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 universities, institutes and colleges in and outside the Netherlands. The association's journal, *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics*, 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. One can submit manuscripts—main articles (to be peer-reviewed), critical responses (published peer-reviews), short articles and/or book reviews—to info@ethnogeopolitics.org. At www.ethnogeopolitics.org, one can find information about the association's foundation, founding members, aims, activities and publications—particularly freely downloadable copies of the journal's issues.

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Security and Refugee Crisis in Europe
Babak Rezvani

Introduction

Europe is a very particular place. It is not appropriate to call any place the center of the world as the Earth is a globe. However, the course of history has made Europe the center of the world. This has been so since the late 18th century (if not earlier) until now. Europe is situated in the center of the world, yet it is very close to its periphery. Indeed, seeing through geopolitical glasses, the concepts center and periphery have, and at the same time beget, particular meanings.

Europe, or better said Western Europe, is part of the hegemonic West. It is part of the economic, political and military hegemonic bloc called the West. It is disputable whether or not (Western) Europe is militarily hegemonic. Nevertheless, being part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and a primary military ally of the United States of America (USA) makes it part of the dominant West. This may sound typically old-fashioned as it echoes the Cold War discourse. However, it is not old-fashioned, as it is the reality of the day.

Again, more than two decades after its formal termination, the realities of a Cold War between the West, let us say NATO and its allies, and the East, let us say Russia and its allies, is more relevant than ever before. There is, however, one important difference: the opponent of the West in the previous century was the Soviet Union, but is now its core state the Russian Federation, allied with a few of the other former Soviet republics.

The West on the other hand is expanding itself towards the former East, towards not only the countries that were the Soviet sphere of influence (i.e. the Warsaw Pact) but also to many of the former Soviet republics. These countries include the Baltic Republics and Ukraine but also Georgia (even though the latter case was abortive and done only half heartedly. This is also to some extent true about the Ukraine). This latter fact is regarded by Russia as an encroachment on its sphere of influence by the West.

There is, however, another perceived enemy of the West. This latter one, whether we call it Muslims, the Islamic World, the Middle Easterners, or the Middle East, is one that is not expressed in clear terms. It is one opponent, which is avoided being called as such by most Western politicians, except a few such as the presumed U.S. Republican Party presidential nominee Donald Trump, or the Dutch populist politician Geert Wilders, who talk about it in simplistic terms. It is being named by such terms as Islamic extremism, Islamic terrorism, or simply as terrorism. Ordinary people, politicians and even scholars (e.g. Huntington 1993; 1997) are not always clear whom they are talking about and whether this opponent is a
cultural or a territorial entity. Often, wittingly or unwittingly, they remain silent about the Salafi/Wahhabi Takfiri nature of these extremists, and by this they contribute to a Western popular aversion against the Muslims in general. The influx of Muslim refugees, not least owing to the Syrian Conflict, causes tension within most European societies and brings Europe into a situation of an acute security and identity crisis.

Indeed, we cannot indiscriminately talk about the West being anti-Muslim. There are countries such as Germany that (perhaps consciously) includes members of its Muslim migrant communities in its national football team or other representations, and there are those that do not.¹

There are countries that name the currently dominant Islamic terrorist group in the Middle East deliberately as “the Islamic State” even without using its acronym IS. There are those who use only the acronyms ISIL or ISIS that represent a more qualified labeling. There are also European countries such as France that have chosen to use a name such as Daesh, an Arabic acronym which remains unknown to most Europeans—and one that sounds similar to rather pejorative terms in Arabic. Of course, this is a wise policy in a country like France, where the population is relatively polarized. In France, Muslim (North) Africans constitute poor socio-economic classes and the native French often constitute the upper classes. Therefore, such a labeling leads less likely to a polarizing effect on the native and migrant populations.

It is disputable whether or not Western politicians regard Russia or the Islamic nexus—whatever and however they perceive it to be—as their primary enemy. However, it is visible that in a situation of ever salient Euro-centrism Russia's European credentials are questioned and Russians are being regarded as the inferior Asiatic Other (see e.g. Shlapentokh 2013; Heffernan 1998: 23-31). Such a European anti-Russian attitude is even visible in allegedly politicized song festivals and sport competitions. On the other hand, an anti-European attitude is also strong in Russia.

There are indications that certain thinkers and theorists of (geo-)strategy in the West regard Russia as far more dangerous than extremist Salafi/Wahhabi Takfiri terrorism. Such a stance is visible in Western stance in the Syrian conflict. Even though the West itself, has taken part in bombing ISIL, its clear aversion against Assad's regime and Russian involvement in the Syrian conflict suggests that such sentiments do exist. Moreover, suspicions exist that many Western countries and their allies have latently or overtly—at least indirectly—supported other militant Sunni (read Salafi/Wahhabi Takfiri) rebels or even ISIL itself.

Europe is now facing threats from different sides. The official reading acknowledges threats from radical Islamic terrorism and from Russia. Yet, there is another danger that most European politicians would not like to admit: the European Union (EU) itself is very unpopular among Europeans, at least among most Western Europeans.
In addition to Brexit (i.e. the British referendum in favor of United Kindom leaving the European Union), the Dutch vote against an association agreement with Ukraine (6 April 2016)\(^2\) was a clear indication of popular West European anti-EU sentiment showing disapproval of (what popularly is regarded as) EU-expansion at the cost of its citizens’ welfare. Nevertheless, the Western populations remain relatively unvocal and in any case less frightened about the influx of East and Central European workers who most of the time may remain physically and phenotypically less distinguishable from the native populations.

The influx of refugees, mainly from the Middle East, has indeed its own benefits for Europe. It gives fresh blood and a boost to societies with aging populations and shrinking economies. However, its risks are manifold. First, it is not clear if European countries are able to absorb these large numbers of refugees at once. It is clear that the more developed Western societies are the ones who are burdened disproportionately, as they are already absorbing large numbers of workers from those eastern and central European countries that refuse to absorb refugees themselves.

Moreover, regardless of the economic and geographic capacities of the absorbing countries, the very idea of having to give shelter to a huge number of refugees is a very unpopular idea among many citizens in the European countries, even among the Muslim ones. The flow of refugees to Europe has its own security risks too. We do not always know if terrorists are among the refugees or not, but have to honestly admit that such a chance is quite substantial.

Nowadays every \textit{ad hoc} terrorist attacks in Europe and North America are attributed to ISIL, as they were once habitually attributed to Al Qaeda. It is very unlikely that a young man shooting at a gay club in Florida has necessarily ties with ISIL in the Middle East. It is more likely that the terrorist attacks in Paris (late 2015) and Brussels (early 2016) were linked to ISIL. In any case, ISIL would eagerly claim responsibility because it creates an image of a more dangerous and potent, fearsome organization. Causing fear is indeed one primary goal of such terrorist organizations as ISIL. The anti-migrant and anti-Islam organizations and activists contribute to this end—a state of fear—as much as ISIL itself does.

As earlier analyses have shown, religion is a very weak a factor in explaining emergence of conflict. However, it seems that wars with a religious rationale are bloodier than those without such a rationale (see e.g. Rezvani 2013; 2015).\(^3\)

European security analysts should seriously regard homegrown extremism as a bigger threat than any threat from the Middle East. However, they should also be alert and seek to ensure that terrorists, couching themselves as refugees, do not enter the European soil. The chance of a terrorist attack by these ‘fake’ refugees may be small. However, they may play a crucial role in further radicalizing the home-grown radicals and even recruit them for the wars in the Middle East. A horror scenario would be that a network gets established between terrorists in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere that can circulate and operate both inside and outside Europe.
These are the real risks involved in the influx of refugees to Europe. European politicians should worry more about such grave dangers than about whether or not refugees have a right to halal food or should be allowed to wear a headdress. Europeans, policy makers and citizens alike, should accept that the European demography is changing—but they should also be very cautious, and make sure that it remains a safe environment in which human rights of all citizens are protected.

_Babak Rezvani, Editor-in-Chief _ Amsterdam, June 2016

Endnotes

1. For example, a certain Turkish football player who scored against the Netherlands, Oğuzhan Özyakup, is an ethnic Turk born and raised in the Netherlands, who was included in the national Turkish football team, rather than in the Dutch one. There are large communities of Muslim migrants living since almost half a century in the Netherlands that still live in segregation, and the rate of unemployment is higher under them compared to the native population. However, the Netherlands have no official anti-Muslim policies.

2. On 6 April 2016 a referendum on the Association Agreement between the European Union and Ukraine was held in the Netherlands. Proponents of the agreement had large financial support and the Dutch government campaigned in favor of this agreement. Yet 61 percent of the Dutch voters voted against this agreement. It was remarkable that short promotional political clips were advertised on Youtube. Such politically motivated advertisements on Youtube were unheard of before in the Netherlands.

3. One should pay particular attention to the role of Wahhabi/Salafi militancy in the North Caucasus and Central Asia.

References


Main Article

Maritime Political Geography: Iran's legal dilemma in the Caspian Sea ends up in geographical certainties for all

Pirouz Mojtahed-Zadeh, Hashem Amiri & Ramtin Salarian

Abstract

In this article, which is the concluding episode of the series of my studies into Caspian political geography, we have tried to discuss, after briefly assessing the background to what has been known in the past twenty years as ‘the legal regime’ of the Caspian Sea, the latest development in Iran’s perspectives of the shaping of maritime political geography. In the 1990s, as the world order began to shift, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Caspian Sea’s position in global geopolitics also changed.

In debates over geo-legal delimitation of the Caspian Sea in the wake of the Soviet collapse, Iran articulated a position sometimes identifiable with Russia’s initial approach—that the Caspian Sea should be a condominium or an ‘area of common use’ for the littoral states. In late 1996 Tehran argued that the Soviet-Iranian treaties of 1921 and 1940 should determine the legal status of the Caspian Sea as a condominium. Slow progress in hammering out a legal regime on that basis was almost brought to an end for Iran in the mid-1990s, as outside influence(s) increased over the Caspian oil resources pertaining to states other than Russia and Iran.

By 1998 the Iranian government shifted its position to a complete carving up of the Caspian Sea in equal shares for the five coastal states. In May and September 2002, Russia signed protocols demarcating its relevant maritime areas of the Caspian Sea with Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, respectively.

Meanwhile, academic delegates from the Caspian littoral states in an international seminar at Mazandaran University on the Caspian Sea—Babolsar, October 19–20, 2003—issued a declaration, on the initiative of the first author which put forward a solution on the basis of calling for: a) creation of a strip of offshore zone 25–45 miles from the coastline into the sea to allow an exclusive economic zone for each of the five littoral states; b) creation of a common-use zone in the remaining body of the sea to allow equal rights of use for commercial, navigational and other maritime activities by each of the five states.

In the latest development, together with the other four states, Iran signed on September 29, 2014, a declaration whereby it was agreed that there will be two fixed zones determining the legal status of the sea: a zone of state sovereignty and a zone with exclusive fishing rights. These two zones will be 25 nautical miles length: a 15 miles territorial sea for each state from their shoreline, and a 10 mile exclusive fishing zone. Below follows the original declaration in Persian.

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Introduction

Whither Maritime Political Geography

Understanding the concepts relating to the practice of maritime geopolitics in the Caspian Sea ought to be seen as a prerequisite for any study of the functionality of international maritime regulations and political geography that is taking shape in that land-locked maritime region. Conceptually however, maritime political geography may be described as an academic subject closely resembling the study of the implementation of international laws and regulations in maritime areas of the world. It deals with the study of the geopolitical imperatives that help in shaping a state's sovereignty over maritime areas of the world, with special reference in this particular study, to territoriality and boundary issues in the Caspian Sea.
The control and ownership of the maritime areas adjacent to state territories and their seaward extensions have for a long period of time been a controversial topic. Since ancient empires began to sail and trade over the seas, control of coastal areas has been important to states. However, it was only by the twentieth century that countries began to come together to discuss a standardization of maritime boundaries. Surprisingly, the situation is yet to be resolved.

While establishment of a distance of 3 nautical miles (nm) from their coastline was first adopted by the British in early 20th century, others gradually established their territorial waters at 12 nm, which was internationally adopted later on. These territorial waters are considered part of a country's jurisdiction, subject to all of the laws of the land of that country. In 1952, Chile, Peru, and Ecuador claimed a zone 200 nm from their shores.

The need for standardization of the maritime areas at sea was first realized by the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS I) in 1958. In 1960 UNCLOS II was held and in 1973 UNCLOS III took place. Following UNCLOS III, a treaty was developed that attempted to tackle the sea boundary issue. It specified that all coastal countries would have a 12 nm territorial sea and a 200 nm Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Each (coastal) country would control the economic exploitation and environmental quality of their EEZ.

A more recent study about the environmental impact on maritime political geography suggests that rising sea levels due to climate change has the potential to undermine existing legal regimes that govern control of the world's oceans and continental shelves. Climate-driven environmental changes are already destabilizing the Arctic and fostering new types of alliances.

By altering commonly accepted baselines that are used to determine the right of states to extend state control outward from their shores, these environmental changes also have the potential to undermine fragile accords in the maritime arena, and to create new sources of instability. From a policy perspective, recognizing that rising sea levels will likely undermine existing maritime regimes points to the need for proactive agreements that anticipate changes in the configuration of coastlines.

Conceptually, the potential for environmental changes altering jurisdictional arrangements highlights the importance of challenging the tendency to treat the environment as a constant in geopolitical analyses (A. Murphy 2013).

An Introduction to the Caspian story

Though the former Soviet Union accepted Iran as a Caspian country, and in accordance with the terms of the treaties of peace and co-operation of 1921 and 1940, recognized its privileges in the maritime region, for many decades Iran's rights to sea resources and navigation were never fully respected. In the 1950s, for example, Iran was denied the opportunity to maintain a naval presence in that region and Moscow discouraged any attempt by Iran to explore oil even in the inland areas of Mazandaran.
In the 1990s, as the world order began to shift, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Caspian Sea's position in global geopolitics also changed. Littoral states, including Iran, began to claim positions in the region and, most significantly, the United States chose to view this region as important to its geopolitical vision of the New World Order. In the American view, this vision would be achieved only when control over the two main energy deposits of the 21st century, the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea, were to be established.

Actually, US companies signed oil concession agreements with the new Caspian states (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and the Azerbaijan Republic) and began exploration activities, ignoring the absence of a Caspian legal regime and maritime delimitation. This new 'gold rush' led to territorial and boundary contentions among Caspian littoral states, impacting negatively the prospects for regional stability and cooperation. This paper provides a perspective on the geopolitical factors that have influenced international relations in and around the Caspian Sea. It also discusses the sea's legal regime in terms of which each nation-state has access and rights to its resources.

The evolution of Caspian-centric regionalism or block politics owes as much to geo-economics as to the post-Soviet Union political geography of the region. While discussing the central role of the Caspian legal regime, this paper will focus on how this and other factors shape the region's political landscape (Mojtahed-Zadeh 1998: 69–86).

**Legal background**

Prior to the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, boundaries between Iran and its northern neighbor—the Tsarist Russia in the beginning, and Soviet Union later—comprised Iran's longest borderlines. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union the said borderlines were inherited by the Republic of Armenia, the Autonomous Republic of Ganja, the Republics of Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, whereas the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan remained Iran's neighbors only in the waters of the Caspian Sea.

Before the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Caspian Sea was deemed to be a Soviet–Iranian sea, used almost solely for navigation in accordance with regulations determined by a series of bilateral treaties heavily tilted in favor to Soviet interests in that sea.

However, the new geopolitical climate that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union in late 1991 called into question the pre-existing legal regime, affording Iran (as well as the four newly independent countries of Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan, which replaced the USSR around the sea) a long-awaited opportunity to assert its claim to Caspian resources as well as bolster its national interests in the region (Mojtahed-Zadeh 2006: 73).

**Historical Background**

Following the Russo-Iranian Wars of 1804–1813 and 1826–1828, Russian commercial vessels exercised the right to navigate the entire Caspian and its shoreline, and by the terms of Turkamanchay Treaty of 1828 only Russian naval vessels were granted the right to sail the
Caspian Sea to the exclusion of all other powers (Turkamanchai Treaty, 1828). Thus it is not surprising that Russia’s navy was able to establish, despite Iranian protests, a naval station on an island in the south-eastern Caspian in 1840. This period was accompanied by Russian expansion, on land, into areas of present-day Turkmenistan that were claimed by Iran. The Russo-Iranian land boundaries, east of the Caspian Sea, were finally demarcated by the 1881 Boundary Convention as beginning at Hassangholi Bay and extending eastward along the Atrak River, and was more finely delineated through two protocols in 1886 (Mojtahed-Zadeh et al. 2003: 608).

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in Russia changed that country’s colonial attitude towards Iran and ushered in a new stage in Russo-Iranian relations, and thereupon, although not immediately, in the legal regime governing use of the Caspian waters by the two countries. Gradually, Iran’s rather limited rights in the Caspian Sea region were augmented by the signing of a number of legally binding instruments with the Soviet Union.

Of note is the 1921 Treaty of Moscow, which restored Iran’s use of the sea for navigation that had been prohibited by the 1828 Treaty of Turkamanchai. Also of similar significance (albeit of little practical substance) were the bilateral Iran-USSR Trade and Seafaring Agreement of 1940. In appearance at least, the new legal regime of the Caspian Sea began to resemble more of a jointly held ‘Soviet–Iran sea’, than an exclusive ‘Russian lake’ as was popularly perceived previously.

Maritime Delimitation Process

Delimitation and demarcation of the seabed has always been the main feature in various options for the Caspian legal regime in the new era. From a geographical point of view, any division of the Caspian seabed will need a three-sectional division of the entire sea: 1) The northern section, comprising Russia, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan; 2) The middle or central section, comprising Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan; and 3) The southern section, comprising Iran, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan.

In debates over delimitation of the Caspian Sea in the early 1990s, Iran articulated a position sometimes identifiable with Russia’s initial approach—that the Caspian Sea should be a condominium or an ‘area of common use’ for the littoral states. In late 1996 Tehran argued that the Soviet-Iranian treaties of 1921 and 1940 should determine the legal status of the Caspian Sea as a condominium. Slow progress in hammering out a legal regime on that basis was almost brought to an end for Iran in mid-1990s as outside influence increased over the Caspian oil resources pertaining to states other than Russia and Iran.

By spreading their influence in the region, the United States and their allies in the European Union and Turkey (Askari & Taghavi 2006: 85) introduced a new dimension to the Caspian debate on legal regime, at one point going as far as arguing for the internationalization of the Caspian legal regime (Butler 1995), which was ignored by all parties concerned. It is also of consequence to note that the Caspian Sea was considered in Washington DC to be one of the two largest oil deposits of the world, the other being the Persian Gulf. This geopolitical view...
of the region (Kemp 1997), together with the perception of Iran's newly enhanced geo-
strategic position, sandwiched between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, led to a US
strategy of isolating Iran in the exploitation of Caspian resources and in its geopolitics of
access (Mojtahed-Zadeh 2003 b).

Late in 1996 however, Russia's position changed partly owing to pressure from Western oil
companies (Sciolino 1998: WK16) to that of dividing the seabed within a 45-mile coastal zone
into national sectors, with the interior portion of the sea continuing to be administered as a
condominium. This general concept was followed in early 1998 by an agreement in principle
between Russia and Kazakhstan to demarcate their adjacent sectors (Blum 1998: 149; Sciolino
Ibid).

By 1998, the Iranian government shifted its position to a complete carve-up of the sea in
equal shares for the five coastal states. In an accommodating gesture, Russia adjusted its
position in favor of some form of maritime division of the sea. But in July 1998, a joint
communiqué issued in Tehran by the deputy foreign ministers of the two states proclaimed
that, until a new Caspian Sea regime could be determined, the condominium legal regime
would remain in effect (Sciolino 1998: WK46). Nevertheless, Iran continued involving its
state-owned companies in oil and gas development and exportation with the republics of
Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan (Blum 1998).

Meanwhile, since 1995 Iran has consistently taken the position that unilateral actions (for
exploitation of seabed resources) by coastal states are not permitted until rules for
exploitation of mineral resources of the sea are worked out with the agreement of all the
coastal countries (UN document, 1996).

In July 1998 the presidents of Iran and Turkmenistan agreed that the legal regime, which
should be agreed among all five littorals, ought to be composed of a condominium seaward
belt of national jurisdiction, or the water column and the seabed should be divided equally
among all littoral states if there could not be agreement on the condominium approach (UN

In response to the 2002 summit meeting of leaders of the Caspian countries in Ashgabat,
officials of Iran's Foreign Ministry advanced the idea that if some division of the seabed into
economic zones is a fait accompli, then the division should be into five equal parts of 20% for
each, among the littoral states (Akhondov 2002: 1).

In May and September 2002, Russia signed protocols demarcating its relevant maritime areas
of the Caspian Sea with Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, respectively (Daily Iran, 2002: 3). These
actions were seen in Tehran as formulas designed to put pressure on other Caspian states,
particularly Iran, to come to terms with Moscow's new approach to a Caspian legal regime.
The Iranian Foreign Ministry declared the tripartite agreements of 2003 and 2004 between
Russia, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan based on equidistance as unacceptable (Interfax
Information Service) and continued to insist on a one fifth slice of the lake.

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Meanwhile, academic delegates from the Caspian littoral states in an international seminar at Mazandaran University on the Caspian Sea—Babolsar, October 19–20, 2003—issued a declaration, on the initiative of the first author that included the following principles:

(1) Creation of a strip of offshore zone of 25–45 miles from the coastline into the sea to allow an exclusive economic zone for each of the five littoral states.

(2) Creation of a common-use zone in the remaining waters and surface areas to allow equal rights of use for commercial, navigational and other maritime activities by each of the five littoral states. This common-use area will allow the littoral states to remain neighbors of geographical contiguity.

(3) Creation of common-use zones for seabed areas and the subsoil resources that underlie the common-use areas by following the same principles that divided the exclusive economic zones among the five coastal states.
Though Iran's Foreign Ministry decided to ignore this advisory declaration, it seems that eventually the terms specified in this declaration became the terms of reference for all five littoral states. Even the Iranians seem to favor the carve-up of the seabed and subsoil resources.

Conclusion

The main reason for Iran's changes and modifications of its position on the issue of Caspian Sea legal regime, which had started from the beginning in 1991 and continued throughout the following twenty years, was that its Foreign Ministry preferred to have the public opinion on its side at every step of the way. This was in accordance with the changing mode of a national debate throughout this period, which was encouraged by the Foreign Ministry.

These changes and modifications during the national debate began with Iran's argument for the implementation of the terms of 1921 and 1940 Iran-Soviet agreements, with muted hints that these treaties provided for a 50% share of the sea to each of the two signatories..., and changed to dividing the sea to five equal shares guaranteeing a 20% share of the Caspian Sea for Iran.

By the year 2010 the national debate in Iran over the country's share of the Caspian Sea and her position on its legal regime reached a categorical conclusion in a debate among experts holding differing views, that Iran ought not continue arguing for the percentage of share in the task of delimitation of the entire body of the Caspian Sea (khabaronline09, 2010).

The underlined advice implicit in the emerging consensus during that national debate, is the recommendation that Iran should follow a consensus among all littoral states based on a combination of condominium and seabed divisions as well as delimiting a strip of 25-mile width of an exclusive zone along the coastline of each state, in much the same way as advised by the Babolsar declaration.

On 24 November 2010, the Iranian envoy on Caspian Sea affairs announced that his country would no longer press for a percentage share of that sea and confirmed that Iran believes that a convention among all littoral states based on equity and justice can be adopted by the end of March 2012 (www.casfactor.com/en/news/61.html).

In the latest development, IRI President Hassan Ruhani signed on Monday September 29, 2014, together with heads of other Caspian Sea states, a declaration at the end of their summit meeting at Astrakhan whereby, according to a Russian presidential aid: "As a result of the works done by experts, it was agreed that: there will be two fixed zones determining the legal status of the Caspian Sea: a zone of state sovereignty and a zone with exclusive fishing rights. These two zones will be 25 nautical miles: a 15 miles territorial sea for each state from their shoreline, and a 10 mile exclusive fishing zone". The documents for this agreement was said to be signed officially at the next meeting during the next summit to be hosted by Kazakhstan (http://en.apa.az/xeber__political_statement_on_caspian_sea_legal_216937.html).
And this is how years of Iran's legal dilemma in the Caspian Sea status ends up in geographical certainties for all in the Caspian maritime political geography.

Meanwhile, Iran and Russia during the same summit built a strong consensus among the Caspian states, which also feature Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, over the inadmissibility of any (other) foreign military presence in the Caspian Sea, ruling out any future possible deployment of NATO forces in that basin (Russian council.ru/en/inner/?id_4=4463).

Prof. Pirouz Mojtahed-Zadeh is Professor of Political Geography, and currently visiting professor at the University of Tehran, Faculty of Geography. He generally teaches Political Geography and Geopolitics at the Universities in the Tehran area of Iran. pirouz_mojtahedzadeh@hotmail.com

Dr. Hashem Amiri is Researcher in Political Geography, and has recently completed his PhD in the Political Geography department under Mojtahed-Zadeh’s supervision, at the Islamic Azad University of Science and Research of Tehran. h_amiri5@yahoo.com

Ramtin Salarian is a PhD candidate for International Law of Maritime Regimes at the Islamic Azad University of Chalus, Iran. ramtin.salarian@gmail.com

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Critical comments on the article “Maritime Political Geography”

(First Critical Response to Pirouz Mojtahed-Zadeh et al.’s “Maritime Political Geography: Iran's legal dilemma in the Caspian Sea ends up in geographical certainties for all”)

To put it briefly, I have the following critical yet generally positive comments to make about the article: 1. I commend the nicely built structure of the article and the clear build up of the article's argument; 2. I also appreciate the brief but cohesive analysis of the subject, and the sufficient pointing out of references and sources for eventual further study of the subject; 3. Still, there is a need for more Iran(ian) sources examining the article's argument; and 4. There remains a need for further follow-on debate on the impact of environmental changes on the maritime accords between nations.

- Dr. Thrasy N. Marketos, a specialist on energy geopolitics in Asia, Eurasia and the Middle East, is a Senior Research Fellow for the Institute of Continuing Education at the Hellenic Military General Headquarters, Athens, Greece.  marketosthras@gmail.com

Anonymous comment from Iran on “Maritime Political Geography”

(Second Critical Response to Pirouz Mojtahed-Zadeh et al.'s “Maritime Political Geography: Iran's legal dilemma in the Caspian Sea ends up in geographical certainties for all”)

This is an interesting paper discussing a very delicate issue. However, the authors forget to mention that Iran's share of the Caspian Sea resources is 50%. According to the Irano-Soviet treaties this lake was an Iranian-Soviet condominium and both countries had equal share of its resources. Oil was already discovered in the Caspian Sea at the late 19th century. Therefore, the term 'resources' does not only refer to fish but also to oil, as the Soviet and Iranian signatories were already aware of the existence of oil in the Caspian.

- Anonymous

Remarks on “Maritime Political Geography”

(Third Critical Response to Pirouz Mojtahed-Zadeh et al.’s “Maritime Political Geography: Iran's legal dilemma in the Caspian Sea ends up in geographical certainties for all”)

The presented article deals with different aspects of the Iranian maritime policy towards the Caspian Sea. It has analyzed particularly the Iranian perception of the legal status of the
above-mentioned Sea based on the geographical background. The author discusses historical and legal backgrounds of the topic. His conclusions are innovative and convincing.

- Prof. George Sanikidze is Director of the G. Tsereteli Institute of Oriental Studies of the Ilia State University, Tblisi, Georgia. gsany@yahoo.com

Editorial Note

Obviously there is not just one Iranian point of view. The 50% formula is a very popular claim in Iran. Regardless of the text of treaties, also the political balance of power does matter. Our journal chooses not to take position in such complicated legal issues as this one. However, I personally have a point of view and understanding of, and perhaps a solution to, this issue, about which I will write later after I have studied the treaties in more depth.

- Babak Rezvani, Editor-in-Chief

NB: do you have any comments on Pirouz Mojtahed-Zadeh et al.’s article and/or the critical responses? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or through the contact form at www.ethnogeopolitics.org. Some of the comments on this and any other contribution, we may publish as Critical Responses (maximum 3,000 words) in the next issue(s) of the journal. Extensive critical responses with own source references may be published as full-fledged, separate articles. Please supply your name, contact details, academic and/or other professional titles and affiliations, as well as your specialisms and any major publications.
Main Article

The Fight Over Land and Home: Opposing Worldviews in Walter Echo-Hawk and Leslie Marmon Silko

Steven Pelletier with Susan Najita

Introduction

What is your favorite story? Do you remember who first told it to you? What was it about? Did it teach you something about life that you always remembered ever since hearing it? Or does it remind you of a time and place that occupies a special place in your heart and mind? How would you respond to someone who asked you what is your favorite legal precedent? Could you think of one? Would you ask for clarification: “what do you mean?”

One may indeed think highly of rulings that ended such historical injustices as slavery or segregation, but to say one is their favorite would be almost inappropriate. Although I am not stating that no one has favorite legal precedents, what I am trying to elaborate is that there is a certain personal connection one has to one’s favorite story that one does not have with one’s favorite legal precedent. Although this may seem an odd place to begin, this becomes the difference of opinion when it comes to the treatment of land in the viewpoints of two prominent Native American authors of today.

Land has been in contention between Native American peoples and European settlers ever since the first non-Native Americans stepped foot on the shores of America, flying under an imperial banner over 500 years ago. Through the formation of the United States of America and sovereign Nations of Native American tribal governments, the contention over the land of America continued—dominated by the interests of the state.

Whether it was forcing Native American peoples off the lands they inhabited since the time before the formation of the United States and on to Reservations, extracting resources off the Reservations, or placing large power plants and other government installations on or just outside the boundaries of Reservation lands, the United States continued to use the land of Native peoples for their own interests.

As Native peoples protested in every way they could, the United States government sought to use the lands they inhabited, what became the point of contention between the two was not simply a discourse about land and its many uses, but about home.

Opposing Worldviews Over Land and Home

Native peoples have long watched their home being slowly destroyed while European settlers and their descendants built a place they too could call home. As time went on, both the Native American tribes of America and the newly formed United States of America found
that they both shared a home. What they did not share, however, was the treatment of the home which both inhabited due to differing worldviews.

In both Walter Echo-Hawk's *In the Light of Justice: The Rise of Human Rights in Native America and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2013) and Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead: A Novel* (1991) they seek to show their readers these differing worldviews for Native American peoples and the descendants of European settlers.

Echo-Hawk does so by explaining how the United Nation's passing of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on September 13, 2007 creates a legal framework through which the worldview of European settlers—which slowly stripped away the validity of the Native American worldview and became the worldview the United States government adopted as well—can finally be counteracted in law-making policies.

Silko's *Almanac*, however, although spanning to global proportions in the course of the narrative, centers around a Native American character from her own community of Laguna Pueblo in order to elaborate her own thoughts on how a Native American worldview is superior due to its beginning and ending on a foundation of viewing the world in which one inhabits as home.

Although they may situate themselves in different discourses and go about elaborating their arguments in vastly different ways, both Echo-Hawk and Silko rely on storytelling as a vital means of reincorporating the Native American worldview into a larger society. The difference between the two, however, comes back to the language through which both texts treat the concept of land.

Although Echo-Hawk recognizes the importance of the stories Native American peoples tell about the places they call home, he makes it abundantly clear that the legal language of a human rights framework (the said foundation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) is what needs to be utilized in order for Native Peoples to reclaim the places they call home.

Silko, however, invents a language which describes the place one calls home. In these differences of terms the worldviews of Native Americans are advocated as necessary for all mankind, yet as differing as the terms “land” and “home” are in their meanings, so too are the implications for the future Echo-Hawk and Silko posit in their individual texts.

**Echo-Hawk's Worldview on Land and Home**

In Walter Echo-Hawk's *In the Light of Justice: The Rise of Human Rights in Native America and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, he explains how the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

> "invites us to view federal Indian law in a new way. It is possible to go beyond that amoral body of law to conceive of Native American rights as "human"
rights.” Indeed, we can pole vault over the Indian Self-Determination Policy to situate federal Indian law and policy in a human rights framework, and the Declaration shows how to realign some of our outmoded legal doctrines with principles of justice heretofore absent in Native American law. When viewed through a human rights lens, we can at once see values that are higher than the state.” (Echo-Hawk: XIII).

Through this human rights discourse, Echo-Hawk champions the reason why he believes the Declaration is the foundation for indigenous peoples all over the world, and particularly Native Americans, to regain the legal ground they have lost throughout centuries of proceedings with colonial governments.

Drawing parallels many times throughout his text to the Civil Rights Movement, Echo-Hawk sees the Declaration as the means for monumental judicial decisions such as Brown v. Board of Education in a Native American rights setting. Instead of creating laws which simply eliminate state-sponsored forms of racism, he sees this Declaration and the legal language of human rights as the means through which Native American peoples will be able to obtain “reparations” from the United States government.

Reparations in Echo-Hawk’s usage of the term, however, does not refer to monetary compensation, but instead to “measures aimed at restoring justice through wiping out all the consequences of the harm suffered by the individuals and/or people concerned as a result of a wrong, and at re-establishing the situation which would have existed if the wrong had not been produced.” (Echo-Hawk: 11). Chief amongst these re-establishing of the situation that would have existed if the wrong had not been produced, is the recognition for the United States government, and American society at large, of the Native American worldview.

Although Echo-Hawk’s argument seeks mostly to help the average everyday person to understand the legal ramifications the Declaration can have for Federal Indian Law in the United States, when he reaches the sixth chapter of his book, he makes a somewhat environmental shift in focus to deal with issues surrounding Native American lands in the United States.

In this sixth chapter Echo-Hawk argues that through the Declaration, a “land ethic” can be developed in the United States which does not simply see the natural environment as a resource at the state’s disposal. Echo-Hawk believes that it is through Native American culture that this land ethic will develop because Native American culture, “teaches that some places are holy ground, [that] we have important relatives in the animal and plant kingdom, and [that] humans must cooperate with the natural world to survive.” (Echo-Hawk: 134-135).

Although Echo-Hawk is quick to explain that these values are not just “quirks” of Native American culture, he does believe that since the Declaration is intended to give reparations which, “produce equitable relations between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples [while exploring] notions of reparative justice that allow peoples to heal historic injuries and move
forward as a stronger whole,” that through incorporating the Native American worldview of the natural world, Americans will be able to see the land in which they inhabit as a living entity in which they are merely one of many (Ibid).

Echo-Hawk, however, places his faith in establishing this worldview (which posits a more personal type of relationship to land) through the means of storytelling. As he comes to the conclusion of his chapter on developing a new land ethic, he begins to quote stories about the land from the likes of Eagle Chief (Pawnee), a Mohican prophecy, Brave Buffalo, Luther Standing Bear, Pete Catches, Black Elk, and simply the name of the Lakota people. Each quote Echo-Hawk gives, relays a story (even in just one sentence) about how all living things—plants, humans, animals—no matter how big or small, are all sacred and none of them are more important than the others. As Echo-Hawk explains,

“The stories told by the land are about its peoples—their origins, struggles, values, and beliefs. The songs and histories that it whispers are often profound, ancient, or can take on sacred meaning. Sometimes, the tragic stories are not pretty, in haunting places such as Sand Creek, the Washita River, and other massacre sights or places where injustice took place. The land also tells the sacred stories of the birds, animals, plants, and the natural phenomena that comprise human habitats. The lessons learned from the land are what give us our identity and make us fully human.” (Echo-Hawk: 154).

Here Echo-Hawk places special emphasis on the stories one tells about the land, since what is formed through the stories are a personal connection to the land. It is through this personal connection that Echo-Hawk believes his land ethic will develop in the United States. Informed by Native American peoples who have told stories about the land of the United States for centuries, the United States can begin to educate all of its peoples about the land through these stories.

As stories are then passed down from generation to generation about their land, it will no longer just be Native American peoples who become so tied to the land that the land reflects them in the stories they tell about them, but this will spread to include all the peoples of the United States of America.

Silko’s Worldview on Land and Home

Although Echo-Hawk does not further elaborate this viewpoint as the chapter ends just a few lines after the previously quoted lines, it clearly echoes some of the same sentiments as Leslie Marmon Silko in her novel Almanac of the Dead (1991). Ever since releasing the classic collection of stories Storyteller in 1981, storytelling has been an important theme for Silko in every piece of writing she has produced ever since. Much like Echo-Hawk’s views, Silko believes that storytelling connects people to the land in which they live, but the connection for Silko is a deeply intimate one that originates from Native American culture as well.
In *Almanac of the Dead*, Silko elaborates on this deeply intimate connection through the character of Sterling who comes from Silko’s own community of Laguna Pueblo located in the high deserts of central New Mexico. She begins to establish this connection to the land for her reader by removing Sterling from the community of his people, the Laguna, and focusing on his social isolation both inside and outside of that community.

Although Sterling is not the only character to be “banished” from his original lands in the novel (social isolation is an important theme in *Almanac*), he is the one through whom Silko is able to show the deep intimate connection one feels to the land which one originally inhabits. Because although the stories one tells about the land may be to inform and educate future generations and understand one’s own relationship to it as merely one being in a sea of living entities, the stories are meant to create one’s home.

The very first story we get in Silko’s novel is the story of Sterling and why he has become socially isolated from his home community of the Laguna reservation. What seems to have sent him into exile from Laguna were the dealings he had with the Hollywood film crew that he had been assigned to police. Back then, Sterling seems powerless to stop this crew from getting into places they are not allowed and from accessing information that is not intended for outsiders.

While Silko makes her reader feel as if Sterling is set up from the very beginning as it is almost impossible for one person to account for hundreds of others, Silko also makes it clear that Sterling is set up almost from the moment of his birth. Being a fatherless and motherless child, he is taken in by all of his aunts who make it their life’s responsibility to make sure that Sterling will be taken care of. Silko makes it clear that this places Sterling in the crosshairs of his cousins’ ire as they view him as having a favored position even though he is not their actual sibling.

Within this family jealousy subplot, Silko also begins to show a divide between how the traditional worldview of Laguna (the Native American worldview) saw their relationship with the world in the past and how that worldview is replaced by one that reflects the worldview of the United States government.

The tribal council at Laguna is very clear that they chose Sterling because he is the Laguna person who has lived outside Laguna the longest. This leads the council to believe that this experience has helped Sterling to understand things about the world outside of Laguna. Yet Sterling points out to them again and again the fault in their logic, telling them, “You act like I should have known everything just because I lived off reservation. But I was working for the railroad. I was living in towns like Winslow and Barstow, not Hollywood. How was I supposed to know why they all had runny noses?” (Silko: 91).

Even if there is not the slightest hint that the tribal council is setting up Sterling for a fall, this type of logic makes the reader question just how sheltered the tribal council is and how exactly they view non-Laguna people. Whereas Sterling recognizes that the people from Hollywood are just as weird and foreign to him as they are to the tribal council, the council
seems to think that by just living off reservation gives one absolute knowledge about how to deal with anybody who comes in from off reservation.

The way in which the tribal council conceptualizes the world outside of Laguna and the way in which Sterling does seem to embody the two differing worldviews that are at odds in Echo-Hawk's text as well. As Sterling begins to reflect on his interactions with people at Laguna he finds that “Something really had happened to the world. It wasn't just something his funny, wonderful, old aunts had made up...People now weren't the same. What had become of that world which had faded a little more each time one of his dear little aunts had passed?” (Silko: 88).

As he begins to think about interactions with his aunts, and specifically his relationship to Aunt Marie, Sterling starts to question why exactly he was banished. As he begins to bring the reader closer and closer to the moment when he is finally forced out, he begins to be warned by a voice that seems to come out of nowhere:

“Although Sterling had been telling himself not to worry, a voice deeper inside told him there was bad trouble on the way. The voice told him mostly it was due to his long absence from the village—first, going away to boarding school so young, and then going to work for the railroad right after high school. Then, the voice continued, there was the fact that except for Aunt Marie, his close family and clanspeople had died out over the years. Who was going to plead his case for him? It was considered shabby to stand up and defend oneself. It amounted to bragging. It was far better to have friends and in-laws vouch for your good deeds and truthfulness. He lay there in the dark and regretted that he had not done more socializing in the six months he'd been back.” (Silko: 95-96).

The voice not only warns of the trouble Sterling is about to endure, but it begins to question how the Laguna community chooses to deal with Sterling when trouble does come his way that affects the whole community at Laguna.

The tribal council brings Sterling in to let the community decide what to do with him, yet by their own standards for defense, they should know that Sterling cannot have a fair trial as he has no one but Aunt Marie to stick up for him. So why would they even bother with the hearing when they should know that the system in place is set up to be a one-sided argument? And further questioning the tribal council's own method of judgment, why does it seem that the opinion of Aunt Marie is completely left out of consideration for Sterling?

Although Sterling lays out how this type of hearing is supposed to proceed at Laguna, the actual execution of it shows that although there are traditional ways of handling this matter—that are supposed to be part of Laguna culture—the proceedings are manipulated and voices are silenced so that the way it has been used to work is no longer enacted.

Sterling recognizes that the worldview the tribal council sees him through is not one of their own culture, but rather one of the United States government's since how Sterling knows the
Laguna ways of handling such matters are not what is being enacted. Instead he is placed in a courtroom in which he is set up to be at a clear disadvantage through his lack of representation and knowledge about how the legal proceedings in which he is placed are to proceed. Silko places Sterling in exactly the same type of context Echo-Hawk is writing to eliminate through educating someone like Sterling about the rights they have due to the Declaration and imploring them to re-activate the Native American worldview in a legal setting.

Although Silko sets up the narrative so that it seems that Sterling is always viewed as someone on the outside of Laguna, it is important to consider that Sterling himself adopts the United States worldview as he leaves the reservation as soon as he is given the opportunity. As evidence in the quote from pages 95 and 96, Sterling himself recognizes that he did not socialize enough with the others at Laguna and seems to make the choice over and over again to distance himself from the other people who live at Laguna.

Working on the railroad both in Arizona and California, also, would seem to show that Sterling himself rejects the Laguna worldview and moves further westward and deeper into highly urbanized areas that would seek to efface Sterling's connection to Laguna.

Although it is tough to understand Sterling's choice to return to Laguna, and thus difficult to understand what Sterling's personal connection is to the Laguna community, what is clear is that although the council and his cousins may be finding a final excuse to kick him out of Laguna, Sterling himself always has one strong intimate connection to Laguna: Aunt Marie. The narrator even makes it clear that "he had dreamed of spending the years with his poor little decrepit auntie, keeping her company until she returned to her beloved sisters and her own dear aunts at Cliff House." (Silko: 97).

Sterling sees that as long as Aunt Marie is alive he will come back to Laguna and stay close to her until her death. This too, however, seems to support the argument that Sterling rejects the Native American worldview, since if he views his Aunt Marie as his only connection to Laguna, then what was he planning to do once she died?

Again, many of the choices he makes in his life back this up as well, since he does not want to be married to a Laguna woman (let alone any woman), he has no children, and although he may indeed take Aunt Marie's property when she dies, he never views that property as his and makes no claims to it upon his wishes against leaving Laguna.

Although the opening section leaves Sterling's position in the Laguna community up in the air, when Silko brings the reader back to Laguna with Sterling, this relationship becomes cemented. Although Sterling's relationship with the people in Laguna has never been great (and it seems as if it never will be), as he steps out of Lecha's car and away from Seese's embrace onto the red sandstone just off of interstate 40, Sterling begins to recall stories about the place he calls home and familiarize himself with the environment again.
I must pause here for a minute and call out this term environment. Although I know that Silko is showing her reader that Sterling has a connection to Mother Earth specifically in the Laguna reservation and the whole ecosystem of that area, environment is the term that entails all of that but that is not really what Silko is showing Sterling is connecting to again. As the title of this final chapter states, what he is connecting to, and has always been connected to, is home. This is an important distinction for Silko and one I feel many readers and scholars miss on reading through a text that connects itself to many different humanitarian and environmental movements.

Although *Almanac of the Dead* may be viewed as early eco-criticism and deals with many issues in social and literary theory, Silko is not advocating for the reader to adopt a certain political ideology or to read her works through a certain literary lens; instead what she calls her reader to do is understand where their own home is and what their responsibility to it is.

Sterling’s narrative, although dealing with issues like uranium mining and Hollywood’s lack of respect towards indigenous culture, at its center lies his personal relationship to the place he calls home. Rather than choosing to end her novel with Zeta and Lecha completing the *Almanac* or one of the many militant groups in the novel actually starting an uprising to overthrow a global power, she chooses to focus on one man’s reconnection to home. Sterling may indeed have left Laguna and been forsaken by the people in it, but as soon as he remembers that Laguna is his home Silko reveals why this four letter word is the most important term for her book. As Sterling reflects at the end of the novel, “Home.” Even thinking the word made his eyes fill with tears. What was “home”? (Silko: 757).

This question is tossed around in the final chapter of the book as Sterling considers not what kept him out of his home, but what connected him to it even before he was born. Recalling old stories of his own people, stories foretelling future events like the return of the stone snake, and the relationship between his aunties and himself, Sterling remembers why he came back to Laguna and understands the knowledge that was passed on to him through these connections is necessary for his home to survive. As the final lines of the novel state, “Sterling didn't care about the rumors and gossip because Sterling knew why the giant snake had returned now; he knew what the snake's message was to the people.” (Silko: 763).

Sterling now understands that although his relationship to the people in the place he calls home may be fractured, and although they may have forgotten about the “old-time ways” that helped keep the land alive for thousands of years before, he has to stay in his home because he understands these things and will look to these “old-time ways,” the Native American worldview, in order to ensure his home has a future.

As Sterling looks southward from Laguna for what he knows will come next, Silko invites the reader to think of the ways they are connected to their home and, like Sterling, draw on practices from the past that were instilled for a purpose of preserving the land and ensuring a future.

Although I am calling this viewpoint of Silko the Native American worldview due to its basis in her own personal connection to Laguna, Silko, like Echo-Hawk, believes that this
Comparing Echo-Hawk's and Silko's Worldviews on Land and Home

Now we must unpack the various connotations the word “home” can mean and hammer out the definition in order to understand how the term can be used by the legal language Echo-Hawk and Silko are writing against and differentiate the meaning that Silko intends when she titles the final chapter in *Almanac* “Home.”

The *Oxford English Dictionary* states that home can be many things: from, “the place where a person or animal dwells,” to, “a collection of dwellings; a village, a town.” Or in more legalistic language that would fit with Echo-Hawk's text, home could be, “a landed property; an estate, a manor; A dwelling place; a person's house or abode; the fixed residence of a family or household; the seat of domestic life and interests. Also (chiefly in later use): a private house or residence considered merely as a building.”

For Silko's purposes, as well as for the purposes of this essay, what is intended by the word home is that it is “without article or possessive,” and that it can refer to, “the place where one lives or was brought up, with reference to the feelings of belonging, comfort, etc., associated with it.” (*The Oxford English Dictionary*).

Although it may seem a bit juvenile and the move of a neophyte to simply rattle off dictionary definitions, what needs to be created in explaining the difference is a fixity of terms between Echo-Hawk and Silko. The final definition notes that home is without article or possessive and that when one evokes the term “home” with no article or possessive, the term also references to all the feelings of belonging, comfort, etc., associated with it.

Whereas Echo-Hawk is clear that evoking the Native American worldview is a way of re-establishing the validity of the cultures and worldviews of Native Americans, Silko instead is trying to use her own Native American worldview as a model for others to think about the responsibility they have to the place they call home.

Although it may seem that this too is Echo-Hawk's point as well since the Declaration is meant as a cultural bridge between Native American peoples and the United States, the difference in the foundation for each project is that Echo-Hawk places the foundation of establishing the Native American worldview in the UN Declaration, whereas Silko places it in storytelling.

For Echo-Hawk, storytelling is merely a feature of the new legal framework the Declaration will give to Native American peoples through which they will be able to finally have the right...
to self-determination. This is an important distinction, because Echo-Hawk places the power outside the hands of Native Americans and back into the language of a legal framework.

For Echo-Hawk, it would be a distinctly Native American contingent that uses the framework the Declaration gives Native Americans; and he would also be right to point out that the Declaration was written by indigenous peoples from around the world including many Native American leaders. The Declaration, however, at its basis is founded on a human rights discourse that was created by strict legal proceedings removed from many indigenous communities and contexts.

Turning back to Silko and her use of the term home, however, we can begin to see the disconnection Echo-Hawk's legal framework creates in the relationship he seek to establish with the land. Here is where the fixity of the terms "land" and "home" come into play. The place Silko calls home is still for all intents and purposes in Echo-Hawk's discourse still qualified as land. Although he may say that through the use of storytelling the connection to it becomes the exact same thing as Silko's concept of home, the use of storytelling is to establish his land ethic: the way in which his legal framework will from this point forward treat land.

Although a new relationship may be developed to land for Echo-Hawk, it will still be set within borders and have laws drawn up about its varying uses. Law will still be the ruler over the land. Home, however, has no ruler, nor borders. Home is an intimate space that is understood by all, yet experienced only by the individual. Even individuals who would agree sharing their home have differing conceptions of this home, though they share a responsibility toward maintaining that home. Land is cold and removed from the individual whereas home is warm and constantly connected. Land can be defined and quantified, home cannot.

I view Echo-Hawk's reliance on the law of the land in order to re-empower Native American peoples as curious and also troubling. I understand completely that Echo-Hawk seeks to undo many legal injustices perpetrated against Native Americans in the United States, yet to place your faith into a legal system that has at every turn used this same system to keep Native Americans from achieving equal footing, to me, makes little sense.

I am not saying that Echo-Hawk's work should be disregarded or that people like him should not be doing the work they are doing in courtrooms and legal offices all around the United States, but I am still curious as to why now the UN Declaration is some sort of legal magic wand that with a few waves of its articles will wholly undue rulings the United States government has fought for more than a hundred years to uphold.

My concern mainly lies in how Echo-Hawk believes that the incorporation of the Native American worldview into the law will affect the worldview itself. Echo-Hawk seems to believe that by merging this worldview with worldviews that directly oppose it, a happy merging will occur in which one culture accepts and validates the other. Drawing on his parallels to the Civil Rights Movement, however, we can see that when this sort of process is
played out in real life it is a violent process that must suffer through a turbulent period marred by bloodshed and pain. Silko's narrative accounts for this in many ways that Echo-Hawk's text does not.

Although Silko herself believes that the Native American worldview I have proposed in this essay is one that can be shared by people across the globe, she still believes that this worldview will not blend or mesh at all with those that have sought to snuff it out. Even as Sterling peacefully waits in his home at the end of *Almanac of the Dead* he waits for the coming fight he knows has been foretold due to the re-emergence of the Native American worldview as being necessary for the survival of the human race.

Conclusion

While both Walter Echo-Hawk and Leslie Marmon Silko are concerned for the survival and validation of Native American peoples in the United States, each carries out the way they see that survival and validation in differing ways. Echo-Hawk believes that although the legal system has been set up so as to constantly keep Native American peoples under the rule of the state, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples finally gives Native Americans a way to fight back thanks to a new language of human rights laws which have not been used in federal Indian law before.

Silko, however, writes that a reconnection to the place one calls home must be made and that one need stay in that home fulfilling the responsibilities to it while waiting for the uprising that will come from others making this same reconnection. Both may anticipate struggles, but only one anticipates bloodshed.

Although not hoping for Silko to be correct personally, if we are to look to stories of this land of America as Echo-Hawk suggests, then what we will find when two opposing worldviews collide will mirror Silko's premonitions rather than Echo-Hawk's optimism. It is up to those who continue the fight, from this point forward, to understand this and prepare themselves for what is to come in re-validating a Native American worldview in the United States.

Steven Pelletier is a PhD candidate on the theme Decolonization & the Environment under the supervision of Prof. Susan Najita, and Graduate Student Instructor in the Department of English Language & Literature at the University of Michigan. swpellet@umich.edu

Susan Najita is Associate Professor on Pacific, Asian American and U.S. minority literatures, in the Department of American Culture at the University of Michigan. najita@umich.edu

References—Works Cited


Critical review on the manuscript “The Fight Over Land and Home”

(First Critical Response to Steven Pelletier's “The Fight Over Land and Home: Opposing Worldviews in Walter Echo-Hawk and Leslie Marmon Silko”)

As it is, I wonder whether it is ready for publication; it often looks like an early draft, and frequently seems to assume that the reader must have read the novel(-s).

It needs a theoretical framework and important terms such as ‘world-view’, ‘home’, ‘law’, and ‘story’ must have been defined and discussed more extensively—and the novels should clarify the matter. It is essential that the difference between the American Constitution and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples be spelled out.

But it has brilliant ideas in joining or juxtaposing story with law and other binary oppositions. If the author would show the difference between the two world views and the struggle of the railroad worker and the place of Auntie in his mind, all these would have really been very important. Here again the concept of home and outside world of jobs would merit discussion.

The author could really make his/her topic a very active and relevant topic, and not fall into brief descriptions from the text which are unavailable to the reader, and have recourse to revolution at the end (without naming it). The author must realize that it is these oppositions which are very good to be discussed. After having presented the theoretical framework, then all quotes from the novels would find their justifiable place. The readers would then be engaged in the work and see how they could relate to the text and the novels. After all, who is not in some way experiencing these dualities.

- Prof. Soheila Shahshahani, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran, is Head of the Commission Anthropology of the Middle East, at the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES). soheilairan@gmail.com

Comments on “Fight Over Land and Home”

(Second Critical Response to Steven Pelletier's “The Fight Over Land and Home: Opposing Worldviews in Walter Echo-Hawk and Leslie Marmon Silko”)

It is an interesting topic that deserves attention. I believe that the Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics does a good job to pay attention to Native American Studies. However, the author should be aware of the fact that not every reader is familiar with his subject. Therefore, I recommend the author to pay more attention to introducing the theme, subject(s) and context of his study better. All in all, the author writes in a readable and inviting manner for the reader.

- Anonymous
Editorial Note

Steven Pelletier’s evocative and thought-provoking comparison of Echo-Hawk’s and Silko’s notions of land and home, among Americans in general and Native Americans in particular, deserves a wider reading. Thus Prof. Anton Treuer, Professor of Ojibwe at Bemidji State University (Minnesota, US), approves the quality of this article for publication in our journal but wishes to keep his review unpublished. The article especially deserves a wider response and debate among those who belong to it, form part of it, are somehow affected by it—or are simply interested by it as a scholar or citizen (or both) from the ‘outside’. Still, I wish to point attention to some major issues that also some of the peer reviewers have pointed out albeit in different wordings.

First, are Native Americans really uniquely separate from and superior to other peoples regarding to the “land ethic” as Steven seems to suggest in his article? Are Native Americans really uniquely qualified, and they alone, to ‘teach’ other peoples on such an ethic? What about settlers from Ireland, for instance, who had and still have very intimate connections to their (former) homelands and (former) homes in that land—as told in numerous ‘fairytale’ (also peopled by spirits, goblins, etc.), family stories and other kinds of storytelling? Be that as it may, not all European (and other) settlers exploited and environmentally damaged the lands they occupied—though many or most of them certainly did, aided by the powers of the state.

Second, one wonders what Steven’s own true position is on the likelihood, desirability and/or justifiability of an armed uprising among Native Americans. This is a potentially explosive and certainly sensitive issue, that he himself raises at the end of his article—without further elaborating on this, and clarifying this, in order to avoid any unfortunate misunderstandings.

- Caspar ten Dam, Executive Editor

NB: do you have any comments on Steven Pelletier’s article and/or the critical responses? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org, or through the contact form at www.ethnogeopolitics.org.
(Announcement)

My new Cartoons and other Illustrations

Caspar ten Dam

After a hiatus of many years, I am finally again producing cartoons and other illustrations for customers and clients. I am also experimenting with new cartoons such as the one about the “[Terrorism] Expert” (see picture on the left), some examples of which have been reproduced in the most recent issues of this journal (another “Expert” cartoon is shown on page 20 of the present issue). Shown below is a page of my experimental, wordless cartoon story “The Encounter”. I regularly place freely downloadable “The Expert” and other cartoons on my website www.ctdamconsultancy.com (see Homepage and ‘Events’).

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

Ethnic and Civic Proto-National Consciousness in Pre-Modern Spain

Maxim Tabachnik

Abstract The article revisits the main theoretical debate in the field of nationalism studies between Modernists and Primordialists. Modernists claim that nations are the product of the modern historical period (and especially the associated rise of capitalism and liberal values in the 18th century Europe) but are presented as ancient by nationalists. Primordialists see them as an integral part of human history with ancient roots. Ethnosymbolists attempt to bridge the two extremes of thought by suggesting that, while shaped as we know them during modernity, nations were formed around pre-existing ethnic cores.

This article addresses the case of the Spanish national identity by analyzing historiographical literature and presenting findings that support the ethnosymbolist position. The analysis reveals a basis for an argument that what is understood today as the historical Spanish national identity was born not only before late modernity (18-19th centuries), namely in the early modernity (15-16th centuries), but in pre-modern times, namely in the 12-13th centuries or in the late Middle Ages. Furthermore, this collective identity was built on top of an ethnic core, which started forming in the 6th century or the late Antiquity. The article also finds evidence of both ethnic and civic elements of proto-national consciousness in Spain in pre-modern and even Antique times thus further weakening the Modernist thesis, which deems the ethnic/civic tension within the nation also a product of modernity and the associated rise of liberal ideology.

In this traditional or historic sense, Spain may have been the oldest "historical nation" but not at all the first modern political nation.

S. Payne, “Spain: A Unique History”

Introduction

The dominant Modernist school of nationalism scholarship claims that nations are modern but are presented as ancient by nationalists (Anderson: 5). Leading Modernist accounts by Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner link the rise of nationalism to the rise of modernity and, especially, liberal ideology and modern capitalism, be it print capitalism in the case of Anderson or industrialization in the case of Gellner. Modernity as a historical period is usually dated from the 16th century onward, the first two of its centuries seen as early
modernity when people “hardly know what has hit them” (Berman: 16–17). Modernists emphasize the late modernity of the 18-19th centuries when capitalist economic relations and liberal political thought reached their heights.

While in political science modernity is firmly associated with nationalism (Lachmann: 205) and the rise of the nation-state, modernity has had overreaching implications for all aspects of social and individual life and is still poorly understood (Tabachnik: 3). There is no doubt, however, that “something” major happened in the middle of the second millennium in Europe (Lachmann: 1). This “something” changed the course of the world's history, and, therefore, historians see modernity as a historical period.

This article will add to the minority of the voices claiming that the roots of nationalism predate modernity. This school of thought is comprised of primordialists as well as perennialists and ethnosymbolists associated with them. Primordialists such as Cliford Geertz claim that the nation as a collective identity is a natural part of the human condition and has been present throughout history. Anthony Smith bridges the two opposing poles of thought by suggesting that while today's nations may have been constructed during the modern times in Europe, they were, in fact, reconstructed out of existing ethnic cores that go back in history.

Modern nations, therefore, have ethnic antecedents. Smith's position, usually called ethnosymbolist, is close to the perennialist school, which claims that over the course of most of human history there have been expressions of collective identity that should be considered national (Ballester-Rodríguez: 22). Ethnosymbolists and perennialists are usually grouped with primordialists, although Smith's proposal is unique in its potential to reconcile the overall debate. Furthermore, Smith suggests that the concept of a nation is a blend of ethnic (based on the ideas of common origin and descent and manifested in a common culture) and civic (territorial and also political, educational and economic) elements (Smith: 113). This article's argument is in line with Smith's, but it also suggests that such blend is also pre-modern.

1. The Birth of Spanish National Consciousness

In the case of Spain, historians commonly accept that the Spanish nation came into existence as a result of the Independence War of 1808 against the Napoleonic invasion (Ballester-Rodríguez: 25). Recent work of Ballester-Rodríguez, however, places its rise in early modernity (mid-1550s to mid-1650s). I will review his argument as well as consider other accounts that suggest that Spanish national consciousness may be even older than the period that he suggests.

Starting with a historiographical overview of the existence of a proto-nation and proto-national consciousness in pre-modern and early modern Spain (from the age of Roman Hispania to the 17th century AD), I will seek to validate Smith's thesis on the ethnic and civic
tension in nationalism—but not during modernity, as it is commonly done, but as taking place during the period under consideration mentioned above. Finding the elements of ethnic and civic national consciousness during this period would not only validate Smith’s thesis but also reject the Modernist one.

In particular, the literature I rely on places the birth of a stable Spanish collective identity, resembling that of the Spanish national identity of today, in the 12-13th centuries AD, shortly before the birth of the English and French ones. This article also confirms that a proto-Spanish identity existed already in the Roman Empire, and as some hold, the case of the Spanish identity is not exceptional in this sense as many other groups displayed proto-national identities or conscious self-perceptions in the Roman period despite the prevalent academic paradigm (Ten Dam: 2013).

The birth of what Smith calls an “ethnic core” in Spain can be actually tracked to the 6th century AD when the ban on ethnic intermarriage between Romans and Visigoths was lifted. During the 13th and 14th centuries AD the Catholic aspect of the aforementioned medieval Spanish identity singled out Jews and Muslims as “the other”, giving birth to religious and then ethnic anti-Semitism. The latter has survived to this day, despite a civic and ethnically-blind religious discourse that placed Spain as the chosen land to bring Christianity and civilization to the rest of the world.

Centered even more on Christianity in the face of the Arab expansion, this medieval Spanish identity then further merged with that of Castile in the aftermath of its union with Aragon in 1479. Spanish ethnocentricism continued in the colonies where Indians and people of mixed ethnic and racial background were relegated to underclasses.

At the same time, elements of the civic understanding of collective identity survived from the Roman times: anyone could join a Castilian community as long as his or her intention was genuine, people were allowed to settle in the New World based on birth on the territory of the Iberian Peninsular and not because of being anyone's descendent. Based on this analysis, a case may be made, therefore, for the existence of a Spanish proto-national identity with both ethnic and civic elements, usually associated with modern nationalisms, in pre-modern times and even as early as late Antiquity.

A. Early vs. Late Modernity

The Modernist thesis limits itself by insisting on a strictly political understanding of the nation as a sovereign expression of the collective will of the people (Ballester-Rodríguez: 13) and the demand to have its own state. Gellner famously defines nationalism as “primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent” (Gellner: 1). Not only is his vision of nationalism political but it also connects political power to a sense of belonging to the nation, a cultural entity reinforced by political will (Gellner: 52). This concept of the nation may indeed be the creation of later modernity.
as the Modernist school claims. But if we relax this definition by removing the insistence on the supposed existence of a political expression, we will observe that in its pre-political meaning the nation existed well before modernity and is close to the ethnic definition the nation offered in the Biblical account where it refers to “a group of people connected by history, culture and/or religion” (Ballester-Rodríguez: 52).

Other scholars trying to bridge the Modernist and Primordialist theses, have concluded that pre-modern national identity is, in fact, ethnic national identity (Cărăuş: 19). It describes the nation understood in ethnic terms. However, the case of Spain confirms that both ethnic and civic elements of proto-national identity were present before the modern historical period in Europe.

In particular, historians generally agree that by the 18th century, the concept of nation was already widely used in Spanish as it was in other European languages in both of its ethnic and civic meanings as “a line of descent related by blood” and “a collection of inhabitants of a territory” (Lomnitz: 8). The civic concept of the nation in Spain has been traced at least to the beginning of the 17th century (Quijada: 12). The overwhelmingly more frequent ethnic concept of the Spanish nation goes back to the to a dictionary published as early as 1490 (Ballester-Rodríguez: 47; Quijada: 20).

Even if earlier accounts have fewer historical documents to rely on, it is evident that by the 1550s, the concept of the Spanish nation was already in wide use (Ballester-Rodríguez: 16). In most cases, it reflected the Biblical usage of the Latin natio (see the reference above), oftentimes with its own politico-territorial expression as in the case of the Israeli nation (Ballester-Rodríguez: 52).

Going beyond definitions, Ballester-Rodríguez in his work La identidad española en la Edad Moderna (1556-1665) argues that the Spanish nation already existed in the people’s collective consciousness at that time alongside other existing national identities such as Portuguese or Catalan ones (Ballester-Rodríguez: 39). Other authors add that the early modern period made Spain as we know it and “many Spaniards are still living in it” (Kamen: ix). However, other authors have suggested that the origin of Spanish national consciousness lies in earlier periods. I call this consciousness proto-national in the rest of the article.

B. The Middle Ages

Furthermore, Ballester-Rodriguez claims that Spanish national consciousness in its historical but not political meaning existed in the Middle Ages (Ballester-Rodriguez: 81). Other accounts confirm that in the Middle Ages “people already spoke of ‘Spain’” even if politically it did not yet exist (Kamen: 14). Certain Spanish historians have timed the rise of the collective identity of ‘Spanishness’ to the 13th century AD, shortly before than that of ‘Englishness’ and ‘Frenchness’. Popular histories and legends of that time already used these concepts. Such accounts support a suggested framework that places the initial formation of proto-national consciousness in Europe to the period between the 11th and 17th centuries (Fusi Aizpurúa: 40–41).
It seems logical that the Christian Iberian kingdoms developed a Hispanic identity due to their resistance to the Arab invasion. This is a unique feature of the Spanish national identity that may have forced it into an earlier consolidation than those of other European nations, a historical development that many recognize (Kamen: 33; Payne: 105). Another aspect contributing to the early consolidation of collective identities of Castile-Leon, Catalonia, Aragon, and Portugal into one shared a collective identity, is the fact that they all represented Christians geographically separated by the Pyrenees from the rest of the Christian world.

In the process, Castile became the leading kingdom in the Holy War against the Moorish kingdom of Al-Andalus due to its territorial expansion especially after the victory of Navas de Tolosa of 1212 AD. As a consequence of Castile's rise, its leaders nurtured a project of pan-Hispanic unity. The project became a political priority in Castile already by the 13th century (Ballester-Rodríguez: 109). The union of Castile and Aragon in 1479 made this vision reality.

In the aftermath of this union and the leading economic role of Castile in it, the notion of Castile and that of Spain merged as Castile "hijacked Spain's identity". This process was later solidified by Castile's imperial enterprise in the Americas where Castile and Spain were "perceived as identical" (Kamen: 18). Castilian-based chroniclers and writers started referring to 'Spain' when they really meant 'Castile' and their language as 'Spanish' as opposed to 'Castilian' (Ibid: 17). With Castile's ascent its language quickly became an international language understood in other parts of Europe. A book claimed in 1544 that it was understood in "most Christian nations" (Ibid: 151).

Accordingly, it has been suggested that between the 12th and the 16th centuries we can observe a gradual rise of the sense of Spain as a nation unified by the "monarchy, institutions, religion, wars, language and culture" (Fusi-Aizpurúa: 45–46). Even if legally "Spain" did not yet exist then, just like "Germany", it was a "convenient way to refer to the shared experiences of those who lived in the territories" of the Iberian kingdoms (Kamen: 11).

Spain therefore "existed as a 'nation' long before it existed as a state, because there were enough people, both at an elite and at a popular level, who shared the feeling that they belonged to something called Spain" (Kamen: 16). Even the political understanding of the Spanish nation has been dated to pre-modern times: some claim that it was 1474, the effective year of union of Castile and Aragon, and not 1808, which saw the birth of the Spanish nation in a political sense. This would make Spain the "oldest nation in the world" (Ibid: 33).

C. Antiquity to Late Antiquity

There is also evidence that proto-national elements already existed in what we today know as Spain even in Antiquity and Late Antiquity, both before and after the fall of Rome. Hispania, while being officially just a politico-territorial administrative unit of Rome, arguably developed its own collective identity. Numerous Roman accounts speak of the ‘Spanishness’ of such well-known Romans as Seneca, Emperors Adrian, Trajan and Theodosius. This stable identity contributed to what was later seen as the Romanization of
the invaders. After the fall of Rome, for example, Hispania was one of the few places that were able to recover their Roman names due to the predominance of Roman (read Spanish Roman) culture over the Visigoth one. The name of Gothia given by the invaders to the territory of Spain, was eventually lost (Ballester-Rodríguez: 85–86).

There are further accounts that Gothic Spain displayed a collective identity as it merged its Roman and Visigoth populations by the 6th-7th centuries when the ban on the intermarriages between the two groups was lifted. From the 7th century on, Gothic Spain exhibited “one language, one faith and one sovereign” (Iñigo-Fernández: 85).

By the encounter with the Arab world, Gothic Spain's collective identity was in sharp contrast with the later Arab Spain, which remained a mere geographic division with no collective identity of its own (Ballester-Rodríguez: 91). Similarly, Stanley Payne describes a “Spanish idea” that “underwent an extensive historical evolution and transformation from the sixth and seventh centuries”; the evolution lasted over a millennium but the core was the sense of a historic mission (Payne: 78).

One may, therefore, argue that a proto-Spanish collective identity started developing during the Roman times and became further defined in the fusion with the Visigoth culture aided by the homogenizing role of Christianity. Such an identity was necessary in order to face the immediate task of resisting the clear “other”—the Muslim invaders that disembarked on Spain's shores in 711 AD. If one accepts the proposition that a Spanish proto-nation existed as far back as Antiquity, it is useful to analyze it for ethnic and civic elements in order strengthen the thesis that the Spanish nation had indeed pre-modern antecedents.

2. Elements of Ethnic Nationalism

Political participation in a pre-modern community was usually linked to loyalty to a tribal chief, a feudal lord or an absolutist monarch. The bond to an abstract entity of the state appears first in Ancient Greece, a rather recent development in world history (Heater: 4). A tribe or a clan was originally lead by a military hero and based the community around his relatives and associates (Riesenberg: 6). The ethnic concept of the collective identity or the nation may be assumed to be older than the civic one.

The case of Spain is no exception: the original idea of the nation in Spain was that of lineage and descent (Lomnitz: 9). The ethnic collective understanding was by no means egalitarian: the horizontal ties of equality of belonging to the same ethnic community were supplanted by “vertical ties of loyalty” such as the ones between a master and a servant as well as by sex and age hierarchies subordinating women to men and children to adults (Ibid: 9–10).

A. The Catholic Kingdom

Historians testify to the initial legal separation between Germanic Visigoths and Hispano-Romans based along ethnic lines in the aftermath of the fall of the Western Roman Empire.
The ban on ethnic intermarriage was finally lifted in the 6th century AD—the 4th Council of Toledo already referred to the whole of the population as the same gens in 633 AD (Payne: 48). The original ethnic separation of the two populations had all but disappeared by that time.

Catholic religion played a major role in the establishment of a new ethnic understanding of the nation in Spain. Recent research tracks the origins of the ethnic understanding of belonging to the Castilian anxiety over Jewish converts, which led to the idea that “blood was a vehicle through which all sorts of characteristics and religious proclivities were transmitted” (Martínez: 26).

It has been even suggested that anti-Semitism emerged for the first time in history in Castile, where violence against Jews arose in the 13th and 14th centuries as well as in the rest of Europe accompanied by the Jew’s “demonization in Christian popular mythology” (Martínez: 27). The context was that of a transition to a monetary economy and the devastation by the “Black Death” bubonic plague. Violence against Jews led to mass conversions among the former to Christianity. The Church first reacted favorably despite a popular mistrust of the converts deemed insincere. Later on, the popular distrust was paralleled by that of the Church itself: the Spanish Inquisition was founded precisely on the task to identify “secret Jews”, which later extended to the descendants of Muslims (Ibid: 1).

Importantly, if before Jews were treated as just followers of a different faith, a racialist idea arose that Jewishness was “transmitted in the blood” similar to reproduction in the natural world such as horse breeding (Martínez: 27). While the precise reasons for this dramatic shift in attitudes toward converted Jews is not clear, this could be seen as the birth of anti-Semitism in the West, as we know it.

From religious, anti-Semitism became ethnic, which explains the continuous intolerance toward converts. While racism existed previously and could have been adopted from interactions with Muslims who treated white slaves as privileged over black slaves already in the Early Middle Ages (Sweet: 145), ethnic discrimination divorced from phenotype was new. Moreover, religious and ethnic identities became intertwined.

Consequently, over the course of the 15th century there were a number of decrees protecting limpieza de sangre, or purity of the blood. The crystallization of this process of legal discrimination occurred in 1492 and 1502 when unconverted Jews and then Muslims were expelled from Spain. The proto-nation, which had been multicultural and multi-religious prior to the 13th-14th centuries, made steps in the direction of ethnocultural homogenization.

Even before these developments, though, both Jews and Muslims saw themselves as a “distinct socio-cultural group, based not on territory or government, because they had neither, but on religion and place of origin” (Kamen: 14). The expulsions permitted Pope Alexander VI (originally from Valencia himself) to bestow on Fernando and Isabel the title of “Catholic monarchs” to the detriment of the French kings who previously were titled “more Christian”, “very Christian” and “most Christian” (Álvarez-Junco: 43).
The converts, named “the new Christians” were under the constant vigilant eye of the Inquisition. The notion of limpieza de sangre gave the then proto-national idea even a heavier ethnic slant: the “Old Christians” only could hold high office and they were thought as a “community of blood” (Lomnitz: 16).

This process of annihilation of converts and their descendants i.e. effective ethnic cleansing reached its apogee by the end of the 16th century, with strict procedures of permitting the access to privileged posts and bodies only after presenting proof of descent from numerous generations of baptized Christians. Ironically, thanks to massive falsification of such documents, not only religious minorities but also their descendants evaporated from the population registries and the process of ethnic cleansing was completed by the middle of the 17th century (Álvarez-Junco: 43). While on the surface Spanish nationalism on the outside focused on combatting Lutherans, Ottoman Turks and other foes of the true faith, on the inside the ethnoreligious national homogenization ruled supreme.

B. The Colonies

The Spanish colonial concept of the nation was also predominantly ethnic and based on the notion of race (Lomnitz: 41). By 1492, the Spanish society was already “obsessed” with the idea of the purity of blood (Martínez: 1). The notion of blood as “biological paternity and maternity” was extended to indicate an individual’s honor and reliability and became the basis for Spain’s concept of nation as “a people that emanated from the same blood” (Lomnitz: 43).

In Spanish America, the original ideology of the purity of blood eventually translated as being “equated with Spanish ancestry” (Martínez: 2). ‘Spanishness’ became a legal category in order to distinguish this group from both colonial underclasses (‘Indians’, ‘blacks’, ‘mulattos’ and ‘mestizos’) and from individuals of other European origins. ‘Spanishness’ was “legally and formally” understood as a community of descent and, therefore, included “Creoles” (Lomnitz: 17).

The separation of ‘Spaniards’ from ‘Indians’ or castas culminated in a legal system of “two republics”—a set of “ideas, legislation, and institutions” that maintained the distinction between the two populations (O’Hara: 31). Colonial Spanish America was, therefore, based on a predominantly ethnic understanding of the nation and maintained “racially determined social boundaries” (Ibid: 33). It comes as no surprise that most independence movements in Spanish America were led by whom Anderson famously called “creole pioneers” (Anderson: 47) or ethnic Spaniards from the colonies.

In most newly-created countries the ethnic Spanish elite remained in power for most of their history. Native ethnic groups were de-facto “excluded from equal participation in the economic, social and political system” despite the apparent legal equality as citizens enjoying the same rights (Stavenhagen: 67). Today, in the aftermath of the Cuban and the Sandinista revolutions and propelled by globalization, Latin America is living a re-emergence of indigenous movements that “articulate old grievances and express new
demands” in the shape of new social movements (Ibid: 66-67) that surprise the world with its anti-capitalist and anti-Western ideas (“A Political Awakening”). The principle of self-determination may still allow the 45 million indigenous peoples one day to demand redrawing the Latin American borders.

3. Elements of Civic Nationalism

Despite the predominant ethnic idea of membership in a collectivity, civic elements characteristic of late Roman times and the medieval city life were also present in Iberia. All settlers of the newly conquered territories were deemed equal before the Crown irrespective of their religion or social status (Herzog: 17). The great diversity of legal traditions eventually gave way to a *jus commune* revived from the Roman times, which defined citizenship as a social contract (giving the right to use common space in exchange for paying taxes and fulfilling other obligations). By the 16th century, this model had spread to all of Castile’s territories with the populations divided between vecinos (citizens) and residents or forasteros (non-citizens) (Ibid: 18). The particularities of each local citizenship model, such as residence requirements, were varied.

This concept of membership in a community was civic in nature: *jus commune* jurists “portrayed citizenship as a process of civic conversion” where newcomers were granted equality with natives after the process of joining the community was completed (Herzog: 24). Castilian citizenship law thus was seen as natural: anyone had the right to leave the place of citizenship and join another one; all that was necessary was the will to do so and transfer one’s loyalty to another community through another social contract (Ibid: 25). In principle, communities could not refuse anyone who wanted to join them.

Such a civic understanding of membership in a community was not uncommon in medieval Europe, especially in towns, which, as in Italy, were able to survive the fall of the Roman Empire and carried through the civic tradition in the face of the world becoming more rural and political power moving into the countryside (Riesenberg: 97).

Complicating the role of the Church in defining the proto-national consciousness in ethnic terms, the civic tradition admittedly survived not in the least thanks to Christianity. The latter helped ensure the continuity of the institution of polity membership in its egalitarian ideal: the concept of the freedom of will meant the possibility of choice “not only between good and evil, but also between Perugia and Siena” (Riesenberg: 134). In practice, this meant a freedom of choice of regarding the political community one wished to belong, a concept currently associated with civic nationalism. In fact, ascriptiveness versus voluntary association is a key difference between how scholars define the ethnic versus civic nation (Keating: 3).

Another civic element of nationalism is related to being recognized as a member of a particular community due to the birth on its territory (*jus soli* in today’s legal system defining citizenship acquisition): the 16th century notion of *naturaleza* (nativeness). *Naturaleza* was a
series of royal decrees proclaiming that only the natives of the kingdoms of Spain could emigrate to and trade in the New World (Herzog: 65).

Naturaleza was, however, linked to individual kingdoms and there was no such sentiment for Spain as a whole. On the one hand, this concept enhanced the notions of *jus soli* a century ahead of it becoming a legal norm in Britain in the aftermath of the landmark 1608 court decision in the case of Robert Calvin, later cited by the US Supreme Court in the 19th century (Shachar: 115).

On the other hand, however, the notion soon started to be interpreted ethnically despite its apparent undermining of the idea of the Spanish nation as a cohesive entity. Interpreted as a measure directed at rejecting "all non-Spanish elements", naturaleza led to a shift in the Castilian notions of citizenship, which were changed in the New World to exclude the Indians and those of mixed-blood (Herzog: 63). In other words, a seemingly civic national element resulted in an ethnic nationalist policy due to the overall strength of Spanish ethnic nationalism of the time.

We may thus conclude that the elements of both ethnic and civic nationalism were present in pre-modern Spain: from regulating populations based on their ethnic origins (be it in the case of Hispano-Romans and Visigoths, pure-blood Christians, or non-Spanish colonials) to choosing a political community upon one's individual will alone under the legal guarantee of same political rights as the (earlier, recognized) natives. Finally, it is important to return to the crucial role played by the Catholic Church in the rise of Spanish collective identity. It struggled between the inherent ethnic understanding of national identity prevalent in the country and the universal humanistic values the theological doctrine required it to proselytize.

4. Religion: Civic Façade, Ethnic Content

The special role of religion in Spain had influence on both the civic and ethnic preconceptions of the nation. By and large, the rise of national consciousness in Spain, as well as in its main imperial competitor, the Ottoman Empire, was an "offshoot of religious expansionism" (Lomnitz: 15). Divine grace was believed to be behind the success of the colonial expansion in the Americas. Spaniards were the chosen people led by a Catholic monarch, thus crystallizing the nation's privileged connection to the Church and the institution of papacy.

In this vision, Spain was envisioned as a universal nation in its divine duty of spreading Christianity by "conquering the rest of the world", in the words of a 16th century chronicler (Annino et al.: 19). The universal nation as mandated by God is, by definition, civic: it does not exclude anyone but instead seeks to leave no one out, even if at times by forced as opposed to voluntary means as was described previously in the case of Muslim and Jewish converts in Spain.
Consequently, Spain’s imperial vision, at least in principle if not in practice, subscribed to the continuance of the tradition of the great empires inherited from the Romans, whose model of citizenship was not based on kinship but instead the “ideal nation-state was a universal nation-state” (Román: 24). Roman legal concepts survived and expanded in the Middle Ages as mentioned in the previous section. Despite the existence of different citizenship regimes in ancient Rome, they were open: beside sons of Roman fathers, other categories such as foreigners and even freed slaves could qualify for citizenship.

Citizenship was thus in principle accessible to all irrespective of the Italian descent. The cosmopolitan character of Roman citizenship culminated in a 3rd-century imperial edict expanding the rights of citizenship to all freemen of the Empire “in a growing identification of the Roman world with the whole of civilization itself” (Klusmeyer: 19).

Accordingly, in theory, the Spanish monarchy aspired in the formal sense to be the new Rome that brought Faith to the rest of the world in what can be seen as a civic direction. In practice, however, the Catholic faith became a substitute for a very ethnic understanding of the nation. With the disappearance of Jews and Muslims after the fall of Al-Andalus appeared the infamous concept of sangre azul (later translated into English as blue blood) that supposedly distinguished Christians of Visigoth ancestry from darker-skinned Moors during the Reconquista.

The special position of Spain at the forefront of the shifting boundary between the Christian and Muslim worlds led to an eventual union of faith and blood: later, for example, Spanish American colonists were encouraged to intermix with the indigenous population thus making mutual descendants true-blood Christians. While this seems paradoxical given the ideas of the purity of blood, it comes from the same notion of blood transmitting behavioral characteristics and testifies to the religion’s struggles between such ethnic notions and the universal and essentially civic calling its teachings strove to spread.

Yet, overall, Catholic religion in Spain failed to realize its civic ambitions and usually functioned as an ethnic attribute divorced from its theological meaning. Religion became a shared culture required of all Spaniards. The important attribute of the Spanish culture was, for example, to “attend religious services, venerate sacred objects, and participate in collective rites and ceremonies” (Álvarez-Junco: 46). This was not a religion in the sense of a system of understanding of the invisible laws of reality, it was rather an “external and visible culture, a system of behaviors and attitudes shared with the rest of the community” (Ibid: 46).

Conclusion

This article presented literature that confirms that the Spanish national identity has its origins not only in the early modern but in the medieval and the late Antique historical periods. Moreover, throughout this time it admittedly exhibited both ethnic and civic elements. While the ethnic understanding of the collective identity was predominant, the civic one was also present. This further challenges the prevalence of the Modernist school of
thought in today’s social sciences and requires its revision possibly along the lines of the ethnosymbolist argument.

While the nation as a political community may be the result of the relatively recent spread of liberal values and capitalism, as the Modernists suggest, nations as collective self-conscious identities based on a common territory, history, culture, language, religion and descent existed before modernity. Some authors suggest differentiating nations since certain ones may, indeed, be primordial (Ten Dam: 337) yet others argue that even the widely-recognized “modern” nations such as the American one, have deep ethnic roots (Kaufmann).

This article has argued for a holistic historical approach seeking proto-national elements in pre-modern history and reviewing them from the point of the ethnic/civic distinction usually associated with modern nations. Such a historical nation cannot be left out of the Modernist account of the rise of the political nation, and the analysis of the Spanish proto-national identity presented here is a case in point. It also serves as another reminder that European nations “have deep historical roots, and no case were merely ‘invented’ in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, despite the faddish and misleading language of commentators” (Payne: 104).

Due to its unique role in facing the great “other” of the Muslim invasion, in “this traditional or historic sense, Spain may have been the oldest “historical nation” (Payne: 105), although other European nations may not fall much behind.

Dr. Maxim Tabachnik is a PhD candidate at the Department of Politics, University of California, Santa Cruz, United States. mtabatch@ucsc.edu

References—Bibliography


___________ 26 June 2013. In person. Amsterdam.

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After more than nine years, the Mayflower Bookshop has left the Hogewoerd in Leiden, the Netherlands, and has settled at Breestraat 65 in the same university town (www.themayflowerbookshop.nl)
Review on “Ethnic and Civic Proto-National Consciousness in Pre-Modern Spain”

(Critical Response to M. Tabachnik’s “Ethnic and Civic Proto-National Consciousness in Pre-Modern Spain”)

This paper belongs to a popular branch of the modern humanities: the history of ideas. It focuses on the rise of the Spanish collective national identity in the historical process from ancient Graeco-Roman Spain to the 19th century. Contrary to those who claim that nationalisms are “the product of the modern historical period” (Abstract) related to 18th-century capitalism and liberalism, the author holds that “over the course of most of human history there have been expressions of collective identity that should be considered national” (Introduction; on A. Smith’s ethnosymbolism).

The paper offers a wide panorama of discussions on the rise and definition of modern nationalisms and nations, and adduces a relevant bibliography of the problem. The author refers to an important subject in the politics and humanities of modern Europe. At present we are actually witnessing the rise of national identities in Central Eastern and Balkan Europe.

Although it is true that the roots of the East European and Spanish discussions are of different origin (the post-colonial syndrome in the East of Europe and the resulting search for new identities), however, this paper may play an inspiring role in the (Europepean) East for comparative reasons.

I would not agree that “a proto-Spanish identity existed already in the Roman empire” (Section 1). Hadrian, Seneca and Trajan were descendents of the Latin colonists who were settled in the newly conquered provinces of the Iberian Peninsula to create a new ruling class over the predominantly indigenous Iberian and Celtic populations. Hadrian, Seneca and Trajan can be described as ‘Spanish’ in the same way as English nationals who were born in India or Kenya can also be labelled ‘Indian’ or ‘Kenyan.’ They were Latin speakers. Hadrian also spoke fluent Greek, as well as Seneca did. Their cultural identity can be described as ‘hellenism.’

In the 5th-7th century the Iberian Peninsula presented a mixture of ethnic groups, languages and cultures. This conglomerate consisted of the descendants of different Celtic tribes with their markedly original culture and language; the Roman colonists, who were Latin speakers (they were representatives of the former ruling class); the earlier pre-Roman and pre-Celtic peoples; and the Germanic invaders—newcomers with very different tribal histories (Visigoths, Suebi, Vandals).

The author is probably right when he claims that the beginning of the Spanish identity can be referred to the Spanish war with the Arab invaders from the 7th century on. I would personally not divide the invaders of the 5th-7th century into ‘our’ invaders (Germanic
tribes) and ‘alien’ invaders (the Arabs) (Section 1, ‘C. Antiquity to Late Antiquity’, esp. last paragraph).

If we look at this problem from the perspective of the history of art we will see a fascinating, complex cultural map with the Roman imperial art and early Christian art which neighboured the idiosyncratic art of the Kingdom of Toledo, and the art of the Arab conquerors at the same time. This phenomenon can still be seen today in the art and architecture of Spain. The picture would be even more complicated if we included the earlier pre-Roman Iberian and Celtic cultural and artistic components.

These comments make up my share in the discussion and do not change my good opinion on the paper’s academic value as a historical study from the field of the history of ideas. In general I would say that in the Graeco-Roman period we can speak rather of separatisms, religious identities, tribal and local and loyalties, and not of nations and nationalisms.

The question that intrigues me, as a reader of the paper, is whether ‘civic nationalism’ can be regarded as what I personally understand as ‘nationalism’ (Section 3). The author is right when he claims that traditional opinions on the rise of the nationalist ideologies are influenced by those who explain their origins in terms of the Romantic ideologies and the correlated growing popularity of Darwinist and racist ideologies in the 19th century, as well as with the 18th-century liberal and capitalist ideologies. In fact some of the 17th-century Polish nobility identified itself as gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus.

What did this mean in the contemporary political language? Natio must have referred to citizenship, that is to the status of equestrian estate (the szlachta), which guaranteed full civil rights, while gens referred to a particular language (e.g. early Ukrainian or South Russian and perhaps also to the eastern-rite Christian religious identity).

Consequently the author may be right in his definition of ‘civic nationalism.’ The Polish analogy is certainly limited. Eastern Europe developed a different dynamics of group identities. However, on the other hand, 16th-17th-century Poland, the Italian states and Spain belong to a circle of counter-reformation countries which surrounded the Lutheran centre of Europe. Consequently some analogies can be justified.

I would not say that anti-Semitism “emerged for the first time in history” in 13th-14th century Castile (Section 2, ‘A. The Catholic Kingdom’). There is a vast bibliography on ancient anti-Judaism (Roman, Greek, Syrian, Egyptian) (e.g. E. Bickermann, *Ritualmord and Eselskult*, 1927; S. Eddy, *The King is Dead*, 1961; J. Yoyotte, *L’Égypte ancienne et les origines de l’antijudaïsme*, 1963; M. Stern’s anthology on Jews and Judaism in the Graeco-Roman period, 1980; T. Reinach’s *Textes… 1895*, etc.).

The author’s discussion on ‘purity of blood’ in the 15th and 16th century Spain sounds very interesting, as well as his comments on the rise of Latin American anti-Western and anti-capitalist movements. His synthetic description of the newly shaped Spanish Catholicism of the early colonial era (16th century) is apt and instructive.
My comments should be understood as my contribution to a discussion in the humanities. I do not want by far to influence the author's ideas. I am strongly against censorship. The author has his/her right to put forward his/her own ideas. The paper is worth publishing as a contribution to the current discussion on national identities in Europe, also and probably in particular in Eastern and Balkan Europe.

It is interesting to observe that national identities are beginning to occupy an important place in the current discussions of the youngest generations of Central and Eastern Europe. The paper has a well-arranged composition. Its language is clear, as well as its argument.

I would like to read the author's comments on the ideas expressed by E. Cassirer in his *Myth of the State*. It might be interesting to see the confrontation of the author’s ethnosophist attitude and his opinions on the ‘proto-national consciousness’ with Cassirer’s early chapters (Pre-Socratics, Plato. St. Augustine) and his later chapters (Hegel, Gobineau, Spengler). This is certainly a subject for a separate paper.

- Prof. Dr Hab. Tomasz Polański heads the Department of Ancient History at Jan Kochanowski University, Kielce, Poland. He headed the Department of Greek and Latin Language at the Institute of Classical Philology, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland, in 1998-2008, and was Andrew Mellon Fellow in 1999-2000 and 2006-2007. tpolanski@ujk.edu.pl

NB: a couple of other reviews (generally positive) are kept both anonymous and unpublished, according to the wishes of each reviewer. Do you have any comments on Maxim Tabachnik's article and/or the critical response? Please send these to info@ethnogeopolitics.org or post these on www.ethnogeopolitics.org.
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THE TURBULENT WORLD OF MIDDLE EAST SOCCER

JAMES M. DORSEY

James M. Dorsey introduces the reader to the world of Middle Eastern and North African football — an arena where struggles for political control, protest and resistance, self-respect and gender rights are played out. Politics was the midwife of soccer in the region, with many clubs being formed as pro- or anti-colonial platforms and engines of national identity and social justice. This book uncovers the seldom-told story of a game that evokes deep-seated passions.

Football fans are shown to be a major political force and one of the largest civic groups in Egypt after the Muslim Brotherhood: their demands for transparency, social justice, and an end to corruption sparked vicious street battles that left scores dead and thousands wounded. Discontent in Algeria erupts regularly at matches where fans demand the ouster of military leaders. A folk-song crooning national goalkeeper leads protests in Homs, Syria’s third largest city and scene of some of the worst violence perpetrated by Bashar al-Assad’s regime. In a country that bans physical education for girls, Saudi women have established clandestine football clubs and leagues. The book further tells the story of Somali child soldiers turned soccer stars and Iranian women who dress as men to smuggle themselves into stadiums to watch matches.

‘A rare combination of scholar and journalist, James Dorsey offers us a fresh lens through which to look at contemporary events in the Middle East and North Africa. Insightful, provocative, and fun to read, this is a welcome addition to the meagre scholarship on sports and politics in this region.’
— Raanan Rein, Tel Aviv University, author of Football, Jets, and the Making of Argentina

‘This might well be the single most important and informative book on the Arab Spring yet written. A must read for anyone who wants to understand the deeper social and cultural processes underlying the uprisings and counter-revolutionary processes that have shaken the region the last five years.’
— Mark Levine, Professor of History at the University of California, Irvine

‘Dorsey masterfully conveys the complex machinations of politics and culture through his analyses of the words and actions of real people expressing their passions about their lives through the medium of “the kicking sport.” Sports fans and political junkies will greatly enjoy and learn from this fascinating book.’
— Louis W. Goodman, School of International Service, American University

April 2016 / Paperback / 344pp / 9781849043311 / £15.99

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The Arab Spring and the rise of non-state actors

Fadi Elhusseini

In the past five years, Arabs have been living in an endless Sisyphean ordeal, an unexpected nightmare after rising for what they called “the Arab Spring”. A very similar scenario was cloned in most of Arab Spring countries. Alas, a hopeful revolution turned into belligerence, then into strife followed by a war, as if a new regional order was endorsed to guarantee instability and chaos in the region. This new regional order has marked new regional features and novel actors. The most blunt feature is the rise of non-state actors, which in return bolstered their presence and influence across the region, disregarding borders and ignoring the strategic equations that ruled the region for decades.

Non-state actors, mainly Islamic movements, Hamas, Hezbollah and Al-Qaeda, played a limited role in the pre-Arab Spring era. However, and before going further with the newfangled non-state actors and their role in the region, it is noteworthy to highlight a number of facts concerning Islamic movements.

Firstly, any designations that labeled those movements, like political Islam or moderate Islam, are merely descriptive terms and have nothing to do with the core of Islam as a religion. Islam is a comprehensive and inclusive religion and attaching one character, without the reference to others, may give a false impression as if there are different forms of Islam (non-moderate Islam for example). One may argue that such labels are simply “creative” terms to differentiate between the various Islamic groups.

For instance, several Western powers found in “moderate Islam” an acceptable term that may justify ‘dealing’ with specific groups and not others, and the limits of the word ‘dealing’ can range from basic and regular contacts to alliances and common interests and agendas. On the other hand, several Islamic groups did not shy away from being labeled as moderate Islam or political Islam as long as this distinguishes them from other groups that took a violent path to achieve their goals. Being distinguished as “moderates” gives these groups some kind of legitimacy, and hence more freedom to work in their societies to achieve their goals.

Perhaps designating these groups as movements with (an) Islamic orientation would be more accurate. In fact, these groups share one sole goal: the return of Islamic rule (either state or sharia law), and the only difference is the time factor which implies their behavior and reveals their strategy. If a group seeks to achieve its goals gradually and slowly, its behavior and activities are principally characterized with peaceful means, albeit if the group seeks instant and quick change, its policies and actions are chiefly characterized by radical and violent means.

Returning to the role of non-state actors in general, one should concede that with the advent of Arab revolts, their role has become more evident to a degree that it has surpassed the role
of many regimes and governments in the region. Those actors began to impose certain policies and agendas on regional and global regimes and they are now at the helm of every regional summit and international conference.

The emergence of those actors has turned the whole region on its head, broken many taboos and penetrated one country after another. Puritanism is widespread in the region and a new vocabulary, like apostates, infidels and heretics, has become common in daily conversations. In no time, those actors were able to abolish traditional political borders drawn in the early years of the last century by the Sykes-Picot agreement) when other ideas, concepts or phenomena, like globalization, took decades to find their way into the region.

Those actors and their offshoots spread throughout the whole region, taking various names (like Al-Qaeda, Al-Nusra, Daesh or ISIS or IS, the Houthis and others) on the Arab peninsula, in Iraq, Syria and North Africa. Their expansion does not appear to have any limits or borders.

That being said, they have proven to possess a sophisticated organization that does not reflect the limited number of their members and recruits. In other words, the number of their members can not, by any means, reflect the unprecedented “achievements” they managed to attain in such a short time. The most important element in this novel equation is their network of known and unknown allies who provide them with financial, logistical and arms supplies, mainly away from the limelight.

The Iraqi and Syrian cases represent the starkest example of entangled interests and relations from one side, and regional and international hesitation from the other side. Some regional powers opted to keep the card of “supporting or turning a blind eye on the activities and movements of those non-state actors” as a last gamble, lest things veer out of control on other fronts and so as to weaken other groups (like Hezbollah or the PKK) or even to harm the Assad regime at large. Similarly, many Western powers, who classify Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, ignored its outright intervention in Syria in order to weaken all those groups (the ‘bad guys’) in a destructive conflict that took a sectarian hue.

The United States were able to pounce on this opportunity and use it to re-promote to its Arab allies the importance of their role as a “supplier” of weapons, as an “advisor” who provides them with information and expertise in fighting terrorism and as a “protector” through US-led coalition strikes. The reports which showed the evolution in American weapons sales, mainly to Arab countries, are just a case in point (Source: http://rt.com/news/us-weapons-record-sales-649/ See also: http://www.commondreams.org/news/2015/04/20/worrying-rise-us-weapon-sales-greeted-middle-east-engulfed-war).

Russia, which is fully aware that a nuclear deal with Iran would definitely harm its economy (any agreement with Iran would lead to the return of Iran as a big oil supplier which will eventually lead to a drop in oil prices), albeit it had no choice but to bless this deal knowing the importance of Iran in its regional network of relations, mainly non-state actors.
Intriguingly, and despite regional dismay over the existence of non-state actors and their rejection of any talks about a new Sykes-Picot, one may realize that facts on the ground are going nowhere but to that end. Since the US launched their campaign on ISIS, the latter could still maintain control of a large swath and chunk of Iraq and Syria compared to what it used to control before the strikes. ISIS fighters began to appear more equipped and trained and their media performance has improved a great deal. The consecutive successes of ISIS have encouraged others either to follow suit and/or to join such a “successful” model and as a result, not one single Arab capital has become immune, especially in the aftermath of the so-called Arab Spring.

Although many analyses questioned the conditions that brought most of those actors and their real goals out, and despite the fact that many investigations have shown suspicious features in the activities of those groups, the region appears to be inadvertently slipping toward malignant ends.

In an attempt to evaluate the aftermaths of the existence and acts of those rising non-state actors, one may say that distorting the image of Islam was unambiguous. Secondly, some of those actors, who used to enjoy popularity among Arab masses for resisting Israel, appeared to have lost grounds in the Arab streets as they were tented over with violence or sectarian agendas. Thirdly, Israel, which was isolated in the region for decades, was uniquely endowed and could enter the regional dynamics through the door of those actors. To elaborate, Israel, which remained unscathed on the fringes of the Arab Spring and its repercussions, won three-level strategic gains from the emergence of those actors.

It started to sow a network of relations with many Arab regimes that share “in theory” common fears—especially a potential Shiite menace (represented in Iran and Hezbollah). At the second level for Israel, its gains are clearly signified in the weakening of traditional Arab states, such as Iraq and Syria, which remained an eminent threat to Israel according to its decisionmakers. At the third level for Israel, its gains are distracting the attention away from the core issue of the Middle East, which is the continuity of the last true occupation on earth, the Israeli occupation.

In sum, it appears that the region is in desperate need for a real leader, for a new Saladin, who can put an end to the misery, to the division, to the schism that has struck the region and who is able to find a solution for the absence of a religious reference which caused all the chaotic and austere interpretations of Islam.

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.

Reference

Secular State Identity Retained in Nepal

Pawan Kumar Sen

Finally, Nepal is declared a secular state with the promulgation of a new constitution on 20 September 2015. However, the new constitution has described the secularism not as state's total disassociation with any religion and culture, but as protection of religion and culture being practiced since ancient times (Sanatan Dharma in Nepali language) in its Article 4(1). Some political commentators argue that this explanation of secularism has exterminated the real essence of the term ‘secularism’. In spite of this fact, religious minorities and culturally marginalised groups have taken this declaration as a major contribution to the modernisation of a ‘New Nepal’. It is an important move towards institutionalising a new Nepali identity based on multiculturalism.

Despite the fact that Nepal was already constituted as a secular state after the endorsement of the Interim Constitution in January 2007 (which was formally ratified by the first sitting of the elected Constituent Assembly in May 2008), it took a lot of guts to retain the secular state identity in the new constitution.

As the draft of a new constitution was being finalised, a number of Hindu groups and religious leaders were demanding that the country again be declared a Hindu state. Prominent Hindu groups were organising rallies in various cities around the country demanding the restitution of the Hindu state in the new constitution. A nationalist party, Rastriya Prajatantra Party Nepal, had also been demonstrating in numerous cities demanding a Hindu state and the removal of the term ‘secular state’ from the draft constitution.

Some mid-level figures in the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist Leninist) were also opposed to a secular state identity, and were demanding the inclusion of ‘religious freedom’ instead of ‘secular state’ in the new statute. Demands to retain a Hindu state seemed to be an effort to stop proselytisation by Christian missionaries and the slaughter of cows in Nepal.

On the other hand, non-Hindu groups like the Nepal Buddhist Association, and numerous hill indigenous groups (i.e. non-Hindu Mongolian communities), including Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities, and Muslims groups have repeatedly argued that a religiously and culturally diverse country like Nepal should remain an unambiguously secular state not just one that endorses ‘religious freedom’.

An individual's right to religious freedom was already guaranteed as a fundamental right in Article 23 of the Interim Constitution. This clause would be retained in the new constitution, so there was no need to replace the term ‘secular state’ with another one such as ‘religious freedom’.
Analysis of recent opinion polling conducted in Nepal supports the view that there should be no official association between the state and a particular religion. Although the majority of Nepali people still want Nepal to be a Hindu state (this is not surprising since more than 80 per cent identify as Hindus), a significant proportion of Nepalis wish to see their country as a secular state. A strong preference for a secular state is evident at some sub-national levels.

The proportion of those who support secularism is very significant among certain groups of the population such as Buddhists, Muslims, Kirati, Christians, hill indigenous groups, and supporters of most of the Communist parties. The Nepali state’s official association with Hinduism is not universally accepted. The majority of Buddhists and Muslims, as well as the Kirati and Christian populace, want Nepal to be a secular state. Neither Buddhist nor Muslim peoples have pushed for Nepal to be a Buddhist or an Islamic state. Hindu groups demanding that the Hindu state be reinstated simply because Nepal is a Hindu-majority country are misguided.

Further analysis of the survey data shows that supporters of republicanism and federalism are more likely to support secularism, while supporters of a monarchy and a unitary state are more likely to support a Hindu state (http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/himalaya/vol35/iss1/11).

Therefore, Nepal’s disassociation from secularism may lead to a weakening of the country’s other new structures—republicanism and federalism—which are pillars of an inclusive democracy. This further justifies moves to link the Nepali state’s identity to secularism. It is very worthwhile to mention that constituting a secular state should not and does not prevent anyone from practicing the religious faith of his/her choice. Everyone should have the right to practice religious rituals of one’s own choice. This is a fundamental human right too. But, again, this cannot be a reason for reinstating the Hindu state.

An inclusive democracy should accommodate the views of the minority too, not just the views of the majority. If a country is constitutionally secular, religious minority can, too, feel a sense of ownership of the constitution and enjoy equal freedom. For instance, Muslims of India are enjoying the ownership of India’s constitution and religious freedom as equally as their Hindu counterparts even under the reign of a pro-Hindu rightist party like Bharatiya Janta Party.

So, Nepal’s new constitution should recognise the voices of the entire spectrum of the people, not only a majority, advantaged and dominant. This not only guarantees or at least furthers the arrival of an inclusive democracy, but also makes the entire populace, including its minorities and the marginalised, true owners of the constitution. Fortunately, the new constitution has listened to the voice of the religious minorities and the marginalised.

Pawan Kumar Sen is a political analyst and consultant at Interdisciplinary Analysts (www.ida.com.np), Kathmandu, Nepal, and a PhD candidate in Political Science, Leiden University, the Netherlands. The article is an updated version of the paper “Will Nepal once again become a Hindu state?”, East Asia Forum: Economics, Politics and Public Policy in East Asia and the Pacific, 12th September 2015 (www.eastasiaforum.org).
I highly recommend Matthias Weinreich's incisive book on the entrepreneurial migrations and settlements of Pashto-speaking peoples or Pashtuns from Western Pakistan, Afghanistan and other regions to the Northern Areas of Pakistan since the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-1990s. Arguably, it constitutes the first "comprehensive" treatment of "Pashtun migration
in the Northern areas” (p.7), and a single-case study thus has been necessary to “fill this gap” in empirical knowledge (p.7). Weinreich’s findings can contribute to increased insight about migrant behaviour. Yet—and that is my only major criticism—Weinreich has not put his research in any comparative or theoretical context.

Numerically, the presence of Pashtuns or “Pathans” in the Northern Areas—since 2009 known as the autonomous province of Gilgit-Baltistann—is still quite small: Weinreich estimates that in the mid-1990s they constitute just below 1% of the region’s 600,000 inhabitants (though much higher estimates exist of 900,000 people or more). Nevertheless, their impact as entrepreneurs in trade, craftsmanship and other professions is disproportionate to their numbers, helped by the fact that they—as entrepreneurs—are concentrated in the cities and towns of that province.

The main findings presented in this book, and in the preceding German-language publications in the journal *Iran and the Caucasus* (Brill) in 2001 and 2005 (see References), are based on field research Weinreich has conducted between 1993 and 1997 in the four districts of the Northern Areas. These districts include the greater part of the Karakoram mountain range: Gilgit, Ghizar, Diamer, Skardu and Ganche (a part of eastern Diamer became a separate district called Astor in 2004).

Weinreich, an accomplished anthropologist and currently stationed in Ukraine (previously in Armenia) for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), has unearthed the life-histories of Pashtun migrants and (other) local inhabitants, through informal, unstructured interviews mostly conducted in Pashto, or through an interpreter in Urdu, the official Hindi language of Pakistan, and in Shina, a Dardic language.

Even though fluent in Pashto, Weinreich has had to spend considerable time and effort through “repeated meetings and an open exchange of thoughts” (p.10) to gain the trust of prospective respondents. One hurdle that he, like other (male) researchers, has been unable to overcome is the prohibition in Pashtuni society for women to interact with “men not belonging to their family” (p.11). Thus all his sixty respondents in the linguistic part of his research, thirty temporary and thirty permanent migrants, are male.

Weinreich focuses on three aspects in the migrant’s life-histories: the original reasons of the respondents or their forefathers to migrate and settle in Northern Pakistan or “Karakoram”; the trades and professions the migrants undertook to survive, earn a living, and gain status or at least a firm footing in their new homeland; and the degrees to which they learnt or were willing to speak (one or more of) the local languages as opposed to maintaining a (full) mastery of their mother-tongue, Pashto.

Weinreich first sketches the gradually increasing movements of Pashtuns into the largely mountainous north of Pakistan over the last 150 years, which generally show a shift “from seasonal presence to permanent migration” (p.31). The Northern Areas are host to mainly Shina-, Khowar-, Balti-, and Burushaski-speaking communities, though more than ten different languages and thus ethno-linguistic groups can be distinguished, while most of them master (more or less) Urdu. These communities had and still have cross-cutting
affiliations to Sunni, Shi'i (Ismailis, Twelver Shi'ites, etc.) and Sufi (Nurbakhshis, etc.) schools of Islam.

In contrast, the Pashtuns were and are mainly followers of the Sunni school of Hanafi Islam, a given that, together with the pre-Islamic and tribal-martialist Pashtun Code(s) of Honour (Pashtunwali), partially accounts for the recurrent, often violent tensions with the other communities. This leads Weinreich to conclude that in the “mid 1990s local attitudes towards Pashtun migrants were slowly but surely changing from critical to hostile” (p.109).

Even so, the migrating Pashtuns did not only bring concepts and ideas that might be considered reactionary, conservative or tribal i.e. “pre-modern”. Thus one of the biggest increases of Pashtuni temporary migration into Northern Pakistan took place after the opening of the Karakoram Highway in 1978. The new highway made it less paramount to settle down, as it “reduced travel time and cost to such an extent, that even the poorest and busiest of entrepreneurs could .. visit his family [in his homeland] at least once a year” (p.103). Consequently, the permanent migration of Pashtuns into the Northern areas stalled or even reversed—partially accounting for the fact that they still constitute less than 1% of the region's population.

Generally, the Karakoram Highway “facilitated not only the movement of people and goods, but also the exchange of concepts and ideas” (p.54). One of the most important and arguably beneficial things the Pashtuns brought with them was their entrepreneurial spirit. Both the early migrants in the nineteenth century and the later migrants in the twentieth century were excellent traders, crafters (artisans) and, to a lesser extent, farmers. Indeed, they were outstanding initiators of any enterprising trade or profession for making a living and (eventually) a profit, even under the most inhospitable circumstances. Crucially, many or most people in most of the older and more sizable non-Pashtuni communities in Karakoram appear to consider such professions as being beneath them.

Thus many Pashtuns traded in “bones, hides and recyclable industrial material”; in contrast, “few members of autochthonous ethno-linguistic groups would consider engaging in this trade, as dealing with such kinds of products is traditionally regarded as polluting and degrading” (p.65). Weinreich immediately cautions, however, that long-standing expertise and long-held “contacts to tanneries and workshops in the plains” (p.65) gave the Pashtuns a persistent if gradually decreasing edge in this trade. Moreover, some crafts, like tailoring, had sufficient standing for numerous non-Pashtuni locals to become apprentices at “Pashtun-run tailor shops” in Gilgit, Chilas and other large towns (p.67).

Nevertheless, seasonal, temporary Pashtuni migrants also dominated in other crafts that the locals could easily have done themselves if they had wished so. Even services that were a “favourite local pastime” like going to the hairdresser are rarely if ever offered by the locals themselves: “while most members of autochthonous groups harboured ... [an] aversion to ... the barber's profession, their dislike obviously did not include the hair cutter's services as such” (p.67). Clearly the Pashtunwali honour-codes as such do not inhibit Pashtuns from engaging in such professions.
On the very first page of his book, Weinreich links the Pashtuni readiness to work in “all conceivable professions and trades” to “economically motivated migration of Pashto speakers from their original areas of settlement” to the Karakoram region of Pakistan (p.6). Poverty and interrelated political strife and instability did compel many Pashtuns to seasonally migrate and eventually settle in Karakoram. However, blood-revenge (badal) and other socio-cultural reasons related to the Pashtunwali honour-codes seem equally important motivations of migration, certainly in the initial stage.

The later stages of earning a living, learning or teaching a trade, and thereby amassing wealth, were often a migrant’s way “to settle his blood dues at home” (p.39). These reasons frequently resurface in the life-story accounts of Weinreich’s interviewees, when the latter speak of themselves, their fathers, other family-members, or their forefathers. Seventy-year-old Muhammad Isa (interview mid-1990s): “My grandfather and his brother came to this place [Tarishing village, upper Astor Valley, in southern Diamer] about 90 years ago. They were originally from Swat [a valley and district in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or North West Frontier Province], where they had killed two men from the local Khan's clan in a land dispute. Then they had fled the valley in fear of revenge” (p.34).

Seventy-five-year-old Abdul Latif, in Chatorkhand village, lower Ishkoman Valley, in northern Ghizar: “Our father came from Swat. His family was closely related to the Wali, the local ruler there. One day my father had a [violent] dispute with the Wali’s brother about some land which had earlier been promised to our family... My father and his people killed some of the Wali’s men. The ruler took away all my father’s land and swore revenge. ... The English invited my father to Gilgit, promising him land and protection” (p.37).

Thus many of the Pashtun settler’s forebears were “outlaws, who had fled their homelands in fear of revenge” (p.38). Weinreich gives many more examples of blood-feuds accounting for the initial flight of Pashtuns to Northern Pakistan: someone’s father once “killed a man in a fight and, afraid that the slain man’s relatives would seek revenge, he fled to Mansehra” and eventually moved to Gilgit (p.51); two brothers “originated in Swat, from where they had fled in fear of blood revenge to the Tangir Valley [in western Diamer] in the 1950s” (p.74); and so on, and so on.

In an astounding number of cases, the original impetus of Pashtuni migration seems to have been a flight from one’s homeland due to a blood-feud, often arising out of a land dispute. This reminds me of equivalent blood-feuds among the Chechens and Albanians, as described in my ‘How-to-Feud-and-Rebel’ Series published in the journal Iran and the Caucasus.

Actually, the great anthropologist Louis Dupree not only speaks about the tribal martialism of the Pashtuns, the largest ethno-linguistic group in Afghanistan, but also of that of Afghanistan’s Tajik, Uzbek, Hazara and other ethno-linguistic groups: all “Afghan groups with which I am familiar look on themselves as bold warriors, and their folklore reflects this attitude” (Dupree 1997: 119). Nevertheless, he suggests that Pashtunwali codes of “honor and
hospitality, hostility and ambush” (1997, p.127) constitute the predominant “codes of the 
hills” (Ibid: 126): the “values of the Pushtun and of the Muslim religion, modified by local 
custom, permeate in varying degrees all Afghan ethnic groups” (Ibid: 127). Arguably the same 
can be said of the Pashtuni(-like) honour-codes among the non-Pashtuni groups in Pakistan.

Weinreich does not seem to fully grasp from his own observations the crucial relevance of 
the interrelations between Pashtuni blood-feuds and migration-patterns, even though he 
repeatedly refers to the “blood revenge refugees” (p.103) in the concluding part of his book. 
Nor does he link the Pashtuni honour-codes with entrepreneurial practices. In contrast, in 
another article with Mikhail Pelevin he emphasises that “the songs of the Taliban follow 
straight traditional Pashto folk genres” (Pelevin & Weinreich 2012: 55) which in turn are 
primarily “based on the rulings of the well-known Pashtun Code of Honour 
(Pashtunwali)” (Ibid: 56).

Weinreich should have tried to ascertain whether and how the Pashtunwali affects Pashtuni 
trades, crafts and other professions—like Manuela Nocker and Muhammad Junaid have 
done in their research on the life-histories as told through poetic stories of Afghan 
entrepreneurs, mainly Afghan Pashtuns, in Pakistan (Nocker & Junaid 2011). Their theoretical 
framework—entrepreneurial identity construction through reflexive story-telling— 
sufficiently captures the saliency of local values, beliefs and practices. In contrast, Weinreich 
remains empirically focused on the life-histories, professions and languages of Pashtun 
migrants; while adopting the life-history approach, he does not depart from, apply or test any 
particular theory or wider framework.

Nocker and Junaid do confirm that “Afghan entrepreneurial identities tend to adhere to the 
core tenets of the Pashtunwali”, though the “poetic tropes expressed in entrepreneurial life 
history narratives” do “tell us more about the subtle ambiguity and challenges that might be 
experienced when relating to the dominant influence of this code of honour” (Nocker & 
Junaid 2011: 40). Incidentally, the Pashtunwali may even take precedence over Islamic rules 
and laws (Shari’a): although “the majority of religious (Islamic) commandments are highly 
compatible with ‘Pashtunwali’, sometimes they are disregarded if they are seen to conflict 
with this code” (Ibid: 43). Any analysis of Muslim migrant communities must ascertain 
whether any pre-Islamic values, beliefs and practices are as strong as or even stronger than 
their Islamic counterparts within those communities.

Weinreich should be forgiven the aforementioned limitations in his analysis, as these do not 
appear to derive from a lack of knowledge of or insight on Pashtuni honour-codes (far from 
it). Rather, his focus simply lies elsewhere: on the socio-economic dynamics of Pashtuni 
entrepreneurship, and on the linguistic dynamics of conducting business, communicating 
amongst themselves, and communicating with non-Pashtunis while settling down among 
them.

The “language situation” (pp.8,9) of the Pashtuni migrants was diverse: those male Pashtuns 
who permanently settled yet had little income—mainly farmers—often married non-
Pashtuni women due to the “exorbitant [dowry] price demanded for a ‘real’ Pashtun bride” (p.79); significantly, in “households which had accepted non-Pathan women over two or more generations children tended to grow up with the language of their mother” (p.79). Younger migrants with mixed marriages tend to speak Pashto to their father and a non-Pashto language to their non-Pashtun mother (p.80).

More generally, even among higher-income migrants with full Pashtuni marriages, they and their siblings and other family-members spoke Pashto within the home, and the “local majority language” outside the home (p.80). Still, three of Weinreich’s respondents who led mixed households were determined that their children should at least master rudimentary Pashto.

Apart from the influence of the non-Pashtuni mother tongue in mixed marriages, the prevalence of Pashto among the Pashtuni migrants and their descendants is slowly dwindling due to a) the lack of educational facilities and opportunities in the Northern Areas to learn to read and write Pashto (most younger Pashtuns receive formal education in Urdu); and b) the obvious necessity for Pashtuni entrepreneurs to communicate with their mostly non-Pashtuni customers. Moreover, the numerous Pashto dialects make it challenging for Pashtuni migrants to communicate amongst themselves, though they have developed verbal techniques like using synonyms to cross the dialectical divides.

Still, Weinreich notes the “remarkable continuity in the use of Pashto within the family” (p.90); even in many mixed marriages, children spoke some Pashto. Moreover, mastery of Pashto increased the status if not popularity of well-off Pashtuns among the ‘native’ communities (while it decreased the status of poor Pashtuns); they could afford the expensive education of Pashto as well (pp.100-101).

Adopting local languages or resorting to (basic command of) Urdu do rarely constitute full cultural assimilation. Even non-Pashto-speaking Pashtuns tend to stick to the particular Pashtunwali and Islamic values of their forefathers, if only out of respect and obeysance to the latter. Actual knowledge about these values may be dwindling among the permanent migrants, however: hardly any of Weinreich’s interviewees belonging to this group “knew Pashto poems or folklore” (p.90). This reflects the typical challenge of the migrant: one is never fully integrated with either the culture of the homeland or that of the host country, but adopts elements of both, whether by social pressure or autonomous choice.

Weinreich’s findings on the motivations, professions and languages of Pashtun migrants in Northern Pakistan are intriguing. Ye he himself does not compare these aspects with those of other migrants in other parts of the world. That is a natural limitation of any single-case study, and Weinreich clearly has had good practical reasons to refrain from conducting a comparative multi-case study. Still, Weinreich could have referred to other research on Pashtun and non-Pashtun migrations to put his own research in clearer context. Scholars versed in (im)migration studies might detect (dis)similarities with other Diasporas and migrating communities within states. Yet the average reader might find it difficult to assess
the relevance of Weinreich’s empirical findings, and the degrees in which Pashtun migrants behave typically or atypically compared to other migrants. Are these Pashtuns unique, or do they behave as any migrant would in a new environment?

Finally, one may consider Weinreich’s study to be somewhat outdated, given the fact that his findings are primarily based on field research he carried out in the 1990s. Many things have changed in Pakistan and the entire Middle East since then, not just the renaming and reconfiguring of the Northern Areas as Gilgit-Baltistan. The political and intercommunal tensions within Pakistan have worsened considerably, fueled by the repercussions from the terrorist attack by Al-Qaeda (‘The Base’ in Arabic) on the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington DC on 11 September 2001.

Numerous Pashtuns still constitute or support the currently resurgent Taliban (‘Student’ in Pashto) movement that had ruled (most of) Afghanistan since 1996, and was dislodged by an American-led intervention in October 2001 as the Taliban gave hospitality to Al-Qaeda. These and other events and developments, above all the controversial “War on Terror” initiated by the U.S. Bush Administration after “September 11”, increased hostility towards Westerners in the Muslim world.

Multiple extremist movements in Pakistan—like the Pakistani Taliban, the Afghan-Pashtuni Haqqani Network closely allied to the Taliban, and the overarching Lashkar-e-Omar (Army of Omar) that includes Taliban members—thrived on this hostility and fuelled it. They attacked, kidnapped, executed and otherwise maltreated and killed dozens of Western diplomats, journalists, aidworkers, researchers and (other) civilians over the years. Consequently, it would have been dangerous for Weinreich to conduct follow-up field research even in relatively remote and quiet Gilgit-Baltistan. His former interviewees might still trust him, but many or most prospective interviewees would have been more distrustful of a ‘Western’ researcher than back in the 1990s.

Some research can be done and is being done in Pakistan. Thus Muhammad Junaid interviewed the three “male Afghan[-Pashtuni] entrepreneurs at the Qissa Khawani Bazaar in Peshawar in 2009” (Nocker & Junaid 2011: 45), whose life-history narratives are presented and analysed by him and Manuela Nocker in their recent publications (Junaid & Nocker 2009; Nocker & Junaid 2011). Yet Junaid has been able to do this field research because Peshawar, capital of Pakistan’s North West Frontier Province (NWFP), is his home-city.

The first interviewee is acquainted with Junaid’s father, a “renowned paper technologist running his own printing business in Peshawar” (Junaid & Nocker 2009: 6,9(quote),11). The second interviewee’s customer of dental equipment, a dentist, is the author’s family friend (Ibid: 14). The third interviewee, a book printer, was introduced by an office manager of the author’s father (Ibid: 16-17). Arguably, Junaid may not have been able to interview these people so easily or at all if he had not been a ‘native’ utilising his family connections. Yet even for him, a “major obstacle in this research when carrying out fieldwork was the worsening law and order situation of the NWFP and Peshawar” (Ibid: 8).
Manuela Jocker, the co-author and supervisor of Junaid’s doctoral study, was “rather concerned about her student's safety in the field” (Junaid & Nocker 2009: 9). These obstacles and risks would have been even greater for a ‘Westerner’ like Matthias Weinreich—though ‘natives’ like Junaid might be especially vulnerable as potential kidnap-for-ransom victims if they are or become widely known as sons or other family members of successful entrepreneurs.

Nevertheless, Weinreich has been able to do some more recent fieldwork, like collecting 80 Taliban chants or chant-items recorded on nine audio cassettes in Khurram Agency within the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan in 2005 (Pelevin & Weinreich 2012: 51-52 & footnote 7). This research concerns a rather sensitive topic, but the risks apparently were manageable because his stay was so short and his contacts were reliable.

Probably, Weinreich has had no practical opportunity, or considers the dangers too great, to undertake a lengthy follow-up fieldtrip in the former Northern Areas of Pakistan. Still, I hope that he and any collaborators could conduct such research on Pashtun migrants in the foreseeable future, and at least reinterview some of the original respondents of Weinstein’s research in that region in the 1990s.

Caspar ten Dam is a conflict analyst and PhD-researcher on Chechen and Albanian insurgencies at the Institute of History of Leiden University, the Netherlands.  
c.t.ten.dam@umail.leidenuniv.nl

References


CICAM 50th anniversary event:
Images of the Enemy in the 21st century

2 June 2016, 02:30 – 07:00 PM, LUX theatre, Mariënburg 38-39, Nijmegen, the Netherlands

Organized by Centre for International Conflict Analysis and Management (CICAM)

Dr. Babak Rezvani, Chair of the Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics, and Caspar ten Dam, Secretary of the same Association, were invited to attend this anniversary event of CICAM (www.ru.nl/cicam); both of us were able to attend it. The text below is derived from an announcement by the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (www.kpsrl.org).

On Thursday June 2nd, 2016, the Centre for International Conflict-Analysis & Management celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

Stathis Kalyvas, Arnold Wolfers Professor of Political Science, Yale University (photo left), and Bertrand Badie, Professeur en Science Politique, Sciences-Po Paris (photo right), spoke about ‘Images of the Enemy in the 21st century’. Their remarks were followed by a public debate with the audience, moderated by Petra Stienen (photo middle).