ABSTRACTS

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Us vs. Them as Structural Equivalence: Analyzing the Structure of Nationalist Appeals in Georgian Print Media

Nationalist discourse in the media has been identified as a crucial factor driving the causal chain from democratization to a civil conflict. It has also been argued that what makes nationalist discourse risky for further conflict is its focus on Us/Them dichotomy to reaffirm identities. However, little has been done to systematically analyze how strong these dichotomies are in media texts and most importantly, whether there is any relationship between the process of democratization and the intensity of Us/Them divide in the media. Based on the content analysis of the Georgian print media, this paper proposes the innovative way of measuring the structure of the nationalist discourse in the media content using the method of Social Network Analysis. Specifically, by applying the Structural Equivalence Analysis it is possible to show how sharply the Us/Them divide is structured along ethnic lines. Findings suggest that the nationalist appeals are strongly structured along the in-group/out-group lines. Whereas, in non-nationalist appeals this kind of clusters are not identifiable. Looking at the picture in dynamics reveals that the actor-structure of nationalist discourse during electoral periods resembles strong divisions between the national in-group and the out-groups, while this structure disappears during non-electoral times. Moreover, in line with the evidence in the respective literature, results show that the polarization between *Us* versus *Them* in the nationalist discourse becomes particularly strong during the first two elections as compared to the later electoral periods. These findings have corroborated assumptions of the literature looking at the relationship between elections and violent conflicts resulting from them. However, they also add a point that during electoral periods nationalist discourse intensifies not only in terms of its degree, i.e. nationalist statements become more frequent, but also in terms of its kind, i.e., actor structure of the discourse yields sharper divisions between the in-group and the out-groups.

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Cultural Capital, Modernization, and Education in Azerbaijan: Sociological perspective

Abstract

While there is a wide range of academic literature in which cultural capital formation in different countries and regions has been analyzed, the majority of the scholarly studies only highlights certain aspects of the potential of peoples to acquire the cultural capital. In other words, cultural capital has rather been studied in a potential form. The labor capitalization of potential abilities, the complex process of formation of cultural capital in the post-soviet developing countries in the new era of globalization and liberalization of markets remain outside of the scope of contemporary social science researches.

Hence the main target of this article is that to bring to attention the importance of sociological analysis of cultural capital in connection with the education in the post-Soviet developing countries, including Azerbaijan, and the need for developing some methodological and practical recommendations that would improve the study of cultural capital formation in Azerbaijani transition to innovative type of sociocultural and economic developments, models of a multicultural and civic education.

I believe that methodological value of the typology of the forms of capitals described in contemporary Western social science literature allows for describing the differences in the shape of social stratification in the context of various political transformations, including education systems, showing that socio-political relations, educational institutions and their evolution can be understood in terms of the changing roles of certain types of capital,

particularly the cultural capital. I also argue that the conception for a long-term *socio-economic development and modernization* of post-soviet developing countries, including Azerbaijan, involves the transition of societies to innovative type of educational developments, the formation of intellectually capacious human potential, targeted at the promotion of cultural capital of students and youths. The general conclusion of the article is that what the competitiveness of the modern socio-economic system in post-soviet developing countries and Azerbaijan badly needs today is a modernized educational system, the efficiency of professional and training staff, the levels of their cooperation, the development of labor and organizational cultures.

Key words: cultural capital, sociological models, modernization, education, group status culture, basic and instrumental values, economic progress.

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Young people's citizenship activity in times of war threat: case of Ukraine

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The study explores passive, semi-active and active citizenship among young Ukrainians empirically revealed by Citizenship Behavior Questionnaire among 371 pupils aged 11, 14, 17 – 18 years old. The empirical study is introduced by socio-political and educational description of current situation in Ukraine as well as some historical background. Citizenship education in Ukraine is taught through all subjects in the form of national-patriotic education what is justified by recent political conditions: annexation of Crimea and war in the East of Ukraine. Peculiarities of Higher Education in Ukraine reformation are reviewed as well as results of studies concerning patriotism, citizenship and political participation among Ukrainian youth. For our empirical study we have chosen passive, semi-active and active citizenship as dimensions and the following sub-dimensions for analysis: national identity, patriotism, loyalty, civic virtues, social activity, political activity, personal activity, action for change. Boys and girls do not differ significantly in citizenship behavior in Ukraine. At the same time there are significant differences on some citizenship dimensions and sub-dimensions regarding place of living and age. In general, high passive and semi-active citizenship were revealed but low active citizenship telling us about presence of potential but unwillingness for active changes. One of the means for achieving citizenship activity can be enhancement of interest in political media, media literacy and prevention of destructive media effects. These means can be implemented through media education with special attention to citizenship.

It is worth mentioning that history of Ukraine has been taught for a long time through the prism of pro-Russian political goals. As a result we see that interest in history is not largely associated with national identity. Citizenship education in Ukraine should focus on historical literacy giving pupils more facts which will help them to resist pro-Russian propaganda.

All in all current difficult situation in Ukraine being in the state of war in the East and having part of the territory annexed justifies that citizenship education has the form of national-patriotic education but for further development of democratic society it is worth drawing more attention to human rights issues regardless ethnic background.

Exploring the Exogenous Factor: the US and EU's Role in the Turkey-Georgia-Azerbaijan Energy Cooperation

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This paper aims at researching and assessing the contribution that the United States and the European Union, as external players in the South Caucasus, had to the establishment and development of trilateral energy cooperation between Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan. Firstly, the paper will argue that in late 1990s the US played an incremental role in overcoming the deadlock situation over the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline project and hence forging the Turkey-Georgia-Azerbaijan trilateral cooperation format that otherwise could not be sustained. At the same time, it will show that on BTC-related issues the EU has not influenced the trilateral cooperation.

Secondly, the paper will argue that, starting from late 2000s, the EU's activation in the Southern Gas Corridor (SGC) project played a key role in institutionalizing the energy cooperation between Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan and upgrading it to a higher level. Unlike the BTC project and Caspian "oil game", the US role in promoting the Turkey-Georgia-Azerbaijan cooperation in the context of the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline was quite limited. The US policy was rather focused on the wider context of this issue, i.e. paying more attention to SGC's secure accomplishment and success in competition for European gas market.

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Social welfare or moral warfare? Conservative popular resistance against neoliberal social policy in Russia

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Since the mid-2000s, Russia has increased its efforts to strengthen the legal rights of children and to improve the systems of social assistance to vulnerable families in in line with the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. The reform drive has met fierce resistance by a rapidly proliferating grassroots mobilization in defense of 'traditional Russian family values'. Child rights are seen as instruments in a Western moral war against Russia, along with gay rights, gender mainstreaming, and so forth, but the protests are also targeted at neoliberal governance as such. The popular appeal of the campaign stems as much from anti-Western sentiments as from a proliferated distrust in Russian state administrators, who are assumed to exploit transnational policy and global governance for personal gain. This paper suggests that due to the lack of confidence in the state and in new models of neoliberal governance, the protesters locate notions of citizenship primarily to the intimate social sphere, prioritizing 'parental rights' on the expense of 'civil rights' defined by the state-citizen relationship.

Human problems in the conflict zone
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After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgia, along with other former Soviet republics, was facing many vital problems. One of such problem was separatism in Abkhazia.

International press covered the war in Abkhazia that took place after the Soviet collapse, although materials were mainly developed using Russian agencies and therefore it was not very objective, as Russia was also a part in this conflict.

Georgian press was actively broadcasting the stories of war. I was also in Sukhumi in 1993 from 14 August to 24 August. During my stay I interviewed citizens, who were going to sleep at night, knowing that they might bombed that night. There was no water and at the town market, funeral flowers mostly were sold.

On 27 September, Sokhumi was emptied, though not completely, as there were people who couldn't leave including, for instance, a woman who just had a surgery, a widowed woman, an elderly grandmother who lost her children in the war, a young girl who was hiding in her apartment for months without sufficient food or water. This conflict took a large number of vulnarable people as hostages.[1]

People in the conflict zones are deprived of their human rights. They live in their own houses and do not have the right to even speak about property rights. There are multiple challenges they face on a daily basis and their standard of living is radically different from those who are not in the zone of conflict. Those who physically survived the severity of conflict are carrying the heavy burden of being internally displaced persons or refugees. The people who willingly or forcefully are living in the zones of frozen conflict are living a gray life. They cannot freely express their will. Young people cannot receive good education, their children are forced into joining the Russian army and obligatory military service. Ossetians and Abkhazians are offering their youth to study in Moscow, exempting them from entrance exams. The Georgians are doing the same, they are offering the Abkhaz and Ossetians to study in Tbilisi for free, though require them to pass the barrier at the University Entrance Exams.

"You are in the devil's circle" the UN representative to Georgia D. Boden said, when speaking about the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict and in order to break this circle we need the vigilance of Georgia and the support of the international community.[2]

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"Christian Stalin;" The Paradox of the Contemporary Georgian Politics

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While traveling throughout Georgia one might encounter rather an interesting trend of the usage of the image of Stalin for various reasons. In Gori, in the town where he was born, this obsession is taken even further. One of the main streets in the town, still carries his name; one of the main attraction of Gori is Stalin's museum which remained relatively unchanged since the Soviet times. It does not really address the oppressions of the Soviet regime despite minister of culture's several attempts to do so. In addition, the discussion about the restoration of the monument of the ex-Soviet leader in the city centre still comes up from time to time. Interestingly, current Georgian legislation prohibits any usage and display of the symbols associated with the totalitarian regimes. But the image of Stalin somehow manages to avoid the prosecution. To take this paradox even further, in the discourses articulated by the Georgian Orthodox Church, Stalin is portrayed rather positively, as a Christian who believed in God.

This ambivalence towards Stalin, or rather the paradox which one can observe in the contemporary Georgian public discourse is the starting point of this research. This paper will argue that one of the explanations for the image of Christian Stalin should be sought in the discourses on Georgian national identity. It will follow discourse theory developed by Laclau and Mouffe[3] and argue that one can observe following chains of equivalence in Georgian national identity discourses: Stalin=Georgian=Orthodox Christian. More specifically, from the discourse theory terms, Orthodox Christianity can be characterised as the nodal point around which other signs acquire their meaning and discourse starts organising. Since Stalin was ethnically Georgian and Orthodox Christianity is the nodal point or the privileged sign in the articulation process, the empty signifier Stalin becomes a believer in the Georgian national discourse. But it is important to note that the process of nesting this meaning in the floating signifier of Stalin is populist-nationalist discourse, which differs from chain of signifiers of liberal discourse, where Stalin is invested with the meanings of being dictator, mass murderer etc.

To explore the above mention chains of equivalence, this paper will look from the discourse theory lens at nationalist and populist public discourse i.e. conventional media, social media, as well as speeches delivered by the high hierarchs of GOC during the services.

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A spritual ministry: the Russian Orthodox Church as a tool of Russia's foreign policy

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Abstract:

While paraphrasing the contemporary rhetorics of the Kremlin, one can conclude that patriotism plays the role of the main "spiritual tie" of the Russian society. The idea of patriotism understood as love to the home country does not bring anything wrong *per se*. However, the question is what the Russian authorities mean when apply patriotism and what domestic and external effect it has.

The approach of the Russian Orthodox Church largely resembles that of the Kremlin. As its Partiarch Kirill (Gundiaev, 2009) emphasized, "*the Russian Orthodox Church conducts its pastoral mission among the peoples which embrace Russian spiritual and cultural tradition as the core of their national identity*, *or*, at least, *its substantial part*". Gundiaev further repeats Putin's vision while speaking of "the entire East Slavic civilization, which we conventionally call the Russian world." Moreover, while projecting his thoughts to the events in Ukraine during the last two years, Gundiaev underlines that "perhaps, the most terrible threat to the entire Russian world is the extreme nationalism and rejection of a representative of a different nationality, a different culture".

Thus, the vision of the "Russian world", by the Russian Orthodox Church largely resembles that of the Kremlin. The activities of these two political heavyweights are complementary, as they act in parallel with the secular and religious directions. In addition, their interpretation of history, its key dates and events is quite unambiguous, categorically Russo-centric, and hierarchic with the primacy of Russian culture and language over their Belarusian, Ukrainian and other counterparts. At the same time, possible alternative interpretations of history are attributed to local "nationalism" and presented as "a treat", or even a manifestation of "Russophobia."

This text analyzes the vision of national statehoods' development through the prism of the contemporary leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church, acting within the framework of the Russian official discourse towards cultural and historical development of Russia's predominantly Christian neighbors.

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"Islamic identity formation & the roots of ethnic conflicts - religious crisis in Russia"

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If we look at historical events of Russia form a cultural point of view seeking to understand the national identities of Muslims beyond ups and downs, generations and dynasties; we shall face a concept of ethnic & religious identity which has apparently been existed within the identity context for the people of this land. This is a concept having mostly cultural connotations resulted from historical and geographical circumstances with political divisions and which has been derived from the language, dress, beliefs and ethics of various Muslims and nation groups inhabiting Russia around Caspian Sea. These regions have been registered as the most crowded ethnic-nations regions in the world and most northern Islamic area, is to study the formation of national and Islamic identity among its nation groups which first expressed itself through ethnic and Islamic identities under the dominance of regional government including Russian, Ottoman and Persian Empires and transformed into a national identity over time through historical and social developments alongside modernization during 19th & 20th centuries which their effects are still observable in political divisions of the regions.

Russian Muslims are those that have been acquired a specific cultural nature and identity according to environmental features, and climatic and geographic conditions of the region since the genesis of social life there. This overshadows elements such as religion, language, race and sometimes common cultural grounds and causes them to be expressed according to the status of these newly emerging nations.

Thus, if we consider the population groups living in various regions of Russia as ethnic groups, which of course have been employed a kind of cultural expansion in their interactions with other population groups based on Islam, the current article has noted this important issue that what factor(s) have moved these separated nuclei closer or farther from each other despite the great impact of ethnic-nation groups on directing the structure of social life of Muslims in Russia by the uprisings and popular resistance, So we can even still see the formation of Wahhabism and Salafism roots in region as a religious identity in confrontation of Russian. In this research, I try to analyse the root causes of ethnic conflicts and religious crisis among Muslim societies in North Caucasus by providing different cultural and historical information based on a combination of field and library data and focus on Islamic identity formation and how shifting identity from Ethnic-nationalism to Islamic revival.

Key Words: Caucasian Islamic identity, Ethno conflicts, Islamic revival, Wahhabism formation.

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Abstract: **Situation of Azerbaijanians in Georgia as the largest ethnic minority of the country**

Ethnic composition of Georgia is characterized by a great variety. In addition to traditional, distinct ethnic groups that recognize themselves as Georgians, the state is also comprised of ethnic minorities not belonging to the Kartvelian peoples such as Armenians, Abkhazians, Ossetians. Also Azerbaijani people who are taking the position of the largest national minority in the country. According to a census carried out in Georgia in 2014, this is 233,000, which represents more than 0.6% of the population[4]. They are the citizens of Georgia of Azerbaijani origin.
South-east and eastern Georgia are traditionally the largest concentrations of Azerbaijani minority. They live mostly in Kvemo Kartli, Kakheti, Shida Kartli and in the surroundings of Mccheta. Most of them declare themselves as Shia Muslims[5]. Still, ignorance of the state language is a major contributor to the isolation of minorities living in Georgia[6].

Maintaining distinctiveness

The Azerbaijanis in Georgia were able to preserve ethnic unity without ever being affected by the ethnic and linguistic assimilation processes of the history of other ethnic groups in the country. This can be explained by a number of factors, including the number of the population and the tendency to marry within their own religious group. At the end of the 1980s, there began to be some ethnic tension between the Azerbaijani and Georgian population, largely contributed by the policy towards minorities in the country of the first Georgian president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Nevertheless, this never turned into a more serious conflict.

Retreat from the current electoral sympathy among the Azerbaijani minority

The balance caused by the long-standing loyal attitude of the Azerbaijani people, reflected in inter alia tendencies in the electoral process (consistent support of the ruling party), was violated during the last parliamentary elections. In the Marneuli Municipality, an area inhabited by more than 80% of the Azerbaijanians, tensions have arisen due to differences in electoral preferences among local government representatives and a candidate supported by local voters, a representative with Azerbaijani origin[7].
This year's local government elections may be another test for the authorities and a measure of confidence in local government. The existing threat of social apathy and the concentration of society on individual survival strategies can effectively prevent any interest in civic activity during the forthcoming elections and further lack of representativeness in the structures of local government.

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Lost Opportunities in the Georgian-Ossetian Conflict

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After the Soviet collapse in 1991, contraband trade had become a severe problem in Georgia, especially in the separatist Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia. This problem was worsened by the fact that it was closely connected to separatism, armed conflict in Tskhinvali Region in 1991–1992, and uncontrolled borders.

The region have gradually transformed into crime zone that nobody was able to fully control—not the Government of Georgia, the South Ossetian government, or the international community. On the one hand, Georgian authorities declared that they cannot establish Border Guard and Customs Service checkpoints on the administrative border with Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia because secessionists would immediately interpret it as a recognition of a new state border. The border remained open for smuggling into Georgia and for the movement of criminal groups from one side of the conflict zone to another.

Frequent assassinations and kidnappings have become usual practice in these regions. Crime groups were flexible and quickly-built criminal networks which brought in representatives from both sides of the conflict. The Georgian and Ossetian crime groups and law enforcement bodies co-operated in smuggling through the secessionist territory.

Goods, which flowed from Russia through the territory of Tskhinvali region to Georgia, or in the opposite direction, were protected through a system of bribes, mutual sharing and patronage of influential Georgian and Ossetian government officials.

Its catastrophic growth started in 1992, and by 2003 it began to threaten the very national security of the country. It stimulated corruption, creation of powerful criminal clans, and association of the criminal world with political groupings, representatives of central, regional and local authorities, and law enforcement structures of the country. It also led to the involvement of the socially vulnerable part of the population in smuggling.

The anti-criminal and anti-corruption Rose Revolution caused attempts to combat smuggling via South Ossetia, despite the Ergneti market (transshipment point of smuggled goods) played its positive role – it connected together ethnic Georgians and Ossetians, gave them jobs and contributed to the peaceful conflict resolution without politics. Instead of legalization of this market, Georgian authorities chose the way of its forceful closure which in its turn caused renewal of the armed conflict.

Situation worsened after the Russian-Georgian war of 2008, Ergneti market was closed, and Russian border troops divided sides of the conflict without any hope of any economic cooperation in future.

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Micro level research in de facto Abkhazia: methodological and ethical impliations

Abstract

We can imagine that living in an unrecognized state has its specific characteristics related to consequences deriving from unresolved conflict and economic and political isolation. Knowledge about everyday life in Abkhazia originates mainly from online news media and NGO reports. In the latter, economic hardship, the lack of personal security and arbitrary treatment by local authorities is stressed as the most common threats to human wellbeing in Abkhazia. Scholarly studies analysing micro level aspects of everyday life inside the de facto republic are few.

This paper therefore aims to explore how the lack of recognition and the unresolved conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia are embodied in the everyday life experiences of Abkhazian residents. The empirical material derives from fieldwork in Gagra, Gal(i) and Sukhum(i) in 2014, 2015 and 2017 and includes interviews with respondents from the major ethnic groups in Abkhazia. By the use of intersectional risk theory we can discern how lingering tensions and structural inequalities between different groups result in, among other things, differing patterns of mobility and unequal life chances. However, doing research that involves ordinary residents inside Abkhazia implies both ethical and methodological challenges, along with difficulties of access. These challenges will particularly be addressed and discussed in the paper.

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Ethnic conflict in the Soviet Union, with and without ethnicity

Social scientists use identity-based diversity as an explanatory variable in statistical analyses of wide variety of outcomes. In general, such diversity statistics use the ethnic group as their foundation, with group characteristics and traits incorporated as weights. However, work on identity politics indicates that these characteristics and traits may themselves better explain political outcomes than ethnic identity. In this article, I focus on one trait commonly associated with ethnicity—language---and provide a theoretical argument linking different forms of linguistic diversity to conflict, an important outcome in the literature on diversity. I then examine the relationship between linguistic diversity and events of ethnic conflict in a key case: events of ethnic conflict in Soviet regions in the period 1987-1992. I find that measures of linguistic diversity better account for variation in this outcome than do their ethnic corollaries. These findings illustrate that scholars can and should measure identity-based diversity without relying on ethnic groups.

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The Idea of a Nation in the Post-Soviet Populist Discourses: The Case of Georgia

The paper will analyze populist discourses of the Presidents of Georgia through comparative perspective since declaration of its independence in 1991. Considering populism as a policy-making tool of particular elites, the study argues that each President tried to make a *Georgian nation* in the center of their rhetoric for the mobilization of masses in their support. The research will demonstrate that Zviad Gamsakhurdia was a *savior* populist, seeking redemption of the Georgian nation from the Russian yoke, thus responding to the anti-Soviet sentiments of the time. Eduard Shevardnadze was *pragmatic* populist, referring to the *civic discourse* for the state-building under the plundered statehood and nationhood, thus responding to the disillusionment of the first years of independence. Mikheil Saakashvili was *idealist* populist, bringing the *Western discourse* for refurbishing the Georgian nation in a Western style, under promise of membership in the Euro-Atlantic structures. Since 2012, one could argue for the loss of a national idea in political discourse, in the midst of clash of populist discourses of the President Giorgi Margvelashvili and the Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili: the former defending constitutional backbone of state institutions, i.e. functioning democratic state, whereas the latter promoting a *leftist populism* in the name of ensuring social welfare, which at some point compromises the national idea. Theoretically the paper will rely on constructivist approach, whereas the case study method will refer to content analysis of public speeches of presidents, PMs and key politicians, as well as policy documents setting the domestic and foreign policy agendas of the country.

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Ethnic Republic in Russia: Spatial Localization of Ethnic Groups and Linguistic Policies

Since the status of Russian republics is clearly connected with ethnicity ('titular ethnic group'), there is a good reason to define them as 'ethnic regions', 'ethnic republics', and 'ethnic autonomies' (Giuliano, 2006; Gorenburg, 1999; George, 2009). Granting ethnic territorial autonomy is usually accompanied by some preferential policies (Horowitz, 1985), including preferences in the field of ethnic identity issues such as language and culture. At the same time, as far as we talk about territorial autonomies, representatives of other ('untitled') ethnic groups often amounts a significant part of the their population. As a result, preferential policy may produce some conflicts in inter-ethnic relations (Panov, 2016). Thus, the issue of learning the language of the titular group is of great disputed in Russia. Some republics follow a 'strong policy' (compulsory learning the language of the titular group for all students), while the other republics prefer a 'soft policy' (optional learning) (Borisova and Sulimov, 2017). In some regions language educational policy causes conflicts and political struggle, in others it does not.

In the paper, we examine the hypothesis that among other factors, regional variations in linguistic policy depends on the spatial localization of ethnic groups. Therefore, as the main independent variable, we consider the degree of the congruence between ethnic and political-administrative borders: 1) how ethnic groups are localized concerning to each other (combined vs. segregated localization formats); 2) how the borders of ethnic groups' localization correlate with the boundaries of the autonomous region.

Empirically the study is based on such sources as Ethnic Regional Autonomies Database [http://identityworld.ru/index/database/0-21], Geo-referencing Ethnic Power Relations (GeoEPR) [https://icr.ethz.ch/data/epr/geoepr], and Global Administrative Areas (GADM) [http://www.gadm.org]. These data have been analyzed by using of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) technique. For the measurement of the congruence between ethnic and political-administrative borders, the special conceptual and measuring toolset has been developed; particularly the indices of segregation and concentration of "titular" ethnic groups for the ERA were calculated as operational indicators. On the basis of these

indicators four models of the congruence between ethnic and political-administrative borders have been developed. We juxtaposed them with linguistic policies in the republics and find a fairly high degree of correlation between them. Also, such juxtaposition allows us to make some conclusions concerning the issue why similar linguistic policies have different effects from the view of inter-ethnic relations in the republics.

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The 1943—44 Volhynian massacres in the Polish-Ukrainian-Russian "triangle of memory"

Polish-Ukrainian antagonisms have a long history that stretches over several centuries. The collective memories and historical narratives identify two most significant outbreaks of violence in the twentieth century with Polish and Ukrainian national interests at stake. The first is the Polish-Ukrainian war of 1918-19. The second is the massacres of Polish and Ukrainian civilians that took place in the Nazi-occupied Polish-Ukrainian borderland and continued in spiral of anti-Ukrainian violence and forced migrations after WWII. Over the past decade, the massacres in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia in 1943–44 grew to one the most politicized historical topics in both Poland and Ukraine, as consensus about numbers of the civilian offers, conceptual framing, motivations of the killings, and attribution of responsibility have not yet been achieved. At the same time, this "memory war" that culminated in the Polish legislation on "Wolyn" a case of genocide in 2016, had its repercussions in Russia. On the one hand, it became instrumental for the Russian propaganda, especially after the Maidan, in its efforts to present the mass murders of the wartime Ukrainian nationalist movement as the founding myth and guidance to action in the present-day "fascist" Ukrainian state. On the other hand, Russian political and cultural establishment were themselves confronted with charges of genocide connecting to the death of the Polish officers (Katyn massacres) and deliberate starvation of Ukrainian peasants in the wake of the collectivization campaign (The Holodomor).

My presentation will bring into the limelight the intellectual positions detectable in the multidirectional debate on the ethnic motivation of mass murders and charges in genocide in the Polish-Ukrainian-Russian "triangle of memory".

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Post-Soviet Azerbaijani Ethnic Identity and Post-Revolutionary Iranian Azeri Ethnic Identity: Overlaps and Interactions

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In 1990s Azerbaijan was part of a bigger wave of identity crisis that came along with institutional collapse inside the regime and finally the disintegration of the Soviet Union. This wave had started in 19960s when the Soviet regime pulled the ropes tighter against cultural diversification[8], or in other words reacted more fiercely to cultural divergences in the quest for the New Soviet Man.[9] The process of identity crisis at turn of the Soviet Union's dissolution was a rapid and painful one. This process involved a multidimensional deconstruction of identity in all societal levels of the Soviet republics. Agadjanian states that this massive deconstruction fed on the energy of particularism, which he believes led to "entropy" and "anomie". In the aftermath of the Soviet dissolution, under the new states people started to seek patterns of cohesion other than the Soviet Citizen, which left them with the options of conventional groupings based on language, religion and ethnicity.

On the other side of the Republic of Azerbaijan's borders, the Iranian Azeri ethnicity went through a different process of identity-building process after the Islamic Revolution of 1979. However, the cross-national interactions of this ethnic kinship has been continuing in both countries and have a significant role in the shaping of both countries' foreign policy regarding each other. The present study aims at discussing the overlapping and difference points of identity-building processes in these two countries and drawing a clearer picture of the way they interact with each other. The study will also briefly encompass the effect of nation-building policies of the Republics of Azerbaijan and Islamic Republic of Iran on these processes.

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'The rehabilitation of repressed peoples' – how it mirrors the Russian nationalities policy and why it does not make troubles

The paper concerns the so-called 'rehabilitation of repressed peoples' in the Russian Federation. 'Repressed peoples' are understood as ethnicities forcefully resettled under the Stalin rule in the 1930-50s (Pohl 1999); their 'rehabilitation' is interpreted as a policy aimed at the legal, political and social redress for the damage inflicted on the said ethnicities as such. This policy is regulated by two national laws adopted in 1991; while one targets the 'rehabilitation' of ethnic collectivities, the other one provides for the exoneration and rehabilitation of individuals (Bougai 1997). Both laws are still in force, and the process of 'rehabilitation' is going on although playing a marginal and almost invisible role. The Russian President's Decrees on the rehabilitation of the peoples formerly deported from Crimea seem to revive the issue.

The paper addresses a paradoxical development of the 'rehabilitation'. The issue of the formerly deported peoples (FDP) was on the forefront of public debates in the late 1980s – early 1990s (Khazanov 1995); the FDP movements launched loud campaigns; the legitimacy of their claims was widely acknowledged; the public reaction was translated into the respective legislation; the FDP claims really destabilised the political situation in the North Caucasus. However, the FDP movements failed to set up a joint agenda and in fact dissipated by the mid-1990s, and this happened without significant pressure or intimidation of the authorities.

The author points out that the policies of rehabilitation mirrors and embodies the major features of the Russian 'nationalities policy' in general. The 1991 law on the repressed peoples set up the vocabulary and the major concepts of the later ethnic policy. The law and related pieces of legislation demonstrated a high degree of uncertainty; that allowed a flexible interpretation, a 'systemic hypocrisy' (Brunsson 1989) and implementation techniques based on the principle of 'narrowing funnel'. The FDP movements were in fact interested in symbolic issues and territorial claims; the threat of ethnic conflicts opened up opportunities for the authorities to employ effective hegemonic strategies, and FDP activists were incorporated into mainstream institutions or marginalised. Therefore, the 'rehabilitation policy' can serve as a model of the Russian or post-Soviet diversity policy which turns out to effectively tame ethnic claims.

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Colonial Entanglements: The Expulsion of the Adyghe as a Challenge to the Russian Nationality

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My paper, based on previously unknown archival evidences, examines a neglected, yet far-reaching, impact that the expulsion of the Adyghe had on the place of Ukrainian population in the imperial hierarchy of loyalties and, most importantly, on the notion of Russianness.

In the early 1860s, the military administration of the Caucasus, willing to apply in practice new technologies of human categorization and social engineering[10], launched a plan of the mass expulsion of the Adyghe/Circassians from the mountainous territories (which ultimately resulted in the deportation and death of several hundreds of thousands of people) and the simultaneous colonization of the vacant lands by the "Russian element." The "element," in fact comprised of Ukrainian-speaking Cossacks, proved to be reluctant colonizers and strongly objected to leave their households and move beyond the Kuban River. This dramatically affected the perception of them on the part of enraged authorities. In the eyes of the latter, Ukrainian/Little Russian Cossacks emerged as an extraneous, malignant, and contagious part of the healthy "Russian body," which could only be cured by vigorous, unprecedented Russification. Effectively, the Cossacks almost overnight turned from an agent of Russification into its object, ending up as non- or, rather, not-yet-Russians. As a result, the policy of Russification soon spread to the territory of Ukraine itself.

In the paper, I intend to show that colonial situations, such as this one, could have tremendous effect not only on the colonized people, but on the metropole as well. In this sense, the Caucasus was a testing ground for bold imperial experiments, later applied in other borderlands and in the imperial heartland itself.

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Syrian Conflict's Ethnogeopolitical Consequences for Central Eurasia

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Syrian conflict's consequences for the Middle East and Europe are evident. However, its effects on Central Eurasian region are underreported and often underestimated. This paper discusses this conflict's consequences for ethnopolitical, geopolitical and hence also ethnogeopolitical situation in Central Eurasia. The Syrian Conflict may have consequences for the political situation and conflicts in Central Eurasia and notably in the Caucasus.

Scenario-thinking is a method of research in political science. It has, indeed, a certain speculative character but this may be reduced if one restricts himself/herself to tangible data

This paper tries to discuss different possible scenarios and their consequences for Central Eurasian region (which includes the Caucasus, Central Asia as well as Russia and Iran). Much depends on the final result of the conflict. Nevertheless, this conflict has also ethnogeopolitical consequences regardless and independent of the final result.

For example, Armenians whose number may be as high as 300,000 in Syria are fleeing Syria and may flee in larg(er) numbers to Armenia. According to many reports they are encouraged to settle down in the vacant land in Karabakh. This will further complicate the Karabakh conflict as it is a demographic boost for Armenians.

Syria is also home to North Caucasians: significant communities of Chechens, Circassians and Abkhazians live in Syria since the Ottoman times. The same may happen with the North Caucasians. They may flee to Circassian autonomous republics in Russia or to the vacant lands of Abkhazia. In one of Circassian republics, in Adygheya, Circassians constitute a minority of population. The influx of Circassian refugees may alter the republic's demography. The same is true about two other Circassian republics, Karabdino-Ballkaria and Karachayevo Cherkessia that are populated by Circassians and the Turkic Karachays/Balkars. Abkhazian separatist government is already actively encouraging settlement of Abkhazia by Abkhaz from the Middle east. Reports show that Abkhazians from Turkey visit and work there and many even permanently live in Abkhazia. An influx of Abkhazian refugees from Syria complicates the Georgian–Abkhazian conflict.

The attitudes of international actors may differ with this regard. They may condemn the settlement of occupied land by refugees, but they are more likely to accept the status quo and even recognize it in order to solve the demographic/humanitarian crisis. The shift of population may catalyze the international recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh or Abkhazia.

In addition, this paper will pay attention to a few possible post-conflict scenarios with regard to religious (in)tolerance in the wider region.

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Babak Rezvani (PhD 2013, UvA) has studied International Relations and Cultural and Political Geography. He is specialized at teaching subjects related to international security and (violent) conflict management. He has served as a board member of Ceres research school (2007-2011) and serves now as the chairman of Association for the Study of EthnoGeoPolitics. He is the author of many publications in several languages. He has given guest lectures and taught courses in the Netherlands, USA, Kyrgyzstan and Georgia. He is the author of Conflict and Peace in Central Eurasia and Ethno-Territorial Conflict and Coexistence in the Caucasus, Central Asia and Fereydan, which applied qualitative cases studies, quantitative statistical analysis and QCA based on Boolean-Algebra. He has taught many courses about International and Global Politics, Geopolitics, Cultural and Political Geography, Conflict Management, as well as Qualitative and Quantitative Methods of Research (including GIS and visual analytic methods). In addition, to research and teaching, he is also a professional consultant and has offered his services to many (non-)governmental organisations.

Local Peace and Conflict: Narratives and Practices of Armenian-Azerbaijani Rural Communities in Georgia

The presentation centers on ethnically mixed borderland communities caught in a trap of competing national narratives that spread from the surrounding states. It presents an ethnographic research on a contemporary rare case of cohabitation of Armenian and Azerbaijani rural communities that takes place in Georgia's southern borderland. The research examines the narratives and practices of these communities. The study focuses on the meanings that Armenians and Azerbaijanis attach to their actions in the relationships with each other. While living at the "edge" of the (mental) conflict zone between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the communities in question simultaneously cope with the conflict discourses coming from Armenia and Azerbaijan, the set of norms, rules and conditions imposed by Georgia's security policies and attitudes of Georgians towards them. In the situation where the communal interaction in the border region is continually affected by the policies of the host and neighboring states, these Armenian-Azerbaijani communities tend to mutually produce their own communal narratives in order to avoid conflict and focus on the myriad of other things they need in their daily lives. The collectively agreed interpretation of social reality allows these communities to develop a common strategy in order to keep conflict at bay for the sake of their well-being. To delineate this inter-ethnic conflict-avoidance strategy, it is necessary to trace patterns of social interaction within the Armenian-Azerbaijani mixed population that demonstrate how and why the members of both communities prevent the polarization of their "inter-national" relations, which is persistently promoted by belligerent political and media discourses present in each of their "national mainland". This analysis aims at identifying what alternative "imagined community" beyond that defined by "their" nation-states Armenian-Azerbaijani communities are able to construct and sustain. This case study is representative for various ethnically mixed communities whose co-nationals in their countries of origin are set to be in conflict (in addition to the South Caucasus such examples can be found in the Balkans, the Middle East and Central Asia). Understanding the ways by which ethnically mixed borderland populations are able to get past the conflict between "their" nation-states can help us understand how to lessen the spillover effect of international conflict into the communities' hosting country. The transnational nature of contemporary ethno-political conflicts that increasingly challenge border and state organizations across the globe makes this study highly relevant.

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National Borders and Transnational Languages: Nationalism and Trader-Cosmopolitanism in Georgia

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Abstract

Xenophobia towards recent Muslim migrants and visitors and anti-Russian sentiment feed into present day Georgian nationalism as they do in many other post-Soviet locales (e.g. Skvirskaja 2012; 2014 on Muslim migrants in Ukraine). 'Russians' and 'foreign Muslims' are seen as posing, in their different ways, a threat to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Georgian nation-state, as well as affront to the honour of the Georgian nation. While these popular attitudes are often related to political sensibilities and stereotypes entertained by both ordinary people and those in power, economic considerations and professional aspirations also play a role. The tourism industry and international trade carried on by small- and medium-scale traders from Georgia are two economic spheres where the dynamics of nationalist sentiment often come to the fore and are managed in everyday life.

This paper discusses engagement with diversity and practices of coexistence among Azeri market traders in Tbilisi. The large wholesale and retail market of Lillo, situated on the outskirts of Tbilisi, is dominated by the Azeri entrepreneurs and petty traders who skillfully negotiate ethnic divisions within Georgian society and successfully navigate transnational routes and national borders. Focusing on the traders' life histories, business networks and mobility as well as their encompassing 'linguistic ideologies,' this paper compares and contrasts trader-cosmopolitanism among the Azeri ethnic minority with the more mainstream 'nationalism' and xenophobia of Georgian society. In particular, it looks at the post-Soviet generation of Georgians, i.e. those who have no first-hand experience of political belonging to the wider, quasi-imperial Russophone world of the former USSR. I argue that the current trader-cosmopolitanism of the post-Soviet generation is often deeply embedded in culture(s) of trade and commerce practiced during the Soviet period.

Silk Road on a long run: China's presence in Russian Far East

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Today Eurasian, and even global, 'traditional' flows of goods and transport corridors are changing, adjusting to sanctions and investments. New routes are under discussion, old routes are under reevaluation. Plans, announced in the media are often far from what locals experience (or do not experience), and vice-versa, some ongoing constructions are not really discussed in media and official sources. Active discussion about Chinese investments in the "Arctic Corridor" railway is taking place in Finland; in Russia there is the confusion about China's railway-building plans. A minimum of six different projects were announced by the Russian media between 2014 and 2017, none were signed off and started.

China's transport corridors plans in Eurasia, along the Silk Road from Russian Far East through Nordic countries are of a great importance. They both serve investments and goods flows and, what is more important, they change the geopolitical role of the regions and the states. In Russian Far East and Nordic countries new transport corridors with Chinese investments become a tool for China to get access to new resources, to develop world-wide transport route and change geopolitical accents in Eurasia and globally. But what kind of mechanisms make these transport corridors so important for geopolitical changes and what security issues should be taken into consideration on the first place? And what kind of concerns – local communities issues and environmental security – are involved into these processes?

My research is based on 3 research cases, each rather distant from the other geographically but in other ways sharing similarities. The study comprises the following areas influenced by Chinese investments: Finland and the Russian Far East. In Finland the area under study runs from Rovaniemi to Sevettijärvi and Kirkenes, and area of Eastern Finland – Paikkala. In the Russian Far East case there have been three decades of intensive Chinese participation in the same directions: tourism, railroad planning and investments into small Chinese enterprises, built in Russia. This long-term experience has had long-term effects on residents, and the local economy. In Finland local communities are protesting against opening a new International bordercrossing point in Parikkala, because they expect it to become a part of "Silk Road" flow from Russia. Russian politicians, in their turn, are afraid of China's priority cooperation with Nordic countries on transport corridors constructions. It leads to Russian media boom on news about various important transport corridors on Russian territory with Chinese investments.

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Russia vs. EU in the foreign policy discourse of Armenia: Between European identity and Russia-led trajectory

Constructivist-driven conventional wisdom posits that ideas and beliefs are pivotal to shaping foreign policy trajectories. Thus, the explanatory power ascribed to material forces falls back on ideas and cultural practices (Wendt, 1999). Whereas the case of Armenia, characterized by perplexing co-existence of European foreign policy identity with Russia-led foreign policy preferences produces puzzling conclusions.

This paper seeks to explain the evolution of the EU's and Russia's conceptions in the foreign policy discourse of Armenia, delving into their implications for Russia vs. EU policy choices. The study relies on a discourse analysis of the relevant speeches, statements of Armenia's foreign policy-makers.

This paper deliberately departs from the mainstream explanations of Armenia-Russia partnership, which focus chiefly on its asymmetry and the assumption that Armenia's vast dependence on Russia has determined its U-turn (Giragosian, 2015; Popescu, 2013).

It argues that Armenia's Russia-led policy choices immensely owe to Russia's conception as country's indispensable security ally, coupled with the EU's waning image across the country. Armenia's U-turn was preceded by explicit disillusionment with the 'expectation – capability' gaps attributed to the European neighborhood policy and, particularly, the Eastern Partnership. Evidently, Armenia's initial high hopes pinned on the EU's promising neighborhood policy, started to steadily wane down given its irrelevance to country's needs. More precisely, Armenia's President's vocal criticism extended to three core shortcomings of the EU's policy: its incapability of reconciling energy and its broader development policies; lack of security guarantees for Armenia in the face of Azerbaijani and Turkish menace, and most importantly, its irrelevance to breaking the logjam over Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

This has significantly influenced the EU's conception in Armenia's official discourse, shifting it from the notions of normative and status quo challenging power to incoherent actor and political 'dwarf '.

In conclusion, in contrast to the 'security provider' Russia, the EU has been conceived as an inappropriate actor in terms of increasing Armenia's security resilience and offering a powerful alternative to 'indispensable' partnership with Russia.

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"Russian World" and compatriots' policies

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According to its constitutional organization, Russia cannot be viewed as a kin-state of exclusively ethnic Russians. Moreover, the country's Constitution suggests that the state guarantees protection and patronage to its citizens abroad. This protection is therefore applicable to the persons and groups who permanently reside beyond the country's international borders regardless of the origin of their citizenship.

Moreover, the the Federal Law On Russian Federation's State Policy toward Compatriots Living Abroad contains the definition of compatriots (Russian: *sootechestvenniki*), as "persons born in one state, who reside or have lived in it and possess characteristics of common language, history, cultural heritage, traditions and customs, as well as the direct descendants of these persons". Russian citizens permanently residing beyond Russia's borders are also considered compatriots. Furthermore, the notion of compatriots is extended to the persons and their descendants who reside abroad and usually belong to the peoples who historically reside on the Russia's territory; the persons who expressed their free choice in favor of spiritual, cultural and legal relationship with Russia; and the persons whose ancestors previously lived on the territory of the Russian Federation.

According to the same law, this approach includes former Soviet citizens residing in the post-Soviet countries regardless of their actual citizenship, as well as citizens of the state entities mentioned in the law's preamble, who either became foreign citizens or stateless persons. It is also noteworthy that the previous version of the Law explicitly excluded descendants of the persons belonging to the titular nations of the foreign states from the category of foreign compatriots.

This text will analyze the framework and limitations of the Russian policies towards compatriots (as defined in the Russian legislation) and the perception of these policies in the countries of the former Soviet Union, whose entire populations might potentially be treated as "compatriots". The focus will be made on the political speeches and media discourse analysis, as they appear both in Russia and the post-Soviet countries.

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Exhibiting the Nation: Russian Cultural Policies and Nationalism

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Museums traditionally are considered to be two-fold institutions: alongside with the function of collecting, preserving, and mediating tangible and intangible heritage, they are involved in the complex power relations and facilitate the "cultural governance of the populace" (Bennett, 1995, p. 21). The most important role in this task belongs to national museums which influence strongly the identity of the whole nations (cf. Hooper-Greenhill, 1992; Bennet, 1995; Aronsson & Elgenius, 2015; Levitt, 2015). Benedict Anderson in his work on 'imagined communities' uses the notion of "museumizing imagination" (1991, p. 178) to describe this specific role of the museum as an institution designed to organize reality.

Russian national museums bear all the taxonomical attributes of such institutions. However, there is a recurring focus on the national history in Russian cultural policies which puts the historical museums and the akin institutions in focus. After the period of the relative freedom in the interpretation of history in the post-Soviet Russia, the State's involvement in establishing cultural policies increased in the late 2000s. The current policies claim "Russian language and the great Russian culture" (The Ministry of Culture, 2014, p. 4) to be the consolidation mechanism for the nation. The "distortion of historical memory, negative evaluation of important periods in Russian history and spreading false perceptions of Russian Federation being historically underdeveloped" (The Russian Government, 2016, p. 6) is regarded as a sign of a humanitarian crisis that proposed policy intends to avert.

The claim of some perceptions being 'false' implies that there is a true one, the 'regime of truth' (Bennett, 1995) engendered by the politics and policies of the State. In 2007–2015 there were several attempts to rewrite history textbooks for high school students (Sherlock, 2016) and a unified concept for such a textbook was developed. The power of museums as nation-binding instruments, being generally underestimated in the times of transition (1990–2000s) has also been rediscovered by the policy makers who focused their attention on Russian history.

In this paper, I aim to focus on the dynamics of historical exhibitions in the middle of 2010s in Russia and analyse how the State by the means of museums re-frames national history and 'the great Russian culture'.

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Urban Islam in Russia

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While there is extensive research on Islam in Russia and the general processes of urbanization both there and internationally, there has not been a systematic attempt to understand how the two processes of Islamization and urbanization are combining to present new challenges today. As Islamic activists move from the countryside into Russia's cities, they are gaining access to new resources that both provide considerable opportunities for integrating Muslims into the larger Russian society, but also empower the tiny minority that seek to damage the society. This study offers an in-depth look at the processes of Islamization and urbanization in Russia and guidance on how best to respond. The fall of the Soviet Union started two different, but synchronous, processes in Russia. First, after decades of religious suppression, Russia witnessed a dramatic revival of Islam in the North Caucasus and Volga regions. Second, the bankruptcies of Soviet era agricultural collective farms caused mass labor migration from rural to urban areas, both to cities in predominantly Muslim regions and in Russia's European and Siberian areas where Muslims are in the minority. Russia's greater economic development compared with other former Soviet countries encouraged migrant workers from the Muslim majority countries of Central Asia and Azerbaijan to join Russian Muslims in heading for the major Russian cities. In this presentation, we will focus on four aspects of the urbanization and Islamization nexus. First is the high level of differentiation that cities allow, making it possible for some Muslims to integrate into the larger Russian society while others find the resources they need to engage in terrorism. Second is the symbolic power that mosques demonstrate, bringing together Muslims but sometimes alienating them from non-Muslim populations and creating points of friction. Third, we will examine how the concentration of resources in the cities leads to Islamic innovation. Fourth, we will examine how cities serve as nodes in larger Islamic networks.