

Firghe Democrat Azerbaijan Reforms and the Post-Soviet Releases Documents

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Abstract

This article tends to analyze the roots of Democratic Party of Azerbaijan (Firghe Democrat-e Azerbaijan) and the reforms it meant to implement during its single year of life in Iran from the mid 1945 to the mid 1946. The main aim of the article is to search the nature of its reforms and to see whether they were independent or whether the Soviet Union dictated actions. While many studies have been done on the rise and the fall of FIRGHE Democrat, but its reforms and their relations to the Soviet Union's policies have not been the subject of an independent work. The paper concentrates on the post-Soviet era released official documents, particularly the Stalin's formal commands issued in 1946. A comparison between the content of the commands and Firghe's reforms, leads us to the conclusion that the reforms were part of the Soviet Union's strategy to legitimize the Firghe's policies and reinforce the Soviet's presence in Iran in the years after the Second World War.

Keywords: Central Government, Firghe Democrat, Red Army, Reforms, Soviet Union, Stalin's Commands.

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The Analysis of Political Relations between Iran and Russia in the Europe Gas Market

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Abstract

Geopolitical factors have been the most important element affecting political relations between countries. In the period after the Cold War, the geo-economic factors have earned a special role among the geopolitical elements. In recent years, the main factor defining energy security in the Caspian basin is the competition between Europe and the United States on the one hand, and Russia on the other. Russia is the largest conventional gas reserve holder in the world and one of the most important suppliers to the European market. With Iran being the second largest conventional gas reserve holder and given its strategic geographical position as an intermediary between European and Asian markets, there is naturally a potential for a great rivalry between Russia and Iran for market shares in these regions. However, Russia already has an extensive pipeline infrastructure in place and is an established supplier to European and Asian countries. Iran, on the other hand, (due to its isolation and internal hurdles) currently only supplies Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan and soon Pakistan with small volumes of natural gas. Russia also seeks to diversify its export markets to enhance demand security. This article seeks to investigate and explain Iran and Russia's competition in the field of geo-economics with an emphasis on the gas market. The present study suggests that Russia, while trying to keep Iran in the orbit of its strategic allies, also tries to keep away its most dangerous potential rival in geo-economics from European gas market.

Keywords: Energy, Gas, Iran, Russia, Security.

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The Fields of Divergence in Relations between Turkey and Armenia

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Abstract

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Armenian Republic gained its independence in 1991 and Turkey was one of the first countries that recognized Armenian independence after the collapse of the USSR. Since 1993, the Armenian borders with Turkey had been closed and the atmosphere of mistrust between the two countries remained strong. Only in 2009 the two countries tried to open their borders. Some Armenians have criticized the Turkish government for the closure of borders in some Western organizations and associations. Bearing in mind the importance of this issue, this study aims to answer this central question: What are the reasons for divergence in relations between Turkey and Armenia? The research hypothesis is that the tension between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Karabakh region is the main reason of divergence. Territorial claims of Armenians and the genocide issue can be the other obstacles in the normalization of relations between the two neighboring countries. This article reviews the occupation of Nagorno Karabakh impact on the relations between Armenia and Turkey. Then the role of Armenians outside of Armenia and the Armenian claims issue in bilateral relations have been discussed. At the end of the article, attempts for the normalization of relations between the two countries and signing of protocols are the objects of deliberation. This paper shows that in the current situation, there is no possibility of normalization of relations between the two countries.

Keywords: Armenia, Diaspora, Genocide, Karabakh, Turkey.

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The Safavids and Russian Concerns and Conflicts in Georgia

(Based on the Performance of Georgian Princes)

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Abstract

The strategic location of Georgia, have been placed it for a long time in the profits constellation of interests of major powers of Iran, the Ottomans and the Russians, each acting based on their own interests, military and diplomatic policies, which, sometimes in long term caused tensions and disputes between them. As the realization of economic and political ideas of the Tsars of Russia and the Safavid Shahs in the Caucasus was in contrast to the Ottomans, and confronting their advance and influence could only be made possible through the geographical continuity between conquered regions in the Caucasus, especially Georgia as one of their conformable and envisage states. In the meantime, some of the Georgian princes' actions in disconnection and hostility to the Safavid court, and trending toward Russia, according to religious and political tendencies, rejection of coalition with Safavids to fight the Ottomans, and Russians policy to realize the idea of Peter the Great, using political and military weaknesses in the structure of Safavid government, loss of their control over Georgia and Georgians governors' disobedience toward Safavid kings, resulted in the cold and eventually strained relationship between Safavid and the Tsars, ultimately leading to Russian immersive domination over Georgia. This paper intends to answer the following questions, using the review of documents method and based on historical data: What was the Georgia's role in conflict between Ottomans and Safavids? And what was the role of Georgian princes in intensifying this conflict?

Keywords: Concerns, Conflict, Georgia, Russian, Safavids.

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An Evaluation of Regional Economic Integration of Caspian Sea Region

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Abstract

Regional Economic integration accrues considerable benefits to its members, as well as being considered a movement toward globalization. The main purpose of the present paper is to evaluate the efficiency and success of regional economic integration for Caspian Sea region Countries. For this, two major criteria, convergence or proximity of countries (Economic Convergence Index: ECI) and the trade-economic integration degree (Trade Intensity Index: TII), have been measured and assessed for the Caspian region during time period 2000-2013. The results obtained from this paper indicate that per capita income gap is increased for some countries and decreased for others due to the economic integration. Also, an increase in the trans-regional trade share of the countries has decreased the region's trade intensity. There is a similar situation for Iran. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis shows that lack of intra-regional trade development is due to the export-import (Trade) structure of the Caspian Sea region, and thus, the regional economic integration seems impossible at the moment, but the exploitation of the economic integration benefits is expected with enhancement in the trade-economic structure of the region countries.

Keywords: Caspian Sea Region, Economic Homogeneity, Iran, Regional Economic Integration, Trade Intensity.

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Expansion and Connection of EU's Transport and Energy Infrastructures to the Caspian Area and Black Sea: Dimension, Opportunities and Threats

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Abstract

International Transport Corridors and Interstate Pipelines are important sources of conflict and competition between major powers. From a Realistic point of view, they are not only economic initiatives but can also be used as a political leverage for countries *en route*. So each major power has proposed its own preferred corridor. EU's TRACECA Initiative and Southern Gas Corridor, United States New Silk Road and its support for pipelines and Russia's support for International North-South Corridor are obviously in line with this Realistic Approach. The Islamic Republic of Iran, due to its geopolitical situation, potentially faces different choices, so it is important to exactly survey this initiatives and obstacles. After offering a very exact and comprehensive description of the European support of Interstate Initiatives in Caspian Sea and Black sea, In this article, principles, objectives, preferences, programs and measures planned in the European Union for infrastructure connecting Europe to the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea have been presented and Strategies for advancement of national interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran are elaborated on.

Keywords: Established Program, Europe Union, TRACECA, The Black Sea, The Caspian Area, The Southern Gas Corridor.

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Consolidation of USA and India in Great Game Power in Central Asia

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Abstract

Attempts in establishing a balance of power is always one of the realistic approaches of countries in the international relations scope. This attempt is to maintain the *status quo* or to revise it. It seems that the natural tendency of countries in establishing balance of power with each other as realists claim, has currently put the United States (USA) in a historical and strategic dilemma. On the one hand, USA seeks to maintain its position as a hegemonic power, on the other hand, countries such as Russia, China and even India try to challenge this position and to establish balance with the hegemonic power. In this regard, nowhere in the world has USA been challenged strategically as in Asia for containing his hegemonic power. The main question is that how USA decreases the common threat from Russia and China and maintain its hegemonic position? In this line, the main hypothesis is that regarding the balance of power as distribution of power, USA seeks to utilize India for establishing the balance of power in central Asia. Also, India seeks to utilize the potential of USA for developing its sphere of influence in this region.

Keywords: Balance of Power, Central Asia, Clandestine Strategy, Moderate Strategy Hegemonic Power, Offensive Realism.

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Energy Geopolitics, Russia and Turkey Pipeline Diplomacy

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Abstract

The increasing importance of energy in the contemporary international system, has led countries who in addition to Energy supplying countries, are involved in transition. These latter countries are also gaining in importance. Attempts to become a better route for energy, especially oil and natural gas in addition to economic interests and security of the country, are among the factors that strengthen countries political capabilities. By consideration to such importance is that more and more countries are now trying to exploit a convenient geographic position as a power instrument. Turkey, in line with this argument, defined geopolitics of energy as a means of achieving strategic goals in the region and the international system. proximity to the main areas of energy production on the one hand and being adjacent to the European Union as one of the major energy consumers on the other hand, has prompted the Turkish leaders to consider pipeline diplomacy as a tool in pursuing their foreign policy goals. Turkey's suitable geopolitical position is conducive to the Country's importance in energy transfer. This article in addition to consideration of relations between Europe and Russia in the field of energy and vulnerability of the Union by Russia's policy, analyzes opportunities for Turkey to use diplomacy pipeline in the country's grand strategy.

Keywords: Energy Geopolitics, EU, Pipeline Diplomacy, Russia, Turkey.

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State, Economic Development and Integration to Global Economy: The Russian Case Study (1990-2010)

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Abstract

Development and Economic development is one of the essential problems for all of counties in the world. Since 1990s, with the failure of the communist bloc development and central planning experience, this question has been brought to fore more than before: Those countries and states should select which road for development? Russia as a superpower must be studied in this regard. Today, Russia is planning to move to economic liberalization and integration into the economic world. The paper discusses the foreign trade, capital movement, migration, and, somewhat more extensively, the institutional dimensions of Russia's integration into the world economy. Possible implications of the sheer size of the Russian nation are outlined. It is argued that the desire to avoid a break-up of the nation may necessitate excessive centralization. At the same time, this paper concludes with a basically positive assessment of the future prospects for Russia's integration into the global economy. The article will begin with some remarks from a historical perspective and will then address the various aspects of Russia's integration into the global market. The main topics to be discussed here are foreign trade, interaction with international organizations, economic liberalization, privatization and economic opening to the world. This report tries to explain this process and the role of the State (1990-2010) in this direction.

Keywords: Economic Development, Economic Liberalization, Integration to Global Economy, Planning, Russia.

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Iran-Russia Coalition in Light of the Syrian Crisis

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Abstract

After the Cold war ended, one of the approaches discussed in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is looking to the East. The Islamic Republic of Iran has devoured to supply part of its political purposes using this new approach, to avoid the uni-polarization of International System's Structure after the Cold war. Although over the past two decades, the dynamics of Russian-Iranian relations have seemed unstable and, to a certain extent, unpredictable for other players in the international arena; Iran's diplomatic system attracted its special attention to Russia, while this country is identified as a new hegemonic power in the International System with its power matrix on the rise and it is going to be more powerful in different economic, political influence and material dimensions. Iran has tried via progressive contribution with this international center power to supply part of its national goals in regional and international levels. Reciprocally, Iran is of particular importance to Russia as a regional partner, especially in countering U.S. penetration into the Middle East. One of the most important factors currently influencing the dynamic of Russian-Iranian relations is the Syrian Crisis with the United States, the European Union and the other regional power countries at its opposite end. The Method utilized in this research is descriptive analytical and the Structural Realism model theory was used in data analysis.

Keywords: Foreign policy, Iran, Russia, Strategic Alliance, Syria Crisis.

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Explanation of Areas of Integration in Relations between Iran and Azerbaijan and its Challenges (1991-2014)

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Abstract

After the collapse of the USSR, for many researchers the existence of similarities and potential historical, cultural, religious and geopolitical in relations between Iran and Azerbaijan was a suitable context for establishment of close relations and integration in various areas between the two sides, But the course of events was shaped the other way and multiple challenges at different levels of national, regional and global, affected these factors, so that relations between the two countries, despite the existence of appropriate grounds, has undergone many ups and downs. Thus, this research seeks to answer the question that after the independence of Azerbaijan, what factors affect the appropriate fields in integration of Iran and Azerbaijan and have had a negative impact on close and stable relations between the two countries. In this regard, looking to explain how the components of integration and the challenges in front of it, has worked in relations between Iran and Azerbaijan. The hypothesis of the research is that relations of the two countries, despite having the suitable ties that facilitates integration between the two, however the existence of disturbing factors has impeded the process, resulting its facing numerous challenges so that integration of the two neighbors have been impractical. In this study, uses the descriptive method, content analysis and relations between the two countries.

Keywords: Caspian Sea, Caucasus, Integration, Karabakh, Pan-Turkism, Regionalism.

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Modernity in Ismail Gasprinski's Thoughts and its Influence on Russian Muslims

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Abstract

In the nineteenth century, the European countries were developing and progressing rapidly. Russia had turned into a vast empire striving to join the European countries. In this period, the Islamic world was undergoing a process of modernity and reformation. Russian Muslims were under subjugation and Russianization and Christianization were enforced in their society. They attempted to modernize their social life. Ismail Gasprinski (1851-1914) was a Muslim intellectual thinkers, who being aware of backwardness of Muslims compared to the rest of the world, and with his reformist ideas, tried to offer solutions to save his religious and national identity and at the same time modernize his society. The present paper answers the following question: What are the main components of Ismail Gasprinski's thoughts and what was its influence on Russian Muslims? This paper underscores that Gasprinski with his modern endeavors like publishing periodicals, presenting modern pedagogical principles, building modern schools based on European models, and holding conferences for Muslims in Russia, paved the way for Russian Muslim modernists. In a way, he caused a movement called Jadidiye in Caucasia and Central Asia.

Keywords: Ismail Gasprinski, Jadidieh, Modernization, Russian Muslims, Thought.

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Ukraine Crisis and the Russian Military Doctrine

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Abstract

Ukraine, due to its geopolitical position as a leading meeting place of the East and the West, industrial capacities and historical background, is of great importance in Eurasia. The same unique features as well as its ethnic texture has turned the two parts the country into a place for encounters and East-West rivalry. The first serious clash of Russia and the West in this country was during the Orange Revolution in 2004 when the country's presidential election took place. If in 2004, politics was a cause for competition between Russia and in Ukraine, 10 years later and this time because of an economic agent the two sides again stood in front of one another. The contrast was far more intense and deep and it led to the separation of a part of the territory of Ukraine. The purpose of this article, using the analytical method, is to investigate the crisis and its impact on the Russian Military Doctrine. The main question of this study is: What Criteria and Factors in the Ukrainian crisis had an Impact on the Russian military doctrine? To answer this question, we examined the hypothesis that the quest of the West for influence in Ukraine in the political economic and military-security and integration of the country into Western structures increased a sense of threat and instability in Russia and the approach has been aggressive in its military doctrine, but on the other hand, it is a controlled hostile approach to the West and it will not lead to a full confrontation like during the Cold War.

Keywords: Crisis, Military Doctrine, Russia, Ukraine, West.

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Nation Branding Project and Image Building of Russia: Approaches and Achievements

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Abstract

The image of every nation is formed in accordance to the policies of each country, be it domestic and international planning and actions which a nation has done. Nowadays, international image management is a basic principles in statecraft and it is the cause of regional and international influence of nations and it changes the preferences, ideas, identity and culture of countries to internationalization. Also, nation branding increases the attractiveness of a country and makes the country appear as a good country. Russia, with thousands years of history and identity is a good case study. What is the role of the culture, economy, identity, politics and totally nation branding of Russia in world and what kind of direction has it taken? What is Russia's national image around the world, especially in the West and regional environment? This paper, after some review of theoretical background of nation branding, examines the nation branding and nation image process of Russia with a focus on Russian image in the West.

Keywords: Branding, Conception, Image Building, International System, Putin, Russia.

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