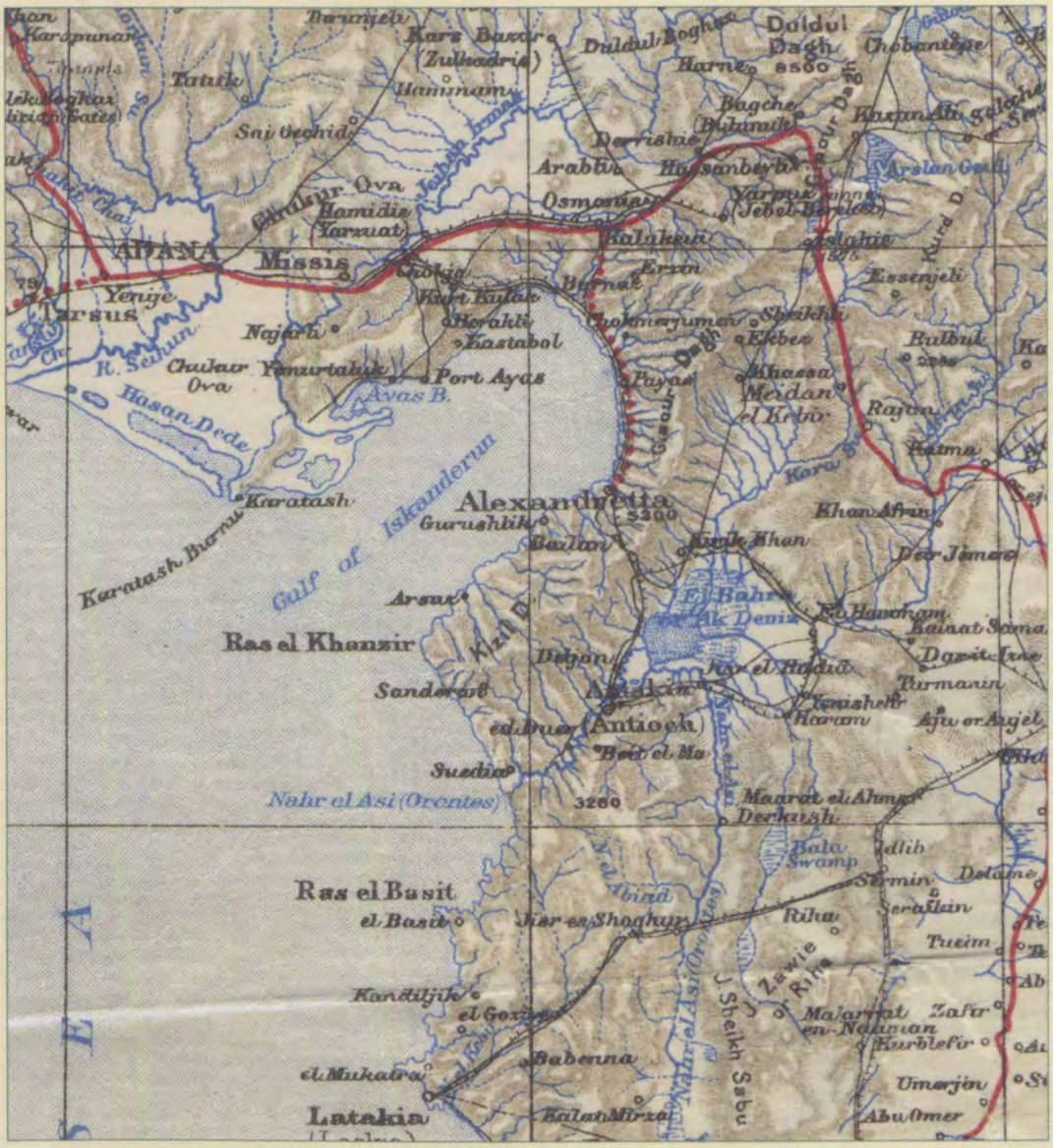
The Role of the State in West Asia



Edited by Annika Rabo and Bo Utas

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Held at the Swedish Research Institute
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Edited by
Annika Rabo and Bo Utas

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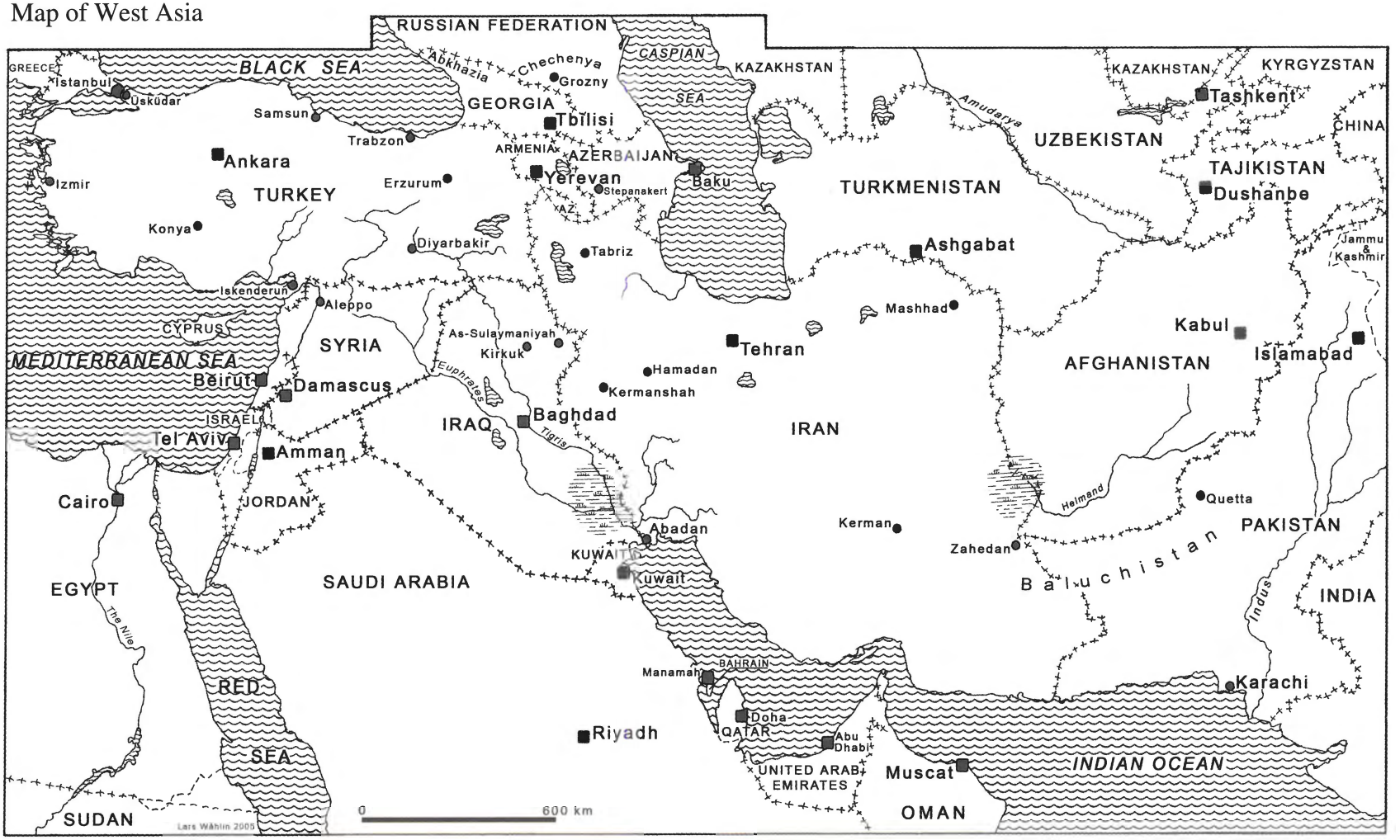
Preface

This volume summarises the results of the multi-disciplinary Swedish research programme on 'Culture and Society in West and Central Asia' that ran from 1997 to 2002. We are glad to see collected here contributions by most of the participants of our programme as well as by a few of our closest collaborators. The Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul hosted the final conference, on the papers of which this volume is based, and we are deeply grateful to the director of that institute, Dr Karin Ådahl, its secretary, Ms Sidsel Braaten, and former director, Prof. Elisabeth Özdalga, as well as to all participants for making it a success. We are obliged to the Swedish Consul General Ingmar Karlsson for participating and supporting our undertaking in various ways. We are also grateful to the Board of the Swedish Research Institute and its secretary, Prof. Jan Olof Rosenqvist, for accepting this volume for publication in its Transactions and to our editorial secretary, Mirja Juntunen, for her careful editing of the variegated manuscripts. Our final thanks goes to the Swedish Research Council that financed the whole research programme as well as the final conference and the publication of this volume.

Annika Rabo Bo Utas

Map of West Asia



The Role of the State in West Asia

ANNIKA RABO AND BO UTAS

This volume is the result of a conference at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul in November 2002. The conference marked the end of a multi-disciplinary research programme – *Culture and Society in West and Central Asia* – that was initiated in 1997 by the Swedish Research Council. West and Central Asia, defined as a region stretching from the Mediterranean to China, and from the Himalayas to Siberia, has left a rich cultural heritage to Europe. At the same time, the region has also contributed to shaping the identity of Europe by constituting a significant other. The purpose of the research programme was to strengthen Swedish-based research on West and Central Asia in the humanities and the social sciences. Individual researchers or groups applied for funding within the general theme of the programme, which was further specified as 'diversity in co-operation and conflict'.

In 1998 four larger projects, including between two and five researchers and graduate students, were admitted to the program. The smallest project proposed a study on firms, trade and industrialisation in Iran from a business- and a macro-economics perspective. Another project wanted to undertake research on borders, boundaries and transgressions, focusing on Turkey and Syria, with participants from political science, comparative literature, Arabic and social anthropology. A third project, consisting of linguists, proposed to study how languages in Syria, Turkey and Iran influence each other in situations of contact where one language dominates another politically, socially or culturally. The fourth project, proposed by peace- and conflict researchers, wanted to focus on possible conditions for resolution of conflicts between and within different levels in the newly formed states in Central Asia and Transcaucasus. The programme also partially sponsored a smaller research project on religion, education and internationalisation in Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Finally, the programme also included two projects which were already running at that time: one on the sound system in modern Mongolian and one on the language situation in Georgia. The geographical boundaries of West and Central Asia were thus treated in a rather flexible way.

Since the inception of the program, the researchers have met annually for small conferences to discuss the progress, research-methods and theoretical underpinnings of the various projects. In 2002, however, the programme committee decided to organise a final meeting in Istanbul and to invite non-

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programme colleagues from Turkey, France, the USA and Sweden to a joint conference on the role of the state in West and Central Asia. This topic, it was thought, was both pertinent and possible to discuss from the perspective of the various disciplines represented in the Swedish programme. Our guests were invited in order to widen the scope of the empirical work undertaken by the Swedish groups. Thirty scholars participated in the conference, and over a period of three days nineteen papers were presented. Fourteen of those presentations have been expanded into contributions to this volume. The articles in this volume focus geographically on Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. We thus decided that *The Role of the State in West Asia* would be a more fitting title than that of the original conference, in spite of the fact that two of the contributions concern the adjacent Caucasian region.

Studying the state in space and time

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the state – and the role of the state – draws renewed scholarly and non-scholarly attention. This is at a time when citizens and would-be citizens, as well as transnational capital and supranational organisations, challenge the scope and scale of state power and influence. Ayubi (1995: 2) sees a 'contradictory development' between scholarly interest in 'bringing the state back in'[1] and the wish of companies and citizens to see less state power and influence. To Blom Hansen and Stepputat (2001: 2) the state 'remains pivotal in our very imagination of what society is'. The state is both inadequate and indispensable, and this paradox has been important in how scholars from various disciplines 'study stateness as a historical and contingent construction' (ibid). An analysis of the state, and the role of the state, can still concern territorial control and the use of legitimate violence, issues that are central to the classic Weberian understanding of a state. But the state can also be studied and analysed through a scrutiny of education, infrastructure, the legal system and the market. The role of the state can thus be approached not only through the political system in a narrow sense, but equally well through language policies, or myths and rituals.[2]

The reverse perspective is obviously equally important but still neglected, although the importance of state functions for most social and cultural processes should be obvious. It is thus highly relevant to ask questions about the role of the state in linguistic, literary, religious and economic studies not only in order to analyse the state but also to contribute to an understanding of those phenomena *per se*. The study and analysis of the state has, of course, never been restricted to political scientists, sociologists and historians. But it is safe to say that for many scholars in the humanities, their disciplines lack independent theories of the state, and the role of the state has tended to be peripheral to their research. The contributions to this volume show that the role of the state in West Asia can be conceptualised in a great many ways, using various theories and methods by researchers from a variety of academic disciplines.

[1] *Bringing the State back in*, (1985) the title of a famous volume edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschmeyer and Theda Skocpol, heralded the 'renewed' interest in the state among American political scientists.

[2] For an illuminating discussion of the importance of cultural processes for an understanding of the nature of the state, see Steinmetz (ed) 1999: 1–29.

States are obviously not new to West or Central Asia. Large parts of this vast region have been incorporated into state structures for millennia, from the time of Sumer, Assyria, Babylonia and Ancient Egypt. Thus it may be claimed that Akhaemenid Persia (sixth through fourth c. B.C.) developed governing structures and set a pattern for later empires all over the ancient world. This political heritage served to help shape the Ottoman Empire, which, in its turn, has left deep marks on this region even today. In the modern age, when so much of state formation centres on nationality, nation and nationalism, the heterogeneous linguistic, religious and cultural composition of West and Central Asia makes the role of the state quite problematic. The focus of this volume is found in the formative period of modern or modernising would-be nation-states with the ensuing problems of borders separating the same and enclosing the different. Parallel to this runs the thorough transformation, when subjects are no longer left to their own devices but start to be moulded into citizens. In that light, the contributions to this volume may be subsumed under four different themes: State building and state maintenance; nation building – manipulation of the imaginary and perception of others; minorities and languages within and across borders and manifestations of the state.

State building and state maintenance

Empirically, states cannot be studied by default. A state has to be formed, built and maintained to become an object of scrutiny. Certain dramatic periods, like wars, may be very important in shedding light on state building. Kivanç Ulusoy analyses the importance of World War I in transforming the Ottoman Empire into the republican Turkish state. He understands the war not mainly as a military affair, but as a period in which state and society became linked in new ways. What came to be the *Turkish* population was mobilised through the war, and the state acquired new instruments to mould and control the population. Ulusoy traces Turkish étatism to this formative war period.

States are not only built and maintained, but may also fall apart. What may cause the break-up of a state? The break-up of the Ottoman Empire and the birth of modern Turkey are closely associated with the Balkan wars and World War I. The break-up of the Soviet Union – the empire dominating modern Caucasus, Transcaucasus and Central Asia – is brought up by Erik Melander, who examines the Nagorno–Karabakh war until 1992. The complexity of 'the state' in the Soviet Union is also brought out in the article, with Nagorno–Karabakh as an autonomous province (*oblast*) within the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic. Melander criticises theories of elite manipulation as causes for wars, and claims that nationalist ambitions on the part of grass-root actors has to be taken into account.

In his article Melander regards the central state authorities in Moscow as the elite. Peter Sluglett, on the other hand, is scrutinising the emergence and development of the middle, or bourgeois, class in the inter-war period in Syria and Iraq. This was the class between the 'old' rich landowners and traders – and the peasants and urban poor. Syria and Iraq were part of the Ottoman empire and became colonial states in the inter-war period. State formation in both countries, he argues, was very rapid in this period, blocking stable class formation. The middle classes in Syria and Iraq grew during the mandate period, largely in response to the creation of *national* (as opposed to Ottoman) and secular institutions. Yet in the post-mandate period the middle class in the

two countries, according to Sluglett, failed to 'capture' society and the state-structures remained largely divorced from the social forces, opening up to coups d' états.

The formation of states commonly involves the control over a particular territory. Emma Jørum in her article discusses the Syrian policy towards the contested Hatay (or Iskanderoun/Alexandretta) province, which was ceded to Turkey during the French mandate. Syria's relation to this border province is paradoxical. Syria has never formally given up its claim to this territory, yet despite recurring outbursts of verbal aggression (on both sides of the border) this particular 'lost' territory is not as important to Syria as the Golan Heights, which were occupied by Israel in 1967. Jørum argues against the conventions of much of International Relations studies, in which borders and territory are largely taken for granted. She claims that in order to understand the difference between the 'value' of Hatay and that of the Golan Heights, it is important to analyse the loss of these areas, not only in terms of the Syrian–Turkish and Syrian–Israeli relations, respectively, but also in conjunction to nation-state building and domestic policies. Hatay was lost before independence and the inclusion of its population into the institutions of modern Syria.

Jørum describes official Syrian–Turkish relations as based on increased trust and cross-border co-operation. Turkish–Iranian relations can be characterised in the same manner, according to Özden Zeynep Oktav. She analyses the position of Turkey from the late 1990s vis-à-vis her eastern neighbour. Oktav claims that despite the many political and ideological differences between the two states, relations have improved considerably. Turkey and Iran are important political actors and both have an interest in promoting regional stability. Oktav's analysis also exemplifies how these two complex and heterogeneous states want to be regarded as homogeneous nation states.

Nation building – manipulation of the imaginary and perception of others

In all nation building a sense of unity has to be spread and maintained. Nationalism – and ethnicity – develops through a belief that *We* are significantly the same and significantly different from *Them*. Similarity/difference in nationalism and ethnicity is commonly based on language and descent, including a historical link to a specific territory. The complex relationship between 'state' and 'nation' is brought out in a number of the articles. State building, Jørum notes, concerns institutions in a given territory, while nation building deals with images and myths. Ulusoy describes not only how the state emerged through the war but also how a national Turkish community was created in this period. As the empire lost its territory, a nation which largely lacked the ethnic and linguistic heterogeneity of the past was carved out. The emergence of nationalist ideas and images has obviously been extremely important in buttressing modern state building in West Asia. In Turkey, as noted by Ulusoy, well-known intellectuals established new journals and published novels to foster nationalist feelings of wartime and to create a sense of 'real' Turkishness. An enforced homogeneity ensued, where 'Anatolia' became the imaginary heartland of the modern Turkish nation.

Also in the Arab parts of the former Ottoman Empire nationalism and nationalistic ideologies spread, but only slowly. Sluglett asserts that not only

the old Syrian and Iraqi elites but a majority of the population were loyal to the Ottoman Empire at least before the outbreak of World War I.[3] Such a statement is clearly part of the contemporary scholarly rethinking of Arab nationalism, where both nationalistic ideas and the spread of nationalist movements have been scrutinised in various settings.[4] But such a statement still runs counter to the official discourse of both the Syrian and the Iraqi Ba'th party, where The Arab Nation until today is referred to as eternal and where the Ottoman Empire is routinely described as '500 years of darkness'.

The war period is discussed by Roberta Micallef as well. She analyses *Cennet Kızın Cinneti*, a short story written by Halide Edip Adıvar during the Turkish war of independence, and argues that a close reading of women writers is instructive because they complicate the typically male-centred myths of the nation. It is common, she writes, that nationalists view the nation as a (male-headed) family and that nationalist ideology is often imbued with ideals associated with masculinity. This is especially the case with the archetypal heroes in war stories. Micallef also analyses Ayla Kutlu's short story *Sen de Gitme Triyandafilis*. The story is set in Hatay in the war-like period at the end of the French mandate. The story, however, was written in the late 1980s. Like Adıvar, Kutlu also portrays a woman victimised by men who are supposed to protect the innocent. But Kutlu's heroine is part of the Greek community and actually ends up staying in what became Turkey. Micallef claims that for Kutlu, and perhaps contemporary Turkey as a whole, the ethnic and nationalist anti-Greek sentiments of the 1920s are no longer relevant.

The role of printed material, especially novels, in vernacular languages has been important in spreading images of a national community. Hashem Ahmadzadeh discusses a very interesting 'counter-case'; the rise of the Kurdish novel in relation to the lack of a Kurdish state. He analyses the emergence of a multi-lingual national novel where the dominant literary themes are war, the lack of Kurdish self-determination and the fragmented community. Ahmadzadeh also discusses the importance of the Kurdish diaspora, especially in Sweden, in giving voice to literary and political ambitions. The Kurdish national movement and Kurdish national aspirations are especially important and interesting in West Asia, since Kurds are present in significant numbers in Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran and hence 'speak to' and threaten a number of states. The creation of *We the Kurds* is thus, for example in literature, shaped through dialogue and confrontation with the many dominant *They* – Arabs, Turks, Persians – the Kurds are facing.

A mirror image of the oppressed Kurds, struggling for national self-determination, is given in the article by Bo Isaksson and Ablahad Lahdo. They describe a number of linguistic journeys along the Syrian–Turkish border, a region that displays considerable linguistic and ethnic complexity. Here there are people who speak various Arabic and Neo-Aramaic dialects, as well as Kurdish, Turkish and Armenian and who classify themselves as Arabs, Kurds, Turks, Armenians or Suryoye/Assyrians. Language proficiency and ethnic classifications often crosscut, adding to the general ethnic and linguistic complexity. Isaksson and Lahdo describe that in some of the villages they visited, Kurds were identified as a 'majority' and talked about as both powerful and threatening. Here we have a case – not unusual in West and

[3] For Christian–Muslim differences in the development of ethnic and nationalist movements in the late Ottoman empire, see Kemal Karpat (1988).
[4] See, for example, James Jankowski and Israel Gershoni (eds) (1997).

Central Asia – where an ethnic or linguistic minority in a nation-state may be a local or regional majority co-existing, both in co-operation and conflict, with other minorities. Isaksson's and Lahdo's article, as well as several others in this volume, also illustrate that perception of 'others' depends on local contexts that have to be carefully scrutinised.

Minorities and languages within and across borders

The states in West and Central Asia are all states with a considerable ethnic and linguistic heterogeneity. This volume only gives a small sample of this historical and contemporary complexity in terms of minorities and languages in the region. Here it is a rule rather than an exception that linguistic groups transcend borders, often of more than two states. In the absence of deliberate and consistent minority policies in states that seek their legitimacy in nation-state ideologies, this causes considerable problems. The articles in this volume present various aspects of various cases – of minorities within borders as well as minorities and majorities across borders.

Results of language policies – and the lack of such policies in Iran are demonstrated in the articles of Helena Bani-Shoraka and Carina Jahani. Bani-Shoraka explicitly addresses the official language policy of Iran from the 1930s onwards, which can be simply summarised as an assimilation of the many linguistic minorities. Bani-Shoraka's case study treats an interior minority, the Azerbaijanis influenced by a closely related exterior language, the Turkish of Turkey. The Azerbaijanis form a quite strong linguistic minority: they are numerous, both in the north-western provinces, where they form a local majority, and in the capital, Tehran. They are mainly Shi'a and well integrated in the political establishment. Although this group is large and influential, the study shows a clear decline in the use of the Azerbaijani language in the youngest generation. The combination of an almost non-existent (although in principle constitutionally safe-guarded) official support for the use of the language and the heavy impact of the centralised state on education, media and other conditions of life (like urbanisation) gives assimilative effects that may seem irreversible. Internationalisation, however, produces certain counter-effects. Modern technology and the inroad of English as well as international media, like video and satellite television (not the least Turkish), may be seen to decrease the persianising pressure, at least on parts of the younger generation.

The case presented by Jahani is different in many respects. The linguistic minority discussed in her paper, the Baloch, inhabit contiguous areas in three states: south-east Iran, south-west Pakistan and south-west Afghanistan. This fact has had considerable effects on the status and development of the Baloch language, with 'language' taken in the sense of a collective designation for a number of closely related dialects rather than a standard language with a number of spoken varieties. In Iran the Baloch remain a low-status minority, poorly integrated in the Islamic Republic as well, as they are almost completely Sunni in creed. Their language has generally been regarded as a rural (even primitive) dialect of the Persian state language. On the Pakistani side of the border, on the other hand, the Baloch have had a relatively speaking stronger position, including centrifugal nationalist tendencies, participation in the local government and possibilities of developing a written language. Jahani sees the establishment of a written Baloch language and the

possibility of using it in elementary education as a crucial means of raising the status of a minority language and of retaining it in the modern world. In Iran, however, next to nothing of the sort has been allowed, and in Pakistan Baloch literacy has remained a rather marginal phenomenon – for political reasons, but also because of the considerable dialect variation.

Another Iranian language (with 'language' in the collective sense) that is notoriously transcending Middle Eastern state borders is Kurdish. No article in this volume addresses the Kurdish language situation specifically, but the contribution by Hashem Ahmadzadeh on the 'statelessness' of the Kurdish novel also mirrors the effects of such statelessness on the situation and development of the language. Ahmadzadeh discusses the construction of a Kurdish national identity as it can be followed in literary production, specifically the novel. His conclusions regarding the impediments found in the lack of a homogeneous Kurdish literary sphere may be transferred to the linguistic situation, which differs widely between the Kurdish areas in Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Georgia/Armenia. To this comes the interesting, and considerable, influence of a culturally active diaspora. However, the formation of a unified standard Kurdish hardly seems possible without the backing of a state authority. On the other hand, the centre's view of Kurdish national ambitions, be they literary, linguistic or political, is spelt out clearly in Oktav's article, in which 'Kurdish separatism' appears as an all-inclusive characterisation. Such 'separatism' may be regarded – and handled – as a political card available to competing governments in the region, at times to be met with a counter-card (such as support of Azerbaijani separatism in Iran to counter possible Iranian support of Kurdish separatism in Turkey). So-called 'hot pursuit' across state borders may be seen as the most acute manifestation of such tension.

Kurdish also appears in the article by Bo Isaksson and Ablahad Lahdo on the situation of Arabic and Neo-Aramaic dialects on both sides of the border between Syria and Turkey, however in a somewhat different role. As noted above, in some places Kurdish may take the role of a majority language, albeit a local one. The border area in question has probably been linguistically mixed for millennia. Various forms of bilingualism, or even trilingualism, are still common, in spite of the pressures of the new centralised states. Here we are talking of spoken dialects. The monopoly of the respective state to propagate its standard language in administration, education and media is not really contested. In this situation, as Isaksson and Lahdo report, the dialects seem to be fighting a losing battle. The specific Arabic dialect group (so-called *qəltu*), supposedly a remnant from the first Arabic migration into the area at the time of the Muslim conquest, is heavily influenced by Turkish on the Turkish side of the border, but – as can be expected – not so on the Syrian side, where instead the influence of Modern Standard Arabic is considerable. The Aramaic dialects face a double pressure, being spoken by Christians, and seem to be quickly disappearing on both sides of the border (both through language shift and emigration). An interesting finding is that, according to Isaksson and Lahdo, the expansion of Kurdish as a practical colloquial language, as it takes over entire areas on the Turkish side of the border, runs parallel with the increasing dominance of standard Turkish in the educational, medial and administrative sphere. Thus new constellations of bi- and trilingualism appear, while the linguistic effects of the state border are on a steady increase.

In contrast to the states of the Middle East, the Soviet Union had developed a consistent minority policy, which ensured linguistic and cultural rights to its more sizable minorities. These minority rights were assigned to areas of ascending size and status, with the various full republics on top. The linguistic character of each area was ascertained by regular censuses, with the last being held in 1989. As summarily described in the article by Manana Kobaidze and Karina Vamling, this system was designed to safe-guard the linguistic rights of the acknowledged minorities in such a way that Russian remained the dominating language in administration and economy as well as the *lingua franca* both between the majority and the minorities within each republic and between the republics. Kobaidze and Vamling describe what happened to this system after the establishment of an independent Georgia in 1991. The language policies naturally remained conditioned by the Soviet system, both by the system itself and by its actual outcome. This multi-linguistic republic still needed a *lingua franca* for communication between its linguistic majority and the numerous minorities, but under the new circumstances and as a result of the new domestic policy, there is a clear shift from Russian to Georgian as second language.

The Soviet system was thus designed to contain nationalistic separatism. That it did not always work is clearly shown by the example of Nagorno–Karabakh, presented by Melander. There, a regional majority of Armenians in a so-called Autonomous Province, bordering the Armenian Republic, comprising a substantial Azeri minority and itself belonging to the Azeri Republic (including Armenian minority groups also outside of Nagorno–Karabakh), embarked on a nationalistic rebellion already before the break-up of the Union. It might be argued that the Soviet political map of Transcaucasia was wrongly constructed from the beginning, but here – as elsewhere – the Soviet borders were not created *ex nihilo*. It was possible for the powerful centre to freeze conflict areas for a long time, but with a weakening centre they could flare up again. However, the changing of existing state borders, inside the former Soviet Union as well as outside, opens threatening perspectives for most of the involved powers, when it is more rule than exception that ethnic–linguistic minorities and majorities spill over existing state borders in quite uncontrollable ways.

Manifestations of the state

The role of the state can be discerned through state building, through the manipulation of the imaginary and through language and minority policies, as discussed above. But the role of the state can also be analysed through a scrutiny of how and where the state is manifested in the daily lives of various kinds of citizens, as advocated by Rabo in this volume. Berna Turam writes about followers of the Turkish Gülen movement, a mainly educational movement aiming to reconcile Islam and secular institutions, and with vast interests in Central Asia. She sees the Gülen movement as part of Turkey's increasingly open and multi-faceted civil society. In her article she argues that the state is embedded in society and that in the 1990s the Gülen movement was both cooperating with and contested by the secular state. Navaro-Yashin (2002: 7) claims that Turkish Islamists have been forced to work within a public life dominated by secular ideology. Hence 'Islamism' and 'secularism' are intimately intertwined. She stresses that in order to understand Turkish

Islamism it is necessary to study Turkish secularists. According to Turam, the commitment of the Gülen movement to defend the secular ideals of the Turkish republic are also found in the Justice and Development Party, which won elections in 2002. Hence the engagements between this Islamic civil society organisation with the state shows that secularism – in the form of a separation of state and religion – is possible in West Asia.

Since independence, most states in West Asia have held a tight grip on the economic policies of their countries. The state has typically been the most important economic actor in countries such as Iran and Syria. Javad Amid and Amjad Hadjikhani discuss developments in the Iranian education system after the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in conjunction with the technological skills used by Iranian firms in their contact with foreign counterparts. They argue that Iranians' access to education has increased dramatically after the revolution. Literacy rates as well as enrolment rates for all levels of education show impressive improvements, not least because of the increase in the supply and in the demand for the education of girls and women. However, according to Amid and Hadjikhani, human resources in Iran are not utilised in the most efficient way. Iranian firms are technologically interdependent with their foreign counterparts to a much lower degree than in industrial countries. Yet relationships with counterparts were profitable and stable. Amid and Hadjikhani claim that firms in Iran are not developing business competence. Instead, efforts are expended on the development of political competence. Firms need to manage and cope with state bureaucrats and politicians. Iranian firms, they stress, act in an environment of political uncertainty that is detrimental to long-term planning and investment.

The traders in Aleppo studied by Annika Rabo also try to survive in a climate of political uncertainty. While the private sector in Syria has been given more room for manoeuvre in the last decade, the public sector – in the shape of bureaucracies – still control the pace and direction of economic liberalisation. To the traders 'the state' manifested itself in various ways in their daily lives, and they talked about 'the state' as an entity that was outside their control. Traders claimed they never quite knew what rules and regulations would be applied by employees in the public sector, and thus used mediation or bribes to manage situations of uncertainty. While bribes were universally disliked by all traders, they justified their own practices, Rabo claims, because they saw their own activities as essential for the economic survival of the country as a whole.

Area-studies revisited

In the original proposal of the Swedish research programme on West and Central Asia the researchers were, among other things, asked to 'assess and perhaps develop theories and models which have been empirically tested in other regions, or which have been theoretically developed in other parts of the world'. Such a task presumes the existence of regional specificity. But is such a presumption valid? Can research focusing on one specific region speak to issues in another?

In the last decade, regional studies devoted to the Middle East and North Africa have come under attack. Such so-called MENA area-studies, with broad academic programs focusing on specific regions, are commonly seen as an American invention and closely associated with policy requirements during

the Cold War era. Regional approaches, however, were established already before World War II.[5] Thus European colonial powers, like Great Britain, France and the Netherlands, developed area approaches in their centres of study and research at much earlier stages. Central Asian area studies, which were part of the theme of the original conference, are on the other hand a late development in the West (as opposed to Russian research), due to the fact that the 'area' in question was rarely accessible for field studies before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Now, on the other hand, Central Asian studies seem to contribute to something of a comeback for the area approach.

The current questioning – and defence – of area studies has largely taken place in an American political and political science context (Tessler et al. 1999, Lustick 2000, Beinin 2003), but the issues raised are also pertinent for other academic settings and for other 'areas'. According to the critique, MENA-research is parochial, insular, lacking in theory and cultivates an 'exceptionalism' of the area (Khalidi 1995). Cross-regional comparisons, as asked for by the Swedish programme, have been suggested as a means to avoid the 'exceptionalism' of West Asia.[6] But, according to the defenders of area studies, all research that is not universal and global in focus could be attacked on the same grounds. Research based on European and American cases may be seen as equally 'exceptional' (Beinin 2003) (cf. Jørum this volume).[7]

The instigation of a regional research programme, such as the Swedish one, clearly opens up many disciplinary and inter-disciplinary questions, as well as questions concerning area or regional studies. Is there a special point in joining West and Central Asia? What constitutes a region when people, goods and ideas flow across (and throughout history have flowed across) – boundaries drawn by historical accidents? The very inclusion of articles on Azerbaijan and Georgia in this volume may be taken to illustrate the inherent diffuseness of regional boundaries. Can researchers from various disciplines gain insight from each other in broad programmes with regional foci? Is there a point in asking economists, anthropologists, political scientists and linguists to take an interest in, and even make use of, each other's research?

The articles in this volume were not written to illuminate questions of regional or disciplinary boundaries. Still, in their totality they may illustrate the difficulties as well as possibilities of 'interdisciplinary area studies'[8]. Researchers, we think, must be allowed to ask questions and use methods that are relevant in, and for, their own discipline. One cannot be interdisciplinary on one's own, although some disciplines are more fluid and adapt more easily to disciplinary co-operation, or to borrowing concepts, methods and theories from others. Nor can one single researcher cover all-important issues in one 'area'. Yet we believe that materials presented in these articles speak to each other in ways that may counter the common Euro-centric division of the world. It is possible and important to see aspects of Turkey in the light of Syria, aspects of Iran in the light of Turkey and so forth. In the same way, we

[5] Beinin (2003: 11) claims that Middle East area studies in the USA is not a product of the Cold War but developed earlier in response to the needs of missionaries and the oil-industry.

[6] The lack of cross-regional comparisons is often invoked by those critical of MENA-research on the state. For an interesting comparative approach, see Waldner (1999) who compares state building and development in Turkey, Syria and East Asia.

[7] For an interesting questioning of the 'exceptionalism' of the Muslim world, see Ghassan Salamé (ed) 1994, especially his Introduction.

[8] See discussion by Brandell and Rabo (2003: 41–43).

argue that research on literature may reveal important things about language, research on language can be relevant in understanding the position of minorities, research on minorities is highly relevant to an understanding of politics, and so on. Thus the contribution of this volume to 'interdisciplinary area studies' will, by necessity, be found in the dialogue between rather than within any individual article.

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War, Mobilisation and the Economy

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In this article on the Ottoman effort during the First World War, I will stress the effects on wars in the transformation of state-society relations. War will be considered as a totalising and socially mobilising event, rather than just as a military affair. It will be argued that war has a social dimension and any social theory of states needs to analyse social upheavals, and the political and geographical collapses in times of war. Therefore, the Ottoman effort during World War I points to the emergence of a new mentality in terms of governing territory, the economy and society. These will be taken as the aspects of the governmental transformation. The Ottoman Empire simultaneously faced the problems of the destruction of its economic space through territorial disintegration, social upheaval through massive immigration from the lost territories in the Balkans and the collapse of the ideology of the state in a period extending from 1908 to 1918. A new mode of government emerged as the defining characteristic of a modern nation-state during this time, in the form of pragmatic and spontaneous answers to the massive social problems. The governing elite, acquiring power on the eve of World War I experienced a tremendous challenge of the three-dimensional task of governing territory, society and the economy. The state as a war dictatorship transformed itself to an internal organisation within the society. Under the drastic conditions of war the state was surrounded by the social as the traditional form of state-society relations in the Ottoman Empire came to an end. This article examines a specific manner of involvement between state and society. Rather than stressing a one-sided penetration of state over society through administrative centralization, compulsory conscription and further taxation, I emphasise the rise of state interventionism in organising society and the economy, which ultimately favours the bourgeois class. This type of state interventionism developed as the result of a fear of social disintegration and moral collapse as a result of war.

War and the Young Turk Revolution

For Turks, World War I is not restricted to 1914–18. The assassination of the Archduke of the Austro–Hungarian Empire in Sarajevo by a Serbian nationalist in June 1914 was the last stage of the Ottoman Empire during the course of

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events which began previously. When considered in light of the series of events such as the Bulgarian independence on 5 October 1908, the Austrian annexation of Bosnia–Herzegovina on 6 October 1908, the Albanian Crisis in 1910, the invasion of Tripolitania by Italy in 1911 and the Balkan Wars of 1912–13, World War I can be seen as an inevitable outcome of an ongoing crisis within the Empire. These events not only *de facto* abolished the 1878 Berlin Treaty, which had balanced the territorial disputes between the Great Powers but also collapsed the Balance of Power and the Concert of Europe, which had secured the stability of Europe during the nineteenth century. The stable world was first shaken by the rise of Germany, who defeated France in Sedan in 1871. The clash of interests between Russia and the Austro–Hungarian Empire over the Balkans contributed to sharpening the rivalry among the Great Powers. Imperialist rivalry and nationalism in the late nineteenth century also conditioned the domestic politics of the Ottoman Empire by paving for the Young Turk Revolution in 1908. When King Edward VII and Tsar Nicholas II met at Reval in June 1908, the shift in the policy of the Great Powers over the future of the Ottoman Empire became evident for the Young Turks (Ahmad 1969: 2–4).

The 1908 Revolution was based on the idea of constitutional government as advocated by nineteenth century Ottoman liberals. This was the only way to secure a legitimate rule and to govern the Empire with its immense territory and multi-ethnic, multi-religious population (Ramsaur 1957). The face of the Empire changed dramatically from 1908 to 1913. The cosmopolitan ideology of Ottomanism and the territorial basis of the Empire collapsed with the Balkan Wars. Refugees from the Balkans caused the government severe problems in terms of food supply, health and housing. The huge territorial and human losses in the Balkan Wars forced the Young Turks towards self-criticism and an ideological reformulation.The goal then became a state with a homogenous population (Macfie 1998: 71–97). Inspired by Gramscian terminology, Feroz Ahmad, one of the prominent scholars of the period, argues for the rise of a radical 'subordinate class' within the Young Turks, namely the Committee of Union and Progres (CUP), with a *coup d'état* in 23 January 1913 (Ahmad 1988: 267). Overcoming the resistance of the existing high bureaucratic and military ranks, this coup was organised to prevent the government from signing a peace treaty accepting the absolute defeat in the wars with Balkan states and leaving Edirne, the old Ottoman capital, out of the new frontiers in Thrace.[1] After this event, the destiny of the Empire fell undisputably into the hands of Unionist cadres until the end of World War I (Yapp 1987: 191–192). The retaking of Edirne in July on the initiative of some young officers from the inner circle of the Committee, led by Enver Bey, increased the prestige of the movement and legitimized the coup in public opinion (Ahmed Emin 1930: 56). The Balkan disaster and the misery of refugees in Istanbul caused deep psychological and ideological effects on the Young Turks.[2]

[1] In the article, Young Turks refer to a more heterodox group of intellectuals and revolutionaries ideologically tied to nineteenth century liberalism, constitutionalism and patriotism. The CUP refers to a Turkish nationalist, Jacobin and radical wing among the Young Turks. They captured power in 1913 on the eve of World War I. The CUP and the Unionists are the same group of people.

[2] Comparing the reformers of the Tanzimat period, Halide Edip, a leading female intellectual of the Revolution, explains the ideological deviation of the Committee from Ottomanism to radical Turkish nationalism as a practical necessity (Edip 1930: 98–99).

One of the immediate consequences of the events occurring from 1908 to 1913 was the change of the Young Turks' ideas on international politics. They were apparently alarmed by the fact that staying neutral in an international environment dominated by the imperialist blocks would lead to a dangerous isolation. As a large scale war was expected, the Unionists saw that an isolated position would lead to an acceptance of a post-war disintegration of the Empire. The expected international political and economic support after the 1908 Revolution never came. Instead, the new government was faced with cold responses from Great Britain when it decided to remove the Capitulations (Ahmad 1985: 174–212).[3] Great Britain and France preferred to establish an alliance with Russia, ultimately pushing the Young Turks into siding with Germany. The Ottoman Empire governed by the Committee signed a treaty of defensive alliance with Germany more than one month after the Sarajevo murder on 31 July 1914.

The decision of mobilisation

The Unionists had already started to prepare the country for a possible war even before Russia, Great Britain and France declared war on the Ottoman Empire as a response to the bombing of Russian ports by two Ottoman warships recently bought from Germany on 28 October 1914. The order of mobilisation had already been decided as a measure of precaution in a secret cabinet meeting on 1 August 1914 (Ahmed Emin 1930: 72). On that same day, the Ottoman Empire also suspended the payment of the national debt. However, until the start of World War I, the key event was the abolition of the Capitulations on 9 September 1914, which drew little reaction from the Great Powers, contrary to the expectations of the Unionists (Zürcher 1994: 129). In fact, when Russia, Great Britain and France declared war on the Ottoman Empire in November, they were breaking their silence towards this one-sided decision of the Ottoman Empire.

The mobilisation order obliged all men between the ages of twenty and forty-five to appear at the nearest military office as soon as possible. There was no war on the agenda, but this general call seemed so urgent that even disabled men had to submit a medical report demonstrating their disability. This sudden decision created chaos and damaged the country's economic boom. Agricultural production and commercial relations immediately collapsed (Emin 1930: 107–118). The good harvest of 1914 could not be gathered because a large part of the male population served in the army. The requisitioning of animals made the agricultural business much more difficult and slow. Small industries were also crippled by the removal of able men for military service. As the railways were under the service of the military, commoditites could not be moved and prices declined sharply. Commercial relations with the rest of the world entered a crisis even before the blockade of Entente powers came into being. This blockade closed the sea-ways for trade, and the parts of the country depending on outside food provisions (especially the places where the Arab population

[3] The Capitulations refer to a wide range of liberties and immunities given to foreigners concerning trade, commerce and taxation in Ottoman territories. The Capitulations were once granted by the Ottoman Empire in order to divide Christian Europe during the period of Ottoman expansion. They later gained a basically economic character and were given to most of the European countries. Even the native Christians within the Ottoman Empire with foreign citizenship used these liberties and immunities in their economic activities.

lived) suffered from famine (Khalidi 1996: 642–656). The result was an abnormal trade balance, exploited by a class of tradesmen and intermediaries who provided food only for large cities and military needs. Thus, the first mobilisation effort was a great failure because of its economic effects.

Probably the most important device of war efforts was propaganda activity. After the annexation of Bosnia–Herzegovina, Austrian goods were boycotted. This demonstrated a sensitivity to political matters as well as the effectiveness of propaganda as the new instrument for mass politics (Yavuz 1963: 168–181). Distribution of information was an important political source during the war. Almost everyone had someone at the front, and their fates were completely uncertain. Thus, the control of information meant control of this uncertainty. The state aimed at penetrating the feelings of the population by directing the flow of information and by monopolising the media almost until the end of the war. The propaganda reached its peak along with the intelligence activities of Teskilat-ı Mahsusa. Ideological propaganda also faced a transformation during the war. The Pan-Islam of Sultan Abdulhamid II had lost its credibility, especially after the failed attempt at counter-revolution in April 1909 (Ahmad 1969: 14–46).[4] But during the war, religion again appeared on the political agenda, to gain the support of the Arabs and other Muslim countries under imperial rule. The declaration of holy war (Jihad) against the enemies of Islam demonstrated how religion was integral to mobilisation efforts, especially in the early days of war. But the Arab Revolt in 1916 finally brought an end to the Unionists' dream on a general Islamic revolt.

Mobilisation as an economic and geographical revival

The economic policy of the government was based on the idea of creating an independent national economy. The immediate device of this aim was the state, which served to promote an economic class loyal to the governing elite. Therefore, the abolition of the Capitulations was a crucial event. The Young Turks were against any arrangement which damaged the equality of the Ottoman Empire with other states. They associated economic independence with national survival. In symbolic terms the abolition of the Capitulations signified the revival of a nation. It was the first step towards a real independence, and helped to gain significant popular support for the government. The event contributed to the prestige of Unionist leaders such as the Finance Minister, Cavid Bey and the War Minister, Enver Bey. The end of the Capitulations also marked judicial equality. With the end of the privileges given to foreigners, and the establishment of perfect equality in taxation, the government increased the customs and replaced the uniform tariff system with selective tariffs on 3 March 1916 (Kurmuş 1978: 182–209).

With the abolition of the Capitulations, the Unionists had the opportunity of realising their nationalist ideas. Power was extremely centralized in the hands of a few men in almost all political matters. The war government was a

[4] Before its consolidation, the constitutional regime established in 1908 faced an immediate Islamist reaction in April 1909. The Islamists aimed at dismissing the Unionist officers, in order to re-establish the absolute rule of Sultan Abdulhamid II and restore the Shariat (Islamic canon law) against the constitutionalist and secular character of the 1908 Revolution. Although the revolt expanded easily with the support of the other opposition parties, the Macedonian troops, namely the 'Action Army' organised by the Unionists suppressed it and deposited the Sultan Abdulhamid II, who was found responsible for the initiation and manipulation of the revolt.

dictatorship of three leading figures of the Committee, namely Enver, Talat and Cemal. While Talat and Enver stayed in Istanbul as Minister of Interior and Minister of War, respectively, Cemal Pasha went to Syria as the Commander of the Fourth Army. When the Cabinet led by Said Halim Pasha resigned on 4 February 1916, Talat Pasha replaced him and formed a new cabinet. The Committee of National Defence, formed on 5 October 1912 as an unofficial body, became an official body after the coup of January 1913, in order to direct the mobilisation efforts (Zürcher 1995: 126–127). The General Council of the CUP led by local party chief Kara Kemal directed non-military affairs. When the government decided to centralise the food supply under a board created by the provisional law of 23 July 1916, Kemal totally controlled this. Due to his policies, the guilds, which were about to disappear as a result of the liberal economic policies of the previous decades, returned as the principal supporters and profiteers of economic policies during wartime.[5]

Apart from the propaganda encouraging the consumption of national goods and local manufacturing, the government issued a series of laws to encourage industry and the establishment of companies, banks and cooperatives. The Law for Encouraging Industry of 1909 was the prelude to the creation of a national industry. This law was revised in 27 March 1915, to stimulate the employment of Turkish citizens in factories and to remove the privileges of foreigners. A language law from 24 March 1916 required the compulsory use of Turkish in correspondence and in carrying out daily business. Finally, the Bank of National Credit was established on 1 January 1917 (İlkin 1975: 537–586). The core of all these measures was to create a national economy through the integration of Turks into the economic life. In practice, this aim corresponded with to the favouring of individuals and groups who were loyal to the CUP. The new economic class was inevitably tied to the Committee controlling the initiation of credits, grants on land, taxation, machinery etc. (Ahmad 1980: 329–350).

The economic problems of the war could fall under two categories: military financing and food supplies for the general population. The Unionists always wanted to take the initiative regarding economic policy. Cavid Bey was the first Unionist entering the Cabinet in 1909 and again held the position of Finance Minister during the war. His first decision was to solve the problem of the multiplicity of currencies, which complicated the implementation of a coherent financial policy in the Empire.[6] Therefore, the Law for the Unification of

[5] The Ottoman economy was mainly organized around local ties and bazaars, until the penetration of European goods and capital after the 1838 liberal treaties signed with the European countries. The central economic actors of Ottoman self-sufficient economy were the guilds. This economic structure was gradually challenged by the European commercial expansion in the nineteenth century and the guilds gradually lost power and were officially banned in 1910 under the pressure of the chambers of commerce, which was mainly dominated by non-Muslims. But as the liberal environment characterizing the 1908 Revolution collapsed with the Balkan Wars, and as the Christians were started to be seen as the agents of European domination in the Ottoman Empire, the guilds gained importance in the context of creating a national economy and a Muslim monopoly in commerce. The Unionist turned towards organising the national economy around well-organised guilds and corporations such as the Society of Tradesmen established in 1915.

[6] As the volume of domestic and international trade increased as a result of the liberal treaties signed with Great Britain and other Western countries from 1838 onwards, and as the state expenditure expanded because of modernisation efforts, there was an increasing need of currency in circulation. The Ottoman Empire tried to cover this need with the reform of 1844, by issuing new gold, silver and copper coinages. However, the continuing increase in the volume of trade and state expenditure in the second half of the nineteenth century pushed the Ottoman Empire to issue old debased coinage and paper money. The foreign currencies also started to be used in conjunction with expanding commercial relations with Europeans nations. The Law of

Currency was enacted in 1916. Cavid Bey was a liberal. To him, Turkey's economic success depended on extending its relations with the West. He favoured borrowing from Europe and the free movement of capital (Berkes 1964: 423–427). When the Ottoman state expenditure expanded to incredible amounts during the war, Cavid Bey preferred to borrow money from Germany rather than to expand the basis of taxation. The government only financed 10 per cent of the war expenditure by taxation. When the war finished, the debt to Germany reached almost 250 Million TL, and the national debt reached 470 Million TL. Taking into account the registered national debt, which was almost 171 Million TL in 1914, the terrible situation of Ottoman finances could easily be understood (Yapp 1987: 268–269). The issuing of paper money in July 1915 in order to cover the extraordinary war expenses also contributed to this situation. As the two previous instances of issuing paper money in 1840 and 1875 had not produced very satisfactory results, this decision was not popular. Cavid Bey, under the influence of the German finance minister Helfferich, implemented a policy which was based on an expected German victory. But the war continued longer than expected, and people's trust in the government fell. The financial system collapsed even before the end of the war (Georgeon 1995: 253–275; Eldem 1975: 373–376).

A second set of problems revolved around the government's food policy. The policy of centralization regarding food provisions had turned Kara Kemal into a dictator. Through the control of the food supply of Istanbul, the Committee established a monopoly over economic activities in order to create a loyal economic class.

The government was not much interested in the actual food problems, but instead aimed at creating an economic class loyal to the Committee and undermining the leading position of the existing commercial class mainly composed of non-Muslims. The Unionists believed that the Turkification of the economy would constitute the basis of the future Turkish nation-state. Hence, the dramatic changes in the population composition of the Empire as a result of population exchanges and expulsion of non-Muslims in the war had this economic motive.

A Turkish nation-state emerged during the war, and the territorial projection of this state went hand in hand with the creation of an economic space. As the Arabs also followed the way of independence in war, the Unionists were inevitably tied to Anatolia. With the collapse of foreign trade, Anatolia emerged as the only reserve for food for the military and for Istanbul. Although the political scene altered considerably with the independence of the Balkan territories, the provisioning pattern of Istanbul by shipment from the Black Sea or the Aegean remained unchanged until the establishment of the Anatolian Railway in the 1890s (Quataert 1993: 63–80). Together with the collapse of the liberal trade regime and the effects of wars, Anatolia provided almost 90 per cent of wheat in Istanbul, and became the principal supplier of wheat during World War I. Finally, as a result of the gradual destruction of the Empire's economic space, Anatolia emerged as the territory of the new Turkish state.

Unification in 1916 abolished the bimetallic system of 1844 and brought the gold standard (Zürcher 1994).

Mobilisation as social and cultural crisis

The frustration of people in all parts of the country reached unbearable levels during World War I. The Empire was in continuous war as a result of Russian expansion and the independence of Balkan nationalities during the previous century. But this time the war brought a social explosion, since the fighting expanded to all parts of the Ottoman territories, including Anatolia and the Middle East, which had previously been outside of the region. Relatively peaceful parts of the Empire, particularly the big cities, suffered from severe refugee problems, food scarcity, interethnic clashes and lack of communications.

First of all, the arrival of refugees created a huge housing problem. In addition to the refugees coming after the Balkan Wars, the capital city of Istanbul continued to receive thousands of refugees from other parts of the Empire and Russia after the Revolution of 1917 (Davis 1995: 175–195). The statistics of the Ottoman Red Crescent and American Red Cross show that in the early 1920s the estimated amount of refugees (Muslims, Russians, Greeks and Armenians) reached almost 90,000 (Criss 2000: 51). The profiteers exploited the situation. Although the government tried to prevent it through a special housing law on 8 April 1918, homeowners rented their houses at extremely high prices. Public health was in danger, especially because of the lack of food and clean water. The medical services were not sufficient to reach all parts of the country. A clear sign of this was the increasing rate of infant mortality. The health services were much better in large cities, but these cities had other problems. Diseases like malaria, typhoid and syphilis caused serious problems in Istanbul (Davis 1995: 190). To prevent the expansion of epidemics the government established a special medical institution through a law passed on 15 October 1915. One of the main reasons for the rapid expansion of epidemics according to the government was prostitution. It created a commission composed of police and doctors which would register prostitutes and check on the health situation in brothels (Toprak 1987: 31–40). The most important problem outside Istanbul was security and public order. Anarchy dominated all parts of the country. As the war continued, the central government lost its authority in the provinces. The general warning of the Ministry of the Interior on 20 October 1916 shows the level the anarchy reached in the Ottoman territories, and demonstrates the incapacity of the state to establish order. It stated that

> The Government stands for a strict application of laws. Many officials are indulging the lawless acts. The right of property is interfered with in many arbitrary ways, in violation of existing laws. The personal freedom of citizen is violated in many places in incredible fashion. In some provinces taxes are raised and popular subscriptions opened in violation of constitution. Officials, whether great or small, who are found guilty of violations of the laws will be dealt with energetically. And, in the case of all, this is the final warning (Ahmed Emin 1930: 106).

National life during wartime was dominated by mobilisation and military losses. The sufferings of the men at the front defined the wartime (national) community. The casualties of the first year, especially as a result of Enver Pasha's campaign on Kars in December, the incredible list of martyrs after the Dardanelles war in the spring of 1915 and the attack on the Suez Canal in August 1916 all created a belief in the common future of the national community. In fact, this was a sentimental community born out of the desperate

belief in the possible return of the soldier who might be dead far away from home. The cries and the songs for the soldiers reflected this emotional unity between the home front and the fields of war. The Turkish tragedy in World War I is best reflected in these few lyrics of Çanakkale Türküsü (Dardanelles Song): 'At Çanakkale I was hit; Alive they dumped me in a grave; goodbye, sweet youth, goodbye' (Zürcher 1996: 230–242). This social dimension of the mobilisation as expressed by the feeling of common destiny, the shocking self-realization of national community and the public awareness of national identity can be also seen in wartime novels written by Halide Edip, Peyami Safa, Yakup Kadri, Burhan Cahit and Ercüment Ekrem. Their common themes were the event of war, the call to arms and the feelings of anxiety of those who remained at home. In these novels, all other questions were measured against the harsh realities faced by the men at the front. The profiteers and the widespread corruption behind the front were severely condemned, and even the notion of richness was associated with moral collapse and social degeneration. Novels reflected a strong enmity against those living in luxury at the expense of the lives of others, while encouraging a sense of community among those at risk of the loss of life. Since mobilisation forced people to share scarce resources, a type of solidarity became a prevalent theme among the common people.

Antagonism between the rich and poor also gained a nationalist colour. Ömer Seyfettin, the Unionist writer, published most of his works which showed the ethnic character of accumulation in the Empire during World War I in *Yeni Mecmua* (New Journal), financed by the Committee. In his short stories, he accentuated the effects of new economic realities for the relations among nationalities. He encouraged the Muslims to become involved in the economy, and insisted on the necessity of creating a Muslim-Turkish middle class. (Ömer Seyfettin 1993 and 1999). The social divisions based on welfare were also linked to the geographical division between Anatolia and Istanbul. While Istanbul was seen as the center of corruption and degeneration, Anatolia rose as the sacred land of martyrs. The novels and the satirical journals of Istanbul, including Karagöz, Kelebek and Guleryüz, reflected this situation. The contrast between the poor people of Anatolia, who suffered from famine, insecurity, the violence of the bandits or dying at the front and the rich of Istanbul, who enjoyed life with prostitutes, were dominant themes in the journals (Georgeon 1995: 333–345).

The clash between Anatolia and Istanbul constituted a basis for one of the most important efforts of intellectual mobilisation, termed 'Halka Dogru' (To the People). Inspired by the Russian Narodniks, prominent intellectuals of the period, such as Halide Edip, Yusuf Akcura, Ahmed Agaoglu, Ziya Gökalp, Hamdullah Suphi, Ali Canip and many others, searched for 'the people' of the country. They considered Anatolia and the culture of Anatolian peasants to be the basis of Turkish nationalism. These populist intellectuals aimed at breaking the traditional alienation of Turkish intellectuals from the people by creating a romantic unity between the land and its people, and promoting the love for the fatherland in their writings. They published in two journals, namely *Turk Yurdu* (Turkish Homeland) and *Halka Dogru* (To the People) (Toprak 1984: 69–81) which were supported by CUP. The creation of a national literature and a 'simple' language that the people could understand were the central claims of this trend. Antolia was important for the ideological crystallisation among the nationalists. The 'discovery' of Anatolia marked a farewell to the Turanian dreams in Turkish nationalism. Pan-Turanian ideas based on uniting with the

Turks in Central idea became widespread among the intellectuals during the war years and fierce discussions occurred, especially in the general congress of *Turkish Heart* in 1918, between two groups of Turkish nationalists. The proximity of Anatolia provided a much more realistic basis for a nationalist ideology compared with the hypothetical racial unity of Turks distant from each other (Üstel 1993: 51–55). Anatolia as the new geography of the new Turkish nation-state and the Anatolian peasantry as the core of the Turkish nation emerged during the World War I. Not the ethnicity but the territory and the common culture were accepted as the basis of Turkish nationalism.

Turkish society faced a great cultural transformation, directed by the government but mostly as a result of the conditions of World War I. The most apparent aspect of this transformation was the situation of women in social life. The mobilisation brought women out of the household primarily as part of the work force, so they could contribute to the war effort. The extensive incorporation of women into society was an integral ideological component of the Young Turks' revolutionary project. However, the emancipation of women was the result of a social upheaval created by the war. Such a full-scale war created a continuous need of women workers. They were employed in hospitals, educational institutions, communications, transport, manufacturing, and in administrative as well as in charitable activities (Philips 1995: 247–277; Criss 2000: 45–47). The Young Turks had already initiated equal opportunities of education for women in 1908. This process culminated with the entry of women to Istanbul University in 1916. A large number of female students went abroad, especially to Germany for university education. Women gained the same rights as men regarding marriage contracts and divorce as a result of the revision of family laws in 1916. The emancipation of women is also related to the reforms in other areas such as education and religion. The reform within Constantinople University was extended in conformity with the German system, stressing the autonomy of the university and the extensive training of women. While deciding to remove the Şeyhülislam – supreme religious dignitary – from the cabinet in 1916, the government restricted his power by placing the religious courts and religious colleges under the control of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education, respectively in 1917. There were also civil associations such as 'The Society for Muslim Working Women', established in August 1916 with branches in Pera and Üsküdar aiming at finding work for women within industry. The leading role of Naciye Sultan, Enver Bey's wife, in this society was a clear sign of the Committee's involvement in integrating women into a life beyond the household. The Society regulated the working conditions of women and encouraged them to get married and form a family (Toprak 1988: 34–38).

Conclusion

The social, economic and political consequences of World War I mentioned above are each worthy of a full study. Here I only indicated that the war was a total social upheaval. What is more specific in the Turkish case is the multi-dimensional transformation of the state: from Empire to nation-state, from monarchy to republic and from a multi-ethnic population to a Turkish one. This multi-dimensional transformation can be analyzed from the angle of mobilisation. All these changes with their political, social and cultural dimensions occurred simultaneously and in the form of a crisis. World War I

occupies a central place in shaping Turkish political practice through the rise of the state as a creative, organizing and regulatory institution in social life. The state in Turkey involved itself with society and its problems under the extraordinary conditions of World War I during which the social upheaval and the effects of the war reached a self-defeating level. In addition to the collapse of state authority, the moral collapse of the society emerged as the primary task of war government. The government emerged as a social instrument to curb the social degeneration. Its intervention in regulating social relations in the name of a common good, health and security marked the birth of a modern state in Turkish political practice. From a wartime political, economic and social collapse, a modern state emerged. Although it is beyond the scope of this article, I stress that the mode of political and economic relations developed during the war shaped also the form of the state in Turkey. First of all, it prepared the way for the *étatism* of the future Turkish Republic as a prolonged form of governing economy, to cover the degenerating effects of capitalism and secure sustainable development. Later, it emerged in the form of planned development after the 1960s, with the interventionist state dominating the Turkish political scene. In addition, the Republic established after the war was the triumph of nationalism restricted to Anatolia. The sentimental unity between the home and the front became the most fundamental basis of Turkish nationalism. The romantic intellectual movement of the war years gave way to a populist doctrine, one of the constituting principles of the Turkish Republic. Finally, in Turkey society emerged as a task and the government appeared as an art in World War I. The mobilisation effort made the government face its capacity to rule and manage the country. In the turbulence of mobilisation the politics gained a content based on nationalism and sentimental unity between the front and the home. The Unionists had the mission of creating a Turkish-Muslim middle class and of consolidating the middle class values of order, security and public consciousness as the basis for the new nation-state in war. The Turkish case demonstrates that the war can not be summarised as a military affair. Rather, it is a social crisis, conditioning the transformation of the state and the mode and the mentality of governing society, economy and territory.

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Turkish Women Write War

ROBERTA MICALLEF

If the nation is an imagined community that community is profoundly gendered. National fantasies, be they colonial, anti-colonial or postcolonial also play upon and with the connections between women, land or nations.
(Loomba 1998: 215)

The first phase of feminist writing in the Middle East is associated with the movements for social reform and modernisation during the era of post-colonial state formation which spans the period between the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth centuries. Nationalism was the leading idiom through which issues pertaining to the position of women in society were articulated (Kandiyoti 1996: 8). The feminists' stake in nationalism has been both contradictory and complex (Kandiyoti 1996: 9). Theorists of nationalism have noted the tendency of nationalists to liken the nation to a family. The nation is a male-headed household in which both men and women have 'natural' roles to play. The culture of nationalism in the Middle East, as elsewhere, resonates with masculine cultural terms. Terms such as honour, patriotism, bravery and duty are linked strongly both to the nation and to masculinity (Nagel 1998: 252). The traditional war stories, especially those linked to successful wars of independence, are about extraordinarily brave, patriotic young men and as the writers for Disney's *Mulan* so succinctly state 'a girl worth fighting for'. In this essay I will examine what happens when 'the girl worth fighting for' speaks, that is when she tells her own 'war-story', by analysing two such texts by Turkish authors, one written during the first phase of feminist writing in the Middle East and the other seventy years later.

Subverting the war story

Close readings of Halide Edip Adıvar's short story 'Cennet Kızın Cinneti' (The Madness of Paradise Girl) written during the Turkish War of Independence (1919–1923) and Ayla Kutlu's 'Sen de Gitme Triyandafilis'[1] written seventy years later, provide textual evidence for my argument that women who have

[1] Although not the most literal translation the one that captures the title best I think is 'Please Don't Go Triyandafilis'.

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appropriated the right to speak subvert and complicate the myth of the nation, even as they participate in nation-building.

Adıvar and Kutlu's war stories are not traditional war stories. Both texts include female characters who do not fit into one of the five categories reserved for women participating in ethnic, national and state processes. These categories are as follows: as biological reproducers of members of the collectivity, as reproducers of the boundaries of the group, by participating centrally in the ideological collectivity and transmitting its culture, as signifiers of ethnic and national differences and as participants in national struggles (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989: 7–8; Nagel 1998: 252–253). We will return to these categories as we proceed with our textual analysis.

Halide Edip's story is set during the Turkish War of Independence, during a time when the successors to the Ottoman Empire were fighting a war of independence against European powers. Kutlu's story begins in the tumultuous period when the Sanjak of Hatay was nearing its end as a French mandate and 'rejoining the Motherland'.[2] In Kutlu's text, the cast of characters is different and the setting is not the War of Independence but the story is nevertheless very similar. In the time span between the publication of the first text (1924) and the second text (1990) examined here, Turkish women were, to use Ian Chamber's terminology, on a journey from being feudal subjects to modern citizens and and on the way to becoming full-fledged members of 'we, the nation' (Chambers 2002: 24).

Halide Edip was writing when the first feminist writers and texts were emerging in the Middle East. She created quite an uproar with her newspaper column, although not necessarily because of its contents. It caught the eye of Yakub Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, a contemporary author, intellectual and diplomat, not because of what she had written, but because she dared to publish it with a man's name attached to hers. In his memoirs of his 'youth and literature', Yakup Kadri writes that he was intrigued by this woman who for the first time ever broke the taboo of attaching a man's name to hers and publishing under Halide Salih[3]. Until then women authors published under 'hanım'.[4] Only one had previously even come close to taking a man's name by referring to herself as Nigar Bint Osman or Nigar Osman's daughter (Karaosmanoğlu, 1990: 239). Taking on a male name was to symbolically take on the male right of occupying public space. Halide chose to attach her husband's name 'Salih' to hers for her foray into the public arena. Had Nigar bint Osman dropped the bint and simply published as Nigar Osman, she would have been equally revolutionary. Halide Edip was a graduate of the American Girls' College and was hence possibly influenced by the American style of women adopting their husband's names upon marriage. In several of her novels and essays, Halide Edip Adıvar advocates the idea that the East should take from the West what it needs in terms of technology and the sciences but it should not forget its own traditions.[5] Turks were only required to take on family names after the passage of the

[2] The Sanjak of Hatay was a French mandate from 1921 to 2 September 1938. On 23 June 1939 it was ceded to the Republic of Turkey.

[3] She divorced her first husband when he decided to take on a second wife. She was unwilling to be part of a polygamous household. She eventually married Adnan Adıvar and began to publish as Halide Edip Adıvar.

[4] Hanım, means lady and was an appellation for upper-class women, the equivalent for men was Bey.

[5] For example, *The Clown and His Daughter*, one of Halide Edip's most famous novels argues that East should take aspects of the West but it should 'Easternize' them.

'family name' law in 1934, eleven years after the Republic of Turkey was established. That our author chose to replace her father's name with her husband's may also indicate a change in the vision of the family and the bonds on which it was constituted.

Ayla Kutlu published 'Sen de Gitme Triyandafilis' ten years before the Turkish parliament would finally make women completely equal to men in the eyes of the law. Much changed in terms of women's position within society in the sixty-six years that elapsed between the texts. A nationalist movement that encourages female participation in the name of national liberation often balks at feminist demands for gender equality (Nagel 1998: 253). This was also true for Turkey. In the early Republican period, it was the men and women of the emergent middle class in Turkey who constructed the social category of the family. According to this view, women are defined as the helper and adviser of the husband as head of the family. This was how marital roles were specified in the Turkish Civil Code adopted in 1926 (Sirman 2000: 174). The Republic of Turkey granted women the right to vote and serve in parliament in 1934, following the founding of the modern Republic eleven years earlier. The Turkish republic abolished the Islamic personal status laws and reshaped laws relating to family and personal status, based on the Swiss Civil Code. In the new republic, citizens were equal before the law irrespective of ethnicity or religion, but not when it came to gender. Women had access to education, equal responsibility for their children and the right to divorce their husbands for several decades, and the country's first female Prime Minister was elected in 1993. But the parliament went much further than that on 22 November 2001. On that date they decided that effective 1 January 2002, Turkish women would be considered equal to Turkish men. Over 1,030 new articles were debated during the month of November, as the last set of changes had been introduced in 1926. Some of the changes that were passed includes: Women are now men's equals in family matters. Previously, the man had been seen as the head of a family, and the woman was given no say in decisions concerning the home or children. Property and assets are divided equally in a divorce. Previously, the wife was only entitled to property legally registered under her name. Men can also file for alimony under the new law. Women are allowed to sue for divorce if their husbands commit adultery. Women are now able to obtain jobs on their own. Previously, they were required to obtain their husbands' consent. Women are now entitled to continue to use their maiden names. We shall have to see if the change in the legal position of women before the law and the process that led to it affected Kutlu's work in any discernible way.

'The Madness of Paradise Girl'

The plot takes place roughly during the same time period as it is published, shortly after the successful conclusion of the Turkish War of Independence, in 1924. The author is not looking to the past or to the future. In her work she describes the time period in which she lives. The setting is an Anatolian village situated along the banks of the Sakarya River. In the tale, the author describes her experience in this village. Instead of fiction, this story is a travel narrative.

'A madwoman whose eyes produced no tears' intrigues the author, who is visiting the village. Cennet Kız, the madwoman, had been a perfectly normal until she became a casualty of war. Two years previously, the young woman had fallen in love with Şeref, the leader of a group of eight young men from the

Kuvayı Milliye, the national forces. The villagers were very suspicious of these eight young men, especially their leader, as he demanded free food. The villagers disliked them intensely and were very angry at Cennet's mother for allowing her daughter to fall in love with this man. At the point when the war could be heard from the village, Cennet Kız's fiancé, Şeref, had to leave to fight. They never married or consummated their love. The Greeks attacked and surrounded the village and while many of the villagers managed to get away, Cennet was unable to escape. The Greeks dragged her off to their camp where they kept her for three days. The children and young men who had harassed her because of her love for Şerif, the leader of the national forces, welcomed her back to the village with spit and stones when she finally managed to escape from the Greeks. Three months later it was clear that she was pregnant, as were three other young women from the village. The latter three had their pregnancies terminated, but Cennet would not allow it. She wanted to keep her baby.

After Cennet delivered a healthy son, the villagers came to visit her mother, Pembe Nine, and demanded that she get rid of the baby or they would burn down her house and rip her daughter to pieces. Cennet's mother refused to give them the baby, but later that evening she wrapped it in a blanket and put it in the Sakarya River. Pembe Nine chose to sacrifice her grandchild to save her daughter and her home. After that, Cennet started to go to the river every night where she howled and sobbed. The villagers were so afraid of her insanity that they couldn't go near her, although they would hurt her if they had the courage to approach her. Pembe Nine's house became a prison for both mother and daughter. No one ever came to visit them. After the murder of the baby, there was never a moment of peace in that house or in that village.

'The Madness of Paradise Girl' is a short but very powerful text that demonstrates the complicated relations between marginalised groups such as the peasants in this story and the central authority, as well as relations towards another sub-category, the marginalised of the marginalised: women. According to Loomba, women on both sides of the colonial divide 'demarcate both the innermost sanctums of race, culture and nation, as well as the porous frontiers through which these are penetrated' (Loomba 1998: 159). Women are penetrable open spaces; the enemy can plant seeds in their minds or their wombs. The stranger from within the nation, the honourable soldier fighting for independence, seduced her mind. The foreigner raped her body. Her mind and her body were empty vessels, which could be and were filled. The men of the nationalist movement represented by the national forces were not there to defend Cennet Kız or the village. The men of the village were not able to defend Cennet Kız or the other three young women who were raped and impregnated by the Greek soldiers. The villagers in general were not willing to fight for any abstract ideas such as the wider nation. In this story, the villagers did not see themselves as part of the nation. They were unwilling to sacrifice their goods or their lives for a larger nationalist cause. And yet the villagers felt obliged to terminate the pregnancies and murder the one baby that was born as a result of rapes by an invading army. As long as these pregnancies and the baby boy were allowed to exist, order could not be established in the village. The consequences of the rapes made it impossible for the villagers to regain equilibrium.

The pregnancies and Cennet Kız's son were the *abject* for the villagers. The word abject itself entered Middle English from Latin in the fifteenth century. It is made up of two components: *ab* to cast off and *iacere* to throw away. The

abject is the object of primal repression, writes Kristeva in the *Power of Horror* (Kristeva 1982: 208). In this text, Kristeva is exploring how group identity is formed by excluding anything that is a threat to the group's boundaries. Kristeva is concerned mainly with the psychoanalytic dimension of the relationship between establishing subjectivity and the maternal body. The argument she establishes within her text is useful in understanding why it was so essential for the villagers to eliminate Cennet Kız's baby in order to re-establish a group identity that would allow them to function. According to Kristeva, it is not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection, but rather what disturbs identity, system and order. The abject is not just the marginalised, or that which causes discomfort. It is the pollutant that must be destroyed so that it does not contaminate everything or everyone with which it comes into contact. The analogy Kristeva gives us is that of vomit. Vomiting is an act of purging. It is an act of casting away that which disturbs the body. However, vomit can also carry the agent that causes disease. Thus, the pregnancies are terminated so that order can be re-established. The children of rape cannot be allowed to survive. Not only would their existence disturb the notions of who the group was, but if they survive, they might pollute the group in its entirety.

Ironically, the murder of Cennet Kız's baby did not restore order but rather created a new kind of rift. The presence of Cennet Kız and her madness, her constant howling by the riverbank, was a constant reminder of the horror that took place. As long as she lived, there would be no hope of order or peace. In a sense, the villagers' ordeal was doubled. Not only were they constantly reminded of their inability to protect their women but were also reminded of the fact that they had forced a grandmother to murder her grandchild. Kristeva is also concerned with taboos, in terms of why societies establish taboos and how they relate to the subjectivity of the group. A bastard conceived through violence by an invading army is a taboo, but murdering your own flesh and blood in order to re-establish order is evidently not a solution.

The story also demonstrates women's active participation in maintaining patriarchal values. The ones who terminated the other girls' pregnancies were older women. The one who murders the grandchild is the grandmother. It might have been easier to re-establish order had they murdered Cennet Kız and her baby. Even though she has misbehaved, Cennet Kız is one of their own. They cannot murder her.

In the final analysis we must ask ourselves whether we are witnessing the author's abjection rather than the villagers'. Kristeva also asks whether one writes under any other condition than being possessed by abjection, in an indefinite catharsis (Kristeva 1982: 208). Halide Edip Adıvar is narrating in first person what she has seen. The event is not one that the villagers speak of openly. Adıvar only finds out because she lies to her hostess about where she is going in order to inquire about the madwoman. Perhaps the abject – for the urban, Western-educated Halide Edip, a graduate of the American Girls' College, and a fervent nationalist – is the villagers' lack of interest in the War of Independence? The behaviour of the Greek troops toward the Turkish women and the lack of mercy for Cennet Kız and her son add to the author's sense of abjection.

'The Madness of Paradise Girl' is not the usual nationalist heroic tale sprinkled with the atrocities committed by invading forces. The locals are as brutal as the foreigners toward these women, and these particular locals are not particularly patriotic or heroic. They run from the foreign forces and leave the

women vulnerable, and then they persecute the already victimised young women. The only man presented as an individual is *Şeref bey*, the leader of the national forces. He is characterised as a handsome, honourable man, while men in groups are despicable, whether old, young, Greek or Turkish. In this text the goals for the future are left unsaid. While class struggles are not at the forefront, the narrator's distaste for the peasants indicates some class conflict. The villagers' lack of nationalist sentiment indicates that work will have to be done by the State in order to incorporate everyone into the newly imagined community. In this story, gender is clearly central and yet class and education complicate gender issues. The victim – the madwoman – is female, as is doubly emphasised by her name *Paradise Girl,* that in and of itself denies that she ever became a mother. If she had, she would have been transformed into *Paradise Woman*. Cennet Kız was an individual who broke away from the group. She made her own decisions regarding the national forces. She made an autonomous decision regarding her child, but she paid a terrible price for that decision.

'Please Don't Go Triyandafilis'

Please Don't Go Triyandafilis won the prestigious Sait Faik short story award in 1990 in Turkey, and was made into a feature film that won several national and international awards. It begins at the end of the French mandate period in what is today Hatay. 'Antuvan', a poor Greek boy, marries Teodora, the daughter of a rich, well-established family from the Antakya Greek community. Teodora and Antuvan have four children. Triyandafilis, their second oldest daughter, is retarded but extremely beautiful. Antuvan becomes extremely wealthy because of his business dealings with the French. Antuvan is frequently away on business, but he and Teodora love their children, especially Triyandafilis. Triyandafilis is also the servants' favourite and is especially the favourite of their Turkish servants' Sultan, who is her primary caretaker, and her deaf husband. Triyandafilis cannot be trusted, so she is a virtual prisoner in her home. All doors and windows are locked to keep her from escaping. However, she falls in love with a French soldier who, awed by her beauty, mistakes her retardation for lack of language ability.

As the French are leaving, the family decides that for their own safety they must also leave. Amidst the chaos of their departure, Triyafandilis manages to escape and goes looking for her French soldier. The family is distraught but they have no choice, they must leave. They try to find her before they leave. In desperation, after they have left, they enlist the help of the Greek community from afar but to no avail. One day she shows up in her old neighbourhood, dirty, semi-starved and with a terrible tale of what has happened to her. (Sultan and her husband are suffering; they have no work and they continue to live in the old house which is now decrepit and falling apart.) Triyandafilis was first abused by a group of soldiers who were supposed to take her to her lover. Then a driver who picked her up and sold her as a prostitute abused her. While going from village to village, she was abused whenever she tried to escape. At last she managed to escape and find her way home. Sultan and her husband take on extra work to be able to feed her and take good care of her. The three live happily until Sultan's husband dies. Then three young men move into the neighbourhood, and one day Sultan comes home and Triyandafilis is gone. Triyandafilis has found a partner in a young man, Rıfat, who moves in with them, and once again they form a happy family. Rıfat works hard and provides

well for the ladies. Then he, too, is called to war. Before Rıfat leaves, he wants to know why they can't have children. Sultan has aborted their baby because she fears that it, too, may be retarded. Rıfat leaves to fight in Korea. He has no idea where it is, or why he is going. He is only following orders. Triyandafilis realises what is going on and is heartbroken. Eventually Sultan dies and the neighbours remove her. Again Triyandafilis is heartbroken. She goes to the waterfront and works on the fishermen's nets. The neighbours and the fishermen give her food. She haunts the neighbourhood at night. She follows young men wearing military uniforms whispering in French *ne part pas*. They don't understand what she is saying. They call her the angel of death. One night a drunken soldier figures out what she is saying and shouts after her, *sen de gitme*…('you too don't go!').

The war story seventy years later

These two texts have a great deal in common, and yet their differences are as striking as their similarities. The first text we dealt with, 'The Madness of Paradise Girl', is a war story, however unusual, because it narrates events taking place during the Turkish War of Independence. Our second text 'Please Don't Go Triyandafilis' is touched by many wars, but most of the story is about the retreat of the French from Hatay at the end of the Mandate, and the encapsulation of Hatay into the Republic of Turkey. Large groups of armed men, organised along the lines of different military constellations, are travelling around the district. The chaos and upheaval is similar to that of a war. In an interview, Ayla Kutlu stated that this particular story is about the horrors inflicted upon innocent bystanders by war. In this case, the innocence of the main character is made absolute by her child-like mental state. She must be excused for any mistakes she makes, for she cannot comprehend the consequences of her decisions. She is so innocent that she trusts everyone and anyone. Thus the author has told us what she considers to be abject, and the text reflects her sense of abjection. The way Triyandafilis is treated during the period of upheaval and chaos is truly horrifying. In this context, the abject is not something concrete but rather the idea that the group the author belongs to could behave in such a way. The group does not have to be a national or ethnic one, only human. For this author, one must abject this violence that is unleashed against women and the innocent during conditions of military upheaval.

Here the men who are supposedly fighting to protect these women are also victimising them. In both texts, older women keep the younger women alive. In the first case, it is the girl's mother and in the second case, a surrogate mother. And yet in both cases, the older women eliminate the offspring. In the case of Cennet Kız, the child is born and then murdered by the protagonist's mother and in the second case, Sultan aborts Triyandafilis' baby. Sultan does not seek either parent's consent, although the protagonist is finally married to a nice, honourable young man who would make a good father. Thus, neither protagonist is allowed to be a reproducer of the culture or a transmitter of its ideology, at least through reproduction. Triyandafilis is not allowed to become the mother of the nation, but the nation is moving forward and becoming more unified. Over time, Triyandafilis becomes *Filiz*. Her name is transformed and made more Turkish just as a more homogeneous and confident Turkish identity emerges.

Unlike Cennet Kız, Triyandafilis' story develops along normal lines. Her life, like most peoples' lives, has good moments and bad moments. She has happy experiences and sad experiences. Once peace and order is established in society, people of different ethnicities are able to live side by side. People revert to being helpful to each other. When Sultan dies and her husband has gone off to the war, Triyandafilis receives food from her neighbours. She mends nets for the fishermen who simply pay her for her work and don't bother her. Perhaps because she is writing decades after the incidents themselves, when the Republic was well established, Kutlu is able to also give us the image of society at peace. She is able to take her protagonist from being a victim and bring her to a point where Kutlu says in an interview: 'Triyandafilis enjoyed the happiness and honor of being a woman' (Kutlu 2000: 217).

Triyandafilis is not involved in an ethnic or nationalist struggle, because she is too 'simple-minded' to understand what is going on and to consciously participate on behalf of one side or the other. She is an ethnic Greek, but more importantly, she is an innocent by-stander victimised by the particular historical circumstances that are taking place around her. The author in no way links Triyandafilis' experiences with her ethnicity. She is not victimised because she is a Greek but rather because she can be victimised. There is no structure in place to protect the innocent.

From Adıvar to Kutlu: change and continuity

According to both Adıvar and Kutlu, war unleashes evil that victimises everyone, including the innocent bystander or the non-combatants in contemporary terminology. Both Kutlu and Adıvar challenge the traditional war story, in that those who are fighting to protect the innocent are also victimising the innocent. Their protagonists do not fit within the categories offered to women by those involved in ethnic or national struggles. The myth of the nation as a 'natural and eternal' being is often constructed around such struggles. That Kutlu is writing at a time when the nation is more unified and women have a more equal role in society is evidenced by the many strong, independent female characters present in her story. This can also be seen from the changed role given to the Greeks. In the first story, the Greeks are the enemy and in the second story they, too, are the victims of chaos. At the end of the French mandate in contemporary Syria, the Greeks were not fighting the Turks - the French were evacuating their mandate. Unlike some of the other ethnic groups in the region, the Greeks had an independent homeland to which they could return, or to which they could be sent if necessary. They were not a threat to the integrity of the borders of the Republic.

Both texts deal with moments of great chaos in the region providing the backdrop for their narratives. Both texts deal with sexualised violence against women. While violence against women in the sphere of the home has often been considered a 'family' affair in both the West and the Middle East, organised political violence against 'defenceless' women and children has been considered particularly repellent (Rabo 1996: 173). Our authors are not exploiting these notions to elicit undue sympathy for their protagonists. Rather, both Kutlu and Adıvar are demonstrating what happens to women, real women, as opposed to women used as symbols in situations of war.

We may find our answer in a closer examination of the afore-mentioned five categories reserved for women participating in ethnic, national and state

processes. The first category is the role of the biological reproducer of the collectivity. While both protagonists did get pregnant and were capable of biological reproduction, their offspring were terminated. Neither woman was allowed to fulfill the role indicated by this category. In the case of Cennet Kız, the father of the offspring, being an unknown enemy soldier, disqualifies the child from being a member of the collectivity. In the case of Triyandafilis, the mother's retardation disqualifies her as a mother, at least in the eyes of Sultan.

The women can only act as boundaries of the group in terms of boundaries that have been violated, boundaries that are porous. They are not boundaries that stop any infiltration. Cennet Kız was violated by the Greeks. Her real crime was not that she was violated by the Greeks, but that in the first place she allowed Şeref's ideas to seduce her and in the second place that she did not reject her baby. That she could grow attached to and love something implanted by the enemy, even if it was also her own flesh and blood, was unthinkable. Rather than demonstrating a notion of boundary, Cennet Kız showed that women could not be relied upon to maintain boundaries. Triyandafilis was not capable of understanding what was happening around her. What was important to her was not boundaries formed by ethnic or national identities, but loyalty to those who loved her and took good care of her. She was loyal and devoted to her servants. She was also devoted to her Turkish husband. Their ethnic or religious identities were irrelevant to Triyandafilis. What was important was her relationship with individuals as individuals, not as representatives of groups based on religious or ethno-national identities. Cennet Kız got into trouble because she did not participate centrally in the ideological collectivity and transmission of its culture, our third category. In fact, it was because she was more interested in participating in the collectivity that would become the nation rather than the village that she got into trouble in the first place. It was her interest in the representatives of the national forces and their ideas which first offends the villagers. By the end of the, text she could not transmit ideology, since she had been reduced to the state of an animal. Neither woman belonged to the clearly defined collectivity where she lived. That Cennet does not have a father and that Triyandafilis is not from the dominant ethnic group in the region means that when their respective ethnic group leaves the area they remain in a vacuum.

Neither 'The Madness of Paradise Girl' nor 'Please Don't Go Triyandafilis' emphasise the role of either woman as a signifier of ethnic or national difference. Both texts emphasise the many levels at which women can be brutalised because they are women rather than simply because they are of a different ethnic or national group. The murder of her baby renders Cennet Kız totally insane; her insanity is not the result of her rape by members of another national group. That Triyandafilis is not of the dominant ethnicity in the region only emphasises the fact that multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies can function quite well if they are based on humanity, with the members of the different ethnic groups caring for each other.

Another issue that we set out to examine is the progress of women as citizens of 'we, the nation'. We have already discussed the changes in the legal framework, but are the differences reflected in the tales themselves? It is clear that there is no nation or dominant state in the first text. Cennet Kız belongs to a village; at that point the State or the Nation is still a vague and distant entity that in 1924 does not have a bearing on the lives of these particular villagers. In 1924, the urban educated women of Istanbul were writing poetry to the women

of Anatolia as if they belonged to two completely different nation-states. In Kutlu's text, she can look past the chaos of the end of the mandate period and describe a peaceful, happy existence for this retarded and innocent young woman who becomes a member of the nation-state. Even she who cannot take care of herself can exist without a caretaker, without being molested, in this new nation-state where she does not, one might argue, organically belong, since she is neither a Turk nor a Muslim. One might argue that she does belong simply because her family was part of the landscape, regardless.

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A Brief Survey of Turkish–Iranian Relations during the Second Half of the 1990s

ÖZDEN ZEYNEP OKTAV

Introduction

Turkey and Iran have been at loggerheads for years over a wide range of issues. Among these are the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, Turkey's growing cooperation with Israel, the two states' competition over access to Central Asian oil, Iranian support for Turkish Islamists and the PKK's (*Partiya Karkerana Kurdistan* – Kurdish Workers' Party) Kurdish separatism. But if we analyse the history of the relationship between Iran and Turkey, we see that the two nations have had a long history of both competition and cooperation.

Following the 1979 Iranian revolution, mutual economic interests served as a factor of compromise in bilateral relations, while the secular–religious divide in the respective regimes caused friction and mutual distrust. According to many analysts, a much more serious factor was that the two countries differed fundamentally in one aspect: Turkey was always apprehensive about the spread of Soviet influence and favoured the maintenance of the *status quo*. The revolutionaries of Iran, on the other hand, objecting to Turkish anti-Islamic secular nationalism, had revisionist aspirations. The unity of Muslims and the establishment of Islamic states became the driving force of Iranian foreign policy. The main area of friction was Turkey's Western orientation. Turkey's eagerness to be considered Western was a divisive factor in relations between the two countries.

In particular, Ankara believed that close economic relations had a higher priority for Turkish interests than political conflicts, and opposed the isolation of Iran both economically and politically on many occasions. Turkey refused, for example, to abide by the US sanctions against Iran in the wake of the embassy crisis. This refusal was motivated by promises from Tehran of future extensive Iranian economic cooperation (Barkey 1995: 152). Ankara also removed visa requirements in 1979, and a joint Turkish–Iranian security commission was established in 1992 to consider the security interests of both sides (Robins 1997: 91). Even during the most tense period, for example,

The Role of the State in West Asia, ed. Annika Rabo and Bo Utas, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, Transactions, vol. 14 (Stockholm, 2005), pp. 37–48.

when the Iranians bombed a Turkish frontier post in 1996, resulting in the death of five Turkish soldiers, Ankara followed the appeasement policy.[1]

This article focuses on Turkish–Iranian relations during the second half of the 1990s with a special emphasis on issues such as the ideological divergence between both regimes and the Kurdish separatism, which simultaneously mirror the conflict between the Islamic political activists and elite circles (bureaucracy and the military) in Turkey. In addition, the reasons for the great shift in current relations between Turkey and Iran, where changes in domestic politics directly affect the bilateral relations of the two countries, are of concern for this study.

Ideological rifts and the Kurdish question

Although Iran and Turkey tried to present a self-confident image of unity to the outside world, each perceived the other regime as a threat to its own existence. The establishment of the Islamic Republic next door allowed the long-buried issue of Islamic fundamentalism also to surface in Turkey. Similarly, the Iranian leadership viewed Turkey as a potential agent of American and Israeli ambitions to weaken, contain and if necessary, overthrow the Islamic government in Tehran.

The above-mentioned mutual distrust was due to the fact that the Turks had turned towards the West beginning with the period of the Ottoman Empire. The founders of the Republic (established in 1923) initiated radical, social and cultural changes in Turkey, with the major goal being the secularisation of polity and society. These social and cultural changes did have a significant impact on the identity of the Turks. Being a Muslim was no longer an essential dimension of their identity. As Heper (2002)[2] noted, many people resorted to religion when they sensed a feeling of alienation. The religiously oriented parties such as the National Order Party – Milli Nizam Partisi/MNP (1970–1971), the National Salvation Party – Milli Selamet Partisi/MSP (1973–1980), the Welfare Party – Refah Partisi/RP (1983–1997) and the Virtue Party – Fazilet Partisi (1997–2001) did not openly state that they would promote Shari'a rule in Turkey, but most of them did have an orthodox faction whose ideas were perceived as incompatible with the principals of secularism by Turkish official circles (bureaucracy and the military establishment). Therefore, these parties were not allowed to survive. That the first three parties mentioned above (MNP, MSP and RP) were banned by military interventions indicates that the Turkish military rather than the political–civil authorities took over the role of protecting the secular structure of Turkey.

In addition to political Islam, ethnic nationalism has also been considered a critical threat to the internal and external security of Turkey by the military establishment since the foundation of the Republic. During the 1990s, however, the rising tide of Islam and the Kurdish separatism prompted the military establishment to enlarge its *de facto* and *de jure* authority vis-à-vis the political–civil authorities in Turkey's foreign and security policies (Özcan and

[1] *Milliyet*, 'Iran'la İlişkilere Devam', 12 April 1996.

[2] 'In the Republican period, Islam in Turkey evinced strong signs of the Durkheimian version of religiosity. Islam was perceived as a source of moral principles. This was the original motive for establishing religiously oriented parties in Turkey.'

Bengio 2001: 27–28).[3] Uneasy relations with Iran during the 1990s simultaneously revealed the conflict within the military and the civilian cadres in the Turkish administration.

With their success in the 1983 elections, the cadres of the Motherland party (ANAP), who adhered to an eclectic mix of economic liberalism and cultural conservatism, initiated a new era in Turkish political life. These cadres, of whom the religious right composed a sizeable component, increased Islamic influence and paved the way to the accession of the Islamist 'Welfare Party' to power in July 1996. The initiatives of the Islamist Prime Minister Erbakan in foreign policy, which included restoring rapprochement between Turkey and other Muslim countries, set off alarm bells among Turkish officials, especially the Turkish military. For example, Erbakan paid his first foreign visit to Iran, and during this visit he declared that Iran and Syria did not actively support the PKK, despite intelligence reports from the Turkish National Intelligence Service to the contrary.[4]

The Islamist members of the Welfare–True Path coalition government were accused by the Turkish military of not only trying to fuse Turkey and Iran into a single Islamic state by collaborating with Iranian ayatollahs, but of also being in collusion with Iran regarding Turkey's war with the PKK's Kurdish separatism movement. During one of the most important Turkish military operations in northern Iraq in 1997, although Iranian officials were given information about the operation beforehand, Tehran did not take measures against PKK militants escaping over the Iranian frontier (Özcan and Bengio 2001: 27–28).

Paralleling the negative attitude of the Tehran government, the Islamist Prime Minister Erbakan's objection to the appropriation of an amount of money for the above-mentioned operation, and his reluctance to give a diplomatic note to Iran, evoked the Turkish military's suspicion regarding the cooperation between Iran and the Islamist members of the government.[5] For security reasons, the military had refrained from giving Prime Minister Erbakan early information about the timing and scope of the operation (Özcan and Bengio 2001: 27–28). The above-mentioned event also strengthened the contention of the Turkish military that Iran was attempting to influence Turkish domestic affairs.

From the outset, Tehran made no attempt to hide its displeasure at Turkey's secular regime. During state visits, for instance, Iranian officials refused to visit Atatürk's mausoleum. Furthermore, the allegations that the murders of some prominent Turkish intellectuals were carried out by Iranian-supported organisations such as the Islamist Action Organisation[6] in 1996 and the

[3] 'The military's strong position within the state bureaucracy is derived first from its unchallenged position within the National Security Council (NSC – Milli Güvenlik Konseyi). When this body was first established in 1949, it only had advisory powers. However, after each of the three military takeovers, in 1960, 1971, and 1980, the NSC's powers were enlarged incrementally, so that by the 1990s, it became the most important forum for formulating and implementing security and foreign policies.'

[4] *Cumhuriyet*, 'Dış Politikada Skandal', 19 August 1996 and *Hürriyet*, 'Hoca'nın MIT Gafı', 18 August 1996.

[5] The military's suspicions were strengthened by foreign minister Abdullah Gül's statement. He declared that they were in cooperation with Iran in fighting against terrorism when he was asked about the report revealing Iran's support for the PKK's separatism (*Cumhuriyet*, 'Gül'den Iran'a Dolaylı Destek', 13 March 1997).

[6] 'The confession of the leader of the Islamist Action Organisation, Irfan Çağrıcı, stating that he and his friends had been backed financially by four Iranian diplomats for the murder of Turkish

Jerusalem Warriors Organisation in 2000[7] exacerbated existing relations with Iran.

On several occasions, Iranian diplomats who intervened in Turkish domestic policies by taking part in street demonstrations against the policy of banning the wearing of headscarves in 1990 (Gürkan 1993: 73) were declared *persona non grata* by the Turkish government, and expelled. During the meeting termed 'A night for Jerusalem', which was held by the mayor of Sincan (a district of Ankara) whose municipality under the Welfare Party, the Iranian ambassador to Ankara, Muhammad Rıza Bagheri, indicated that 'those who sign agreements with the United States and Israel will, sooner or later, be penalised by the youth of Turkey.[8] Bagheri's speech resulted in his expulsion, and prompted the Turkish military to submit a text with eighteen points of recommendations to the government during the National Security Council meeting in 28 February 1997.[9] This led to the resignation of the coalition government in June 1997.[10]

Similar incidents taking place in 1993 and 1994 indicated that Turkish diplomacy towards Iran was a vicious circle: after every major crisis, representatives were expelled bilaterally, then, depending on the severity of the crisis, both parties later decided to once again resume their diplomatic relations on the ambassadorial level (Aras 2001: 2). In other words, Turkey and Iran did not have the luxury of turning their backs on each other. From Turkey's point of view, the reasons for this are as follows:

First of all, since Turkey broke diplomatic relations with Armenia, the Iranian territories serve as a gateway to Central Asia. Secondly, Iran is of vital importance in helping Turkey cope with its energy shortage. Thirdly, there is a large volume of trade between both countries. Fourthly, Ankara, whose relations with its two neighbours, Syria and Greece, were problematic throughout the 1990s, did not want to mar its relations with Tehran. In addition, damaging relations with Iran would weaken Turkey's hand in struggling with the PKK's separatism, and would trigger a rapprochement between the PKK and Iran.

Khatemi's period

After Khatemi came to power in 1997, Ankara was very optimistic, because Khatemi gave the impression that he would control the revisionist aspirations in Iranian foreign policy towards Turkey. However, it soon became apparent to Turkey that the existing issues between both countries would not come to an end. From the point of view of Turkey, Khatemi's presidency was first of

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journalists and intellectuals such as Çetin Emeç and Turan Dursun had also caused tension in relations in 1996'(*Cumhuriyet*, 'Parayı Iran'dan Aldık', 10 March 1996).

[7] 'Ferhan Özmen, one of the leaders of the Jerusalem Warriors, and those arrested, confessed that they had received training and support from operatives and agents of the Iranian intelligence in the Jerusalem Warriors Organisation (*Cumhuriyet*, 'Emirleri Iran Verdi', 20 May 2000). 'With the arrest of the members of the Hezbollah by the Turkish Intelligence Service in Istanbul and in the eastern parts of Turkey in January 2000, Iran's support for Hezbollah came to Turkey's attention, and created tension in terms of its bilateral relations with Iran'(Çetinsaya 2002: 46).

[8] *Hürriyet*, 'Tepki Yağıyor', 3 February 1997 and *Hürriyet*, 'Tahrik Bitmiyor', 4 February 1997.

[9] For the text containing these eighteen points, see *Turkish Daily News*, 'Government Due to Receive MGK (National Security Council) Recommendations Today', 3 March 1997.

[10] For further information, see Özcan 1998.

all a liberal facade for the fundamentalist regime, while the real power in Iran was held not by the liberal Khatemi but by the ayatollahs, who took quite a different view of the country's future and its relationship with the outside world. Secondly, Iran continued to view Turkey as a 'Westoxicated' regime, subservient to the United States, and denounced Turkey's extensive cooperation with Israel on security issues such as manœuvres and joint military exercises in Turkish airspace, thus helping Israel reach the edge of the Iranian border. In addition, from Tehran's point of view, Turkey was harbouring Iranian dissidents and instigating activities by anti-clerical groups in Iran.

Turkey did not hesitate to interfere in Iran's domestic affairs, while at the same time it repeatedly complained about Iran's interference in Turkey's domestic issues. For example, the Turkish Prime Minister, Ecevit, labelled the student demonstrations in Iran as 'a natural reaction against an outdated regime of oppression'[11]. Ecevit's declaration was, in actual fact, a retaliation against the Iranian women's protest against the Turkish parliament's attitude concerning a Turkish female Islamist deputy who wanted to enter Parliament wearing a headscarf in 1999.[12] In addition, throughout Khatemi's period, Turkey's asking[13] for the right of hot pursuit[14] continued to create friction between the two countries. For example, in 1999 Turkey and Iran came to the brink of war when two Turkish soldiers were taken prisoner on the grounds that they had crossed the border.[15]

Towards the expiration of Khatemi's first four years of office, Turkey was restless about the fact that bilateral relations showed little progress. The existing problems such as the Iranian logistic support for the Kurdish guerrillas and ineffective security mechanism were not yet settled However, the changing security perceptions of both countries and the mutual interests have urged Tehran and Ankara to adopt a more pragmatic approach in bilateral relations. First of all, the main change in Iranian foreign policy since the 1997 presidential elections has been that a section of Iran's leadership, known as the moderate faction, has tried to improve Iran's image and to focus on other priorities like democratisation and rational state building.[16]

In other words, Iran has realised that its revisionist policies have led to its isolation in the international arena since it had no alliance system in its

[11] 'In the student demonstrations – the biggest opposition demonstrations since the 1978-1979 Iranian Revolution – hundreds of students gathered at Tehran University to protest the closure of the liberal newspaper Salam. They were attacked by police and by members of an Islamic fundamentalist militia, Ansa-e Hezbollah.' Martim Mc Laughlin, 'Mass Protests and Repression in Iran', World Social Web Site, www.wsws.org, 14 July 1999.

[12] *Cumhuriyet*, 'Iran Türkiye'yi Suçladı', 19 July 1999.

[13] *Cumhuriyet*, 'Türkiye'den İşbirliği Önerisi', 28 July 1999 and *Focus*, 'Turkey Wants More Iranian Help against the PKK', 28 July 1999.

[14] 'The hot-pursuit concept is one of the universally recognized rules of Customary International Law. Originally, it dealt with the legal use of warships in pursuit of alien merchant ships that committed crime in international waters. The hot pursuit type of actions across the political borders are normally conducted on the basis of previously concluded accords or with the consent and permission of the neighbouring country. Turkey, to be able to prevent Kurdish guerrillas' infiltration from Iranian territory, tried to provide Iranian permission for Turkish military operations in form of "hot pursuit"'(Gürkan 1998–99: 29).

[15] 'On 9 August 1999, Iran turned over the two captured soldiers to Turkey' (Olson 2001: 880).

[16] 'Iranians want a regime that corrects the imbalance among the three elements in the country's identity – nationalism, Islam and modernity – by restoring nationalist pride and embracing modernity', Wilfried Buchta, 'The Power Struggle in Iran: Is Peaceful Reform Possible?', *Policy Watch*, 16 December 1999.

regional security. Iran was, however, a candidate for a counter alliance, since it was one of the countries who felt most threatened by the Turkish–Israeli strategic alliance. It could not realise such a concerted move with countries such as Syria, Iraq and Egypt because of mutual distrust (Bengio and Özcan 2001: 80). The Turkish–Israeli strategic cooperation has played an important role in the realisation of the great shift in Iranian foreign policy (Sariolghalam 2001: 14). Tehran has perceived the strategic agreement as a new conspiracy of the US government, specifically and as leverage to force it to terminate its support of anti-Israeli groups, to halt its nuclear program and to stop the development or procurement of long-range missiles. Khatemi, thus, has tried to build bridges especially with the European Union countries.[17] The transition from an ideologically-based foreign policy to one fundamentally founded on national interest came to the fore in the latter part of the 1990s. Government-to-government relations and economic integration, especially with Western countries, have been the main characteristics of the newly formulated Iranian foreign policy.

Khatemi toned down Iran's opposition to the Israeli–Palestinian peace process, and took steps to halt the murder of Iranian dissidents abroad. In spite of the fact that he has not responded positively to the many US gestures toward better relations since 1998, his administration has changed Iran's perspective on the world. Khatemi's mild rhetoric, such as 'dialogue among civilizations'[18] and 'thoughtful dialogue'[19], initiated a new era in Tehran's relations with Washington, and it reinforced the hopes that the existing conflict between Iran and the USA would be solved. However, the above-mentioned developments did not suffice for Tehran to not be included in the 'axis of evil' together with Iraq and North Korea in February 2002. Seen from a different angle, few things have changed within Iranian foreign policy since Khatemi came to power. When it comes to the legitimacy of Washington's anti-terrorism campaign and the Israel–Palestinian conflict, both the hard-liners and the reformists share the same rhetoric.[20]

Competition and cooperation

Ankara has been aware that Tehran, caught in an uneasy position after the 11 September terrorist attack, faces serious security threats on several borders. To the east is Afghanistan, the political stability of which has not yet been

[17] 'Khatemi visited the Pope in April 1999, Italy's Prime Minister Romano Prodi visited Tehran and an Italian bank extended a 1.2 billion credit line to Iranian banks'. *Milliyet*, 'İnançlar Vatikan'da El sıkıştı', 11 March 1999 and *The Economist*, 'Reaching Out If He Can', 8 August 1998. 'In addition, European Union countries agreed to negotiate closer trade and political ties with Iran at a time when the US president accused Iran of being a part of 'axis of evil', *The Economist*, 'Coaxing Iran', 18 June 2002, www.economist.com/agenda/printerfriendly.crm/story_ID=1188055.

[18] Ray Takeyh, 'What Has Impeded Progress In US–Iran Relations?', *PolicyWatch*, 12 January 2001.

[19] 'In an extraordinary televised interview, Khatemi declared solidarity with the essence of American civilisation and expressed regret for the 1979 hostage-taking that began Iran's Islamic revolution. And his hopes for a thoughtful dialogue with the great people of the US', *Washington Post*, 'Iranian Leader Urges Exchanges with US', 8 January 1998.

[20] 'The disagreement on the definition of terrorism and that Tehran did not recognize the legitimacy of Washington's anti-terrorism campaign on the grounds that it does not include the kind occurring in Palestine have been sources of conflict between Iran and the US', *Iran Report*, 'Iran Rejects Terrorism Label', 7 May 2001.

restored; to the west is Iraq, sponsoring the People's Mojahedeen, whose members have carried out numerous attacks inside Iran; while the Armenian–Azerbaijani conflict flares on Iran's northwest border.[21] Iran is thus in no position to confront Turkey. In addition, Turkey has been aware that Iran has an important minority problem. Much of this minority consists of Azeris and Turkomans. The Turkish general staff, in its retaliation action plan of 1997,[22] openly declared that it would support the Azeri organisations as long as Iran continued supporting Kurdish separatists in order to weaken Turkey economically and politically.[23] Turkish–Iranian competition over Azerbaijan was revealed during the July crisis between Tehran and Baku in 2001, when an Iranian military aircraft flew over an Azerbaijani survey ship, resulting in an Iranian naval vessel forcing the ship to leave Caspian waters, which Tehran claims as its own.[24] After a diplomatic note to the Iranian ambassador in Ankara, the chief of General Staff, General Kıvrıkoğlu, attended the graduation ceremony at the Land Forces military academy in Azerbaijan, where some of the instructors were Turks.[25] The visit of the US Under-Secretary of State Elizabeth Jones to Baku, and her offer to support Azerbaijan in its dispute with Iran[26], indicated that the USA was attempting to extricate former Soviet Republics such as Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan from the Iranian and Russian sphere of influence.

The Baku–Ceyhan pipeline, which will link Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey under the aegis of the USA, engendered strong rhetorical opposition on the part of Iran and Russia, who came to see the Baku–Ceyhan as a strategic element in an American plot to dominate the region and exclude them. Turkey's relations with Iran are not, however, monolithic. While the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan is a source of competition between Turkey and Iran, Iran began natural gas exports to Turkey via a 2,557 kilometre (1598 mile) pipeline as part of a $30 billion project in January 2002.[27] Curiously enough, although Turkey has always been a close ally of the USA, Ankara has never favoured the containment policy of Washington. Instead, Ankara has stated its enthusiasm for a transit trade, which would enable Iran to reach the European Union via Turkey, and Turkey to reach Central Asia via Iran.[28]

Much more crucial is that the two countries' refusal of a forcible change of regime in Iraq by an American military attack, which they believe will lead to the foundation of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq, has brought the two

[21] *Cumhuriyet*, 'Ekonomik Yaptırım ve Azeri Kozu', 9 June 1997.

[22] 'In accordance with this plan, Turkey would warn Tehran after every attempt to mar the relations and if it remained indifferent towards Turkey's claims, Ankara would retaliate in the same way. In case of Iran's insistence on following its policies, Ankara would break off its economic relations with Iran', *Cumhuriyet*, 'Iran'a Misilleme Politikası', 2 May 1997.

[23] *Cumhuriyet*, 'Ekonomik Yaptırım ve Azeri Kozu', 9 June 1997.

[24] 'Iran defines the Caspian as a lake, meaning that its resources should be shared equally between the five littoral states under international law. Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, which have the biggest offshore oil fields, say it is a sea, which would pave the way for its division into five national zones.',
The Economist, 'Pipe Dreams?', 12 April 2001,
www.economist.com/agenda/displaystory.crm/story_ID=568959

[25] *Iran Report*, 'Ankara Knows How to Deal with Tehran', 3 September 2001, volume 4, number 33.

[26] *BBC News*, 'US Backs Azeris in Iran Border Row', 27 August 2001, http://news.bbc.co.uk/hı/english/world/middle_east/newsid_1511000/1511684.stm

[27] *Turkish Daily News*, 'Sezer: No One Prevents Improvement of Turkish–Iranian Ties', 19 June 2002.

[28] *Cumhuriyet*, 'Ankara'dan Tahran'a Mesaj: Liberalleşin', 12 February 2001.

countries closer. It has overshadowed other existing disputes between Iran and Turkey. Iran, which for many years paid only lip service to Turkey's fight against Kurdish separatism, never supported the foundation of a Kurdish state and never favoured the disintegration of Iraq. In addition, Ankara wanted to strengthen its ties with the Iranian administration at a time when the PKK, in an effort to be recognised as a political organisation of Kurds living in Turkey, changed its name to 'the Congress for Freedom and Democracy in Kurdistan' in April 2002.[29]

Looking back over the centuries, regardless of the changing regimes or ideologies of both countries, a tradition of coexistence developed which stemmed from the two countries' realisation that restraint served their interests (Gunter1998: 5). This tradition prompts Turkey and Iran to cooperate in a variety of ways. The two countries held an *ad hoc* series of tripartite conferences with Syria beginning in 1992 to prevent a Kurdish state from forming in northern Iraq. They also established a joint security committee through which they exchanged information, carried out inspections relating to border security, and during Khatemi's period, agreed on the necessity of fighting against terrorism in northern Iraq.[30]

Apart from the changing security perceptions mentioned above, the changing domestic dynamics in respective regimes also brought the two countries closer. Together with the student demonstrations protesting the pressure on the press in 1999, the landslide victory of Khatemi during the 2001 elections, which was perceived as a boost for him in the power struggle against the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has revealed that Iranian policy has undergone a dramatic change. The 2001 elections, exceeding even the first stunning triumph in 1997, indicated that an ever-larger number of people have opposed the arbitrary arrests, unfair trials and the imprisonment and dismissal of reformist ministers, journalists and student leaders (Hirst 2001; Abootalebi 2001: 14). Despite the obstructionism of the conservatives, Khatemi and the reformist followers have tried to speed up a liberalisation of the regime as well as of the heavily state-controlled economy with patience, moderation and prudence.

In Turkey the desire of the Turkish people for more integration into the world, further economic development and political reconciliation have given an impetus to the moderation of the radical discourse adopted by the Islamist parties throughout the 1990s. The leader of the Islamist party, Justice and Development Party (JDP) R. Tayyip Erdoğan declared his intention to speed up Turkey's integration into the European Union. His pledge to uphold secularism has indicated the JDP's willingness to create a centre-right party image, and has increased its credibility in the eyes of a majority of Turkish people who intertwined Islamic values with their attachment to Kemalist symbols. 'The surprise victory of the JDP is less indicative of a desire on the part of the Turkish electorate to install an Islamic party in power than of a desire to punish the traditional parties which formerly governed Turkey and are responsible for the sorry state of the economy and the corruption' (Sis-Ahmed 2002).

[29] *Turkish Daily News*, 'Sezer: No One Prevents Improvement of Turkish–Iranian Ties', 19 June 2002.

[30] *Cumhuriyet*, 'Üçlü Toplantıyı Canlandırma Girişimleri', 3 February 1999 and *Hürriyet*, 'Türkiye ile Diyalog Koşulları Hazır', 1 February 1998.

Ankara has been aware of Khatemi's and the reformers' powerlessness and lack of a full-fledged democracy in Iran. Pointing to the fact that Iran is a society immersed in a dynamic debate regarding the essence and direction of the Islamic republic, Ankara tries to enhance bilateral relations especially with the reformist wing of the Iranian administration. For example, during his visit to Iran in 2002, the Turkish President A. Necdet Sezer declined meeting with Iran's religious leader Ali Khamanei.[31]

Iran and Turkey are the two countries of crucial importance in the region, where democracy is maturing to various degrees within different regimes. It should, however, be borne in mind that the regime in Iran, where the Revolutionary Guards are not merely a military force but rather an ideological and political phenomenon, needs a revisionist, anti-American stance to legitimise its existence. The main divergence between the two sides is that Ankara's prioritises the peaceful coexistence of the Arabs and Israelis while Tehran, from an ideological point of view, considers the latter as a rival. During the meeting of the Islamic Conference Organization in 1997, 'Iranian efforts to censure Turkey for its military cooperation with Israel came as a major surprise. Turkish President Süleyman Demirel found himself leaving the summit prematurely, while the Turkish ambassador to Iran was once more called home in a protest gesture' (Kirişçi 2001: 106–107).[32] The second issue that adds to the complexity of relations is Iran's alleged acquisition or development of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and missiles, making it a target of Washington's policy of non-proliferation. Turkey always prefers the preservation of the *status quo*, fearing that Washington's policy in the region can prompt anti-Western Islamic extremists in Iran. It also fears a repetition of the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran.

Conclusion

Throughout the 1990s, both countries were on the threshold of a transformation that opened new horizons for both domestic and foreign politics. In Turkey, the political system faced some challenges, such as reconciling the growing differences between the secular elite and the groups using traditional Islamic symbols to manifest their opposition to the political *status quo* and strengthening weak democratic practices, institutions and acknowledgement of the Kurds as a separate ethnic group. In addition to the challenges emerging in Turkish political system, the foundation of an Islamic state next door and Iran's ambitions to unite all Muslims, which were directed against the *status quo,* touched off alarm bells among the Turkish elite, especially the Turkish military.

Furthermore, Iran's use of the PKK's separatism as leverage on Turkey, along with Syria and Iraq, enhanced the status of the military as the guardian of the country's territorial integrity and security. The influence of the military establishment extended not only to security but also to foreign policy making. For example, 'although according to the constitution, all agreements should be

[31] *Milliyet*, 'Şeriattan Uzak Durmak', 18 June 2002.

[32] 'The religious leader Khamenei, during a conference in Tehran in support for the Palestinian *intifada,* urged the Muslim world to rally behind the Palestinian uprising and to continue the armed resistance.' *BBC News*, 'Iran Warns of Wider Conflict', 24 April 2001, http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/middle_east/newsid_1294000/1294565.stm

presented to the Parliamentary Committee of Foreign Relations for discussion, the February 1996 agreement with Israel, which came as a shock to Iranians as well as many Arab circles, was signed by Turkish deputy chief of the general staff, Çevik Bir during a visit to Israel and not by a representative of the Turkish Defence Ministry on the grounds that it was concerned with issues pertaining to the security and stability of the state' (Özcan and Bengio 2001: 24).

The Khatemi government, which perceived the above-mentioned agreement with Israel as a US conspiracy, felt the necessity of building new alliances, especially with the European Union countries. The transition from an ideologically-based foreign policy to one fundamentally founded on national interest was also due to the changing dynamics of Iranian domestic policy.

After his election, the moderate President Muhammad Khatemi gradually liberalised the theocracy. However, as with most democratic transitions, Iran's reform movement began to acquire bold strategies for altering the demarcations of the state. Although Iran's reform movement has been stymied by a determined conservative backlash, at present, political debate in Iran is lively. Writers, journalists, academics, lawyers and liberal members of the clergy continue to speak out, and public opinion constrains the actions of the religious leaders who wield judicial and military power. Turkey's Western orientation, for this reason, no longer creates problems between the two countries. On the contrary, during Turkish president A. Necdet Sezer's visit to Tehran, Khatemi openly declared that 'a strong Turkey in the EU would have a positive impact on both Turkey and the regional countries'.[33]

In Turkey for the first time, an Islamic party in power, the JDP has pressed home the point that enmity between the military/secular establishment and the new government is not inevitable despite the JDP's Islamic identity' (Sis-Ahmed 2002). All of the above-mentioned developments in the domestic policies of both countries have also played an important role in the rapprochement between the two countries.

Although Turkey's Western orientation and its alliance with the USA and Israel in different geographic areas such as Central Asia and the Caucasus remain a source of friction between the two countries, the objection of both countries to the United States' forcibly changing the Saddam regime encouraged the two nations to reconcile with each other. In addition, Ankara shared the views of Tehran, who recommended that Baghdad abide by the UN Security Council resolutions, and believed that no power should deprive other countries of the opportunity to determine their own fates.[34]

Not surprisingly, during the Iraqi issue, Ankara, whose priority was the preservation of the *status quo*, walked a thin line and dragged its feet in response to the assertive policies advocated by the USA under the guise of combating terrorism. This reluctance can be related to two concerns, the first one stemming from American unilateralism. Turkey favoured a multilateral consensus on the solution of the Iraqi issue, on the grounds that ousting the Iraqi regime through the use of force would set a dangerous precedent that would undermine the United Nations system. The second concern is that Ankara has been anxious about the fact that anti-American feelings fostered

[33] *Turkish Daily News*, 'Sezer: No One Prevents Improvement of Turkish–Iranian Ties', 19 June 2002.

[34] *Payvand's Iran News*, 'Iraq Issue Drawing London Closer to Tehran', 9 February 2003, http://www.payvand.com/news/03/feb/1045.html

by the Bush administration could strengthen the hands of the Islamists in Iran and throughout the Middle East and thus challenge all secular formations in the respective countries of the region.

The latest situation in the region such as the unceasing blasting bombs in Iraq and the deteriorating situation fostered by Ariel Sharon's hawkish stance toward the Palestinian issue so as to prevent the replacement of the Islamic radicals by the moderate ones in the Middle Eastern countries have confirmed that Turkey's above-mentioned concerns are not baseless.

As it comes to the Turkish–Iranian relations, the ongoing instability in Iraq and increasing Kurdish claims concerning the foundation of an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq have been the main factors which have a gluing effect in bilateral relations.

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What does the Secular State have to do with Revivalist Islam?

The Turkish Case and the Gülen Movement[1]

BERNA TURAM

Introduction

The key to exploring the relationship of Islamic revival to 'civil society' is the state. As a highly contested analytical concept, civil society has come to be identified with various spheres of activity ranging from non-governmental associational and public sphere to grass-root, community action and to interpersonal relations. One distinct division in this chaotic debate is the positioning of civil society in relation to the state. Liberal scholars of civil society have clearly articulated the centrality of state for the development of civil society in the West (Hall 1995; Mann 1993; Migdal 2001; Tonkiss and Passey 2000: 49–50). However, a full-fledged emphasis on state-society interaction has not been developed in exploring civil society in the contemporary Muslim context (for exceptions, see Goldberg 1993 et al.; Zubaida 1997; Zubaida 1989) While the majority of recent work prioritizes cultural diversity, public culture, identities and informal associations as the basis of civil society in the Middle East, it refuses to locate the state and political institutions at the heart of the debate of civil society (Eickelman 1995; Eickelman and Piscatory 1996). There are a few good reasons for this lack of interest in the state in contemporary scholarly work on civil society and Islam. The main reason is the prevalent juxtaposition of civil society against the state. This juxtaposition fits well within the Muslim context, where opposition and confrontation between Islamic forces and the secular states has often been taken for granted. The findings of the present study challenge this assumption. Instead of choosing and defending one of the *assumed* definitions of civil society,[2] this paper aims at substantiating the analytical concept by examing evidence from everyday life.

[1] The informants are given false names due to their choice to remain anonymous.

[2] For the specific disagreements between Kumar and Bryant on the usefulness of the term civil society, see Kumar (1993), 'Civil Society: An Inquiry to the Usefulness of a Historical Term', *British Journal of Sociology* 44 and Kumar (1994), 'Civil Society Again: A Reply to

The Role of the State in West Asia, ed. Annika Rabo and Bo Utas, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, Transactions, vol. 14 (Stockholm, 2005), pp. 49–61.

Another reason for decentering the state in contemporary studies of Islam involves the critical stance to mainstream Western literature. Attributing a secular quality not only to the state but also to civil society, the dominant Western view essentialises 'Islam' as incompatible with both (Gellner 1981; 1994a; Huntington 1996; Lewis 1993). Put differently, Islam has been regarded as secularisation-resistant and therefore hostile to civil society. With the contemporary revival of interest in civil society in non-Western contexts, various critiques have started to challenge the Western models of civil society (Hann and Dunn 1996; Norton 1995; Ruffin and Waugh 1996). Scholars of Islam have argued that civil society has travelled to and has been redefined in the Muslim world (Norton 1995; Özdalga and Persson 1996). As opposed to the liberal emphasis on political institutions and vertical relations between the society and the state, civil society in West Asia and Middle East has largely been associated with the horizontal capacities of community, informal associations and social networks (Eickelman 1995; Eickelman and Piscatory 1996; White 1996). Celebrating also the increasing diversity of new social movements and identities, a more inclusive definition has embraced Islamist movements as propellants of a pluralistic civil society (Göle 1996; 2000a; 2000b; Eickelman 2000; Kamali 2000). From this multicultural perspective, the main strength of Islamic forces has been found in their challenge to the authoritarian states of the West Asia and the Middle East (Norton 1995).

This reconstruction of civil society in the Muslim context has effectively decentered the Eurocentric biases in defining civil society. This was useful in coping with the heavy historical baggage that the Western-originated civil society has carried. However, while these critical studies have refuted the assumptions of incompatibility between revivalist Islam and civil society, they have often failed to grapple with the juxtaposition of Islam against the secular politics/state (for an exception, see Heffner 2000). In other words, by separating cultural and political analysis, the new critiques prioritised culture, identities and publics. The states of the Muslim world have often been regarded as irrelevant in terms of the flourishing of civil society, as they were seen as either too weak or too authoritarian. As a result, a rich variety of state-Islam interaction, ranging from contestation and negotiation to cooperation and collusion, has been neglected.

The study illustrates that the perception of Islam as being doomed to opposition, political instability and political distrust (Huntington 1996; Gellner 1994) is reinforced by the definition of civil society as a challenge or battleground against the state. Put differently, the primarily anti-state positioning of civil society continues to reproduce a good deal of empirically unsubstantiated confrontation between Islam against the secularised states. The recent mushrooming of studies of political Islam often fails to explore much beyond this antagonism between Islamic forces and broader political structures. Below, I suggest that the rigid decoupling of civil society and the state in the Muslim world has to be critically rethought in the light of empirical data from West Asia. The states with which Islamic forces engage in experimenting with democracy call for the incorporation of the state into the analysis of civil society.

Christopher Bryant's "Social Self-organization, Civility and Sociology"', *British Journal of Sociology* 45.

By focusing on an internationally effective and moderate Islamic movement, the Gülen movement, I discuss the contemporary transformations of state-Islam interaction in Turkey, from confrontation to actual engagements. In my fieldwork, I examined the micro-sites where horizontal organizations of the Islamic movement provided the platforms of vertical engagements with the state.[3] The paper presents and analyses ethnographic data, highlighting the centrality of the secular state and its Republican project in the self-definition and activities of the Islamic movement as a civil society organisation.

The state as a social actor in everyday life

The recent events in world politics have reinforced the anticipation of confrontation not only within Muslim societies but also between Western and Islamic civilization. In addition to the afore-mentioned analytical controversies, methodological difficulties have further obscured the exploration of different forms of state- Islam interaction. The difficulties of using historical analysis in order to bring Islam into a culturally-sensitive analysis are too numerous to cover here. The obsessive interest in the historical roots of the antagonism between Islam and the secular rule (Gellner 1981; 1994) has largely deflected attention away from contemporary transformations of state-Islam interaction. The findings of the present study suggest that contemporary transformations can be efficiently captured by ethnographic methods. Although the difficulty of access to the states in West Asia and the Middle East has been a major handicap for researchers, the micro-sites of engagements are feasible and available for ethnographic research concerning everyday life (Turam 2001).

The traditional anticipation of confrontation needs to be contested by in-depth empirical research in the micro-borders between the states and Islamic movements. The state needs to be taken into account as a 'social actor' in its multi-dimensional and contradictory relations with other social forces and institutions (Migdal et al. 1994). The state as a social actor does not merely refer to the images of the state or various ideologies associated with the state, such as Kemalism or secularism,[4] which may often have been affected by Eurocentric stereotypes and/or orientalist presumptions. The approach to the state as an actor neither reifies nor glorifies the state as the one and only independent variable regarding all times and places. On the contrary, it captures the state in its embeddedness within society, social forces and institutions (Migdal 2001; Migdal et al. 1994). In understanding Islamic

[3] For the theoretical argument and the empirical analysis, see Turam 2001. Between 1997 and 1999 and intermittently until 2003, I conducted intensive ethnographic fieldwork in Istanbul (Turkey) and Almaty (Kazakhstan), the two metropolitan cities where the movement organizations are concentrated. I conducted in-depth participant observation at multiple sites of the movement, including foundations, households, schools, dormitories, universities, business offices, charity dinners, ceremonies, meetings, media outlets such as the television channel, *Samanyolu*, radio, *Burç,* the newspaper, *Zaman* and conferences. I also conducted 32 unstructured interviews with followers from the inner core, sympathizers and ex-followers. It was a snowball sample, consisting of both males and females from various social and occupational backgrounds.

[4] Heper (1991), see especially the section on state and civil society, where he argues that there was no civil society in the Ottoman Empire, and that therefore there is no tradition of civil society in the Turkish state, either.

revival, ethnography in the micro-sites is more revealing than mere policy analysis or studies of other calculated state behaviour in the government sites. The sites of engagements are unique because they reveal the dynamism of both social forces and the state. These sites host transformations as a result of spontaneity of social forces and political institutions. These sites of interaction accommodate affinities, linkages, contestations and negotiations between the states and Islamic forces. Hence, these sites provide excellent windows through which to observe and explain states' behaviour toward Islam, and to incorporate state-Islam interaction into the analysis of civil society.

Background: The Turkish state and the idea of republican religion

Turkey deserves special attention in the debate on Islam, civil society and the state. Although modernists have been enchanted by it as a perfect confirmation of modernisation theory, it is indeed a more complicated case than merely an exceptional example of the victory of secularisation, secular nationalism and secular democracy in the Muslim world (Lewis 1975; Gellner 1994b).

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic was founded by its Western-influenced founding fathers in 1923. This nation-building was not only a clear break from the Ottoman Empire, but also formed a secular Republican parliamentary system. A series of all-encompassing revolutions took place, including changes in clothing styles, the alphabet, the formation of the parliamentary system and the abolition of the caliphate. After the initial phases of the consolidation of the nation-state, Islamic voices were alienated in the parliament. The Islamically oriented traditionalists who attempted to approach Atatürk and his new regime withdrew from politics from fear, from frustration or by force. The sects and Islamic orders were abolished in the new Republic. During the following decades of the single-party system, religion and politics were authoritatively separated. The top-down secularisation intensified the tensions between Islamic and secular forces, which had originated in the late Ottoman Empire (Berkes 1999).

It is important to note, however, that despite the dramatic repression of Islam in the new Republic, religion was used as a force to create the idea of a nation by the founding fathers. In other words, Islam was eliminated from the public sphere, and relegated to the private sphere. Subsequently, it did not perish, but persisted in the form of underground collective action. When the multi-party system was introduced, Islamic action came to be tolerated in the 1950s. This opening up of the system to conservative and Islamic voices came to an end with the military coup in 1960. Following the ideological polarisation in the 1970s between left and right, another military coup in 1980 repressed civil society once more in Turkey.

Unlike many countries in the Muslim world, Turkey has a functional electoral democracy, although it is not devoid of problems and ruptures. Similar to the rest of the Muslim world, Turkey has not been immune to the Islamic revival occuring within the past two decades. The religious party, Welfare, came to power in 1996, and was soon banned by the secular state. The successor party, Virtue, shared the same destiny of closure in 2001. In November 2002, a third Islamic party, Justice and Development, came to power and formed an Islamic government in a secular state.

When we adopt a narrow focus on the Turkish state's ban of Islamic parties, the case may seem to describe the traditional confrontation between the state

and Islam. The Turkish state appears as the staunch protector of the secular political order, at the cost of repressing religious freedoms, jeopardising a fragile civil society and even violating the main principles of a democracy. Hence, a conventional analysis, unsubstantiated by empirical research, may conclude the following. Islam can not be secularised and remains a handicap and a threat to democratisation and civil society. However, the Turkish case calls for further analysis, for several reasons. In contrast to the increasing perception of the Islamic threat in world politics, the post-1980 period has witnessed the incorporation of Islamic movements and politics into the system in Turkey. First of all, an Islamic party came to power by free and fair elections for the second time, this time it is likely to rule until it loses power as a result of elections. This is mainly because, unlike the previous Welfare, the current ruling party Justice and Development avoids conflict with the state, its national agendas and the constitution of the secular Republic. Second, this non-confrontational Islam is not totally new or marginal, but instead has matured and expanded in and outside of Turkey in the past decades. The new party is similar to another influential and popular Islamic movement, the Gülen movement, which originated in Turkey in the 1980s, when civil society was expanding. Before arriving at hasty conclusions on the confrontation between the secular state and Islamic movements, and then interpreting this as an enemy or quality of civil society, I suggest a closer look at the current state-Islam interaction in Turkey.

The Gülen movement and the state

There has been a good deal of recent research on the Gülen movement, exploring its origins, nature, undertakings and goals (Balcı 2003; Özdalga 2000; Turam 2003; Yavuz 2003). Most of the scholarly work has associated the movement strongly with its predecessors, the Nur movement, led by Said Nursi. Indeed, the Gülen movement emerged from the fragmentations within Nur in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Similar to the Nur movement, it has a strong commitment to science and technology, which explains the movement's openness to the West, modernity and a capitalist market economy. Unlike its forefather Nur, however, the movement accumulated enormous sources of social, political and economic power inside and outside Turkey, and expanded its organisations across the globe. The major outlets of the movement are its numerous schools, universities, dormitories and business and trade networks (see Yavuz 1999). After the fall of the Soviet regime, the movement expanded to the newly independent Central Asian countries, where it opened numerous schools and established business and trade networks (see Balcı 2003). It also mobilised vibrant ethnic policies which entwine with Islamic politics (Turam, forthcoming). In addition to its business, media and trade outlets, the movement has over three hundred schools, seven universities and numerous dormitories across the globe. The schools are interesting, as they combine a secular curriculum with moral education. The instruction in Gülen's schools is in English and Turkish, aiming at reconciling education with an internationalisation of Turkish language and culture. While curricular undertakings are primarily science-oriented, the extra-curricular activities aim at re-socialising the students into choosing faithful and moral lifestyles and Turkish Muslim identities.

The apparent goal of the Islamic Gülen movement is to reconcile the Islamic faith and way of life with secular institutions. I purposely refer to the movement as 'Islamic' as opposed to 'Islamist', since the term Islamist has an anti-state fundamentalist connotation. Despite the growing academic interest in the movement, social research has dismissed one important issue which distinguishes the Gülen movement from other Islamic movements. The movement's distinction is not its international expansion, which can also be observed in fundamentalist and even terrorist Islamic action. The key to understanding this new Turkish Islam is its attitudes to and interaction with the secular states (Turam 2004). In this sense, the movement has to be explored and understood as separate not only from other movements in Turkey but even from its predecessor, the Nurcus. Contrary to the state's stigmatisation of other Islamist movements as '*irtica*' (fundamentalist) activity, the Gülen movement claims and often receives the recognition of being a civil society organization by the secular states. The followers of the movement agree with the philosophy of their leader, Fethullah Gülen, which involves tolerance for faith-based differences within the nation-state. He argues in several of his books that, 'Regardless of the conditions, the legitimacy (of the state) must not be damaged ... Anti-democratic interventions never worked, as we already experienced in Turkey ... Problems have to be solved within the system' (Gülen 1997: 285).

The majority of my informants were in agreement that the only way in which Islam could produce civil society was through the 'revitalisation of faith *under* the conditions of secular democracy and *not against the secular political institutions*'.[5] This secularisation-adaptive attitude has been interpreted as dissimulation (*takiye)* by hardcore secularists in Turkey. This is not surprising when we consider that the distrust between Islamists and secularists has a long history within the Turkish context. However, an in-depth analysis of the 'actual' undertakings of the movement reveals that this new Turkish Islam has engaged the state and its Republican project more forcefully than most of the secularist organisations.

Shifting links between the state and Islam: the politics of engagement

From 1997 to the present, I conducted some hundred informal interviews, twenty life stories and four oral histories during my fieldwork in Turkey and Kazakhstan. The gradual changes in the state–Islam relations have been traced most concretely in the life stories of my respondents. The followers, fifty years of age and above, reported how they survived the state's repression as members of Nurcus until three decades ago. After many years of clashes, they found themselves participating in Gülen's projects. One of my respondents, an active member of the movement, who is the wife of a recognised Islamic scholar reported:

> I was introduced to the world of Nur as a young girl by a group of women who secretly were gathering to read *Risales*[6]. This ...was a kind of renaissance, my enlightenment. Unfortunately, I had to keep it a secret for quite a long time, especially from my parents,

[5] Interviews with followers from the movement organisations, 1998, Istanbul. Author's italics.
[6] *Risale-i Nur* (Epistle of Light) is a collection of letters based on reinterpretations of the Qur'an written by the leader of the Nur movement, Bedüizzaman Said Nursi. The volumes are highly respected and used in tutoring the followers of Gülen Community.

> who, like the majority of people, were hard-core secularists and who were voting for the leftist Republican People's Party... I had to pretend in every sphere of my life in order not to be labeled, marginalised and ostracised. All religious publications including *Risales* were prohibited. I lived in agony and pain for years until I had the courage to start wearing a bigger scarf and I then became shamed in the eyes of my family members. I was ostracised immediately by the whole community. It is only very recently that I started to feel comfortable expressing my faith. The Gülen Community legitimised our Islamic self-identities. Today, all our activities are transparent. We have nothing to hide from or be embarrassed about either from the neighbours or from the state. Often, our fellow followers work in collaboration with the state.[7]

The followers' life stories indicate a transformation from the politics of fear in the early Republic to a politics of engagement in the post-1980 period. In addition, the micro-borders between the state and Gülen reveal that contemporary engagements range from contestation to explicit cooperation. Within the borders of Turkey, these engagements are often perceived as a threat by hardcore secularists. Hence, the Gülen movement constantly negotiates the limits of recognition for faith, Islamic identities and way of life with several branches of the secular state. In the late 1990s, there have been ongoing contestations over the movement's schools between the state and the movement (Turam 2004). The secularist civil society organisations sporadically have attacked the movement and its schools as the traitors of the secular heritage of Atatürk. They have detested Gülen's increasing sphere of influence in education within and outside the Turkish borders. It is important to note, however, that the hardcore secularists fail to acknowledge the shifting links between the movement and the state. As a result of ongoing negotiations, both the movement schools and other organisations are not only maintained but also treated as civil society establishments likely to contribute to democratisation in Turkey.

'Civil Society' projects

Among the multiple sites of engagements, the research-oriented institution of the movement, *Akademi*, deserves highlighting. Although the intended international research and scholarship has not been undertaken in *Akademi*, the goals and worldview promoted by the institution was important to note. I interviewed one of the leading figures of the movement, who participated in the formation of the major foundations of the movement. He was not only an Islamic intellectual but was also in charge of establishing the research unit in 1997. He was extremely sensitive to the issues of the tension between science and religion. During the interview, he corrected my terminology and asked me not to refer the movement organisations as 'religious organisations': 'Our task cannot be reduced to religious activity. I may be religious, but our organisations are not. Why is this simple separation so difficult for people? We aim to advance scientific research here. Our schools are scientific and secular, in line with the premises of secular national education'. I asked him how to best define and refer to the movement's activities and organisations. After thinking for a few minutes, he told me: 'Our undertakings are civil society projects and our organisations are civil society organisations. Faith does not come into the way of such a civic goal. On the contrary, it strengthens our commitment, networks and altruistic voluntarism. Does not

[7] Interview with Ayse Hanim, a follower of the movement in Istanbul, 1997.

civil society rely on these?' Ahmet Bey was a scholar of Islam, yet did not feel comfortable with the Islamic label and association. He was at peace with the scientific goals and very keen on advancing scientific research. After receiving defensive responses from Ahmet Bey, I continued to direct the same question to other followers and received similar answers. Most of my interviews revealed a cooperative engagement with the Republican project, as opposed to confrontation with the secular institutional milieu.

I participated in numerous micro-sites where public events, charity dinners, seminars, conferences on democracy and Islam, were organised by the movement. In most of the charity events, the followers made the guests and potential beneficiaries familiar with the quality and accomplishments of their schools. Their presentation of the schools emphasised their commitment to Atatürk's secular heritage. The movement displays strong loyalties to the secular state in and outside of Turkey. Indeed, in line with national education, the curriculum is secular and scientific, and education was nationalist. During my visits to the dormitories and schools in both Istanbul and Almaty, I witnessed that most of the Islamic influence was disseminated during extra-curricular activities through moral and cultural resocialisation. The teachers agreed in my interviews that 'science and faith do not contradict each other, and they both need to be fostered equally in democracies'. According to them, the main condition of this progress and peace in the Muslim world was tolerance for faith-based movements in secular democracies. 'When the distrust between the secularists and Islamists is overcome, the Turkish Republic will be a more democratic country' said one of the closest friends of the movement's leader. It is this aspiration which motivates followers to engage with the state rather than confront it.

In the light of the movement's self-presentation as an ally of the state, my field study raised the question as to whether the movement was perceived as part of civil society by the state. The pragmatic right-wing leaders have taken supportive stands to the rise of the movement, including the previous Prime Minister, Özal and conservative leaders such as the previous president, Demirel. Recently, the ex-Prime Minister of the centre-left orientation, Ecevit, and several high-ranking bureaucrats in the host countries have become sympathisers of the movement. Although they personally have different political and religious orientations, none of the ruling elite is oriented to political Islam. They represent secular regimes with a strong commitment to the separation of religion from politics. Their sympathy is primarily based on Gülen's goal of the attainment of the main pillars of civil society, particularly better education, stronger associational life and more trade. However, there is disagreement between the leading secular politicians in Turkey with regard to their views of the movement.

Contestations and recognition

Despite the non-confrontational attitudes of the movement, domestic interaction between the movements and the state has been unstable. There have been ongoing ruptures in the interactions due to continuing issues of distrust and to the fragile nature of the politics of engagements. Various state departments have fallen into conflict and disagreement with each other over their attitudes towards the movement. In 1999, the legislative branch of the Turkish state fell into serious conflict with the police. It was discovered that

the chief police organisation (*Emniyet Müdürlügü*) had been implementing an underground operation – wire-tapping in the movement. While the police explained that it was an 'anti-terror and anti-fundamentalist action' to protect the secular order, the courts found the operation illegal and offensive to individual rights and liberties. Consequently, high-ranking police officers, including the head of the police organisation, were found guilty and expelled from office.[8] Infuriated, the chief police officers announced a seeming paradox: 'The Community is *protected from the state by the state* itself'. It was indicated that the secular state was contradicting its own goals and image. Paradoxically, while the courts defended the movement in this instance, in other cases they have accused the leader, Fethullah Gülen, of organising fundamentalist activities. Moreover, although the schools came under the scrutiny of the National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Konseyi*), they remained fully active in Turkey and across the globe. These ambivalent events suggest that the engagements are far from being smooth processes. However, they are also indicative of the partial and uneven transformation in the state's attitudes towards Islamic revitalisation.

In general, despite several ruptures and ongoing issues of distrust, most of the events resulted in a good deal of recognition, negotiation and an emerging cooperation between the movement and the state. As the numbers of schools and organisations increase, the accumulated capital in the movement increases as well. While the capitalist tendencies facilitate the movement's engagement with the state, the nationalist overtone leads to cooperations between the state and the movement (Turam forthcoming).

What makes an Islamic movement a civil society organisation?: An insider's perspective

The recent victory of the pro-Islamic party, Justice and Development, confirms the findings of the present study. Erdogan, the current Prime Minister, not only avoids conflict with the secular state but also shares its agendas in world politics. The politics of both the pro-Islamic party – currently the government – and the Islamic social movement at hand indicate shifting links between the secular state and an emergent non-confrontational Islam in Turkey. In one of my interviews on civil society and Islam, I asked one of the respected leaders of the Gülen movement: 'What, do you think, makes the Gülen movement a civil society organisation?' He explained to me:[9]

> We are not a sect or secret organisation. We are the civic initiative, which is independent of the state. Our foundations produce their own funding...and we pursue our projects autonomously. However, our organisations do not contradict the legislation and principles of the Republic. We accept the sovereignty of the state... conform its constitution and respect its military. This is what makes us a civil society organisation.

Conclusion

The findings on *engaged* Islam are surprising in a political context, where even the majority of secular forces and intellectuals are highly critical, distrustful and/or often dismissive of the state. On the one hand, Turkish

[8] *Yeni Yüzyıl*, November, 1999.
[9] He requested anonymity.

Islamic forces experiment with civic engagement and play a role in transforming a political culture, one in which civil society has been largely understood as state-critical or state-confrontational both in practice and scholarly work. On the other hand, the lack of state-criticism in the new Turkish Islam raises important questions about the nature and shifting attitudes of not only the Islamic forces in Turkey but also of the secular Turkish state. While the end of clash between secular and Islamic forces is an important indicator of the politics of engagement, the cooperation between the state and Islam is by no means a guarantee for democratisation. Put differently, although engagements are characteristic of a more stable political world and promising for civil society, they have to be closely examined to qualify as propellants of liberal democracy. Hence, these transformations call for further empirical research on the nature, scope and agendas of micro-level state–Islam interaction. Through which means and in which issues do the Islamic forces and the secular state engage and cooperate?

The contemporary experimentations between the states and the Islamic movements in West Asia also constitute a fruitful laboratory of studying the interplay between secularisation and Islamisation. More empirically-based projects are necessary to capture the micro-processes through which state–Islam interaction transforms *both* Islam and the states in the region. The nature of the relatively secularised states in the Muslim world is important to explain, since these states play a major role in the shifting links between religion and politics. The politics of engagement entails a subtle and sensitive balance, the loss of which may lead to either the cooptation of Islamic movements by the state (for the Egyptian case, see Moustafa 2000; Zubaida 1997) or the Islamisation of politics as in several cases in the Arab world.

The nature and attitude of the state are important factors which shape the characteristics of Islamic movements. The state as an actor has to be incorporated into the analysis of Islam and civil society. What are the conditions that produce the politics of engagement between religion and the state as two independent institutions? To what extent are the Islamic movements the products of – and not simply reactions to – the states and politics in the region? Generic accounts of the ideologies of the states or 'states as broader abstract projects' are no longer sufficient in answering these burning questions. We will need further empirical research on the actual states of West Asia. The concrete presence of contradictory branches of the state in people's ordinary lives is of a particular importance.

Empirical research on the micro-borders between states and social forces will open windows to these over-generalised subject matters. This may help us to rethink and reformulate our Eurocentric categories of secular states versus secularisation-resistant Islam. Civil or non-civil societies do not evolve in a vacuum. On the contrary, they are deeply entwined with the political and cultural processes of the nation-states. Under which conditions do Revivalist Islamic movements resist and/or adapt state-framed secularisation? A deeper grasp of various forms of Islamisation cannot be separated from our understanding of the diverse paths of secularisation. The incorporation of state-Islam interaction in West Asian states into mainstream social research is very likely to challenge our deepest assumptions about the secularisation-resistant character of Islam. Moreover, the novel interplay between the states and contemporary Islamic movements has already started to raise critical questions about the taken for granted, and often unproblematised, secularism

of Western superpowers. The contemporary West Asian experiments will inevitably occupy an important place in social research on Islam, civil society and the state.

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Traces of Statelessness in the Kurdish Novel

HASHEM AHMADZADEH

Introduction

Following the formation of nation-states during the early decades of the twentieth century in the Middle East, the various aspects of social, political and cultural modes of life were profoundly changed. A central issue within the official policies of the emerging nation-states was that of the construction of unique national identities. This policy however, neglected the multiethnic features of the Middle East. Thus, the Kurds, Azaris and Baluchis, for example, were deprived of practicing their national rights. The process of modernisation and the establishment of the nation-states was also accompanied by the rise of a new literary genre, the novel, which was officially encouraged as a vehicle with which to construct the desired national identities. While the official languages of these states functioned as the main medium of communication for the emerging official social and political institutions, especially the educational system and state bureaucracy, the minority languages were completely suppressed. The Kurds and their political destiny provide an interesting case in terms of how a denied and stateless nation expresses itself in literature. The importance of literature, especially the novel, in shaping and constructing the national character of nations, is widely acknowledged. Huxley (1959: 50) clearly refers to the importance of literature in constructing nations, and argues that novelists and poets 'to a very large extent' are the inventors of their nations. In this article I will discuss the emergence of the Kurdish novel, and, based on the close reading of certain Kurdish novels,[1] try to follow the traces of Kurdish nationalism within its novelistic discourse.

Notes on transliteration: In my transcription of Kurdish names and words, I have followed the Hawar orthography system. Cf. Ahmadzadeh 2003: 3–4.

[1] This article is based on readings of the following novels: *Janî Gel* (People's suffering) and *Dirk û Guḷ* (Thorn and flower) by Îbrahîm Eḥmed; *Şar* (The city) by Ḥisên ʿArif; *Êwarey Perwane* (Perwane's evening); Mergî Taqaney Dûhem (The Death of The Second Only Child) and *Dwahemîn Henarî Dunya* (The world's last pomegranate) by Bextiyar ʿElî; *Guḷi Şoran* (The Şoran flower) and *Baḷindekanî Dem Ba* (Birds with the wind) by ʿEta Nehayî; *Ronî Mîna Evînê Tarî Mîna Mirinê* (Light like love, dark like death) by Mehmed Uzun; *Karmamiz* (Gazelle) by ʿElî Ḥesenyanî, (Hawar); *Rêga* (The way) by Muhemmed Mewlûd, (Mem);

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Kurdish literature

Nation-states typically provide a public education system, usually based on an official language. Kurds, lack not only such a system but also a literature in a unified language. About sixty years ago, Nikitine (1987/1366: 584) noted the lack of a linguistically unified Kurdish literature, and the lack of a common literary language available to all Kurds throughout Kurdistan. His observation is still relevant. The Kurdish novel is written not in a unified standard Kurdish but in at least two major dialects – Kurmanji and Sorani – and two orthographic systems – one Arabic-based, the other Latin-based. Hence, one of the major problems concerning the study of Kurdish literature is the definition of its boundaries. The non-existence of a Kurdish state makes it almost impossible to decide the limits of Kurdish literature as a national literature.[2] Although there is a strong tendency among the Kurdish nationalists to claim that there is a homogeneous Kurdish literature, the reality is different. The geopolitical situation of the Kurds deprived them of any legal or formal co-operation and relationship with each other across state borders. Thus, Kurdish literature in one part of Kurdistan, despite the remarkable political changes which have increased communications among the Kurds in different parts of Kurdistan during the last decade, may possibly develop without any noteworthy influence elsewhere in the region. The Kurds have thus, inevitably, been unable to unite as a result of constructing a unified culture and identity. Instead, the various nation-states that govern the Kurds have aimed at absorbing the Kurds, making them an integral part of their particular national identity. However, the policies of these states as concerns the Kurds have been different over time. The Kurds have, furthermore, experienced different treatment from the different states ranging from pure and absolute denial to some sort of limited autonomy. Thus, the various political and cultural Kurdish movements in these countries have had various characters and various political demands. However, the main aim of the dominant culture and politics of these states was to assimilate the Kurds, at the cost of Kurdish culture and identity. In such a condition, all reactions from the Kurdish side, even purely cultural ones, have been considered as oppositional towards the sovereignty of these states. As minorities within the framework of these newly formed states, the Kurds and their culture and literature were viewed as hostile political activities by the authorities of these states.[3]

Komeļe Şaxe Berz û … (A range of high mountains and …) by Kurdan; *Rawemasî* (Fishing) by Fazil Kerîm Eḥmed; *Ḥesar…û Segekanî Bawkim* (The yard … and the dogs of my father) by Şêrzad Ḥesen; *Tarmayî Helebce* (The shadow of Helebje) by Rêbwar Reşîd; *Jiyan Bedem Ziryanewe* (Life in the wind) by Teyfûr; *Koç* (Migration) by Mehabad Qerdaġî; Biļînd û Newî (The high and the low) by Nesrîn Ceʿferî and *Sobarto* (Sobarto) by Helîm Yûsiv.

[2] Linking up certain literatures to their national affiliation is a common rule in writing the history of literature, especially the history of world literature. Although the idea of linking literary cultures to geographical places has been recently criticised by some literary critics, it is still an acceptable norm in speaking about national literatures. For a critique of current histories of literatures and the way that they describe the rise and development of the novel, see Petersson (2002).

[3] What Deleuze and Guattari (1997: 19) say concerning minority literature is partly applicable to the case of Kurdish literature in the countries which govern the Kurds. They define 'minority literature' as a literature which is written by a minority in the language of the majority, not their own mother tongue. This minority literature has three major features: 1. Its language is influenced by a strong de-territorialising coefficient. 2. Everything has a political colour. 3. Everything has a collective value. However, by 'minority literature', I mean here that literature written by a minority and in its own language. This literature has the second and third features

The rise of the Kurdish novel

As a matter of fact, the history of the novel in the Middle East begins in the late decades of the nineteenth century. However, while languages such as Arabic, Persian and Turkish have had a long tradition of prose writing, the history of Kurdish prose does not go beyond the nineteenth century. The dominance of poetry over other literary genres has been a common phenomenon in the history of many oriental languages.[4] Until the early decades of the twentieth century, Kurdish literature was primarily represented by poetry, with a history of about five centuries. The dominance of Kurdish poetry over prose has been considerable, even within the last decades of the twentieth century. In fact, the history of Kurdish prose writing, even in the non-fictional field, does not extend far back in time. Before the publishing of the first Kurdish newspaper, *Kurdistan*, in 1898 (in Cairo, not in Kurdistan), there were only a few prose works available in Kurdish (cf. Hassanpour 1992: 81).

In studying the Kurdish novel, the divided character of Kurdistan and the differing treatment of the Kurds by the governing states must be taken into consideration. The very unique situation of the Kurds in the former Soviet Union during the early decades after the October Revolution and their state-sponsored cultural activities resulted in the emergence of the first Kurdish novels there. Erebê Şamilov (1897–1978), known as Erebê Şemo among the Kurds, the most famous Kurdish writer from the former Soviet Union, has been considered the 'father of the Kurdish novel' (Kutlay 1996: 58). He was born in a poor family who had fled from the Kurdish parts of the Ottoman Empire to Armenia in the late nineteenth century.[5] His first novel, *Şivanê Kurd* (The Kurdish shepherd) was published in Yerevan in 1935. It was then published for a second time in 1947 and for a third time in Istanbul, in 1978. His other novels are *Kurdê Elegozê* (The Kurds of Elegoz) in 1958, *Berbang* (Dawn) (1958), *Jiyana Bextewar* (Happy life) in 1969, *Dimdim* (1966) and *Hopo* (1969). *Dimdim* was later transcribed from the Cyrillic alphabet into the Arabic-based Kurdish alphabet by Şukur Mistefa, and was published in Baghdād in 1975. It was also published in Sweden in 1983. With the exception of *Dimdim*, which is a historical novel and narrates the events of a war between the Kurds and the Safavid king Shāh ʿAbbās II in the seventeenth century, his novels are mainly written according to the conventions of socialist realism. Another Kurdish writer, Elîyê Evdirrehman, also from the former Soviet Union, published his first novel *Xatê Xanim* (Mrs Xatê) in Yerevan in 1958. He later published three other novels *Dê* (The mother) (1965), *Gundê Mêrxasa* (The village of the braves) (1966) and *Ser Çiya da* (On the mountains) in Yerevan. The main theme of his novels involves the historical movements of the Kurds from the Turkish part of Kurdistan. Among the other Kurdish novelists from the former Soviet Union, one can name Hecîye Cindî, Seîdê Îbo and Egîdê Xudo, who have also published their novels in Yerevan. The position of Kurdish novel writing in the former Soviet Union shows how

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of 'minority literature' in Deleuze and Guattari's terms. One can assume that Deleuze and Guattari's definition is relevant to that literature which is written by the Kurds in the official languages of those countries which overrule the Kurds.

[4] Cf. Micallef (1997: 33) and Jayyusi (1992: 14) concerning the dominance of poetry over prose in Central Asia and Palestine.

[5] For more information on Erebê Şemo's political and literary life, and the general situation of the Kurdish language and the Kurds in the former Soviet Union, see Vanly (1992: 209).

extra-linguistic and extra-literary factors, i.e. the relative freedom of the Kurds in expressing themselves and the existence of an official patron, can contribute to the production of literary works. These novels mostly followed the principles of socialist realism, particularly its doctrines aiming at the creation of a new Soviet citizen. Despite these features, the published Kurdish novels in the former Soviet Union had a significant role in presenting the Kurds during a time that their existence was totally denied by countries like Turkey.

By 1980 there were only a dozen Kurdish novels, most of which had been published in the former Soviet Union. However, in the 1980s the Kurdish novel took a step forward. It is not accidental that serious discussions concerning the generic differences between the short story and the Kurdish novel only began after the publication of influential Kurdish novels such as *Şar* (The city), *Kordere* (The sewage) and *Kwêxa Sêwê* (Kwêxa Sêwê) in Iraqi Kurdistan in the 1980s. The number of Kurdish novels published by 1990, except for those novels which were published in the Soviet Union, was about twenty (eleven novels in Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan, three clandestine novels[6] and five novels in the diaspora). Factors which hampered the rise of the Kurdish novel include political suppression, social and cultural factors and the level of development within Kurdish society. The development of Kurdish nationalism during the 1960s, especially in Iraqi Kurdistan, provided impetus for the development of the Kurdish novel. The interrelationship of Kurdish cultural and political nationalism is a determining factor in the emergence of the Kurdish novel.

Determining the first Kurdish novel necessarily depends on how one evaluates the literature produced by Kurds from different parts of Kurdistan. The question of Kurdish dialects plays a role in determining the first Kurdish novel. Due to the divided nature of the Kurdish speech community and the lack of any organic relationship between its divided parts, mostly because of the borders defining the boundaries of the nation-states and their national sovereignty, it is not possible to talk about the first Kurdish novel within a framework of any Kurdish national unity. Instead, it is more realistic to talk about the first Kurdish novels in a manner of some scholars as regards the Kurdish movements, discussing various movements rather than a united Kurdish movement.[7] Mehmet Uzun, who is originally from Turkish Kurdistan, but has lived in Sweden since 1977, has been mostly referred to as the author of the first Kurdish novel.[8] There is no doubt that Uzun, with seven novels at present, is probably the most active Kurdish novelist.[9] He has contributed

[6] Clandestine literature was that type of literature which was published by the Kurdish opposition movement against the Iraqi government. This literature was called 'Edebî Şax', i.e. the literature of the mountain. During the years of armed struggle against the Iraqi government in the 1970s and 1980s, certain areas in Iraqi Kurdistan were under the control of armed Kurdish parties. These areas were referred to as the freed areas, where considerable publishing activity was carried out. Three clandestine novels were published in the 1980s in Iraqi Kurdistan.

[7] Cf. for example Bruinessen (1999b: 7) and Vali (1999: 83).

[8] Ljung (1999: 2), in a paper presented to a conference during 19–21 August 1999 in Copenhagen, quotes Mehmed Uzun, who has said in a TV program that he is the author of the first Kurdish novel.

[9] As was mentioned Uzun has, at present, published seven novels: *Tu* (You) (1985), *Mirina Kaleki Rind* (The death of an old gentleman) (1987), *Siya Evînê* (The shadow of love) (1989), *Rojek ji Rojên Evdalê Zeynikê* (A day of Evdalê Zeynikê's days) (1991), *Bîra Qederê* (The well of destiny) (1995), *Ronî Mîna Evînê Tarî Mîna Mirinê* (Lightness like love, darkness like death) (1988) and *Hawara Dîcleyê* (The shout of Tigris) in two volumes (2001–2003).

greatly to the development of the Kurdish novel in the diaspora. However, there are other Kurdish novels which were published long before Uzun's first novel in 1985. Thus, Uzun's first novel, i.e. *Tu* (You), cannot be considered the first Kurdish novel, either in the diaspora or in Kurdistan, or in Kurmanji or Sorani.[10]

During the early decades of the twentieth century at the time of constructing Iraq as a new state, there were some successful activities in the field of Kurdish journalism and literature in Iraqi Kurdistan. However, the lack of a rich written culture, especially in terms of a prosaic heritage, along with various social, political and economic factors, did not allow the Kurdish novel to emerge until the early 1960s. While the Kurdish short story had considerable opportunities to develop, at least quantitatively, the Kurdish novel had to wait to celebrate its considerable emergence in Iraqi Kurdistan until the 1970s and 1980s. The political changes in Iraq following the Gulf War and a de-facto Kurdish administration in Iraqi Kurdistan provided a highly productive environment for the Kurdish novel during the 1990s.

Discussing the first Kurdish novel in Iraqi Kurdistan is complicated, due to the backgrounds of two literary works, *Meseley Wîjdan* (The question of conscience) and *Nazdar ya kiçî kurd le ladê* (Nazdar or the Kurdish girl in the village). *Meseley Wîjdan*, written in 1927 or 1928, by Eḥmed Muxtar Caf, has by many been considered to be the first Kurdish novel. The problem with terming this story the first Kurdish novel involves not only its generic features, which have been a question of dispute among scholars (that is, whether it is a novel or a short story) but also the time of its writing and publication. The author of the story, Eḥmed Muxtar Caf (1899–1935), was known as a poet until 1970, when *Meseley Wîjdan* was published in Baghdād, after having been in manuscript form for 42 or 43 years. It was published 35 years after the death of its author (Miḥemmed 1990:26). Bearing in mind the importance of the availability of the book to its readers, the time of publication is significant. Thus, with regard to the time of its publishing, one can hardly accept this book as the first Kurdish novel. The second proposition as to the first Kurdish novel in Iraqi Kurdistan concerns *Nazdar ya kiçî kurd le ladê* (Nazdar or the Kurdish girl in the village) which its author, Miḥemmed ʿElî Kurdî, called a novel. After the publication of its three parts in a Kurdish journal, *Rûnakî* (Nos. 7, 9 and 11) in 1936, the remaining parts were never published, due to the journal's collapse. The complete version of the story has never been published.

Neither of these two stories can be considered to be the earliest Kurdish novels, taking the history of their publication into consideration. Thus, the emergence of the first Kurdish novel in Iraqi Kurdistan after the miscarriage of the first 'novel-to-be' i.e. *Nazdar ya kiçî kurd le ladê* (Nazdar or the Kurdish girl in the village), was to be delayed for 22 years, when *Janî Gel* (People's suffering) was written by the prominent Kurdish writer and politician Îbrahîm Eḥmed (1914–2000), who founded the most influential Kurdish literary journal, *Gelawêj* (1939–49), in 1956. However, the story of this novel is also interesting in terms of Kurdish literature, especially the Kurdish novel. The author, in a preface to the first chapter of the book published in the Kurdish

[10] Uzun himself knows this and has mentioned it in a book, where he acknowledges Şemo as one who involved the Kurds for the first time in discussions about the Kurdish novel (Uzun 1996a: 85). He has also mentioned that Mahmut Baksî published his first novel *Hêlîn* (Hêlîn), in Sweden (Uzun 1996b: 69). Another Kurdish novelist, Birîndar, published his novel, *Soro* (Soro) in Germany in 1983 (Ġefûr 1995: 16).

journal, *Rizgarî*, in Baghdād in 1969, says that he wrote this novel in 1956. Because of the severe censorship going on at that time, he tried to mislead the authorities by choosing an Arabic environment instead of a Kurdish one. He dedicates his novel to the undefeated fighters of Algeria. After the political events of 1956 he was arrested and his notes, including this book, were kept by his friends and relatives in different places. Some of his notes were never found, but the manuscript of his book was returned to him in 1967 by a friend. Two years later, three parts of it were published in *Rizgarî*, and it was only then that the author gave Kurdish names to the characters of the book. In 1972 it was published in Silêmanî. The book was transcribed into Kurmanji and published in Sweden in 1992. It was also translated into Persian by Miḥemmed Qazî and was published in 1980. Another Persian translation of the novel by ʿErfān Qāneʿi Fard was later published in 2001 in Iran. Now, according to what Îbrahîm Eḥmed says, we must consider *Janî Gel* to be the first Kurdish novel in Sorani. However, the date of its publication does not allow us to justify this claim.

The second half of the 1980s is the time of a relatively strong development of the Kurdish novel (Miḥemmed 1990: 24). In this period only seven Kurdish novels were published in Iraq (two of them in Hewlêr and the rest in Baghdād). Ḥisên ʿArif, with his first novel, *Şar* (The city) in 1986 and two novels, *Endêşey Mirovêk* (The thoughts of a human) and *Hêlane* (The nest) in 1990 and 1999 and Miḥemmed Mukrî with his four published novels, *Heres* (The defeat), *Segweř* (Barking), *Toļe* (Revenge), and *Ejdîha* (The dragon), have been among the pioneers of the Kurdish novel in Iraqi Kurdistan. They hold a determining role in the maturation and expansion of the Kurdish novel. Both Mukrî and ʿArif were, in the beginning, active in the field of writing short stories. However, during the 1990s the number of Kurdish novels, both in Kurdistan and in the diaspora, reached an unprecedented record.[11] The relatively radical development of the Kurdish novel in the 1990s can only be explained by the new economic, social, political and intellectual situation of the Kurds, both in Kurdistan and in the diaspora.

Looking for the first Kurdish novel in Sorani leads us to Iranian Kurdistan, where publication in Kurdish was formally outlawed during the reign of the Pahlavis. The history of the Kurdish novel *Karmamiz* (Gazelle) by ʿElî Ḥesenyanî from Iranian Kurdistan is a good example of the extra-linguistic problems which those trying to write and publish a Kurdish novel encounter. In a short introduction to the novel, the writer mentions that he first wrote this novel in Persian in Tehrān in 1964, when he was imprisoned due to his sympathy for the Kurdish question. Later, the manuscript vanished. After the Iranian Revolution, he wrote the novel again while he was fighting against the newly established Islamic Republic. The writer accidentally lost the not-yet-completed second manuscript in the strong current when he waded across the river Keļwê in Iranian Kurdistan. Ḥesenyanî started writing it for the third time. This time, his notes became the victim of a mortar in a village close to Hewşar, a region in Iranian Kurdistan. He did not give up, and wrote until he finished it in 1981 in a village near Mehabad. The life of this writer after finishing the novel is again a striking example of the hard conditions that he

[11] There were about 31 Kurdish novels published in Iraqi Kurdistan in the 1990s. The increasing publication of Kurdish novels has continued into the early years of the twenty-first century. During the first two years of the twenty-first century six Kurdish novels were published in Iraqi Kurdistan.

experienced. Due to family problems, he left the ranks of guerrillas and went back to Mehabad in 1983. Later he left Iran and sought asylum, first in Finland and later in Denmark. Still occupied with the process of getting asylum, he died of a heart attack in 1992.[12] He is buried in Hans Christian Anderson's graveyard in Copenhagen. Seven years after his death his novel was finally published in the Netherlands.[13]

Reḥîm Qazî, a Kurdish writer as well as politician from Iranian Kurdistan, can be considered the author of the first Kurdish novel in Sorani, at least according to the date of the publication of the novel. Nevertheless, the fortune of this writer and his book is no less interesting than the other mentioned books. At the time of the Democratic Republic of Kurdistan in 1946, the Kurdish authorities sent some young Kurdish boys to the former Soviet Union in order to educate them. Reḥîm Qazî was one of these young boys who studied there. He graduated with a Ph.D. in history. Because of the fall of the Kurdish Republic, he never went back to Kurdistan and instead remained in the USSR.[14] He wrote his novel, *Pêşmerge* (Partisan), in Baku. It was later published in Baghdād, in 1961. After the Iranian Revolution (1979) the Kurds of Iran, in addition to many journals and short stories, also published a series of novels.[15]

During the 1990s and early years of the third millennium, a number of Kurdish novels were published in Istanbul.[16] The small number of Kurdish novels that were published in Istanbul shows the important changes in Turkey. Earlier, one could hardly imagine the publication of Kurdish books there. The only Kurdish novel that was published in Turkey before the 1990s is one of Erebê Şemo's books, *Şivanê Kurd*, which was published in 1977 in Istanbul. Until 1990, the only novelists from Turkish Kurdistan were those in the diaspora. The same is true concerning the Syrian Kurds, who have not been able to publish any Kurdish novels in Syria. The appearance of Kurdish novels by Syrian Kurds was only possible in the diaspora. Bavê Nazê, a Kurdish writer who is from Syrian Kurdistan and who lives in Moscow, has written two novels: *Çiyayen Bi Xwinê Avdayî* (The mountains which are watered with blood) was first translated into Arabic and from Arabic into Russian. Its Russian translation was published in Moscow in 1981 (Kutlay 1996: 60). Its Kurdish version was later published in Stockholm in 1989. His other novel, *Stokholmê Te Çi Dîtîye Bêje* (What have you seen in Stockholm?), is a novel about the consequences of the murder of the Swedish Prime Minister, Olof Palme. Kutlay (1996: 61) names two other Syrian Kurdish novelists: Azad Bavê Şehîn, whose novel, *Yên Perîşan* (The poor) was published in Beirut in 1991 and Xemgîn Temo, whose novel, *Pala Bê Şop* (The traceless farmer) was

[12] Here, the author has not mentioned anything about his seeking asylum in Finland. In fact, before arriving in Denmark, he had sought asylum in Finland, where he stayed for a few years.

[13] This information is based on the epilogue which is written at the end of the novel by the publisher of the book, Ceʿfer Ḥusênpûr, a Kurdish poet who lives in Germany.

[14] After the Islamic Revolution in Iran, he went back to Iran, and after staying for a while in Kurdistan, he again went back to the Soviet Union, where he died 9 May 1991.

[15] The Iranian Kurds have also recently published five Kurdish novels in the diaspora. There are at present nine Kurdish novels published in Iranian Kurdistan.

[16] Among the Kurdish novelists whose novels are published in Istanbul one can name: Mehmet Uzun, Medenî Ferho, Riza Çolpan, Lokman Polat, Îbrahîm Seydo Aydoğan, Zeynelabidîn and Helîm Yûsiv, Mansûr Tural, Torî and Remezan Alan. Publishing centres such as 'Doz', 'Tîgrîs', 'Pêrî', 'Berfîn' and 'Avesta' in Istanbul have been active in publishing Kurdish books.

also published outside Kurdistan. Another Syrian Kurdish novelist, Helîm Yûsiv, who lives in Germany, published his novel *Sobarto* in Turkey in 1999.

The Kurdish diaspora provided distinctive opportunities for the development of the Kurdish novel.[17] In the case of the Kurds from Turkey there would not be any Kurdish novel if the facilities of the Kurdish diaspora did not exist. This has been a determining factor even in the case of the Kurds from Iraq and Iran, as far as the Kurdish novel is concerned. The high number of Kurds who have migrated has played a crucial role regarding Kurdish literature. Having been obliged to leave their homeland, the diaspora Kurds have tried to compensate their nostalgia and 'national duty' towards the homeland through an active contribution to the development of Kurdish culture in exile, which is, in Lord Acton's terms 'the nursery of nationality' (Anderson 1998: 59). Among the European countries which host the Kurds, Sweden has a special place as concerns the publication of Kurdish books and journals. In fact, Sweden, after Iraqi Kurdistan and the Caucasus Republics in the former Soviet Union, is where the highest level of Kurdish cultural activities are going on (Utas 1995: 24). It is in Sweden that the number of Kurdish writers is greater than the number in their own homeland (Tayfun 1998: 10).[18] The rate of the published Kurdish books, journals and periodicals and organised seminars and conferences in Sweden is higher than anywhere else in the world (Uzun 1996a: 3). The high level and influence of the Kurdish literature produced in Sweden is now referred to as 'the Swedish school of Kurdish literature' (Tayfun 1998: 42). The importance of Sweden for developing Kurdish into a modern literary language is clearly demonstrated by Bruinessen (1999a: 11) when he evaluates Sweden as a much more stimulating environment for Kurdish writers than Turkey 'even if the language had not been banned there'.

Among the Kurdish main dialects, Kurmanji is that which has mostly been privileged by the diaspora. In fact, Kurmanji is a dialect which has developed entirely within the diaspora (Kreyenbroek 1992: 68). 'Kurmanji, which had remained a relatively backward language (due, at least in part, to its suppression in Turkey), was developed into a modern literary language adequate for political and intellectual discourse' (Bruinessen 1992b: 66).

During the 1990s, a Kurdish publication centre in Stockholm, Nûdem, published nineteen novels in Kurdish (nine translated novels, two transliterated novels, and eight new novels written by Kurdish novelists). A general survey of twelve Kurdish publishers in Stockholm shows that they have published forty-six novels (fifteen translated novels, eight transliterated

[17] The importance of the diaspora in promoting the struggle to construct a distinct identity has been taken into consideration by significant theoreticians such as Benedict Anderson (1998) and Ernest Gellner (1994). Having been forced to leave their homeland, the diaspora communities try to generate 'long distance nationalism', which emerges as a result of the 'ethnicization' of political life in the wealthy post-industrial states (Anderson 1998: 73). For Gellner (1994: 101), diaspora nationalism is, as a matter of historical fact, 'a distinctive, very conspicuous and important sub-species of nationalism'. The absence of fertile bases such as 'industrial social organisation' and the elements of the Reformation, e.g. 'literacy, scriptualism and individualism' (*ibid.* 40) for the development of Kurdish nationalism in its homeland, has been compensated by the consequential and substantial role that diaspora Kurds have had in the enforcement of Kurdish nationalism. Bruinessen (1992b: 48) rightly mentions that Kurdish nationalism owes its mass appeal to social and economic upheavals and labour migration, factors for the creation of a nationalist movement as mentioned by Gellner.

[18] Tayfun's study is limited only to those Kurds who come from 'North Kurdistan', i.e. 'East and Southeast Anatolia' (p. 8).

novels, and twenty-three new novels written by Kurdish novelists) in Kurdish (Kurmanji) during the 1980s and 1990s. There are forty-two Kurdish novels in Kurmanji. Most of these books are published within the diaspora, largely in Sweden. Terming the diaspora the main home of the Kurdish novel can be well justified given the high number of novels published there during a time when no Kurdish novel was published in Turkish Kurdistan. This was the first time in the history of Kurdish literature that the number of the novels had risen to such a high level. As far as the available sources show, there are twenty-two Kurdish novels published in Sorani in the diaspora, especially in Sweden, seventeen of these novels were published in the1990s. Seventeen of these novels were written by Kurds from Iraq.

There were hardly any novels translated into Kurdish before the emergence of the Kurdish novel. Thus, the Kurdish novel is the product of those polyglot Kurdish writers who knew other languages. The Kurdish novel, like Kurdish nationalism, was a reaction to the new nation-states which were being established and which were constructing their identities through suppressing non-desired identities, including the Kurds. The considerable development of the Kurdish novel during the last decade of the twentieth century parallels to the flourishing of Kurdish nationalism and its political successes. The Kurdish diaspora, which is itself a result of Kurdish nationalism in those countries where the Kurds live, has had the most determining role in the rise and development of the Kurdish novel.

Altogether, the last two decades of the twentieth century witnessed an increasing number of Kurdish novels, both in Kurdistan and in the diaspora. While in the late 1980s it was extremely hard to list more than a dozen Kurdish novels, now, only a decade later, there are more than a hundred Kurdish novels.[19] The quantitative increase of Kurdish novels has reached such a point that a Kurdish literary critic, Bêgerd (1999a: 220), calls it an anarchic period of novel writing. The development of Kurdish novels during the 1990s is not only quantitative, but also qualitative. A general comparison between early Kurdish novels and those which have been published recently, albeit not all of them, shows a movement from simple structures to much more intricate ones. The modern Kurdish novelists have changed the direction of narrating the stories from a plain and simple traditional manner to a more literary and modern one. This maturity is evidently a result of the more and more frequent acquaintance with the techniques of modern Western art and literature (Bêgerd 1999b: 221).

Statelessness as the main theme of the Kurdish novel

The Kurdish novel, like Kurdish nationalism, is generally occupied with the aims and objectives of the fragmented Kurdish politics and national identity. Kurdish nationalism and the underdeveloped condition of Kurdish societies did not assist the emergence of the Kurdish novel, which did not emerge until the late decades of the twentieth century.[20] The Kurdish novel generally

[19] Bois (1986: 484), in his highly informative article in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, published in 1986, writes that 'the true novel, as it is understood in the West, does not yet really exist in Kurdish literature.' There is now enough contrary evidence to claim decisively that the true 'novel really exists in Kurdish literature'.

[20] As was earlier mentioned, the first Kurdish novels were written by the Kurds from the former Soviet Union in the 1930s in the Cyrillic alphabet. The emergence of the Kurdish novel at such

narrates the desires and longings of the Kurds for a free and sovereign identity. In almost all of the Kurdish novels examined here, the traces of love for Kurdistan and its misfortunes are common themes. The existence of strong national feelings and the straightforward allusions to Kurdistan are among the obvious features of the Kurdish novel. In other words, the Kurdish novel generally follows its inspiring source, i.e. Kurdish nationalism and its unrealised demands.

The world of the Kurdish novels is first of all characterised by their attention to the situation of the Kurds as a people who suffer from not having a country. The fight of the Kurds for their democratic national rights and their search for a land of their own are clearly reflected in all the novels. The question of identity is first of all related to national identity. The idea of language has been frequently pointed out as a factor which makes the Kurds different from others. Political issues are also mainly related to the idea of the country/homeland and the fight for its liberation. In all of the Kurdish novels there are signs of a war. Political questions, which have not been solved using peaceful means, have paved the way for the ongoing and heavy wars between the Kurds and the official governments of the countries where they live. The condition of the women in all of the novels indicates the patriarchal relationships in the Kurdish societies. The lack of any democratic norm and the current struggle for the national question has widely influenced the condition of the women. Religion and religious beliefs in most of the Kurdish novels do not go beyond the traditional rituals of daily life. It is only in *Êwarey Perwane* that the signs of a fanatic and fundamental political Islam are shown. The characters of the Kurdish novels are mostly involved in a fight against external enemies who deny their national existence and identity. These characters, who are idealised by their fellow citizens, mostly act as heroes and rarely expose any inner conflicts. In the end of most of the Kurdish novels, there are clear signs of the continuity of the struggle to liberate the homeland.

The most central question in the world of the Kurdish novels is the question of identity, which is highly politicised. Here, the central governments are considered enemies of the Kurds. In the Kurdish novels, the aim of the struggle is shaped by the reality that the rights of the Kurds and their own identity, as an ethnic or national group, have been denied. In all Kurdish novels one finds the traces of an ongoing war. In *Koç* (Migration) and *Tarmayî Heļebce* (The shadow of Helebje) the effects and consequences of the first Gulf War are narrated. In *Jiyan be Dem Ziryanewe* (Life in the wind) and *Karmamiz* (Gazelle) the fight of the Kurdish guerrillas against the Iranian government is described in detail. In *Dirk û Guļ* (Thorn and flower) the patriotic love of the Kurds and their struggle for liberty are the main themes of the novel. The highest level of their patriotism is referred to when a Kurdish mother has to leave her hometown, Silêmanî, to live in Baghdād. The traces of loving Kurdistan and trying to live there can also be seen in the life of those Kurds who have left Kurdistan and live in the West. In *Komeļe Şaxê Berz û* ... (A range of high mountains and ...) and *Rawemasî* (Fishing) one sees how the

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an early stage was mainly because of the policy of the Soviet authorities to provide possibilities for the promotion of the rights of minorities, including the Kurds. Despite their historical importance, these novels, due to many political, ideological and practical reasons, were seldom distributed among the Kurds in other parts of Kurdistan. It was only after 1975 that some of these novels gradually appeared in Sorani with Arabic orthography, and later in Kurmanji with Latin orthography.

exiled Kurds physically live in the West while mentally always finding themselves in their homeland, which suffers from her enemies.

Concerning the gender of the writers it should be pointed out that there are only a small number of woman novelists among the Kurdish authors. Bearing in mind that women have had a unique role in the emergence of the European novel, both as writers and as readers, the weak presence of women novelists is a matter of discussion. At present one woman novelist, Gelawêj, has published three novels in Kurdish (all of them in the diaspora), albeit not successful ones. There are two other Kurdish women novelists: Mehabad Qeredaġî, who is primarily known as a poet, published her novel in Sweden, and Nesrîn Ceʿferî, a Kurdish novelist from Iranian Kurdistan, published her novel *Biļînd û Newî* (The high and the low) in 1998 in Mehabad. These novels have not drawn much attention. As far as the presence of the women characters in the world of the Kurdish novels are concerned, they suffer from the patriarchal nature of Kurdish societies. Frank evidence of such a patriarchal system is clearly seen in *Tarmayî Heļebce* (The shadow of Helebje) and *Ḥesar...û Segekanî Bawkim* (The yard ... and my father's dogs). However, there are some noteworthy signs of the presence of women involved in the struggle for change. In most of the Kurdish novels, especially in *Ronî Mîna Evînê Tarî Mîna Mirinê* (Light like love, dark like death), *Şar* (The city), *Êwarey Perwane* (Perwane's evening), *Jiyan Bedem Ziryanewe* (Life in the wind) and *Koç* (Migration), there are women who actively take part in politics. However, despite their active presence, they are always overshadowed by men.

The portrayal of mothers in the Kurdish novels reveals an interesting point as far as the lack of a nation-state is concerned. In Kurdish cultural beliefs it is the mother who symbolises the homeland,[21] and it is noteworthy to look at the way that mothers are described in the world of the Kurdish novels. In *Janî Gel* the mother dies giving birth. In *Şar* the mother dies of an illness and her child, Miryem, is brought up by another woman who is not even her relative. In *Goļî Şoŕan* the mother, after the death of her husband, plays no role at all finding herself alone and powerless. In *Êwarey Perwane* the mother is too sick and handicapped to do anything. Here, even her own children plan to kill her. In *Ronî Mîna Evînê Tarî Mîna Mirinê* the mother is killed and the protagonist has never seen his mother; the role of the mother is played by a prostitute. As a result, one can hardly see any functioning role at all for the mothers in the Kurdish novels. Remembering that the mother symbolises the homeland in Kurdish cultural beliefs, it is not accidental that the mothers in the world of the Kurdish novels are so passive and deprived. The lack of a Kurdish homeland is in fact shown through the helpless mothers. In *Ronî Mîna Evînê Tarî Mîna Mirinê* the only character who does not have a real name is the woman who functions as the mother of the protagonist of the story. She is only referred to as 'Mader', i.e. mother. In *Jiyan Bedem Ziryanewe* (Life in the wind) the mother is jailed and dies soon after having been released. In *Koç* (Migration) the mother is killed and her baby is left alone.

In all of the Kurdish novels discussed within this paper, the idea of country is vague, although there are always obvious references to Kurdistan and the Kurds. In *Sobarto* one sees the interrelationship of the political and military events in different parts of Kurdistan. While *Sobarto* represents the Kurds and

[21] In Kurdish, the homeland is referred to as 'Daykî nîştîman' (The mother of the country). 'Kurdistan', referred to as female entity, is adopted as a female name.

their land, i.e. 'we', those who do not belong to this geography, i.e. *Sobarto*, play the role of the 'others'. However, the borderlines of 'Sobarto' are rarely identified. The fragmented aspects of the Kurdish society can be seen in *Mergî Taqaney Dûhem* (The death of the second only child) where a tornado shakes a building and the war between two brothers covers the entire story. In *Rêga* (The way) we hear from one of the main characters that all parts of Kurdistan form a country which is divided by the enemies. In *Ronî Mîna Evînê Tarî Mîna Mirinê*, the reference has taken on a metaphorical feature and 'Kurdistan' is symbolised by the 'Mountain Country'. However the 'Kurdistan' referred to in the Kurdish novels does not have a defined geography or a juridico-political status. On the other hand, the repeated reference to Kurdistan in the Kurdish novels originates from the fact that the Kurdish imagined community and its juridico-political reality is still far from being realised. In *Biļind û Newî* (The high and the low), which is a historical novel, the author narrates the events of a battle which was imposed by the Safavid king Shāh ʿAbbās on the Kurds who decisively defended their land. It is interesting to note that the father's defeat in the battle was avenged by one of his sons, who at the time of the battle was only an infant. Here again, the continuous wars of the Kurds against the enemies are referred to.

In *Janî Gel* 'Kurdayetî', i.e. Kurdish nationalism and fighting for the rights of the Kurds, is frequently mentioned. 'Wiļat' (land, country) is also pointed out in the story. However, this 'wiļat' is occupied by an enemy who has denied the Kurds all of their national rights. In *Şar* there are references to different parts of Kurdistan. Despite the fact that the referenced parts of Kurdistan, i.e. Iranian Kurdistan and Iraqi Kurdistan, are under the sovereignty of Iran and Iraq, they are mentioned as parts of the same unity, i.e. Kurdistan. The fact that two major characters of the novel originate from Bane in Iranian Kurdistan, but now live in Silêmanî in Iraqi Kurdistan, and the fact that they have strongly feelings about both parts of Kurdistan, show that the official borders have not resulted in dividing the Kurds as far as their national feelings towards the imagined community is concerned. In *Goļî Şoŕan* the protagonist of the novel, Las, comes back after fifteen years to his 'wiļat' (land). It is not clear where it is as far as its geographical and juridico-political boundaries are concerned. In *Êwarey Perwane* the explicit mention of the Kurds and Kurdistan is frequent. However, in spite of this there is difficulty in placing its real borders. In the words of one of the characters, Nesredîn, Kurdistan is the world of hundreds of thousands of villages which have vanished in the labyrinth of a cruel nature. On another occasion Nesredîn says that everything in this land, i.e. Kurdistan, is mirage, its history, is nothing more than a cloud of dust and its borders, due to its enemies and even its own superstitions, are not clear. In the statements of some other characters of *Êwarey Perwane* there are obvious references to the desire of a land with defined borders. In *Ronî Mîna Evînê Tarî Mîna Mirinê* the idea of country is one of the main themes of the novel. The 'Mountain Country', a clear allusion to Kurdistan, has been referred to using different expressions on different occasions, e.g. the 'black land', the 'forgotten land', the 'forlorn and poor country', the country of 'father and grandfathers' and the 'occupied country'.

Both the emergence and development and the themes of the Kurdish novel are strongly interwoven with the Kurdish nationalism. The late emergence of the Kurdish novel and its fragmented features are clear indications of the statelessness of the Kurds. In fact, the Kurdish novel is mostly characterised

by a strong nationalist discourse.[22] In other words, the search for national identity and longing for a Kurdish homeland are strongly reflected in the Kurdish novel. Thus, it can be concluded that Kurdish narrative discourse accompanies Kurdish nationalism as it strives towards objectifying its aims, rather than consolidating a nationalism imposed from above by a nation-state authority. It seems that the Kurdish novel is necessarily linked to Kurdish nationalism and that the fortune of the Kurdish novel is mainly related to the aspirations of Kurdish nationalism. This in turn is enhanced by the Kurdish novel, whose development increasingly parallels socio-political progress in Kurdistan and among the Kurds in the diaspora. The late rise of the Kurdish novel and the lack of any considerable written literary heritage have not hindered it from making its way towards reaching a reasonably high standard of literary quality.

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[22] It is noteworthy to refer to Anderson's (1998: 335) argument concerning the existing affinity between the novel and the rise of nations. According to Anderson (*ibid.*), in his revised theory originating from *Imagined Communities*, the intimate relationship between the novel and the nation becomes strained in the second half of the twentieth century. However, Anderson's argument does not concern the novel in the case of stateless nations. The case of the Kurdish novel shows that its affinity to the nation is still intact. In fact, the case of stateless nations, including the Kurds, provides a valuable source for more studies regarding the function and features of the novelistic discourse and its affinity to the national question.

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The Urban Bourgeoisie and the Colonial State

The Iraqi and Syrian Middle Classes between the Two World Wars

PETER SLUGLETT

In the aftermath of the First World War, and later on in the 1920s, several different kinds of state came into existence in the Middle East, thus adding to the already bewildering roster of political formations in place in the region. Thus, Tunisia and Morocco had been French (and in the case of Morocco, also Spanish) protectorates since 1882 and 1910, respectively; Algeria, which had been gradually conquered by France since the 1830s, was administered as part of metropolitan France, with settlers represented in the Chamber of Deputies in Paris. Libya had been an Italian colony since 1910; Egypt had been (*de facto* since 1882 and *de jure* since 1914) a British protectorate, but emerged as a semi-independent state by 1923; Turkey became an independent republic in 1923. Under the San Remo Agreement in April 1920, the (Greater) Syrian and Iraqi provinces of the Ottoman empire which the Ottomans had still ruled in 1914 were officially divided into five states, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Syria and Transjordan, which were assigned to the tutelage of Britain and France in a new form of dependence, the mandate system, under the overall aegis of the newly created League of Nations.

With the exception of republican Turkey, these different formations can all be considered 'colonial states', in the sense that the state structures in place in the mid-1920s were primarily intended to serve the economic and political interests of a particular colonial power, as well as having the subsidiary but, in the case of the mandates, explicitly stated, purpose of preparing the territory concerned for independence. As Nazih Ayubi[1] has pointed out, 'the state' is a relative newcomer to the Middle East, both institutionally and conceptually (Ayubi 1995: 4). This newness has evidently not affected its durability, since even the seductions of pan-Arab nationalism have not prevented Middle Eastern states from surviving the transition from 'colonialism' (in the broadest

[1] For various theoretical approaches to the study of the state in the Middle East, see Ayubi (1995); see also Luciani (1990) and Owen (2000).

The Role of the State in West Asia, ed. Annika Rabo and Bo Utas, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, Transactions, vol. 14 (Stockholm, 2005), pp. 77–90.

sense) to independence more or less intact. Apart from the special case of the expansion of Israel outside its boundaries to control territories that originally formed part of its neighbours' domains, the only significant border changes in the region have been transfer of the Sanjak of Alexandretta from Syria to Turkey in 1938 and the merger of the former two Yemens into a single state in 1990.

Although a complicated and many-faceted concept, the theory of the *state* as defined by various political philosophers (Marx, Weber, Gramsci) is reasonably straightforward for unitary states (France, Belgium), but less so both for 'dependent' states (especially in Central and South America) and for colonial states, where the economic and political agenda is simultaneously local and extra-territorial. The economies of late nineteenth/early twentieth century Argentina and Chile, for instance, were not autonomous 'national economies' in comparison with contemporary Spain or Holland or even the Ottoman empire, since they were so greatly affected both by British economic activity locally and by developments elsewhere in the global economy. Of course, this is a very large discussion which need not detain us here, except to point to some of the pitfalls inherent in any discussion of 'state' and 'bourgeoisie' in the colonial context. Thus a 'colonial bourgeoisie' is bound to possess less 'agency' than the 'national bourgeoisie' of an independent state. In addition, in the mandated states which form the subject of this essay, there was neither a settler bourgeoisie formed by nationals from the metropolis (as in, say, Morocco) nor a particularly large number of resident foreign nationals playing an influential role in the economy (as in, say, Egypt).

In general, it is quite difficult to define *class* in the colonial state with any rigour, since social and economic roles are almost always blurred, fluid and transitional, as well as being affected in a variety of ways by the state's relations with the metropolitan power. The bourgeoisie or 'middle class' is particularly elusive, since – especially in the inter-war Middle Eastern states under discussion – its members and functions are so amorphous. At one end of the class structure stand the great Syrian and Iraqi landlords, import and export merchants, together with the traditional bankers, moneylenders and old and new industrialists. At the other end stand the peasants, artisans, industrial workers and the unemployed urban masses, most of whose situations had changed dramatically – often for the worse – since the arrival of full blown capitalism in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In the middle stands ... who? This paper is an attempt to show how the mandatory regimes in Iraq and Syria affected, and of course greatly expanded, the existing 'middle classes' in both states, and affected the relations of this burgeoning group with the colonial (and briefly the post-colonial) state.[2]

Social structure in the 'Fertile Crescent' in the last years of Ottoman rule

The states of Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Syria and Transjordan were first created *de facto* as a result of the wartime military and diplomatic activity of Britain (and of France, though very much as a junior partner), and then formally through the San Remo agreement in April 1920. They were profoundly shaped by their shared Ottoman past, and had many features in common, although there was probably nowhere quite as remote (and thus as

[2] I have profited from the discussion of 'middle class' in Parker 1998.

far from the purview of central government) in 'Greater Syria' as the Iraqi marshlands or the mountains of Kurdistan. Again, the Syrian coast and its immediate hinterland had been almost completely incorporated into the world economy for most of the nineteenth century, while much of upper and central Iraq, and Transjordan, had only begun to be profoundly affected by the *international economy* after the 1880s.[3] It is necessary, therefore, to give some impression of the main features of class and social structure in the Arab provinces at the end of the Ottoman period, bearing in mind that the nineteenth century itself had witnessed a series of rapid and multi-faceted social and economic changes.

Here we are better informed about Lebanon and Syria than we are about Iraq. There is no equivalent for Baghdad of al-Qasimi's *Qamus al-sina'at al-Shamiyya*, an index/encyclopaedia of 437 Damascene trades and manufactures, or the semi-official *Dalil Suriya wa Misr al-Tujjari* (1324/1908),[4] which lists the names of bankers and moneychangers, and traders and manufacturers by commodity, in Egypt and in Aleppo, Beirut and Damascus. It is generally recognized that the traditionally gloomy picture of the inland cities of Syria in the latter part of the nineteenth century needs to be made more nuanced, in terms both of the details of the apparently negative effects on the traditional economy and of the timing of change – that is, that some sectors were less affected than others, and some experienced recovery or reconstitution, or both.[5] Consular reports and other sources give a fair idea of the number of looms in operation in particular years, and of the number of people employed in textiles and other sectors of manufacturing industry. The lists and financial standing of members of the various chambers of commerce and industry are also useful in tracing the upward (or downward) trajectories of individuals and firms through the mandate and independence period.

Adopting traditional Ottoman classification, we should probably begin with the *'ulama'*, for whom the nineteenth century had been a period of particularly tumultuous change, involving the serious questioning of traditional values. The *'ulama'* were not only 'religious professionals' but also, in a much broader sense, the 'men of the pen', who formed the core of the legal and educational professions.[6] Four principal external forces had particularly influenced the *'ulama'*: first, the Wahhabi movement, and its 'intellectual spin-off', the *salafiyya* movement, which advocated a spectrum of reforms advocating a return to an idealised vision of early Islamic society; secondly, the Tanzimat reforms, one of whose effects was to bring about profound changes in the nature of the teaching and judicial professions; thirdly, if more peripherally, the 'Islamic modernism' of 'Abduh, Afghani and their followers, which stressed free will and freedom of choice, harking back, in some sense, to the Mu'tazilite movement under the early 'Abbasids, sometimes represented

[3] There is a good deal of controversy surrounding this; see various recent accounts of 'pre-capitalist capitalism' in the region, including Doumani (1995), Fattah (1997) and Khoury (1997).

[4] For a discussion of the *Dalil*, see Sluglett (2002: 144–157).

[5] '[T]his did not mean that industrial output declined. On the contrary, Damascus' industry on the whole experienced a period of relative prosperity after 1880 thanks to the increasing number of local clients and also as the result of easier connections to the regional market' (Peter 2003). See also Quataert (1993).

[6] What follows is based on Hourani (1990).

as a form of 'Islamic Protestantism';[7] and finally the 'advent of modernity' throughout the period.

Some members of the *'ulama'* eagerly embraced the changes, while others resisted them. The 'dilemmas' confronting the religious elite of Greater Syria and Iraq were partly resolved with the fall of the empire, the creation of the mandated states and the abolition of the caliphate in 1924. These developments led to the setting up (or the confirmation) of 'national' structures for the religious profession,[8] and, in time, to the voiding of law and education of much of their Islamic content in the legal and educational systems of the new states. Obviously, this is a much more complex issue than this brief discussion allows, but one fairly widespread consequence was that around the turn of the century, and even more so after the First World War, educated young men were no longer as interested as they had been in the past in following the various stages of a traditional Islamic education. Instead, they chose first to qualify, and then to teach, in the new secular national educational systems, or to become career civil servants, lawyers, doctors, engineers, architects and so on.

Throughout the Ottoman Empire, but especially in the Arab provinces, the growth of private ownership of land was a major and highly consequential phenomenon of the second half of the nineteenth century. This is a large topic,[9] but suffice it to say that although a private property regime had gradually been evolving *de facto* since the end of the eighteenth century, the Ottoman Land Law of 1858 was the first legal instrument to validate the private ownership of *agricultural* land[10] by granting title deeds to those who could prove continuous occupation and/or usufruct over a given period of time. In contrast to the situation in Western and Northern Europe, where large landowners generally spent a good part of the year on their estates, both old and new landlords in the Fertile Crescent were almost always, or soon became, town-dwelling absentees. Some were tribal shaykhs, whose registration of the tribal lands in their own names effectively turned 'their' tribesmen into serfs; others were townsmen who had been accustomed to lending money to villagers to enable them to pay their taxes, and now decided to take possession of the lands which had been pledged as security for the unfortunate villagers' debts. Particularly in Syria and Lebanon, this kind of indebtedness and its consequences was a major reason for the widespread emigration of villagers to North and South America at the end of the nineteenth century. Another important category of 'new landlords' consisted of educated members of the urban middle classes who knew how to take advantage of the new legislation. For example, a succession of members of the al-Jabiri family in Aleppo

[7] In the sense of 'faith based on reason as well as revelation'.

[8] The Ottoman state had always appointed its own 'religious officials', and the *Shaykh al-Islam* appointed provincial qadis and muftis. The initiative for these appointments devolved *de facto* to the religious authorities in the new states, or occasionally directly to the colonial authorities. The nomination of Hajj Amin al-Husyani as *mufti* of Jerusalem by the British mandatory authorities over the heads of far better qualified candidates is probably the best known example, but in a comparable manner, the French High Commission created a Shi'i council for Lebanon *ab initio*; the sect had not enjoyed official status under the Ottomans.

[9] For a more detailed discussion, see Farouk-Sluglett and Sluglett (1984: 409–424); Farouk-Sluglett and Sluglett (1983: 491–505).

[10] The distinction is important. Urban real estate, market gardens, vineyards and so on formed a distinct category in Islamic law, and their acquisition as private property had always been permissible through purchase or inheritance. Land used for cereal cultivation was subject to a different legal regime.

directed the local *tapu* or land registration office in the city from the time of its inauguration in the early 1860s until 1914, during which the family's land acquisitions rose spectacularly.

Between the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, the man/land ratio of cultivable land was generally fairly favourable. Although the agricultural prospects of both Iraq and Syria turned out to be less brilliant than British and French propaganda had asserted during the First World War, there was certainly no shortage of land. A former landlord acquaintance remembers sending trucks to scour northern Syria in search of hands to help bring in the harvest in the 1940s. The 'merchant-tractorists'[11] of Aleppo were prominent in the development of the Syrian Jazira in the late 1930s and 1940s, with Armenian drivers using tractor-driven ploughs to compensate for the lack of farm labourers. Hence, while much of the land that became part of large estates in the interwar period was 'land of ancient settlement', it was also the case during this period that much new land came under the plough. The mandate and early independence governments granted generous tax breaks to anyone putting 'dead' or uncultivated land to work, often undertaken, in Iraq and northern Syria, with the aid of mechanical irrigation pumps (whose unrestricted use over the next decades was to become a major factor in the decline of Iraqi agricultural productivity). While some of the beneficiaries of this general trend towards the consolidation of large estates were undoubtedly members of the group which Batatu has characterised as 'the Old Social Classes' (Batatu 1978) many, both in Syria and Iraq, came from much newer money. Most of the Iraqi officers who had served with Faysal in the Hijaz and then took political or bureaucratic office – and often gained access to cheap land in the process – under the mandate and monarchy were from middle or lower middle class backgrounds. Again, as Linda Schilcher demonstrates (Schatkowski Schilcher 1985), many of the Damascenes who were prominent in the national movement until the late 1950s were from families who were relatively unknown in the late nineteenth century, and had thus made their fortunes in the recent past. Again, although the most obvious consequence of the 1858 Land Law and the legislation of the mandatory period was the growth of *large* estates, a number of more modest individuals also benefitted from the Law. A survey of landholding in Syria shows that over 8,000 individuals owned estates of more than 100 hectares at the time of the land reform of 1958, a rather larger number than the conventional figure of 'fifty families' suggests.

Finally, a major if unintended consequence of the Tanzimat in the nineteenth century which at least partly accounts for the rise in the number of 'new upstarts' was the expansion of the Ottoman bureaucracy (Roded 1984: 63–94). The judicial, fiscal and bureaucratic structures that evolved (in response to major pieces of legislation such as, *inter alia,* the Land Law of 1858, the Law of Vilayets of 1864 and the major reform of civil law, the *Mecelle*, in 1876) gradually came to require more and more locals who had either received a modern, that is secular, education, or were otherwise prepared to adapt themselves to the requirements of government employment (the so-called *effendiyya*, whom we shall discuss later, although I am not certain how early the term came to be in general use). While the Tanzimat had

[11] The phrase is Doreen Warriner's (Warriner 1948). It is slightly misleading, in the sense that the Ajuris, Mambarbashis and other leading Aleppine families bought the tractors and paid Armenians to drive them, rather than driving the tractors themselves!

been directed principally towards stopping or at least tempering the 'ascendancy of [the] local power groups' (Douwes 2000: 63) that had so weakened the empire in the period between the 1780s and the 1820s, the fact that many more local individuals were required to carry out a wide variety of governmental functions in the latter part of the nineteenth century meant, paradoxically, that in some ways the broad attempts to centralise did not always have that precise effect. A register of Ottoman civil officials for Aleppo in 1858 lists only 20 individuals, including the governor-general, the treasurer, and the *qadi,* while the provincial *salnames* of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries contain lists of employees spreading over several pages.[12]

Hence, although it is not possible to do justice to the process here, it can safely be asserted that by the beginning of the twentieth century the socio-economic landscape of the Ottoman Arab provinces had undergone a series of rapid and far-reaching transformations, and, importantly, that these transformations dated from the relatively recent past. I have not mentioned Lebanon, whose own special regime, the *mutasarrifiya*, between 1861 and 1915, had the effect of largely 'protecting' the area from many of the major currents ebbing and flowing in the rest of the empire, but also helped to create a sense of patriotism and local nationalism unique in the area at the time.[13]

All these developments, of course, came to an abrupt halt with the outbreak of the First World War, the great watershed in the history of the area. The traditional view of the Arab national movement has the Ottoman Arab provinces straining for their freedom from Istanbul from various dates in the latter part of the nineteenth century, but it is doubtful that this account is entirely accurate. First, the reality of Ottoman rule had not been the straightforward dominance of one ethnic group over 'the others', as was the case in, say, the French or Russian empires. Even in its latter days, the Ottoman empire's principal source of legitimacy, at least among most of its Muslim subjects, was the same as that of other 'Muslim states', that is, that it attempted, however imperfectly, to create the necessary political and socio-economic conditions under which, or against the backdrop of which, the good Muslim life could be lived. In contrast with the various populations of the Balkans where Muslims formed a minority, and which became increasingly susceptible to appeals to various shared ethno-linguistic and religious identities in the course of the nineteenth century, the majority of the population of the Arab provinces was generally prepared to accept the legitimacy of the empire.[14] There were only a very few loud or organised pressures for anything beyond a degree of decentralisation before the empire's sudden demise at the end of the First World War, and even these were insignificant before 1908–1909 (Kayali 1997).[15]

[12] These employees were often related to each other (see Yazbak 1998).

[13] This occured as a result of the massacres of Christians in 1860 (see Akarli 1996).

[14] The existence of opposition movements attempting to temper the absolutism of the latter years of 'Abd al-Hamid does not contradict this assertion; these movements almost always aimed at reforming the system rather than overthrowing it. The *nahdha*, the Arab literary renaissance of the latter part of the nineteenth century, was more concerned with rescuing or extolling the cultural heritage of the Arab past than with political agitation for a different kind of Arab present.

[15] Cf also '...the empire, for most Muslims and even some Christians, was simply seen as the only remaining political force capable of forestalling European colonial ambitions' (Masters 2001: 176).

At least until 1908, all but a handful of Muslims and Christians in the Arab provinces (the Balkan provinces had already gained their independence) remained generally committed to the ideals of Ottomanism, *Osmanlilik,* which extolled the virtues of membership in a multi-ethnic and multi-national state, and it was only the empire's collapse in 1918 that meant that this commitment could no longer be sustained. In addition, the end of the empire did not come about as the result of the end of a protracted struggle for colonial freedom, nor could it have been long foreseen. The Young Turk government had in no sense been *obliged* to throw in its lot with the Central Powers in 1914; furthermore, if the Ottomans had decided to make peace with France and England in, say, 1917, it would have been difficult for the Entente powers to have insisted on dismantling the empire. In other words, there was nothing *inevitable* which might have led to the assumption that the empire would collapse (or that it would collapse so suddenly and finally) and be replaced by a political order based on the creation of a series of states on the Westphalian model.

Two vital aspects of the war and its aftermath were, first, the economic privations that these years brought in their train, and second, that the creation of the new states transformed a regional economy (in which there had been, certainly, a number of irksome local tariffs) into a series of rather small national economies, putting major barriers to free trade within a region where few had previously existed. During the war, Syria and Lebanon suffered famine conditions, graphically described by Elizabeth Thompson (2000), in which tens of thousands died of hunger, partly as a result of Ottoman requisitioning (associated with the regime of Jamal Pasha in Beirut) and of the general collapse of the local as well as the wider Ottoman economy, but also partly because of the Allied naval blockade off the Syrian coast.

After the war, the newly created states of Syria and Iraq had little geopolitical or economic rationale. Their two major northern cities, Aleppo and Mosul, had traded with each other and with their hinterlands in central and south-eastern Anatolia, rather than with Damascus and Baghdad, which now became their capitals. The arrival of tens of thousands of penniless Armenian refugees in Aleppo contributed to the city's economic decline, but it began to recover some of its pre-war prosperity by the end of the 1920s. Even so, the creation of the Turkish Republic, and Turkey's determination to plough its own economic furrow, meant that Aleppo was permanently severed from its 'natural' economic hinterland to its north and north-east.

The end of the Ottoman Empire and the formation of the mandates

When the Ottoman Empire was defeated in 1918, the socio-political structures of the Arab provinces underwent a series of major sea changes. Although the 'traditional arrangements' had already been somewhat altered by the upheavals surrounding the Young Turk revolution in 1908-09, the situation and function of the notables described by Albert Hourani had remained more or less what it had been since the middle of the previous century, at least until that point. The notables, in broad terms, were the Sunni Muslim landowning elite (some of whom had taken important positions in the Tanzimat bureaucracy), part of whose social and political function was to act as a dual-directional filter between the Ottoman state and those elements of the local population whom it was necessary to appease, conciliate, galvanise or otherwise accommodate. Although members of this 'class' seem to have had

relatively little consciousness of or solidarity with their counterparts elsewhere in the empire, some movement in this general direction may have been encouraged by, for example, the foundation of prestigious secondary schools in Istanbul to which elite families sent their sons, the reinstitution of the Ottoman parliament, and (with the limitations already described) the embryonic Arab nationalist movement. Other forms of empire-wide class-based organisation (labour unions, professional associations) had not yet come into existence.[16]

This goes some way to explain the magnitude of the post-war upheaval, during which most of the old linkages, though by no means all of the old ways of doing business, suddenly disappeared. For those who continued to be involved, or who became newly involved, new relationships had to be forged, not only between the elites and the colonial regime, but within and among an elite of very different composition. In the mandated states, the focus of power and authority switched from the old imperial capital (Istanbul) to a new hierarchy operating from new local capitals and under a set of rules drawn up in Paris and London. As well as creating new structures, the new lines on the map created new sub-sets of relationships whose implications local political actors gradually had to learn and within which they became obliged to manoeuvre. In addition, in order to function at all, the new national states and new national economies required substantial numbers of graduates from various levels of the 'modern' educational sector, for a variety of purposes: the civil service, the teaching profession, banking, intra-regional and 'foreign' trade and of course the military. It was not that such employment did not exist before, but, presaging the structures of the 'revolutionary states' of the 1950s and 1960s, (heavily influenced by the command economies of the Soviet Union and the countries of eastern Europe), the new states gradually became *the* major employer of salaried workers, a development which greatly added to the ranks of 'the middle classes'.

At many levels of generalisation, the structures created by Britain and France in Iraq and Syria were similar, given the peculiar exigencies and the simultaneous imposition of the mandate system. It is also possible to view the Middle East mandates as resembling other colonial non-settler polities, where a small elite of 'collaborators' was chosen and fostered to do the imperial powers' bidding and assist in the pacification of the territory or the most efficient extraction of the surplus. But this would be to oversimplify, and also to play down the very different styles of the imperial powers which created and administered the mandated states.[17]

In addition, the areas which became mandatory Iraq and mandatory Syria had undergone very different experiences between 1914 and 1920. Perhaps the most salient difference was that by 1920 Britain had been in Iraq for some six years, and had created a civil and military administration on Indian lines, gradually extending British control northwards from Basra (22 November 1914) and, after many vicissitudes, to Baghdad (11 March 1917) and eventually to Mosul (3 November 1918).[18] In Greater Syria, in contrast, the Ottoman civil authorities remained at their posts for most of the war.

[16] The Sufi orders, although they did function at an empire-wide level, were expressions of a different kind of solidarity; it does not seem sensible to include them here.

[17] For the general parameters within which French colonial policy operated, see Aldrich (1996). See also Sluglett (2003).

[18] For a new interpretation of the mechanisms of the Iraqi mandate, see Dodge (2003).

Jerusalem was captured by the British in December 1917, and nine more months elapsed before the capture of Damascus on 2 October 1918. Most of the local elite had little time to prepare for the realities of British and French occupation; few 'Syrians', apart from the Maronite bourgeoisie of Beirut, were particularly inclined to accept France as their protector; in fact, a rather larger number favoured some sort of connection with Britain. In Damascus and Aleppo, only a very small group consisting of those already disposed to support Faysal ibn Husayn exhibited any very great enthusiasm for the permanent establishment of an Arab kingdom under his rule (Gelvin 1994: 645–61; Gelvin 1997), since the majority of Syrians, insofar as they had thought about it at all, saw no reason why they should not rule themselves after the Ottomans' sudden departure.

In addition, it was not until September 1919, preceded by months of bitter recriminations, that Britain declared unequivocally that it would remove its army from Syria, a move which finally opened the gate to full-fledged French occupation. It was only at this point, some five years after British troops had landed in southern Iraq, that France took control of the interior of Syria. Other uncertainties also persisted; Mustafa Kemal's establishment of the Turkish Republic still had the capacity to attract the favourable attention of prominent Aleppines until the end of the 1920s, and it was not until the middle of 1925 that the League of Nations' boundary commissioners came down unequivocally on the question of (what are now) the boundaries between Turkey and Iraq.

The middle class under the mandate

The middle class is the 'class in transition' *par excellence*, and its nature and composition varies substantially over both time and space. As in all third world countries, the Iraqi and Syrian middle classes expanded enormously during and after the mandate/colonial period, largely, as I have suggested, in response to the secular requirements of the colonial state. Furthermore, since the 'colonial status' of the mandates was professedly temporary, there was a determined attempt, perhaps more in the British than in the French mandates, to recruit locals (rather than British colonial officials) to administrative and judicial positions. The mandated territories needed a fairly large bureaucracy/civil service in the broadest sense of the word (school-teachers, typists, bank clerks), as well as an army, and since both civil and military employment required a certain basic level of technical competence, admission was perforce often on grounds of merit rather than simply by birth or influence.

'Nationalism' and the middle class

By the mid-1930s, perhaps earlier, elements of a 'modern middle class' had come into being in all the mandated states. At this stage, few *ideological* political parties had come into being, and the kinds of groupings which participated in, for example, the Iraqi political arena, were largely fortuitous and *ad hoc* combinations of like-minded individuals. In general, and particularly in Iraq and Syria (Lebanon and Palestine had specific features which make it difficult to generalise about them) the main goal of the

politically conscious members of the population was national independence, that is, freedom from the tutelage of Britain or France. In Syria, with a relatively homogeneous population (roughly 90 per cent Arabs and 70 per cent Sunni Muslims) which had been both cut off from Palestine and itself divided into a number of smaller units (in an attempt to prevent or damp down the growth of national sentiment), there were movements advocating either a reconstitution of 'natural' or 'geographical' Syria, or the formation of a larger 'pan-Arab' political entity.

In Iraq, where the population was far more heterogeneous (70 per cent Arab, 25 per cent Kurds, but where 65 per cent of the Muslim population was Shi'i and where Sunni Arabs formed only some 15 per cent of the population), Arab nationalism had a far harder row to hoe, largely because it had little appeal to Kurds or Shi'is. In spite of this, Michael Eppel has suggested in a recent article that the ideology of Arab nationalism was widely and enthusiastically received among 'the *effendiyya*, or Westernized middle stratum' (Eppel 1998), identified largely in terms of their dress (Western) and employment ('modern'). Eppel (1998: 230) admits that the concept/group is both vague and hard to define beyond the general sense of 'members of the Westernized middle strata'.

Since the term was also quite widely used in correspondence by British diplomatic representatives in various parts of the Middle East, it has a certain utility in the sense of 'new middle class'. However, it is unreasonable to link this rather amorphous group with the apparently wholesale and successful propagation of 'Arab nationalism and its Pan-Arab ideological dimension' (mainly through the school system), and its adoption as the principal 'middle class' discourse during the period. The ethnic and sectarian composition of Iraq make it difficult to imagine that this ideology, with its generally Sunni Arab vision of the Arabo-Islamic world, would have been the 'doctrine of choice' of a population whose composition was more than half Shi'i and at least one fifth Kurdish. Eppel's assertions seem to be reflecting the loud *post hoc* declarations to this effect during and after the period on the part of Arab nationalists and Ba'thists, to the extent that they have become part of the received wisdom of Iraqi historiography.

It seems very much more likely that school students became imbued with notions of *Iraqi* nationalism. Well into the 1950s and into the first couple of years of the post-revolutionary state (after 1958), it was the Iraqi Communist Party, an organization that Eppel does not mention at all, with its agenda of national independence and social reform, that was the most significant element in the political opposition. In brief, the concept of the *effendiyya* has only limited value, and the characterisation of the Iraqi middle strata during the 1930s and 1940s as being overwhelmingly pan-Arab in outlook seems unconvincing.

The mandate state

Partly because of their top-down nature, the political-constitutional structures put in place by the colonial powers did not long survive the powers' departure. As elsewhere in the third world, the bureaucracy increased exponentially, partly because of the state's ever-increasing role in the economy, and partly because the employees of the state tend to be among its most loyal supporters. Compared with the shambles and/or the repression which came into being

after the termination of the British or French connection, it is perhaps not surprising that the rather rudimentary parliamentary regimes of the mandate period (installed somewhat less impressively in Syria than in Iraq) should have continued to arouse a degree of nostalgia among those old enough to remember them. However, the political system was not the only part of the structure overthrown by the 'revolutionaries' of the 1950s and 1960s. The 'failure of the bourgeoisie' which the various coups also symbolised can be regarded as a consequence of its inability to play its 'historic role' as an accumulator and investor of capital, and thus to shoulder its 'proper' economic and political responsibilities. The various coups and revolutions, and the lack of any meaningful resistance to them, were also the result of a widespread sense of disenfranchisement and a lack of 'empowerment' *vis-à-vis* the state on the part of the burgeoning ranks of the lower middle and middle classes.

As far as Iraq and Syria are concerned, these are relatively uncharted waters, and formal statistics and censuses, where they exist, can only tell part of the story. In *Overstating the Arab State,* the most ambitious study of state and class in the Middle East, Ayubi states that: 'Although it is sorely needed, no imperial history of the Arab world is yet available' (Ayubi 1995). Ayubi eschews Samir Amin's conclusion that Britain and France created anything which could be defined as a 'colonial mode of production' in their Middle East possessions, and points instead to the long transitional period during which pre-capitalist and capitalist social formations co-existed alongside one another. In the same way as poverty excluded much of the population from the market economy, most Iraqis and Syrians were also excluded from the political arena, partly by their isolation in the rural areas where many of them lived, and partly by the electoral rules imposed by Britain and France, under which the right to vote was given only to males who earned enough to pay a certain amount of tax. Some of the results of this were that elections were regularly and evidently gerrymandered,[19] and that political office was rotated between a fairly small group of individuals. These individuals were sometimes, and sometimes not, organised, as has been mentioned, in what were called political parties, but which in fact consisted of 'so and so and his supporters'.

Thus in mandatory Iraq and Syria (as in Egypt) social forces were not greatly engaged with the state and, in addition, no political organisation (with the possible if rather dubious exceptions of the Egyptian *Wafd* and *al-Kutla al-Wataniyya* in Syria) either bothered to obtain, or was able to obtain, any broadly-based national constituency.[20] This gradually led to the extreme vulnerability of the state when its colonial protectors had departed, or, to use a more neutral if more elusive term, its *relative autonomy*, that is, the sense in which the state was not firmly rooted in society and was thus 'up for grabs' to the highest or, more relevantly, the most militarily effective, bidder (Ayubi: 98)

[19] For election-fixing in Aleppo in 1926 and 1928 (see Sluglett 1989: 301–316).

[20] This was true even of *al-Ahali*, (and its successor, the National Democratic Party) a 'social-democratic' Iraqi political organisation founded by admirers of the general principles adumbrated by the British Labour Party, which enjoyed great respect for its disinterested social concern but little effective influence between the 1930s and the late 1950s.

Tentative conclusions

The process of state formation in both Iraq and Syria in the inter-war period was too forced and rapid to allow for stable class formation. Reality belied expectation, in the sense that the liberal political and economic structures which the mandates seemed to promise were little more than a façade. High tariff barriers were imposed both within and between neighbouring states, which, together with the limited size of the domestic market, acted as brakes on economic development. The majority of the population continued to work in agriculture under conditions which became increasingly oppressive in direct proportion to the colonial powers' success in creating a 'stable' regime of large private landlordism, with the result that rural to urban migration became the most significant demographic feature of the 1950s and 1960s.

Similarly, 'political freedom' functioned only as a form of glorified cronyism, and was extended only to a privileged few. The majority were excluded from political participation, a situation which became increasingly intolerable with the expansion of the new middle class through education and through bureaucratic, educational or military employment. The institutional structures created by Britain and France were not sufficiently grounded enough to be capable of peaceful reproduction or renewal, which meant that it was relatively easy for the state(s) to be captured by well-organised or even fortuitously positioned armed groups, generally from lower middle class rural or urban backgrounds, acting on their own initiative (Batatu 1978 and Batatu 1999). For a time, both the 'national bourgeoisie' and the professional middle classes were courted by the new military rulers, only to be bypassed by the Ba'th parties when they were no longer needed to run the state. Under the Ba'th, though more so in Iraq than in Syria, loyalty to the regime soon became more important than competence (both military and civil), which led to the gradual depoliticisation of the middle classes (and indeed of most of society) and to their general alienation from the state. It is not clear how much recent developments in the region will succeed in reinvigorating aspirations and structures that have lain dormant for many decades,[21] but it is my fervent hope that they will.

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[21] For example, the 'civil society movement' in Syria (Haraka al-Mutjama'al-Madani), which grew very rapidly after the death of Hafiz al-Asad in June 2000 (and was stifled in the first months of 2001) (see George 2003: 30–63).

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The Role of the Origin of the State

Understanding Current Syrian Policy towards Hatay

EMMA JØRUM

Today, most of the world's territory has been divided into a pattern of sovereign states. However, the clear and precise borders shown on internationally recognised maps give no hint of the often existing disjunction between effective state control and the territorial aspirations of state leaders and others. Border- and territorial disputes remain a major source of conflict between states as well as between nonstate-actors and governments, and questions concerning borders are an important aspect of both domestic and international politics.

Although by no means the only source of border- and territorial conflicts, approximately half of today's land boundaries were superimposed by European powers. Most of these borders were created less than a century ago, and all over the world there are memories of unmet territorial aspirations and perceptions of the 'true' extension of the national territory. This paper deals with one such superimposed border and its adjacent territory – the former Sanjak of Alexandretta, in Turkey known as Hatay and in Syria as liwā' iskandarūnah – included as part of the national territory on both Syrian and Turkish official maps. Internationally, the dispute over this border area is fairly unknown, and is one of the least studied results of the colonial remapping of the Middle East following World War I. Today the question of Hatay does not cause obvious tension in Turkish–Syrian relations and it is not characterised as a pressing issue by either side. It is, however, still an obstacle to a complete naturalisation of Turkish–Syrian relations.[1]

The aim of this article is two-fold. The first aim is to examine Syrian past and present policy, i.e. verbal as well as non-verbal actions, towards Hatay. For comparative purposes, Syrian policies towards the Golan Heights, another area *de facto* outside of Syrian control but also marked as part of the national territory will be brought in. In order to situate Syrian policy towards Hatay within a broader framework, the second aim of the paper is to discuss some theoretical points of departure for understanding current Syrian policy.

[1] Mr. Ufuk Gökçen, First Secretary at the Turkish Embassy in Damascus, interview 14 May 2002.

The Role of the State in West Asia, ed. Annika Rabo and Bo Utas, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, Transactions, vol. 14 (Stockholm, 2005), pp. 91–103.

Finally, the suggested conclusions will be presented in a brief concluding discussion.[2]

Hatay in Turkish–Syrian relations 1920–1998

On 30 June 1939 the former Sanjak of Alexandretta was annexed by Turkey. Since 1922, Alexandretta had been part of the French mandated Syria, but had at the same time been rewarded a special regime as a result of the October 1921 Ankara Agreement. Therefore, even though Alexandretta was part of French mandated Syria, its status differed from the rest of the mandate from the start. As Syrian independence seemed to draw near in 1936, the Turkish government raised concerns about the future of the Turkish-speaking part of the population in an independent Syria. The League of Nations decided that Alexandretta should remain an autonomous region within the independent Syria. The final cessation of the area was the result of years of Franco–Turkish negotiations and gradually increased Turkish pressure. Since Syria was a French mandate, its foreign relations were exclusively controlled by France. As a result, the Syrian government at the time had no say in treaties signed by France on behalf of Syria. Therefore, the fact that the Syrian government did not accept the move could be overlooked.[3]

When Syrian independence was obtained in 1946, Turkey initially demanded Syrian recognition of Turkish sovereignty over Hatay in return for Turkish recognition of Syrian independence. Syria refused. The question was somewhat solved by a bilateral agreement, according to which, Syria would not formally demand the return of the area, and Turkey would not insist on formal Syrian recognition of the border (Sanjian 1956: 383). Already at an early stage it was thus decided that the question of Hatay would 'hang in the air', as it continues to do to this day. With the exception of the government of Commander in Chief Husni al-Zaim, who ruled Syria for 137 days in 1949, no Syrian government has recognised the present border between Syria and Hatay. Even though World War II and then the 1948-49 Arab–Israeli war and its consequences largely overshadowed the dispute, the Hatay question remained a point of tension in Turkish-Syrian relations. This tension peaked during the reign of Syrian Army Chief of Staff Adib Shishekli (1951-1954), whose maps of the 'Arab Homeland' that was to be liberated included not only Hatay but also a considerable amount of additional Turkish territory.

In the early 1970s there was a clear shift in Syrian policy towards Hatay. Although the area remained on Syrian maps, Syria has not verbally claimed the area since 1970,[4] and in 1972 the yearly '29th of November Occupied Alexandretta' demonstrations in Syria were banned (Soysal 1998/1999: 102). Apart from a few Turkish protests to Syrian verbal announcements of Hatay being Syrian territory[5], Hatay did not cause major problems in bilateral relations from then on. Bilateral relations were still tense, but this was rather due to other factors such as disagreement over water supplies, Syrian support

[2] As this paper is based on research in progress, the conclusions are to be considered tentative.
[3] It is not within the scope of this presentation to provide the details of the 1920–1939 period. This is, however, the period most previous research on the Hatay question deals with.
[4] Güner Öztek, Director of the Foundation for Middle East and Balkan Studies (Ortadoğu ve Balkan İncelemeleri Vakfı), Istanbul, interview 1 May 2002.
[5] See, for instance 'Tension dans les rapports Syrie–Turquie', in *L'Orient le Jour,* 16 December 1989.

for the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK)[6] and the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA)[7] and 'historical baggage' resulting in mutual suspicions of hostility and unreliability. Perhaps most importantly, the Turkish–Syrian border also constituted the border between NATO and a country with strong connections to the USSR and up until the beginning of the 1990s the Cold War was a most efficient guarantor of the status quo.

In the early 1990s the issue of Hatay resurfaced in Syrian–Turkish relations. Although nothing new, Turkish media carried increasing reports of how Syrian maps include Hatay and how students of Arabic origin in Hatay were offered university education in Syria at the Syrian government's expense.[8] In 1998, Turkish Prime Minister Masut Yılmaz issued what Turkish analysts called the most severe Hatay-related warning to Syria in many years: 'those who have their eyes set on our territory are bound to go blind …not even a square centimetre of this homeland can be given up … those who print maps showing Hatay as their own territory should not forget the historical realities'.[9]

The October 1998 Turkish–Syrian Crisis

Following the end of the Cold War, and as the USSR dissolved, Syria's role as the main supporter of the PKK had become increasingly evident (Cornell 2001: 41). Syria was considered a threat that had to be dealt with, and after several warnings the showdown came in October 1998. Following this crisis, which lasted for three weeks, Syria and Turkey signed the so-called *Adana Agreement* on 20 October.[10] This agreement put an end to the Syrian support for the PKK, which – at least from a Turkish point of view – was the most critical obstacle to improved relations.

According to Michel Gilquin, the question of Hatay resurfaced in the Syrian press during the October 1998 crisis (2000: 159). However, the Syrian newspaper *Tishrin*, known as the 'paper of the president', did not mention it once (Lundgren 1999: 13). This makes it difficult to imagine that any other Syrian paper would have brought it up. The question of Hatay was certainly mentioned by papers in other Arab countries, and several carried an interview with Syrian Information Minister Muhammad Salman stating that 'Syria will not renounce its rights…the Iskandarūnah question is a national cause on which one can not make concessions'.[11]

[6] The PKK was founded by Abdallah Öcalan in 1978 with the goal to create an independent Kurdish state. In 1984 it began waging an armed struggle against the Turkish state. In 1998 the Turkish government estimated that about 30,000 people had died as a result of this armed struggle. In 2002 PKK changed its name to KADEK.

[7] ASALA reportedly killed thirty Turkish diplomats, including families, drivers and guards between 1973–1984. The group was apparently broken after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Beirut (Popes 1997: 44).

[8] Maliha Altunisik, Department of International Relations, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, interview 29 April 2002.

[9] Ankara met en garde Damas: Aucun centimètre ne pourra être dissocié de la Turquie, affirme Yilmaz à propos d'Iskandaroun', in *L'Orient le Jour,* 24 July 1998.

[10] The agreement is available at the website of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs www.mfa.gov.tr

[11] See, for instance 'La Syrie ne renoncera jamais à Alexandrette, souligne Damas' in *L' Orient le Jour*, 20 October 1998 and 'wazīr al-'ilām as-sūrī: lā yumkinu at-tafrīT fī-l-iskandarūn', *al-Bayan*, 20 October 1998.

Hatay in post-1998 Turkish–Syrian relations

The Adana Agreement, often referred to as a turning point in Syrian–Turkish relations, was followed by a number of agreements on co-operation in various fields. When Syrian president Hafez al-Asad passed away in June 2000, bilateral relations had greatly improved. Turkish President Necdet Sezer attended al-Asad's funeral, and the press statement released by the Turkish Foreign Ministry expressed 'confidence that the recent positive steps taken as regards the Turkish-Syrian relations will continue in the period ahead'.[12]

There were immediate talks of how Bashar al-Asad, Hafez al-Asad's son and successor, would visit Turkey within the near future. However, this planned visit took until January 2004 to materialise. The exact reasons for this delay were never officially declared, but there were strong indications that the sticking point was a Turkish insistence on the signing of a bilateral Declaration of Principles. According to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this declaration would 'help to overcome the controversial issues currently present between the two countries' and help Turkey 'enhance our relations with Syria in every respect, especially in the political field'.[13]

The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not specify the nature of these controversial issues. According to numerous reports in both the Turkish and Arab (to my knowledge only non-Syrian) press, diplomatic sources claim that the obstacles to reaching a consensus on a Declaration of Principles are either the question of the present border separating Syria from Hatay or both the border and the water question.[14] This view is shared by several Turkish researchers and scholars.[15] Further, Mr. Solmaz Ünayıd, Director General of Policy Planning Department at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stated in July 2002 that Syrian maps showing Hatay as Syrian territory is a 'dark stain in the new page that has been opened in bilateral ties and Turkey wishes Syria to take the necessary steps to eliminate this relic of the former era' (Ünaydın 2002: 68).[16]

Despite reports that Hatay is a central point of disagreement when it comes to the Declaration of Principles, Turkish diplomats deny that the two countries discuss Hatay at all. However, according to the Head of the Middle East Department at the Turkish Foreign Ministry, the Hatay question *is* a problem in bilateral relations. Turkish–Syrian relations are at present on the mend but in order for this to continue, the Hatay question needs to be solved, and the only solution acceptable to Turkey consists of a Syrian recognition of the

[12] *The Passing Away of Hafez Assad, President of Syria-No:94, 10 June 2000*, www.mfa.gov.tr (12 October 2002).

[13] *Foreign Policy: Middle East* at www.mfa.gov.tr (12 October 2002).

[14] See, for instance 'Water, borders file obstruct concluding a Syrian-Turkish statement', 3 October 2000 www.arabicnews.com (12 October 2002), 'Damascus and Ankara make up' in *Daily Star,* 13 November 2000.

[15] Maliha Altunisik, Kemal Karişci, Department of International Relations, Boğazaçi University, Istanbul, interview 30 May 2002 and Güner Öztek.

[16] The fact that the visit finally took place 6–8 January 2004, without a prior Declaration of Principles should probably be understood within the frame of the developments in Iraq. The fact that no Declaration of Principles was signed and no final solution reached on the Hatay question should be seen as a Turkish concession, not a Syrian one as was reported by some Turkish and Western European media. Syrian media did not comment on the issue. When interviewed by Turkish media, Bashar al-Asad's answer to questions about Hatay were completely in line with other post-1998 Syrian statements, i.e. that Hatay was not a priority and that, with time, a solution would be found.

present border.[17] While it is clear that the official Syrian view is that the area was wrongfully detached from Syria,[18] current Syrian ambitions regarding the future of the area remain unclear. Syria keeps Hatay as part of Syrian territory on its maps. It has also turned down a Turkish suggestion to jointly re-demarcate the border (where the border stones have been removed), on the basis that it is not clear where the border should be drawn.[19] Yet Syria does not seem eager to openly discuss the question of Hatay nor its possible solution. Instead, Syria holds that the two countries should continue to develop their economic and political ties and, with time, a solution to the Hatay question will come automatically.[20] Whatever the goal, if there is a clear one, the most suitable way to get there in the present circumstances has been judged by Syrian decision makers to be to keep the area on the map and to avoid talking about it. This constitutes Syrian policy today.

Still, the fact that Syria does not recognise the present border does not cause obvious tension. On the contrary, there are several major signs of increased trust. Since 1999 some of the Turkish–Syrian border crossings have been opened in order to allow families divided by the border to spend the major Muslim holidays together. In 2002, the two border crossings in Hatay were included for the first time. In May 2002, colourful photos of this event were posted on the outside wall of the Turkish Embassy in Damascus. In February 2002, Turkey made a decision to remove mines from an area of 350,000 m² along the Syrian–Turkish border between Sharnaq in south-eastern Turkey to Samandağ in Hatay. Apparently Syria has agreed to dismantle these mines during the coming five years.[21] In addition, Syria and Turkey are discussing a possible new visa regime which would allow Turkish and Syrian citizens to acquire visas at the border instead of first having to travel to Damascus, Ankara or Istanbul.[22] According to an opinion poll presented by the Centre for European Studies at Istanbul's Boğazaçi University in March 2002, only 2 per cent of the Turkish public feels that Syria is Turkey's biggest enemy (following Greece at 34 per cent, the USA at 21 per cent, Europe at 8 per cent, Iraq at 5 per cent, Russia at 3 per cent and Iran at 3 per cent[23]). In September 2002, a yearly danger assessment report by the Turkish military council stated that Syria is not a danger to Turkey.[24] If Turkey at one point during the 1990s felt that Syria increasingly constituted a problem and a threat, this is hardly the case anymore.

[17] Ömer Onhon.

[18] See, for instance *Syria 2000: A Geopolitical and Economic Yearbook* (published by the National Information Center, Damascus 2001), p. 29 and *al-mūjaz fī tarīkh al-'arab al-jadīd wa-l-mu'āSir li-Saff ath-thālith ath-thānawī al-adabī* (2002), p. 78.

[19] Ömer Onhon.

[20] Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al-Shara interviewed in the evening news of Turkey's NTV channel in November 2000. 'Farouk al-Shara: Hatay is not a priority', *Turkish Daily News,* 6 February 2001.

[21] See 'Turkey to Clear Mines on Syria Border', 26 February 2002 www.bbc.co.uk and 'Syrian–Turkish Border Strip to be Prepared for Cultivation', 4 February 2002 www.arabicnews.com

[22] Ömer Onhon.

[23] *Türkiye Dış Politikası Kamuoyu Araştırması* available at www.boun.edu.tr The above figures are taken from slide no 12; *Hangi devlet uluslararası ilişkilerde Türkiye'nin en büyük düşmanıdır*? The fact that only 2 per cent chose Syria does not necessarily mean that the rest of the respondents do not see Syria as an enemy at all.

[24] 'Al-Anwar: Positive Turkish Message to Syria', 23 September 2002, www.syriadaily.com

A brief comparison with the Golan Heights

When comparing current Syrian policy towards Hatay with its policy towards the Golan Heights, the difference is striking. It becomes obvious that Hatay is not a top priority for Syria today. Like Hatay, the Golan Heights are marked as Syrian territory on Syrian maps, but this is where the similarities in Syrian policy end. Unlike in the case of Hatay, these maps are accompanied, in both international and domestic arenas, by constant verbal demands for the return of the area. Syria has made it utterly clear that a peace deal with Israel will not be based on anything short of a full Israeli withdrawal to 4 June 1967 armistice line,[25] while Syrian–Turkish relations, on the contrary, have improved considerably despite Hatay. With the seizing of power by Hafez al-Asad in 1970, the question of Hatay was toned down on both domestic and international arenas. Three years prior to his ascendancy to power, the Golan Heights had been occupied by Israel, and one of the main reasons for al-Asad's coup was dissatisfaction with the way the loss of the Golan Heights and the conflict with Israel were not given top priority (Seale 1988: 145). While al-Asad Sr. in 1973 went to war in order to liberate the Golan, no such attempts have been made concerning Hatay. It is still an area that no Syrian soldiers have died for.

Some theoretical points of departure

What kind of theoretical framework is needed to understand the role of the state in Syrian policy towards Hatay? Judging by the subject matter – Syrian policy towards areas *de facto* outside of Syrian control – an understanding of the policy towards Hatay, as well as towards the Golan Heights, should be sought within the area of Theory of International Relations and its subfield Foreign Policy Analysis. There are several factors derived from such theories, as well as from quantitative research conducted on territorial disputes, that could explain why the Golan Heights are given priority over Hatay. Such factors include, for instance, overall relations with the adversary (Israel/Turkey), the strategic importance of the area, the 'Syrianness' of the inhabitants in the disputed area and international recognition or lack of recognition of the current borders as well as the passage of time. The classical and still dominant – but when it comes to the Third World, debated (David 1991) – balance of power theory also provides guidance for understanding. This theory suggests that Syria would want to avoid having bad relations with *both* Turkey and Israel. These factors are not unimportant, but this line of reasoning is insufficient.

Efforts to create a generally accepted (non-trivial) theory of International Relations and Foreign Policy Analysis have hitherto failed. A major divide within International Relations today centres on the question of whether external factors or internal ones are more decisive in the shaping of foreign policy. Proponents of the priority of external factors treat all states as functionally similar entities interacting in an international system, where the distribution of power is the main determinant of behaviour. Proponents of

[25] However, at the end of August 2002 there were reports that Syrian representatives at a closed-door conference bringing together opinion makers and officials from the Middle East announced that if necessary Syria would consider 'border corrections' in an agreement with Israel. See Sadeh (2002). No further details have so far been released or leaked.

domestic factors point to specific characteristics of a state, such as cultural attitudes, economic relations, historical legacies and form of government to explain its foreign policy behaviour. Recent studies conducted on Arab states suggest that at least the early foreign policy behaviour of 'created' and recently independent states, including Syria, was a result of the lack of state- and nationbuilding (Mufti 1996; Hinnebusch and Ehtesami 2002: 10; Barnett 1998). This point, that the development of internal statebuilding and territorial integration with time will affect perceptions of territories both within and outside imposed borders, should not be overlooked in the cases of Hatay and Golan.

A possible logical analysis is to view Syrian policy towards Hatay (as well as the Golan Heights) over time as an illustration of an ongoing process whereby the Syrian state, which has had its borders abruptly drawn by outside powers, establishes and defines its national territory. This process consists of simultaneous internal and external statemaking: internal through territorial integration, state- and nation-building and external through the protection of borders, negotiations and militarised attempts to conquer or liberate territory (as in the case of the Golan Heights in 1973). In order to understand Syrian policies over time, we must recognise that there is a difference between the Syria of 1946 and the Syria of 2002. Anderson and O'Down point out that the drawing of state borders generates a dynamic for state projects of internal homogenisation (1999: 598) and Barzilai and Peleg argue that social and political changes are often reflected in perceptions of and attitudes towards borders (1994: 60). Along with the transformation of the Syrian state – a result of internal statebuilding – Syrian interests and goals may have changed.

Bringing the territory back in?

Territory and borders are largely taken for granted within political science, regardless of whether the perspective stems from International Relations, Comparative Politics or research on state- and nation building.[26] At best, they are mentioned in passing as one of the fundamental characteristics of the state. But as Biersteker points out, one of the most important analytical challenges for scholars of International Relations Theory today is to identify different meanings of state, sovereignty and territory, including understanding their origins and changes and analysing their interrelationships (Biersteker 2002: 157). While borders as such are accepted by all as a point of reference, any particular border can be established, defended, disregarded, violated and moved and their significance can change (Jackson 1998: 157; Anderson and O'Down 1999: 593). They can also come to be *regarded* as natural and thereby unproblematic. As Jackson (1998: 157) reminds us, borders are what states make of them, and that changes over time.

[26] Exceptions where borders and territory are at the center of analysis include the interdisciplinary research project *Borders, Boundaries and Transgressions* of which this paper is a part and Thongchai Winichakul's *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (1994).

The impact of the creation of the state

There is scholarly disagreement over whether the modern territorial state system in the Middle East was mostly created by Western colonialism or whether the territorial extension of these states are rather based on nuclei produced by indigenous and regional pre-colonial forces. However, when it comes to Syria there seems to be agreement that the present borders cannot be justified by earlier history and that they are solely the result of Great Power politics. As Buzan (1998: 228) points out, this leads us to an interesting theoretical question: What happens when the international system creates the state?

When given full independence in 1946, the Arab Republic of Syria had to both interact with the outside world – think about foreign threats, defend its borders, etc. – as well as act inwards – build a functioning state and integrate its given territory by extending the state apparatus throughout the given territory and develop an infrastructure and means of communication. [27]

There are several interconnected reasons as to why a newly independent and created state needs to integrate territorially; a state's autonomy flows principally from its ability to provide a territorially centralised form of organisation with a capacity of mobilisation (Mann 1998: 1) and integration prevents the fragmentation of the state and helps promote growth and development (Mengisteab, Kidane and Daddieh 1999: 4–7). As Charles Tilly points out, the strengthening of the power of the state vis-à-vis society is also a way to neutralise and lessen potential or actual rival powers outside of the central political organisation (Tilly 1985: 181). Correspondingly, Fabrice Balanche reaches the conclusion that Syrian territorial integration has been a strategy for regime survival (Balanche 2000: 702).

In the beginning of the mandate in 1920, the territory within the French mandated Syria was divided into a number of 'states', and not until 1936 had these been joined in the single state of Syria.[28] The Syrian Arab Republic was therefore, at the time of full independence ten years later, in a situation where both the Syrian state – territorial integration under a centralised authority – and the Syrian nation, legitimising the existence of the Syrian state as opposed to for instance a larger Arab state (see note 24), would have to be created. This is not to say that there was no sense of unity within the territory given. As Brandell and Rabo (2003) point out, a sense of national unity is often created in colonial territories through the struggle for independence. However, the post-independence state-led efforts to create a specific Syrian nation have been ambiguous, as a glance at the Syrian constitution shows.[29] The idea of the *Arab* nation, as opposed to a *Syrian* nation, is still strong and the Arab Cause and interest, as opposed to a specific Syrian Cause and interest, is what has largely provided Syrian regimes with legitimacy (Hinnebusch 2002: 141;

[27] An alternative for the Syrian leadership during and after independence would have been to disregard all the colonially drawn borders and pursue the stated goal of Arab unity. This road, however, was not taken. It is not within the scope of this paper to examine why this did not happen. For attempts at explaining this, see Muslih (1991) and Mufti (1996).

[28] The exceptions were the areas that had been attached to Mount Lebanon to form the new state of Greater Lebanon and the Sanjak of Alexandretta, which had hitherto been an autonomous part of the State of Aleppo and now remained autonomous within the state of Syria.

[29] Article 1:2–3 states: 'The Syrian Arab Republic is a part of the Arab homeland. The people in the Syrian Arab region are part of the Arab nation and works and struggles to achieve the Arab nation's comprehensive unity.' (Official translation).

Sadowski 2002: 139). It is therefore wiser to perceive the Syrian 'nation building' as the building of what Buzan calls 'the idea of the state'. The idea of the state is the glue keeping the territorial-polity-society package together, legitimising the existence of the specific state in the minds of its population and defining much of its power and character as an actor in the international system (Buzan 1991: 64–66). The Syrian 'idea of the state', to be perceived as the defender of the Arab Cause in the Arab-Israeli conflict, gives another indication of the priority of the Golan Heights over Hatay.

Along the same line, Herb points out that all states are involved in making their population identify with the territorially based institution (Herb 1999: 21–22; see also Rooke 2005). A necessary measure in order to make a population identify with the territorial whole is the integration of the territory, which ties the periphery to the centre. Both state- and nation building, through territorial integration, is then necessary for the stability of the state. While nation building can be seen as a 'manipulation of the imagination' and largely founded on myth (Anderson 1991), state building will have to be physically and concretely expressed. Thus, by necessity, with time, territories not included in the actual state building will be left out of this process. At the time when Syria obtained independence, Hatay was no longer part of it. As mentioned above, it had further enjoyed autonomy within the French mandated Syria prior to the Turkish annexation in 1939. The loss of Hatay was, and still is, real and concrete to the people personally affected. There may still be a Syrian conviction that Hatay should have been part of the Arab Republic of Syria. Nevertheless, Hatay was not part of the territory upon which post-independence Syria embarked its state building and territorial integration. What is implied here is that this is a loss that Syria has in practice learned to live with. The Golan Heights, at the time of occupation in 1967, on the contrary, was part of the then more integrated and stable Arab Republic of Syria, whose citizens on the Golan either fled or remained under Israeli occupation. This should be considered *in addition* to the military strategic importance of the Golan and the fact that from a Syrian point of view, Israel is perceived as much more threatening than Turkey.

Theories of international relations and foreign policy analysis in terms of the Middle East

Discussions on how, why and when to combine theoretically informed social science research and area studies is far from a new feature within social sciences. Out of the different regions focused upon within area studies, Middle Eastern studies are often accused of being the most under-theorised area (Bill 1994: 518; Gerges 1991: 215). Opinions among Middle East researchers on the relationship between area studies and explicit theory can be said to move along a continuum. At one extreme, we find scholars seeing no difficulty in the application of theories developed on the basis of Western experience on the Middle East. At the other extreme, we find scholars feeling that the preoccupation with theory is an exercise left to those who do not possess the necessary linguistic and cultural skills to be able to carry out effective fieldwork.

The basic assumption of this article is that at the crossroads where 'pure' Middle Eastern studies meet explicit theory, much is to be won. However, in order for this meeting to be fruitful, it has to be kept in mind that International

Relations (as well as other) theories developed on the basis of Western experience may need revision when applied to other parts of the world (and perhaps often when applied to the West as well). As Ayoob points out, the major International Relations theories today – realism, neorealism and neoliberalism – all fail the basic test of applicability primarily because, being based on the West, they do not concern themselves with the behaviour of the large majority of members of the international system (Ayoob 1998: 32). Neuman argues that when studying the Third World, International Relations theories suffer from a conceptual misfit so that basic assumptions such as the nature of anarchy, rational choice, the state, sovereignty and the international system have little or no reference to the reality studied (Neuman 1998: 32). These theories are themselves the result of area studies, only the area under study was the West, which has then been taken as the norm. This norm has in turn somehow been confused with what is general.[30] For instance, that all states irrespective of time or place look and act the same (read: like Western states) is an assumption that may provide theoretical parsimony and elegance. Its fruitfulness for an adequate understanding of *all* states' actions must nevertheless be seriously questioned. The application of conventional theories of International Relations to the Middle East has made the region look more familiar to students with a command of these theories but without area-specific knowledge. As Barnett argues, this has helped correct a far too frequently held notion that the Middle East is driven by 'irrational' forces. At the same time, the application of these theories has made the region look increasingly unfamiliar to students specialised in the region (Barnett 1998: 237). Instead of trying to shoe-horn reality into inflexible theoretical frameworks at the imminent risk of generating inadequate explanations, these theoretical frameworks need to be developed in order to help the observer understand what factors guide the actual case(s) under study. This is obviously easier said than done, and can only be achieved at the cost of parsimony in theoretical assumptions. Theories that open up for the possibility of the degree of internal development and integration as a factor that may affect state action will not be as simple. If this is seen as a great sacrifice by some, these theories will in return at least stand a better chance of providing an understanding of *both* Western and non-Western states.

Summing up: time does not heal all wounds

Syrian policies towards Hatay and the Golan Heights, two areas included as part of Syrian territory on Syrian maps but *de facto* outside of Syrian control, differ profoundly. While there are constant verbal demands that Israel withdraw from the Golan Heights, Syrian officials avoid spelling out Syrian ambitions for a future Syrian–Turkish solution regarding Hatay. While Syrian policies towards both Hatay and Golan certainly have been and still are affected by international factors, I have argued that they are also affected by domestic developments. The gradual development in Syrian integration of its *de facto* territory, its state – and nation building, may have resulted in changing Syrian interests and goals. The role of the state, therefore, in this case, has to be widened to *the impact of the origin and the process of the creation* of the state. A theoretical framework that does not reflect on the

[30] For a discussion on this point, see Valbjørn (2002).

origins of the state, holds its nature constant and closes the door for a possibly dynamic relationship between state and territory will simply not do the job. When moving beyond their focus on short and stable periods of time, theories of International Relations are likely to benefit from adopting a more explicitly process-oriented perspective instead of expecting causal factors to operate according to invariant covering laws (Cederman and Rao 2001: 829)

The passing of time has been identified as a factor to consider when trying to predict conflict behaviour over disputed territory. Buzan suggests that it is quite possible that territorial instability is characteristic of immature state systems and that states, with time, as they acquire longer histories, begin to identify with quite closely defined territories (Buzan 1991: 92). Why is that? What is it about time that makes territorial conflict less likely? The argument here is that if Syrian perceptions of the meaning and significance of Hatay as a part of the Syrian Arab Republic has changed over time, which indeed it seems to, it is not just a matter of 'time heals all wounds'. Instead, the internal changes, along with subsequent changed perceptions in the definition of the scope of the national territory, is what might help heal at least some of the wounds.

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Reflections on the Linguistic Situation in Anatolia and Northern Syria from a Semitist's Perspective

BO ISAKSSON AND ABLAHAD LAHDO

In this article we are going to present some reflections on the linguistic situation in Anatolia among Arabic and Aramaic-speakers. It is obvious that the state – whether the modern states of Turkey or Syria or Iraq or their predecessors in Ottoman-empire – has played a decisive role in the formation of the groups that constitute the linguistic and ethnic landscape of present day Anatolia. We will concentrate our reflections to some specific parts of the Arabic-speaking area in Anatolia, from north to south: Sason, Siirt and Tur Abdin in Turkey, and the whole northern border region in Syria. These points of departure also represent the linguistic borders of a specific variety of spoken Arabic in Anatolia, which is called the *qəltu*-dialects. The *qəltu*-dialect group constitutes an ancient layer of Arabic, representing the first migration of Arabic-speaking people in this area after the Muslim conquest. This fact deserves a short background sketch.

Historical background of the linguistic complexity in Anatolia

At the time of the Muslim conquest, present day Syria and most parts of Anatolia were under the political control of the Byzantine empire. The degree of hellenisation of the common people was slight. 'Only in the cities do there appear to have been sizeable numbers of Greek-speaking government officials' (Holes 1995: 15). The vast majority of the indigenous population was peasants speaking various dialects of Aramaic (Donner 1981: 92–94). There were also nomadic Arab tribes inhabiting the Syrian desert that regularly visited the Syrian towns and traded with local merchants. This majority situation of an Aramaic-speaking sedentary population gradually changed in favour of the Arabic language in the centuries following the Muslim conquest in the middle of the seventh century. Today, there are only a few islands of the Aramaic speaking Christians in the Tur Abdin area in south-east Turkey. In this border region the linguistic complexity is great and we have the impression that nearly every non-Christian person in Tur Abdin speaks at least two languages today,

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Kurdish and Turkish. Christians speak at least three languages, beside Kurdish and Turkish either Arabic or Turoyo (Neo-Aramaic), or both.

After the Muslim conquest it took many centuries of gradual evolution – political, administrative and socio-cultural – before the majority of the peoples in Syria was arabicised and islamised. In some of the peripheral areas neither arabicisation nor islamisation was ever completed. As we have been able to see for ourselves when we were travelling in northern Syria and in Anatolia, there are still groups of an Aramaic-speaking population in this area and among the native Arabic-speaking population there are still Christian groups, although they have lost the historical Aramaic vernacular.[1]

The spread of the Arabic language in Syria is less fully documented than that of Egypt but it is safe to say that an Aramaic–Arabic bilingualism lasted for centuries. Aramaic was used at home and with other Aramaic speakers, Arabic for public and interethnic communication, especially outside the cities. And of course this bilingualism has left traces in the resulting Arabic dialects, which still bear Aramaic traits in their grammar that must be called an Aramaic substrate. The increasing prestige and use of Arabic as the language of government and state religion, together with the growth of mixed marriages and the bringing up of children as Arabic-speaking Muslims, were all factors that must have accelerated the disappearance of Aramaic.

A similar development is naturally discernible today in Anatolia, where Turkish is the language of the government and the officials, and is the only language permitted in the schools. Turkish has a long history as a spoken language in eastern Anatolia. Anatolia was opened up to a gradual penetration of nomadic Turks already with the Seljuk defeat of the Byzantine army at the battle of Manzikert north of the Lake of Van in 1071. From that time on, the eastern border of the Byzantine-empire was more or less open to the influx of Turks coming southwards and westwards from central Asia. This Turkish expansion would ultimately lead to the emergence of a new dynasty, the Ottomans, who by the end of the fifteenth century occupied the whole of Anatolia and the Balkans. The early Turkic tribes that conquered east Anatolia have, most probably, left some traces in the form of a cultural and religious substratum, but, linguistically, the exceptionally strong influence of Turkish on the Arabic dialects of Anatolia comes from modern Turkish. There are several reasons for this quick change. After the foundation of the republic of Turkey in the early 1920s, a process of 'Turkification' started. Two elements in this process are of a certain interest in this aspect and should be mentioned:

1. According to the Surname Act, *Soyadı kanunu*, of 28 June 1934, all people living in Turkey must have surnames.[2]

2. All names of cities, towns and villages must be derived from Turkish words. However, this principle was not effectuated by law but by recommendations from officials such as the local government commissioner, the local municipal council, etc.

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[1] Holes 1995: 18. There are also large groups of Arabic-speaking Christians in central and south Syria, e.g. Greek Orthodox.

[2] Lewis 2002: 289. See also Ballı 1991: 65 and Arnold 2000: 357. People from the Siirt region said that the authorities sent officials to the villages with a list of Turkish names and every family had to choose one. The ones who did not chose were given a family name that the officials chose for them.

In the late 1940s, the young Turkish state started a process of building schools in south-eastern Turkey. Within twenty years, schools came to almost every village, and children had the chance to learn how to read and write. This occurrence took place at a time when Kurdish dominance, at least linguistically, was growing stronger in the region. It was a time when whole non-Kurdish villages shifted totally to Kurdish. As an example, one can mention the Neo-Aramaic villages in the Tur Abdin area. *Kafro*, a village in the district of Midyat, was in a stage of total transition to Kurdish. In the early 1940s, only people forty years or older could understand and speak some Neo-Aramaic. Another village is *Karborān*, also in the district of Midyat. No one from this village speaks Neo-Aramaic at the present time. Today, there is a community of *Karborān* people living in Västerås in Sweden. Children belonging to this community and who are born in Sweden have Kurmanji as their mother tongue. The adults attend a Sunday mass held in Kurmanji, although they are Christians belonging to the Syriac Orthodox Church.[3]

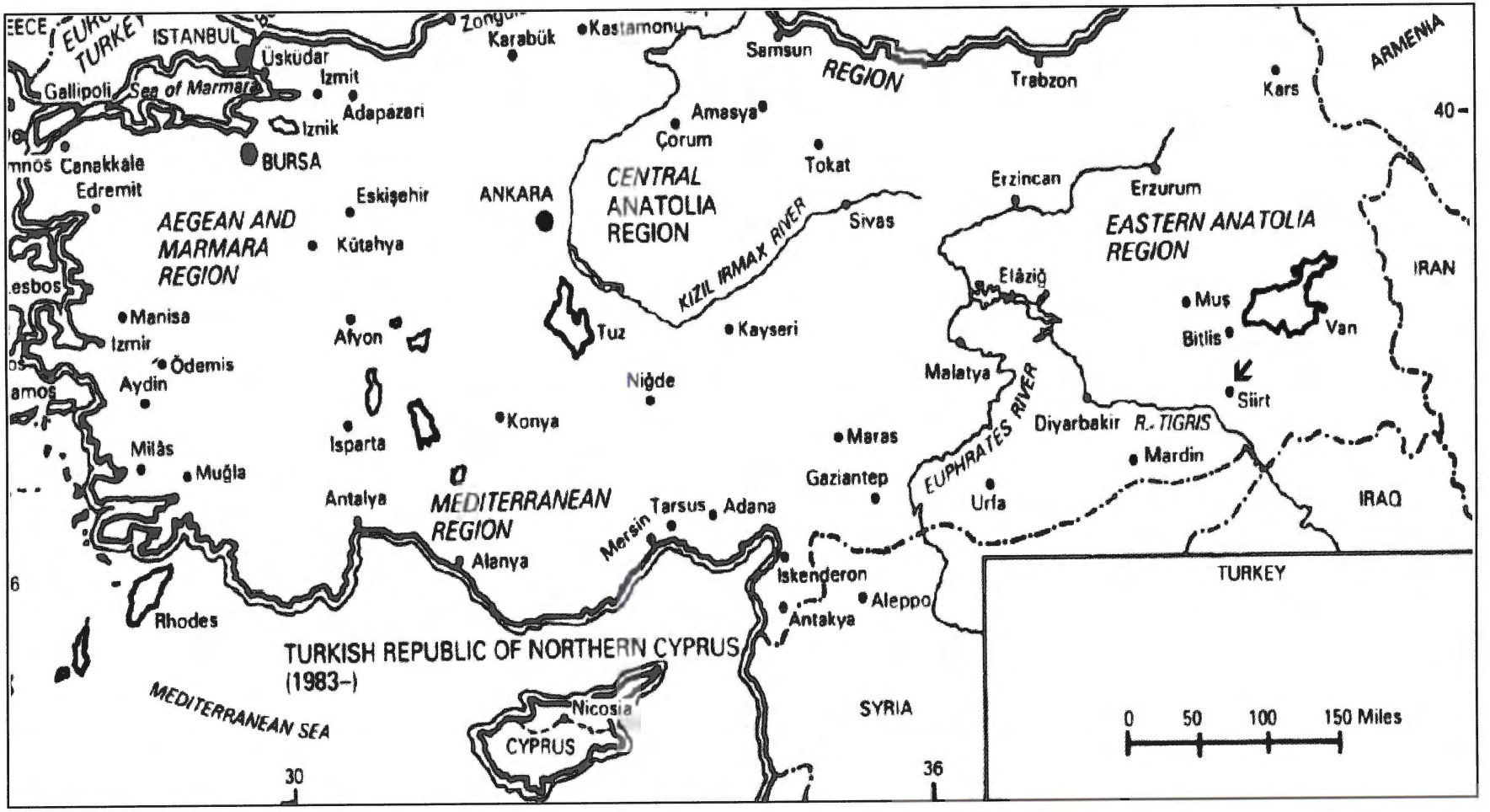
Television came to the region in the 1970s, although only to the cities. Today, television is part of the basic furniture of households in the villages. All television programs are either in Turkish or dubbed into Turkish. Radio programs are broadcast in Turkish and newspapers are all written in Turkish. Turkish became the language of educated people, consequently gaining high status. Those who spoke good Turkish were considered to be educated and hence had a higher social status in the community.

It is quite interesting to analyse our linguistic data from Arabic dialects in this area. In northern Syria, along the border to Turkey, which is the most southern location of speakers of the archaic *qəltu* Arabic, Turkish influence is barely discernible in the Arabic vernacular, limited to some Turkish loanwords. In the northernmost part of the Arabic-speaking area of Anatolia, in Sason and Hasköy, as far to the north as Muş, Turkish traits in spoken Arabic abound and penetrate the whole language system, including phonology, morphology, syntax and of course the lexicon. The same powerful Turkish adstrate influence on Arabic is also evident somewhere in between those geographic extremes, in the vicinity of Siirt.

Since the field studies of Otto Jastrow in the late 1960s, Turkish has become a natural medium of communication, not only for Turkish officials but for all people in the Arabic-speaking area, particularly in the south-east. But Kurdish has also gained influence, because of a continuous influx of Kurds into areas formerly dominated by Christians, and because of the increasing necessity for the Arabic-speaking minority to communicate with the Kurds. In the north, in the Sason region, Turkish seemed to have remained a medium only for official communication and mass media. In the streets, and in the restaurants and cafés, we heard only Kurdish and Arabic. The Arabic speakers in the Sason district constitute an isolated border area on the linguistic map of the Arabic language. They normally do not see Arabic television or radio, so there is practically no influence from Modern Standard Arabic. The linguistic situation in eastern Anatolia is complex. On the one hand, Turkish dominates mass media and official communication completely, while on the other hand, Kurds constitute not a minority but a majority in eastern Anatolia. Hence the Aramaic and Arabic-speaking groups tend to develop a solid competence in Kurdish side by side with the Turkish that is learnt at school.

[3] Based on interviews both with informants *in situ* and informants now living in Sweden.

Map showing the location of Siirt in south-eastern Turkey (see arrow). Tillo is located 9 kilometers north-east of Siirt (source: Ahamed, F. *The Making of Turkey*, London and New York 1991. The map is slightly modified).



The rise of Kurdish political power occurred in the wake of the disintegration of the Arab empire in 1258. Kurdish self-rule was largely a product of the evolving process of social and economic change inside the territory we usually call Kurdistan. Beginning in the seventeenth century, Kurdish society experienced increasing detribalisation, sedentarisation and urbanisation. Small kingdoms were formed with armies and civil bureaucracies. By the end of the seventeenth century, Kurdistan was under the rule of some forty large and small states (Hassanpour 1993: 111). We can assume that there was linguistic tension during this time between Arabic, Persian and Turkish on one side and Kurdish on the other. This tension was shaped by both the cultural and religious power of the dominant languages and the relative weakness of Kurdish as a literary and official medium of communication. 'The loosely integrated Ottoman and Persian empires could not rule over Kurdistan directly and, as a result, were not in a position to impose the Turkish or Persian language on the native speakers of Kurdish who were out of reach and largely illiterate' (Hassanpour 1993: 111). In the mid-nineteenth century, however, the Ottoman and Persian states overthrew the rule of the many small Kurdish states. By recent estimations Kurdish is spoken by about twenty million people. 'The numerical strength of the language has been undermined, however, by the forcible division of its speakers among five states – Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and the former Soviet Union – and therefore by the transformation of the Kurds into minorities of various sizes in these countries' (Hassanpour 1993: 107). Exact figures of the Kurdish population in Turkey are not available, but a moderate estimate by McDowall for the year 1980 was 8,455,000 people (McDowall 1985: 7).

Both the state and the market are decisive in determining a linguistic dominance. According to Hassanpour (1993: 140) 'The state is certainly not the only factor in the distribution of linguistic power. In a developed capitalist society the market is arguably the most powerful determinant of language use in business such as book publishing, journalism, broadcasting, and even higher education. In developing countries, however, the modern state plays a major role in the destinies of minority languages.' In the case of eastern Anatolia, it is safe to assert that the Turkish state has adopted an extremely restrictive attitude towards all minority languages, specifically Aramaic, Arabic and Kurdish, including any willingness to call them minority languages at all. During our fieldwork in eastern Anatolia, we met an official who argued that the term 'minority' implies a political responsibility towards the minority group and, even worse, it may invite neighbouring states to lay claims on Turkey. He specifically mentioned the claims of Syria on the Hatay province and the instability of the Turkish–Syrian border (cf. Emma Jørum in this volume).

Migration to and from villages in Syria and Turkey

We journeyed several times along the Turkish/Syrian border, on both sides. South of the border, in the Syrian towns of Amuda and Tel Mozan you may, in good weather, see the beautiful mountains of Tur-Abdin and the ancient town of Mardin climbing the mountain slopes. From the Turkish side, you look down on the large plains of ancient Mesopotamia. On both sides you may travel quite close to the border. On the Syrian side, the road along the border may get as close to the border as fifty metres, so close that you are able to observe not only the railway track of the once famous Orient express but also the watchtowers of the Turkish border defence. But usually you see no Syrian defence forces or

Syrian watchtowers at this border. During our fieldwork, as we travelled from east to west as far as the border to Hatay within Syrian territory, we discerned considerable tensions in the region, expressed by fear or ill-feelings against groups considered to constitute a local religious, linguistic or ethnic majority. Our informants were either Muslim Arabs or Christian Aramaic speakers, and hence the cases do not reflect a Kurdish viewpoint or majority standpoints in general. Tensions were clearly linked to how people understood the role – ideally and in practice – of various states in this complex situation of regional minorities and majorities. In the 1970s Christian groups from this area have found a refuge in the USA and Europe, not least of all in Sweden, and this migration has caused a depopulation of many formerly Christian-dominant towns and villages. This has of course caused much distress and fear among the few Christians that are left in the area. The Aramaic speakers we met on both sides of the border felt that their culture was perishing. They expressed fear over what they perceived as the regionally growing power of the Kurds and concomitantly their own demise as a religious, ethnic and linguistic group.

Fear of dominating groups is not limited to Christians, of course. According to the informants from Tillo, in the region of Siirt more than fifty per cent of the Arabic-speaking population had migrated in less than two years. The reasons for leaving Tillo may vary but two reasons are often mentioned in the material, namely: 'There is no other place like our home village, both concerning weather and (concerning) everything else. It only has two disadvantages: In Tillo there is no water and there is no work'. The informants are careful not to put politically sensitive information on tape but when our tape-recorder was off these Arabic speakers voice a fear and dislike of the growth of the Kurdish-speaking population in their villages. Kurds, according to an informant, have many children, while they – the Arabic speakers, only have a few. Kurds, furthermore, are willing to do any kind of work for only half the wages asked by the Arabic-speakers. 'Twenty to twenty-five years ago life in Tillo was much better than now. Today Tillo has been mixed (with other people). The way Turkey is a mixture of people, there too it is the same. Tillo has been mixed' (quotation from an informant).

We also visited the village of al-Jalame, a couple of kilometres from the Hatay border. In that village, only about twenty families were Arabs (sunni Muslims) and the rest, seven hundred families, were Kurds. The Arabs were of Bedouin origin but are now *hadar* (sedentary people). All male Arabs in the village speak Kurdish, and express that they are afraid of the continuous 'expansion of the Kurds'. In the village of Deir Balute, only some hundred metres from the border to Hatay, there were only three or four Arab Muslim families. The rest were Kurds. But five kilometres to the south, only five hundred metres from the border to the Hatay, in the village of Atme, the whole community was Arabic. This community spoke neither Kurdish nor Turkish.

Migration from the Siirt region is occurring so rapidly that the Arabic speakers are worried that soon none of them will remain in their home villages, and that both their language and their culture will vanish. Such an anxiety is often observed in the recorded material. This anxiety is conspicuous when one studies some lines from an informant now living in Istanbul. He starts by saying: 'I am teaching my daughter Arabic, but after her what will happen? Now my daughter goes to school where everyone else is a Turk'. He goes on by saying: 'Now I have three daughters. These three daughters, if in the future they have four children each this makes them twelve. Everyone will then leave for a

different place. In such a situation we will get mixed with the Turks. We will get mixed with Turks and then what will happen?' And he ends by saying 'This is what will happen. We will forget ourselves. We will forget our origin and we will vanish. The lineage will come to an end'.

The difficulty in maintaining a language in 'exile' can be illustrated by the worries voiced by a fifty-five year old woman who moved to Istanbul nine years ago: 'because people here in Istanbul talk like this (Turkish) we also do so. Nevertheless, our Arabic (talk) is much better and nicer.'

On 11 April 2002 we visited Tall Abyad, a small town about one hundred kilometres north of ar-Raqqa, on the Syrian–Turkish border with a frontier station. According to an Armenian informant, people here are divided into three distinct groups: Arabs, Kurds, and Christians (divided into Armenian and Syriac Orthodox). The Christians originate from Urfa (Şanlı Urfa). He said that there was a tension between the groups in Tall Abyad.

In April 1999, while travelling along the border, Isaksson visited three border towns, Amuda, Darbasiyye and Ras al-Ayn, located on the Syrian side of the border to Turkey, respectively 30, 56 and 116 km west of Qamishli. The towns are located in a border region where the effects of two dialect types are clearly perceivable. On the one hand, there are deeply felt roots in the Mardin area with its special kind of *qəltu*-Arabic and on the other, there is a strong influx of a more prestigious central Syrian tongue. The speakers in the recordings were mostly Christians of the Syriac Orthodox Church. In addition to Arabic, most of them also spoke a Neo-Aramaic dialect, Turoyo (Lahdo 1999). They all view themselves as native Mardilli speakers with historical roots in the Tur Abdin area in south Anatolia, with varying degrees of literacy (and the resulting influence from Modern Standard Arabic). Their own view of the dialect is expressed in a passage from Ras al-Ayn: 'the way we are talking now, the speech we use belongs to the Mardin district and its environment. By environment we mean the villages, Qsor, Čefetlek, l-Manuriyye, Bnebil, and Qalat Mara'. In these three towns there is an increasing influx of Kurdish speakers. In all three towns there are also autochthonous Muslim Arab inhabitants that speak the same dialect as the Christians. But there is a generation gap. Younger speakers no longer master the native dialect: 'I can tell you that this dialect is no longer used by those who are under thirty years. We have forgotten our dialect, I mean, in the same way as we have forgotten our first language (= Aramaic) we have forgotten our dialect also'.

According to the informants, in Darbasiyye there are about 55,000 people, of which 25,000 live in the town proper. 90 per cent are Kurds, 40–45 families are Christian and the rest are Arabs of Muslim confession. The Arabs come from Central Syrians cities and are officials of various professions, teachers, policemen, civil servants etc. The linguistic situation has changed rapidly in Darbasiyye. Before 1967, the portion of Christians speaking the traditional Mardilli was about 70 per cent, and before that the dominance of Christians was even greater: 'Once all al-Darbasiyye was Christian. There were about five or six Arab families, or four, five Turkish families, some of them were from Diyarbakir and some of them from Berke'.

Ras al-Ayn has about 80,000 inhabitants, of which 50,000 live in the central part of the town. 2,500–3,000 are Christians. Two-thirds of the Christians are Aramaic speakers belonging to the Syriac Orthodox Church. There are also Christians of the Armenian Church in Ras al-Ayn.

During our field work we also came to the Turkish town Idil, with the Arabic name Āzəx, close to the Tigris river on the way between Midyat and Cizre, not far from the three state border crossing point of Turkey, Iraq and Syria. In Idil we encountered a few autochthonous Arabic speakers of the ancient *qəltu*-variety. They were all in all twenty-two persons from nine families. They were Syriac–Orthodox Christians, but did not speak Neo-Aramaic. They claimed that although they felt that the Turkish government seemed to be changing its policy towards the Christian minority, they were still called *gavir*, 'infidels', by people in the streets.

In a mountainous area in the Mardin district, in south-eastern Anatolia, there is a big village. This village has about 450 houses and three churches, with the houses largely in ruins. We visited this village 30 October 2000. Here, too, the people speak the ancient variety of Arabic, *qəltu*-Arabic. However, the informants tell us that their grandparents could speak the indigenous Aramaic dialect of the area, Turoyo. Now only two Christian families live (a total of seven persons). The rest of the inhabitants have, 'for some reason' emigrated to the United States, Brazil, Germany, Holland and Sweden, where the majority live on the outskirts of Stockholm. A young male informant told us that he and his mother had made several attempts to emigrate to Sweden, but that they were not successful. He was sad and could see no future in the village, but also claimed it would be difficult to leave his parents. Both he and his parents were afraid because his uncle was killed some years ago for the sake of money. In January 2003 his father died and hence the number of the Christian inhabitants of this village decreased by one-seventh.

During a field trip in October and November 2000 we also made a survey in Anatolia and visited the mountainous Sason region, where there are several more or less isolated villages, some of which were not accessible by car. This area has been the centre of power for the PKK, the Kurdish Workers party. The Kurds are still powerful outside the main roads and towns. In urban areas and main roads, however, the Turkish military presence is strong.

The autochthonous grown-up people in the Sason area seem to speak three languages: Arabic, Kurdish and Turkish. We asked several people when they learn those languages. Arabic is learnt at home, as vernacular, without any knowledge of writing. Turkish is taught in school. The children in Arabic villages apparently did not speak Kurdish. But as soon as they are of the age when they can visit the town alone, they start to learn Kurdish. It should be kept in mind, of course, that the Kurds constitute the vast majority in this area and that very few Kurds speak Arabic. Some of the Arabic speakers we met in Sason considered themselves Kurds: 'Our parents and grandparents were Arabs but we are Kurds'.

We also visited Hasköy on the highway between Tatvan and Muş. As far as we know, Hasköy is the northernmost Arabic-speaking location in Turkey. We stayed one day in Hasköy and got a recording from an approximately thirty-year-old Arabic informant. This informant was furious when we met him because he was involved in a lawsuit with the authorities of agriculture. He had been granted a loan for one year and it had turned out that the harvest during the present year was bad. He claimed he had no chance of paying back the loan and hence would be sent to jail. We often heard that the state never invests anything in this region and that the authorities during harvest time bought wheat, tobacco and wine grapes for low prices and sent them to the western part of the country. The state did not bother to build, for instance, a tobacco factory or a winery in

the region. All investments are directed to the western part of the country. Such complaints were heard from Arabic-speaking Muslims and express a feeling that the region is neglected by the state. Linguistically, the most conspicuous characteristic of the samples of text from Sason is the heavy Turkish and Kurdish influence, especially Turkish.

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Aleppo Traders and the Syrian State

ANNIKA RABO

Aleppo is Syria's most important industrial and commercial city. Trade and industry is very heterogeneous. Many traders work both in retail and wholesale, and they are quite often also industrialists or small scale producers. In this article, Aleppo traders and their ambiguous relations with the Syrian state will be used as a case-study[1] to discuss how and where the state appears from the point of view of these citizens, and how the state is talked about. The overall aim of my trading informants is to have *a shop of one's own*. Such a shop is both an expression of, and an instrument towards, *independence* and *settlement*; both cherished values in the market. Traders[2] were exceedingly wary of state-polices, and their striving for independence was a striving away from dependence on the public sector. In their daily lives as traders they were, however, highly dependent on the state. In projecting a sharp dichotomy between the private sector and the public, they tried to present an image of themselves as victims of unjust and corrupt employees. Yet, as will be discussed in this article, such a dichotomy obscures the considerable complexity both of the private and the public sector as well as the relation between them and between state and society. This article is thus less about 'the state idea' and more about 'the state-system' (Abrams 1988: 82) where the state 'is represented and reproduced in visible everyday forms' (Mitchell 1991: 81) from a particular ethnographic site (cf. Blom Hansen and Stepputat 2001: 3).

The Syrian state has commonly been analysed as exercising great control over the economic life of the country. After independence in 1946, policies of Étatism emerged, especially when Syria joined a union with Egypt (1958–1961). These policies were taken over by the Ba'th party, which came to power in 1963. In terms of investment in industry and agriculture, the state was the most important actor for decades. But the private sector was never set aside. In particular, the small traders of the market survived and at times even

[1] The case is based on fourteen months of anthropological fieldwork, between 1997 and 2003, among traders in Aleppo. The research was supported by the Swedish Research Council. Many of the arguments in this paper appear in greater detail in Annika Rabo, *A Shop of One's Own*, London, I. B. Tauris, 2005.

[2] My informants classified themselves and were classified by others as *tujaar* (s. *taajer*), and I use the English term *trader* as a rough equivalent to the Arabic term. The vast majority of my informants had their shops and offices in the old covered market in the city centre.

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thrived. Furthermore, a 'class' of privileged traders with connections to the state have emerged since the late 1970s (Bahout 1994: 74). Syria is today an international anomaly, in that international creditors and financial institutions have very little influence over economic policies (Perthes 1995: 7). There has been little foreign pressure on Syria to adhere to policies of structural adjustment. At the same time, such polices have been implemented since the early 1990s, scaling down the economic ambitions of the state.[3]

'This is not our state'

Where did the Syrian state appear and how was it manifested and talked about in the market of Aleppo? 'The state' as it is commonly used in the social sciences is, of course, an abstraction, which is studied in and through tangible institutions, agencies and relations. In everyday life we have a tendency to reify abstract concepts, or to make the ephemeral concrete. Among my Aleppo trading informants, as among other Syrians, the state (*ad-daula*) was commonly talked about as a controlling and repressive force. The concept took on metaphorical qualities, where it stood for almost everything which was disliked about their country. To the traders it manifested itself in their daily activities in the market, as well as in a myriad of other every-day situations. The state was an all-encompassing entity, which they expressed as having little or no part in, or control over. Traders rarely linked politicians and the state together, but frequently used the concepts of the state and the regime (*as-sulta*) and the (political) system (*an-nizam*) interchangeably. They rarely talked about the government (*al-hukuma*). Due to the extremely centralised nature of Syrian institutions, my informants seldom made any greater distinction between the local, provincial and national manifestations of the state. None of this is very surprising but reflected, I think, not only the perceived but also real fusion between regime and the state, and the lack of independent public institutions in Syria. It also reflected how most Syrians verbally – semi-openly and semi-secretly – tried to disassociate themselves from the state/regime they commonly claimed was not theirs.[4] This disassociation, however, was paradoxical. The very importance of the state for Aleppo traders (and others) was shown by the intensity of this wishful disassociation. Furthermore, the very prevalence of '*this is not our state*'-talk and -action served to underline the many interconnections between traders and public/state institutions.

For the traders, the state manifested itself in many important ways through the public sector (*qat'a al-'am*). This was talked about in less abstract ways; it included public enterprises, publicly financed and managed services and all kinds of public bureaucracies. Aleppo traders complained excessively about the malfunctioning of the public sector. Such complaints were legion all over Syria, and were, during my fieldwork, much more open and public than I had experienced in the 1980s and early 1990s. No topic – aside from marriage, family-life and religion – was brought up as much by my market-informants as that of the malfunction of the public sector. They complained that it was inefficient and ill-suited to their demands. Complaints were commonly heard

[3] In the spring and summer of 2003 many of my informants argued, however, that the privatisation policies of Syria were speeded up to pacify the USA.
[4] For an interesting analysis of official political symbols and rhetoric in Syria see Wedeen 1999.

about the mismanagement of public enterprises. There were frequent comments in the market that when private Syrian companies were nationalised in the early 1960s, the state brought in managers with no experience. In contrast, informants insisted that the private sector in the 1950s was successful and able to compete on a world market. Most of my informants claimed that the economic problems of today began with the mismanagement of public enterprises. Traders and others could semi-openly talk about these issues, because the political climate has become much more favourable to the private sector.

In the market, complaints about the public sector in general and the bureaucracy in particular were commonly set off by the presence of public employees. There were, for example, frequent visits by the 'price-police' from the Ministry of Supply, checking to see that traders did not over-price their products. Employees from the city checked that merchandise was not spread on pavements and in the alleys of the covered market. There were also employees checking on the size of business and industrial establishments in order to calculate the level of the cleaning tax. This tax was probably the most irksome expenditure for traders. Whenever the subject came up, traders expressed great frustration: '*We pay and for what? Streets and alleys are as dirty as ever!*' The cleaning-tax, it seemed to me, made traders deliberately sweep more dirt and debris into shared spaces, the neglect of which was then made eminently clear. None of my informants avoided paying their electricity or telephone bills, although they complained that they had higher dues in their commercial establishments than in their domestic. Taxes and fees were routinely complained about as being too high, and evaded as long as possible. They justified their lack of cooperation by claiming that fees and taxes were not collected for the benefit of a Syrian or Aleppo common good, but were used to line the pockets of all and sundry in 'the state'.

Traders were faced with a great deal of uncertainty in their dealings with representatives of the public sector. One day when I was sitting in the shop of an informant, overseers from the city council came in a lorry to check on the display of goods outside shops for any illegal spread of merchandise onto the pavement. It happened so quickly that shopkeepers did not have time to remove the goods they routinely spread far outside their shops. The council people confiscated the merchandise of my informant, along with other traders'. Asking him what would, happen he told me that they now had to pay a fine to the city in order to get their goods back. He explained that if the goods were not worth much, they would not bother to pay. It was also possible, he said, that their impounded merchandise would be stolen by city employees, or paid for and collected by other merchants. To my informant, this was a routine event in their line of business, and he took the incident calmly. He eventually did go, found his confiscated goods, paid a fine, and brought them back, but later told me that it was hardly worth the trouble.

Mediation, bribes and corruption

In the market there were daily occurrences where traders, while breaking the law, clearly felt like victims and insisted that the real culprit was the city council or the state. Most citizens – traders or not – were daily faced with great inconveniences when confronted with the public sector. Rules and

regulations, they claimed, were purposely unclear, applied in a haphazard way or subject to change. One way to hedge the risks was to use *wasta*, mediation.

Wasta is a complex phenomenon involving actors both in hierarchical and horizontal relationships (Rabo 1986: 155–160). *Wasta* is based on trust, in relations of friendship or patronage. It may involve exchange of money, but it is never understood, or talked about, as an economic relationship between giver and taker. Instead it is talked about as a relationship gainful for both parties.[5] Any person may become a *wasiit* – a mediator or a middleman – if he or she has resources deemed necessary by others. People often act as mediators in one context and need mediation in another. A trader in the market may, for example, bring *wasta* in order to ensure a fair deal, a prospective groom may use a *wasiit* to approach the family of his intended bride or a worker seeking a job may bring *wasta* to secure employment with a trader. *Wasta* may have long- or short-term implications. It may bind the mediator to the supplicant or it may be the expression of a prior link. Several of my informants acted, or were ask to act, as a *wasiit* in solving various kinds of problems between traders. To be regarded as a good *wasiit* was a way to build your reputation. Most of my informants had a group of close friends and associates who passed mediation to each other. The giving of *wasta* in the market, and outside, was part of the 'collection of others' deemed necessary not only for trade, but for everyday life in Syria.

But mediation in the Aleppo market was not enacted between traders alone. On the contrary, most instances in the market (and outside) where *wasta* was deemed necessary involved the public sector. Most *wasta* in the public sector was small-scale, largely used by citizens to 'get things done', but also, at times, to circumvent rules, regulations or the law. From this perspective, *wasta* can be considered as a resource which expands as the need – or perceived need – for mediation expands. In Syria, the expansion of the public sector, and the increased needs on the part of citizens to deal with that sector, increased both the need for *wasta* and the opportunities for *wasiit*-acting (Rabo 1986: 155–171). Yet in the 1990s there has been a very noticeable shift in Syria from petty *wasta* to petty bribes. During my fieldwork it was obvious that my informants, and others in Aleppo, no longer sought the *wasta* of ordinary public employees, but were instead obliged to, or condescended to, paying a bribe (*rashwa)*. Mediation in Aleppo had been transformed into a market where services had a monetary value.[6]

The process whereby bribery became more and more common, in Aleppo, or at least was perceived to become more and more common is obviously very complex. It is partly related to the relationship between the people working in the private sector and the public sector – between traders and employees – and the relationship between citizens at large and the public sector. Each and every citizen has become increasingly tied to the public bureaucracy in many different ways[7]. The need for voting-cards, identity cards, passports and a myriad of permissions to travel, to build, to marry and to be employed has increased the intensity of contacts between citizens and the public

[5] Mediation and patronage/clientelism is often seen as a key concept in the study of the Middle East, but can be of course found almost everywhere (see Rabo 1986: 158–160 for discussion).

[6] The relationship between mediation-bribes and various states clearly varies from place to place. For an interesting discussion on China see Smart 1999.

[7] For theoretical approaches to the relation between corruption and states, see Heyman and Smart 1999.

bureaucracy. The 'opportunity-structure' for petty bribes has increased because the Syrian bureaucracy is still approached through face-to-face interaction. Citizens could not call by telephone or write for papers or permissions in order to pay their taxes or their fees. They had to appear in person, or through the help of a mediator, as discussed above. The increasing poverty of public employees, and their often poor working conditions, clearly increased the sense of discontent among them, and many, from what I heard, legitimated their bribe-taking in such a way. The relative prosperity of many citizens in the private sector who were willing to 'get things done', further increased the opportunities for bribes.

Traders, being publicly exposed in the market, were in daily contact with representatives of the public sector. There were rules and regulations pertaining to their everyday activities, requiring visits by public employees, and they needed papers for various kinds of transactions. While traders strove towards and cherished their independence, many habitually claimed that they were at the mercy of visiting public employees, who were satisfied by nothing less than a tangible gift. Informants in the market commonly insisted that everything in Syria had become infused by bribes, where '*everybody* (in the public sector) *wants their cut*'. One man, commenting on the spread of petty corruption, agreed that bribes or gifts were not a new phenomenon in Aleppo, but insisted that the character had changed. '*Before it was done with a certain finesse and not in an open way. Now public employees don't feel ashamed. They just won't do anything in an office until you give them a bribe.*' Since traders routinely broke any number of laws, both wittingly and unwittingly, there were ample opportunities for employees to be appeased by small or more substantial gifts. This kind of daily petty-bribery was generally attributed to the low salaries of Syrian public employees. After the take-over of Bashar al-Asad in 2001, traders and non-traders alike hoped, in vain, for a substantial increase in the salaries of public employees.[8] Only this, many said, would put a stop to petty-bribes.

In Aleppo a dynamism had developed between what I would characterise as petty and intermediate bribery,[9] with the occurrence of one type feeding into the other. Intermediate *rashwa*, where money or material goods were exchanged for non-routine services in the public sector, increased dramatically in the 1990s. *Wasta* was still used for and by people with political connections, but my informants often had to pay dearly for non-routine services, like a building permission or an export license. Earlier, such services were mainly executed within the framework of *wasta*. They bound giver and taker, the sought-out and the seeker – or cliques on both sides – into relationships of seeming mutuality. They were also the outcome of such relationships. Very often the *wasiit* was a member of the ruling party or employed in one of the security agencies. At the time of my fieldwork, most traders could not function without paying intermediate *rashwa*. Very often seekers of such services also needed the help of mediators to make such payments.

[8] Salaries have increased, but not enough to offset higher consumer prices. In the summer of 2003, a number of my informants claimed that Syria 'in order to become part of the European Union (sic!) has to increase public salaries substantially'.

[9] In Syria and in Aleppo there is also what I characterise as 'grand' bribery, which is used by very important political patrons and mediators.

Traders and non-traders alike constantly complained about the corruption of the country and the prevalence of bribes.[10] All of my trading and non-trading informants stressed that there was a strong link between the prevalence of petty and intermediate bribes and widespread corruption (*fasad*) in Syria. In principle, bribes were abhorred by all people in both the private and the public sector, yet excused when given or taken by themselves or others close to them. From the point of view of the traders, they had certain rights and could use means – considered illegal by Syrian law – to reach those rights, since the employees of the state did not, free of charge, give them their rights. *Rashwa* in Aleppo was always a matter of hard cash, while *fasad* was perceived as a structural illness prevalent in the public sector, with negative repercussions on the private sector. My informants defended their own practices of giving petty and intermediate *rashwa* as a necessary evil to get their job done, or their rights attended to, but never implicated themselves in the *fasad* of the country.

During my fieldwork many city dwellers told me that corruption was more widespread in Aleppo than in any other Syrian city.[11] Non-traders attributed widespread corruption to the trading- and industrial-spirit of the city and sometimes argued that traders in Aleppo had spoiled public employees with their willingness to use bribes. '*Those people want to get things done and they can afford to pay bribes. Even clean employees who are moved to Aleppo get used to taking bribes.*' Many traders quite openly discussed the price of various employees. One judge was pointed out as notoriously corrupt, and as having built a private palace from the proceeds of his bribes. A great many traders were involved in various lawsuits or in legal procedures, and in the market everybody claimed to know which lawyers and which judges conspired together, and at what price a favourable outcome could be bought. According to one trader all judges took money, but while some were corrupt and passed wrong sentences, others were corrupt but '*at least followed the law*' in their verdicts.

All of my informants agreed that the very prevalence of routine giving and taking money, where the line between legal and illegal was unclear, and perhaps purposefully blurred by all involved, paved the way for, and contributed to, a '*rashwa*-isation' of society and a sense of *fasad*. My informants commonly expressed shame and great anguish over the general corruption of Syria, yet justified their own practices because they felt trade was essential to the economy of the country. Sometimes this led to pinpointing responsibility on others, more far away.[12] Some informants often claimed that Damascene traders had intimate and close contacts with politicians and power-holders. They insisted that Aleppo traders had to pay bribes because they were disadvantaged compared to Damascene traders. In this type of reasoning they, the clever and hard-working Aleppians, were deliberately kept on a short rein by private and public actors in the capital. Others stated that nowadays the reputation of a trader did not matter any more; only money. '*If you have money you are a king, no matter how you got it. If you have no money, you are nothing, even if you are honourable.*'

[10] See Gupta's article on the discourse of corruption in an Indian village. He asserts that the very act of talking about corruption underlines the 'degree to which the state has become implicated in the minute texture of everyday life' (Gupta 1995: 375).

[11] I heard exactly the same complaint in Raqqa in north-east Syria in the late 1970s.

[12] For an interesting analysis of 'corruption-talk' in Pakistan, see Verkaaik 2001: 344–364.

The paradoxes of economic liberalisation

Spurts of economic liberalisation in the Hafez al-Asad era (c.f. Kienle 1994) have increased the scope and scale of the involvement of private enterprises in the Syrian economy. But neither economic liberalisation nor open door policies have lessened the involvement of the public employees. On the contrary; the planning, execution and management of deregulation and privatisation policies in Syria has been the work of the public sector. Deregulation may hence, paradoxically, increase the regulatory power of the state by putting new bureaucracies, bureaucratic procedures and bureaucrats in place. While public enterprises and factories have been economically neglected or abandoned and hence contribute less and less to the GNP, the bureaucratic public sector's grip over the economy has not diminished in Syria. Five-year-plans are no longer produced, as in the heyday of socialist planning, when most larger and medium-sized enterprises were state-owned. There are instead other kinds of planning and control institutions. There is, for example, an economic planning body which acts as a decision-maker for foreign trade.[13] It also wields considerable influence over economic polices related both to the private and the public sector, and the relationship between the two. This committee includes not only important ministers, party leaders and trade union leaders, but also representatives from the Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Perthes 1995: 210–211).

Most of my informants claimed that only large enterprises owned by big traders and industrialists who hold strong links to political power-holders have reaped the benefits of economic liberalisation because of their connections to the Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Economic liberalisation has thus given some in the private sector more influence, but liberalisation has not curtailed the scope of bureaucratic interference in the very field of economic change. On the contrary; traders and industrialists constantly harped on obstacles and difficulties especially related to export and import. They also linked the scope and scale of bribe-taking to these new economic opportunities. New economic policies whetted the appetite for more freedom and affluence, but did not fulfil these expectations for the private sector as a whole.

The increased economic importance of traders and industrialists has been ushered in by the state. The importance of traders, it can be argued, has thus contributed to the *rashwa*-isation of Aleppo, because they have the means to pay bribes. The aspirations of traders – independence and settlement – are furthermore the aspirations of many in the public sector as well. Taking bribes is the starting point for many employees to set themselves up in business. In the spring of 2002 the market was slower than ever, and corruption as prevalent as before, according to my informants. The wife of one of my informants, like everybody else, expressed with great frustration that '*a common policeman*' earned more than traders, who were now forced to eat from their capital. This, she said, would stop trade and cause problems for the whole country because '*traders are the basis of the economy*'.

[13] The Committee for the Guidance of Imports, Exports and Consumption.

Linking the public and the private sectors

The private sector in Syria is an abstraction and a blanket label which overlooks the extreme differences between various kinds of private enterprises. This sector has never been homogeneous. But with the concomitant dismantling of public enterprises and increased economic liberalisation, its heterogeneity has increased. There are more private enterprises today because opportunities for employment, or survival from employment, in the public sector have decreased. In Aleppo the private sector includes small sandwich-stalls in the medina, workshops in basements in residential quarters of Aleppo, large wholesale traders and huge factories in the new industrial zones. Shop-owners, agents, traders and industrialists come in all shapes and sizes, all faced with various assets and constraints and controlling various resources. They all strove towards 'a shop of one's own' as an expression of their independence and settlement, but they operated in various ways inside the market and their political assets differed considerably.

The public sector is also heterogeneous, consisting of all kinds of bureaucracies and employees. In everyday interaction between representatives of the private and the public sectors the private/public-distinction was often rather blurred. Although most of my informants expressed a great deal of antagonism towards the public sector, as well as towards many public employees, they were also, as stated above, worried about their fate. Traders at times also employed part-time workers who were public employees. Many of my informants, furthermore, had relatives and friends in the public sector, or had even been public employees themselves. In turn, ordinary employees in the public sector expressed no antagonism towards the private sector as such, since many of them depended on it for their survival, or were connected to it through friends and relatives. There was no generalised class- or interest-based antagonism between people working in the private and public sectors, or between employees and traders or industrialists. Ordinary public employees did not identify with the public sector. Their hopes and aspirations for their own future were not bound to public employment. It was no longer heroic to work in the public sector, and national development was no longer associated with a large public sector. Public employment was no longer a source of pride or good reputation, and it inspired no loyalty. Instead *rashwa* had, for many, become an institutionalised perk. Non-corrupt employees were pointed out, but by doing this, the very *rashwa*-isation of Syria simultaneously appeared.

Everyday relations in the private sector were not as clear-cut, either. In the market, traders were often in conflict, but they generally recognised the right of others to make a living. This living should ideally be made of building and preserving one's name and reputation through relations of trust. The logic of the Aleppo market was not monetary profit-maximisation for a few, but survival and profit for the many. Self-aggrandisement and profits incurred through close links with the state were criticised. Most of my informants had not forgotten the nationalisation of the 1960s and the events of the early 1980s when the Aleppo market was occupied by army units in pursuit of the Muslim Brothers. Through their own everyday participation, they were painfully made aware of their dependence on public employees, of the prevalence of petty and intermediate bribes and of their link to corruption. In such an environment, traders who ostentatiously displayed their riches or their visible connections to the powers-that-be were criticised and commonly described as 'nobodies'. Yet many such nobodies were also sought after and needed as mediators, and they

were not publicly antagonised. In practice, therefore, many traders interacted with such private sector representatives in the manner in which they interacted with important representatives of the state. Many traders needed as much *wasta* and used as much *rashwa* to influence traders with connections to political leaders as they did to influence public employees.

But talk of 'the private sector' in the market, among traders, glossed over the heterogeneity and the divisions within that (good) sector and reproduced ideas of a homogeneous (evil) public sector. Traders' talk of the economic importance of 'their' sector heightened their ideas of a public sector draining off their hard work. But in everyday face-to-face interactions in the market with other traders, and with public employees, this talk – of an ideological nature – was converted into an everyday complex reality where they, as traders, strove to manage, and survive on, their enterprises. Practices of *wasta* and *rashwa* served to bridge the gap between an ideological discourse of 'us' and 'them' and everyday activities. Mediation and bribes blurred the lines between the private and the public sectors by implicating both in practices they in principle condemned. But at the same time, the prevalence of *wasta* and *rashwa* increased traders' conviction that they were the true essence of society because these phenomena were blamed on 'the public sector' or 'the state'.

The normality of 'exceptional cases'

In Syria, as elsewhere, there are many links and nexuses between the public and the private sectors, and the state (in the abstract) clearly plays a role in forming and maintaining such links. Yet here, as elsewhere, citizens at large, as well as power-holders and researchers, commonly make an analytical distinction between the two. This distinction may obstruct our understanding of how, where and through whom the state operates, as well as how, where and through whom private agents operate to further their interests (however defined) (cf. Poluha and Rosendahl 2002: 27–31). The public sector is as divided and as heterogeneous as the private. My Aleppo informants, as well as power-holders (of and in the state), however, discursively perpetuated a distinction between *one* private and *one* public sector, thus underlining, and even creating a difference and antagonism between the two rather abstract entities. But in everyday interaction, as discussed, the boundaries were different and much fuzzier.

The case of Aleppo traders and their ambiguous relations with the state could obviously be used to bolster an argument of the 'exceptionalism' of Syria or the Middle East (cf. Introduction and Jørum in the present volume). My argument, however, is different. Yes, this *is* a particular case of state-citizen relationship, but then *all* cases are particular. For all cases we should ask: Where is the state and how is it perceived and talked about by various citizens in different contexts? (Rabo 1996: 155). The state, then, dissipates into bureaucracies, and bureaucracies dissipate into employees. These employees are not only employees but simultaneously citizens, with lives and ambitions outside their jobs. And citizens, as well, dissipate into a heterogeneous collection of men and women. I am not arguing that the particularity and exceptionalism of any and all cases are such that state-citizen comparisons cannot be made. Scientific analyses must, of course, reduce complexity in order to address any issue. But this reduction should not be

based on simple dichotomies such as state-civil society or the public and the private sector. Instead we should scrutinise, first of all, the meanings of such concepts as they are used by a variety of actors, and secondly the manifestations of such concepts in everyday life. Such an approach needs to be based on detailed case studies, but also informed by a critical view of taken-for-granted assumptions about state-citizen relations anywhere in the world.

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The State, Technological Capacities and Technical Exchange in Iran

An Interdisciplinary Approach

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Industrialisation has been a main concern of almost all developing countries for the last six decades. There has also been a general belief that the state should play an active role in promoting industrial development. Governments have employed various measures for this purpose. They have restricted trade through tariffs and quotas, paid subsidies to industries or provided credit with favourable terms. Such support was supposed to help local 'infant' industries to grow and become competitive within international markets. Acquiring modern technology was supposed to be one of the factors that would have benefitted from the support and could even contribute to this process.

Industrial experience in a large number of developing countries shows that the majority did not achieve their goals of industrialisation. There are reasons to believe that weak technological capabilities might have been among the major reasons behind these failures. Learning by doing, that is, working with imported machinery certainly had some benefits for these countries, but insightful learning demanded more purposeful planning. Such learning was necessary to help industries in using this imported technology and in enabling them to recognise suitable technology, adapt it and master it. The firms were eventually capable of improving their technology, taking into consideration national conditions.

We can argue that the success of firms' technological activities in turn depends on two major factors. First, they must have access to certain capabilities in terms of knowledge and skills to interact and adapt themselves to others in the market. Second, there must be sufficient incentives to encourage them to efficiently use these capabilities. For example, the experience of industrialised countries indicates that learning or competence should be connected to intensive cooperation. Firms should be encouraged to enrich competence through interactions with local and international firms. Accordingly, increasing technological capability highly depends on how firms master their relationships with other firms. Strong technological cooperation requires education and an adaptive capability on the part of the firms. From

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this point of view, investment in education is necessary for the industrialisation of a country, but it is not sufficient. This suggests that industrialisation depends on the appropriate incorporation of investments in technological capabilities regarding the firms' technological activities.

The above proposition offers an opportunity to analyse industrialisation in an interdisciplinary framework including economics and business. While the mainstream emphases in both disciplines often create a clear-cut boundary between the two, the present study will show how their combination may enhance our understanding of subjects such as industrial development.

This paper intends to examine the industrialisation performance of Iran, which was relatively weak in the last two decades (Amid and Hadjikhani 2005: Chap. 5). More precisely, we want to study the Iranian investments in human capital and analyse the firms' behaviour concerning technological capability. First, we use overall data and economic tools to analyse the development of human skills in Iran after the Revolution of 1979. We will later study the incentives to use these skills through examining firms' technological exchange with their foreign counterparts. We use firm level data and business network theory for this purpose.

The paper is arranged in the following manner. We will briefly explain what national technological capabilities are and why a government should develop them. Secondly, we will focus on the Iranian experience with regard to human skills, which is one of the key components of technological capabilities. Then we examine a survey on the firms' strengths in developing technological competency. We attempt to explain some of the results seen in a cited a survey of Iranian firms, and also to compare these results to a similar survey in industrialised countries. Finally, the last section summarises the main findings of the paper, and presents some concluding remarks.

National technological capabilities

The importance of acquiring modern technology in order to encourage industrialisation within developing countries has been recognized in development literature since the 1950s. The complexity of the learning process was, however, less known. It was presumed that when developing countries import modern machinery, they would gain access to new technology through experience, or 'learning by doing' which was the popular expression. Although many developing countries imported modern machinery for decades, the evidence suggests that most of their industries failed to meaningfully reduce technological dependency, nor did they become internationally competitive. Two explanatory factors might include insufficiently developed prerequisites for technological activities and inadequate incentives to undertake such investments. It is reasonable to argue that, for example, existing machinery, infrastructures and technical education are necessary for successful industrialisation. All of these factors could be labelled as national technological capabilities.

We may divide the components of national technological capabilities into three broad groups: (a) physical investment, (b) human capital and (c) technological efforts (Lall 1992: 170). Physical investments consist of various equipment and machinery that are essentially the very reasons industries exist. These could also be termed basic capital. Human capital includes all types of education, from simple literacy and numeracy to higher education. This

naturally includes informal learning as well. Learning by working within small family enterprises and on-the-job training will certainly add to human capital. Finally, technological efforts create, *inter alia*, technical personnel who are available for technical tasks and research and development investments. Cooperation with foreign firms in acquiring technical and managerial skills and foreign direct investments arranged to transfer knowledge could also be included as part of technological efforts. The physical investments are necessary for the existence of industries, and the other two categories are required in order to utilise the investments efficiently and to improve upon them. In sum, these three factors together are intended to support the industrial activities of the firms, eventually leading to industrial development.

Market forces, institutional functioning and government policies all influence national technological capabilities. The state plays a decisive role in promoting national technological capabilities within developing countries since markets and institutions are often not sufficiently developed to have any noticeable impact on these capabilities. Furthermore, activities such as education, manpower training and research and development are characterised by market failures, which then reduce private incentives to invest in them and raise the role of the state (Lall and Latsch 1998). Although the state can decisively contribute to the enhancement of national technological capabilities, it is the incentive system that determines the use of them, and eventually determines the industrialisation process. To put it differently, the level of national technological capabilities defines the highest progress that firms can achieve in their technological efforts. The incentive system influences the use of capabilities and indeed stimulates their expansion, renewal or disappearance (OECD 1987: 18).

Foreign trade is one of the channels that may be used by firms to enhance national technological capabilities through technological exchange. However, foreign firms are often reluctant to transfer their technical and managerial skills to other firms. Contrary to the neoclassical assumption of perfect and free access to technology, firms more often than not try to protect their know-how. This implies that the importing firms have to actively attempt to acquire modern production techniques and skills. They have to explicitly demand the transfer of knowledge and training of their personnel as part of the contract with their foreign partners. They should also ask for some technical assistance in adapting the technology and mastering it at home. Domestic firms may undertake such activities only if they are managed by people who understand these issues and are capable of requesting assistance. They also need competent specialists who can learn, master and finally improve the imported technology. All in all, it is plausible to conclude that human capital may contribute greatly to the enhancement of national technological capabilities in general and technological efforts in particular.

Human capital in Iran after the Revolution

We can study the development of human capital in post-revolutionary Iran by examining some of the common indicators for education. Table 1 shows the selected indicators. We can see that almost all indicators bear witness to uninterrupted quantitative improvements in human capital between 1980 and 1996.

Table 1 *Some Indicators on Human Capital in Iran, Selected Years*

Indicator	1980	1990	1996
Literacy rate, (% age 15 and above)	50	63	70[a]
Gross enrolment rate at various education levels (%)[b]			
Primary	87	110[c]	90
Secondary	42	54	74
Tertiary	–[d]	10	17
Students per 100,000 inhabitants	461[d]	825	1714
Science and engineering students per 100,000 inhabitants	187[d]	248	486

Note:

a. The share is for 1995.

b. The share of children registered at each level out of the total number of those in the age group who should have studied at this level.

c. The share exceeds 100 because certain students needed to repeat levels.

d. Universities were closed in 1980 and 1981. The figures are for 1979.

Sources: UNESCO Statistics (Internet 2003), UNESCO Statistical Yearbook (1998), World Bank (1996, Vol. II) and SCI (1984, 1996 and 2000).

The adult literacy rate rose by about 20 percentage points over a period of fifteen years (see Table 1). The latest data show that the literacy rate reached 76 per cent in 2000 (UNDP 2002: 150). Furthermore, Table 1 shows that the gross enrolment rate at all levels increased during this period. There are reasons to believe that Iran had passed the early stages of industrialisation. Then, the rise in the number of students at the secondary and higher levels of education were perhaps more important, since they provide the basis for a semi-skilled and skilled labour force. According to Table 1, the number of students per 100,000 inhabitants grew from 461 students in the late 1970s to 1 714 in 1996. Still more relevant is the information on students who studied science and engineering. The number of these students increased from 187 to 486 per 100, 000 inhabitants between 1979 and 1996.

The observed improvement in the human capital in Iran might be explained by both the supply and demand of education. Regarding the demand, both economic and non-economic factors must have been important. High economic benefits may, for example, induce people to demand more education. We may study the profitability of education by the private rate of return to education. We do not have any recent study on Iran, but estimations for the pre-Revolutionary period show that the rate of return was rather high (Psacharopoulos 1985: 599). People might then have demanded more education, since they perceived it as a profitable investment. Moreover, it is generally believed that education increases employment opportunities in the future.

Education may also be demanded for social and cultural reasons. One example involves titles such as 'doctor' and 'engineer' which are used before names. These titles give the bearers higher social status. In addition, many families did not allow their female children to attend schools, especially at higher levels, before the Revolution because they did not approve of the social and cultural conditions at schools and universities. The conditions were perceived to be non-Islamic and too westernised. After the Revolution, schools

and universities were to follow Islamic rules and traditions, and such families then had no reasons to keep their daughters from continuing their studies. This might have contributed to enormous increases in the demand for education for girls and for women. A case in point is the proportion of women within higher education. It increased from 31 per cent to 43 per cent of the total over a period of two decades after the Revolution (SCI 1984: 117 and SCI 2000: 646–647).

On the supply side, we need to study the state's behaviour, as it has been the principle supplier of education in Iran. There are reasons to believe that the Iranian government was mainly driven by non-economic motives in this respect. The new regime explicitly expressed its intention to invest in education during the early periods of the Revolution. Among the reasons that were presented for the importance of education was that Islam encourages the believers to educate themselves. It is also possible to argue that the new leaders tried to win political support by complying with the public (mainly urban), enthusiasm for education. The constitution of the Islamic Republic clearly documents the importance that the Islamic regime attached to the education.

Paragraph 3 in Article 3 of the constitution indicates that the state had to provide free education for everyone at all levels, and it had to facilitate the expansion of higher education. This is prescribed as one of the ways to help the country to achieve specific religious, cultural, and economic objectives. Article 30 explains more clearly that the state must provide all citizens with free education up to secondary school, and that it must expand free higher education to the extent that is required by the country for the attainment of self-sufficiency. Moreover, Article 43 includes education among the basic necessities for all Iranians that had to be provided by the state.

The state was also the only supplier of education until the early 1990s. Although private schools have been permitted since then, the state has remained by far the most important actor in pre-university education. On the other hand, the private Azad University has become a major supplier of higher education in the 1990s. The university was established as a non-governmental, non-profit educational system with several hundred students in 1982. It expanded rather quickly and educated more than half of all university students by the middle of the late 1990s (BMI 2000: 649–651).

There are, however, grounds for being cautious regarding the observed quantitative progress of human capital in Iran. First of all, the dropout rate within the last level of secondary education rose from about 19 per cent to 33 per cent between 1983 and 1992 (World Bank 1996: annex 5). In other words, in that decade, a larger number of students began high school but a higher percentage of them did not graduate. This suggests that the net enrolment rates could not have been as impressive as the gross figures presented in Table 1. The quality of education raises some questions as well. Many schools had inadequate, or completely lacked, laboratories and workshops and many teachers were not qualified (World Bank 1996, Vol. I: 32).

The number of pupils per teacher and per class are also common measures of education quality. Both numbers show little improvement in Iran. As Table 2 indicates, the number of pupils per teacher remained the same in the primary schools, while it first deceased but later increased within the secondary schools between 1980 and 1996. The number of students per class also remained unchanged. By and large, one may conclude that the measures

devoted to education could only finance the increasing demand for education. In other words, the Iranian government succeeded in expanding primary and secondary education, but it failed to bring about any noticeable improvement in the quality of education, or what we may call a deepening of education.

There were also some unfavourable trends within higher education with regard to the type of human capital that could affect industrialisation. We can see from Table 2 that the share of students who studied science and engineering decreased from 40 per cent of the total immediately after the Revolution to about 28 per cent in 1996. A large proportion of these students studied at Azad University. The quality of education at some of its many campuses is dubious. For the sake of comparison, we can mention that approximately 50 per cent of the educational staff of the state universities had PhD degrees in 1998. The number of staff who held PhD degrees at Azad University was about 20 per cent. (SCI 2000: 642 and 644).

Table 2 *Indicators on Human Capital in Iran, Selected Years*

Indicator	1980	1990	1996
Pupils per teacher	28	24	26
Primary	-	31	31
Secondary	28[a]	24	32
Pupils per class in primary and secondary school	30	32	30
Share of students studying science and engineering (%)	40[b]	30	28
Share of science and engineering students at Azad University out of total science and engineering students	0	28	47

Note: a. The ratio is for 1981.
b. The ratio is for 1982.
Sources: UNESCO Statistical Yearbook (1998), World Bank (1996, Vol. II) and SCI (1984, 1996 and 2000).

In sum, we may conclude that the state performed fairly well in raising human capital in Iran. The next question is whether the accumulated human capital was used to enhance further national technological capabilities. The state itself tried to use part of this capital to improve technological efforts. Two commonly used measures in this respect are the total expenditures on research and development and the number of specialists engaged in such activities. In 1994, about 0.5 per cent of GNP was spent on research and development, which was a rather good record for a developing country. Moreover, the number of scientists and engineers engaged in research and development activities increased from 3,194 in 1985 to 39,256 in 1994. Similarly, the number of technicians employed in projects went up from 1,845 to 10,104 in the same period (UNESCO 1998 and 2001).

Nevertheless, there is evidence of rising unemployment among university graduates. For example, the unemployment rate among university graduates was 11 per cent in 1999 and rose to 22 per cent in 2001 (*Aftab-e Yazd,* 19 February 2002). There must have been several reasons behind this. One reason could have been the excessive investment in certain programs. There might have been tendencies to respond to demand pressures without any thorough analysis of the future needs of the economy. Another factor might have been the geographical mal-distribution of skilled labour. Educated people tend to

choose to work in larger cities. A third reason might have been insufficient complementary investments in the basic capital which demands an educated labour force. Still another factor might have been the unsatisfactory quality of education. We believe that the incentive system that directs the use of human capital by firms must have also played a major role in the under-utilisation of this capital. This implies that firms might have had little incentive to undertake technological exchange, which requires skilled labour. As a result, the firms' approach to technological exchange with foreign firms reveals a great deal about their human capital demand. We turn to this subject in the following sections.

A device with which to study the Iranian firms' technological competency

For further understanding of this issue, we needed empirical facts. These facts can assist in shedding more light on the development of technological competency in Iran. A comparison of the facts on Iranian firms to industrialised countries can provide evidence regarding differences and similarities. Comparative facts can also support the conclusions reached in this article.

In this section, the focus is on technological competency of the firms themselves. Competency is defined as the strength of the firms to build the skills and resources required for intensive technological cooperation and in order to create the unique technical solutions demanded by the market. Consequently, a low level of the skills and resources required in order to cooperate and adapt technology explain weak technological competency. It is in fact neither economical nor possible that every firm accumulate all these resources within itself. It is to the benefit of both firms and society that firms diversify resources and cooperate to create new products or technological processes. The diversification of resources and cooperation allows for firms to reach a higher level of competency than that allowed for by costly and unnecessary resource accumulation. The main strength of the business firms in developed countries, for example, lies in their skills of intensive technological cooperation to order to create the unique technical solutions demanded by the market. Higher levels of cooperation will result in the creation of new technology. This benefits both the firms and society.

We collected and examined information regarding sixty large Iranian firms, to understand how firms in a developing country like Iran manage technological competency. The aim of the survey, which contains more than 250 questions, was to show the weaknesses and strengths within technological relationships between Iranian firms and foreign supplier firms. The survey also examined the role of the government's trade policy. Results from the Iranian survey will be compared to another survey with almost identical questions. This survey was conducted several years earlier and involved relationships between 60 Iranian firms with their business partners from developed countries. This comparison will provide deeper understanding and possible conclusions regarding Iranian firms' technological competency. We present here only a select number of facts because of space limitation. The select facts indicate general trends in the responses. We begin by introducing the selected tool of analysis. We will then discuss the results of the studies on firms' technological capability and will later turn to the organisational or management ability of the firms.

To conduct accurate information collection and valid conclusions, we need an analytical tool. There are a number of theoretical perspectives from which to study firm competency. These vary from classic theories on organisation and marketing theories and informal organisational relationships as well as institutional theories to more recent relationship and network perspectives. One approach in measuring the firms' competency is examining the manner in which the firms interact with their environment. An understanding of Iranian firms' technological skills requires an understanding of what resources they purchased from foreign suppliers, what types of products they sold to Iranian customers and what relationship they had with other firms and political organisations. Taking these factors into account, we selected the industrial network theory (see for example, Hadjikhani 1996; Håkansson 1985). This theory is built on relationship interdependency and the long-term relationship between business and non-business actors. It is constructed on the presumption that firms do not act in isolation. Any action on the part of one actor influences the other. Actors with strong relationship make strong adaptations towards each other. The theory is appropriate in our case as it permits us to study the Iranian firms' industrial skills while analysing the relationship contents of the Iranian firms not only with their foreign partners, but also with others in their environment. The selection was also relevant since a survey based on this theory was already designed to measure the behaviour of firms in industrialised countries.

In the context of this business network, skills and competency are defined by the content of the firms' actions. It presumes that each business activity in a relationship is more or less dependent on the performance of a number of other activities, and each activity is a link in one, or several, more or less extensive and closely linked activities. The Iranian firms' technological competency, therefore, is related to the activities not only of the Iranian firms within the study but also to the business activities performed by other firms and organisations. In other words, the Iranian firms' technological competency is more or less dependent on a number of other business and political actors. This raises the aspect of interdependence between several actors, which is a crucial aspect in any business network. There is direct interdependence between Iranian firms and their suppliers, and also an indirect interdependence between the two firms regarding customers, competitors, or the state, specifically in terms of decisions on foreign trade. Trade policy affects the foreign suppliers directly and others, such as customers or competitors, indirectly. The theory is thus relied on interdependent relationship with two different types of actors. One considers the relationship with counterparts; in the case of this study, the relationship between Iranian firms with their foreign suppliers. The second considers the relationship between these two focal actors with others; in this case, the Iranian firms with their competitors, customers and political actors in Iran. Studying the content of the exchange between, first of all, Iranian firms and their foreign suppliers, and then the positive/negative impact of the others, can reveal strengths in the Iranian firms' relationships and their technological competency. Thus, using this theoretical device, measuring relationship strength of the Iranian firms as regards their surroundings, specifically foreign suppliers indicates the firms' competency.

Indicated strengths tend to indicate competency. A high strength factor implies high interdependence and long-term technological interactions. This

indicates high technological competency. A high strength factor demands close technological cooperation, the development of new products and support from the political actors. The exchange of basic products with suppliers and customers, on other hand, reveals a weak relationship and low technological competency. However, the level of strength in the relationship, or the firms' technological competency, is comprised of the content of the relationships with the focal actor (counterpart) and relationships with others (like customers, competitors and the government that the firms are connected to). If Iranian firms have simple technological relationships with not only foreign firms, but also with other business firms like customers and competitors, then the level of competency is low. Naturally, the opposite case will generate high technological competency.

Technological capability of the firms

When studying technological competency, one measure of a strong relationship is the degree of technological cooperation and adaptation between the interrelated firms. In a question that measured the partnerships in technological development, the managers were asked to select one alternative from five alternative choices ranging from strongly positive to strongly negative. Only 5 per cent of the Iranian firms selected the alternative 'strongly positive'. For the same question, the score given by managers of firms in developed countries was more than 23 per cent. Regarding the alternative choice of 'partly agree' (in the same question), 15 per cent of Iranian firms selected this response. 22 per cent of firms from developed countries selected this response. Further, while 52 per cent of the Iranian firms saw their partner as 'unimportant'. In terms of technological development, only 29 per cent of firms from the industrialised countries selected the alternative of 'unimportant' regarding technological cooperation. These values indicate that Iranian firms have weaker technological cooperation with their suppliers. In a further examination of technological competency, we introduce results from certain other questions.

One question examined the degree of interdependence. The question was designed to measure the importance of Iranian firms for the supplier in product technology. Our results show that more than 63 per cent of the Iranian firms did not feel that their technological cooperation had extended into a development of new ideas. Only 41 per cent of firms from industrialised countries gave such an answer. In the same question, about 23 per cent of the Iranian firms and more than 35 per cent of the firms from industrialised countries agreed that supplier firms were important for technological cooperation. Comparison of the values given by the firms in Iran and industrialised countries indicate that the technological relationship among Iranian firms and their partners is much weaker than among firms from industrialised countries.

One measure of strength regarding technological competency is the degree of uniqueness in the exchanged product between partners. The more unique the product exchanged, the higher the level of demand for management competency to organise a unique cooperation. High competency in both managerial and technological areas will strengthen cooperation. On the contrary, a low level of uniqueness indicates weak technological competency. This question can further reveal the type of exchanged product. In the question

measuring uniqueness within technological cooperation, the value given by Iranian firms was only 3 per cent. This fact also indicates that the product exchanged had a low level of technology.

In examining the degree of technological cooperation, we raised another question in order to analyse the firms' technological adaptation. In this question, responses indicated that the level of Iranian adaptation was less than 15 per cent. In this context, adaptation refers to the specific input of the firms in adjusting their own technology and production process to the technological system of the counterpart. The higher the level of mutual adaptation, the higher the level of technological competency. The value of 15 per cent reached in the question above indicates low interdependence and technological adaptation. In the question of adaptation, responses given by firms from industrialised countries as regards the degree of adaptations were more than three times higher. Firms from industrialised countries gave high value the technological relationships, since each firm does not need to create either a large or broad technological competency level alone. These firms avoid the development of total competency since the creation of high competency requires a large resource input and decreases the efficient use of specific competency. As a consequence of this strategy, international firms have become dependent on each other. Each firm creates a specific competency, and cooperates with other firms who have access to other complementary competencies, in order to develop new technological processes or products.

Another question that specifically examined the level of interdependence between firms was related to the problem of delivery time. A high level of interdependence indicates that firms cannot always know what equipment they need in advance, especially when the equipment contains sophisticated technology. Further, when cooperating with suppliers, they create schedules to reduce storage costs by (JIT) just-in-time delivery of products. This means that each firm is required to develop an administrative competency that can manage the delivery by JIT. In the question for examining the impact of the delay in delivery, for the one-month delay, for example, 84 per cent of firms from industrialised countries stated that the delays would have had major and serious effects on their production activity. For the same alternative (the impact of a one month delay), the value given by the Iranian firms was 43 per cent. While Iranian firms gave a value of 40 per cent regarding the alternatives of marginal and minor effects, the firms from industrialised countries gave a value of 5 per cent. These values also show that the products exchanged among Iranian firms had a more simplistic nature and did not possess sophisticated technology. Otherwise, Iranian firms could not buy products and keep them in storage far in advance.

In another question, we examined the nature of the exchanged product. The aim was to understand how standardised or unique the products were. Unique technology within the product can indicate a high technological competency for the Iranian firms. Supporting the results of the earlier questions, the scores in the first question for the alternative standardised product was 60 per cent and for the totally new product, 13 per cent. The results indicated that the score of 13 per cent mainly consisted of technological solutions for the specific projects when the firms purchased components and equipment. Since these specific solutions have a very temporary nature, a strong and long-term technological relationship was missing. A large number of answers in the other questions verified the results above on the nature of the exchanged

products. They indicated that the nature of the product supplied by the Iranian firms' foreign suppliers had a simplistic nature. Contrary to the Iranian case, the results for the firms from industrialised countries show that products supplied among these firms had a higher level of technology.

A presumption in the theoretical device of the study, based on the industrial network model, is that relationships can be strong and long-lived because of technological interdependency (see for example, Håkansson and Snehota 1989; Hadjikhani 1996 and 1997). The results gained from the questions examining the relationships between firms from industrialised countries indicate such behaviour. Thus, theoretically, given the condition that the technological or managerial relationship is weak, the partners' cooperation will be short-lived. In a sense, partners with a weak technological relationship can simply switch to other firms which can supply the same products but at a lower price. Moreover, low technological and managerial competencies will result in short-term interaction. In examining this postulation, we wanted to understand the length of the relationship between the Iranian firms with their foreign partners. Contrary to our expectations, the results from the Iranian study indicated a long-term relationship in the field of economic exchange. We raised questions about the range of benefits and also on the length of the exchange relationship between the Iranian firms and their partners. The responses indicated that the Iranian firms have had more than ten years of exchange relationship with their foreign partners, with no plans to switch to another firm. Further, in the question that examined the benefits from partnerships in the last five years, the Iranian firms expressed that partners were very satisfied with the benefits. The score for good profitability was 75 per cent. In another question examining future benefits, the Iranian firms explained that they anticipated a high benefit from the exchange relationship with their partners. With reference to the weak technological relationship in the Iranian case, we expected to obtain results showing a short-term interaction.

The responses on technological and economic exchange indicate an interesting result. Iranian firms had weak technological relationships with foreign firms, but had high profit gains guaranteed for a long-term period. This indicates that the major reason for the long-term relationship between the Iranian and foreign partners was the economic gains from the exchange. There are some similarities in the behaviour of the firms in Iran and those from industrialised countries. They all had a long time period of exchange, they had good profits as a result of the exchange and they also believed in maintaining high profitability in the future. The major difference between these two groups of firms was seen in the technological area. The crucial question is hence: why is there such a difference in the strength of technological relationships between Iranian firms and firms from industrialised countries?

The answer to the question above is related to the Iranian government's intervention in trade policy. Generally, the impact of the state within industrialised countries is not as significant as in Iran. If we, for example, examine the question on the regulation of foreign currency and its impact on the relationship between firms and their foreign partners, we can easily find some answers. We had raised two questions about the impact of the political exchange control and exchange rate. For these two questions, we asked the managers to choose one option out of the alternatives from ranging 'no impact' to 'very much impact'. Whereas the governments in the industrialised

countries have very low or no impact on the exchange rate and exchange control, the managers from the Iranian firms felt that these regulations had a very high impact on their relationship with the foreign partners. More than 68 per cent of the Iranian firms believed that the exchange control very much affected their relations with their foreign partners. The response for the very high impact of the exchange rate shows a value of 62 per cent. The value given to the alternatives 'rather much' and 'very much' together was 81 per cent (for foreign exchange control) and 82 per cent (for the exchange rate).

One question that specifically examined the impact of trade policy was how trade policy affects the firms' technological cooperation with foreign firms. The managers were to select the alternatives 'no effect', 'minor effect', 'some effect', 'rather strong effect' and 'very strong effect'. The answers were very interesting. In the answers, the cumulative value given by the managers to the first two alternative answers 'no' and 'minor importance' of the trade policy impact was only 6.7 per cent. The cumulative value for the last three alternatives, i.e. 'some', 'rather strong', and 'very strong', was 93.3 per cent. These values indicate that the managers of the Iranian firms saw the intervention of the state as an important element in the development of their technological competencies. With reference to these answers, we believe that the state plays a crucial role in the Iranian market. In verifying such a conclusion, we present the answers of the managers to another question. We tested the relative importance of different market and non-business units for the firms. The score for government was 39 per cent (impact of bureaucrats excluded). This can be compared to the Iranian firms' technological relationship with foreign suppliers which had a cumulative value of only 18.9 per cent. The value given to competitors was only 2.7 per cent. The impact of the other business firms, like local customers, had a value of 5.4 per cent. Beside the fact that state had a high level of impact on the firms, the answers strangely show that the firms' business relationship had a low level of importance in their market activities. The main attention of the firms' market activities was given to the political relationship. In other words, the business firms' market was not functioning properly.

Political versus business and technical competencies

The data presented here showed that there have been rather impressive improvements in quantitative records of education in Iran after the Revolution of 1979. Literacy rates increased and enrolment rates at all educational levels went up. The number of science and engineering graduates, which are especially important for industrialisation, increased greatly as well. We saw, however, that the accumulated human capital tended to be under-utilised in Iran. Iranian firms showed very little interest in technological cooperation with foreign firms and limited their relations to simple imports of the goods. Such activities did not require much skilled labour. There was therefore an imbalance between the country's technological capacity and the firms' technological input into industrial activities.

A plausible conclusion is that the Iranian government did a good deal to enhance the overall level of human capital but it was not used efficiently. The state's interventions weakened the firms' interest in enhancing their technological capabilities. A major reason might have been the disincentives that were created by the many rules and regulations. Trade and exchange rate

restrictions were typical examples. Iranian firms often had to allocate a lot of work to obtain the required permits for trade and foreign exchange transactions. At the same time, they increased profit opportunities for the importers.

Instead of increasing business competencies, firms created a political competency to meet and utilise the political and bureaucratic measures. This means that firms do indeed devote resources to confronting the political field. The firms' political activities build up a competency that is essential and distinguished from business competency. In the Iranian case, it is evident that the coercive actions of the political actors caused a high level of uncertainty, forcing the firms to make large commitments to challenge the burden. But the firms also accumulated a high level of political knowledge, such as how, when, and where to adapt or influence. Conditions with high political uncertainty require a unique competency. This competency is not economic, business, or technological competency. It is instead political competency including bureaucratic knowledge, that makes firms able to meet political challenges. This knowledge, in addition to the firms' political resources, makes the firms unique, since understanding how to manage the relationship with political actors is very specific and is based on personal relationships in most cases. Firms that should use national technological capabilities in practice reacted to market uncertainty and developed capabilities in other areas.

Political uncertainty also forces firms to avoid long-term investments. This is the case not only for local but also foreign firms. Under the conditions of a large number of political regulations and rapid changes in political decisions, firms have no option other than being short-term exchange oriented. Firms know that it takes about five years before a large capital investment can start to give a profit. High capital investment requires first of all a stability regarding political conditions and also requires low bureaucratic regulations, i.e. a low political uncertainty.

A high political uncertainty encourages firms to seek rapid profit over a short period of time and to not get involved in long-run investment commitment. In the Iranian case, the purchase of large quantities of products rather than adopting a 'just-in-time' approach is a consequence of such uncertainty. It seems reasonable to conclude that investing in other competencies such as political and bureaucratic know-how are more profitable than investing in technological exchange for the Iranian firms. The expertise regarding the former requires in all probability a different type of education than what ordinary universities and high schools offer.

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The Iranian Language Policy of the Twentieth Century

The Case of Azerbaijani in Tehran

HELENA BANI-SHORAKA

There is often a mismatch between language planning and actual language practice in society. Research carried out in Tehran shows such a gap between ideal linguistic situations and reality. This article is a short description of the Iranian language policy, with focus on the largest minority language in the country, namely Azerbaijani. I argue that both recent domestic political and legal developments, as well as foreign mass media effects, challenge the official stance towards minority languages.[1]

Language policy and language planning: some general definitions

Definitions of the term 'language policy' vary considerably from narrow ones, confined to specific political interventions affecting language, to very broad ones which include not only decisions and actions but also public and official attitudes to language. Schlyter (1997) defines language policy as that which an authority, e.g. the government of a country, both allows and stipulates as far as language practice is concerned. A concrete manifestation of language policy is language planning which involves decisions on what measures are to be taken and their implementation (Schlyter 1997: 8–9). Wardhaugh (1998) defines language planning as an attempt to deliberately control the language situation in a society. This control is carried out by public authorities, academies etc., and includes, on the one hand, the establishment of rules for orthography and linguistic correctness, especially for schools, and on the other, measures to promote or limit the use of different languages within the state. Language planning can seemingly take a variety of forms and produce many different kinds of results (Wardhaugh 1998: 346).

Taken together, language policy and language planning constitute the main promotive stages of language reform; they initiate changes in practice and

[1] The present article is a revision of a previous article published in *Orientalia Suecana* 51–52 (2002–2003).

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possibly also changes in linguistic structures. However, language policy is dependent on societal support. This support is commonly seen in connection with the notion of language attitudes. Given this connection the language policy of a particular society would be enabled and developed in accordance with beliefs and loyalties concerning language among the members of that society or, in a very authoritarian or totalitarian society, by a minimal part of its members. This relationship between language attitudes on the one hand, and language policy and reform on the other, is reciprocal rather than hierarchical or unidirectional. Language attitudes are dynamic phenomena and they easily change when e.g. demographic and political changes take place in a society. The fact of language reform being a political process may also cause alternations in language attitudes (Schlyter 1997: 9).

Language planning has also become part of modern nation-building because a noticeable trend in the modern world is that language and nation are regarded as synonymous. Most 'new' countries want their own language, which has made language a basic expression of nationalistic feelings. Consequently, governments have had to form plans to develop or promote certain languages, and sometimes to hinder or demote others. Almost anywhere in the world a demand for 'language rights' is often one of the first demands made by a discontented minority (Wardhaugh 1998: 346). The deliberate attempts to interfere with a language or one of its varieties can take a number of forms. The attempt may e.g. focus on the status of a language with regard to some other language or variety, which is called *status planning*. Status planning is concerned with the extra-linguistic aspects, and changes the function of a language or a variety of a language and the rights of those who use it. For example, when speakers of a minority language are denied the use of that language when educating their children, their language has low status. Status is, of course, a relative concept; it may be increased or reduced by degrees, as is often the case. As far as languages and their varieties are concerned, status changes are nearly always very slow, are sometimes actively contested, and often leave behind strong residual feelings.

Another type of deliberate attempt to interfere with language is the changing of its internal condition. That attempt is called *corpus planning* and it seeks to develop a language or a language-variety, usually in order to standardise it, i.e. to provide it with the means to serve every possible language function in society. These two types of planning often occur simultaneously, because many planning decisions involve a combination of a change in status and internal change. Also, in a multilingual country, it is not unusual to see several different and parallel directions of language planning, e.g. to see one standpoint regarding the official and favoured language/-s, and at the same time another towards the minority languages. This has been shown to be the case in Iran.

This study has two aims: first, to discuss the ideas of language policy which have prevailed in Iran and to relate them to the ideas of language planning and measures taken to implement them, and second, to look at the specific situation of Azerbaijani in Tehran, focusing on language choice patterns and attitudes towards the minority language and relating them to the official language policy of the twentieth century. The reason for limiting the focus to the capital city is partly because of the major influence it exercises on other provinces, and partly because of the question of accessibility. The findings are viewed and analysed in double foci. On the one hand they are explained through the minority language policy of the Iranian authorities during the twentieth century, and on

the other, as a case study of a sociolinguistic situation in a multilingual society with asymmetrical power relations. The methods used for data collection include a questionnaire study, informal interviews and participant observation. The benefits as well as shortcomings of the methods are discussed below. The study is organised as follows. A short summary focusing on language policy in general and the language policy of Iran in particular, concentrating on minority language issues, introduces the study. The following section presents the case study carried out in Tehran. Its first part concerns the language choice patterns in the family, while the second part focuses on general attitudes towards bilingualism and minority languages. In the discussions, the results of the study will be related to the official Iranian language policy of the twentieth century as well as present trends in the country. With this brief theoretical outline we now turn to the specific situation of Iran.

Language policy in Iran

The language issue has been regarded as an indisputable unifying factor in this otherwise linguistically and culturally heterogeneous country. Serious efforts to integrate the country's non-Persian speaking population (about 50 per cent of the total population of 65 million) began in the 1930s. The ideology dominating the language planning efforts in Iran has been based on the idea of linguistic assimilation, which means that everyone, regardless of origin, should learn the dominant language of the country, i.e. Persian. A number of efforts of varying degrees of success have been undertaken during the twentieth century focusing mainly on Persian orthography and word coinage. As a consequence of the Iranian nation-building process, any demand from minority groups concerning 'language rights' have been rejected or at best neglected with the argument that they have been politically rather than linguistically motivated (*New Language Planning Newsletter*, p. 2).

As for the language planning measures taken towards Persian, a number of academies have been established at various times during the twentieth century. The main concern, even though several strategies have been employed, has been word coinage. Putting aside the major Arabic influence on Iranian linguistic history, Iran has during the last several decades been in close cultural and scientific contact with industrially advanced European countries. One of the most important linguistic results of these contacts is lexical borrowing; Persian has borrowed a large number of general and technical European terms used in different parts of modern life, which explains the central position of word coinage in the language planning. The work of the academies to implement the language planning has not, according to Jazayery (1983: 264) been particularly successful, for two main reasons: (a) inadequate theoretical basis and methods; (b) lack of public support and involvement. Another recurrent issue is the present writing system borrowed from Arabic, which was originally constructed for Semitic languages having considerable phonemic differences from Persian, an Indo-European language. The many resulting inconsistencies in the Persian writing system makes it complicated to acquire for native Persian speakers, and the difficulties are even larger for non-native Persian speakers. This is demonstrated by the high percentage of drop-outs in the first classes at elementary school, as well as the high rates of illiteracy in certain provinces, which are setbacks both at a personal as well as a national level.

The official measures taken towards minority languages have therefore been to downplay their linguistic functions in society as well as to limit and sometimes prohibit their use in public (Hassanpour 1995: 126). One of the consequences is that the largest minority language in Iran, Azerbaijani, with all its different dialects, together with other minority languages has not been standardised.

Even though article 15 of the latest constitution from 1980 declares that the use of regional languages is allowed, general attitudes of the authorities towards bilingualism have mainly been negative, and bilingualism has been regarded as a threat to national unity (Nercissians, 2001: 59). This situation can be said to have continued more or less until the 1990s, ten years after the abolishment of the prohibition against the minority languages. With the slightly 'liberalised' internal politics of the 1990s a movement towards the preservation of Azerbaijani language and culture has developed within certain groups of this language community. Nowadays, there are a few periodicals and weekly newspapers published in Azerbaijani in Tehran and other large cities. Cultural activities of various kinds are allowed even though they are still restricted by Iranian authorities.

Language choice and attitudes within the Azerbaijani community

This case study of the sociolinguistic situation of the Azerbaijani language community in Tehran was carried out between 1998 and 2000. The Azerbaijani language belongs to the south-western or Oghuz group of the Turkic language family, and is spoken by the Azerbaijani people. The people are known by several names depending on the location and context, such as *tork* (Turk), *azari* (Azeri), *tork-e azari* (Azeri Turk) and *tork-e azabaijani* (Azerbaijani Turk). As Lee discusses (1996: 1), these names are used interchangeably; however in academic contexts Azerbaijani is considered the most proper. Azerbaijani has, then, two meanings: 'the Azerbaijani people' and 'the language spoken by them'. The long-term proximity of these two languages, Azerbaijani and Persian, and the asymmetrical power relationship between them has led to them sharing a number of linguistically similar features. Apart from a large number of lexical borrowings from Persian into Azerbaijani, spoken Persian has exerted a syntactic influence over spoken Azerbaijani (Kiral 1997; Lee 1996).

The Azerbaijani-speaking minority is the largest one, both in Tehran and in the entire country. Since questions on ethnicity or mother tongue have not been posed in any census, there are no statistical data available on minority groups in Iran. An estimated figure of the Azerbaijani population in the capital city of Tehran is 1.5 million. The figure for the entire country is estimated to be 24 millions (www.iranatlas.com). The members of this very heterogeneous ethno-linguistic group live under varying socio-economic circumstances. I agree with the socio-economic division of Tehran made by Amir-Ebrahimi (2000), who recognises three broad areas, where the wealthiest citizens inhabit the northern parts of the city, and the least well-off and the newcomers the southern parts. In the central commercial areas in between we find a wide variety of people who belong to what may be defined as a middle class. The case study deals with language choice patterns within the home domain, and general attitudes towards the Azerbaijani language. For the initial language-choice part of the study I

have used questionnaires[2] for my data collection, and for the second part informal interviews and participant observation.

One thing needs to be mentioned about the methods used. The type of data gathered through questionnaires may be quite subjective and impossible to control. It is said that self-reports are subject to variations in relation to factors such as prestige, ethnicity, and political affiliations. Still, the lack of existing data has convinced me that this might be a worthwhile starting point. Regarding the observations and interviews, I have tried to reduce the effects of the problem through several long stays and regular meetings with the informants. Further, it is vital that a distinction be made between attitudes and opinions. Opinions can be defined as overt beliefs without an affective reaction, and they can often be verbalised. Attitudes, on the contrary, contain affective reactions and may be latent. I agree with Baker (1992: 16) that underlying attitudes can be indicated by observation of behaviour and by self-reports. Both methods might validly indicate latent dispositions of response.

Language choice within the family

In this section the language(s) chosen when speaking with different family members were asked for. The study includes both entirely Azerbaijani families as well as mixed marriage families. The family members are grandparents, father, mother, spouses, siblings, and children. As far as the statistical methods are concerned, chi-square tests have been used for the analyses. The probability value was set at 5 per cent ($p<0.05$). For this article, three social variables were used against which the statistical data were run. These independent social variables[3] are age, education, and neighbourhood. Due to limited space only the age factor is presented in the tables. It should be mentioned that age is not regarded as a factor that causes language decline, but as an indicator that sums up movement over time. Therefore, it does not reveal the underlying reasons for that movement (for further discussion, see Baker 1992: 42). Five options were provided for each question: (1) always Azerbaijani, (2) more Azerbaijani than Persian, (3) equally much/both, (4) more Persian than Azerbaijani, (5) always Persian

Table 1. Language choice when speaking with parents in percentages.

Age	Father					Mother				
group	A	A>P	A=P	P>A	P	A	A>P	A=P	P>A	P
1	20.5	9.0	11.5	23.1	35.9	24.4	6.4	11.5	24.4	33.3
2	46.4	10.9	10.1	13.8	18.8	46.4	13.6	9.3	13.6	17.1
3	72.0	15.0	2.8	4.7	5.6	71.3	14.8	2.8	3.7	7.4
4	91.2	2.9	2.9	-	2.9	88.9	4.2	2.8	2.8	1.4

A = always Azerbaijani; A>P = more Azerbaijani than Persian; A=P = equally much of both languages; P>A = more Persian than Azerbaijani; P = always Persian

[2] 650 questionnaires were distributed in all 22 districts of Tehran, out of which 521 were returned.

[3] All informants are over the age of twelve and are divided into four age groups: (1) 12–20; (2) 21–35; (3) 36–50; (4) 51–. As for education, the low educational-level category is composed of informants with no education at all or public education lower than high school. The mid-level category is composed of initiated high school education, completed high school education, or practical/technical training. The high-level category comprises those with initiated and/or completed higher education. As for neighbourhood, I refer to Amir-Ebrahimi's socio-economic division of Tehran into three areas, where the first one is the northern-central (districts 1–8), the second one is the central belt through the city (districts 9–14), and the third one is the southern (districts 15–22).

There is no statistical difference found between language choice with father and mother. However, there is a sharp line dividing the two oldest and the two youngest age groups, indicating that the younger the informant, the more Persian is used with the parents. Contrary to the age factor, education shows a different pattern. The results show that there is a significant difference between the low and mid-educational levels, indicating that the lower the level of education, the more Azerbaijani is spoken to parents. The same type of pattern is found between the mid and high-educational level, where the most highly educated informants use more Azerbaijani with their parents. This leaves us, quite interestingly, with the mid-level educated informants, who claim to use the most Persian with their parents. Neighbourhood as a social factor for determining language choice seems not to have any significant relevance. Although Azerbaijani is generally spoken more often with parents in the southern parts of the capital, the difference compared to the central and northern parts is not statistically significant.

Before turning to the remaining family members, some socio-demographic issues regarding the civil status and the spouses of some of the informants should be pointed out. Of the 80 informants in the youngest age group (1), only one young woman is married. This is why the youngest age group is left out of the analysis regarding spouses and children. For the second age group, the number of married informants is sufficient to carry out statistical tests.

Table 2. Language choice when speaking with siblings and spouses in percentages.

Age	Siblings					Spouses				
Group	A	A>P	A=P	P>A	P	A	A>P	A=P	P>A	P
1	10.7	6.7	5.3	21.3	56.0	-	-	-	-	-
2	25.7	13.2	10.3	13.2	37.5	37.1	14.3	8.6	8.6	31.4
3	47.7	13.5	11.7	11.7	15.3	38.1	8.8	11.5	17.7	23.9
4	50.0	19.5	7.3	8.5	14.6	57.5	17.5	8.8	1.3	15.0

A = always Azerbaijani; A>P = more Azerbaijani than Persian; A=P = equally much of both languages; P>A = more Persian than Azerbaijani; P = always Persian

The age groups show that there is a significant difference in language choice between siblings within different age groups, i.e. the younger the informant, the more Persian is used with brothers and sisters. As far as spouses are concerned, there is a difference between the two oldest age groups, where informants in the oldest age group claim to speak more Azerbaijani with their spouses. Looking at the education factor, it seems to influence the language choice with spouses in that the higher the level of education of the informant, the more likely it is that he/she chooses Persian with his/her spouse. There is no significant difference between the language choice of siblings, i.e. the choice of language with siblings is quite evenly distributed among the alternatives. Finally, in the tests involving neighbourhood, the use of Persian is generally high, but Azerbaijani is used more often (exclusively or in combination with Persian) in the southern parts of the capital than in the central and northern parts.

The last table presents the language choice patterns with grandparents and children. The language chosen when speaking with grandparents is clearly mostly Azerbaijani. There is a significant difference between the youngest and the oldest groups, as well as between age groups 2 and 4. The younger the informant, the more Persian is used. As for the children, and quite contrary to the grandparents, the majority seems to use more Persian than Azerbaijani or always Persian, regardless of age group. A very interesting result appears if we

separate mixed Persian/Azerbaijani families from families where both parents are Azerbaijanis. There is no significant difference between the language choices of these two family types. They both claim to speak mostly Persian to their children.

Table 3. Language choice when speaking with grandparents and children in percentages.

Age	Grandparents					Children				
group	A	A>P	A=P	P>A	P	A	A>P	A=P	P>A	P
1	52.1	17.8	5.5	15.1	9.6	-	-	-	-	-
2	67.7	10.0	2.3	7.7	12.3	20.6	4.8	6.3	30.2	38.1
3	77.8	11.1	3.0	4.0	4.0	13.8	9.2	10.3	30.3	36.7
4	96.5	-	-	-	3.5	17.2	16.0	7.4	25.9	33.3

A = always Azerbaijani; A>P = more Azerbaijani than Persian; A=P = equally much of both languages; P>A = more Persian than Azerbaijani; P = always Persian

The education variable follows the given pattern. All informants speak mostly Azerbaijani when addressing their grandparents, and education has no significant relevance for other language choice patterns. There is no significant difference between the language choice with children, i.e. the majority more often choose Persian than Azerbaijani, or always Persian with their children.

Neighbourhood as a social factor for determining language choice seems not to have any significant relevance for language choice with grandparents or children. Although Azerbaijani is generally spoken more often with grandparents in the southern parts of the capital, the difference compared to the central and northern parts is not statistically significant. And vice versa, the use of Persian when addressing children is generally high, but Azerbaijani is used more often (exclusively or in combination with Persian) in the southern parts of the capital than in the central and northern parts.

The general picture we get from the questionnaire study indicates that there is an asymmetrical language choice pattern when addressing grandparents and children. Azerbaijani is dominant when addressing the oldest generation, while Persian is used when addressing children. The importance of education is as expected; generally the higher the level of education, the more Persian is used. The fact that mid-level educated informants claim to use mostly Persian with parents might be explained by the fact that most of these informants are young people, which again points to the age factor in the pattern of language choice. Finally, the neighbourhood factor only seems to indicate that Azerbaijani is used more often in the southern parts than in the other two areas. The asymmetrical language choice pattern between generations seems to also be valid in the southern areas.

Attitudes

The interview data and observations concerning attitudes confirm the general results of the questionnaire study, although they give a more nuanced picture. In accordance with Nercissians' observations, the Azerbaijani language is heavily stigmatised (2001: 63). When answering questions on Azerbaijani language use in the family setting, remarkably positive feelings were uttered. At the same time, many informants spoke of the language as less important, or not useful and/or good enough to be used in school. When asked general questions on children's bilingualism as related to self-esteem, identity, new language

learning, possible confusion of the languages involved etc, the majority of the informants expressed positive feelings about bilingualism as such. However, it soon became apparent that many of the informants interpreted bilingualism as two 'real' (read national) languages, and that they sometimes did not even regard themselves as bilinguals. Similar cases have been reported from other studies, where the minority language is considered of low status and therefore not taken as seriously as the official language. Edwards (1994: 97) argues that there can be 'inconsistency between assessed attitudes and actions related to them'. Baker (1992: 2ff.) very convincingly pinpoints the possible *double foci* of attitudes towards bilingualism in general and the two languages involved in a specific study in particular. He warns against mixing these approaches since they might mean different things for a speech community. This is something that seems to hold true for a large number of Azerbaijani informants in Tehran.

Results of the relative political relaxation towards minority languages in the mid-1990s have led to the appearance of cultural activities such as concerts, seminars, and language and folklore classes. The level of interest in Azerbaijani language and culture has increased dramatically because of an increase in supply, among other things. This is due to political and legal conditions as well as the new technological possibilities. Most sectors in Iranian society have undergone a rapid computerisation, and access to computers and the Internet has increased as well. These cultural activities obviously fill a need previously not allowed and/or satisfied. In addition to the domestic changes that have taken place, there is good reason to stress the effect of mass media on language attitudes and the specific part played by Turkish satellite broadcasting.[4] These satellite channels are still not legal in Iran, but after having been tracked down and persecuted during the 1990s, they are now periodically left alone. Through these channels – widely spread in Tehran and every major city in northern Iran – people can follow Turkish news, TV shows and other programs not allowed on Iranian national television. Undoubtedly, these channels have had an immense impact on youth culture, and have raised the already high status of Turkey which is the only neighbouring country to which Iranian citizens can travel without a visa. Today, especially for many young people, Turkey symbolises modernity and progress, and at the same time it is a country which has been able to preserve its Islamic heritage.

Discussion

With the trends in the Iranian language policy fresh in mind, we can clearly observe two separate policies during the past century: one regarding the single official language based on corpus planning, and the other regarding minority languages, dominated by negative or neglective status planning. The measures taken towards Persian, mainly dealing with lexical coinage, seem to have had varying degrees of success. The results from the minority language policy are difficult to measure, but as the example of language choice patterns among bilingual Azerbaijani/Persian speakers shows, it seems to have had a slow but definite effect, at least in urban areas. The signs of language shift are certainly

[4] In the present article I have chosen to focus on the Turkish influences exclusively. This should by no means downplay the important role played by e.g. Asian satellite broadcasting, the broadcasting from the Gulf states available in southern parts of Iran, or the broadcasting and music industry produced by exile Iranians living in the USA.

present, even though the pace varies in different parts of the capital. The attitude study points in the same direction, but gives a more nuanced picture. It is evident that even though parents in general are strongly motivated to use the minority language at home, most of them in fact choose Persian when addressing their children. Parent-child interaction in Azerbaijani is often believed to influence the children's knowledge of Persian negatively. It is simply a fact that the use of Persian is materially more rewarding and is connected to privilege and power.

What seems to be a far more interesting development, and an indication of the dynamic nature of attitudes, is what I elsewhere (Bani-Shoraka, 2002–2003) have called the *revitalization* of the Azerbaijani language and culture. Domestic changes and developments on the legal and technological levels, in addition to mass media effects from the Turkish satellite broadcasts, seem among other factors to have led to an ongoing change of attitudes toward the stigmatised Azerbaijani language and culture. In line with the above discussions, a redefinition of the Azerbaijani identity, especially among the younger generations, is taking place. The prestigeless Azerbaijani identity, previously associated with provinciality, traditionalism and, for some people, also regression, seems nowadays among many young people to have changed its meaning. The Turkicness of the identity (the word *tork* referring to both Turkic and Turkish) now also conveys modern progressive associations. Turkicness, then, has a different meaning for members of each generation, and is interpreted on an individual level. This trend among Azerbaijanis in Tehran, as well as elsewhere in the country, undoubtedly challenges the official stance towards minority languages. However, in what way it may affect future directions of official status planning is yet to be seen.

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State Control and its Impact on Language in Balochistan

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The purpose of the present article will be to present certain aspects of the sociolinguistic situation among one of the least studied ethnic groups in the Middle East, the Baloch, who inhabit the south-eastern corner of the Iranian linguistic area. It is an area where the dominance of the state is relatively recent, and where modern society with a monetary economy, a settled lifestyle, mass education, state administration etc. is just being established.

It is particularly interesting to study language-related decisions of the state, and the implementation of these decisions in a region like Balochistan, where until recently there were no such phenomena as e.g. language planning, education, mass media, newspapers or administrative language. However, in Iran the Persian language and in Pakistan Urdu and English have started to play a constantly growing role in Balochistan, something which is by many Baloch felt as a threat to both their language and their distinct ethnic identity. It must be stressed that modernity is not regarded as negative, but the Baloch intellectuals face the dilemma of how to retain their ethnic and linguistic diversity at the same time as they seek active participation in an increasingly globalised world.

The historical background

The border between Iran and Pakistan, which cuts through the traditional land of the Baloch, has since the time of its demarcation in the late nineteenth century been constantly questioned and frequently ignored by the Baloch living on both sides of it. It is called the Goldsmid line, and was drawn by a border commission headed by the British general Goldsmid, which also held representatives from Tehran and the Balochi Khanate of Kalat (see below) (Breseeg 2001: 133–134, Hosseinbor 2000: 73–80).[1] However, it has had a considerable impact on linguistic issues, and it is therefore interesting to study the position of Balochi on both sides of this border.

[1] The Baloch delegates opposed the demarcation already at the meeting of the border commission, arguing that both the western and the eastern parts of Balochistan ought to belong to the Balochi Khanate of Kalat.

The Role of the State in West Asia, ed. Annika Rabo and Bo Utas, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, Transactions, vol. 14 (Stockholm, 2005), pp. 151–163.

There is very little known about the early history of the Baloch, but two main theories prevail as to when they arrived in their present habitat, which includes south-eastern Iran, south-western Pakistan and southern Afghanistan. The 'native theory' argues that the core of the Baloch settled in Balochistan and mixed with other local peoples as early as 2000 years ago, as a continued movement of the Aryan tribes that had already invaded the Iranian plateau from the north. The 'migration theory', supported by the indigenous epic tradition as related in the epic poetry on genealogies and the wanderings of the Baloch tribes, suggests that the Baloch arrived in Balochistan from the north-west considerably more recently, some time around the tenth century A.D.

In fact, the ballads suggest a Semitic origin for the Baloch and a close relation to the prophet Muhammed. This could, however, be seen as a pseudo-historic way of legitimising the Baloch as good and orthodox Muslims. Other origins, such as Turkic or Indian, have also been suggested for the Baloch (Dames 1904: 7). It may well be that the Baloch earlier in their history were 'a series of tribal communities not sharing any feelings of common ethnicity' (Spooner 1989: 607), and that even though linguistic evidence suggests the likelihood that at least a core group were of Indo-European origin[2] who had migrated from the north-west, 'Arab groups could have found their way into the heterogeneous tribal population that eventually assimilated Baluch identity east of Kerman' (Spooner 1989: 609). Arab historians from the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. associate them with the area between Kerman, Khorasan, Sistan and Makran (Spooner 1989: 606). It is also possible that they assimilated a major part of the local inhabitants in Balochistan when they settled there.

It is not possible to talk about 'a Baloch race' (cf. Dames 1904) in order to distinguish them from neighbouring peoples, but there are other factors which bind them together and separate them from others in the region. Anthony D. Smith (1986: 21) finds that the term *ethnos* 'would appear to be more suited to cultural rather than biological or kinship differences'. Among such cultural differences, he enumerates 'a collective name', 'a common myth of descent', 'a shared history', 'a distinctive shared culture', 'an association with a specific territory' and 'a sense of solidarity' as crucial components of ethnic affiliation (Smith 1986: 22–31). All these factors are applicable in the case of the Baloch. Among the components of a shared culture, those of language and religion are particularly important, and the Balochi language as well as the Sunni creed are distinguishing factors in relation to neighbouring ethnic groups.[3]

It is important to be able to distinguish the 'self-group' from other surrounding ethnic groups. In fact, it is only in an interactive relation to other groups that are perceived as different that a delimitation of the 'own-group' versus the others becomes meaningful (see e.g. Eriksen 1993). In Iran the Sunni creed is crucial in that respect, since the Balochi language is closely

[2] Balochi is an Indo-European language of the Iranian branch, most closely related to Kurdish, Gilaki, Mazandarani, Talyshi and other north-western Iranian languages.

[3] However, a small number of Baloch in Iran profess Shi'a Islam. There are also Shi'a Muslims among the Baloch in Pakistan (Breseeg 2001: 58). There are, furthermore, communities who profess the so-called *zikri* religion which developed out of Sunni Islam around 1500 A.D. As for language, many people who ethnically regard themselves as Baloch, especially in Punjab and Sindh, do not any longer speak Balochi, which means that there is a process of language shift under way among the Baloch. There are strong reasons to believe that this process will continue and probably even be speeded up as modern society with education etc. more and more strongly penetrates Balochistan.

related to Persian and is normally in the official discourse described as a 'dialect' (*guyeš*) of the Persian language (*zabān*), whereas the majority in Iran, contrary to most Baloch, profess Shi'a Islam. In Pakistan, on the other hand, the language, which is not closely related to Sindhi, Lahnda, Punjabi, Urdu or other Indian languages and very distinct from the eastern Iranian language Pashto, is more crucial, since the majority of the Muslims in Pakistan, including a vast majority of the Baloch, profess Sunni Islam.

The traditional socio-economic systems in Balochistan divide the land into a northern part and a southern part.[4] In the north, pastoral nomadism has been the predominant lifestyle, whereas in the south agriculture, with few landowners and landless workers or slaves, has been more common. The tribal structure has, however, historically been a uniting factor among free-born Baloch in all Balochistan, and it has been easy for originally non-Baloch tribes and clans to associate with and incorporate themselves into the Balochi tribal system.[5] Nowadays the de-tribalisation process is strong, especially in those parts of Balochistan where the traditional economy is based on settled agriculture rather than on pastoral nomadism.[6] Tribal loyalties are also often felt to hamper a strong nationalist movement, and many intellectual Baloch nowadays try to propagate the replacement of tribal (sub-national) loyalties with loyalty to the entire Balochi *ethnie* (see Smith 1986: 21).

In the seventeenth century the Baloch allied themselves with another tribal people, the Brahuis,[7] against other forces in the region, and this Balochi–Brahui Khanate, with its centre in Kalat (in present-day Pakistan) continued to exist until 1947. It was especially powerful during the second half of the eighteenth century, under Nasir Khan I, who 'was the only khan who successfully transcended tribal loyalties' (Spooner 1989: 611), but it was later weakened and incorporated into the British administration in 1839. The language of administration in Kalat was from the beginning Persian (Baloch 1987: 120),[8] but English later replaced Persian for official purposes.

In the nineteenth century the Qajar shahs, ruling from Tehran, made several attempts to subdue the western parts of Balochistan. Likewise, British India had intentions of expanding westwards in Balochistan. This is the background of the Goldsmid border commission, and the demarcation that resulted from it divided most of the Balochi mainland between British India and Iran.[9] Even so, the Qajars never succeeded in establishing their power in Balochistan, and it was only in 1928 that the newly established Pahlavi monarchy was successful in imposing direct control over the province.

[4] For a thorough discussion of socio-economic structures in Balochistan, see e.g. Fabietti (1996).

[5] See Titus (1998: 668), who discusses the differences in social structure between the Pashtuns and the Baloch, and finds that among the Baloch a hierarchical structure predominates and facilitates the incorporation of new elements into the tribe.

[6] Cf. Orywal (1996), who describes the de-tribalisation process among the Baloch in Afghanistan.

[7] The Brahuis speak a Dravidian language, and therefore are generally considered to have migrated to their present habitat from the south-east.

[8] Persian had a long tradition as a language of writing, literature and administration. The Samanids, ruling from Bokhara over large areas of Central Asia and Khorasan in the ninth and tenth centuries, began using New Persian in addition to Arabic, the language of the Muslim conquerors, as an administrative language.

[9] A smaller part is found within the borders of present-day Afghanistan.

Official language policy and the impact of education and mass media

Education in Balochistan prior to the modern era was comprised of the traditional Islamic *madrasa*-education. There was no possibility of studying the Balochi language and literature within this system, since there was no written literary tradition in Balochi to refer to. The languages employed were Arabic, which was the language of religion and science, and Persian, the language of a long and elevated literary tradition.

Along with modernisation came a secular education system and a nationalist discourse as well, first in British India, and later in Iran. Hosseinbor finds several reasons as to why a nationalist movement demanding political, linguistic and cultural rights for the Baloch was much slower to emerge in western (Iranian) Balochistan than in eastern (Pakistani) Balochistan, e.g. the 'extremely slow pace of urbanization, the absence of social and economic modernization, and the very limited modern education introduced in western Baluchistan prior to the 1960s' as well as the 'repressive Pahlavi rule' (Hosseinbor 2000: 150).

When the demands for freedom from the colonial yoke grew stronger and stronger in British India, several of the educated young Baloch started to demand a free Balochistan as well. Some of these nationalists were also poets and writers and played a major part in the Balochi literary movement. The British had already paid considerable attention to the Balochi language. A number of grammatical descriptions and dictionaries of various Balochi dialects were produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[10] Balochi oral epic poetry, folktales, stories etc. were collected and published by M. Longworth Dames, who as a result made a great contribution to the preservation and study of Balochi oral literature.[11] Examinations were also held in Balochi, and the colonial officials were encouraged to learn the language (Bruce 1900: 69).

When the young nationalists from the 1930s onwards started to write poetry, stories and other literary pieces in Balochi, they thus had a certain tradition to fall back on. The importance of books and periodicals in Balochi published from the mid-1950s onwards must not be underestimated. These publications, however, are also very limited in many ways. Firstly, their distribution is geographically limited, largely to Pakistan, and secondly, their readership is very limited. All educated Baloch have received their education in English/Urdu (in Pakistan), Persian (in Iran and Afghanistan) or another language, e.g. Arabic in the Gulf States. In addition, the Balochi literary movement is founded solely on personal initiatives, with next to no official support. Therefore, only a small literary elite takes an interest in reading books and magazines in Balochi, which also places financial constraints on publishing in Balochi (see e.g. Dashtyari 2003).

[10] E.g. Gilbertson, George W., *The Balochi Language, A Grammar and Manual,* Hertford 1923; Gilbertson, George W., *English–Balochi Colloquial Dictionary,* I–II, Hertford 1925; Marston, E. W., *Grammar and Vocabulary of the Mekranee Beloochee Dialect,* Bombay 1877; Mockler, E., *A Grammar of the Baloochee Language*, London 1877; Pierce, E., 'A Description of the Mekranee–Beloochee Dialect', *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,* 11(1875): 31, Bombay 1876, pp. 1–98.

[11] In Dames, M. Longworth, *Popular Poetry of the Baloches*, I–II, published for the Folk-Lore Society by David Nutt, London 1907, and Dames, M. Longworth, *A Text Book of the Balochi Language*, Punjab Government Press, Lahore 1891.

There is no official use of Balochi as a language of administration or education in Pakistan, even if voices have been raised in particular for introducing it as a language of education. The official support the language receives in Pakistan is that it is taught at the University of Balochistan in Quetta, that it has an official academy, the Balochi Academy, founded in 1961 and that it is used as a language for radio and TV transmissions. There is also a periodical, *Ulus*, published in Quetta by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.[12]

In the early 1990s measures were taken to introduce Balochi as a language of primary education in those areas of Pakistani Balochistan where it is spoken by a majority of the population. This experiment was not very successful, however, due to several reasons, including disagreement among the Baloch on orthographic issues and the lack of qualified teachers. What was perhaps more important was the speakers' attitude towards Balochi, which many Baloch see as a 'backward and rural' language, knowledge of which offers no improvement in terms of social or economic status in today's Pakistan. Likewise, people felt threatened by the fact that the Brahuis and the Baloch would be taught in different languages, even though as a result of their political alliance in the Khanate of Kalat, they strongly identify as one people. There is also widespread bilingualism (Balochi–Brahui) among the Brahuis (Farrell 2000: 24–25).

Although the cultural climate in British India, and later in Pakistan, was not totally negative to a Balochi cultural and literary movement, things were quite different on the other side of the Goldsmid line. The linguistic and cultural policy of the Pahlavi monarchs was that of strict conformity to the majority. All attempts at strengthening local customs, traditions and cultures were viewed as opposition against the nation and as threats to the territorial integrity of Iran. Especially those languages spoken within the borders of Iran that are related to Persian (the Iranian languages)[13] were regarded as local dialects of Persian. Under such circumstances there was, of course, no provision made by the government for mother tongue education or even cultural activities or publication in the minority languages. Mojab and Hassanpour describe this cultural and linguistic hegemony as the propagation of 'racist and national chauvinistic myths in the state-controlled media, in educational institutions (all state owned), and in government organs', denying the national, linguistic and cultural diversity of Iran (Mojab and Hassanpour 1995: 231–232).

According to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, chapter 1, article 15, in addition to the official language Persian, '[t]he use of regional and national...languages in the press and mass media...as well as for teaching in schools the literatures written in them, is permitted' (Algar 1980: 34). This means that it is in principle permitted to publish books and newspapers in Balochi, but at present there is hardly any such publication taking place in Iran. When it comes to teaching Balochi literature in the schools, there is, of course, no provision being made for such a subject, due to the almost total lack of Balochi literature in written form.

[12] *Ulus* was published regularly between 1961 and 1991. It was re-started in 1996, but the issues appear very irregularly.

[13] These languages include e.g. Kurdish, Lori, Gilaki, Mazandarani and Balochi. Languages totally unrelated to Persian that are spoken in Iran are e.g. Arabic (a Semitic language) and Azerbaijani Turkish (a Turkic language).

The first time publication in Balochi was possible in Iran was directly after the Islamic Revolution (1979–1980). A number of magazines appeared for some months, but this publication was soon forced to cease. In the late 1990s publishing in Balochi was resumed, and two bilingual magazines (Persian-Balochi) are at present being published, one from Iranshahr and one from Zahedan.

As for radio programmes, the situation is different, and Radio Zahedan has daily broadcasts in Balochi. In fact, these broadcasts date back at least to the 1960s, thus to the time of the Pahlavi monarchy.[14] The contents of these broadcasts are usually viewed with suspicion by the Baloch, being regarded as 'official propaganda' rather than as genuine concern for the Balochi language. There is no provision being made for TV transmissions in Balochi in Iran.

State control in Iran expresses itself as control over education, administration, media, publication etc., and thus there is an exclusive or nearly exclusive use of Persian in these language domains. There is no interest on the part of the state to stimulate the development of a vigorous Balochi language to be used in media, education and administration. The reason for this is obvious. There is a strong fear that a movement in support of cultural autonomy would soon develop into a political movement with demands for independence.

It should, however, be said in favour of the present regime that it has allowed much more cultural plurality than the Pahlavi monarchy. TV programmes showing regional variations in e.g. lifestyle, dress, dance etc. are frequently broadcast. Permission has been given to arrange 'poetry evenings' with recital of Balochi traditional and modern poetry e.g. in Chabahar where many culturally active Baloch live. The bilingual magazines in Persian-Balochi (see above) are also a positive feature. There is, in fact, a considerable publication (books, newspapers etc.) taking place in the two largest minority languages Azerbaijani and Kurdish, and in the academic year 2004–05 B.A. programmes in the Azerbaijani language and literature (in Tabriz) and in the Kurdish language and literature (in Sanandaj) are offered in Iran for the very first time.[15] There is also a Department of Gilan Studies at the University of Rasht.[16]

In Pakistan the use of Balochi in education, administration and media is also very limited, although not as restricted as it still is in Iran. Balochi is mainly spoken at home, within one's immediate community (with relatives, neighbours, friends etc.), and sometimes at work as well. When it comes to religion, Arabic is the language of recitation and worship, whereas sermons are normally delivered in Balochi for the sake of comprehension in Balochi-speaking communities both in Iran[17] and in Pakistan. On the whole, however, Balochi may be regarded as the language of the traditional domains, which carry no particular status in today's society.

[14] Elfenbein (1966: 1) refers to broadcasts in Balochi from Zahedan.

[15] For Azerbaijani, see www.tribun.com/2000/2009.htm. Information about Kurdish was given by Hashem Ahmadzadeh, Uppsala.

[16] Oral communication with Padideh Pakpour, Uppsala, who spent the spring semester 2004 as a guest student at the University of Rasht.

[17] This occurs within the Sunni mosques throughout Balochistan, which are not frequented by the Shi'ites. However, in the *Masjed-e Makki* 'The Meccan Mosque' in Zahedan the sermon is in Persian due to the fact that this mosque is also frequented by other Sunnis than the Baloch (recent information obtained from Iran).

Prestigious domains such as administration and education, which hold the opportunities for advancing in society, are non-Balochi domains. Here the state language(s) is/are totally predominant. Therefore, many parents who are eager for their children to advance in society prefer them to learn these languages instead of Balochi.[18] The survival of Balochi would under such circumstances only be possible at the cost of education and progress in society. Farrell (2000: 20) finds that '[a]t present it is partly *lack* of education that is ensuring the strength of Balochi', a situation that is, of course, both impossible and undesirable to perpetuate. The state, i.e. the ruling elite, may desire to keep the Baloch uneducated and unable to participate in modern political discourse, but that is definitely no longer the desire of a majority of the Baloch themselves.

Even though the literacy rate is still low in Balochistan, it is gradually rising. I have made my own observations and also interviewed several people who live in Iranian Balochistan or who have visited the region recently, and it is quite clear that most children there, both boys and girls, nowadays receive at least primary education. The traditional lifestyle is more and more giving way to modern life, which makes school attendance easier[19] and more attractive. Thus, nearly the entire younger generation becomes acquainted with Persian at least from the age of six, when they begin school. The socio-cultural hindrances against girls' education were also to a certain degree weakened after the establishment of the Islamic Republic, with separate boys' and girls' schools and the compulsory veil. On the other hand, reports also indicate that in small villages with only a few children, boys and girls are taught together in one class, something which causes most girls to drop out after elementary school.

In the census carried out in 1996 (*Ābān* 1375 in the Iranian Anno Hijra solar calendar) the literacy rate for the province of Sistan and Balochistan was 57 per cent for persons six years of age and older. Looking at the literacy rate by gender, the breakdown was 49 per cent for females and 65 per cent for males (*Iran Statistical Yearbook 1377* 2000: 603). The definition of literacy was very generally stated as 'all individuals who can read and write a simple text in Farsi or any other language' and even those who had studied only the first year in primary school or the equivalent were counted as literate (*Iran Statistical Yearbook 1377* 2000: 595).

The figures for Sistan and Balochistan may be compared to the average literacy rate for the entire country, which was 80 per cent for the same year,[20] and to the province with the lowest literacy rate after Sistan and Balochistan,

[18] It was, in fact, observed in Zahedan, the provincial capital in the Iranian province of Sistan and Balochistan, that some families chose to speak Persian to their children rather than Balochi. They argued that this would prepare their children better for starting school, since the child would otherwise in school meet a new language that he/she was not familiar with, something that could hamper the learning process and put the child at a disadvantage compared to classmates who already knew Persian. See also Farrell (2000: 25), who notes that in Balochi tuition centres in Karachi, the aim of which is to provide supplementary education to the children of their community, Urdu is used as the teaching language, since the goal is 'academic advancement of their pupils rather than any concern for language issues'. For a comprehensive study on language attitudes among university students in Pakistan, see Mahboob (2002). Only 10 per cent of the respondents to the question 'Should your first language (other than Urdu) be the medium of instruction for primary education' give a positive answer, whereas the same figure for Urdu is 63.1 per cent and for English as high as 76 per cent (Mahboob 2002: 30).

[19] E.g. when the nomadic lifestyle is replaced by a settled way of life.

[20] 74 per cent for females and 85 per cent for males.

namely Kurdistan, where 68 per cent of the population was literate (*Iran Statistical Yearbook 1377* 2000: 603).[21] Ten years earlier, in 1986 (*Mehr* 1365 in the Iranian Anno Hijra solar calendar), the literacy rate in Sistan and Balochistan was 36 per cent[22] compared to 61 per cent in the whole country (*Iran Statistical Yearbook 1370* 1993: 123).

Another factor that has greatly strengthened the impact of Persian in Iranian Balochistan is the electrification of the province, which, although it had already started, was speeded up and almost totally completed shortly after the Islamic Revolution. Along with electricity came television. Many Baloch men, especially in the southern parts of Balochistan, spend at least some time as guest workers in the Gulf States, where they often purchase electronic goods, such as radio- and TV-sets, for their family in Balochistan. Television was first introduced in the provincial capital, Zahedan, in the 1960s, but nowadays television has reached even the most remote areas of Iranian Balochistan.

Television has been a major breakthrough in the introduction of Persian in Balochistan. By watching Persian programmes at an early age, often even before going to school, the children get acquainted with this language and learn to pronounce it with a Tehrani accent, something which is not true of most educated Baloch in the older generation, who generally speak Persian with a 'Balochi accent'. One reason for that is that they were introduced to Persian at school, generally by local teachers, who themselves spoke Persian with a Sistani or Balochi accent. Several Baloch friends of mine from Iran remember that they felt ashamed to speak Persian at school, especially in front of Persian-speaking classmates who made fun of their accent.[23]

Structural influence from Persian on Iranian Balochi[24]

In Iranian Balochistan two major dialects are spoken, the Western (or Rakhshani) dialect and the Southern (or Makrani) dialect. Both these dialects are spoken on the other side of the Goldsmid line as well. There is also an area in Iranian Balochistan, Sarawan, where a very particular dialect, more profoundly influenced by Persian than other Balochi dialects, is spoken (see also Baranzehi 2003).

Nowadays it is quite obvious that the national language, Persian, is the socially and culturally dominant language, and that Balochi is the low-status vernacular. However, this has not always been the case, and the example of Sarawan proves that clearly. Within this area one or two centuries ago, Baloch

[21] 57 per cent for females and 79 per cent for males.

[22] 25 per cent for females and 46 per cent for males. Compare this to Kurdistan, with a 39 per cent literacy rate (23 per cent for females and 54 per cent for males).

[23] The power of television exceeds by far the power of radio. Since it is both audial and visual, it makes a much greater impact than only audial media. The power of television in making a whole generation acquainted with a language can also clearly be seen in Sweden, where many children in the younger generation who grow up with American serials subtitled in Swedish start speaking English before they are even able to read and write Swedish. Procházka also stresses the impact of television as one of the key factors behind the ongoing language shift from Arabic to Turkish among speakers of Arabic dialects in Turkey (Procházka 1999: 124).

[24] The purpose of a research project carried out by the present author, funded by the Swedish Research Council between 1998 and 2002, was to describe the linguistic interaction between Persian and Balochi in Iranian Balochistan. For further information on phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical influences from Persian on Balochi both in historical and modern times, see Jahani and Korn (2003), particularly the articles written by Baranzehi, Farrell, Jahani, Korn, Mahmoodi Bakhtiari and Mahmoodzahi.

tribesmen of high status in the local society lived side by side with immigrant peasants of Afghan or other Persian-speaking origins, who had come to Sarawan more recently than the Baloch (Spooner 1967: 56).

Languages in contact can affect each other in different ways. Much depends on the relative status of the languages. Two or more languages of more or less equal status may be spoken side by side and mutually affect each other in terms of structure and lexicon without eradicating either one or the other language. This is called *adstrate* influence.

Another setting is when a dominant language, e.g. the language of a conquering group or the political elite, exercises influence on a dominated language, e.g. the language of a minority group. This type of influence is often called *superstrate.* Sometimes this term also implies that the final outcome of language contact is that the prestigious language is abandoned by the conquerors in favour of the local language, which, however, has been considerably influenced by that language. Such an outcome is more likely when a small number of conquerors seize political power in an area where a language other than their own is spoken, e.g. at the Norman conquest of Britain.

However, the term superstrate is also used in a broader sense to describe the influence on a low-prestige language when 'another and more prestigious language which is imposed upon the speakers of the first, usually by conquest or political absorption...exercises an identifiable effect upon that first language' (Trask 2000: 330). By this definition, Persian structural and lexical influence on minority languages in Iran could be termed superstrate influence. It is, however, very unlikely that local languages would replace Persian in present-day Iran.

The term *substrate* is normally used for a language already spoken in an area or by a group of people 'which has had a detectable effect upon the newly arrived one' (Trask 2000: 329). As with superstrate, this term generally refers to a difference in status between the substrate language and the newly arrived language, where the substrate language is the low-status language. Likewise, it is often used to describe settings where this language has been replaced by the new language, in which it has left structural and lexical traits. As an example, Celtic traits in English could be mentioned.

The dialect of the central valley of Sarawan mentioned above is especially interesting to study from a contact linguistic perspective. In Sarawan, the non-pastoral economy, mainly based on settled agriculture, has a longer tradition than in other parts of Iranian Balochistan. The same applies to education. Since education is in Persian, it considerably strengthens the Persian influence. This, together with the immigration of Persian speakers to Sarawan in the past centuries, has made this dialect a very interesting object for studying linguistic contact.

It seems that in former times, Balochi was the high-status language in Sarawan, since the immigrants gave up Persian for Balochi.[25] However, a

[25] This was my assumption at the time when I wrote the article. However, new information on Sarawan (obtained during a field journey to Iran in February–March 2005) gives a different picture. The Baranzahi/Barakzahi Khans of Sarawan were of Afghan origin, thus not speakers of Balochi. However, in order to be able to communicate with their subjects, they acquired Balochi, retaining the Persian grammatical structures referred to in the article as substrate phenomena.

significant number of substrate phenomena[26] from Persian can be found in Sarawani Balochi. These features are not encountered in any other dialect of Balochi, either in Iran or in Pakistan. Examples of such phenomena are the replacement of the genitive with the *izāfa*-construction for genitive attributes, and, on the whole, a case system very similar to that of Persian. Another structural reshaping is that all postpositions have changed into prepositions.

Today Persian is the unquestioned high-status language, and nowadays superstrate effects from Persian on Sarawani as well as on other Balochi dialects in Iran is heavy. Among superstrate phenomena can be mentioned syntactic constructions instead of morphological case marking (e.g. for the indirect object), adjectives placed after their nouns with the *izāfa* as the linker and Tense–Aspect–Mood (TAM) forms of the verb modelled on Persian constructions (e.g. the progressive present and past). Extensive use of Persian lexical items can also be observed in most dialects.

Is there a future for the Balochi Language within the state of Iran?

As long as a language is used in all the domains represented in everyone's daily life, or at least in the life of a majority of its speakers, it cannot be seen as threatened. But as soon as socio-economic changes take place, the traditional lifestyle and culture of an *ethnie*, and with that possibly its whole basis of identification, is threatened.[27] When this happens among a minority group, like the Baloch, there are several courses the group, or members of the group, can take. They may seek full acceptance in the majority society and be ready to give up what is distinct and exclusive to their group, including the language, or they may see a need to defend their identity by demanding self-determination in some form or another. They may also strive to retain their identity as a separate *ethnie* within the present political framework. This approach is a realistic alternative only if adequate opportunities for the development of distinct languages, forms of worship and other components of the 'ethnic' cultures are given by the state authorities.

In Iranian Balochistan there is a deeply rooted suspicion against the Persians,[28] who are often derogatorily called *gajar*.[29] The Balochi way of living, including its social organisation and its honour codes, differs considerably from that of the Persians. There have been several insurgencies against the direct rule from Tehran over Balochistan after 1928 (see e.g. Hosseinbor 2000: 141–164). After 1979, the different religious creeds have also been accentuated, and there is a strong feeling among the Baloch that due

[26] I am broadening the use of this term here. Normally it is used to describe the influence from an indigenous low-prestige language on a newly arrived language. Here, I use it to denote the influence of any language of low status (in this case Persian spoken by an immigrant group who had settled in the central valley of Sarawan) on a more prestigious language (here Balochi, the language of the ruling elite, which was also gradually adopted by the immigrants).

[27] Religious beliefs may be re-evaluated (secularisation), and the language may be threatened, especially in a minority setting, based on the fact that new language domains (e.g. education and official administration in a language other than the minority language) enter into the life of the members of the *ethnie*.

[28] This is also the case with other Shi'ites, e.g. the Azerbaijani Turks.

[29] This term comes from the Qajar dynasty, who ruled Iran between 1796 and 1925. It was during this dynasty that Tehran became the capital. Military campaigns from this new capital were launched towards Balochistan to subdue the region, something which created strong hatred towards the *'gajars'* among the Baloch.

to their Sunni creed, they are not given adequate opportunities to advance in the Islamic Republic, which is based on the Shi'a creed.

The Iranian Baloch also have strong links with the Baloch in Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Gulf States, e.g. by massive immigration to Karachi from Iran after the 1928 events, by tribal links to the Baloch in Afghanistan and by Iranian Baloch seeking employment as guest workers in the Gulf States. The choice to be incorporated into the majority society would mean giving up these links. It is therefore unlikely that the Baloch will seek full acceptance in the majority society, and if adequate measures are not taken for cultural (including linguistic) development within the present political framework, there will most likely be increased demands for political self-determination.

Indeed, many Baloch intellectuals are genuinely concerned about the future of the Balochi language in Iran. With the introduction of education and modern socio-economic structures in Balochistan, the basis of the traditional society is being eradicated slowly but surely. However, there is also an awakening to the fact that if Balochi is to continue to be a vigorous language in Iranian Balochistan, the Baloch themselves must adopt a positive attitude towards the language and work for its development in the new domains as well, i.e. as a language of writing, and ultimately of education. Some steps have already been taken, such as the publication of bilingual (Persian–Balochi) journals and the more and more frequent arrangements of Balochi literary and cultural gatherings (see above). I have also been told that there is some lobbying for the introduction of Balochi as a subject at university level in Iranian Balochistan.[30] These are all steps that have been taken several years ago in Pakistani Balochistan.

It is the state that forms policies towards language and culture and controls the administrative and educational systems. The demands of the people within the state have, of course, a strong bearing on the decisions of the ruling elite. The present paper has tried to show that the more favourable conditions for the Balochi language in British India than those seen in Iran from the beginning of the twentieth century prepared the path for a new generation of educated Baloch to also use their language in reading and writing.[31] It must, however, be stressed that even in Pakistan the Balochi cultural movement is facing enormous problems, including low readership, financial constraints and official suspicion. The unsuccessful launching of Balochi as a language of primary education in Pakistani Balochistan can also be seen as a serious backlash.

On the other hand, it was noted above that political strength is a changeable factor, and that at one time the Baloch tribes in Iranian Sarawan were a mighty force, who assimilated other ethnic groups such as Afghans and Sistanis, whereas now the Shi'a Muslims[32] constitute the ruling elite in Iran. What will

[30] The two state universities in Iranian Balochistan are located in Zahedan and Iranshahr. There are also 'free' (i.e. private) universities in Balochistan. In view of the fact that such permissions have been granted for Azerbaijani and Kurdish (see above), it is likely that this will happen also for Balochi in a not too distant future.

[31] This is not necessarily due to a genuine concern on the part of the British administration for the Balochi language. They just applied a different policy towards local languages in order to maintain and strengthen their rule than that employed by the Pahlavi monarchs.

[32] These are mainly the ethnic Persians and Azerbaijanis. Among the Azerbaijanis, there is an ambivalent attitude towards the Persian cultural dominance. Many seek full acceptance in the Persian culture even to the degree that they feel ashamed of their background which they associate with a rural and 'backward' way of living. Others are proud of being Azerbaijanis, i.e.

happen on the political scene in Iran and Pakistan in the future is hard to foresee, and one can do nothing but speculate about whether there will be new shifts in the political strengths between the Baloch and the present ruling elites.

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speakers of a Turkic language, and want to retain this language and transfer it to their children. For them, there is the choice of trying to acquire cultural rights within the present system or to struggle for independence. The fact that there is a fear of Azerbaijani attempts at self-determination can be seen in, e.g., Iran's official support for the Christian Republic of Armenia in its conflict with Azerbaijan.

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State Manipulation or Nationalist Ambition?

Assessing the Causes of the Nagorno–Karabakh War[1]

ERIK MELANDER

During the years 1992–94 a ruthless war raged over the constitutional status of the Nagorno–Karabakh Autonomous Province, a predominantly Armenian-inhabited enclave within the former Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic. Armenian nationalists in Nagorno–Karabakh, with the help of considerable military support from Armenia, sought to remove Nagorno–Karabakh from Azerbaijani authority, in order to join Armenia or gain independent statehood. This very destructive conflict escalated from a war of words and non-violent action in 1987, during the first years of Gorbachev's perestroika, to full-scale ethnic warfare in early 1992, as the Soviet Union collapsed. This course of events allows for a case study of the role of the Soviet state in the outbreak of the first of several violent ethnic conflicts that accompanied the end of Soviet power.

While the ferociousness of the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict probably contributed to the demise of the Soviet Union itself, it has nevertheless been suggested that this conflict was the result of manipulation by forces in Moscow in the heart of Soviet power structures. This notion that state manipulation may have caused the war over Nagorno–Karabakh will be examined closer in this study. In this connection, it becomes important to try to distinguish between the roles of the Soviet organs of authority at the union level, i.e., the highest authority in Moscow, and these at the levels of the Azerbaijani and Armenian republics. In order to assess the role of the state at the various levels of Soviet power, it is of course also necessary to take into account the roles of non-state actors in the drama. In this case, we will deal primarily with the Armenian and Azeri nationalist movements that initiated and fuelled the war of words, and that at later stages resorted to armed force as well.

The Nagorno–Karabakh war could also provide an excellent setting for a discussion of what constitutes a state in the first place, as the self-proclaimed Nagorno–Karabakh republic rapidly developed into a quasi-state with military

[1] This chapter draws theoretically on Melander 2003 and empirically on Melander 2001.

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control over territory, conscription and taxation. However, because of space limitations, this latter topic will merely be touched upon.

Manipulation theory and its weaknesses

The notion that self-serving elites in control of the state apparatus may manipulate some of their subjects into taking up arms against members of certain societal groups, especially if ethnic identity is invoked, is common. In this mode of explanation it is assumed – explicitly or implicitly – that the manipulated actors would not find it in their interest to fight if they only were better informed, and realised what the manipulators were up to. Manipulation is a central component of many elite-oriented theories on the causes of civil and ethnic violence. Examples range from classical sociologist Vilfredo Pareto's (1935) elite circulation theory to some of the currently most cited and celebrated works on ethnic conflict, such as those by Paul Brass (1991) and Donald Horowitz (1985).[2] I argue that this explanation for violent conflict is theoretically questionable, in that it seems to presuppose that the manipulated actors are unsuspecting and easily misled. The whole issue of why actors would allow themselves to be manipulated in this way is not addressed satisfactorily. Thus, much of what ought to be explained is simply assumed away in manipulation theory.

To manipulate means to deceitfully influence somebody to your advantage. Typically, the manipulator influences actors into taking up arms against other societal groups. Even if not always explicitly invoked, manipulation reasonably has to be a central cog in those theories on internal war and civil violence that emphasise the role of self-serving elites, but neglect to explain exactly how other actors are influenced to follow these elites' directives and cues. I will focus my critique on recent theories that take the possible role of ethnicity into account. The so-called instrumentalist perspective typically 'emphasizes the uses to which cultural symbols are put by elites seeking instrumental advantage for themselves or the groups they claim to represent' (Brass 1992: 102). In other words, ethnicity is seen as an instrument that sometimes is used to obtain some larger, typically material end. A well-known example of instrumentalism is Paul Brass's theory of elite competition, according to which ethnic conflict arises out of elite competition for valued resources. Brass writes rather vaguely that self-serving elites use cultural symbols to demarcate and mobilise the ethnic constituencies in whose name the elites compete for power and goods. The question as to why other actors would be swayed by these elites' use of symbols to pursue costly and risky strategies, such as ethnic warfare, is left hanging. One gets the impression that Brass assumes that the manipulators are goal-oriented and calculating, whereas all others in contrast are emotional and easily influenced to act against their own good.

This ambivalent stance regarding the sophistication of various conflict actors is also evident in some theories on ethnic conflict closer to the primordialist perspective, as exemplified by Donald Horowitz's influential work (1985). This approach sees ethnicity as something primordial, a largely inherited and fixed characteristic of individuals and communities. According to this perspective, conflict flows naturally from ethnic differences. Horowitz answers the question

[2] See also e.g. Brown (1996–97), David (1997), Eide (1998), Mansfield and Snyder (1995), Snyder (2000) and van Evera (1994).

of 'why the followers follow' in ethnic violence with reference to various mechanisms of ethnic group psychology (1985: 140). Apparently, in Horowitz' analysis manipulators are immune enough to the influences of ethnic group psychology to instrumentally pursue self-serving strategies, whereas the followers, on the contrary, are induced by the ethnic group psychology to act against their own interests. No explanation is given for this puzzling difference.

The constructivist perspective on ethnic conflict is also susceptible to similar criticism. According to constructivists, ethnic identity is a social phenomenon, constructed from social interactions and evolving as these interactions change. Ethnic conflict, then, is caused by 'certain types of what might be called pathological social systems, which individuals do not control. In this view, it is the social system that breeds violent conflict' (Lake and Rothchild 1998: 6).[3] This is a very unsatisfactory explanation, since it is unclear how 'a social system' can organise and arm militias, fire Kalashnikovs, burn down houses and so on. As sociologist Howard S. Becker puts it, 'In many sociological theories, things just happen without anyone doing them. ... Avoiding saying who did it ... is a theoretical error, not just bad writing'(1986: 8).

Departing from a constructivist perspective on ethnic conflict, Espen Barth Eide recognises the need to bring agency and rational action back into constructivism. In a vein similar to the instrumentalists, he emphasises the role of 'conflict entrepreneurs' who use a 'speech act' that 'takes politics beyond the established rules of the game.' (Eide 1998: 8) The warfare and deliberate atrocities in former Yugoslavia, according to Eide, represent an 'extreme version of symbolic warfare: It is a *discourse*' (Eide 1998: 37, italics in original). However, it is not explained how and why the other actors are induced by the manipulator's speech act to take part in such a dreadful 'discourse'. As James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin (2000) note in their critical discussion of constructivist explanations for ethnic violence, it is odd that the analysts working within constructivism find the elites' machinations transparent, while the involved publics supposedly are duped.

Eide further speculates that as the manipulator 'normally intends to achieve a rupture with pre-existing ideas and behaviour, the likelihood of success is greatly enhanced in situations of rapid change, crisis, or relative deprivation' (Eide 1998: 9). Other conducive conditions that Eide mentions are contemporary perceptions of a hostile inter-group history, the de-legitimisation of a previously dominating ideology, and elite control over the media. Still, it is not explained why these conditions would induce actors to disregard their own interest, and uncritically act on the manipulators' self-serving directives.

I propose that for manipulation theory to actually explain violent conflict, two conditions have to be fulfilled. First, it must be the case that the manipulated actors did not realise what the manipulating party was up to, and therefore failed to discount instigative deeds. Second, it must be the case that the manipulated actors would have changed their behaviour if they had seen through the manipulator's machinations. I argue that there are no good grounds for assuming that conflict actors are so naive and unsuspecting that the first condition is fulfilled. When we examine violent conflicts in detail, we instead find that the parties have their own reasons for fighting, which means that the second condition is not fulfilled. In particular, both of these two objections

[3] Lake and Rothchild summarise the literature on the causes of ethnic violence and do not endorse the constructivist perspective. Rather, they focus on actors making decisions.

apply to the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict. A close examination of the events leading up to the outbreak of the war shows that nationalist ambition was the driving force, and that manipulation by the state cannot explain the war.

The actors in the Nagorno–Karabakh war

In 1987, Nagorno–Karabakh was a predominantly (76 per cent of the population) Armenian-inhabited Autonomous Province (*oblast*) within the Azerbaijani republic of the Soviet Union. Within Nagorno–Karabakh there was also a substantial Azeri population, which thus constituted a local minority, although the Azeri were the majority in the Azerbaijani republic as a whole. Among the Armenian population of Nagorno–Karabakh there was dissatisfaction related to the fact that the province was subordinated to Baku, and not part of the Armenian republic. There were complaints that the republican authorities in Baku systematically neglected the province, and that the Armenian minority faced discrimination (Kaufman 1996: 15f; Goldenberg 1994: 161; Mityayev 1998; Yamskov 1991; Zverev 1996).

The dissatisfied Armenians in Nagorno–Karabakh came to be represented by two main factions. First, there was the traditional Communist nomenklatura who played a leading role in the nationalist movement in the province. This faction largely controlled the state organs of authority associated with the status of Nagorno–Karabakh as an autonomous province within the Azerbaijani republic (Kaufman 1998; Malkasian 1996). Then there was a younger, more radical leadership that was to gain more influence as the crisis progressed. This radical leadership organised its power-base outside of any state structures, and primarily in the militant Dashnak party, which was an illegal Armenian nationalist organisation secretly operating in the Soviet Union from 1988 (Goldenberg 1994: 144).

The cause of unifying Nagorno–Karabakh with Armenia was also perceived as very important to the population of the Armenian republic. In this republic, a huge nationalist movement was to emerge and gradually assume the real political power. Because of the massive popular support for the nationalist movement, and perhaps also as a reflection of sympathy for the nationalist cause, the Armenian communist leadership mostly kept a low profile or adapted its position to that advocated by the nationalists (Rutland 1994: 845). The leadership of this movement, organised in the 'Karabakh Committee', did not come from the traditional nomenklatura but instead represented a real challenge to the Armenian communist regime. When the nationalist movement came to power, it evolved from being a non-state actor into assuming control over the state organs associated with the Armenian republic. This power-base was then used to support the Armenian diaspora in Nagorno–Karabakh.

The idea of unifying Nagorno–Karabakh with Armenia was not acceptable to the communist leadership in Baku. The regime in Baku expected that Moscow would prevent any detrimental changes as long as the Azerbaijani republic remained loyal to the union leadership. The Azerbaijani state thus resisted any attempts at undermining its control over Nagorno–Karabakh. The nationalist opposition movement in Azerbaijan did not assume organised form until rather late in the conflict. Later frustration with what was perceived as the weakness and passivity of the Azerbaijani government would spur the formation of a strong nationalist opposition, which became a serious threat to the communists' grip on power in the republic.

The last major actor in the Nagorno–Karabakh drama was the union-level leadership in Moscow, headed by Gorbachev. The overriding concern of the leadership in Moscow was to preserve communist rule and the unity of the state (Malkasian 1996: 120f; Zverev 1996). The central state organs of authority in the Soviet Union opposed the transfer of Nagorno–Karabakh to Armenia also because of the risk that an acceptance could mean many more such demands all over the union, and thus great strains for the state. This in turn meant that Moscow naturally sided with Baku in defending the status quo against the Armenian attempt to obtain a revision (Cornell 1999: 51; Malkasian 1996: 116ff; Rutland 1994; Zverev 1996). At the same time, Gorbachev was hesitant to use very forceful measures, since this could have had negative repercussions on his reform program (Malkasian 1996: 191; Shakhnazarov 1993, chapter 12; see also chapter 15 in Gorbachev 1995).

The deadly riots in Sumgait

The status of Nagorno–Karabakh has repeatedly been openly disputed before and during the Soviet era. Shortly after Gorbachev announced his reform program under the slogans of perestroika and glasnost, the conflict over Nagorno–Karabakh openly reappeared. Signatures were collected and petitions written to the authorities in Moscow, with the request that the autonomous province be transferred from the republic of Azerbaijan to the republic of Armenia. Tragic events soon followed which drastically exacerbated the situation. Already by the end of 1987, a small trickle of Azeri refugees from Armenia and from Nagorno–Karabakh had begun (Altstadt 1994: 116; Cornell 1999; Kaufman 1998: 16). On February 22, Azeri demonstrators marched toward Stepanakert protesting against the resolution taken there by the Nagorno–Karabakh provincial Soviet three days earlier, in which a formal appeal was made for the transfer of Nagorno–Karabakh to Armenia. Just inside the border of the autonomous province, the Azeri demonstrators clashed with police forces and local Armenians, and two Azeris were killed. When these casualties were announced on Azerbaijani radio, violence directed against the Armenian minority erupted in the town of Sumgait not far from Baku. Some of the up to 2,000 Azeri refugees present in Sumgait at the time are reported to have played a significant role in this deadly ethnic riot in which 26 Armenians and 6 Azeris were killed during 27–29 February, according to official sources. Armenian sources claim that a much higher number of Armenians were killed (e.g. Masih and Krikorian 1999: 8).

Several alternative explanations can be proposed for the Sumgait events. One is that the deadly ethnic riot was a spontaneous or locally instigated outbreak of uncontrolled violence that the republican and central authorities failed to prevent, due to incompetence and inefficiency rather than to malign intent. A variant of this explanation holds that local elements in the Azeri mafia wanted a cover under which Armenian competition could be eliminated (Sakwa 1990: 244; see also Kaufman 1998). Another possible explanation holds that the events were organised by the Azerbaijani republican authorities, possibly even in conspiracy with the central authorities in Moscow, as a warning to the secessionist Armenians in Nagorno–Karabakh. There are claims that representatives of the authorities in Baku before the riots threatened the Armenians in Nagorno–Karabakh with violence unless the demands for unification with Armenia were withdrawn (e.g. Arutyunyan 1990). Yet another

possibility would be that anti-perestroika forces, perhaps among the highest levels of power within the Soviet Union, organised the deadly ethnic riot as a means of discrediting Gorbachev and his reforms (this was the explanation offered by the General Secretary himself – see Croissant 1998: 29). It has also been suggested that the authorities in Moscow, following an imperialist logic, wanted to ensure that the region would continue to be divided and weak, and thereby controllable.

Militant Armenians began the first preparations for an armed struggle as a response to Sumgait (Masih and Krikorian 1999: 20f). Among them was Igor Muradyan, one of the original members of the Karabakh Committee in Armenia, who was expelled from the Committee because of his radicalism, forming his own *Miatsum* (Unification) movement (Malkasian 1996: 142). Armenians in Nagorno–Karabakh also issued threats that guerilla warfare would be launched if the demand for unification with Armenia was not met. In May, self-defense sentries appeared on the streets of Stepanakert.

The still widespread Armenian hopes for an easy political victory were dashed in March, when the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR rejected the appeal of the Nagorno–Karabakh Soviet for unification with Armenia with no possibility of appeal. During the spring and summer, sporadic clashes and acts of local ethnic cleansing of the minority populations continued in both Armenia and Azerbaijan. At the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party, Gorbachev reiterated on 28 June that any changes to the republican borders were out of the question. This was a great disappointment to the Armenian nationalists, who refused to give up their campaign. Transports through the Lachin corridor between Nagorno–Karabakh and Armenia were increasingly hampered by civil disturbances during the summer of 1988. The prospect of a virtual Azerbaijani siege of the enclave loomed forebodingly, especially considering the harsh winters in this mountainous area (Malkasian 1996: 113).

On 18 July, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet decided to send special representatives to Nagorno–Karabakh to oversee a major program for economic investments and cultural development in the autonomous province, which had been initiated already in March but failed to placate the Armenian nationalists. It was also decided that a special commission under the Soviet of Nationalities would further examine the situation in Nagorno–Karabakh. It seems that Moscow underestimated the intensity of the Armenian preference for the unification of Nagorno–Karabakh with Armenia. The central communist leadership thought that the large investment and cultural development package for Nagorno–Karabakh would be sufficient to offset the Armenian dissatisfaction (Malkasian 1996: 62). Moscow also dispatched Interior Ministry troops to Nagorno–Karabakh and Armenia already in February.

In Nagorno–Karabakh, fear and tension had gradually been mounting since the events in Sumgait. The Azeri minority in Armenia and the Armenian minority in Azerbaijan outside Nagorno–Karabakh were also subjected to various forms of harassment, and numerous minority members were forced to flee from their homes. The appearance of often horrified and badly maltreated refugees served to heighten both populations' fear of each other (Malkasian 1996: 143; see also Croissant 1998: 31).

The onset of massive ethnic cleansing

One consequence of the intermingled ethnic settlement patterns in Nagorno–Karabakh was that there were islands of Azeri settlements, such as Shusha, within this predominantly Armenian-inhabited province, which was itself an enclave within Azerbaijan. In some places there were even small Armenian enclaves within such Azeri enclaves. The people living in these various enclaves naturally became worried about being cut off from outside support as tension mounted. Around the Azeri village of Khojaly slightly to the north of Stepanakert, a siege within a siege threatened to develop. On 18 September, a serious clash between members of both ethnic groups as well as Interior Ministry forces resulted in one Armenian being killed in a drawn-out firefight. During the days that followed, the ethnic cleansing of Stepanakert and Shusha was more or less completed (Malkasian 1996: 146f; Mityayev 1998: 490).

The massive waves of ethnic cleansing in both Armenia and Azerbaijan, which soon were to follow during the remainder of the year, would have been impossible without substantial planning and large-scale, organised efforts. The entire Azeri minority of Armenia and most of the Armenian minority outside Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan were forced to leave their homes in November–December 1988. In this connection the Azerbaijani authorities lost *de facto* control over most of Nagorno–Karabakh during the latter half of 1988 (Croissant 1998: 34). It seems plausible that Gorbachev was still very hesitant to order the military to use large-scale lethal force. Instead, he accused on 1 December Armenian and Azerbaijani officials of losing control, and urged them to act decisively to stop the violence (Masih and Krikorian 1999: 13). Leaders of the nationalist organisations were arrested. On 12 January 1989, Nagorno–Karabakh was placed under direct rule from Moscow, a move that represented a compromise between the Armenian demands for a transfer and the Azerbaijani insistence that the status of the autonomous province was not to be changed. This direct rule can be said to have been at the most moderately successful in imposing order in Nagorno–Karabakh, and no real progress was made in bringing the parties closer to a mutually acceptable agreement.

On 28 November, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR suddenly ended the special administrative status of Nagorno–Karabakh, and restored the subordination of the province to Baku. The Supreme Soviet also adopted some measures to bolster the autonomy of the province and to reestablish its provincial soviet. Nevertheless, this move was widely seen as a victory for Baku. It is quite conceivable that a certain fatigue was beginning to affect the leadership with regard to the increasingly costly deadlock in the efforts to reconcile all sides to the conflict (Croissant 1998: 35). The various attempts at compromise that had been introduced had been met with hostility. From a military point of view, the Interior Ministry forces deployed to Nagorno–Karabakh had difficulties in suppressing the guerilla-style forces that were slowly developing with local support. The Soviet forces were increasingly targeted by raids aiming at acquiring weapons, which further contributed to the demoralisation of the troops. All this ominously resembled the bitter experiences in Afghanistan from which the Soviet militarily had only recently disentangled itself (Sakwa 1990: 246). Given the conclusion that the direct rule was an excessively costly failure, it was more natural then for Moscow to side with Baku than with Stepanakert and Yerevan, since the Azerbaijani authorities were in favour of preserving the status quo. This was more preferable to

Moscow than the stance of various Armenian governmental bodies that to varying degrees advocated border changes.

Moscow uses military force against Baku

On 1 December, a joint session of the Armenian Supreme Soviet and the national council of Nagorno–Karabakh proclaimed a union of the Armenian republic and Nagorno–Karabakh. In and around Karabakh, Armenian guerillas increased their activities (Kaufman 1998: 25). Meanwhile, resentment grew among Azeri nationalists, who protested against the authorities' inaction when it came to actually enforcing the nominal Azerbaijani control over Nagorno–Karabakh (Croissant 1998: 36). Rumors were widely circulated in Azerbaijan that Armenian guerrillas were going to seize by force the enclave and the strip of land separating it from the Armenian republic (Dragadze 1996: 285). On 11 January, Azeri militants, who according to some sources were heavily armed with military weaponry, attacked and cleansed of Armenians three villages on the border to Nagorno–Karabakh. Other militants purportedly representing the Azerbaijani Popular Front declared that it had assumed power in the city of Lenkoran and that the Communist party was dissolved (Kaufman 1998: 23). The ethnic violence on the border of Nagorno–Karabakh soon spread to Baku, where rioters for more than two days murdered Armenians while the local police and the Soviet Interior Ministry troops stationed in the city stood idle.
On 19 January, when the anti-Armenian riots in Baku had all but ended, Moscow responded in force. In a massive military crackdown Baku was occupied and the immediate threat to communist rule in the republic posed by the Azerbaijani Popular Front was brutally neutralised. The Soviet Minister of Defence, General Yazov, openly admitted that this was the goal of the operation (Dragadze 1996: 281). Meanwhile, in the border regions between Nagorno–Karabakh and Azerbaijan and between Armenia and Azerbaijan, guerilla warfare was being waged between nationalist paramilitaries.

The central authorities in Moscow thus re-imposed Soviet control over Baku, and proceed to install a new First Secretary in the Azerbaijan republic, Ayaz Mutalibov, attempting to quell the inter-ethnic fighting in the border regions. Having seen the danger of frustrated Azeri nationalists overthrowing the communist rule in Azerbaijan, Moscow gave more active military support to Mutalibov's regime. Mutalibov, in turn, steadfastly relied on Moscow (Ilham Mamed-zadeh, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, interview by author, Baku, April 1999; Rasim Musabekov, advisor on nationalities issues to President Mutalibov, interview by author, Baku, April 1999). Increasingly serious attempts were made to disarm the paramilitaries of the Azerbaijani nationalist opposition, and to reassert *de facto* control by the Azerbaijani authorities over Nagorno–Karabakh (Croissant 1998: 38; Herzig 1996: 260; Zverev 1996).

Operation Ring – the Soviet Army turns on the Armenians

The next major step in the escalation of the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict came with the initiation of the operation called 'Ring' in the spring of 1991. In the beginning of that year, Soviet Interior Ministry forces were caught up in the middle of clashes between Azerbaijani special police forces and Armenian

guerillas. In early April, units of the 23rd Motorised Rifle Division of the regular Soviet army were interposed as a buffer along the Armenia–Azerbaijan border. By the end of the month, these units joined forces with the Interior Ministry troops and the Azerbaijani special police in a massive offensive against areas with a predominantly Armenian population to the north of Nagorno–Karabakh. Officially, the purpose was to neutralise illegal armed formations in the area, but in practice, Operation Ring amounted to systematic ethnic cleansing using regular military forces. In May, the joint Soviet and Azerbaijani forces even entered three towns in Armenia proper, and arrested more than 20 people there. Shortly thereafter, Armenian-held villages in Nagorno–Karabakh itself were also attacked. The brutality and scope of the operation, and the fact that units of the Soviet Army for the first time openly operated jointly with the Azerbaijani forces, had a deep impact on the thinking on the Armenian side.

The major escalation of launching Operation Ring can be explained by two main motives. From Moscow's perspective, the use of regular army troops in joint cleansing operations together with the Azerbaijani special police, and against substantial resistance by Armenian guerillas, constituted a strong signal that the Armenian demands were unacceptable. The troops brutally demonstrated that the price of continued defiance could be very dire for the Nagorno–Karabakh Armenians. According to the Armenian nationalist Zori Balayan, the Soviet Minister of Defence, General Yazov, commented on Armenian protests against Operation Ring with an oft-repeated remark: 'Well, Mutalibov and Ter-Petrosyan will just have to get round a negotiating table' (cited in Balayan 1997: 60).

This operation was the first occasion that military force was massively used by Moscow against the Armenians. Significantly, the union leadership, that reasonably had been mainly interested in preserving the status quo with regard to the borders in the region and avoiding further trouble, had so far refrained from taking very costly action against the Armenian nationalists. Initially the situation had not seemed acute enough to warrant these kinds of drastic measures. Of the main parties to the conflict, the union leadership therefore probably felt the least need for demonstrating resolve through violence. Not until the spring of 1991 had Moscow become sufficiently concerned about the Armenian recalcitrance. By then, weaker forms of signalling had repeatedly failed to convince Stepanakert to back down, and the nationalist leadership now in power in Yerevan was steering Armenia toward independence from the Soviet Union. Operation Ring came after the Armenian republic increasingly displayed an open unwillingness to sign the new union treaty worked out by Gorbachev in order to prevent the break-up of the Soviet Union (Croissant 1998: 40f; Herzig 1996: 261).

What is more, from the point of view of the republican leadership in Baku a threat was at this time building up that the Armenian nationalist paramilitaries would create a *fait accompli* by way of capturing the last Azeri-held settlements in Nagorno–Karabakh as well as the strip of land separating Nagorno–Karabakh from Armenia. The decision-makers in Baku thus perceived an urgent need to strike at the Armenian guerillas, and to prevent additional Armenian forces and military supplies from entering the enclave (Musabekov, advisor on nationalities issues to Mutalibov, interview by author, Baku, June 1997). The brutality with which the operation was carried out indicates that the intention was also probably to intimidate the Armenians into submission or flight.

The aftermath of Operation Ring

Operation Ring was not executed swiftly and decisively enough to cripple the Armenian guerillas (Musabekov, interview 1997). The intimidation effect was clearly more pronounced, although it would later backfire, since a hardened and more militant leadership eventually gained prominence in Stepanakert. In the summer of 1991, the massive costs inflicted on the Armenian population through Operation Ring made the political leaders of the breakaway enclave reconsider the feasibility of their struggle. An initiative was taken to signal to Moscow and Baku the leadership's willingness to retract on most of their demands if only Operation Ring was stopped. This move by the Nagorno–Karabakh Armenians was initially not supported in Yerevan, but after intense debate and a strong personal intervention by the Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan, the parliament of the Armenian republic officially endorsed the initiative (Souren Zolyan, member of the Karabakh Committee and the Armenian parliament, interview by author, Yerevan, June 1999).

In late June, a delegation was sent from Stepanakert via Yerevan to Moscow in order to seek assistance in the initiation of a dialogue with the Azerbaijani side. The initiative was perceived as indicating a willingness to submit to Baku both by the Azerbaijani leadership (Mamed-zadeh, interview) and the leaders of the Armenian militants in Nagorno–Karabakh (Georgi Petrosyan, member of the 'National Council' and of the team sent to Moscow in June 1991, interview by author, Stepanakert, June 1999; and Manvel Sarkisyan, coordinator of Dashnak paramilitary preparations, interview by author, Yerevan, June 1999). Despite this expressed Armenian willingness to enter negotiations on terms favorable to Baku, the ascendancy of an alternative, more radical Armenian leadership in Stepanakert would prove decisive for the subsequent escalation of the conflict. Anger and dismay among the more radical segments of the Armenian population of Nagorno–Karabakh was especially aroused after the meeting in Baku was harshly criticised in a local radio broadcast on 29 July (Arutyunyan 1994: 57). Then, on August 10, one of the Armenian participants in the criticised meeting in Baku, Valeriy Grigoriyan, was murdered in a drive-by shooting in the center of Stepanakert (Arutyunyan 1994: 63; Chobanyan 1993: 119). This assassination of one of the old nomenklatura leaders in Stepanakert was generally interpreted by the population as a move by the radicals to silence the proponents of negotiation with Baku, and after this event the moderate view was seldom expressed in Stepanakert, whereas the radical position became dominant (Karen Ohanjanian, coordinator of the Stepanakert branch of the Helsinki Citizens Assembly, interview; Petrosyan, interview).

The second important reason as to why nothing came out of the Armenian readiness in the summer of 1991 to back down, thus eschewing a full-scale war, is the failed coup-attempt against Gorbachev in August 1991. The chronicler reporting the activities of the delegation sent by Stepanakert to Moscow in June believes that this mission was frustrated because most of the influential decision-makers with whom the delegation met in fact were preoccupied planning and preparing for the coup (Arutyunyan 1994: 40). Gorbachev's adviser, Georgiy Shakhnazarov, believes that the General Secretary at the time was focused on the new union-treaty, which Gorbachev hoped would create more favorable conditions for the resolution of issues such as the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict (Shakhnazarov 1993: 221).

When the coup came, it first paralysed Moscow's policy with regard to Nagorno–Karabakh, and then resulted in an abrupt shift to a temporary military

disengagement and withdrawal from the conflict (Croissant 1998: 43f). Although Russian President Boris Yeltsin, together with his counterpart in Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev, managed to obtain the signatures in September 1991 of both Mutalibov and Ter-Petrosyan on an agreement outlining a process for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, Moscow lacked the necessary resolve to assist in implementing the agreement (Mityayev 1998: 502).

It seems reasonable to conclude, then, that the further escalation of the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict to full-scale reciprocated warfare became practically inevitable after the fateful events in the summer of 1991. As a result of Operation Ring and the consequent political developments, the hostility and military mobilisation on both sides had reached an unprecedented level. In Nagorno–Karabakh a new leadership intent on military struggle had gained control, and after large quantities of heavy weaponry flowed in to both sides as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the stage was set for the final escalation. In January 1992, the Armenian forces in Stepanakert went on the offensive and captured Khojaly, the Azeri village that had been the scene for the fateful clash in September 1988. Hundreds of Azeri civilians were massacred in the process. The storm of Khojaly signified that the struggle over Nagorno–Karabakh, after four years of open conflict, finally had reached the stage of full-scale reciprocated ethnic warfare.

Conclusions

This study has dealt with the role of the state in the escalation of the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Most importantly, I reject the notion that manipulation by the state authorities at the central level in Moscow caused the war. Rather, the authorities in Moscow were challenged by the nationalist movements in Armenia and Azerbaijan. These movements represented a threat to the communist monopoly of power. The state organs at the level of the Azerbaijani Soviet republic mainly acted in accordance with the directives coming from Moscow, and reacted to, rather than drove, the escalation. In the Armenian Soviet republic the largely passive communist regime was early on replaced by a nationalist government that used the republican state as a vehicle for supporting the Armenian separatists in Nagorno–Karabakh. Thus, when led by the nationalists, the state in the Armenian republic played a significant active role in challenging the constitutional status of Nagorno–Karabakh, and in enabling the armed struggle when peaceful means failed to yield sufficiently far-reaching concessions by either Moscow or Baku. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that the actors pushing the war of words to a shooting war were the nationalists operating outside of the Soviet state structures.

In Nagorno–Karabakh the Armenian guerilla fighters themselves over time created their own quasi-statelet, with exclusive military control, conscription and taxation. This process is very interesting in itself, in that it may shed light on how states originate and operate. But the militant faction of the Armenian nationalists in Nagorno–Karabakh chose to initiate war when they still lacked the basic functions of a state. Thus, I conclude that non-state actors drove this conflict to war, in that they raised an armed challenge that the Soviet authorities in Moscow and Baku refused to give in to.

This conclusion needs to be qualified in one important respect. Although the Soviet state mainly reacted to the challenge by the nationalists and used force to

defend the status quo, it seems that the excessively brutal character of the response by the state further hardened the militants among the nationalists. This is most evident in the reactions among many Armenians in Nagorno–Karabakh to the Soviet army operation in the spring of 1991 known as Operation Ring. In the aftermath of Operation Ring the radicalised militants among the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh assumed the real power in the breakaway province. This development probably negated the last real chance for a peaceful solution of the conflict.

To sum up, this study shows how nationalist ambition on behalf of the primary parties, on both the Armenian and Azeri sides, drove the escalation of the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict. There is no evidence that manipulation by the central powers in Moscow caused the war. A sound first cut at explaining any violent conflict remains to examine whether the actors fought for their own reasons, without being manipulated in any significant sense.

The key reasons identified in this study are the conflicting nationalist aspirations and assessments of the balance of power among the primary parties. It seems that for the nationalists, the goal of exclusive control over ethnically cleansed territories was seen as a good that was valued in itself. This motive becomes more comprehensible if combined with the impact of fear and preemption. For example, consider the possibility that the desirability of an ethnically pure Greater Armenia might have been a widely held ideological conviction among Armenians. The origin of this ideology becomes more clear in the light of the extremely difficult history of this people, especially the enormous massacres of the Armenians in Turkey in the beginning of the century. The Armenian people have vigorously kept the memory of this tragic history alive, and a great potential for feelings of vulnerability and deadly danger seems to have become almost imbedded in the modern Armenian identity. In this context, the Azeris are often portrayed as the same Turkish people who in modern history repeatedly committed genocide against the Armenians. The possible ideological lure of the notion of an ethnically pure Greater Armenia as a defence against the Turks becomes somewhat more comprehensible against this background. It can be similarly speculated that this kind of extreme nationalist ideology might have been influencing the Azeri side, perhaps because threats to the integrity of the Azerbaijan republic was seen as a threat to a rather weak Azeri sense of nationhood (Kaufman 1998). Needless to say, such explanations would not make the inhuman acts of ethnic cleansing which might have followed from such ideologies any more legitimate.

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The Balance of Languages in Post-Soviet Georgia

MANANA KOBAIDZE AND KARINA VAMLING

This paper focuses on the competition among languages in multilingual Georgia and the role of the state in this process. It examines changes of balance between the two major languages in Georgia – Georgian and Russian – and also the processes which involve the use and status of other languages in Georgia. The two most important issues are:

- The difficulty of the Georgian state in establishing a common language of inter-ethnic communication for its multitude of ethnic groups, which may lead to further disintegration
- The strong decline in the use and importance of Russian and, at the same time, an increase in the use of English

The paper first provides a historical background and an orientation on languages and ethnic groups in Georgia. This is followed by sections on issues where the state plays a prominent role in regulating language development: language policy in Georgia, the status of Georgian as a second language, education and the choice of languages of instruction and languages of inter-ethnic communication. Competition between minority and majority languages are seen in all these areas, which contributes to a shift of balance among the languages involved.

Background

Georgia has a history of statehood of more than 2000 years (Guchua and Meskhia 1979: 16–20) and has had a documented literary language since the fifth century. The official religion of Georgia has been Christianity since 337. From early times the Georgian language and script, as well as the Georgian church, became prominent symbols of the Georgian state and important features of the Georgian identity.

The Georgian language is not Indo-European, Turkic or Semitic; it belongs to the Caucasian language family.

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> For many centuries literary Georgian has been the language of state administration, law, religion, science, education, art and interethnic communication in Georgia. It retained these functions in the period of the political disunity of Georgia, because – in spite of the separation – in all parts of Georgia Georgian was the language of political administration, divine service and culture. But where the positions of the Georgian language was weakened, the Georgian ethnos began to decline. (Jorbenadze 1991: 7–8).

Periods of dependence on other powers – Arabs, Persians, Mongols and Turks, to mention a few, – and periods of Georgian independence have succeeded one another.

The annexation of Georgia by the Russian Empire took place in 1801. Drastic changes in the demographic structure of Georgia occured in the nineteenth century, caused by the war between Russia and Turkey and between Russia and Iran. Armenians and Greeks who were persecuted in Turkey and Iran found refuge in Georgia. The subsequent Russian policy of assimilation, including the settlement of non-Georgian groups into the area (among them Armenians, Russians, Greeks and Germans), and an emigration of Georgians due to this Russian policy, caused important changes in the demographic composition. The compact settlement of these groups had important consequences, since it considerably increased the multilingualism of Georgia.

Languages and ethnic groups in Georgia

Georgians form the majority group, with Armenians (8 per cent), Azerbaijanis (6 per cent) and Russians (6 per cent) as the largest minority groups (data from 1989). Major changes have occurred in the demographic situation of Georgia during the post-Soviet period due to ethno-political conflicts, in particular those in Abkhazia and South-Ossetia.

As noted above, Georgia is a multilingual state with groups speaking the same language typically found in compact settlements (for instance, Armenian and Azerbaijani speaking areas in the south of Georgia). In such areas, Georgian is often found to be a (local) minority language. The level of bilingualism is rather low, and Russian often functions as the lingua franca in inter-ethnic communication.

In the Western part of the country, the language situation is quite different. The two most important indigenous languages in this part are Svan and Megrelian, which are Kartvelian (South Caucasian) languages like Georgian. Svans and Megrelians consider themselves ethnic Georgians, and use Georgian as their literary language. This is combined with extensive individual bilingualism and a diglossic situation with functional division of language use. The decisive factor for the maintenance of these languages in this case as well seems to be the demographic factor (Vamling 2000).

Among the West Caucasian languages spoken in Georgia are Abkhaz and the Northeast Caucasian languages – Batsbi (Tsova-tush) and Chechen. Apart from Russian, Indo-European languages include Armenian, Ossetian, Kurdish and Greek. The Turkic languages are represented by Azerbaijani, and the Semitic languages by Assyrian. Jews are divided between Georgian Jews, who have a very long history of settlement in Georgia and speak Georgian as their mother tongue, and other Jews coming from different parts of the USSR.

Language policy in Georgia – past and present

The situation in Georgia after the Russian annexation was characterised by increasing Russian influence and assimilation. In the end of the nineteenth century Russian was made the language of instruction at all levels of education, prohibiting the use of Georgian in schools (Tabidze 1999). At the same time, attempts were made to promote the use of vernacular languages in education, e.g. Svan, Megrelian and Abkhaz (Rogava 1998; Gamakharia and Gogia 1997).

After the Russian October Revolution, Georgia declared its independence (1918). During the following period, important measures were taken by the Georgian Social-Democratic government to improve the status of the Georgian language. A Georgian University opened, as well as schools and colleges with instruction in Georgian. In the new constitution of 1921, Georgian was declared the official language of the independent Republic of Georgia. The constitution further stated that all nationalities living in Georgia had the right to receive state-supported education in their native languages (Constitution 1921: §129, §135). Minorities had the right to use their native language in administration and local government (Constitution 1921: §136) (Lomashvili 2000).

In February 1921, Georgia was occupied by the Russian Red Army. The country lost its independence and became a part of Soviet Russia.

Soviet language policy

The early Soviet language policy remained largely unchanged, allowing great freedom for the minorities. A substantial difference, however, was that since February 1921 this policy was conducted not within the independent state Georgia, but within another state, Soviet Russia (that subsequently changed into the Soviet Union (1922). Thus, since this time the goal of the language policy was set to favour non-Georgian/Russian bilingualism among non-native speakers of Georgian, not non-Georgian/Georgian bilingualism. Georgian retained its constitutional status of an official language, but this was only a formal status.

In the 1930s, Soviet policy shifted in the direction of a strengthening of the internal unity of the Soviet state and in isolation from the surrounding countries. As a consequence of this new political climate, national schools in Georgia, with instruction in 'foreign' languages such as Estonian, Greek, German and Assyrian, were abolished. This was also a period of changing writing systems. Orthographies in Latin used by Abkhazians and Ossetians in Georgia were replaced by the Georgian script[1] and the Latin based scripts being used for Kurdish and Azerbaijani were changed into the Cyrillic alphabet.

The encouragement of diversity was a means to separate and divide the inner unity of nations in the Soviet Union, and was also intended as a step towards assimilation, the so-called merging of nations and to form the new Soviet nation. Only one language connecting these different groups within any republic was intended to be the Russian language (Kobaidze 1999: 162).

In contrast to this diversity, the teaching of Russian had a strong base. It was taught at all schools, TV and radio broadcasting in Georgia included programs from Moscow and some programs from Tbilisi were in Russian. Young men from Georgia were sent to all corners of the Soviet Union to do their military

[1] Later, in 1954, the Georgian script was replaced by the Cyrillic alphabet.

service. Sending students to different parts of the Soviet Union to work in the summer time or two years after their graduation was a widespread practice.

Thus, Russian had a special position in Georgia as well as in the whole of the Soviet Union. Even if Georgian had the status of the official language in Georgia during the Soviet period, Russian was the dominating language in most major domains of the Georgian society. Representatives of the Georgian government used Russian when addressing the whole population of Georgia. Common functions of Soviet society such as the army, transport and communication, the system of energy supply, political structures above the local level and foreign relations all functioned exclusively in Russian. In the area of education, pupils were offered instruction in Georgian, Russian and a number of national languages. Students of all nationalities in Georgia were offered (and are still offered) university education in Georgian or Russian. Higher education in Azerbaijani, Armenian, Ossetian and Abkhaz languages also existed.[2]

Language policy and language use in Post-Soviet Georgia

The independence of the Republic of Georgia was declared in 1991, following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In February 1992, the constitution of 1921 (cf. above) was restored as the effective constitution of Georgia.[3] The status of Georgian thus changed from being a Soviet minority language to becoming the majority language of an independent country. The status of the other languages in Georgia changed as well. Russian became a minority language among other minority languages, with the important provision that it retained its function as lingua franca among some groups in the country.

Recent measures undertaken by the government concern language standardisation and the creation of new language commissions. Another important task of the state is to set up regulations for the domains of use of the different languages. One particularly important area in this connection is education, in particular the regulation of language use in instruction and the development of bilingualism. In the following, we will deal with a number of such issues in order to highlight the most striking changes in language use.

Language planning and its implementation

The Georgian language had to meet the challenges of functioning as a full-fledged state language in the post-Soviet situation. This was facilitated by the fact that Georgian was already used in most domains of society, i.e. higher education, mass media and local administration. However, due to extensive changes in the economic and political system, new terminology was needed in many areas. Both newly created and traditional Georgian terminology had been used in this process (for instance, the Old Georgian monetary units *tetri* and *lari* were introduced for the new Georgian currency). A new domain for the use of Georgian was the military service and a new institution of higher education, the Academy of Military Science was founded in 1993 (Literaturuli sakartvelo

[2] Department of Armenian language and literature, Department of Azerbaijani language and literature at the Tbilisi State Pedagogical Institute, Department of Ossetian language and literature at the Tskhinvali State Pedagogical Institute, Department of Abkhaz language and literature at the Sukhumi State University.

[3] A revision of the constitution was made in 1995.

1998: 28). Another example of a new domain for language planning in Georgia is that of advertising and product information. A draft project of a law on advertising from 1997 suggested that all advertisements and labels on any product to be sold in Georgia should be in Georgian. This draft was turned down, as it was criticised for being nationalistic and discriminating, with respect to the rights of other nationalities resident in Georgia (and also would not give any profit to large companies producing goods for such a small market).[4]

Different organisations dealing with language issues have been set up under the Georgian parliament. In 1995, the Permanent Committee of the State language of Georgia (*sakartvelos prezidenttan arsebuli sakhelmtsipo enis mudmivi komisia*) with President Shevardnadze as its chairman, was created. The aim of the committee is to elaborate the language policy of the country and to prepare the renovated project of the Program of the State Language adopted in 1989. Two years later, the State Palace of the Language of Georgia (*sakartvelos enis sakhelmtsipo palata*) and its sections in different regions of Georgia were set up. Its goals were defined as follows:

- To support the functioning of the State language of Georgia
- To protect the norms of the Georgian literary language
- To secure human rights and freedoms in the sphere of language relations
- To improve the effectiveness of work of the Permanent Committee of the State language of Georgia

That language issues are important and sensitive questions in multilingual Georgia is illustrated by the work on the draft project of the Law on the State Language of Georgia. It started in 1997 but has not yet been concluded. The definition that all other languages except the state languages (Georgian and Abkhaz) would be defined as foreign languages caused a debate, as according to this definition Armenian, Russian, Azerbaijani and other languages spoken in Georgia would be declared foreign languages. In 2001 a new definition was suggested: A foreign language is an official (state) language of other states. The opposition did not accept this definition either, and the discussion of the draft project was postponed again (Todua 2001: 9–10).

Since 1990, the fourteenth of April has been celebrated as the day of the Georgian language. This date was chosen in memory of the events on the fourteenth of April 1978, when §75, addressing the official status of Georgian, was preserved in the Constitution of Soviet Georgia, despite attempts to remove it.[5] The day of the Georgian language is a date for summarising what has been done during the year in the functioning of Georgian within the areas of teaching and research.

In the post-Soviet period, many names of towns, streets, newspapers [e.g. *Akhalgazrda Komunisti* 'The young communist' > *Akhalgazrda Iverieli* 'The young Georgian', *Komunizmis gza* 'The road to Communism' > *Aragvi* (river in Georgia)] etc. were changed in Georgia. Either old names were restored or new names were given, e.g. towns which were named after Soviet revolutionaries, received their original names back after the Soviet period. Certain names of

[4] A law on advertising was subsequently adopted (1998).

[5] This became possible as a result of a large protest demonstration in Tbilisi (which was a very unusual manifestation back in 1978) and other activities within the Georgian society as well.

squares and streets in Tbilisi reflect the history of the change of power. *Tavisuplebis moedani* 'Freedom square' and *Davit Aghmashenebeli street* are examples of this:

Nineteenth century: *Erevanskis moedani* – Erevanskij, the Russian general who got his name after driving away the Turks from Yerevan
The Soviet period: *Leninis moedani* 'Lenin square'
The post-Soviet period: *Tavisuplebis moedani* 'Freedom square'

Nineteenth century: *Vorontsovi* street – Vorontsov, a Russian high official and representative of the Russian Czar in the Caucasus in the nineteenth century
The Soviet period: *Plekhanovi* street – Russian revolutionary Plekhanov
The post-Soviet period: *Davit Aghmashenebeli street* – after a Georgian king from the twelfth century

Many research and educational institutes received new names: Department of Atheism became Department of History of Religion, Department of History of the Communist party received the name Department of History of Political Parties, the Museum of Friendship among Nationalities changed its name into the Research Centre for Relations among Nationalities, etc. These changes, of course, indicated a change of goals, ideology and orientation.

The changing of names turned out to be such an overwhelming process that certain politicians found it necessary to change their own proper name in order to manifest their loyalty to the newly adopted ideology. Eduard Shevardnadze, former president of Georgia, who had been the First Secretary of the Communist Party in Georgia in the 1970s and later, in the 1980s, the Minister of the Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, returned to Georgia in 1993 as a representative of a non-communist ideology. He considered it reasonable to become baptised in the Georgian Church and to receive a new name: *Giorgi*. This was a way to demonstrate that he became non-communist (non-atheist) and one with the Georgian national ideology. However, he still uses his ordinary name *Eduard* in everyday life.

The status of Georgian as a second language

The Soviet language policy aimed at maintaining linguistic diversity within Georgia (as well as in other Soviet Republics) but also in the future at creating a new unity – the Soviet identity – out of these separated parts. This policy had both positive and negative effects: on the one hand, any group living in Georgia had the opportunity to preserve its identity, traditions and native language. On the other hand, the group remained segregated and outside society, unfamiliar with the language and culture of the country where they lived but familiar with the language and culture of the third part – Russia (Kobaidze 2001). As shown in Table 1, when comparing the self-estimated fluency in Georgian and Russian as a second language, the figures for Russian are considerably higher than for Georgian, and also higher in 1989 than in 1970 (*Statistic work* 1991).

Table 1. Percentage of Fluency in the Second Language of the Soviet Union in Georgia

	Fluency in Georgian		*Fluency in Russian*	
	1970	1989	1970	1989
Total population	3.7	5.7	21.5	32.3
Georgians	0.3	0.1	20.1	31.8
Abkhazians	2.0	2.4	59.3	80.5
Ossetians	25.3	32.6	25.3	36.6
Russians	10.5	22.5	0.3	0.7
Ukrainians	5.6	14.1	47.9	41.6
Byelorussians	3.3	11.0	41.1	37.4
Azerbaijanis	5.0	9.3	16.5	34.2
Armenians	11.4	20.3	35.5	42.9
Jews	6.6	27.7	22.4	24.0
Georgian Jews	2.4	3.1	49.7	49.5
Assyrians	24.1	36.0	34.5	31.2
Greeks	6.7	15.4	36.9	44.7
Kurds	27.2	43.8	28.2	26.2

The goal of employing Russian as a lingua franca has been reached in certain parts of Georgia. And in those regions, where the Georgian language has lost its function as the language of inter-ethnic communication, serious problems have emerged after the Soviet period. The new Georgian State faced the hardest problems in the regions adjacent to Russia: in the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia and the Autonomous Region of South-Ossetia. The position of Georgian was especially weak in Abkhazia (the self-estimated fluency in Russian among the Abkhaz was 80,5 per cent, whereas it was only 2,4 per cent in Georgian). Any attempt to strengthen this position was met by desperate resistance from the non-Georgian population in these areas. After the end of Soviet power, all these sentiments resulted in ethno-political conflicts and separatist demands, which have only been partly realised. The Georgian population (approx. 300,000) was forced to leave these areas and is currently living in other parts of Georgia, with the status of internally displaced persons.

The level of fluency in Georgian of non-Georgian groups was a frequently debated topic during the end of the perestroika (Vamling 1990) and early post-Soviet period. A characteristic feature during these years, starting from the end of the 1980s, was to arrange a wide net of language courses in Georgian at factories and other organisations, where employees would have the opportunity to study Georgian.

An issue that was raised in this context was that a certain level of knowledge of Georgian should be required in order to receive Georgian citizenship. This suggestion was turned down, as it would have been unjust to demand the knowledge of a language immediately, without giving an opportunity to study it first. On the other hand, it turned out that the state is unable to carry out the necessary measures to teach Georgian – and many persons among the non-Georgian population lacked the motivation for learning Georgian. However,

everybody living in Georgia subsequently received Georgian citizenship without any provisions regarding their knowledge of Georgian.[6]

The situation is particularly difficult in areas of compact settlement of non-Georgians, for instance, in the settlements of Armenians close to the Georgian-Armenian border, and those of the Azerbaijanis in the south of Georgia. Here, the position of the Georgian state is rather weak, politically as well as linguistically. The Russian influence is, for instance, seen in the circulation of Russian currency in these areas, and in the presence of Russian military bases. The neighbouring republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan actively support these populations with educational materials and other literature in the respective languages.[7]

In 1997 President Shevardnadze issued a state action program for the functioning of the state language among the population of different nationalities living in Georgia. Only one region, Samtskhe–Javakheti (Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe and Ninotsminda) would receive 80,000 *lari*[8] from the state budget in order to pay salaries to teachers of the Georgian language and literature at non-Georgian schools, to create courses in Georgian and to obtain text books for schools, dictionaries and other materials, etc. In the following year, this region was to receive 350,000 *lari* from the budget, but it only received 155,000 *lari*. The implementation of this program turned out to be problematic. In the following years, not even salaries to teachers were paid out properly. For various reasons, state funding did not reach its designated application (Kutaladze 2000).

The choice of languages of instruction

The educational system in Georgia has its roots in the Soviet educational system. It would be unjust to deny the great achievements of this policy in terms of the encouragement of native languages, the spread of literacy and, in many cases, the creation of literacy for many ethnic groups. At the same time, it was a powerful tool for spreading the Soviet ideology and knowledge of the Russian language as a first step for the implementation of Russian as the only language of international interaction. Russian also became the second mother tongue; the ultimate step towards this was to transform the 'second mother tongue' into the 'mother tongue'.

Education, which used to be part of the state monopoly in Soviet times, has become diversified with different types of private schools and institutions of higher education. As an illustration of this general development, the number of monolingual schools in Tbilisi with Georgian as the language of instruction has increased from 50 per cent to 72 per cent from 1982/83 to 2000/01, whereas the number of Russian schools has decreased from 25 per cent to 5 per cent during the same period (*Department of Statistics*, Ministry of Education of Georgia, unpubl., *Statistical Abstract* 2002).

[6] The requirement for obtaining Georgian citizenship is settlement in Georgia for a minimum of 5 years (law adopted in 1993).

[7] Georgian authorities are trying to change this situation. During the last years, textbooks written by Georgian authors and translated into the respective languages of instruction, Armenian, Azerbaijani etc, are also in use.

[8] The Georgian currency is called *lari*.

The recent law on education from 1997 states that it is up to the local population and administration to choose the languages of instruction to be offered in schools in a certain area.

Statistics on the number of pupils and their choice of language of instruction is shown in Table 2. When comparing the figures, it is important to note that there has been a considerable decrease in the total number of pupils during the period 1990–2002. The most striking change is the decrease in the number of pupils following instruction in Russian, whereas Georgian is the only language of instruction that has increased its share of the pupils – from 68,7 per cent in 1990 to 79,5 per cent in 2001 (partly, this difference is related to the fact that data from Abkhazia and South Ossetia are included for 1990/91 but not for the other years).

Table 2. Distribution of pupils by language of instruction

Number of pupils	*1990/91*	1995/96	1998/99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002
Totally in Georgia	*866 400*	701400	715800	707600	697400	680828
Pupils taught in:						
Georgian	*68.7*	82.99	84.26	84.85	85.33	79.45
Russian	*20.8*	7.38	6.11	5.77	5.46	2.2
Azerbaijani	*5.6*	5.70	5.73	5.6	5.48	4.5
Armenian	*3.8*	3.89	3.88	3.77	3.7	3.3

Source: *Statistical Abstract* 2002.

In order to illustrate the main tendency of correlation between the demographic situation of the group and their choice of language of instruction, we may compare the percentage of the population in Tbilisi, Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki who are Georgian, Armenian and Russian with the distribution of pupils taught in Georgian, Armenian and Russian in these areas. As shown in Table 3, Georgian is the majority language in Tbilisi, whereas Armenian is the local majority language in Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki. The tendency is that the local demographic situation seems to be the decisive factor for the choice of language of instruction (not taking into account age differences, mixed marriages, etc.). In the majority language settings – Georgian in Tbilisi and Armenian in Akhalkalaki – these languages are chosen as languages of instruction by speakers of other languages as well. The situation in Akhaltsikhe is somewhat different, as neither Georgians nor Armenians represent a clear majority. There is a preference for the choice of Georgian, presumably motivated by existence of the Akhaltsikhe University with instruction in Georgian.

Table 3. Correlation between the demographic situation of the group and choice of language of instruction

	Tbilisi	Akhaltsikhe	Akhalkalaki
Georgian population (%)	66.02	37.7	4.4
Pupils taught in Georgian (%)	81.4	61.1	4.7
Armenian population (%)	12.07	42.73	79.5
Pupils taught in Armenian (%)	1.2	32.1	89.4
Russian population (%)	10.1	12.03	10.5
Pupils taught in Russian (%)	17.2	6.8	5.8

Note: Percentage of population is based on the data from the 1989 census. Percentage of pupils is based on the data from 1996–97 (unpublished data supplied by the main centre of information of the Ministry of Education of Georgia).

The post-Soviet period has been characterised by a growing interest in new languages of instruction and in improving the knowledge and use of English and other foreign languages. The new market economy also brought new demands to the educational system. Decentralisation of the educational system has also begun. The first signs of this occurred already in the Soviet period, e.g. the so-called German school founded by Guram Ramishvili in Tbilisi in 1979. The first private school appeared in 1989. The number of private schools, including secondary schools and institutions of higher education, has increased drastically since the 90s. Countries such as Turkey, Greece and the USA are also involved in the region in the opening and financing of private schools and institutions of higher education. Examples of this are the Tbilisi Demireli College, founded by the Turkish Company 'Chaghlari' in 1993 and the Tbilisi branch of the American University of Hawaii (1997).

At state institutions of higher education such as the State Technical University of Georgia (*sakartvelos teknikuri universiteti*), two faculties offer instruction in English. There is also a faculty with English as the language of instruction at the Medical University in Tbilisi.

The use of English as a language of instruction is often emphasised as an advantage of a school. Even kindergartens where children can begin to study English have opened. English still has the nuance of an elite language, while Russian retains its democratic feature, more or less available to any stratum of society. However, the interest in English has also given rise to an opposing opinion. The fashion of acquiring one's education by means of a foreign language may become a danger for Georgian youth, as they might lose connection with their own culture and their own background and become foreigners both in their own motherland and abroad (Bashaleishvili 2001: 10).

The use of English in other domains

The opportunity of having contacts with the non-Russian speaking world, which was an exclusive advantage of certain persons and circles in rare cases during the Soviet time, has became a reality for the wide population. This has given rise to the necessity of knowing another language. Besides travel, trade and other immediate contacts with countries outside of the Soviet space, other contacts have also increased. The Internet works in favour of broad contacts,

and increases the demand for knowledge of foreign languages, especially English.

English is widely used for websites made in Georgia. Newspapers in English are published in Tbilisi. In 2000, Georgia became the fifty-first member country of the non-political educational organisation the English-Speaking Union (ESU).

Languages in inter-ethnic communication

As noted above, there is a growing interest in improving the knowledge of foreign languages, but also in improving knowledge of the Georgian language. For instance, in a questionnaire study[9] undertaken by the present authors among non-Georgian groups in Georgia, over 40 per cent of the respondents indicated that they would like to improve their knowledge of Georgian.

Russian has thus lost its official function and its position of major language in Georgia. The shift in interest regarding Russian among the Georgian population has also been motivated by deteriorated relations between Russia and Georgia, e.g., citizens of Georgia (except those who live in Abkhazia and South Ossetia) are required to obtain a visa in order to enter Russian territory.

An important remaining function of Russian is its function as a lingua franca among the non-Georgian population. This is particularly true in rural areas with a compact settlement of Azerbaijanis (Amirhekmat 2002) and Armenians, whereas Georgian has a stronger position as a lingua franca in the capital and in areas of Chechen settlements.

A Georgian intellectual and specialist in the Russian language expressed his attitude to this new situation, thereby summarising many of the problems facing the Georgian authorities in the area of language policy:

> In the non-Georgian regions of Georgia the positions of Georgian are not strengthened nowadays [...] it is even weakened. Some kind of tendency of competition and confrontation has appeared. This has been a reaction towards the noise regarding the Russian as a symbol of the enemy. One believed that Georgian should take the place of Russian automatically but this has not happened. Instead, a vacuum has appeared and this vacuum became the space for other tendencies – a weakening of the connections between the centre and the regions and a weakening of the positions of the Georgian language...
>
> When separatists talk about separatist demands in Russian on the Georgian TV channel everybody can understand his speech but nobody answers him. One should answer him and answer in Russian in order to make this answer comprehensible to everybody (Tsibakhashvili 1998: 2–3).

Concluding remarks

In conclusion, we have seen that a change of balance has clearly taken place among the languages of post-Soviet Georgia. The use of Georgian has increased in almost all spheres of society. Russian has lost ground, even if it is still a compulsory subject at school. Many in the younger generation of Georgians grow up with virtually no knowledge of Russian – something that was unthinkable fifteen years ago.

Georgia recently signed the European Framework convention for the protection of national minorities. This is a factor that may play a role in the

[9] The results are unpublished.

future development of the language situation of Georgia, presumably in particular in strengthening the institutional support for the indigenous minority languages (Foundation for Endangered Languages, http://www.ogmios.org/144htm

It is an important challenge for the Georgian multilingual state to promote bilingualism and to solve the problem of establishing a common language of inter-ethnic communication. The present situation, involving a diverging development where some communities use Russian and others use Georgian in interethnic communication (with poor mutual knowledge of the two languages) threatens to widen the gap between the different ethnic groups in Georgia.

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