that geographical, location, distance and proximity have not become as irrelevant as one may think.

A recent study (Rezvani 2019b: 142-152) that compares Tajikistan with Georgia concludes that despite the fact that both have been small failed-states for some time after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgia and Tajikistan took different geopolitical orientations and paths owing to their geography, both in the sense of physical space and the cultural attributes to it. Thus their histories and cultures did matter. Still, their territories or populations as such did not matter as much as the fact that neither of these small countries could take a more dominant role regionally and had to take a more or less subservient or 'follower' position vis-à-vis one of the contending major powers. Even so, the most impactful factors affecting the geopolitical orientation of these countries were their geographical locations in fragile, contested neighbourhoods and their desire for security at almost any costs.

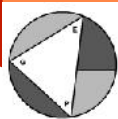


Conclusion: (Ethno)Geopolitics in a Still-Globalised World

In sum, a globalised world does not mean a “placeless world” but a reality in which different places all over the world are increasingly interconnected and interact with each other. International trade and migration have become increasingly pervasive. This fact means that social, economic and political realities in one place have their impacts on places elsewhere. Cheap labour attracts Western companies to move to Asia, Africa and Latin America which in turn causes unemployment in Europe and North America.

Migration of people from poor, politically unstable and/or undemocratic countries does not mean simply an economic burden on the West, but rather a social and political burden. Migrations of people may often bring with them the problems and conflicts from the mother countries. The ongoing, protracted conflict between Turkey and the militant Kurdistan Workers’ Party or PKK (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê* in Kurdish), is a point in case. Kurdish and Turkish (extremist) activists often clash with each other in European cities, which would be unimaginable if there had been no large migrations of Turks and Kurds from Turkey to European countries in the first place. In fact the realities of one place migrate to another place, which forms evidence of (modern-day) mechanisms of geography.

Geography is also important because it provides us knowledge about the different places in the world. Our information about and the knowledge of places get outdated as time passes. This is especially true in the current era in which technological developments change the characteristics of places even more rapidly than before. Therefore, we



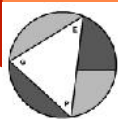
continuously need new information and insights about different places of the world.

The study of countries and peoples (*Länder- und Völkerkunde* in German) has been one of the main fundamentals of the 'scientific' disciplines of human geography and cultural anthropology (see e.g. Penck: 1912; Rezvani 2020b: 81-82). As time passes by and the processes of globalisation and counter-globalisation proceed apace, the character of regions changes, along with their physical appearance and cultural make-up. Scholars need to update their factual knowledge about these transformations. Geography is a the discipline *par excellence* which provides us information about the results of transformations on the ground. In that sense geography constitutes the linchpin or nucleus of ethnogeopolitics as an emerging field of studies.

Finally, (ethno)geopolitics concerns as much the actual influence of geography on statecraft as ideas and thoughts about the relationships between them. The location of a country and its specific historical pathways do influence one's country geopolitical codes and the way it views its place in the world, and perceives its security and even (trans)national mission (Dijkink 1996; Rezvani 2019b: 150-153).⁴

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Endnotes

1. See Rezvani (2020a: 19-20 [pre-print online version], endnote 15).
2. *Daesh* is the Arabic acronym for *al-Dawla al-Islamiya al-Iraq al-Sham* (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, ISIL) Many countries in the Middle East and the West (particularly France, the U.K. and the U.S.) opposing and fighting ISIL have preferred calling it *Daesh* rather than the Islamic State, denying it its claims of Islamic governance and legitimate statehood (Rezvani 2016: 6).
3. See for an optative solution the recent and interesting paper by Krzysztof Trzcinski (2020).
4. See also Rezvani 2019c and 2020b for a general picture of the modern-day geopolitics in Post-Soviet Space.

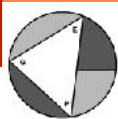
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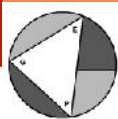
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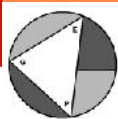
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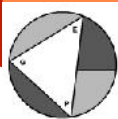
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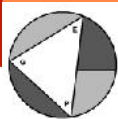
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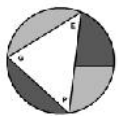
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Critique on 'Geography – Globalisation' essay

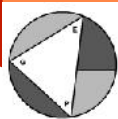
(Critical Response to Babak Rezvani's and Caspar ten Dam's "Geography, State and Ethnogeopolitics in the (post) Covid-19 Age of Globalisation")

I find it easy to agree with most assertions of the author(s) but much in this essay has been said elsewhere as well. There is certainly a need for a revaluation of geopolitics in the 'age of globalisation' which has been successfully pursued by authors like Robert Kaplan. However, his work has been generally uncritically reviewed (much to my regret even in *The New York Review of Books*) and suffers from more failures than a tendency of physical determinism (for example his ignorance of decades of discussion in political geography about the heritage of Mackinder etc.). Kaplan also shows an old deficiency of geopolitics: the bias of the homeland of the author(s).

There is another problem that is not sufficiently elaborated in this essay. The author(s) mention the rise to power of other actors and organisations than the state, but at the same time emphasises the continuity of the state in this age. How these new conditions reshape or reaffirm geopolitics is a question that is not very clearly answered or explored.

The article would have gained in power of persuasion by including an example (or small case study) that shows how ignorance of geopolitics has led to wrong evaluations of current political events.

As it now stands the essay may be well placed as an introductory to a volume of studies in which these aspects are further elaborated, but as



a separate statement it is somewhat unsatisfactory.

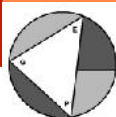
- Anonymous

Editorial Note

This critical response—and a few critical responses that stay both anonymous and unpublished on the request of the peer-reviewers in question—happen to concern a much earlier version of the article as published here; thus many of the reviewers' comments have been dealt with and incorporated in this article as published here (insofar as we agree with these comments of course).

- Caspar ten Dam, executive editor

NB: do you have any comments on Rzevani's and Ten Dam's article or the published critical response? Please send these (maximum 3,000 words) to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or through the contact form at www.ethnogeopolitics.org. These may appear as Critical Responses in the next issue(s) of the journal. Extensive critical responses with source references may be published as full-fledged articles. Please supply your name, contact details, titles and affiliations, including your specialisms and any major publications.

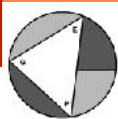


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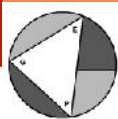
Нетрадиционная тактика внешних акторов
влияющие на протестные движения в
регионах Африки и Ближнего Востока

(Non-traditional Tactics of External Actors
influencing Protest Movements in the Regions of
Africa and the Middle East)

Ойбек Махмудов и Бабак Резвани
(Oybek Makhmudov & Babak Rezvani)

Abstract in English The ongoing protests, in Africa and Middle East countries, became a fertile common ground for the external implementation of political and information technologies. This includes, above all, the external impact on the population through foreign mass media and information technologies, which created specifically for this purpose propaganda blogs that effectively encouraged young people to conduct destructive actions in North African and Middle Eastern countries. But the protests that have been happening in the United States are caused more by internal political and societal problems.

The reason for the protests in the countries of North Africa and the Middle East have been caused, first of all, by the recent financial crisis from 2008 onwards. In the recent past protests in these countries, similar methods of social engineering, designed by Western think tanks, have



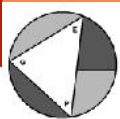
been applied to introduce so-called "liberal" standards that are unacceptable to countries with their own established values.

And the protests in the regions are aimed at blocking geopolitical configurations and breaking down regional bloc associations and organisations that run counter to certain external world actors, as these configurations and associations negatively affect their own "national interests".

Key words: Information Warfare, Protest Movement, Blogs, Social Engineering

В ходе продолжающихся акций протеста, в Африке и странах Ближнего Востока, стало общим основанием по внешнему внедрению политических и информационных технологий. Включая, прежде всего, внешнее воздействие на население через зарубежные СМИ и информационные технологии, включая созданные специально для этой цели пропагандистские блоги, которые эффективно побуждают молодежь проводить разрушительные действия в странах Северной Африки и Ближнего Востока. Но протесты, которые прошли в Соединенных Штатах, вызваны в большей степени внутривнутриполитическими проблемами.

Причина этих протестов была вызвана, прежде всего, недавним финансовым кризисом. В прошлых протестах в странах Северной Африки, Ближнего Востока аналогичные методы социальной инженерии, разработанные внешними аналитическими центрами, применялись для введения так называемых «либеральных» стандартов, которые неприемлемы для стран с их собственными установленными традициями и ценностями.

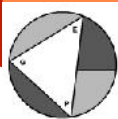


Ключевые слова: информационная война, протестное движение, блоги, социальный инжиниринг

В ходе продолжающихся акций протеста, в Африке и странах Ближнего Востока, стало общим основанием по внешнему внедрению политических и информационных технологий. Включая, прежде всего, внешнее воздействие на население через зарубежные СМИ и информационные технологии, включая созданные специально для этой цели пропагандистские блоги, которые эффективно побуждают молодежь проводить разрушительные действия в странах Северной Африки и Ближнего Востока.¹ Но протесты, которые прошли в Соединенных Штатах, вызваны в большей степени внутриполитическими проблемами. Причина этих протестов была вызвана, прежде всего, недавним финансовым кризисом.

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А протесты в регионах направлены на блокирование геополитических конфигураций и разрушение ассоциаций и организаций региональных блоков, которые вступают в противоречие с субъектами внешнего мира, поскольку это затрагивает их «национальные интересы».

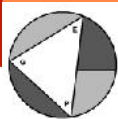


И эти разрушительные мятежи происходят главным образом в богатых странах, производящих сырье и энергию, где провокация внутренних обострений приводит страну к политической и экономической нестабильности. Это, в свою очередь, приводит к тому, что внешние участники усиливают свое влияние путем введения сначала частных военных компаний, а затем их западных транснациональных корпораций.

Протесты, организованные в этих регионах, имеют далеко идущие последствия. Запад намерен ограничивать влияние Китая и России в этих энергетических регионах. Поскольку в обоих странах сосредоточены в этих регионах, свой большой бизнес. Поэтому КНР планирует инвестировать более 70 миллиардов долларов в инфраструктуру в странах Африки к югу от Сахары. Более половины инвестиций Китая пошли на развитие инфраструктуры в Африке, на развитие гидроэлектростанций и железнодорожных проектов.²

Согласно данным, объем торговли между Африкой и Китаем достиг более 114 миллиардов долларов. А инвестиции Китая в Африку к 2015 году достигли более 570 миллиардов долларов.

Таким образом, результаты протестов в этих регионах были целенаправленно смоделированы для увеличения политических и экономических рисков против присутствию китайских и российских компаний. Это привело к потере ряда нефтяных контрактов для России в Ливии и ряде арабских стран. Также в Ливии сократилась работа 75 китайских компаний, общий убыток их компаний в Ливии составил порядка 20 миллиардов долларов.³

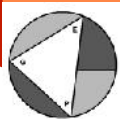


В целом, эти протесты привели к геоэкономическим потерям в регионе для Китая и России. Также протесты в Сирии приведут к геостратегическим потерям и негативным последствиям, в первую очередь для РФ.

Протест в настоящее время не новая в своей стратегии, изменились только тактика и методы в связи с информатизацией общества. Восстание происходит, главным образом, в регионах, имеющих важное геополитическое и геостратегическое значение. И государство, которое будет управлять в этих регионах, поэтому будет влиять на мировой политический процесс.

Особенность этих акций протестов в регионах варьируется по-разному, из-за рассмотрения различных факторов, таких как географические, религиозные и социокультурные. Для населения стран Ближнего Востока и африканских стран характерна прежде всего его политизация. Таким образом, дальнейшее обострение ситуации перерастает в серьезный и неконтролируемый конфликт. В связи с этим, в этих регионах мятежи были спровоцированы неправительственными организациями, которые на своих тренингах представили разработку специальных политических программ и усилили призывы религиозных лидеров к участию правительства.

В связи с этим создание нестабильной ближневосточной дуги будет продвигаться к российско-китайским границам. А в среднесрочной перспективе идеологи «революций» планируют смоделировать мятеж в Пакистане и странах Южно-Азиатского региона.

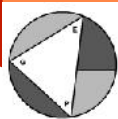


Прежде всего, на такие разрушительные действия государство должно оперативно реагировать на зачинщиков и руководителей мятежников, поскольку гражданское население в большинстве случаев подвергается опасности, что требует защиты. Также необходимо объективно отражать события в местных СМИ и параллельно создавать независимые информационные центры в регионах. Это, в свою очередь, предотвратит искажение информации, обычно интерпретируемой внешними медиацентрами.

Нет необходимости кардинально менять систему, ее будет эффективнее модернизировать, одновременно повышая политическую грамотность и образование среди молодой части населения.

Для каждого региона существует разница в плане действий повстанцев, и поэтому методы внешних участников будут разными. Страны Африки и Ближнего Востока характеризуются сопротивлением узкой группе местных элит. В Европе будет расти феномен недовольства обездоленных социальных групп, лоббирования их интересов.

По сути, они будут на волне финансового кризиса, когда многие перспективные профессии не остались позади после кризиса. То есть в развитых странах ожидается развитие беспорядков «отвергнутых». И в этом случае само значение термина «политическая борьба» станет архаичным. В связи с этим флешмоб акции и социальные сети приобретут глобальное значение, где появится более высокий уровень доступа к

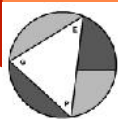


информационным ресурсам.

Ранее, до начала 2000 года, подобные акции протеста были разработаны с участием военных учреждений, в основном экспертов по «повстанческим движениям». В последние годы военные сотрудничают с гражданскими аналитическими центрами, где они совместно предлагают использовать технические новшества для преодоления менталитета населения, вовлечения их в протестные движения. В будущем также ожидается активное вовлечение нетрадиционных субъектов в форме неправительственных организаций, транснациональных корпораций, в борьбу за сферы влияния в стратегических регионах путем использования «сетевых» акций.

То есть будет развиваться «цифровая» форма протеста. В целом роль национального фактора будет играть важную роль в противодействии развитию процесса глобализации. И когда в странах Африки и на Ближнем Востоке они поймут о допущенных им ошибках в отношении срыва ранее стабильного режима. В среднесрочной перспективе «толпа» снова уйдет и произойдет повторение событий, и в этом случае национальный фактор будет служить объединяющим фактором. Из-за того, что эти страны уступают в информационных технологиях, внешние игроки сами возьмут контроль над ситуацией, чтобы изменить систему, которая им неудобна.

Но в среднесрочной перспективе роль национального фактора в информационной борьбе не будет одинаковой из-за разного восприятия, технологического развития регионов, и снижение

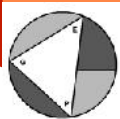


доверия к сетям. Но, так или иначе, развитие «сетевых информационных» протестов актуализируется. На месте это будет как новый тип борьбы в форме «виртуальных войн», в которых больше не будет необходимости вовлекать массы, и упор будет делаться на развитие мобильных «кибер» групп.

Также проблема противодействия будет состоять в том, что не будет каких-либо определенных лидеров или постоянного штаба. Чтобы эффективно противостоять новым типам угроз как протестному движению, странам в регионах в первую очередь необходимо поддерживать социально-экономическую стабильность и наращивать свой культурный потенциал.

В случае, если вооруженный конфликт будет обостряться, ситуация станет непредсказуемой. Следует ожидать ответных ударов со стороны различных ячеек организаций боевиков, по военным объектам в различных регионах мира. Это также приведет к консолидации иранского общества, что позволит сосредоточить усилия на ускорении развития ядерной программы. С помощью военного решения проблемы Иран немедленно блокирует Ормузский пролив, блокируя доступ Запада к нефти из арабских стран, уничтожая танкеры с использованием противокорабельных ракет "Нур" и мин и нанося удары по нефтеносным районам залива. В этом случае события приобретут масштабный региональный конфликт.

При попытке уничтожить ядерные объекты Ирана могут возникнуть серьезные последствия для экологической ситуации в соседних регионах мира.



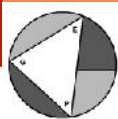
При мирном исходе кризиса Иран сохранит нынешний режим, а Саудовской Аравии и другим арабским странам придется считаться с требованиями и лидерством Ирана.

Эскалация протестных движений в Иране выгодна Саудовской Аравии, Ливии и Нигерии. Россия получит краткосрочные дивиденды от роста цен на нефть и увеличения экспорта в Европу. Однако для России в целом вооруженный конфликт на Ближнем Востоке будет иметь негативные последствия в контексте потери союзников и влияния, а также многомиллиардных контрактов на вооружения.

А санкции в отношении Ирана, в виде срыва в процессе осуществления «ядерной сделки» с Ираном, вызваны нежеланием Запада, решать данную проблематику. Но данные санкции укрепят только позиции китайцев. Китайские переработчики рассчитывают получить значительные скидки по контрактам на иранскую нефть, поскольку другие импортеры будут сокращать закупки нефти, чтобы избежать санкций со стороны США и Европы, за нарушение запрета.

В то же время США будут нести расходы по обеспечению воздушной и морской безопасности в Ормузском проливе. Ежедневный транзит сырой нефти через пролив составляет 17 миллионов баррелей в день, что составляет 20% мировых поставок.

Но даже при мирном исходе кризиса США и Израиль не откажутся от своих планов. Американцы попытаются усилить



оппозицию в этих двух геостратегических регионах.

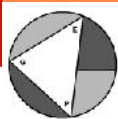
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Inequality and Poverty in Spain continue to grow—Between working in the Black Economy and the Civil-servant Bureaucracy

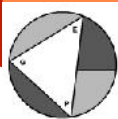
Rodolfo Valentino

The two subsequent contributions in this journal concern German and Spanish texts of the same article regarding an EUROSOR (Independent European Sociological Research) study conducted and translated by the author himself.

I. Individual Occupational Objective: Becoming a Civil Servant—A Comparison between Spain and Germany

According to many experts, the gap between incomes in Spain is greater than ever. After the great Euro crisis, which in Spain was largely a real estate crisis, Spain fell into a severe recession, from which it has not yet recovered. Although the unemployment rate has halved since its top in 2013, with newly created jobs in the public sector, the figure of 14% is still well above the Euro zone average and is only exceeded by Greece within of the European Union (*Handelsblatt*, 07/31/2019).

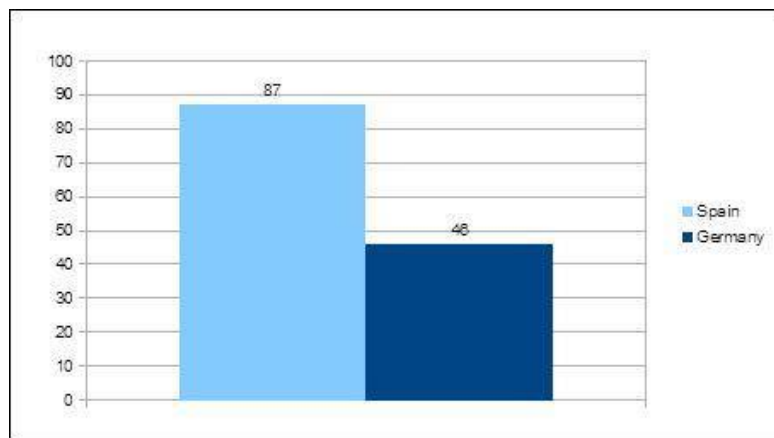
It is not surprising that the majority of students (87%) in Spain aspire, according to a representative study completed on August 31, 2019 by the Independent European Research Institute EUROSOR in Santander, to become a civil servant. While the number of German students who



would be delighted to be civil servants is 46%. The study consists of short ten-minutes interviews in which a total of 1886 matriculated students in 30 universities in Spain and Germany were interviewed.

As reasons for this election, German and Spanish students said they wanted above all a stable and secure income (Spain = 93%, Germany = 65%), creditworthiness when buying a home (Spain = 97%, Germany = 48%), flexible working hours (Spain = 54%, Germany = 62%), overtime paid (Spain = 95%, Germany = 28%), lifetime work (Spain = 97%, Germany = 42%), a good and safe pension (Spain = 78%, Germany = 96%), less work (Spain = 96%, Germany = 32%), more paid vacations (Spain = 97%, Germany = 13%) and non-expendable work contract (Spain = 94%, Germany = 48%).

Fig. 1: Would you like to become a civil servant after completing your studies? (in %)



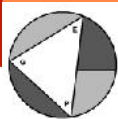
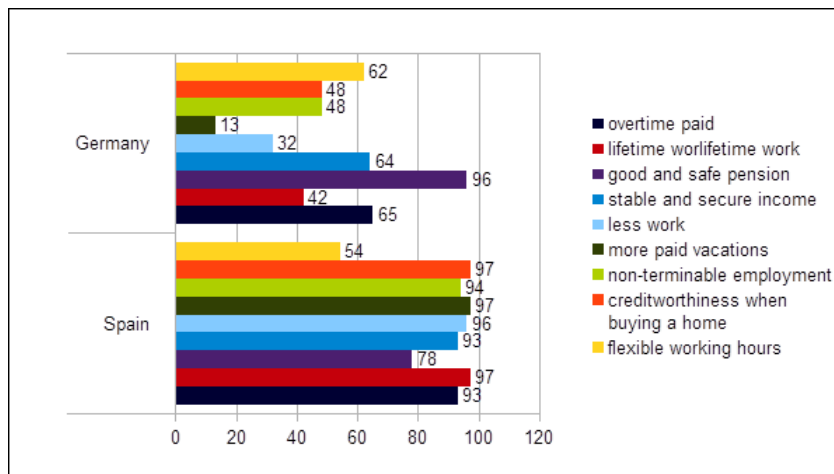


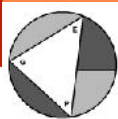
Fig. 2: What advantages do you see in becoming a civil servant? (in %)



II. Social Inequality and Poverty in Spain

Meanwhile, income in Spanish society is distributed more unequal than ever. According to Dr. Rodolfo Valentino, Director of the Independent European Research Institute EUROSOR, it is surprising that Spanish policy does not see or have not seen in the past the need to act and points to the already existing welfare state, which, compared to Germany, transcends almost the whole economic burden and of care of the members to the family, that is to say parents and grandparents.

But income inequality and the impoverishment of the middle class (except civil servants) in Spain continue to grow. "This is mainly due to



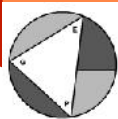
two factors,” says Dr. Rodolfo Valentino:

“On the one hand, there are high-income groups that have benefited from the fierce capital and corporate profits and, on the other, 70% of households of lower incomes (up to € 1400 and less) that have touched the lowest social position. The middle class has delivered 50% of its members to the lower classes. A special feature worth mentioning is that the ‘poor’ in Spain, in contrast to Germany, are being punished twice. Instead of banks offering a low interest credit account to reach the end of the month, they take advantage and charge the poorest with a penalty fee of 40 to 80 euros when there is an overdraft. A double punishment for those who already have to turn around each Euro and tremble in case they don't arrive until the end of the month. Current data shows that all those politicians and economists, who gave and still give the signal of end of social alarm, because the impoverishment of a large part of the Spanish population does not continue, have been wrong. While inequality is growing more slowly, Spain still ‘happily’ follows the risky path to greater inequality.”

III. Conclusion: Strategies of combatting Inequality—An Expertise

According to many experts, additional financial assistance is needed to stop income inequality in the middle and lower layers. It is important that households in the middle and lower part of the social hierarchy receive non-bureaucratic and specific support and advice.

This includes not only access to psychosocial counseling, financial aid, but also large tax relief for small entrepreneurs (some of which are being promoted towards self-employment by the Spanish Labour Office



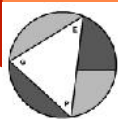
SEPE), “since the Spanish Tax Agency uses complex procedures and confusing models, in the opinion of our 100 small entrepreneurs interviewed like translators, scientists, shop owners, artisans, etc., to collect money aggressively through penalties and fees instead of promoting employment. Many told us in the interviews that they do not declare all the income, because the Spanish Tax Agency, unlike the neighbouring European institutions, does not respect the subsistence minimum,” says Dr. Rodolfo Valentino.

In one thing, many social scientists agree that the increase of inequality in Spanish society can destroy social cohesion. This trend can only be stopped, according to Dr. Rodolfo Valentino, if wages increase markedly, capital and wealth revenues are properly taxed and a large tax reform significantly alleviates small income and small businesses. In addition, households with children should receive much more financial support. The introduction of “Minijobs” free of taxes and tax charges (up to €450) like in Germany, could also make the fiscal and economic burden of “medium” and “poor” households bearable.

Dr Rodolfo Valentino is Director of the Independent European Sociological Research (EUROSOR) institute, and Director of the European Institute of Studies on Migration, Social Inclusion and Intercultural Learning (IEM), Bonn, Germany (<http://binev.de>).

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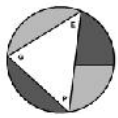
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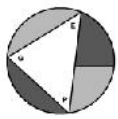
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Ungleichheit und Armut in Spanien wachsen weiter—Zwischen Schwarzarbeit und Verbeamtung

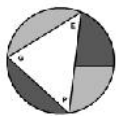
Rodolfo Valentino

The preceding contribution in this issue of our journal concerns the English text of the same article regarding an EUROSOR (Independent European Sociological Research) study conducted and translated by the author himself.

I. Individuelles Berufsziel: Verbeamtung—Ein Vergleich zwischen Spanien und Deutschland

Die Kluft zwischen den Einkommen ist laut Meinung vieler Experten so groß wie nie zuvor. Nach der großen Euro-Krise, die in Spanien zum größten Teil eine Immobilienkrise war, stürzte Spanien in eine schwere Rezession, von der sich das Land immer noch nicht erholt hat. Zwar hat sich die Arbeitslosenquote seit ihrem Höhepunkt 2013 auch durch neu geschaffene Stellen im öffentlichen Sektor halbiert, doch liegt sie mit 14% immer noch deutlich über dem Durchschnitt der Euro-Zone und ist innerhalb der Europäischen Union die zweithöchste nach Griechenland (*Handelsblatt*, 31.07.2019).

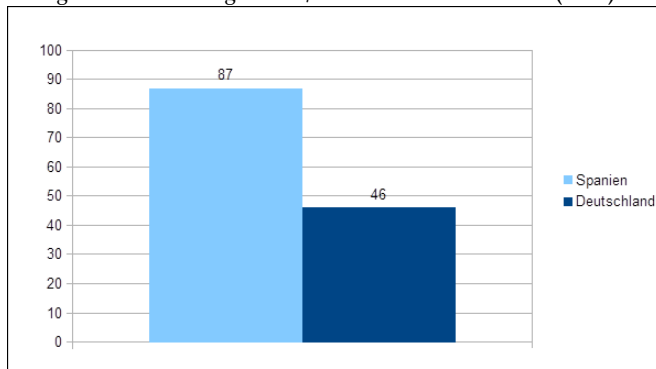
Da wundert es nicht, dass die meisten Studenten (87%) in Spanien laut einer am 31. August 2019 abgeschlossenen repräsentativen Studie des Unabhängigen Europäischen Forschungsinstituts EUROSOR in Santander, eine Beamtenlaufbahn (spanisch: *oposiciones*) anstreben.



Während die Zahl der deutschen Student/innen/en, die sich über eine Verbeamtung freuen würden, bei 46% liegt. Die Studie bestand aus kurzen zehnminütigen Interviews, bei denen insgesamt 1886 aktuell an 30 Hochschulen eingeschriebenen Student/innen/en in Spanien und Deutschland befragt wurden.

Als Gründe für diese Wahl gaben die deutschen und spanischen Student/innen/en u.a. ein festes und sicheres Einkommen (Spanien=93%, Deutschland=65%), Kreditwürdigkeit beim Hauskauf (Spanien=97%, Deutschland=48%), flexible Arbeitszeit (Spanien=54%, Deutschland=62%), bezahlte Überstunden (Spanien=95%, Deutschland=28%), Arbeit auf Lebenszeit (Spanien=97%, Deutschland=42%), eine gute und sichere Rente (Spanien=78%, Deutschland=96%), weniger Arbeit (Spanien=96%, Deutschland=32%), mehr bezahlten Urlaub (Spanien=97%, Deutschland=13%) und Unkündbarkeit (Spanien=94%, Deutschland=48%) an.

Fig. 1: Würden Sie nach dem Studium gerne eine Beamtenlaufbahn einschlagen oder Staatsangestellte/r auf Lebenszeit werden? (in %)



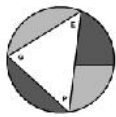
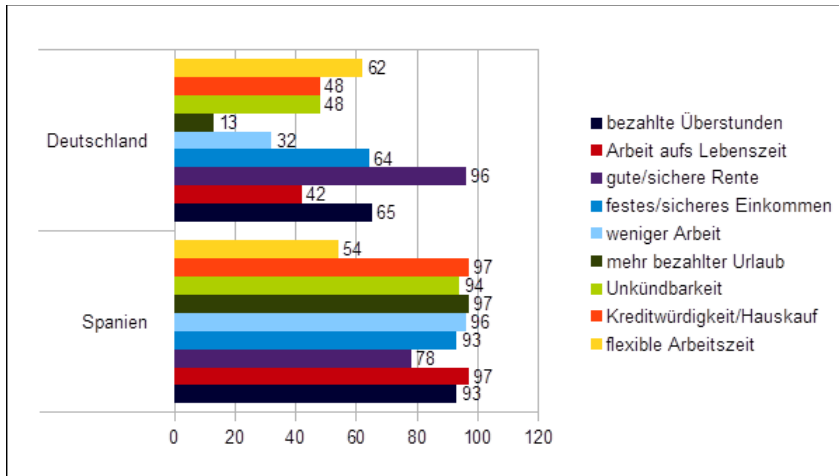


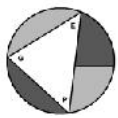
Abb.2: Welche Vorteile sehen Sie darin, Beamt/er/in bzw. Staatsangestellte/r auf Lebenszeit zu werden? (in %)



II. Soziale Ungleichheit und Armut in Spanien

Derweil sind die Einkommen in der spanischen Gesellschaft so ungleich verteilt wie noch nie. Nach Meinung von Dr. Rodolfo Valentino, Direktor des Unabhängigen Europäischen Forschungsinstituts EUROSOR, sieht die spanische Politik jedoch kein Handlungsbedarf und verweist auf den bereits existierenden Sozialstaat, der im Vergleich zu Deutschland eher der Familie sowohl die Pflege- als auch die ganze Finanzlast für Familienangehörigen aufbürdet.

Doch die Ungleichheit der Einkommen und die Verarmung der (nicht-

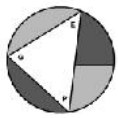


verbeamteten) Mittelklasse in Spanien wachse weiter. “Das liegt vor allem an zwei Faktoren,” verrät uns Dr. Rodolfo Valentino:

“Es gibt einerseits Gruppen mit hohen Einkommen, die von sprudelnden Kapital- und Unternehmenseinkommen profitiert haben und andererseits Beamte, die mit ihrer festen Anstellung auf Lebenszeit nur wenige wirtschaftliche Einbußen hinnehmen mussten. Gleichzeitig sind 70% der Haushalte mit den geringsten Einkommen (bis zu 1400,- EUR und weniger) zurückgefallen. Die Mittelschicht hat über 50% ihrer Angehörigen an die unteren Schichten abgegeben. Eine Besonderheit, die erwähnenswert erscheint, ist, dass die ‘Armen’ in Spanien, im Gegensatz zu Deutschland doppelt bestraft werden. Statt einen günstigen Dispokredit zu erhalten, werden sie mit einer Gebühr von 40,- bis 80,- EUR bestraft, wenn sie ihr Konto überziehen. Dazu kommen die jeweiligen Zinsen. Eine doppelte Strafe für Menschen, die so schon jeden Euro umdrehen und zittern müssen, dass sie das Monatsende finanziell nicht überleben. Die aktuellen Daten zeigen, dass sich all jene Politiker und Ökonomen, die soziale Entwarnung gaben und immer noch geben, weil sich die Verarmung weiter Teile der spanischen Bevölkerung nicht fortgesetzt habe, geirrt haben. Zwar wächst die Ungleichheit aktuell langsamer, aber Spanien geht den riskanten Weg zu größerer Ungleichheit immer noch munter weiter.”

III. Konklusion: Strategien der Ungleichheitsbekämpfung—Eine Expertise

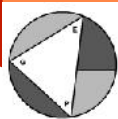
Nach Meinung vieler Experten sind zusätzliche finanzielle Leistungen notwendig, um die Ungleichheit der Einkommen am unteren Ende einzudämmen. Es sei wichtig, dass Haushalte ganz unten in der



sozialen Hierarchie unbürokratisch und zielgerichtet unterstützt und beraten werden.

Dazu gehören nicht nur der Zugang zu psychosozialer Beratung und finanziellen Hilfen, sondern auch große Steuerentlastungen für kleine Unternehmer (die teilweise vom spanischen Arbeitsamt SEPE in die Selbständigkeit getrieben werden), „da das spanische Finanzamt (*Agencia Tributaria*) durch komplizierte Verfahren und unübersichtliche Formulare in unseren 100 Tiefeninterviews mit kleinen Unternehmern wie Übersetzern, Wissenschaftlern, Ladenbesitzern, Handwerkern etc. ihrer Meinung nach eher darauf hin zu arbeiten scheint, sie mit hohen Strafen zu belegen, statt Arbeitsplätze zu fördern. Viele verraten mir dann, dass alle deswegen auch darauf angewiesen sind, nicht alles zu versteuern, weil das spanische Finanzamt anders als die europäischen Nachbar-Institutionen, das Existenzminimum eines Menschen überhaupt nicht respektiere,“ so Dr. Rodolfo Valentino.

In Einem sind sich viele Sozialwissenschaftler einig, dass die zunehmende Ungleichheit in der spanischen Gesellschaft, den sozialen Zusammenhalt zerstören kann. Diese könne laut Dr. Rodolfo Valentino, nur eingedämmt werden, wenn die Löhne spürbar steigen, Kapital- und Vermögenseinkünfte angemessen besteuert werden und eine große Steuerreform kleine Einkommen sowie kleine Unternehmer spürbar entlaste. Außerdem sollten v.a. Haushalte mit Kindern finanziell viel stärker unterstützt werden. Die Einführung von Steuer- und Abgabenfreien Minijobs (bis zu 450,- EUR) wie in Deutschland könnte die Steuer- und Finanzlast „armer“ und „bescheidener“ Haushalte auch noch mal erträglicher machen.



Dr Rodolfo Valentino is Director of the Independent European Sociological Research (EUROSOR) institute, and Director of the European Institute of Studies on Migration, Social Inclusion and Intercultural Learning (IEM), Bonn, Germany (<http://binev.de>).

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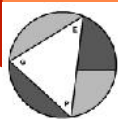
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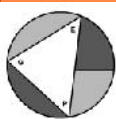
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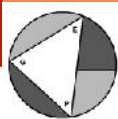


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La Desigualdad y la Pobreza en España continúan creciendo—Entre Dinero Negro y Oposiciones

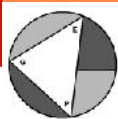
Rodolfo Valentino

The preceding two contributions in this issue of our journal concern the English and German texts of the same article regarding an EUROSOR (Independent European Sociological Research) study conducted and translated by the author himself.

I. Objetivo Ocupacional Número: Opciones—Una Comparación entre España y Alemania

Según muchos expertos, la brecha entre los ingresos en España es mayor que nunca. Después de la gran crisis del euro, que en España fue en gran medida una crisis inmobiliaria, este país cayó en una grave recesión, de la que aún no se ha recuperado. Aunque la tasa de desempleo se ha reducido a la mitad desde su pico en 2013, con empleos recién creados en el sector público, la cifra de 14% está todavía muy por encima del promedio de la zona del euro y solo es superada por Grecia dentro de la Unión Europea (*Handelsblatt*, 31.07.2019).

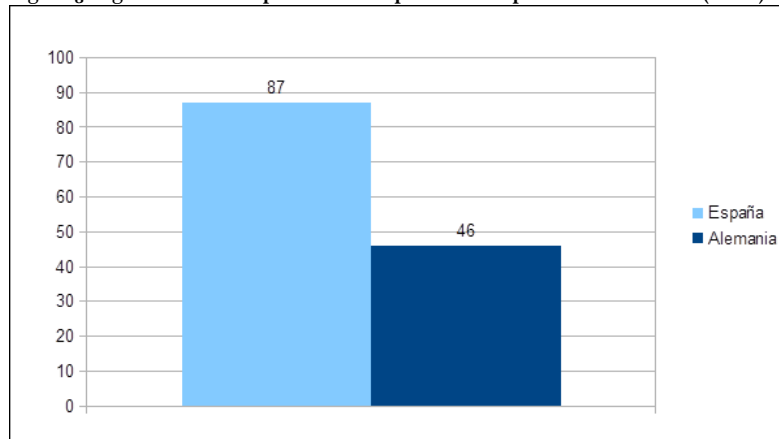
No es de extrañar que la mayoría de los estudiantes (87%) en España aspiran, según un estudio representativo finalizado el 31 de agosto de 2019 por el Independent European Sociological Research EUROSOR en Santander, a hacer oposiciones. Mientras que el número de estudiantes



alemanes que estarían encantados de ser funcionarios es del 46%. El estudio consiste en entrevistas cortas de diez minutos en las que se entrevistó a un total de 1886 estudiantes matriculados en 30 universidades de España y de Alemania.

Como razones para esta elección, los estudiantes alemanes y españoles dijeron que deseaban sobre todo un ingreso estable y seguro (España = 93%, Alemania = 65%), solvencia crediticia al comprar una vivienda (España = 97%, Alemania = 48%), horario de trabajo flexible (España = 54%, Alemania = 62%), horas extras pagadas (España = 95%, Alemania = 28%), trabajo de por vida (España = 97%, Alemania = 42%), una pensión buena y segura (España = 78%, Alemania = 96%), menos trabajo (España = 96%, Alemania = 32%), más vacaciones pagadas (España = 97%, Alemania = 13%) y contrato de trabajo no rescindible (España = 94%, Alemania = 48%).

Fig. 1: ¿Te gustaría hacer oposiciones después de completar tus estudios? (en %)



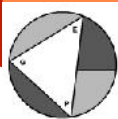
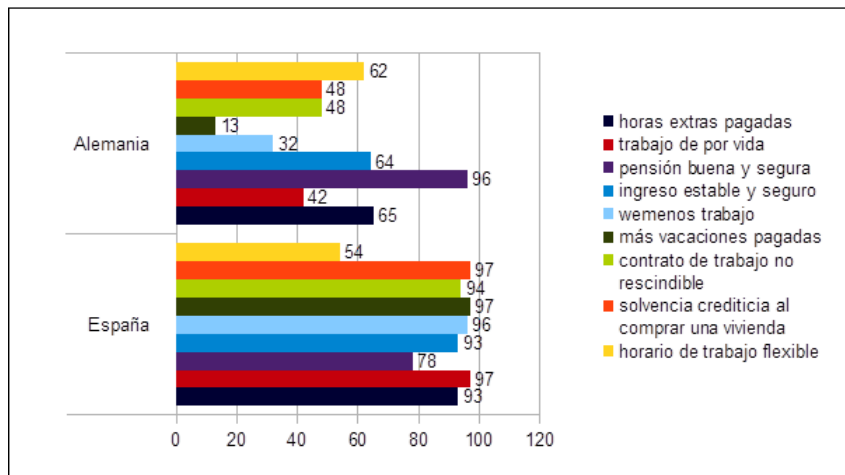


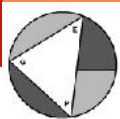
Fig.2: ¿Qué ventajas ves en ser funcionario público? (en %)



II. Desigualdad Social y Pobreza en España

Mientras tanto, los ingresos en la sociedad española están distribuidos de manera más desigual que nunca. Según el Dr. Rodolfo Valentino, Director del Instituto Europeo de Sociología EUROSOR, sorprende que la Política Española no ve ni ha visto en el pasado la necesidad de actuar y señala al estado de bienestar ya existente, que, en comparación con Alemania, traspasa casi toda la carga de cuidados y económica de los miembros a la familia, es decir a los padres y los abuelos.

Pero la desigualdad de ingresos y el empobrecimiento de la clase media (no funcionarizada) en España continúan creciendo. “Esto se



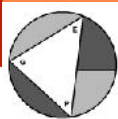
debe principalmente a dos factores”, subraya el Dr. Rodolfo Valentino:

“Por un lado, hay grupos de altos ingresos que se han beneficiado de las feroces ganancias de capital y corporativas y, por otro, el 70% de los hogares de ingresos más bajos (hasta 1400,- EUR y menos) que han tocado fondo social. La clase media ha entregado el 50% de sus integrantes a las clases bajas. Una característica especial digna de mención es que los 'pobres' en España, en contraste con Alemania, están siendo castigados de doble forma. En vez de que los bancos ofrezcan una cuenta de crédito de intereses bajos para poder llegar a final de mes, se aprovechan y cargan a los más pobres con una multa de 40 a 80 euros cuando hay un descubierto. Un castigo doble para aquellos que ya tienen que dar la vuelta a cada euro y temblar por si no llegan hasta fin de mes. Los datos actuales muestran que todos esos políticos y economistas, que dieron y todavía dan la señal de fin de alarma social, porque el empobrecimiento de gran parte de la población española no continúa, se han equivocado. Si bien la desigualdad está creciendo más lentamente, España todavía sigue 'alegremente' el camino arriesgado hacia una mayor desigualdad.”

III. Conclusión: Estrategias de Prevención de Desigualdad— Opinión de Expertos

Según muchos expertos, se necesitan ayudas económicas adicionales para detener la desigualdad de ingresos en las capas medianas y bajas. Es importante que los hogares en la parte media e inferior de la jerarquía social reciban apoyo y asesoramiento no burocráticos y específicos.

Esto incluye no solo el acceso a asesoramiento psicosocial, ayudas económicas, sino también grandes desgravaciones fiscales para pequeños empresarios (algunos de los cuales están siendo promovidos

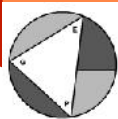


hacia el autoempleo por la SEPE), “ya que la Agencia Tributaria utiliza procedimientos complejos y modelos confusos, en la opinión de nuestros 100 pequeños empresarios entrevistados como traductores, científicos, dueños de tiendas, artesanos, etc., para recaudar dinero de forma agresiva a través de penalizaciones y multas en vez de promover el empleo. Muchos nos contaron en las entrevistas que no declaran todos los ingresos, porque la Agencia Tributaria, a diferencia de las instituciones vecinas europeas, no respeta el mínimo vital”, dice el Dr. Rodolfo Valentino.

En una cosa, muchos científicos sociales coinciden y es que el aumento de la desigualdad en la Sociedad Española puede destruir la cohesión social. Esta tendencia solo se puede parar, según el Dr. Rodolfo Valentino, si los salarios aumentan notablemente, los ingresos de capital y riqueza se gravan de manera adecuada y una gran reforma tributaria alivie notablemente los ingresos pequeños y a los pequeños empresarios. Además, deberían recibir los hogares con niños mucho más apoyo económico. La introducción de “miniempleos” (alemán: ‘Minijobs’) libres de impuestos y cargas tributarias (hasta 450,- EUR), como en Alemania, también podría hacer soportable la carga fiscal y económica que tienen los hogares “medianos” y “pobres”.

Dr Rodolfo Valentino is Director of the Independent European Sociological Research (EUROSOR) institute, and Director of the European Institute of Studies on Migration, Social Inclusion and Intercultural Learning (IEM), Bonn, Germany (<http://binev.de>).

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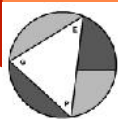
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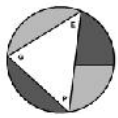
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Main Article

Democratisation in Russian Politics and the 1994 Russian Invasion of Chechnya

Michael Keen

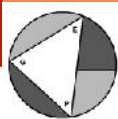
Introduction

In December 1994, soldiers of the Russian Federation crossed the border separating Russia from Chechnya, *de jure* an autonomous republic in the North Caucasus region within Russia but *de facto* independent since 1991, beginning what subsequently became known as the First Chechen War. Russian forces immediately met with heavy Chechen resistance, and fighting continued until Russian forces in Chechnya were defeated militarily in 1996, at horrific cost to both militaries and to the civilian population of Chechnya.

The Russian invasion of Chechnya was not undertaken for primarily military reasons, however. Instead, as this paper argues, the 1994 invasion of Chechnya was inseparably tied to Russia's incomplete process of democratisation following the fall of the Soviet Union.

While Russia was no longer democratising in the period leading up to the 1994 invasion of Chechnya, its prior partial democratisation was critical in shaping both the decision of President Boris Yeltsin and his inner circle to commit to a path of invasion and the manner in which this decision was made.

Specifically, Yeltsin's advisors pushing for war did so because they



hoped a successful campaign would improve their standing vis-à-vis their rivals in Yeltsin's entourage, and Yeltsin's decision to commit to war came with one eye on the results of the 1993 parliamentary elections and the other looking ahead to the 1996 presidential elections.

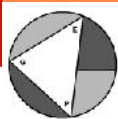
The speed, opacity, and confusion surrounding the decision to launch the invasion was a product of the institutional failures of the 1993 Constitution. The failure of the 1994 Russian invasion of Chechnya led in turn to the further erosion of Russian democracy by exposing and entrenching the non-consultative nature of Russian politics, undermining civil liberties in Russia, and providing ideological ammunition for the subsequent rising authoritarianism of Vladimir Putin.

Assessing Democratisation in Russia

In considering the relationship of democratisation in Russia with the start of the 1994 Russian military campaign in Chechnya, it is first necessary to delve deeper into precisely what democratisation entails and how the concept maps onto the realities of Russia in 1994.

As Bogaards (2010: 476) points out, democratisation has been defined and measured in many different ways, and applying these varying definitions results in quite different assessments of which countries are and are not democratic or democratising at any given time.

However, as Tilly writes, there are three main ways to assess democratisation: substantive criteria, which sthe realities of individual experience and social interactions; constitutional criteria,

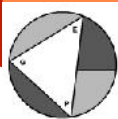


which emphasise legal procedures and institutions; and political-process criteria, which emphasise interactions between political actors (Tilly 2000: 4).

Although a full analysis of these three methods of assessing democratisation is beyond the scope of this paper, Tilly's argument in favor of political-process criteria is compelling, and this paper will adopt Tilly's definition of democracy. Per Tilly, "a regime is democratic insofar as it maintains broad citizenship, equal citizenship, binding consultation of citizens at large with respect to governmental activities and personnel, as well as protection of citizens from arbitrary action by governmental agents" (Tilly 2000: 6). A regime is thus becoming more democratic, or democratising, if it is advancing, on net, these four criteria.

By applying Tilly's definition, it is clear that Yeltsin's Russia of 1994 was more democratic than the Soviet Union had been and therefore that Russia had experienced democratisation at some point and to some degree between 1991 and 1994. However, whether Russia was still democratising in 1994, and to what degree, is much more contestable.

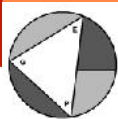
The key event in Russian democratisation between the dissolution of the USSR and the 1994 invasion of Chechnya was the constitutional crisis of 1993, which pitted President Yeltsin and his inner circle against opposition in the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, Russia's parliament. Although the dispute initially concerned Yeltsin's economic reforms meant to reorient Russia's economy towards capitalism, it soon became a fight over the fundamental balance of power between the presidency and the parliament in post-Soviet Russia.



A national referendum in April 1993 assessing popular confidence in President Boris Yeltsin and calling for early presidential and parliamentary elections failed to resolve the standoff, and in September 1993, the crisis reached its apex. President Yeltsin ordered the parliament dissolved, despite having no powers to do so under the 1978 Constitution, then still in effect. Parliament responded by formally impeaching Yeltsin and declaring Vice President Alexander Rutskoy, who happened to be a major Yeltsin opponent, to be Acting President. After escalating street battles in Moscow between pro-Yeltsin and anti-Yeltsin forces, the constitutional crisis was only resolved when the Russian army, previously neutral, decisively threw in its lot with Yeltsin. After a tank bombardment (see Photo 1), the parliament building was stormed, and the recalcitrant deputies were forced into submission.



Photo 1: Russia's parliament building after being shelled by pro-Yeltsin army units, October 4, 1993 (Foltynova 2019)



Based on Tilly's definition, the 1993 constitutional crisis brought Russia's democratisation to at least a temporary halt: one elected branch of government bombarding another into submission does not advance Tilly's political-process criterion of effective binding consultation, nor does the fact that the political dispute was effectively resolved by the army taking sides with one governing branch of the country.

Domestic Russian Politics and the Prelude to Invasion

In December 1993, a popular referendum approved a new constitution favored by President Yeltsin. The 1993 Constitution concentrated enormous formal power in the hands of the president, granting the president the power to appoint key ministers and even go to war without consulting the parliament (McFaul 2001: 213-214). The institutional design of the 1993 Constitution would greatly influence the Russian leadership's decision to invade Chechnya in December 1994.

One final national political event on December 12, 1993 had a major impact on Russian-Chechen relations and, ultimately, the outbreak of full-scale war. Simultaneously with the constitutional referendum, new parliamentary elections were held. Although Yeltsin himself was not a member of any political party, several liberal parties, most notably Russia's Choice, were understood to be pro-government parties.

As shown in Figure 1, these parties performed disappointingly in the elections, while the party that garnered the largest share of votes was the right-wing nationalist Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), led by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy (see Figure 1) (Kagarlitsky 2002: 84).

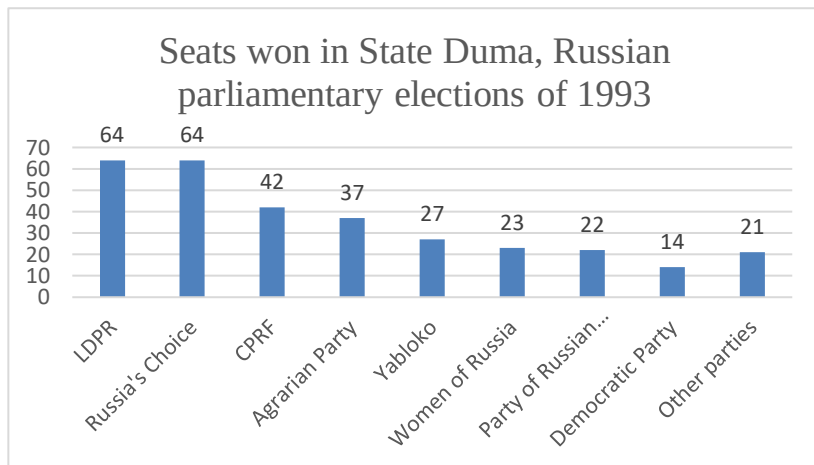
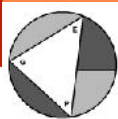
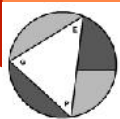


Figure 1: results of parliamentary elections, December 12, 1993

The LDPR advocated a muscular form of Russian nationalism bordering on fascism, emphasising rebuilding Russia as a great power and a unique civilisation. The LDPR's rise seemed to indicate that conservative nationalism was set to become a dominant ideology of the opposition in Russia. Thus Yeltsin's inner circle began to think about how the president could undercut the LDPR's appeal going forward to prevent Zhirinovskiy making a strong future challenge for the presidency. They soon came up with an answer: a decisive strike against Chechnya (Gall & De Waal 1997: 144).

In 1991, as the Soviet Union collapsed, Chechnya, formerly (together with Ingushetia) an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic within the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (SFSR), declared its independence from Russia.



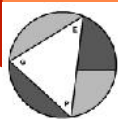
Prior to the collapse of the USSR, the Chechen nationalist movement received encouragement from Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who raised fears of the Russian nationalist movement crushing non-Russians within the Russian SFSR as a means of making trouble for Boris Yeltsin, who was encouraging non-Russian union republics (for example, the modern states of the Baltics, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia) to secede from the Soviet Union (Cheterian 2008: 227; Seely 2001: 16).

For their parts, President Yeltsin and the Russian leadership always opposed Chechnya's independence. But between the breakup of the USSR and 1994, Russia's central government was too preoccupied with other matters (especially reforming the economy and internal power struggles) to prevent Chechnya from achieving *de facto* independence.

However, the Russian state's impotence did not prevent growing hostility between Yeltsin's government and Chechnya's separatist regime of Dzhokhar Dudayev, a former Soviet air force general who had been elected chairman of the National Congress of the Chechen People in late 1990 and President of Chechnya in October 1991 (Zakayev 2018: 20-22). Yeltsin and Dudayev soon developed an immense personal enmity for each other.

From 1992 onward, the central Russian government consistently sought to overthrow Dudayev's regime by force, even if before 1994 the central government lacked the resources to act effectively against Dudayev (Evangelista 2002: 22).

In Chechnya, despite little interference from the central government for three years, Dudayev was unable to build a functioning state. Rule of law

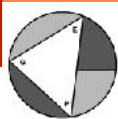


was tenuous at best; as a result, according to one estimate, up to 10,000 people were killed or disappeared in Chechnya between 1991 and 1994 (Winter 2016: 15-16). The Chechen economy largely consisted of various crime rackets. Many of these crime rackets spanned the Russian-Chechen border (which, prior to 1994, was never closed in any case); members of the Russian elite often laundered their ill-gotten money in Chechnya (Kagarlitsky 2002: 113).

By 1994, though, the stage was set for a greater confrontation between the central Russian government and Dudayev's regime. First and foremost, President Yeltsin had defeated his opponents in Moscow and was therefore finally in a position to address Chechnya. Other developments furthered the rising confrontation. In February 1994, the autonomous Russian republic of Tatarstan signed an agreement with the central government under which Tatarstan, which like Chechnya had made moves towards independence and declared "state sovereignty," agreed to renounce its claims to sovereignty in exchange for various special concessions and rights (Cheterian 2008: 249-250). Crucially, with Tatarstan's status vis-à-vis Moscow clarified and formalised, Chechnya stood as the only remaining region of Russia contesting its relationship with the center.

Through spring 1994, both sides remained committed, on paper at least, to negotiations. Dudayev demanded a meeting with Yeltsin himself; Yeltsin was formally open to the idea, and a Kremlin representative announced in March that preparations for a Russian-Chechen "summit" were underway (Cheterian 2008: 250).

However, the Russian government, after months of delay, nominated

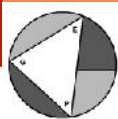


Nationalities Minister Sergei Shakhrai to head its negotiating team. Dudayev's hatred for Shakhrai was well known; Dudayev had called Shakhrai an "enemy of the Chechen people" and accused him of instigating conflict between Ingush and Ossets in 1992 (Bennett 1998: 313-314).

In late May 1994, a car bomb in Grozny, the capital of Chechnya, targeted Dudayev's convoy. Dudayev escaped unscathed, but three others were killed, including a Chechen government minister. The Chechen government promptly blamed Russian intelligence for the attack, and in an interview with a Russian television station, Dudayev personally attacked Yeltsin, accusing him of being a drunkard (Cheterian 2008: 251). Shakhrai later claimed these personal insults ended any possibility of a direct meeting between Dudayev and Yeltsin that could have averted war (Ibid: 251). Negotiations having failed, Yeltsin and his inner circle increasingly turned towards military options.

However, through summer and early fall 1994, military options did not stretch to full-scale invasion, and Yeltsin's inner circle was by no means united. In July, a number of Russian vehicles were hijacked by Chechen criminals, who attempted to flee with hostages and ransom money to Chechnya; the fact that the hijackers were promptly apprehended by Dudayev's security forces did not prevent the hijackings from causing, according to one analysis, "a conclusive and disastrous deterioration of relations between the Kremlin and Dudayev" (Lieven 1998: 87).

Immediately following the hijackings, Yeltsin's government increased its financial support for the Chechen Provisional Council, an anti-Dudayev Chechen group led by Umar Avturkhanov, which announced



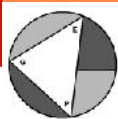
in early August it was forming a parallel government in Chechnya to rival Dudayev's (Bennett 1998: 318).

Also in August, Ruslan Khasbulatov, former speaker of Russia's Supreme Soviet and one of Yeltsin's most prominent political opponents during the 1993 constitutional crisis and an ethnic Chechen, announced he was permanently returning to Chechnya. Khasbulatov claimed he would work to make peace between rival Chechen factions but undoubtedly sought to present himself as an alternative to Dudayev (Bennett 1998: 319).

According Akhmed Zakaev, then an official in Dudayev's government, Khasbulatov had been seeking to sow opposition to Dudayev's government in Chechnya since shortly after Dudayev's election in October 1991, including by working to torpedo any possible meeting between Dudayev and Yeltsin; but Khasbulatov's physical arrival in Chechnya marked a new escalation (Zakayev 2018: 33-34).

Despite his opposition to Dudayev, Khasbulatov enjoyed great prestige in Chechnya thanks to his past experience and achievements in Russian national politics. Khasbulatov's return to Chechnya alarmed Yeltsin and his inner circle even further: they feared their hated rival could use Chechen politics as a springboard to return to the national political scene (Shevtsova 1999: 114).

Plans to marginalise both Dudayev and Khasbulatov by supporting Avturkhanov's Chechen Provisional Council accelerated. On August 25, 1994, Yeltsin's government recognised the Chechen Provisional Council as the sole legitimate government of Chechnya. By October, Russian air

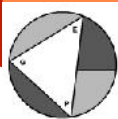


forces were supporting the Chechen Provisional Council in its skirmishes with pro-Dudayev forces; still, the latter consistently came out on top in the clashes (Lieven 1998: 89-91). In early November, Yeltsin's government announced that talks with Chechnya could only occur after Dudayev left power (Lieven 1998: 92).

Meanwhile, Yeltsin's pro-war advisors grew in influence within his entourage, partially for reasons having nothing to do with Chechnya. At the end of August 1994, President Yeltsin's drunken conduct on a state visit to Germany prompted several liberal members of the government to write Yeltsin a letter asking him to behave with more dignity; in response, Yeltsin marginalised them from the government (Gall & De Waal 1997: 154).

In October, an economic crash weakened the position of Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, who had not enthusiastically supported war, while in early November, two more moderate ministers were sacked (Gall & De Waal 1997: 155). Hardliners now controlled ever more access to Yeltsin himself. Their motivations for war continued to be mixed.

In November, Oleg Lobov, secretary of the Security Council, reportedly called for a "short, victorious war to raise the President's ratings" (quoted in Evangelista 2002: 38). Lobov had in mind the operation the United States had carried out in Haiti that September, which appeared to provide a popularity surge for U.S. President Bill Clinton; the military action against the Russian parliament in 1993 was also cited as an encouraging precedent for a war in Chechnya (Isaenko & Petschauer 2000: 13).

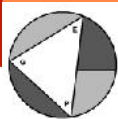


Lobov may have not even understood the extent to which the situation in Chechnya was not analogous to Haiti or the Russian parliament; Yeltsin's advisors, especially the hardliners, were remarkably uninformed about what was actually happening in Chechnya (Evangelista 2002: 36). Defense Minister Pavel Grachev subsequently claimed that Dudayev could be removed by a single Russian airborne battalion in two hours, and Grachev reportedly told Yeltsin any operation against Chechnya would be "a piece of cake" (quoted in Shevtsova 1999: 113).

In late November 1994, the Russian government attempted to give the ineffective Chechen Provisional Council more direct support. On November 26, a column of the Provisional Council's fighters launched a major assault on Grozny, with the support of dozens of Russian tanks and armored vehicles, manned by Russian soldiers (Lieven 1998: 92).

After heavy fighting, the assault was routed by pro-Dudayev forces, who captured 21 Russian soldiers. Dudayev paraded the prisoners on television, claiming that if Russia admitted they were its troops, the men would be treated as prisoners of war and, if not, they would be executed as mercenaries (Bennett 1998: 325-326). Yeltsin responded with an ultimatum, demanding that all forces in Chechnya release their prisoners and disarm (Lieven 1998: 92).

Three days later, on November 29, Yeltsin called a meeting of the Security Council. At the meeting, Yeltsin demanded an immediate vote in favour of war, refusing to permit any discussion until after the vote was passed unanimously (Bennett 1998: 326).



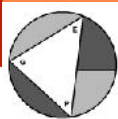
At this point, it was clear to all that war was imminent. Sporadic Russian airstrikes on Grozny began and Khasbulatov, seeing where events were headed, left Chechnya on December 4; Dudayev's release of the captured Russian soldiers on December 6 proved futile, and Chechen armed forces mobilised (Lieven 1998: 93). On December 7, the Russian government claimed the conflict did not concern Russia and Chechnya but was only a "peacemaking mission" to separate warring Chechen "factions," thereby casting the conflict as merely a matter of restoring order and denying the existence of any political dimension (Kipp 2001: 53). On December 11, Russian military columns crossed the border into Chechnya, and war began.

Incomplete Democratisation as Catalyst for War

The decision to invade Chechnya made in fall 1994 would not have been possible without Russia's incomplete democratisation. Had Russia not democratised at all, there would have been much less pressure to raise President Yeltsin's ratings specifically in advance of the 1996 elections.

Despite the fact that the 1996 presidential election, like other elections in post-Soviet Russia, was marred by widespread allegations of voting irregularities, to say nothing of the unfair media environment in support of President Yeltsin, it was democratic in one critical aspect: Yeltsin and his aides understood that it was at least theoretically possible for Yeltsin to lose the election and to be removed from power as a result.

Although authoritarian regimes that do not face electoral pressure do frequently start internal and external wars in order to boost domestic

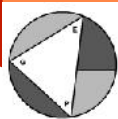


popularity, the specific time constraint imposed by the 1996 elections added special urgency to hardliners' preferred Chechnya policies, contributing to the decision to invade.

Moreover, the increasingly hardline shift in the Yeltsin government's Chechnya policy occurred partially in response to the apparent growing popularity of the nationalist wing of Russian politics. If the 1993 parliamentary elections had not been relatively free and fair, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's LDPR would not have been able to score a surprise win, thereby signaling the arrival of the nationalist bloc as a force to be reckoned with.

However, the fact that democratization in Russia had been halted also provided political motivations for the military campaign against Chechnya. Because Yeltsin had crushed his political opponents with military force and pushed through a hyper-presidential constitution, despite the presence of opposing parties in the Duma, Yeltsin no longer faced any real domestic political opposition by 1994. This left him unable to resort to his preferred political tactic of blaming the opposition for Russia's problems, most notably the perilous state of the economy and declining living standards (Shevtsova 1999: 114). A new solution, or excuse, was needed, and the Chechen war was intended to provide one.

In addition to impacting motivations behind Russia's military campaign in Chechnya, the incomplete state of democratisation in Russian politics also impacted the mechanisms by which the decision to invade Chechnya was reached. The institutional design of the 1993 Russian Constitution, imposed after the 1993 crisis, and in particular the

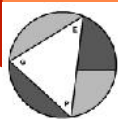


constitution's extreme concentration of power in the hands of the president, shaped the Russian government's decision-making process on the road to war. Four factors characterised this presidential system:

First, the super-presidential system exposed the entire process to President Yeltsin's personal foibles. For example, as was previously discussed, several leading liberals in Yeltsin's inner circle, who advocated a more cautious line on Chechnya, were marginalized in early fall 1994 because Yeltsin was personally offended by their request that he behave with more dignity when representing Russia abroad.

Furthermore, Yeltsin's personal hatred for Ruslan Khasbulatov, which matched Yeltsin's hatred for Dudayev, pushed the Russian government to intervene more aggressively against Dudayev's regime lest Khasbulatov gain influence in the interim (Bennett 1998: 320). Had Russia's democratic institutions been stronger and its political actors not been fundamentally subservient to Yeltsin, Yeltsin's personality would not have played such an outsize role and the Russian government would have been more likely to back Khasbulatov as, on merits alone, Khasbulatov was likely the Chechen opposition figure best placed to topple Dudayev without war due to Khasbulatov's national prestige and links to influential religious orders in Chechnya (Zakaev 2018: 23).

Second, Yeltsin's vast powers as President meant that influence within Yeltsin's inner circle frequently did not correspond with formal job titles but rather with personal access to Yeltsin, a hallmark of patrimonial authoritarian regimes rather than fully democratic ones. For instance, the struggle for influence within Yeltsin's inner circle was the main factor initially pushing hardliners to advocate a military solution in

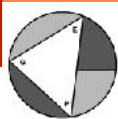


Chechnya as early as summer 1994; then, the main advocates of war were those who had been marginalised by recent cabinet reshuffles and sought to regain lost power (Lieven 1998: 86).

In another example, after November 26, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev decisively backed the use of force, likely in an attempt to seize the limelight from his more hesitant political rivals (Gall & De Waal 1997: 163). Fights over personal access to Yeltsin also led members of his inner circle to prevent others from reaching Yeltsin with information, which might have swayed Yeltsin's determination away from war (Ibid.: 165).

Third, the formal powers vested in the presidency meant that President Yeltsin was able to formally authorize the military campaign via secret decree; he was under no constitutional obligation to inform, much less consult, the Russian parliament or broader public (Evangelista 2002: 32). Under a more democratic institutional system, the fact that as of December 1994, polls found that a greater share of the Russian public opposed military action against Chechnya than supported it might have been more relevant in guiding the Russian government's policy (Cheterian 2008: 259).

Finally, the 1993 Constitution left an institutional hole in decision-making: no single body existed to pull together information from different ministries, chains of command and factions in the leader's inner circle into one single coherent policy. During the Soviet era, the Politburo had fulfilled this role. In 1994, the closest such institution was the Security Council, but even it did not fully function (Lieven 1998: 95-96). As a result, the process by which the decision to launch a military campaign in Chechnya was opaque even to those participating in it, and



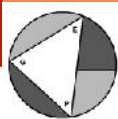
major technical concerns expressed by the Russian military were ignored (Lieven 1998: 88-89).

Conclusion: The Invasion of Chechnya and the Future of Russian Democracy

The 1994 Russian military campaign in Chechnya was, in retrospect, corrosive to democratisation in Russian politics. Theoretically, leaving aside the fact that the Chechen victims of the war were nominally Russian citizens, the war need not have been destructive to Russian democratisation. The campaign was formally justified in terms of restoring constitutional order to the last region of the Russian Federation whose relationship with the center remained contested.

Tilly acknowledges that for a state to democratise, it must actually have the capacity to govern, which includes control over its territory (Tilly 2000: 6). However, that is not how things occurred in practice. First, Russia lost the war militarily, and a peace agreement signed in 1996 left Chechnya even further outside the control of Moscow than had been the case in 1994. More importantly, the war ultimately reinforced rather than challenged the forces that ground democratisation in Russia to a halt prior to the start of the war.

The war demonstrated beyond all doubt the lack of popular consultation involved in the running of the Russian state: President Yeltsin was able to start, prosecute, and ultimately lose a war without consulting the broader government, much less the public, or subsequently facing any real accountability (Blank & Tilford 1995: 3).



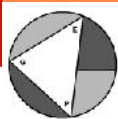
Although opposition to the war within Russia emerged almost immediately, especially from within the Russian military, and was taken up by political parties, the war did not prompt a new repolarization of Russian politics that could have challenged the system more broadly (McFaul 2001: 258). This was largely because the political forces that opposed the invasion of Chechnya did not match the forces opposing Yeltsin's other policies, preventing the formation of a united opposition front (Ibid: 259-260).

Despite the war's unpopularity in Russia, President Yeltsin was reelected in 1996, his victory owing more to private deals cut with major political and economic figures than to genuine popularity or new policies.

Ultimately, the fact that the post-1993 institutional structure, with all its undemocratic patrimonialism, opacity, and lack of popular accountability, was able to survive the political crises that followed the 1994 invasion of Chechnya demonstrated the post-1993 institutional structure's staying power and made further democratisation more difficult (McFaul 2001: 262-264).

After 2000, Yeltsin's successor, Vladimir Putin, was able to channel political ideas on Russia's "crisis of statehood" that emerged in the context of the 1994 invasion of Chechnya into a new loose ideology of "Putinism" (Hill & Gaddy 2013: 38). Putin was then able to dismantle many aspects of Russian democracy without meaningfully departing from the Yeltsin-era rules of the game.

Finally, the Russian leadership drew lessons from the military progress

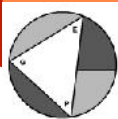


of the 1994 invasion of Chechnya that would later erode democracy in Russia. For example, the Russian media quickly proved itself an irritant to the government over Chechnya by reporting honestly on military defeats suffered and atrocities committed by Russian forces, and by refusing to toe the government's line in portraying the Chechen leaders as simple criminals and fanatics. When Russia invaded Chechnya again in late 1999, the government made control over media narratives of the war a priority, which contributed to a broader increase in government repression of the independent media in Russia (Zürcher 2007: 94). Russian democracy suffered as a result.

There is no evidence that President Yeltsin and his advisors launched the 1994 military campaign in Chechnya with the primary intention of striking a blow at the process of democratisation in Russian politics. Instead, as has been the case with countless military campaigns, different political actors supported war in Chechnya to advance myriad ends.

However, Russia's journey on the spectrum between authoritarianism and democracy between 1991 and 1994, and especially the specific point at which democratisation was halted, was instrumental in shaping the personal and political motivations and the institutional processes that led those in favour of war with Chechnya to win out in shaping Russian policy. The war itself then further calcified Russia's democratic halt and even paved the way for greater authoritarianism under President Putin. The ultimate victims were the people of Russia and Chechnya.

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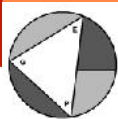
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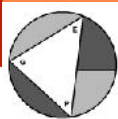
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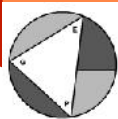
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Main Article

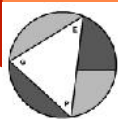
The Ethnic Womb and the Symbolic Hearth: How Identity Politics Made Women Targets of Sexual Violence in Nagorno-Karabakh

Quinn A. Webster

Abstract Rather than framing gendered violence as inevitable in conflict, understanding it as a unique aspect of combat enables us to interpret the ethnogeopolitical factors which sparked war in Nagorno-Karabakh as equally crucial in explaining the outbreak of sexual violence. In the aftermath of the USSR's dissolution, unclear ethnic/territorial claims and the collapse of an overarching Soviet identity created a condition of ontological insecurity where violence served to establish belonging within an ingroup and assert positive distinctiveness over an outgroup. Where women represent the biological and cultural (re)producers of the nation as the ethnic womb and the symbolic hearth, an attack on the mother becomes an attack on the overall ethnîe. Therefore, gender-based violence in Nagorno-Karabakh may be interpreted as a tool used to redress the existential anxiety caused by ontological insecurity.

Key words: Identity Politics, Nagorno-Karabakh, Gender-Based Violence, Ontological Insecurity, Ethno-Nationalist War

"The home front and war front became almost indistinguishable and often it was not possible to determine where it was more dangerous, at home or on the front line."—*Gagik, an Armenian boy who trained other child-fighters* (Shahnazarian & Ziemer 2012: 1673-1676)



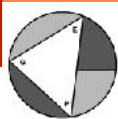
Introduction

In reviewing the last century's tally of conflicts, it is rare to find any without an integral component of gender-based violence (GBV). From the "bush-wife" carrying out domestic tasks by day and sexual services by night to children forced into sex rings by peacekeepers, conflict is rife with sexual assault (Holzner 2011: 42; Allen-Ebrahimian 2017). However, while rape often becomes an "indistinguishable part of the poisonous wartime stew called 'lootpillagelandrape'," *how, where, and why* sexual assault occurs is important to comprehending women's experiences in ethno-nationalist war (Enloe 2000: 108).

In analysing traditional conceptions of "peace," women's lives are frequently relegated to the "private sphere" and ignored (Enloe 2014: 1-18). Thus, for women experiencing violence in Nagorno-Karabakh, a frozen conflict may in fact be searingly active. The motives driving sexual assault are explanatory in how the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and its legacy has unfolded, and in contesting its "frozen" nature.

The conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh¹ presents a quagmire of crime and causality; there are myriad competing narratives of the conflict, though a common complaint is the fundamental clash between an Armenian myth-symbol complex emphasising fears of genocide and an Azeri one emphasising territorial integrity (Kaufman 2001: 49). Each therefore saw Karabakh as vital to national existence and its loss as threatening group extinction, leading to nationalist extremism which erupted into war around 1988 (Ibid.: 50).

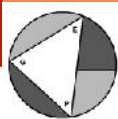
Notwithstanding other interpretations, I concentrate on gender-based



violence, which is theorised uniquely within the region's ethno-nationalist tangle. I am however restricted by underdeveloped research owing to cultures of silence, intentionally biased information², and recent changes in the political climate normalising, and even legalising, GBV in the South Caucasus (Avetisyan *et al.* 2018).

One activist working with the women's rights organisation *Kvinna till Kvinna* explained that survivors of sexual violence are often forced to leave Nagorno-Karabakh to avoid being stigmatised "as a source of shame by neighbors and society;" conversely, perpetrators are rarely punished (*Kvinna till Kvinna* 2019: 28). Although unreported cases make determining the problem's scope difficult, the existing information paints a grim picture where GBV has been pervasive within the conflict (Bastick *et al.* 2007: 115). Events such as the 1988 Sumgait Pogrom, where an Armenian woman was dragged naked through the streets, "cotton buses" which took poor women to military bases for prostitution, and extensive wartime abuse evidence often-public violence intended to harm and humiliate women (Rettman 2017; *Kvinna till Kvinna* 2019: 27).

Though these public forms of GBV capture the greatest international attention, rape in ethno-nationalist war represents two sides of the same coin, where soldiers harm enemy women in their enemies' homes, and concurrently their own women in their own homes. While such wartime domestic abuse is interrelated to martial rape as a method to re-masculinise the soldier's male identity and re-establish ethnic dominance at home, rape within the family extends beyond the scope of this article and thus I choose to focus on examining the attack on the "other" (Borer 2009: 1172).

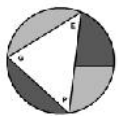


As much as the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is territorial, it is also ethnic; the conflict is widely regarded as resting on “mutually exclusive conceptions of the ethnic territory” and a desire to alter prevailing ethnic demographics (Yamskov 1991: 638-644). Multiple fractured identities entailing significant overlap in geography, culture, and language alongside the dissolution of the USSR helped to evoke a condition of ontological insecurity which drove the outbreak of violence, frequently against women.³

This gender-based violence took aim in attacking women both as the *ethnic womb* (the guardian of the ethnic bloodline) and the *symbolic hearth* (the guardian of the ethnic home). In doing so, men were able to degrade the other's ethno-nationalist conception as a whole, and thus make ideological gains in the conflict. In this sense, the physical attack against a woman became a symbolic act against an entire identity.

Here, sexual violence in Nagorno-Karabakh served to redress the anxiety created by ontological insecurity by physically and symbolically asserting dominance over another's identity in times of ethnogeopolitical instability. The structure of this essay will build as follows: first, I argue that ontological insecurity resulted from unclear territorial/ethnic claims which intensified during and after the dissolution of the USSR and which in turn sparked violence. Second, I theorise that sexual violence became a weapon against women as the *ethnic womb* and the *symbolic hearth*. Finally, I apply my theoretical framework to three incidents of GBV during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Sexual assault happens in manifold contexts and for manifold reasons,



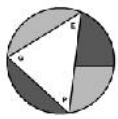
and I do not intend to explain every instance or aspect of GBV, but rather to posit identity insecurity in Nagorno-Karabakh as a unique lens through which to explain martial rape.

Identity, Belonging, Conflict and Violence

Identity is itself slippery; though identity exhibits both constancy and flux side by side, it is the bedrock of “defining and locating our individual selves in the world” (Smith 1991: 17-18). Thus, it is tenuously held yet fiercely defended. This weak grasp or constancy, redoubled by the South Caucasus’ sheer variety of cultural and ethnic differences and unstable boundaries, inevitably created a “political Charybdis” in which cultures and ethnicities are pitted against one another (Ibid.: 18).

The 2005 Nagorno-Karabakh census lists more than three spoken languages in the region, and an ethnopolitical map counts more than eight ethnic groups living in the surrounding area (see Table 1, Map 1). Furthermore, the USSR’s rapid imposition of forced ethnic harmony in the 1920s and its later revoke thereof as the USSR collapsed in 1991, threw already-fractured ethnicities onto the battlefield (De Waal 2003).

These two factors, the burden to differentiate and the USSR’s dissolution, created a condition of ontological insecurity which drove discrimination of the negative, feared outgroup to reassert one’s own positive, embraced ethnic identity, sparking violence. Though it would be exaggerating to deduce a sense of common ethnicity from the fear of extinction by an outgroup alone, the role of warfare is a “crucible of ethnic cohesion” which mobilises nationalist sentiments, ultimately



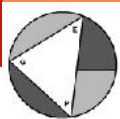
elucidating the trajectory of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (De Waal 2003: 27).

This essay hinges on three overarching assumptions about ethnic identity. First, that the “ethnie,” or idealised ethnic community, is discursively constructed through *difference*, whereby identity comprises a meaning-making process that symbolically constructs itself in relation to others (Castells 1997: 7; Shahnazarian & Ziemer 2012: 1669-1670). Fostering inclusion in ethno-nationalism also necessitates parallel exclusion to define “us” versus “them” (Murer 2014: 295).

Second, self-identification occurs by symbolically identifying the motivations of social actors within everchanging political, historical, and cultural settings (Brubaker & Cooper 2000: 14). During war, people build a positive self-concept distinct from other comparatively negative identities (Tajfel & Turner 1979: 33-47). Thus, social identity becomes the part of an individual’s self-concept which “derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group ... together with the value and emotional significance” thereof (Tajfel 1981: 255).

Third, identities are lenses through which we process our surroundings (Somers & Gibson 1994: 59). It is through these daily narratives that we “make sense of the social world” and form our identities (Ibid.: 38). Therefore, one’s identity is integral to one’s *belonging* within a community and to attaching meaning to our lives.

If belonging is about the security being ‘in place’ provides, a *lack* of identity suggests a lack of security, which Kinnvall terms ontological insecurity (Yuval-Davis *et al.* 2005: 526; Valentine *et al.* 2009: 246;

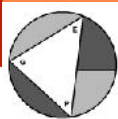


Kinnvall 2004: 755). Ontological security refers to a “person’s fundamental sense of safety in the world,” including a basic “trust of others” necessary to “maintain a sense of psychological well-being and avoid existential anxiety” (Giddens 1991: 38-39).

Identity herein sustains a “narrative about the self and [answers] questions about doing, acting, and being” by re-establishing previous identities or formulating new ones (Kinnvall 2004: 746-747; Giddens 1991: 38-39). Since identity is tied to ‘historical memories’ of the homeland within the family’s household, ontological security is maintained when home can provide a site of constancy relating to permanence and continuity (Smith 1991: 21-23).

In other words, home is a secure base on which identities are constructed (Dupuis & Thorns 1998: 28). When the security of home is lost, as in conflict, then a new home—or a new identity—for ontological security is sought. As Sigel notes, humans harbour a powerful drive to maintain “a sense of [identity] continuity that allays fear of ... being changed against one’s will” (1989: 459). One main response to such insecurity is to reassert one’s (self-)identity by drawing closer to any collective which can reduce insecurity and existential anxiety (Kinnvall 2004: 741). Ontological insecurity thus gives rise to politics of resistance, violence, and the re-assertion or growth of local identities to re-establish psychological *belonging* (Ibid.: 747).

In the 1988-1994 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, ontological insecurity followed two conditions: the burden of differentiation against unclear territorial/ethnic claims and the Soviet identity’s and state’s tumultuous dissolution. As the “narcissism of small differences” suggests, closely



related communities with adjacent borders are more likely to engage in conflict due to hypersensitivity to details of differentiation (Freud 1991: 131).

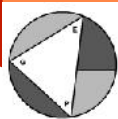
Indeed, table 1 and map 1 illustrate that the South Caucasus is overwhelmed by different languages, ethnicities, and populations, leading to increased tension to distinguish *who is who* within a relatively small geographical and cultural space (Brown 1984: 603-623). In a 2009 interview with Ulrike Ziemer, a woman named Karina claimed that:

“In Karabakh, they called us ‘*galma*’, and in Armenia they scolded us for speaking in Russian and not Armenian” (Shahnazarian & Ziemer 2014: 33).

As this interview excerpt indicates, language variations contribute to everyday marginalisation and prejudice regarding Nagorno-Karabakh (Shahnazarian & Ziemer 2014: 33).

Within Armenian identity, there are also Yerevan Armenians (ethnic Armenians from Armenia) and Baku Armenians (ethnic Armenians from Azerbaijan), as well as many intermarriages which muddle the line between *us* and *them*, augmenting ontological insecurity (United States Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration 1993: 11-12).

On top of this, regional dimensions such as common cultures, ethical and behavioural similarities, common mythology and ancestral heroes, and collective historical memory can both connect and divide “the face of Caucasian nationality” (Ilyasov 2013: 10-13). Religious identity, varied as it is throughout the Caucasus, is a powerful mobiliser of national



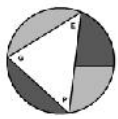
identity and can become a divisive tool to distinguish local peoples from one another when ontological security is threatened, such as during mutually exclusive claims to an ethnic homeland like Nagorno-Karabakh (Ibid.: 11-13). When cultures are similar and small populations are interspersed closely, identity can fracture and thus must be defined more ardently (Brown 1984: 603-623).

Furthermore, the USSR's sweep through the South Caucasus in the 1920s overlaid an additional veil of identity which complicated pre-existing regional identities. For a period, one could be Soviet and Azeri and Karabakhi, amongst other roles.⁵ The Soviet policies of ethnic harmonisation, redrawing borders disregarding ethnic communities, and 'russification', fundamentally altered the identity landscape while suppressing conflict; hence, it proved unsurprising when Armenian and Azeri nationalism grew after the USSR began to disband and fragment around 1988 (Liu 1998: 76-79; Shahnazarian & Ziemer 2012: 1671-1672).

In many ways, ethno-nationalism was "built into" the organisation of socialism, "manifesting itself differently in different countries but absent from none" (Verdery 1993: 174). When the USSR dissolved, an entire facet of the region's identity—alongside important government structures, cultural practices, borders, and hierarchies—disappeared nearly overnight. The Soviet identity and consequent pressure to harmonise was stripped from South Caucasians, triggering ontological insecurity.

Ontological Insecurity and Violence

To rectify the ontological insecurity galvanised by ethnic/border anxiety

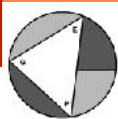


and the USSR's dissolution, *ethnies* must re-assert their claim to ethnicity over another's, therefore defining by contrasting. Social Identity Theory (SIT) propositions that people construct their inter-group identity by attaching emotional significance which builds self-esteem; people therefore cultivate a positive conception of the "ingroup" against the "outgroup," creating inherent competition (Tajfel 1982: 13-19).

Experiments by Tajfel and Turner found that simply assigning children to groups inspired discrimination against the outgroup, as members tend to view competitors negatively so as to increase their own self-esteem through "positive distinctiveness" (1979: 33-47).

One means of buttressing positive distinctiveness (thereby legitimising identity) is by reifying the social hierarchy by dominating the outgroup through *violence*. Bielby and Murer explain that 'doing' violence is part of 'doing' our identity, making violence "a generative force" (Bielby & Murer 2018: 3). Identity is furthermore performative—we perform ritualised and codified acts to signify our belonging to a group (Butler 1999: 173-174). By 'doing' violence against an outgroup, we re-perform fantasised acts of perpetration to reconfigure the self, thereby concretising the threatened identity (Bielby & Murer 2018: 3-4).

Therefore, the physical attack against an outgroup symbolically attacks the latter's self-conception. By committing violence, especially killing, the vulnerable individual demonstrates membership by 'doing' exclusion (Bielby & Murer 2018: 3-4). Thus, "to be recognized as a member of the collective self it may be necessary to violently debase the other" (Murer 2014: 314).

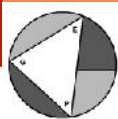


Therefore, the suicide bomber who literally diffuses himself over his victim symbolically dominates the other's ethnic identity with their own, re-performing their idealised status hierarchy. This mirrors the 1994 bombing of Bagratashen by Baku Azeris and Azerbaijan's "suicide drones," which aim not just to kill, but to performatively disintegrate their ethnic body to disrupt the outgroup's social stability (*Los Angeles Times* 1994; Sanchez 2016).

Additionally, where identity performances demonstrate group membership, performative violence wins social capital that translates into *belonging* within the *ethnie*—even for suicide bombers beyond the grave (Murer 2014: 294-297; Bourdieu 1985: 728-729). These symbolic purposes—to dominate and to belong—amalgamate to redress ontological insecurity through physical violence.

Utilising SIT, violence in Nagorno-Karabakh mollifies ontological insecurity motivated by unclear territorial/ethnic claims and the USSR's dissolution. As Druckman explains: "membership in [an ethnic group] becomes part of the individual's self-identity and critical to a sense of self-worth" (1994: 49). When this self-worth is threatened, members of the group reify their identity through exclusion and discrimination, ultimately leading to violence aimed at legitimising the idealised status hierarchy in order to achieve positive distinctiveness.

Though the development of social identity does not inherently produce violence, the outgroup discrimination it engenders primes us for violence when amplified by boundary-making rhetoric premised on the threatening image of the "other." In this way, physical violence spawns a symbolic crutch for a fractured identity.



Gendered Violence and Ethnic Identity

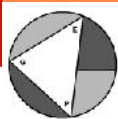
Gendered Violence: Masculinity as a Performance

Masculinity, like ethnicity, performs identity: one acts out internalized, embedded and normalised signs to signify belonging to a gender (Butler 1999: 185). During conflict, the militarised is masculinised and vice versa. Enloe suggests the process of militarization works to preserve society's (martial) hierarchies of identities (2000: 261; Birkedal 2018: 43-45).

Notions which are constitutive to militarisation as a project—masculinity/femininity, honor, and heroism—are constructed through cultural practices dependent on performance. These performances help construct the “masculine self” by reaffirming socialised gender norms in line with *hegemonic masculinity*.

Such gender norms, inherited from the Ancient Grecian ideal of the “citizen-warrior,” generally consist of acting out critical values which help to retain the patriarchal status hierarchy—aggression, courage, violence, etc. (Tickner 2004: 43; Kimmel 1994: 125). Hegemonic masculinity, much like a hegemonic state, differentiates itself by configuring “manhood” around the dominance of men and the subordination of women (Connell 1995: 77; Hooper 2001: 73). Because violence performs “manhood,” boys are praised for being aggressive, especially when such aggression is sexual (Connell 1985: 263).

As Bellini explains: “men must not only reject femininity, but [also] dominate and control women to be men” (2010: 55). Because ‘doing’



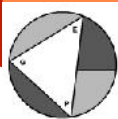
violence and 'doing' gender are mutually constitutive performances, violence which seeks to dominate the outgroup is inherently gendered and thus *victims' gender matters* (Bielby & Murer 2018: 4).

Arguably, the nation cannot be divorced from its ethnic aspect—the nation is foremost a community of common descent. Such militarised hegemonic masculinity equates “manhood” with the ability to defend his nation and thus his *ethnie* (Smith 1991: 13-21). Men are projected to be the “just warriors marching into battle,” while women are the “beautiful souls marching for peace”—innocent of the war yet needing protection (Elshtain 1987).

In the South Caucasus, the *status quo* prescribes men as hero-fighters expected to sacrifice their lives for their nation and thus for their women (Beukian 2014: 254). Within these discourses, women become at once the victims and the causes of war (Elshtain 1992). Women are thereby reduced to a form of traffic: as exchangeable, symbolic property for the primary purpose of cementing bonds with other men (Kosofsky 1985: 34).

When men perform gender-based violence they perform their masculine identity, which through socialised gender norms that portray the man as the ethnic warrior and the woman as the ethnic victim is inherently tied to performing national identity.

Thus, militarised masculinity endorses sexual violence insofar as it performs a codified set of norms which involves dominating both “our” and “their” women and what they represent: the *ethnic womb* and the *symbolic hearth*.

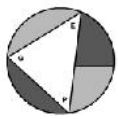


Women as the Ethnic Womb

As I have argued, violence responds to ontological insecurity by dominating one's own identity over another's. This can be further achieved through sexual violence, as hegemonic masculinity directs men to protect their *ethnie* and thus their women, who control the mythified "ethnos of the womb" (Zivkovic 2006: 258; Čolović 2002: 18). Čolović argues that the nation reproduces itself mythically through a "double vascular" system: one transmits the blood through individual biological mothers and the other through the sacrificial blood of fallen heroes which soaks the native lands (2002: 23).

Such logic links the nation to the mother. Women demarcate the ethnic boundaries of an identity as they are tasked with transmitting bloodlines as biological reproducers and cultural traditions as ideological reproducers (Beukian 2014: 252; Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989: 7-10). Women play such a central role in birthing the nation that linguistically, national symbols are coded as the 'motherland' (*mayrenik*) and 'mother tongue' (*mayr lezou*)⁶ (Beukian 2014: 252).

For Armenian women, motherhood and family-building are perceived as unique Armenian traits distinguishing them from the *otar*, or "other" (Beukian 2014: 249). The particular history of genocide and national struggle has been the burden of women, rendering motherhood a symbolic feature of (self-)identity within the nationalist project (Ibid.: 249). Thus, women as the *ethnic womb* makes gender-based violence (GBV) an egregiously effective tool to degrade the "other;" to attack a woman of another *ethnie* is to literally invade and dominate the *ethnic womb*, disrupting their bloodline: the very basis of ethnic identity.



Martial rape further doubles as ethnic cleansing, where forced pregnancies can undermine family solidarity (Holzner 2011: 42; Card 1996: 7). Whereas rape can be considered an act of patriarchal violence against an individual in the largest sense of sex discrimination, genocidal rape is the systematic rape of women during wartime as a tactic to conquer a people (Connell 1985: 264; Bennett 2002). Even if no pregnancy results, knowledge of the rape is sufficient to alter cultural and generational solidarity (Card 1996: 7-8).

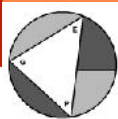
Mirroring the logic of the suicide bomber, the act of ejaculation in genocidal rape becomes a symbolic means to assert and insert one's own identity onto and into another. She is left with a degraded feeling that she has lost control over her body and identity (Seifert 1996: 55).

Symbolically then, to rape the ethnic woman is to rape the entire ethnicity. In this way, one can reify their own identity by enforcing the patriarchal status hierarchy and dismantling the other's clarity of "self" (Bourdieu 1985: 728-729).

This violence also works to emasculate the "father" role of the male enemy in a biological sense by attaining control over "women's [reproductive] rights," thereby fracturing ethnic boundaries (Borer 2009: 1172). Ultimately, GBV functions to redress ontological insecurity by dominating the *ethnic womb*, and thus the *ethnie* of the "other", both on the battlefield and at home.

Women as the Symbolic Hearth

Since the images of Greek goddess Hestia and her vestal virgins, women



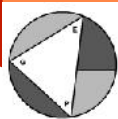
have been depicted tending to the home's hearth (Jennings 2008: 208-214). Even today, women are synonymous with "guardians of the hearth and carers of the home" (Dudwick 1997: 237; Enloe 2014: 177-178).

South Caucasians often picture the family as a "fortress"—the man the "outer wall" defending against danger, and the woman the "inner wall" preserving domestic order (Dudwick 1997: 235-249). She, imagined at home baking bread and rearing children, further takes on the role of the *symbolic hearth* herself as the warm and familiar center of the domicile. She becomes the bastion of ethnic identity which passes down myths and traditions, fostering the nest wherein family identity grows (Smith 1991: 11-14; Beukian 2014: 252).

Men are also idealised as the external defenders of the hearth in Caucasian culture (Beukian 2014: 252). As Nagel highlights: "the real actors in nationalist productions are men defending their freedom, their honor, their homeland and their women" (2003: 159). However, just as home is something to defend, it is also something to attack: the domicile becomes targeted in war, as it and its inhabitants (the 'womenandchildren') represent the vulnerable interior of ethnic identity (Sjoberg & Gentry 2007: 3).

Sexual assault makes the "private" "public," breaching the walls of the home and destabilising the symbolic hearth, leaving the house to crumble around it. But, even after rape a woman does not gain the right to her own pain; indeed, it is the man "in charge" of her who is the target (Heit 2009: 364).

To rape a woman is to symbolically, and sometimes physically, breach



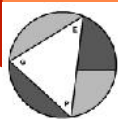
the “outer wall” the man presents, emasculating both his masculine and ethnic identities through his women. Thus, sexual assault becomes a tactic to assert distinctiveness over the “other” by invading the pedestaled “home” and attacking the *symbolic hearth*.

The Mother Maketh the Nation

In ethno-nationalist war, there exists a sentiment that “when we lose the *mothers* to the dark side, all is lost” (Sjoberg & Gentry 2007: 169). The mother becomes synonymous with the nation, and the motherland synonymous with identity. This leads to a delicate discourse where women shape men’s identity, becoming inherently vulnerable yet indispensable to the nationalist project (Zivkovic 2006: 259). Hooper suggests that gender roles in warfare prescribe women as victims of the enemy’s fighting so men can battle in their defense (2001: 82; Sjoberg and Gentry 2007: 171-173).

While women in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict do play the victims war is *fought for*, they dually play “essential targets for the attainment of ethnic purity or the corruption of the purity of the opponents’ ethnicity” as well (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007: 172). In her roles as the *ethnic womb* and the *symbolic hearth*, the woman becomes an intermediary for men to attack the other nation and assert the idealised status hierarchy.

Thus, wartime rape in ethno-nationalist conflict may be construed as a means to redress ontological insecurity. In understanding sexual violence as a gendered performance of identity, we must recall that gender is diverse and hybridised and consequently, performative rape



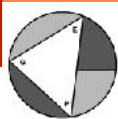
takes meaning fluidly as conflict evolves. In the next section, I will apply a gendered lens to three cases of GBV during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Sexual Violence within Nagorno-Karabakh

Claudia Card contends: “if there is one set of fundamental functions of rape, civilian or martial, it is to display, communicate, and produce or maintain *dominance*” (1996: 7). Much of the conflict-driven GBV demonstrated this purpose by performing gendered norms to signify positive distinctiveness. In attempting to resolve ontological insecurity, sexual violence became a tool to reaffirm the status hierarchy and to consequently dominate the “other.”

Though there are many recorded instances of sexual violence on either side ranging from domestic abuse to mass rapes to the molestation of pregnant women and babies, a lack of international attention to the topic and strong misogynistic cultures which demonise survivors have stifled large-scale reporting (*Kvinna till Kvinna* 2019; Lee 1988; CEDAW 1997).

However, descriptions of 1988 Sumgait pogrom, the 1990 Baku pogrom and the 1992 Khojaly massacre consistently describe mass rapes and mutilations taking place (De Waal 2003; Lee 1988; CEDAW 1997). A 1997 report from the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) records pregnant Armenian women and babies being molested, little girls being raped in front of their parents, and Christian crosses being burned on women’s backs



during the Baku pogrom (CEDAW 1997). Furthermore, a survivor of the Khojaly massacre claims he witnessed Armenian forces torture and rape women and children throughout the invasion (Girit 2017).

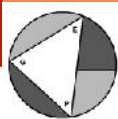
In lieu of presenting a comprehensive description of the atrocities, I will instead apply this theoretical framework to three specific cases: the Sumgait Pogrom, a gang rape of two Azeri women, and “survival sex” in Armenia.

First, the Sumgait Pogrom may be the war’s most infamous example of sexual violence. Following Nagorno-Karabakh’s attempted merger with Armenia in early 1988, violent riots broke out in Sumgait—an Azeri township 32 kilometers off Baku—which quickly became littered with gang rapes, molestations, and attacks on Armenian women and children (Dash 1989: 72-73). Speaking to a crowd of 300 in a Moscow churchyard, one man remembered:

“[I] saw a pregnant woman who had been hacked to death, her womb slashed open and the unborn baby mutilated ... other people had their ears and fingers cut off” (Dash 1989: 73).

Another Soviet journalist watched an Armenian girl burned alive; her charred torso was later dragged and mutilated on the street (Dash 1989: 73). Karen Matevosyan, a retired policeman living in Stepanakert, further recalls the lynching of a naked woman during the “three days of hell”:

“The bandits came to their flat and beat him [her husband] and left him for dead, but he wasn’t dead. They raped her and then they



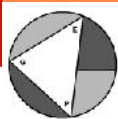
dragged her by her hair down the stairs from the fifth floor to the ground floor and chased her through the streets” (Rettman 2017).

These public attacks against women represent a symbolic degradation of the *ethnic womb* and humiliation of their protector-men, wherein the sexuality of women is destroyed (sometimes burned) to send a message of dominance to female survivors and the men socially connected to them (Card 1996: 7).

Additionally, mutilating a pregnant woman and her unborn child serves as ethnic cleansing by physically destroying her fertility as a means of murder and emasculating the father’s defender role (Beukian 2014: 252). This further acts as symbolic domination of her ethnic identity by invalidating her motherhood. Dragging her from her husband’s home moreover evokes the image of the *symbolic hearth* by physically and symbolically invading the domicile and its tie to family identity.

Second, HG 7, an 81-year-old Azeri man, recounted during a 1994 Human Rights Watch interview in Baku his experience being beaten and kidnapped by Armenian soldiers (Panico 1994: 58-60). He fled Hoje, Azerbaijan, alongside four men, an older woman, and a young woman carrying a two-day-old dead infant whose burial had been interrupted by the Armenian attack. The captives were held in a wooden shack with a dirt floor and fed only once in two days; here, Mr. G remembers witnessing the gang rape of the two Azeri women by their captors (Ibid.: 59-60). The old man cried as he recalled the women were raped two to three times daily in front of the male captives:

“The attackers did not pay attention to the shouting or cries of the



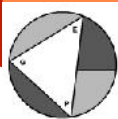
women, nor to the pleas made on behalf of the young woman, age twenty-two, who had just delivered and then lost her first-born child a few days earlier” (Panico 1994: 58-60).

The act of raping the Azeri women in front of male captives can be understood as a weaponised performance illustrating dominance over their identity and masculinity. Furthermore, the rape of a woman after taking her dead child replaces her ethnic progeny with their genetic identity through a possible pregnancy, acting as ethnic cleansing, which attempts to address ontological insecurity by dominating and erasing the “other.”

Finally, in discussions with the Swedish women’s organisation *Kvinna till Kvinna*, activists identified sexual exploitation as a component of Armenian military structures; some low-ranking soldiers were expected to “offer their wives sexually” to higher-ranking officers in exchange for privileges (*Kvinna till Kvinna* 2019: 27).

Though it remains unclear whether sex work is an organised practice in the Armenian military or if it simply occurs on an individual basis, women serving as cooks, cleaners, nurses, doctors, and administrative staff have and continue to face sexual pressure from military personnel (*Kvinna till Kvinna* 2019: 27).

Sex became survival in bordering regions and around military bases, where a gynecologist reported that selling sex had become common for impoverished mothers (*Kvinna till Kvinna* 2019: 27). There were repeated reports of buses that recruited women for work in ‘cotton fields’:



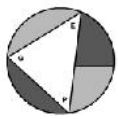
“We know that ‘cotton buses’ are not going to the fields. Women are taken to another region or military base for sex” (*Kvinna till Kvinna* 2019: 27).

This forced prostitution of Armenian women within military structures worked to reify the militarised masculinity complex compounded with men’s ethnic identity. Further, it illustrates the hypocrisy bound tightly to such masculinity complex; while soldiers are charged with the heroic protection of “their women,” they simultaneously rape both enemy women and their own, where both acts help to construct the image of a virile, red-blooded man.

As the vilification of women is often socialised during military training, rape thus reaffirms soldiers’ anti-femininity complex (Seifert 1996: 35-43). This militarised rape fortifies the process of treating women as symbolic intermediaries through which to strengthen and degrade masculinity, such as by trafficking wives to higher-ranking officers.

Just as raping enemy women dominates the other’s ethnic identity, raping one’s own women sends a similar message of male control over the bloodline and community. As Beukian reminds us, masculinity and Armenian identity are linked, and thus the anxiety created by ontological insecurity is redressed by men reasserting their masculine dominance through sexual prowess, simultaneously fulfilled through one’s own women and through the enemy’s (2014: 252-253).

These three examples of sexual violence, though offering only a fragment of the conflict’s atrocities, paint a grim picture where ontological insecurity and masculinised identity were militarised to



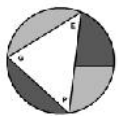
target women in their roles as mothers and guardians. While individual motives behind sexual assault are multifold, rape acts as a cross-cultural language of male domination in a weaponised masculinity-femininity social structure (Card 1996: 6-9). In ethno-nationalist conflict, such domination can be enjoyed for its own sake as well as for ulterior ends such as to reassert or attack ethnic identity.

Conclusion

Just as traditional scholarship tends to be overly simplistic by claiming men's experiences as universal, this essay has been too simplistic by illustrating women as victims and men as patriarchal warriors only. Increasingly, women are recognised as actors, enablers, and even perpetrators of wartime violence, instead of simply as victims (Askin 2003: 513). It is important to note that women played a number of roles in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: as mothers and daughters surely, but also as fighters, activists, and visionaries who impacted the trajectory of the conflict and its aftermath (Shahnazarian 2016).

Gender and conflict are socio-historical processes that are carried out collectively and thus have a collective meaning (Seifert 1996). Such meaning is both localised and specific as well as ever-changing, and while hegemonic masculinity is often dominant, masculinity itself is as varied and fluid as the many roles which men played.

This essay offers one explanation of GBV in Nagorno-Karabakh as a response to ontological insecurity generated by unclear territorial/ethnic claims and the USSR's impact on the identity

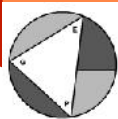


landscape. These fractured identities sought positive distinctiveness by dominating the “other” through women as the *ethnic womb* and the *symbolic hearth*. In a war where men targeted one another, women became both conductors and targets of symbolic nationalism. However, as Hooper reminds us, “masculinities are not just domestic cultural variables but the products of men’s participation in [the greater system of] international relations” (2001: 122).

My argument’s limited focus on the masculinised aspects of conflict rather than on women’s roles, as well as prioritisation of social rather than psychological identity theories opens it to criticism within the overarching discussion of women in war. This is further aggravated by constrained research on GBV in the Caucasian political climate, specifically within Azerbaijan.

This essay does however signify a larger trend in IR: that conceptions of masculinity in war leave women on the periphery, and more specifically, that conceptions of identity cast women as being acted upon, not as actors. In understanding women’s function in men’s (self-)identity, the ideas of “peace” and “war” no longer accurately reflect what women actually experience, illuminating that for women experiencing the socio-cultural consequences of gendered violence in Nagorno-Karabakh, a frozen conflict might be frighteningly hot.

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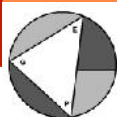


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Endnotes

1. Also called Artsakh by ethnic Armenians.
2. Anna Sarkisyan (2014) claims that Karabakhi women suffered essentially no GBV during the conflict, illustrating how even current, international sources misrepresent the violence's scope.
3. For clarity, I employ a binary approach to gender, though recognising the existence of genders outside the heteropatriarchy.
4. Turkic for "newcomers".
5. As Smith argues, the self is composed of multiple identities and roles which frequently overlap and reinforce one another, including familial, territorial, class, religious, ethnic, and gender (1991: 13-18).
6. Armenian terms.
7. Anonymised.

NB: do you have any comments on Webster's article? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitic.org or by contact form at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.



Supporting Data

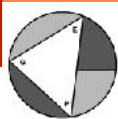
Table 1: Nagorno-Karabakh Census (2005)

Աղյուսակ 5.2 Մշտական բնակչությունը (քաղաքային, գյուղական) ըստ ազգայնության և լեզուների
 Table 5.2 De Jure Population (Urban, Rural) by Ethnicity and Languages
 Таблица 5.2 Постоянное население (городское, сельское) по языкам и национальностям

Լեռնային Ղարաբաղի Հանրապետություն
 Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh
 Нагорно-Карабахская Республика

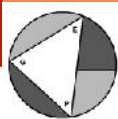
Աղյուսակ 5.2
 Table 5.2
 Таблица 5.2

Ազգությունը Ethnicity Национальность	Ընդամենը Total Всего	Մայրենի լեզուն Mother tongue Родной язык			
		Հայերեն Armenian Армянский	Ռուսերեն Russian Русский	Ուկրաիներեն Ukrainian Украинский	Այլ լեզու Other Другой язык
ԸՆԴՀ ՆԿՐ ԽԿՐ	137737	136366	1274	7	90
Հայեր Armenians	137380	136194	1128	0	58
Արմյան Armenians					
Ռուսներ Russians	171	63	106	0	2
Ռուսեր Russians					
Ուկրաիներ Ukrainians	21	5	9	7	0
Ուկրաիներ Ukrainians					
Այլ Other	165	104	31	0	30
Այլ Other					
Քաղաքային Urban	70512	69423	1027	5	57
Գործարար Urban					
Հայեր Armenians	70318	69344	937	0	37
Արմյան Armenians					
Ռուսներ Russians	94	29	63	0	2
Ռուսեր Russians					
Ուկրաիներ Ukrainians	16	5	6	5	0
Ուկրաիներ Ukrainians					
Այլ Other	84	45	21	0	18
Այլ Other					
Գյուղական Rural	67225	66943	247	2	33
Սելսկոյե Rural					
Հայեր Armenians	67062	66850	191	0	21
Արմյան Armenians					
Ռուսներ Russians	77	34	43	0	0
Ռուսեր Russians					
Ուկրաիներ Ukrainians	5	0	3	2	0
Ուկրաիներ Ukrainians					
Այլ Other	81	59	10	0	12
Այլ Other					



Map 1: *Yerevanci* (2003)





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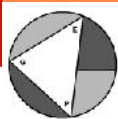
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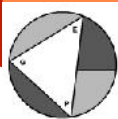
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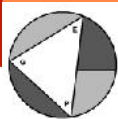
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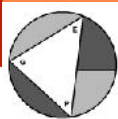
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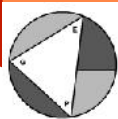
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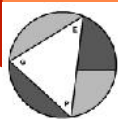
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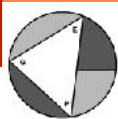
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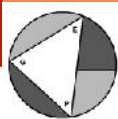
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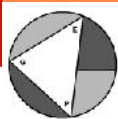
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Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Protracted Melted Conflict rather than a Frozen one

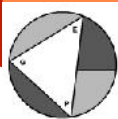
Babak Rezvani & Caspar ten Dam ¹

Abstract: *This article discusses the recent re-eruption of the Karabakh war, which is about the ownership and control of the former Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Province and seven surrounding districts in the Republic of Azerbaijan. The parties to this conflict are the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Armenian separatists from Karabakh supported by Armenia. Nagorno Karabakh is de jure part of Republic of Azerbaijan. However, it is mainly inhabited by ethnic Armenians and is de facto under the control of the self-declared Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh). This article seeks to offer an objective discussion of this conflict which has re-erupted again into a full-scale war since September 2020; it discusses the positions taken by surrounding countries as well.*

Keywords: Nagorno Karabakh, Karabakh Conflict, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Russia, Iran, Georgia, Russia, Turkey, the Caucasus, International Law, Ethno-territorial Conflict.

Introduction

After months of tension that began in July 2020, the Karabakh Conflict re-erupted into a full-scale war in late September 2020. The long-term yet barely functioning ceasefire broke down on September 27 (for reasons that have yet to become clear). Even though skirmishes along



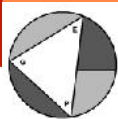
the so-called “line-of-contact” have not been rare in the past, this time it broke out in a full-scale war.

The Armenian and Azerbaijani accounts of development to re-ignited war may differ. However, the Azerbaijani military action was resolute, and followed by an offensive by the modernised and reinvigorated Azerbaijani armed forces. Subsequent fighting and shelling of both military positions and civilian centers (each side accusing the other of violating temporary ceasefires and/or attacking civilians), has killed thousands of combatants and hundreds of civilians on both sides (estimates are preliminary, often partisan and vary considerably) and displaced tens of thousands of Armenian and Azeri civilians alike.

Azerbaijani troops recaptured some adjacent areas of Nagorno-Karabakh that had been occupied by Armenian forces for years if not decades, as well as some (outlying) parts of Nagorno-Karabakh itself. For now there seems to be a shaky stand-off if not stalemate, interspersed with flare-ups and even major military operations initiated by both sides—despite peace talks and ceasefires brokered by some neighbouring countries and (other) international mediators.

This conflict about sovereignty over the former Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Province, in the former Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan, started in the late 1980s, with a full-scale war between 1988 and 1994. There have been skirmishes despite a ceasefire negotiated in 1994 (Bishkek Protocol), most notably in 2016.²

The label “frozen conflict” may not entirely fit the ethno-territorial conflicts in the Post-Soviet Space, as the root causes of none of these

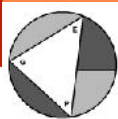


have been addressed yet and as almost all of these (with the exception of Transnistrian conflict) have re-erupted twice (e.g. Abkhazia, South Ossetia etc.). It will be very difficult to solve an ethno-territorial dispute owing to the fact that in the current state of international law sovereignty over a territory is indivisible (barring particular rights of self-determination in post-colonial contexts).

There are possibilities to negotiate and even agree about rights of a country over a territory which is *de jure* not its territory, or establish a condominium (for example, Andorra). However, it still requires to assign the ultimate sovereignty over the territory to an independent country whose independence has been recognised internationally.

Therefore, resolving territorial conflicts is very difficult to say the least. It becomes even more difficult when it concerns an ethno-territorial conflict such as those in the Post-Soviet Space. In such conflicts ethnic groups demand almost exclusive rights or entitlement to a territory and develop often discourses about its inhabitation in history. Such discourses may be effective in building a sense of legitimacy among people but have often not much legal value according to international law.

This article seeks to discuss the Karabakh War in a rather objective i.e. non-partisan fashion, yet at the same time without discussing it too analytically or proposing possible solutions to the conflict in question. Nevertheless, it is our intention to offer more in-depth analyses and solutions for this or similar conflicts in the future.



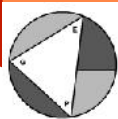
Positions of Neighbouring Countries vis-à-vis the Karabakh Conflict

It is increasingly common—since the skirmishes started in July 2020—that the main regional news outlets, notably those of Russia and Iran, call the Karabakh War a conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia and no longer a conflict between Azerbaijan and the Armenian separatists of Karabakh.³

All neighbouring countries, i.e. Russia, Georgia, Turkey and Iran, recognise the Nagorno Karabakh region as *de jure* territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Russia has good relations with both Armenia and Azerbaijan and is trying to balance the richer and larger Azerbaijan with the poorer and smaller Armenia. Georgia has good relations with both Azerbaijan and Armenia. However, as it has its own issues with break-away regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and as the oil pipeline from Azerbaijan passes through its territory, Georgia might be slightly in favour of Azerbaijan.

Turkey has no diplomatic relations with Armenia as it has its own issues and troubled history with Armenia and Armenian diaspora, and supports rhetorically Azerbaijan (unlike Pakistan, Turkey does recognise Armenia). The Armenian claims of involvement of Turkish F16 fighter jets in the recent hostilities cannot be confirmed. The claims of Turkey that PKK/YPG fighters are present in Karabakh cannot be confirmed either.

Similar to Pakistan, Turkey frames its support of Azerbaijan as a sign of Islamic solidarity, while for the predominantly Western international



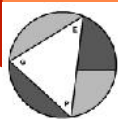
audience, Turkey frames its support as a natural regard for international law and the principle of territorial integrity. However, the Turkish reaction towards Kosovo's independence and the territorial integrity of Serbia was very different. Be that as it may, for the Azerbaijani audience, Turkey tries to frame its support for Azerbaijan as a Turkic-speaking fraternal nation given that both countries speak a similar Turkic language.

Of all neighbouring countries, Iran is closest to Azerbaijan in the cultural sense. Both countries share similar culture and history. The northwestern Iranian region of Azerbaijan has historically been among the most—perhaps the most—important region of Iran. To give an example, the Iranian crown princes used to live in Tabriz—the capital city of the Iranian region of Azerbaijan—before moving to Tehran in order to be crowned as the Iranian king, after their father's death.

Today, there are more Azerbaijanis living in Iran than in the Republic of Azerbaijan (perhaps even more than double as many), and there are many other ethnic groups living in Iran who, similar to Azerbaijanis, are Shia Muslims and speak a similar Turkic language.

Stalin has tried to steer the Azerbaijani language in the Caucasus away from its vast Persian vocabulary. Still, the extent of Persian vocabulary in the Azerbaijani language of the Caucasus remains significant. It is even more evident when Azerbaijani singers sing poetry in classical Azerbaijani which does not differ a lot from contemporary Azerbaijani language spoken in Iran.

Iran has a policy of not recognising break-away regions. For example,



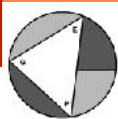
Iran has not recognised Kosovo, while Turkey did for the reasons of historical ties and Islamic solidarity. Several important Iranian political figures have stated after the re-eruption of the Karabakh conflict that Iran is against the occupation of Azerbaijani territory and supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. However, they also have expressed concerns about the reports and rumours about the usage of Israeli drones and deployment of conservative Islamist fighters—who were allegedly brought by Turkey from Syria—along the Iranian northwestern borders (see e.g. *Tehran Times* 2020 and *Tasnim News Agency* 2020).

Iran has actively (and reportedly even militarily) supported the Republic of Azerbaijan in the early days of the Karabakh conflict in the 1990s (see e.g. Rezvani 2013a & 2013b; there are other sources mentioned in those articles too). But Iran has retreated from such close involvement after it was sidelined by the fact that the solution or at least containment of the Karabakh conflict was trusted to the OSCE Minsk Group consisting of Russia, the United States and France, which appeared to be fairly ineffective.

Despite all these facts, Iran remains now neutral and is on speaking terms with both Armenia and Azerbaijan. However, the influence of Iran on both countries is much less compared to that of Russia.

Final Remarks

Despite American and notably Russian mediated ceasefires, these ceasefires were violated many times. According to our confidential

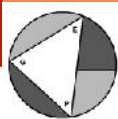


sources who wish to remain anonymous, Russia has made the warring parties know that an attack on big cities outside Karabakh is a redline for Russia. That is the reason why both sides accuse the other of having attacked cities in Armenia or Azerbaijan outside the immediate zone of conflict, whereas the other party denies such claims. In a regular war, a country is not very likely to deny its successful operations (even if those operations produce a lot of collateral damage).

As of now, Azerbaijan has recovered territories around the former Nagorno Karabakh to the south of the Lachin Corridor, but for now its advance into the former Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Province has been restricted. It may point towards a possible agreement about the evacuation of the seven districts outside the former Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Province. Certainly, there has been such a peace scheme negotiated by Levon Ter-Petrossyan and Heydar Aliyev, then the presidents of respectively Armenia and Azerbaijan.

In a recent debate during the Munich Security Conference (February 2020) the current President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, expressed support for such a scheme, while Nikol Pashinyan, the current prime minister of Armenia, stated that any solution to the Karabakh conflict should be acceptable to the peoples of Armenia and Azerbaijan as well as to the people of Karabakh itself. He mentioned that he is the first Armenian leader ever for whom an acceptance by the people of Azerbaijan is a precondition for a solution.⁴

Military action to resolve the Karabakh conflict—indeed any armed conflict in general and ethno-territorial conflict in particular—may



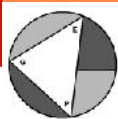
recover territories but is unlikely to offer sustainable peace, for the losing party may reorganise and wage a new war in the foreseeable future. Only negotiated agreements seem to be sustainable, and this can only be reached by credible commitment and confidence building, not merely among government officials of the opposing sides but most of all among the peoples the officials of each side claim to represent and take their interests, safety and well-being to heart.

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Endnotes

1. I want to express my gratitude to co-author and fellow-editor Caspar ten Dam, without whose careful edition of our journal and patience and critical reading of my article, this current issue of our journal would not have been possible.
2. An earlier article in our journal discusses the hostilities Karabakh in 2016 (Baghdasaryan 2019). As we have mentioned in the Editorial of the current issue, we do not necessarily endorse the author's view. However, the fact that author has discussed these hostilities, shows that the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, unlike by many or most analysts in the West, has not been regarded a frozen conflict in the region itself.



3. See www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrvpT2KONPU&ab_channel=RT. See also Chadwick (2020), and other (secondary) sources mentioned in it or in other sources that are referred to in this article.
4. See www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKcUniwblk&ab_channel=AZERTAC English ; or www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBh7LBjOHjs&ab_channel=%D4%B1%D5%A6%D5%A1%D5%BF%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%A9%D5%B5%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%B6.

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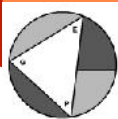
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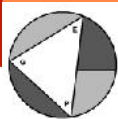
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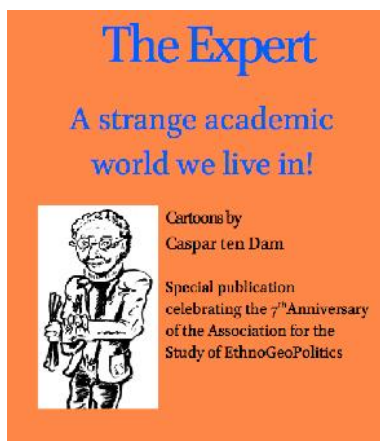
Breestraat 142 (© Mayflower 2016)

The Mayflower Bookshop in Leiden (www.themayflowerbookshop.nl) moved from Hogewoerd 107 to Breestraat 65 in 2015 in order to expand its repository. In 2016 it moved to Breestraat 142. In early 2020 it opened an additional Book Outlet Leiden at Breestraat 70, which offers many books in Dutch and other non-English languages as well.



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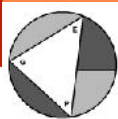
Comic book *The Expert* by Caspar ten Dam



The comic book *The Expert: A strange academic world we live in!* is available in pdf for just € 10. The Teaser (Vol.6 No.2, pp.14-22) is downloadable at www.ethnogeopolitics.org/publications. This comic book (64 pages, ISBN-9078907-5568-31-8), published to celebrate the 7th anniversary of our Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics, concerns the first book publication by the association's publishing house, *EGxPress Publishers*.

One can order a full pdf-copy of the comic book by transferring € 10 (VAT-free) to EGP's Bank account: NL83 INGB 0752 458760 BIC: INGBNL2A T. a. o. Servet Sahin, Amsterdam, with a reference to "comic book Expert"—and inclusion of one's email-address so we can send a pdf-copy to you. Send a reminder to info@ethnogeopolitics.org.

Since recently one can order the book at Amazon for a similar price as well (see e.g. www.amazon.com/dp/B08LG7WMKT). We thank our new fellow-editor Ms. Zhang Shi for making this book available at Amazon.



Dorsey's Column

Drawing Battle Lines: Centre-Right Parties take on Civilisationism

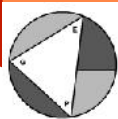
James M. Dorsey

A podcast version of this story is available on Soundcloud, Itunes, Spotify, Stitcher, TuneIn, Spreaker, Pocket Casts, Tumblr, Podbean, Audacibel, Patreon and Castbox.

Introduction: CDI and its call to maintain Humanitarian Values

In late January 2020 the Centrist Democrat International (CDI), in an attempt to counter the rise of civilisationism (or 'civilisationalism', a term coined by the author) in multiple countries and regions across the world, has called for an alliance of nations, political parties and faith groups, that would seek to ensure that politics and international relations remain grounded in humanitarian values at a time of increasingly unimpeded violations of international law and human rights.

CDI's call carries weight given that it is the world's largest coalition of almost 100 political parties from across the globe, including ruling parties in Europe, Latin America and elsewhere. This coalition is broad, ranging from German Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) to Fidesz–Hungarian Civic Alliance (*Magyar Polgári Szövetség*), the party of Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orban, a professed illiberal who envisions his country as a Christian nation.



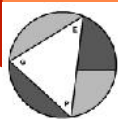
The call takes on added significance because it was issued by a group that traces its roots to European and Latin American Christian democracies at a meeting on 23 January 2020 in Indonesia, the world's third largest democracy and its most populous majority Muslim country, hosted by the largest Indonesian Islamic political party, the National Awakening Party (PKB).¹

PKB, founded by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the world's largest Muslim organisation, joined CDI at the end of 2018 as part of the CDI's effort to expand its reach beyond Christian democracy and NU's advocacy of a humanitarian interpretation of Islam that encourages cooperation across political, ethnic and religious divides on the basis of a shared respect for human rights and international law.

Stalemate: CDI grapples with Civilisationist Leaders within and beyond its Ranks

The resolution adopted at the January 2020 CDI executive committee meeting in Yogyakarta, Indonesia², comes at a moment that Fidesz's membership in the European People's Party (EPP), a CDI affiliate, hangs in the balance. Fidesz was suspended from the EPP political family in March 2019 over rule-of-law concerns, though the party's 13 deputies remain part of the EPP group within the European parliament.³

Mr. Orban and Fidesz stand accused of undermining pluralism in Hungary and removing the country's checks and balances by stacking the Constitutional Court with loyalists; reshaping the electoral system to favour the party; placing dozens of watchdog institutions, including



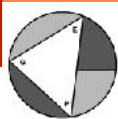
the judiciary and prosecution service, under the leadership of their allies; and effectively eroding independent media.

Although a divorce with EPP is likely, Fidesz is expected to remain a member of CDI, prompting questions what the group means with its warning about civilisationist leaders and states.



Mr. Orbán (center-right) at January 2020 CDI executive meeting in Yogyakarta

Mr. Orbán was among prominent figures, including former heads of state and government, who attended the CDI meeting in Yogyakarta and voted unanimously in favour of the resolution. Yet, at a news conference immediately after the meeting, Mr. Orbán insisted that Hungary was “a Christian nation” and that Christianity had to inform all aspects of Hungarian society. He spoke of living “side by side” rather than with Muslims.⁴



The CDI resolution came in response to what it described as the “emergence of authoritarian, civilizationalist states that do not accept the rules-based post-WWII (World War Two) order, whether in terms of human rights, rule of law, democracy or respect for international borders and the sovereignty of other nations.” ⁵

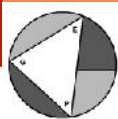
The resolution was designed to counter “authoritarian regimes’ blatant disregard for the fundamental rights articulated in UDHR” (United Declaration of Human Rights) and re-introduce “moral and ethical values” into public policy, economics and politics. ⁶

The resolution’s significance lies in the fact that it re-introduces the battle of ideas into a global power struggle to shape a new world order that has largely been reduced to geopolitics, geo-economics, big and regional power rivalry and replacement of adherence to international law with the principle of might is right.

Equally importantly, it offers an antidote to the rise of civilisationism (or ‘civilisationalism’) and the civilisational state that seeks its legitimacy in a distinct civilisation rather than the (non-homogenous) civil state’s concept of territorial integrity, language and citizenry.

Conclusion: CDI versus the rise of civilisationism

The trend towards civilisationism feeds off the politicisation of history. It benefits from the fact that 21st century autocracy and authoritarianism vests survival not only in repression of dissent and the limiting or denial of freedom of expression. It above all creates or seeks to create the basis for



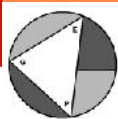
an unspoken consensus on values and principles of governance that are illiberal at best and that would underwrite a new world order on which men like Mr. Orban, China's Xi Jinping, Russia's Vladimir Putin, Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Saudi Arabia's Mohammed bin Salman, India's Narendra Modi, the Philippines' Rodrigo Duterte and US president Donald Trump find a degree of common ground.

Civilisationism is frequently based on myths erected on a falsification and rewriting of history to serve the autocrat or authoritarian's purpose. Men like Messrs. Trump, Orban, and Erdogan project themselves as nationalist heroes who protect the nation from some invading horde.

In the final analysis, the CDI resolution—despite Orban's dissonant presence at the meeting—constitutes a call for a continuous and robust discussion of what the principle of moral and ethical values means and how they are translated into law and policy.

For CDI and Mr. Orban, the litmus test will be how they move from fudging definitions to determining whether they can find common ground on translating words into deeds. For now at least, a true common ground between CD and Mr. Orban seems highly unlikely, if only because Orban continuous to translate words into deeds which are at odds— indeed directly contradict and violate—the content and spirit of CDI's resolution and overall purpose.

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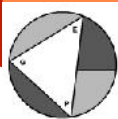


An earlier version of the article appeared on January 26, 2020, at <https://mideastsoccer.blogspot.com/2020/01/drawing-battle-lines-centre-right.html>.

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2. Ibid.
3. Maïa de La Baume & Lili Bayer, 'Hungary's Orbán clings on to Europe's power center' *Politico*, 20 March 2019, updated 19 April 2019, www.politico.eu/article/orbans-party-suspended-from-european-peoples-party/.
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5. Ibid note 1 (quotes).

NB: do you have any comments on Dorsey's article? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitic.org or by contactform at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.



Guest Column

The Religious Doctrines of the Iraqi Turkmen: a Focus on the Shia Turkmen

Sheth Jerjis

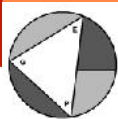
Introduction

Practically all the Iraqi Turkmen people embrace Islam. Very few of them are Christian; they are called Christians of the Citadel, referring to the Kerkuk citadel, their mother language is Turkmen and they use Turkmen language in their religious ceremonies (Al-Hirmizi 2005a and 2005b, and Samanchi 1999). With time and particularly after evacuation and demolition of the Kerkuk citadel during 1997-1998, they had migrated mainly to Baghdad and out of the country. The history of their presence in Kerkuk extends by some sources to the time of the Mongols of Genghis khan in the 13th century.

Regarding the doctrinal (sectorial) components of the Iraqi Turkmen Muslim majority, they are Sunnis, Shias and a considerable percentage of the extremist Shias (*Al-Gulat*), such as Shabaks, Kakayis and Ahli Haq, are of Turkmen ethnicity (Moosa 1988).

Historical dimension

The settlement of the Turkmen in Iraq continued throughout multiple centuries, from the reign of the Umayyad dynasty (661–750 CE) to the



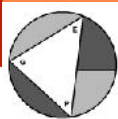
Abbasids (750–1258 CE), the Seljuk Empire (1118-1194 CE), Zengid (1127–1233 CE), the two Mongol periods of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane (1258–1411 CE), and the Black Sheep (*Qara Qoyunlu*) (1374-1468 CE) and White Sheep (*Aq Qoyunlu*) (1470-1508 CE) Turkmen monarchies. Ismail Shah of Safavids (1508-1534 CE) followed Qoyunlu dynasties, and then came the Ottomans (1638-1917 CE) to rule the region (Samanchi 1999).

Most of the sources support the idea that after defeat of Ismail Shah by Salim I of the Ottomans in the battle of Chaldiran in 1514, the Turkmen soldiers of Ismail Shah with their families spread and took root in the north of Iraq. They constituted the only Shia Turkmen who settled in Iraq. Despite that, many sources consider it doubtful; there are sources which support the idea that there were Shia sects in between the Black Sheep Turkmen tribes (Shahmoradi 2013 and Moosa 1988).

Population statistics

The Turkmen are the third largest component of the Iraqi population after the Arab and the Kurd. In addition to being a minority, which *per se* is a vulnerable community, whose human rights can be easily violated, their presence in a non-democratic nationalist community (Iraqi community) has led to:

- Failure of reflection of their population size in the official Iraqi statistical reports i.e. census statistics
- Deprivation of cultural and political rights
- Severe demographical changes of their regions
- Exposure to systematic violation of human rights

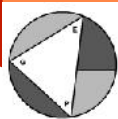


Therefore, one cannot depend on the Iraq government statistics to learn the true size and traits of the Iraqi Turkmen population. One should note that the initial estimations of the population number of the Iraqi Turkmen occurred in a very unfavourable geopolitical environment during dismember of the Ottoman Empire and British occupation of Iraq and after the First World War.

At the time when the Iraqi state was established, the discussions to determine the owner of the Vilayet (province) of Mosul in the former Ottoman Empire reached its climax in the League of Nations and in Lausanne. The large size of the Turkmen population was considered in favor of annexing the province to the Republic of Turkey (Al-Hirmizi 2003).

During the discussions of the Mosul problem, which continued from the end of the First World War until the Ankara treaty in June 1926, the number of the Iraqi Turkmen population was fixed by the new Iraqi State and the British mandate to 2% of the total Iraqi population. Then all the subsequent Iraq governments repeated the same percentage of the population of the Iraqi Turkmen until the fall of Baath regime in 2003.

Iraqi Turkmen politicians and intellectuals estimate the percentage of the Iraqi Turkmen to be at least 10% of the total Iraqi population. Estimation or counting of the population size of particular sects within the Iraqi Turkmen population has never been achieved. Turkmen sources consider the population size of the Shia Turkmen to be between 40% and 50% of the total Iraqi Turkmen population (Samanchi 1999 and JamesBowman.net 2003).



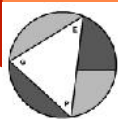
Regions

Regarding the regions of the Shia Turkmen in Iraq, they are found in different provinces. They live in considerable numbers in the city of Kerkuk and they inhabit large areas at the south and south-west of the city and province. For example, in Kerkuk province, they inhabit the district of Tawuk and sub-districts of Taze Khurmatua and Bashir. In the Salah al-Din province, there live Turkmen in the district of Tuz Khurmatu, where dozens of villages are populated by Shia Turkmen. They constitute the Turkmen of sub-district Kara Tepe and its villages in the Diyala province.

In the province of Nineveh, where there live more than half a million Turkmen, some sources estimates the percentage of Shia Turkmen at 30% of the Turkmen of the province. They are found inside Telafer city and in the Sallamiya and Rashiyya sub-districts. The Shabak and Kakayi Turkmen Shia sects are estimated to be several thousands in both Kerkuk and Nineveh provinces (Kayili 2008; Demirci 1991 and Saatci 1996).

Political Situation

As an ethnic minority community, all the Iraqi Turkmen have been exposed to discrimination and marginalisation by all the Iraqi governments since the establishment of the Iraqi state in 1921. This included systematic assimilation policies by the Baath regime, which came to power in 1968, and by the Kurdish authorities after the fall of

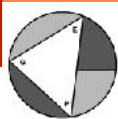


The Baath regime in 2003. The Shia Turkmen suffered additionally severely for their doctrinal beliefs.

The Islamic *Dawa* party, which was established inside Iraq in 1957, according to other sources in 1967, spread among the Iraqi Shiites in general in the 1970s, and the Shia Turkmen politicians took their share in this spread. The Baathist government started pursuing them since it grasped power in Iraq in 1968. Large numbers of Shia peoples were accused of affiliation with the *Dawa* party. Without fair trials, large numbers of them were imprisoned or sentenced to death including children, and many of them disappeared. Fleeing outside the country, particularly to Iran, started at that time.

The Iraqi government's chase of them reached a climax in 1980, during which the well-known Shia religious figure Mohammed Baqir al-Sadr was executed by the Baathist regime (Islamic Movements 2019). After which fleeing abroad, mainly to Iran, of the Shias further increased. Their fleeing reached a climax during the Iraq-Iran War between 1980 and 1988. In all the afore-mentioned events, the Shia Turkmen took flight too.

As a separate incident, the Baathist regime expelled (deported) large numbers of the Iraqi Shias (Faili Kurds) to Iran, claiming that they were of Iranian origin. According to Minority Rights Group International, the deportation took place in two episodes, firstly between 1969 and 1971, whereby the number of deported Shias was estimated to be about 70,000 people.

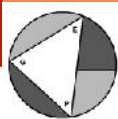


In the second episode the deportation was realised after the Revolutionary Command Council issued Decree No. 666 in 1980, which mandated to deport the foreign origin Iraqi peoples (noting that almost all were born in Iraq at least for two generations), whereby the number of deported people was between 150,000 and 500,000 (Minority Rights Group International 2017).

In the 1980s, there gathered large numbers of Iraqi Shias in Iran, almost all of them whom were strictly religious. At the beginning of the Iraq-Iran War, the major Iraqi Shiite parties started to be instituted under direct supervision and control of the Iranian government, such as the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq and the *Badr* organisation. One should note that the Islamic *Dawa* party was the only autonomous Shia party established inside Iraq before the fall of Baath regime in 2003. After this, the major Shia parties and armed Shia organisations were divided and several political and armed Shia groups were formed.

There are large number of Shia Turkmen at the highest levels of the major Iraqi Shiite parties. Several of them take important positions in the leaderships of those parties. For example, Mohammed Taqi Al-Mavla is among the founding party members of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, Mohammed Mehdi al-Bayati is almost the second authority in the *Badr* organisation, and Abbas al-Beyati and Jasim Mohammed Jafar are in the leadership of the Islamic *Dawa* party (The Washington Institute website 2017).

The organising of immense congresses by the Iraqi opposition parties abroad, which started after the occupation of Kuwait by the Baath regime of Iraq in 1990, prepared the stage for Iraqi Turkmen politicians



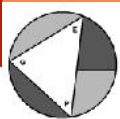
to start establishing political parties. Within a few months, both Turkmen political groups, the conservative nationalists and the religious Shia, had established their first parties.

Regarding the establishment of the religious political parties of the Iraqi Shia Turkmen, the first was the Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkmen (*Irak Türkmenleri İslam Birliği*, الاتحاد الاسلامي لتركمان العراق). The Shia Turkmen politicians who were and still are members of the Iraqi Islamic *Dawa* Party founded the Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkmen in Syria on 2 March 1991.

Regarding Iraqi Turkmen political organisations, the Turkmen conservative-nationalist political community ¹ (SOITM Foundation 2019) established their first party under the name of the Iraqi Turkmen National Party, inside Turkey and under control of the Turkish government, in late 1990 and early 1991. After a few months, the religious Shia Turkmen political community founded their first political party in Syria, called the Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkmen.

The Turkmen conservative-nationalist political community, which includes Shia Turkmen politicians too, is much larger than the religious Shia Turkmen political community. Later on, the Turkmen conservative nationalists founded several other political parties, of which the majority are dominated by the Turkish intelligence services.

Notably, Turkey allowed the Turkmen of Iraq to establish political parties after the occupation of Kuwait by the Baath (Saddam) government in August 1990, when the Iraqi opposition abroad announced the organisation of their first congress. Before this, the



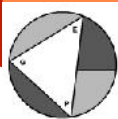
Turkmen were not allowed to establish any political party in Turkey.

The second political organisation of the Shia Turkmen, the *al-Wafa* movement, was founded in 2002 by the Turkmen in the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq so as to compete with the Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkmen in the meetings of the Iraqi opposition before the fall of Baath regime in 2003. It should be noted that all the Iraqi Turkmen political organisations lack the most basic requirements of a political party. Thus, the *al-Wafa* movement is almost only known by the names of its few founders, and it has no headquarters or any public base.

Given the aforementioned developments, Turkey controls the Turkmen of Iraq with an iron fist that is assisted by the blind obedience of the Iraqi Turkmen to Turkey due to geopolitical and historical factors. This blind obedience has decreased in recent years, yet not to a degree to free the Turkmen political system from Turkish domination.

Thus Turkey dominates the Turkmen conservative-nationalist political community, marginalising all the other Turkmen politicians and organisations which are not subjugated to Turkey, particularly Shia Turkmen politicians and organisations. The submission of Turkmen to Turkish political will gives a negative impression about the Turkmen among other national, regional and international powers, and deprives the Turkmen of their support.

Turkey stood in the way of any cooperation between the Turkmen conservative-nationalist and the Turkmen religious Shia groups. For example, the Shia Turkmen parties have been deprived of participating in the Iraqi Turkmen Front and in the Iraqi Turkmen Assembly



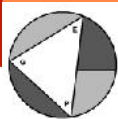
(Samanchi 1999) which are under control of Turkey. When Iraqi Turkmen intellectuals and politicians increased their call for the establishment of a general Iraqi Turkmen council, Turkey dissolved the then-existing Iraqi Turkmen council in 2011, preventing its (re)establishment until today.

As another example, Turkey prevents the two Turkmen political groups (those subjected and not subjected to Turkey) from cooperating with each other, and the disadvantages of this harmful Turkish policy is evident particularly during the Iraqi general elections.

The Turkish domination of the Turkmen polity can be considered one of the major reasons why the Turkmen of Iraq were unable to reflect their true population number in the Iraqi political arena and so during the elections and in the activities of parliament. Consequently there were always just a few Turkmen members from the Turkmen political groups ever elected and represented in the Iraqi parliament. Turkey's Turkmen policy has distorted and weakened the Turkmen political system to the point that the system is considered collapsed today.

Turkmen in Armed Shia groups

The Shia Turkmen are found in almost all the armed groups of the Iraq Shiite parties, such as the military forces of the *Badr* organisation and *Saraya al-Salam* of the Sadrist movement, the latter, led by the Islamic Shia cleric and politician Muqtada al-Sadr. Shia Turkmen participate also in all armed units of *al-Hashd al-Shaabi* (Popular Mobilisation Forces), which was set up after the Supreme Shiite Ayatollah Al-Sistani

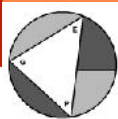


invited Iraqis to resist and fight the strictly Sunni religious groups which announced the establishment of the so-called *al-Dawla al-Islamiyah* (Islamic state 'IS'), after its occupation of Mosul city in June 2014.

The so-called Islamic State (IS) occupied large Turkmen regions in the four Iraqi provinces of Nineveh, Kerkuk, Salah al-Din and Diyala, while other Turkmen regions remained on the frontier battle lines between the warring sides. The Shia Turkmen constitute the majority of inhabitants of those areas. For example, in the Telafer district, large number of Shia Turkmen were executed and hundreds of women were taken as captives of the terrorist organisation the Islamic state of Iraq and Syria (الدولة الإسلامية في العراق والشام).

In Kerkuk province, massacres were committed in al-Bashir region and bodies of the victims were hanged on electric fences. Another massacre was committed in the village of Bir Awchi, a sub-district of Salah al-Din province. Shia Turkmen are found in lower numbers in sub-district of Qara Tapa, al-Saadiya (Kizil Rabat), Mansuriyat al-Jabal (Deli Abbas) and Jalawlaa in the province of Diyala, which were seized by IS.

The Turkmen of south and south-east of Kerkuk province established 16th Brigade of *al-Hashd al-Shaabi*, soon after the appearance of Islamic State. The brigade is also called *al-Hashd al-Shaabi al-Turkmmmani*. Shia Turkmen are found in the other factions of *al-Hashd al-Shaabi* too, as in large numbers in Brigade 52 of *al-Hashd al-Shaabi* and the *al-Abbas* brigade, the latter connected directly to the supreme Shia authority in Karbala.



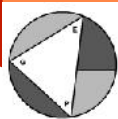
The Turkmen nationalist Haq Party is the only Turkmen conservative-nationalist party that has *al-Hashd al-Shaabi* forces, and most of its members are Sunni Turkmen. The number of Iraqi Turkmen in *al-Hashd al-Shaabi* before and during the elimination of the so-called Islamic State in Mosul city was estimated to be around seven thousand fighters. The Shia Turkmen in the factions of *al-Hashd al-Shaabi* participated in all the battles in all the regions against IS; many of them lost their lives—but also inflicted heavy casualties among the IS fighters (E. Gaston & A. Derzsi-Horvath 2018 and Anadolu Agency website 2015).

Some of the first and major causes for the emergence of armed groups in Iraq were the dissolution of the Iraqi Army during the fall of Baathist regime and the American-led occupation of Iraq in 2003. The major cause for the emergence of the large, overarching armed group called *al-Hashd al-Shaabi* is the emergence of Sunni extremist armed groups, which occupied different Iraqi provinces whereby the most violent and brutal one of these declared the so-called Islamic State.

Thus *al-Hashd al-Shaabi* gained almost complete legitimacy in the eyes of the Iraqi state and even indirectly in those of the international coalition, and cooperated with them and actively participated in liberating Iraqi lands and bringing the Islamic State to its knees.

Conclusion

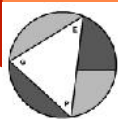
The Iraqi Turkmen are considered the third largest component of the Iraqi people, though their population number has been continuously underestimated since the foundation of the Iraq state in 1921.



In terms of doctrines, the Turkmen majority in Iraq is composed of the Sunni branch of Islam. The proportion of Shia Turkmen is estimated to be less than half of the Turkmen in Iraq. There are small numbers of Shabak and Kakayis Turkmen, as well as a very small number of Turkmen Christians. The presence of Turkmen in Iraq dates back to about twelve centuries ago, while the presence of Shia Turkmen in Iraq dates back to the Safavids era (1508-1534 CE). The Iraqi Turkmen are found in the northern and middle provinces of Iraq, and Shia Turkmen are found almost everywhere where Turkmen found in Iraq.

The Iraqi Turkmen suffer from severe weaknesses in political terms and human rights protections. It can even be said that Turkmen politics is collapsing today, and Turkey is playing the biggest role in sabotaging Turkmen politics. The conservative-nationalist trend is considered the largest segment of Turkmen politics which is dominated by Turkey. As for the Shiite religious political trend, it consists of two weak indigenous parties and Turkmen leaders in high positions in the large Iraqi Shiite ruling parties. The Shiite Turkmen are present in significant numbers in all the armed Shiite factions, and there are also independent Shiite Turkmen armed factions.

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Endnote

1. The Iraqi Turkmen political organisations can be categorized into three groups:

- I. Iraqi Turkmen Conservative Nationalist Political Community, which includes a large number organisations:

Organisation of the Turkmen Democrats and Patriots (OTDP) (1980)

Iraqi National Turkmen Party (INTP) (1991)

Turkmen Union Party (1991) (TUP)

Turkmen Eli (TE) (1996)

Turkmen National Democratic Movement (TNDM) (1993)

Turkmen Independent Movement (TIM) (1994)

Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) (1995)

Turkmen People Party (TPP) (1996)

Turkmen Eli Co-operation and Cultural Foundation (TCCF) (1996)

Islamic Movement of the Iraqi Turkmen (IMIT) (1997)

Turkmen Nationalist Community (TNC) (2004)

Turkmen Nationalist Movement (TNM) (2004)

Turkmen Justice Party (TJP) (2004)

Turkmen Decision Party (TDP) (2005)

Iraqi Turkmen Bloc (2009)

Turkmen Coalition (2012)

Turkmen National Right Party (2013)

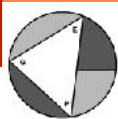
- II. Iraqi Turkmen Religious Shia Political Community, which include two parties and many Turkmen politicians in the leadership of the Iraqi Shiite parties:

Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkmen (IUIT) (1991)

Wafa Movement (2002)

Inside the large Shiite parties:

Islamic Al-Dawa Party



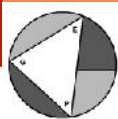
Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution, *Mohammed Taqi al-Mawla*
Badr Organisation, *Mohammed Mahdi al-Bayati*
Sadrists, Fevzi Akram
Others

III. Iraqi Turkmen organisations in the Kurdish region and cooperating with the Kurdish authorities, there are many of such political and civil society organisations, most of which lack the simplest requirements of an organisation:

Turkmen Union and Brotherhood Party (TUBP) (1992)
Turkmen Brotherhood Party (TBP) (1992)
Iraqi Turkmen Union Party (ITUP) (1994)
Turkmen Democratic Party of Kurdistan (TDPK) (1997)
Turkmen National Liberation Party (TNLP) (1998)
Kurdistan Turkmen Cultural Association (KTCA) (1998)
Turkmen People Party (TPP) (2002)
Turkmen National Community (TNC) (2002)
Turkmen Association of the Liberals (TAL) (2003)
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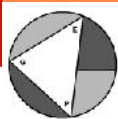
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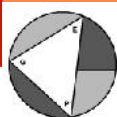
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NB: do you have any comments on Sheth Jerjis' article? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or by contact form at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.



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Turkey's Iraqi Turkmen Policy *Merciless Exploitation and Violation of International Law*

By Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights Research Foundation (SOITM Foundation)



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About "Turkey's Iraqi Turkmen Policy"

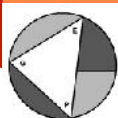
The Turkmen in Iraq are of ethnic Turkic communities living in several countries neighboring Turkey.

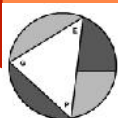
The animosity and the hatred that had developed towards the Ottomans in the later decades of the Empire reflected onto those Turkic origin communities in the newly created countries after the Ottomans dismembered, which all were ruled by non-Turkish governments. The Turkic communities in the Balkans were exposed to massacres, in Greece they are still deprived of their ethnic rights, and in the Arabic countries, they are marginalized and exposed to serious assimilation policies, as in the cases of the Iraqi and Syrian Turkmen.

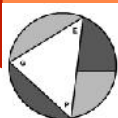
These suppressed communities had no other choice than to consider Turkey as their only rescuer and subjugate themselves to Turkey. At the same time, this has increased the animosity against them in their new countries and removed the possibility of getting help from any other national, regional or international powers.

On the other side, Turkey had neither ability nor intention to help these Turkic communities, in contrary. Turkey remain inattentive to their sufferings, even misused these communities benefiting from their blind obedience.

This book presents the history of 3 decades of the Turkish policy towards the Turkmen of Iraq, which can be considered a vivid view of the Turkish relation with Turkic communities in the neighboring countries.







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