Forum

of

EthnoGeoPolitics

Scope

The aim of the Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics (EGP), or EthnoGeoPolitics in short, 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 univers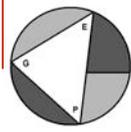ities, institutes and colleges in and outside the Netherlands. The association's journal, *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitcs,* is above all intended to elicit analytic debate by allowing scholars to air their views, perspectives and research findings—with critical responses from others who may hold a different view or research approach (submit articles and responses to info@ethnogeopolitics.org). At the association's website, http://www.ethnogeopolitics.org, one can find more information about its foundation, founding members, aims, activities and publications—in particular freely downloadable copies of the journal's issues.

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(*Announcement*)

ASEEES-CESS Joint Regional Conference at Nazarbayev University
22-24 May 2014   Nazarbayev University, Astana, Kazakhstan

The conference is still open for registration to Attendees (not included in the program), i.e. to all who have a scholarly interest in the region: please visit http://shss.nu.edu.kz/shss/Events/Conferences/ASEEES-CESS_Info

Prof. John Schoeberlein john.schoeberlein@nu.edu.kz
Chair of the ASEEES-CESS Organizing Committee
Director, Eurasian Regional Studies/SHSS/Nazarbayev University

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Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS) http://centraleurasia.org
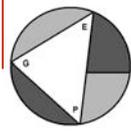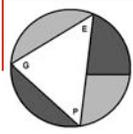
Editorial

Investments and Conflict Management in the Middle East and Central Eurasia

Babak Rezvani

Conflict resolution or conflict management, that is the question. Or is it a non-question? Lately, much is being said and written about conflict management. It is certainly a catchword in present-day conflict studies. However, views and opinions differ about it. Conflict management is chosen above conflict resolution when resolving a conflict seems impossible in the short run.

The aim of conflict management is to alleviate the burdens of conflict off the shoulders of people affected by it. Sometimes a learning process is initiated within the cadre of conflict management; people and scholars have to learn from a conflict. This is a noble and reasonable goal. We should learn from each conflict in order to have a broader knowledge about violent conflicts and in order to be able to solve, manage or prevent them.

One problem, however, is the materialistic and even economistic approach taken in so many projects of conflict management. This approach is informed by a materialistic, and often resource-based, understanding of conflict eruption. Therefore, it is often argued that conflicts are more likely in environments of poverty and destitution and will diminish when people's livelihood prospects improve. As a basic rule, it is believed that offering jobs to the combatants will make them less eager to fight.

This line of thinking is clearly shown in the World Bank's World Development Report 2011, entitled "Conflict, Security, and Development". The materialistic and economistic assumptions may be true in the poorest countries, and whenever the material aspects of conflict outweigh its identity aspects. Such assumptions, however, may not be valid in the context of identity conflicts and tensions prevalent in Central Eurasia and post-Communist states elsewhere (e.g. Ethiopia).

Although the social economic situation and the youth's unemployment may have been among the root causes that took people to the streets in many North African and Middle Eastern countries, the conflicts in these regions go far beyond social economic issues. These conflicts also have an ethno-religious aspect, which is generally neglected in the Western media. This has been the case notably in Bahrain and Syria.

A closer look at the ethno-religious map of the region shows that there is a possibility that the Syrian conflict will spread across the wider region. This conflict may have serious consequences for Syria's direct neighbors. Offshoots of the Syrian conflict already are visible in Lebanon and Iraq. A diffusion of the Syrian conflict into Turkey may have catastrophic consequences. Even the Caucasus may not remain safe from the consequences of the Syrian
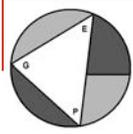
conflict. For Armenian and Abkhazian separatists may (forcibly) populate the separatist regions of Nagorno-Karabakh (and its vicinities) and Abkhazia with ethnic Armenian, Abkhazian (and Circassian) refugees from Syria, in order to change the demographic and ethno-cultural configuration in each of these regions. This in turn may trigger (panic) reactions from Azerbaijani and Georgian authorities, or even from autonomous-minded militants.

Similar ethno-religious conflicts in the wider Middle East have intensified in the last couple of years. Terrorist assaults on Shi'ite Muslims communities have occurred all around the Islamic world, notably in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq, and Al-Qaeda-linked Salafi militants succeeded in some terrorist bombings in Iran. The Wahhabi/Salafi militants have a record of assaults not only on Shi'ite Muslims but also on traditional non-extremist Sunni and (Sunni and Shi'ite) Sufi Muslims, as well as on non-Muslims.

The worsening security situation in Afghanistan, and President Hamid Karzai's recent attempts of reconciliation with the Taliban, are all indications that Afghanistan may again become an international hub of terrorism and extremism if Americans leave that country without having stabilized the situation and cut the foreign support for the Taliban in that country. Extremism and terrorism in Afghanistan and Pakistan are not isolated events and have a negative impact on the security in neighboring countries, such as Iran, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Afghanistan is the place where investments in conflict management are most needed. Contrary to the American strategy of retreat, what Afghanistan needs more than ever are investments in its security sector and state-building in general.

Apparently, not all the money invested in Afghanistan and not all the efforts the international community has made in Afghanistan to bring peace and security have been in vain. Nevertheless, these efforts and investments have not been enough, nor sufficiently successful in themselves. A retreat of the international community from Afghanistan, however, may make all those efforts and investments wasted ones.

The revolutions in Post-Soviet Eurasia—in countries such as Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan—have preceded those in the Arab countries. Today, owing to advanced communication technologies, one event in one part of the world may easily trigger other ones in other parts of the world. Similarly, the protests in Turkey may not be irrelevant to these happenings, as have been Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's public support for Egypt's former President and leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood Mohammed Morsi.

Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Middle East are in many ways related and, therefore, it is not sensible to analyze the situation in one region without taking into account the situation in other regions. Hopefully, the emerging discipline of ethnogeopolitics can offer valuable insights in that regard.

Babak Rezvani   Amsterdam, March 2014
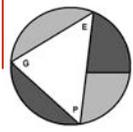
Main Article

Intervention against Marginalization in the Subaltern Space

Sai Ramani Garimella

Abstract   *Caste, India's version of race marginalization has been an acknowledged discriminatory practice. Societal-regeneration attempts in subaltern India have addressed entitlements through affirmative action programmes. Economic empowerment notwithstanding, caste-founded hegemony and violence continue to appear on the public space of community relations, often as ritualized violence. Ostracizing the practice of untouchability could not make much headway in addressing the problems of caste violence. This paper presents a statutory attempt at addressing the violence, the limited success it has achieved, and a few suggestions for extrapolating this limited success.*

Key words: caste, Constitution, marginalized groups, atrocities, criminalization, Prevention of Atrocities Act, special courts, judgments.

Introduction

Marginalization of certain communities, founded upon religious practices, has been a historical and cultural derivation, a practice founded upon the centuries old caste structure in India. Independent India's tryst with governance began with a constitutional acknowledgment of this marginalization and social exclusion of certain groups of the population (officially grouped under the categories of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, hereinafter referred to as SCs/STs).

The Constitution of India proscribed discrimination based on caste. It specifically included special provisions that allowed a percentage-based proportional representation to these groups in the form of reservation in the legislative bodies, government services and educational institutions. It abolished the ignominious practice of untouchability—the anathema of all the discrimination through an affirmative action policy ingrained into Fundamental Rights. Articles 14, 15, 16 and 17 empower the designated groups with educational, economic and social advancement.[1]

These constitutional values were translated into significant affirmative action programmes in the area of criminal law as well, particularly by enacting the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act of 1989. This Act was intended to prevent the caste-based violence against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and *Adivasis* (meaning the Indigenous people. *Adivasi* is a term that has been loosely used in the public space at various levels, but does not find mention in the Constitution) through an institutional mechanism for speedy trial and justice, and ensure relief and/or rehabilitation of the victims of caste atrocities.
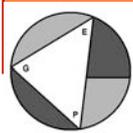
Upendra Baxi, the noted jurist, commented that the legislation was a significant instrument aimed at the promotion and protection of human rights of SCs/STs and *adivasis* (Baxi 1989). However, with the increased incidence of atrocities and massacres of SCs/STs and other forms of caste-based violence like stigmatization practices, coupled with an extremely low rate of conviction for offences and a staggering number of pending complaints, an appraisal of the statutory intervention efforts is an immediate necessity.

Understanding the Concept of Violence

According to the Oxford Dictionary, 'atrocity' is defined as "an extremely wicked or cruel act, involving physical violence or injury"; the word 'atrocious' has been defined as horrifyingly wicked, and of a very poor quality; as extremely bad or unpleasant. The term atrocity thus involves physical and (or) psychological harm and painful experience of individuals or group of individuals.

The noted peace theoretician Johan Galtung stated that violence is present when human beings are being influenced and coerced, so that their actual somatic and mental realizations, as in the consciousness and capacity to resist and react to violence, are below their potential realizations.

Galtung has identified six dimensions of violence, namely: physical and psychological violence; negative and positive approach to violence, as in influencing by punishing the other for an act that the influencer considers wrong and also by rewarding the other when he does what the influencer considers right; whether or not there was an object that was hurt; on the subject of violence (meaning the actor or perpetrator of violence), whether there was personal or direct violence and structural or indirect violence; intended and unintended violence; and manifest and latent violence, manifest violence referring to that which is observable whether or not it is recognized as is the case for some forms of structural violence (Galtung 1969: 168). Latent violence "is something which is not there, yet might easily come about" (Galtung 1969: 172).

Markedly different, the Marxist approaches on crime and violence find causation for violence in the modes of production and the economic relations in society. William Chambliss opined that the different modes of production would result in significantly different social relations, and therefore to different forms of crime and punishment (Chambliss 1975: 150). Susan Easton was of the opinion that criminal behavior would be a highly possible expression of class conflict, and is a derivative of the marginalization and exploitation within the economic relationships in any society (Easton 2008: 117).

The Indian experience of caste violence is often related to the caste-class dichotomy involving socio-cultural values of hierarchical social order, and also involving the feudal and semi-feudal agrarian relations in terms of demands for land and just wages.[2] Theoretically, such experience could be explained in terms of the exploitative nature of economic relations prevalent among the population. Academic scholarship in this has attributed the economic
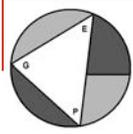
aspect of caste violence to the growth of agricultural civilization in the country and the emergence of agricultural castes where the land owning classes, usually the higher castes, needed assured access to manual labour for agricultural operations.[3]

Caste discrimination, and its violent expressions, has existed in Indian society since times immemorial, and sometimes thrived on the oppressive apparatus of successive incumbent regimes. To borrow a Foucaultian expression in this context, it can be said that the caste as a form of hierarchical observation over a period of time has been used as a disciplining power in the social apparatus, by the higher castes, at the top of the hierarchical caste-pyramid.

Foucault opined that the exercise of discipline presupposes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation. It presupposes an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to induce the effects of power are clearly visible. To extend this understanding of Foucault to caste discrimination and violence, it can be said that the hierarchical caste structure was the social apparatus that ensured continuance of social discrimination and extended legitimacy to the practices that were violent and disciplining. Caste in its classical form was coercive and disciplining, either through direct violence, or by hegemonic imposition (prophecy of the Gods, instilled fear for the power of the written word, etc.).[4]

Also there were instances of alternation between the two mechanisms: between direct acts of violence and the violent practices that find source in the hegemonic social order, and the intensity of violence dependent on the resistance offered by those who were subjugated, those who were the objects of this disciplinary power which also worked and works as a discriminatory power (Omvedt 2006: 39-40, 98-100).

Caste violence takes many forms extending over a wide spectrum of human activity; all such activity is geared toward ensuring continuance of the social stigma attached to a certain community. Often there was spatial segregation, rules governing physical proximity with the members of such identified 'outcast' or 'low-caste' communities, sexual violation, insults and epithets demeaning the value of the labour performed by these communities, caste massacres and other forms of physical violence and abuse, individually as well as collectively (Rao 2009: 27). Such acts of violence, by regular observance, have become ritualized forms of violence.

Studies on the Incidence of Caste Violence

Based on three major incidents of caste violence—the 1968 *Kilavenmani* [a village] *dalit* massacres in Tamil Nadu (*dalit*, in literal terms, refers to those who have been broken, ground down by those above them in a deliberate way[5]); the 1977 *Dharampura* [a place] *dalit* atrocities in Bihar; and the 1981 Gujarat riots between Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and *Patels* (a community belonging to the higher castes)—Barbara Joshi was of the view that violence against SCs/STs is rooted in the economic relations of communities, the societal values of caste differentiation and the inability of the State to enforce a new form of
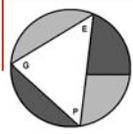
"social contract"based on the constitutional values and a secular legal framework (Joshi 1982: 676-687). She observed:

> The significance of this relationship has been all too thoroughly overlooked in analyses that have assumed a simple dichotomous equation: economic conflict equals 'class'; only conflict over ritually defined norms equals 'caste'. Unfortunately, 'class' and 'caste' make misleading synonyms for 'economic' and 'ritual'. Especially when used as mutually exclusive opposites, this casual vocabulary all too easily leads us from recognition of very real economic components in conflict to the unexamined assumption that economically based identity class consciousness has superseded primordial identity in this case, ritually defined caste identity as the organizing principle of conflict. (Joshi 1982: 682)

Antagonistic elements of caste differentiation have embedded themselves in the political institutions at the grass-root level, termed as *Panchayats*—literally meaning a group of five people (often the powerful men of the village habitat), thus providing a significant power base to perpetuate caste-based deprivations. Etymologically, *Panchayat* refers to an administrative and justice system at the village, the basic territorial unit of governance. This system comprises five elders of the village, men of wisdom and respect; sometimes women have also found membership in the *Panchayat*.

The Constitution in its empowerment policies has identified the *Panchayat* as the nodal institution for translating the empowerment policies into governance programmes. However, these *panchayats* are often found to be comprised of members from one particular caste, thus creating a not completely unfounded impression that governance and justice in that geographical area would have caste intonations (Hayden 1983: 291,294). Despite legislative and policy interventions, the presence and continuation of antagonistic social, economic and religious cultural elements of caste differentiation makes the enforcement of human rights difficult if not impossible (Thorat 2000: 2).

The work of Debashish Chakraborty *et al.* (2006: 2478-81) finds linkages between atrocities and the social mobility of the marginalized. Using secondary data reported in *Crime in India*, the authors concluded:

> One shortcoming of the country's approach towards welfare of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is that atrocities are mostly taken as a law and order problem, divorcing them from the larger strategy for social justice. Atrocities do represent a significant hindrance to socioeconomic mobility of the community. Policy-makers should take into account that ending violence on scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is a basic requirement for success of the redistributive policies, rather than assuming that those policies would result in termination of violence/discrimination. (Debashish Chakraborty *et al* 2006: 2480).

Significant Reasons for Atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

According to the Report of the Commissioner of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, 1988, the following findings constitute the main reasons of caste atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes:
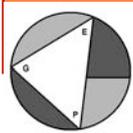
1.   Unresolved land disputes related to allotment of government lands or distribution of ceiling surplus lands to SCs/STs persons.

2.   Tension and bitterness on account of non-payment or underpayment of the prescribed minimum wages.

3.   Resentment of upper castes over the manifestation of awareness among the SCs/STs about their Constitutional and legislative rights and privileges.[6]

Economic conditions of SCs/STs have not witnessed a paradigm shift as constitutionally envisaged, largely owed to the fact that land-reform laws and policies have not been sincerely or sufficiently implemented, thus allowing caste-based institutions to survive. Data shows that the majority of SCs/STs and *Adivasis* are still landless (Annual Report of the Ministry of Labour, Government of India 2009: 10). In other instances, while land was allotted to SCs/STs, possession could not be taken because of fear of violence from the dominant caste or class.

Arguably, an essential feature of both the feudal and capitalist modes of production is the lack of a sufficient, reasonable low wage compensation, which has caused protests by the marginalized, leading to massacres of the marginalized, in recent times, at *Khairlanjee* for instance.

The word *dalit* comes from the Sanskrit root *dal-* and means broken, ground-down, downtrodden, or oppressed. *Dalit* refers to one's caste rather than class; it applies to members of those menial castes which have born the stigma of untouchability because of the extreme impurity and pollution associated with their traditional occupations. *Dalits* are 'outcastes' falling outside the traditional four-fold caste system consisting of the hereditary *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya*, and *Shudra* castes; they are considered impure and polluting and are therefore physically and socially excluded and isolated from the rest of society.

Most of the *Dalits* depend upon the same upper caste-Hindus, as in the *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya* and *Shudra* castes who are perpetrators of violence and violators of their rights and dignity, to earn a living. The practice of "untouchability" characterises this relationship. So it is found that there is little reason for them to report violence and much to protect their meagre livelihood (Ramaiah 2011: 164).

A. Caste Identity, Stigmatization and Violence

One's particular caste is a form of identity, and also an affiliation to a community—with some elements of sovereignty—that has a limited authority to establish its own system of governance (Hayden 1983: 291-294). Governance and economic relations have been founded upon caste and have been an important reason for the occurrence of caste founded violence, whenever there was resistance to such structured identity and the economic activity that was attached to such identity.[7] In rural India, especially because of insular family and social structures, caste continues to be a primary source of social identity (Anirudh Krishna 2003: 1171-1190).
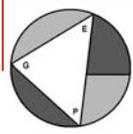
These identity structures have continued to exist despite political measures to empower the marginalized groups at regular intervals. Human Rights Watch in its report on *dalits* in India in the year 2007 reported that in more than 50% of India's villages *dalits* were denied entry into non-*dalit* houses.[8] Lower wages for the same category of work to the *dalits* is a reality in a quarter of India's villages. Further health services to the *dalits* were also a difficulty in about 25-30% of Indian villages.

Often political participation is also founded on caste identity. Despite attempts to improve the social status of the marginalized, there is some evidence that social representations of the stigma associated with marginalized groups have been internalized by members of these groups themselves, possibly due to socio-structural constraints upon social mobility (Jaspal 2011: 27-62). In addition to actual cases, the social boycott, which often lasts for a considerable period of time, puts tremendous pressure on the growth potential of the community. For example, social boycot (against *dalits*) was in place for nearly a year in an Andhra Pradesh village and for two years in a Gujarat village (Jaspal 2011: 27-62).

B. Violence against the Marginalized—Intra-Caste and Intra-Group Violence

Another facet of the problem of violence against the marginalized is the *dalit* intra-caste and intra-group violence. It is a reality that subaltern India witnesses violent social relations not just between the upper caste Hindus and the *dalits*, but also amongst the various *dalit* communities. As Ambedkar opined, most of the *dalits* being illiterate, ignorant and god-fearing people, they practice religion and the caste-system, although not to the extent of the practice by the upper castes. Therefore, caste-discrimination takes place within the social relations of the *dalit* castes as well, with such relations often having violent overtones as well (Ambedkar 1989: 9-15). They, therefore, remain internally divided and are thereby unable to take collective action against caste oppression.

C. Demographics and Caste-based Violence

As Ambedkar has argued in his writings on caste discrimination in India, *dalits* never constituted a collective group with sufficiently large numbers that would have enabled them to fight caste-based violence (Ambedkar 2003: 34, 42, 143). Although the SCs/*Dalits* and STs account for 16.6% and 8.6% of total Indian population respectively[9], they constitute too small a number in each village to muster enough courage to demand the support of the law and going to the police and the judiciary to punish the caste Hindus for violating their rights.

There are 1241 individual ethnic groups notified as Scheduled Castes by the State. Navsarjan, an NGO working in the area of *dalit* rights and inclusion activity, reported that *dalits* control less than 5% of the total resources in the country. An alarming 62% of them are illiterate and half the *dalit* population is below the poverty line (BPL).

The National Human Rights Commission in its Report on the Prevention of Atrocities against the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes quoted a study reported by Human Rights Watch in its 2007 report that covered 11 atrocity-prone districts for four years that showed that 36%
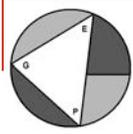
of atrocity cases were not registered under the Prevention of Atrocities (POA) Act but under the provisions of the general criminal law of the country.[10]

Furthermore, in 84.4% of the cases where the POA Act was applied, the cases were registered under wrong provisions with a view to concealing the actual and violent nature of the incidents. The study also documented that an average of 121.2 hours lapsed between registration of murder cases and initiation of police action, and for rape cases the gap between the incident and the reported action was an average of 532.9 hours. The non-registration of cases, apart from reflecting caste bias and corruption, has also been attributed to the pressure on the police to keep reported crime rates low in their jurisdiction.

The report further stated that according to police records, during the period of four years, the incidents of atrocities increased by 90% due to truthful reporting, and yet police reports showed that the general crime rate was down by 1.35%. The increase in crime rates is not viewed favourably in police administrations and has negative implications for the police personnel involved. With a view to presenting lower crime rates in the district, under-reporting of information is done at the district headquarters, which gets further diluted at the State and National level.

D. Slack Legal System

Debashish Chakraborty *et al* (2006) also opined that delayed punitive action against the culprits of caste-based violence ensured continuance of a permissive environment for repeated occurrence of such violence. The authors commented that while there has been a significant increase in the number of crimes charge-sheeted under this legislation, delay and absence of prosecutions and convictions of offences remained a major area of concern.

This research paper considered the data on the incidence of crime, largely ranging from the period 2001 to 2011. It addressed two specific issues:

a) The nature of the violence reported, specifically the kind of offences that arguably amount to caste-based violence, and

b) Data on the cognizance of caste-based violence by the exclusive special courts established for expedited trials.

The analysis also presented a few important facets—on the functioning of the institutional mechanism established by the Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989.

The data for this research has been sourced from the records of the National Crime Records Bureau, Government of India. Utilizing this data, this research attempts to answer the following fundamental questions that (should) form part of the performance appraisal of this legislation:

a) Has there been an increase in the incidence of crimes as defined under this legislation over the years despite the presence of the legislation?
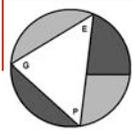
b) What is the volume of complaints taken cognizance of by the exclusive special courts, including those that have resulted in a disposal order, either of conviction or acquittal?

Data and research analysis

Legislation, especially in pluralist societies, has been an important mode of ushering social change. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act of 1989 in its stated objects and reasons reads: "Despite various measures to improve the socio-economic conditions of SCs & STs, they remain vulnerable. They are denied a number of civil rights; they are subjected to various offences, indignities, humiliations and harassment". [11]

The Prevention of Atrocities (POA) Act, and socio-criminal legislation driven by the affirmative action philosophy, had three stated purposes:

- prevent the commission of offences i.e. atrocities against the members of marginalized caste communities;

- ensure an effective and efficient justice delivery mechanism that ensures speedy trial and decision with the least possible procedural irritants for the victim/complainant.

- provide relief and rehabilitation to the marginalized castes subjected to violence.

The legislature was aware of the exclusive nature of caste-based offences against marginalized communities, as different from general criminal law offences. Taking note of the hegemonic practice of marginalization and its ill-effects on the socio-economic structures within the communities, India's national parliament attempted to penalize and thereby delegitimize overt and covert practices laced with caste hegemony.

Identifying a list of practices that reeked of caste-based authoritarianism, prejudice and structured violence, the legislation, the POA Act, sought to eliminate by penalization the marginalization and violence associated with mass atrocities.

Some of the common forms of hegemony and marginalization that are now statutorily proscribed are wrongful occupation of the land belonging to SCs/STs; institution of false and frivolous cases against the SCs/STs; depriving the SCs/STs from exercising their right to vote; intimidating, outraging the modesty, as in attempt(s) of criminal acts against *dalit* women with intention of sexual intercourse where such attempt(s) did not result in a sexual intercourse, and rape of *dalit* women; murder, arson or abuse and insulting the *dalit* on his/her caste lines etc. Verbal abuse could also be characterized as stigmatization and hence, an atrocity.

As opined by Rao, the POA Act, in succinct detail, specified that acts ranging from humiliation and economic terror to ritualized violence fall within the definition of atrocity, thereby ensuring that all forms of violence against the marginalized are criminalized (Rao 2009: 256).
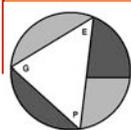
Incidents of caste violence have increased in spite of the efforts at legislative intervention, and even after the enactment of the POA Act. The nature and intensity of the incidence of violence is also an alarming fact, aptly summarized in the following observation: "The incident of assault and abuses is nothing but because he [the victim] belongs to SC and he is lower in the eye of [the] upper caste *Reddy* (a member of the *Reddy* community) person accused. The offence is not only against [the victim] but against society and ultimately the nation".[12] The statement only confirms the fact that violence is a result of the unequal caste reckonings in society, despite the overall political and economic empowerment.

Table I   Comparative incidence of crime against Scheduled Castes (2007-2011)

Offence	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**Variation 2011 to 2010 (%)**
Murder	674	626	624	570	673	18.1
Rape	1349	1457	1,346	1,349	1557	15.4
Kidnapping/Abduction	332	482	512	511	616	20.5
Dacoity	23	51	44	42	36	-14.3
Robbery	86	85	70	75	54	-28
Arson	238	225	195	150	169	12.7
Hurt	3814	4216	4410	4376	4247	-2.9
PCR Act offences	206	248	168	143	67	-53.1
POA Act offences	9819	11602	11143	10513	11342	7.9
Other	13490	14623	15082	14983	14958	-0.2
Total number of complaints	30031	33615	33594	32712	33719	3.07%

Source: Crime in India-2001-2008, National Crime Records Bureau <www.ncrb.nic.in>

Table I allows one to conclude that there has been a significant increase in the incidence of caste-based violence in India. For example, in the year 2011 there were nearly a thousand more incidents of caste-based violence reported as compared to the previous year. In the period 2007-2011, there has been a significant increase of caste-based atrocities, especially with regard to the offences of Murder, Rape, Kidnapping & Abduction and Arson.

Also pointed out in this table is the incidence of mass atrocities, a fact one can derive from the figures on the offence of arson. As has been pointed out in the examples of the *Khairlanji* massacre, mass atrocities against the scheduled castes has been an often practised means of 'disciplining' by the upper castes in India. The year 2011 saw a 12.7% increase in the incidence of arson against the SCs.

The figures shown in Table I further reinforce the fact that caste violence is often used as a major disciplining activity (Jaspal 2011; Anand 2012) by the perpetrators of this violence. These figures also indicate that the State is much behind in attempting to weaken and
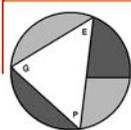
eradicate this disciplining power of the Upper Caste, despite constitutional entitlements, punitive measures and affirmative action programmes.

Table II Annual data of the cognized complaints before the Special Courts (2001-2008)

Year	Cognizance of complaints (including pending)	complaints withdrawn by		Disposal			Pending	%	% Convict-ion
		State	victim	Convicted	Acquitted	Total			
2001	105099	81	1042	5855	11310	17165	86811	82.6	34
2002	114464	9	1410	6556	13847	20403	92642	80.9	32.1
2003	114882	21	1351	5937	14866	20803	92708	80.7	28.5
2004	112409	23	2227	5962	16040	22002	88157	78.4	27
2005	109072	12	953	6145	14495	20640	87467	80.2	29.8
2006	106754	4	991	5662	14833	20495	85264	79.9	27.6
2007	106646	0	1146	6572	14698	21270	84230	79	30.9
2008	106773	6	814	6743	14548	21291	84662	79.3	31.7

Source: Crime in India, National Crime Records Bureau (2001-2008)   www.ncrb.nic.in

Table II details the status of the complaints of caste-based atrocities taken cognizance of by the courts during the period 2001-2008. While the number of crimes reported during the stated period has significantly increased over the years, complaints pending hearing and final decision are recorded at approximately 80%.

As has been reported by Debashish Chakraborty *et al* (2006), the low conviction rates reflect a lackadaisical attitude by the investigation institutions and the courts, thus allowing a permissive environment for the perpetrators to sustain and continue with their practice, with renewed vigour. The withdrawals of cases, by the State and also the victims, could also be because of the absence of courts within the victim's geographical proximity, making it difficult for the victims/complainants to pursue and persist in the complaint.

The figures reflect the absence of a system sensitized towards the needs and fears of the complainants, and the difficulties experienced in pursuing their grievances through democratic institutions.

The situation of violence and atrocities on SCs/STs and denial of justice is a democratic deficit that constitutes one of the causative factors accounting for the extremist/naxalite movement(s) in rural India as identified by the Expert Group of Planning Commission. It observed: "Widespread practice of social discrimination, untouchability, violence, and atrocities against the weaker sections is an index of the failure of the promises made to the oppressed people of this country" (Report 2008: 2).

While the mandate of the Prevention of Atrocities (POA) Act has been the establishment of Exclusive Special Courts to address caste-based atrocities, many States have designated their existing District Sessions Courts as Special Courts under this law. It goes to demonstrate the absence of sensitization towards the reasons and objectives of this legislation; when a
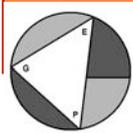
general criminal court is designated as a special court under this law, concerns emerge about the nature of procedure that may be adopted in such courts and its compliance with the legislation's objectives.

For ensuring speedy trial, as few as nine States have established Exclusive Special Courts in 171 districts in the country. Attempts need to be made to extrapolate this example across the country, at least in the districts identified as atrocity-prone.

Conclusion

Incidents of atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes increased despite political and social empowerment of SCs/STs. Many cases of caste atrocities go unreported; and reported cases are often not properly investigated. The conviction rates in the cases of caste atrocities are abysmally low, raising questions about the effectiveness of the law and legal institutions.

The justice mechanism envisaged under the Prevention of Atrocities (POA) Act needs to be addressed in order to increase its strength and vitality. A few areas that could be part of this (re)assessment are given below, keeping in mind the findings and observations described in the preceding pages.

1.   The category of offences that are penalized under this legislation should be amended to criminalize a few other practices that are a manifestation of ritualized violence —obstructing the use of common property resources; causing physical harm or death on the allegation of practicing witchcraft; imposing social or economic boycott; and preventing entry to any place of public worship.

2.   The number of Exclusive Special Courts needs to be increased, as well as ensuring their presence in all the districts, especially in identified atrocity-prone areas. For example in the state of Chattisgarh, there are only six special courts, whereas the state has twenty districts.

3.   The special courts existing in each district have to be Exclusive Special Courts, exclusive in their establishment and functioning. It has been noted that in many districts existing Session Courts have been designated as special courts. This could have impacted the volume of work handled in these courts apart from affecting the quality of work, as the sensitization towards the needs and objectives of the special legislation might be found wanting.

4.   A witness protection scheme under the POA Act could be an effective way to address the problem of frequent withdrawal of complaints before the Special Courts.

5.   There ought to be a more humane procedure and attitude adopted by the special courts ingraining the spirit of the legislation. Reducing the rigours of the trial process must be realized through a suitable amendment to the legislation.
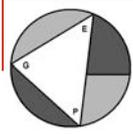
6.   Investigative procedures, often been subject to censure by the courts, need to be structurally revised. A few possible structural changes could include the creation of special units with female police officers for receiving complaints in all police divisions of the district declared atrocity-prone. This would help the victims of atrocities in filing their complaint, who no longer need to travel to the district headquarters town to file their complaint. Also investigation of the complaint becomes easier for reasons of being nearer to the scene of crime. The special unit should familiarize itself with the main intention of the POA Act and such sensitization should permeate the entire process of investigation. Investigations should be completed and reported in a prescribed time-frame. The POA Act could be amended to provide a mandatory period for completion of the investigation and the judicial processes in any complaint filed under the legislation.

7.   To address the issue of pending cases under the POA Act, special public prosecutors trained on the legislative vision need to be appointed. The performance of these courts, in handling the volume of cases through proper methods and procedures, could be monitored by a special unit/department of the High Court, which is the nearest appellate authority.

8.   It has been often noted that there are very few appeals made against acquittal decisions by the special court. There should be a supervisory mechanism to review such acquittal decisions, and also ensure that there is an appeal option by the State in such cases.

At the broad policy strata of governance, there has to be significant efforts at deconstruction of caste-based social hierarchy, and also special efforts to ensure that the benefits of deconstruction penetrate all levels of the caste subaltern sphere. Such efforts at deconstruction, however, should not affect the affirmative action benefits that were decided on the basis of the caste and yet were received only by a few groups in the subaltern sphere.

Efforts at controlling and eventually eradicating caste-based violence have to take the deconstruction discourse beyond the affirmative action entitlements debate. They have to address a significant stratum of the caste hierarchy—i.e. educate the upper caste Hindus against indulging in mass violence and other violent and repressive practices.

Caste atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have to be linked to the discourse of violation of human rights of SCs/STs, not only by the State and its various agencies but by the society at large. The criminal justice system needs to be more humanized, incorporating the best practices of adversarial and inquisitorial jurisprudence. Informed and sensitized administration of justice on the strength of human rights is the goal to be worked for.

Prof. Sai Ramani Garimella is Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Legal Studies of South Asian University, New Delhi, India.

Endnotes

1. Article 38 further mandates the State to secure a just social order. Articles 243, 330, 332 and 338 provide for political empowerment of the marginalized sections of society.
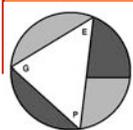
2. http://www.unisa.ac.za/contents/faculties/humanities/sosw/docs/ASPJ-2005/ASPJ2005-3-1-08-Caste-and-class.pdf (accessed on 31-08-2013).

3. Krishnan, PS: Keynote address delivered at the National seminar on Implementation and Impact of SCs/STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 on the Scheduled Castes organised by the Centre for Social System, School of Social Sciences, JNU, March 22-23, 2000.
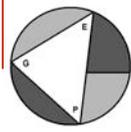
4. http://www.academia.edu/1773515/Caste_and_Hierarchical_Observation (accessed on 04-07-2013).

5. The word *dalit* also inherently includes the notions of pollution and *karma* (a hindu religious understanding of actions of present and previous existence) that were used to justify caste hierarchy and exclusionary practices.

6. Annual Report of the Ministry of Labour, Government of India (2009-10). P. 61-68, 95-96, 167-170.

7. For example, the *dalit* caste called *valmiki* has been performing manual scavenging occupations for generations. Despite the activity of manual scavenging being prohibited by the State, the members of this caste have often been subjected to violence by the higher castes for resisting performing this activity. The valmiki community's attempts at giving up such a demeaning occupational caste identity are seen as attempts to contest the authoritarianism and authority of the higher castes in that geographical area.

8. Hidden Apartheid: Caste Discrimination against India's "Untouchables" Human Rights Watch Volume 19, No. 3 (C) February, 2007, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/india0207webwcover_0.pdf (accessed on 10-12-2013).

9. Census of India 2011, Release of Primary Census Abstract, 2013, http://idsn.org/fileadmin/user_folder/pdf/New_files/India/2013/INDIA_CENSUS_ABSTRACT-2011-Data_on_SC-STs.pdf (accessed on 06-07-2013).

10. http://www.nhrc.nic.in/Documents/Publications/reportKBSaxena.pdf (accessed on 10-12-2013).

11. http://www.ncdhr.org.in/others/Draft%20postion%20paper%20presented%20on%2011th%20Aug.pdf (accessed on 18-09-2013).

12. Shri N. Balayogi, Special Sessions Judge, Guntur ., Case Guntur 55/S/2003 http://annihilatecaste.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/SCST_Postion-Paper-Amendments-Proposed-2010.pdf (accessed on 02-10-2013).

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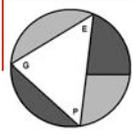
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Editorial Note

The critical responses concern an earlier version of Sai Ramani Garimella's article than the one published here. Rather than reacting to these critical responses in a separate text, the author made some improvements on his own, and in response to some comments from the editorial board and the critical reviewers.

This leaves the editorial board in a quandary: it must decide whether to include the critical responses to an earlier version of the article even when only the latest version is shown here (option 1), or to approach the reviewers anew with a request to offer new comments on the latest, improved version of the article (option 2). As option 2 tends to be (too) cumbersome
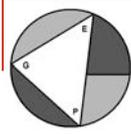
and timeconsuming a process to undertake, we have opted for option 1—even though the critical responses are somewhat 'outdated' vis-a-vis the final version of the article. The editorial board will try to find a structural solution to this problem; any suggestions on this issue are welcome.

- Caspar ten Dam, Executive editor

Dalits and Scheduled Castes as interchangeable terms

(First Critical Response to Sai Ramani Garimella's "Intervention against Marginalization in the Subaltern Space")

In the first paragraph in the section of the Introduction, immediately after the Abstract), the author has talked about the special provisions of reservation for SCs and STs in various sectors. It is a good starting point. However, it is also worthwhile to mention explicitly about how much percentage was reserved for these groups in government jobs and public universities, and since when.

At the end of the section of the Introduction, it is contextual to describe briefly about the Mandal Commission established in 1979 under the chairmanship of B. P. Mandal, which was obliged to submit a report to the Indian government on reservations and quotas for SCs and STs along with many other things. Though many of the recommendations are not implemented yet, some of its recommendations with regard to reservations in government services and higher education have been implemented in the subsequent years and in the recent past (in my knowledge).

In the first paragraph of the section 'Studies on the Incidence of Caste Violence', the author has mentioned about Barbara Joshi's view on violence against SCs and STs based on three incidents of caste violence. Why is Joshi's view so important based on these three incidents? It must be clear.

The terms Dalits and SCs have been used as interchangeable throughout the article. Therefore, it must be mentioned at the beginning that these two terms mean the same. The author should remember that readers of the journal are not only those from India.

- Pawan Kumar Sen is consultant at Interdisciplinary Analysts (www.ida.com.np) in Kathmandu, Nepal, and PhD candidate at Political Science, Leiden University, the Netherlands.

NB: do you have any comments on Sai Ramani Garimella's article and/or the critical responses? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or through the contact form at http://www.ethnogeopolitics.org.
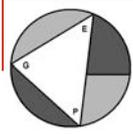
Interface between Caste structure and the State: Complexities and Issues

(**Second** Critical Response to Sai Ramani Garimella's "Intervention against Marginalization in the Subaltern Space")

This is an important topic that needs to be addressed in social research. The author has attempted to engage with the complex interface between the primordialist structure of caste and the post-enlightenment institution of the State. The author endeavours to demonstrate the ramifications of this interface in a rapidly changing society. However, the following issues need to be resolved regarding shortcomings in the article.

A: The title is not clear and it does not reflect as to what the author seeks to state. It has to be made clear as to what intervention actually indicates, who intervenes and as to why. So, it would be more appropriate to formulate the title as 'Statutory Intervention in the Subaltern Space: Caste-Based Atrocities and the Question of Social Justice in India'.

B: The analogy between caste and race indicated in the abstract is ambiguous. It needs substantiation in the introduction.

C: The scope and research questions have been specified in the middle of the paper, they need to be mentioned at the outset.

D: The author has not defined concepts such as Dalit, caste, subaltern space and marginalisation. [Concept of Dalit defined in the author's published version here. Ed.]

E: The aims and objectives of the paper are not clearly stated. The author must specifically show as to how caste-based violence and affirmative action is being linked.

F: The author may use the Foucaultian notion of power and then explain the notion of disciplining. [This Foucaultian notion is briefly discussed in the published version here. Ed.]

G: Since the paper is a discourse in the sociology of law, the sociological element concerning caste based violence in the context of rising Dalit consciousness and political mobilisation has to be understood. The question as to why such violence continues despite the economic and political upliftment of the Dalit has to be addressed in a better way. In this regard, the works of Gopal Guru can be looked at.

H: The very nature of caste has transformed drastically in India. From a mere economic categorisation backed by religious connotation to a ritualistic social behaviour, it has metamorphosised into a macro social identity with apparent political symbolism. This phenomenon can be understood by the works of M.N. Srinivas, Andre Beteille and Badrinarayan.

I: The text needs to be edited and tightened to take care of grammatical and punctuation errors. Citations need to be complete. [Hopefully any such errors have been dealt with. Ed.]

J: The author can revise the paper according to these suggestions.

- Anonymous
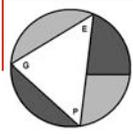
Main Article

Non-traditional Threats in Central and South Asia: Problems and Prospects

Oybek Makhmudov

Introduction

In the Central and South Asia regions the challenges of facing non-traditional threats have become more complex and challenging in recent years. If before 2001 the main threat was posed by just a few main militant groups, recently their numbers have increased to some 40 groups that are freely operating in Afghanistan, Pakistan as well as crossing over to Tajikistan. These developments show that increasingly, foreign clandestine centres are promoting, assisting and sustaining the new militant groups, even designing and financing them in their geographical, ethnic and political determinations.

The increase in the number of research centres with military affiliations, working as analytical centres of the air force and other branches of the armed forces, have investigated the origins, objectives ideologies and tactics of insurgent movements. The latter have exported their "products" to practice in other regions as testing grounds—and have increasingly become involved in criminal activities, or have increased their contacts and cooperation with apolitical organized crime groups.

Therefore lately it has not been easy for both regions to cope with the increased scores of mobile militants groups. Meanwhile, some groups are openly operating in South Asian countries, while they are banned in Central Asian countries as terrorist organizations. They migrate to safer regions where the legality of their existence is opaque i.e. where so-called anti-terrorism legislation is not as developed or not directed against them.

Other risks include activities of members and adherents of militant groups gradually penetrating to business and political realms, like them emerging as parliament deputies and representatives of political institutions as is happening in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. This article focuses on various non-traditional threats facing both regions in their varied dimensions and suggests ways to deal with possible and likely scenarios.

Wider Nexus

For over a decade now, the eyes of most security analysts have been riveted on Afghanistan. The counter-terrorism approaches in South and Central Asia focus mostly on containment and curtailment measures to prevent threats of political violence and (violent) criminality, because militants, operating in Afghanistan, have nexuses with European, Albanian, Turkish and Kurdish drug mafias. These transnational organized crime networks have increased their
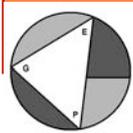
presence in the main production centres and have begun to gain more control over the whole supply chain. These networks also actively defend their markets and production networks. The militants control the opium and heroin traffics, money laundering, trade in small arms and convert their entire proceeding to hard currencies. For instance, drug money provides opportunities for organized crime groups; and drug proceeds enable terrorist groups to increase their manpower capacity for militant activities in the regions.

The regional security organizations operating in both the Central and South Asia regions are not so effective in countering the penetration of militant groups and drug trafficking, as from Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as from the Golden Triangle, where opium crops spread to more than 157 thousand hectares.[1] The "high tribunes" of international organizations have urged the local governments to adopt interdiction measures to curb narcotic traffic. But in reality, the foreign military troops have been freely making a huge business for themselves through drug traffic, by delivering heroin in military cargo planes that are rarely checked at the military bases.

It has also been reported that huge amounts of precursors and angidrids—the main ingredients for heroine production—are transported to Afghanistan across the Pakistan border. Recently transporting heroin from Afghanistan became costly; hence the militants are transferring some of their laboratories to Central Asia. As a result Kyrgyzstan's annual heroin output potential has suddenly skyrocketed to an estimated 180 to 220 tons.

The illegal laboratories in Kyrgyzstan also use indigenous ephedra that produce around 500 tons of ephedrine, which can be used in amphetamines. The Chu Valley, which extends across northern Kyrgyzstan and southern Kazakhstan, yields a very large crop of marijuana. That region is adjacent to the metropolitan centres of Bishkek and Almaty. According to reliable expert sources, Kyrgyzstan's recent drug exports to the outer world have outpaced that of Burma.[2]

For both regions other main threats emanate from the hidden laboratories that manufacture methaqualone and mandrax in addition to trafficking of ATC[3] from Myanmar, that ultimately spread to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) markets and beyond. Also the increased drug use worsens the AIDS epidemic, mainly from Vietnam. The narco dealers are directly linked to and also directly engaged in small arms trafficking, explosive materials and human trafficking.

Drugs facilitate the quick flow of huge funds through *hawala* (informal value transfers according to Islamic law and customs) channels, and through illegal traders, who in turn finance most of the militant activities. During the start of the financial crisis of 2008, the drugs acted as "liquid goods" that enhanced the turnover of Western banks. These banks subsequently required additional financial investments that helped them avoid bankruptcy.

It is thus evident that banks do have interests in laundering "drug money". Therefore the organized criminal nexus has grown too deep and too complex in South and Central Asian regions to be uprooted by simple interdiction measures. Who reaps the most benefits from
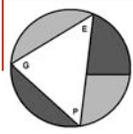
increasing non-traditional threats, and why it is essentially prone in these two regions, need further explanation.

Contributing Factors

Several factors contribute to the non-traditional threats posed by militant and criminal groups. First of all, it seems that big actors are not genuinely interested to see a strong Central and South Asia. Strong and powerful nations in the regions are not in consonance with their geopolitical strategies, concepts and ambitions. Escalating military situations in the regions provide them opportunities for exporting arms. Thus the major exporters of small arms delivered to Afghanistan are from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Russia and the United States (Small arms survey 2004: 128). Unfortunately, these weapons are recently being used by non-state actors such as religious extremists and organized crime groups.

Experts opine that more that 10 million small weapons are currently circulating in Afghanistan illegally.[4] And through porous borders with Tajikistan, they could easily proliferate across the Central Asian region. These small arms are freely available on the black markets of Afghanistan and Pakistan, especially in the Peshawar bazaars.[5]

The huge quantities of these weapons could even, by themselves, increase the probability of new or intensified armed conflicts between ethnic groups in the region. Besides, the UK, France, Germany, Canada and Italy have approved huge arms supply exports to Saudi Arabia, some of which may fall into the hands of illegal political groups in that country. Over the years thousands of political or religious detainees have been jailed in Saudi Arabia.

The ongoing supply of small arms will lead to a regional arms race and a possible diversion of arms to militant groups, including radical fundamentalists and terrorists.[6] In the short term, involvement of external actors in the Central Asian region would only deteriorate the security situation with an accelerated arms race that may make the region even more unstable than it is now.

The presence of religious-militant bases in Afghanistan could easily frustrate the proposed energy projects for exporting Central Asian energy resources to the countries bordering the Indian Ocean and beyond. This would ultimately deprive the Central Asian countries of a primary source of income, acutely dependent as they are on exporting energy resources to developing countries in particular.

The regional security structures lack the capacity to adequately prevent or combat the threats posed by well organized militant groups waging guerrilla warfare and following other various tactics. Moreover, the militants successfully use the rugged, mountainous terrain to cover their penetration into various cities of the regions. In Kyrgyzstan a radical booklet was found that described the economic situations in Bangladesh and Malaysia to draw attention and attract followers from among the illiterate population in rural areas.

The second contributory factor to non-traditional threats is the fact that the regional security organizations in the region have limited capacity, inadequate experience and lack unified
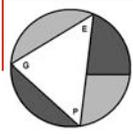
counterinsurgency and counterterrorism strategies. Sometimes, military forces rush to the field without a night-fighting capacity, inferior air support, inadequate communication facilities, no bullet proof armour, no proper maps of the area, no essential rations, and with helmets incapable of withstanding fire from a Kalashnikov assault rifle.[7] However, the militants, armed with light weapons and night-vision goggles, are well armed for a prolonged armed struggle.[8] All these deficiencies stem from the following problems:

Firstly, the member states of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) do not have well-trained, mobile forces ready to counter local terrorist operations, as in the mountainous terrain of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The CSTO's military strategies are mostly directed at preventing macro-level threats emanating from conventional and regional armed conflicts rather than facing or countering militant activities in local areas.

Secondly, over the last few years there has been increasing mistrust between Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian regional security organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the CSTO in countering terrorism. Member countries do differ on collecting precise information, which would be used for prohibiting funding of the enemy, and for finding, fixing, targeting and then effectively engaging the enemy. The process remains too slow and creates barriers in dealing with the extant reality.

Thirdly, there is limited or no interregional military cooperation to face the challenges of non-traditional threats. As a result, fleeing insurgents are not caught, they roam free and all counterinsurgency operations are rendered fruitless. The absolute absence of a common approach to countering non-traditional security threats in the region is a major roadblock to dealing with these threats.

Fourthly, a number of regional security organizations carry functions duplicated by their counterparts in other countries. This creates more problems than had been anticipated, and could have been avoided. As states grow complacent and incapable, the militants grow strong and capable. Despite overlapping memberships in the three regional bodies (CSTO, SCO and OSCE) there is a lack of coordination among the members and a substantive duplication of efforts instead, including in their counterterrorism and counterinsurgency strategies.

The non-state actors either enjoy overt support of one or more particular states or operate covertly in connivance with state agencies. They link the entire nexus from Central Asia to the "Golden Crescent" (comprising Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran) and the "Golden Triangle" (comprising Myanmar, Laos and Thailand). These are the two major routes of drug trafficking.

Many terrorist organizations have links to nongovernmental international organizations. For instance militant organizations have regularly received financial support from liberal
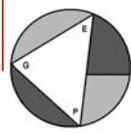
offshore banks, foreign law enforcement agencies, companies, wealthy individuals and NGOs as Aid and Relief Organizations.

However, money from narcotic trafficking constitutes the bulk of their financial support. Estimates suggest that drug trafficking from Afghanistan has already reached an export value of around $4 billion per year of which only a quarter goes to the opium farmers and the rest is appropriated by local officials, militants, field commanders and drug dealers.[9] The UNODC estimates that a huge volume of opium is consumed in the Islamic Republic of Iran, approximately 450 metric tons per year. The total consumption of opium in the neighborhood of Afghanistan such as in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan has been estimated at 650 metric ton per year.[10]

Cyber Issues and Security

In midterm perspectives, it may well be that virtual warfare would remain primarily an information war by militants groups and other non-state actors waged against the state to affect and destroy the cyber-warfare capability of the state. Making it dysfunctional is the leitmotif of many or most militant groups, by targeting the computerization systems in business, social services, governance and defense sectors.

Cyber tactics has become one of the most "effective tools" in the hands of religious militants, especially after the encyclopedia of "jihad" was displayed on the internet space. The main objectives of such cyber tools are increasing the number of adherents through websites, twitters and blogs. Countermeasures against cyber warfare by these militant groups are underdeveloped or even undeveloped in the Central and South Asian regions. Therefore, cyber war creates another critical shift in the nature of new militant threats in the regions.

The idea of the "one-man army" is more completely realized in the shape of the well-trained hacker than it had been ever hoped for by the militant through any other technology. The safest and surest mode of communication for the extremist is through the Internet and through the use of various "chat houses". Since no one knows—or can easily know—who is at either end of the "electronic conversation", no one knows too the significance of what is being communicated. The militant groups have become so sophisticated in encrypting their messages that even the spoken words do not communicate the real meaning of the conversation. And thus the propagandist messages of militant groups are spread.

Actors Sans Results

Like 'too many cooks spoil the broth', as in the double standard applied by external regional organizations in countering terrorism—making in that sense the statement true that 'one's man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter'—has led to lack of practical studies on new types of non-traditional threats. Current studies still tend to focus on related issues of the same traditional threats. As a result, non-traditional actors, who pursue their objectives of
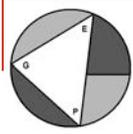
creating vulnerable security situations in the Central and South Asia regions, directly penetrate neighbouring countries.

Besides, these regions have become a hotbed of some of the most ferocious religious militant groups, mostly pursuing geopolitical objectives. Most militant groups receive their training and learn all relevant fighting tactics in training camps located outside the regions in the Caucasus and Pakistan. There they combine various nefarious methods to escalate conflicts. They play it as a geopolitical game to involve international militant groups, who help them effectively achieve their strategic goals. Therefore, there is an urgency to consider the following counter measures:

First of all, there is a need to activate prevention mechanisms to detect and deter destructive propaganda, coming from the militant groups. They have been using sophisticated communications systems for expanding the base of their radical propaganda through internet and digital systems. Such activities ought to be considered a cybercrime against the state in many countries and the guilty must be brought to book.

Collective precautions should be taken to prevent religious propaganda aimed at manipulating views of the population by provoking them with false religious ideas. Efficient countermeasures in this direction would be of immense use to harness religious and cultural potentials of the Central and South Asian regions against destructive militant ideologies in these regions. What the countries of Central and South Asia need to do is to launch a global educational and informational campaign against militant terrorists and religious extremists in order to educate the population about their heinous designs.

The Central and South Asian regions are located at the crossroads of historic junctions between multitudes of cultures, religions and civilizations marked as of crucial geopolitical significance. Samarqand and Bukhara played a significant role in the Islamic world as civilizations with 2500 years of history. So were the Seljuks in the Turkic world. The seminal contributions of the Timurid and Baburid rulers were no less significant. For this historic-cultural reason alone, outside powers should help to promote stability, democracy, tolerance and prosperity in the region, rather than undermine these by narrow, self-interested designs.

After 2014 most external actors in the region would focus more on Central and South Asia. Therefore it is urgent to collectively throw a fresh look at the issues related to regional stability. The Central and South Asian countries have significance to the Western external powers as strategic partners in the region to be pitted against other regional powers such as Russia, China, and Iran. Such a power configuration in the region is in the interest of the West and would protect the commercial concerns in the exploitation of Caspian energy resources. The primary American interest is in security across the region, which entails its continuing presence in Central Asia, particularly after the turbulence of the Arab Spring.

After the withdrawal of (nearly) all Allied forces from Afghanistan in 2014, new or increased threats could easily emerge across Central and South Asia. Western countries may use the fluid situation by forming closer bilateral relations with certain countries in Central and South Asia, as a divide-and-rule strategy to weaken the cooperation between those countries
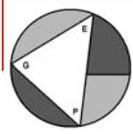
in the region, and thereby further their own geostrategic and even hegemonic interests. Implementation of an effective counterterrorism strategy in these regions requires a well thought-out roadmap, collectively approved and collectively pursued so that the collective endeavor would ultimately bear fruit.

A solid regional security system in both the regions through the SCO framework may contribute in this regard to establish such a counterterrorism strategy. Local experts opine that it is necessary to create an "anti drug belt" around Afghanistan in which joint counter operations with EU, UN and neighbors of Afghanistan and Central Asian countries would play a prominent role in throttling the financial flow to militant activities. However, a CSTO dominated by Russia would not approve an active role by the SCO. Therefore, with a view to effectively counter the menace of contemporary militants, a universal approach should be worked out to combine all possible measures: military, political, academic, educational, religious, and cultural.
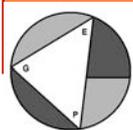
Russian Interests

Enhancing the military and strategic presence of Russia in the region entails increased vulnerabilities of Central Asia's security systems and economic development. In addition to obtaining control over energy resources of Central Asia, the US will try to involve Central Asian countries in alternative energy projects, so as to limit Russia's power and influence which it has already done through the pipelines of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and the proposed Nabucco. Russia is keenly interested in restoring or enhancing her influence in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Russia's traditional fields of action would be direct: energy policy, military-technical cooperation, and other plans to shift the balance of military forces in the region to its own benefit. Projects for transporting gas from Turkmenistan and the broader Caspian Basin across Afghanistan to South Asia, which were aborted by the instability in Afghanistan, could be revived in the long run in the context of a broader effort to restore and improve road, rail and other transport and communication links. The revival of Central Asia's future links with India, which have been frustrated by the war in Afghanistan, opens up the possibility of access to Indian ports as well as markets for Russian and Central Asian goods.

Given Russia's ongoing interest in the North-South freight transportation corridor, Russia can play a particularly important role in developing infrastructure and bringing the landlocked Central Asian countries into the global marketplace by connecting them to that corridor. Here, the United States could also play a role by encouraging and assisting Russia in the development of this route as a complement to the East-West transportation routes from Central Asia across the Caspian, to the Caucasus and the Black Sea.

While the East-West route became a focus of early competition between America and Russia, the development of a North-South route, binding Central Asia to Europe and Asia could easily become a platform for cooperation. Without cooperation between the big external powers, the prospects for stability in Central Asia are fairly slim. In addition, replaying the

"Great Game" would only ultimately undermine the US and Russian efforts to safeguard their national interests in the region.


Conclusion

Generally, the problems for the stability of South and Central Asian regions are all too often worsened by the narrow geopolitical concepts and initiatives of the external powers. Concepts such as "Wider Black Sea Strategies","Bigger Central Asia","New Silk Routes" and others initiatives have one hegemonistic objective in common: to ensure total control over strategic regions by creating "rings [spheres] of influences".

The ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan as well as the insurgency movements and religious conflicts spreading across the Middle East should serve as a sobering reminder to foreign powers to change their narrow geopolitical views in favor of setting up a global organization to quickly implement common counter measures to dispel the threats of terrorists and other militant groups. Thus the only way to mitigate or even defeat the common threats from such groups is by way of overcoming differences and setting up a collective mechanism for combating various non-traditional threats never earlier present in such a degree and constellation in the two regions. Central Asian and South Asian geo-cultural, geopolitical and geo-economic milestones could provide long-term anchors to regional security and stability.

Dr. Oybek Makhmudov is Director at the Center of Youth Political Scientists, Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

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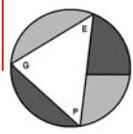
The roles of America and other actors in Central and South Asia

(First Critical Response to Oybek Makhmudov's "Non-traditional Threats in Central and South Asia")

First of all I would like to note that the problems discussed in the article are topical today. Therefore it is a timely article. I am not going to give much attention to the article's positive aspects—deep and relevant insights of the author, which are rare in similar articles, but rather more to the things that could be added and changed.

First, the role of America could be more emphasized and developed in relation to different issues mentioned in the article. For example, the article's author is probably right when he writes that "militants, operating in Afghanistan, have nexuses with European, Albanian, Turkish and Kurdish drug mafias" and that "foreign military troops have been freely making a huge business for themselves through drug traffic, by delivering heroin in military cargo planes that are rarely checked at the military bases". At the same time he truly notes: "During the start of the financial crisis of 2008, the drugs acted as "liquid goods" that enhanced the turnover of Western banks. These banks subsequently required additional financial investments that helped them avoid bankruptcy. It is thus evident that banks do have interests in laundering "drug money"."

In this context I would argue that America has been the main initiator of the conflict in Afghanistan, while its troops never truly fought the "drug lords" there. Also America was a big supporter of Kosovo independence (despite or even because of the Albanian drug mafia factor) and exactly its banks can and often do take an active role in drug money laundering from all around the world. From that point of view America's role in broader Asia seems to be very controversial and should be analyzed in more detail.

Besides, Saudi Arabia is one of the most active terrorism supporters in the world and at the same time it has been a very close American ally for a long time. In fact, it is not clear how much the United States truly fight terrorism, and how much they take part in its development (like in the case of the Syrian conflict).

Second, there is a contradiction in the article. Firstly the author writes that "big actors are not genuinely interested to see a strong Central and South Asia. Strong and powerful nations in the regions are not in consonance with their geopolitical strategies, concepts and ambitions". But then later in the article he notes: "The primary American interest is in security across the region, which entails its continuing presence in Central Asia, particularly after the turbulence of the Arab Spring".

Therefore it is not clear what exactly is the interest of America. The arguments above show that it could be more negative (disruptive) than positive (constructive) in the region, seeking just to stay in it while effectively doing nothing. Then it is hard to expect that America will help Russia in creating a "North-South" corridor.

At the same time it is difficult to agree with the notion that Moscow is interested in this North-South corridor. Now it seeks to create the Eurasian Union and wants to effectively
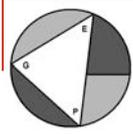
encapsulate the Central Asian (CA) states in a new Soviet Union. Therefore, Russia does not need new trade ways, which could give CA countries more alternatives (especially keeping in mind the fact that China as a Russian competitor in the region is already taking their resources).

One more questionable issue is the role of the SCO as described by the author. He writes: "A solid regional security system in both the regions through the SCO framework may contribute …. to create an "anti drug belt" around Afghanistan in which joint counter operations with EU, UN and neighbors of Afghanistan and Central Asian countries would play a prominent role in throttling the financial flow to militant activities. However, a CSTO dominated by Russia would not approve an active role by the SCO".

Several things should be noted in this context. First, for the moment the SCO is still a meeting forum without real military background—differently from the CSTO. Of course the CSTO must do a lot to strengthen its potential, but in perspective it really pretends to become the main security guarantor in Central Asia. At the same time China seems to accept this development, because it is better for Beijing to leave Russia the role of leader in that region than take it on itself. Therefore, there is no real competition between CSTO and SCO.

Finally, one could hardly expect from the West (let alone Pakistan) to create an "anti-drug belt" around Afghanistan, given the role of America mentioned above (which helps to explain the mistrust between CSTO and NATO mentioned by the author).

Finally, the author rightly mentions the Chu Valley as a center of the drug trade, posing a big threat to the political stability of CA countries, especially to Kyrgyzstan, where the central government is very weak. At the same time government representatives in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are reported to take active roles in the drug trade themselves, a situation that must be combatted and resolved before any real progress can be made.

Despite all my critical remarks, it should be said once more that in general the article is very perceptive and openly discusses the problems other authors often avoid. The material just could be presented in a better way with some additional insights, deeper analysis and structural improvement. Hopefully the author would do so in a modified and expanded article in the foreseeable future.

- Dr. Vadim Volovoj (PhD political science) is a Senior Expert at the Center for Geopolitical Studies in Lithuania; see further www.geopolitika.lt
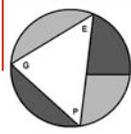
Security Threats in Central and South Asia: Shared or Distinct?

(Second, Extensive Critical Response to Oybek Makhmudov's "Non-traditional Threats in Central and South Asia")

Kamoludin Abdullaev

The topic of the reviewed manuscript is of high significance. The region of Central Asia is not Russia's quiet backyard anymore. Since the early 2000s its importance for world politics is defined by the proximity to Afghan-Pak—a combined theater of operations against al-Qaeda and its Taliban allies and the world's most dangerous place and its affiliation with major Eurasian actors like Russia, China, Iran, Pakistan, and India. A tendency of seeing the Afghan-Pak conflict exclusively from a South Asian perspective, ignoring security challenges in neighboring Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan is misguided. The author's article may help to fill this gap.

Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan share Afghanistan's northern border. This region is divided from Pakistan by a narrow (around 20 km wide) strip of Afghan land. This makes it the closest post-Soviet territory to the Afghan-Pak conflict zone. Furthermore, Central Asians share ethnic ties with Afghanistan's largest non-Pushtun Muslim "minorities", as some 40-50% of the Afghan population have their brethren "pori daryo" (beyond the river).

However, it is unclear what specific militant groups the author is talking about in his paper. Do these include local protest groups that use violence occasionally, or are these exclusively international jihadists and terrorists? Seeing this difference is crucial for scholars writing on this region and making propositions on how to make the region safer.

Among insurgents in Afghanistan and Pakistan are individuals from neighboring Central Asia. The biggest group of jihadists of Central Asian origin is associated with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). It is comprised mostly of members of the banned Islamist organizations originating from the Republic of Uzbekistan and their families, who escaped (or performed *hijrat*) to Afghanistan between 1993 and 2001 onwards. The IMU represents the biggest group of foreign fighters in Pakistan. According to Pakistani authorities, around 90% of foreign militants operating in tribal zone are Uzbek.[1]

In addition to Uzbek *muhajeeds*, hundreds of poor Tajik, Uzbek, Tatar, Kazakh and Kyrgyz youth have headed to religious schools in Pakistan for study in the past two decades. Many of these schools remained open to pro-jihadi Pakistani parties, which provided their recruits with special training facilities in the Pakistani tribal areas and Afghanistan. The Central Asian governments have perceived these radicalized students (*talibs*) as potential cadres for terrorism.

Finally, radical Tajik Islamists, the irreconcilable segment of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) involved in the Tajik civil war (1992-1997), have found their own niche in an
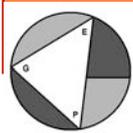
International Islamic Brigade in South Asia. Having refused to make peace with the secular Tajik government and integrate into Tajik society, these seasoned fighters opted to join jihad in Afghanistan. Most of them came from the Rasht Valley (Gharm) in Tajikistan.

These three groups—IMU with its break-away Islamic Jihad Union, radical pro-Salafi students, and the former UTO combatants—represent the bulk of the Central Asian jihad against the United States and its allies. They have diverse backgrounds and motivations that put them at the heart of the conflict in South Asia. They may have different if not conflicting approaches, in choosing roles they want to play in the region.

There is considerable disagreement over how the conflict in South Asia (Afghanistan and Pakistan particularly) may impact the neighboring Central Asian states. These assessments can be grouped into two broad categories:

Encouraging assessment

According to this assessment, the conflict in Afghanistan-Pakistan, by and large, has South Asian parameters. After the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2002 the IMU is spent force, a "tired scarecrow", "a brand... generating revenues for intelligence consultants, career boosts for DOD officers, and a rhetorical crutch for the Uzbek government and its apologists".[2] The foreign jihadists who joined the Pashtun strife are developing an exit strategy. This is a good sign that the coalition forces have managed to localize the conflict and diminish the global support for the Taliban. Furthermore, al-Qaeda and the Taliban are amorphous by their structure, have dissimilar agendas, show little enthusiasm in developing a regional strategy, and have limited resources and disinterest in interfering in Central Asia.

Alarmist scenario

This assessment paints the conflict in Afghanistan and Pakistan as showing a vivid tendency of internationalization.[3] The Obama Administration's 2009 troop surge in Afghanistan elicited a matching response from radical Islamists worldwide eager to fight against the United States and its allies in South and Central Asia.[4] Al-Qaeda and the Taliban have solid organizational structures, appeal, and potency, which allow them to spread into Central Asia, Xinjiang, and the Northern Caucasus. Taliban need foreign fighters, as they are better trained and better armed than local Afghan rebels.

The alarmist assessment is supported enthusiastically by local Central Asian governments and Russia. Russia particularly, in the period between the two Chechen wars (1996-1999), was keen to prove the existence of ties between rebels in its breakaway republic and the global Islamic cause. Likewise, the Tajik government wants to present itself as the biggest victim of terrorism and a reliable ally in the fight against it.

The US-NATO forces are leaning toward the more optimistic assessment of the problem. The principal US objective in Afghanistan has been the destruction of the Taliban and denying al-Qaeda a safe haven. The recognition that Taliban not only survived but also expanded in neighboring territories requires a principal and resource-consuming strategic shift. So far, the
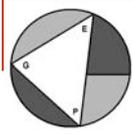
United States is not ready to drastically alter its vision of the conflict and has no clear strategy that can secure such a shift.

The author of the reviewed article seemingly supports the alarmist assessment of security situation in the region. In his opinion, 'some of the militant groups that freely operate in Afghanistan and Pakistan, cross over to Tajikistan'. Indeed, the penetrations of radical Islamist groups in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan from Afghan territory have taken place many times since the 1990s and some of them including the last one (in Tajikistan's Tavildara and Rasht valley in 2009-2010), raised some concerns about whether the Afghanistan-Pakistan conflict was spilling over and deteriorating the security situation in Central Asia.

These concerns are not fully grounded, however. It is safe to say that al-Qaeda's "Tajik plot" (if it indeed existed) failed in 2009-2010. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) did not find it necessary to intervene with a mission in Tajikistan. Despite mostly deserved accusations of weakness, corruption, mismanagement and incompetence, the government of Tajikistan so far has managed to gradually stabilize the situation relying on its own recourses.

It has been more than twelve years since the global jihad was proclaimed in Afghanistan (in October 2001). Have the Central Asian Muslims responded to this call for jihad? The answer is likely to be "no". No Taliban emerged and no Muslim rage has been detected in Central Asia against the West. There have not been protests against local rulers for supporting the US invasion of Afghanistan.

Pan-Islamism never prevailed over local, sectarian and national interests in Central Asian and Afghan political agendas. Throughout the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s no *mujahedeen* or Taliban forces have directly targeted Central Asian neighbors despite the latter's support of the Soviet and Western military missions.

In fact, the conflict in Tajikistan's Tavildara and Rasht valley has little to do with the US presence in Afghanistan, Taliban and al-Qaeda. More likely it was a continuation of the civil war between the two major Tajik factions.

Against this backdrop, IMU appears to be a suppressed group of militants that joined the Taliban out of hopelessness and not because of deep-seated desire to build a caliphate with Afghanistan at its core. Similar to IMU, the irreconcilable elements of UTO suffered internal problems at home. They have shown no interest in fighting in support of the Taliban, who have long been antagonistic toward the Tajik-dominated Northern Alliance.

Likewise, no feeling of solidarity has been developed between Afghanistan-based Tajik and Uzbek communities, mirroring the actual "cold war" between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The number of ethnic Tajiks in IMU is relatively low. In support of the view claiming Central Asia's relative distance from the global jihad, one may point out that Central Asia is not a territory "occupied by the infidels", such as Chechnya, Xinjiang, and Kashmir.
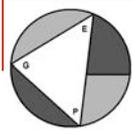
Central Asia is not in the "jihad zone", since no images portraying Muslim suffering and death in Central Asia are available on TV or Internet to attract volunteers for jihad from all over the world. In light of this, one should be skeptical of Tajik and Uzbek authorities' interpretation and the media coverage of terrorist activities in their territories.

Nevertheless, people in Central Asia view South Asia with aversion and alarm. They are increasingly associating their future with violence in South Asia and growing Taliban and even Al-Qaeda influence.

Even if the threat is not real, people's overall perception is pessimistic. The threat of radical Islamism emanating from Afghanistan-Pakistan has been deeply entrenched in the political culture of Afghanistan's neighbors since the Soviet-Afghan war. It justified the building of foreign bases and enhancing military cooperation within the framework of the region's major international organizations led by Russia and China: the CSTO and the SCO respectively.

Accordingly, outsiders see Central Asia through the same lens of radical Islam and as an arena for potentially "another Afghanistan." Alteration of this paradigm is a tough challenge, and major domestic and international stakeholders including Russia, China seem unwilling to dispense this seemingly overstated threat, which has served them well as a universal political tool in achieving their goals.

In sum, in both of the above assessments (encouraging and alarmist), it is obvious that the conflict in Afghanistan-Pakistan will have mid- and even long-term impacts on the region.

The reviewed manuscript focuses on various non-traditional threats facing regions of Central and South Asia. In particular, the author mentions militant groups, as well as drug-trafficking and heroin production, and this means that these problems are defined in the paper as non-traditional. However, these issues (that is illegal drug business, proliferation of jihadism and terrorism) are of the highest importance for world politics and cannot be called non-traditional.

In my understanding, non-traditional threats are, as a rule, "softer" and less visible and obvious than traditional ones. I would suggest the author to connect these with each other to see how they interrelate in order to deepen our understanding of the security threats in Eurasia.

The author also writes that the militants are transferring some of their laboratories to Central Asia, and "as a result Kyrgyzstan's annual heroin output potential has suddenly skyrocketed to an estimated 180 to 220 tons." This "alarmist" information should be checked thoroughly. Central Asia-based heroin laboratories are very rare (if any) as they cannot compete with Afghan heroin laboratories.

Virtually all of the heroin shipped to Russia from Central Asia is made in Afghanistan. Central Asia is a major trafficker, not producer, of heroin. Also, since late 2001 till the present
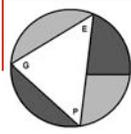
in a NATO and US-controlled Afghanistan, opium production and heroin manufacturing survived and even risen and this fact has not been admitted in the article.

When it comes to conclusion and prospects, the author proposes to set up "a global organization to quickly implement common counter measures to dispel the threats of terrorists and other militant groups"; and he also believes that "Central and South Asia need to launch a global educational and informational campaign against militant terrorists and religious extremists in order to educate the population about their heinous designs". Good idea, but non-realistic. The nations of these two distinct regions (Islamic vs secular, or to be precise, Islamic vs Muslim) have different if not conflicting approaches and security threats perceptions.

Even among post-Soviet Central Asian states threat perceptions vary. Tajikistan and Uzbekistan for example are in conflict over their understanding of the sources of terrorism and of the nature of political Islam. Uzbekistan uses a struggle against Islamic fundamentalism as a pretext to oppress any kind of dissent. The Uzbek government considers Tajikistan a haven for radical Islamic groups, especially the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). The Uzbek government also fears that a part of the sizable Tajik population residing in Uzbekistan may support Islamic extremism.

Unlike Uzbekistan that puts hard pressure on all opponents of the regime, also by labeling them "fundamentalists", Tajikistan opened political space for moderate Islamic parties in the region. Currently, the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) is the only Islamic party in Central Asia to be included in the political process.

Over the years, the IRPT has moved toward moderation, despite governmental pressures and largely ungrounded accusations of terrorism. The IRPT is the only Islamic party that succeeded in gaining popular support and achieving visible political results. In neighboring countries, the rising Islamic militancy is more a result of the repressive counterterrorist policies than its cause.

Most of the Central Asian states and Russia have exaggerated Islamism and the Taliban threat, both to justify strong cooperative international security measures against the perceived common threat and to gain support and assistance of Western governments. Declaring another "global war on terrorism" in Central and South Asia may result in an overall worsening of the situation, boosting both authoritarianism and radicalization of moderate Islamists in the region.

The reviewed paper brings us the idea that despite their diverse ideological trajectories, all states of the region under study are confronted with similar internal problems, which are supplemented by external tensions. Domestic conflict triggers include discredited elites drawn into parochial feuds and near-collapsed state institutions.

Throughout Central and South Asia, Muslims encounter various problems including corruption, poverty, health issues and unemployment that produce complex responses, including tolerance of radicalism, militancy, and violence.
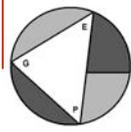
In Central Asia, the major security threat largely lies in the failure of political and economic transformation, growing authoritarianism, widespread corruption, and other political, social and economic ills that have little or no connection to religiosity or the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan. If these problems are not addressed, even the defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan will not eliminate the threat of "talibanization," as a destructive de-modernization and involution process, in Central Asia.

Instead of building up the military capabilities by channeling millions of dollars to corrupt governments, the West and the international community at large, should seek to strengthen national political institutions and processes, support state and civil society-building, aid economic development, and help the regional governments in fighting drug-trafficking. Such a strategy would have a great potential to combat traditional and non-traditional security threats in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as ensuring stability in Central Asia.

Dr. Kamoludin Abdullaev is an independent scholar from Dushanbe, Tajikistan, with over thirty years of experience in the study and teaching of modern history of Central Asia with a focus on Tajikistan; see further http://kamolkhon.com.

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NB: do you have any comments on Oybek Makhmudov's article and/or the critical responses? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org or post these on http://www.ethnogeopolitics.org.

Some of these comments the Editorial Board may publish as Critical Responses (maximum 3,000 words) in the next issue of the journal. Extensive critical responses with own source references may be published as full-fledged, separate articles—like Abduallev's response to Makhmudov's article. Please supply your name, contact details, academic and/or other professional titles and affiliations, as well as your research specialisms and any major publications.
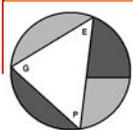
Egypt 2013: What can you tell?

Fadi Elhusseini

Genuine democracy requires practice and partnership, and cannot be realized aloof from the people. Mobilizing crowds to replace the ballot box is very dangerous as the lust for power and authority can be cast in popular demands, and gain pro forma legitimacy. In order to put forward a truthful analysis, one should call a spade a spade.
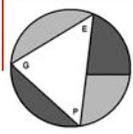
Coup d'état

First and foremost, what the army has committed in Egypt is nothing but a "coup". Discharging a President who was democratically elected through fair elections (the first of its kind in decades in Egypt), the suspension of the constitution (voted for by referendum), the resolution of the Shura (legislative) Council and the closure of radio and TV stations in synch with scores of arrests without warrant or court orders, are all signs of a coup.

Meanwhile, the attempts to draw an analogy between what happened on June 30, 2013 and January 25, 2011 is erroneous. In the revolution of January 25th 2011, the toppled regime did not derive its power from democratic and fair elections and its supporters didn't have any real presence, on the ground, when compared to the protesters. As for what happened on June 30th, removing a President that took power through fair elections and who has evident presence and supporters in every city in Egypt is an entirely different case.

Moreover, the allegations the Egyptian Army tried to make were marred by a lot of falsehoods and misleading statements. Talking about siding with the people in the face of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) is erroneous, especially if the classification criterion is the presence in squares and streets. This is because the bias and siding would be to one side's advantage at the other's expense.

Additionally, saying that the bad performance of the previous government was one of the main reasons that prompted the military action to stop the country's political and economic decline is misleading too. Evaluating the performance of a President or a government cannot be reasonable after less than a year in power, bearing in mind the difficult political, economic and social conditions Egypt suffered before and during this year, plus the continuous instability and demonstrations throughout this year.

Egypt 2013 and Chile 1973—Similarities and differences

In effect, the toppling of President Mohamed Morsi and the ensuing violence and human rights violations, committed mainly by the army in Egypt, retells the 1973 US-funded *coup d'état* in Chile.

The main difference between the two cases is the role of external and internal factors. For instance, in Chile, the coup was instigated by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the following government was ostensibly supported by the United States. In Egypt, poor economic performance, government wrongdoings, the state of polarization and the continuous incitement against Muslim Brotherhood (MB) were the main reasons behind the coup. In the case of Egypt there is no evidence of external involvement prior to the coup. Even the welcoming reaction of some Arab countries who have started to pour money in order to assist the new *de facto* government, does not prove any external role either.

Despite such differences, overall the Egyptian coup appears as a repeated scenario of the Chilean *coup d'état*. First and foremost, the two coups took place within the context of major global and regional events (Cold war in Chile's case & the Arab Spring in Egypt's case). Freely elected presidents were civilians (Chile's Salvador Allende was a physician & Egypt's Mohamed Morsi is an engineer and PhD holder) and they came to power with a narrow majority of the electoral vote.

Both toppled presidents were overthrown by military commanders (Augusto Pinochet in Chile & Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in Egypt), who had been promoted and assigned as Commanders-in-Chief of the army by Allende and Morsi respectively. Chile and Egypt were living through constitutional crises and massive economic and social instability as a prelude to coups.

Last but not least, the clash in both cases was between two ideological camps; the conservative-dominated Congress of Chile (US supported) versus the socialists (USSR supported), while in Egypt the conflict was between the MB, as a representative of 'moderate' Islam, against the liberals as representatives of the 'secular' camp

Muslim Brotherhood in Power

Throughout the one year of their rule, the MB failed to assuage Egyptians' fears (particularly those of their political and ideological opponents), and could not walk the walk of other successful Islamic parties in the region, like Turkey's Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP) whose political and economic success was striking and dubbed by many Arabs as a model to emulate. Thus, it cannot be denied that a major reason behind this current state of affairs is the lack of political experience of the MB, which was reflected in a number of controversial incidents.

The most striking mistake the MB made was passing the new constitution, despite opposition from Christians and others in civil society. This has caused a rift between the MB
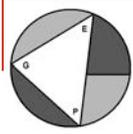
and the rest of civil society and numerable political actors in Egypt's overall society. The rift widened after a series of changes brought about by Morsi's government of Prime Minister Hisham Qandil, who appointed new governors and refused a national consensus government. The dismissal of presidential adviser Khaled Alameddine, a member of the senior leadership of the Salafi Nour Party, is a stark example of how the MB began to lose many of their allies.

While suspicions mounted, the political exclusion of non-MB actors became evident and new political appointments of MB members and their supporters and allies corroborated (or at least seemed to corroborate) these suspicions. Such actions and decisions deepened and increased uncertainty, and the MB's attitude was interpreted as a rejection of any form of political partnership with other segments of society, especially non-Muslim ones.

Furthermore, and following the hasty dismissal of Defense Minister Tantawi and Chief of Staff Sami Anan, discontent among security and military forces became prevalent. This led dozens of officers to support the revolution (June 30th), especially after Morsi's accusations that the security forces where incapable of protecting MB headquarters during certain riots by anti-MB protesters.

Such a tense environment came in tandem with poor political performance, the continued economic downturn, declining rates of employment and investment and accusations of marginalizing several segments of the society, all leading to a growing state of polarization. Tension and incitement escalated, fiery speeches, articles and feverish TV shows aimed to attack the other side became common, until the eruption of the coup d'état occurred.

This coup represents a tragic culmination and critical point of the increasing polarization in Egyptian society, exacerbated by a debilitating and ultimately self-defeating "zero-sum" mindset—the gain by one can only be achieved at the expense of the other—by numerous social, political and military actors in this country's increasingly divided society.

Prognosis

First, it should be underscored that disqualifying the MB, or any other political or social actor, from political life will have momentous repercussions. The longer violence, social hatred and exacerbated cultural polarization lasts, the less likely it is to develop a sound democratic environment and thereby a pluralist political culture in Egypt. For that, it is important for newly fledged democracies to understand that tolerance should replace hatred and partnership should overcome disqualification, and that this is the sole path towards more healthy and stable societies.

Another conclusion which can be drawn is that the longer the coup-makers remain in power, the more likely their rule will turn into dictatorship, even if they reinstitute some semblance of democratic practice. The moment such regimes sense a menace to their reign, they would start gritting their teeth to protect and bolster their rule, which would express itself through propagandist vitriol and demonization of perceived and actual opponents.
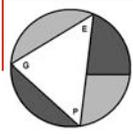
Simply put, the Egyptian experience of the Arab Spring was within striking distance of achieving a sound and durable democracy, yet this will not be realized at this stage, except in the event of a peaceful transfer of power from military to civil institutions, in tandem with better educating people on how they can practice their democratic choice, peacefully, and accepting partnership and living side by side with the others.

Fadi Elhusseini is an Associate Research Fellow at the Institute for Middle East Studies in Canada (www.imesc.org), and a PhD candidate at the University of Sunderland in the UK.

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Democracy requires much more than Elections and Majority Rule

(Extensive Editorial Comment on Fadi Elhusseini's "Egypt 2013: What can you tell?")

Babak Rezvani

Many people call the toppling of Morsi a revolution and many others regard it as a coup d'état. Can it be both? I think it can. It is a delusion to believe or assume that militaries have no roles in revolutions. They often have played key roles by actively or passively taking sides.

The removal of Morsi from power was preceded by widespread popular protest. The rules of democracy prescribe that a government fulfills its period of government and that change of government proceeds by democratic elections or by an act of parliament (depending on the country's constitution).

Therefore, it is doubtful, and perhaps irrelevant to label the removal of Morsi from power as either a revolution or a coup. One thing is, however, certain. Democracy is not, and should not be, only about voting and a dictatorship of majorities over minorities. The rights of the opposition, ethnic and religious minorities, vulnerable social classes should be respected in a true pluralist system and culture of democracy.

Nevertheless, during the reign of Morsi the secular-minded people felt threatened by the growing Salafi or Salafi-like radical Islam, and the members of minorities such as the Christian Copts were harassed and their churches burnt. The Islamist President Mohamed Morsi was officially not from the Salafi An-Nour party, but represented officially the Muslim Brotherhood. Nevertheless, as many facts show, he had a Salafi-like Islamist agenda and could not maintain the peace and order in Egypt.

It is remarkable that Morsi began his speech at the Non-Aligned Movement's Summit (2012) in Tehran by praising the Sunni caliphs. Iranians, and Shi'ites in general, are very sensitive to this, and not lastly because of what Omar Ibn Khattab, the second Sunni Caliph did to Iran. Morsi's remark was very provocative. Nevertheless, Iran wanted to restore diplomatic
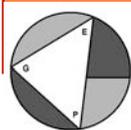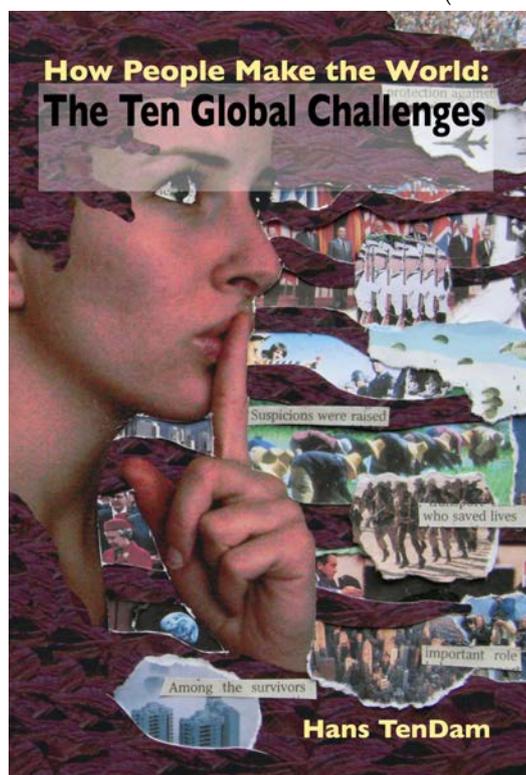
relations with Egypt after 30 years. However, when Iran's President Ahmadinejad visited Egypt, Sunni Islamist radicals assaulted him by throwing a shoe at him.

All these events, plus general mismanagement in his administration, were not helpful for Morsi's image. He and his supporters may assert that his rule was frustrated by the army and other powerful factions within Egypt's political and economic elite. But the fact remains that many, perhaps most, people in Egypt were horrified by these mismanagements and the prevalent violence, and that Morsi's image and reputation in foreign countries was consequently not positive.

We realize that the situation in Egypt is very sensitive to many Egyptians. Our journal has the policy to let all voices get heard. Everyone has the right to his or her opinion and analytic approach. Our journal does not prefer and endorse one view over the other. Even I, as the editor-in-chief, express only and solely my own understanding of the situation based on my own analytical approach. Having said that, we welcome all contributions and commentaries about this or other subjects. One of the goals of our journal is to promote academic and intellectual debate and dialogue.

- Babak Rezvani, Editor-in-chief

The Iran Nuclear Interim Deal: Analysis & Debate

Babak Rezvani & Caspar ten Dam

A nuclear interim deal was reached on 24 November 2013 between Iran and 5+1 (see Appendix for the full text)—that is, between Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, the United States of America, Russia, China, France and the United Kingdom, and with Germany and Catherine Ashton, the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (therefore the negotiating forum could also be called the 6+2 or 7+1). This deal has been a hotly discussed issue over the last months.

Here, four scholars, B. Rezvani, V. Volovoj, T. N. Marketos and J. M. Dorsey, offer their analyses and viewpoints on this nuclear deal between Iran and the "international community" or rather, in fact, mainly the major powers of the West.

The Nuclear Agreement between Iran and 5+1: Realities and Prospects

Babak Rezvani

The reactions and opinions of Iranian politicians, political and economic analysts, scholars and ordinary people are mixed about this "nuclear deal" in November 2013; so are mine. Many Iranian politicians, and political analysts—not only the hardliners—call it a second Turkmenchay treaty.

Along with the preceding Gulistan Treaty, the Turkmenchay Treaty was a treaty which is regarded as the most traumatic and most humiliating event in modern Iranian history. That was the treaty between Qajar Iran and Tsarist Russia, by which Iran lost the remaining parts of its territories in the Caucasus and ceded them to Russia, lost its navigation rights in the Caspian Sea, and was penalized and had to pay a huge sum of money to Tsarist Russia.

All in all, I think it is unfair to call the so-called 5+1 nuclear deal a second Turkmenchay Treaty. The recent deal between Iran and 5+1 is not a treaty but an agreement for a period of six months. And although its positive results for Iran are meager, the negotiating team was not to blame. They negotiated against a too powerful adversary and the power relations were very unequal.
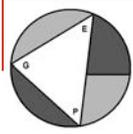
By the virtue of the recent agreement Iran gave up everything and in return got access only to a tiny share of its own frozen assets in banks; seemingly only $ 4.2 billion. The sanctions on the banking and money transfer systems, which has paralyzed the Iranian economy and healthcare system and had brought about severe humanitarian consequences, were not lifted. The sanctions against purchasing new airplanes, which also have cost human lives, were also not lifted.

However, the sanctions against the Iranian automobile industry were lifted, probably because their removal benefits France as Peugeot and Renault have cooperation agreements with Iranian companies and produce cars in Iran. Remarkably, it was France that was even tougher than the United States in the negotiations and frustrated the first round of negotiations.

The Western accusation that Iran is trying to produce nuclear weapons does not rest on solid grounds. Iran has enriched uranium up to 20 percent, while uranium should be enriched at least up to 80, or preferably 90, percent if a country wants to produce nuclear weapons. The West is suspicious of Iran, allegedly because the Iranian enrichment program is an expensive one and not economically cost-effective. They always ask why would Iran insist in enriching uranium when it is expensive. Yet Iran has to enrich uranium itself because the West is not very eager to sell nuclear fuel to Iran for its civilian-purpose reactors. In addition, the West argues that the Iranian heavy water reactor in Arak should be closed, despite the fact that it does not need enriched uranium to operate.

Certain channels of media in the West and Arab countries try to depict Iran as a war mongering and anti-Semitic country that threatens its neighbors. They often refer to the statements of the former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. However, the relationship between Ahmadinejad's statements and the necessity of sanctions against, or in any case the frustration of, selling Iran civilian airplanes and medicines, is not clear.

It is not fair to regard Iran as dangerous for regional peace, especially by a country that itself has used nuclear bombs, for the first and only times in human history. Despite Iranian hardliners' belligerent discourse at times, Iran has not initiated a war in the last 200 years. It is not a secret now—thanks to their public statements and Wikileaks—that Saudi Arabia and Israel have threatened Iran with military force, or have urged Americans to take action.

Nuclear weapons are militarily of no use to Iran. The accusation that Iran may use nuclear weapons against its Arab neighbors or Israel does not rest on logical grounds. Iran is militarily much stronger than its Arab neighbors and does not need any nuclear weapons to defeat them. Moreover, Iran has to face American reaction if it hypothetically uses nuclear weapons against its neighbors. Therefore, an hypothetical nuclear military capacity does not give Iran any practical military edge over its neighbors. It is also absurd to believe that the Iranian establishment—in fact, a theocratic establishment—would ever use nuclear weapons against Israel; simply because that area is known as a holy land for Christians, Jews and Muslims alike. Similarly, Iran has not attacked the holy cities in Iraq, during the Iraq–Iran war (1980-1988).
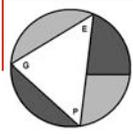
It is also not fair to depict Iran and the Iranian nation as anti-Semitic. Iranian people respect Judaism and Jews worldwide and are aware of their contributions to science. Many Jewish prophets are buried in Iran, and Jewish Iranians have contributed a lot to, and are respected in, Iran. Despite issues and imperfections at times, Iran has been a benevolent and safe environment for Jews; in stark contrast to the European or even Arab countries, where many Jewish communities have originated from. It is important to note that the Iranian King Cyrus the Great liberated Jews from slavery in Babylon, and since then Jewish Iranians have peacefully coexisted with Muslim and Christian Iranians for thousands of years.

It is also noteworthy that it was Saudi Arabia that invaded Bahrain and unleashed a bloodshed among the Shi'ite majority there who demanded democratic reforms. The reaction of Hillary Clinton, the then American Secretary of State, was striking: she warned Iran not to interfere in Bahrain's affairs—despite the fact that many Bahrainis hold also Iranian citizenship—rather than unequivocally condemning Saudi action.

The West should understand that the nuclear program is for Iran an issue of national pride, and it is not very relevant for Iran if it turns out to be expensive. Targeting one's national pride is not very productive if one wants to reach mutual understanding and good relations. The Western expression of "carrot and stick" is offensive. Yet the West uses this expression to characterize its wishful policy towards Iran. There is no need to mention that Iranians find this expression very offensive and disrespectful. The Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has said that the West should be respectful towards Iran instead threatening with sanctions. The Western conduct of long and relentless negotiations with Iran in Geneva was a sign of respect towards Iran.

On the other hand, the American statement that the agreement does not recognize Iran's right to uranium enrichment was a strategic mistake. The current US Secretary of State John Kerry may have said this in order to ease Saudi, Israeli and American hardliners' tempers, or may have wanted to indicate that the USA does not recognize any country's right to uranium enrichment.

However, it was a strategic mistake, and not very productive, to deny Iran's right, after Kerry had signed an agreement which foresaw in Iranian enrichment activities. Many experts have already mentioned the right of each signatory of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) to enrich uranium. For example, Hans Blix, the former executive chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (2000-2003) and director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (1981-1997), has mentioned that the NPT foresees in uranium enrichment activities.

The West and Iran have to coexist. There is no other choice. Iran has a young population and enormous human resources. Iranian students have often gained success in many scientific Olympiads. If anything, and if not counteracted, the Iranian youth may play a positive role in the state of the world technology and science in the foreseeable future, which is beneficial to the West.
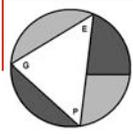
It is up to the West, and particularly the USA, to prevent the next Iranian generation from becoming and remaining distrustful of the West. Normalization of relations between Iran and the USA will be beneficial to both countries and to the Iranian people in particular—at least because they will not fear any shortages of medicines and any military threats in the future. This will only happen when agreements and relations are based on upon mutual respect.

True, the provocative and belligerent foreign policy by Ahmadinejad's administration has isolated Iran, and has cost Iran dearly in the economic and diplomatic spheres. A North Korea-like isolation will be disastrous for Iran. Iranian authorities should also understand that engagement with the international community will benefit the Iranian economy and Iran's position in the world, and the normalization of relations with the West is an unavoidable part of that process.

All in all, the Iranian negotiating team did its best. The Iranian team claims that the acknowledgement of the Iranian nuclear rights by a reluctant West was a victory for Iran. However, on the other hand, Iran gave up almost everything and got almost nothing. The West states that they may lift sanctions step by step. However, a healthy dose of skepticism is called for, because Iran has almost nothing more to offer for a serious and durable bargain in the future.

Nevertheless, the ordinary Iranian people are happy; at least for a time. The West has lifted the barriers against medicines and humanitarian affairs and also will sell now spare civilian airplane parts. And hopefully this will result in fewer fatalities.

## Crucial points in the Iran or 5+1 nuclear deal

Vadim Volovoj

There are several crucial points in the Iran or 5+1 nuclear deal. First of all it means that there is no strategic consensus in the American elite. While one camp supports the position of Israel and Saudi Arabia—the position of sanctions and war against Damascus and Tehran— the US President Barack Obama's camp seeks peace in Syria and Iran.

It seems that for Obama and his supporters the geopolitical priority of the future concerns China, and he wants to finish the American role in the Near and Middle East story, to get rid of the Arabs and Tel Aviv problems and interests. This really coincides with the position of Russia, which made deals on Syria, and now also on Iran, possible.

Still this may be not the end of the story, because the "war camp" in the USA is hardly going to surrender easily. That is why the further agreements on, and with, Syria and Iran will be difficult, and there maybe possible provocations by the "war camp" to ruin today's results.

Dr. Vadim Volovoj (PhD political science) is a Senior Expert at the Center for Geopolitical Studies in Lithuania; see further http://www.geopolitika.lt.
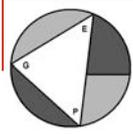
Thoughts on the nuclear deal with Iran

Thrassy N. Marketos

In relation to the nuclear deal with the government of Iran, I can contribute with the following thoughts, even though I have not specifically worked on the Middle Eastern issues:

1. This six-months deal is an immense step forward for a process that had stalled for so long, and a hopeful and peace-boosting one, especially if we recall the belligerent mood of President George W. Bush Jr.'s Administration toward Iran's nuclear program, or even the impasse just a few days before the Iran and 5+1 deal.

2. Should we be realist in our analysis, there is no chance of a resolution of practically any Middle East problem nowadays, especially not in the Syrian crisis, in the absence of Iran. And I would like to add that there should not be. Iran possesses a key strategic location in the region; it controls the Shi'ite Muslims of Iraq and Hezbollah, and is collaborating with Russia and China on various issues, in particular on the Middle East energy geopolitics. Energy routes and oil and gas pipelines, to my view, are going to reshape the map of the Middle East.

3. US President Obama's policies on the Syrian proxy war and on the so called "Arab Spring" have been so far quite balanced and realistic, if we in particular recall the presumably diminished strategic interest that Washington DC shows for the Middle East, and its outspoken primary interest for the Pacific region as the "hottest" place on the world's chessboard.

4. Israel is not about to move away from its tough stance on Iran's nuclear program issue, given that the President of Iran is not willing to give up the progress the country has made in its nuclear program. In addition, Jerusalem is not going to attack Tehran on its own. Last but not least, Israel is gaining a powerful position in the new Middle East, taking advantage of the other regional countries' chaotic situations.

5. Owing to its economic capacity and resources that it possesses, Iran's economy is about to quickly recover if some sanctions are lifted. In addition, the West as a whole is anxious to make business with Iran.

6. The Kurds seem to gain a lot out of the new equation that is going to be crafted in the Middle East, and that is happening to the detriment of Turkey, the traditional geopolitical adversary of Iran.

7. Saudi Arabia will have to cope with the new realities sooner or later.

Some thoughts of mine on these and similar issues can be found also in my analysis entitled 'Iran's Geopolitics in midst of the U.S.—Russia—China Energy Security Struggle for the
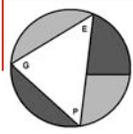
Geostrategic Control of Eurasia' that was published in the *Central Asia-Caucasus* e.journal in 2009 (can be found under my name in Academia.edu).

Dr. Thrassy N. Marketos is a jurist and a specialist on Eurasia geopolitics. He is author of China's Energy Geopolitics: The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Central Asia (*Routledge/ Taylor & Francis, 2009*).

The Iranian Nuclear Deal: Rewriting the Middle East Map and Reviving the US Pivot Towards Asia

James M. Dorsey

If all goes well, the preliminary agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the five permanent members—the United States, China, Russia, France and Britain—plus Germany would ensure the peaceful nature of the Islamic Republic's nuclear program and ultimately reintegrate it into the international community. In doing so, it would not only remove the threat of a debilitating war with Iran and prevent a nuclear arms race in the Middle East and North Africa. It would also return the Islamic Republic to the center stage of the region's geo-politics, force regional powers such as Israel and Saudi Arabia to focus on their most immediate issues rather than use the Iranian threat as a distraction, and offer the United States the opportunity to revert to its stated policy of pivoting from Europe and the Middle East to Asia.

To be sure, a resolution of the Iranian nuclear crisis is not a panacea for the vast array of social, political, economic, ethnic, national and sectarian problems in the Middle East and North Africa. Political and social unrest, boiling popular discontent with discredited regimes, and identity politics are likely to dominate developments in the region for years to come. If anything, Iran's return to normal relations with the international community could fuel social and economic tensions in the region. Not because Iran would be instigating or fuelling them in a bid to destabilize the region, but because other Middle Eastern nations would no longer be able to employ the Islamic Republic as an existential threat that distracts from the countries' real problems.

Iran's return to the international community is moreover likely to provide the incentive for it to constructively contribute to ending the bitter civil war in Syria, breaking the stalemate in fragile Lebanon where the Shi'ite militia Hezbollah plays a dominant role, furthering efforts to achieve peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and take some of the sting out of the region's dangerous slide into sectarian Sunni-Shi'ite conflict. All of that would allow for the reduction of a number of fires in the Middle East and North Africa that the Obama Administration has been seeking to control and that have prevented it from following through on its intended re-focus on Asia.
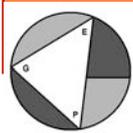
A resolution of the nuclear crisis offers Iran far more than the ultimate lifting of crippling international sanctions despite of which it has over the last decade been able to effectively counter the US policy in the Middle East and North Africa through its support of Hezbollah, the single most powerful grouping in Lebanon, and Hamas, the Islamist Palestinian faction in Gaza; its aid to the embattled regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad; backing of restive Shi'ite minorities in the oil-rich Gulf states and Iraq; and ensuring that the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki looks as much toward Tehran as it looks to Washington DC.

Iran's incentive to become more cooperative is the fact that a resolution of the nuclear crisis would involve acknowledgement of the Islamic Republic as a legitimate regional power, one of seven regional players—alongside Turkey, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Pakistan—that have the demographic and geographic breadth or economic, military and technological strength that enables them to project power. It would also allow Iran to capitalize on geostrategic gains it has made despite its international isolation.

Iran is likely to be further motivated by an easing and ultimate lifting of the sanctions, as that will allow it to address boiling domestic social and economic discontent. President Hassan Rouhani's election earlier this year has for now replaced that powder keg with high expectations that his more moderate policies would ease the heavy economic price Iran was paying for its nuclear program—even if many Iranians are disappointed that Iran will reap only $7 billion in benefits from the freshly concluded agreement in the coming six months. The $7 billion serves however as an incentive for Iran to come to a comprehensive and final agreement on its nuclear program.

And that is what worries opponents of the nuclear deal like Israel and Saudi Arabia the most. Beyond the fact that the deal potentially could transform Iran from a game spoiling pariah into a constructive player, it removes the Islamic Republic as the foremost perceived threat to the national security of Israel and Saudi Arabia. For Israel, this risks peace with the Palestinians reclaiming its position at the top of the international community's agenda, making it more difficult for it to evade the painful steps needed to end a conflict that is nearing its centennial anniversary. For Saudi Arabia, it complicates its efforts to fuel regional sectarianism, deflect calls for equitable treatment of its Shi'ite minority as well as for greater transparency and accountability, and establish itself as the region's unrivalled leader.

Nowhere is that likely to be more evident than in the Iranian policy towards Syria. Contrary to widespread perception and what Saudi Arabia and its allies would like the world to believe, Iranian-Syrian relations are not based on sectarian affinity but on common interests stemming from international isolation. That reality changes as Iran rejoins the international community.

Iran's return to the international community would constitute not only a policy challenge for Saudi Arabia but also a multi-layered ideological one. Wahhabism, Saudi Arabia's puritan version of Islam that historically much like Trotskyism has been primarily focused internally on the Muslim world, and those it considers to be deviants detests Shi'ites more than it does
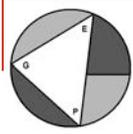
Jews. That has recently translated into a tacit anti-Iranian alliance between Israel and the Saudi kingdom.

Saudi Arabia, moreover, as the custodian of Islam's holiest cities, Mecca and Medina, sees itself as the world's only truly Islamic regime and is thus suspicious of any government or group that threatens that claim. As a result, Saudi Arabia has been seeking to counter Iranian influence from the day the Islamic Revolution toppled the Shah in 1979. One of its primary tools since then has been pouring huge amounts of money into Wahhabi proselytization across the globe.

For the United States, a deal means evading at least for now the threat of another Middle Eastern war with potentially catastrophic consequences, and enlisting Iran in addressing the region's problems. That creates space for it to focus on long-term goals in Asia.

However, in removing Iran as a regional lightening rod, the US is likely to be forced to clearly define a Middle East policy that balances short term national security with the reality of years of regional volatility and unrest to come. That unrest could redraw some national borders and is likely to involve messy political and social transitions, if not further regime change following the toppling in recent years of autocrats in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen and the civil war in Syria.

The US will also have to convincingly reassure Gulf states, first and foremost among them Saudi Arabia, that it still is the reliable friend and ally that constitutes the region's defense umbrella. The US rapprochement with Iran is but the latest development that has Gulf states incapable of defending themselves wondering to what degree the United States really is their last resort. Confidence in the US defense umbrella was already weakened by the Obama Administration's declared pivot towards Asia, US support for Arab revolts, American war weariness after a decade of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, Washington DC's refusal to decisively support anti-Assad rebels in Syria, the Russian-mediated chemical weapons agreement with the Assad regime, and reduced US dependency on Gulf oil as it becomes self-sufficient and ultimately a net exporter.

One way of reassuring Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states would be for the United States to increase bilateral security consultations with individual Gulf states and intelligence sharing in areas where their partners feel most threatened. One key focus would be groups like the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corp and Lebanon's Hezbollah who stand accused of terrorist attacks in various parts of the world and support for restive Shi'ites in the Gulf.

Ironically, for the Gulf states there are no good policy alternatives. Failure to come to an agreement with Iran would leave Iran with a sense of embattlement and persuade it to revive its path towards nuclear arms. That would unleash an arms race in the region, potentially make it even more volatile and unstable—the very prospect Gulf states are trying to curtail.

James M. Dorsey is a senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, co-director of the University of Würzburg's Institute for Fan Culture, and the author of The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer *blog and a forthcoming book with the same title.*
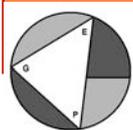
Editorial Comment

Lately, there have been many complaints about the ideas certain authors have expressed in our journal. We do understand that many of the issues discussed in our journal are politically sensitive. All the statements expressed in these articles are the author's, and are not in any way endorsed by the editorial board of our journal, *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics*. Dissimilar to many other journals, we do not force the authors to change their views and analyses to suit certain agendas.

For example, James Dorsey uses the term "the Gulf" instead of "Persian Gulf". Persian Gulf is not only the term preferred by Iran but also the only internationally accepted formal designation of "that" gulf. Moreover, the relationship between Iran and Hezbollah, and between Iran and Hamas are not similar. While Iran has profound influence on the Lebanese Hezbollah, there is no evidence that Iran has a leverage on Hamas. Similarly, there is no evidence, despite James Dorsey's uncritical adaptation, of the Arab regimes' assumption that Iran is trying to develop nuclear weapons. Again, there are no pieces of hard evidence for such attempts.

However, as the editorial board tries to publish any approved text, as much as possible, in its original form, we did not manipulate or in any way alter the original contents of the submitted and published articles.

- Babak Rezvani, Editor-in-chief

Appendix: The 5+1 Iran Nuclear Deal—Full Text

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November 24, 2013—Updated 1607 GMT (0007 HKT)

(CNN)—The following is the full text of the nuclear deal between Iran and six world powers:

Joint Plan of Action Preamble

The goal for these negotiations is to reach a mutually-agreed long- term comprehensive solution that would ensure Iran's nuclear program will be exclusively peaceful. Iran reaffirms that under no circumstances will Iran ever seek or develop any nuclear weapons. This
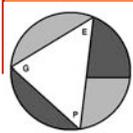
comprehensive solution would build on these initial measures and result in a final step for a period to be agreed upon and the resolution of concerns. This comprehensive solution would enable Iran to fully enjoy its right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the relevant articles of the NPT in conformity with its obligations therein. This comprehensive solution would involve a mutually defined enrichment program with practical limits and transparency measures to ensure the peaceful nature of the program. This comprehensive solution would constitute an integrated whole where nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. This comprehensive solution would involve a reciprocal, step-by step process, and would produce the comprehensive lifting of all UN Security Council sanctions, as well as multilateral and national sanctions related to Iran's nuclear program.

There would be additional steps in between the initial measures and the final step, including, among other things, addressing the UN Security Council resolutions, with a view toward bringing to a satisfactory conclusion the UN Security Council's consideration of this matter. The E3+3 and Iran will be responsible for conclusion and implementation of mutual near-term measures and the comprehensive solution in good faith. A Joint Commission of E3/EU +3 and Iran will be established to monitor the implementation of the near-term measures and address issues that may arise, with the IAEA responsible for verification of nuclear-related measures. The Joint Commission will work with the IAEA to facilitate resolution of past and present issues of concern.

Elements of a first step

The first step would be time-bound, with a duration of 6 months, and renewable by mutual consent, during which all parties will work to maintain a constructive atmosphere for negotiations in good faith.

Iran would undertake the following voluntary measures:

* From the existing uranium enriched to 20%, retain half as working stock of 20% oxide for fabrication of fuel for the TRR. Dilute the remaining 20% UF6 to no more than 5%. No reconversion line.

* Iran announces that it will not enrich uranium over 5% for the duration of the 6 months.

* Iran announces that it will not make any further advances of its activities at the Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant (1), Fordow (2), or the Arak reactor (3), designated by the IAEA as IR-40.

* Beginning when the line for conversion of UF6 enriched up to 5% to UO2 is ready, Iran has decided to convert to oxide UF6 newly enriched up to 5% during the 6 month period, as provided in the operational schedule of the conversion plant declared to the IAEA.

* No new locations for the enrichment.

* Iran will continue its safeguarded R&D practices, including its current enrichment R&D practices, which are not designed for accumulation of the enriched uranium.

* No reprocessing or construction of a facility capable of reprocessing.
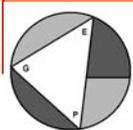
* Enhanced monitoring:

- Provision of specified information to the IAEA, including information on Iran's plans for nuclear facilities, a description of each building on each nuclear site, a description of the scale of operations for each location engaged in specified nuclear activities, information on uranium mines and mills, and information on source material. This information would be provided within three months of the adoption of these measures.

- Submission of an updated DIQ for the reactor at Arak, designated by the IAEA as the IR-40, to the IAEA.

- Steps to agree with the IAEA on conclusion of the Safeguards Approach for the reactor at Arak, designated by the IAEA as the IR- 40.

- Daily IAEA inspector access when inspectors are not present for the purpose of Design Information Verification, Interim Inventory Verification, Physical Inventory Verification, and unannounced inspections, for the purpose of access to offline surveillance records, at Fordow and Natanz.

- IAEA inspector managed access to:

. centrifuge assembly workshops4;

. centrifuge rotor production workshops and storage facilities; and,

. uranium mines and mills.

In return, the E3/EU+3 would undertake the following voluntary measures:

- Pause efforts to further reduce Iran's crude oil sales, enabling Iran's current customers to purchase their current average amounts of crude oil. Enable the repatriation of an agreed amount of revenue held abroad. For such oil sales, suspend the EU and U.S. sanctions on associated insurance and transportation services.

- Suspend U.S. and EU sanctions on:

. Iran's petrochemical exports, as well as sanctions on associated services. (5)

. Gold and precious metals, as well as sanctions on associated services.

· Suspend U.S. sanctions on Iran's auto industry, as well as sanctions on associated services.

· License the supply and installation in Iran of spare parts for safety of flight for Iranian civil aviation and associated services. License safety related inspections and repairs in Iran as well as associated services. (6)

· No new nuclear-related UN Security Council sanctions.

· No new EU nuclear-related sanctions.
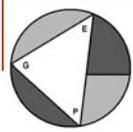
· The U.S. Administration, acting consistent with the respective roles of the President and the Congress, will refrain from imposing new nuclear-related sanctions.

· Establish a financial channel to facilitate humanitarian trade for Iran's domestic needs using Iranian oil revenues held abroad. Humanitarian trade would be defined as transactions involving food and agricultural products, medicine, medical devices, and medical expenses incurred abroad. This channel would involve specified foreign banks and non-designated Iranian banks to be defined when establishing the channel.

* This channel could also enable:

a- transactions required to pay Iran's UN obligations; and,

b- direct tuition payments to universities and colleges for Iranian students studying abroad, up to an agreed amount for the six month period.

· Increase the EU authorisation thresholds for transactions for non- sanctioned trade to an agreed amount.

Elements of the final step of a comprehensive solution*

The final step of a comprehensive solution, which the parties aim to conclude negotiating and commence implementing no more than one year after the adoption of this document, would:

· Have a specified long-term duration to be agreed upon.

· Reflect the rights and obligations of parties to the NPT and IAEA Safeguards Agreements.

· Comprehensively lift UN Security Council, multilateral and national nuclear-related sanctions, including steps on access in areas of trade, technology, finance, and energy, on a schedule to be agreed upon.

· Involve a mutually defined enrichment program with mutually agreed parameters consistent with practical needs, with agreed limits on scope and level of enrichment activities, capacity, where it is carried out, and stocks of enriched uranium, for a period to be agreed upon.

· Fully resolve concerns related to the reactor at Arak, designated by the IAEA as the IR-40. No reprocessing or construction of a facility capable of reprocessing.

· Fully implement the agreed transparency measures and enhanced monitoring. Ratify and implement the Additional Protocol, consistent with the respective roles of the President and the Majlis (Iranian parliament).

· Include international civil nuclear cooperation, including among others, on acquiring modern light water power and research reactors and associated equipment, and the supply of modern nuclear fuel as well as agreed R&D practices.
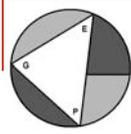
Following successful implementation of the final step of the comprehensive solution for its full duration, the Iranian nuclear program will be treated in the same manner as that of any non- nuclear weapon state party to the NPT.
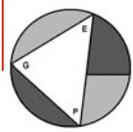
(Footnotes)

(1) Namely, during the 6 months, Iran will not feed UF6 into the centrifuges installed but not enriching uranium. Not install additional centrifuges. Iran announces that during the first 6 months, it will replace existing centrifuges with centrifuges of the same type.

(2) At Fordow, no further enrichment over 5% at 4 cascades now enriching uranium, and not increase enrichment capacity. Not feed UF6 into the other 12 cascades, which would remain in a non- operative state. No interconnections between cascades. Iran announces that during the first 6 months, it will replace existing centrifuges with centrifuges of the same type.

(3) Iran announces on concerns related to the construction of the reactor at Arak that for 6 months it will not commission the reactor or transfer fuel or heavy water to the reactor site and will not test additional fuel or produce more fuel for the reactor or install remaining components.

(4) Consistent with its plans, Iran's centrifuge production during the 6 months will be dedicated to replace damaged machines.

(5) 'Sanctions on associated services' means any service, such as insurance, transportation, or financial, subject to the underlying U.S. or EU sanctions applicable, insofar as each service is related to the underlying sanction and required to facilitate the desired transactions. These services could involve any non-designated Iranian entities.

(6) Sanctions relief could involve any non-designated Iranian airlines as well as Iran Air.
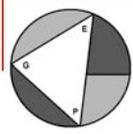
* With respect to the final step and any steps in between, the standard principle that "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" applies.

CNN (24 November 2013) The Iran nuclear deal: full text.

Available online at: edition.cnn.com/2013/11/24/world/meast/iran-deal-text/

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