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How to Feud and Rebel: 2. Histories, Cultures and Grievances of the Chechens and Albanians*

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Abstract

This article analyses the historical roots and cultural characteristics of the Chechens and Albanians, and how they relate, in their recurrent conflicts with the Russians and Serbs, to long-term *grievances*, the second variable of my *Brutalisation* theory. In this article I also explain why the theory departs from the *grievance* rather than *greed* premise. Indeed, most of the Chechen and Albanian grievances appear to be based on real and correctly perceived, i.e. *absolute* deprivations. More fundamentally, given my *post*-constructivist proposition on the "acting-out" of norms, values and beliefs irrespective of factual or invented origins, I seek to show that *martialism*, (Sufi-inspired) *resistance*, and (male) *egalitarianism* have helped to shape and sustain historic grievances, Islamisation (particularly among Chechens), nationalist aspirations and traditional *violence-values* in Chechen and Albanian societies. Finally, I describe how pre-1979 trauma's and devastations destroyed most records, buildings and symbols of their cultures and histories, as a cautionary note to my efforts to trace both the factual and mythologised foundations of their identities.

Keywords

Chechens, Albanians, North Caucasus, Kosovo, Political Islam, Sufi Orders, Wahhabism, Martialism, Egalitarianism

I. Introduction

In order to understand why and how people revolt, and under what conditions they brutalise i.e. increasingly resort to terrorism, brigandry,

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gangsterism and other forms of violence[1] that violate local and/or international norms, I have developed a *brutalisation* theory that presupposes a (recurrent) cycle of violence involving four main variables: *violence-values* or values on "good" and "bad" violence (variable 1); original *grievances* leading to armed conflict (variable 2); *combat stress* leading to atrocities (variable 3); and new *conflict grievances* emanating from such atrocities (variable 4), spawning counter-atrocities and eventually hardening or debasing the *violence-values* (a composite term coined by the author).[2] Likewise, Evelin Lindner has developed "a *theory of humiliation*" as part of a "new multidisciplinary field" that "incorporates ... anthropology, history, philosophy, political science, social psychology, and sociology" (Lindner 2006: xiii-xiv). Indeed, humiliation is a major, perhaps primary form of grievance (complaint-of-a-hardship-or-injustice) or actual hardship (deprivation), and the "cycle of humiliation and retaliation" (Lindner 2006: xiv) does resemble my theory's brutalisation cycle, particularly if focused on the latter's original-grievance and conflict-grievance variables. In my current research I test the Brutalisation theory on the Chechen and Albanian separatists during the last Cold War and first post-Cold war periods between 24 December 1979 (Soviet invasion of Afghanistan) and 11 September 2001 (*Al Qaeda's* attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon). I particularly focus on the first post-Soviet Russo-Chechen conflict (1994-1996), the first high-intensity years of the second Russo-Chechen conflict (1999-present), and the latest Serbo-Albanian conflict in Kosovo (1997-1999).

This article examines the historic grievances of Chechen and Albanian separatists and the people they (claim to) represent, as these at least partially account for the outbreaks of and (consequent) brutalities in the latest conflicts. Section II reviews the conflict theories that have inspired or helped to shape the Brutalisation theory and its main variables, though I argue that those conflict theories that posit other primary motivations than grievance—and the consequent aspiration to liberate oneself, secede and/or form one's own (nation)-state—appear much less credible. Section III provides a meticulous exposition on Sufi Islam, on its doctrines, branches, and schools of thought most salient among Chechens and Albanians, so as to better understand these as-

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[1] See C. ten Dam, *Conceptualising Violence: How to Grasp, Define and Combat Terrorism and Other Atrocities in a post 11 September world*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing (CSP), forthcoming.

[2] See further "Brutalisation Theory", at *http://sites.google.com/site/tristansolutions*. A downloadable Diagram represents a simplified model of the Brutalisation cycle with its four constituent variables.

pects of Islam in these communities. Section IV examines the pre-1979 histories of endangered cultures and grievances among the Chechens and Albanians. After all, the "crisis in Chechnia is a logical consequence of two centuries of Russian onslaught on the North Caucasus" (Broxup-Bennigsen 1992: p.x). Much the same can be said of the Albanian-Serb struggle over Kosovo. Section V describes how pre-1979 trauma's and devastations destroyed most Chechen and Albanian records, buildings and symbols of their cultures and histories, as a cautionary note to my efforts to trace both the factual and mythologised foundations of their identities. The Conclusion (section VI) summarises my main findings and assessments on the histories, cultures and grievances of the Chechens and Albanians.

II. Saliency of Grievances and Aspirations

The Brutalisation theory, particularly its second and fourth variables (grievances and conflict grievances), contain elements from the contrasting theories of *frustration-aggression* (Dollard *et al* 1944 (1939); Miller 1941; Berkowitz 1962, 1969), *absolute deprivation* (Hobsbawm, 1959, 1969; Bourdieu 1961, apud Poupeau/Discepolo 2008; Bell 1976, 1998 etc.), *relative deprivation* (Stouffer *et al* 1977 (1949); Runciman 1972; Gurr 1968, 1970), *depredation* (Hechter 1995; Grossman 1999; Collier/Hoeffler/Sambanis *et al* 2000; 2001; 2002; Fearon/Laitin 2003 etc.), *new (predatory) war* (Kaldor 1999) and *transformed (irregular) war* (Van Creveld 1991a,b). Basically, the first three conflict theories depart from the motivational premise of *grievance* (complaint-of-a-hardship-or-injustice) about a *deprivation*, i.e. lack of needs ranging from food, water and bodily safety to political and socio-economic rights; the latter three theories depart from that of *greed* (search-for-private-gain in power or wealth) leading to *depredation* i.e. plunder and destruction of goods and properties.[3] Not that I adopt these theories wholeheartedly. Thus, I agree with Leonard Berkowitz (1969: esp. 4-5,13-14,35-36) that frustration does not always lead to aggression, that imitation and other learning processes also can engender aggression, and that deprivation does not necessarily entail frustration and may actually lead to acquiescence and apathy (others, however, regard these as suppressed frustrations that eventually lead to aggression). Nevertheless, Ted Robert Gurr's concept of *relative deprivation* (partially based on the frustration-aggression paradigm)—the perceived discrepancy between resources one wants and resources one

[3] I am the first to use the terms "depredation", "depredationism" and "deprivationism" in the greed vs. grievance context.

gets without resorting to violence—has been highly influential (Sandole/Van der Merwe 1993: esp. 12-13), with traces even in Evelin Lindner's *humiliation* theory. Yet, relative deprivation (RD) appears only valid for "lesser" socio-economic grievances—supposing that such grievances ever engender rebellions. Lindner, like Gurr, does recognise that "poverty, low status and marginalization do not automatically elicit feelings of suffering and despair" (Lindner 2001b: 62)—and consequent rebellion or other violence. Crucially, however, "relative deprivationists" overlook the obvious given that people are not merely "disappointed", "frustrated" or "relatively deprived" when being tortured or massacred: they feel pain, panic, and perhaps rage (a feeling of humiliation), and usually have an instinct to survive. Such extreme deprivations spawn, necessitate and justify self-preservation through armed resistance beyond anything else, and go far beyond improving one's daily existence or satisfying one's heightened expectations. I even question Lindner's proposition that *humiliation*, i.e. "punishing exposure to the negative judgment of other people", ranging from "being the object of genocide to being the victim of gossip" (Lindner 2001a: 51), is the "*most* common denominator in conflict and violence" (C.E. Stout, apud Lindner 2006: viv). Even if one conceptualises humiliation as a violation of human dignity[4], extreme deprivations like torture and immediate threat to one's life may bring all-enveloping pain, fear or apathetic resignation rather than activating anger. Then an angry sense of humiliation may be blotted-out forever, or at least delayed until the pain or danger has receded, i.e. the deprivation has become less intense or severe. I thus prefer Abraham Maslow's broadranging *human motivation* or *hierachy-of-needs* theory (Maslow 1941, 1943, 1987 (1954)). Like the related absolute-deprivation theories, it allows subjects to have grievances against objective realities—certainly those that endanger one's life, health and sanity by hunger, massacre, torture, rape and mutilation. I consider *trauma*[5] i.e. mental anguish from such extreme depriva-

[4] All "human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art.1, UN General Assembly res.217 A(III) 10 December 1948).

[5] Trauma from war-fighting, a major consequence (or cause) of combat stress—the third variable of my Brutalisation theory (and actually often constituting a deprivation and consequent "combat grievance")—is also called *post-traumatic stress* in the field of military psychology (see further C. ten Dam, "Violence-values and Combat Stress among the Chechens and Albanians"(2011), *Iran and the Caucasus*, vol. 15.2, forthcoming).

tions of *annihiliation* and *devastation*[6] to engender most rebellions. Still, I criticise the ideological, pro-rebel bias of many "absolute deprivationists", many of whom followed Marxist *Weltanschauungen* and practised "people's war" and state-building (Mao Tse-Tung 1961 (1937); Guevara 2003 (1960); Fanon 1965, 1970).

However, my strongest critiques are directed against the depredation, new-war and transformed-war theories. Thus Paul Collier *et al* have used unconvincing, even faulty proxy variables for greed to "corroborate" their theory in quantitative analyses, like opportunity costs offered by GDP growth, ratio of primary commodity exports to GDP, and male secondary schooling (Collier/Hoeffler 2001, 2002).[7] Worse still, all the "greed" theorists tend to erroneously distinguish between "sincere" ideology-driven rebellions during and prior to the Cold War (or since World War II: Van Creveld) and "fake" crime- and terrorism-driven rebellions (Makarenko 2002; 2003, apud Galeotti 2005; etc.) after the Cold War (or World War II), whereby each type supposedly represents a *fundamentally different kind of war*. Especially Kaldor's new-predatory-war theory suffers from this blind spot: "research on earlier wars tends to be disregarded" (Kalyvas 2001: 99), which reveals a "limited grasp of the history of warfare" (M.L.R. Smith 2003: 34). New war "predationists" are fixated on contemporary links between greed, usurpation and pillage, forgetting that wars always have involved such crimes. Likewise, Martin van Creveld got obsessed with contemporary events like the Palestinian *intifada* or uprising. The effective fighting methods in Palestine, Bosnia and other places led Van Creveld to believe that these present a "new" kind of "small, irregular" war (Venema 1996)—even though he inadvertently shows in his own work (eg. Van Creveld 1991b) that *irregular warfare is of all times*, thereby undercutting his own transformation-of-war thesis. Nevertheless, Kaldor's new-war and Van Creveld's transformed-war theories—very much variants of the overall depredation theory—have helped to lay bare the undeniable increase in the *number* of criminal(ised) non-state actors destabilising localities, countries and entire regions in the world today.

Fortunately, some scholars, even former "depredationists" (e.g. Sambanis 2004: 264-266), nowadays refuse to be drawn exclusively to either

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[6] Rather than "deprivation" as such, my chosen terms *annihilation* and *devastation* better capture the "degree of harm the individual actually suffers or anticipates" (Berkowitz 1962: 45).

[7] To say the least, such proxy variables seem rather distant from the behaviours of "greed" and "grievance" Collier, Hoeffler and other "depredationists" wish to detect or discount.

deprivationism or depredationism to account for elite-instigated violence. They focus instead on the "interaction between political and private identities and actions" that express socio-political *cleavages* in two ways: "first, actions "on the ground" ... seem more related to local or private issues than to the war's driving (or "master") cleavage; second, individual and local actors take advantage of the war to settle local or private conflicts ... bearing little or no relation to the causes of the war or ... goals of the belligerents" (Kalyvas 2003: 475-476). Some scholars oppose all theories that focus on root causes: "while conflicts are caused by structural conditions like the unequal access to resources ... wars do not automatically result from them"; rather culture determines the motivations, i.e. "material and social benefits (honour, prestige)" of violence (Schmidt/Schröder 2001: 4-5). Similarly, others criticise those who "*essentialise* fighter motivation" as if "any motivation springs from singular causes ... [like] greed *or* grievance" and who "*fail to recognise the polymorphous character of war*" (Henriksen/Vinci 2008: 87).

Robert Cribb argues that triggers or "dynamics of escalation" best explain mass violence, pointing to fractious societies *not* suffering from violence: "if there is dry grass everywhere, it becomes vital to look at the sparks".[8] Primary triggers are two *fatal discoveries*: a feeling of betrayal by the other (a grievance), whom the elite often demonises through propaganda; and the realisation that one can get away with murder (a greed). Yet, contrary to Cribb, I argue that pre-existing devastations, deprivations, disparities and tensions still remain necessary conditions for the grass to turn tinder-dry. In that sense these conditions do constitute root causes of potential or actual conflict, yet of different kinds and with different trajectories and outcomes.

All in all, my Brutalisation theory in its present form relies on the *grievance* rather than *greed* premise, given the former's apparently wide(r) validity. Still, the influence of the depredationist theories one can infer from the overall cycle of ends-and-means degeneration which the theory purports. At the very least, *criminalisation* accompanies brutalisation, as greed easily feeds on grievance.

Be as it may, armed non-state actors claiming lofty aspirations like freedom and self-determination—often expressions, manifestations and proposed remedies of grievances—tend to either reject the basic concepts of brutalisation and criminalisation as pertaining to their armed struggles, or argue that the ends justify all means. Proud Chechens and

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[8] R. Cribb, in Dirk Vlasblom, "Het is de vonk, niet het droge gras (It is the spark, not the dry grass)", *NRC Handelsblad* (*New Rotterdam Courier-General Trades' Paper*) 17 April 2008: 9.

Albanians object to the terms *banditry*, *terrorism* and even *rebellion* as valid descriptions of their resistance to alien rule. Chechens still resisting Moscow consider themselves part of a legitimate if underground Chechen state. My concept of rebellion is a neutral one, however; it does not denote or presume illegality or illegitimacy. A rebel movement may succeed in forming a government and seek international recognition. So-called *irredentist* rebels (though irredentists can be state actors too) constitute the expansionist and often more aggressive variant of secessionist nationalism, given their territorial claims across existing state borders. I circumscribe *ethnicity* or "ethnic identity" as the belief among a group of people (and possibly external observers) that they have common tribal, genealogical, and/or mythical ancestries, here classified as a sub-type of *nationalism*, the belief that a (supposedly) homogeneous people with common characteristics—shared history, territory, culture, religion, language, race, and ethnicity—should have self-rule or its own state. In practice numerous actors exhibit combinations of nationalism and republicanism or *statism* (i.e. civic nationalism) in, for instance, written constitutions of states and declarations of armed non-state actors.[9]

Similarly, I refuse to presume that nationalisms are secular in orientation. One must ascertain whether Muslim rebels and other actors having emerged from the rubbles of, say, the Afghan, Soviet, and Yugoslav states have followed genuine, "pure" Islamist goals, rather than nationalist-secular ones in which religion is only co-opted as part of a strategy to attain nationhood. Fundamentalism and nationalism are not necessarily mutually exclusive phenomena, however. One rightly can criticise the artificial "polarisation between culture-centred and state-centred theories of nationalism" whereby the first school of thought perceives religious revivalism as characteristic of non- or anti-state movements, and the latter school regards nationalism solely as a secular state ideology; this false dichotomy obscures the "links between ethnicity, revivalist Islam and the nation-state" (Turam 2004: 353-354).

III. Islam among the Chechens and Albanians

SUFI ISLAM

Cross-cutting *Sunni* ("Customary") and *Shi'i* ("Follower") Islam is "woollen" (*Sufi* or *Tasawwuf*) Islam, a mystical-ascetic movement that spread

[9] See C. ten Dam, "Definitions of Identity and Violence" (2010), and idem "Rebellion, Terrorism, Other Violence" (2007), unpublished manuscript, at *http://sites.google.com/site/tristansolutions*.

across the expanding Muslim world (*dar-al-islam*, abode of Islam). Asad al-Muhasibi (781-857 A.D.), Djalal al-Din Rumi (1207-1273), and Ibn al-'Arabi (1165?-1240) developed Sufism's essentials. Nowadays dozens of Sufi schools (*tariqa*; *turuq* pl.), represent different chains (*silsila*, link, lineage) of Muhammad's message. Sunni-Sufi schools became dominant in the Caucasus, while Shi'i dogmas were central to Dervish Sufi orders (*tekkes*)[10] in the Balkans, particularly among Albanians. A Sufi ("those who wear woollen clothes") seeks communion through unveilings with Allah, Muhammad or other prophets and saints, by losing one's conscious self through either meditation or frenzy. This a guide or master (*murshid*, *sheikh*) teaches his adept, pupil and disciple (*murid*, aspirant; *salik*, pilgrim), through a link (*rabita*) of spiritual absorption of adept into master. The Sufi meditates by fasting or seclusion, mentally uttering a continuous, non-spoken remembrance (*zikr*) of Allah. Ecstasy involves a loud *zikr* through trance-inducing dancing, singing to *allah*, and flagellations or stabbings. The loud path or way to Allah (*tariqat*, i.e. order, brotherhood, school) impresses observers (Duijzings 2000: 108-109; Goltz 2003: 55-56, 114-115, 201-202). Three Sufi schools are vital here; many or most Chechens follow the first two and many Albanians the last one.

Naqshbandiya

Disciplined, semi-orthodox, originally Sunni *tariqa* or *tai'fa* (community, group, brotherhood, order) based on silent *zikr*, named after Baha al-Din Naqshbandi (1318?-1389 A.D.) in Bukhara, Uzbekistan (Algar/Nizami 1993). Both his predecessors and successors expounded heterodox teachings in the Iranian Shi'i Sufi tradition, allowing loud *zikr*. Yet, Abd al-Khaliq al-Ghujduwani (?-1220) preferred the silent *zikr*. Ahmad Sirhindi al-Faruqi (1564-1624) and Bukhara Sheikh Shah Murad (?-1801), hostile to Shi'ites and non-Muslims, strictly interpreted the Shari'a. Only the kindred *Yasawiya* order, still surviving in Turkmenistan, maintains "sinful" loud *zikr*. Sirhindi's order entrenched in the late Moghul and Ottoman empires. Ottoman Sheikh Diya al-Din Khalid al-Shahrazuri al-Kurdamiri (1776?-1827) reiterated Sirhindi's teaching to counter heretical and infidel threats. A Persian follower of Khalid's sub-order (*vird*), ex-Shi'i caliph Isma'il al-Shirwani al-Kurdamiri (1786?-1839?), converted Dagestanis and Chechens, including Dagestani scholar (*'alim*) Muhammad al-Yaraghi. While embroiled in anti-Russian resistance, Al-Shirwani transformed the Khalidiya back into a decentralised, heterodox *tariqa*, allowing Shi'i tenets and disciples. His Dagestani deputy Ja-

[10] Another word for Sufi order meaning lit. "lodge" or "monastery".

mal al-Din al-Ghazi-Chumiqi (?-1866?) allowed loud prayer and placed *rabita* above *zikr* (Zelkina 2000: 113-114). This made Chechen Sufism syncretic and tolerant; violence against non-aggressive unbelievers was rare—even if the local "Naqshbandi leadership" remained "anti-Shi'i" (Gammer 1994b: 216).

Qadiriya

Decentralised, unorthodox, originally Sunni *tariqa* with centralised sub-orders based on loud *zikr*, founded by Hanbalite *'alim* Abd al-Qadir al-Gilani in Baghdad just before his death in 1166 A.D. Later sub-orders often shed Hanbali views and adopted Shi'i ones. A Kumyk-Dagestani shepherd, Sheikh al-Hajj Kunta al-Michiki al-Ilishkani also called Kunta Hajji Kishiev (1829?-1867), brought it to the North Caucasus in the 1850s (Bennigsen 1988; Margoliouth 1990). Less known and researched than the Naqshbandiya, Quadiriya is "one of the four oldest ... Sufi *tariqas* and ... most widespread of them all" globally, though Naqshbandiya remained dominant in the USSR (Gammer 2006: 73). Kunta Hajji and his followers were a-politically ascetic, pacifist, individualist and populist. A personal *rabita* with al-Qadir's spirit was sufficient for initiation, without *murid* subservience. Consequently Shamil, the Naqshbandi military-political-religious leader (*imam*) of the 1834-59 rebellion, was hostile to the order. Yet, many Naqshbandi went over to the Qadiriya, which also converted nearly all remaining pagan Chechens and Ingush. The Naqshbandiya was a spent force after Shamil's surrender in 1859; people, exhausted and numbed, embraced Kunta Hajji's call for superficial surrender. Yet, Russian brutality, including starving Kunta Hajji to death during his captivity (1864-1867), transformed the Qadiri into fierce resistance fighters. His *vekils* (deputy-leaders) formed five hereditary *virds*: the original *Kunta Hajji*, most powerful during the 1990s; *Bamat Giray* (Hajji Mitaev), the former's Ingush branch; the devout *Batal Hajji* (Belhoroev) with loud musicless *zikr*; the *Chim Mirza*, "drummers" concentrating on loud *zikr*; and the militant *Vis Hajji* born among Chechen exiles in Kazakhstan after Stalin's 1944 Deportation, with men and women performing white-capped *zikr*. Only the *Yangulbi-Hajji* order, allying with the Bolsheviks in the 1919-21 civil war, was "pro-Russian" (Bennigsen/Wimbush 1985: esp. 7-12, 18-24, 32-36).

Bektashiya

Heterodox loud-prayer order named after Hadjdji Bektash Wali (? – 1270-1) in Anatolia, established as a *tariqa* by Balim Sultan (? – 1516). Bektash' disciples constructed its tenets and rites from the *Yasawiya* and *Kalandariya* (wandering dervishes) Sufi orders, and from Shamanic, pre-

Islamic, Shi'a, Christian and other heretical elements. They even put their *tariqa* above the Shari'a. They kept their teachings and practices hidden in order to survive Ottoman persecution. Thus the "history of the Bektashiyya before the 19th century is not well known" (Geoffroy/ Zarcone *et al* 2000: 251 [quote]; Tschudi 1986). Bektashi syncretism appealed to commoners and lay followers, and crucially, to former Christians in the Sultan's Janissary corps. The order entered the Balkans in the 16th century, where it became the main Dervish order among Albanians in the late 18th century, and extended into Kosovo and northern Albania in the 19th century. In Anatolia the Bektashi never fully recovered from their proscription in 1825, the Janissary disbandment of 1826, and the 1925 "New Turk" prohibition of all Dervish orders.

Dozens of Sufi schools exist among Albanians and Bosnian Muslims, notably the (Shi'i oriented) *Rufai*, *Kaderi* (Qadiriya), *Halveti*, and *Sadi* (Sadiya). The Naqshbandiya, and particularly its Mujadidiya and Khalidiya branches that supplanted the original school across the Ottoman empire, became dominant among Bosnian-Muslim Sufis. Albanian Sufis stayed heterodox, helped by the geographic isolation and syncretic tendencies of Albanians generally. Still, only a minority of Albanians follow multiple Sufi schools with a few hundred to a few thousand followers each. The Bektashiya is a small order in Kosovo with only a major *tekke* in Gjakovë (Srb.: Djakovica); it is well represented in FYROM Macedonia[11] and Albania with its chief *tekke* in Tirana (Duijzings 2000: esp. 80-84, 114-116, 157-175). It and most other Dervish and other Sufi orders with Bosniak, Turk and Roma followers have survived the 1996-1999 Kosovo conflict and now thrive in Prizren and other places.[12]

PURIST ISLAM

During the 1990s Chechen separatists, in contrast to their Albanian counterparts, invited, out of sheer ignorance or desperation, foreign *mujahidin* (sing. *mujahid*, holy-warrior; from Arab. *muǰāhid*, struggler) into their ranks who mainly follow two ultra-orthodox, anti-Sufi schools that have become dominant in the Middle East and beyond.

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[11] The United Nations recognised the country under the provisional name *Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* (FYROM) on 8 April 1993 (UNRES/47/225), given objections by Greece on the name and symbols considered part of the Greek heritage. I usually refer to "FYR Macedonia".

[12] Refki Alija, "Dervishes Keep Whirling in Western Kosovo", *Balkan Investigative Reporting Network* (BIRN), Balkan Insight, 30 Sep 2008 (www.birn.eu.com; now www.balkaninsight.com): equates "dervishes" with (all) Sufi *tariqas*.

Wahhabiya
Ultra-orthodox Sunni school founded by neo-Hanbali scholar Muhammad ‘Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792 A.D.) around 1740 in Huraymila, central Arabia. He and his sons Husayn and ‘Abd Allah denied they formed a *tariqa*: any grouping undermines the oneness of Allah (*tawhid*). Still, “those professing unity of Allah”(*al-Muwahhidun*) came to be called *Wahhabi*. They condemned traditional, even Hanbali law-schools (*mazhab*), “pagan” Bedouin and Ottomans, and Shi‘ites and Sufis for their “cult of saints’, the sin (*shirk*, stealth, avoiding duty) of worshipping divinities, prophets and forefathers. Muslims committing “innovation” by “misinterpreting” the Qur’an, Sunna and Hadith were to be forced back to “true” Islam. In 1744 Diriya’s prince (*amir*) Muhammad Su‘ud (1726-65) swore loyalty (*bay‘a*), tying the Su‘udi clan to Wahhabism. It spread “settlement by settlement, tribal segment by tribal segment” (Peskes/ Ende 2002: 41), destroying sacred trees and tombs, though the 1805 attempt to demolish the Prophet’s exterior tomb in Medina, and Ottoman seizures of Diriya in 1818 and Riyad in 1837, nearly undid the movement.[13] Their imamate then flourished under Faysal al-Turki (?-1865), though his competing sons destroyed it by 1892. Ibn Su‘ud (1876-1953) restored it in 1902, yet suppressed the ultra-Wahhabi *Ikhwan* movement in 1927-30; his pragmatism helped to create the Saudi state that exists to this day. Meanwhile Wahhabism had spread beyond Arabia, though “details of this process are not well known” (Peskes/Ende 2002: 45).

Salafiya
Neo-orthodox Sunni school formed in Egypt at the end of the 19th century by *‘alim* Muhammad ‘Abdu (1849-1902) and *al-Manar* journal founder Rashid Rida (1865-1935). They and other adherents expounded “reform” (*islah*) of Islam back to that of the “pious forefathers” (*al-salaf al-salih*), the Prophet’s companions and immediate successors (Ende 1995; Ende/Shinar 1995). Salafis, also called “neo-Wahhabis”, opposed saint-worshipping Sufis in particular, and adopted Wahhabi monotheist doctrines. Yet, unlike old-fashioned Wahhabis they sought to distil “pure” rather than resurrect “historical” Islam, square Arab nationalism with pan-Islamism, form a new Caliphate, oppose Colonial powers and the Young Turks, and emancipate Muslims through “free schools” (Salafi *madrasas*). Ernest Renan’s 1883 thesis that Islam was incompatible with unfettered science stung Salafi *‘ulama* (scholars), who em-

[13] Ottomans killed al-Wahhab’s grandsons Sulyaman and ‘Ali in 1818. Yet, the Egyptian troops were too “civilised” to annihilate all Wahhabi, most of whom were banished to Cairo and later returned—a process repeated in 1837-1843.

braced science's fruits yet opposed free, non-literal "enquiry on the revealed Book", which leads people astray and wear Islam like a "fur coat turned inside out (Rashid Rida, 1900)" (Merad 1978: 142, 145). Since the late 1920s Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood under Sayid Kutb (executed in 1966) and other neo-Salafi movements became disenchanted with all stultified regimes, accounting for the current struggle between *Al-Qaeda* Salafis and official Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia.[14]

Given the widening Salafi-Wahhabi split, and the success in which heterodox opponents made "Wahhabi" into a pejorative term denoting fanatical backwardness, most Jihadists in Chechnya and elsewhere prefer to be called Salafis on the ground that al-Wahhab merely transferred the Prophet's teachings, not made these his own. Far more significant, however, is the debate on Islamic holy war (*jihad*, strive, effort). Many insist that Islam contains no inherently aggressive doctrine, pointing to the lively Muslim debate over "whether or not jihad ... is restricted by the *shari'a* to defensive purposes" (Martin, apud Kelsay/Johnson 1991: 108). Yet others hold that defensive and peaceful holy-strive interpretations—which they acknowledge do exist in Islam—deviate from the traditional-Sunni majority view that "*djihad* has principally an offensive character" (Tyan 1991: 539). Be as it may, many *'ulama* distinguish between "greater" inner *jihad* toward perfect faith and "lesser" physical *jihad* to defend or proletise Islam by force. Extreme Salafis—and arguably many orthodox Sunnis—believe that *jihad* constitutes the duty of every (adult male) Muslim to wage never-ceasing war to spread "true" Islam everywhere. Such *extremisation* easily fuels brutalisation, like in Chechnya. Emil Souleimanov wrote: "The ... conviction of today's (extremist) Salafis that all who do not share their opinions are kafirs [unbelievers] ... gives them self-justification for their intolerance and brutality towards non-Salafi Muslims, not to mention non-Muslims... Jihadism became an attractive alternative to the complicated mystic ideology of "normative" Sufi Islam ... especially for the militarised and, owing to the war, radicalised [Chechen] youth" (Souleimanov 2007: 137).

However, apart from investigating possible interplays between religiosity and brutality among Chechens and Albanians, as I do extensively in my current research, one needs to unearth other cultural characteristics that may play even larger roles in their violence (see Ten Dam 2009).

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[14] Eleven Saudi *Al-Qaeda* suspects released from Guantanamo Bay went through a Saudi rehabilitation programme, yet later fled to Yemen and other countries to join terrorist groups there; Wahhabi "re-educations" of Salafis clearly fail to take hold (R. F. Worth, "Saudis Issue List of 85 Terrorism Suspects", *NYT*, 4 Feb. 2009).

IV. Culture, Grievance and Violence among the Chechens and Albanians

The shepherd boy Kaukazos confronted god Kronos fleeing from his son and enemy Zeus; the boy paid with his life but gave Zeus time to arrive and kill Kronos (Van der Leeuw 1999: 1). The Caucasus, the region between the Black and Caspian seas, resembles Afghanistan in ethnic-tribal variety and warrior folklore. Afghan codes of honour and violence-ethics, like blood revenge (*badal*), show striking similarities with those of Chechen, Albanian and indeed any tribal-clannish society. Perhaps it is true that the "mountains made the men" (Baddeley 1908: xxi-xxii). Of all Caucasian peoples Chechens most resemble the Afghans' "insolence of harsh freedoms set against a backdrop of rough mountains" (Dupree 1997: xvii). Yet, even ancient Slavs and early Russians had blood-feuds and other patriarchal customs; the deep cultural divide between Russians and Chechens is just a few centuries old (Luzbetak 1951: 198, fn. 46). All peoples of the Caucasus call themselves "Mountaineers" (*gorcy* in Russian), exhibit defiance, bravery, self-reliance and hospitality, and wear similar dresses and the long hat (*papakh*). Most were semi-sedentary farmers herding sheep, goats, horses and cattle from winter (lowland) to summer (highland) pastures based on the Neolithic *Ziehbauerkultur*. They were herdsmen, no nomads with movable abodes (tents). Highland Chechens moved livestock to lowland winter pastures though they kept mountain homes (Gammer 1994a: 20; idem 2006: 4-7; Luzbetak 1951: 192, 199, 204 and fn. 75). Likewise, most peoples of the Balkan, the region between the Adriatic and Black seas, were agricultural settlers with herding livestock on winter and summer pastures; Vlachs, Gypsies and Albanians still lead semi-nomadic, pastoral lives (Malcolm 1998: 11,23-24-26,30).

In the following comparative sub-sections I seek to clarify the histories and cultures of Albanians and Chechens, and identify the main societal values—martiality, resistance and egalitarianism—accounting for their resort to "emancipatory" violence.

CHECHENS

Origins and Martial Traditions

Chechens call themselves "the people" (*Nokhchi*). Up to this day, they or most of them live in exogamous patriarchal and patrilineal groups led by elders (*vokkhstag* or *aksakkal*, "white-bearded"), in extended families (*tsa*, *dözal*), multi-family (lineage) village communes (*kup*), clans (*gar*, *neqi*), tribes (*teip*) and multi-tribal communes (*tuqum*). Chechens belong to "our people" (*Vainakh*), those speaking *Nakh*, a version of the in-

digenous Ibero-Caucasian language.[15] The Vainakh include the *Galgai* whom Russians call "Ingush" after Angusht village, the Muslim *Akkin* in Dagestan (also seen as 'just' a Chechen tribe), and the Christian-Orthodox *Kists* and *Batsis* (Batsbis, Tsova-Tush) in Georgia who presently number just a few thousand each. Highland Chechens in mountain villages (*auls*) regard other Vainakh as Chechen tribes; yet, lowland Ingush see themselves as a distinct people populating most lowland villages (*yurts*) since the 18th century. These divergences make us concentrate on the Chechens, though ethnologically Vainakhs are on par with Albanians. The warlike Northern Albanian and Kosovar Albanian *Gegs* most resemble the *Nokhchi*. Russians call the latter "Chechens" in early chronicles, particularly since a 1708 encounter at Bolshoi Chechen (now Chechen Aul) village.

The Chechens' codes of honour (called *nokhchalla*), which according to them and many observers had ancient origins and made them hospitable, tolerant and non-aggressive to outsiders (Gammer 2006: 3-4). However, inter-clan competition grew together with Chechnya's population, increasing the number of clans from 59 to a 100 during the first half of the 19th century, and to 170 (100 in mountains, 70 on plains) by the 1990s—mostly due to ambitious sub-clans declaring themselves *teips* or *taips*.[16] Sparse evidence indicate that Vainakh and other Mountaineer religions were Polytheistic, Shamanistic and Animistic, now an "amalgam of orthodox Muslim tenets, Sufi rituals, ancient... beliefs, ... Christianity and ... Zoroastrianism" (Jaimoukha 2005: 107). Experts note strong resemblances between the militant egalitarianism and direct yet narrow democracy (no foreigners and women could vote) of Chechens and those of ancient Greeks. Some believe Chechen and other Mountaineer societies have once been matriarchal (Lieven 1998: 305,327(fn. 6),329-30; Jaimoukha 2005: 1,84). However, strictly speaking the "origin of the Chechens and their early history is unknown" (Luzbetak 1951: 22). The following traits may account for the recurrent resort to political violence among many Chechens.

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[15] I translate *gar* and *neqi* as "clan" and *teip* as "tribe". Scholars discern the same social units, but apply different terms (family, clan, tribe) for them. Many use the term *teip* for clans of over fifteen households. Most define "clan" as the multi-household group with actual or perceived common ancestry. I translate *tuqum* (Persian for family, clan) as multi-tribal commune; others translate it as multi-village commune or tribal confederation. I define *Nokhchi* as "people" and *Vainakh* as "our people". Scholars disagree on how to translate these terms. I designate *Nokhchi* for Chechens, and *Vainakh* for all Nakh-speaking peoples, including Tsova-Tush.

[16] *Taip* derives from Arabic *ṭāifa* (community, group); perhaps "relatively recent" (Wood 2007: 13, note 4)—or a new label for an ancient phenomenon.

Warrior Culture

The brave (horse)man (*jigit*) or warrior (*k'ant*, *k'onakh*), bandit-of-honour (*abrek*), long Caucasian dagger (*kinjal*), sword (*shashka*) and wolf (*borz*) symbolise warrior ethos, sustained by customary "law of the mountains" (Arab. '*ādat* ['*ādāt*], pl. "customs") and *nokhchalla*. North-Caucasian secret societies, called Men's Houses and Unions, sustained fighting skills and chivalry codes, initiating youngsters in lightning raids (*nabeq*) to capture horses, cattle and other properties (including slaves, who as "properties" possessed few if any rights under *adat*). The *nabeq* were hardly bloody, unless shortages and incidents led to plunder, killings and kidnappings—leading to blood-feuds (*kanly*, *chir*) or other reprisals. Particularly in Dagestan "feudal lords" organised "special campaigns ... aimed at capturing people and getting ransom"; Russians, other foreigners and kindred Mountaineers were captured and often enslaved in "predatory raids" (Inozemtseva 2006: 181,186 (debtors),188). These activities engendered a *gun culture*: "men were armed everywhere they went, even when working in the fields" (Souleimanov 2007: 25). Mountaineers learned to fire musket, gun and cannon from forests, mountains and villages. They became magnificent horsemen and sharpshooters, superior in both qualities to the Cossacks and Russians; in 1722, Peter the Great's cavalry lost the first regular engagement against them. Cossacks could not "stand their ground" against Chechens "without ... artillery" (Gammer 1994a: 24); the latter's first use of cannon, under Imam Shamil on 13 August 1843 and later in his Dagestan campaign, shocked and demoralised the Russians (Gammer 1994a: 16-17 (fn. 22,23), 21-23, 147, and fn. 55). Even so, the Chechens and other Mountaineers had "no artillery but what they could capture" (Baddeley 1908: xxxviiiii; 25), and the larger armount of artillery acquired in 1847 was "of no great service" to Shamil (Laqueur 1977: 74).

Religious and Secular Resistance

Chechens resisted foreign rule through secular yet Sufi-inspired struggles, like the 1825-1827 Greater Chechnya revolt under Beybulat Taymi, yet mainly through holy wars (*gazavat*) under Imam Mansur in 1785-1791, Ghazi Muhammad in 1829-1832, Hamza Bek in 1833-1834, and Imam Shamil in 1834-1859. During the 1829-1859 Great Gazavat, Sufism "merged with nationalism and traditional martialism" (Jaimoukha 2005: 118). Mountaineers initially resisted Islam when Arab armies took Derbend in 642 A.D. Also other areas (Tiflis in 645 A.D.) fell under the Hanafi, the most orthodox Sunni school after the Hanbali. Yet, Chechens, Ingush, and Dagestanis came to follow the Sunni *Shafi'i* school. Shi'i Islam, whose *Ithna-ashari* school sprung in Persia, only struck root

among Turkic-speaking communities in south Dagestan; by the 1700s, Persia's Safavid dynasty (1508-1736) was "in the throes of a terminal disease" (LeDonne 1997: 92). Sufis converted Chechens and later Ingush despite 10th-13th century Christian competition, though Islamisation estimates range from the 18th to 19th century (Lieven 1998; Zelkina 2000; Jaimoukha 2005). Flexibility accounts for Sufism's success: "Once it is recognised that *All is He*, alien beliefs and practices can ... be read as ... Islamic truths" (Chittick *et.al* 2000: 321). Claims of hereditary links (*silsila*) to Muhammad impressed clan-elders and their ancestry-revering societies (Geoffroy 2000: 245). Naqshbandi and Qadiri Sufis provided unity to resist the Russian advance. However, Shamil's "harsh, even despotic" Islamist regime—perhaps so constructed to "spur the mountain people into battle"—temporarily undermined moderate Sufism, and ultimately failed to create lasting "solidarity between the mountain tribes" (Laqueur 1977: 75). The Russians eventually won by superior resources and "siege" (fortress building) and "axe" (forest clearance) strategies.[17] Yet insurrections continued to erupt from the 1860s to the 1940s.

Egalitarianism

Chechens basically had two classes: the free man (*uzden*) with equal rights and without elitist privileges, and the slave (*lai*), usually a captured foreign enemy who could buy himself free (*yasir*, captive, slave by ransom).[18] However, former slaves or even male descendants of former slaves up to the tenth generation were rarely able or allowed to marry the daughters of the "free classes". Indeed, the 'free and equal' Chechens (and Ingush) captured and traded in slaves almost as frequently as the "feudal lords" and "free subjects" among the Dagestani and other Mountaineer peoples (until the Russians managed to abolish the practice in the late 19th century), and *yasirs* "could be Chechens or Ingushes, captured by the rival communities" (Inozemtseva 2010: 22, 23-24).[19]

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[17] Unlike most Caucasus specialists, Laqueur does not deem the "siege" strategy as instrumental to Russia's conquest of the Caucasus: the "network of forts ... was not well suited to local conditions", which enabled nimble Mountaineer *guerrillas* to circumvent the forts and the roads that connected them (Laqueur 1977: 72-73).

[18] Some translate *uzdens* as "nobility and vassals" (Jaimoukha 2005: 85); freemen or ex-slaves (*halkhoi*) were not politically free (ibid: 86, 88, 92).

[19] Though the absolute number of slaves and their economic functions were relatively insignificant (one reason why so many were allowed to buy or receive their freedom), the "social and legal status" of slaves was "almost the same throughout the North Caucasus" and had a "great influence upon the social psychology and legal conscience" of Dagestani and other Mountaineer societies (Inozemtseva 2010: 22,24).

Even so, men voted in communal, clan, and tribal assemblies, and elected Elders with legislative, judicial and/or military powers; Muslim judges (*qadi*) and scholars (*'ulama*) were scarce among Chechen and Dagestani highlanders (Zelkina 2000: xvii, 17 18, 42, 43). They maintained their patriarchal yet egalitarian mountain democracy in the midst of Circassian and other stratified societies (though with elected elders). Chechen egalitarianism constitutes external freedom vis-à-vis other peoples, yet hardly internal freedom vis-à-vis one's own kin and nation (Souleimanov 2007: 22-23; and fn. 12).

Chechens consider themselves to be the toughest and most freedom-loving people in the world; neighbours—including Russians—tend to confirm this, though in less flattering terms. Love of freedom (*marsho*), pride, and honour (*ezdel* or *namus*)[20] make their grudges long-lasting, unbending. Indeed some Chechens "believe that, if Shamil [a Dagestani Avar] had been a Chechen, they would never have been subdued".[21] However, some Russian politicians and scholars contest the "common view that the Chechens differ radically from the rest of the population of Russia", if only because the Soviet era diminished the salience of and differences between "cultural traditions" so much "exaggerated by enthusiasts of ethnographic or militaristic romanticism" (Gorbachev, apud Tishkov 2004: xi,xii [quotes]; Tishkov 2004: 10).

The salience of Islam and its variants among contemporary Chechens remains contentious. Indeed, Tishkov's conclusion that "violent group conflicts are not so much preordained as constructed" (Gorbachev, apud Tishkov 2004: xiii) shows that the debate between (neo-) primordialists and (neo-)constructivists is as heated as ever. Nevertheless, Tishkov recognises that Stalin's Collectivisation, Deportation and frequent purges constitute genuine historical grievances of factual, "absolute" deprivations among the Chechens and many other peoples, however much separatists manipulate these grievances or "invent" cultural traits. Not all history is myth.

The superiority complex among Chechens regarding their "unique" martialism contributed to the lack of regional support for their 1990s independence drive. North-western Circassians, and "warlike and numerous" (Baddeley 1908: xxx) Avars, Kumyks and other peoples in ethnically diverse Dagestan do claim a similar prowess. Indeed, numbering 125,000 among the half a million peoples in Dagestan, the Avars histori-

[20] In Chechen the "word *ezdel* is used for "honour" as a direct translation" (Souleimanov, email 07-03-2008).

[21] Ann Sheehy, "Power Struggle in Checheno-Ingushetia", *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (RFE/RL) Report on the USSR, vol. 3/46, 15 Nov 1991: 20.

cally were the "most important of the tribes" (ibid: xxix). Circassians (Cherkess, *Adyghe*) and Kabardanians (aristocratic Circassian tribes) were famed warrior-slaves and mercenaries (Quelquejay *et al* 1991). Circassian resistance to Russia "began earlier, lasted longer and ended more disastrously" with the 1864 exodus than the Chechen-Dagestani one (Henze, apud Broxup-Bennigsen 1992: 62). Turco-Mongol, Arabic, Persian, Russian and Soviet incursions and devastations made all indigenous Mountaineers together a minority of less than a quarter of the people in the Caucasus by the 1940s. Depleted numbers made their martial traditions echoes from the past. Also the Cossacks, absorbed by Mountaineer intermarriages and weakened by Tsarist-Soviet policies to reclaim these former persecuted serfs and use them for their own ends, "may have had a great [martial] tradition once, but you can't put a broken cup back together again" (Russian cadet, in Lieven 1998: 237). Some tried in vain to resuscitate such traditions, notably the Kabardin firebrand Musa Shanib (b. 1935-1936), also known as Yuri Muhammedovich Shanibov under his Russified name (Derluguian 2005: 2-4). In contrast, Chechens retained their demographic-cultural unity, population size and martial ethos through secretiveness and imaginative measures, like taking multiple wives. Chechens frown upon peacetime polygamy, but adopt it if the nation is under threat. It was crucial in Shamil's 1829-59 *Murid* resistance, and after the February 1944 Deportation: in the latter case nearly a quarter of 480,000 Chechens died in trains to Kazakhstan or of cold and hunger afterwards; tens of thousands died in subsequent years. The Deportation was prepared so secretively and executed so swiftly by amassed army and NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) troops on 23 February 1944 (completed in a few days), that the Chechens nor the other Mountaineers were able to organise effective resistance through any dormant (sub-)clans or other structures. Yet, by 1989 over a million Chechens were living in the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic and elsewhere in the Soviet Union due to their high birthrate. Already by the late 1950s "more Chechens came back ... than were deported" due to their active polygamy in exile (Lieven 1998: 321). Other scholars note the high birth rate in exile, but not the crucial role of polygamy behind it (Tishkov 2004: 29,40).

Therefore, the Chechens were not only adept at nurturing their grievances—largely based on real, factual deprivations and injustices to begin with—but also at ensuring their survival in sufficient numbers during the worst devastatations, including genocidal attempts to scatter and eliminate them.

ALBANIANS

Origins and Martial Traditions

Albanians call themselves *Shqiptare* (rather than *Albanoi*), after an ancient Durrës tribe; only old emigrées in Italy call themselves *Arbëresh* (Malcolm 1998: 29(notes 25-28)-40).[22] Albanian (*Shqip*), a unique branch of Indo-European, is the only indigenous, ancient language in the Balkans, apart from Greek. Most scholars consider Albanians descendants of the multi-tribal Illyrians formed in the early Iron Age (1,000 B.C.) or earlier. This theory appears plausible, and is popular among Albanians. Yet, their origins are as obscure and contested as the Chechens'(Inalcik/ Mann 1986: 650, 653; Wilkes 1992: 38). Others believe they descended from Thracians (proto-Romanians), Daco-Moesians (Dardanian-Illyrian remnants) or even "Caucasian Albanians". To speculate on ancient contacts or common ancestries is tempting, given the "astonishing resemblance between the customary law of the northern Albanians and that of the peoples of the North Caucasus" (Fox, apud Gjeçov 1989: xix). However, Albanian and Chechen languages lie far apart, and there are no other corroborating data.

Albanians live in exogamous patriarchal, patrilineal and patrilocal families (*shpi*),extended families in walled communes (*zadruga*), brotherhoods (*vllazni*), kinship groups (*gjini*), sub-clans (*mëhallë*, *vëllazëri*, multi-family brotherhoods), clans and tribes (*fis*)[23] and multi-tribal communes or banners (*flamur*). They intermingled with their neighbours; highlanders (*malësor*) in the north-Albanian Malësi (highlands) intermarried and fought side-by-side with Montenegrin (Slav) highlanders (*brdjanin*). The ultra-clannish, egalitarian, partially Catholic highland *Gegs* north of Albania's Shkumbin river include the Kosovar Albanians. The semi-clannish (*fara*, *gjeri*), Ottoman-feudalised and Islamised lowland *Tosks* south of that river include the small yet distinct *Çam* and *Lab* tribes. Gegs and Tosks speak different dialects and their cultures diverge (Babuna 2000: 67), much like Chechens and Ingush. Gegs often had better relations with Montenegrins than with fellow Tosks, and Geg Catholics and Muslims intermarried rather than married with (Muslim) Tosks. These are just a few of the multiple cultural, linguistic and religious differences between the thirty or so Albanian "clans" or "tribes" (Mal-

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[22] The Latin term *Albania* denotes "mountainous land". Origins and meanings of *Alb-* and *Shqip*-roots are obscure.

[23] A single term *fis* is translated as both "clan" and "tribe" (and occasionally "kin"); scholars do not identify separate Albanian terms. Oxford Albanian-English Dictionary (1999): "*fis*: 1. clan, tribe 2. (*Colloq.*) ethnic group, nation, nationality".

colm 1998: 14, 16-17; Hasluck 1954: 117-118, 148-149, and back map; Inalcik (/Mann) 1986: 651-652).[24] Albanians generally had tense relations with the Slavs who, driven from central Europe by the Avars, arrived in the 6th century A.D. and drove Latin-speaking *Vlachs* (proto-Romanian Aromanians, *Aromâni*) into north Albania. Slavs separated into Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in the 12th century (Stavrianos 1958: v, 8, 9, 21). The religions of the ancient Illyrians were probably of a Polytheistic nature, yet documentary and archaeological evidence are sparse. After the schism of 1054 A.D. most Albanians (the probable descendants of Illyrians) converted to either Catholicism or Orthodoxy, while some kept their (quasi-)Roman and indigenous pagan faiths. Nowadays 80% of all Albanians are nominally Muslim. Most are Sunni *Hanafi*, some are heterodox Sufi Dervish, including the Shi'i-oriented *Bektashi* with Christian dogmas and practices; 10-12% are Christian-Orthodox, and 8-10% are Catholic. Around 90-95% of Kosovar Albanians are Muslim and 5-10% Catholic (Malcolm 1998; Duijzings 2000).

The Albanians' honour codes make them hospitable and friendly toward visitors (according to themselves and many observers). If their militancy, egalitarianism and male democracy resemble those of ancient Hellas, they probably developed these independently (Wilkes 1992: 4). Be as it may, these following cultural traits explain—at least from a "neo-primordialist" viewpoint—their propensity to political violence.

Warrior Culture

Albanians are famed for their prowess. Even the Spartans were impressed by the ferocious Illyrians (Wilkes 1992: 117-119). Customary honour (*besa*) codes sustained this ethos, centred on an oath also called *besa* ("oath-of-honour, a vow on one's life") when touching a holy book, rock or token (Camaj, apud Gjeçov 1989: xiv; Fox, ibid.: xx). The Ottomans took the toughest and bravest for their armies, calling them desperados, "madmen" (*deli*). The *Kanun* or Laws of the Mountains— unwritten until the 1850s—codified when or how to take oaths, particularly the Kanuns of Gjergj Kastrioti "Skanderbeg" ("Lord Alexander") in his former strongholds (Krujë, Dibër, Mat) and of his rival and ally Lek (Lekë) Dukagjin(i) in most northern Albanian lands. Nowadays most Albanians are ignorant of the *Kanun* ("law, rule, rod") (Hasluck 1954: 14-

[24] The known data on the numbers, denominations and other characteristics of the Albanian clans seem rather outdated, and confusing given the triple translations of *fis* as "tribe", "clan" or "kin".

15).[25] Some reinvent Mountain laws to foment nationalism (Schwandner-Sievers, apud Schmidt/Schröder 2001). Their *gun culture* ensures a low threshold to take up arms to settle disputes. Thus sixteen of forty-nine death sentences in Yugoslavia during 1973-87 had to do with vendetta killings in Kosovo.[26]

Secular and Religious Resistance

Albanians resisted Byzantines, Bulgarians, again Byzantines and Serbs between the 850s and 1450s, and the Asiatic-Turkic Ottomans during their long rule between 1453 and 1914. The Nemanjic dynasty (1166-1371 A.D.) imposed on them its Serb-Orthodox faith under King Stefan Dusan (1331-55) (Burr 1949-1950). Most Albanians converted to Sunni Islam after the Ottomans conquered Kosovo in 1455 and Albania in 1571, compelled by poll (*cizye*) and other taxes, and enticed into careers as Grand Viziers or feudal knights (*spahi*, *sipahi*, cavalryman) ruling small (*timar*) and large (*zeamet*) estates. Boys were Islamised through collection (*devsireme*) for the Sultan's household or his standing army (*janissary*). Albanian clans had to elect military leaders (*bajraktar*, standard-bearer) and supply one fighter per household.[27] Sufis had "traces of pre-Islamic Asian shamanism" (Malcolm 1998: 134) resembling Illyrian shamanism; yet highland and Catholic Albanians clung to the *Kanun*, helped by inaccessible terrain (Gjeçov 1989: xiii, xvi, xvii). Others learned to hide their beliefs. Crypto-Christians (*laramane*, motley, piebald), publicly Muslim (men) yet privately Christian (women), evolved into syncretic Muslim-Christians. Albanians relied on illicit, anarchic structures until the state of Albania was proclaimed in 1912. The League of Prizren (1878-81) lasted too short to realise an Albanian state. Even Skanderbeg—"never defeated in battle, he mastered both regular warfare and guerrilla tactics" (Laqueur 1977: 15) and thereby repelled Ottoman forces from 1443 until his death in 1468—remained a relatively isolated

[25] Experts differ on which one of several 15th century Lek (Lekë) Dukagjins was the author of the *Kanun*. Most deem Dukagjini's *Kanun* geographically dominant, and ascribe it to the Dukagjini of 1410-81, Skanderbeg's military deputy yet political superior.

[26] BBC's Summary of World Broadcasts (SWB) Central Europe, the Balkans, EE/0042/B1: *Yugoslav News Agency/Telegraph Agency of (the) New Yugoslavia* (*Tanjug*), 4 January 1988; EE/0009/B11: Pristina, 20 November 1987.

[27] Household heads selected male members for military duty—yet at times had to join the "army of the Banner" himself (Gjeçov, *Code Lekë Dukagjini* [CLD] 1989 (1933): §§ 25.6, 26.b4). Hasluck applies the terms *deli* (desperado), *spahi* and *bajraktar* for all the rank-and-file levies (Hasluck 1954: 115, also 116-129).

rebel chief in Krujë. *Nuk ka shteti*: there is no state (Schwandner-Sievers, apud Schmidt/Schröder 2001: 98).

Egalitarianism

Dukagjin and Skanderbeg agreed that "all men are equal, whether handsome or ugly". They "revised and codified existing laws" (Hasluck 1954: 13) to equalise and balance male decisionmaking powers: village, clan and tribal assemblies chose their Elders, who must obtain assembly consent to change any code, and council or jury consent to impose any penalty on grave transgressors; household-heads were obliged to attend meetings and vote (ibid.: 9-15). Albanian society was not classless: central Albanians and some *malësor* adopted feudal customs from the Byzantines. Albanian-Muslim landlords (*beys*) heavily taxed and repressed all peasants in Ottoman times. Clans came to be called *bajrak* (banner, standard). The *bajraktar* (often a *spahi*) became hereditary; at first alien to egalitarian clans except the Catholic *Mirditë*, it became an "organic part of the clan system" (Malcolm 1998: 16-17). Skanderbeg rebelled because he wanted to reclaim hereditary lands, like other lords unwilling to be relegated as *timar* vassals (Inalcik (/Mann) 1986: 654,655). Nevertheless, elders, *bajraktars* and other leaders remained at least formally equal to all community members under the *Kanun*, barring often lighter punishments for crimes and transgressions, a heavier weight accorded as a juror (usually twelve votes), and social privileges (especially for leaders of "good families" of ancient descent), like the "corner seat, head of the roasted animal and [a] first cup of coffee" (Hasluck 1954: 123, 132-133).

Albanians do not suffer from a cultural superiority complex like the Chechens do, but they are inordinately proud of martial traditions like the *kaçak* (outlaw, bandit, rebel; from Turkish "fugitive") and *amanet* or pledge (imposed) by an ancestor or deceased (usually a *kaçak*) to give one's life for a cause like liberation. Many analysts minutely describe these traditions, however from a constructivist perspective tend to dismiss these as invented, manipulated and mythical attributes. They also, paradoxically, acknowledge the community's "right-to-revolt" grievances from an absolute-deprivationist perspective, yet at the same time attack from a pacifist perspective the "glorification" of violence through martial valour and sacrifice. Anna Di Lellio and Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers exhibit these perspectives when researching the rural-patriarchal "master narrative" of the March 1998 massacre by Serb police forces of rebel leader Adem Jashari and his extended family in Prekaz (Srb.: Donji Prekaz), Kosovo (Di Lellio/Schwandner-Sievers 2006). Even

if those *memory entrepreneurs* (Jelin 2003: 34) who "use traditionalist nationalist rhetoric ... are often louder than their national counterparts who seek peace" (Schwandner-Sievers, apud Schmidt/Schröder 2001: 115), the Prekaz "myth" *was* one of the war's worst atrocities. During 5-7 March 1998 special police units *did* massacre fifty-one members of the Jashari clan, most of them women, children and elderly (Amnesty International EUR 70/33/1998: 1-3; Troebst, Appendix 1C SIPRI Yearbook 1999: 47, 51). Moreover, this massacre *did* drive many Kosovars into the arms of the Liberation Army of Kosova (*Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës*, UÇK; Srb.: *Oslobodilacka vojska Kosova*, OVK) or "KLA"[28] out of fear, anger and survival-instinct, rather than nationalist fervour. Ironically, this dynamic shows that not all Albanians share a warrior cult, or activate it only in extreme emergency—which indirectly does corroborate Di Lellio and Schwandner-Siever's detection of urban, modernist and feminist (equal-gender emancipatory) counter-narratives.

Nevertheless, many martial legends or "master narratives" are based on historical facts, i.e. many such constructions do contain primordial elements. Thus the Kosovar *kaçaks* did in fact violently oppose Turkish, Serb, Bulgarian and Austro-Hungarian rule prior to and during the First and Second Balkan Wars of 1912-13 and World War I. They resisted Yugoslav rule in the anti-Serb uprising of 1918-19, until they were annihilated in the mid-1920s—though some tiny rebel groups survived (Babuna 2000: 68). Even *Kanun* codifier Shtjefën Gjeçov joined the 1912 "mass uprising" of "Albanian highlanders" (Fox, apud Gjeçov 1989: xviii). Hasan Pristina, Bajram Curri and other *kaçak*-leaders founded in November 1918 the Committee for the National Defence of Kosova (*Komiteti i Mbrojte Kombetare ë Kosovës*), or Kosovo Committee (KK): "employing tactics that resembled a bandit organization... Kachak leaders launched attacks on Serb officials" (Cohen 2001: 11). Yet, the KK "issued strict guidelines ..., urging insurgents not to harm local Slavs, burn houses or churches, take booty or mistreat victims" (Kola 2003: 18-19). Kosovo's central region Drenica had a long history of brigandry and rebellion. Albanians do revere both male and female warriors, like Azem Bejta ("Galica"), a *kaçak*-leader during the 1918-24 revolts (also against Ahmed Zogu's regime), and his wife Shota Galica. Bejta was killed in July 1924. Shota fought on until fatally wounded in July 1927 (Malcolm 1998:

[28] The English acronym "KLA" distinguishes the Kosovar rebel group from the National Liberation Army (*Ushtria Çlirimtare Kombetare*, UÇK) in FYROM Macedonia, which I identify by the acronym "NLA".

239-63, 272-78; Vickers 1998: 93, 99-102).[29] Albanians do not just admire martialism as a virtue in itself, but primarily as a vehicle to overcome discrimination, repression and other severe deprivations and injustices. Histories of "heroic resistance" do not signify unfettered cohesion and solidarity, however. Fearing feuding, discrimination and suppression, Slavic Muslims (*Goranci*) and Turkic- and Slav-speaking Albanians hide their differences from the majority Muslim and Albanian-speaking Albanians, or assimilate with the latter. Peripheral communities, including "majority" Albanians, have had to dissimulate their beliefs, identities and aspirations (Duijzings 2000: 24,35).[30]

Generally, nationalism and ethnicism seem to reflect strong human dispositions, overtaking even religious and atheist ones. Communists naïvely believed that "the solution to ethnic hostility lay in progress ... by industrial development" (Derluguian 2005: 187). Indeed, "nationalism has proved an uncomfortable *anomaly* for Marxist theory and ... [thus] has been largely elided, rather than confronted" (Anderson 1991: 3). Communist regimes did seek to eradicate nationalism; yet Marx' and Marxist class-analysis failed to fully grasp and account for national identifications across classes (ibid: 3-4). Chechen and Albanian *Volksarts* may seem artificial constructions rather than primordial realities. Yet, the constructivist/primordialist debate becomes moot for so far people genuinly believe in and "act out" their identities: "all that matters about Shanibov is his .. papaha hat, regardless of whether we ... attribute it to ... Kabardin tradition or his ... decision to become a nationalist leader and warlord" (Derluguian 2005: 184). A neo- or post-primordialist theory based on cultural acclimatisation rather than racial determination may help explain Chechen and Albanian *Volksarts*: both communities have distinct languages and other cultural attributes, and have long lived in their homelands. Though their precise ethnological origins remain obscure, their nationalist-primordial claims actually are plausible.

V. Conflict origins: Historic Grievance and Loss

The analysis of the Chechen and Albanian cultures cannot hide the fact that future research and discovery must fill considerable gaps in available knowledge on their histories, cultures and grievances. Constituting a note of caution to the findings in the preceding section, I next de-

[29] See also Kristaq Prifti, "Democratic Revolutionary Organisation", in BBC's SWB, EE/0271/A2/1: *Albanian Telegraph Agency* (ATA), *Zeri i Popullit*, 28 Sept. 88.

[30] Irredentists allegedly forced *Ulcinj* (Montenegrin Albanians) at Kosovar schools to Albanise their surnames (SWB, EE/8689,8718/B1: *YNA*, 24 Sep, 4 Nov 87).

scribe the main reasons for these knowledge gaps—all to do, once more, with the traditional customs and historical sufferings of the Chechen and Albanian peoples.

CHECHEN TRAUMA AND HERITAGE

Despite or rather because of Russia's brutal colonisation "Sufi orders in the Caucasus, far from waning, practically absorbed official Islam" (Bennigsen/Wimbush 1985: 23). Nearly all (non-Russian) Caucasus experts explain "Muslim resistance to the Tsar" (Gammer 1994a) by *absolute deprivation*: the harsher the repression, the more resolute the resistance. Few detect opportunist motivations as causes, triggers or sustainers of any major revolt, uprising, or even *abrek* banditry. Even Derluguian focuses on "organizational and socio-psychological causes of brutalization" emanating from painful memories of genocide, deportation and repression (Derluguian 2005: 20). True, greed-driven *depredation* seems ill-suited to explain the Sufi-led rebellions among the Vainakh and Dagestani in the 19th century and beyond. However, there may yet be insufficient knowledge about Vainakh tribal and religious customs to be fully confident about their reasons and ways of violence, even though I have done my best to uncover and summarise these in the preceding section. Basically all we know is that the martial ethos of Chechens and other Vainakh peoples, and their inhospitable surroundings, helped them and their indigenous language and culture to survive; they withdrew to their mountain towers and waged *guerrilla* from there. Three factors account for the lack of available historical data, closely linked to age-old sufferings that Chechens either inflicted among themselves or outsiders inflicted on them.

Misty Oral Past

Across the Northern Caucasus the numerous ethnicities (and languages) —more than thirty in Dagestan alone—were predominantly non-literate. Chechens and Ingush adopted a script only under a Soviet literacy programme in the 1920s (initially in Latin; Cyrillic since 1938). Prior to that literacy drive, some Chechens—less than one percent—wrote in Arabic or Chechen in Arabic script, in Persian, Turkic and Russian or Chechen in Cyrillic script. Unlike educated Afghans (Dupree 1997: 66, 74-75, 82) they constrained their literature mainly to religious (Sufi) treatises. This contrasts with the "enormous proliferation of works" by native Sufis in India and elsewhere (Chittick/Massignon *et al* 2000: 321). Oral agreements often disintegrated due to misunderstandings and interpretational differences. Thus "weak *jama'ats* [rural Dagestani com-

munes] rented part of their communal lands to a stronger one in exchange for its ... protection. Concluded orally, such agreements often led to confusion which could result in bitter land disputes" (Zelkina 2000: 23).[31] Remembering eight generations of one's ancestors did little to offset inherent weaknesses in oral transmission—neither did Islamisation: Sufis did not literate the common people, and they nor orthodox *'ulama* wrote down their genealogies; "it has never been a custom to keep registers of births and deaths in mosques" (Souleimanov 2007: 26).

Imperial Bias

Among the few Russians who admired the Mountaineers, Alexander Pushkin, Leo Tolstoy and Mikhail Lermontov, serving as military officers in the Caucasus in 1824, 1839 and 1851-1854 respectively, criticised the atrocious "punitive expeditions" against them. Yet, even they exhibited and sustained prejudice. Russian pupils memorised Lermontov's Cossack Cradlesong which speaks of the "evil Chechen", and Pushkin's warning to Russian maidens to hurry home because "across the Terek Chechens roam". Russians revere General Aleksei Yermolov, the Tsar's ruthless and racist Caucasus commander-in-chief during 1816-1827, ever since Pushkin wrote "Bow down, Caucasus, Yermolov comes!". Caucasian "savages" should submit to the Tsar and accept civilisation. Only Christian-Orthodox Georgians and Ossetians and Muslim Kabardians got favourable treatment, so as to drive a wedge between Circassians in the West and Chechens in the East, which "in spite of Shamil's desperate effort in 1846, was never bridged over"; this helped the Russians to defeat each in isolation (Baddeley 1908: xxiii). Even so the "Kabardáns" occasionally rebelled, often with the Chechens and others against Russia, like in 1785, 1806 and 1810. Soviet accounts lack overt racism yet display condescension; such prejudice resurfaced during *perestroika* when populists accused even Gorbachev of protecting the "North-Caucasian" mafia.[32] Also Soviet dissidents, like Alexander Solzhenitsyn, regarded Chechens with a combination of "admiration ... patronisation and fear" (Lieven 1998: 346). Russian observers, out of ignorance or self-interest, described the Naqshbandiya-Mujaddidiya-Khalidiya sub-order inspiring the 1829-59 resistance as *Muridism*, a "fanatical" movement distinct from Sufism; it seems "incredible to find West-

[31] The "lack of local written sources" bedevils research even on the "history of ... Islamisation" (Zelkina 2000: 5). However, according to Jaimoukha (2005: 90) "Land disputes were ... rare" given "extended collective and personal memories" and "oath-making rituals".

[32] SWB, SU/0758/B1: *Telegraph agency of the Soviet Union (TASS)*, 6 May 90.

ern scholars" still "subscribing to such theories" (Gammer 1994b: 208). Yet many (Broxup-Bennigsen, Jaimoukha, Laqueur, Zelkina) actually adopt the term Muridism to describe a Sufi(-inspired) resistance movement, not a Jihadism separate from Sufism. Be as it may, written indigenous accounts are extremely rare. John Baddeley "remained .. dependent on the diaries of Russian generals ..., and most authors writing accounts of the latest [Russo-Chechen] war ... have ... been ... dependent on him" (Seely 2001: 28; 22-32). Western observers were taken aback by their fierceness: "Chechens are, more than ... other mountain tribes, far from civilization" (Berže 1858: 35). All Colonial powers had the right to subjugate "fanatics and savages, who must be ... cowed, or they will rise again" (Callwell 1976 (1899): 148).

Deportation, Desecration, Destruction

Jozef Stalin's inspiration to deport the Chechens (and other Mountaineers) came from Platon Zubov, who proposed in 1834 that the only way to deal with the Chechen nation, "remarkable for her love of plunder, robbery and murder" and "uncontrollable insolence", is to "destroy it to the last" (Zubov 1834: 173-76). His plan of forcible transfer was executed on the Circassians and Ubykhs in 1864. Stalin's Collectivisation programme, the 1937 purge of higher cadres (in many republics, not just in Checheno-Ingushetia), and particularly the 1944 Deportation destroyed countless Chechen archives, inscriptions and other materials. When the Chechens returned *en masse* to their homeland in the late 1950s—after Nikita Khrushchev "rehabilitated" them, helping to debunk Stalin's charge that they had massively defected and aided the Nazis during the Great Patriotic War—they "discovered that everything had been done to obliterate their memory ... Mosques, monuments, inscriptions and, worst of all, graveyards had been destroyed" (Gammer 2006: 182; Bennigsen/Wimbush 1985: 13, 15-16). Authorities reopened the first new mosque only in 1972. We do not know the precise extent of the damage done to the Chechen heritage. Local knowledge is fragmentary, as among other Sufi communities in the former Soviet Union; the Soviets persecuted non-cooperative Sufi clerics everywhere and destroyed mosques and monuments, though Sufi brotherhoods, particularly Chechen ones, were resilient and survived underground. Therefore "little research had been done on ancient and medieval Chechen history", which makes the task of locating and studying the "few archival materials that have escaped the destruction" (Jaimoukha 2005: 2; 9, 15, 60, 198, 202-203) in 1944 and beyond more daunting (Gammer 2006: ix-x). Worse still, only a "few written sources" remaining or written after 1944 have

survived the latest Russo-Chechen wars (Tishkov 2004: 32). However, there is a lack of interest or proper focus, even accounting for the dearth of data: "Vainakh history is perhaps the most poorly studied among those of the various people of the North Caucasus" (Jaimoukha 2005: 23). So, there remains plenty of unexplored terrain still—including private collections that have survived the carnage of three hundred years of Chechen-Russian confrontation. Yet, we are running out of time. Anthropological observations of "traditional" North Caucasians become increasingly difficult as living generations lose contact with the past. Already by the 1950s "Caucasian culture" was "vanishing from life, memory, and science" (Luzbetak 1951: 1).

ALBANIAN TRAUMA AND HERITAGE

Albanians had good reasons to reject foreign rule. According to many Balkan experts their sufferings have been genuine, grave and factual, effectively supporting the *absolute deprivation* premise. Albanian Sufis were less able than their Chechen counterparts to withstand repression and destruction, perhaps because of their political marginalisation since the Prizren League and the concurrent secularisation of Albanian society. The Serbian army burned Bektashi lodges in Kosovo, Albania and elsewhere during and after the First Balkan War; Serbs "re-Christianised" other *tekkes* and banned the entire order as soon as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was established (Duijzings 2000: 83-4; also F. W. Hasluck 1929: 92, 524-525, 551). Albanians, despite having eloquent spokespersons at peace conferences from the 1878 Treaty of Berlin to the 1913 Treaty of London, were too destitute (ill-funded), fractious, disorganised, ill-known and ill-reputed to successfully argue their case of a unified homeland, leaving "more than half of the total Albanian population ... outside the borders of the new Albanian state" (Vickers 1998: 8; 43-45, 79-85). After World War I Albanians lacked the means to counter the propaganda-machines of Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians and other neighbours. Albanians did not suffer such wholesale destruction and "cultural genocide" as Chechens did; yet three corresponding factors account for a relative lack of knowledge about Albanians' immaterial culture, their beliefs, morals and customs:

Misty Oral Past

Highland isolation helped their language to survive, but also emasculated it: "Impoverished by centuries of neglect, Albanian has a small native, but a large borrowed vocabulary" (Inalcik/Mann 1986: 650). The absence of indigenous script, despite Latin transliterations in the 17th

century (by Catholics), blocked the rediscovery of lost native words even after educated Albanians had first adopted the Latin script by the 14th century. Only much later did some (Von Hahn, Gjeçov) codify surviving Mountain laws and customs. Oral transmission across generations was all but perfect, and had "degraded" among most tribes (Hasluck 1954: 13; xi). People laid boundary stones and other markers for houses, lands and other properties, often at landed spots of thrown pebbles, rocks, axes or farthest-carried slabs, or where warriors died after confrontations. Participants, disputants or elders took oaths (rituals varied) by carrying stones and earth on a shoulder and swear to carry their "weight in this world or the next" if they lied, cheated or erred (many refused to utter such a heavy *besa*). Yet all these witnessed rituals could not prevent misunderstandings, disagreements and vendettas. Due to scarce land and disappeared or moved markers "disputes over boundaries were ... endless" (Hasluck 1954: 98; 73-82 ("Law of the Dog"); 95-109 ("Boundaries")). Though large-scale literacy programmes in the early 20th century helped to diminish territorial disputes, few women were able to participate, emancipate and further curtail such violence; in 1988 still 72.6 per cent of Kosovar-Albanian women were illiterate.[33]

Imperial Bias

Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman records on Albanians and their predecessors were infrequent, biased, and interested in these "alien tribes only when their actions impinged ... on the Empire" (Malcolm 1998: 29-30). Ottoman population registers could not settle disputes between contemporary and present-day nationalist historians about family-name provenances, leading to diverging claims on numbers of "early" or "genuine" Albanians and Serbs, Muslims and Christians (ibid.: 112-113). European observers tended to believe the Serbs once the latter got their own state in 1878. They sympathised with fellow European-Christian Slavs, dismissing Albanians as "a primitive people" who "admire warlike attributes beyond all others" (Baerlein 1922: 35). By the time of the Balkan wars of 1912-1913, just a few Westerners were knowledgeable of and sympathetic to Albanians, notably Edith Durham. Unbalanced accounts continue to this day: "writers do not do justice to the complexities of that history if they treat it either as a tragic story of Serbs being ... oppressed by Albanians, or as a heroic story of Albanians fighting ... for national liberation" (Malcolm 1998: 182).

[33] SWB, EE/0305/B1:*Yugoslav News Agency* (*YNA*), 7 Nov 88.

Deportation, Desecration, Destruction

The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes formed in 1918 enveloped a conquered Kosovo, and refused to recognise and name inhabitant Albanians as a constituent people: particularly the Serbs simply repressed and massacred them: between 1918 and 1921 they killed over twelve-thousand Kosovar civilians and destroyed over a 120 villages. Yet Belgrade never wished, dared or was able to realise the 1937 proposal by Serb historian Vasa Cubrilovic to expel all Albanians from Kosovo, as "the world ... is used to things much worse" and the "shifting of a few hundred thousand Albanians will not lead to the outbreak of a world war" (Cubrilovic 1994: 41; idem 1993a). Tens of thousands of Albanians did emigrate, yet the deportation of 200,000 (or 300,000) Kosovar Albanians to Turkey never materialised due to a shortage of funds. The fall of the Stojadinovic government in 1939 and World War II prevented further "ill-treatment of their clergy, ... destruction of their cemeteries ... [and] ... secretly burning down Albanian villages and city quarters" (Cubrilovic 1993b: 12-15). Nevertheless, many Albanian records, buildings and monuments have been destroyed. These losses heightened anti-Serb enmity so much, that during World War II many Albanians supported or joined the Axis powers so as to realise a greater-Albanian state, through rightwing anti-communist organisations like the Albanian National Front (*Balli Kombëtar*, BK, est. 1942) and the Kosovar-Albanian *SS Skanderbeg* division. Their fateful "enemy-of-my-enemy-is-my-friend" reasoning brought Albanians to the wrong side of history as "Nazi collaborators"—even though "Ballists" and other nationalists would have fought the Nazis if the Allies and Yugoslavs had accepted a Greater Albania. The initially marginal Communist Party of Albania (CPA, est. 1941) under Enver Hoxha gained control over present-day Albania (on Hoxha's "shifty" WWII role and relationship with Ballists, see Kola 2003: 24, 27-29, 41-43, 48). Ever since, many Serbs look upon their Albanian compatriots as a potential fifth column. This in part explains why Kosovar-Albanians experienced something akin the Chechen trauma of "1944" when in 1999 Serb forces expelled nearly a million of them (their population had grown rapidly since the 1930s) during the latest conflict. During their short exile Serbs destroyed their population registers, complicating identification and property claims. Milosevic could have erased their history from Kosovo if they had not been able to return after NATO's intervention.

Nowadays the history, society and politics of Albanians are increasingly well-researched. Yet more books are being published on the Chechens, even though their history, society and politics are even less

known, perhaps reflecting a stronger urge to fill a more serious gap in knowledge—or higher interest in a strategically more important conflict involving secessionists battling a nuclear superpower. Still, Noel Malcolm and Julie Mertus saw it necessary to inform a bewildered public and dismantle persistent myths that Albanians, and even to a larger degree Serbs, tell of themselves and each other. If "more Serbian myths were dealt with than Albanian ones, that was ... because more existed in the first place: my aim .. was not anti-Serb, but anti-myth" (Malcolm 1998: xxvii). Most "Truth" stories contain Serbian rather than Albanian factual distortions (Mertus 1999: 12). The shortfall of research on Albanians was more acute a hundred years ago. Then just a few—Gjeçov, Durham, Hasluck—were recording law codes, customs and beliefs. Much of it would have forever remained beyond our knowledge if they had not done groundbreaking field research; Gjeçov was assassinated, Durham was ridiculed, and Hasluck died of leukaemia in 1948 before she could complete her work. Their publications arrived too late to influence the Great Powers, "many of them ... ignorant of Balkan affairs" (Vickers 1998: 97) and Albanian affairs most of all.

VI. Conclusion

The distinctive "societal values" of *martialism* (valour, courage, fighting skill), *resistance* (defiance, readiness to rebel at the slightest opportunity) and (male) *egalitarianism* (freedom; equality in mutual respect and decisionmaking) among the remarkably similar communities of Chechens and Albanians have helped to shape and sustain their histories, cultures, grievances and (consequent) aspirations. At the same time these characteristics have helped to create the *societal values* in question, in a feedback loop of mutually reinforcing phenomena. These cultural traits or societal values in turn have brought about or at least solidified the essential *violence-values* in both Chechen and Albanian societies, which I have grouped under the concepts of *honour*, *blood feud*, *raid*, *hospitality* and *mediation*. I must reiterate that, apart from the persistent discrimination against women, and the large space that tribal bodies (generally not recognised as legal entities in international law) accord men—under strict conditions—to seek justice through blood-feuds, many of their "traditional" local norms are actually compatible with "modern" humanitarian and human rights norms (see first article of the "How to Feud and Rebel" series).

Chechen and Albanian perceived identities of being unique, martial peoples who only can live freely by the gun, are ideal "tinder-boxes" in the hands of political entrepreneurs. The "élite's interests are .. encoded

in a moral idiom relating imminent violent confrontation to anything from revenge obligations to religious imperatives, 'traditional' animosity or 'the good of the nation' " (Schmidt/Schröder 2001: 4). Even (neo-)primordialists acknowledge that "a primordial shared feeling" is "not ... enough; ethnic "leaders and elites have to ideologize and mobilize the sharers of the eth[n]ic markers", and "competition over scarce resources is also a necessary condition for mobilization" (J. Rotschild, apud Kristensen 2000: 21). Grievances can be grounds for rebellion, yet do not necessarily provide or constitute the spark that makes it happen. Underground militants—assuming they already exist well before the outbreak of conflict—need incidents or other opportunities for it to start. Both regime and rebel elites, whether sincere or self-serving, utilise popular grievances, beliefs and traditions. Perhaps manipulative leaders are the prime aggressors i.e. conflict generators after all, not so much the "cultures of violence" they tap into. Even so, Chechen and Albanian groups, parties and factions, whether along or across clan loyalties, follow common or at least mutually intelligible violence-values which fall under the larger societal-values of martiality (valour), resistance (defiance) and egalitarianism (freedom), thereby shaping the "rules of the game".

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