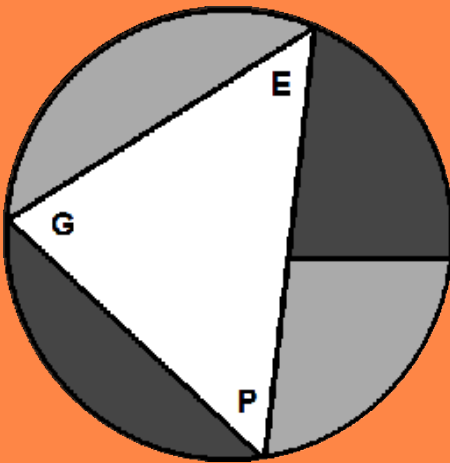


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Scope

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 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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* * * 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 multiple 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—Developments in the field

Upcoming and Ongoing Research Projects having Directly and Indirectly to do with Ethno-GeoPolitics: Announcements, Updates and Preliminary Observations

Caspar ten Dam & Zhang Shi

Current situation in the world and of our journal

We continue to face outbreaks of new variants of the Covid-19 corona virus across the world, particularly due to ineffective, even disastrous policies of denial and belated responses or simply lack of capacities to roll out massive vaccination campaigns. Naturally many of our (advisory) board-members, editors and regular contributors to our journal—who reside in many of the most seriously affected countries spread around the world—have had to prioritise their own safety and those of their loved ones. We wish them and their families and friends all the best, and like in our preceding Editorial offer them our deepest condolences for their suffering and loss (Ten Dam & Rezvani 2020: 9).

Given the “endemic health crises (especially the Covid-19 corona pandemic) and wars” (Ten Dam & Rezvani 2020: 9) that affect many of us, just a handful of editors and prospective contributors—including the authors of the current editorial—have been able to spare some time to keep our journal afloat during these trying times. Despite the best efforts of the latter however, we have as of yet been unable to overcome



the structural half-year backlog i.e. delay in the production of issues of our journal. Thus above all the corona crisis accounts for the belated appearance of the current Winter 2020 issue—and of the preceding Autumn 2020 issue as well. Once more we thank the contributors and fellow-editors for their patience. We hope that the state of the world and our personal situation will improve—and thereby overcome the backlog of issues in the coming months and years.

Current research projects through (members of) our association

Despite the aforementioned situation(s), some members of our Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics (EGP) and our journal—including both co-authors of this current Editorial—have been able to set up and continue with multiple research-and-publication projects having directly or indirectly to do with the burgeoning field of ethnogeopolitics (EGP). As the following description of three of these projects concerns this field as a discipline or rather multidiscipline, this Editorial simultaneously serves as this issue's developments-in-the-field section.

Indeed EGP is relevant in helping to account for kinship bonds and other traditional identities and cultures, as analysed by Caspar ten Dam in his contribution 'Chechen Clans and Other Kin Groups in Times of War and Peace' in the current issue of our journal.

Such bonds, identities and cultures are the topics in varying degrees in the following three research projects through (members of our) EGP association, the first two conceived and led by Caspar ten Dam and the



third by Zhang Shi:

- a) Extended Families, Clans and other Kinship Groups in Present-day Societies (see esp. Ten Dam 2019);
- b) Ethnic and Kinship Bonds as Challenges of EU Enlargement in South-East Europe (Ibid); and
- c) European Cultures and Cultures in European Countries based on a book proposal by Zhang Shi (see Shi 2021).

Extended Families, Clans and other Kinship Groups in Present-day Societies

The overarching project initiated last year with the help of our EGP association in order to “further research on the oft-neglected role of ethnic and kinship bonds in present-day societies” (Ten Dam 2019: 156)—preliminarily titled “Survival and Saliency of Extended Families, Clans and other Kinship Groups in Present-day Societies: A Survey of Current Research and Urgently Needed Research” (Ibid)—has been gathering momentum.

In March 2020, the initiator, coordinator and main author of this project, Caspar ten Dam, signed a (preliminary) contractual agreement with Cambridge Scholars Publishing to oversee the envisaged edited volume on this very topic, titled ‘Extended Families, Clans and Other Kinship Groups in Present-day Societies: A Survey of Current Research’.

As Guest Editor I would provide the Foreword, Introduction and at least one book chapter to this edited book publication, and would help to find



other contributors for book chapters as well. Indeed the current Editorial constitutes one avenue of approaching prospective contributors to this publication. The summary or abstract of the planned publication is as follows:

Despite industrialisation, urbanisation and (de)colonisation, many present-day societies, be they formerly tribal or still (partially) tribal, appear to retain many traditions having to do with extended families, (sub-)clans and other kinship groups more often than not adhering to customary laws. Even so, many once-tribal groups seem to be overtaken by 'modern' i.e. industrial and post-industrial trends. Be that as it may, research findings on the saliency of tribal societies in general and kinship groups in particular, appear to be dispersed and sketchy to date. This volume seeks to bring the newest research on this topic under a single roof, in order to offer new insights on the role of kinship groups continue to exert in different regions of the world—even in so-called 'modern' societies (partially based on the paragraph in Ten Dam 2019: 157).

At this stage, we still need a number of prospective contributors for this edited volume. If one is interested, one could submit a chapter proposal and/or ready manuscript for a book chapter in this volume to me directly (tendam@ethnogeopolitics.org) or through the submission form at Cambridge Scholars (www.cambridgescholars.com/pages/guest-edited-collections).

If for some reason your submitted manuscript is rejected for the edited volume, you could always resubmit it for publication in our journal as a peer-reviewed Main Article—or as a book chapter in an edited volume on a similar overall topic by our own *EGxPress* publishing house.



Ethnic and Kinship Bonds as Challenges of EU Enlargement in South-East Europe

One could consider this research project, earlier presented as a “particular project B” within the overarching research project on the “oft-neglected role of ethnic and kinship bonds in present-day societies” (Ten Dam 2019: 157 (quotes)), as a distinct project on its own.

Actually, this project also looks at the kinship identities—as part of broader ethnogeopolitical factors i.e. “cultural, social, religious, ethnic and (geo-)political characteristics, processes and developments” (Ten Dam 2019: 159) ¹—within both current EU member states and prospective candidate states beyond South-East Europe or the Western Balkans. Still, the focus during the first phase of the project will remain on such identities within countries in the latter region, “that is to say Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Kosovo, and Serbia” (Ibid: 159 (quote), 164, endnote 2). ²

The Editorial in the Winter 2019 issue of our journal already describes the “more developed parts” of the original research proposals regarding both this project and the overall project on kinship groups in present-day societies (see preceding section), so I need not to repeat these descriptions here (see Ten Dam 2019: 157-158; 159-161). Suffice to say here that the project has experienced delays due to the tribulations of the corona pandemic (see first section)—and the need to conduct a more extensive literature review than originally envisaged.

This extended literature review for this project is still underway, and I plan to present additional research findings based on this review in a



follow-up Editorial or article in e.g. the journal's 'Developments in the field' section in one of the upcoming issues of our journal.

This extended literature review is particularly needed to further buttress—or rather falsify i.e. stress-test and if necessary discount—my rather strong statement that “analysists and policymakers within both the EU institutions and established EU member states have tended to neglect ethnogeopolitical factors such as ethno-patrimonialism and tribal, clannish and other sub-ethnic and sub-national identities and alliances” (Ten Dam 2019: 162)—both within their own societies and those of prospective member states.

My initial literature review (Ten Dam 2019: esp. 162 (source references)) has corroborated this statement, yet requires more corroboration still in order to make it a plausibly, convincingly valid one. If true, and if ethnogeopolitical factors like ethnic and kinship bonds are “ignored or misunderstood, any further EU enlargement” with western Balkan and any other states will be “even more challenging and troublesome or even more unlikely” (Ibid: 161). This dire prospect (for so far one supports EU enlargement) ought to underpin the practical policymaking relevance of looking at kinship identities in both actual and prospective EU member states.

If the apparent lack of knowledge and understanding within EU institutions and current member states of kinship bonds is corroborated, this may in fact affect the workings and enlargement of the EU. Thus I and any collaborators will investigate whether other international and regional bodies like the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Organisation for Security and Cooperation in



Europe (OSCE) and any of their member states are more knowledgeable about kinships and other ethnogeopolitical factors among their own member states and beyond. Such knowledge from these governmental organisations (GOs) may offer insights useful and perhaps crucial to the EU, if only because its actual and prospective memberships overlap with NATO, OSCE and other GOs.

These considerations tie in with the “possible expansions of the research topic”, including comparing the “recent history of EU enlargement with NATO enlargement, regarding mainly post-communist countries from the former Easter Bloc who have become new EU members, NATO members, both, or none of those yet. For instance, have identified ethnogeopolitical factors been equally salient and operational in both EU and NATO enlargements—or not?” (Ten Dam 2020: 7). Naturally any (preliminary) findings of such follow-up research will eventually be published in our journal as well.

European Cultures and Cultures in European Countries

Ms. Zhang Shi, our new assistant editor and Chinese studies editor (Chinese-language section) of our journal, has embarked—with advisory support from our executive editor Caspar ten Dam—upon a research project on European cultures and cultures in European countries which should result in a book publication by *EGxPress* or another publisher.

This publication will be geared towards a wider audience beyond academia, particularly those residing in Asia and other parts of the



world who wish to visit and stay in Europe for vacation, study and/or work—but who are not yet familiar with European culture in general and the cultures in European countries in particular.

Consequently, prospective contributors are asked to provide book chapters on particular European countries which are “not strictly academic articles and teaching materials replete with scientific jargon; they need to be written in accessible language so as to attract a wide group of readers” (Shi 2020: 3). Parts of Shi’s book proposal co-authored with Caspar ten Dam (available upon request) are reproduced here, with some slight modifications.

One major objective of the planned book is to enhance our understanding of European cultures. For this to happen fruitfully and lucidly (in order to avoid obfuscation and misunderstanding), we need to participate in the continuing debate on the political, cultural and geographical boundaries of Europe—which may be contested and different if overlapping due to contrasting vantage points.

For instance, does or should ‘Europe’ include the European part of Russia up to the Ural mountains—or even the entire Eurasian continent all the way to Vladivostok? For now, we focus on the identifiable cultures of 44 European countries—the total number of countries i.e. internationally recognised nation-states in Europe according to the United Nations.³

Significantly, this list of 44 countries includes Russia—a country which many of its inhabitants (and its current regime) does consider to be ‘uniquely Russian’ or ‘Eurasian’ rather than ‘European’ as understood by



many or most countries in Central and Western Europe. Indeed many of the latter countries and their inhabitants do not consider Russia a European country for these very cultural—and geopolitical—reasons.

A further complication of this list is the fact that a country like Kosovo is not on it, for the very geopolitical reason that many states in and beyond Europe recognise this former province of Serbia as an independent state since its independence declaration in 2008—currently by 98 out of 193 member-states of the UN, so not by nearly half of them, including e.g. Serbia and Russia. ⁴

If one would include countries like Kosovo on a larger list of European countries, one would come up with a number of at least 50 or 51 European countries according to different estimates. ⁵

Be that as it may, European countries—i.e. whichever countries could or should be considered and labelled European—have significant differences in language, religion and religious festivals, diet, politics, clothing and other aspects.

The analysis and research of these cultural differences may be helpful in bridging any remaining cultural gaps in Europe and promoting integration of cultures across the world. Its significance lies in the given that this analysis can not only help to better and deeply understand the cultural differences of European countries, cross cultural communication barriers, but also cultivate people's adaptability in cross-cultural communication, and effectively avoid misunderstanding caused by cultural differences.



Misunderstandings often occur when people from different cultural backgrounds and languages talk to each other. With the deepening of international exchanges, we have more frequent and close contacts with people all over the world. It is particularly important to understand the culture(s) of Western countries, especially in the context of European integration, as the cultures of European countries are also quite diverse.

It is not easy to understand each other, and exchanges between different cultures often encounter difficulties. Therefore comparison of cultural differences among European countries is of great significance—particularly for those living in other parts of the world who may be not as familiar with these differences as those living in Europe. Indeed, the book on European culture(s) is particularly intended for a non-European audience, in order to increase their understanding of European culture(s).

European culture is a collection of cultures of all European countries, within and beyond the current EU with its current member states. We need to first analyse and publish the culture of each country, until we have ideally finished publishing the culture chapters of at least the 44 European countries according to the United Nations.⁶

We certainly will publish a collection of analyses of at least some of these 44 European countries exhibiting variants of European culture. Our cultural book chapters are not strictly academic articles and teaching materials replete with scientific jargon; they need to be written in accessible language so as to attract a wide group of readers to read, so there will be a lot of beautiful pictures in them, but we must mark the link source of the beautiful pictures. If other sources are used in the text,



they need to be marked with references just like in published articles.

Naturally, one should recognise that not all 44 distinguished countries necessarily have sharply distinct cultures from each other. Rather there appear to be groups of countries with similar cultures in history, language, religion and the like—like the Scandinavian countries (Norway, Sweden etc.), the Germanic countries (Germany, Austria etc.) and Anglo-Saxon-Welsh countries (U.K., Ireland etc.).

And there are countries with clear hybrid cultures, like the Netherlands, which is generally considered part Germanic (esp. linguistic origins and social-welfare thinking) and part Anglo-Saxon (esp. in free-market thinking, art, entertainment and large-scale adoption of English language).

Furthermore, there should be an argument in an overarching Introduction and/or Conclusion about to what extent there really is a distinctly common European culture overarching all these particular differences.

For each book chapter the culture of each country and region in Europe can be divided into six parts: introduction of the whole country and region, geographical location, history, population, climate, political economy, food, clothing, famous scenic spots or buildings, religious festivals, and politics. Each part requires at least one picture and corresponding explanatory text (except for the introduction part).

Of course, if the contributor of each chapter thinks it is necessary to add other parts one can consult Ms. Zhang Shi, the overall editor and head



of this research and publishing project within our association—and if necessary with Caspar ten Dam, the advisor of this project and executive editor of *Forum of EGP*, the journal of our association.

One can consult either or both if a prospective contributor thinks that a country not on the UN-list of 44 European countries—like semi-recognised ‘breakaway’ states Kosovo and Transnistria, or even ‘faraway’ countries like Turkey, Armenia and Georgia which or many or most of their inhabitants (like to) consider themselves European ⁷—should deserve a distinct chapter.

Concluding remarks

The three projects described above should directly and indirectly aid in the continued “conceptual and methodological development” of EGP as announced and foreseen by our Editor-in-Chief Babak Rezvani in the maiden Editorial of our journal (Rezvani 2013: 5).

Arguably the phenomena studied, described and (to be) published in these projects—kinships, national identities and (other) cultures in countries and (sub)regions in different parts of the world—are crucial factors impacting the (post) Covid-19 age of globalisation, and are thereby just as relevant to the field of EGP. From a reverse perspective, EGP as a field of studies is “still relevant in the age of globalisation” however controversial and contested the concept of globalisation itself may be (Rezvani & Ten Dam 2020: 13).

Hopefully the descriptions of the three research projects undertaken by



Caspar ten Dam and Zhang Shi, with the help and collaboration of other (advisory) board members and editors of EGP, will generate further interest and feedback—and additional collaboration and (crowd)funding for these projects—among the readers.

Caspar ten Dam (MA political science at Leiden University) is Executive Editor of this journal. He is an experienced conflict analyst with his own research company based in Leiden, the Netherlands (www.ctdamconsultancy.com).

He is specialised in (regional) conflict, terrorism and security studies, and has published multiple academic articles on topics within these fields, including in this journal. info@ctdamconsultancy.com

Zhang Shi (MA engineering at Shenyang Agricultural University; MA economic law at China University of political science and law) is Assistant Editor & Chinese studies editor (Chinese-language section) of this journal. She is currently part-time professor at IGI-GLOBAL (www.igi-global.com) based in China.

She has published multiple papers related to intellectual property, and is planning book publications on e.g. ethnic groups in China and cultures in Europe. She is specialised in intellectual property law, international law, ethnicities and cultures in East (esp. China) and West (esp. Europe). jessee_zhang@163.com



Endnotes

1. Original citation from www.ethnogeopolitics.org (main page).
2. My Editorial in the Winter 2019 issue of our journal erroneously refers to “proposed project A” in endnote 2 (Ten Dam 2019: 164); this endnote actually refers to the “more particular project B” (Ibid: 156).
3. Apparently there are “44 countries in Europe today, according to the United Nations based on the United Nations official statistics”: www.worldometers.info/geography/how-many-countries-in-europe (with full list of countries, with “current population and subregion”). Not included in this “total of “countries” and listed separately” are “Dependencies (or dependent territories, dependent areas) or Areas of Special Sovereignty (autonomous territories)” i.e. Channel Islands (U.K.), Isle of Man (U.K.), Faeroe Islands (Denmark) and Gibraltar (U.K.) (see same source). Yet such mentioned dependencies should also include for instance the overseas territories of the Netherlands, like the Caribbean islands of Curaçao and Sint Maarten (autonomous countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands), and the island of Aruba (constituent country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands).
4. See further note 7.
5. See e.g. www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/europe.htm; and www.isolatedtraveller.com/world-encyclopedia/list-of-all-countries-in-europe.
6. See note 3.
7. In this regard it seems strange that the UN (see note 3) does consider former Soviet republics like Russia and Ukraine to be European countries, but not former Soviet republics like Armenia and Georgia. Are the latter situated in a region—the Caucasus—so different geographically and/or culturally as not to be considered part of Europe? If so, this would be a weak argument and distinction on its



own—if only because a large part of the Caucasus falls under the internationally recognised territory and sovereignty of Russia. The proposed book should discuss in at least a foreword or introduction (and preferably in a number of book chapters as well) these complicated issues—and investigate the background and particular reasons of how and why the UN has come up with the number and list of ‘44 European countries’.

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Rezvani, Babak, ‘EthnoGeoPolitics and its Forum’ *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics* Vol.1 No.1, Spring 2013, pp.4-6.

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_____, *Can Kin Groups Flourish in an Ever Larger Union? EU Enlargement in South-East Europe and Beyond—and the Vital if Controversial Role of Ethnic and Kinship Bonds* Research Plan, November 2020 edition. Unpublished manuscript (as of yet); available upon request.

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.



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



(Advertisement)

Photobook *Srebrenica Commemoration*

by Fred Rohde (photography) & Caspar ten Dam (texts)



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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Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics Vol.8 No.2 Winter 2020



Политические, экономические и социально-культурные изменения в России: Влияние пандемии

(Political, Economic and Socio-cultural Change in Russia: the Influence of the Pandemic)

Дарья Воробьева (Daria Vorobyeva)

Abstract in English The Covid-19 pandemic has already influenced and will continue to influence political, economic and socio-cultural processes worldwide, including in Russia. This article analyses a number of political, economic and socio-cultural changes and emerging tendencies in Russia since March 2020.

The beginning of the pandemic coincided with two important events for Russia: Russia's conflict with the OPEC nations due to the former's refusal to reduce oil production and as a result a decrease in oil prices and ruble exchange rate, resulting in negative consequences for the Russian economy; and the proposal for Constitutional amendments—including the one giving President Putin the right to stay in power two more terms.

Both factors potentially could have led to public discontent against the government and possibly socio-political instability in the country. In such circumstances, competent and effectively developed policies related to combatting the pandemic and its consequences have become fundamental to the government.



Введение Пандемия Covid-19 заметно повлияла и будет влиять на экономические, политические, а также социально-культурные процессы как в мире, так и в России. Данная статья рассматривает ряд политических, экономических и социально-культурных преобразований и наметившихся тенденций в России с марта 2020.

Начало пандемии совпало с двумя важными событиями: конфликтом России и ОПЕК в связи с отказом Москвы сократить объемы добычи нефти и вследствие—падением цен на нефть и курса рубля, а следовательно и негативным последствиям для экономики страны; предложением внесения ряда поправок в конституцию России—в том числе дающие президенту Путину возможность оставаться у власти еще два срока.

Оба явления в потенциале могли и все еще могут привести к недовольству населения правительством и потенциально к социально-политической нестабильности в стране. В сложившейся ситуации грамотно и эффективно разработанная политика государства в отношении борьбы с пандемией и ее последствиями стала для правительства принципиальной.

Политические и экономические аспекты

Политические изменения. Успешная борьба с Covid-19 стала принципиально важной для поддержки президента Путина, правительства в целом и (косвенно) поддержки населением внесения поправок в конституцию. С одной стороны, пандемия,



экономические проблемы и потенциально вопросы безопасности могли способствовать к поддержке населением идеи сохранения Путина у власти в период нестабильности, так как россияне, прошедшие кризис 90-х, крайне не расположены к повторению того же сценария.

Помимо этого, массовые мероприятия в период самоизоляции были запрещены и выход оппозиции на антиправительственные демонстрации—в том числе выступления против поправок в конституцию—незаконны и осуждались бы большинством населения. Во время пандемии для большинства населения как вопросы мировой политики (Brexit, война в Сирии и т.п.), так и политические реформы в России перешли на второй план, уступив место заботам об экономической стабильности и здоровье, тем самым снизив интерес значительной части населения к политической полемике (Баунов, 2020). Все эти факторы потенциально могли способствовать сохранению или даже укреплению поддержки населением правительства.

С другой стороны, если бы правительство не смогло приостановить темпы распространения вируса или справилось бы с пандемией значительно хуже, чем страны Запада—это сильно ударило бы по престижу президента и его правительства. Помимо этого, экономические проблемы населения и накопление агрессии и недовольства, вызванных неопределенностью и домашней самоизоляцией, могли бы настроить часть населения против правительства.



Еще рано в полной мере обсуждать последствия вируса, но можно утверждать, что в целом с первой волной государство справилось успешно. Конечно, официальные статистические данные могут корректироваться, но наихудшего варианта распространения вируса и сильных антиправительственных настроений удалось избежать. Появляющаяся информация о некорректном лечении пациентов, особенно в регионах, и осуждением действий правительства также не перешла критическую линию.

Также, с раннего периода режима самоизоляции статус президента Путина, выступающего в роли «отца нации», укреплялся, когда десятки миллионов россиян ожидали его выступлений в прямом эфире, в которых оглашались изменения в режиме самоизоляции и социально-экономические меры поддержки правительством населения, пострадавшего от пандемии.

В рамках Москвы Путина одобряли, когда он не поддерживал устроение ряда мер самоизоляции, предложенных мэром Москвы Собяниным, а в регионах—когда президент в строгом формате требовал у губернаторов или региональных министров более быстрого и адекватного реагирования на борьбу с пандемией. Например, жесткая критика президента, когда выяснилось, что более половины медработников, работающих с пациентами Covid-19, не получили дополнительных выплат, а также распоряжение решить вопрос в течении 4 дней и обещание лично проверить ситуацию, были позитивно оценены населением и еще раз подтвердили необходимость наличия в стране сильного лидера (Сандурская, 2020).



Таким образом, в целом правительству удалось сохранить к себе доверие населения, уровень безопасности в стране, а также получить одобрение большинства на голосовании по поправкам в конституцию.

Экономические изменения. Что касается экономики, эксперты сходятся во мнении, что влияние пандемии окажется негативным и приведет к снижению ВВП России до 20%. В дополнение, низкий уровень доверия бизнеса к государству может привести к боязни инвестировать в бизнес и увеличенному выводу капитала за рубеж (Солдатова и Пивкина, 2020).

Несмотря на ряд мер по экономической поддержке бизнеса государством, повышение уровня безработицы и общей экономической неопределенности в стране приведет к снижению спроса в сфере развлекательных услуг и туризма, а также торговли в целом (следовательно, будет необходима переквалификация специалистов), а также может спровоцировать недовольство правительством.

Например, согласно проведенным опросам, в ближайшие месяцы 27% компаний в России планируют снизить зарплаты сотрудникам, а 37%—существенно сократить персонал (Ивушкина, 2020). Режим самоизоляции и быстрой перестройки сферы услуг (в том числе в сфере образования) на дистанционный формат также потребует от правительства быстрого правового реагирования: быстрой разработки слабого на данный момент нормативного регулирования относящегося к дистанционной работе и правам работников, стандартам качества онлайн



образования и проблемой малой доступности качественного интернет соединения в сельской местности (Баунов, 2020).

Например, во время онлайн экзаменов часто можно было увидеть у торговых центров с wi-fi машины с детьми, сдающими экзамен; дети из малообеспеченных семей не всегда имели необходимое для дистанционного образования и сдачи экзаменов оборудования (например, свободного компьютера или камеры). Таким образом, от успешности работы правительства над этими и рядом других экономических вопросов (таких как снижение повысившегося уровня безработицы), связанных с результатами пандемии, будет зависеть поддержка правительства населением в ближайший период.

Социально-культурные изменения

В первые недели пандемии и режима самоизоляции в Москве присутствовал дух объединения нации перед проблемой, люди стали больше ценить социальные контакты—часто можно было наблюдать беседу посетителя магазина с продавцом на кассе.

В тоже время, в СМИ постоянно появлялись новости об опасности распространения и заражения Covid-19, что, видимо, повлияло на отношение людей. Согласно опросам, большой процент населения испытывал стресс и фрустрацию, уровень оптимизма россиян упал: например, с -37 пунктов в декабре до -61—в марте 2020 (Гришин и др., 2020).



В целом, высокий уровень стресса и раздражительности у большого количества людей был замечен с марта и все еще продолжает присутствовать в июле 2020. Постепенно люди разделились на четыре основных группы:

- 1) те, кто старался бегать или гулять в 5-6 часов утра или выходить из дома с пакетом продуктов (чтобы избежать потенциальных вопросов полиции);
- 2) те, кто придерживался российской концепции «законы существуют, чтобы их нарушать» и всячески осуждали и нарушали режим;
- 3) небольшой, но заметный процент населения, для которых угроза заражения представлялась (и до сих пор представляется) очень страшной. Эта группа людей с марта и до частичной отмены режима самоизоляции находилась дома, пользуясь услугами доставки на дом, а если кто-то и выходил, то с полностью закрытым телом и остро реагировал на случайное приближение другого человека (например, в магазине) на расстояние меньше, чем два метра;
- 4) группа людей, которая старалась соблюдать режим, но скептически относилась к его необходимости.

При этом люди, осуждающие даже легкие нарушения режима, начали проявлять агрессию по отношению к нарушителям—вольным или невольным. Нередкими стали статьи и блоги в интернете о том, как негативно относились соседи к вернувшимся



из Москвы в родные города и деревни людям—например, вернувшейся в свою деревню женщину с детьми, отказали в помощи, когда у них перегорел радиатор и в доме стало очень холодно, а машины для покупки нового или переезда у них не было (Сажнева, 2020).

В целом негативное отношение к москвичам и приезжающим из Москвы как к разносчикам инфекции достаточно сильное. Даже в июле, когда внутренний туризм разрешен и может позитивно повлиять на экономику курортных районов России, далеко не все хотят принимать москвичей—по статистике около 60% всех случаев заражения приходятся именно на столицу, что вызывает страх принятия столичных туристов и гостей. Поэтому частичное восстановление межрегионального и потенциально международного сообщения вызывает радость одной части населения и резкое осуждение другой.

Сложно суммировать изменения по всей России, но что касается Москвы, то можно было заметить изменения в культурно-идеологических настроениях населения. В первые недели в супермаркетах стали покупать больше алкоголя—как правило пива, но со временем эта тенденция снизилась. В тоже время, особенно среди населения 30-45 лет, гораздо больше стали обсуждать правильное питание, переход к ношению натуральных материалов и сокращению гардероба, важность сохранения здоровья и семейных ценностей.

Особую популярность приобрели такие товары, как маты для йоги и т.п., которые на какое-то время пропали из интернета—нужно



было записываться в очередь на их покупку, после поступления в продажу. Стоит отметить, что ряд граждан приспособился к дистанционному или смешанному формату работы, что привело к популярности идей переезда в загородные дома и жизнь на природе; отсутствия необходимости затрат на большие офисные помещения для многих фирм.

Заключение

Неопределённость, замкнутость и снижение уровня дохода значительного процента населения может привести к обострению существующих и увеличению числа социально-экономических проблем, в результате чего возможна политическая нестабильность и снижение уровня безопасности в стране. Эти факторы могут приобрести еще более сильный характер, если осенью в страну придёт вторая волна пандемии.

В тоже время можно заключить, что несмотря на ряд экономических и социальных проблем, вызванных пандемией, правительству удалось в целом успешно справиться с первой волной распространения вируса, не вызвав критического уровня недовольства населения.

Более того, в результате режима самоизоляции среди части населения наблюдается рост идей, связанных с переходом на более здоровый и этичный образ жизни. Таким образом, можно надеяться, что хотя распространение пандемии может показаться цепочкой дестабилизирующих общество факторов, возможно



благодаря именно этой цепочке событий, общество начало выход из давно устаревших социально-экономических реалий. Сброс отживших экономических, социальных, политических и иных форм функционирования общества, может способствовать закладыванию основ нового социально-культурного мышления и политических и экономических изменений как в России, так и в мире.

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Related publications:

Daria Vorobyeva (2020). "Defining Russian Foreign Policy towards Syria since 2011: Traditional factors and the role of Syria in the Kremlin's wider domestic and international goals." in Hinnebusch R. and Saouli A. (eds.) The War for Syria: Regional and International Dimensions, Taylor&Francis (book chapter).

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NB: do you have any comments on Vorobyeva's article? 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.



Feature: Interview with an Extraterrestrial

Rodolfo Valentino

The two subsequent contributions in this issue of our journal concern German and Spanish texts of the same article translated by the author himself, under the auspices of the European Institute for Migration and Social Inclusion (IEM) and Independent European Sociological Research (EUROSOR).

Introduction

What would intelligent aliens say about us humans? According to Rodolfo Valentino, Director of the European Institute for Migration and Social Inclusion IEM, their verdict would be devastating, because the image that “The United Planets of Humanoid Galaxies” receive from us is cruel and negative. In their opinion, we are still in the “homo mediocris” stadium. There are some that have evolved, but compared to the widespread ignorance, stupidity, mediocrity, social incompetence, barbarism, cruelty, and the real self-destruct potential of the majority of the people, they could do nothing for us. But they are talking about hope and a new opportunity that we would have got from the “Grand Council”. Because the people who had developed genetically and psychologically in their direction, is increasing. But unfortunately they are not in power, are hampered in their work or “put on ice” by the majority who are still in the “homo mediocris” stadium.



The Interview with an Extraterrestrial

Extraterrestrial: Hi!

Earthling: Hi! Are you an alien? This is awesome. What do you want from us?

Extraterrestrial: Nothing, we will return from time to time until you are on the same level like us.

Earthling: Who are you?

Extraterrestrial: The United Planets of the Humanoid Galaxies. You are still in the “homo mediocris” stadium. Some stand out, but they are very few in relation to the ignorance, the barbarism, the cruelty, the evil and the potential of self-destruction of the majority that prevails on this planet.

Earthling: Why don't you teach us?

Extraterrestrial: You do not pay attention to yours, when they stand out in fraternity, humanity, equality, love of neighbor, solidarity, etc. And you are going to listen to a green creature like me. Never....impossible.....

Earthling: But are we so stupid, or what?

Extraterrestrial: Well, you are still stoning women for religious or other reasons. You burnt women for religious and fanatical reasons. You still humiliate, torture and murder millions of people, women, children and men. We have observed everything. You still enslave millions of women,



children and men. When you systematically gassed millions of your own, we wanted to invade the planet and exterminate all humanity, for the Great Council called you “beasts” and a “virus”. You should not spread under no circumstances on other planets ...

Earthling: Enough, enough! Now I feel like shit

Extraterrestrial: That's what most said in the Council but you have again another chance. People who have genetically and psychologically evolved in our direction are on the increase. Unfortunately they are not in power and when they are, they are quickly deprived of power, blocked and often killed by the majority who has not reached this stage of evolution.

Earthling: Will we save ourselves....? Alien, alien, where are you? Do not go f+++.....! I wanted to take a selfie for Facebook Everyone would be surprised Shoot!

*Dr Rodolfo Valentino is a Director of the Independent European Sociological Research institute (EUROSOR; www.facebook.com/eurosor), and a Director of the European Institute of Studies on Migration, Social Inclusion and Intercultural Learning (IEM), Bonn, Germany (<http://bimev.de>; <http://migrapolis.de/bim-e-v/>).
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NB: do you have any comments on Valentino's article?

Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org or through the contactform at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.



Feuilleton: Interview mit einem Außerirdischen

Rodolfo Valentino

The preceding contribution in this issue of our journal concerns the English text of the same article translated by the author himself, under the auspices of the European Institute for Migration and Social Inclusion (IEM) and Independent European Sociological Research (EUROSOR).

Einführung

Was würden intelligente Außerirdische über uns Menschen sagen? Nach Meinung des Direktors des Europäischen Instituts für Migration und soziale Inklusion IEM, Rodolfo Valentino, wäre ihr Urteil verheerend, denn das Bild, dass "Die Vereinigten Planeten der Humanoiden Galaxien" von uns erhalten, sei grausam und negativ. Ihrer Meinung nach sind wir immer noch im "homo mediocris"-Stadium. Es gebe zwar einige, die sich weiterentwickelt hätten, aber verglichen mit der weit verbreiteten Ignoranz, Dummheit, Mittelmäßigkeit, sozialen Inkompetenz, Barbarei, Grausamkeit und dem realen Selbstzerstörungspotenzial der Mehrheit der Menschen, könnten sie nichts für uns tun. Sie sprechen aber von Hoffnung und von einer neuen Chance, die wir vom "Großen Rat" bekommen hätten. Denn die Menschen, die sich genetisch und psychologisch in ihre Richtung entwickelt hätten, nähmen zu. Aber leider seien sie nicht an der Macht, würden an Ihrer Arbeit behindert oder von der Mehrheit, die im "homo mediocris"-Stadium verweilen, "auf Eis gelegt" werden.



Das Interview mit einem Außerirdischen

Außerirdischer: Hallo!

Erdling: Hallo! Bist du ein Außerirdischer? Das ist ja toll. Was willst du denn von uns?

Außerirdischer: Nichts. Wir werden Euch im Auge behalten und von Zeit zu Zeit zurückkehren, bis Ihr Euch auf gleichem Evolutionsniveau befindet wie wir.

Erdling: Wer seid Ihr?

Außerirdischer: Die Vereinigten Planeten der Humanoiden Galaxien. Ihr seid immer noch im "homo mediocris"-Stadium. Einige sind definitiv weiterentwickelt, aber verglichen mit der weit verbreiteten Ignoranz, Dummheit, Mittelmäßigkeit, sozialen Inkompetenz, Barbarei, Grausamkeit und dem reellen Selbstzerstörungspotenzial der Mehrheit der Menschen, können wir nichts für Euch tun.

Erdling: Warum bringt Ihr uns das denn nicht bei?

Außerirdischer: Ihr hört ja nicht mal auf Eure eigenen Leute, selbst wenn sie Euch als Vorbild Brüderlichkeit, Menschlichkeit, Gleichheit, Nächstenliebe, Solidarität usw. vorleben. Und dann sollt Ihr auf ein "grünes Männchen" hören, wie ich es für Euch bin. Das macht doch keinen Sinn.....

Erdling: Sind wir wirklich so dumm oder was?



Außerirdischer: Nun ja, Ihr steinigt immer noch Menschen aus religiösen oder sonstigen Gründen. Ihr habt Frauen aus religiösen und fanatischen Gründen verbrannt. Ihr erniedrigt, quält und ermordet Euresgleichen millionenhaft, egal ob Frauen, Kinder oder Männer. Wir haben alles beobachtet. Immer noch werden Millionen Frauen, Kinder und Männer versklavt. Und als ihr systematisch Millionen Euresgleichen vergast habt, wollte der Große Rat Euren Planeten besetzen und die ganze Menschheit auslöschen. Viele der Mitglieder sprachen von "Bestien" und ein "Viren", die ausgemerzt werden müssten, die sich unter keinen Umständen auf andere Planeten ausbreiten sollten....

Erdling: Genug, genug! Jetzt fühle ich mich echt wie ein Stück Dreck.....

Außerirdischer: Das ist das, was die meisten im Großen Rat über Euch gesagt haben aber Ihr habt schon wieder eine Chance bekommen. Die Menschen, die sich genetisch und psychologisch in unsere Richtung entwickelt haben, nehmen zu. Aber leider sind sie nicht an der Macht und wenn sie es sind, werden sie schnell abgesetzt, an Ihrer Arbeit behindert oder von der Mehrheit, die im "homo mediocris"-Stadium verweilt, "auf Eis gelegt".

Erdling: Werden wir uns retten können...? Außerirdischer, Außerirdischer, wo bist du? Geh doch noch nicht....Scheiße! Ich wollte ein Selfie von uns für Facebook schießen

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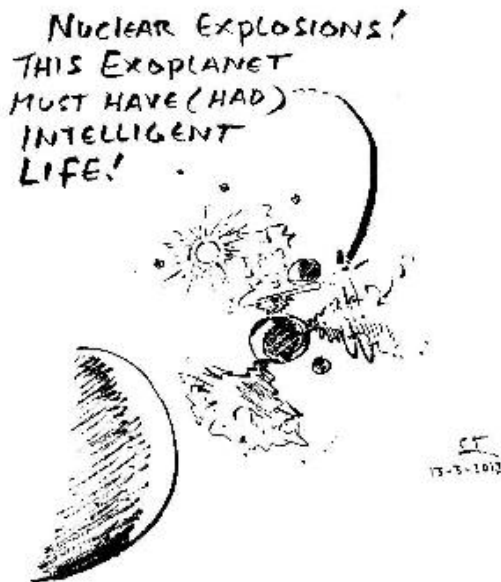


Figure 11.2. The cartoon.

www.ctdamconsultancy.com
<http://ethnogeopolitics.org>

An "Expert" cartoon by Caspar ten Dam; see www.ctdamconsultancy.com



Folletín: Entrevista con un Extraterrestre

Rodolfo Valentino

The preceding two contributions in this issue of our journal concern the English and German texts of the same article translated by the author himself, under the auspices of the European Institute for Migration and Social Inclusion (IEM) and Independent European Sociological Research (EUROSOR).

Introducción

¿Qué dirían los extraterrestres inteligentes sobre los humanos? Según Rodolfo Valentino, Director del Instituto Europeo de Migración e Inclusión Social, su veredicto sería devastador, porque la imagen que reciben “Los Planetas Unidos de las Galaxias Humanoides” es cruel y negativa. En su opinión, todavía estamos en la etapa del “homo mediocris”. Aunque haya algunos que han evolucionado, en comparación con la ignorancia, la estupidez, la mediocridad, la incompetencia social, la barbarie, la crueldad generalizadas y el verdadero potencial de autodestrucción de la mayoría de las personas, no pueden hacer nada por nosotros. Pero también hablan de esperanza y una nueva oportunidad que nos ha concedido el “Gran Consejo”, porque admiten que las personas que se han desarrollado genéticamente y psicológicamente en su dirección, están en aumento. Pero, lamentablemente, no están en el poder, se ven obstaculizados en



su trabajo o “congelados” por la mayoría que todavía permanece en el estado del “homo mediocris”.

La Entrevista con un Extraterrestre

Extraterrestre: Hola.

Terrícola: Hola. ¿Eres un extraterrestre? Es impresionante. ¿Qué queréis de nosotros?

Extraterrestre: Nada, volveremos de vez en cuando hasta que estéis a nuestra altura.

Terrícola: ¿Quiénes sois?

Extraterrestre: Los Planetas Unidos de las Galaxias Humanoides. Todavía os encontráis en el estadio del “homo mediocris”. Algunos destacan, pero son muy pocos en relación con la ignorancia, la barbarie, la crueldad, la maldad y el potencial de autodestrucción de la mayoría que predomina en este planeta.

Terrícola: ¿Por qué no nos enseñáis?

Extraterrestre: No hacéis caso a los vuestros, cuando destacan en fraternidad, humanidad, igualdad, amor al prójimo, solidaridad, etc. y vais hacer caso a una criatura verde, como lo soy yo. Imposible.....

Terrícola: ¿Pero tan malos y estúpidos somos, eh?

Extraterrestre: Todavía apedreáis a mujeres por razones múltiples. Quemastéis a mujeres por razones religiosas. Todavía humilláis,



torturáis y asesináis a millones de personas, mujeres, niños y hombres. Lo hemos observado todo. Todavía esclavizáis a millones de mujeres, niños y hombres. Cuando gaseasteis sistemáticamente a millones de los vuestros, queríamos invadir el planeta y exterminar a toda la humanidad, porque el Gran Consejo os calificó de “bestias” y de “virus” que no se deberían esparcir bajo ninguna circunstancia por otros planetas.....

Terrícola: ¡Basta, basta ya.....! Me siento como una mierda.....

Extraterrestre: Eso es lo que dijo la mayoría en el consejo....pero tenéis otra oportunidad más (muchos de nosotros han dejado de contar ya las que habéis malgastado). La gente que ha evolucionado genética y psicológicamente en nuestra dirección está en aumento. Por desgracia no está en el poder y cuando lo está es rápidamente detenida, bloqueada y muchas veces asesinada por los poderosos y mediocres apoyados por la mayoría que no han llegado a este estadio de la evolución.

Terrícola: ¿Nos salvaremos....? ¡Extraterrestre, extraterrestre, eh, no te vayas....joder....! Nos iba a sacar un selfie para Facebook.....Todos iban a alucinar.....¡Mierda!

Dr Rodolfo Valentino is Director of the Independent European Sociological Research institute (EUROSOR; www.facebook.com/eurosor), and Director of the European Institute of Studies on Migration, Social Inclusion and Intercultural Learning (<http://bimev.de>; <http://migrapolis.de/bim-e-v/>). eurosor.iem@gmail.com psciocura.valentino@gmail.com.

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Main Article—Research Note

Chechen Clans and Other Kin Groups in Times of War and Peace: Definitions, Types, Saliencies and Need for Further Research

Caspar ten Dam

Abstract Arguably, most traditional societies conform to a predominant religion, state, emperor, nation, ethnicity, or to a predominant collection of tribes and clans; multi-clan or other mixed groups with residential unity and self-identification in hamlets, villages, towns or other localities; and finally to extended families and nuclear families. In this research note I discuss some (preliminary) observations of mine, and those of Dettmering, Sokirianskaia and some other scholars, observers and others on the identified, claimed or actual (sub-)clans and other kinship or localised ethnic (sub-)groups however defined among the Chechens in distant and more recent history. Further research is required to determine with more confidence what roles any such surviving kinship and ethnic (sub-)groups may have played during particularly the First Russo-Chechen War (1994–1996) and the first high-intensity phase of the Second Russo-Chechen War (1999–2005), which since then has morphed into a collection of small-scale insurgencies across the North Caucasus.

Introduction

Arguably, most traditional societies conform to a predominant religion,



state, emperor, nation, ethnicity, or to a predominant collection of *tribes* i.e. kin groups without residential unity ('ethnic' if with perceived common ancestry); *clans* i.e. kin groups with residential unity; multi-clan or other mixed groups with residential unity and self-identification in hamlets, villages, towns or other localities; and finally to *extended families* and *nuclear families* within or straddling across kin groups.

Louis Dupree asserts that the "key ... is kinship, that reciprocal set of rights and obligations which satisfies and .. limits an individual's .. role" (Dupree 1997: 181; 183-92 on kinship typology (no clear 'tribe' definition)). In this regard one must keep in mind that scholars generally discern the same kinship or other social units, but apply different terms (family, clan, tribe, etcetera) for these.

Therefore most but not all scholars researching social groups broadly define the concept of 'clan' as the multi-household group with actual or perceived common ancestry—though just a few of them nowadays apply Dupree's classic-anthropological marker of residential unity or its absence to distinguish between 'clans' and 'tribes'.

At any rate, I argue that even in many 'modern' (post-)industrial societies nowadays, 'pre-modern' kinship groups and their constituent values appear to hold sway or at least retain some considerable influence:

"Despite industrialisation, urbanisation and (de)colonisation, many present-day societies, be they formerly tribal or still (partially) tribal, appear to retain many traditions having to with extended families, (sub-)clans and other kinship groups more



often than not adhering to ‘pre-modern’ customary laws. Paradoxically, their adherence to ‘old’ values—however much contemporary ignorance, manipulation and brutalisation disfigure these in times of war and (relative) peace—leads to the same “conflict of the aggressive impulses .. with the moral norms” Talcott Parsons discerned in Western societies (Parsons 1947: 169)” (Ten Dam 2019: 157).

That is to say, groups still adhering to ‘old’ values often come into conflict with the ‘dominant’ moral norms typically inscribed in domestic constitutional law of the ‘modern’ societies they happen to live in. As I noted elsewhere, violence can “ensue between “relatively ‘emancipated’ and ... traditional groups” (Parsons 1947: 178); no single society is purely traditional or modern” (Ten Dam 2012: 240, note 21; see further Ten Dam 2015: 620).

Be that as it may, in this research note I discuss some observations of mine and others on the identified, claimed or actual (sub-)clans and other kinship or localised ethnic (sub-)groups however defined among the Chechens (Nokhchi) in particular and the *Vainakh* (i.e. mainly Chechen and Ingush) Nakh-speaking peoples in the Caucasus in general.¹

Above all, I seek to determine what roles these native ethnicities, tribes and lineage sub-groups have played during particularly the First Russo-Chechen War (1994–1996) and the first high-intensity phase of the Second Russo-Chechen War (1999–2005), which since then has morphed into a collection of small-scale insurgencies across the North Caucasus.



Incidentally, I agree with those analysts and scholars who deem the Second Russo-Chechen War actually continuing to this very day albeit on a diminished scale in both Chechnya and the North Caucasus at large: thus despite “all of its efforts, Russia has not been able to win the war entirely and decisively. Although Moscow has a strong local government in Grozny that controls all of Chechnya, it has been impossible to eliminate all of the Chechen guerilla formations” (Askerov 2015: 27).

Violence-values, combat-stresses, conflict motivations and (brutal) violence among Chechen (kin) groups

I am engaged in ongoing research on behavioural and cultural violence-patterns by combatants based on (sub-)clan and other kin-group identities and loyalties, during and after post-Communist separatist conflicts like those in Chechnya (1994–1996, 1999–2005 or arguably to this day), Kosovo (1997–1999) and Nagorno Karabakh (1988–1994).

In this research I seek to explain amongst other things the intermittent, persistent or increasing *brutalities* i.e. violations of local and/or international violence-norms—or the surprisingly frequent maintenance of these norms (*non-brutalities*)—among both kin-based and non-kin-based combat units of separatist fighters and those of their (semi-) incumbent-state enemies. This latter research project is just one of many that I am undertaking, alone or in collaboration with others, which form part of my overall Brutalisation research agenda.

The latter research agenda revolves around a Brutalisation theory that I



have developed myself, with its variables *violence-values* (my composite term) on proper and improper violence; *conflict-inducing motivations* (grievances, avarices, interests and ideologies) that bring about i.e. cause or trigger the conflict; *combat-stresses* like fear, fatigue and rage resulting from or leading to trauma's (and hypothetically to brutalities as well); and *conflict-induced motivations* (grievances, avarices, interest and ideologies) that happen by, through and during the conflict in question.² Empirical findings indicating the significant yet partial validity of some aspects or variables of the Brutalisation theory have already been published (see e.g. Ten Dam 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015).

I am not alone in doing research on traditional pre-industrial and modern (post-)industrial societies and their impact on violent conflict. Thus I have pointed out in several review essays (esp. Ten Dam 2017a, 2017c) that Babak Rezvani convincingly shows in both his *Ethno-Territorial Conflict and Coexistence* (2013) and *Conflict and Peace in Central Eurasia* (2015) that five interrelated factors can or do account for the outbreak of secessionist ethno-territorial conflicts:

- i) historic grievances like the wholesale deportation of the Chechens in 1944 on orders of Stalin;
- ii) the obligation in martial cultures to avenge historical wrongs and seek safety from such wrongs in the future through independence;
- iii) a rebelling movement representing or claiming to represent the largest indigenous group in the region or contested territory; and most importantly of all:
- iv) the contested territory exhibiting a “so-called mosaic type of ethno-geographic configuration” of “highly homogeneous



- pockets of ethnic concentration” (Rezvani 2013b: 15; Rezvani 2015: 3); and
- v) a “politicization of ethnicity” (2013b: 55; 2015: 43) in a hierarchical-territorial ethnopolitical system whereby some ethnicities get a higher autonomy, nationality status and other privileges than others (2013b: esp. 116-120; 2015: esp. 107-112).

Indeed, as mentioned in my review essays (Ten Dam 2016: 68-69; 2017d: 50; 2017e: 438-439) on Ilyas Akhmadov’s books on the Chechen independence struggle (Akhmadov et al 2010, 2013), it is the combination of all these five factors identified by Rezvani that appear to account for the Chechen conflict. After all “there are many cases of ethno-territorial groups in the (post)Soviet space that enjoy territorial autonomy and a dominant demographic position therein, but nevertheless have not waged a war of independence” (Rezvani 2013b: 249). One also needs to account for “why an ethnonationalist conflict emerged in Chechnya, and diffused and transformed into a Wahhabi/Salafi religious conflict” (Rezvani 2014: 871, 886, note 57).

Alternatively, Emil Aslan Souleimanov and Huseyn Aliyev posit that their own case-study encompassing the First and Second Chechnya Wars between 1994 and 2005 shows that, in asymmetric conflicts, socio-cultural values based on codes of *retaliation*, *silence* and *hospitality* upheld by insurgents from ‘traditional’ honor cultures facilitate, as socio-anthropological phenomena, violent mobilisation and pro-insurgent support (Souleimanov & Aliyev 2015b, 2017, 2018).³

These socio-cultural values among “*honorific* insurgents” (Souleimanov



& Aliyev 2017: 9) resemble my own typology of *violence-values* I apply in my research on brutalisation in armed conflicts: *honour*, *blood-feud*, (predatory) *raid*, *hospitality* and *mediation*; these honorific values among Chechens and Albanians have solidified their *societal values* of martialism, resistance and (male) egalitarianism during their wars of independence in the Caucasus and the Balkans in their recent and more distant history (Ten Dam 2010: esp. 333-335; Ten Dam 2011: esp. 265-266; Ten Dam 2012: 226, note 2; Ten Dam 2015: 578, note 3).

Indeed, their observation that an overarching “concept of honor is irrevocably connected” to notions of (blood-feud) retaliation, silence and hospitality in “honor cultures that are organized along .. blood kinship” (Souleimanov & Aliyev 2017: 18-19) resembles my own observation that such “violence-values” which can be seen as “derivatives of the central “honour” value ... characterise many or most tribal and other pre-industrial societies” (Ten Dam 2010: 335).

As I noted in one of my articles in my How to Feud and Rebel Series, “Chechen society lacks hierarchies i.e. classes; competition occurs among clans and other kinship groups instead, and tends to be violent given the martial tradition” (Ten Dam 2012: 233). I observed that due to this inter-clan competition and martial tradition, “youngsters and adults are pressured to excel”, whereby consequent “group expectations lead to potentially brutalising honour-stress among youngsters with fragile self-esteem” (Ibid: 234). Therefore, I concluded that:

many Chechens, especially those from minor or ‘impure’ clans (including those made up of former slaves), felt compelled to prove their valour in spectacular acts as *smertniki* (suicide fighters)



against non-Chechen enemies, Russians in particular. Such violence reveals *double brutalisation*, i.e. discarding of both international and traditional norms: war-traumatised youngsters came to reject customs and adore brute strength (Ten Dam 2012: 234).

Still, do Chechen armed formations during the wars in the 1990s and the present low-intensity conflict significantly differ in their behaviour and thus brutality if any, and do different (sub-)clan memberships and identities account for many or any of these differences? These questions are exceedingly difficult to answer, as little field and empirical research has been done to directly answer these questions.

Yet before one can study degrees of brutalities for whatever reasons among (ethnic-) Chechen clans and other kin groups, one needs to identify these groups first—and even ascertain whether these truly have existed as functioning entities at any point in time.

Thus one of the first questions one needs to answer is whether *all* the 158 Chechen and 55 non-ethnic Chechen clans identified by historiographers like Magomet (Mahomet) Mamakaev ⁴ and Tarik Cemal Kutlu and Chechen nationalists alike ⁵, have—supposing all of these have truly existed as claimed—in fact survived the brutal Russo-Chechen Wars of the 1990s and beyond. Probably not, as reprisals like *zachistkas* (cleansing, mop-up operations) and other brutalities by Russian and pro-Russian forces led to the “murder or disappearance of the males (and sometimes even females) of entire families and clans”



(Souleimanov & Aliyev 2015b: 697-698) among the insurgents and their supporters. It seems unlikely that the members of the most affected, most badly mauled clans have survived these wars in sufficient numbers so as to remain functioning clans or at least surviving sub-clans in the present day. Moreover, reportedly a number of the 'classic' clans already ceased to function and exist even prior to these conflicts due to Soviet indoctrination, industrialisation and urbanisation.

Provenance, saliency and extancy of Chechen and other Vainakh kin groups: conceptualisations and observations

At first sight the broader patterns of (ethnic-)Chechen clan and other kinship entities, identities, distributions, characteristics and present-day existence i.e. survival in and beyond Chechnya seem to be generally known and agreed upon—yet on closer inspection turn out to be highly uncertain and contested. Indeed, the lack of up-to-date knowledge and lack of consensus on the rare out-of-date knowledge on Chechen clan and other kin groups remarkably resembles the gaps in research and knowledge on their Albanian counterparts.

As I have shown in a couple of review essays and research notes on Robert Elsie's groundbreaking *Tribes of Albania* (2015) and his related works (Ten Dam 2018a, 2018b), the presently "known data on the numbers, denominations and other characteristics of the Albanian clans seem rather outdated and confusing" (Ten Dam 2010: 352, note 30; Ten Dam 2011: 254, note 24). Indeed hardly any systematic research has been conducted on the Albanian clan and other kin-group structures ever since Franz Seiner's seminal census study in 1916-1918 of Albanian



regions occupied by Austrian-Hungarian troops which basically covers presentday Albania and some adjacent areas in Montenegro and Kosovo (see Seiner 1922). So I have had to conclude that even Elsie's *Tribes of Albania* "does not fully succeed in determining and clarifying the precise fate of all known Albanian tribes [and other kin groups]" (Ten Dam 2018a: 42; 2018b: 37).

Elsie acknowledges that his *Tribes of Albania* is "admittedly, a motley collection of information and texts with many lacunae of which the author is painfully aware" (Elsie 2015: 12). This admission is disquieting: Dr. Robert Elsie has been one of the few and most prominent specialists on (ethnic-)Albanian poetry and literature, who in more recent years has broadened his studies to (ethnic-)Albanian politics and society as well, including the history, structure and saliency of the "about 70" (Ibid: 10) clans or tribes among the Albanians. His untimely death in late 2017 prevented him from conducting and publishing any more follow-up research on this kinship phenomenon.

Despite very specified claims by some scholars and analysts, the Chechen kinship phenomenon remains as fuzzy, indistinct and contested as the Albanian one—arguably even more so. Even I claimed that, broadly speaking, "inter-clan competition grew together with Chechnya's population, increasing the number of clans from 59 to a 100 during the first half of the 19th century, and to 170 (100 in mountains, 70 on plains) by the 1990s—mostly due to ambitious sub-clans declaring themselves *teips* or *taips*" (Ten Dam 2011: 247-248).

At any rate some scholars and analysts assert that, to this day, "Chechens identify themselves as belonging to one of roughly 150 large clans (*teips*),



sometimes referred to as tribes. Teips are subdivided into several branches of clans (*gars*), split into smaller branches of patronymic families (*nekyes*). Nekyes, in turn, are subdivided into groups of related families spanning up to seven generations (*shchin-nakhs*), which are further subdivided into nuclear families (*dözals*)” (Chereji & Sandu 2021: 7 (quote); Souleimanov & Aliyev 2015a: 169-170; Askerov 2015: 222, 228).⁶

However, even the general ‘facts’ regarding the tribal and kin structures in Chechen society remain contested to this day. Strictly speaking, the “origin of the Chechens and their early history is unknown” (Luzbetak 1951: 22 (quote); 195-99, 204-206).

There is no consensus on what civilisation shaped Chechen culture and ethnos, nor on the provenance of Chechnya’s 150 to 170 clans. Some believe they and their mountain democracy were formed thousands of years back; thus Chechen ethnologist Magomet Mamakaev regarded the *taipa* “an ancient Chechen institution that simply acquired a new name in the 17th century” (Dettmering 2005: 470-471 & note 15; from Mamakaev 1973: 5-7).

Others, like Russian-Chechen ethnologist Yan Chesnov and Kabardin-Circassian ethnologist Amjad Jaimoukha, believe the Chechen clans were established during a seventeenth-century democratic revolution (e.g. Jaimoukha 2005); some scholars believe these clans were formed as late as the nineteenth century (e.g. Broxup-Bennigsen 1992: 4).

Some even question whether such clans have ever existed at all, or dismiss these and their supposed customs as “mythical social structures” (re)invented by political entrepreneurs (Tishkov 2004: 14). Thus Valery



Tishkov opposes Chesnov's 'primordialist' take on Chechen identity and history of resistance to the Russians, which so influenced local and Western scholars (e.g. D.E. Furman, Gall & De Waal, Lieven): rather "a constructivist approach is absolutely timely for this research" (Ibid: 49). Still, both Chesnov and Tishkov agree that the high-lowland distinction among Chechen clans is overly simplistic. Here Tishkov appears to recognise the *teip*—or as I would call it, the *gar* or *neqi*—as a reality after all.⁷

From the contestations as those described above, Ekaterina Sokirianskaia deduces that even more recent literature on "teips (clans)" seem "to pose more questions than provide answers as to what the contemporary teip really is" (Sokirianskaia 2005: 454). While primordialist, often nationalist scholars vaguely describe it as a kin-based tribal unit, modernist pro- *and* anti-Russian scholars insist that there is "no such thing as teip" (Ibid). Interestingly, modernist nationalists among the Ingush and Chechens argue that all "these myths about clan structures, Elders, customary law are created in order to construct an image of backward, primitive societies .. who cannot govern themselves and have to be governed by the strong hand of Moscow" (Ibid).⁸

Ironically, many founders, proponents and followers of the separatist Chechen Republic of Nokhchi (*Noxçiyın Respublika Noxçiyçö*, NRN), also called Ichkeria after Chechnya's south-eastern 'heartland' (*ich kerî*: "place over there" in Kumyk)—of which currently only remnants exist in exile in London and elsewhere—(did) believe in these 'myths', or at least (did) consider these vital ingredients for creating or maintaining their national identity and state-building efforts.



Russia's colonial conquest and ethnography in the Caucasus

During the 19th century authorities of Tsarist Russia and the ethnographers they employed initially regarded Vainakh and other Mountaineer clans in the Caucasus with their diverse customary laws, “supposedly pre-Islamic traditions” and intertribal rivalries as bulwarks against unifying “Islamic ideas and institutions” which Imam Shamil and other native leaders so effectively employed when opposing Russian encroachment; yet eventually “the clans, one of the defining elements of traditional societies in the eyes of Russian observers, were themselves regarded as a danger to Russian statehood” (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 341-343 (quotes), 344-345).

Consequently the Tsarist authorities and their ethnographers in the Caucasus sought to co-opt those ‘aristocratic’, ‘princely’ and other ‘kindred’ leaders among particularly the Vainakh peoples who could counteract, weaken, nullify and even destroy both clan and other kin-group structures and Sufi and other Islamic influences in their midst. Yet initially, until the mid-19th century, Tsarist authorities fostered perceived and/or actual clans and their customary laws for anti-Islamic purposes (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 350-353).

Thus the Russians initially sought with rather limited success to utilise Vainakh customary “law of the mountains” (*Adat*, from Arab. *‘ādat*, pl. “customs”) against Islamic rules and laws (*Shari’a*)—while encouraging native languages at the expense of Arabic (and Persian) for this very purpose (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 355-363). Actually Islamic judges (*qadis*) and customary elders had been alternatively cooperating and competing with each other even before



the Russian encroachment.

Even so the Tsarist authorities tended to overestimate the 'Islamic danger' in general and perhaps the 'clan danger' in the Caucasus as well. This overestimation was understandably due to the challenge posed by Imam Shamil's resistance during 1834-1859 and the Imamate or Islamic state he established and led during the 1840s, strictly imposing Islamic rules and laws in the territories he controlled, which basically covered present-day Chechnya, (parts of) Ingushetia and Dagestan.

At any rate, local men reportedly "voted in communal, clan, and tribal assemblies, and elected Elders with legislative, judicial and/or military powers; Muslim judges (*qadi*) and scholars (*'ulama*) were scarce among Chechen and Dagestani highlanders" (Ten Dam 2011: 251 (quote); Zelkina 2000: xvii, 17, 18, 42, 43). Arguably the *Shari'a* "altered and marginalised the *adat* only among Dagestani and Chechen lowlanders" during the 19th century (Ten Dam 2010: 346).

All in all, any native peoples with perceived or actual clan structures within the Tsarist Empire did constitute a particular challenge for the authorities. Integrating or at least subjugating the "diverse peoples and their different political and social traditions" already constituted the "empire's main task .. to secure the viability of the multinational state" (Cvetkovski apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 2-3).

Incidentally, the above observations signify that Russian ethnographers, ethnologists and other analysts did perceive Vainakh and other Mountaineer clans and other kin groups as genuinely existing phenomena—even if (mis)perceived through biased eyes.



Vainakh and other peoples in the (North) Caucasus

Regarding peoples on supra-kin levels, Christian Dettmering stresses that “Chechens and the Ingush should be compared because their reaction to Russian advance diverged, with the Chechens perennially fighting and the Ingush remaining calm” vis-à-vis the Russians (Dettmering 2005: 470). Indeed through much of the 19th century “the Russian military command was able to establish a working relationship with the Ingush, while the Russian-Chechen relationship was always prone to conflicts” (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 343).

Russian ethnographers, travelers and other outside observers aided the Tsarist authorities in their divide-and-rule policies—including provoking blood-feuds from or among anti-colonial resistance fighters through raids by collaborating Chechen and other native (youth-)militias (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 347-349). They did so by describing “real or imagined cultural, social, and political differences” between Mountaineer peoples in general and Vainakh peoples in particular (Ibid: 345)—and thus between Ingush and Chechens as well. For instance the traditional robberies including ritualised, manhood-affirming intertribal raids were supposedly far more prevalent, cruel, thuggish and politicised i.e. insurgent among the ‘fierce’ Chechens than the ‘gentle’ because ‘less-Islamicised’ Ingush (Ibid: 345-348).

Dettmering convincingly observes that the traditional raids or robberies generally were highly constrained with customary rules limiting the degree of violence so as to prevent blood-feuds, making it improbable



that the “differences between the Caucasian peoples in the cruelty and fierceness”—and frequency—of their attacks were huge (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 346 (quote)-347).

Even though Chechens may “consider themselves to be the toughest and most freedom-loving people in the world” (Ten Dam 2011: 251), their traditional “lightning raids (*nabeq*) to capture horses, cattle and other properties” to initiate their youngsters in bravery and martial skills (Ibid: 249) may not have been fiercer or in any way more ‘superior’ than those by other Mountaineer peoples. At any rate the “superiority complex among Chechens regarding their “unique” martialism contributed to the lack of regional support for their 1990s independence drive” (Ibid: 251).

Despite their consequent isolation, many Chechens dared to seek independence from Russia at the time. One major reason for this daring, even rash independence drive is the fact that Chechens, in contrast to other North-Caucasian peoples, have “retained their demographic-cultural unity, [large] population size and martial ethos through secretiveness and imaginative measures, like taking multiple wives” during and after Stalin’s 1944 Deportation drive (Ten Dam 2011: 252).

Be that as it may, Russian policymakers and ethnographers temporarily ceased to distinguish between Chechens and Ingush during the 1870s for political reasons, mainly because they considered the latter as less friendly than before and sometimes “even worse than the Chechens” (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 364)—thereby inadvertently and ironically still distinguishing and comparing the two peoples.



The main reason for the diminished standing of the Ingush—and consequent invalid denial as a people distinct from the Chechens—by the Russians at the time was the rise in the Ingush territories of the Qadiriya Sufi order (*tariqa*). Sheikh al-Hajj Kunta al-Michiki al-Ilishkani also called Kunta Hajji Kishiev (1829?–1867?) had been proselytising this order throughout the North Caucasus. The Russians considered this a threat despite Kunta Hajji and his followers being initially “a-politically ascetic, pacifist, individualist and populist” (Ten Dam 2011: 243). Ironically “Russian brutality, including starving Kunta Hajji to death during his captivity (1864–1867), transformed the Qadiri into fierce resistance fighters” in subsequent years (Ibid: 243).

Particularly one of the hereditary sub-orders (*virids*) formed by Kunta Hajji’s deputy-leaders (*vekils*), the devout Batal Hajji *virid*, alarmed Russian authorities due to its paramilitary structure and fierce appearance—even though Batal Hajji (Belhoroev) himself was apolitical (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 363–366; Ten Dam 2011: 243; see further Lemerrier-Quelquejay 1983; Bennigsen & Wimbush 1985 (1967): esp. 7–12, 18–24, 32–36).

Dettmering himself is ambiguous (perhaps because ambivalent) about the degrees in which both the commonalities and differences or distinctions between the Vainakh peoples were either primordial, artificially constructed or even imagined by the Tsarist authorities and their ethnographers for empire-building and divide-and-rule purposes.

On the one hand Dettmering asserts that the “Chechens, the Ingush, the Karabulaks, and the Kists” all “belong to the Vainakh family of ethnicities” speaking “closely related dialects” and generally exhibiting



similar egalitarian clan societies—while at the same time having grown into “different peoples” with separate cultural-religious-political trajectories in the space of a few centuries or even decades, with most of the “fault-lines” appearing or already establishing in the early 19th century (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 343-344, 366 (quotes); Dettmering apud Branch 2009: 594-595; Dettmering 2011: 333-336).

On the other hand Dettmering emphasises that both the supposed common identities and particular differences among the Vainakh peoples during the late 18th and early 19th centuries “can no longer be determined”; indeed “neither exact linguistic nor social proofs” appear to exist regarding the nowadays widely accepted and firmly ingrained distinctions between Chechens, Ingush, Karabulaks and Kists (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 344 (quote); Dettmering apud Branch 2009: 583-585; Dettmering 2011: 142-146).

Kinship groups within Vainakh and other peoples in the (North) Caucasus

Regarding kin-level differences, Dettmering is ambiguous (perhaps because ambivalent) about the degrees in which clans and other kin groups among the Vainakh and other Mountaineer peoples were either primordial, constructed or imagined by the Tsarist authorities and their ethnographers for empire-building and divide-and-rule purposes.

On the one hand Dettmering repeatedly suggests that such kin groups have been genuine entities: thus he concludes that 19th century Russian



ethnographers ‘merely’ “exaggerated the influence of clans on the Chechen societies and underestimated the role of the villages as political entities of these societies” (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 354)—while the consequent aim by the Tsarist authorities of “destroying the clan structures by the resettlements was probably achieved” (Ibid: 353).

On the other hand, like Sokirianskaia regarding contemporary clans or tribes, Dettmering repeatedly suggests that Chechen and other North-Caucasian clans and smaller kin groups including “maximal lineages” (extended families in concentrated settlements) have been hard to define because these have remained intangible, ill-understood entities which ceased to exist even before the Russian conquest—or (many of these) never truly existed in the first place. Thus he claims that the (pro-)Russian ethnographers, being “obsessed with the clan”—and their paymasters in the Russian political and military establishments as a consequence—were pursuing “a chimera” (Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 353, 354).

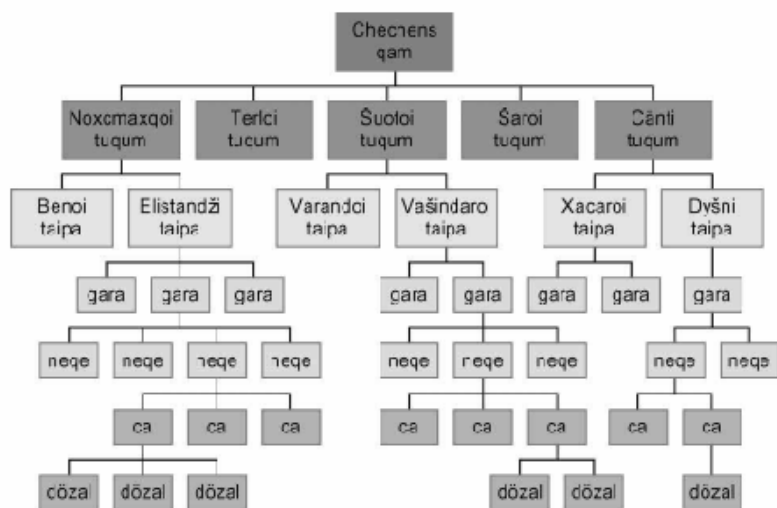
Given these cautions and apparent doubts about kin-group extancies and salencies, Dettmering questions the basic presumptions behind Mamakaev’s highly-structured and hierarchical “Chechen clan model” as reproduced in Figure 1.1 here (Dettmering 2005: 469-471).

Dettmering thus criticises Mamakaev’s belief that Chechen—or rather Vainakh i.e. mainly Chechen and Ingush—clans were “political structures with no territorial cohesion” (Dettmering 2005: 469-470) by the 19th century since they already had “descended to the fertile plains between the Sunzha and the mountains” in the 16th century (Ibid: 471)



but were still powerful political actors opposing the Russian colonisation by armed struggle and other means a few centuries later. In this regard, Mamakaev's simplified model as shown in Figure 1.1—which depicts just five of the nine *tukhums* or tribal unions shown in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 in the Appendix—appears to reflect a widespread 19th-century idea among Russian and other colonialists and colonial-minded ethnologists that “‘stateless’ societies with clan structures were much more difficult to integrate into empires” (Ibid: 469).

Figure 1.1: Mamakaev's simplified kin-structure model of the Chechen nation



From: Christian Dettmerring, 'Reassessing Chechen and Ingush (Vainakh) clan structures in the 19th century' *Central Asian Survey* Vol.24 No.4, December 2005, p.471, Figure 1.



Original source: Magomet Amaevich Mamakaev, *Chechenskii taip (rod) v period ego razlozheniia* (Чеченский Тайп (Род) в Период его Разложения—The Chechen tribe/clan (family) during its [period of] expansion) Grozny: Checheno—Ingushskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1973.

Dettmering consequently questions the entire design of Mamakaev's Chechen clan model—a model followed by many other scholars (Aroutiunov, Kutlu, etc.)⁹ —as a forced, artificial adoption of the pioneering model by American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan (1818–1881) of the Native-American *Iroquois* people. This includes the transfer of “Morgan's 23 criteria of an Iroquois clan to the Chechen *taipa*” (Dettmering 2005: 471; see Morgan 1954 (orig. 1854, 1901); Tooker 1983).¹⁰ Still, it remains unclear to what extent Dettmering precisely agrees or disagrees with Mamakaev's circumscriptions of:

a) extended families—the *dözal* as a “joint extended family of four generations”; the *ca* as “several *dözals*” which “formed the family space around the hearth”; and the *neqe* (line) as “several *cas* and forming a lineage over four to six generations”; and

b) clans—the *gara* (branch) as the “maximal lineage .. which comprised seven generations”; and the *taipa* as an apparent, yet unspecified ‘super-clan’ with a “common mythic ancestor” (Dettmering 2005: 470–471 (quotes)).¹¹ Again, I generally translate and define *gar* and *neqi* as clan and *teip* as tribe.¹²

Dettmering does unequivocally reject Mamakaev's basic assertion that “most *taipanas* were united in nine *tuqumas*” (Dettmering 2005: 479)—and asserts instead that the *tuqum* originally meant, and truly existed as,



a union between kindred, blood-related (super- or sub-)clans within villages, and was not a multi-clan union or a multi-tribe commune beyond or across the villages. Nor was there a true Chechen ‘nation’ (*qam*) in the sense of a confederation of *tuqumas* under a so-called “‘*mexk qel*’ (council of the land)” that also “regulated the customary law and traditions” (Ibid: 471).¹³ Similarly, Azerbaijani-born scholar Ali Askerov—like many other scholars and analysts—insists that *tukhums* certainly nowadays do “not play any role in social and political processes in Chechnya” (Arsakov 2015: 228).

Dettmering is not the only scholar critical of the unfounded presuppositions and lack of corroborated research on Mountaineer kinship groups. Thus Ekaterina Sokirianskaia, founder and director of the Conflict Analysis and Prevention Center (CAPC) and author of one of the rare fieldworks on post-20th-century clans and other kin-groups in Chechnya and Ingushetia, lambasts the lack of falsifiable, corroborated theory grounded in “primary fieldwork” in the ongoing “academic and ideological debate” (Sokirianskaia 2005: 455).

This critique is echoed by the more general criticism by Nino Kemoklidze and others about the “relative dearth of independent research into the cultural, social, historical, ethnic and religious complexion” of the Caucasus region (Kemoklidze et al 2012: 161).

In Sokirianskaia’s own field research she found two distinct meanings of *teip* among Chechen and Ingush communities: 1. “clan, i.e. large kin-group, consisting of hundreds of families”; and 2. “extended family, which includes all the relatives with whom a person maintains kin relations” (Sokirianskaia 2005: 456).¹⁴



Sokirianskaia concludes that the teip-as-clan (meaning 1) does no longer truly exist as a functioning *social group* due to the breakdown and impracticability of “face-to-face communication” (Sokirianskaia 2005: 456) by the destructive impacts of Russian colonisation, Soviet collectivisation, WWII deportation and post-WWII urbanisation and industrialisation. This conclusion concords with her assertion in earlier research that “the Osetian and Ingush peoples were non-existent as such” in the 18th and 19th centuries but rather were “so-called “societies” or tribes” which later separated and coalesced into two distinct Osetian and Ingush nations (Sokirianskaia 2004: 4).¹⁵

Yet in the same earlier publication, she notes that the Ingush (like Chechens) traditionally treat the “land of the forefathers as sacred” and thus (like Chechens) returned *en masse* during the late 1950s to their ancestral villages in the Caucasus after Khrushchev’s reversal of Stalin’s forced deportation of many North-Caucasian peoples in early 1944 to other parts of the Soviet Union (Sokirianskaia 2004: 6).

Such territorial attachment to villages and other geographical locations are typical of both clans and smaller kin groups like extended families with traditions of residential unity, suggesting that both teips-as-clans (meaning 1) and teips-as-families (meaning 2) may have persevered among the Ingush during that period.

Indeed, Sokirianskaia’s observation that the “years of deportation strengthened the traditional family structure, informal social institutions, solidarity, [and] customary law” among the Ingush (Sokirianskaia 2004: 6) suggests that *clans* may have been among these ‘informal social institutions’ paradoxically strengthened by exile.



This mirrors my observation (as mentioned earlier) that even during the worst devastations like Stalin's 1944 Deportation leading to tens of thousands of deaths, "Chechens retained their demographic-cultural unity, population size and martial ethos through secretiveness and imaginative measures, like taking multiple wives ... if the nation is under threat" (Ten Dam 2011: 252). They returned in large numbers to their homeland in the late 1950s just like the Ingush did. Still, one must ask the question why the Chechens nor the other North-Caucasian Mountaineer peoples had been able to organise effective resistance to Stalin's deportation drive through "any dormant (sub-)clans or other structures" (Ibid: 252).

On closer thought, the secretive, swift and well-organised Deportation campaign, which took the Chechens and other North-Caucasians by surprise, may not have been the only reason for their lack of large-scale armed resistance: thus their once-vibrant tribes and smaller kin groups may have been so dormant, dysfunctional and even non-existent as political-military or even social entities by that time that effective resistance would have been impossible to begin with.

In any case, Sokirianskaia acknowledges that the *teip-as-clan* has remained a symbol of *social identity* among Chechens and Ingush, maintained by lineage narratives, burials in the mythical or factual village or other location of origin, and exogamous intermarriages.

However, she perceives the *teip-as-extended-family* (meaning 2)—i.e. the man's extended family—to be much more relevant and salient in Chechen and Ingush societies, especially in rural villages where one could maintain face-to-face contacts more easily. Relatives of the extended family function as vital contacts, patrons and guarantors for



finding employment, though neighbours, *virids* (religious brotherhoods) and friends fulfill these functions as well (Sokirianskaia 2005: 456-460).

Sokirianskaia thus deems the teip-as-clan as a “loose identity” at best, while the daily routines of “Chechen and Ingush individuals are to a greater extent shaped by close kin, religious groups, regional/village identities and ideological orientations” (Sokirianskaia 2010: 6). Given this assertion it is hardly surprising that she hardly mentions Chechen, Ingush or other Vainakh clans and kin-groups in most of her other publications (e.g. Sokirianskaia 2019, 2020, apud Jayakumar 2019).

However, I believe that Sokirianskaia overstates her case, by asserting that the teip-as-clan is a “non-existent entity” (Sokirianskaia 2005: 462) *everywhere* in Chechen and Ingush society, as if there are no exceptions at all. Actually she does refer to such outliers, when she observes that “in some small teips (up to 300 nuclear families), mostly in Ingushetia, face-to-face communication remains possible” (Ibid: 457). Indeed, even if “small teips are few” (Ibid), they *may* have played state-building, policy-making and military roles in Chechnya and Ingushetia in the recent past and may still do so in the present day.

One other reason why Sokirianskaia prematurely ‘disqualifies’ the main hypothesis—“State building and policy-making in Ingushetia and Chechnya have been shaped by interaction of primordial patterns of social integration, primarily teips (clans)” (Sokirianskaia 2005: 462)—is that the results of her study are pioneering and insightful yet neither exhaustive nor conclusive. Her “participant observation and in-depth interviews” in Chechnya and Ingushetia between 2002 and 2005 are significant yet incomplete; by her own admission “certain areas” in



Chechnya were “inaccessible” at the time due to continued fighting and military operations there—consequently, “pro-federal groups” were “more accessible to analysis” than anti-federal groups i.e. insurgents (Ibid: 453, 465 (quotes)).¹⁶

Therefore I take issue with Sokirianskaia’s statement in her subsequent PhD research (Sokirianskaia 2009) that “clan (teip) ties do not play the defining role” (Sokirianskaia 2010: 4) in the state-building and political-integration processes in Ingushetia and Chechnya.¹⁷ She does identify “descent (clanship), kinship, territory, religion, and ideology” and other ties through “acquaintances, colleagues, friends and professionals” (Ibid: 4) as the main six factors shaping the elite compositions and effects of successive governments in both republics between 1991 and 2009 as shown in Figure 1.2 below.

However, Sokirianskaia clearly considers the first two factors—clanship and kinship—as peripheral compared to the other ones. Consequently she opposes the school of thought which claims that “regime transition and state-building in Central Asia and the Caucasus is shaped by and organized around clans—pre-existing informal identity organizations based on kinship” (Sokirianskaia 2010: 5).

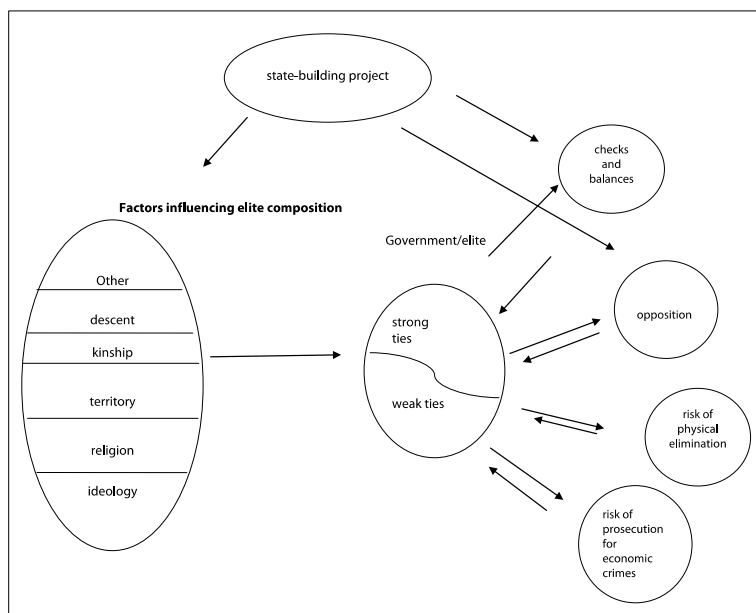
Yet despite Sokirianskaia’s impressive fieldworks, like the one carried out during 2008-2009, I deem her statement that “clans (*teips*) have ceased to function as patterns of political integration of any prominence” (Sokirianskaia 2010: 5) too sweeping, too generalised.

Thus *some* clans and smaller kin-groups within clans could have played significant roles in Chechen, Ingush and other Vainakh societies in the



Caucasus—perhaps even in governing and state-building processes during the late 20th century. And these may still continue to do so well into the early 21st century. As shown in the next section, some clans and other kin-groups have been more supra-kin nationalistic and independent-minded yet at the same time more cohesive and state-ruling capable than others—thereby nuancing the general observation that the “strength of ties among the elites does not covary with kinship” (Sokirianskaia 2010: 6).

Figure 1.2: Sokirianskaia’s diagram on Elite Composition and Ties in Government



From: E. Sokirianskaia, 'State-Building and Political Integration in Ingushetia and Chechnya (1991–2009)' *Russian Analytical Digest* No.86, 16 November 2010, p.7, Figure.1.



At this stage of my own research, however, I cannot confidently take side in the debate, i.e. either exclusively support or reject Mamakaev's presuppositions in his clan-structure model as shown in Figure 1.1—or take an alternative position. Incidentally I would consider the *gara* a clan or at least a sub-clan, rather than an extended family given its apparent size and complexity. And I circumscribe the *kup* as the multi-family (lineage) village commune (Ten Dam 2011: 247), while it remains uncertain whether Dettmering circumscribes the *kup* as such a commune too.

Even so, Dettmering closely ties the *kup* to the *gara* as villages apparently are or were dominated by such single (sub-)clans or supra-families, both being territorial “entities that owned the land and distributed it amongst their members” (Dettmering 2005: 476 (incl. non-defined reference to ‘kup’)).

I tend to agree with his earlier-noted critique of the widespread assumption that clans, Chechen clans in particular, have had no territorial cohesion in one or more villages or other localities since the 19th century onwards. Indeed, during the latest Russo-Chechen wars certain “populated areas” in Chechnya such as those of “Tsentsoroy, Belgatoy, Dargo, Benoy” (Mashkadov in Akhmadov & Daniloff 2013: 43) appear to refer to geographically concentrated *teips* or ‘clans’ of the same name.¹⁸ For so far these latter *teips* do exhibit residential unity, I would call these ‘clans’ rather than ‘tribes’ (see start of Introduction)—but if I would apply the terms *gar* or *neqi* for these kin groups instead, I would have to deviate from the application of kin-group names in Mamakaev's multi-pyramidical kin-group model (see Figure 1.1).



Actually Dettmering at one point seems to use the terms clan and tribe in the reverse sense as I do regarding residential unity or lack of it (see start of Introduction), when he concludes that the “dominant Chechen entities were the villages, which were united into tribes for defensive reasons and these tribes were not based on blood relationship” (Dettmering 2005: 482).

While I generally use the classic anthropological distinction between the *tribe* as a kin group without residential unity (‘ethnic’ if with perceived common ancestry) and the *clan* as a kin group with residential unity, Dettmering appears to use the terms in a more multi-faceted way. He appears to consider clans as kin groups with or without residential unity, and tribes as multi-kin or non-kin groups without or with residential unity.

At any rate, Dettmering convincingly argues that the village-based and multi-village and/or multi-ethnic territorial tribes played a significant political and military roles in the 19th century—and I would add 20th century—rebellions against Russian encroachment, while the *teips* and smaller clans were subsumed and divided across lowlands and highlands, villages and other settlements, playing only social and cultural roles under these territorial arrangements.

However, I do wonder whether *teips* (tribes) and *gar* and *neqi* (clans and sub-clans) as I define them may have been, and may still be, distinct and significant political actors within the villages and other settlements (hamlets, towns, etc.), competing with other resident tribes and (sub-)clans in the decision-making bodies of those villages and other settlements.



Perhaps Dettmering—a specialist on 19th century rather than 20th century Vainakh history (see Dettmering 1999, 2005, 2011; Dettmering apud Branch 2009; Dettmering apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014)—underestimates, or even has not considered, the dynamics of *intra-village and other intra-territorial competition between resident (sub-)clans and tribes* to this day. The most powerful, respected and/or savvy kin groups may shape decisions and policies in villages and other settlements in which they happen to coexist with other, ‘lesser’, less successful (sub-)clans there—even if formal decision-making in those localities is done by consensus, and supposedly represent unity and common identity in those localities.

Chechen kin groups and their political and military formations in recent history: claims, anecdotes and observations

Despite the theoretical and interpretative contestations, and rather to counteract minimalist and constructivist views on Chechen clan culture and structure, present-day Chechen nationalists come up with very precise identifications of the names, ethnicities and numbers of clans and other kin groups in Chechnya—which some scholars fully or largely adopt in their works (e.g. Askerov 2015: 222, 228).

Thus those supporting the residual government-in-exile in London of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, that once seceded from Russia in the early 1990s and ultimately failed to remain independent during the subsequent Russo-Chechen conflicts, list on their website *Waynakh Online*—as shown in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 in the Appendix—the names of



158 clans (or tribes) distributed among nine *tukhums* (tribal unions), and 55 non-Tukhum Chechen and non-ethnic Chechen clans residing in the republic, based on the works of just a few yet still authoritative sources (Mamakaevev 1973; Kutlu 2005).¹⁹ Indeed, they claim that all these “society bodies and names from the smallest to the largest .. still exist with all [its] spiritedness in the Chechens”.²⁰

For now, one could take their contestable claims as a point of departure for seeking to answer half a dozen questions for future research (see Concluding remarks). Still, if any other scholars and sources credibly criticise or validly depart from their claims regarding the identification and salience of (any of) the clans and other kin groups, they should indicate this accordingly.

To undertake systematic and comprehensive research on Vainakh (i.e. mainly Chechen and Ingush)²¹ kin groups will be an uphill challenge however, no matter what claims are taken as a point of departure. Unfortunately there appear to be just sparse anecdotal references and rudimentary analyses about the kin-group memberships and salencies of Chechen leaders and ordinary Chechens in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. This appears to be true even in more recent publications by former and current separatist leaders or indigenous and foreign scholars (e.g. Akhmadov & Lanskoj 2010; Akhmadov & Daniloff 2013; Askerov 2015; Zakayev (Zakaev) 2019). And even those references and analyses tend to contradict and contest each other.

Thus Ilyas Akhmadov, Foreign Minister of the Chechen separatist government abroad from 1999 to 2005, rather briefly mentions—or does



not mention at all—his own kinship and those of compatriots, rivals and other leading figures during the Chechen independence struggle or ‘separatist insurgency’ in his autobiographical *Chechen Struggle* (2010) and biographical *Chechnya’s Secret Wartime Diplomacy* (2013) based on twenty-four secret audiotapes sent to him by his President Aslan Maskhadov (see Ten Dam 2016, 2017d, 2017e).

These references (should) include, amongst others, the kin-group provenances of General Johar Musaevich Dudaev, the first elected President of the self-styled Chechen Republic of Nokhchi or ‘Ichkeria’; and General Aslan Khalid Maskhadov, Dudaev’s eventual successor in 1997 after the former’s violent death in 1996 until he was himself killed by Russian forces in 2005 (Ten Dam 2017d: 44). Akhmadov does at one point explicate that Dudaev was from a “*teip*, the Yalkhoroi” (Akhmadov & Lanskoj 2010: 9).²²

However, neither Akhmadov nor Maskhadov in his audiotapes to him mention the kin-group provenance of Maskhadov himself—or for instance that of Maskhadov’s great Islamist rival, commander Shamil Salmanovich Basaev, who helped to defend Chechnya’s capital Grozny against Russian invasion in late 1994 and to recapture it in mid-1996, and was eventually killed in mid-2006 reportedly by Russia’s secret service (Akhmadov & Lanskoj 2010: 44).

In contrast, Ali Askerov mentions in his *Dictionary of the Chechen Conflict* (2015) that Basaev “was born into the Benoy²³ *teip* in the village of Dyshne-Vedeno” and that Maskhadov’s “family belongs to the Alleroi²⁴ *teip*” (Askerov 2015: 58, 157).



Just like Akhmadov in his publications however, Askerov fails to consistently explicate the kin-group provenance if any of all major Chechen figures with entries in his *Dictionary of the Chechen Conflict*—including that of Akhmadov and Dudaev (Askerov 2015: 35-36, 88-89). Nor does he indicate whether some may not possess any kin-bloodline identity in the patrilineal or at least patrimonial sense. After all, these Chechens may have forgotten such an identity for themselves, or it no longer exists or has never existed for them in the first place. The latter may be particularly true for many non-ethnic Chechen inhabitants of Chechnya who still call themselves Chechens. Still, Askerov may not have had room in his dictionary to explicate all these provenances or explain their absence in his typically brief entries on individuals.

In short, both Askerov's and Akhmadov's references to ethnic, local and above all kinship identities, bonds, customary laws (*adat*), blood-feuds and crosscutting Sufi, Salafi and other Islamic schools (*tariqats* or *tarikats*) and brotherhoods (*djamaats* or *jamaats*, often political organisations with military wings) of individuals and groups are quite rare or quite brief²⁵—or quite contested given the diverging claims by other scholars.

A revealing case in point is the contested provenance and relevance of Johar Dudaev's blood ties on the family and larger kinship levels. Dudaev was just forty-six years old when he was elected head of both the separatist All-National Congress of the Chechen People (*Obshchennatsional'nyi Kongress Chechnskogo Narodna*, OKCh)²⁶ and its armed wing the National Guard at the founding meeting in November 1990.



Dudaev did not seem to have the credentials to become Chechnya's first separatist President in the late Soviet and early post-Soviet eras: Dudaev was a member of the semi-Ingush *yalkhoro* mountain *gar* (clan); moreover, he was married since 1969 to Alla Kulikova, a Russian from Estonia, and continued to exhibit pro-Soviet sentiments and nostalgia (see e.g. Sheehy 1991a & 1991b; Broxup-Bennigsen 1992: 219-239).

However, disagreements on the social and political strength of a particular *teip* or tribe²⁷ already become apparent here. To some analysts the *yalkhoro* or *yalkhoroi*²⁸ tribe to which Dudaev belonged was "relatively small and insignificant" (Lieven 1998: 58) and hardly respected by hardline Ichkeria nationalists.

Dudaev was actually born on 15 April 1944 in the "mountain village of Yalkhoroi" just a "few weeks before the deportations" in south-western Chechnya; yet the *yalkhoro* tribe was "an obscure mountain one, .. descended from the semi-Ingush people, the Karabulaks, .. with little influence in Chechnya" (Gall & De Waal 1997: 83-84). To others, however, the tribe's members were "renowned for their military genius" (Souleimanov 2007: 83). Moreover, reportedly many of the powerful *melkhi*²⁹ tribe supported Dudaev and his call for full independence from Moscow (Akhmadov & Lanskoj 2010: 9-10).

Nevertheless, Dudaev got his initially ceremonial posts as a compromise figure, whatever the strength, reputation and influence of his tribe or clan. Even so, after elections on 27 October 1991 organised by the All-National Congress, Dudaev became the first President of the independent Chechen Republic of Nokhchi (*Noxçiyn Respublika Noxçiyyə*, NRN), also called Ichkeria after Chechnya's south-eastern



'heartland' (*ich keri*: "place over there" in Kumyk) already declared by the second All-National Congress on 8-9 June 1991.³⁰

Perhaps by oath Dudaev secured the loyalty of his Presidential Guard, even while released criminals and other paramilitaries under then twenty-seven-year-old gangster Beslan Gantemirov, opportunistic founder of an 'Islamic Path' party, infiltrated the National Guard and Grozny's municipal police. The former head of *Chechenstro*i construction company Yaragi Mamadaev, like Gantemirov a member of the apparently powerful *chinkho*³¹ tribe, became deputy and later acting prime minister after both bankrolled the All-National Congress in its early years (see e.g. Sheehy 1991a & 1991b; Broxup-Bennigsen 1992: 222,225-226,230; Gall & De Waal 1997: 90-91; Lieven 1998: 58-59).

Valery Tishkov dismisses Dudaev's vanguard as a "narrow, ragtag group" of "three to five thousand people" believing in the *teip* (clan) 'figment' (Tishkov 2004: 13-14). Still, he affirms that the labour surplus of up to 200,000 jobless, seasonal-work and criminal(ised) youths "became the main reserve for the armed struggle" (Ibid: 41).

Unlike state-dependent proletarians i.e. regular-wage earners (mostly Russians), these seasonal sub-proletarians with their 'social capital' of family and friends became Dudaev's foot soldiers. This separatist coalition initially "created and led by national intellectuals were able to splinter and overcome the *nomenklatura*, but could not preserve state order" (Derluguian 2005: 165).

According to Georgi Derluguian, "family honor, kinship and patronage" were and are part of this social capital, and sub-proletarians most rely



on these “traditional .. notions” (Derluguian 2005: 132). However, it remains unclear or at least highly disputed whether these ‘traditional notions’ (Ibid: 136, 141-154, 194, 207) influenced or even shaped combat units and other armed formations during periods of violent conflict in and around Chechnya.

Zelimkhan Yandarbiev—a Chechen poet and leading ideologue of the Chechen Revolution, Vice-President of Ichkeria and party leader of Harmony (Bart), later renamed the Vainakh Democratic Party ³²—has apparently suggested that “armed groups or squads were organized on a territorial basis throughout the war”; yet Tishkov did “not trace any special *teip* connections or solidarity in .. critical moments of the armed uprising” (Tishkov 2004: 94).

Other authors do point to such clannish connections in the political and military spheres however. Thus Akhmadov points out that Vakha Arsanov, who allied himself with Maskhadov as vice-presidential candidate with the latter as victorious presidential candidate during Ichkeria’s 1997 presidential elections, was a leading member of reportedly the largest mountain tribe the *cheberloi* or *chaberloi* ³³; Arsanov had “tremendous authority among his men” who primarily belonged to the same tribe, from which he formed a “highly disciplined unit, with highly competent commanders at the mid- and junior levels” (Akhmadov & Lansky 2010: 70 (quotes)-71).

Perhaps Tishkov could not find these clan connections in Chechen armed formations, because Dettmering’s theory that neither the *taipanas* or ‘supra-clans’ nor the lower-level clans (*neqe*, *garanas*), but



rather the multi-clan and non-lineage tribal villages and larger territorial units were the primary political and military actors in the 19th-century rebellions, may hold true for Chechnya's 20th- and 21st-century rebellions as well.

Even so, certain clans from certain villages did form armed formations, or at least dominated and led the village-groups that in turn formed and dominated the larger armed formations. Tishkov acknowledges this as much, as he extensively cites his guide and cross-reviewer Rustam Kaliev (even though buried in an endnote) on this phenomenon:

There are people from different *teips* living in every village. It is true that armed groups were formed along territorial lines, but *teip* membership also played a part. For example, the Galaizhoiskaya brigade in Yermolovka were practically from one Galai *teip*. In Zakan-Urt, the Chaberloy special regiment, headed by Kurdi Bazhiyev, consisted mainly of Chaberloy *teip* members (Tishkov 2004: 94 & 235 note 2).

Sokirianskaia actually acknowledges that the overall picture of clan saliency in political and military formations is mixed, though revolves around the *teip*-as-extended-family rather than *teip*-as-clan, or what we would call the extended-family (*dözal*) or higher sub-clan levels: among the Vainakhs (mainly Chechens and Ingush), the “political (and in Chechnya also military) unit” with a leading figure “may or may not be formed by the figure’s close kin” as its nucleus; many a politico-military group is “then manned by the supporters of this figure, including relatives, neighbours, fellow villagers” (Sokirianskaia 2005: 464).



Yet other groups were not based on kin, village and/or neighborhood affiliations—and apparently were so much the weaker for it: thus “Aslan Maskhadov’s political-military grouping was based on shared political ideals rather than kinship and neighbourly relations, which reduced its competitiveness with other groupings” (Sokirianskaia 2005: 464).³⁴

Be that as it may, the interplays of ideologies, interests and feuds between (pro-)rebel and (pro-)regime tribes and clans sealed the fate of the National Guard and Dudaev’s Revolution. A(k)hmad Kadyrov, his two sons Zelimkhan and Ramzan, and other members of the *benoy* tribe came to oppose Maskhadov’s ‘Ichkeria republic’—which they once defended in the 1994-1996 war—and throw in their lot with Putin’s Russia. They were horrified by the ‘Wahhabi’ or rather Salafi³⁵ take-over of the separatist movement, and sought to reinvigorate traditional Sufi Islam with maximum autonomy of their people inside Russia.

Russia’s leader Vladimir Putin, who sought to ‘normalise’ Chechnya by co-opting local groups (‘Chechenisation’), orchestrated Ahmad’s election as Chechen President on 5 October 2003. Jihadist separatists killed Ahmad with a bomb in May 2004—only to have his young son Ramzan Kadyrov (b. 1976), a former wartime warlord notorious for his ruthlessness, take over the Presidency in March 2007 after stints as deputy-premier and premier.

To this day Ramzan intimidates—for the time being—the overwhelming majority of the Chechen populace into submission. Over the years he has done this by brutal cleansing (*zachistky*) operations against insurgents and their supporters of all stripes, pogroms against



suspected homosexuals and (other) dissidents resulting in often deadly beatings, hostage-takings, expulsions and destruction of property, and intimidating, hardly effective if not counterproductive Countering-Violent-Extremism (CVE) programs to ‘deradicalise’ (former) Jihadist insurgents and their families; over the years neighbouring republics like Dagestan and Ingushetia have adopted similar if less brutal tactics and deradicalisation programs to stamp down the wider Islamist insurgency in the North Caucasus (see Sokirianskaia 2013, 2017, 2019, 2020).³⁶

Ramzan has been able to do hold on to power primarily by enhancing from the start the pro-Moscow ethnic-Chechen *kadyrovtsy* paramilitary force founded by his father. One reason for the Kadyrov family’s power and influence—and the decision by Putin to utilise them—appears simply to be the immense size of the clan or tribe they belong to. As Maskhadov himself has observed in one of his surviving audiotapes, “Benoy’s people must come to power at any cost, this is a big clan” (Akhmadov & Daniloff 2013: 78).³⁷

The *benoy* clan or tribe to which the Kadyrovs and many of the *kadyrovtsy* belonged to, consisted of over 80,000 members, being thus by far the largest among “roughly 150 teyps or large clans” or tribes among the Chechens (Souleimanov & Aliyev 2017: 33-34 & 42, note 8).

Indeed, the *benoy* reportedly “amounts to 15% of the Chechen population” (Sokirianskaia 2005: 456), thereby being as large or larger than many a *tukhum* or tribal union, and apparently the largest Chechen clan or tribe as well. As I have argued elsewhere, this very fact “may paradoxically further Chechen autonomy and even (*de facto*) independence on the long term” (Ten Dam 2017d: 51).



Intriguingly, the prominent secessionist Shamil Basaev, an eventually ‘Wahhabist’ or rather Salafist ³⁸ commander notorious for violent acts like the Budennovsk hostage crisis in June 1995 in southern Russia and the incursion into Dagestan in August 1999 (Ten Dam 2017d: 44), belonged to the large and powerful *benoy* tribe as well (Askerov 2015: 38).

Basaev’s tribal lineage may at least partially account for his extraordinary impact on the Russo-Chechen Wars and the period in between—though no known source has pointed to this. Indeed, one must wonder how many *benoy*-members joined his battalions rather than the pro-Moscow *kadyrovtsy* at the time, and how many joined or switched sides to the latter after Basaev’s death—though no known source has delved into this. ³⁹

Concluding remarks

After having reviewed the research by Dettmering, Sokirianskaia and others, I still maintain that the saliency of Vainakh clans and other sub-clan and supra-clan kin groups is more checkered and nuanced than often supposed. Like among the Albanians (see Ten Dam 2018a, 2018b), many Chechen, Ingush and other Vainakh clans and other kin groups appear to have been annihilated and many others weakened and dispersed due to centuries of persecution and forced modernization. Still, some other clans and other kin-groups may have persevered as social and political units despite all these devastations, deprivations and assimilations.



Of course, one could and should question whether the tribal and (sub-)clan structures among the Chechens as depicted in Mamakaev's model in Figure 1.1 have actually been ever true in the (late) 19th century—let alone in any period during the 20th century or the early 21st century.

For one thing, many of the identified (sub-)clans, super-clans, tribes and tribal unions as shown in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 (see Appendix) have probably been dispersed and decimated during the multiple armed conflicts, ethnic cleansing and deportations over the last few centuries. Yet I have not come across any research detailing the exact fate of any of these kin groups in distant and recent history, indicating a huge gap in our knowledge of Chechen, Ingush and other Vainakh kin structures.

In large part this knowledge gap about kin structures is due to an exasperating if understandable reluctance among Chechens—and indeed other North-Caucasian peoples—to divulge their own knowledge about their own culture to outsiders.

Given their repeated sufferings from colonisation, repression, warfare, deportation and other devastations in the past and present, Chechens and other North-Caucasians may be fearful to divulge any such information and insights to outsiders. The latter may betray them to incumbent, all-too-often hostile authorities—or otherwise betray, misinterpret and dishonour their trust by, for instance, writing disparaging accounts about their culture and traditions. Indeed, their traditional, honourific and arguably clan-based code of silence (see esp. Souleimanov & Aliyev 2015b: 695-698; Ibid 2017) has both predated and been reinforced by these sufferings and disparagements over the last few centuries.



In that regard it is puzzling that even the few scholars who have been able to conduct extensive field research in Chechnya and the broader Caucasus, like notably Ekaterina Sokirianskaia, rarely if ever point to this reticence to foreigners among local respondents and wider populace—let alone acknowledge that they themselves have only gained a degree of trust among the latter after painstaking and repeated efforts to make contact with them and put them at ease.

True, there exist “challenges facing scholars and practitioners who are dealing with the Caucasus” (Kemoklidze et al 2012: 1611) other than gaining trust of the locals. Most notably, this concerns the challenge of overcoming the dearth of independent research by Western and other foreign scholars due to their overreliance on the dominant Soviet and Russian ethnological research and (post-)colonial perspectives on the region from the 19th century to the present day.

Indeed, barring a few exceptions (e.g. Broxup-Bennigsen 1992; Zelkina 2000; Derluguian 2005; Gammer 2006, 2008; Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014) ⁴⁰ most outside researchers have harboured rather narrow cultural, geopolitical and security-analytical preconceptions of the Caucasus being “largely constructs of the late Russian and Soviet supremacy in the region” (Kemoklidze et al 2012: 1613). Consequently many of the latter researchers have tended to recognise little if any differences between and within the North-Caucasian peoples and republics.

Ironically, decisionmakers, policymakers, ethnographers and other analysts and observers have otherwise tended to exaggerate or even invent differences between peoples in the North Caucasus as either semi



-artificial constructs or semi-primordial identities. The Tsarist and even Soviet empires nurtured and expediently exaggerated for divide-and-rule purposes many ethnic and (sub-)tribal differences in the Caucasus and elsewhere. Indeed ethnography as a nascent discipline aided to “provide imperial authorities with new instruments of control” (Cvetkovski apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 2).

Outside researchers should be aware and knowledgeable about these ethnic and (sub-)tribal categories which have solidified into genuinely felt identities among Circassians (Cherkess, Adyghe), Kabardians (originally aristocratic Circassian tribes), Chechens, Ingush, Avars, Kumyks and other peoples in ethnically diverse Dagestan and elsewhere in the Caucasus.

Even though the Soviet regime preferred to speak of classes and nations and to (re)name or (re)categorise the peoples in the Caucasus and other regions in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) accordingly, the recognised nationalities generally equated the ethnicities distinguished in Tsarist times. But “unlike tsarist policy, which emphasized (and strengthened) heterogeneity” albeit with ethnic-Russian dominance through ethnographical categorisations based on race, religion, language and territory, the “Soviet regime, conversely, developed a clear concept of nationality precisely because it wanted to overcome it” (Cvetkovski apud Cvetkovski & Hofmeister 2014: 4).

Even so the Soviet Union’s hierarchy of nationalities within the federal structure of sovereign and autonomous (sub-)republics unintentionally served to strengthen their identities, rivalries, mutual jealousies and consequent animosities, thereby contributing to the USSR’s eventual



disintegration (see Rezvani 2013b, 2015).

At any rate, few outside researchers are able to access original sources or their translations, let alone recognise the “influence of the Middle East, especially Persia/Iran, both historically and in more recent times in the Caucasus” (Kemoklidze et al 2012: 614). Indeed, I myself know of just a few researchers who have been able to conduct extensive archival and/or field research with interviews in the native languages in the Caucasus, including Ekaterina Sokirianskaia (see Sokirianskaia 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2020; Sokirianskaia apud Jayakumar 2019) and Babak Rezvani (see Rezvani 2008, 2009, 2010, 2013a, 2013b, 2015, 2020; Ten Dam 2017a, 2017c; Rezvani & Ten Dam 2020).

Rather than departing often subconsciously from (pro-)Russian perspectives given the wealth of Russian(-language) sources, outside researchers should examine and perhaps even depart from local perspectives more often. They can only do this if they help to overcome the “disengagement of local scholars, who possess unique factual data” (Kemoklidze et al 2012: 1615). However, even Nino Kemoklidze and others fail to mention that such local self-isolation may be due to the widespread code of silence born out of past and present sufferings and continuing need of self-preservation.

Consequently, to further a “dialogue with the local writers, academics and researchers” (Kemoklidze et al 2012: 1615) is easier said than done. In any case, what is certainly needed is “old-fashioned research in the field, research in archives, research in social anthropology and auto-ethnography” (Ibid: 616). Such research is needed to bridge the gap in knowledge about the Caucasus due to the “very limited attention among



Western academics” (Ibid: 1614) it received over the last few centuries.

The overall inattention on the Caucasus actually forms part of the relative scholarly neglect of the wider Eurasian continent in for instance conflict and development studies—with the marked exception of the close attention paid to the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation in the narrow field of security analyses in the West since the late 19th century to the present day.

Thus in conflict studies “scholars rarely study Eurasian insurgencies compared with those in Africa, the America’s and South-East Asia” (Ten Dam 2017b: 47). At one point I have urged those in development studies that it would be “wise and indeed urgent to compare the histories, deprivations and current fragilities of post-colonial countries in the (former) Third World and those of post-communist countries in the (former) Second World”.⁴¹

The mainly communist Second World has largely been situated on the Eurasian continent until the end of the Cold War. It still is to a large degree today, if one includes quasi or *de facto* communist states like Belarus and to a lesser degree Moldova and unrecognised Transnistria—and outright communist states like China and North Korea on the Asian part of the continent—not counting all the post-communist states on it that struggle with their communist legacies and persist in Soviet-style practices.

Despite the aforementioned shortfalls and challenges in obtaining knowledge, I intend in future research to ascertain whether each of the named tribes, clans, sub-clans, other kin groups or localised ethnic (sub)



groups however defined ⁴² among the Chechens and any Chechen combat units in, around or beyond Chechnya:

- i) is correctly identified by the indicated name;
- ii) exists at least 'formally' in name (*existent*);
- iii) is really *salient* i.e. vibrant and culturally active, according to the asserted or actual norms, customs and other practices;
- iv) has been politically and/or military active prior to and during the armed conflicts in the 1990s and beyond;
- v) if so, has been active in identifiable political and/or military formations, and been involved in fighting and other violence;
- vi) if so, has exhibited identifiable brutality, brutalisation and/or rather debrutalisation patterns;
- vii) if so, whether any particular norms, beliefs, customs and practices of the clan or other group in question account for any of the brutality, brutalisation and/or debrutalisation patterns.

One of the most relevant yet challenging questions tied to research question v) is to determine the extent to which (sub-)clan identities and loyalties shape discernible combat-units from platoons to battalions or their equivalents upward of each warring party—as opposed to political, secular and/or religious and other ideological or cultural group identities and loyalties.

Before we could even begin to deal with the research questions formulated above, we need to identify and distinguish the kin groups as indicated in research questions i) and ii). However, despite repeated requests to (Chechen) scholars and analysts I know of (including those at *Waynakh Online*), few of them have helped me to date to clarify and



couple the different transliterations across different sources of the originally Chechen names of tribes and other kin groups in and beyond Chechnya.⁴³

True, the “problem of transliteration is everywhere, and we accept this as normal” (Askerov 2015: x).⁴⁴ Even so, the best linguists and translators among us should clarify which diverging transliterations refer to and belong to which particular Chechen or any other kin group—or any other phenomenon—in order to avoid befuddlement on which kin group or any other phenomenon one is referring to.

Perhaps Chechens themselves may be sensitive about and contest the identifications, distinctions and transliterations of their kin groups, who may thus be unwilling to share their thoughts on these matters to outsiders like me. Indeed, as noted before, their traditional code of silence regarding their own family, clan or any other form of bond or identity—especially when coupled with the codes of retribution which could engender blood-feuds (*chir*) or hospitality (*siskal*) even to one’s enemies which could temporarily halt or even resolve blood-feuds (see Souleimanov & Aliyev 2015b, 2017)—makes it very hard for outsiders to gain their trust and access to their culture. Still, I hope the publication and dissemination of this Research Note would encourage them to divulge their thoughts on these at long last.

Ideally, if we are able to collate required reliable data, we may even be able to map the violence-patterns during battles, manoeuvres and other events of each major Chechen combat-unit during the Russo-Chechen Wars and other conflicts from the early 1990s to the present day. We may



thus be able to assess and categorise these violence-patterns in their degree of adherence to or violation of local and international norms, including those of humanitarian law and human rights law.

This undertaking—if ever doable—would present a more advanced testing or falsification of my Brutalisation theory. This will probably show that the theory is just partially valid, i.e. characterises only certain factions among the warring parties at certain time-periods. Still, the theory's overall validity seems to increase the longer any violent conflict like the ones in Chechnya lasts, with recurrent high-intensity fighting and a detectable erosion of local and international norms vis-à-vis the sanctities of the non-combatant and the prisoner of war.

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Appendix

Table 1.1: Tribal Unions and Clans in the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria *

Each column shows clans (or tribes) of each of the 9 tukhums (tribal unions): 158 clans

Äkkiy	Myäbiy	Nosēmāxkaxoy	Tarloy	Čantiy	Cubarloy	Saroy	Šotoy	Eritxoy
Barčaxoy Zhevoy Zoxoy Nokkoy Pxačoy Pxačaxoy Vyäppiy (7 clans)	Byästy Benastxoy Talčxoy Kamalkoy Koratto Keganxoy Mešiy Sakamxoy Teratxoy Čaxoy Elxoy Amxoy Jamsxoy Ryätty Barčaxoy Džaxarxoy Yueganxoy (16 clans)	Alaxoy Aytxalloy Belgaty Benoy Biltoy Gordaloy Gendagenoy Uutxoy Daxxoy Dışal Zanalakloy Kixoy Šoxoy Kumaloy Sesaxoy Singalxoy Xaračoy Čjontaroy Caroy Cernoy Sirdi Suonoy Egabatxoy Elisanzxoy Enakaloy Enganey Ereanoy Valxoy (28 clans)	Bavloy Beixoy Bešni Gemeroy Gizxoy Gillxoy Zheraxoy Kenaxoy Macarxoy Nikaroy Ošuiy Samaxoy Syuidiy Filtarxoy (14 clans)	Buzaroy Deaxoy Kxokadoy Xačaroy Xikdexaroy Cjuncoy (6 clans)	Arstxoy Ačeloy Basoy Begačexoy Bosoy Bun Culatxey Lay Zheštixoy Zürxoy Naxoy Kerexoy Kiri Kuley Laškarcy Makazxoy Nizheloy Nohči-keley Nuxxoy Coxaroy Rigaxoy Sadoy Salbyutxoy Sandaxoy Sikkaxoy Sisxoy Tunluxoy Xarkaloy Xindoy Xoy Cikaroy Čebyaxkinkoy Čermaxkxoy (13 clans)	Buti Dunaxoy Zhogjaldoy Kharoy Kačexoy Kevaxoy Kinxoy Kin Mazuxoy Čerčixoy Naxalxoy Panyaxoy Naxalxoy Ximoy Xinduxoy Xixoy Xulandoy Xakmadoy Čevxoy Šikaroy Cesi (19 clans)	Varandoy Vašindaray Gatxoy Gorgačxoy Dexestoy Keloy Muskulxoy Myaršoy Nixaloy Panyaxoy Ryoduxoy Sanoy Syatoy Tuxxoy Urduytoy Xalkoy Xalkeloy Xanenoy (18 clans)	Jalxoy Jandaloy Belxaroy Bokoy Bulgačxoy Bielta- Nekki Garčoy Clalay Clandaloy Mezaxoy Muxaxoy Muxaxoy Muxaxoy Orxoy Fergxoy Xaytaray Yalxaroy Čečey (17 clans)

*: Collected by Waynakh Online, www.waynakh.com/eng/chechens/tribal-unions-and-clans/ (first accessed 3-03-2011 and 14-10-2013; last accessed. 12-06-2020 and 8-01-2021).
Sources: Mohmad Mamakaev, *Čečenskiy tayp v period ega radlojeniya* Grozny, 1973;
Tarik Cemal Kutlu, *History of the Chechen Resistance* Istanbul, 2005.



Table 1.2: 55 Non-tribal and non-ethnic Chechen Clans in the Republic of Ichkeria *

Non-Tukhum clans	Clans from diverse nations	Ethnic-Georgian clans	Ethnic-Dagestani clans	{For later: any clans from other sources}
Guxoy Goçingxoy Dzumcoy Mayst Mulkhoy Key Nalxoy Peixoy Xukoy Çimxoy (10 clans)	Abxoy (Abkhaz) Arseloy (Russian) Gjebertloy (Kabardian) Zhagtiy (Jewish) Nogjiy (Nogay) Orsi (Russian) Turkey (Turk) Çerkaziy (Circassian) Gjezloy (Tatar) (9 clans)	Ardalo Bacoy Ghurzhiy Mexaloy Cartoy Soy (6 clans)	Jandiy (Andiyacı) Akxloy Almaxxoy Ancadoy Argjanoy Axtoy Börtiy Gjaz-gjumkiy (Lakci) Gjalgitloy Gjunki Danuxoy Zhjay Etloy Kogjatiy Kulinxoy Kübçiy Khordoy Melardoy Nikotoy Sürxoy Sogjatiy Suliy (Avarcı) Tjundalxoy Tarkxoy (Kumakı) Xjakaroy Judaloy Cjadarxoy Çanaxxoy Çungaroy Solardoy (30 clans)	

*: Collected by *Waynakh Online*, www.waynakh.com/eng/chechens/tribal-unions-and-clans/ (first accessed 3-03-2011 and 14-10-2013; last accessed 12-06-2020 and 8-01-2021). Sources: Mohmad Mamakaev, *Çeçenskiy tayp v period ega radlojeniya* Grozny, 1973; Tarik Cemal Kutlu, *History of the Chechen Resistance* Istanbul, 2005.

NB: Total number of clans from tables 1.1 & 1.2: 158 + 55 = 213 clans



Endnotes

1. I define *Nokhchi* as “people” and *Vainakh* as “our people”. Scholars disagree on how to translate these terms. I designate *Nokhchi* for Chechens, and *Vainakh* for all Nakh-speaking peoples, including the Ingush and Christian-Orthodox Kists and Batsis (Batsbis, Tsova-Tush) in Georgia (Ten Dam 2011: 247-248 & note 15).
2. From 2005 till 2014, I have described my Brutalisation theory, with some minor modifications, as “a cycle of violence involving four main variables: *values* on “good” and “bad” violence (variable 1); *grievances* leading to armed conflict (variable 2); *combat stress* leading to atrocities (variable 3); and *new conflict grievances* emanating from such atrocities (variable 4), spawning counter-atrocities and eventually hardening or debasing the original violence-values (the cycle returns to the first variable)” (Ten Dam 2010: 332). Yet since then I have widened and reformulated the theory’s variables so as to more equally represent different motivations as explanations of brutal behaviour. In a forthcoming book *Brutal violence* (Cambridge Scholars) I will further widen the theory so as to encapsulate any kinds of violence, with modified variables: violence-values, violence-stresses and violence-inducing and violence-induced motivations.
3. My extensive book reviews—one with and one without additional source references of my own publications and those of others—on Souleimanov and Aliyev’s *How Socio-Cultural Codes Shaped Violent Mobilization and Pro-Insurgent Support in the Chechen Wars* (Palgrave-Springer 2017), and their earlier study on the same topic published in the *Journal of Strategic Studies* (Vol.38 No.5), are forthcoming in this journal and *Terrorism and Political Violence*.
4. Askerov’s *Historical Dictionary of the Chechen Conflict* contains a short entry on apparently the same “Magomet Mamakayev (1910-1973)”; yet this entry does not refer to the major work *Chechenskii taip* (1973)



written by the Mamakaev we speak of and which is the original source of Figure 1.1 and the basic source of Tables 1.1 and 1.2 in the Appendix (see further Askerov 2015: 76, 155).

5. See *Waynakh Online*, www.waynakh.com/eng/chechens/tribal-unions-and-clans/ (last acc. 12-06-2020 and 8-01-2021); see further Tables 1.1 and 1.2. Apparently the identified clans do not include any ethnic-Chechen clans residing mostly or fully outside Chechnya, like any in neighboring Ingushetia, Dagestan, Georgia, elsewhere in Russia or further abroad.
6. I have preferred to translate *gar* and *neqi* as “clan” and *teip* as “tribe” (Ten Dam 2011: 248, notes 15, 16), though I may opt in future publications to translate *neqi* as “sub-clan” or more specifically as “patronymic family” (Souleimanov & Aliyev 2015a: 169; Chereji & Sandu 2021: 7). Askerov describes Chechen society as a “*k’am* (people)” subdivided into “*tukhum* (community), *teip* (clan), *gar* (branch), *nek* (smaller branch), *dja* (large family), *dozal* (family)” (Askerov 2015: 228), thereby largely following Mamakaev’s kin-structure model shown in Figure 1.1. As I indicate in the Introduction, scholars generally discern the same social units, but apply different terms (family, clan, tribe) for them. Many use the term *teip* for clans of over fifteen households. *Taip* derives from Arabic *ṭāifa* (community, group).
7. Tishkov acknowledges that “neither my cultural nor my geographic identity is neutral” (Tishkov 2004: 2).
8. Third and last quote from Prof. Arsamakov, rector of Ingush State University, during a conversation with Sokirianskaia in 2002.
9. Russian ethnologist Sergei Aroutiunov appears to follow Mamakaev’s model, when he speaks of around 150 “tribal, i.e. *teip* units” being divided into “smaller units, lineages (varisses)” and united into about “nine larger tribal units—*tukhums*”; yet Aroutiunov’s other claim that



there are also around 150 “kin-neighbor based communities” seems to accord closer to Dettmering’s multi-clan village model (see Sokirianskaia 2005: 454 (quotes)). Tarik Cemal Kutlu (1944-2004) is a Turkish scholar who translated Mamakaev’s works and published his own works on Chechen culture and history (see e.g. Kutlu 2005).

10. Dettmering presumes that the reader is familiar with Lewis H. Morgan and his pioneering work. Consequently he does not elaborate on Morgan’s work nor make any source references. Therefore I have located some sources myself (Morgan 1954 (orig. 1854, 1901); Tooker 1983).
11. Apparently Dettmering does not fully support Mamakaev’s kinship definitions. Thus the “exact distinctions” amongst *dözal*, *ca* and *neqe* “were not very clear” (Dettmering 2005: 470). Moreover, “Mamakaev used the terms *dözal* and *ca* for the first time and there is no record for these terms in 19th century literature .. Thus it is very difficult to determine the various family functions of entities smaller than the *neqe*” (Ibid: 476). Even so, Dettmering does not come up with any explicit, precise, formal definitions of the various possible kinship entities of his own—at least not in the cited and other publications being consulted here.
12. See note 6.
13. The “first time the term *mexk qel* appears in literature is in Mamakaev’s book” (Dettmering 2005: 481).
14. Sokirianskaia apparently follows the fundamentals of Mamakaev’s model: “There exist over a hundred teip-1 groups (allegedly about 150), each uniting tens of lineages (*gar*), subdivided into dozens of extended families (*nek*) consisting of nuclear families (*dozal*)” (Sokirianskaia 2005: 456).
15. Thus tribes like the “*ironsty*, *kudartsy*, *digortsy*” subsequently “formed the Osetian nation” and tribes like “*ghalghajtsy*, *dzejrahktsy*, *kistintsy*,



metshkhaltsy, tsorintsy” later “merged into the Ingush nation” (Sokirianskaia 2004: 4).

Apparently the mentioned Ingush tribes are not part of or connected to the ‘clans’ and ‘tribal unions’ in the Republic of Ichkeria (self-styled independent Chechnya) as presented in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 in the Appendix i.e. as collected by *Waynakh Online*, www.waynakh.com/eng/chechens/tribal-unions-and-clans/ (first acc. 3-03-2011 and 14-10-2013; last acc. 12-06-2020 and 8-01-2021).

16. Despite the acknowledged inaccessibility of some parts of Chechnya, Sokirianskaia insists she spoke with a “sufficient number of respondents in different regions of Chechnya” (Sokirianskaia 2005: 453). But how many and representative were they, and could their responses be so substantial and exhaustive as to have “*fully disqualified*” (Ibid: 462; italics added) the hypothesis regarding the saliency of the teip-as-clan?
17. Sokirianskaia’s article in the November 2010 issue of *Russian Analytical Digest* bears the same title as the sub-title of her PhD-thesis *Governing Fragmented Societies*, and thus clearly constitutes a summary of the latter (see Sokirianskaia 2009, 2010).
18. See the *Belgatoy* and *Benoy* ‘clans’ within the *Noxčmăxkaxoy* ‘tribal union’ in Table 1.1. Yet given the diverging transliterations of originally Chechen terms by different sources, I have been unable to locate equivalent clan names for ‘Tsentsoroy’ and ‘Dargo’ in Tables 1.1 and 1.2.
19. Mamakaev’s classic *Chechenskii taip (rod) v period ego razlozheniia* (1973) is hard to get at; it is available in just a handful of libraries, like the Bodleian Library in Oxford (code 24744e.108). I was able to get a copied version of it from Prof. Victoria Arakelova at Yerevan State University during one of my visits to Armenia, to attend a conference in early November 2013.



20. See *Waynakh Online*, www.waynakh.com/eng/chechens/tribal-unions-and-clans/ (first acc. 3-03-2011 and 14-10-2013; last acc. 12-06-2020 and 8-1-2021). These Chechen nationalists and separatists—or patriots and freedom fighters (depending on which side and perspective one takes)—particularly adopt the following kin-group definitions and categorisations, closely following Mamakaev's circumscriptions (Mamakaev 1973; see Dettmering 2005: 470-471):

“

Düözal: Nuclear family

Cha (Ts'a): Residence, Family

Nieqhiy (Niekiy): Stirpes {?} (aul = village, clan)

Gar Soy: Tribe

Tayp: Clan

Tuxum: Tribal Union

Qham (Kam): Nation, Commonweal

Düözal that nucleus of the family is parents (mother and father). Eight generation relatives which breeding from a mother and father, has names. In the literature, 3th, 4rd and 5th lines are calling generally as yuqharalla, yuqralallaš (category of people, categories of people; community, communities)” (Ibid *Waynakh Online*).

21. See note 1.
22. Possibly identical to the Yalxaroy ‘clan’ within the *Erštxoy* tribal union in Table 1.1. Given the diverging transliterations of originally Chechen terms by different sources, this and many other identifications on my part are currently uncertain. As often happens “different sources spell the same Chechen name differently” (Askerov 2015: x), which may lead to erroneous identifications as well. Moreover, other (semi-)Chechen, (semi-)Ingush and other Vainakh tribes or clans, certainly those residing outside Chechnya, appear not to be tabulated by representatives of the Ichkeria Republic as reproduced in Tables 1.1



- and 1.2 in the Appendix. See further notes 5 and 15.
23. Apparently identical to the *Benoy* 'clan' within the *Noxčmăxkaxoy* 'tribal union' in Table 1.1.
 24. Apparently identical to the *Alaroy* 'clan' within the same *Noxčmăxkaxoy* 'tribal union' in Table 1.1.
 25. See for those rare and/or brief references: Akhmadov & Lanskoy 2010: esp. 9-10, 70-71, 117-118, 254 note 5. Akhmadov & Daniloff 2013: esp. 66, 77, 89, 94, 138, 174, 190, 222, 224, 232, 260 note 15, 261, Ch.7 notes 2 and 3. Askerov 2015: 31, 58, 76, 77-78, 88, 108, 115, 119, 120, 122-123, 127, 137-139, 144, 154, 156, 157, 161, 162, 179, 187, 197, 199, 209, 210, 220-221, 222, 229, 230, 233, 245, 246, 251, 254-255.
 26. Also called 'Pan-National', later 'National' Congress of the Chechen People(s) (Lieven 1998: 56-60; 96-101).
 27. For translating *teip* as 'tribe' rather than 'clan' see note 6.
 28. Possibly identical to the *Yalxaroy* 'clan' within the *Erštxoy* 'tribal union' in Table 1.1. See further my cautionary remarks in note 22.
 29. Possibly identical to the non-Tukhum *Mulkhoy* 'clan' in Table 1.2. See further my cautionary remarks in note 21.
 30. Despite both anti- and pro-independence opposition, Dudaev's (all-)National Congress organised self-styled, separatist presidential and parliamentary elections on 27 October 1991; Dudaev became president with reportedly 85-90% of the votes and nationalist parties won all seats. During 1-2 November, Dudaev and the new parliament reaffirmed Chechnya's independence. Local Russians, Cossacks and Chechens opposing Dudaev's Revolution either boycotted or were allegedly barred from the elections: BBC's Summary of World Broadcasts, SU/1250/B1: Tass world service (ws), 5 Dec 91.
 31. Possibly identical to the non-Tukhum *Činxoy* 'clan' in Table 1.2. See further my cautionary remarks in note 22.
 32. Yandarbiev's suggestion or claim of territory-based formation of



armed units can apparently be found in his *Chechnya – Bitva za svobodu* (Chechnya – The Struggle [Battle] for Freedom) Lvov, Ukraine, 1996.

33. Possibly identical to the ethnic-Kabardian (!) *Gjebertloy* 'clan' in Table 1.2. Yet it could otherwise refer to the *Čebarloy* tribal union (!) in Table 1.1. See my cautionary remarks in note 22.
34. Sokirianskaia speaks here (Sokirianskaia 2005: 464) of the most powerful groups at the highest governing or top-brass levels in Chechnya and Ingushetia; yet her observations could be equally true for lower-level political and/or military groupings.
35. Just like Wahhabism, Salafism is a purist version of Islam within the Sunni branch (see on the similarities and differences between Wahhabis and Salafis: Ten Dam 2011: 245-246).
36. Even government of the Russian Federation has had to undertake deradicalisation programs vis-à-vis thousands of Islamic State (ISIS) recruits and (family) supporters throughout the Russian Federation—not just in its North-Caucasian territory—who have gone to Syria, stayed home or returned from Syria (see Sokirianskaia apud Jayakumar 2019).
37. In another audiotape Mashkadov speaks of the “clan factor, the Benoi factor” (Akhmadov & Daniloff 2013: 89). Erroneously or confusingly, Akhmadov and Daniloff note that the “Benoy clan is one of the biggest of *several* clans that make up Chechen society” (Ibid: 261 note 2, italics added). As we have shown here, scholars as well as leading and ordinary Chechens alike claim that Chechen society consists of at least dozens if not hundreds of clans and larger and smaller kin groups.
38. See note 35.
39. Possibly, distinct *gar* (clans) and *neqi* (sub-clans) and smaller kin groups (see note 6) within the *benoy* tribe may have joined Basaev's forces, while other distinct kin groups within the same tribe joined



Kadyrov's forces at the time or eventually after Basaev's demise. It would be even more intriguing if it turns out instead that members from all distinct kin groups within the *benoy* tribe often or generally joined these two opposing forces in roughly equal measure. If so, many members of the same nuclear or extended families chose opposite sides as well, probably fracturing these families in the process. A fracturing of families by choosing opposite sides is typical of many a civil war. A huge literature exists on this phenomenon, like in the accounts of the American Civil War (1861-1865).

40. Actually, many of these exceptional researchers lauded by Nino Kemoklidze and others (Kemoklidze et al 2012: e.g. 1614-1615, notes 6, 7, 8, 9) I have repeatedly consulted and cited in my own research and publications having to do with the Caucasus.
41. Caspar ten Dam, comments on the 'Annual Conference 2015 of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law', www.ctdamconsultancy.com/uncategorized/invited-participant-at-annual-conferenceof-the-knowledge-platform-security-rule-of-law/ (posted 25 June 2015).
42. To reiterate, scholars generally discern the same social units, but apply different terms (family, clan, tribe, etcetera) for them (see Introduction and note 6). Thus most but not all scholars define the concept of 'clan' as the multi-household group with actual or perceived common ancestry.
43. See notes 20 and 22.
44. In this case the major transliteration problem "originates from the wide use of the Russian version of personal and geographical names" of originally Chechen terms, which complicates things as "Chechen and Russian are very different languages with different sounds" (Askerov 2015: x). Thus a "personal name in Chechen may be pronounced in English almost identically while being broken in Russian" (Ibid). See further note 22.



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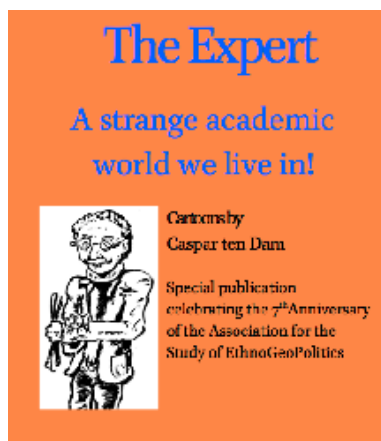
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Dorsey's Column

The Caspian Sea as Battleground—Second Karabakh War as Cause or Consequence?

James M. Dorsey

Introduction

Populated at the time by fluent Hebrew speakers, the Israel desk of Armenia's foreign ministry waited back in 1991—in the immediate wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union—for a phone call that never came. The ministry was convinced that Armenia and Israel, with whom Armenia shared an experience of genocide, were natural allies. The ministry waited in vain. Israel never made the call. That shared experience could not compete with Armenia's Turkic nemesis, Azerbaijan, with which it was at war over Nagorno Karabakh, a majority ethnic Armenian enclave on Azerbaijani territory.

"The calculation was simple. Azerbaijan has three strategic assets that Israel is interested in: Muslims, oil, and several thousand Jews. All Armenia has to offer is at best several hundred Jews," said an Israeli official at the time.¹

Azerbaijan had one more asset: close political, security and energy ties to Turkey, which was supporting it in its hostilities with Armenia. As a result, the pro-Israel lobby and American Jewish organisations with longstanding ties to Turkey for years helped Ankara defeat proposals in



the U.S. Congress to commemorate the 1915 mass murder of Armenians. That has changed in recent years with strains between Turkey and Israel becoming more strident over issues such as the status of East Jerusalem, held by Israeli since 1967's Six Day War, the Palestinian question, Iran, political Islam, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's touting of implicitly anti-semitic conspiracy theories.

What has not changed is Israel's close ties to Azerbaijan that puts it on the same side as Turkey in renewed animosity between Armenia and Azerbaijan following the former's recent defeat in the Second Karabakh War of September-December 2020. This is a reflection of the Caspian basin's inextricable links to the greater Middle East's myriad conflicts and the fluid and fragile nature of regional alliances, partnerships and animosities across the Eurasian landmass.

Writing in a recent issue of *Baku Dialogues*, Svante Cornell emphasised this important point, noting the "gradual merger of the geopolitics of the South Caucasus and the Middle East" and going so far as to say that Azerbaijan, in particular, is "more closely connected to Middle Eastern dynamics than it has been in two centuries".²

Turkey, which has opportunistic partnerships with Russia and Iran, both littoral Caspian states that pushed for a ceasefire in Karabakh but were seen as empathetic to Armenia, and Israel, with its close ties to Moscow, rank among Azerbaijan's top arms suppliers. Indeed top aide to Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev confirmed that the Azerbaijani military was using Israeli- and Turkish-made killer drones in the Second Karabakh War that began in late September 2020.³



Straddling Divides

If Israel and Turkey seem strange bedfellows, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates appear to be in a bind. The two Gulf states have invested in Azerbaijan to counter Iranian influence in the Caspian but seem inclined to favour Armenia because of their animosity towards Turkey, which they accuse of interfering in internal Arab affairs. Saudi Arabia signalled where it stood by backing Armenian calls for a ceasefire within the first two days of the renewal of hostilities and giving voice to Armenia rather than Azerbaijan's side of the story in state-controlled media. ⁴

By the same token, Israeli ties to Azerbaijan, which has worked hard to deepen its ties to Iran ⁵, potentially put it at opposite ends with the UAE and Bahrain with which it recently established diplomatic relations in order to strengthen their alliance against Iran and Turkey. Nonetheless, this may be one instance in which finding Gulf states and Israel on different sides of a divide may work in the Jewish State's favour. Israeli sources suggest that the Second Karabakh War potentially creates an opportunity for back-channelling in which Israel could try to drive a wedge between Turkey and Iran.

"The arms shipments to Azerbaijan and the flare up in Nagorno Karabakh is a reminder that the periphery alliance may not be entirely dead," said prominent Israeli commentator Anshel Pfeffer in early October 2020. ⁶ Pfeffer was referring to the Israeli policy prior to the opening of relations with Arab states to maintain close relations with its neighbours' non-Arab neighbours in the absence of official Israeli ties to its Arab neighbours.



With ethnic Azerbaijanis, who account for up to a quarter of Iran's population and are influential in the country's power structure, Tehran, often perceived as empathetic to Armenia, walked a fine line calling for a ceasefire in the Second Karabakh War and offering to mediate an end to the fighting. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is of ethnic Azerbaijani decent.

Iranians in nearby border areas stood on hilltops to watch the fighting in the distance.⁷ Security forces clashed with demonstrators in various cities chanting "Karabakh is ours. It will remain ours."⁸ Iran, in line with international law, has long recognised Nagorno Karabakh as being a part of Azerbaijan. Yet, the demonstrations serve as a reminder of environmental protests in the Iranian province of East Azerbaijan at the time of the 2011 popular Arab revolts that often turned into manifestations of ethnic Azerbaijani nationalism.⁹

Posturing on Sea and Land in and around the Caspian Basin

Even before the hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan erupted on the north-western inlands of the Caspian, Iran had stepped up its naval posturing on the basin's southern coast. Analysts like Jamestown's Paul Goble¹⁰ and Russian conservative writer Konstantin Dushenov¹¹, as well as Iranian naval commanders, raised the spectre of enhanced U.S. sanctions-busting military cooperation between Moscow and Tehran in the Caspian and beyond.

These and other analysts—in what appeared to be a repeat of unconfirmed reports of closer Chinese-Iranian cooperation that



stretched credulity but circulated for an extended period of time and were discussed widely in policy circles ¹² —suggested that Russia and Iran were planning extended military collaboration, including naval exercises in the Caspian as well as in the Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

The analysts, including the aforementioned Dushenov, who was reportedly jailed a decade ago on charges of antisemitic incitement ¹³, claimed further that Iran had offered Russia naval facilities at three ports—Chabahar, Bander Abbas, and Bander Busher—on the Islamic Republic's Gulf coast, a move that would violate its foundational principle of no foreign presence on its soil. It would also contradict Iran's proposal for a regional Middle Eastern security architecture that would exclude involvement of non regional powers. ¹⁴

Nevertheless, raising the spectre of a more assertive attitude, senior Iranian commanders stepped up visits to naval facilities and a shipyard on Iran's Caspian coast where a destroyer is being repaired and modernised. The officials, including Iranian navy commander Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi, his deputy, Admiral Habibullah Sayari, and Admiral Amir Rastegari (who reportedly oversees naval construction), stressed the importance to Iranian national security of the Caspian on tours of facilities on the coast.

These officials also urged closer cooperation and joint naval exercises with other littoral states like Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. Thus the “Caspian Sea is the sea of peace and friendship and we can share our military tactics with our neighbours in this region. We are fully ready to expand ties with neighbouring and friendly countries,” Rear Admiral



Khanzadi said.¹⁵

The Iranian moves are about more than just strengthening the country's military presence in a basin that it shares with Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan. A 2018 agreement among the littoral states, made necessary by the collapse of the Soviet Union, barred entry to the basin by military vessels of non-littoral states but failed to regulate the divvying up of the sea's abundant resources.

Closer naval ties with Caspian Sea states would allow Iran to leverage its position at a time when Central Asians worry about greater Chinese security engagement in their part of the world. The latter engagement threatens a tacit understanding in which Russia shouldered responsibility for regional security while China focused on economic development.

Increased Chinese engagement raises the spectre of the export of aspects of the People's Republic's vision of the twenty first century: an Orwellian surveillance state amid widespread anti-Chinese sentiment in countries like Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan as a result of China's brutal crackdown on Turkic Muslims in the troubled north western province of Xinjiang.

Hard hit by the economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic, Central Asians are torn between wanting to benefit from Chinese willingness to reinvest projects related to the Belt and Road Initiative and their concerns about the way that enhanced Chinese influence could impact their lives.



Popular sentiment forced Kyrgyzstan early on in the pandemic to cancel a \$275 million Chinese logistics project. The Kazakh foreign ministry summoned the Chinese ambassador to explain an article published on a Chinese website that asserted that the Central Asian country wanted to return to Chinese rule.¹⁶ Kazakh media called for China and the United States to leave Kazakhstan alone after the Chinese foreign ministry claimed that the coronavirus had originated in U.S.-funded laboratories in the country.

Iranian efforts, boosted by the Indian-funded deep sea port of Chabahar that serves as a conduit for Indian exports to Central Asia, benefit in the margin from big Asian power rivalry; it has opened the region, including the Caspian basin, to greater competition with the Islamic Republic's chief Gulf opponents, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Iran hopes that geography and Central Asian distrust of past Saudi promotion of its ultra-conservative strand of Islam will work to its advantage. That hope may not be in vain. Tajik foreign minister Sirodjidin Muhriddin, despite past troubled relations with the Islamic Republic, opted over a year ago to ignore a Saudi invitation to attend an Organisation of Islamic Cooperation conference in the kingdom and visit Iran instead.

Iran has since agreed to invest \$4 billion in the completion of a five kilometre long tunnel that will link the Tajik capital of Dushanbe with the country's second largest city, Khujand.¹⁷ That, however, has not put a halt to recurring strains. In September 2020, Iran summoned the Tajik



ambassador in Tehran in protest against the broadcast of an anti Iranian documentary on the Central Asian's state's state television channel.¹⁸

Saudi Arabia and the UAE have fared somewhat better in Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. Saudi utility developer ACWA Power, in which China's state-owned Silk Road Fund has a 49 percent stake, and the UAE's Masdar or Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company agreed to invest in Azerbaijani renewable energy projects. ACWA Power also signed agreements in Uzbekistan worth \$ 2.5 billion for the construction of a power plant and a wind farm.

Perhaps Iran's strongest trump card is that by linking the Caspian to the Arabian Sea it can provide what the Gulf states cannot: cheap and short access to the Indo Pacific. Already, Iran is written all over Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's transportation infrastructure plans. A decree issued in late 2017 identified various corridors as key to his plans, including the extension of a rail line connecting Uzbekistan's Termez to Afghanistan's Mazar i Sharif to the Afghan city of Herat, from where it would branch out to Iran's Bandar Abbas port, Chabahar—and Bazargan on the Iranian Turkish border.

“As Tashkent seeks to diversify its economic relations, Iran continues to loom large in these calculations. For Uzbekistan, not only do Iranian ports offer the shortest and cheapest route to the sea, but several future rail projects cannot be accomplished without Tehran's active participation,” wrote Central Asia analyst Umida Hashimova in January 2020.¹⁹



Iran, together with Russia and India, has been touting a sea and rail hook-up involving Iranian, Russian and Indian ports that would link South Asia to Northern Europe as a viable alternative to Egypt's Suez Canal and constitute an addition (or even alternative) to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

In July 2020, Iranian and Indian officials suggested the route would significantly cut shipping time and costs from India to Europe.²⁰ About a month earlier, Senior Indian Commerce Ministry official B.B. Swain said the hook-up would reduce travel distance by 40 percent and costs by 30 percent.²¹

The Iranian Indian-Russian push is based on a two-decades-old agreement with Russia and India to establish an International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) as well as more recent free trade agreements concluded by the Russia-dominated Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) with Iran and Singapore. These agreements have fuelled Central, South, and Southeast Asian interest in the corridor even if the EAEU itself groups only a handful of countries: Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan, another Caspian Sea state.

Exploiting the momentum, Russia has been nudging India to sign its own free trade agreement with the EAEU while the grouping is discussing an accord with ASEAN, which, as it happens, has just signed a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership with China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand.

If successful, the Iranian push, backed by Russia and India, would



anchor attempts by Iran to project itself—as opposed to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates—as the key Middle Eastern player in Russian and Chinese ploys for regional dominance.

Leveraging geography and Central Asian distrust of past Saudi promotion of its ultra-conservative strand of Islam, Iran expects that kickstarting INSTC will give it a significant boost in its competition with Saudi Arabia and the UAE for the region's hearts and minds. INSTC would also strengthen Iran's position as a key node in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) on the back of a two-year-old rail link between western China and Tehran that runs across Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan.²²

The INSTC would link Jawaharlal Nehru Port, India's largest container port east of Mumbai, through the Iranian deep sea port of Chabahar on the Gulf of Oman, which is funded by India to bypass Pakistan, and the Islamic Republic's Caspian Sea port of Bandar e Anzali to Russia's Caspian harbour of Astrakhan at the mouth of the Volga and onwards by rail to Europe. The Iranian push was boosted by an agreement in March 2020 between Russia and India that would enable the shipment of goods through the corridor on a single invoice, a requisite for shippers to persuade banks to issue letters of credit.²³

Invoices and letters of credits may not make the difference as long as Iran asserts itself, and Russia seeks to fend off a Turkish challenge in the South Caucasus, its Chechen-Muslim soft underbelly in the North Caucasus, and potentially among Russia's Turkic Muslim minorities. Russia also seeks to fend off Turkish influence in Central Asia's former



Soviet republics, territories Moscow has long considered as its preserve.

“If it turns out that [...] we just hum and dither and do not force our southern neighbour to swallow his insolence along with his own teeth [...]; and if [it turns out that] we take sixteenth place in Azerbaijan, while Erdogan is number one; then what is our position in Kazakhstan, in Central Asia, in [...] Ukraine (considering Crimean Tatars and military supplies)? And what will our position be in Tatarstan, in Bashkiria, in Yakutia and Altai, where Turks also live? This is not theory, it is reality,” said in October 2020 prominent Russian commentator and head of the Moscow based Middle East Institute Yevgeny Satanovsky.²⁴

Conclusion: History Repeats Itself

Armenia's humiliating defeat at the hands of an emboldened Ankara-backed Azerbaijan is likely to turn the Caspian basin into one more battlefield in multiple power struggles across the greater Middle East aimed at shaping a new regional order.

The Azerbaijani and Turkish sense of moral and military superiority and victory, coupled with Erdogan's assertive regional policies, bodes ill for the need for Azerbaijan to balance its success with gestures and magnanimity. The latter are needed to rebuild confidence in Azerbaijani assurances that the safety, security, and rights of the Armenian population in Nagorno Karabakh will be safeguarded amid their fears of renewed displacement or even ethnic cleansing. It also throws into doubt longer-term relations between Russia and Armenia, where many feel betrayed by Moscow's refusal to come to Armenia's aid under a defense pact between the two



countries (Russia maintains a couple of military bases in Armenia under the pact),

Turkey's inevitable role in any negotiations to resolve the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict adds to the balancing act that Russia and Turkey are performing to ensure that their alliance is not undermined by multiple regional conflicts in which the two countries back opposing sides.

Russia is likely to worry about pan-Turkish and nationalist voices demanding that Turkey capitalise on Azerbaijan's success to increase its influence in Central Asia, a region of former Soviet republics with ethnic, cultural, and linguistic links to Turkey.

The pan-Turkic daily *Türkiye*—a newspaper with the fourth largest circulation in Turkey—urged the government to leverage the Azerbaijani victory to create a military alliance of Turkic states: “The success in Karabakh has brought once again to the agenda one of the West's greatest fears: the Turan Army.”²⁵

Azerbaijan, which has become stronger with the military training, joint drills, and support with armed drones that Turkey has provided, has broken Armenia's back. This picture of success that has appeared has once again brought to life the hopes concerning a Turan Army, that would be the joint military power of the Turkic states,” *Türkiye* wrote.²⁶

So far, Turkey's bet that history would repeat itself appears to be paying off. The South Caucasus is the latest former Soviet region, after political crises in Belarus and Kyrgyzstan and the electoral defeat of pro-Russian forces in



Moldova, in which Moscow's ability to maintain stability is being challenged.

For now, Erdogan has strengthened his position in what will lead inevitably to a rejiggering of the balance of power in the Caucasus between not only Russia and Turkey, but also Iran, at a time when the trade-off for Israeli support of Azerbaijan is believed to be the Jewish state's ability to operate surveillance of the Islamic republic. "The message sent from Tel Aviv to Tehran is very clear: 'Syria is my backyard, and I will be in Azerbaijan, your backyard,' " said Sadik Öncü, a Turkey-based international relations analyst, referring to Iranian support for Syrian President Bashar al Assad.²⁷

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



Main Article—Guest Column

The Emergence and Collapse of the Iraqi Turkmen Political System under the Domination of Turkey¹

Sheth Jerjis

“For each meeting of the Iraq Turkmen authorities with authorities from the Kurdish region or from outside the country, Turkish officials did identify the Turkmen representatives who were going to attend that meeting. The Turkish officials were writing a detailed report and reading it to the Turkmen representatives who were attending the meeting ... Every Turkmen representative had to take their notes, and then the report was given to the head of the delegation to remain committed to it during the meeting ... Most of the time, we were embarrassed because those whom we met were asking questions or making suggestions that were not included in the reports given to us by the Turkish authorities, and we were looking to each other and we spoke with our eyes and we couldn't do anything ... Those we met were making fun of us for not being able to answer them; in fact, we were like a Robot”. **A Turkmen politician**

Abstract This study presents the emergence and the workflow of the Turkmen political system under control of Turkish authorities in the form of time periods. It examines the objectives of the Turkish policy towards the Turkmen of Iraq, and analyses the continuous deterioration of the Turkmen policies and human rights situations, which have been subjugated to the Turkish national interests and policies. This study evaluates the influences of the geopolitical changes and the accompanied



changes in Iraq on the Turkmen of Iraq and the Turkish policies towards the Turkmen there and elsewhere. This article is a summary of the book by the Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights Research Foundation (SOITM) titled Turkey's Iraqi Turkmen Policy: Merciless Exploitation and Violation of International Law (see SOITM 2019 in the Bibliography).

Introduction

Marginalisation of the Iraqi Turkmen started with the foundation of Iraqi state. Assimilation of the Turkmen and the changing of the demography of their regions by the Ba'ath regime began in 1970. The human rights violations of Iraqi Turkmen by the Kurdish authorities began in Erbil city after the establishment of the safe haven in 1991 and in all Turkmen regions after the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003 and the control of the Kurdish authorities over these regions. Then the so-called Islamic State (الدولة الإسلامية)—ISIS eventually changed its name to Islamic State or IS—has subjected the Iraqi Turkmen to the aggressive violations of human rights.

The geopolitical circumstances forced the Turkmen political system to be established in exile in Turkey in 1990 and grow there for a while. Since its establishment, Turkmen political institutions and civil society organisations have remained under the domination of the Turkish authorities, which have been subjected to the Turkish national interests.

The nucleus of the Iraqi Turkmen Council (*Irak Türkmen Meclisi* – مجلس تركمان العراق) which was founded in 1994 under the title of the Turkmen Shura, was part of the project of the Turkish authorities to establish the Turkmen Front. The Turkmen Shura developed into the Iraqi Turkmen Council in 2005.



The Iraqi Turkmen Council was dissolved in May 2011 by the Turkish embassy in Baghdad. Since then, Turkey has blocked all attempts by Turkmen politicians and intellectuals to establish an independent Iraqi Turkmen Council, and still prevents it from being realised. The revolution of a group of Turkmen students and youth in 2015 and their seizure of the building of the Turkmen Council was among those attempts to establish an independent general Turkmen Council that the Turkish state put an end to in a short time.

The Turkish policy towards the Iraqi Turkmen is considered the main reason for the failure of the Iraqi Turkmen political system and the continuing violation of their human rights. The system suffered from exploitation, tyranny, sanctions and humiliation under the domination of the Turkish administration until it reached its complete collapse. The collapse of the Turkmen political system is the main cause of the miserable conditions in which the Turkmen of Iraq live today.

The human rights situation of the Turkmen of Iraq

Violations of the human rights of the Iraqi Turkmen started since the establishment of the Iraqi state in 1921. Reducing the population number of the Iraqi Turkmen by the British Mandate and the Iraqi state to 2% during the establishment of the Iraqi Kingdom after WWI, through misleading estimations and censuses, made the large Iraqi Turkmen population unnoticed by the regional and international communities. This can be considered one of the main factors which has contributed to continued human rights violations of the Iraqi Turkmen—and the lack of attention by the Western media and relevant organisations.



Iraqi Turkmen were deprived of education in their mother tongue (SOITM Foundation 2009), their rise to high positions in the state became difficult, they were prevented from establishing cultural and political institutions—and they were exposed to the massacre of July 1959 (Batatu 1978).

After 1970 during the period of the Ba'ath regime, the Turkmen were subjected to fierce assimilation policies and human rights violations—including confiscation of hundreds of thousands hectares of Turkmen lands, deportation of Turkmen and bringing of Arabs to settle in Turkmen regions, Turkmen being forced to change their ethnicity to Arab, all of this leading to the change of the demography of Turkmen regions (Al-Samanci 1999: 209-216; SOITM Foundation 2013).

Violations of the Iraqi Turkmen human rights by the Kurdish authorities began in the city of Erbil after the first Gulf War in 1991 and in all the Northern provinces and Diyala province after the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003 (Iraqi Turkmen Doctors Association 2015; European Parliament resolution 2013; Institute for International Law & Human rights 2013; ICG 2018; MRGI 2017):

- In the city of Erbil and Kifri:
 - The historical Turkmen neighbourhoods were evacuated to disperse their concentration and facilitate their absorption (information taken from an anonymous source within the Kurdish regional authorities; the source's identity remains anonymous so as to safeguard his/her safety).
 - Turkmen have been repressed politically, culturally, and educationally (Lalani 2010).
- After the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003, the Turkmen suffered



under the control of the Kurdish parties and the Peshmerga (the military forces of the autonomous Kurdistan Region of Iraq) and in almost all Turkmen areas, especially in the Kirkuk province and the Tuz Khurmatu district. For example:

- o Hundreds of assassinations, kidnappings, arbitrary arrests, house raids and theft of their contents took place (SOITM Foundation 2017; see photo No.1 in the Appendix);
- o Tens of thousands of Kurdish families were brought and settled in Turkmen areas;
- o The Kurds controlled the economy in the Turkmen regions and marginalised the Turkmen in administration.

The so-called Islamic State or IS occupied vast Turkmen regions (2014–2017) in all the Northern provinces of Iraq, where most of the Turkmen were and still mainly followers of the Shia branch of Islam. Some Turkmen regions were liberated in the space of several months; other regions remained under IS rule until its defeat in Iraq. Other Turkmen regions (villages and towns) remained on the border of battlelines between IS and Iraqi forces, which were subjected continuously to all types of attacks:

- In the Nineveh governorate: Tal Afar district, Ayadiyah and Mahalabiya sub-districts, and in the Mosul city. A large number of villages in the Nineveh Plain, the Mosul central district and the district of Sinjar;
- In the west of the Kerkuk province: Bashir sub-district was occupied, and the districts of Tawuq and the sub-district of Taza Khurmatu remained on the border of battle, which were subjected to continuous attacks with all kinds of weapons. Taza Khurmatu was attacked even with chemical weapons;



- In the province of Salah al-Din: IS occupied the western and northern parts of the district of Tuz Khurmatu almost completely (the liberation was gradual; different regions remained under the control of IS for different periods of time), and the sub-district of Amerli was besieged for more than a month. The city of Tuz Khurmatu remained within the range of IS's fire, and suffered hugely from all types of attacks;
- The Turkmen are everywhere in the province of Diyala. IS occupied the Turkmen regions of Qara Tepe, Saadiya (Kizil Rabat) Jalawla (Qara Khan) and Mansuriyah (Adana Koy) sub-districts, while Qazaniyah remained on the border of battlelines between the IS and Iraqi forces under threat.

Hundreds of thousands of Shia Turkmen in these Turkmen regions were subjected to ethnic cleansing (HRW 2015):

- Men were killed and buried in collective graves and women were taken captives in Telafer district and in the villages of district of Tuz Khurmatu and were sold in slave markets;
- Tens of thousands of Turkmen families were displaced, a large part of them could still not return to their homes until today;
- Hundreds of houses and entire neighbourhoods in some Turkmen regions were demolished, especially in Amerli sub-district and in many villages of Tuz Khurmatu.

The following sections of this study present the emergence and the workflow of the Turkmen political system under control of Turkish authorities in the form of time periods. In these sections, this study examines the objectives of the Turkish policy towards the Turkmen of Iraq, and analyses the continuous deterioration of the Turkmen policies



and human rights situations, which have been subjugated to the Turkish national interests and policies. The following sections also evaluate the influences of the geopolitical changes and the accompanied changes in Iraq on the Turkmen of Iraq—and particularly the consequent Turkish policies towards the Turkmen there and elsewhere.

Before the establishment of the Turkmen Front

Turkey did nothing for the Turkmen of Iraq before 1990, when they were subjected to the most aggressive human rights violations by the Ba'ath regime. Numerous Turkmen intellectuals and academics lived in Turkey at that time. This number increased to hundreds of thousands during and after the Iraq-Iran War in 1980-88. Turkey did not allow them to establish political parties.

After the Ba'ath regime invaded Kuwait in August 1990, the activities of all sections of the Iraqi opposition abroad increased dramatically. They began organising big congresses and holding important meetings with the ministries of foreign affairs and other government departments in foreign countries, as if representing the Iraqi government in exile. In order to gain a closer look and knowledge of the progress at work in the Iraqi opposition, Turkey allowed Iraqi Turkmen to establish a political party in Turkey.

The Iraqi National Turkmen Party (INTP; *Irak Milli Türkmen Partisi*, IMTP – الحزب الوطني التركماني العراقي) was founded at the turn of 1991, a few months before the first congress of the Iraqi opposition in Beirut on March 11, 1991. The INTP or National Turkmen Party in short became a hope for the Turkmen people, who had been deprived of political



activities for a century and had been subjected to all kinds of human rights violations. The Turkmen people, with its academics, high-ranking soldiers, writers and opinion leaders, and all other segments, supported and embraced the National Turkmen Party. The INTP represented the Iraq Turkmen in the conferences of the Iraqi opposition and in the meetings with governments.

A few months after the establishment of the National Turkmen Party, a group of Turkmen members of the Iraqi al-Dawa Party established the Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkmen (*Irak Türkmenleri İslam Birliği* – الاتحاد الإسلامي لتركمان العراق) on March 2, 1991. The Islamic Union was beyond the control of Turkey and was thus marginalised by its government.

Ahmad Gunash founded the third Turkmen party in late 1991, which was called the Turkmen Union Party (*Türkmen Birlik Partisi* – حزب التركماني). The Turkmen Union Party was the second Turkmen party instituted beyond the control of the Turkish authorities. The Turkish authorities handed the party to Riyaz Sarikahya in 1993 and its name was changed to Turkmeneli party (*Türkmeneli Partisi* – تورکمن ايلي بارتيسي) in 1996.

The National Turkmen Party remained the major representative of the Iraqi Turkmen among the Iraqi opposition groups. The Iraqi opposition included major Arabic and Kurdish political groups, for example:

- Shia Islamist Groups, such as the al-Dawa Party and Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution which includes several other parties;
- Iraqi Kurdistan Front, such as the Kurdistan Democratic Party, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan;
- Sunni Islamic groups, such as the Iraqi Islamic Party and different



Kurdish Islamic parties;

- Conservative groups, such as the Iraqi National Congress and the Iraqi National Accord Movement
- National Assyrian Party.

Holding a good position among the major Iraqi opposition groups in order to represent the third largest component of the Iraqi population (European Parliament resolution 2013/2562), had required intense professional efforts from the National Turkmen Party. With the constant exacerbation of the Iraqi problem—i.e. the human rights violations of mainly minorities during the 1970s Iraq-Iran War of the 1980s, the first Gulf War and economic embargo during the 1990s, etcetera—the works and activities of the Iraqi opposition increased steadily in the 1990s.

Congresses were held in different countries, such as Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Austria, the United Kingdom and the United States. The opposition was contacting governments of the United States, European countries, and Arab countries, especially the Gulf States, to get political support and establish contacts. The expenses and expenditures of the National Turkmen Party had increased. The National Turkmen Party should have participated in all those activities, which required intensive professional political efforts and important financial sources.

Turkmen organisations faced difficulties in self-financing for various reasons:

- The Iraqi Turkmen were economically in dire strait, as they had been subjected to assimilation policies for decades;
- The lack of political culture in the Turkmen community led to a lack of conscious solidarity with the Turkmen institutions;



- The Turkmen institutions were unable to prove themselves in order to obtain a good popular base;
- It was difficult to obtain financial support from inside Iraq before 2003, as the vast majority of the Turkmen people lived inside Iraq and the Turkmen institutions were situated outside Iraq;
- The establishment and remaining of Turkmen organisations under the control of the Turkish authorities and forcing the Turkmen organisations to rely on Turkish funding only, which were not routinely granted and subject to the will of the Turkish managers and Turkish national policy.

As the politicians of the National Turkmen Party gained in experience and developed their relations with foreign countries, which were interested in the Iraqi problem, the party's chance of obtaining funding from sources other than Turkey increased.

However, any participation of the Turkmen politicians in the frequent meetings outside Turkey required the approval of the Turkish authorities (Ministry and Intelligence). After approval, financial support was provided and upon return a report was required. The approval of the Turkish authorities for financial support was not routine. There were very important cases where approval was not obtained. For example, Turkey banned the National Turkmen Party from participating in meetings to distribute the revenues of the Oil-for-Food program (SOITM Foundation 2019: 68-71).

Over time, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Intelligence organisations increased dictating its policies to the leaders of the National Turkmen Party. After Turkmen politicians got tired of the



Turkish government's continued policies to keep control over them and the Party, they began to evade the Turkish authorities so as to avoid their interference in the decision-making process of the party. When Turkish authorities realised that they could no longer control the Turkmen politicians of National Turkmen Party, they began to oppose and undermine the leaders and founders of the Party, by cutting funding, obstructing activities and adopting the establishment of the Turkmen Front so as to control completely the Turkmen political system.

Establishment of the Iraqi Turkmen Front

The discussion by Turkish officials and some Turkmen politicians of subjugating Turkmen politicians, Turkmen political organisations and civil society organisations under the umbrella of a single institution began more than a year before the establishment of the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF; *Irak Türkmen Cephesi* – الجبهة التركمانية العراقية) in early 1994. Through this project, Turkey aimed to prevent any Turkmen activity or policy that contradicts Turkish national policies, redlines and interests, even if it conflicts with the most important Turkmen national interests.

In mid-1994, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Turkish Intelligence Organisation began to establish the Turkmen Front (even though this Front is actually a Turkish Turkmen Front, I prefer to use the term Turkmen Front only). The world-renowned Turkmen academic Ihsan Dogramaci was persuaded by a high-ranking Turkish politician to oversee the establishment and administration of the Turkmen Front. According to some Turkmen politicians, the Turkish politician who



convinced Dogramaci to accept the mission was the Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel.

Dogramaci, along with some Turkmen academics, founded an institution in name only called “Turkmen Shura” to establish the Turkmen Front. The Turkmen Shura was not officially registered, did not have a statute, did not have regular meetings and never met with its full body of members (SOITM Foundation 2019: 129-133). On February 5, 1995, a declaration was published and on April 24, 1995, the establishment of the Turkmen Front was announced.

During the establishment of the Turkmen Front, the Turkish authorities excluded all the Turkmen politicians and organisations which were beyond the control of Turkish authorities (Al-Samanci 1999: 230; Jerjis 2020). For example, these included Shia politicians, who held many senior leadership positions in the large Iraqi Shiite parties, and the Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkmen. The establishment of the Turkmen Front was similar to the establishment of a Turkish governmental department:

- The interviews for the appointment of politicians and staff of the Turkmen Front were conducted by officials of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Intelligence Organisation;
- Monthly salaries were allocated in US Dollars to the staff.

Neither the requirements of that period nor the political situation of the Iraqi Turkmen required the establishment of an umbrella organisation. The status and circumstances of the five Turkmen institutions that were announced to have joined the Turkmen Front were as follows:

- There were only two Turkmen parties;



- The largest Turkmen party, the National Turkmen Party opposed the project and refused to join it; thus in a meeting of Turkish intelligence with Turkmen politicians towards the end of 1995, a Turkish intelligence staff expelled the president of the National Turkmen Party, Muzaffer Arslan, from the meeting when he criticised the project of the Turkmen Front;
- The Iraqi Turks' cultural and solidarity association has been a civil society organisation that already has been subjected to the Turkish stipulations since its establishment in 1959;
- The Turkmen Brotherhood Club has been not a political organisation but a civil society institution and refused to join to the Turkmen Front.

As preparations for the establishment of the Iraqi Turkmen Front on April 24, 1995, and under the control of Turkish authorities:

- The Turkmen Independents Movement (*Türkmen Bağımsızlar Hareketi* – حركة التركمان المستقلين) was established towards the end of 1994, as part of the project;
- The leaders of the National Turkmen Party were neutralised and later on expelled in order to include the party under the umbrella of the Turkmen Front;
- The administrators of the Turkmen Brotherhood Club (*Türkmen Kardeşlik Kulübü* – نادي الاخاء التركماني) – Erbil branch could not be convinced to be included under the umbrella of the Turkmen Front. Despite this, the Club's name was included as being one of the founders of the Turkmen Front.

By establishing the Turkmen Front, Turkey completely controlled the



Iraqi Turkmen political system. Turkish authorities obliged the Turkmen politicians and political and civil society organisations, who were put under the umbrella of the Turkmen Front, not to receive any kind of funding from any source other than that allocated by Turkish government.

By controlling the funding, Turkey could control the activities of the Turkmen politicians and the Turkmen organisations as well. By this policy, Turkey deprived the Iraqi Turkmen from Azerbaijani funding and the funding of other kin countries. Thus, Turkey has been able to redesign the Turkmen political map in such a manner as to administer directly the Turkmen political system.

Failure of the Iraqi Turkmen Front

The eventual functioning of the Turkmen Front, which was established forcibly by Turkish officials, was not as the Turkish founder authorities desired and anticipated. There were continuous problems and daily disputes, especially in the meetings of the executive committee of the Front.

On December 19, 1995, an armed conflict broke out between the leaders of the Turkmen Front, which resulted in killing one person and wounding one other. Rivalries and conflicts between the centres of power in the Turkish administration—the military and intelligence services—were the main factor behind the major differences and violent confrontations between the politicians of the Turkmen Front.



What was happening within the Turkmen Front was not of any real importance to the Turkish authorities. The true importance for Turkey was to maintain:

- Control over the activities of the Turkmen Front and its policies and external relations;
- Control over the issues related to minorities not to be raised, as these issues constitute a problem for Turkey;
- Making sure that the Turkish redlines related to Iraq, particularly the north of that country, were not to be violated.

On the other hand, the Turkmen of Iraq are proud of their ethnic identity and demand its recognition, and argue for their cultural and political rights and education in their mother language.

Members of the executive committee of the National Turkmen Party from Erbil had already joined the Turkmen Front against the will of their leaders. The National Turkmen Party was deprived of financial and political support from Turkey. Those who joined the Turkmen Front got the salaries. The leadership of the National Turkmen Party dismissed its members who joined the Front.

About a year after the establishment of the Turkmen Front, members of the National Turkmen Party, who were dismissed from their party, left willingly the Turkmen Front due to the uselessness of the Turkmen Front for the Iraqi Turkmen and continuous disputes in the executive committee of the Turkmen Front.

The restrictions imposed by the Turkish authorities on the National Turkmen Party and its leaders led to restrictions of the party's activities



activities and of its participation with the Iraqi opposition in international venues. This happened when the National Turkmen Party could not participate in several meetings of the Iraqi opposition in England and America.

For example, the National Turkmen Party was prevented to participate in the meetings of distribution of revenue of the Oil-for-food program in the United States. The director of the anti-terrorism department in the Turkish Intelligence organisation requested from Ahmed Chalabi, one of the participants in organising the meetings from the Iraqi side, to remove the Turkmen from the list of attendees at the conference in the U.S. in early 1996.

Thus, Turkey had deprived the Turkmen of Iraq from a monthly income estimated at millions of US Dollars, while the Kurdish parties received 120 million US Dollars a monthly share from revenue of the Oil-for-food program (SOITM Foundation 2019: 68-71).

In early 1996, its president, Turhan Ketene, left the Turkmen Front. Thus, almost a year after its establishment, the Turkmen Front had almost completely failed as an organisation.

Reconstruction of a fully kneeled Turkmen Front by redesigning Turkmen organisations

By early 1996, when the Turkmen Front failed almost completely, the National Turkmen Party had almost completely collapsed. As a result of the seeds of division were sowed in the party leadership, due to the



establishment of a group that supported the project of establishing the Turkmen Front and mainly due to limiting the activities of the party by Turkish authorities and by cutting off the party's funding.

Turkish intelligence prepared its plan, possibly in March 1996, to pave the way for the re-establishment of the Turkmen Front and subjugate the Turkmen politicians and organisations completely to the Turkish authorities. A member of the executive committee of the National Turkmen Party, Mustafa Kemal Yaychili, a Turkmen politician affiliated to Turkey, had been assigned to implement the plan. In mid-1996, Yaychili appeared in the city of Erbil to achieve the following goals:

- Removing Turkmen politicians who were not subservient to the Turkish authorities, especially within the framework of the establishment of the Turkmen Front, by:
 - Organising of fake second congress of the National Turkmen Party;
 - Splitting the unity of the executive committee of the Turkmen Brotherhood Club (an official civil society organisation);
- Dissolution of the Turkmen Independents Movement.

Yaychili failed to convince the members of the National Turkmen Party from Erbil city, who joined the Turkmen Front against the will of the party leadership and then left the Turkmen Front as well. In the meantime they refused to work under the previous administrative system. They insisted on changing the party's working style. The idea of Yaychili was to rebuild the party and subjugate it to the Turkmen Front.

Yaychili organised the fake second congress of the National Turkmen Party, appointing himself the president, and changing nearly all members of the executive committee. At the same time, Yaychili was



able to create a rift in the executive committee of the Turkmen Brotherhood Club. This led to the resignation of the president of the club along with a group of members of the executive committee on September 24, 1996.

The group, which Yaychili supported, consequently dominated the Turkmen Brotherhood Club. The head of the latter group, Wadad Arsalan, who became the president of the Club, was elected as a vice for Yaychili, when Yaychili became the president of the National Turkmen Party by the fake congress. Later on, the way was paved for Arsalan to become the second president of the Turkmen Front.

The Turkish Army replaces Turkish Intelligence in the administration of the Iraqi Turkmen political system

In the midst of the intelligence operation to completely subjugate the Turkmen political system to the Turkish authorities, in accordance with an agreement with Masoud Barzani, the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic party (KDP), the Iraqi Army entered Erbil city on August 31, 1996, to change the governor of Erbil province from Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), the party led by Barzani's main rival Jalal Talabani, to Barzani's party. The Iraqi Army attacked the headquarters of the Turkmen Front and the headquarters of the Turkmen parties and civil society organisations:

- All the contents of the Turkmen institutions were either destroyed or stolen;
- Iraqi soldiers kidnapped fifty-nine Turkmen politicians and workers from these institutions;



- The kidnapped people disappeared and nothing was heard from them to this day.

Some Turkmen leaders working directly under the command of Turkish officials left Arbil city shortly before the attack. Some Turkmen politicians who survived this attack claim that Turkey knew about the attack and did not warn other Turkmen politicians in time. The Turkmen Front, which meant almost the whole Turkmen political system, had almost totally disintegrated after these events.

The Turkish Army at this stage started to take over the Turkmen dossier from the Turkish intelligence organisation, so as to exclusively administer the Turkmen political system. A few weeks after the Iraqi Army left Erbil, some Turkmen politicians who were members of the Turkmen parties and institutions were called by the Turkish Army office in Erbil city. They were informed that the Turkish Army had become responsible for managing the Turkmen political system.

In the context of rebuilding the Turkmen Front, the Turkish Army started to dissolve the Turkmen Independents Movement, while a member of the Movement's executive committee managed to persuade the Turkish Army to change its mind:

- The Movement's congress was organised on September 3, 1997;
- The head of the Movement and most of the members of the executive committee were replaced by others.

As for the Turkmeneli Party, the party's president, Riyad Sarikhaya, was always behaving in the context of the Turkish policies, and accepted the project of establishing the Turkmen Front from the beginning. Thus, all



three Turkmen parties were brought into line to rebuild the Turkmen Front: the National Turkmen Party, the Turkmen Independents Movement and the Turkmeneli party. As the largest and oldest Iraqi Turkmen civil society organisation, the Turkmen Brotherhood Club – Erbil branch had also been subjugated.

To show the Turkmen Front as supposedly independent and legitimate, the fake First Turkmen Congress was held between September 17 and 18, 1997. It was under the full control of the Turkish Army. Each of the following was elected:

- President and members of the executive committee of the Turkmen Front;
- The Turkmen Shura was rebuilt with thirty members.

Accordingly, the Turkish authorities had rebuilt the Turkmen Front in a manner similar to moving checkers.

Use of intimidation, punishment and media defamation against the Turkmen politicians and organisations

“However, all that took place under the direct domination of Turkey, either under the control of the Turkish intelligence or the generals of the Turkish Army. When one of the officials of the Iraqi Turkmen Front disobeyed their orders, they expelled and threatened him by various means. Sometimes they threatened some of the people to kidnap his daughter or his son”. **A Turkmen politician**



Intimidations and punishments

By this stage the Turkish authorities had expelled from the Turkmen Front any Turkmen politician or institution who refused to obey the orders of the Turkish authorities or continue to oppose or criticise the Turkish administration. Turkey marginalised and exerted pressure on any Turkmen politician or Turkmen organisation working outside or against Turkish policies, except the Turkmen Shia organisations, which were marginalised at any rate.

Reducing or cutting off financial support from the Turkmen organisations that Turkey provides, has been one way employed by the latter to bring them to their knees. It must be taken in consideration that these organisations are prohibited from receiving financial support from any source other than Turkey. Intimidation and kidnapping of Turkmen politicians who continue to oppose Turkish policies towards Turkmen continued unabated—including threatening to kidnap the sons or daughters of some Turkmen politicians.

Defamation by the media

In April 1996, the Turkish journal *Nokta* published an article on its page 56 of its weekly issue, entitled “Clean hands operation in Iraqi Policy: National Turkmen Party under the spotlight” insulting the leaders of the National Turkmen Party who rejected the project of the Turkmen Front of the Turkish Intelligence Organisation (see Photos Nos. 2 & 3 in the Appendix). The same journal was used by a power centre in the Turkish government, to defame Professor Ihsan Dogramaci, who supervised the



establishment of the Turkmen Front on the recommendation of the Turkish government.

The article in question included photos of the National Turkmen Party leaders, with the exception of the president of the Turkmeneli Party, Riyaz Sarikhaya, who supported the Turkmen Front project. Its defaming of the Turkmen leaders lacked the most basic moral values and were downright insulting to the Turkmen of Iraq.

These Turkmen leaders were and are still known for their integrity by the Turkmen inside Iraq and abroad. The article misleadingly fuddled information and incidents to make insulting and unfounded accusations to provoke the Turkmen people and the Turks against the targeted Turkmen leaders who rejected the Turkmen Front project. Therefore the article:

- Praises Riyaz SariKahya, and considers him the person who brought the president of the National Turkmen Party, Muzaffar Arslan, into the political arena and made him gain popularity among the Turkmen;
- Insults one of the National Turkmen party's leaders, Hassan Ozmen, calling him "The blind Hassan". Claims that he was a servant in the office of the Turkmen leader Iz al-Din Qojawa, and defames him by stating that Qojawa used to beat him constantly, additionally accusing Ozmen of collaborating with the Syrian intelligence and linking his rise in the party to his relation with the party's president, Muzaffar Arslan;
- Attacks Dr. Aydin Beyatli and claims that he has been a Ba'athist and 'Saddamist', and that, with the support of Ozmen, he rose in the party;
- Insults another member of the party leadership, Yasar Imamoglu, by accusing him that he sold his property in the city of Kirkuk to the Kurds,



and was involved in arms trade;

- Accuses Muzaffer Arslan of:
 - Marginalising the Turkmen politicians who were not members of the National Turkmen Party;
 - Expelling some others from the party;
 - Making many Turkmen politicians to leave the political arena.
- Distorts the facts and states that Arslan joined the Turkmen Front under pressure from the popular base, though it is well known that the National Turkmen Party joined the Turkmen Front under pressure from Turkish Intelligence; and Arslan never embraced the Turkmen Front project;
- Accuses all party leaders who oppose the Turkmen Front project of misappropriating funds without providing any convincing evidence;
- Arbitrarily accuses Arslan of spending 180,000 US Dollars from the budget of the Turkmen Front, even though Arslan was actually expelled from his party due to his refusal of the project of Turkmen Front and had no role whatsoever in the establishment and management of the Turkmen Front.

Management of the Turkmen political system by Turkish Army alone with an Iron fist (1997 – 2008)

“A minor Turkish employee was dictating to Turkmen politicians decisions that were negatively affecting the fate of Turkmen in Iraq. Turkey did not allow the Turkmen, even once, to make their own decisions”. **A Turkmen politician**



With the re-establishment of the Turkmen Front and its submission to the offices of the Turkish Army, the control of the Turkish authorities over the Turkmen organisations, and thus over the Turkmen community, became absolute. The chosen Turkmen politicians and officials were those who could easily be subordinated to the Turkish authorities and their national policies, which aimed to:

- Exploit the Turkmen to serve the Turkish national interests;
- Suppress the Turkmen struggle for their rights as a minority, due to the negative Turkish policy towards its own minorities.

The fact that the Turkish management of the Turkmen political system is illegal by its nature, as it falls outside the sovereign authority field of the Turkish government and submitted it to a closed military administration. Consequently, the sufficient proper follow-up and monitoring of the administration of the Turkmen political system by Turkish authorities was not possible in the sense of good and fair management and fair and impartial use of its financing.

The main features of the policy of the Turkish administration were as follows:

- Any external contact or any activities should be decided and supervised by the Turkish authorities;
- Complete submission to the Turkish red lines that dictated:
 - o No recognition of a federal Iraqi state; accordingly, no recognition of the Kurdish regional government;
 - o Not using the word Kurdistan;
 - o Not dealing with the Kurdish regional government;
- In important cases, the Turkish authorities were using other



Turkmen loyal to them, thereby marginalising the politicians and leaders of the Turkmen Front. As happened in the meetings of the Iraqi opposition:

- o Turkey imposed Mustafa Ziyai to participate in New York meetings in October 1999 (SOITM Foundation 2019: 162-163);
- o Ziyai was secretly sent to attend the meetings of the Iraqi opposition in London during December 14-15, 2002 (Al-Samanchi 2015).

Some of the many major events of this period were as follows:

- Under dictation of this Turkish policy on Turkmen towards the Kurds, Turkmen politicians and institutions have been subjected to many attacks by the Peshmerga and were marginalised by the Kurdish administration in every field;
- A petty Turkish staff official had prevented the Iraqi Turkmen to participate in the cabinet of the Kurdish region in 2000, after the Turkmen politicians got a reasonable share in the mentioned government (see photo No.4 in the Appendix);
- Any financial expenses or expenditures necessitated the signature of the head of the Turkmen Front. As a result:
 - o The second president of the Turkmen Front, Wadad Arslan, resigned in 2000, accusing the Turkish managers of interference and manipulation of the Turkmen Front's finance. After his resignation, Arslan, along with a large group of staff members left the Turkmen Front, and started working with the Kurdish parties;
 - o The fourth president of the Turkmen Front, Faruk Abdullah, refused to sign the checks of tens of thousands of US Dollars brought by the Turkish managers claiming that they were expenditures of the Front. Abdullah was dismissed from the presidency on April 24, 2005 at the



General Turkmen Congress held one year before its normal date;

- o The fifth president of the Turkmen Front, Saad al-Din Ergec, subjugated himself utterly to the Turkish military authorities, and was elected for the second time as president of the Turkmen Front in 2008 by manipulated fifth General Turkmen Congress. Ergec's period was known for misusing his powers and embezzling large sums of money. According to the Turkmen politician Hassan Ozmen, Ergec embezzled no less than five million US Dollars. If this has been Ergec's share, then what has been the share of the Turkish managers of the Turkmen Front? The rapid enrichment of Turkish Army officers who were running the Turkmen political system was the talk of some Turkmen politicians during that period.

- Turkey prevented Iraqi Turkmen from accepting American terms to participate in the post-Ba'ath regime political process. This led to the marginalisation of the Iraqi Turkmen in this political process, after the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003.

- That year, the headquarters of the Turkmen Front was moved from Erbil to Kirkuk, without making an agreement with the Turkmen of Erbil. This caused a large number of Turkmen from Erbil to leave the Turkmen Front to work with the Kurdish authorities;

- The Turkmeneli Party left the Turkmen Front in 2005;

- The Erbil branch of the Turkmen Front:

- o Was the second largest Turkmen political community;

- o Left the Turkmen Front in 2005;

- o Accused the Turkmen Front of being an instrument in the hands of Turkey;

- o Seized all the buildings of the Turkmen Front in Erbil, and started to cooperate with the Kurdish parties.



- The president of the Turkmen Front, Saad al-Din Ergec, refused in 2007 a constant financial support of Azerbaijan's government to the Iraqi Turkmen. Ergec could not have taken this a decision without orders from the Turkish Army;
- Regarding the Iraq elections:
 - The Turkmen failed to win significant votes and seats in all Iraqi elections since 2003; thus they sent very few deputies to parliament despite their large population;
 - Turkmen candidates for the Iraqi elections were selected by the Turkish Embassy in line with Turkish national interests;
 - The Turkish military office in Erbil obstructed an electoral agreement of the Turkmen Front in the parliamentary elections in December 2005, causing the Turkmen to lose more than ten representatives.
- After the fall of Ba'ath regime in 2003, as American-Turkish relations deteriorated, the Turkmen were marginalised in the formation of government in Baghdad:
 - Songul Cabuk represented the Turkmen in the first post-Saddam Governing Council. She was a Turkmen woman with no political experience whatsoever;
 - A Turkmen academician, Rashad Mandan Omar, without any political experience, was appointed as a minister in the first cabinet after the fall of Ba'ath regime.

In this period (1997–2008), the aggressive violations of Turkmen human rights was continuing and threatening the Turkmen existence in Iraq. Even though all the sections of the Turkmen community had to extend great efforts and activities, the Turkish authorities tied the hands of the Turkmen politicians.



It was impossible to establish a Turkmen political institution outside Turkish control. Even if it had been possible, it would have been quite easy for the Turkish state and its intelligence services to oppose and undermine it. It would have been either dissolved as happened with the Turkmen People's Party, or remained an insignificant movement as happened with the Turkmen Decision Party.

The Turkish Army humiliates the Turkmen politicians, hence the Turkmen people (July 2008 – May 2011)

No matter how unscrupulous a people's politician and intellectual may be, it is impossible to accept and maintain such a treacherous and humiliating administrative system. On February 22, 2008, part one of SOITM Foundation's series of articles under the title "Turkey's Iraqi Turkmen Policy" was completed. The article was sent to some Turkmen intellectuals and Turkish officials. The subtitle of the article was, "The unconstructive role of the Iraqi Turkmen Front within the Turkmen Policy" (SOITM Foundation 2019: 27-32). The article criticised the Turkmen Front system and workflow without commenting on the negative role of the Turkish state.

The cooperation of the president of the Turkmen Front, Saad al-Din Ergec, with the Turkish managers from the Turkish Army and years of closed military administration paved the way for the blatant manipulation of the financial resources of the Turkmen Front. As a result, the share of the branches of the Turkmen Front and the parties affiliated to the Front in the budget has been seriously reduced.



Additionally, the president of the Turkmen Front was ruling the Front by an iron fist. The heads of the branches of the Turkmen Front and the presidents of the affiliated parties, who were forming the executive committee of the Turkmen Front, revolted against the president of the Front, and issued a decision to dismiss him in May 2008.

The retribution of the Turkish Army was harsh and swift; it effectively redesigned the entire Iraqi Turkmen political system. First of all, the Turkish military authorities refused the dismissal of the president of the Turkmen Front loyal to them. In response, the Fifth General Turkmen Congress was organised under the hegemony of the Turkish Army, on July 13 and 14, 2008.

Obviously all the stages of the congress were manipulated and rigged. The heads of the branches of the Turkmen Front were contained and subjugated. All the parties under the roof of the Turkmen Front were expelled from the Front. Elections were arranged in a manner whereby Ergec could be re-elected as President of the Turkmen Front. By forged elections, the members of the Turkmen Council were determined. No rule was used in the elections other than the rule of obedience to the Turkish authorities. The Turkmen Front was transformed into a political party with the same name.

The Turkmen Justice Party (*Türkmen Adalet Partisi* – حزب العدالة التركماني) was one of the marginalised and expelled parties at the Fifth General Turkmen Congress. The Turkmen Justice Party is a party with Muslim Brotherhood ideology, as AKP of R. T. Erdogan, leader of the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP – حزب العدالة والتنمية). This means that the one which ran the Turkmen Front at that



period was still the Turkish Army alone. After this congress, Turkey ceased organising general Turkmen Congresses that were held formally every three years to elect the leading cadres of the Turkmen political system.

In 2010, all members of the Baghdad branch of the Turkmen Front were expelled due to a verbal altercation between the head of the branch and Ergec, the former president of the Turkmen Front.

To unify Turkmen institutions and create a climate for joint action, the Turkmeneli Party and a number of Shiite Turkmen politicians organised a conference in Baghdad in June 2009. The Iraqi Prime Minister attended the conference. The project was undermined by the Turkish embassy in Baghdad, which contacted many Turkmen politicians and intellectuals and warned them not to participate in the conference.

This period (2008–2011) was one of the darkest periods in the history of the Turkmen of Iraq, a totally perverted, usurped Turkmen political system with:

- All Turkmen regions being controlled by Kurdish parties, security forces and Peshmerga;
- Turkmen being marginalised in the administrations of all their regions;
- Kurdish families being deliberately brought and settled in Turkmen regions;
- Turkmen being subjected to arbitrary detentions, kidnappings, assassinations and all kinds of violence including bombings;
- The Iraqi elections being organised under the absolute control of the Kurdish parties, Kurdish security forces and the Peshmerga. Notably,



practically all Kurdish politicians and intellectuals claim the ownership of almost all Turkmen regions—the regions were even included in the Kurdish constitution.

The activities of the Turkmen political system at this stage (2008–2011) were limited to:

- Occasional press releases from the Turkmen Front about daily events;
- Occasional declarations of the president of the Turkmen Front about the daily events;
- Participation in ceremonies and memorial anniversaries, such as:
 - Martyrs day celebrations;
 - Anniversary celebrations of Turkmen national days and important occasions of the Turkmen Front;
 - Participation of Turkmen Front politicians in the celebrations by the Turkish embassy or consulate of Turkish national days.

The two periods of the Turkmen Front under Ergec's presidency (2005–2008 & 2008–2011) were characterised by corruptions, persistent neglect of the branches of the Front and almost complete absence of genuine Turkmen political activities.

Dwarfing the Turkmen political system and dissolving of the Turkmen Council (May 2011 – July 2016)

Turkey's President R. T. Erdogan—in cooperation with his erstwhile ally yet eventual enemy Muhammed Fethullah Gulen ²—liquidated a large number of generals and other high-ranking officers from the Turkish



Army beginning in 2005. In subsequent years, Erdogan's popularity reached its peak, receiving 50% of the vote in the 2011 general elections. The disagreements between Erdogan and Gulen began towards the end of the first decade of the 21st century, which surfaced when Jurists loyal to Gulen summoned the head of Erdogan's National Intelligence Service on 7 February 2012.

The second part of the series of articles by the SOITM Foundation was delayed by three years, for fear of its negative impact on Turkmen politics and of the Turkish authorities' retaliation against Turkmen politics. Turkey's misuse of the Turkmen political system continued and the difficulties of the Turkmen people increased.

It was written on February 27, 2013, with a subtitle "The Turkmen of Iraq are victims of subordination and deteriorated national politics" (SOITM Foundation 2019: 33-42). The article criticised Turkey's abuse of the Turkmen political system. This part of the series had been distributed to the same persons and addresses as the first part.

In May 2011, upon directives from the Turkish embassy in Baghdad, which meant that on orders of the Turkish civil government and not the Turkish Army:

- The Turkmen Council was dissolved;
- The president and the members of the executive committee of the Turkmen Front were changed without organising an involvement of a convened General Turkmen Congress. Arshad al-Salihi was appointed as president of the Turkmen Front;



- The Turkmen Council was replaced with a six-membered fake board called “Diwan of the Turkmen Council”, while:
 - o The Diwan did not have any open activities;
 - o The head of Diwan and his deputies attended the building just to spend their free time, and have coffee and a chat there;
 - o Members of the Diwan received their salaries from Turkey in US Dollars.
- For the first time, Erdogan could introduce a few members of the Muslim Brotherhood ideology into the executive committee of the Turkmen Front.

It should be known that the main authorities in the Turkish-made Turkmen political system, were all appointed by Turkish authorities, are as follows:

- The General Turkmen Congresses, which elects the
- Turkmen Council, which elects the
- Members of the executive committee of the Turkmen Front and
- The president of the Turkmen Front;
- The Turkmen Civil Society organisation, which includes about 20 associations, foundations, syndicates, etcetera, administered by a manager.

The Turkmen Council had been dissolved, while the Turkmen parties, civil society organisations and Turkmen intellectuals were working for months on a project to build an independent General Turkmen Council.

Radical changes in the Turkmeneli Satellite TV channel took place at the same period:

- Anchor, head of news bureau and technical staff were replaced;



- The channel started to broadcast in line with Erdogan's religious policies;
- Religious programs and programs on Ottoman history and glories increased in number;
- Turkmen politicians close to the Turkish Justice and Development party ideology, like Hassan Turan, started to appear more in TV programs, while others, like Hassan Ozmen, were marginalised.

The contradictions and rivalries in the policies of the various Turkish governments and the Turkish offices that run Turkmen politics were unconstructively and directly reflected on the Turkmen political system. While the Turkish Army was dictating to the Turkmen Front not to recognise the Kurdish administration in Iraq and not to cooperate with it, Erdogan forced the Turkmen Front to cooperate with the Iraqi Kurdish administration and accept Kurdish policies, especially with regard to the Kirkuk Governorate.

While the Turkish Army forced the Turkmen Front not to cooperate with Iraqi religious groups, Erdogan managed to compel the Turkmen Front to cooperate with the Sunni Islamist politicians and his loyalists like Tariq al-Hashimi, the founder of Renewal List (قائمة التجديد) who was the Vice-President of Iraq and Osama al-Nujaifi, the head of Salvation & Development Front (جبهة الإنقاذ والتنمية) who was Vice-President of Iraq and Speaker of Parliament.

Another Turkish blow to the Turkmen came with the problems surrounding the Iraqi Islamic politician Tariq al-Hashimi in late 2011 and early 2012. Al-Hashimi was the Vice-President of Iraq and the founder of Renewal List. After he was convicted of murder, he fled Iraq and settled



in Turkey. In solidarity with al-Hashimi, the Sunni group led by Ayad Allawi withdrew its ministers from the Iraqi cabinet.

The Erdogan government asked the Turkmen minister, Turhan al-Mufti, to withdraw from the Iraqi cabinet under prime minister Nouri al-Maliki as well, but the Turkmen minister refused to comply. The Turkmen minister was supported by a large section of the Turkmen people. The punishment of Erdogan's Turkish government was as a significant reduction in funding of the Turkmen Front, which effectively paralysed it.

A few months after forming the new executive committee of the Turkmen Front in May 2011, the disputes continued between the pro-Erdogan religious group and the group supported by the Turkish military, leading to a suspension of the meetings of the executive committee. After that, the executive committee of the Turkmen Front did never meet, except for obligatory meetings, like those called to embrace and announce the decisions taken by the Turkish authorities.

In this period (2011–2016), the situation of the Iraqi Turkmen was as follows:

- Continuing violations of their human rights which increased their daily difficulties and sufferings;
- Further deterioration of the Turkmen political system;
- Further increase of Turkish domination over the Turkmen politicians and Turkmen political system; in fact the Turkmen remained hands-tied prisoners in the hands of the Turkish authorities.

On April 22, 2015, the Turkmen Student and Youth uprising began in



response to the inefficiency of the Turkmen political system and the violation of Turkmen human rights. A group of Turkmen students and youth seized the building of Turkmen Council in the city of Kirkuk, demanding:

- Resignation of members of the Diwan of the Turkmen Council;
- Rebuilding an independent general Turkmen Council.

The revolting students and youth handed over the Turkmen Council building to a group of six Turkmen parties who pledged to fulfil their demands. The six Turkmen parties began intensive efforts to realise the goals of Turkmen student and youth.

Considering the uprising of the Turkmen students and youth as a movement against the Turkish state, the Turkish government started to suppress the uprising. Turkey was able to eliminate the uprising within the space of three weeks. Consequently, Turkey kept the Turkmen political system as it was in its collapsed state (SOITM Foundation 2019: 175-182).

Before the uprising of the Turkmen students and youth, Turkmen politicians and parties were continuing nonstop their attempts to establish the independent General Turkmen Council. The suppression of the revolt of the Turkmen students and youth by Turkey can be considered one of the most harmful blows to the political will of the Turkmen of Iraq. After Turkey thwarted it, the attempts of the Iraqi Turkmen to establish an independent Turkmen Council has come to a complete standstill.

The activities of the Turkmen political system by this stage became



limited to the following:

- Press releases from the Turkmen Front about the events of the hour;
- Declarations of the president of the Turkmen Front about the events of the hour.

Silencing the collapsed Turkmen political system (15 July 2016 – Present)

Despite Erdogan having managed to penetrate the executive committee of the Turkmen Front, impoverishing it and dwarfing its activities, the Turkish Army was still the main controller of the Iraqi Turkmen political system.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Fethullah Gulen began infiltrating the Turkish Army's institutions, and his penetration into the armed forces was increasing day by day. The cooperation between Fethullah Gulen and the Turkish Army against Erdogan began at about 2010.

The infiltration of Gulen agents into the Turkish Army had reached a point where it became powerful enough to lead the failed coup of July 15, 2016, together with the Republicans, who were controlling the army. With the failure of this coup, the Republicans and Fethullah Gulen gave Erdogan an excuse not to show mercy in purging them of all state institutions.

Despite the apparent role of Gulen in the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016, some sources claim that Erdogan exaggerated Gulen's role. However, the history of Gulen's organisation, particularly his speeches



and his infiltration into the most important Turkish state institutions such as the security and military services, support the thesis of his major role in that attempt. The following is an excerpt from Fethullah Gulen's long speech broadcasted by Turkish TV channel ATV on 18 June 1999, which can be found on YouTube on the internet:

"It is a matter of going too far, as wandering in their vital arteries, coming back without being injured or felt, without making discover of our presence. Whether in terms of their financial strength, in terms of power and resources supplies in their own country, in terms of scientists, in terms to reach to the large parts of the society who has this (our) feeling and this (our) thought, until to come to a certain point and constancy, it is imperative, indispensable and necessary to continue serving in this (secret) way" (Gulen 1999a (quote); see further Gulen 1999b) .

After the failed coup, Erdogan took over the Turkmen file and the management of the Turkmen political system. He already had significantly weakened the Turkmen political system after 2011. The system had become nothing more than a writing on paper.

Within the framework of the radical cleansing of Republicans and Gulenists in Turkey, Erdogan started to put pressure on al-Salihi, the head of the Turkmen Front, who was still under the Turkish Army's control. Al-Salihi began to publish declarations from his Twitter account saying: "What you benefit, O Turkish government, from fighting Arshad Salihi".

Al-Salihi was summoned to Ankara, and it is understood that he was warned and conditions imposed on him to maintain his position as president of the Turkmen Front. After al-Salihi's return from Ankara, he



stopped publishing press statements, as if he had disappeared from the political arena. At this stage, all types of the activities of the Iraqi Turkmen political system were ceased—even the press releases of the Turkmen Front.

Dozens of offices of the Turkmen political system and hundreds of staff members kept receiving symbolic salaries from the Turkish authorities and continued to be directly managed by these authorities.

The changes that occurred in the Turkmen political system during this period were against the most basic administrative rules and did not comply with any of the articles of the Turkmen Front's Charter, but were in line with the political desires of the Turkish politicians. For example:

- Several changes were made in the institutions and branches of the Turkmen Front, during the first half of 2019, which included heads and personnel;
- On May 25, 2019, most of the members of the executive committee of the Turkmen Front, including heads of the branches, were replaced by even more subservient individuals;
- These changes were as usual decided by the Turkish authorities (Turkish Army) given that after the failed July 2016 coup attempt Erdogan controlled the Turkmen political system. Since these acts cannot be openly announced, they were communicated in a very irrational and obtuse manner. The press release published on May 25, 2019 by the Turkmen Front mentioned that the executive committee of the Turkmen Front made the changes. This means that the members of the executive committee dismissed themselves and appointed new members. These procedures were not subject to the most basic adminis-



-trative rules and violate the Charter of the Turkmen Front. According to the Charter of the Turkmen Front, appointments or replacements of members in the executive committee of the Turkmen Front are made by the Turkmen Council and from the members of Turkmen Council;

- On March 28, 2021, the president of the Turkmen Front was replaced by Ankara. The Turkmen politician with an ideology of the society of Muslim Brotherhood Hassan Turan replaced the conservative nationalist al-Salihi;
- In order to legitimise the administration and implementation of changes in the Turkmen political system, the Turkish Army was creating different measures, but Erdogan was making changes directly by administrative or intelligence orders, as happened in the aforementioned changes and the earlier radical changes in the Turkmen political system in 2011.

Some of the factors that help Turkey to dominate the Iraqi Turkmen and their political system

The blind obedience of the Turkmen of Iraq to the Turkish state and their absolutely misplaced confidence that Turkey is helping the Turkmen of Iraq, are due to the following reasons:

- Historical geopolitical factors: particularly the loss of high social and political status after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, and exposure to human rights violations and assimilation policies that led to isolation and a sense of loneliness among the Turkmen of Iraq. The situation prompted them to depend on kinsmen who were not expected to offend



more powerful neighbours. This is valid for the other Turkic communities in the region's countries as well;

- Turkish intelligence's possession and management of the Turkmen media, and the absence of an independent Turkmen media;
- The lack of political culture among the Turkmen of Iraq, as a result of:
 - o The absence of a democratic system and a democratic mentality in the region in general, exacerbated by decades of authoritarian rule in Iraq;
 - o The absence of independent political, cultural and media institutions for Turkmen since the establishment of the Iraqi state in 1921 and the denial of education in the Turkmen mother tongue;
 - o The exposure to suppression and assimilation policies for a long time.

Since the administration of the Iraqi Turkmen political system by Turkey is illegal, it has been carried out by the Turkish authorities—in particular by either the Turkish intelligence services or the Turkish armed forces. Therefore, the overwhelming majority of the Iraqi Turkmen do not know the fact that the Turkish state is mistreating them. Additionally, this situation removed the administrative and legal deterrence for the Turkish authorities in the mismanagement of the Turkmen political system, the Turkmen politics and the Turkmen people.

The inability of the Iraqi state and the silence of the international community are helping Turkey to intervene in Iraq's internal affairs and to control and exploit the Turkmen of Iraq.



There are many institutions and organisations either affiliated or not affiliated with the Turkmen Front, all of which are run by Turkey. There are a large number of Turkmen employees in these institutions and organisations.

For example, there are dozens of fake civil society organisations, each of which has few employees and do not have any activities. The employees of these institutions and organisations receive small wages ranging from \$ 100 to \$ 150 from the Turkish state, which are good sums for poor families and unqualified workers in light of the deteriorating economic situation in Iraq.

Almost all the members of the Turkmen community consider this Turkish policy as a support for the Turkmen people. These employees advocate Turkish policy towards Turkmen and form a media and propaganda trumpet for Turkey. They oppose, prevent, suppress and work to silence those Turkmen who criticise the Turkish policy towards Iraqi Turkmen.

Turkey does not hesitate to use unfair and harmful punitive means to silence opponents of its policy towards Turkmen and to maintain its continued control over Turkmen politics and the Turkmen people, by intimidation, media defamation, psychological warfare, dismissal from work and cutting off funding.



Conclusion

The Turkmen political system was founded in Turkey and remained under domination of Turkish authorities, affecting the fate of the Turkmen people. The system was exploited in the context of Turkish national policy and in line with Turkish interests. In order to realise this policy, Turkey used a large number of Turkmen affiliated to it and used unfair, repressive, punitive and arbitrary methods against those who rejected Turkish policy. The Turkmen political system has not been able to stand on its own feet since its establishment.

The absence of the Turkmen media led to the ill-development of the political culture of the Turkmen individual, maintaining the weak political cohesion in the Turkmen community. Among the main disadvantages of this situation are:

- The absence of teamwork required for institutional work;
- The inability to take voters to the polls;
- Unconstructive distribution of the electorate's vote;
- Winning of a small number of ineffective candidates.

In terms of the responsible Turkish government departments and the periods, the management of the Turkmen political system by the Turkish authorities can be divided into four stages, which are:

- Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Intelligence Organisation (1991 – 1997);
- Turkish Army (1997 – 2011);
- Turkish Army and Turkish government (R. T. Erdogan) (2011 – 2016);
- R. T. Erdogan (from 2016).



The violation of Turkmen human rights took place by:

- The successive Iraqi governments (1921 – 1968);
- The Ba'ath regime (1970 – 2003);
- The Kurdish authorities (1991 – 2003 in Erbil and 2003 – 2017 in other Turkmen regions);
- The Turkish state (since 1991);
- The religious extremists, including those of the so-called Islamic State (after the fall of Ba'ath regime in 2003).

Turkey followed this harmful policy towards the Iraqi Turkmen, despite that the Turkmen of Iraq:

- Have kinship ties with the Turkish state, as they are considered cousins;
- Being in a very dire situation, because of having been subjected to human rights violations for decades;
- Rely on and trust the Turkish state;
- Regard the Turkish state as their only saviour.

The Turkish state is responsible for the following:

- Impeding the establishment and development of independent professional Turkmen political, strategic and cultural institutions. The Turkmen political and non-political institutions today lack not only the basic requirements for a specialised institution, but also the simplest requirements that any simple institution should have. The political failure of the Turkmen of Iraq and their absence from the Iraqi political arena;
- Therefore, Turkey is responsible for the failure of the Turkmen to obtain their usurped rights, for the continuation of human rights violations against the Turkmen;



- Accordingly, Turkey plays an important role in the assimilation of the Turkmen of Iraq.

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Endnotes

1. The Turkmen political system means the Turkmen Council, the Turkmen Front, the Turkmen parties and the Turkmen civil society organisations.
2. Mohammed Fethullah Gulen is the leader of an Islamic religious organisation known as Service Organisation ‘Society’ (*Hizmet Kuruluşu* ‘Cemaat’); however, Gulen was able to infiltrate all the Turkish state’s institutions, particularly the security and military forces and bureaucracies. Gulen is the major suspect of organising 15 July 15, 2016 coup attempt in Turkey.

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Appendix

Photo No.1 Press release of SOITM Foundation entitled "Violence against the Iraqi Turkmen (Part 2): It continues at the mercy of the Kurdish parties", 29 April 2017

Press Release

Violence against the Iraqi Turkmen (Part 2): It continues at the mercy of the Kurdish parties



Date: April 29, 2017
Ref: PHA-00057

Around 19pm of March 11th 2017, a group of 7-8 masked armed men talking Kurdish and wearing Kurdish costume stormed the house of Mr. M.M. at the Piryadi neighborhood of Kerkuk city. They impersonalized as Kurdish security service (Asayish) and came to search the house for weapons; however, they squeezed the home residents in a room and robbed the house.

Again on March 14th 2017 the house of Mr. E. Sh. in the Gharnata neighborhood and on December 6th 2016 the house of Mr. S.H. in the neighborhood of Sahat Al-Ihtifalat were subjected to the same raid.

These are only few out of tens of similar awful attacks to which the Turkmen of Kerkuk city are recently suffering from. This situation has been continuing since the fall of the Baath regime in 2003.

Since 2003, in insecure and instable Iraq, large part of Turkmen regions, particularly Kerkuk province, remain at the mercy of the Kurdish parties. The Kurds dominate almost all the governmental administration and claim the ownership of these regions. The Turkmen are subjected constantly to kidnappings, assassinations, raiding houses and marginalization. These ruthless offences, which are likely to get out of control and burst into massacres in the near future.

The central Iraqi government and the international community, particularly the United States, the International Coalition and UN, are called to intervene directly to stop such continuous Kurdish suppression against the non-Kurdish components of the Kerkuk city and the whole region ruled by the Kurdish regional governments.



Photo No.2 Article entitled "Clean hands operation in Iraqi Policy: National Turkmen Party under the spotlight" published by Turkish journal *Nokta*, dated March 30, 1996





Photo No.3 Article entitled "Clean hands operation in Iraqi Policy: National Turkmen Party under the spotlight" published by Turkish journal *Nokta*, dated March 30, 1996



Necmettin Erbakan

İhtiyatlı bir dâvaya ile çalınan Özgür Gelinç (Fazilet Sarıbaş) ile tanışması. Genç olması, tabii ki ve başlangıçta istikrarlı temaları, Arslan'ın siyasetin kapılarını açıyor. Böylece, Türkmen toplumuna girmek için zorunlu olarak bilimsel olarak Arslan'ı tanıyıp kabulleniyor.

Bu dönemde, Türkmenler arasında Kite Hasan olarak da tanınan Hasan Özmen'in derinlere girdiğini görüyoruz. Özmen, Şam'tan İstanbul'a Irak rejimine karşı Suriye'de mücadele edenler ile birlikte İstanbul'da Kite Hasan'ın yanına "Arslan" olarak girmek için girmişti. Ama, son kışkırtılı ile İstanbul'da, Özmen'i sık sık duyuyor. Özmen'in Suriye'deki görevi El Muhafız El Soria ile birleştiğinde de bu yıllarda nedensiz olarak çıkarılıyor.

Öğreniyoruz ki, 1994'den itibaren, Süleyman Kite Hasan'ın iyiliği için çalıştığını biliyoruz. Bu dönemde, Irak'ta Kite Hasan'ın davası, yeminin son vermesi için Özmen'i Türkiye'ye getiriyor. Özmen, Türk vatandaş oluyor. Daha sonra Mülkiye Arslan ile tanışıyor, ama İMTP'nin bu düzeyde kadrolarına taşıyor. Bu hızlı yükselişin ardından, zamanında kendisine büyük emeli geçen Sadık Kete'nin hain ilan ediyor. Özmen ile birlikte Türkiye'ye getirilen ve Özmen'in aracılığı ile İMTP'ye giren Türkmen, Özgür Dilekçe Aydar Bayraktar ve Irak'ta yaşadığı dönemde BAAS devleti ile birlikte Türkmen olarak tanınmış.

1990'ların sonlarında temata girdiği için, Mülkiye'de görevli olduğu dönemde, Süleyman Kite Hasan'ın yanına girmek için Irak'ta çalıştığı bir kişiye başvurmuştu. Ancak, Türkiye'ye gelmesi için bir nokta var. Irak'tan Türkiye'ye giden Türkmenler, mal varlıklarını Arslan'a veya Kite'ye bırakıyorlar. Ya bir Türkmen'e devrediyorlar ya da terk ediyorlar. Türkmen için bu durum, yıllarca kendilerini istikrar etmeye çalışan Arslan



İsmet Arslan

ve Kite'ye karşı bir sepi. İmmünlü, bu şekilde olmuyor. Türkiye'ye gelirken vatan şifalı olarak ile de uğurluğu ile Irak'tan ve 1991'de İMTP'ye giren İsmünlü, daha sonra diğer bir kişiyle birlikte Irak'tan Türkiye'ye gelip Türk vatandaşlığına geçiriliyor. Bugün bu kişiler Danimarka'da "siyasi mülteci" olarak yaşıyor.

Arslan'ın 1991'den itibaren İMTP'yi Türkmen toplumunun tek temsilcisi olarak göstermek için çalışan birisi olduğu düşünülüyor. Arslan ve çevresinin varlığı çok sayıda Türkmen'in, siyasetin artık dışına çıkması anlamına geliyor. 1995 yılında başlarında tabandan gelen birisi. İsmet Arslan, Türkmen Birlik Partisi ve Fehil'in içinde gelen Türkmen lideri ile birlikte Nisan 1995'te Türkmen Cephesi'nin kurulmasını "Kite'ye" katılıyor.

İMTP yönetimi bu konuda büyük bir başarıya ulaşmış. Çünkü, Arslan'ın Türkmenler'e yaptığı yardımlar artık İMTP tarafından yapılmaya başlanmış, bu ciddi bir başarı olarak görülmüş. Çünkü, bu Türkmen toplumuna Arslan ve çevresinden memnun değildi.

Dışarıdaki İddia. Cephe'nin kurulduğu zaman itibaren İMTP bu yeni oluşumu kabul etmek için elinden geleni yapıyor. Hatta el altından cephe için bilgilendirme yapıyor. Bu şekilde, Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu.

Türkmen Cephesi'nin kuruluşunda bu durumun bir sonucu olarak görülen birisi. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu.



Mustafa Çavuş

Si. Başkını. Türkmen Kete'nin ile birlikte bu şekilde olduğu düşünülüyor. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu.

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Arslan'ın kendilerine, Süleyman'ın 1991 yılında gittiği birisi. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu. Arslan ve çevresinin memnun olduğu.



İsmet Arslan



Photo No.4 *Türkmeneli* newspaper, "Iraqi Turkmen Front have indicated their willingness to participate in the fourth cabinet of KRG", issue dated January 19, 2000



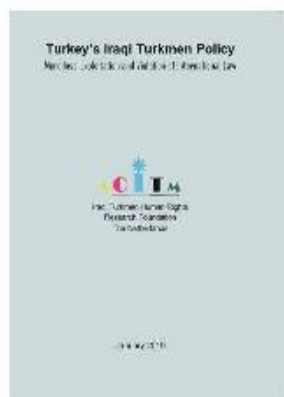
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Turkey's Iraqi Turkmen Policy *Merciless Exploitation and Violation of International Law*

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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