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Nation-Building and the Identity Transformation of Women in the Soviet Era (1917-1991) and the Post-Soviet Period (1991-2022): A Case Study of Kazakhstan

Elaheh Koolae¹
Tayebe Gholipouri²

After the October Revolution of 1917, the process of identity formation in the Soviet Union was profoundly shaped by Bolshevik socialist ideology. One of the central aspects of this ideology was the reconfiguration of the “woman question” and the attempt to construct the “New Soviet Woman”—a woman capable of playing an active role simultaneously in the spheres of family, politics, and the economy. In this context, organizations such as the Women’s Department of the Communist Party sought to encourage women’s participation in the structures of power by creating educational, social, political, and employment opportunities. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kazakhstan underwent structural and ideological transformations. In practice, international organizations and non-governmental organizations gradually contributed not to the improvement of women’s social conditions but to the decline of their social status.

▪ **Keywords:**

Identity – Nation-building – Soviet Union – Post-Soviet – Central Asia – Kazakhstan.

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Russia's Cooperation with the European Far Right (1991-2024) (Case Study: Germany, Italy, and France)

Mehdi Nouri Choureti¹
Mehdi Sanaei²

One of Russia's strategies to redefine its position in the international and European order has been to support the far-right movement in key Western European countries such as Germany, Italy, and France. This article uses a qualitative method and a descriptive-analytical approach to examine why and how Russia cooperated with the far-right movement in Western Europe (Germany, France, and Italy) from 1991 to 2024. On what basis did Russia in the post-Soviet period tend to cooperate with the far-right movement in Europe, and what mechanisms did it use to achieve its goals? The research hypothesis is that the occurrence of color revolutions, NATO expansion to the East, the Crimean crisis, and Western support for Ukraine, along with Russia's efforts to redefine its position in the global order and the importance of the far-right movement in Europe, were among the most important reasons for this cooperation.

▪ **Keywords:**

Russia, far-right, Western Europe, soft power, anti-Westernism.

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The War of Connection: The Role of Small Ports in International Corridors With Emphasis on the Development of Aktau and Kuryk Ports

Habibollah Malkootifar¹

The emergence of small and medium-sized ports as vital nodes connecting remote areas in international transport is a dominant issue in global transport, given the importance of maritime and rail corridors. In recent years, the two small ports of Aktau and Kuryk have in recent years, through a clear and well-planned program, become one of the maritime transport nodes in several international corridors in the Caspian Sea, including the important Trans-Caspian Corridor and the Tracika Corridor. In addition, they play a major and very important role in the Chinese Belt and Road megaproject, and if the North-South Corridor is successful, they will be one of the key points of this project. This has been done through a clear and well-documented program. By examining this issue, this research seeks to investigate and prove the importance of small ports in the world, and especially in the Caspian Sea, for connecting important international corridors and ultimately their enormous impact on the regional and international economy. The research method is a combination of descriptive library and field research and uses the theories of developmental government and geo-economics.

▪ **Keywords:**

Port, Corridor, Aktau, Corrie, Zhejiang Economy, Development of wealth, Port development, Caspian Sea.

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The Russian Security Dilemma in the Nordic-Baltic Region

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Since Russia's war with Georgia in 2008, the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, its intervention in the Syrian conflict in direct opposition to Western interests, the invasion of eastern Ukraine on February 24, 2022, and its interference in the affairs of other countries, discussions about Russia's behavior and intentions have increased significantly in areas that have geographical proximity to Russia. Especially since the "Ukrainian issue" has a prominent non-geopolitical feature, and there are many "nation-states" with this feature in Russia's neighborhoods and surroundings. The study of Russian foreign policy trends in the Nordic-Baltic region and the influential component of Russia's "compatriots abroad" can shed light on geopolitical trends in the Nordic and Baltic regions. The main question of this article is how the security dilemma has affected the relations between Russia and the Nordic-Baltic countries. Based on Russia's understanding of the security dilemma, this research examines the issue that the security dilemma has expanded the scope of Moscow's security threats to the Baltic and Nordic regions. "Uncertainty," "self-reliance," and "anarchy" in Russia's foreign policy behavior have led to the weakening of the national security dilemma in the Nordic-Baltic countries. This research will attempt to analyze Russia's behavior in dealing with the Nordics and Baltic using the logic of the security dilemma.

▪ **Keywords:**

Nordic, Baltic, Russia, security Dilemma, Scandinavia.

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Goals of Regional and Trans-Regional Actors in the South Caucasus (Horizon of 2035)

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The South Caucasus region holds an important position in international politics in terms of energy resources, geopolitical, and geo-economic importance. A region where the three countries of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, with their continued internal disputes and security instability, have prevented the formation of a common security complex and facilitated the influence and competition of regional and trans-regional actors in influencing the course of developments. Therefore, the main question is: what will be the approach of regional and trans regional actors, their goals, and their position in achieving their interests in the South Caucasus by 2035? In response to the main question, the main hypothesis claims that regional and trans-regional actors will adopt opposing approaches by 2035 to achieve their strategic interests. The region's geopolitical, political, and internal security challenges, along with the contradictory alignment of the South Caucasus countries in their proximity to regional and trans-regional powers, will make the security environment of the South Caucasus competitive, unbalanced, and critical. The main goal of this research is to analyze and explain the interests of regional and trans-regional actors in the South Caucasus in the horizon of 2035 from the perspective of expert elites. The research method employed in this article is strategic foresight. The data collection tool utilized includes library resources, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews with experts and elites.

▪ **Keywords:**

South Caucasus, Futures Studies, Geopolitical Competition, Security Challenges, Regional and Trans-Regional Powers.

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The Geopolitical Dynamics of the TAPI Pipeline for Afghanistan During the Taliban Regime: Opportunities and Challenges

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The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project, as one of the geoeconomic initiatives in Central and South Asia, has the potential to influence regional geopolitical equations. Afghanistan's transit position in this project makes the country a key point in connecting Central Asian gas resources to the high-consumption markets of South Asia. By posing the main question, "What geopolitical opportunities and challenges does the dynamism of the TAPI project create for Afghanistan?", the present study seeks to examine the geopolitical capacities and obstacles facing this country in the process of realizing the TAPI project. The research hypothesis is based on the fact that although the TAPI project can bring important benefits such as benefiting from transit income, attracting foreign investment, creating employment, strengthening economic ties with neighboring countries, and enhancing Afghanistan's geopolitics; But on the other hand, challenges such as insecurity along the project route, lack of adequate technical and institutional infrastructure, the Taliban's ambiguous and inefficient political structure, competition between regional and trans-regional actors, and doubts about Turkmenistan's gas capacity have posed serious obstacles to the full realization of these opportunities. This research was conducted using a qualitative method and a descriptive-analytical approach, using reliable library, documentary, and digital resources.

▪ **Keywords:**

TAPI pipeline, Natural gas, Afghanistan, Geopolitics, Central Asia.

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Problematology of the Talysh Ethnic Group in the Republic of Azerbaijan (After The Collapse of the Soviet Union)

Kosar Taleshi¹
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The collapse of the Soviet Union brought profound changes to the borders and policies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, affecting non-Azeri Iranian-origin groups, particularly the Talysh. This study examines the identity, political, and social situation of the Talysh in the post-Soviet period. The main question is how the cultural, social, and historical capacities of the Talysh can be analyzed and what reactions they have shown to homogenizing policies. The research hypothesis suggests that due to the absence of independent civil institutions, the Talysh possess limited political capacity, yet cultural resistance and intra-group identity awareness are strengthening. The hypothesis is framed by concepts of contemporary political sociology and within a multilayered theoretical approach, including theories of cultural hegemony and identity politics. The study relies on library sources and employs a descriptive-analytical method for data examination.

▪ **Keywords:**

Talysh, Republic of Azerbaijan, Iran, Soviet, Homogenization.

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Causes of Turkey's Aggressive Approach in the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

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Ardeshir Sanaei²*

The In 2020, the Second Karabakh War marked a turning point in the geopolitical dynamics of the South Caucasus. During this war, the Republic of Azerbaijan regained control of the peripheral areas of Nagorno-Karabakh after nearly three decades. In this context, Turkey's role as one of the key regional actors was particularly prominent. Unlike Turkey's approach during the First Karabakh War—which was limited to political support—Ankara adopted an assertive strategy this time, providing comprehensive political, military, and media backing that significantly contributed to Azerbaijan's victory. The central question of the article is: What factors drove Turkey to adopt such an approach? To answer this, the study employs neoclassical realism as its theoretical framework, emphasizing the role of domestic variables—such as elite perceptions, strategic culture, and internal political considerations—in shaping and modifying structural factors. Accordingly, the hypothesis states that structural factors, including Russia's passivity, the West's indifference toward resolving the Karabakh conflict, and Turkey's strategic alliance with Azerbaijan, were interpreted through domestic variables such as consensus among Turkish leaders, a Turkic-centered nationalist discourse, the Justice and Development Party's interests in maintaining power, and economic considerations. These dynamics collectively pushed Turkey toward an aggressive policy orientation. The research method is qualitative and descriptive-analytical.

▪ **Keywords:**

Second Karabakh War, Turkey, Neoclassical Realism, Structural and Domestic Factors.

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The Taliban's Water Approach: The Impact of the Qosh Tepe Project on Regional Conflict and Cooperation

Javad khademzadeh¹

Given the scarcity of water resources, the management of transboundary rivers can serve both as a source of cooperation and as a potential arena for conflict among countries. Central Asian states are highly sensitive to changes in the utilization of shared water resources. Afghanistan's geographical and climatic position, along with its shared rivers, confers strategic importance and places the country at the center of regional political, economic, and security interactions. The return of the Taliban to power has reshaped the region's hydro-political landscape, and projects such as the Qosh Tapa Canal have heightened concerns among downstream countries. The main research question is how the Taliban's water policies have affected the hydro-political balance in the region and what opportunities or threats they create for future regional water cooperation. The research hypothesis posits that the Taliban, by leveraging Afghanistan's geographic position and their noncompliance with binding water regimes, aim to increase leverage and secure strategic benefits through projects such as the Qosh Tapa Canal.

▪ **Keywords:**

Hydro-politics, Taliban, Central Asia, Qosh Tapa Canal, Transboundary Rivers.

Wisdom and Knowledge in Abai Kunanbaiuly's Words of Edification: From the Context of Kazakh Cultural Identity to the Intellectual Space of Central Asia in the 19th Century

Fahimeh Shakiba¹

Abai Kunanbaiuly (1845–1904) was a prominent nineteenth-century Kazakh thinker and poet. His seminal work, the *Words of Edification*, arose during Kazakhstan's cultural, identity, and colonial crises. This study employs directed qualitative content analysis and philosophical hermeneutics. It explores how Abai's concepts of wisdom and knowledge relate to Kazakh cultural identity and Central Asia's intellectual space. The central question is how Abai redefined these concepts to address an identity crisis and articulate an ethical-cultural subjectivity. The findings indicate he aimed to cultivate the traits of a conscious human being within this framework.

▪ **Keywords:**

Cultural identity, Abai Kunanbaiuly, *Words of Edification*, wisdom, knowledge.